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**The Woman Movement and the
Negro Movement—Parallel
Struggles for Rights**

BY

HELEN MATTHEWS LEWIS, B.A.

PHELPS-STOKES FELLOW, 1948-49

UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

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HELEN MATTHEWS LEWIS, B.A.
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A Thesis Presented to the Graduate Faculty
of the University of Virginia
in Candidacy for the Degree of Master of Arts

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PREFACE

IT is the contention of this thesis that there are many important similarities between the Negro problem and the women's problem. These similarities are not merely accidental. The ideological and economic forces behind the two movements—the emancipation of women and the emancipation of Negroes—have much in common and are closely interrelated. Negroes and women had both been under the yoke of the paternalistic system, a pre-industrial scheme which gradually became broken in the nineteenth century. Both groups were then strongly influenced by the Industrial Revolution, and for both groups the readjustment process is not yet consummated. The problems remain, even though paternalism is gradually declining as an ideal and is losing its economic basis.

It is the purpose of this paper to point out some of these similarities and interrelations in the status and history of both groups. Rather than treating both problems as unique, it is hoped that in concentrating on the similarities of the two that it will thereby give perspective to both problems.

In the first chapter I have tried to point out the basic similarities between the sex and race statuses in the stratification of American society, pointing out a few of the many possible parallels in social roles, and the patterns of conduct assigned to these roles. In chapters II-IV, I have tried to present the economic, political and educational parallels, showing the present and historical similarities of the two groups in these three aspects of social life. Chapter V, called "Defensive Beliefs," points out the similarities in type and function of the justifications for the various discriminations and the defenses utilized to perpetuate the desired relationships. As both groups have struggled for status and "rights," the movements have been closely aligned. The connections between the two movements are pointed out in chapter VI. The last chapter attempts to show the public aspect of both of these problems.

I appreciate the many helpful criticisms and suggestions of Professor Floyd N. House and Professor Lambert Molyneaux of the University of Virginia. To Mr. Judd W. Lewis I owe thanks for his careful reading of the manuscript and his helpful suggestions. I am also grateful to Mrs. Phyllis Moss for her secretarial assistance.

Charlottesville, Virginia
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H. M. L.

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CHAPTER I

SEX AND RACE GROUPS IN THE UNITED STATES

SEX, along with age, class and race, is one of the foci around which societies are structured, and elaborate systems of status and right are rooted in these basic categories. Social roles are differentiated in accordance with them, and "appropriate" patterns of conduct assigned. These roles and patterns are inculcated from early childhood and form part of the basic structure of personality, determining the individual's conception of himself as well as his status in the community.¹ Violation of these roles and behavior patterns brings not only the risk of external sanctions but of internal conflict.

In our society today sex status and race status are life-long forms of rank, and death is the only means of escape. The members of both groups are socially "visible," that is, distinguished by physical characteristics which have become symbols to which are attached attitudes and judgments. Others impute to all members traits alleged to belong to the group and act toward the member *as if* the traits were present.

These believed-in differences between the sexes and between the races are, in the main, differences in acquired traits. They are the results of socialization, the inculcation of the roles and patterns of behavior from early childhood.

The mind and the personality are largely developed by social interaction. Social factors mould the individuals around the stereotype. It seems justifiable then to infer that differences in personality and mental expression between Negro and white and between men and women are, in the main, no greater than the existing differences in opportunity for participation in the social world.²

It would be an oversimplification, however, to assume that biology plays no part in determining sex roles. Most societies try to rationalize the division and ascription of statuses with relation

1. For discussions of age and sex groups see Talcott Parsons, "An Analytical Approach to the Theory of Social Stratification," *American Journal of Sociology*, VI 841-62, and Ralph Linton, "A Neglected Aspect of Social Organization," *loc. cit.*, 870-86.

2. W. I. Thomas, "The Mind of Woman and the Lower Races," *Sex and Society*, (Chicago, Univ. of Chicago, 1907), 312.

to sex in terms of the physiological differences between the sexes or their different roles in reproduction. Though this may have served as the starting point for the development of a division, the actual prescriptions are almost entirely determined by culture. Even the psychological characteristics ascribed to men and to women in different societies vary so much that they can have little physiological basis.³

Professor Boas, in *The Mind of Primitive Man*,⁴ emphasized the fact that physiological and psychological characteristics of man are highly variable and can be stated only in relation to environmental, including physical and cultural, conditions. Traits of personality have meaning only when they are expressed as reactions of the individual to varying types of environment, of which existing culture is the most important.

In studies of the mental traits of the sexes it has similarly been pointed out that psychological differences which exist between the sexes are due to differences in social influences brought to bear on the developing individual from early infancy to adult years. Brain efficiency, biologically, has been, on the average, approximately the same in all races and in both sexes, and differences in intellectual expression are the results of an individual's social history rather than biological.

As Margaret Mead pointed out,⁵ though all societies use sex for social differentiation, not all of these socially defined roles insist upon innate temperamental differences. Traits such as dominance, bravery, aggressiveness, objectivity and malleability are not inalienably associated with one sex as opposed to the other. Temperaments or personality traits which we regard as native to one sex are rather mere variations of human temperament, to which either or both sexes may, with more or less success in the case of different individuals be educated to approximate.

In Klineberg's survey of the experimental evidence,⁶ he concludes that all generalizations which base personality and behavior patterns on inherent racial differences lack a scientific basis. The

3. Ralph Linton, *Study of Man*, (N. Y., D. Appleton-Century, 1936), 116.

4. Franz Boas, *The Mind of Primitive Man*, (N. Y., Macmillan, 1938).

5. Margaret Mead, *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies*, (N. Y., Wm. Morrow & Co. 1935).

6. Otto Klineberg, *Race Differences*, (N. Y., Harper, 1935), 367 and Otto Klineberg, *Characteristics of the American Negro*, (N. Y., Harper, 1944).

popular concepts of the inherent superiority, either physical or mental, of certain races and inferiority of others have no proven scientific validity.

The question of "sex differences" or "race differences" as scientific problems are not important for the purposes of this paper. Between any two specifiable groups there are bio-social differences. The important things for this study are the social attitudes toward the personalities grouped around the very obvious facts of sex or race and the beliefs in the inherent superiority of white over Negro and masculine traits over feminine traits and social relations existing under this context. This paper is interested in the "differences that make a difference," that is, it is only so far as differences are treated as involving or related to social superiority or inferiority that they are relevant to this discussion of sex and race statuses.

From the wide range of possible personality traits, a culture may isolate each type by making it the basis for the approved social personality for an age-group, a sex-group, a race-group, or an occupational group. Such personality traits as fear, aggression and affection are socially typed for the statuses. The culture then shapes each new-born child to the personality and then elaborately prescribes behavior. Girls are taught sex-appropriate language, clothes, hairdress, gait, play, recreation, work and pitch and intonation of voice. For the Negro there is similar insistence upon caste-appropriate language, stance, manners, dress, work and intonation of voice. In both cases there is no biological basis.

The behavior patterns defined in early childhood are strengthened in adolescence. For the Negro, it is then that the occupational and sexual taboos become matters of urgency and both the definiteness and the parental reinforcement of this instruction increase greatly.⁷ Punishment is experienced in violation of caste sanctions and the "good Negro"—the well-accommodated Negro—receives patronage and protection as rewards for following his prescribed role. In the social clique, school and formal organization, the child gains prestige if he learns the sex-appropriate code, etiquette, rituals and goals, but he meets extreme social, and at times physical punishment, if he does not. Sexual segregation is maintained

7. Allison Davis and John Dollard, *Children of Bondage: The Personality Development of Negro Youth in the Urban South*, (American Council on Education, Washington, D. C., 1941), 250-51.

not only in the play group until full adolescence, but also in the school and church.⁸ The adult woman who "keeps in her place", i.e., follows the role assigned, also receives patronage, protection and a chivalrous homage. Both the female role and the colorcaste role are rigidly defined "places" which prevent competition or equality with white males. White adult males prefer to deal with both women and Negroes in less professional ways in the paternalistic and protective fashion—thereby preventing real equality.

Accordingly, the personality types are specialized by sex or race, and when any trait—love of children, bravery in the face of danger, lack of interest in personal relations, docility or passivity—is completely bound up with sex or race, numerous maladjustments become possible.

