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“For Working Women in Oregon”

Caroline Gleason/Sister Miriam Theresa and Oregon’s Minimum Wage Law

IN THE FALL OF 1912, Caroline Gleason reported to her new job at the Stettler Box Factory on Portland’s Glisan and Tenth streets. Gleason’s job, and that of her female coworkers, involved gluing labels onto shoeboxes, using glue dipped from a huge, heated pot in the center of a large work table. The odors wafting up from the hot glue were “something less than pleasant.”¹ After affixing two or three labels, the workers’ hands became so sticky with glue they needed to wash them in order to continue their task. Washing off the glue required hot water, which could only be obtained by hauling five-gallon pails through the plant to an open steam pipe. The women held their pails under the steam until the water was heated, then hefted them back to their workstations. Gluing labels was piecework, so the time they spent hauling pails and washing their hands meant fewer labels pasted on boxes, and that meant less wages earned. After working three ten-hour days, Gleason quit her job having earned the total sum of \$1.52. Her experience mirrored that of tens of thousands of women laboring in manufacturing plants, steam laundries, and canneries in the early twentieth century, with one important exception — Caroline Gleason was working undercover.²

Gleason was directing an organized investigation for the Consumer’s League of Oregon (CLO) into the wages and working conditions for women wage workers throughout the state, and working at the box factory was one aspect of her job. The CLO was part of the fervent social reform movement sweeping through the United States and all industrialized countries during the Progressive Era, generally defined as the years from 1890 to 1920. Reformers had grown increasingly alarmed by the essential ways industrialization



Courtesy of Holy Names Heritage Center

This portrait of Caroline Johanna Gleason (1886–1962) was created around 1910, just two years before she directed a survey of women’s work and wages that led to Oregon’s first minimum wage law.

was endangering the social order of the nation and by its effects on working class men and women. The activists understood that all workers needed protective labor legislation but, for philosophical and political reasons, soon narrowed their focus to women workers. Shaped by a maternalist ideology that claimed a woman’s main purpose in life was to be a mother, social reformers soon deemed protective legislation the most expedient way to



Workers pose inside the Palace Laundry workroom located at East Tenth and Everett in Portland, Oregon, in about 1915. Power laundries required women workers to stand at machines and wrestle hot, wet clothes and linens for an average of nine and a half hours per day.

“protect” women’s future maternal responsibilities. Without responding to the real issues confronting working women in the early twentieth century — poverty-level wages, gender-segregated occupations, and unsafe working conditions — protective labor legislation mitigated those conditions, at best, and inhibited genuine protection of women workers, at worst. All protective legislation, furthermore, was crafted and enforced within the context of rigid racial and ethnic classifications and divisions, which mainly limited protection to white women born in the United States.

Oregon played an important role in the development of protective legislation when its state legislature passed the first compulsory minimum wage law for women workers in the nation in 1913. Caroline Gleason, later known as Sister Miriam Theresa, was an integral member of Oregon’s social reform community and played a crucial role in passing the groundbreaking minimum wage law. By legislating the nation’s first minimum wage for women workers, Oregon helped frame Progressive Era debates about

the changing status of women, their relation to wage work, and the role of the state in regulating workers in the workplace. Exploring Gleason’s life and work in the social reform movement brings the dynamic political and cultural changes of the Progressive Era into sharp human relief. Gleason’s complicated, and sometimes contradictory, endeavors on behalf of working women exemplify the broader struggle between conservative and radical approaches on how best to maintain democratic principles and social order in the face of the fundamental changes that industrial capitalism wrought on the social fabric of Oregon and the nation.³

Caroline Johanna Gleason was born to John and Fidelia (Lucia) Gleason near Minneapolis, Minnesota, on March 15, 1886. Her parents both came from immigrant families, and they met in Chicago and married in 1878. John worked as an undertaker while Fidelia managed their home and cared for their children: John, Mary, Caroline, Clara, and Helen. In 1889, the Gleasons moved the family to Minneapolis, Minnesota, to join the burgeoning Holy Rosary Parish on the city’s south side. The Holy Rosary Church, parochial school, priory of the Dominican Fathers, and the Convent of the Dominican Sisters filled an entire city block and was the center of the family’s religious, educational, and social life. Caroline found the fathers “thoroughly modern men” who participated in electoral politics and were “frequently foremost in movements for civic or municipal improvements.”⁴ The Dominican Sisters balanced their work as teachers at the parish school with caring for the “sick and afflicted” of the parish. Gleason remembered her mother driving the “externe Sister on her begging trips in the family horse and buggy” and otherwise doing charitable work.⁵ She thrived under the “well-directed influence of the Sisters” and on the “religious training . . . mingled with the intellectual development” she encountered at school.⁶ Her parents considered a good education important for all of their children, regardless of gender, and insured that Gleason’s education continued.

Gleason boarded at the St. Clara Academy in Sinsinawa, Wisconsin, (run by the Dominican Sisters) for her high school education from 1901 to 1904. She regularly contributed articles to the school’s publication, *The Young Eagle*, and one piece, “The Voice of Duty,” signals her developing sense of personal responsibility. Writing about early parental and religious influences, Gleason mused: “the circle of influences [is] lengthening. Books, companions, teachers added their atoms of counsel to make up the molecular structure of all our moral ideas. The time comes at length when we have a perfect appreciation of what duty means. A love of the right because it is the right lives in us.” She continued: “Duty . . . is that which a person is bound by moral obligation to do or refrain from doing.” Gleason’s skill at working with others blossomed at St. Clara’s, and she received a gold

medal “For Superior Excellence in Department” awarded by a vote of her peers.⁷ From her writings and activities, Gleason leaves the impression of a confident young woman who embraced knowledge and was undaunted by new challenges. A family anecdote supports that view: “‘Carrie’ would try anything! Even jumping into [thirty-foot] water holes when she couldn’t swim — we had to . . . rescue her.”⁸ After twelve years of parochial education that wove her religious, spiritual, and intellectual development together, Gleason left to attend a public college, exposing her to a secular world of education and activism.

Gleason entered the University of Minnesota in the fall of 1905. Although women constituted less than forty percent of students enrolled in college, attending university had become more commonplace for them by the early twentieth century. Historian Barbara Solomon classifies women like Gleason as part of the third generation of middle- and upper-class women to attend college, the first having done so during the 1870s. Gleason’s parents represented a growing group of families that “were increasingly receptive to the female college experiment, and . . . determined to make it available to ambitious daughters.” Along with changes in the demographics of the student population, college curricula were being revamped. We do not know Gleason’s exact course of study, but her courses were likely different than those from earlier generations. Generally defined as the attempt to understand the nature and potential of modern society, the social sciences — particularly economics, sociology, and political science — advanced as academic disciplines at this time, and students “were attracted to new viewpoints in the social science courses that replaced the old moral philosophy course.” In addition to her studies, Gleason was active in the University Catholic Association and the Women’s League.⁹

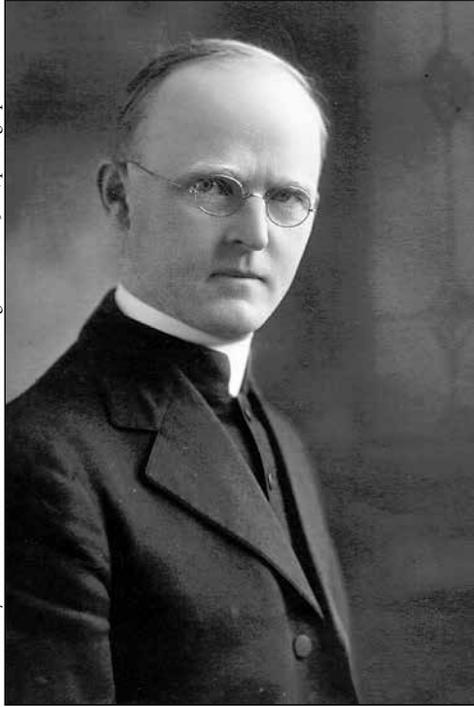
Organized in 1902, the Women’s League aimed to “promote good fellowship and sociability among the women of the University” and to “aid in any project which may be of benefit . . . to the women students.”¹⁰ Gleason’s membership in the League provided her with two important benefits. It allowed her to engage with her female peers as they tackled the rigors of academia and planned their post-graduate endeavors, and it provided her the chance to work with, and learn from, female faculty members. As treasurer of the League, Gleason worked alongside Ada Comstock, the first Dean of Women at the university and an ardent advocate for equal opportunities and facilities for the school’s female students. Making the case that female students’ physical well-being was as much the school’s responsibility as their intellectual accomplishments, Comstock led the Women’s League in a campaign for a separate women’s building. The space would provide female students “a place to study, a place to rest, a place to eat, a place to find the

warm welcome of college-girl good-fellowship.”¹¹ The league’s efforts were successful, and Alice Shevlin Hall awaited women students returning to campus in the fall of 1906, Gleason among them. Though her published writings from high school are available, Gleason left no records of her time in college, making it difficult to draw clear conclusions about how her personal philosophy evolved during this time. Descriptions of her thoughts about women’s roles in society, their rights as citizens, or whether women were men’s equal would only be conjecture, but her actions after graduation suggest she viewed herself as both independent and capable.

Gleason confronted the same dilemma all college-educated women grappled with: “After college, what?” With the limited range of professions open to women, social work was attractive as a field that offered college-educated women an outlet for their professional ambitions while remaining within accepted gender roles. “In this period,” writes Solomon, “the professionalizing of attitudes and methods in field-work and social investigations reshaped the traditional forms of social service.”¹² Social work could now be a full-time professional career for college-educated women; previously, women had found vocational fulfillment as volunteers in benevolent charity, social work’s precursor. Gleason’s decision to pursue social work seems consistent with her earlier sentiments about one’s “moral obligation” and her admiration of the charitable works her mother and the Dominican Sisters engaged in.

Shortly after Gleason graduated from college in 1908, her sister Mary received an offer of a teaching position in Portland. According to Gleason, their father would only give Mary his permission to move to Oregon if Caroline accompanied her. A family friend, Father Edwin O’Hara, was a parish priest in Portland, and he would serve as a surrogate family member for the two young women in an unfamiliar city. Caroline did not have a job offer, but in addition to her bachelor’s degree, she had earned a high school teaching certificate, perhaps from awareness it was one profession readily available to women. Gleason’s decision to relocate to Oregon marked the beginning of her professional life in social work and her life-long collaboration with her mentor Father O’Hara.

