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"Are You With Us?": A Study of the Hoosier Suffrage Movement, 1844-1920

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"Are You With Us?":
A Study of the Hoosier Suffrage Movement, 1844-1920

A Thesis

Presented to the Department of History

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of the Requirements for Graduation Honors

Sarah Elizabeth Bowman

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April 22, 1912 was an eventful day for a group of suffragettes in northern Indiana. It was election day in West Hammond, a city straddling the Indiana-Illinois border, and local reformer Virginia Brooks was running for school board president. Brooks' female supporters spent the day at the polls, encouraging voters to elect Brooks to office. However, when Hammond resident Julius Lessner appeared at the voting site, tension and violence escalated between the parties. According to an article in *The Inter Ocean*, a Chicago newspaper, Lessner:

> delivered himself of a few personal views of the election to a crowd of voters. The views did not meet with the approval of the suffragists....In an instant a score of the Amazonian guards...surrounded the man and physically expressed their sentiments in the matter. In about three minutes all that was left of Mr. Lessner that was recognizable were a few weak efforts at resistance and a vociferous repetition of the same political views he had previously expressed. Not satisfied that they had materially changed the man's appearance, the women then bodily carried him off and hurled him into a ditch of water.[1]

Lessner's friends pulled him out of the ditch and took him to a hospital for treatment. Later that day it was declared that Virginia Brooks had won the election, defeating three male candidates. News of Brooks' victory and the actions of her bold supporters reached newspapers throughout the Midwest, but it also spread to papers on both coasts of the United States.[2]

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[1] "Fist Fights Put to Rout Suffrage Foes," *Inter Ocean*, April 23, 1912, accessed March 17, 2015, http://www.newspapers.com/image/34575885. At this time, Virginia Brooks was well-known in West Hammond for advocating reform in the city. While West Hammond technically lies in Illinois, the main portion of Hammond is in Indiana. The name was changed from West Hammond to Calumet City in 1924.

[2] "Suffragists Duck Opponent," *Daily Free Press* (Carbondale, IL), April 24, 1912, accessed March 22, 2015, http://www.newspapers.com/image/10868397; "Man Thrown Into Ditch," *Indianapolis News*, April 23, 1912, accessed March 22, 2015, http://newspaper.com/image/387325031; "Modern 'Joan of Arc' Elected in Illinois," *San Francisco Call*, April 23, 1912, accessed March 22, 2015, http://newspapers.com/image/80850115; "Value of Education," *Washington Post*, April 28, 1912, accessed March 22, 2015, http://newspapers.com/image/28901246; "Suffragists Have a Busy Day and Carry Election," *Oakland Tribune*, April 23, 1912, accessed March 22, 2015, http://newspapers.com/image/76337027.

While the actions of these Hoosier suffragettes may have shocked some, their behavior -and cause- would not have been unfamiliar to witnesses at the scene or to those who read about it. By 1912, women's suffrage had grown to be one of the most recognized and controversial movements in the world, as the fight for enfranchisement was already a prolonged battle of more than half a century. Improved technology and better communication meant that major suffrage achievements and setbacks became international news stories. Just a month before Virginia Brooks' triumph, for example, British suffragettes belonging to the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) participated in window-breaking demonstrations in London.[3] Furthermore, only two weeks after Brooks' election, 20,000 American suffragists marched in the streets of New York City demanding the right to vote. Whether through elections, club meetings, parades, demonstrations, or newspaper articles, women's suffrage was everywhere- including Indiana.

The story of Brooks and her "militant" followers is just one example of the political activism that Hoosier suffragists engaged in throughout their struggle to secure enfranchisement. However, the Indiana suffrage movement has failed to attract the attention of scholars studying the national women's suffrage movement and those examining state history. This is problematic because the events that occurred in Indiana can augment existing knowledge of both women's, suffrage, and state histories. For example, several prominent suffragists, like Ida Husted Harper and May Wright Sewall, were Hoosiers. Harper, in fact, worked with Susan B. Anthony and wrote her authorized

[3] John Simkin, "Women's Social & Political Union (Suffragettes)" *Spartacus-Educational*, accessed March 25, 2016, http://spartacus-educational.com/Wwspu.htm.

biography. For over 75 years, thousands of women participated in suffrage activities across Indiana, illustrating a long-lasting commitment and passion for the cause.

The few historians who have examined the state's movement insist that Indiana mirrored the national movement in strategies and politics. Furthermore, they promote the characterization of Hoosier suffragists as "ladylike reformers," which means they were respectable, conservative, and did not desire too much public attention.[4] In these histories, white, middle- or upper class women are the focus of study, and suffragists from other demographics are either ignored or are only briefly mentioned. The story of the "Amazonian guards" above, however, suggests that the Indiana suffrage movement was not as one-sided as it has been portrayed. My research demonstrates that "ladylike reformers" are only part of the story. Thus, it is imperative to study and discuss both ladylike reformers and more militant suffragists as both groups were present on the national stage and in Indiana.

The purpose of this thesis is to present a more complete portrait of the Hoosier suffrage movement by providing the stories of suffragists with more radical inclinations, those from the working-class and rural locations, and women of color. In addition, this thesis studies the movement comprehensively (from 1844-1920) in order to emphasize the long suffrage legacy in Indiana. To ignore or forget the contributions made by all "types" of suffragists is to deny an important chapter of Hoosier history.

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[4] "Ladylike" suffragists were typically well-off society women who participated in a variety of club and reform organizations. As "respectable" women, they would have only wanted positive and limited press coverage about their work; for more about "ladylike reformers," see Barbara Anne Springer, *Ladylike Reformers: Indiana Women and Progressive Reform, 1900-1920* (Ph.D. Indiana University, 1985). Additionally, Springer also writes that Hoosier female reformers during the Progressive Era, "began cautiously, using such noncontroversial devices as memorials and petitions, avoiding militancy, and trying always to behave in a 'ladylike manner."

This project is based on primary sources and archival materials such as letters, leaflets, newspaper articles, suffrage organizational records, photographs, speeches, and other similar documents. Specifically, this project utilizes archival collections of the Women's Franchise League (WFL) of Indiana. This association was affiliated with the much larger and more influential national group, the National American Woman's Suffrage Association (NAWSA). Additionally, the Congressional Union (CU) also held memberships within the state. Although most documents are located in Indianapolis archives, records show that membership of all groups were found across the state, illustrating the widespread interest of the movement throughout Indiana.

In addition to primary documents, secondary sources are essential to understanding suffrage at the national level and in Indiana. Three works are at the core of this project. First, Barbara Springer's 1985 dissertation is one of the few pieces of scholarship that examines the Hoosier suffrage movement during the Progressive Era. Springer's *Ladylike Reformers: Indiana Women and Progressive Reform, 1900-1920,* studies the reform work undertaken by Hoosier women in the early twentieth century.[5] Her work is not exclusive to suffrage activism, however, as Springer includes also includes female reformers involved in temperance, labor, and housing reform movements.

Although her work covers a variety of women and their causes, Springer finds a commonality between them: they were all "ladylike reformers," respectable middle- or upper-class white women dedicated to the improvement of their communities. While a large number of Hoosier suffragists could certainly be described as such, Springer

[5] Barbara Springer, *Ladylike Reformers: Indiana Women and Progressive Reform, 1900-1920* (PhD. diss., Indiana University, 1985).

overlooks the fact that there were other suffragists who do not fit with her characterization. This thesis argues that not all the women who participated in the Hoosier suffrage movement were "ladylike"; furthermore, it also reexamines what it meant to be a "ladylike reformer."

In her Master's thesis, "Indianapolis Women Working for the Right to Vote: The Forgotten Drama of 1917," Jennifer Kalvaitis tells the story of a series of Hoosier court cases that examined the legality of female enfranchisement in agreement with the state constitution and municipal suffrage laws.[6] Kalvaitis' work focuses primarily on the actions of members of the WFL and follows Springer's lead in stating that these women were respectable and conservative suffragists. Although this is her main stance, Kalvaitis writes that as enfranchisement was continually denied them, even these ladylike reformers grew more bold in their words and actions by the end of the 1910s. Furthermore, Kalvaitis acknowledges that Indiana also had suffragists who did not belong to the Woman's Franchise League (WFL). She briefly mentions working women, African Americans, and radicals in her thesis. While they are only a small part of her overall discussion, the inclusion of other suffrage supporters in this work is noteworthy and encouraging as it presents a more multi-faceted story of women's suffrage in Indiana.