The strongest implement for moulding the growing child into the accepted form is the coercion to behave like a member of one's own sex group or race groups. This rigid sex-dichotomy and race-dichotomy of prescribed behavior questions the child's security of belonging to his own race or sex unless he conforms. He is forced to conform to the prescribed sex or race role by being told that his own sex or race is in question. Children are reproached with such terms as "tomboy" or "sissy" or "acting like little colored children;" don't act like a girl" and "little girls don't do that" press children into conformity. The threat of failing to behave like a member of one's own sex or race is used to enforce a thousand details of nursery routine and cleanliness, ways of sitting or relaxing, ideas of sportsmanship and fair play, patterns of expressing emotions and a multitude of other points in which we recognize socially defined sex-differences or race-differences.⁹ Back and forth go the comments: "Girls don't do that;" "Don't you want to grow up to be a real man like Daddy?"—confusing the child's emotions in that, if the child is unfortunate enough to possess even in some slight degree the temperament approved for the opposite sex, it may well prevent the establishment of any adequate adjustment to its world. The presence of extreme self-confidence attitudes in Negroes or of other traits "reserved" for white personalities lead to frustrations and the labels of "uppity" or "acting like white folks."

8. Allison Davis, "American Status Systems and the Socialization of the Child," *American Sociological Review*, VI, 350.

9. Mead, *op. cit.*, 297.

Should a physical, intellectual, or artistic potentiality accidentally express itself in an activity considered appropriate to the "opposite" sex or "opposite" race, the child is thereby reproached for his choice and accused of having emotions or talents appropriate only for the other group.

This social specialization is then rationalized into a theory that the socially decreed behavior is "natural" for one group and "unnatural" for the other, and that the deviant is a deviant because of biological defect, or developmental accident.¹⁰

Marginal personalities develop when the social personalities are more akin to those of the "opposite" group, yet the persons are unable to enter into this group or find approval or satisfaction in the roles that have been so rigidly defined for that group. These marginal personalities are inevitable when a society insists upon artificial connections between sex or race and certain basic personality traits. This lack of correspondence between actual temperamental constitution of members of each group and the role that a culture has assigned to them has reverberations in the whole society. The very existence in a given society of divisions of social personality, of a sex-determined, sex-limited personality and of a race-determined, race-limited personality penalizes in greater or less degree every individual born within the society.

The further belief that these sex and race differences are superior and inferior has many deep-felt implications. When we speak of sex prejudice or race prejudice, it is implied that the prejudice is not toward the white, Anglo-Saxon, male, Protestant which is the favoured status. We generally assume that people of these characteristics are not the object of prejudice. The judgments and evaluations of inferiority are given to the personality traits and statuses ascribed to women and to Negroes.

The evaluations can be felt and seen often in the reactions to conspicuous errors in ranking. A male acquaintance of mine recently had an automobile accident as a result of an exceptionally stupid mistake on his part. After distractedly turning left on a red light he was struck by another car. The driver immediately rushed over, opened the door and inquired of my friend: "Are any of you ladies hurt?" He was immediately embarrassed to find the driver a man. Upon telling the story the friend remarked that this was the most

10. Mead, *op. cit.*, 299-300.

humiliating part of the accident. The reaction to such errors in ranking is one of moral indignation, being "unjustly" disparaged by being put on a level with those who are really inferiors. There have been lawsuits and damages recovered from calling whites "Negro" or "colored."

Very early, small boys learn to resent fiercely titles of "sissy" and descriptions of "pretty as a little girl." It is significant that to call a girl a "tomboy" is much more complimentary and there are many small girls who have tried to kiss their elbows that they might become boys as prophesied. "It is such a pity," Margaret Fuller recorded someone as saying to the mother of four sons, "that one of your boys was not a girl." "Who would have been?" asks one of them, overhearing. "I wouldn't have been, Tom wouldn't have been, Will wouldn't have been, Jim wouldn't have been, who would have been?"¹¹ There is disparagement, concern or mockery in the intonation of "all girls" or "only girls" in reference to maleless progeny.

Jefferson Davis' biographers had great difficulty in their numerous attempts to disprove the rumor that their "manly" hero attempted to escape capture by dressing in women's clothes.¹²

Though inappropriate behavior by a member of the inferior sex or race group is severely punished as an infraction of our social code, yet, as in all inferior social ratings, the positions allow use of certain degrees of chronic aggression, sabotage and cleverness against the superior rank.

For the Negro there are certain, well-disguised forms of "getting even," such as sabotage of his work for white people (slowness, lack of punctuality, clumsiness) and the use of flattery, humor, secretiveness, "ignorance" and other behavior for outwitting white people and getting favors, which are learned at an early age.¹³ There is also secret compensation for many in knowing the stereotype is not true and feeling contempt for the white person who believes it. This feeling of secret but superior knowledge serves as a type of retaliation.¹⁴

11. Elsie Clews Parsons, *The Old Fashioned Woman*, (N.Y., G. P. Putnam, 1913), 16.

12. Robert McElory, *Jefferson Davis, The Unreal and the Real*, (N.Y., Harper, 1937), II, 514.

13. Davis and Dollard, *op. cit.*, 251.

14. Cf. James Weldon Johnson, *The Autobiography of an Ex-colored Man*, (N.Y., A.A. Knopf, 1927.)

Similar feminine wiles are institutionalized. The power of the scold or the shrew, the "nagging wife," is proverbial and female blandishments and charms are notable for getting favors. Feigned ignorance, flattery and "playing inferior" are all methods of outwitting the male sex. These latter methods are particularly prevalent among the marriageable young girls in the "dating" periods.

A college girl admitted:

I sometimes 'play dumb' on dates, but it leaves a bad taste. The emotions are complicated. Part of me enjoys 'putting something over' on the unsuspecting male Toward the 'date' I feel some contempt because he is 'taken in' by my technique At times I resent him! Why isn't he my superior in all ways in which a man should excel so that I could be my natural self?¹⁵

The inferior-superior ratings are also rationalized into the belief that they are "natural" along with the personality traits and behavior ascribed to the members of the groups. These rationalizations are built into ideologies which serve to keep the social stratification secure by keeping both groups "in their places." Veblen pointed out that historically racism and the cult of masculinity as marks of intrinsic superiority have been used as justifications of the "predatory" institutions of mankind. Veblen also pointed out that just as the belief in the intrinsic inferiority of the Negro is a major basis of race discrimination, so the belief in the intrinsic inferiority of women has served as basis for the special "prerogatives" of males.¹⁶

Ralph Linton, in *The Study of Man*,¹⁷ gives us the useful distinction between "achieved" and "ascribed" status. Ascribed status must be attained by birth, or must be biologically determined, e.g., sex, age and race.

In America achieved status is determined very largely within an occupational system, organized in terms of generalized criteria of performance within functionally specialized fields.¹⁸ This highly

15. Mira Komarovsky, "Cultural Contradictions and Sex Roles," *American Journal of Sociology*, LII, 188.

16. Thorstein Velen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class in Human Nature and Enduring Peace*, ed. by Gardner Murphy, (Cambridge, Houghton Mifflin, 1945), 362.

17. Linton, *op. cit.*, Chapter VII.

18. T. Parsons, *op. cit.*, 852.

valued status, however, is attained under conditions of limited opportunity. Only a few positions are open at the "top" and the rigidity and prerequisites of ascribed status in relation to achieved status engenders strains and frustrations of considerable proportions.¹⁹

Both sex and race roles are segregated in our society so as to remove both groups from the occupational positions which are identified with the highest achieved status. The members of both groups are thereby prevented from competing for status with white adult males.

This has led in both situations to the development of other means of gaining prestige. In both situations it has led to the emergence of relatively autonomous systems of class. Especially in the Negro situation, a class system within the caste has developed in order to produce prestige positions. Similarly women have tended to form an autonomous system; the woman doctor has tended to specialize in pediatrics, obstetrics, and gynecology; the woman lawyer has tended to work in family and domestic relations.²⁰ This social segregation of prestige roles has protected the status of white adult males.

This debarring of women from the occupations competitive for status with men of their own class has also led the efforts of women to secure prestige in realms outside the occupational relevant spheres where prestige is accorded men.

In general in America we find a patriarchal family pattern, in which the male is trained for dominance and intellectual leadership, while the female is oriented toward the domestic and service roles.²¹

The roles, however, are at times inconsistent and confusing. A child with characteristics carrying sex prestige at one stage may lose status merely by continuing them to another. Meanwhile, the adolescent girl finds the adult models she is trying to copy in continuous flux, shifting with a "New Deal," or a major war.²² Strains

19. Robin Williams, Discussion of Allison Davis, *op. cit.*, *American Sociological Review*, VI, 355.

20. Everett Cherrington Hughes, "Dilemmas and Contradictions of Status," *American Journal of Sociology*, L, 353-359. See also Williams, *op. cit.*, 350.

21. R. S. and H. M. Lynd, *Middletown in Transition*, (N.Y., Harcourt, Brace, 1937), 604 in Georgene M. Seward, "Race, Sex, and Democratic Living," *Human Nature and Enduring Peace*, ed. by Gardner Murphy, (Cambridge, Houghton Mifflin, 1945), 365.