Edwin Vincent O’Hara shared a Midwestern background similar to Gleason’s. Born in Lanesboro, Minnesota, in 1881, O’Hara’s devout Catholic parents had emigrated from Ireland during the potato famine and settled in the Midwest. O’Hara’s ideals of social justice were sparked listening to Populist speakers traveling the lecture circuit, and his “strong social instincts” further developed during his years at St. Paul Seminary (1900–1905) under the tutelage of Father John A. Ryan, O’Hara’s moral theology professor. Ryan’s 1906 book *A Living Wage: Its Ethical and Economic Aspects* shaped O’Hara’s



Father Edwin V. O'Hara was unwavering in his belief in social justice and the role the Catholic Church should play in bringing it about. He voiced his opinions about the need for protective legislation in any venue, whether debating about the minimum wage law with local Socialist Tom Burns on street corners or presenting to the Board of Governors of the Portland Commercial Club.

by the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary). By the time Gleason arrived in 1908, O'Hara was well established in the local reform community, and his connections provided her with opportunities to pursue her ideals of social work and activism.¹⁵

Caroline and Mary Gleason lodged together in Portland, and Mary worked as a Latin teacher at Jefferson High School. Caroline, likely drawing on O'Hara's connections, found work as a part-time instructor of Latin, English, and social studies at St. Mary's Academy and College. By moving across the country and away from their family, the Gleason sisters joined

views of social justice and his approach to industrial legislation. The book's main argument is the paternalistic view that husbands and fathers are "the natural provider for all members of the family." Ryan distinguished between a "living wage" and "a woman's Living Wage" by declaring "women who are forced to provide their own sustenance have a right to what is a Living Wage for them," fostering the mistaken belief that most, if not all, women were only supporting themselves.¹³ Ryan's tenure as a professor at Catholic University of America from 1915 to 1939 provided O'Hara with a strong connection to the "intellectual center of the Catholic social reform tradition."¹⁴ After his graduation from seminary and his ordination, O'Hara was assigned to the Archdiocese in Oregon City in 1905. Archbishop Alexander Christie was impressed with "seminary reports [that] described [O'Hara] as an 'idea man,'" and appointed O'Hara curate at the Pro-Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Northwest Portland. O'Hara immersed himself in social justice work along with his religious duties, and he became a regular lecturer to the all-female student body of St. Mary's Academy and College (run

the growing numbers of "women adrift" in the country. *Women adrift* was the term the federal "Report on Women and Child Wage Earners in the United States" ascribed to single women living independently of family — a new phenomenon that families, governments, and social service agencies struggled to understand and accommodate.¹⁶ Excluded from many male institutions, mid nineteenth-century middle- and upper-class women formed women's clubs and service organizations that allowed them to extend their activities and interests beyond the "private sphere" of home and family and into the "public sphere" of politics and economics.¹⁷ Feminist historian Estelle Freedman refers to this separatist activity as "female institution building," of which The Portland Woman's Club, Oregon Federation of Colored Women's Club, and Portland YWCA are some local examples.¹⁸ These organizations provided services for young "women adrift," including inexpensive and respectable housing, safe facilities for recreation and social gathering, and vocational classes. Under O'Hara's guidance, a group of women formed the Catholic Women's League (CWL) in 1909, "to be of service to employed women, especially those away from their homes."¹⁹ Gleason received her first opportunity to delve into social work when she accepted a volunteer position with the CWL.

The CWL provided practical services for single women and female workers in the city. The League's quarters in downtown Portland included their business office, reading rooms, a cafeteria, and an employment department as well as spaces for evening classes and a home-finding service.²⁰ Gleason staffed the employment department and started a Business Girls Club, which brought her into direct contact with young women, "particularly those working in large mercantile stores, 5 and 10-cent stores, millinery and dressmaking establishments" and a "smaller number from laundries and factories."²¹ Apparently, Gleason considered the house she shared with her sister an extension of the League's facilities. Mary once protested to family members that "Carrie brought home so many homeless or troubled people [I] never knew who would be sleeping in the extra bedroom."²² By many measures, Gleason could be defined as a woman working for wages, yet she never characterized herself in those terms. Her impulse for engaging in social work mirrored many settlement house and social service workers of the time — educated women from middle- or upper-class families who approached their work as a spiritual duty to aid humanity, not merely a secular profession.²³

By the early twentieth century, women working for pay remained controversial, even as it became more commonplace. While the majority of women wage earners, regardless of race or ethnicity, labored in domestic and agricultural jobs outside of the industrial marketplace, the social reform

movement focused on those who worked in factories, laundries, offices, and mercantile establishments. Reformers identified as unacceptable the toll that long hours, harsh working conditions, and starvation wages of the industrial workplace were taking on the health of potential mothers of the next generation of citizens. Gleason shared their concerns that working-class women were incapable of countering the forces of industrial capitalism by themselves. Unimpressed by the uneven organizing efforts of trade unions on behalf of women workers, social reformers determined that state intervention offered the best protection for the nation's potential mothers. This maternalist ideology served as a key motivation behind protective legislation for women wage earners in the United States and in industrialized nations around the world. Some reformers supported unionizing women and worked through the Women's Trade Union League or craft and industrial unions, but the majority, Gleason among them, supported the passage of protective legislation by working through such organizations as the National Consumer's League (NCL).

THE NCL WAS one of the most influential social reform organizations of the early twentieth century. Founded in New York City in May 1898, the NCL initially advocated for a consumers' label as a way for middle- and upper-class women to purchase "right goods, rightly made" with the ultimate goal of "civilizing capitalism." The general secretary of the NCL, Florence Kelley, determined that intervention at the point of production was needed to attain the sweeping reforms the League envisioned. The organization's motto, "Investigate, Agitate, Legislate," sums up the organization's goals. Kelley believed "legislation [w]as the preferred means to obtaining progress for workers." The NCL defined itself as an organization that "assisted the state and local leagues in securing the passage of laws by sending representatives to hearings, furnishing printed matter, statistics and expert advice, particularly with reference to the form of bills."²⁴ Based in New York City, most of the NCL's branch leagues were in the large industrial cities of the Midwest and Northeast. The one "persistently active League" on the West Coast was located in Portland, Oregon, and one of the NCL's first opportunities to put its ideals into practice transpired in Oregon.²⁵

The CLO was originally founded in 1903, but it did not become a political force until 1905. That year, Kelley and Maud Nathan, president of the New York branch league, came to Portland as part of the NCL's West Coast tour. The tour included Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Jose, and Portland, and it coincided with the National American Woman Suffrage Association convention and the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition, both held in Portland that summer. Kelley and Nathan held public meetings and lectures

at Portland's churches, at synagogues, at the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), and in private homes. Their visit revived the languishing CLO, and by fall of that year, the board of directors contained the names of many prominent business, religious, and community leaders of the day. Among them were Helen Ladd Corbett; Caroline Ladd; Helen Ayer, a staunch supporter of women's suffrage; Henrietta Eliot, wife of the activist Unitarian minister Thomas Lamb Eliot; Jessie Honeyman, founding member of the YWCA; and Dr. Stephen Wise, the reform-minded rabbi of Temple Beth Israel. Kelley's visit bolstered membership in the state league, and local personal connections strengthened the bonds between that local branch league and the national organization. Oregon Child Labor Commissioner Millie R. Trumbull, for example, was a former colleague of Kelley's from their time spent together at Chicago's Hull House.²⁶

In 1905, the NCL responded to a plea from its branch in Portland to help defend the state's two-year-old maximum hour law for women workers. The legal case began when laundry owner Curt Muller violated Oregon's ten-hour law by requiring employee and unionist Emma Gotcher to work overtime. After the Oregon State Supreme Court upheld the law in 1906, Muller successfully appealed his case to the U.S. Supreme Court. When the CLO asked for legal assistance in defending the state's ten-hour law for women workers, the NCL agreed to help and retained the services of attorney Louis D. Brandeis.²⁷

Brandeis teamed with Josephine Goldmark, Secretary of the NCL's Committee on Legislation and Legal Defense of Labor Laws, to prepare the group's legal brief on behalf of the state of Oregon. Goldmark assembled the 113-page brief that Brandeis submitted in support of his oral arguments before the Supreme Court. Compiling data collected by various government bureaus in the United States, England, and Europe, the "Brandeis Brief" used statistical evidence that showed long hours of work harmed women's health and, therefore, their ability to be "mothers of the future." This groundbreaking legal approach became known as "legal realism," which countered the prevailing "legal formalism" that allowed arguments to be made solely on legal precedent.²⁸ In 1908, the Supreme Court decision *Muller v. Oregon* broke with "legal formalism" and "freedom of contract" by upholding the constitutionality of the ten-hour law as a "reasonable form of class legislation." Their decision elevated the argument that women were "different" and warranted legislative protection.²⁹ The "difference" versus "equal" distinction is critically important to the legislative remedies that social reformers sought.

Much of the discourse on the need for protective legislation for women revolved around the question of women's "difference" or "equality." Simply

stated: Were women different than men or their equals? Were all women equal to each other? This basic determination divided the maternalists or social feminists, who championed the difference theory, from the radical feminists, who advocated for women's inherent equality. This distinction was critical to feminists and reformers and shaped their support of or opposition to protective legislation.³⁰

Followers of the difference theory — Gleason and the CLO, for example — believed women needed legal protection to safeguard their well-being and their primary role in life as mothers. It was imperative that women's health and future reproductive capabilities not be compromised by long work hours, unhealthy working conditions, and low pay. Women who fulfilled the motherhood ideal were “good mothers” and “good citizens” and deserved protection. The definition of who qualified as “good” was embedded in the racial and ethnic prejudices of the time, limiting protection to white women working in certain occupations.³¹

Radical feminists argued that women are inherently equal to men and pursued a political and legal agenda that reflected their stance. From a position of equality — by having the vote, for example — women could negotiate for adequate wages and working conditions. Equality proponents were convinced that protective legislation would only hurt their cause and set women's advancement back. Scholar Nancy Woloch summarizes these disparate viewpoints in relation to the minimum-wage issue as “a split between two strategies for change, two factions of politicized women, and two colliding sets of goals: labor standards and equal rights.” In the short term, Gleason came down on the side of “labor standards” as the most expedient way to address working women's needs, but she also hoped protective legislation would serve as an “awakening to realize what they have a right to ask for.”³²

In the aftermath of the Muller decision, the difference argument gained traction with the social reform community, which viewed legislative remedies as the most expedient way to help women workers. Scholar Elaine Johnson concludes that the CLO came to prefer “legislation as the means to help working women, not unionization,” and that “once the [ten-hour] law was enacted on a gender basis, reformers and unionists accepted the gender boundaries as fixed.” Kelley “recommended that state and local leagues study the subject of minimum wage boards.”³³ The CLO accepted Kelley's challenge: “The impetus given by the National Consumers League,” concluded Gleason, “induced the Oregon branch to determine . . . to make a study of wages, hours of work, and sanitary conditions surrounding employment.”³⁴ As chairman of the newly formed Social Survey Committee, O'Hara promoted Gleason as the best candidate to oversee the survey. First, however, she would need to receive more education and training in scientific methods.

