

## Fair Connections

### *Women's Separatism and the Lewis and Clark Exposition of 1905*

“THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE, MANY of whom stood in the hot sun for hours,” gathered at 2:00 p.m. on July 6, 1905, on Lakeview Terrace by the Columbia Court of the Lewis and Clark Centennial and American Pacific Exposition and Oriental Fair in Portland, Oregon. The crowds had arrived to witness the unveiling of a bronze statue of Sacajawea, the Shoshone woman recently popularized by Eva Emery Dye in *The Conquest: The True Story of Lewis and Clark*.<sup>1</sup> Visitors who flocked to the celebration made attendance that day one of the largest since the fair’s opening day. Speakers at the event — which followed by one day the official closing of the thirty-seventh annual convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) in Portland — included Abigail Scott Duniway, Oregon’s own suffragist, and Susan B. Anthony, legendary leader of the woman suffrage movement. Regional press coverage of both the NAWSA convention and the Sacajawea statue unveiling was extensive and positive, illustrating the success of Oregon clubwomen’s leadership and networking.

During the years and months preceding the opening of the Lewis and Clark Exposition, Oregon women sought to modify their practice of women’s separatism, a long-standing tradition of women’s organizations in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, and to use their experience and expertise within the new model of integration — that is, to work collaboratively with male organizers of the fair. Many Oregon women were experienced in organizing and financing world’s fairs. Edyth Weatherred had served as commissioner from Oregon for the world’s fairs in Buffalo and in St. Louis, for example, and Oregonian Mary Phelps Montgomery — daughter of former Missouri Governor John Phelps and member of the Board of Lady Managers for the 1904 St. Louis Louisiana Purchase Exposition — had spent six weeks in Washington, D.C., lobbying for a loan from Congress for the St.



*Suffrage supporters gather in front of the Oregon Building at the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition. A reception was held in honor of Susan B. Anthony (center), following the June 30, 1905, fairground session of the National American Woman Suffrage Association's thirty-seventh annual convention in Portland.*

Louis fair. She was well connected and would later secure an appropriation of \$35,000 from the state of Missouri for the Lewis and Clark Exposition.<sup>2</sup> When women's efforts to work with the all-male organizers of the Portland world's fair foundered, Oregon women fell back on the skills they knew best and developed an expanded, modernized version of female separatism.

Since the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, American women had often sought to highlight women's work and women's issues at world's fairs through a separate Board of Lady Managers and a separate women's building featuring women's exhibits.<sup>3</sup> In 1904, one year prior to the Lewis and Clark Exposition, however, male and female organizers at the St. Louis Exposition embraced a new model that sought to highlight women's contributions by integrating women's work throughout the fair. The women's building there was used only for administrative and social functions and contained no women's exhibits, and the fair's Board of Lady Managers served only as an extension of the male organization.<sup>4</sup>

Although Oregon women were unable to secure support from the Lewis and Clark Exposition's male board of directors for either a women's building

or a Board of Lady Managers, they successfully focused fairgoers' attention on two separate but related women's projects: the national suffrage convention and the Sacajawea statue.<sup>5</sup> Under the skillful leadership of Sarah A. Evans and other clubwomen, women organizers relied and expanded on their well-established traditions of female separatism to overcome problems in trying to work with male directors of the Lewis and Clark Exposition Company, the corporation that was responsible for financing and planning the fair. To cover up their failure in working with women, the corporation erroneously claimed that it had adopted the integration model of St. Louis when, in fact, it had been women's separatism that had won the day.

NEARLY ALL THE OREGON WOMEN involved in the two projects were white and middle or upper class.<sup>6</sup> They were also members of one or more women's clubs and tended to have a relatively high degree of education. Through "organized womanhood," Sandra Haarsager notes in her study of clubwomen in the Pacific Northwest, women had discovered not only personal power but also "collective power." Clubwomen are examples of a phenomenon that Karen Blair calls the "politization of Domestic Feminism, whereby women nurtured pride in the lady's special qualities and confidence to reach out into the public domain."<sup>7</sup> Blair describes the paths of clubwomen and suffragists as uniting in 1914, but, for many Oregon women involved in the Lewis and Clark fair, these paths had already merged by 1905.

Sarah Evans exemplifies the clubwoman of her day as well as the younger generation of suffragists who would pioneer new tactics. She was a charter member of the Portland Woman's Club and served as its president in 1903 and 1904. She was also a member of the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), the Oregon Equal Suffrage Association, the National Consumers League, and the Portland Women's Union, and she was active in the Oregon Federation of Women's Clubs, which she headed in 1905 and 1906. An excellent networker, Evans used the club and committee system to work efficiently on a wide range of civic and social issues important to women. Perhaps best known at the time for her efforts to promote free public libraries, and later for her thirty-year service as Oregon's first food inspector, she also had a successful career as a journalist, experience she would employ during the year leading up to the fair. After the fair, as a journalist and a clubwoman, Evans continued to work vigorously for woman suffrage, eventually authoring the chapter on the history of the Oregon suffrage movement in NAWSA's official *History of Woman Suffrage*. In the years and months leading up to the fair, Evans brought clubwomen together to focus on two separate but linked projects related to the fair, thereby guaranteeing the success of both. Such skillful networking by Evans and other Oregon women challenges

the assertion by historians of earlier fairs that, from 1904 onward, women abandoned their long tradition of female separatism at world's fairs in favor of the new integrationist approach, thereby diminishing their effectiveness in introducing new ideas or bringing about change.<sup>8</sup>

Historically, women's role in the planning and exhibitions of world's fairs had been relatively small until the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. Separate exhibits usually featured women's handiwork and often included displays on women's charitable work, women's colleges or medical schools, women's contributions to the fine arts, and inventions by women. Although the mere presence of women's exhibits might indirectly challenge what some historians describe as the "hegemonic" views of fair directors, most women who wished to directly challenge the dominant worldview of political and economic elites had to do so outside official channels and off the fairgrounds.<sup>9</sup> During the 1876 Philadelphia fair, for example, the National Woman Suffrage Association maintained a "suffrage parlor" in downtown Philadelphia, and Susan B. Anthony, having been denied a spot on the official July 4 program, resorted to reading a "Declaration of Rights of Women" on the steps outside Independence Hall while the official centennial celebration was taking place inside.<sup>10</sup> Women's efforts to use fairs to highlight their accomplishments and issues — from dress reform to suffrage — reached new heights in Chicago, though even there, a large "Woman's Congress" was held off the fairgrounds. Several historians focus on Bertha Palmer's ability to overcome division among Chicago's divergent women's groups and the overall success of the Woman's Building in Chicago, but most end their analyses of women and world's fairs with St. Louis, one year prior to Portland's Lewis and Clark Exposition.<sup>11</sup>

Mary Frances Cordato argues that fair women at Chicago's Columbian Exposition adopted the well-established nineteenth-century strategy of female separatism to achieve "a collective consciousness based upon womanly ideals. . . . [which] assumed . . . political dimension that held genuine feminist potential." Most of those well educated, socially well connected, and often professional women were active in the women's club movement and, like the majority of clubwomen of the time, combined a larger view of public service with older, more traditional female ideals of motherhood and domesticity. Although they remained "a small group of white, middle- and upper-class women," the Chicago Board of Lady Managers achieved remarkable independence and powers, in part because their organization was officially recognized and funded by the federal government.<sup>12</sup>

The Chicago Board of Lady Managers had initially planned to depart from the separatist model of earlier fairs. By exhibiting women's work throughout the fair, rather than in a separate building, they aspired to vis-



*The Women's Building at the Chicago Columbian Exposition in 1893 was designed by Sophia Hayden. In addition to much sculpture and other works of fine art by women, it featured exhibits on women's colleges, women's medical schools, and women scientists, as well as a room devoted to inventions by women.*

ibly raise women's work to the same level as that of men. When the plan to collect and display data on women's employment in the production of exhibited items proved unworkable, women seized on the Woman's Building as a mechanism to "command full power over the organization, design, and use of public space."<sup>13</sup> Ultimately, the building served as a central location to showcase a large range of women's achievements, from art and literature to education and engineering.

Estelle Freedman suggests that both the Woman's Pavilion in Philadelphia and the Woman's Building in Chicago are examples of women mobilizing through a separate women's culture to bring about change. After 1920, she argues, the "rhetoric of equality" and the new integrationist approach "subverted the women's movement by denying the need for continued feminist organization." Within the context of world's fairs, however, both Virginia Grant Darney and Cordato characterize the St. Louis Exposition in 1904 as a turning point toward integration. According to Cordato, St. Louis women "did not reject woman's culture, [but] they nevertheless questioned the usefulness of separatism as a world's fair organizing strategy" and relied on an "integrationist framework" for women's work. Such a framework, which

extended from exposition exhibits to the judging process, failed to raise the visibility and awareness of women's accomplishments, and women involved in the St. Louis fair witnessed a significant setback in the pattern of female separatism and networking. Although a Board of Lady Managers existed, Darney notes that "most members were selected by virtue of their husbands' social or economic positions . . . [and] in reality [were] representative only of the male board which appointed its members." She concludes that, as the ideal of integration became the new norm, "never again would women enjoy the gender solidarity they had known in Philadelphia in 1876, Chicago in 1893, and Atlanta in 1895."<sup>14</sup>

At first glance, Portland's fair appears to confirm Darney's assertion. Many women participated in traditional, supportive roles at the fair, providing services to visitors and fulfilling a variety of social functions. A YWCA building provided an information bureau; the Portland Women's Union maintained a rest area as well as a small exhibit; women served as hostesses at countless receptions, especially at the Oregon Building; clubwomen worked to assure that streets near the fair were lined with roses; and, through Lewis and Clark Clubs, women helped to provide materials for numerous exhibits, most notably sending examples of trees and shrubs from Oregon's various counties. More importantly, no separate women's building was constructed and, apart from a very small exhibit of women's handiwork in the "Women's Court" of the Oriental Building, there existed no separate display of women's work. Despite much talk, no Board of Women Managers was ever created, and the Lewis and Clark Corporation's Committee on Women and Women's Work was ultimately eliminated.