Lisa Tetrault writes of the connections between suffrage history and historical memory in her book *The Myth of Seneca Falls: Memory and the Women's Suffrage Movement, 1848-1898*.[7] This work is significant because it examines how and why certain histories are preserved or forgotten as well as the implications that follow. More

[6] Jennifer M. Kalvaitis, "Indianapolis Women Working for the Right to Vote: The Forgotten Drama of 1917," (Master's thesis, Indiana University, 2013).
[7] Lisa Tetrault, *The Myth of Seneca Falls: Memory and the Women's Suffrage Movement, 1848-1898*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014).

specifically, Tetrault challenges the historical memory surrounding the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848 and Susan B. Anthony. The author argues that the legacy of Seneca Falls was created by Anthony in the late nineteenth century to unify and strengthen the national movement that remained divided after the Civil War. During the process of creating a history of women's suffrage in the United States, Anthony selected which events were essential and which were not. Consequently, standardized U.S. history only provides a partial account of suffrage activities during the nineteenth century.

Similarly, my project seeks to understand why historians of the Hoosier suffrage movement have been invested in the ideas of "ladylike reformers" and a conservative movement. The story of women's suffrage in Indiana was much longer and more radical that it has been portrayed; therefore, it becomes necessary to contemplate why scholars prefer to discuss the "ladylike reformers" instead of the "Amazonian guards." Have historians only paid attention to the documents that display the words and actions of the "ladylike reformers?" Or do scholars want to continue to highlight the conservative nature of Indiana by ignoring the more progressive people and events?

My thesis draws on various primary and secondary sources to create an overview of the Hoosier suffrage movement. In the first half of this work, I describe some major events that occurred during Indiana's seventy-five year battle for enfranchisement. Instances such as the 1859 presentation of a women's rights petition to the Indiana General Assembly, letter writing campaigns carried out by the Indianapolis Equal Suffrage Association in 1887, and the response to the 1917 passage and retraction of the Maston-McKinley Partial Suffrage Act demonstrate that Hoosier suffragists vigorously participated in both the social and political spheres as they worked to attain the vote. This

illustrates that Hoosier suffragists did not simply discuss enfranchisement amongst themselves within the comfort of their own homes. On the contrary, they took action in both their communities and in the state capital and engaged Hoosier residents and politicians alike. Furthermore, these examples highlight the long support of enfranchisement in Indiana. Dedication to the suffrage movement spanned generations and involved numerous women through the course of more than seventy-five years.

The second half of this thesis presents a study of radical Hoosier suffragists. Although I struggled with using the word "radical," I ultimately decided that it was the most apt term to describe the beliefs of these women towards suffrage and reform. I use "radical" to counter "ladylike," which implies propriety and diffidence. On the contrary, the leaders that I discuss below were innovative women with bold ideas. Mary F. Thomas, May Wright Sewall, Ida Husted Harper, and Virginia Brooks are just four examples .They pursued professional careers and supported progressive women's reforms, like education, dress, and equal pay. While it may be tempting to categorize them as "ladylike" due to their class and race (middle-class white women), their beliefs and actions suggest otherwise. I argue that it is erroneous to categorize Hoosier suffragists according to their demographics. Instead, actions and beliefs provide more telling evidence of their progressive stance towards suffrage.

Highlights of the Hoosier Suffrage Movement, 1844-1920

In *The Myth of Seneca Falls*, Lisa Tetrault states that Midwestern women were some of the most enthusiastic supporters of women's rights during the post-Civil War era. They worked at both the state and national level, although many women were particularly dedicated grassroots activists in their respective states. These suffragists hoped to change

individual state laws that prohibited woman's suffrage instead of pushing for a national amendment that would give women the vote. As a result, this created a strong sense of regional identity. In 1869, Midwestern suffragists attempted to establish their own organization, the Western Woman Suffrage Association. Hoosier activists were certainly involved with this group, as one of the initial calls for the association occurred at a meeting that took place in Indiana.[8] This example, and the ones that follow, show that Indiana women were active and invested in the suffrage movement before and after the turn of the century.

One of the earliest endeavors into women's activism in the state occurred before the Civil War. In 1844 the Indiana General Assembly received its first petition on behalf of women's rights. This petition, which took place four years before the infamous Seneca Falls convention[9], was not focused on suffrage; instead, it requested the right for married women to own property. Many politicians initially found this appeal humorous and the committee to which it was delivered ignored it. Despite this reaction, however, in 1846 Hoosier women were granted the right to make wills and retained some property rights at the time of marriage.[10] Although this petition was treated as a joke[11] and quickly

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[8] Lisa Tetrault, *The Myth of Seneca Falls,*48-55. The author writes, "in June of 1869, activists at an Indiana suffrage meeting backed the creation of a new regional association, the Western Woman Suffrage Association. Women and men throughout the Midwest also supported the idea. In the fall of 1869, the same year the National and American Associations were created, Midwestern women held a large convention in Chicago to launch the Western Woman Suffrage Association."

[9] Ibid., 1-20. In this work, Tetrault describes the creation of what she calls "the myth of Seneca Falls," a story which asserts that the Woman's Rights Convention of 1848 at Seneca Falls, New York was the birth of the American women's rights movement. On the contrary, Tetrault contends that the tale was invented for a specific purpose (to unify a fragmented suffrage movement in the years following the Civil War) and that Seneca Falls was not the starting point for women's rights in the United States. Indeed, plenty of evidence suggests that women's rights activism began before that renowned meeting. Numerous activists, like the Grimké sisters and Lucretia Mott, lectured on behalf of women's rights in the years preceding 1848. The fact that the 1844 Indiana petition occurred four years prior to Seneca Falls augments Tetrault's claim.

[10] Pat Creech Scholten, "A Public 'Jollification': The 1859 Women's Rights Petition before the Indiana Legislature," *Indiana Magazine of History*, 72 no. 4 (1976): 347-349. In this article Scholten describes how the 1859 women's rights petition was regarded as a "farce" by some politicians, journalists, and Hoosiers.

forgotten by many Hoosiers, women's rights activists made a second attempt fifteen years later and proceeded to cause a sensation in the political and social realms.

The presentation of the 1859 petition received much attention because it marked the first time in Indiana history that women appeared before of the state legislature. Not only were women scattered throughout the audience during the joint session, but three Hoosier activists addressed the General Assembly- unlike the presentation of the 1844 petition, which was introduced by male supporters.[12] Mary F. Thomas, as the initial orator, thus became the first Hoosier woman to deliver a speech to the Assembly. Thomas was cognizant of the significance of the occasion and the derisive attitudes of the men. Thus, her remarks at the assembly:

> permit me, friends, to say a word before reading our petition. Brothers and sisters, we have not come here to exhibit ourselves as a show to our brothers of the General Assembly. We have come here feeling deeply the need of that which we petition of you; and I beg of you to receive us as becomes our cause and your position in this place.[13]

Both the petition and Thomas' speech centered around two demands: equal property rights and the vote for women in Indiana. Thomas was followed by two more female speakers, Mary B. Birdsall and Agnes Cook.[14]

The author illustrates the political and social antagonism that Hoosier suffragists faced during the mid-nineteenth century. Moreover, Scholten shows sympathy when describing the plight of early Hoosier activists.

[11] Ibid., 348. Journalists recounted the event as "'a noisy and foolish meeting' and 'an extemporized affair' that included 'desultory debates'...."

[12] Ibid. On this subject, Scholten writes, "for the first time in Indiana women had publicly presented a petition calling for women's rights- a petition signed by over one thousand residents of Wayne County, including signatures of both women and legal (i.e. male) voters. And if this were not enough, three women had addressed this joint session of the Indiana Legislature, the first time that a person of the female sex had spoken before the state legislature."

[13] Ibid., 352.

[14] Ibid., 354. Unfortunately, Birdsall's speech was not published and no record of it can be found. Cook's address primarily focused on temperance.

The reaction to the 1859 petition and presentation was negative. As mentioned, many Hoosier men found the event to be humorous or frivolous. Others thought that the request for equal rights was problematic because it would upset the status quo or because the female disposition was ill-suited to politics. In an anonymous letter to the *Indiana Weekly State Journal*, "John Young" clearly expresses these opinions. He asserted, "'these very extravagancies, ladies, show that impulse and feeling prevail too much in your nature to fit you for the cool calculations of statesmanship.'" Young continued by adding that women would "soon be corrupted, your beauty will fade, your virtue would become weak and vacillating.'"[15]Sentiments such as these prevailed across the state in the following decades, creating a hostile environment for Hoosier suffragists; consequently, the movement stagnated in the political sphere. Despite this, women persisted to organize and fight for enfranchisement, although they made little headway in the years succeeding the Civil War.

At the national level, resistance to suffrage also occurred. Suffragists faced difficulties in Eastern, Southern, and Midwestern states, but several Western territories began to grant women the vote as they became states (Wyoming became the first in 1890). The Western successes encouraged many women across the country in spite of the numerous political setbacks.