With few resources available for such training in the West, Gleason traveled across the country to study social work theory and practices in the industrial metropolis of Chicago in 1910 and 1911. She enrolled in the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy, the premier training institution for the fledgling profession of social work. Progressive theories and practices followed by most social reformers were grounded in the developing scientific methodologies, proponents of which believed that the proper study of social problems would result in the best and most efficient solutions. Gleason attended classes in order to learn the correct methodologies. In addition to her studies, she gave “fifteen hours a week to field work” with the aim of making “this practical work a genuine social apprenticeship.” Courses offered were Social Legislation, Industrial Conditions and Relations, and Methods of Social Investigation, all subjects that provided Gleason with a solid foundation for the social reform work she and the CLO planned to pursue.³⁵

During her academic studies, Gleason boarded at Graham Taylor's Chicago Commons. Taylor, Professor of Christian Sociology at the Chicago Theological Seminary and a Chicago School faculty member, recalled: “From the Pacific coast Caroline Gleason came in 1910 for a year's residence, sent by her parish priest to prepare for social work with the Roman Catholic churches in Oregon.”³⁶ Chicago Commons was a settlement house founded by Taylor in 1894 that, like most settlement models, was not run under specific religious auspices but was not a purely secular organization either. Gleason was familiar with that perspective, it being the motivating principle in her life and work. Located on Chicago's northwest side, the Commons neighborhood included Scandinavian, Irish, Italian, and German immigrants, often the first generation of urban poor. The women and children from those communities comprised the majority of the workforce employed in the city's sweated trades — defined as such because of long hours of work, low wages, and unsanitary conditions.³⁷ In the fall of 1910, Gleason became involved in a large industrial strike and encountered firsthand the effects of industrial unrest that social reformers hoped to eliminate or, at least, to moderate.

Working conditions in the needle trades were notoriously bad, but when one of Chicago's major garment manufacturers, Hart, Schaffner, and Marx, instituted a bonus system and reduced their piece rate, sixteen women walked off the job. The strike lasted from September 22, 1910, until February 1911. At its height, over forty thousand workers walked the picket lines. The Women's Trade Union League (WTUL) organized a Strike Committee that raised money for the strikers' rent, opened a commissary to supply them with food, and helped coordinate picket lines. Gleason and her colleagues at the Chicago School became part of the WTUL's volunteer brigade. The

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The forty thousand women workers involved in the 1910 Chicago Garment Workers' Strike persevered in their walkout despite police beatings, the biting cold of a Chicago winter, and the financial hardships that resulted from not working. Their conviction despite being immigrants from many countries and not sharing a common language belied the often-repeated charges that women workers were unorganizable or did not understand the value of collective action.

strike was one in a series of “influential experiences” Gleason had in Chicago that shaped her views and practices as a social worker.³⁸

Gleason returned to Portland in 1911 and for a short time became the Field Secretary for the Catholic Women's League and the live-in supervisor of its residential cottage. The clientele of the cottage were “girls in any kind of emergency [who] were received for temporary care.” Gleason learned of working women's issues first-hand from “girls from all types of employment who were not loath to pour into [my] ears the difficulties of their employment and other problems of their daily existence.” Although empathetic to the issues that confronted young working women and claiming “keen interest” in their situation, Gleason seemed most interested in studying them. She soon seized on another opportunity to gain more knowledge of social work practices in the spring of 1912, requesting a one-month leave of absence from the Catholic Women's League to visit “the large industrial centers of

the country to learn everything possible that would help [me] in work as Field Secretary.”³⁹ During her trip, Gleason was involved in social survey investigations in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, and New York City. The *Catholic Sentinel* published her report about doing “preventative work on behalf of girls,” with a Philadelphia byline. Her one month leave extended to three, and during her visit to New York City, Gleason met Florence Kelley. In later correspondence, Kelley observed that she had been “much impressed with her ability.”⁴⁰ Gleason summed up her trip as one of “wearing out shoe leather, unbelievably fast, but accumulating much knowledge.”⁴¹

When Gleason returned to Portland in July, the CLO was fully engaged in preparations to craft a minimum wage bill and introduce it in the 1913 legislative session. The Social Survey Committee determined that Gleason was “trained” and “excellently fitted” to direct its social survey.⁴² Gleason accepted the job. For the remainder of 1912, the CLO's campaign for a state minimum wage law went forward on multiple fronts. Gleason directed the field work for the social survey of wages and working conditions, travelled to the “large centers throughout the state” to enlist their cooperation, and spoke to women's groups around the state. O'Hara and the Social Survey Committee wrote the minimum wage bill and mustered support with legislators, the business community, and the public. Although Gleason and the CLO eventually worked to pass a gendered bill, documents available from Oregon's campaign for the minimum wage law in 1913 suggest a complicated path to that configuration.

O'Hara took charge of drafting the content of the minimum wage bill. As he did so, he corresponded with numerous experts active in the national social reform network. Because the process of industrialization in the United States lagged behind Europe, Australia, and New Zealand by several decades, O'Hara could draw on a body of existing policies and practices. Daniel T. Rogers contends, in *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Era*, that the approaches taken to resolve the “pressing social questions” that flowed from industrialization and modernization resulted in “transnational borrowings and imitation, adaptation and transformation” in all industrialized countries.⁴³ O'Hara tapped into that extensive network of reformers as the CLO decided whether to make the law compulsory, how to enforce it, and whether it should apply to both men and women. Vassar economics professor Herbert Mills and Columbia University economics professor and president of the American Association for Labor Legislation Henry Seager were two experts O'Hara consulted. Their blunt reactions to the bill's draft were based, in part, on the minimum wage law passed in Massachusetts in 1912 that relied on voluntary compliance by employers and was considered weak. Mills called the Oregon bill “a bad one” because it set a specific mini-

imum wage and placed the jurisdiction over the minimum wage solely in the hands of the Commissioner of Labor, instead of “review by some impartial and high minded commission.”⁴⁴ Seager considered Oregon the ideal location for a better law because of the “advanced ground on the subject of labor legislation” in the *Muller v. Oregon* case, and he believed a “favorable decision should this bill become law” and be challenged in court more likely to happen in Oregon than in other parts of the country.⁴⁵

Unlike social reform activists, organized labor — whether the American Federation of Labor (AFL) or the Industrial Workers of the World — disdained legislative remedies for wages, hours, and conditions of work. Samuel Gompers, leader of the AFL, was “especially hostile to the Australian- and English-style minimum wage boards . . . [and] worried that these boards might become bureaucratic instruments for wage-setting and labor arbitration as a substitute for collective bargaining.”⁴⁶ In accordance with the view that women workers were only temporary members of the workforce, organized labor couched women’s work in paternalistic terms. Trade unionists and workers first used the term “living wage” in the early 1870s, defining it as a wage that allowed male heads of households to earn enough to support their families.⁴⁷ Unionists worried that employers would pay women less (and they were correct on that point), which could result in driving men’s wages below the “living wage” level or becoming the maximum wage employers would pay. Gompers often dismissed social reformers as “do-gooders,” but the AFL’s stance eventually softened when it came to protective legislation for women.⁴⁸

O’Hara’s correspondence also addressed the significant issue of whether the law should include men *and* women workers, meaning the Social Survey Committee considered protective legislation that would not just be limited to women. John Mitchell, vice-president of the American Federation of Labor, challenged the CLO’s gender inclusive approach as they finalized their social survey. Mitchell and members of the CLO met in mid July to discuss the Consumer’s League’s impending survey of wages and working conditions. It is unknown whether Mitchell had been summoned to Oregon by the local labor community or had caught wind of the impending minimum wage bill elsewhere, but he clearly came to discuss the CLO’s approach. Gleason’s recollection of the scope of the survey when presented to Mitchell was: “The Committee wished to include the conditions, wages and hours of employed men as well as women in the study . . . to campaign for a minimum wage and hour law for all wage-earning adults.” Mitchell, however, “advised emphatically against including the employment of men in the study saying that a minimum wage for them would never be enacted at that time, and . . . would only endanger legislation that could benefit women and minors.”⁴⁹ Whether

Mitchell’s view was the tipping point or not remains unclear. During 1912, a smattering of short articles in the *Oregon Labor Press* offered tentative support for a minimum wage law. One editorial took credit for the origins of the concept: “Another cardinal principle of unionism has received the government OK — the minimum wage!”⁵⁰ The legal opinion of Oregon Attorney General A.M. Crawford also supported a minimum wage law for women only. Crawford deemed the bill constitutionally sound and defensible on the two likely points of contention: the police power of the state, and whether the law would be a delegation of legislative authority. Crawford’s opinion specifically mentions women and children as falling within the scope of the police power of the state, referencing the *Muller* decision as a precedent.⁵¹

Taking all of these opinions into account, Gleason reworked the survey forms. Referring to herself, she recalled the “thrifty soul of the director mourned as several hundred dollars worth of questionnaires were dumped into the wastebasket . . . and the cards which were prepared for the investigation of women’s conditions were the simplest possible, and much less expensive!”⁵² Not only were the survey cards and forms scrapped, the proposed statute was also rewritten to cover only women and minors. Reviewing the final revision of the bill, O’Hara’s mentor John Ryan reopened the question of protecting both genders. “[You] ought to have the law extend to all wage earners,” he wrote to O’Hara, “men as well as women and children . . . I am so anxious to see minimum wage legislation extended to men as well as women that I don’t like to let any opportunity looking in that direction be disregarded.”⁵³ Based on Ryan’s decisively gendered views for a living wage in his book, this inclusive response is surprising. Many reformers judged the political climate unfavorable for gender-neutral legislation, however, and a law that covered only women fit their maternalist views. Instead, they settled for the “entering wedge” strategy, which speculated if they could secure protections for women workers, eventually those protections would be extended to male workers as well. They noted, for example, England’s factory laws, which had first covered minor apprentices, then all minor workers, and finally, women.⁵⁴ With the critical decisions about the scope of the minimum wage bill settled, Gleason began the survey of women’s wages and working conditions around the state.