Official news releases by the all-male Lewis and Clark Corporation asserted that the old separatist model had been replaced by the new St. Louis-style integrationist model. "Women at the exposition," wrote Frank Merrick, manager of the General Press Bureau of the Lewis and Clark Corporation,

are placed on the same plane with men as competitors in every line — artistic, educational, industrial and economic. It was early decided to follow the plan carried out at the Louisiana Purchase exposition and make no separate exhibit of women's work. No women's building for exhibit purposes is to stand at the exposition as a mark of the ancient idea of woman's inferiority to men.

Rather, Merrick explained, women's contributions would be integrated with those of men. He spoke enthusiastically about the story of Sacajawea and the project to erect a statue commemorating this "neglected heroine." It would be, he announced, "the first statue ever erected to an Indian woman" and would be "given a permanent place in one of Portland's public parks

after the Centennial is over.” Although Merrick wrote enthusiastically about the statue project as well as the upcoming national suffrage convention — noting reassuringly that “[women’s] intellectual side will not be neglected” — he completed the section about “Women at the Fair” with reference to the “golden-skinned Geisha girls,” “soft-eyed harem beauties,” and “dancing and singing girls of all climes who would be on view on ‘the Trail,’” thereby putting in doubt fair organizers’ genuine commitment to placing women “on the same plane with men.”<sup>15</sup> By supposedly adopting the integrationist model of the St. Louis fair, Oregon’s fair organizers released themselves from the need to explain the absence of a women’s building, a substantial women’s exhibit, a Board of Women Managers, or even a Committee on Women and Women’s Work.

Merrick, however, had it all wrong. If an integrationist approach had been endorsed, it was by male directors, not by the women involved with the fair. Nowhere in women’s club minutes, their letters to one another, or newspaper articles they wrote is there an argument for, or even a discussion of, integration by women. Sheri Bartlett Browne argues that women worked independently from fair planners because of the corporation’s early decision to integrate the work of women.<sup>16</sup> The record suggests, however, that the integrationist model was actually embraced by the corporation late in the planning process, as a way to cover up its failures to work with women.

Instead of abandoning the tradition of female separatism, Oregon women used the fair to their advantage by relying on female networking in creative, new ways. By arranging to hold the first ever national convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association on the West Coast, and the first in conjunction with a world’s fair, and by rallying behind the Sacajawea statue, Oregon women enjoyed an extraordinary level of female solidarity in bringing women, figuratively and literally, to center stage in 1905.<sup>17</sup>

THE SUCCESS OF THE SUFFRAGE convention and the Sacajawea project must be understood in the context of the great odds women had to overcome as they sought to work with fair directors to define women’s role at the upcoming exposition. Ironically, those very problems may have served to strengthen the resolve of women to work together on their two projects. Three early sources of friction existed between the corporation and women: the corporation’s failure to respond to women’s early offers of help, its insistence on establishing new women’s clubs rather than working through existing ones, and its ultimate failure to establish a Board of Women’s Managers.

Offers of help from women’s organizations did not find the response women had hoped for and led instead to considerable misunderstanding.

As early as November 1902, Adelia Wade, an active clubwoman from Pendleton and president of the Oregon Federation of Women's Clubs, wrote to her friend Leo Fried, who forwarded the letter to Henry Reed, secretary of the corporation, to suggest that the board make use of the already existing network of women's clubs "to promote the interests of the Lewis and Clark Fair." She expressed frustration that an invitation during the previous year to *Oregonian* editor Harvey Scott (who would later serve as president of the corporation) to address the Federation had gone unanswered but declared that women remained "organized, ready, willing . . . to be of service." Urging the corporation board "not to confound the State Federation with your local clubs," Wade called on board members to make use of the State Federation of Women's Clubs to organize all women, both within and outside the club movement.<sup>18</sup>

In March 1903, an article in the promotional magazine *The Exposition*, possibly penned by Wade, who hoped her pleas for broad inclusion would be approved, implied that a role for women at the fair had been determined. "The Woman's Department of an Exposition is broad and far-reaching," wrote the author. "Hundreds are joining the department and offering . . . assistance" ranging from collecting local artists' work, needlework, and canned fruit to coordinating "as many national conventions . . . as possible." In a signal to the corporation directors that Oregon women were as determined as they were team spirited, the author asserted that the "Oregon Woman's Department of the Exposition is composed of loyal, progressive, practical women, and they intend assisting the Board of Directors in every way possible, to make the Exposition a grand success."<sup>19</sup> The article appears to have been written as a suggested plan of action, for in reality no Woman's Department existed.

In an April 7, 1903, eight-page letter to J.C. Cooper, the newly named chairman of the fair corporation's Committee on Women and Women's Work, Wade expressed continued frustration that the women's offers of assistance still remained unheeded. Explaining that the Oregon Federation of Women's Clubs had already been working for the St. Louis and Charleston fairs and had worked diligently to secure state appropriations for the Portland exposition, she expressed dismay that no one among Portland's fair organizers had taken advantage of the Federation's state convention the previous year. "The women were all ready then," she explained, but were told by Henry Corbett that Portland's fair organizers "'were not yet ready'. . . We now, at this late day are asked to 'organize women's clubs,'" she continued, referring to an announcement in the previous day's *Oregonian*. She found the request by the corporation to organize new "Lewis and Clark Clubs" to be "like dividing the forces of the women" and reiterated that she strongly

recommended working through existing women's clubs. Concluding that she hoped he would not find her letter "impertinent or officious," Wade reiterated the earnest desire of Oregon women to "do their best" for the fair.<sup>20</sup>

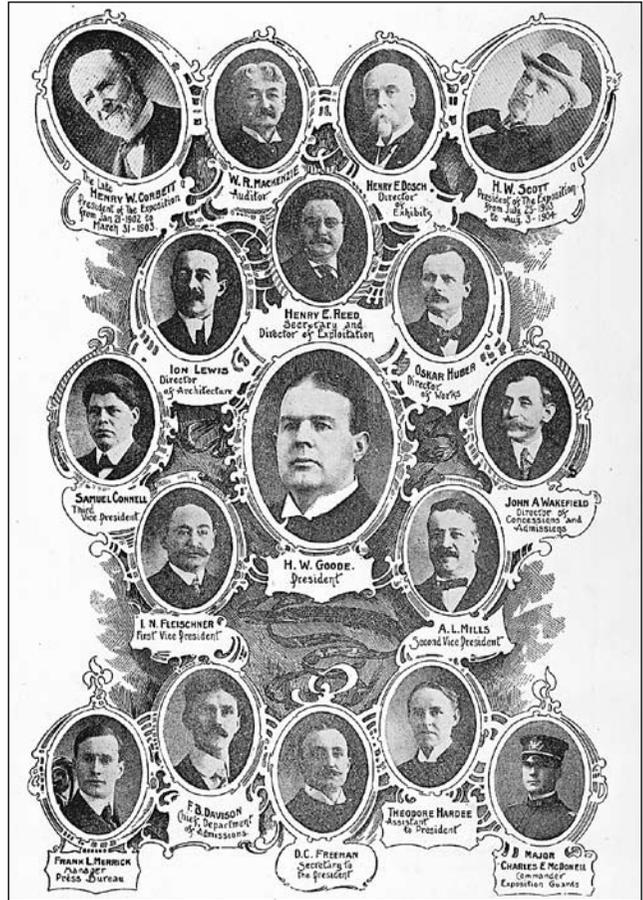
Three days later, in an effort to resolve a "misunderstanding . . . among the women arranging to engage in the movement to inaugurate & maintain a Woman's Department at the Lewis & Clark Fair of 1905" and "to secure harmony of action," the Portland Woman's Club petitioned the corporation to establish a committee of twenty-five to be in charge of women's work at the fair.<sup>21</sup> On the same day, Rose Hoyt — president of the Portland chapter of City Federation of Women's Clubs, active member of the Portland Rose Society, and soon-to-be promoter of the Portland Rose Festival — also wrote to Secretary Reed, describing the existing network of women's clubs and explaining that the City Federation had already appointed a committee on the Lewis and Clark Exposition. She then asked for space on the fairground for the construction of a women's building, which would be fully financed by women. In addition to offering "parlors, refreshments, lounging, reception, music and other rooms," Hoyt wrote, a women's building would afford space "for the display of Women's products . . . where all women will find things of interest."<sup>22</sup>