22. Seward, *op. cit.*, 365.

are produced when the early training is inappropriate to the later positions. Education, other than professional, is similar for boys and girls. Girls, however, are urged to study and make good grades and then criticized if "too bright," thus becoming unfeminine and unmarriageable. A college girl writes, "I find it confusing and difficult to be praised for being clever and working hard and then, when my efforts promise to be successful, to be condemned and criticized for being unfeminine and ambitious."²³ More strains occur with marriage and the acquisition of full adult status and responsibilities. In our urban society the fundamental basis of family status is the occupational "achieved" status of the husband and father. In a sense, marriage is partially "achieved;" personal qualities and effort do play a decisive role. Marriage then determines woman's fundamental status, and after that her role is not so much status-determining as a matter of living up to expectations and finding satisfying interests and activities. The achievement is in "marrying well" to a man with "occupational status." In a culture emphasizing individual achievement, and since marriage is her main "achievement—," it is no wonder that there is much romantic nostalgia for the time when fundamental choices were still open.²⁴

The principal source of strain in the sex role structure results from the occupational status being regarded as the primary position and giving the wife only a "pseudo" occupation in the management of the home. The old-style rural home in which the wife functioned as administrator and producer is virtually extinct. The home no longer produces, but consumes. The self-centered, self-supporting, well-nigh independent unit of mediaeval times that within its limits produced the necessities of life no longer exists. The center of gravity of the family has shifted to the factory, the brewery, the bakery, the delicatessen shop, the school, the kindergarten, the department store, the municipal department of health and sanitation, the hospital, the library, the social centers and playgrounds and dozens of other similar institutions, and the control over the activities represented has likewise departed to the outer world. In the rural life status was determined by the family rather than the individual husband with an urban job. Though patriarchal, the common enter-

23. Komarovsky, *op. cit.*, 186.

24. Talcott Parsons, "Age and Sex in the Social Structure of the United States," *American Sociological Review*, VII, 612.

prise gave the wife the status of partner, a status of which she is deprived in modern life. Now she is her husband's wife, the mother of his children and the person responsible for the management of the household. It is impossible for modern women to be industrious in the sense of being intelligently and usefully occupied as the rural woman was within the limits of her home. With the *content* of the feudal home gone the modern world has yet struggled to keep the *form* and make women and the home the vehicle by which to carry over into the present the chivalry of men, the piety, industry, and self-sacrifice of women. Women have tried to continue this role but have, in doing so, often manufactured work that were better left undone and wasted time getting indifferent results when compared with the skilled and expert work that is done under the methods of specialization and organization used by men.²⁵

Strict adherence to this "domestic" or "feudal" role has been progressively decreasing as the wife has attempted to gain prestige in more fruitful spheres. The pattern, however, because of the strong beliefs and pathos surrounding fidelity and devotion to husband and children, the mother in the home and similar values, offers perhaps the highest level of a certain kind of security.²⁶

Another prestige-securing role is that of the feminine glamour pattern. The "emancipated" woman has tended to gain prestige by segregating the element of sexual interest and attraction from her total personality, and by emphasizing the segregation of sex roles in following this pattern. This glamour pattern is quite attractive in that it is the most direct path to a sense of superiority and importance. It is limited to a certain age though, and we often find the pathetic situation of grandmothers still trying to be "glamour girls." This pattern is also a reflection on the supporting male's ability to pay for fashionable clothes. This role then is a significant part of our "standard of living" and the "conspicuous consumption" of our urban competitive society.²⁸ The role as an offset to masculine occupational status and related to the masculine role can be seen in

25. Jessie Taft, *The Woman Movement from the Point of View of Social Consciousness*, (Univ. of Chicago, 1915), 31-33.

26. T. Parsons, "Age and Sex in the Social Structure of the United States," *op. cit.*, 612.

28. T. Parsons, "An Analytical Approach to the Theory of Social Stratification," *op. cit.*, 854. See also Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, (New York, The Modern Library, 1934).

the common stereotype of the physically beautiful, expensively and elaborately dressed women with physically unattractive but rich and powerful men.

Another pattern of emancipation from complete domesticity has been through cultural, educational work, reform and welfare work in the community. These fields have been traditionally open to women and thus provide no competition with male status. This pattern lays far less stress on exploitation of the female sexual role as such and more on that which is essentially common to both sexes. This "humanistic" or "good companion" role is considered the result of women's following their traditional duties, care of children, sickness, and control of production and consumption, into the community as these duties became community wide. As men became absorbed in occupations women took over the community welfare, reform, education, and in many suburban towns, the politics. This role is only partially institutionalized however, and its patterns often bear the marks of strain and insecurity (classically depicted by Helen Hokinson's cartoons of club women). The multiplicity of choices of channels of expression in this role has also resulted in widespread manifestations of strain and insecurity in neurotic behavior.²⁹

There is considerable strain in lack of clear-cut definition of the adult feminine role. There tends to be oscillation between emphasis in domesticity, glamour and the humanitarian or "good companion" roles according to situational pressures and individual character tendency to emphasize one or another more strongly. This is a situation likely to produce a high level of insecurity.

In the Negro group there are many tensions and strains in the attempt to gain prestige and status. As noted earlier, the major development has been in the emergence of a relatively autonomous class system within the caste. This has provided some economic prestige positions in the professions and service line, however, the mass of Negroes do not secure such outlets.

Other prestige roles have evolved, just as in the women's situation, to secure prestige outside the occupational relevant sphere. The thoroughly accommodated Negro, the "Uncle Tom" follows the prescribed role. He plays the part of the "good old darky" in

29. T. Parsons, "Age and Sex in the Social Structure of the United States," *op. cit.*, 613.

paternalistic plantation type Negro-white relationships, receiving the protection and patronage of whites. As in the "domestic" role for women this pattern is less frequently followed as wealth and education have become more accessible to Negroes. The protest leaders have taken the prestige positions in the Negro community and the "Uncle Toms" are more and more held in contempt and ridicule in the Negro community. However, there is still great security in Negro-white relationships in the South achieved by assuming this role.

Just as the "domestic" role for women is based on the content of the rural home which has passed away so the "Uncle Tom" role is based on the paternalistic, personal relations of the old plantation system when the Negro was illiterate and culturally assimilated to slavery patterns. Slavery and the dependent situation of the Negro has passed away, yet the old slavery attitudes have continued, particularly in the old South among whites. This has necessitated the use of the role of the old "darky" to plead and appeal to influential whites. This produces deep humiliation in the person assuming the role and the person often also receives the aggression of the Negro community, since the role symbolizes the hated caste role.

Another important prestige role for the Negro is that of the "bad" Negro. They can be seen walking the streets unemployed, standing around on the corners, or laughing, playing and fighting in pool halls. Many folk songs have been developed expressing admiration for their recklessness and bravado. The "bad" Negro is a fairly recent development. There were few "bad" slaves and admiration for them was unpolitic. Dramatic exhibitions of recklessness and egotism raise the status of the desperado especially if they involve flaunting themselves in the face of a white person with verbal affronts, collisions on the sidewalk, insulting gestures and minor obscenities. The policeman, the white man, armed, is the supreme test of daring. "Railroad Bill" was perhaps the most famous one whose career was recorded in many ballads. This pattern of conduct is very significant. As a local hero and a racial demi-god the "bad" Negro is assured of the prestige he yearns for.

Another role through which Negroes are allowed considerable prestige is that of the entertainer, artist or athlete. The Negro as a musician, actor, dancer, or other type artist is allowed to perform almost freely for a white public in the North—and to great

extent in the South. His excellence in these fields—cultivated by folk stimulation from earliest childhood and by realization that other means of earning a living are closed—is recognized and supported by the stereotypes.³⁰

The leadership of the "Uncle Tom's" has been taken over in great part by protest personalities. These generally come from the upper and middle class Negroes who live mostly by catering to Negroes—thus they do not rely on the whites and may avoid whites in all spheres of life. Some live in extraordinary seclusion from white society. Educated, respectable, self-possessed, they work with the N.A.A.C.P., the Urban League and other movements to fight discrimination. Extremely race conscious and sensitive to all caste discriminations such a leader is at times sullen and often dissatisfied. There is more tension in this role, and the social unrest and agitation for "rights" among this group are indicative of the tension and anxiety.

Among the Negro as among women early training is often not appropriate to later positions, real or desired. This also sets up strains of considerable proportion. The Negro child in school is taught the American Creed, only to discover later that much of it applies only to whites. He is often trained in skills for which he finds no employment. With the blocking of certain avenues to "achieved" status there naturally develop considerable frustration and verbal aggression.

In highly integrated societies the clusters of attitudes culturally sanctioned as appropriate to various social positions tend to be accepted at all positions of the scale. The maladjustments come with individuals who have temperaments more suited to a role other than their prescribed one. In a complex and changing society, however, the definitions of the situations become tenuous and confused. It is then that conflicting and ambiguous roles appear.

30. Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma*, (N.Y., Harper, 1944), 654.