Scientific social surveys were central to progressive philosophy, and Gleason and the Social Survey Committee believed that the information gathered would be essential to their case with legislators and the public. Social scientist Dorothy C. Wertz notes: “All reforms in working conditions during the Progressive Era were preceded and buttressed by massive research reports.” Sociologists, economists, and settlement workers compiled detailed lists of the “average” working woman’s expenses that listed basic needs down

FORM III.

Female Wage Earner's Expense Report

INDUSTRIAL WELFARE COMMISSION,
Olympia, Washington. No. _____

I, the undersigned, do hereby submit a correct statement of the actual expenses incurred by me for my maintenance during the four weeks ending _____, 191__

ITEMS	1st Week	2nd Week	3rd Week	4th Week	Total
Board					
Luncheons					
Lodging					
Clothing and Shoes					
Repair of Clothing					
Laundry					
Medicine and Dentistry					
Street Car Fare					
Newspapers and Magazines					
Stationery and Postage					
Association Dues					
Insurance					
Vacation Expenses					
Amusements					
Church or other contributions					
Gifts					
GRAND TOTAL					

Kind of employment _____
Is this your first report on this kind of blank? _____
Do you live alone? _____
Do you cook your own meals? _____
Do you live with parents or other relatives? _____
Do you receive assistance from relatives? _____
Do you contribute to support of relatives? _____
What wages do you receive per week? _____
Remarks: _____

(Signed) _____
Address _____
No. _____ City _____

Note: The above information will be of no value unless it is continued for a period of at least six months. The information you give will be known to the public by number only, as your name will be detached by the Commission and filed away for their reference only.

Form 3.

This sample expense report reveals the level of financial detail social surveys requested of women workers to determine the need for a minimum wage that would cover their cost of living. The form is from the Washington Industrial Welfare Commission, but it is likely similar to the ones Oregon used, because Washington hired Gleason for two months in the spring of 1914 to complete that state's social survey.

answers to the questionnaires revealed how inadequate working women's wages were. Anonymous testimonials from women surveyed claimed that

to the last handkerchief and calculated costs down to the last penny. These types of surveys gathered statistics on "everything quantifiable that could be connected with working women," but they rarely addressed the issues of occupational segregation by gender or considered how technology factored into the types of work women were hired to do. This is evident in the approach taken by the CLO.⁵⁵ Using examples of surveys pioneered in Chicago and Philadelphia, Gleason and her team of three investigators took a multi-faceted approach to gathering data. They distributed printed questionnaires about types of employment, sanitary conditions in the workplace, and whether women lived at home or "adrift," along with forms for women to record wages and living expenses, to two thousand women in eleven Oregon cities. They also solicited employers for their wage schedules, their views on labor conditions, and "their opinion as to the feasibility of the proposed bill."⁵⁶

Gleason and the committee received about five hundred completed survey cards. Personal stories and

even "with good management . . . economy and self-denial," most salaries "only allow . . . the bare necessities of life." Many of the women interviewed supported children or grandchildren or contributed to a family income; their wages were not for incidentals or treats, known as "pin-money."⁵⁷ Historian Judith Baer emphasizes that: "The 1900 census had exploded the 'pin money' theory of women's work by showing that virtually all women workers lived alone and supported themselves, were heads of families, or contributed most of their earnings to their families."⁵⁸ Thirteen years later, the view of women as temporary workers earning pin money continued to dictate women's wage rates, which were therefore not based on the actual economic needs of women workers. Gleason assembled the data and the revised text of Oregon's wage bill with a brief history of wage boards and minimum wage laws in Australia, New Zealand, and England into an official report the CLO published in early 1913. She couched the survey's findings in maternalist language, characterizing women's wage rates as "miserably inadequate . . . and gravely detrimental to their health; and since most women wage earners are potential mothers, the future health of the race is menaced by these unsanitary conditions." The survey concluded: "\$10 a week is the very least on which the average self-supporting woman can live decently and keep herself in health."⁵⁹ While Gleason and her coworkers were completing the survey, the CLO waged an educational campaign to win popular support for the proposed legislation.

Throughout the summer and fall of 1912, O'Hara, Gleason, and members of the Social Survey Committee addressed civic and business groups, with O'Hara and Child Labor Commissioner Millie Trumbull focusing their efforts in the Portland area. The business community was often divided on the issue of protective legislation for women. Historians Theda Skocpol and Joseph Tripp note that the amount of business owners' resistance was, generally, directly proportional to the degree they felt the law would affect their business or industry. Employer associations that had vehemently opposed protective legislation in any form at the end of the nineteenth century began to alter their views. In 1914, anti-union ideologue Walter Gordon Merritt explained that transformation: "Let the legislature protect them against the worst abuses rather than arming them with the weapons of militancy to defend themselves. Let the state narrow the field of industrial warfare." The business community likely believed they would have more control over the legislative process than they did over collective bargaining. Nevertheless, they, too, only extended their acquiescence to laws to protect women workers.⁶⁰ While O'Hara and Trumbull lobbied in Portland, Gleason "was commissioned to address women's clubs throughout the State." She toured towns "as far away as the State line on the East, and, after Thanksgiving, [gave] a series

of talks to women in towns along the route to Medford and the Oregon-California border.” The majority of the women she addressed “were deeply interested and sympathetic with our aims,” but the wives whose husbands owned or managed industrial businesses employing women, “though not argumentative were coldly unimpressed.”⁶¹ The CLO published the *Report of the Social Survey*, distributed it across the state in early 1913, and shifted their focus from garnering public support to gaining legislative backing.

The “Oregon System” of direct democracy created by William U’Ren and others between 1884 and 1908 had transformed Oregon’s political landscape, creating fertile ground for protective legislation to take root. Nationally, progressive politics and candidates scored their most impressive victory in the general election of 1912, and Oregon followed suit. In the 1912 election, Oregon voters registered their opinions on more than thirty state and local initiatives and referenda, one of which established suffrage for the state’s women. The populace elected to office candidates from the newly formed Progressive Party as well as more reform-minded politicians than in any previous election in the state’s history. Coupled with the surprise election of Democrat Oswald West as governor two years earlier, “progressive reform became firmly implanted at Salem.”⁶² West owed his election, in large measure, to the support of working men and social reformers. He repaid them by supporting reform legislation that suited their agendas as well as his own, placing Oregon squarely within the larger reform-movement’s efforts to establish legislative protection for women workers.

On opening day of the 1913 Oregon Legislature, Senate president Dan J. Malarkey of Portland introduced S.B. 77, the CLO minimum wage bill. The preamble to the bill read:

For an Act to protect the lives, health and morals of women and minor workers, establishing an Industrial Welfare Commission for women and minors, prescribing its powers and duties, and providing for the fixing of minimum wages and maximum hours and standard conditions of labor for such workers, and providing penalties for violations of the Act.”⁶³

Multnomah County representatives Michael Murnane and A.W. Lawrence shepherded the bill through the legislative process in the House of Representatives. O’Hara touted endorsements by the Rotary Club, State Federation of Women’s Clubs, Retail Merchants Association, Commercial Club, Wholesale Grocers, State Grange, and the Central Labor Council. Governor West urged legislators to join him in supporting the bill in his “Message to the Legislature.”⁶⁴ Gleason characterized the “radical nature” of Oregon’s minimum wage bill based on its compulsory provisions that created an industrial welfare commission and would grant the commission “full power

and authority” to investigate and ascertain “wages and working conditions; inspect and examine books and payrolls and employer records.” The bill also provided “penalties for violation of the Act,” which placed Oregon’s law in uncharted legal territory.⁶⁵

Opposition to the minimum wage legislation materialized during the first weeks after the bill’s introduction as employers read the *Report of the Social Survey*. Senator Malarkey presided over “a large public hearing before the Senate Committee on Industries” on January 28, 1913, facilitating a public discussion between the bill’s proponents and opponents. Over fifty people attended, although notably absent was any contingent of working women — or at least, none of their comments were reported. A delegation of employers led by Everett Ames, the owner of a manufacturing business, commented that “by and large the members of committee of the employers were open . . . that there should be a minimum wage bill . . . that in no manner were the employers endeavoring to defend present conditions.”⁶⁶ They did, however, take issue with certain provisions of the bill and presented an alternative. Their bill proposed to: limit the commission to three members, not five; set a fixed minimum; eliminate the “clause providing for a conference committee”; and allow appeals of commission rulings to the courts. Business owners defended working conditions for women workers in the state while, in Gleason’s words, “denial followed denial as to the truth of the conditions stated in the Report.” Malarkey called on Gleason to testify. Wishing “only to refute their statements,” as reported by the *Oregon Journal*, Gleason came “armed with statistics and an arsenal of personal experience in ‘hiring out’ at various industrial establishments” and generally gave “an effective talk upon the necessity of regulation.” After her report, Ames “announced he would recede from his objections if the bill’s advocates would agree to amendments reducing the membership of the commission.”⁶⁷ Proponents of the bill agreed, and the minimum wage bill passed out of committee. The full Senate approved it unanimously the following week.

Less information was recorded about hearings in the House, but reports of the bill’s progress in local newspapers indicate supporters spent the better part of two weeks lobbying representatives. “Every member of both Houses was interviewed,” noted Gleason who, though always serious about her work, revealed a lighter side when recollecting her lobbying for the minimum wage bill: “[Being] aware of the psychological influence of clothes, [I] equipped [myself] with a pretty new hat.”⁶⁸ On February 11, 1913, “it took the house just 12 minutes . . . to pass the Malarkey minimum wage bill, which now becomes a law unless vetoed by the governor. Only four votes were cast against the measure on its final passage,” according to the *Oregon Journal*.⁶⁹ Gleason strongly believed that women winning the ballot in the 1912 election

made a difference in the passage of the bill, noting that its endorsement by the “State Federation of Women’s Clubs and other women’s organizations in the state, gave the legislators a long, long pause.”⁷⁰ Gleason had provided critical testimony on behalf of the bill and, after Governor West signed it into law on February 17, 1913, she would be central to its implementation.