Ignoring these various pleas, or perhaps simply frustrated and confused by so many suggestions, the corporation proceeded with plans for the creation of a statewide network of women's Lewis and Clark Clubs. Bylaws for the new clubs were drawn up, calling for them "to operate auxiliary to the [yet to be appointed] Board of Women Managers." Each club was to appoint a standing committee whose "duty it [would] be to organize the products and resources of the county and to arrange them into their respective classes and divisions, for proper and creditable display at the 1905 Exposition."<sup>23</sup> The bylaws made no mention of existing women's clubs, a women's building at the fair, or any activities or exhibits specific to women. Women responded to the call to create Lewis and Clark Clubs throughout the state by forwarding dozens of names of new officers to the corporation. Not surprisingly, the women of Pendleton, led by State Federation President Adelia Wade, "declined to organize a Lewis and Clark Club" because they simply did not have time for a new club. They did, however, propose a way for Pendleton club members to participate.<sup>24</sup>

What resulted from the corporation's plans to coordinate women's activities through the Lewis and Clark Clubs is unclear. Among archived exposition materials at the Oregon Historical Society Research Library is a large record book titled "Committee on Women and Women's Work." One entry, dated March 20, 1903, briefly describes the committee's plans to organize clubs, but the remainder of the book is entirely empty.<sup>25</sup> Other records indicate that

the corporation called a meeting of delegates from the newly minted Lewis and Clark Clubs for May 20, 1903, but, before it could be convened, more trouble arose. On May 2, the *Portland Evening Telegram* reported that “the committee on women’s work of the Exposition will try to mollify the women of the City Federation. This will be brought about diplomatically with a view to keeping peace between all factions, and at the same time permit clubwomen of Portland to obtain recognition at the hands of the board.” The corporation called for a meeting the following Thursday to deal with the “threatened disruption among local organizations,” so that “for the time being the trouble about Lewis and Clark clubs that has been brooding will be forgotten.” As if to distract the women, the corporation’s proposed topic of discussion for the upcoming meeting was a plan by the directors to give women “the privilege of raising the first flag upon the exposition grounds.”<sup>26</sup>

Exactly why the women of the City Federation needed to be mollified and peace needed to be restored among the clubwomen of Portland is unclear. Edyth Weatherred, who had experience working with previous fairs and had taken on the task of organizing Lewis and Clark Clubs throughout the state,



*Officers and directors of the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition included corporation Presidents Henry W. Corbett, Harvey W. Scott, and Henry W. Goode; Secretary and Director of Exploitation (advertising) Henry E. Reed; and Frank L. Merrick, manager of the corporation’s Press Bureau who proclaimed that the corporation had endorsed an integrationist policy in working with women.*

grew increasingly frustrated and declared in a May 4, 1903, letter to Cooper that “there positively must not be no [sic] more friction and I do trust you men are not being influenced by three or four short sighted women.”<sup>27</sup> She reiterated that the clubwomen of eastern and southern Oregon as well as Adelia Wade and the State Federation all stood behind her. It is possible that Hoyt, of the Portland City Federation, who had earlier called for a Women’s Building at the fair, refused to cooperate with Lewis and Clark Clubs, which were confined to organizing and arranging “products and resources” of each county for display at the fair. Or, perhaps a power struggle existed among leaders of the Portland Woman’s Club, the City Federation, and the State Federation. We do not know what transpired at the special meeting but, in light of later events, it is unlikely that the assembled women were altogether mollified by the proposed “privilege” of raising a flag.

To complicate the disputes and confusion over the corporation’s failure to respond to women’s early offers of help and its decision to establish a network of Lewis and Clark Clubs was a third source of friction: the Board of Women Managers (the term “Ladies” having been replaced at the suggestion of the Portland Woman’s Club). At most earlier world’s fairs in the United States, including those in Philadelphia in 1876, Chicago in 1893, Atlanta in 1895, and St. Louis in 1904, a Board of Lady Managers was created to coordinate the activities of women. Such boards were often authorized by and drew their legitimacy from federal legislation that funded each fair. To secure even modest funding, the Lewis and Clark Corporation had to settle for federal *participation* rather than *authorization*.<sup>28</sup> For this reason — and perhaps because of the strained relations with women organizers — a women’s board was not readily embraced by corporation directors, despite lobbying by various women and women’s groups.

The Portland Woman’s Club and the City Federation favored a Board of Women Managers, but State Federation President Wade, perhaps eager not to provoke directors by appearing “impertinent or officious,” voiced a more conciliatory view: “The State Federation is not in favor of a ‘Board of Lady Managers.’ We believe that if an Advisory Board of ladies could be had, to act with the Directors and Commissioners, it would be far better for all concerned.”<sup>29</sup> In the midst of conflicting advice regarding the creation of a Board of Women Managers, the directors compiled a list of probable members but delayed announcement of any such board. In a September 1903 letter to the corporation’s Board of Managers, President Harvey Scott stated:

Under our Bylaws, the work of the Board of Women Managers must be supervised by the committee of three of the Board of Women’s Work. The names of the members of this committee are submitted with those of other committees of this Board. Until our plans shall have been perfected and adopted, it will be, in my judgment, not advisable

to go forward with definite plans for the work of this Committee and of the Board of Women Managers.<sup>30</sup>

An exchange of letters between Wade and Reed, the corporation's secretary, illustrates the continuing confusion over the relationship between what Wade called the "Women's Department of Fair Works," the Lewis and Clark Clubs, and the proposed Board of Women Managers. Wade complained to Reed that Cooper had mistakenly thought the State Federation of Women's Clubs wanted to "dictate" to him, possibly a reference to the article in the March issue of *The Exposition*. This was, she asserted, "his mistake," and, in the confusion, her organization had ended up getting "credit for a vast amount of foolishness."<sup>31</sup> Around the same time, in a letter published in *The Exposition*, Wade complained: "In response to your request for an account of what the State Federation has done for the Lewis and Clark Fair, we can only say very little. The opportunities afforded the organization thus far have not been large." She indicated that the Federation had hoped to use the St. Louis fair as a springboard for their participation in the Portland fair, but without an Oregon State Building in St. Louis, Oregon women could not advertise the Lewis and Clark Exposition or network with clubwomen from other states.<sup>32</sup>

By the fall of 1903, J.C. Cooper had been replaced by George W. Bates as chairman of the Committee on Women and Women's Work. President Scott again stated that he would appoint a Board of Women Managers but that its announcement was being withheld for the time being.<sup>33</sup> No announcement appears to have ever been issued, and, by August 1904, both the Board of Women Managers and the corporation's Committee on Women and Women's Work appear to have been eliminated altogether. On August 14, Sarah Evans queried Eva Dye, "Do you notice they have done away with a 'woman's committee'?"<sup>34</sup> The following day, Hoyt wrote newly elected President Goode to complain that no board had been formed, implying that it would be better to do so now than never at all. "There are things women can do and will do if encouraged or allowed," she wrote, "but as they are not Angels but just humans with tempers and hurt feelings you would better be a little good to us. Other Expositions have had 'Lady Managers'! Why not we?"<sup>35</sup> No details surrounding the corporation's decision to abandon its plans appear to exist; however, one copy of the probable list of members ended up in corporation records marked "General File Bury out of Sight H.E.R. [Henry E. Reed]."<sup>36</sup> Published programs and catalogues of the fair make no mention of a Board of Women Managers, a Committee on Women and Women's Work, or a Women's Department, and Reed made no mention of Lewis and Clark Clubs, the ill-fated Board of Women Managers, or the Committee on Women and Women's Work in his official history of the fair.<sup>37</sup>

THE WOMEN OF OREGON, however, were not so easily defeated. In two related but separate projects, they worked closely together to focus public attention on women. The first project was the thirty-seventh annual convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, which was held in conjunction with the fair. During February 1904, Jefferson Meyers, president of the state Exposition Commission, issued an invitation to NAWSA for it to hold its annual convention in Portland during the fair. Meyers's wife, Annice Jeffreys Meyers, along with other officers of the Oregon State Equal Suffrage Association, "joined in the invitation."<sup>38</sup> The idea to invite NAWSA to Portland may have originated with Annice Jeffreys Meyers, a suffrage activist and doctor who was the personal physician to Abigail Scott Duniway. As vice president of the state suffrage association and a member of the Portland Woman's Club, Jeffreys Meyers served as general chair of the committee that organized the Portland convention, and she was elected auditor of NAWSA during the meeting in Portland. Jeffreys Meyers and her husband were also major supporters of the Sacajawea project, contributing copper from their mine for the bronze statue as well as for small commemorative Sacajawea spoons.<sup>39</sup>

Although rhetorically linked to the historic trek of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark a century earlier, the Lewis and Clark Exposition was focused on boosting Oregon's business community, and the corporation sought financial support from businesses, such as hotels, restaurants, street car companies, and retailers, which stood to benefit from the influx of visitors. The prospects of a national convention — whatever the topic — held great economic promise for investors.