CHAPTER II

THE ECONOMIC PARALLEL

THIS still remains in many respects a white, Anglo-Saxon, male, Protestant culture. These are the expected characteristics for many favored statuses and positions, particularly in the economic field. Because the highest prestige positions are those of the higher income and professional type, and in these areas both Negroes and women have been most restricted from competition, it is here that the greatest discriminations are encountered.

Traditionally members of both groups have been relegated to so called "Negro jobs" and to "women's jobs," jobs for which, it has been rationalized, they are inherently suited. These jobs have been to a great extent domestic service and unskilled labor, for which the wage returns are low.

The Negro jobs include the following principal groups: domestic service, home laundering, certain other service occupations, home sewing, lumber milling, turpentine farming, fertilizer manufacturing, unskilled work in building construction, maintenance-of-way work, helpers and laborers in stores, unskilled work in blast furnace and steel rolling mills, tobacco rehandling and other unskilled work in tobacco factories.¹

The jobs in which women compose the majority of employees are: servants, clerical workers, teachers, operatives on apparel, housekeepers, laundry workers, dressmakers, nurses, telephone operators, boarding house keepers, waitresses and beauticians.²

Great numbers of these "Negro jobs" and "women's jobs" are regarded as undesirable and many carry a social stigma, not only because they are on the bottom of the occupational ladder, but also because of the fact that they are traditionally "Negro jobs" and "women's work."

Many of the Negro jobs are seriously variable with the seasons, and are characterized by a high degree of physical and psychological disutility. Practically all the jobs for Negro males are "day labor"

1. Myrdal, *op. cit.*, 80.

2. U. S. Department of Labor, Woman's Bureau, *Woman's Bureau Conference Report, The American Woman*, Bulletin No. 224, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1948), 13.

jobs, involving long and strenuous muscular exertion. In logging the "disagreeable factor" is chiefly the risk of accident and disease; in sawmills, accident risk and noise; in fertilizer plants, dust and disagreeable odors; in wood construction, excessive exposure to the elements, and so on.³

There have been traditional beliefs that the Negroes and women should stay where they belong—the Negro on the Southern farm land and in domestic service, and the woman in the home or in related jobs outside. Southern agriculture, however, offers no new opportunities to the Negro. He is being pushed off the land and necessarily is increasing the number of job-seekers in non-agricultural pursuits. The segregated Negro economy offers little to the mass of Negroes.

The present day home with all its former productive functions gone does not provide enough constructive work to keep women employed except during certain short periods of a woman's life. The old-style rural home as a center for family life is virtually extinct, and with it has gone the function of mothers, female relatives and daughters as administrators and producers in household activities. The home is a small, single-family unit, which consumes the contents of cans and frozen packages, ready-made clothes and the energy of electric wall-plugs. Even babies are no longer born within its walls. The writers who do maintain that women must "go back to the home" do not take into account that an entire economic revolution would be necessary to restore the ideal agrarian homesteads. The great majority of the women who do work do so because they must; the long used rationalization for low wages for women—that they work for pocket money—has been proved wrong. Working women must help support, or completely support themselves and often a family.⁴

The main practical problem then is opening up new possibilities for members of both groups to earn a living by their labor. As noted before, the fact that the positions of highest prestige are in the

3. Myrdal, *op. cit.*, 1081-2.

4. Today only 38 percent of the working women are single, while 46 percent are married and an additional 16 percent widowed or divorced. In a New York State survey 92 percent of the employed women contributed regularly toward family expenses, and almost three-fourths of them turned over 50 to 100 percent of their earnings to the family's support. U. S. Dept. of Labor, Woman's Bureau, *op. cit.*, 16.

economic sphere makes these jobs more jealously guarded, and the movements for advancement by both Negroes and women have found here the greatest resistance and have had here the smallest success in their struggles for "rights."

During World War II both Negroes and women were allowed in jobs previously closed to them. Even though this was a necessary move to achieve full production, traditional objections to the training of women and Negroes in the skilled mechanical trades still were hard to break. Though the needs of war extended the breakdown of many obstructions, even then opportunities for upgrading and supervisory jobs for women and Negroes were limited. Since the war some have been able to remain in these traditional white man's skills, however, with the wartime emergency and F.E.P.C. gone, many have been forced back into their traditional jobs.

Though there has been some agitation since the war to send women back to the home,⁵ it has in no way equalled the drive of the 30's when the newspapers were filled with agitation to discharge married women. The slogan then was: "Shall married women have jobs when men are unemployed?"

It has been noted that both groups are generally the last hired and the first fired—producing for both great insecurity of employment. Since the war there have been some shifts from the better paying factory jobs into less well-paying service trades. The number of women employed dropped from 20½ million during the war to 17 million in December 1947.⁶

The returning Negro veterans, many trained in skills in the Army, have had to accept, in many cases, low pay, unskilled jobs. In Arkansas 95 percent of their U.S.E.S. placements in 1945-46 were service and unskilled.⁷ Though 24,000 Negro carpenters were trained in the Army only 5 percent have been employed as such. The building trades, almost as a whole, have barred Negroes from industry except as common laborers and hod-carriers.⁸

Employment of women came naturally with the development of an industrial and money economy, in contrast to an agricultural

5. U. S. Dept. of Labor, Woman's Bureau, *op. cit.*, 79.

6. *Ibid.*, 11.

7. Charles G. Bolté and Louis Harris, *Our Negro Veterans*, Public Affairs Pamphlet No. 128, (Public Affairs Comm., N.Y., 1947), 4.

8. *Ibid.*, 12-13.

economy. The production of less and less in the home and more and more in factory and the need of the cash that women could earn outside the home became important. To work at some and perhaps at several different periods of their lives is becoming more the accepted expectation of women themselves and of society for them.⁹ The cotton gin began to bring women out of the home. The old looms were laid aside, and linen goods became all but obsolete. The women began to operate the machines, and the machines were in the factories. This revolutionized the entire significance of the work done hitherto by women. At home they spun and wove, as well as baked and tended the household. If, after clothing the family, they worked at the loom for a wage, the wage was a pittance. In the factory, too, it remained a pittance, even in such places as Lowell, Massachusetts where nearly all the spindles and looms in the town were manned by women. Woman was cheap labor.¹⁰

Harriet Martineau, when visiting this country in 1836, was dismayed both by slavery and the status of women. She wrote that she was surprised to find women "occupying a very subordinate position in a country calling itself free and to find that they had entered only seven paying occupations. They were allowed to teach (at a small salary), to be seamstresses, tailoresses, milliners, dress-makers, household servants, and factory operatives."¹¹

Today women are still concentrated in twenty-three women's occupations though there are actually only nine of the 451 listed occupations which have no women in them. The great bulk of employed women remain in the traditional fields of "women's work."

The training some of them had received in slavery gave to the Southern Negroes a degree of monopoly on labor for a few years after the Civil War. This was the situation on the rural plantations and in most other types of unskilled work as well. Unskilled work was tainted with inferiority. Negroes were the domestics and the laborers. They were also, to a great extent, the craftsmen and mechanics. They were carpenters, bricklayers, painters, blacksmiths, harness makers, tailors and shoemakers. For even skilled labor was degraded, and whites had often been denied the opportunity of

9. U. S. Dept. of Labor, Woman's Bureau, *op. cit.*, 16.

10. *Ibid.*, 53.

11. Harriet Martineau, *Society in America*, (London, Saunders & Otley, 1837).

acquiring training since so many masters had preferred to work with slaves. The high price paid for skilled slaves had encouraged their training in the crafts.¹²

Slavery actually protected Negro artisans from competition with whites. It was only after Emancipation that the Negro laborer had to compete with white job-seekers, resulting in his exclusion from many occupations and his being pressed downward in occupational levels. As the Negroes have been urbanized they have been employed in laboring jobs in the growing industries even when excluded from machines. Some industries have been open to them. The growing number of upper and middle class white families in cities have also employed them as domestic servants. Though the Negroes were pressed down in relative status in the occupational hierarchy, and though they did not get their full share in the number of new jobs so that the proportion of Negroes declined, the absolute number increased.¹³

Negroes failed to get any appreciable share in jobs whenever new lines of production were opened up. Technical innovations making work less strenuous, less dirty and more attractive has often been accompanied by redefinition of the occupations from "Negro jobs" to "white men's work." Negroes have been driven out from one kind of job after another. The old Negro carpenters, masons, painters, barbers and even waiters, bellboys and elevator operators have gradually been displaced from their "Negro jobs." The decline of handicrafts and the progressive mechanization of industry generally meant exclusion of Negroes from job opportunities. The commercial laundries brought about a spectacular decline in the number of Negro home laundresses.¹⁴

Defensive beliefs were constantly built up to rationalize this process. It was contended that the Negro was inefficient, unreliable and incompetent to work with machines.

This problem of displacement can also be seen in the economic history of women. As all kinds of work formerly done by women in the home have been transferred to factories outside the home, men have replaced women in some of these kinds of work. In the case of laundering or baking, the woman did all the work in the home.