By the dawn of the twentieth century, however, the U.S. women's suffrage movement was under new leadership. Later called by historians the "middle generation," these women steered the movement in a different way than their mothers and grandmothers had. Led by Carrie Chapman Catt, Anna Howard Shaw, and Harriot Stanton Blatch, daughter of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, NAWSA began to use different

[15] Ibid., 357-358.

tactics to gain awareness. Inspired by the successes of the Western states, these leaders switched from fighting for a national amendment to advocating for state constitutional revisions. Whereas Stanton and Anthony favored a Constitutional amendment, Catt and Shaw hoped that each individual state would adopt suffrage.

Additionally, arguments for enfranchisement during this period shifted from the need for equality to claims of superior female morality. Historian Lois Banner writes, " Stanton and Anthony had argued that women deserved the vote because, like men, they had a 'natural right' to it. The next generation contended that women as mothers needed the vote to protect the home and that the nation needed the votes of native Anglo-Saxon women to counteract the supposedly pernicious effects of immigrant and black males' votes." [16] As a result, this new moral and social appeal appeared less radical than the previous generation's demand for equality between the sexes.

Consequently, NAWSA chapters spread across the country and thousands of women boasted membership. This was incredibly powerful because it created a nation-wide network dedicated to the movement. While NAWSA headquarters remained on the East Coast and focused primarily on Washington, D.C. and a national amendment, state branches could work for enfranchisement within their borders. Using this approach, NAWSA was able to fight a two-front battle with the federal and state governments. With western states increasingly adopting woman suffrage, supporters believed that it was only a matter of time until the federal government would finally concede or that each state would eventually amend their constitution to allow women's suffrage.

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[16] Lois W. Banner, *Women in Modern America: A Brief History* (New York: Houghton Brace Jovanovich, 1974): 92.

Although NAWSA remained the largest and one of the most influential suffrage association s until the ratification of the 19th amendment, additional organizations also sprouted across the United States. For example, the Woman's Franchise League (WFL) was the dominant suffrage association in Indiana. Despite a different name, the WFL of Indiana existed as a branch of NAWSA. Hoosier members of the WFL attended NAWSA conventions and participated in other NAWSA events. State leaders met and corresponded with national leaders to strategize over the course of action for Indiana. Moreover, the 1919 state membership directory lists Dr. Anna Howard Shaw and Carrie Chapman Catt as Honorary President and President, respectively.[17]

Perhaps because of this allegiance to NAWSA and its emphasis on respectability, the WFL thrived in the Hoosier state. Founded in 1911, the WFL established charter branches in Indianapolis and Vincennes. But by its first anniversary, the organization added thirty-four more. The number continued to grow; by 1916, the WFL had sixty branches. In 1921, the year that the WFL disbanded, that number had nearly doubled, with 112 branches throughout the state. [18] Furthermore, the WFL divided Indiana into thirteen districts. Except for Starke County, the remaining ninety-one counties comprised the thirteen segments.[19] (See Map 1 in Appendix). As this data shows, Hoosier women statewide had an interest in the fight for women's suffrage.

As for leadership, the structure was fairly straightforward. At the state level, the WFL consisted of a board of directors comprised of thirty-eight women: twenty -five

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[17] 1919 Directory, Woman's Franchise League of Indiana, Collection M0612, Series I, Box 2, Folder 8, William H. Smith Memorial Library, Indianapolis Historical Society, Indianapolis, IN.
[18] Wendy L. Adams and Chelsea Sutton, "Members of the Woman's Franchise League of Indiana, 1915-1917," *Genealogy Across Indiana*, (Indianapolis: Indianapolis Historical Society Press, 2011), 1.
[19] This information is found in the 1919 Directory. "1919 Directory," Woman's Franchise League of Indiana, Collection M0612, Series I, Box 2, Folder 8, William H. Smith Memorial Library, Indianapolis Historical Society, Indianapolis, IN.

members elected from around the state and the chairwomen from each of the thirteen districts. The same pattern was repeated at the district-level: an executive committee comprised of a chairwoman, secretary-treasurer, and one president from each county in the district.[20] Twice a year, WFL members came together for a state convention. There, suffragists addressed any organizational issues, discussed the condition of suffrage at the state and national levels, and listened to guest lecturers.[21]

Interestingly, branches of the WFL could be found in all types of locations: larger urban cities like Indianapolis, Ft. Wayne, Evansville, South Bend, and Terre Haute (with populations ranging from 233,650 to 53,684 in 1910); smaller cities like Lafayette, Muncie, and Kokomo (all with populations around 20,000 in 1910); rural towns like Bloomington, Peru, and Elwood (populations around 10,000 in 1910); and several smaller towns with populations under 5,000. In a few instances, there were even women from places like Judson and Sulphur Springs with 1910 populations of 141 and 209, respectively. Therefore, this data shows that Hoosier women from various geographies across the state participated in the movement. Likewise, when the data is charted on a map, one clearly can see the statewide dedication to women's suffrage.[22](See Maps 2-3 in Appendix).

Additionally, members were also expected to pay annual dues to their districts. In 1913, dues were fifty cents, with half of the amount staying in the district and the other

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[20] Adams and Sutton, "Members of the Woman's Franchise League of Indiana, 1915-1917," 1. The size of the district executive committee varied according to size of membership. As district membership numbers increased, more executive positions were created. Likewise, in districts with smaller numbers, positions were taken away; however, there was always a president in each county and a chairwoman in each district.
[21] *Ibid.*, 1. The authors write, "the league held yearly statewide conventions, where members could make amendments to the organization's constitution and hear lectures on possible forthcoming state legislation, and other topics related to the women's suffrage movement in Indiana."
[22] "Complete Organization of the Woman's Franchise League of Indiana," M 0612, Series I, box 1, folder 14, William H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, IN. This document lists the places of residence from which its members hail, but only for the years 1911-1916.

half going to the state board. As membership significantly increased over the next few years, annual dues dropped to twenty-five cents. Adjusted for inflation, fifty cents in 1913 is equivalent to $11.85 in 2015 and twenty-five cents in 1916 is equivalent to $5.38 in 2015.[23] This information generates important questions concerning class and female suffrage participation in Indiana.

While most of the archival records and newspaper stories illustrate the prominence of middle and upper-class women, given the popularity of the WFL across the state, one can assume that working-class women were also drawn to the suffrage movement even though they do not overtly appear in the archive. In fact, the counties that had the highest level of WFL membership were located in the central and north-central regions of the state- areas that were primarily dominated by agriculture and manufacturing (see Maps 2- 3and Charts 1-3 in Appendix). Thus, a large portion of the populations of those counties would have been comprised of farmers and factory workers. Therefore it is not plausible to believe that such high levels of membership were derived only from wealthy women in those districts.

In Wayne County, for example, a farmer's wife was the first to register to vote in the summer of 1917. An article in *The Indianapolis News* declared, "when the Wayne County board of registration opened its session, the first person to qualify as a voter was a woman. She was Mrs. Winfield Smelser, wife of a farmer, living south of Richmond."[24] The same piece also described the successful registration of an illiterate woman who was "poorly but neatly dressed" in Muncie, Indiana. (The woman was assisted by a

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[23] *Ibid.*, 1.; Inflation calculations were made using the online CPI calculation on the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics website, www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculation.htm, accessed 28 April 2015. These calculations make it easier to understand how much WFL women were expected to pay in dues each year.

[24] "First Women to Register," *The Indianapolis News*, June 30, 1917, accessed April 25, 2016, https://www.newspapers.com/image/38461933.

registration clerk, also a female).[25] This article demonstrates that rural and poor women were also eager for enfranchisement.

In her Master's thesis, Jennifer Kalvaitis also grapples with the issue of class and suffrage in Indiana. She writes, "the three Indianapolis newspapers did not provide much coverage on working-class women's involvement in the suffrage movement....very rarely did the *Indianapolis Star* mention anything about women outside the wealthier classes."[26] This particular topic deserves to be examined in greater detail. Was the prominence of middle and upper-class women in newspaper coverage due to respectability politics, or was it because the WFL only attracted wealthy suffragists? I am more likely to believe the former rather than the latter, and as I have suggested, I find it unlikely that working-class women did not participate in the Hoosier suffrage movement. The high numbers of membership in rural counties implies that working-class women had an interest in suffrage, in spite of the fact that they were not often mentioned in press coverage.

Similarly, the same principal can be applied to race. Although most of the women featured in news articles about suffrage were white, African American women belonged to suffrage associations as well. As was true at the national level, Hoosier African American women were typically excluded from various types of reform organizations; consequently, they often had to form their own clubs.[27] In Indianapolis, groups like the Women's Advance Franchise League, the Woman's Suffrage League of the Second

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[25] Ibid.
[26] Kalvaitis, 55.
[27] Emma Lou Thornborough, and Lana Ruegamer, ed., *Indiana Blacks in the Twentieth Century* (Bloomington, IN: 2000): 23-24. Historian Emma Lou Thornborough writes, "the Indiana Federation of Colored Women's Clubs and the National Association of Colored Women were not affiliated with their white counterparts, the Indiana State Federation of Women's Clubs and the General Federation of Women's clubs."