Most sessions of the NAWSA convention, which lasted from June 28 through July 5, took place at the First Congregational Church in Portland. Friday afternoon's session, on June 30, was held on the exposition fairgrounds during "Woman's Day" and was followed by a reception honoring Susan B. Anthony at the Oregon building.<sup>40</sup> Probably because of the long series of "greetings" and addresses, and because it lacked substantive reports, historian G. Thomas Edwards characterizes the session at the fairground as the "least productive" of the convention.<sup>41</sup> Yet, for it to have occurred at all, and with the blessings of fair organizers, is significant. Less than thirty years earlier, Anthony had resorted to speaking on the steps outside an official event, and mainstream newspapers had not even covered her presentation. In 1905, the *Oregonian* and other papers could barely say enough complimentary things about Anthony and reported on the reception in her honor with enthusiasm. Referring to the "intellectual lights at the head" of NAWSA, the *Oregonian* praised the "signal triumphs attained through the many brilliant and profound addresses made," noted the "liberal percentage of men who



*As part of the NAWSA meeting, a reception honoring Susan B. Anthony was held at the Oregon State Building at the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition. A later reception, on October 6, 1905, honored Abigail Scott Duniway.*

listened attentively,” and reported that the reception for Anthony was “more largely attended than any event which has been given since the opening of the Exposition.”<sup>42</sup>

The convention and the statue project gave newspaper editors the opportunity to publish appealing stories that supported fair organizers’ goal to impress “the world with the serious aspirations of the people of the Northwest.”<sup>43</sup> Even before participants arrived in Portland, well-known suffrage leaders Susan B. Anthony, Anna Shaw, and Carrie Chapman Catt drew media attention as they traveled west by train, delaying schedules and receiving accolades and flowers along the way. Oregon newspapers capitalized on the celebrities’ visit to Portland, a city so infected with boosterism that any inclination to criticize the cause of women’s suffrage was trumped by the desire to showcase Portland as the city of the future. Reflecting just how well conference leaders had succeeded in feeding the press positive news stories, one reporter purportedly exclaimed that “If the great political organs of the United States knew how well these women have the tricks of the trade at their fingers’ ends they would employ special detectives to watch suffrage literature in disguise.”<sup>44</sup>

Prominent participants at the convention included the aged and beloved Susan B. Anthony, NAWSA President Rev. Anna Shaw, Vice President Carrie Chapman Catt, Alice Stone Blackwell, and Charlotte Perkins Gilman. Oregon’s own Abigail Scott Duniway addressed the delegates on her favorite



*The Oregonian published this photograph of NAWSA representatives — incoming President Rev. Anna Howard Shaw, Honorary President Susan B. Anthony, Corresponding Secretary Kate M. Gordon, prominent author Charlotte Perkins Gilman, and outgoing President Carrie Chapman Catt — on July 2, 1905.*

topic, “Pioneers of the Northwest.”<sup>45</sup> Coordinating her remarks with the statue project, Shaw focused her annual address on the “little Shoshone squaw” who offered “lessons of calm endurance, of patient persistence and unfaltering courage.”<sup>46</sup> Both local and national women’s clubs were prominent participants at the convention and, in their talks, Duniway and Sarah Evans drew links between the women’s club movement and the suffrage movement. Many national and local clubwomen appeared on the program, bringing greetings and support from the Oregon State Equal Suffrage Association, Women’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), YWCA, Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), Woman’s Medical Association, Oregon State Federation of Women’s Clubs, Woman’s Henry George League, and Ladies of Maccabees. Although not part of the official program, the Portland Woman’s Club hosted a reception at the Commercial Club for the visiting suffrage leaders.<sup>47</sup> Widespread support by such a large number of women’s clubs undoubtedly contributed to the success of the convention. At various sessions, NAWSA organizers also made room for prominent Oregon men who supported women’s suffrage, including Governor George E. Chamberlain, Portland Mayor Harry Lane, the Hon. W.S. U’Ren, C.E.S Wood, and Jefferson Meyers. The inclusion of so many male speakers may have appealed to corporation observers who clung to the integrationist philosophy.

THE SECOND SUCCESSFUL WOMEN’S project associated with the fair, the Sacajawea statue, was also closely tied to women’s club work as well as to the suffrage cause. Culminating as it did with a photogenic parade and unveiling ceremony, it provided an appealing story that would attract

readers and boost newspaper sales. Historian Sandra Haarsager notes that “because [clubwomen] did not possess the formal political power to enact measures or the financial means to sustain their designs, changes spurred or spearheaded by the clubs were frequently attributed to others;” and, when local cities or legislatures took over the various public services or cultural programs initiated by women’s clubs, they — not the women — usually received credit.<sup>48</sup> In the cases of the NAWSA convention and Sacajawea project, however, newspapers gave full attention and credit to Oregon women for their work.

Although the planning, financing, and tremendous success of the Sacajawea project was unique to Oregon’s world’s fair, the idea of a statue commemorating a woman at a world’s fair was not. The representation of certain virtues in female form had been a practice since classical times, and world’s fairs often continued this iconographic tradition. In Chicago, classical caryatids and images of women personifying “The West,” “Faith,” “Virtue,” and “Freedom” decorated the Women’s Building. Montana paid tribute to American values, the wealth of the nation, and the great mineral resources of the West in a public unveiling of a six-foot female “Justice,” a silver statue on a solid gold base. Female statues of “The City Welcoming Her Guests” and “Peace” were among the statuary created for the St. Louis Fair.<sup>49</sup>

Projects to commemorate specific historical female leaders in statuary at fairs were often the result of female networking. Suffragists at the Chicago Columbian Exposition in 1893, for example, seized upon the figure of Queen Isabella of Spain as a fitting symbol for their movement as well as for a fair celebrating the “discovery” of America by Columbus, whose voyage Isabella and her husband King Ferdinand had financed. The group raised funds to commission Harriet Hosmer to create a likeness of Isabella to place in front of the Women’s Building, but tension between the pro-suffrage “Isabellas” and the more moderate women on the Board of Lady Managers assured a less glorious fate for the plaster cast of the queen, who ultimately came to rest in front of the California Building. Anne Whitney’s renderings of Lucy Stone and Harriet Beecher Stowe were eventually joined by Adelaide Johnson’s busts of Susan B. Anthony, Lucretia Mott, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton in the Women’s Building in Chicago.<sup>50</sup>

A statue of Sacajawea was also not without precedent. A likeness of the “Birdwoman” (from the Hidatsa for *Sacajawea*) had been commissioned for the St. Louis Exposition of 1904. Unlike its more famous version in Portland, however, it was the work of a male sculptor and made of staff, a temporary, plaster-like material. Most likely it disappeared in the “demolition rubble” along with most other statuary from the fair.<sup>51</sup> In sharp contrast, Oregon’s statue of Sacajawea, which stands today in a prominent location in Port-

land's Washington Park, was conceived, funded, and executed by women as a tribute to women's leadership, vision, and civilizing influence.

Eva Emory Dye suggested the Sacajawea project to the Portland Woman's Club, served as president of the Sacajawea Statue Association, and formally presented the statue for unveiling at the Lewis and Clark Exposition. But it was Evans — indefatigable fundraiser, publicist, and close friend of Dye — who orchestrated the project and served as the crucial link to NAWSA planners and to the Lewis and Clark Corporation. In May 1903, soon after the Portland Woman's Club created the Sacajawea Statue Association, a long article about Sacajawea appeared in *The Exposition*, likely written by Evans or Dye, major champions of the statue project. Readers were told that “there often comes a time in the lives of men when the woman steps to the front and leads the way.” The selfless, skillful “little Indian girl,” the author wrote, would finally win recognition, and her statue would be “placed [the author predicted] on the Exposition ground in front of the Woman's Building.”<sup>52</sup>

Letters between Evans, who lived in Oswego (now Lake Oswego), and Dye, her friend in Oregon City, trace the story of the Sacajawea Statue Association from its rise as a fledgling club to a successful organization supported by various women's clubs, national suffrage leaders, the Reformed Order of Red Men, and wealthy businessmen. In her treatment of that correspondence in her study of Dye, Browne emphasizes the connection between the Sacajawea project and the eventual success of suffrage in Oregon, but she does not highlight the role Evans played connecting the statue project with the 1905 NAWSA convention and with the Lewis and Clark Corporation, which had been so reluctant to grant women a significant role at the fair. Nor does Browne explore the manner or extent to which Evans employed her skills as a journalist to foster such links. As secretary of the Sacajawea Statue Association, Evans functioned as an important bridge between the statue project and the NAWSA meeting. She served as the official press representative to the convention for the *Oregon Journal* and was the first speaker to offer greetings at the fairground session on June 30. Behind the scenes, she was the mastermind of the ceremonious unveiling of the Sacajawea statue on July 6, an event that unofficially extended the NAWSA convention by one day.