12. Myrdal, *op. cit.*, 280.

13. *Ibid.*, 280.

14. *Ibid.*, 282.

When this was removed to the factory men were substituted for women in many of the operations.

This then opens the big question of whether women are taking men's jobs or men took women's jobs. Many argue that when women's work was transferred from the home to the factory, laundry, office and mill that men took these over. Then as women have taken many of these jobs, they were merely following into public the jobs which formerly they performed at home. Women, unable to make economic contributions in the home that they once could, have followed the work to the factory where it can be more efficiently done.

The problems of wages and earnings for both are mainly these:

(1) that wages have been and are low when measured by the demands of health, decency and comfort, and (2) that different scales of pay usually exist for so-called women's and men's jobs, for Negro jobs and white jobs, and different scales often exist for individual men and women and individual Negroes and whites when the occupational equipment is alike and the quality and volume of work substantially identical. The phrase "equal pay for equal work" has been a slogan for both groups in their attempts to ameliorate this situation.

During the war when individuals of both groups were employed in a number of traditional white men's jobs there was a tendency to fix wage scales at points approaching the original pay, and under pressure of immediate demand many rates of pay for both were equalized. Women and Negroes are still paid at much lower rates, however, and single women earn consistently more than married women.

It has been argued that the equal wage is a protection of the whites against the competition of Negroes and of the men against underbidding on the part of the women. It has been pointed out that, so long as wages are unequal, the employer has an inducement to substitute women for men or Negroes for whites or to cut the wages of the men and the whites to an equality with those of the lower wage group.¹⁵

This same sort of argument is the traditional "To keep a Negro in the ditch, you must stay there with him" which Booker T. Washington first formulated.

15. Paul H. Douglas, *Wages and the Family*, (Univ. of Chicago Press, 1925), 273, in U. S. Dept. of Labor, Woman's Bureau, *op. cit.*, 231.

Susan B. Anthony early used the same argument that unequal pay depresses all wage levels. In 1853, when many Americans were aware of the low esteem in which the teaching profession was held and teachers were underpaid, and many of them, chiefly women, were not sufficiently educated themselves to be able to teach others, an educational convention was held at Rochester. Susan B. Anthony attended it, and listened while the men speculated why teachers were considered to be far beneath lawyers, ministers or doctors. Susan Anthony asked to speak—an action without precedent as a demonstration of audacity and bad taste. For one-half hour the men argued whether she should be heard. After a much debated vote, winning by a small minority, she was given permission to speak:

It seems to me, gentlemen, that none of you quite comprehend the cause of the disrespect of which you complain. Do you not see that so long as society says a woman is incompetent to be a lawyer, minister, or doctor, but has ability to be a teacher, that every man of you who chooses this profession tacitly acknowledges that he has no more brains than a woman? Thus men must compete with the cheap labor of women. Would you exalt your profession, exalt those who labor with you. Would you make it more lucrative, increase the salaries of the women engaged in the noble work of educating our future Presidents, Senators, and Congressmen.¹⁶

The same arguments are being voiced today in the agitation for a Federal bill on equal pay. Many labor unions have joined in the drive and the United Nations Commission on the status of women has decided that of all the various economic problems the problem of equal pay for equal work is probably the most important. They argue that when you have a group that is under-cutting, it tends to drag down the whole wage scale.¹⁷

Lower wages for women have long been rationalized by the argument that their husbands provide them with economic security and that they work merely for pin money. In reality women work of necessity because a great percentage of them are heads of families, or must supplement the meager earnings of their husbands. Further—

16. U. S. Dept. of Labor, Woman's Bureau, *op. cit.*, 53-4.

17. *Ibid.*, 95.

more, there is the large group of women who have no husbands and are their own sole support.¹⁸

The problem is not always equal pay for equal work, because it is difficult to discover more than a very few instances in which men and women or whites and Negroes do the same work, in the same place, at the same time, so that the question is often rather that mentioned earlier of segregation of jobs than of equal pay. Both groups do the work called unskilled and both have been limited in opportunities for training or employment in the skilled, higher paying work. Many of the craft unions have not permitted either group to become apprentices. Their requirements for apprenticeship and other previous preparations have had for their purpose not only the maintenance of high standards of work but the limitation of the supply of workers, the reduction of the competitive pressure, and often the exclusion of women, Negroes, and aliens.¹⁹

The rising importance of labor unions for unskilled and semi-skilled workers has been of great importance and promises more help for both Negroes and women. Though many early experiences for both with trade unions were highly unsuccessful, there have been many recent gains in wages, working conditions, etc. Just as some believe the trade union movement is making a greater contribution toward the solution of the race problem in the South than any other organizations, some say that the labor union, in their work with women in factories and in service occupations, are helping the members to participate more fully in the life of our times.²⁰

As some craft unions have kept Negroes and women out of apprenticeships and skilled work, there have been many trade union agreements in which inequality in pay was actually written right into the agreement. The industrial unions, however, have largely organized without discrimination and many have taken positive measures to organize Negroes and women and seek more equality for them in opportunities for job advancement.²¹

18. In December 1947, earnings of all workers averaged \$57.54 a week, earnings of unskilled men averaged \$49.79 a week, but women's earnings averaged only \$41.39 a week.

19. Sophonisba P. Breckinridge, *Women in the Twentieth Century*, (N.Y., McGraw-Hill, 1933), 104-5.

20. See U. S. Labor Dept., Woman's Bureau, *op. cit.*, 25, and Lucy Randolph Mason, "The CIO and the Negro in the South," *The Journal of Negro Education*, XIV, No. 4.

21. Myrdal, *op. cit.*, 402.

In the professions, business and white collar occupations associated with upper or middle class status, the exclusion policy for all except white males is usually more complete and "settled." It is protected by social conventions.

The overwhelming majority of Negro businessmen, professionals and Negro white collar workers are either dependent on the segregated Negro community for their market or they serve in public institutions—like schools and hospitals—set up exclusively for the use of Negroes. While the Negro community gives places for a fair number of Negro preachers, teachers and neighborhood storekeepers, it offers little chance for civil engineers, architects or other such positions which have places only in the over-all economy. The Negroes' representation among managers of industry is even smaller.²² The monopoly over the Negro market of teachers, preachers, undertakers, beauticians and others is generally respected and they have a vested interest in racial segregation since it gives them what opportunity they have.

Women lawyers, scientists and business executives are also exceptional. Women represent less than five percent of the high grade professional groups such as doctors, dentists, engineers, architects, lawyers and CPA's.

The progress of both Negroes and women in the field of medicine is an interesting story of their attempts to enter one of the old professions. Of the 176,000 physicians in the United States Negroes number about 4,000 or about 2 percent and women number 7,600 or 4.3 percent.²³ The proportions of each in this profession have shown little change in the past 40 years.

Just as most Negro physicians are segregated in the Negro community there is a type of segregation among women necessitating their working in women's and children's hospitals, and specializing in such women's fields as pediatrics, child psychiatry, obstetrics and gynecology.²⁴

There has also been a type of segregation or rather isolation for both in their being placed in research, teaching and laboratory

22. *Ibid.*, 3-4.

23. Helen Edith Walker, *The Negro in the Medical Profession*, (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Virginia, Aug. 1948), 25, also U. S. Dept. of Labor, Woman's Bureau, *Woman Physicians*, Bulletin No. 203, No. 7, (Washington Government Printing Office, 1945), 1.

24. U. S. Dept. of Labor, Woman's Bureau, *Woman Physicians*, *op. cit.*, 5.

work where they get the prestige of research positions but are out of the way of patients and public.²⁵

Of the seventy approved medical schools, all but four admit women students and one, the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania, accepts women students only. About half of all women applicants and only a slightly higher proportion (52%) of all men applicants are normally accepted.²⁶ The two Negro medical colleges, Howard and Meharry, provide the great majority of training facilities for Negroes. In 1946-47, Howard and Meharry combined had a total of 496 students, and only 82 Negroes were enrolled in other medical schools over the country. Thus the actual facilities for Negroes represent only some 2.2% of the nation's facilities. Howard received 1,351 applications for the 1947 season; Meharry received 800, and the total admitted to the two schools was only 125. Discounting probable duplication of applications to the two schools, and a large number for unqualified students, this still leaves a large number of rejected students.²⁷

A greater difficulty than training facilities for both women and Negroes has been in the lesser number and variety of residencies open to them, though the number of residencies has trebled since 1927 and in 1944 totaled 5,393. The principal sources for both have been in segregated situations: all-Negro hospitals and women's hospitals; and these have not been sufficient to serve the small annual number of graduates. There are eight Negro hospitals, which meet the standards of the specialty boards, offering eighty-five residencies to Negroes.²⁸ Women have been particularly discriminated against in regard to type of residency. Residencies in surgery have been especially difficult for women to obtain.