Baptist Church, the Woman's Suffrage Club of Irvington, and the Fourth Ward League of North Indianapolis were popular choices of African American suffragists.[28]

However, one "Afro-African" group and one "colored" group appear in the WFL 1919 State Directory (Marion, Grant Co. and Wabash, Wabash Co., respectively).[29] In the record, these two organizations are clearly designated as separate from the other WFL branches in their cities and counties (for example, the city of Marion is listed as having an "Afro-American" branch in addition to a presumably all-white branch), but the fact that they are included in the Directory poses intriguing questions regarding race and suffrage in Indiana. Like in the case of working-class women, archival and newspaper sources are limited in their information about African American suffragists. Yet, the inclusion of the two African American branches in the WFL 1919 Directory indicates that African American women insisted on equality within the Woman's Franchise League of Indiana.

Moreover, some Hoosier suffragist opposed the segregated clubs. Thornborough states, "a few white clubwomen and feminists made efforts to cooperate with and assist the black organizations. Among them was May Wright Sewall of Indianapolis, the president of the International Council of Women, who spoke at the first convention of the Indiana Federation of Colored Women's Clubs."[30] As the WFL documents and the Thornborough passage illustrate, the suffrage movement in Indiana was more

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[28] Kalvaitis., 57.

[29] 1919 Directory, Woman's Franchise League of Indiana, Collection M0612, Series I, Box 2, Folder 8, William H. Smith Memorial Library, Indianapolis Historical Society, Indianapolis, IN. The Directory lists the names and addresses of each member in every county in which there is a WFL branch. It also provides the names of state and local leadership.

[30] Thornborough, *Indiana Blacks in the Twentieth Century*, 23-24.

complicated that scholars have insisted. Hoosier suffragists were not just a homogenous mass of "ladylike reformers." Instead, they were ideologically and racially diverse.

While the existing records show that many Hoosier suffragists in Indiana were white and wealthy, other evidence from the WFL papers suggests that, because of their racial or socio-economic status, the WFL also had members who were not "ladylike reformers." It is difficult to determine the cause behind why these suffragists have been left out of the Hoosier suffrage narrative. In part, it could be due to a lack of sources. The "ladylike reformers," and even the radical Hoosier suffragists (who were often white and wealthy as well), received more press coverage as a result of their high-ranking positions in suffrage organizations and society. However, to tell the story of enfranchisement in Indiana without acknowledging the participation of African American and working-class women (and any other marginalized suffragists) is precarious because it creates an incomplete history.

One of the major events that occurred during the final years of the Hoosier movement was the passage and retraction of the 1917 Maston-McKinley Partial Suffrage Act. This controversial legislation and the judicial rulings that followed form the subject of Jennifer Kalvaitis' Master's thesis, "Indianapolis Women Working for the Right to Vote: The Forgotten Drama of 1917." According to Kalvaitis, the Maston-McKinley Partial Suffrage Act "granted women suffrage in municipal elections, school elections, and special elections, including referenda on prohibition and electing delegates to the proposed constitutional convention in1917. While the bill did not grant women the right

to vote in presidential or state elections, partial suffrage gave them a significantly amplified voice in the public realm."[31]

Although this was certainly a victory for suffragists, many Hoosiers opposed the new legislation. Henry W. Bennett was the first to take action. He filed a lawsuit against a different 1917 law, one that called for a constitutional convention, and also questioned the constitutionality of women's partial suffrage.[32] Kalvaitis describes it as such: the Marion County Superior Court ruled in favor of the constitutional convention law, but against the partial suffrage law. As a result, Bennett appealed and the case went to the Indiana Supreme Court. The state Supreme Court declared that the constitutional convention law was in violation of the existing state Constitution, but did not rule on the partial suffrage law.[33]

Unhappy with the ambiguity towards women's partial suffrage, another Indianapolis man, William Knight, "filed a lawsuit claiming the Indiana General Assembly did not have the right to extend the voter base through these means."[34] Knight claimed that women voting would create unnecessary costs for taxpayers (i.e. separate ballot boxes and more staff present at the polls). Ultimately, the Indiana Supreme Court ruled that the Maston-McKinney Partial Suffrage Act "violated Article II, Section 2 of the Indiana Constitution."[35]

While the judicial proceedings certainly tell a lot about how the Hoosier political sphere regarded women's suffrage, the reactions of suffragists tell a different story.

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[31] Kalvaitis, 1.
[32] Ibid. Bennett objected to the "high cost associated with holding a constitutional convention. He also complained about the constitutionality of the partial suffrage law , because that law allowed women to cast ballots for delegates to attend a constitutional convention."
[33] Ibid., 1-2.
[34] Ibid, 2.
[35] Ibid.

Frustrated by the proceedings, members of the WFL wrote and performed a skit to display their unhappiness. The satirical play centered around a cast of four characters: Lindy Anna, Bill Suffrage (Lindy Anna's beau), Sir Dark (the antagonist), Anti-Suff (Lindy Anna's aunt). In the play, Lindy Anna and Bill Suffrage were supposed to be married on November 6, but Anti-Suff "opposed the match" and convinced Lindy's father to "retract his consent" of the marriage. To make matter worse, Sir Dark, "appeared out of nowhere. He seemed to have no vested interest in the matter and yet opposed the match without providing a reason." After some arguments between Sir Dark and Bill Suffrage, the play ends happily with the marriage of Lindy and Bill.[36]

The skit was intended to be a ladylike display of disapproval.[37] Yet despite the element of respectability, it was an audacious move. This is because these Hoosier suffragists publicly showed their irritation with the opposition towards enfranchisement and specifically called them out (for instance, the character of Sir Dark) . For all of their efforts to be nonpartisan and respectful, the 1917 WFL play illustrates how the U.S. suffrage movement as a whole grew more assertive as the decade came to a close.[38] By the time the skit debuted, the White House pickets carried out by the National Woman's Party (NWP) had been in place for many months. Several picketers, or "silent sentinels," as they were called, had been arrested and served jail sentences. In addition, some even

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[36] Ibid., 76-77. A performance of the skit took place on September 28, 1917 at the Claypool Hotel.

[37] Ibid., 78. Kalvaitis writes, "while this play seemed to have been the most vocal and visual means Indianapolis women used to express their displeasure, it followed the societal expectations of women. Pageants put on by women and children celebrated achievements and holidays. The farcical nature of this play may have offended some of the real people the women mockingly portrayed; however, it was a response to an unfavorable ruling that fit within the confines of how women were taught to behave in society."

[38] "Miami County's 'Flying Squadron,'" *The Indianapolis News,* June 30, 1917, accessed February 6, 2016, https://www.newspapers.com/image/38461937. The Woman's Franchise League also utilized other tactics to gain public support. For example, the Miami County (Peru) branch organized "auto tours through the [Miami] county" in June 1917 to "[urge] all women to register." The auto tours took place a few months before the skit.

protested with hunger strikes. These women and their actions were sensationalized by the press and received plenty of attention.

Despite the fact that many Hoosiers suffragists disagreed with the NWP,[39] the Party's daring behavior challenged the boundaries of respectability and acceptability and also affected the actions of more conservative organizations, like the WFL. Perhaps this is why members of the WFL felt compelled to write and publicly perform a play that mocked the hostility to women's enfranchisement. Although the skit was indeed a ladylike tactic, it also reflected the increasingly assertive demand for suffrage that happened nationally.

Radical Hoosier Suffragists

Not only does Indiana have a long history of active suffrage participation, but the beliefs and behavior of several suffragists contest the characterization of a uniformly conservative and "ladylike" movement. The women I discuss below are examples of radical Hoosier suffragists. I describe them as such because they were professional women who demanded equal rights with men. While their socio-economic class and race may give them the appearance of "ladylike reformers," these Hoosier women defy such characterization. As Robert D. Johnston asserts in his book, *The Radical Middle Class: Populist Democracy and the Question of Capitalism in Progressive Era Portland, Oregon,* one's placement in a particular income bracket does not always equate a

[39] Kalvaitis, 80. The author states, "the Woman's Franchise League of Indiana repeatedly denied association with the women picketers. For example, in June [1917] the Franchise League released a statement calling the picketers 'undignified, unnecessary and disorderly.'"

rejection of radicalism.[40] Johnston challenges the notion that "middle-class" equates "conservative," and the same theory is applicable to the radical Hoosier suffragists.