Beginning in the summer of 1903, Evans worked tirelessly to win the moral and financial support of local, regional, and national clubwomen. Her activities included writing and speaking about the project; fundraising at the local, regional, and national level; distributing promotional materials, including copies of Dye's book and promotional buttons; and organizing details of the parade that preceded the actual unveiling ceremony at the fairground. In her work for the Sacajawea Statue Association, Evans

exploited her membership in and ties to various women's clubs, and she put the Lewis and Clark Clubs to good use as fundraising organizations for the statue project, despite the controversy regarding their creation. Reports of their contributions dot the pages of her articles in the *Journal*. Finally, she networked with clubwomen from Idaho, New York, and other states to gain support for the statue.

Through personal correspondence and through the weekly page she edited in the *Journal* on "Women's Clubs" and "Women's Work," Evans focused the attention of dozens of women's groups with disparate geographic, social, religious, and political outlooks on the statue project. Throughout, she was zealously committed to the Sacajawea statue as a *women's* project. As she explained, "it is our desire to have the entire amount of money contributed by women, and the work done so far as possible [by women]." She wanted it to "be a beautiful and touching tribute for the women of today to pay, not only to Sacajawea, but to the pioneer mother and to womanhood."<sup>53</sup>

Just as women's efforts to form a Board of Women Managers were plagued by conflict and controversy, the Sacajawea project encountered its share of obstacles. By December 1903, sculptor B.J. Barrett had proposed a competing model for a seven-foot fountain, complete with pine forests, bears, a miner's cabin, and waterfalls, which the *Oregonian* described as "Civilization, mounted on a prancing steed, holding the palm of victory and the lamp of enlightenment in either hand, and led by the Indian maid Sacajawea, [who stood] on top of the cliff." If executed in stone, the article continued, it would make a "beautiful monument to the city after the Fair was over."<sup>54</sup> Evans characterized the situation as yet another "setting down on the women" by the corporation.<sup>55</sup> By February 1904, Barrett's competing model, now titled "Sacajawea," was being exhibited in a storefront window, and Evans was growing increasingly distressed.

Evans's mood changed, however, when she learned that NAWSA, which was supportive of her project, had accepted the invitation to hold its annual suffrage convention in Portland during the fair.<sup>56</sup> In March, she told Dye the good news that Reed, Director of Exploitation (advertising) for the corporation, had agreed to designate a "Sacajawea Day" at the fair. By then, Dye and Evans had begun to send ideas to Alice Cooper, a Colorado sculptor working in Chicago. Although corporation records make no mention of the selection process, we know that fair directors had selected one of Cooper's designs by June 1904, when it was featured in a promotional magazine, the *Lewis and Clark Journal*. The article, probably written by Evans, who had begun to use her credentials as a journalist to support the project, juxtaposed the rather prosaic model of "Birdwoman," designed by Bruno Zimm for the St. Louis Fair, with Cooper's more striking proposal for Portland. The author

acknowledged that Zimm's statue had been well researched but concluded that Cooper's design had a greater appeal:

Thus it will be seen that realism is the keynote to Mr. Zimm's conception of Sacajawea. Every detail is painstaking; exact, true to the most petty detail of those hard and toilsome days of travel over the Rockies.

Miss Cooper, on the contrary, has idealized her theme, lifting her heroine above the plane of the commonplace into a loftier and nobler realm, transporting her into the very spirit of the West, keen of vision, dauntless of heart, pressing onward with rapt purpose and unremitting zeal to the goal.<sup>57</sup>

Ultimately, the steady stream of small donations from individual women and women's organizations had to be augmented by other sources. Growing impatient, Evans turned to the Reformed Order of Red Men, a patriotic organization with roots in the colonial-era Sons of Liberty. Evans and the Order launched a carefully coordinated nationwide fundraising campaign, including an appeal to the Order's sister organization, the Degree of Pocahontas, and she promised contributors a role in the presentation ceremonies.<sup>58</sup> In the end, members of Portland's business establishment assured the final success of the fundraising campaign. Four days after Evans noted that the corporation had dissolved its Committee on Women and Women's Work, she gleefully wrote to Dye that the Commercial Club, whose publicity manager she had lobbied for support, had decided that the statue "must be funded." Soon thereafter, Commercial Club leaders agreed to raise the remaining balance and devised a plan to engage the help of their wives so that the statue could remain primarily a women's project.<sup>59</sup>

Browne describes the assistance of the Commercial Club, calling the statue association's connection to the chairman of its executive committee a "political coup." She also notes the important fundraising principles the women had learned and explains the involvement of businessmen's wives in the context of "women's voluntary associations as appropriate extensions of women's domestic roles."<sup>60</sup> Absent from her analysis, however, is the important connection between the Commercial Club and the Lewis and Clark Corporation. Theodore B. Wilcox, chairman of the Executive Committee of the Commercial Club, was also one of the largest stockholders in the Lewis and Clark Corporation.<sup>61</sup> Wilcox had become one of the directors of the fair corporation only a month before the Commercial Club decided to aid in funding the statue, and it is likely he believed a positive outcome of the Sacajawea project would add to the success of the fair. Soon after Wilcox's election as one of the corporation directors, Evans observed that corporation President Goode's opinion of the women's club had "changed wonderfully," that he was now wholly in support of the statue project, and

that he “promises us anything we want.”<sup>62</sup>

Evans’s letters to Dye reveal her meticulous concern for detail as the July 6 unveiling ceremony drew nearer. She expressed a desire to discuss the “exact arrangements” with the Red Men to make sure there would “be no hitch” in the parade preceding the unveiling.<sup>63</sup> She made arrangements for the delivery of the statue to the fair, which traveled to Portland by rail free of charge thanks to Evans’s efforts, and she reported on her conversation with city officials regarding the placement of the statue after the fair.<sup>64</sup> Once the statue had arrived in Portland, official exposition programs announced — most likely at the behest of Evans, who was coordinating every detail — that “the statue of Sacajawea . . . reached Portland Wednesday from New York” and that the upcoming “unveiling exercises . . . will be on an elaborate scale.”<sup>65</sup> In an undated, hastily written communication to Dye, Evans reported on the progress of the pedestal for the statue, which, she explained, would be located on “the finest place on the grounds,” the so-called Columbia Court.<sup>66</sup>

Cleverly timed to follow the suffrage convention by one day, the unveiling ceremony brought woman suffrage and Sacajawea together in one celebration. It began with a gala parade featuring a float bearing Sacajawea “pointing the way to Oregon,” and, in addition to hundreds of members of the Reformed Order of Red Men, prominent members of NAWSA were featured in a “16 seated tallyho.” According to the *Oregonian*, the pageant was “one of the most interesting ever seen in the city.”<sup>67</sup> Anthony and Duniway, featured speakers at the unveiling, specifically linked Sacajawea to the cause of woman suffrage. Claiming it to be “the first time in history that a statue has been erected in the memory of a woman who accomplished patriotic deeds,” Anthony urged listeners to “remember the part women have played in the progress of the world and vote ‘Yes’” for woman’s suffrage. As her theme, Duniway used the motto of the Sacajawea Statue Association, *Dux Femina Facti* (A



*The Sacajawea statue, pictured here in the Columbia Court (Lakeview Terrace) of the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition, was designed by Alice Cooper of Colorado.*

Courtesy of John Wilson Special Collections, Multnomah County Library, Portland, Oregon



*The Sacajawea statue was unveiled on July 6, 1905, following a parade through the streets of Portland one day after the official closing of the NAWSA convention. Today, the statue is located in Portland's Washington Park.*

Woman Led the Deed), and referred to the Indian woman as “an emblem of the liberty that is dawning for women of this Western Coast.” When presenting the statue to the city, Dye paid tribute to Sacajawea and “all women and all mothers, who . . . still lead on, on.” She praised the leadership of Sarah Evans and lauded the many contributions of club-women throughout the state who had made the project a success. When introducing Mayor Lane, who delivered an address on behalf of the city, Dye paid tribute to the “high chivalry” of Lane’s grandfather, the first governor of the Northwest Territory, who had once recognized a group of Indian girls who had served

as peace envoys to hostile Indians by exclaiming “‘God bless you, ladies . . . you have saved us all.’”<sup>68</sup> In one stroke, this comment — subtly drawing the connection between women and their potential to “civilize” — placed the current event into a larger historical context. The inclusion of prominent male speakers on the program was also politically astute, because it made the event appear consistent with the official integrationist model embraced by the corporation.

What led the corporation, which had failed to create a Board of Women Managers and eliminated its Committee on Women and Women’s Work, to enthusiastically endorse a female statue project? One reason was undoubtedly economic. In programming special events, corporation planners likely expected to boost attendance and, hence, ticket sales. July 6, “Sacajawea Day,” was timed by NAWSA and statue planners to celebrate the formal closing of the convention in Portland, and it did draw a large crowd. Receipts that day totaled 19,172, the fifth largest since opening day on June 1.<sup>69</sup> Though initially reluctant to support the women’s statue project, the corporation — as well as the larger commercial interests of Portland from which it drew support — ended up benefiting financially by devoting a day to the unveiling ceremony.