Members of both groups have been barred from a number of the professional organizations. Though most women now belong to the county medical societies, and hence to the American Medical Association, many Negroes in the South are barred through the county barrier. Due to discriminations of both groups, Negro Medical Societies and Women's Medical Associations were formed. In 1915 a national organization of women, the American Medical

25. U. S. Dept. of Labor, Woman's Bureau, *Woman Physicians*, *op. cit.*, 5. and Hughes, *op. cit.*, 358.

26. U. S. Dept of Labor, Woman's Bureau, *Woman Physicians*, *op. cit.*, 7.

27. Walker, *op. cit.*, 38.

28. *Ibid.*, 61.

Women's Association, Inc., which in 1944 had 1,200 members, was formed.²⁹

There are numerous organizations for specialists such as the American Pediatric Society and the American Psychiatric Association to which qualified women may belong, but even here there are notable exceptions. The American Gynecological Association has only one woman member and many local groups of medical specialists such as the New York Obstetrical Society do not admit women to membership.

There is another great handicap that both groups hold in common and that is in their association with hospital staffs. Since their hospital facilities are limited they must often turn their hospitalized patients over to white, male physicians who have hospital privileges. In greater New York in 1940, outside the New York Infirmary for women and children, there were only two women serving as hospital directors of service. Of some 700-725 women physicians in New York City 309 had no hospital connections, only 140 were on hospital staffs, 123 had only out-patient connections, and 103 were connected with the New York Infirmary for women and children.³⁰ With few exceptions in the South only the all-Negro hospitals grant hospital privileges to Negro physicians, even though most of the other hospitals have segregated wings for Negro patients.³¹

During the first World War a few Negro physicians and a few women were used on a temporary basis in the Medical Corps. The women were used as "contract surgeons" with army status but without commissions. A few Negro physicians, trained in a separate camp from the white medical officers, served in the Medical Corps during World War I.

In World War II the Negro National Medical Association and the Women's Medical Association agitated for the appointment of members of both groups in the Army Medical Corps and Navy Medical Corps. In the spring of 1943 both groups achieved the right to appointment in both. In the summer of 1944, 133 women physicians were serving with the armed forces or as commissioned officers in the United States Public Health Service. Approximately 600 Negro Medical Corps officers served in the armed services.

29. U. S. Dept. of Labor, Woman's Bureau, *Woman Physicians*, *op. cit.*, 12.

30. *Ibid.*, 11-12.

31. Walker, *op. cit.*, 69.

Members of both groups find their incomes less than that of white, male physicians. The median income for all physicians is \$4,600, while that for graduates of grade A medical schools was \$6,070. The median income of women physicians in 1942 was \$3,000, considerably lower than the general averages of all physicians as given above. Since the Negroes must rely on the Negro community for their income their remuneration is much less than that of the white physicians.

Negro physicians and women physicians encounter much prejudice from colleague groups and patients. The white, male, protestant physician of old American stock and of family of moderate social standing is the stereotype of the auxiliary traits associated with the physician in our society. People think of these as "natural," and through cartoons, fiction, radio and motion picture they are worked into sentiment and conduct. Through the colleague-group or fellow-worker group the role with the appropriate auxiliary characteristics is learned. This role then becomes the basis of the colleague-group's definition of its common interests, of its informal code and of selection of those enter the inner fraternity. Epithets such as "hen doctor" express the hostility of colleagues to persons deviating from the expected type. The advent of colleague-competitors of new and peculiar types arouse anxieties and these new types entering the professions are often not drawn into the informal brotherhood in which experiences are exchanged, confidence built up and the formal code elaborated and enforced.³² These new types become marginal personalities.

As has been noted in the stereotyped prejudices, there is the rationalization that these new people are peculiarly fitted to the particular places in which they have previously functioned, and it is followed by the implication that they are not able to fill new positions to which they aspire. In the advance of the new group—women, Negroes, some ethnic groups, etc.—to new positions, the old stereotype does not completely disappear, but is slightly modified. The assumption that Negroes were not good for industrial work or work with machines has been followed by the notion that they are good at certain kinds but still not fit to supervise. As women have become doctors it has been rationalized that they are probably good with children but would never make good surgeons.

32. Hughes, *op. cit.*, 356.

The new types appearing in established positions produce contradictions and dilemmas for the individuals concerned and for other people who have to deal with them. Such a dilemma may be illustrated by a young woman who became a member of that virile profession, engineering. The designer of an airplane is expected to go upon the maiden flight of the first plane built according to the design. He (sic) then gives a dinner to the engineers and workmen who worked on the new plane. The dinner is naturally a stag party. The young woman in question designed a plane. Her co-workers urged her not to take the risk—for which, presumably men only are fit—of the maiden voyage. They were, in effect, asking her to be a lady rather than an engineer. She chose to be an engineer. She then gave the party and paid for it like a man. After food and the first round of toasts, she left like a lady.³³

There are contradictions for a Negro who qualifies for a traditional profession. His membership in the Negro race is a key status-determining trait which tends to overpower other characteristics, but his professional standing is also a powerful characteristic. There is the dilemma of whether to treat him as a Negro or as a member of a profession. This leads to the tendency to use the Negro professional only in an emergency or to keep the relationship quite formal and specific.³⁴

For the Negro professional there is the personal dilemma. If he accepts the role of the Negro to the extent of appearing content with less than full equality and intimacy with his white colleagues for sake of such security and advantage as can be so secured, then both he and his race accuse him of being an "Uncle Tom." Since the whites also tend to say any Negro who rises is an exception there is a strong temptation for him to seek advantage in the belief that he is unusual.

The elaboration of social segregation has in many ways solved or avoided the problem. The woman lawyer serves women clients, or specializes in some kind of legal service in keeping with her traditional place. Women physicians find a place in specialties concerned with women and children only. A female electrical engineer was urged by the dean of the school to accept a job whose function was to give the "woman's angle" to the design of a household

33. Hughes, *op. cit.*, 356.

34. *Ibid.*, 357.

electrical appliance.³⁵ The Negro professional also finds his clients among Negroes. There has been the use of women and Negro personnel officials in industries which hire women and Negro workers. Negro and women policemen arrest and imprison "their own," and most public committees must have one woman and one Negro to interpret "their point of view."

Another solution previously mentioned is that of a kind of isolation: putting these new people in the library or laboratory out of the way of patients and public. Industries have recently been hiring a number of Negro chemists to work in testing and research laboratories and to do other work which involves few contacts with the production organization.

35. Hughes, *op. cit.*, 358.

CHAPTER III

THE POLITICAL PARALLEL

WHEN a legal status was necessary for the imported Negro servants in the 17th century, the nearest and most natural analogy was the status of women. At the beginning of the 19th century most of these similarities in the legal and political status of Negroes and women remained. It is small wonder that the women Abolitionists saw the similarities and declared with Emily Collins that:

All through the Anti-Slavery struggle, every word of denunciation of the wrongs of the Southern slave was, I felt, equally applicable to the wrongs of my own sex. Every argument for the emancipation of the colored man, was equally one for that of woman; and I was surprised that all Abolitionists did not see the similarity in the condition of the two classes.¹

At law, Blackstone's dictum that "the very being or legal existence of woman is suspended during marriage" was still authority. The legal discrimination which grew out of the feudal common-law theory that marriage destroyed a woman's separate identity still remained.² The unmarried woman of this period might contract, hold, and manage her own property, the legal limitations upon her being largely political in nature, but immediately upon marriage her status changed. She lost all right to the control of her property. She could not sue or be sued in her own name. She had no standing before the law as a separate entity. The control of her real estate passed to her husband, and he could manage it and have the use of all income, rent and profits therefrom without her interference. All personal property when reduced to possession passed absolutely into his control, including the right of disposition. She could not make a will, for the law itself disposed of such portion of her estate as was reserved to her at the time of her death. If a living child was born, her husband gained control of her real estate until his death,

1. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Matilda Joselyn Gage, *History of Woman Suffrage*, (N.Y., Fowler & Wells, 1881), I, 89.

2. Sara Louise Buchanan, *The Legal Status of Women in the United States of America*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, Jan. 1, 1938), U. S. Dept., of Labor. Woman's Bureau, Bulletin no. 157.

however long he might outlive her. She could make no valid contract and had no right to her own children or any wages she might earn.