Furthermore, although most of the women described below were active around the turn of the century, radical Hoosier suffragists supported the movement well before the Progressive Era. A prime example is Mary Thomas. Thomas was a trailblazer as both a professional woman and as a devoted activist for women's rights, and she attained many achievements in both roles. For example, in 1877 Mary Thomas became the second woman in the country to be admitted to the American Medical Association.[41]As for the start of her activist career, it is stated that Thomas was inspired after hearing Lucretia Mott speak in 1845. She was a member of the Indiana Woman's Rights Society, and served as the organization's president in 1856.

Not only was Mary Thomas active in Indiana, but she also occupied positions within the national movement. In 1857, she was an editor of the *Lily*, a woman's rights newspaper founded by Amelia Bloomer. After the Civil War, she held the presidency of the American Woman Suffrage Association (which later merged with the National

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[40] Robert D. Johnston, *The Radical Middle Class: Populist Democracy and the Question of Capitalism in Progressive Era Portland, Oregon,* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003, 12. Johnston fights against the characterization that all members of the middle-class were conservative and predictable. He writes, "in fact, we cannot formulate a satisfactory a priori theoretical definition that a scholar can use to examine the middle class with any chronological depth-if at all....To examine middling folks as they have constituted (or not constituted) a class *over time* requires giving up the illusion that sociological abstraction can aid us much beyond providing interesting ideas to reflect upon and use in a highly flexible manner. We must therefore blend together an eclectic mix of occupation and ideology, gender and culture, property and politics, in order to bring out a middle class...with any significant complexity and historical meaning."

[41] "Dr. Mary F. Thomas," Morrison-Reeves Library, accessed February 6, 2016, http://www.mrlinfo.org/history/biography/thomasmf.htm. Born into an abolitionist and Quaker family, Thomas learned to value equality from an early age. As an adolescent, her family resided in Washington, D.C., and Thomas's father would occasionally take her to congressional debates. She met and married Dr. Owen Thomas after the family relocated to New Lisbon, Ohio. During 1851 and 1852, Mary Thomas took medical courses at Penn State's Medical College for Women and followed those years with additional studies at Cleveland Medical College in 1852-1853. She began her practice in Fort Wayne, Indiana and after two years in the city, Thomas and her husband moved to Richmond, Indiana, a city known for its Quaker heritage. During the Civil War she participated with the Sanitation Commission and accompanied supplies from Indiana to the battle front. Following that, Thomas also worked alongside her husband in a Nashville hospital for the duration of the war.

Woman Suffrage Association to become the National American Woman Suffrage Association, NAWSA, the dominant suffrage organization of the late nineteenth century) for one year. Thomas died in 1888, and as she had previously requested, all of her pall bearers were women- two African American and four white.[42]

Although countless women contributed to the Hoosier suffrage movement, two suffragists were particularly well-known during the post-Civil War era. May Wright Sewall and Ida Husted Harper were suffragists who played key roles in both the Indiana and national movements. Like Mary F. Thomas before them, these two women maintained professional careers while actively working for suffrage and women's rights. While they were certainly regarded as respectable ladies, at times, Sewall and Harper each contested the prescribed roles and attitudes toward women. It is because of such reasons that I use the word "radical" to describe them.

May Wright Sewall[43] was an avid women's rights supporter who gained prominence not only in Indiana and the United States, but also globally. Her most recognizable achievement was the creation of the National and International Councils of Women, which she helped co-found in 1888.[44] Sewall hoped that the Councils would bring together women of different backgrounds and organizations to unite and discuss issues pertaining to women's rights. The Councils were not committed to a particular reform, political party, or religion, but instead welcomed any woman and association

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[42] Ibid.

[43] Jane Stephens, "May Wright Sewall: An Indiana Reformer," *Indiana Magazine of History*, 78 no.4 (1982): 274. Sewall was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in 1844. She first worked as a teacher before attending Northwestern Female College (now Northwestern University) and in 1866 "received the degree of Mistress of Science." Sewall then taught in Mississippi, Michigan, and Indiana. She obtained her Master of Arts degree in1871 and she married her first husband, Edwin Thompson, the following year; however, Thompson died of tuberculosis in 1875. She married Theodore Sewall in 1880 and taught at his school, the Indianapolis Classical School.

[44] Ibid., 282-284.

dedicated to the advancement of women. The International Council was especially successful, and by 1907 it boasted over twenty national councils and claimed the membership of approximately eight million women, making it the largest women's organization..[45] Today, the International Council of Women is still active and plays an important part in advancing women's causes throughout the world.

On a smaller scale, albeit no less important, May Wright Sewall's activism was paramount in the Hoosier state. As a university-educated woman and a teacher, one of Sewall's passions was female education reform. She argued that girls should be allowed to study the same curriculum as boys, and that less emphasis should be placed on the so-called "social graces." As if this was not already a controversial proposition, Sewall additionally advocated for dress reform and for physical education to be implemented in schools.[46]

During her years as an educator May Wright Sewall was also actively involved in the suffrage movement and belonged to Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton's National Woman's Suffrage Association. Frustrated by the resistance towards female enfranchisement in Indiana, Sewall and nine others held a secret meeting in 1878. The purpose of this gathering was to discuss how to create a more progressive suffrage society in Indianapolis. The secrecy did not last for long, however, as the participants

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[45] Ibid., 285.

[46] Ibid., 278-281. May Wright Sewall understood that change required action; as a result, she established the Girls' Classical School in Indianapolis with her husband Theodore (also an educator and reformer) in 1882. The curriculum utilized at this avant-garde institution followed the requirements of the entrance exams for Harvard, Smith, Vassar, and Wellesley. She also decided to omit the more traditional courses - like music and painting- and replaced them with Latin, Greek, mathematics, and physical education. Furthermore, as Jane Stephens writes, Sewall recommended a school uniform of a "kilt skirt and loose waist with a sash," which was uncommon "in the day of the corset, bustle, and petticoats...." The school served as a prep school for many college-bound women, but also educated those who did not plan on attending university. The Girls' Classical School offered courses in domestic science, chemistry, physics, cooking, and home nursing- well before it became common to do so.

decided to publicize their next meeting and establish a new organization. The result was the formation of the Indianapolis Equal Suffrage Association in April 1878. This was also the start of Sewall's involvement at the national level, as she participated in the 1878 NWSA Jubilee Convention.[47]

By the end of 1880, Sewall and her fellow IESA members decided to engage the stagnant representatives of the state legislature. In December of that year, each member of the Indiana General Assembly received a letter from the IESA. The contents of the letters "clearly warned the legislators that their careers were being watched carefully and urged that they take up the 'Suffrage Question,' devoting a day to hearing the arguments of suffrage advocates before voting to remove the 'unjust restrictions of the elective franchise to one sex.'"[48] This tactic proved successful , as both the Senate and the House approved a suffrage amendment for debate at the next General Assembly (1883). Yet resistance from the liquor industry (entrepreneurs were afraid that women would vote for prohibition) and the election of new representatives (who were anti-suffrage) in 1882 resulted in a resolute defeat.[49]

These setbacks did not deter Sewall or her fellow Hoosier suffragists from their activism. The movement continued to grow, and the Indianapolis Equal Suffrage Association became a statewide organization (the Equal Suffrage Society) in May 1887. Moreover, Sewall convinced Anthony to hold the National Woman Suffrage Association annual convention in Indianapolis the following May. By the time the gathering was set to take place, NWSA officially merged with the American Woman Suffrage Association

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[47] Ibid., 285-286. According to Stephens, May Wright Sewall traveled to the Rochester convention and presented a speech on women's suffrage. She received praise for her lecture from several high-profile suffragists, including Lucretia Mott, Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Frederick Douglass.
[48] Ibid., 287.
[49] Ibid., 289.

to create what would become the largest suffrage organization in the country, the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA). In a similar manner, the Equal Suffrage Association joined with the Indiana branch of NWSA to become one group unified under NAWSA.[50] Because of the alliance with NAWSA, Sewall began spending more time working with Anthony and other national leaders. From that point on, May Wright Sewall remained involved in suffrage activism; however, most of her attention was focused outside Indiana as she received more duties at the national level.[51]

One of Sewall's contemporaries and fellow Hoosiers, Ida Husted Harper[52], was just as involved in the suffrage movement during the late nineteenth century. Harper's participation was most focused at the national level, rather than in Indiana; this is due to Harper's friendship and close collaboration with Susan B. Anthony. Today Ida Husted Harper is most remembered for her writing, as she penned some of the most influential tomes of suffrage history, such as the fourth, fifth, and sixth volumes of the *History of Woman Suffrage* and Anthony's authorized biography. Yet, before she was one of the first women's history scholars, Harper was a Hoosier journalist who wrote on behalf of women's rights.

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[50] Ibid., 290.