Another explanation for the change in attitude is that the statue was open to a wide range of interpretations and, therefore, proved to have broad appeal. It was supported by progressive suffrage activists, such as Evans, Dye, Duniway, and Anthony, and was also embraced by women such as Mary Phelps Montgomery, the third vice president of the Sacajawea Statue Association who had been an active opponent of woman suffrage for many years.<sup>70</sup> It was supported by progressive men who favored woman suffrage, such as Chamberlain and Meyers, and also by a wide array of influential men who held more conservative views of women's role, from the Reformed Order of Red Men to members of Portland's business establishment. Thus, the directors of the fair could abandon their promise to create a Board of Women Managers while throwing their support behind a project they deemed safe and uncontroversial.

Finally, growing support for the statue project by both men and women could have been linked to Sara Evans's vigorous journalistic campaign, which she had launched at the suggestion of the Portland Woman's Club with a special Woman's Club edition of the *Journal* in the spring of 1904. As a club-woman, Evans was certainly familiar with the rituals and symbols typical of the woman's clubs movement of her time, and her *Journal* articles frequently drew on the symbolic potential of the Sacajawea statue. In Sacajawea, she discovered a symbol that was as malleable as it was powerful. She was the unsung pioneer mother, sustainer and nurturer of men and children; yet, she was also the indomitable female interpreter, guide, and leader. With Dye as her mentor, Evans transformed Sacajawea from "little Shoshone" mother to grand "civilizer." Such a role model fit well with Evans's view that women, once given the vote, would change society for the better.

Despite her decidedly progressive leanings, Evans managed to speak to readers of many points of view. Her own political stance was balanced by her repeated affirmation of traditional values regarding women's role, demeanor, and appearance. She admired professional women, but she also admired a "womanly woman" and one who knew how to be a good hostess. She cautioned the women of the city and the state that, at the upcoming fair, they would "stand in the relative position to the rest of the world as hostess and guest" and that, even during the upcoming conventions, they should provide "neutral ground" so that visitors could "discuss, perchance fight out, their various issues."<sup>71</sup>

In private, Evans shared with Dye her frustrations about working with clubwomen. "Women are so stupid," she once wrote, confiding that she had declined to discuss details of a particular problem with clubwomen because they "would get so muddled."<sup>72</sup> What the majority of women needed, she suggested, was to be brought "step by step." Otherwise, one would exhaust

oneself “by trying to force all women, in one short club year, to think and work alike.” One needs to “concentrate rather than scatter one’s energies,” she cautioned.<sup>73</sup> During “one short club year,” from 1904 to 1905, Evans led by example, taking women readers of her *Journal* articles “step by step.” She rallied their support and built anticipation for the suffrage convention and the statue project. Whereas earlier in her life she had campaigned for free public libraries, and later she would work to insure safe inspection of food, for the moment, she had chosen to focus on women and the upcoming Lewis and Clark Exposition.

Evans’s articles were broad in content and covered news from the city, the state, and other states as well. She reported on events ranging from Duniway’s speech about the project at the state fair in Salem to a “Sacajawea Powwow” in Baker City, for she recognized that, even though the exposition would take place in Portland, the statue project might resonate with women statewide. “It may serve a dual purpose,” she wrote in August 1904, “by bringing a woman’s tribute to a deserving woman and bringing the women of the state together to work for high and lofty purposes regardless of section or locality.”<sup>74</sup> In her year-end summary of club activity, Evans included reports from new Lewis and Clark Clubs in Woodburn and Independence as well as news from long-established women’s clubs in Pendleton, Salem, and Portland. She also reported on stories about the Sacajawea project that appeared in newspapers as far away as Texas and Boston, included news about DAR support in New York, and wrote a story about a professor at the University of Washington who backed the project.

Evans’s *Journal* pages often move abruptly from topic to topic, but, taken as a whole, they illustrate what Haarsager calls the move “from literature to lobbying” that took place in women’s clubs in the Pacific Northwest during the early years of the twentieth century.<sup>75</sup> Evans reported, for example, that a women’s club in The Dalles had been “organized for literary purposes, [but now] has stepped out of its beaten path many a time and oft to do civic work.”<sup>76</sup> Tucked between news of the DAR, a story about a female artist, or a report on the retiring president of the WCTU were articles about women’s clubs lobbying for juvenile courts, a school for domestic science, and an end to child labor. And carefully placed among these were frequent articles — often two per page — relating to the Sacajawea project.

Evans’s pages in the *Journal* also brought together the two women’s projects associated with the fair. In a January 1905 *Journal* article, for example, Evans reported that Sacajawea was the name of a newly formed suffrage society in Minnesota. Noting that reading circles, mountains, clubs, and yachts had recently been honored in the same fashion, Evans proclaimed that “nothing could be more appropriate” than assigning the name to an

organization working for women's equality.<sup>77</sup> Carefully interspersed with Sacajawea news were articles about and photographs of Anthony, Shaw, Gilman, Duniway, and other well-known suffrage leaders who would assemble in Portland for the national convention. Evans also lamented that the Republican Party had ignored NAWSA's request to include woman suffrage on its platform; she printed a laudatory obituary of Senator Hoar of Massachusetts, a woman suffrage supporter; and, in October 1904, she wrote a strong editorial column in favor of votes for women. Once funding for the statue was nearly complete, with only brief mention of the Commercial Club's involvement in her pages, news about the statue was less prominent, and information about the upcoming NAWSA convention became more extensive and frequent. As Duniway would later note in her autobiography, the women's club movement had become one



*Sarah A. Evans, journalist, clubwoman extraordinaire, and woman suffrage leader, networked with other Oregon clubwomen to bring about the two successful women's projects at the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition.*

(OHS neg., bb003612)

of the "great recruiting grounds for the Woman Suffrage cause," and Evans brought her readers "step by step" to support the cause.<sup>78</sup>

Evans's articles about the fair described it primarily in the context of the suffrage convention or the Sacajawea statue, projects that would not have been planned or brought to fruition without the efforts of women working together. Evans pointedly informed readers that no federal or state appropriations had been allocated for a Sacajawea statue: "Over \$1,000,000 will be spent in honoring the memory of the heroes of the Lewis and Clark party and not a cent of it has been appropriated to the only heroine."<sup>79</sup> Even while she bemoaned that lack of support, she took pride in women's participation in the fair: "It is woman's one part and contribution to the success of the exposition and the credit of the state is at stake."<sup>80</sup> Three months later, when the corporation finally eliminated the Committee on Women and Women's Work, Evans wrote that

those who have been keeping in touch with the proceeding of the board meetings of the Lewis and Clark fair directors must have noted, with no little concern, that in the 'boiling down' process of committees the one on 'women and women's work' was skimmed entirely out of existence. . . . While it is humiliating to the women of Oregon to be ignored, when all other expositions have been so much benefited by their work, and it has so eagerly been sought, the women will certainly have the best of the bargain by being let alone.<sup>81</sup>

Women, she implied, well organized through their clubs, were already working with better organization and efficiency than men might have imposed on them.

The two women's projects in which Evans played such an important role are also significant because they helped lay the groundwork for the eventual success of the 1912 Oregon woman suffrage campaign. When voters ratified Oregon's initiative and referendum system in 1902, suffragists seized upon the initiative as a means to achieve their goal. State and national suffrage leaders agreed that hosting the NAWSA convention in Portland in conjunction with the 1905 fair would enhance the chances of passing the suffrage initiative scheduled for 1906. To the dismay of NAWSA leaders, the Oregon suffrage initiative of 1906 failed, as did those of 1908 and 1910. Those losses were the result of many factors, but historians usually attribute them to opposition by the "liquor interest," which argued that woman suffrage would lead to prohibition, and to tensions between national leaders and Duniway that resulted in discord among Oregon suffrage leaders. Duniway campaigned for suffrage for years but, as historian Rebecca Mead argues, "innovative tactics" by a younger generation of suffrage leaders and the growth of the women's club movement were important contributors to the eventual success of woman suffrage in the Pacific Northwest.<sup>82</sup>

In Oregon, the clubwomen who had orchestrated the two successful projects of 1905 provided models, methods, and leaders for the successful campaign of 1912. The Oregon women's club movement's commitment to suffrage grew stronger during the years after the fair and, as Browne has shown, played a key role in "putting suffrage over the top." Unlike other regions of the country, it was leaders within the club movement, such as Sarah Evans, who played a significant role in the effort.<sup>83</sup> Although she is vilified by Duniway's biographer Ruth Barnes Moynihan for siding with national leaders against Duniway in Oregon's final suffrage campaign of 1912, Evans was certainly not alone in disagreeing with Duniway's tactics or in finding her decisions "arbitrary."<sup>84</sup> Whether she was really one of Duniway's "prime enemies," or as two-faced as Moynihan charges, she was at the least a highly capable and politically astute woman who, once set upon a goal, moved mountains to achieve it.<sup>85</sup> Under Evans's leadership, the clubwomen's

involvement in the NAWSA convention and the statue project gave women experience in organizing, fundraising, and publicizing on a new scale, important skills that would help them win the vote in 1912.