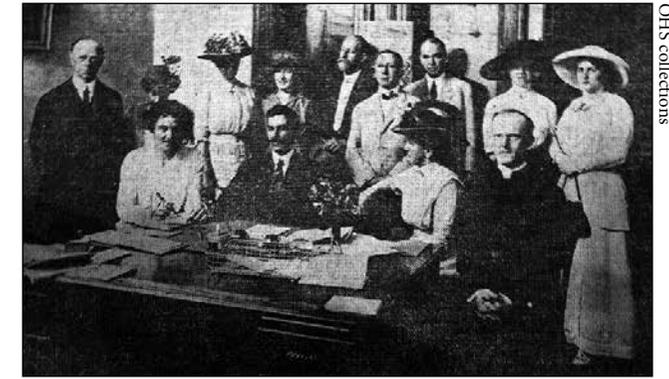
An important requirement of the minimum wage law was the creation of the Industrial Welfare Commission (IWC), which would establish “standards of hours,” “conditions of labor,” and “standards of wages.” The commission’s structure, based on wage boards and arbitration panels from Europe, Australia, and New Zealand, designated three unsalaried commissioners, one to represent each of the factions affected by industrial relations: employees, employers, and the public. The IWC received an appropriation of \$3,500 per annum, which covered operating expenses and the executive secretary’s salary. The executive secretary would conduct all the field work and administrative tasks related to the commission’s work. In early June, West appointed O’Hara on behalf of the public, pottery manufacturer Amedee Smith to represent employers, and retired teacher Bertha Moores to act on behalf of employees.⁷¹ The *Oregonian* noted that Moores’s credentials included having been “a self-supporting woman all her life, knows their trials and tribulations and is in thorough sympathy with them.” Amedee M. Smith, the *Oregonian* reported, was “a retired pottery manufacturer, a capitalist, and real estate operator . . . vice-president of the Realty Associates, and the son of a pioneer resident of Portland.”⁷² Smith and Moores selected O’Hara to serve as chairman of the commission, which turned to Gleason as the “strong willed” person capable of carrying out its work as executive secretary. Gleason accepted the position, and for the next three years, she oversaw the implementation of the Commission’s work.⁷³

The law establishing the IWC went into effect June 3, but before the staff could really settle into its offices, a strike occurred at the Oregon Packing Company (OPC) in Portland on June 27. Extensive studies and analysis of the strike exist — including Adam Hodges’ MA thesis and Greg Hall’s article in this journal on women and children in the canning industry — but, because the strike captures the competing philosophies and interests central to protective legislation for working women, I include a brief accounting here.⁷⁴ The strike eventually involved city and state government officials and law enforcement agencies, the IWC, the International Workers of the World (IWW), and local Socialists. If the reform community expected protective legislation to suddenly alter the complicated political, economic, and cultural terrain of labor relations, the OPC strike challenged those notions.⁷⁵

The Oregon Packing Company (OPC), a fruit canning business, employed about two hundred women at its processing plant on East Eighth

and Belmont streets. On June 27, 1913, about fifty women struck the plant when they failed to negotiate with the plant manager for a reasonable piece rate for their work. Representatives from the Socialist Party and the IWW soon joined the women on the picket line and generally assisted them in organizing the strike and providing food and shelter for the workers. Philosophical clashes about who could best represent the women’s interests erupted between the newly established com-

mission, the Socialists, and the IWW. Wanting to demonstrate its effectiveness, the IWC called a special meeting with the striking women. The women were unequivocal in what they wanted to settle the strike. They produced a detailed list of demands that included flat wages, accurate accounting of piece rates, and the elimination of unsanitary working conditions.⁷⁶ Using the powers granted under the minimum wage law, the commission toured the entire plant, spoke with women workers on the job, weighed boxes of fruit, and looked over the company’s accounting books. The commissioners and plant manager Roland Fontana began spontaneous negotiations over wage rates, with Fontana suggesting the plant would close and relocate if required to pay higher wages. The commission countered with a flat rate of one dollar for a nine-hour day, significantly less than the dollar and fifty cents for a ten-hour day proposed by the workers. Two days later, the IWC announced it had reached an agreement with OPC for a flat rate of one dollar a day based on a ten-hour day, apparently having had no further contact with the strikers. Though the new rate was a slight improvement over the previous one, even the commission conceded the amount fell far short of the ten dollars per week the CLO’s social survey deemed the minimum “to protect the lives and health and morals of women.” The IWC considered the strike over on



This Morning Oregonian photograph from July 23, 1913, shows the members of the Industrial Welfare Commission and representatives to the conference on wages, hours, and working conditions for women in mercantile establishments. Seated, left to right, are: Caroline Gleason, Amedee M. Smith, Bertha Moores, and Father O’Hara. Standing, left to right, are: Thomas Roberts, Ruth Catlin, Kate Trevett, Helen Dineen, William Woodward, I.N. Lipman, Thomas D. Honeyman, Mrs. J.W. Mackey, and Gladys Rogers.

July 1, but the workers did not accept the conditions of the settlement and remained on the picket line.⁷⁷ The strike continued until late July, but despite some media attention, the goals of the women workers were not achieved.

Regularly denied access to the bargaining power of organized labor unions, working women's objectives were just as often subsumed by the maternalist agenda of the social reform movement. While the opinions of the women strikers at OPC were heard by the IWC, the resolution that body achieved neither directly addressed the needs expressed by workers nor met its own standards of protection through economic means. The alternative advocates for the women, the IWW and the Socialists, did provide some direct assistance during the strike, but the groups' focus eventually shifted to a free-speech fight that, while important, did not address the strikers' ultimate goals. The women also requested help from the Central Labor Council, and they received sympathetic comments but no visible efforts at organizing workers at the OPC or elsewhere in the canning industry. In the end, the women strikers and other working women viewed the actions by the IWC and the other groups with trepidation about what type of assistance or protection they could expect in the future.

Aware of working women's doubts, the IWC worked nonstop over the first eighteen months of its existence to regulate the wages and working conditions of women around the state. The commission held forty formal business sessions, sixteen informal hearings, and seventeen formal conferences and hearings. Gleason was at the center of all this activity, arranging the formal events, keeping records of all meetings, and disseminating information to workers and business owners about orders issued by the commission. Public conferences were the main investigative mechanism, and the IWC held them for each industry — manufacturing (with a separate conference on canneries), mercantile stores, clerical occupations, and a statewide conference for all women workers outside of Portland — providing venues for open public debate about the issues and for the IWC to present information. Conferences and hearings were required by law before any changes could be made to wage rates or working conditions.⁷⁸ Once the commission took testimony, reviewed information, and made any necessary investigations at businesses, it issued "obligatory orders" or rulings that spelled out specific wage rates or details concerning hours of work or lengths of time a worker could be considered an apprentice. Once an order was completed, copies were printed and required by Section 9 of the minimum wage statute to be posted at relevant businesses so that workers could see and understand their rights.

The IWC generally held public conferences in the evening, often in a meeting room in the newly built Portland Public Library in downtown Portland. The structure of the conferences was identical: representatives — three

each on behalf of employees, employers, and the public — offered official testimony regarding the cost of living, the cost of doing business, and what wage rate would accommodate both factors.⁷⁹ Each industry had specific characteristics that made it unique and required certain considerations, but the format of each conference remained constant. The IWC submitted three questions to each gathering: "What is a proper minimum wage? What are proper hours? Should women be employed at night?"⁸⁰ Despite the social survey report's original premise that the minimum wage must be a minimum of ten dollars a week, much of the testimony revolved around continued scrutiny of working women's budgets in an attempt to accurately figure the cost of living and, therefore, determine the correct minimum wage. For office workers, it was necessary to factor in a standard of dress that required a greater allowance for clothing than was necessary for factory workers. For the canning industry, the seasonal nature of the business had to be taken into account. By the end of the biennium, the commission had issued six rulings on wages, but only the one for clerical workers met the original wage of ten dollars a week — the "very least" a woman could earn and "maintain her health and morals."⁸¹ Gleason acknowledged this inconsistency, but defended the commission's work by noting the wage rates were an improvement over those in place "in advance" of the IWC and that the wage levels issued in the face of "bitter hostility, open and secret, from employers" were a "compromise."⁸² In addition, employers expressed frustration with the methods and results of the commission's work.

For all the IWC's efforts to compromise and consider employers' views as well as those of women workers, employers continually challenged the commission to defend its practices and decisions. Employers faithfully sent their three representatives to conferences and meetings, but many of them wanted to request specific exceptions they felt their businesses deserved, not to address the larger questions of adequate wage rates and decent working conditions for female employees. Some employers "denied the enforceability of the law" and the commission's power to investigate, refusing Gleason access to their businesses to conduct inspections. Employers even questioned the "accuracy and reliability" of the original CLO survey and the general prohibition of "night work." Finally, employers strongly doubted the commission's ability to understand the rules of business. Department store owner Julius Meier decried "the work of the commission all child's play." While a small number of employers supported the commission's efforts, most tolerated the rulings when they had to and ignored them when they felt they could escape detection.⁸³