Politically women and slaves had no voice. Though none of the original thirteen state constitutions restricted suffrage, between 1790 and 1840 most of the states added "white, male" to the voting qualification. Apparently the restrictions had not been necessary earlier. New Jersey in limiting her franchise to "white, male" in 1844 declared as their reason that women, Negroes and aliens had been allowed to vote.³

Though all the states added the "male" qualification to voting some states allowed free Negroes to vote. All of New England, with the exception of Connecticut, permitted the Negroes to vote. New York granted the Negroes suffrage if they owned a specific amount of property, a qualification which the state laws did not require of whites.⁴

For many living in this period such voting restrictions did not seem contradictory to democracy. Jefferson, though a most thorough believer in democracy, said:

Were our State a pure democracy, in which all the inhabitants should meet together to transact all their business, there would yet be excluded from their deliberations: 1. Infants, until arrived at years of discretion; 2. Women, who, to prevent depravation of morals, and ambiguity of issue, could not mix promiseously in the public meetings of men; 3. Slaves, from whom the unfortunate state of things with us takes away the rights of will and of property.⁵

The Federal Constitution which became effective on March 4, 1789, however, stated no limitation on the rights of citizens to vote. The qualifying word "male" came into the fundamental law of the land with the 14th Amendment to the Constitution in 1868 which gave the Negro suffrage. Previously the matter of voting qualifications had been completely up to the states.

The early nineteenth century witnessed several efforts at the

3. Arthur W. Calhoun, *A Social History of the American Family from Colonial Times to the Present*, (N.Y., Barnes and Noble, 1945), II, 79.

4. Charles S. Mangum, *The Legal Status of the Negro*, (Chapel Hill, Univ. of N.C., 1940), 371-2.

5. Thomas Woody, *A History of Women's Education in the United States*, (N.Y., The Science Press, 1929), I, 5.

amelioration of laws affecting women, both single and married. In 1809, Connecticut gave married women the power to will property; in 1845, an act to protect the rights of married women provided that "the interest of any married man in the real estate of his wife," held by her at marriage or acquired during marriage, "shall not be liable to be taken by levy of execution against him," during her life or the lives of her children by the said marriage; and, in 1846, it was enacted that, "whenever any married women shall hereafter earn wages by her own labour, payment may be made to her for the same, and when made shall be good and valid in law as though made to the husband of said married woman"⁶

In 1833 in Massachusetts, married women were empowered to receive payments, with the Supreme Court's approval, in case the husband had absented himself or abandoned her without "sufficient provision for her support." In 1842 Massachusetts authorized women to make wills, and in 1845, married women were empowered to hold property separately and "to sue and be sued" on contracts made with reference to such property as if unmarried; in 1846, they were "allowed to give a valid receipt for their own wages;" and, by law of 1874, they were put substantially on an equality with men so far as contracting, selling real estate, giving notes, making mortgages, suing and being sued were concerned.⁷

Mississippi gave married women control of their property as early as 1839. Maine and Pennsylvania made some modifications of property laws affecting women between 1844 and 1849. The California constitution in 1849 recognized the right of married women to continue to hold, as their separate property, such property as they had held before marriage. Similar guarantees were made to women by the constitution of Texas. On April 7, 1848, New York State passed a "Law to protect Property of Married Women," which became an objective for the women's rights agitators in other states.⁸

Such rights, which had been forbidden to slaves, and many of them to free Negroes before Emancipation, were supposedly pro-

6. Thomas Woody, *A History of Women's Education in the United States*, *op. cit.*, I, 397.

7. *Ibid.*

8. *Ibid.*, I, 398-9.

vided the Negro in the 14th Amendment and the Civil Rights Act of 1870 giving the freed men the right to make and enforce contracts, the right to hold and convey personal or real property, to sue and be parties to suits in the courts, and to be subject to the same punishments and penalties as white persons, any law to the contrary notwithstanding.⁹

Many of these rights however have never been fully realized by Negroes in America. After Reconstruction days Southern States began circumventing Federal Court Rulings in regard to Negro suffrage. These dodges have taken the form of poll taxes, white primaries, special registration requirements, literacy tests, mass purging, violence and intimidation (particularly by the Ku Klux Klan) to frighten Negroes from the polls. Other legal rights of the Negroes have been extra-legally prohibited. The right to make and enforce contracts is often abused in the plantation system conditions of tenancy and share-cropping. The legal right to own property is guaranteed the Negro by the 14th Amendment but there are many discriminations in practice. The Freedmen, early and late, found much opposition to their purchasing property, and segregation and zoning restrictions, both housing and business, are closely connected with the right to own and convey property, limiting both in many respects.

Women are still the subjects of statutory discriminations in legal rights, though these are few now in comparison with the mid-19th century. A recent publication of the League of Women Voters stated that legally and politically women have gained most of the important privileges and responsibilities men possess. It noted as the outstanding discriminations left: the few states' denial to women of the right of domicile if that state is not the legal residence of her husband and the denial to women of some states of the guardianship of their children. In a few states husbands exercise certain controls over their wives' earnings.¹⁰

Both groups in their struggles for status have put great emphasis upon gaining political participation and legal rights. With the American revolutionary tradition and democratic creed it is most natural that both groups would have great faith in the vote

9. Mangum, *op. cit.*, 27-8.

10. *The Legal Status of Women*, Publication No. 91, (League of Women Voters, Washington, D. C., April 1, 1947).

and believe and exploit the two maxims: "Taxation without representation is tyranny" and "Governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed." Refusal to apply these to any group has been consistently pointed up as an inconsistency.

The first definite agitation for political rights among women began as early as 1828 when Frances Wright, a Scotch girl, was the first woman to lecture publicly on political questions in the U. S. She challenged openly the justice of the inequality of the sexes as well as the inequality explicit in the slavery of the period and she was roundly condemned by press and pulpit. Such suggestions were decidedly "reforms against nature." In 1838 Ernestine L. Rose, a Polish Jewess, lectured in the larger cities on the "Science of Government," boldly advocating suffrage for women. In 1843 Margaret Fuller published *Man Versus Woman or the Great Lawsuit* wherein she set forth, more forcefully and clearly than any one had before in the United States, the servitude of women and the need for their complete emancipation.

At this same time American women had begun lecturing against slavery and found that in so doing they had to defend their right to do so, this leading to demands for their own political and legal "emancipation." In the anti-slavery societies and the work for Abolition women began to agitate the question of their right to speak, vote, and serve on committees, and it was from these experiences that the Woman's Rights Convention of 1848 in Seneca Falls developed. It was at this meeting that the grievances were listed and accepted along with a series of resolutions, the ninth of which stated, "that it is the duty of the women of this country to secure to themselves their sacred right to the elective franchise." The ninth resolution alone failed to secure unanimous endorsement, and only by ceaseless activity and advocacy of Mrs. Stanton and Frederick Douglass, who felt that it was the key to success in all other demands, was it finally carried.¹¹ The demand for the right of suffrage became the first objective for it was believed that only through the vote could their other objectives be attained. At the Worcester Convention in 1851 it was called "the cornerstone of this enterprise." The woman's Right's Movement later became explicitly the Woman Suffrage Movement and kept that title until women were given the

11. Woody, *op. cit.*, I, 419.

franchise in 1920, and continues still in the campaign for political participation through the League of Women Voters.

The movement for women suffrage first aimed at obtaining amendments to the state constitutions. The first woman suffrage petition was sent to the New York Legislature in January 1849 with sixty-two signatures. In 1854, the first convention designed to influence suffrage legislative action was held in Albany, and petitions of 10,000 names asking for woman suffrage were presented from only two counties, and Mrs. Stanton addressed the Legislature. In 1856 similar petitions and "right to suffrage" bills were presented to the Ohio and Wisconsin Legislative Committees. The movement was still tied in with the Abolition movement and women and men lectured in many states on both, some adding the third, temperance. One by one the States were amending the "woman laws." Wisconsin, California, Minnesota, Oregon and Kansas, coming into statehood during this period began with liberal codes of law for women. The women became very much encouraged at the legal changes being made, and felt certain that New York would begin the new trend by enfranchising its women when it revised its Constitution in 1866. Thousands of petitions were being sent to the Legislature asking for the right of women to vote, the right to her person, her wages and her children.

The period of 1850-60 saw much activity in Anti-Slavery and Woman's Rights. Woman's Rights, second only to slavery in political interest, had grown out of the Abolition Movement and had exceeded it in legislative concessions during this period. It came very near to achieving its aims when the progress of the campaign was stopped short by the Civil War and the political exigencies of Reconstruction.

In 1869 the National Woman Suffrage Association, with Susan B. Anthony as Chairman and the American Woman Suffrage Association with Lucy Stone as Chairman were organized. In 1890 these rival groups decided to pool their efforts and uniting under the name of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, and founded their paper, "The Woman Citizen."

Wyoming, which had granted suffrage to women in 1869 when it was a territory, continued the grant as a state in 1890. Colorado followed suit in 1893, and Utah and Idaho did likewise in 1896.

Those working for the "cause" then realized that the masculine element in society was in no hurry to let women vote, and for fourteen years there was a stalemate.

