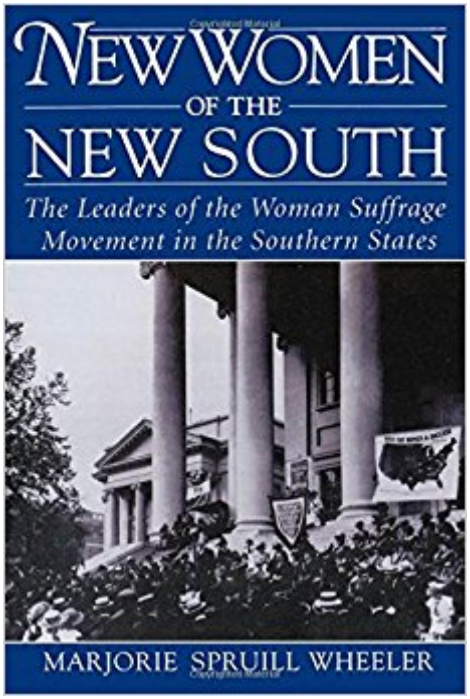
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New Women Of The New South: The Leaders Of The Woman Suffrage Movement In The Southern States



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Synopsis

There is currently a great deal of interest in the Southern suffrage movement, but until now historians have had no comprehensive history of the woman suffrage movement in the South, the region where suffragists had the hardest fight and the least success. This important new book focuses on eleven of the movement's most prominent leaders at the regional and national levels, exploring the range of opinions within this group, with particular emphasis on race and states' rights. Wheeler insists that the suffragists were motivated primarily by the desire to secure public affirmation of female equality and to protect the interests of women, children, and the poor in the tradition of noblesse oblige in a New South they perceived as misgoverned by crass and materialistic men. A vigorous suffrage movement began in the South in the 1890s, however, because suffragists believed offering woman suffrage as a way of countering black voting strength gave them an "expediency" argument that would succeed--even make the South lead the nation in the adoption of woman suffrage. When this strategy failed, the movement flagged, until the Progressive Movement provided a new rationale for female enfranchisement. Wheeler also emphasizes the relationship between the Northern and Southern leaders, which was one of mutual influence. This pioneering study of the Southern suffrage movement will be essential to students of the history of woman suffrage, American women, the South, the Progressive Era, and American reform movements.

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Customer Reviews

"This vibrant study...answers some of the key questions concerning late-nineteenth-century feminism. Her volume is invaluable, not just because of how much it teaches us as scholars, but because it has the wit and accessibility to engage our students. The business of scholarship can be all too tedious, but Wheeler's book lightens our load by offering us a brisk, timely study which will doubtless enjoy a wide and enthusiastic readership."--Reviews in American History"This study adds rich detail and dimensions to Progressive Era accounts. It is especially welcome to those of us who teach in the South classes composed primarily of women who need to know their own past."--Marth H. Swain, Texas Women's University"A much-needed and more inclusive treatment of the women's suffrage movement. Wheeler suggests one reason the Southern experience has been largely ignored by historians is that it was unsuccessful and therefore perceived as insignificant. Her careful examination of the very conditions that made it unsuccessful, though, is what makes this account so intriguing."--Roanoke Times & World News"This carefully researched study adds a large and significant new dimension to the history of the American suffrage movement, and throws new light on the politics of the New South."--Anne Firor Scott, Author of Natural Allies: Woman's Associations in American History"Marjorie Spruill Wheeler introduces us here to a remarkable group of women. This engaging and pioneering account will recast the way we think about the South in which these women lived and the Souths that have followed."--Edward L. Ayers, Author of Promise of the New South"Wheeler's research has uncovered a gold mine in Southern women's papers. Her clear-eyed, subtle investigation should regenerate interest in the woman suffrage movement by attending to the class, race, and regional dynamics of it."--Nancy F. Cott, Yale University"Marjorie Spruill Wheeler sets her compelling portraits of white suffrage leaders in the complex racial and sexual politics of both the New South and the national suffrage movement. This study assures that future historians of women and politics in the U.S. will have to reckon with the South, recognizing the centrality of states' rights, southern strategies, and a broad range of racial (including racist) views to the battle for women's rights in America."--Nancy A. Hewitt, Duke University"This book is the first to examine comprehensively the strategy and objectives of the [woman suffrage] movement in the South as a whole....[This] well-written volume places the Virginia Equal Suffrage league in a wider regional and national context and as such should find a place on the shelves of all libraries whose collections include materials on the history of women, reform, twentieth-century politics, and the southern United States."--Virginia Librarian"New Women of the New South is well researched, well argued, and well written and will prove a useful monograph for students in undergraduate classes in southern and women's history."--Georgia Historical Quarterly"Many books are chosen, but few actually reshape our thinking about the South. Amid the wealth of worthy texts, there remains a