[51] Ibid., 291-295. In addition, Sewall's interests and passions had also shifted by the turn of the century. In the last decade of her life, and especially during WWI, Sewall worked ardently on behalf of pacifism and advocated against teaching nationalism to school children. Another movement that occupied Sewall's time was spiritualism, although she kept her beliefs a secret. Even though spiritualism was not unfamiliar or particularly deviant during this era, the publication of Sewall's book, *Neither Dead nor Sleeping*, just a few months before her death in 1920, scandalized conservative Indianapolis. Nevertheless, May Wright Sewall was buried between two other notable Hoosiers, poet James Whitcomb Riley and former president Benjamin Harrison, at Crown Hill Cemetery in Indianapolis.

[52] Nancy Baker Jones, "A Forgotten Feminist: The Early Writings of Ida Husted Harper, 1878-1894," *Indiana Magazine of History*, 73 no. 2, (1972). Ida Husted Harper was born in 1851 in Fairfield, Indiana, a town in the southeastern part of the state. At the age of 18, she became the high school principal in Peru, Indiana; three years later, in 1868, she married Thomas W. Harper. The couple soon moved to Terre Haute, where Thomas Harper would eventually become city attorney and legal counselor for labor activist Eugene Debs and his Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen. This is also where Ida Husted Harper would begin her professional writing career.

Harper's first articles were published in the early 1870s in a Terre Haute newspaper, the *Saturday Evening Mail.* Originally, Harper submitted her writing under a male pseudonym, perhaps to ensure publication or to protect her reputation. She did not receive her own byline until September 1882, and she even had her own column titled "A Woman's Opinions," which often appeared on the front page of most issues. Harper wrote about various women's rights topics in her column; for instance, discussions on marriage, divorce, education, and suffrage were typical publications. In addition to her work for the *Saturday Evening Mail*, Harper also penned a monthly column, "The Woman's Department," in Eugene Debs' *Locomotive Firemen's Magazine*, from 1883 to 1894.[53] The purpose Harper's features in both papers was to engage female readers.

Although she would later be known for her involvement in the suffrage movement, Ida Husted Harper's initial definition of women's rights centered around the need for economic independence and the right for women to work without any stigma attached.[54] In a *Saturday Evening Mail* column published on October 25, 1879, Harper described women's rights as "'the right to pursue whatever vocation in life she is best adapted for...'"[55] In addition, Harper still believed that women should still seek marriage and motherhood, and once married, working women should give up their jobs. At the

[53] Ibid., 79, 82-83.

[54] During this period, women did not work unless absolutely necessary; thus, working women of this era were defined by their socio-economic status. More often than not, morality and sexuality also came in to play, as working women were thought to be more promiscuous than non-working women.

[55] Ibid., 83. It is necessary to recognize that Harper's statement was intended for affluent white women. Those from the working-class and women of color would have already been employed to support themselves or their families. While this attitude towards women's voluntary employment would have been viewed as nontraditional, it would not have been completely novel or scandalous. Many women during this era began attending universities to pursue professional occupations, most commonly in medicine or law.

same time, she also stated that married women needed to find ways to "cultivate" their minds (often through reading or writing).[56]

These views, especially in comparison to Harper's actions, appear contradictory. Although she was against married women working outside the home, during her early career Ida Husted Harper was, in fact, an employed, married woman (at least until her divorce in 1890). This is reflective of the end of the 19th Century, a time in which traditional beliefs often conflicted with new, progressive attitudes towards women's behaviors and rights.

While Harper was a longtime supporter of enfranchising women and often discussed the subject in her articles, the journalist's entry into the national movement began in 1878 when Susan B. Anthony visited Terre Haute. Anthony was not well received in the city, and a local group refused to let her speak at their meeting. However, labor activist Eugene Debs backed the famous suffragist and supported her lecture. His action delighted Harper, and it also resulted in the first meeting between Anthony and Ida Husted Harper. This marked the start of a friendship that became a writing partnership and resulted in the publication of some the first suffrage histories. The introduction also sparked Harper's participation in the movement. Nancy Baker Jones writes:

> as her friendship and admiration for Anthony grew, Harper expanded her activities beyond writing and assumed an active, constant role in the long struggle for the right to vote. She attended suffrage conventions annually in Indiana, Washington, D.C., and elsewhere, and in 1887 acted as state secretary of the Indiana chapter of Anthony's National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA).[57]

[56] Ibid., 91-92.
[57] Ibid., 97.

In 1897, Ida Husted Harper left Indiana to live with Anthony in Rochester, New York to begin work on Anthony's biography. She also accompanied Anthony on her lecture tours in the United States and Europe. At the same time, she continued to write for newspapers, and from 1899 to 1913, she wrote for various papers and magazines based in New York, Boston, Washington, D.C., Chicago, Philadelphia, and Indianapolis. Although Anthony died in 1906, Harper, on the other hand, lived to see the passage of the 19th amendment.[58]

In *The Myth of Seneca Falls*, historian Lisa Tetrault describes the significance and impact of the *History of Woman Suffrage* series. Although this idea had long been a desire of Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and fellow suffragist Matilda Josyln Gage, the trio did not actually begin the writing process until 1880. The purpose of the project was to "give younger women a source for learning about- and understanding- the movement's legacies, objectives, and strategies....The *History* would be both a gift and a lesson. It would be a legacy and a directive." The *History of Woman Suffrage* claimed that the American women's rights movement began at the Seneca Falls convention in 1848, and that its sole focus was women's suffrage. [59]

Moreover, since no national archive existed- let alone one dedicated to women- the authors asked suffragists around the country to send them any documents they had, and the response was extraordinary. Anthony, Gage, and Stanton received "letters, newspaper reports, speech transcripts, pamphlets, legislative reports, legal treatises, and

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[58] Ibid., 98-99.

[59] Tetrault, *The Myth of Seneca Falls*, 101, 110-113. Consequently, the *History* is a biased and skewed in the favor of the NWSA, Stanton, and Anthony. For the most part, the books left out contributions made to the women's rights movement before 1848 and ignored the other factions of the larger movement, such as property rights and female education and labor reform. Furthermore, the *History* harshly portrayed the opposition, the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA) and its founders, Lucy Stone and her husband, Henry Blackwell.

more."[60] Because of this overwhelming success, the authors planned to create multiple volumes. The *History* was a collection of incredible books created by women, for women. And in the process, the first women's history archive was established in Anthony's attic.

In 1898, the same year of the 50th anniversary of the Seneca Falls convention, two more contributions to suffrage scholarship appeared: Stanton's autobiography, *Eighty Years and More,* and Anthony's authorized biography, *The Life and Work of Susan B. Anthony*. The latter was penned by Anthony's new companion, Ida Husted Harper (Gage had died the same year). In the manner of the *History,* Anthony's biography was divided into two volumes, with a total of approximately 1,100 pages. After the publication of the work, Harper and Anthony destroyed a large portion of the archive that had accumulated in Anthony's house.[61]

The next project that the pair began was the addition of a fourth volume of the *History of Woman Suffrage;* it was completed and published in 1902 (the year of Stanton's death). Although Anthony died four years later in 1906, Harper continued to write on the topic of suffrage, although she did so through her various newspaper and magazine articles, as stated above. The final works of the *History*, volumes five and six, were written by Harper in 1922, a few years after the passage of the 19th Amendment.

Ida Husted Harper's national involvement with the suffrage movement counters the idea that Hoosier women were uninvolved or disinterested in winning the vote. Harper wrote some of the most influential accounts of American suffrage history, which

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[60] Ibid., 115.

[61] Ibid., 176-182. On this topic, Tetrault writes, "the burning clearly took place, but the motivations behind it are harder to decipher. The consequences were clear, however: the destruction of the original sources meant that Anthony's authorized biography and the *History of Woman Suffrage* would become *the* source."

gave her prestige and authority. However, Harper is rarely listed as an influential Hoosier, and one must ask why the state does not claim her as one of its own. Harper gained national prominence, but why is she not remembered for her contributions to women's suffrage and women's rights?

While Tetrault's discussion of memory and suffrage history focuses on the national movement, it is also necessary to think about memory and suffrage history in Indiana. It would be inaccurate to assume that the Indiana suffrage movement as a whole was radical. At the same time, however, it is erroneous to believe that only "ladylike" suffragists- meaning conservative, white, and middle-class women- dominated the Hoosier movement. If the sources show that there were other "types" of women who supported female enfranchisement, one must ask why there has been so much emphasis on the characterization of a respectable and conservative movement.

Perhaps part of the answer lies within the archive itself. Since most of the materials donated to historical institutions once belonged to "ladylike reformers," only their stories exist in the archive. Furthermore, because newspapers of the day liked to report almost exclusively on the "ladylike reformers," a similar situation arises. As a result, it is these suffragists who appear to have encompassed the Hoosier movement.