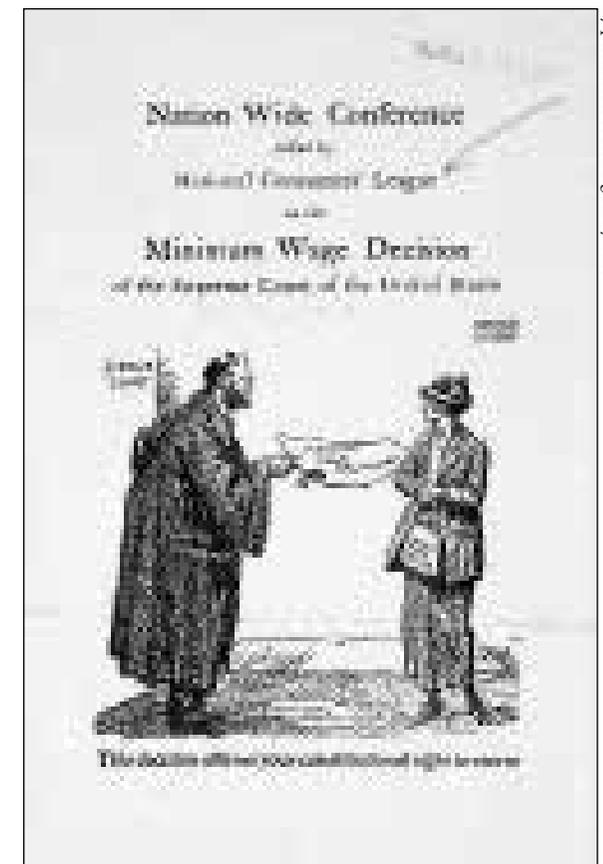
Women workers struggled to find a balance between any benefits of the minimum wage law and the constraints imposed by the law's maternalist provision to protect their "lives and health and morals." Female telephone

and telegraph operators and hotel workers disputed the commission's "no night work" rule and questioned why "working hours should be limited to one certain part of the twenty-four" available in a day. The commission attempted to accommodate these differences, but on the issue of "night work," they were unyielding, certain in their conviction to "protect" women from dangers — real or perceived — associated with working at night.⁸⁴ Working women routinely claimed they were not being exploited and could earn more money working at night. The distinguished scholar of women and labor law Alice Kessler-Harris notes that working women chafed when protective legislation not only regulated but also prohibited "the work of women in certain occupations." Often those types of work offered better wages — night work in hotels or as telegraph operators, for example — but clashed with social reformers' sense of "protecting women." Gleason's observations that women's complaints about night work outweighed complaints over wages and numbers of hours worked supports this assessment.⁸⁵ Still, with limited access to unions, working women used the provisions of the minimum wage law and industrial welfare commissions as one strategy to obtain better wages and working conditions. Scholar Jaclyn Greenberg summarizes the relationship between women and industrial welfare commissions in general: "When the commission helped them obtain decent wages, they supported it. They attacked it when it did not. Their view of the minimum-wage law was pragmatic." Oregon's women wage earners were not alone in their frustration with the maternalist views that continued to shape minimum wage policy. There was a growing discontent expressed by working women everywhere who wanted the flexibility to choose their own hours of work and did not consider working at night, or work in certain occupations, dangerous or detrimental to their health. In short, they did not need to be protected; they wanted to be treated as equals.⁸⁶

With remarkable similarity to the path Oregon's ground-breaking ten-hour law took, a legal challenge arose against the new minimum wage law. On October 14, 1913, less than five months after the IWC's inception, Frank C. Stettler filed a lawsuit against the commission's Order No. 2 — which mandated a minimum wage of \$8.64 a week and hours of work of no more than 9 hours per day and 54 hours per week in any manufacturing establishment — as unconstitutional. He claimed the commission was illegally assuming legislative authority, one of the charges Crawford had identified in his legal opinion of the law. In 1914, Elmira Simpson, a Stettler employee, filed an additional lawsuit claiming the commission's minimum wage ruling "would deprive her of the right to work." Like the Muller case ten years earlier, the Oregon courts defended the commission's actions, and Stettler appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court. The legal team of Brandeis and Goldmark once

again joined Oregon's legal staff to defend the law. *Stettler v. O'Hara et. al.*, and *Simpson v. O'Hara et. al.* would be the first tests of a minimum wage law and of women's "difference" since the Muller decision and one "to which all industrial and social workers were looking with interest."⁸⁷ Legal and procedural delays kept the Court from ruling on the cases until 1917, but based on the precedent of *Muller v. Oregon*, the Court upheld the constitutionality of Oregon's minimum wage by a split decision of 4-4. Many saw this vote as a weak endorsement of state intervention on behalf of one class, women. As working women had begun to assert their right to work where and when they wanted, public sentiment began to follow. When women gained the vote nationally in 1920, three years after the Stettler decision, public sentiment and legal precedent that had supported protective legislation for women turned in a new direction, this time in favor of women as equals.

On April 23, 1923, the Supreme Court of the United States failed to sustain a minimum wage law in the *Adkins v. Children's Hospital* case. The 5-3 decision (Brandeis recused himself from the case because his daughter Elizabeth served on the affected minimum wage board), including reasoning transposed from



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As in the Muller and Stettler cases, the National Consumers' League's legal team defended a gendered minimum wage law in the Adkins case. On the heels of woman suffrage in 1920, they modernized their argument to address women's need for a "living wage" precisely because they were independent and, in many cases, had others dependent on them. Their argument did not persuade a majority of the U.S. Supreme Court, who suggested women were now "equal" to men and did not need special protective legislation.



Sister Miriam Theresa transferred her considerable energy and dedication to the community of the Sisters of Holy Names and embraced her religious life with genuine humility and simplicity. Throughout her life, awards, honorary degrees, and accolades were bestowed on her in recognition of her work on Oregon's minimum wage law.

day I would enter the Church," Gleason joined the Sisters of Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, the religious community that ran St. Mary's Academy.⁹⁰ Becoming a religious did not dampen Sister Miriam Theresa's commitment to social work. She returned to St. Mary's and integrated her worldly experiences into teaching such courses as Principles of Social Legislation, Community Organization, Labor Problems, and Social Statistics.⁹¹ In 1930, the Sisters of the Holy Names opened Marylhurst College, and Sister Miriam Theresa continued teaching social work principles as the Dean of the Sociology Department, drawing on her personal experiences in Oregon's history of protective labor legislation in hopes of creating a new set of social activists.⁹²

the Stettler decision, rejected the "difference" argument that had allowed for the use of state police power on behalf of women as one class of citizen. Justice George Sutherland, writing the majority opinion, claimed that "the ancient inequality of the sexes" had now diminished "almost to the vanishing point." The court found the lengthy brief submitted by the NCL team of lawyer Felix Frankfurter and social worker Mary Dewson was only "mildly persuasive." Although the ruling only affected the District of Columbia's minimum wage law, it had a profound dampening effect on similar laws around the nation.⁸⁸

Long before the Adkins decision, Gleason had resigned as executive secretary of the IWC. She "left the world" to become a religious in 1916, and after taking her vows, became known as Sister Miriam Theresa.⁸⁹ Having known "from the time I was a girl that some

There is no record that Sister Miriam Theresa spent much time in personal reflection of her former life activities, making it difficult to definitively discern what motivated her intense involvement in the social reform movement and her personal views on working women. Gleason published scholarly papers and general articles on the subjects of working women, protective legislation, and her role in Oregon's minimum wage law over two decades; these provide a limited view into her beliefs and actions. "For Working Women In Oregon," published in *The Survey* in 1916, her master's thesis, "A Living Wage by Legislation and the Oregon Experience" from that same year, and her 1931 doctoral dissertation, "Oregon Legislation for Women in Industry," all contain more factual findings and reviews of the events she was a part of than any personal reflections. Throughout these writings, Gleason remained steadfast in her views that "the Oregon statute and similar statutes" could "obtain for [working women] the justice" they could not obtain on their own but also held out hope that, over time, protective legislation would "instill into them a confidence to work for their own rights."⁹³ Her spirituality always seemed to be her driving force and, ultimately, her decision to become a religious at the height of her social reform work offers us the best evidence of her motivations. She once recalled that a young woman she assisted at the Catholic Women's League residential cottage "had missed early spiritual training . . . and that the education of youth — rather than social work — was the most effective way to achieve social justice." In making a choice to pursue that path, Gleason joined other women from that time — such as Ellen Gates Starr, a founder of Hull House — who also chose a religious life as a more lasting expression of their desire to effect positive change in the world around them.⁹⁴

The larger legacy of Gleason's work and that of the Oregon minimum wage law is embedded in the broader reform movement of the early twentieth century. The desire to mitigate the harshest aspects of industrialization moved like-minded people to actively pursue remedies in protective legislation across the United States and in the industrialized countries of Western Europe, Australia, and New Zealand. Regardless of national, regional, or local differences, women's work became more explicitly gendered during the Progressive Era, and protective legislation did little to hinder that development, instead facilitating it. Historian Nancy Woloch posits that the "minimum wage seems to have succeeded more as a cause than in practice."⁹⁵ The effects of minimum wages on women's earning capabilities were limited, and the failure of the gendered minimum wage can be found in a political strategy that was organized around women's "difference" and the constraints of a maternalist ideology. But reformers' instinct to create a more equal standing for workers within industrial capitalism was not wrong. Once *all* workers

were included in protective legislation, its potential could finally be fulfilled. In 1938, the passage of the Fair Labor and Standards Act (FLSA) created a national minimum wage. Although it had taken twenty-five years, the origins of that Act began with Caroline Gleason and the passage of Oregon's minimum wage law in 1913.

NOTES

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1. Sister Miriam Theresa (Caroline Gleason) Collection, 2007.23.1, box 4, folder 4, Minimum Wage Law Manuscript, 1961–1962, Holy Names Heritage Center, Marylhurst, Oregon [hereafter S. Miriam Theresa Collection].

2. S. Miriam Theresa Collection, Minimum Wage Law Manuscript; Anne Kelly, "Sisters Strive for Acceptance in Brotherhood," *Oregon Labor Press* October 31, 1975, 20–21.

3. For similar arguments about the results of women's protective legislation, see Alice Kessler-Harris, *A Woman's Wage: Historical Meanings & Social Consequences* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1990); Susan Lehrer, *Origins of Protective Legislation for Women, 1905–1925* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987); and Nancy Woloch, *Muller v. Oregon: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996).

4. Caroline J. Gleason, "A Dominican Block," *The Young Eagle* vol. 27 (May 1904), 785–86.

5. S. Miriam Theresa Collection, Personnel file, Biographical Data Sheet.

6. Gleason, "A Dominican Block," 786. In 1893, Fidelia Gleason died unexpectedly after a very brief illness; Caroline was seven years old. Three years later, her father married Adele "Addie" Raymond, Fidelia's niece and someone the Gleason children knew. The family soon included four more children: Beatrice, Grace, Raymond, and Alma.

7. Caroline J. Gleason, "The Voice of Duty," *The Young Eagle* vol. 27 (June 1904), 806; *Fiftieth Annual Catalog of St. Clara College*, Annual Commencement Bulletin, June 15, 1904, 72, 75.

8. S. Miriam Theresa Collection, Personnel file, Biographical Data Sheet; Grace (Gleason) Hoban to Sister Ida Marie, May 15, 1982.

9. Barbara Solomon, *In the Company of Educated Women: A History of Women and Higher Education in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), Table 2 p. 63, xviii, 65, 81; Dorothy Ross, *The Origins of American Social Science* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), xx–xxi. Caroline and her older sister Mary attended St. Clara's Academy and the University of Minnesota together, with Mary one year ahead of Caroline. *University of Minnesota Annual Register, 1907–08* (Delano: University of Minnesota, 1908), 46. Caroline's younger sister Clara was enrolled as a freshman when Caroline was a senior.