dearth of imaginative, innovative studies, especially of women's experience throughout the southern states. Marjorie Spruill Wheeler's book is precisely that. She teaches us to see the South anew, and she brings a bounty of fresh evidence and confident interpretation to a subject sorely in need of regional and comparative evaluation....What Wheeler achieves is extraordinary. She compels us to grasp the connections between women across the South, and she provides us with hypotheses about southern women's experience all scholars of the South can examine with profit."--Southern Quarterly

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Most books on the struggle for women's suffrage in the United States are written by "Yankees", authors from north of the Mason-Dixon line, and from the point of view of the "Yankee" leadership that dominated the movement.This book presents the suffragist struggle by an Southern author and from the point of view of Southern suffragists who deeply resented "Yankee" interference in Southern politics. Southern suffragists advocated a states rights solution to woman suffrage instead of a federal amendment (the 19th) so that states would have local control of voting qualifications. "Local control" meant being able to deny Black women the franchise as they had so effectively

denied Black men after the passage of the 15th amendment.Of course, Southern suffragists were on the wrong side of history on the issue. But racism more than sexism was the greatest obstacle to passage of the 19th amendment. I recommend this book for anyone wanting to understand why it took so long, why Southern Congressman and Senators and Southern state legislatures fought against the 19th amendment to the bitter end,

Needed this book for a college course I had and it was just what I need. It was less expensive than buying at the bookstore. So I save alot of money and was able to buy some other supplies.

Hazel Brannon Smith won the Putlizer Prize for editorial writing in 1964. Born in Gadsden, Alabama, she died nearly destitute in a nursing home in Tennessee in 1994. She not only spoke up for women's rights but for those of the poor South who could not speak for themselves. She exposed the Klan death threats and cross-burnings in Mississippi and suffered for her stand against violence, and economic strangulation in the name of "telling the people the truth and defending their freedom."It was considered harmful for females to ride bicycles in case it might harm their reproductive capability. They adopted trousers (bloomers) so that they could ride them freely. Through the suffragist press, women reinvented themselves as professional journalists, policy experts and savvy visionaries. Susan B. Anthony's 'Revolution' and 'Farmer's Wife' publications led the way for the women to demonstrate for the right to vote. They left a heritage of feisty optimism and stealthy radicalism which forced a nation to live up to its ideals of 'representative democracy.'More women in the South are becoming involved in politics. We even had a nominee for Mayor of Knoxville at the last election. Louisiana has a female Governor. What's this world coming to?The rose is a rose,And was always a rose.But the theory now goesThat the apple's a rose,And the pear is, and so'sThe plum, I suppose.What will next prove a rose.You, of course, are a rose --But were always a rose.

A wonderful addition to the historiography on the woman suffrage movement. Wheeler provides a jumpstart to examining the specifics of the woman suffrage movement in the South. While she admittedly focuses on 11 specific leaders, her study incorporates a much broader scope as she takes us on a journey to explore the specifically Southern nature of the arguments for women's votes in the early 20th century. A great read!

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