Yet another component is a historian's interpretation of the sources. While I would agree that many suffragists in Indiana embraced the term "ladylike," I have also come to the conclusion that several other women were too radical to be "ladylike reformers." Their belief in equality between the sexes- in professional endeavors, education, dress reform, and enfranchisement- was different than the "ladylike" belief of female moral superiority. The story of these radical Hoosier suffragists deserves to be

told because it is an important part of the movement as a whole by demonstrating that the battle for enfranchisement was much more complex than has been suggested.

Conclusion

The *Daily Free Press*, a newspaper based in Carbondale, Illinois, described the story of Virginia Brooks and her followers as such:

> Supporters of Virginia Brooks, a militant suffragette, gave a beating to Julius Lessner, who opposed Miss Brooks' election to the presidency of the board of education of West Hammond. Miss Brooks' cohorts, known as the 'Amazonian Guards,' lifted Lessner high in the air and cast him, writhing and saying unladylike things, into a ditch of muddy water. 'Stay there,' they shouted, 'until you can behave.' Miss Brooks easily defeated the other contestants, receiving 300 votes out of about 500 polled.[62]

This article paints a very different description of Hoosier suffragists than what several scholars have discussed in their works. Instead of being "ladylike reformers," these women were "Amazonian guards." Instead of being respectable suffragists, they were "militant suffragette[s]." Far from being docile or passive, the West Hammond suffragettes displayed audacity, determination, and strength.

Throughout this thesis, I have shown that the suffrage movement in Indiana was more multifaceted than has been portrayed in other studies. While other works have focused on the fight for enfranchisement during the Progressive Era, this thesis argues that women's rights activism in Indiana, including suffrage, began before the Civil War. It is important to acknowledge this fact because it illustrates that seeking the vote was not a just a fad for Hoosier women. Despite the political and social hostility towards female enfranchisement within the state, generation after generation of suffragists in Indiana persevered in their quest for over 75 years.

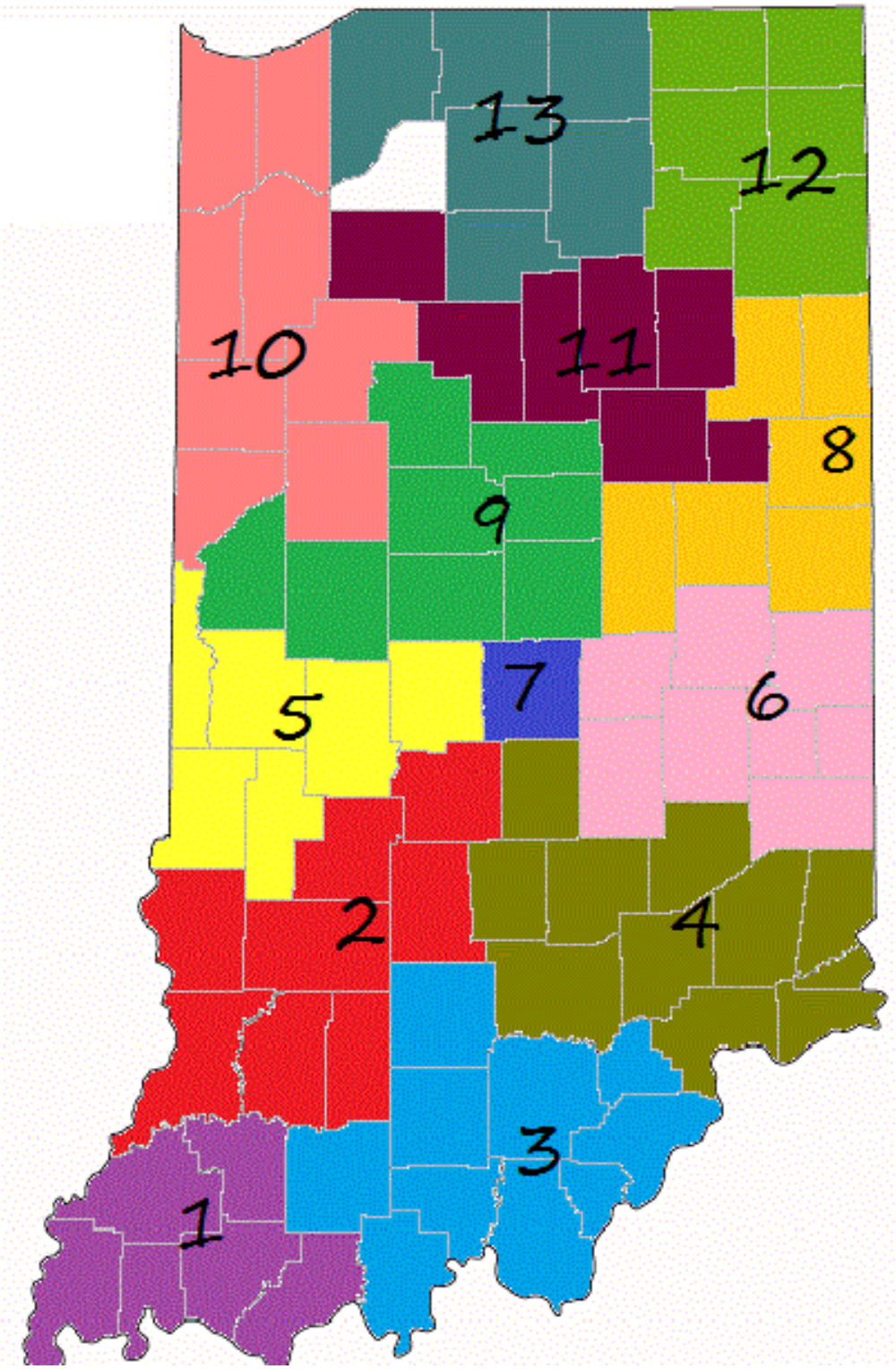
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[62] "Suffragists Duck Opponent," *Daily Free Press* (Carbondale, IL), April 24, 1912, accessed March 22, 2015, http://www.newspapers.com/image/10868397.

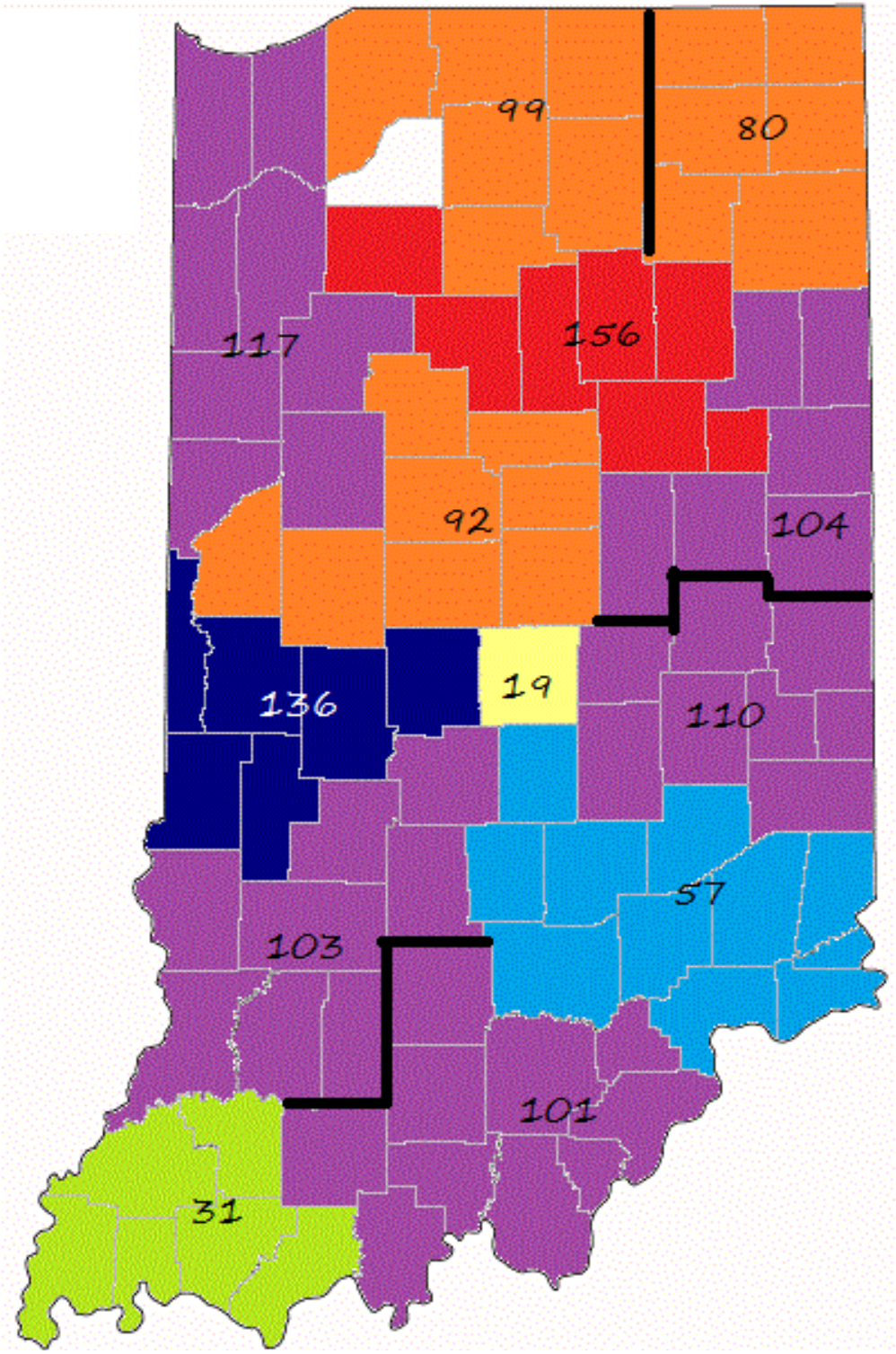
In addition, "Are You With Us?" challenges the assumption that all Hoosier suffragists were conservative, white, and wealthy urbanites. On the contrary, this thesis shows that African American, working-class, and rural women all participated in suffrage activism. Moreover, several of the state's prominent suffragists believed in radical reform for women's rights. It is necessary to include the work and biographies of these women in the Indiana suffrage narrative because they help provide a more rich and accurate history of the movement. It may be more difficult to find their stories in the archives, but that does not render them insignificant.