SOME HISTORIANS HAVE characterized world's fairs as "sites of struggle between dominant and subordinate groups," where marginalized groups held "counter-hegemonic" views.<sup>86</sup> Yet, Oregon women such as Sarah Evans worked to make certain that their views and projects were not subordinated or marginalized. In so doing, they transformed a Native woman into a symbol of womanhood that even white men could embrace. In her analysis of statuary at the Lewis and Clark Exposition, Lisa Blee points to the ways in which statues and exhibits of, and performances by, Native peoples supported the central exposition theme of American expansionism and empire. Sacajawea, she argues, was reshaped by her creators to become a civilized "American patriot," even though she was not a United States citizen, was married to a Frenchman, and was consistently referred to as a "savage." Blee notes that one speaker at the unveiling "created the illusion that the Indian women endorsed [American] expansion" and suggests that Dye saw Sacajawea as a "gatekeeper [who] represented Indian acceptance of white supremacy," an assumption consistent with Manifest Destiny, so prevalent in the history of the West.<sup>87</sup>

In *Manliness and Civilization*, Gail Bederman points to pageants at the Columbian Exposition as examples of Americans dramatizing "that white men were more manly and civilized than savage dark-skinned races." She further suggests that the peripheral placement of the Women's Building at the Chicago fair "at the very edge of the civilized White City . . . at the border between civilization and savagery" demonstrates that male organizers viewed women's contributions to civilization as marginal. She argues, however, that early feminists such as Charlotte Perkins Gilman developed an alternative discourse, one that focused on *women's* central role in civilization.<sup>88</sup> Gilman's theories were based on the notion of white supremacy, and it is important to remember that Oregon clubwomen who achieved success in 1905 were white. Nevertheless, in its physical centrality at the fair and in the many comments made by female supporters of the project, Sacajawea's statue underscored the central role of *women* as "civilizers." The statue also held the possibility of a much more subversive message, that it was *white men*, rather than Native peoples or women, who were uncivilized. The seeds of such an idea appeared in Anna Shaw's annual address to the NAWSA convention, in which she spoke metaphorically to Sacajawea: "May we, the daughters of an alien race, who slew your people and usurped your country, learn the lessons of calm endurance, of patience and persistence

and unfaltering courage exemplified in your life, in our efforts to lead men through the pass of justice.”<sup>88</sup>

We may never know exactly what Sacajawea represented for different groups and individuals. We do know that, through her and the suffrage convention that celebrated her statue, Oregon clubwomen demonstrated that women’s separatism was alive and well, and that it had leaders who relied and expanded on the tradition of women’s clubs and women’s networking in new ways. The real irony is that the success of the statue project and the NAWSA meeting would be officially recognized by the Lewis and Clark Corporation as examples of the enlightened new philosophy of integrating women at world’s fairs when those projects had actually been the product of female separatism.

## NOTES

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1. *Oregonian*, July 7, 1905. The official title of the fair was the Lewis and Clark Centennial and American Pacific Exposition and Oriental Fair. For brevity, I refer to it throughout as the Lewis and Clark Exposition.

2. James Boyce Montgomery, Biographical and Genealogical Materials on Montgomery and Phelps Families, Undated, MSS 2727, box 2, folder 3, Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Portland [hereafter OHS Research Library].

3. Spellings of women’s buildings and women’s clubs vary considerably, sometimes even within one source. Whenever a title or quotation uses the singular (e.g. the Woman’s Building in Chicago) I retain the singular, but in most other cases I adopt the plural usage. When referring to the movement, I maintain the conventional “woman suffrage.”

4. Virginia Grant Darney, “Women and World’s Fairs: American International Exposi-

tions, 1876–1904” (Ph.D. diss., Emory University, 1982), chapter 5.

5. On the 1905 NAWSA convention and presentation of the Sacajawea project, see G. Thomas Edwards, *Sowing Good Seeds: The Northwest Suffrage Campaigns of Susan B. Anthony* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press, 1990); Abigail Scott Duniway, *Path Breaking* (Portland, Ore.: James, Kerns & Abbott, 1970); Ida Husted Harper, *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 5 (Salem, N.H.: Ayer Company, 1922); Ronald W. Taber, “Sacajawea and the Suffragettes: An Interpretation of a Myth,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 58:1 (January 1967); and Jeffrey Uecker, “Picturing the Corps of Discovery: The Lewis and Clark Expedition in Oregon Art,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 103:4 (Winter 2002). Taber was the first of several historians to assert that many of the details surrounding Sacajawea’s life were fabricated by Dye and other suffrage leaders to further their cause, a thesis Sheri Bartlett Browne successfully challenges in *Eva Emery Dye: Romance with the West* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2004). Brown analyzes Dye’s choice of Sacajawea and examines the histories of the Sacajawea Association, Dye’s relationship with Sarah Evans, and both women’s roles in the ongoing suffrage campaign. Although Browne makes the important observation that the Sacajawea statue project was “training ground” for women in “community organizing,” and emphasizes the connection be-

tween women's clubs and the successful 1912 suffrage initiative in Oregon, she does not consider women's role at the Lewis and Clark Exposition in the larger context of historiography of world's fairs or fully explore the central role played by Evans (pp. 87–91, 100). Holly J. Pruet's "A 'Sense of Place . . . Pride . . . Identity': Portland's 1905 fair," (undergraduate thesis, Reed College, 1985) briefly considers the role of women at the Lewis and Clark Exposition, and I am indebted to her work for a number of important leads. Other works that focus on the Lewis and Clark Exposition, but not the role of women, include Carl Abbott, *The Great Extravaganza: Portland and the Lewis and Clark Exposition* (Portland: OHS Press, 1981); Robert Rydell, "Visions of Empire: International Expositions in Portland and Seattle, 1905–1909," *Pacific Historical Review* 52 (1983); and Lisa Blee, "Conflating Lewis and Clark's Westward March: Exhibiting a History of Empire at the 1905 Portland World's Fair," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 106:2 (Summer 2005).

6. In 1900, African Americans comprised only .23 percent of the state's population; yet, white clubwomen in Oregon had joined those from other states to exclude them from the state's federation of women's clubs. Elizabeth McLagan, *A Peculiar Paradise: a History of Blacks in Oregon, 1788–1940* (Portland, Ore.: Georgian Press, 1980), 120.

7. Sandra Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood: Cultural Politics in the Pacific Northwest, 1840–1920* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), 17–19. Karen Blair, "The Limits of Sisterhood: the Woman's Building in Seattle, 1908–1921," in Karen Blair, ed., *Women in Pacific Northwest History: An Anthology* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988), 5.

8. Brief biographies of Evans are found in Winfield Scott Downs, ed., *Encyclopedia of Northwest Biography* (New York: American Historical Co., 1943), 220–23; and Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood*, 291–95. See also Harper, *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 6, chapter 36; Darney, "Women and World's Fairs"; and Mary Frances Cordato, "Representing the expansion of woman's sphere: Women's work and culture at the World's Fairs of 1876, 1893, and 1904," (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1989).

9. For an analysis of fairs by the "cultural hegemony school," see the work of Robert W. Rydell, especially Rydell, John E. Findling, and Kimberly D. Pelle, *Fair America: World's Fairs*

*in the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2000); and Rydell, *All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876–1916* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).

10. Darney, "Women and World's Fairs," 45–49. See also Paul Greenhalgh, *Ephemeral Vistas: The Expositions Universelles, Great Exhibitions and World's Fairs, 1851–1939* (Manchester, U.K.: Manchester University Press, 1988), 177–78.

11. For a detailed account of women at the Chicago Fair, see Joanne Madeline Weimann, *The Fair Women* (Chicago: Academy Chicago, 1981). Greenhalgh, who focuses more on European fairs, identifies the Columbian Exposition as the height of women's progressive activities at American world's fairs, after which he claims "women's sections [were] rapidly appropriated by anti-suffrage forces." *Ephemeral Vistas*, 182–183. See also William D. Andrews, "Women and Fairs of 1876 and 1893," *Hayes Historical Review*, 1 (1977); and E.A. Heaman, "Taking the World by Show: Canadian Women as Exhibitors to 1900," *Canadian Historical Review*, 78:4 (1997). Heaman interprets women exhibiting as a "political act" that allowed them to be recognized as a "genuine presence." Greenhalgh briefly examines women's participation in Philadelphia and Chicago as well as European fairs after 1893, providing statistics on the percentage of women participants and exhibits from the U.S. and European nations. Both Heaman and Greenhalgh consider the phenomenon of women exhibitors being themselves on display.

12. Cordato, "Representing the expansion," 12, 233.

13. *Ibid.*, 228–32, 238.

14. Estelle Freedman, "Separatism as Strategy: Female Institution Building and American Feminism, 1870–1930," *Feminist Studies*, 5:3 (Fall 1979), 521; Cordato, "Representing the expansion," 409; and Darney, "Women and World's Fairs," 161.

15. *Oregon Journal*, December 25, 1904.

16. Browne, *Eva Emery Dye*, 110.

17. NAWSA, created in 1890, was the result of a merger between the more conservative American Woman Suffrage Association and the more progressive National Woman Suffrage Association.

18. Wade to Fried, November 9, 1902, in Lewis and Clark Centennial and American Pacific Exposition and Oreintal Fair Records, 1894–1933,

MSS 1609 [hereafter MSS 1609], box 12, folder 9, OHS Research Library.