10. Barbara Stuhler and Gretchen V. Kreuter, eds., *Women of Minnesota: Selected Biographical Essay* rev. ed. (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1998), 211–13; *University of Minnesota Annual Register*, 48. Comstock left Minnesota in 1912 to serve as unofficial president of Smith College for eight years (unofficial

because she was female and therefore unable to hold the position officially) and finally left to become the first president of Radcliffe College in 1923, a post she held for twenty years.

11. *The Gopher Yearbook, 1908* (Delano: University of Minnesota, 1908), 55; "The Woman's League: It's Origin, It's Object," *The Minnesota Alumni Weekly* 5:33 (May 14, 1906); Shevlin Hall, University of Minnesota Old Campus Historic District, *National Register of Historic Places Nomination #84001463*, excerpt from nomination at www.waymarking.com/waymarks/WM4AYJ (accessed September 14, 2008). Wealthy lumberman and philanthropist Thomas H. Shevlin donated \$60,000 for the construction of the hall; it was named in honor of his wife Alice.

12. Solomon, *In the Company of Educated Women*, 115, 124.

13. John A. Ryan, *A Living Wage: Its Ethical and Economic Aspects* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1906), 107–108.

14. Joseph M. Turrini, "Catholic Social Reform and the New Deal: The Papers of Monsignor John A. Ryan and Bishop Francis J. Haas," Annotation: The Newsletter of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission Vol. 30:1 (March 2002) Accessed at www.archives.gov/nhprc/annotation/march-2002/catholic-social-reform.html. J.G. Shaw, *Edwin Vincent O'Hara: American Prelate* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1957), 12–15; Mark Perlman, *Labor Union Theories in America: Background and Development* (Evanston, Ill.: Rowe, Peterson and Company, 1958), 55–64. Social justice was part of a Catholic social teaching that attempted to create a society where all individuals received equal shares of society's bounty and each person was treated equally and fairly. Ryan's dissertation served as the basis for *A Living Wage* and was already being used in Catholic social justice circles, and St. Paul's Seminary, by 1904. Ryan went on to help design President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal programs.

15. Timothy Michael Dolan, "Some Seed Fell on Good Ground": *The Life of Edwin V. O'Hara* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1992), 18; Shaw, *Edwin V. O'Hara*, 15; "Around Portland-Cathedral Notes," *Catholic*

Sentinel, June, 1905.

16. "Report on Condition of Women and Child Wage-Earners in the United States" vol. 5 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1910–1913). See Joanne Meyerowitz, *Women Adrift: Independent Wage Earners in Chicago, 1880–1930* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1988), xxiii, 145; Gloria Meyers, *A Municipal Mother: Portland's Lola Greene Baldwin, American's First Policewoman* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1995), 27–28; and Caroline J. Gleason, *Report of the Social Survey Committee of the Consumers' League of Oregon on the Wages, Hours, and Conditions of Work and Cost and Standard Living of Women Wage Earners in Oregon with special reference to Portland* (Portland, Ore.: Keystone Press, 1913), 21.

17. The terms *public sphere* and *private sphere* refer to the separation between civic and personal activities. Historically, women were confined to the private sphere of home and family while men occupied public life in politics and economics. Beginning in the mid nineteenth century, women began to press for access to the public sphere by addressing social problems that affected their personal domain of home and family.

18. Estelle Freedman, "Separatism as Strategy: Female Institution Building and American Feminism, 1870–1940," in Penny Weiss and Marilyn Friedman, eds., *Feminism and Community* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995): 85–104.

19. S. Miriam Theresa Collection, Minimum Wage manuscript, 5-a-3.

20. Dolan, "Some Seed Fell on Good Ground," 22; "Women's League Officers Chosen," *Catholic Sentinel*, March 9, 1911; "The Catholic Women's League will Give a Card Party and a Musical," *Catholic Sentinel*, April 20, 1911, 5; "League Will Take Larger Quarters," *Catholic Sentinel*, September 12, 1912; Catherine C. Gordon, *Caroline Gleason: Catholic Social Reformer*, (paper, American Catholic Historical Association, Portland, Ore., March 16, 2002), 5.

21. S. Miriam Theresa Collection, Minimum Wage Law Manuscript, 5-a-2.

22. S. Miriam Theresa Collection, Personnel file, Grace (Gleason) Hoban to Sister Ida Marie, May 15, 1982. One home the sisters

rented was at 3135 NE 24th Ave., across from Madeleine Church, the parish of Father George Thompson, a labor mediator and someone mentioned as a social work colleague of Sister Miriam Theresa.

23. See Eleanor J. Stebner, *The Women of Hull House: A Study In Spirituality, Vocation, and Friendship* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997).

24. Elaine Zahnd Johnson, "Protective Legislation and Women's Work: Oregon's Ten-Hour Law and the Muller v. Oregon case, 1900–1913," (University of Oregon: Ph.D. Diss., 1982), 148. Landon R.Y. Storrs, *Civilizing Capitalism: The National Consumers' League, Women's Activism, and Labor Standards in the New Deal Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 15, 19.

25. Storrs 16–17

26. Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1992), 412; Lehrer, *Origins of Protective Legislation*, 391. Meyers, *A Municipal Mother*, 4, 7, and 13; John William Leonard, ed., *Woman's Who's Who of America: A Biographical Dictionary of Contemporary Women of the United States* (New York: American Commonwealth, 1915), 385. Hull House was a settlement house, another means of social reform that offered services to the urban poor in the neighborhoods they lived and worked, and one of the most well-known of settlement houses in the United States.

27. Woloch, *Muller v. Oregon*, 24–26. The maximum hour law limited women to working no more than ten hours a day and fifty-four hours a week.

28. Ibid. Judith Baer, *The Chains of Protection: the Judicial Response to Women's Labor Legislation* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1978), 72. Baer questions "the methodological sophistication of the reports" that offered few instances of "causal relationships" between workplace problems and whether women were more vulnerable than men.

29. Woloch, *Muller v. Oregon*, 10, 22; Baer, *The Chains of Protection*, 48; Lawrence B. Glickman, *A Living Wage: American Workers and the Making of Consumer Society* (Ithaca,

N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1997), 142. The concept of "freedom of contract" came from the Reconstruction Era and the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution to allow ex slaves freedom to choose whom they worked for. The judiciary of the nineteenth century turned the clause into the foundation of laissez faire economics that was not undermined until the Muller decision in 1908.

30. For overviews of this debate, see Seth Koven and Sonya Michel, eds., *Mothers of a New World: Maternalist Politics and the Origins of Welfare States* (New York: Routledge, 1993); Alice Kessler-Harris, *Out to Work: A History of Wage-Earning Women in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982); Susan Lehrer, *Origins of Protective Labor Legislation for Women, 1905–1925* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987); and Robert D. Johnston, *The Radical Middle Class: Populist Democracy and the Question of Capitalism in Progressive Era Portland* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003).

31. See Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood," in *Dimity Convictions: The American Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1976); and Linda Gordon, ed. *Women, The State, and Welfare* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1990).

32. Julie Novkov, *Constituting Workers, Protecting Women: Gender, Law, and Labor in the Progressive Era and New Deal Years* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), 12; Woloch, *Muller v. Oregon*, 51; Testimony of Miss Caroline Gleason, *Final Report and Testimony Submitted to the Congress Submitted by the Commission on Industrial Relations* vol. 5 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1916), 4694.

33. Johnson, "Protective Legislation and Women's Work," 134–35; Florence Kelley, "Minimum Wage Boards," *Proceedings of the National Conference of Charities and Corrections, Boston, June 1911* (New York: National Consumers' League, 1911), 4.

34. S. Miriam Theresa Collection, Minimum Wage Law Manuscript, 7.

35. Chicago School of Civics & Philanthropy, *Announcements 1911–1912 with Register, 1910–1911*, Bulletin no. 12 (Chicago: Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy, July 1911), 38.

36. Graham Taylor, *Chicago Commons Through Forty Years*, (Chicago: Chicago Commons Association, 1936), 276–77. Because O'Hara arranged for Gleason to attend the Chicago School and live at the Commons, I presume the church, or Father O'Hara, paid Gleason's tuition and living expenses. Portland had two settlement houses. The Portland Chapter of National Council for Jewish Women built and administered programs at Neighborhood House in the South Portland (what is now the Lair Hill Neighborhood). Valentine Prichard opened the People's Institute on the corner of SW Fourth and Burnside Street, and later added two branch offices, one in Albina and another at First Presbyterian Church in SW Portland.

37. *The School of Social Service Administration*, University of Chicago, www.ssa.uchicago.edu/aboutssa/history (accessed April 6, 2008); Stebner, *The Women of Hull House*, Chapter 2. The School of Social Economics became the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy in 1908. The name changed again to the School of Social Service Administration when it became part of the University of Chicago.

38. S. Miriam Theresa Collection, Minimum Wage Manuscript, 5-a-1; Women's Trade Union League of Chicago, *Official Report of the Strike Committee: Chicago Garment Workers' Strike, October 29, 1910–February 18, 1911* (Chicago: s.n., 1911), 4–12, accessed at ocp.hul.harvard.edu/ww/outsidelink.html / <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:FHCL:458789> (accessed February 9, 2009).

39. S. Miriam Theresa Collection, Minimum Wage Manuscript, 5-a-1.

40. Florence Kelley to Rev. O'Hara, March 20, 1913, in Reverend Edwin V. O'Hara Scrapbook and Minute Book, Oregon Industrial Welfare Committee, Microfilm Collection #53, Oregon Historical Research Library, Portland [hereafter O'Hara Scrapbook]; Gordon, *Caroline Gleason*, 6; Caroline Gleason, "Among the Girls of a Large City," *Catholic Sentinel*, May 2, 1912.

41. S. Miriam Theresa Collection, Minimum Wage Law Manuscript, 5-a-1.

42. Ibid.; Dolan, "Some Seed Fell on Good Ground," 33.

43. Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age*, (Cambridge,

Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1998), 7, and Chapter 6, "The Wage Earners' Risks."

44. O'Hara Scrapbook, Herbert E. Mills to Rev. Edwin V. O'Hara, October 10, 1912; Henry R. Seager to Rev. Edwin V. O'Hara, November 12, 1912.