As historians and residents of Indiana, our present moment proves an excellent time to reexamine and reconsider the Hoosier suffrage movement. 2016, the year in which this thesis was written, marks Indiana's bicentennial. As celebrations of our state's history take place, there is no better time to reflect on the inclusion and exclusion of Indiana women's contributions than during these festivities. To overlook or ignore this important chapter of our state's history is inexcusable; to do so is to forget the contributions of thousands of Hoosier women who dedicated so much time, energy, and passion to the movement. Additionally, as the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th amendment draws near (2020), it is also necessary to contemplate Indiana's suffrage history within the context of the national movement. Though the state's activism is often overlooked because of its somewhat typical and conservative nature, scholars must emphasize the importance of Hoosier suffragists' involvement in both the state and national levels. For reference on how to be assertive, one only need to follow the example of Virginia Brooks' "Amazonian guards."

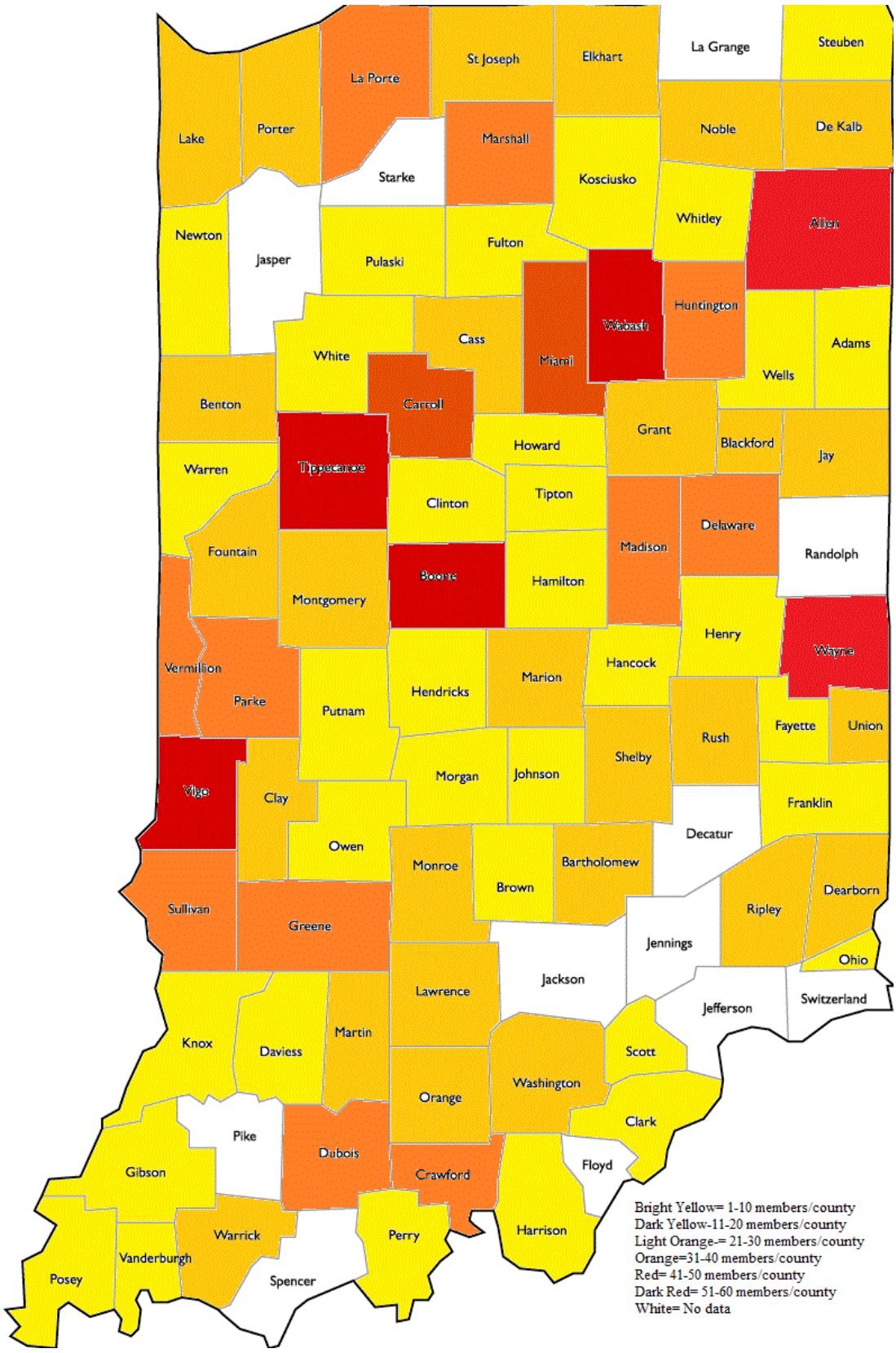
Appendix



Map 1, "Districts of the Woman's Franchise League of Indiana, 1919."



Map 2, "Number of WFL Members per District, 1919."



Map 3, "Number of WFL Members per County, 1919."

Tables 1 and 2: Population Comparisons

County Seats of the Counties with the Largest WFL Membership in 1919 (Range: 31-75 members)

County Seat	1920 Population	2010 Population
Delphi (Carroll Co.)	2,087	2,893
Peru (Miami Co.)	12,410	11,417
Richmond (Wayne Co.)	26,765	36,812
Ft. Wayne (Allen Co.)	86,549	253,691
Terre Haute (Vigo Co.)	66,083	60,785
Lebanon (Boone Co.)	6,257	15,792
Lafayette (Tippecanoe Co.)	22,486	67,140
Wabash (Wabash Co.)	9,872	10,666

As Compared to:

Major Indiana Cities with Relatively Low WFL Membership in 1919

City	1920 Population	2010 Population
Indianapolis (Marion Co.)	314,194	820,445
South Bend (St. Joseph Co.)	70,983	101,168
Evansville (Vanderburgh Co.)	85,264	117,429
Gary (Lake Co.)	55,378	80,294
Muncie (Delaware Co.)	36,524	70,085
Kokomo (Howard Co.)	30,067	45,468

Table 3: Members per District, 1919

District	Counties	Number of Members
1	Gibson, Vanderburg, Warrick, Posey	31
2	Daviess, Greene, Knox, Martin, Monroe, Owen, Sullivan, Morgan	103
3	Clark, Crawford, Dubois, Perry, Scott, Washington	101
4	Brown, Bartholomew, Dearborn, Johnson, Ohio, Ripley	57
5	Clay, Hendricks, Parke, Putnam, Vermillion, Vigo	136
6	Fayette, Wayne, Franklin, Hancock, Henry, Rush, Shelby, Union, Wayne	110
7	Marion	19
8	Adams, Delaware, Jay, Madison, Wells	104
9	Boone, Carroll, Clinton, Fountain, Hamilton, Howard, Tipton, Montgomery	92
10	Benton, Lake, Newton, Porter, Tippecanoe, Warren, White	117
11	Blackford, Cass, Grant, Huntington, Miami, Pulaski, Wabash	156
12	Allen, Dekalb, Noble, Steuben, Whitley	80
13	Elkhart, Fulton, Laporte, Marshall, St. Joseph, Kosciusko	99

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