19. *The Exposition*, 1:6 (May 1903), 4 (archived at the John Wilson Special Collections, Multnomah County Library, Portland, Oregon). “Talks” and “strikes” refer to ongoing labor disputes during construction at the fairgrounds. On labor issues at the Exposition, see Rydell, *Visions of Empire*.

20. Wade to J.C. Cooper, April 7, 1903, in MSS 1609, box 16, folder 2, OHS Research Library.

21. Portland Woman’s Club Minutebook, January 1903–May 1905, 19, MSS 1084, Minutes of April 10th, 1903, box 1, folder 6, OHS Research Library.

22. Hoyt to Reed, April 10, 1903, MSS 1609, box 16, folder 2, OHS Research Library. Hoyt’s suggestion for a Woman’s Building was referred to the Committee on Women and Women’s Work, which would confer with the Committee on Grounds and Buildings, but no record of their deliberations or decisions exists. Articles of Incorporation of the Lewis and Clark Centennial and American Exposition and Oriental Fair, Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition 1905, Official Records: History, 229, John Wilson Special Collections, Multnomah County Library.

23. BY-LAWS, in MSS 1609, box 16, folder 2, OHS Research Library.

24. Wade to Cooper, n.d., in MSS 1609, box 16, folder 2, OHS Research Library.

25. Committee on Women’s Work, in MSS 1609, box 16, folder 2, OHS Research Library.

26. *Evening Telegram*, May 2, 1903.

27. Weathered to Cooper, May 4, 1903, in MSS 1609, box 16, folder 2, OHS Research Library.

28. Congress appropriated fewer resources, did not invite foreign governments to participate, and did not appoint a commission to oversee the fair. Having agreed to large expenditures for the St. Louis Fair, and being concerned about requests for future fairs, Congressional leaders were in a frugal mood. Only after intense lobbying by Oregon boosters and a second trip to Washington, D.C., by corporation president Harvey Scott did a modest appropriations bill pass. The battle to secure federal funds had already taken place when Oregon women began to lobby for the Board of Women Managers. See Carl Abbott, *The Great Extravaganza*, 16–17.

29. *The Exposition*, 1:8 (July 1903), 4.

30. Scott to Board of Managers, September 7, 1903, in MSS 1609, box 1, folder 3, OHS Research Library.

31. Wade to Reed, July 4, 1903, in MSS 1609, OHS Research Library.

32. *The Exposition*, 1:8 (July 1903), 4.

33. Articles of Incorporation of the Lewis and Clark Centennial and American Exposition and Oriental Fair, Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition 1905, Official Records: History, v. 8, 302, John Wilson Room, Multnomah County Library.

34. Evans to Dye, August 14, 1904, in Sacajawea Statue Association, MSS 1089 [hereafter MSS 1089], OHS Research Library.

35. Hoyt to Goode, August 15, 1904, in MSS 1609, box 10, folder 9, OHS Research Library.

36. See MSS 1609, box 16, folder 3, OHS Research Library.

37. Henry E. Reed, “Official History of the Lewis & Clark Exposition,” MSS 383B, OHS Research Library.

38. Harper, *History of Woman Suffrage*, 5:147.

39. The selling of spoons was a clever and more indirect way of publicizing suffrage than the more common sale of suffrage buttons, blouses, or valentines. See Margaret Finnegan, *Selling Suffrage* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), chapter 4.

40. Records in the Lewis and Clark Exposition President’s Office Correspondence contain an April 5, 1904, letter from Kate Gordon, Corresponding Secretary to NAWSA, to H.W. Goode, “Director-General” of the Exposition, accepting his invitation to name June 24, 1905, “Woman Suffrage Day of the Lewis & Clark Exposition,” Women’s National Suffrage Association file, MSS 1609, box 16, folder 3, OHS Research Library. Although the date of the convention was changed, subsequent plans for a “Woman’s Suffrage Day” seem to have been forgotten by fair organizers. June 24 ended up being “Good Roads Day.” Exposition programs directly before June 30 announce the upcoming day as “Woman’s Day,” yet the program for that day fails to include that moniker.

41. Edwards, *Sowing Good Seeds*, 230.

42. *Oregonian*, July 1, 1905.

43. Henry E. Reed, “Official History,” 321.

44. Harper, *History of Woman Suffrage*, 5:117–18, 131.

45. Duniway’s biographer insists that Duniway was excluded from speaking, but the actual program, NAWSA’s official history of the convention, and Duniway’s own memoir all record otherwise. Ruth Barnes Moynihan, *Rebel*

- for *Rights*, Abigail Scott Duniway (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1983), 211.
46. As quoted in Edwards, *Sowing Good Seeds*, 227–28.
  47. Portland Woman’s Club Minutebook, October 13, 1905, MSS 1084, box 1, folder 8, OHS Research Library.
  48. Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood*, 23.
  49. See Robert W. Rydell, *World of Fairs: the Century-of-Progress Expositions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 27–30; and George McCue, *Sculpture City: St. Louis* (New York: Hudson Hill Press, 1988), 58.
  50. Weimann, *The Fair Women*, chapter 4, 284–95; and Browne, *Eva Emery Dye*, 54.
  51. McCue, *Sculpture City*, 67.
  52. *The Exposition*, 1:6 (May 1903), 3–4.
  53. Undated appeal, in MSS 1089, box 4, folder 7, OHS Research Library.
  54. *Oregonian*, December 5, 1903.
  55. Evans to Dye, December 5, 1903, in MSS 1089, box 4, folder 7, OHS Research Library. Browne incorrectly ascribes this comment to October 5 rather than November 5. Evans was writing in response to the *Oregonian* article of the same date.
  56. Evans to Dye, February 29, 1904, in MSS 1089, box 4, folder 8, OHS Research Library.
  57. *Lewis and Clark Journal*, June 1904, 18–19.
  58. Typescript letter to Red Men lodges, n.d., in MSS 1089, box 4, folder 6, OHS Research Library.
  59. Evans to Dye, August 18, September 9, and 14, 1904, in MSS 1089, box 4, folder 8, OHS Research Library.
  60. Browne, *Eva Emery Dye*, 108–109.
  61. Reed, “Official History,” 414, 419.
  62. Evans to Dye, October 5, 1904, in MSS 1089, box 4, folder 8, OHS Research Library.
  63. Evans to Dye, June 24, 1905, MSS 1084, box 4, folder 8, OHS Research Library.
  64. On the statue’s travel to Portland free of charge, see *Oregon Journal*, April 23, 1905.
  65. Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition Official Program, July 1, 1905, 11.
  66. Evans to Dye, n.d., in MSS 1084, box 4, folder 8; and Reed, “Official History,” 172.
  67. Evans to Dye, n.d., in MSS 1084, box 4, folder 8; and *Oregonian*, July 7, 1905.
  68. *Oregonian* July 7, 1905.
  69. Reed, “Official History,” 409.
  70. As a member of the Board of Lady Managers in St. Louis, Montgomery would have been a logical candidate for such a board in Portland, though she claimed her duties in St. Louis made this impossible. In an undated manuscript in the OHS Research Library collection of her papers (MSS 2727), Montgomery recounts the story of her later conversion to supporting woman suffrage.
  71. *Oregon Journal*, September 4, 1904. On clubwomen’s use of symbols, see Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood*, 132–34. On suffragists’ use of the “justice argument” employed by Duniway and the “social change” argument embraced by Evans, see Browne, *Eva Emery Dye*, 124.
  72. Evans to Dye, October 25, 1903, in MSS 1089, box 4, folder 7, OHS Research Library.
  73. *Oregon Journal*, August 8, 1904.
  74. *Ibid.*, August 14, 1904.
  75. Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood*, 177ff.
  76. *Oregon Journal*, December 25, 1904.
  77. *Oregon Journal*, January 15, 1905.
  78. Duniway, *Path Breaking*, 122.
  79. *Oregon Journal*, May 4, 1904.
  80. *Ibid.*, August 14, 1904.
  81. *Ibid.*, August 21, 1904.
  82. See Rebecca J. Mead, *How the Vote Was Won: Woman Suffrage in the Western United States, 1868–1914* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), 97–107; and Kimberly Jensen, “‘Neither Head nor Tail to the Campaign’: Esther Pohl Lovejoy and the Oregon Woman Suffrage Victory of 1912” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 108:3 (Fall 2007): 350–83.
  83. Browne, *Eva Emery Dye*, 122, 102, 168n11.
  84. On Duniway and her critics, see Edwards, *Sowing Good Seeds*, 251. See also Mead, *How the Vote Was Won*, 102.
  85. See Moynihan, *Rebel for Rights*, 215–16, 225n2. On Evans’s ability to get things done and willingness to take credit, see Browne, *Eva Emery Dye*, 103, 106.
  86. Rydell, *World of Fairs*, 225–26n13. On the “cultural hegemony school,” see also Rydell, Findling, and Pelle, *Fair America*; and Rydell, *All the World’s a Fair*.
  87. Blee, “Completing Lewis and Clark’s Westward March,” 232–45.
  88. Gail Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880–1917* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press), 75, 121–22, 167.
  89. Shaw quoted in Edwards, *Sowing Good Seeds*, 228.