45. O'Hara Scrapbook, Seager to O'Hara, October 24, 1912.

46. Skocpol, 412; Lehrer, *Origins of Protective Legislation*, 153.

47. Glickman, *A Living Wage*, 131.

48. Storrs, *Civilizing Capitalism*, 53.

49. S. Miriam Theresa Collection, Minimum Wage Law Manuscript, 4–5.

50. "The Minimum Wage," editorial, *Portland Labor Press*, March 28, 1912.

51. Gleason, *Social Survey*, 7–9.

52. S. Miriam Theresa Collection, Minimum Wage Law Manuscript, 4–5.

53. O'Hara Scrapbook, John A. Ryan to Edwin O'Hara, November 23, 1912.

54. Woloch, *Muller v. Oregon*, 9–10, 47–48; Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings*, 238.

55. Dorothy C. Wertz, "Social Science Attitudes Toward Women Workers, 1870–1970," *International Journal of Women's Studies* 5:2 (March/April 1982): 161–71.

56. Gleason, *Social Survey*, 20. The other field workers were Daisy M. Eager, Mrs. William P. Gannett, and Grace G. Collins. Collins, who was white, went on to become active in the Portland YWCA and provided substantial funds to the construction of the Williams Avenue Branch that directly served the women of the city's black community.

57. Ibid, 67–71.

58. Baer, *The Chains of Protection*, 73.

59. Gleason, *Social Survey*, 7–9, 13. The minimum wage for cannery workers of \$6.00 per week would equal \$69 for a 40-hour week, or \$103 for 60 hours. Stenographers, some of the highest paid women workers in 1913, earned \$10 per week, which in 2000 would have been \$114 or \$172 for a 40-hour and 60-hour week, respectively. See Michael Sheehan, et al., *Oregon's Prevailing Wage Law: Benefiting the Public, the Worker, and the Employer* (Portland: Oregon and Southwest Washington Fair Contracting Foundation, 2000), 16–17.

60. Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers*, 406; Joseph F. Tripp, "Toward an Efficient and Moral Society: Washington State Minimum-Wage Law, 1913–1925," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 67:2 (Summer 1976): 98; Lehrer, *Origins of Protective Legislation*, 203, 205.

61. S. Miriam Theresa Collection, Minimum Wage Manuscript, Backgrounds, 8.

62. E. Kimbark MacColl with Harry H. Stein, *Merchants, Money, and Power: The Portland Establishment, 1843–1913* (Portland: Georgian Press, 1988), 432.

63. Gleason, *Social Survey*, 13–17. While this article addresses protective legislation and its effects on women wage earners, reformers grouped women and children together. The pairing is germane to the role paternalism played in protective legislation, but addressing it would broaden the subject matter too widely for the scope of this piece.

64. "Minimum Wage Bill Discussed," *Oregonian*, January 29, 1913; "In Salem to Aid Minimum Wage," *Oregon Journal*, January 22, 1913; "Oregon May Soon Have Minimum Wage for Women," *Oregon Daily Journal*, January 29, 1913.

65. *Oregon Minimum Wage Cases*, Supreme Court of the United States, October Term, 1916, nos. 25 and 26, *Frank C. Stettler v. Edwin O'Hara et al.*, and *Elmira Simpson v. Edwin O'Hara et al.*, reprinted by the National Consumers' League, 37–43, 55–64; "Reprint of Governor West's Message to the Legislature," *Oregon Journal*, January 14, 1915.

66. "Minimum Wage Bill Discussed," *Oregonian*, January 29, 1913; "Oregon May Soon Have Minimum Wage for Women," *Oregon Journal*, January 29, 1913. Frank Stettler, whose box factory was the location of Gleason's "hiring out," attended the hearing.

67. "Minimum Wage Bill Discussed," *Oregonian*, January 29, 1913; "In Salem to Aid Minimum Wage," *Oregon Journal*, January 22, 1913, 5; "Oregon May Soon Have Minimum Wage for Women," *Oregon Journal*, January 29, 1913, 6.

68. S. Miriam Theresa Collection, Minimum Wage Law Manuscript, 8; Gladys Turley, "Industry and Sister Miriam," *Sunday Journal Magazine*, May 6, 1951, 10M.

69. "Minimum Wage Bill Up To West; only

4 Oppose It," *Oregon Journal*, February 12, 1913. The dissenters were Heltzel (R-Marion), Hill (D-Polk), Johnson (R-Marion), and Massey (R-Washington). Massey subsequently switched his vote in favor of the bill. See Sister Miriam Theresa, "Oregon Legislation for Women in Industry," Bulletin of the U.S. Women's Bureau no. 90 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1931), 2.

70. S. Miriam Theresa Collection, Minimum Wage Law Manuscript, 8; Gladys Turley, "Industry and Sister Miriam," *Sunday Journal Magazine*, May 6, 1951.

71. Industrial Welfare Commission, *First Biennial Report of the Oregon Industrial Welfare Commission, 1915–1916* (Salem: State Printing Office, 1915), 5, 34. Commissioners were compensated with a per diem to cover travel expenses incurred performing their duties. Industrial Welfare Commission Industrial Welfare Commission of Oregon, *Minute Book*, vol. 1, Microfilm #53, Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Portland, Oregon, 16, 46 [hereafter Meeting Minutes]. One news article referred to Moores as "having been a working girl," although later she was identified as a "teacher," a commonly held view of women workers despite their age or occupation.

72. "Powers of Commission Absolute in Fixing Working Conditions," *Sunday Oregonian*, July 13, 1913.

73. Meeting Minutes, June 6, 1913, 10, 46. Depending on how many hours she worked, Gleason's salary of \$2,000 per year may not have met the commission's standard of \$10 week as the minimum required to guarantee her health and moral well-being. See Industrial Welfare Commission, *First Biennial Report*, 5. The Commission purchased a copy of Josephine Goldmark's *Fatigue and Efficiency* and subscribed to the social reform journal *The Survey* for a year.

74. See Adam Hodges, "The Industrial Workers of the World and the Oregon Packing Company Strike of July 1913." (M.A. thesis, Portland State University, 1996.); Greg Hall, "The Fruits of Her Labor: Women, Children, and Progressive Era Reformers in the Pacific Northwest Canning Industry," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 109:2 (Summer 2008): 226–51; Janice Dilg, "Proceeding in an Orderly

and Lawful Manner': Protective Legislation, Working Women, and Progressive Politics, 1913–1924" (M.A. thesis, Portland State University, 2005).

75. MacColl, *Merchants, Money, and Power*, 446–47.

76. "Agitators Still Busy," *Morning Oregonian*, July 1, 1913; Meeting Minutes, June 30, 1913, 20–1; "Girls Out," *Portland News*, June 27, 1913; "Work is Hampered," *Morning Oregonian*, June 30, 1913.

77. "Statement of the Welfare Commission," *Portland News*, July 4, 1913; "Minimum Wage Scale Reached," *Oregon Journal* July 1, 1913; "They Weren't Told About It," *Portland News*, July 5, 1913; "Trying to Start Trouble So Cops Can Break Strike," *Portland News*, July 4, 1913; Hodges, "The Industrial Workers of the World," 106, 107, 110.

78. Chapter 62, General Laws of Oregon, 1913, Sections 7–10, regarding the requirements of hearings and conferences, Section 9, pertaining to the required posting of IWC orders at each applicable workplace.

79. Industrial Welfare Commission, *First Biennial Report*.

80. "First Conference on Wages is Held," *Morning Oregonian*, July 21, 1913.

81. Industrial Welfare Commission, *First Biennial Report*; Industrial Welfare Commission, *Second Biennial Report of the Industrial Welfare Commission, 1915–1916* (Salem: State Printing Office, 1916); Sister Miriam Theresa, "Oregon Legislation for Women in Industry," Bulletin of the U.S. Women's Bureau no. 90 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1931), 23.

82. S. Miriam Theresa Collection, "Oregon Legislation for Women," 23.

83. Meeting Minutes, 92, 94, 105; *First Biennial Report*, 14–15.

84. Meeting minutes, 83; Industrial Welfare Commission, *First Biennial Report*.

85. Ruth Milkman, ed., *Women, Work, and Protest: A Century of U.S. Women's Labor History* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985), xii.; Kessler-Harris, *Out to Work*, 185; Testimony of Miss Caroline Gleason, *Final Report and Testimony*, 4688.

86. Jaclyn Greenberg, "The Limits of Legislation: Katherine Phillips Edson, Practi-

cal Politics, and the Minimum Wage Law in California, 1913–1922," *Journal of Policy History* 5:2 (1993): 221.

87. *Second Biennial Report*, iii; v; Meeting Minutes, 28, 195; *Oregon Minimum Wage Cases*, 57–61; *First Biennial Report*, 15; S. Miriam Theresa Collection, Personnel file. By 1914, eleven states had similar minimum wage law and wage boards of industrial welfare commissions to regulate wages and working conditions for women and minor workers.

88. Woloch, *Muller v. Oregon*, 53–56.

89. *Second Biennial Report*, v; "Oregon Woman to Be Accorded Honor: Public Service Work Now Recognized," *Oregon Journal*, June 4, 1916; O'Hara Scrapbook, "Social Worker Quits World for Life in a Convent," 155.

90. Caroline Gleason to Mother Provincial M. Flavia, 1916, S. Miriam Theresa Collection, Personnel file.

91. S. Miriam Theresa Collection, Personnel file.

92. Sister Miriam Theresa was given short-term assignments to other Sisters of the Holy Names' schools in the Northwest, and she spearheaded a short-lived school of social work in the early 1940s, but she returned to teaching at Marylhurst until 1960; S. Miriam Theresa Collection, Personnel file; Jane Ellen Burns, interviewed by the author, August 13, 2008.

93. Caroline J. Gleason, "For Working Women in Oregon," *The Survey* 36:24 (September 9, 1916): 585–86; Caroline J. Gleason, "A Living Wage by Legislation and the Oregon Experience" (M.A. thesis, University of Oregon, 1916); S. Miriam Theresa Collection, "Oregon Legislation for Women," 32.

94. Nancy Fadeley, "Oregon Labor's Guardian Angel," *Eugene Register-Guard*, September 3, 1967.

95. See Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings*; Koven and Michel, eds., *Mothers of a New World*; Peter J. Coleman, *Progressivism and the World of Reform: New Zealand and the Origins of the American Welfare State* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1987); Neville Kirk, *Comrades and Cousins: Globalization, Workers and Labor Movements in Britain, The USA and Australia from the 1880s to 1914* (London: Merlin Press, 1986); Woloch, *Muller v. Oregon*, 50.