But the woman suffragists, or suffragettes, as they came to be called, campaigned everywhere for the vote. The halls of Congress were besieged by women, and committee hearings were held in every session from 1869 on. As the nineteenth century drew to a close the suffragette movement became more prominent. This was the era of the great crusaders, and the roster contains the names of many distinguished women. In the van were Harriett Beecher Stowe, Julia Ward Howe, Lucy Stone, Clara Barton, Frances Willard, Jane Addams, Susan B. Anthony, and Carrie Chapman Catt.

The women began to gain ground. In 1910 Congress was petitioned by a list of half a million women to grant them suffrage, and popular sentiment gradually turned in favor of their cause. Kansas, Oregon and Arizona followed in 1912, and Nevada and Montana in 1914. In 1917 a referendum in New York was held and 1,030,000 women declared that they wanted the vote. Then came the War, which in reality advanced the cause of suffrage, and that of feminism as a whole. The War put demands upon industry and business which only the employment of women could fill and industrial production was increased enormously. The general economic and social opportunities of women were broadened and the fight for woman suffrage benefited.

In 1918, Michigan, Oklahoma and South Dakota extended suffrage to women. And in 1919 Congress finally voted to submit to the states for ratification an amendment granting women suffrage, and on August 26, 1920 the required number of states had ratified the 19th Amendment, and its inclusion in the Constitution was announced. Delaware, Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi and Florida did not ratify. It seems significant that these were all slave states.

Before the Civil War, of the thirty-seven States which composed the Union at the time of the ratification of the 15th Amendment, all save six used the word "white" as descriptive of the elector. The granting of suffrage during the Reconstruction became an important political move for Republican control of the South. In more recent times the N.A.A.C.P. and other organizations interested in securing political and legal rights for Negroes have had a constant battle to

get Supreme Court rulings and legal protection against the various dodges the Southern states have employed to prohibit Negro suffrage.

There are still a number of limitations affecting both groups alike and which both are working to eliminate. Both groups are limited in regard to Jury Service. There are still sixteen states which do not permit women to serve on the jury, and despite repeated decisions by the federal courts that Negroes must be placed on jury lists, practically no Negroes serve on juries in the South except in large cities in the Border States.¹² Raper reported a survey of the courts in 1940 which showed that in Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Florida, North and South Carolina the federal grand juries and petit juries in most of these states as well as the superior court grand and petit juries in the larger cities were using Negroes, however the vast majority of the rural courts had made no pretense of putting Negroes on jury lists, much less calling or using them in trials. North Carolina and Virginia had taken the decisions more seriously.¹³

Both groups are limited in regard to public office. Elective offices are open to qualified women in most of the State governments by express provision, by interpretation of general provisions of the statutes in the light of the nineteenth amendment to the Federal Constitution, or by virtue of definite State policies. Despite the "eligibility" of both groups for elective offices it is still very difficult for members of either group to be elected to public office.

It has been only in segregated Negro districts that the few Negro councilmen, state representatives and even fewer Congressmen were elected. The skillful use of gerrymandering has prevented more of this. Outside of the West where women have long had more political and legal rights than in other sections, the situations in which women have been elected to offices are the suburban towns where the man work in the city and take an interest in the city politics, leaving the women to run the small communities, and the vacancies to which widows have been elected to take over their husband's offices.

More Negroes and women are appointed to public office than elected, but even these are nowhere near the proportion of the

12. Myrdal, *op. cit.*, 499.

13. *Ibid.*, 549-50.

Negro vote. It is now common for all committees considering city-wide, state-wide, and nation-wide problems to appoint a Negro and a woman to present the "Negro-point-of-view" and the "woman-point-of-view." Everyone tends to look upon these members as representatives only of their group and the appointees themselves tend to consider all issues from "their point-of-view."

There have been many appointive positions which have been claimed by them as being particularly suited to their control—positions for which their being women or Negroes particularly qualifies them. Inspectorships in establishments employing girls and women or Negroes have been claimed. Women have argued for judgeships in juvenile courts, and police officers to care for women prisoners; Negroes have argued for Negro policemen in their communities, and both have claimed directorships of institutions for their particular groups.

Both groups have gained positions more readily in keeping with their spheres. Women have argued for and found support for the public jobs that are "women's jobs," such as directors of institutions for women, maternal and child welfare positions. Negroes also gain positions in segregated situations. The first major appointment in the Federal government for a woman was when Julia C. Lathrop was selected by President Taft to be head of the Children's Bureau.

There have come to be "traditional appointments" also for Negroes—those held by Negroes since Reconstruction days, such as Recorder of Deeds for the District of Columbia. Occasionally a new "traditional" position is created. When the Roosevelt-appointed Federal Judge in the Virgin Island resigned another Negro was appointed in his place. Roosevelt appointed a number of Negroes to positions in the Federal Government. Under the leadership of Mary McLeod Bethune, Director of the Division of Negro Affairs of the N.Y.A., the most important of these organized an informal group, the Federal Council, popularly known as "the Black Cabinet."

Just as each political party considers the "Finnish Vote," the Negroes and the women are considered very important minority groups and both parties do some catering to them. No political convention would now be held without at least one woman speaker and one Negro somewhere on the program—at least to sing.

Directly after women were granted suffrage, the "Woman's Lobby" won considerable concessions in welfare legislation. The feared woman's bloc was soon found to be non-existent, however, and the threat of the women's vote diminished after 1925 and the women's bills began to find less support. The so-called Negro bloc has also been found to be non-existent. The supposed solidarity and organization of both groups cannot be found though the potentiality is often stated and feared in such terms as "Negro domination" and "petticoat rule." A politician was reported to have remarked recently: "Can you conceive of what would happen if all the women's clubs ever got together on one thing? There wouldn't be a politician in Washington whose hat wouldn't be blown off."¹⁴

Members of both groups have often come out of their legislative experiences disillusioned. Statements similar to this one by a woman have been expressed by Negroes. "It is my opinion that men do not want women in office, they only put them in for expediency—to keep the women voting and working for them politically. Usually they do not give them offices of leadership but chiefly honorary positions."¹⁵ Some women have agreed with this woman's conclusions that, "the obligation rests upon them to think and to act together as women if they wish advantages to women as a group. Women do not frame the policies, build the platforms, or shape the political ideas. When they organize as women and support women in politics—then and not 'till then will they be a real force."

Similar desires for solidarity have been expressed by Negroes in demands for a Negro party. Both groups, however, have shied away from arousing fear of "Negro domination" and ridicule of "petticoat rule," and have been careful to abstain from political moves which might be interpreted as group exclusiveness. Both groups have realized that influence must be through the dominant parties. Some of the organizations of both groups, the Woman's Party, the League of Women Voters and the N.A.A.C.P. have in small degree attempted to take up collective bargaining with the two parties on behalf of their voters. Both groups have relied in great part on lobbying to secure not only political and legal rights but economic and social status as well.

14. U. S. Dept. of Labor, Women's Bureau, Bulletin No. 224, *op. cit.*, 80.

15. Breckinridge, *op. cit.*, 331.

Women began petitioning and agitating for legislation as part of their anti-slavery work, temperance and other espoused causes. Dorothea Lynde Dix lobbied for care of the indigent insane and Clara Barton lobbied long before the suffrage lobby became so important. The General Federation of Women's Clubs in 1900 and 1904 urged women to lobby for bills in municipal, state and national legislatures on questions of marriage and divorce, child protection, child labor, pure food, forestry and libraries. The suffrage lobby used almost all the techniques available: petition, picketing—which often resulted in arrests—street-corner oratory, parades and many other militant procedures to induce legislation. These are very similar to the procedures used by Negro protest movements of recent years.

When in 1920 women achieved the ballot, they had lobbied for over fifty years, and in growing numbers, for child labor laws, educational facilities and against discriminatory laws for women. A Woman's Joint Congressional Committee was organized in Washington to serve as clearing house for federal legislative activities of member organizations, and it became recognized as the "Women's Lobby on Capitol Hill." The League of Women Voters and the Woman's Party still work to influence legislation. The Y.W.C.A., the General Federation of Women's Clubs and other such groups also often urge women to "write your Congressman."

The League of Women Voters advocate programs of legislation, address questionnaires to candidates before the primary as well as before the general election and publish records. There are interviews with candidates and their managers individually and in deputations. Constituents are informed, letters and telegrams from constituents solicited, hearings arranged, publicity released.

The National Woman's Party, with the purpose "to secure for women complete equality with men under the law and in all human relationships," maintains constant vigilance through its national office in regard to legislation concerning women, urging removal of all discriminations and agitation for federal legislation. This group supports the Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and opposes the enactment of protective legislation for women that does not apply to men, an extreme position opposed by the League of Women Voters and others.

The Woman's Bureau in Washington grew out of the Woman in Industry Service established in 1918. A similar agency was formed in the early days of the New Deal to keep watch on Negro rights in policy making at Washington, the Joint Committee on National Recovery.

The National Negro Congress was an attempt at a National Negro agency embracing all existing Negro organizations to form a strong Negro movement. This group became a communist front and failed. The March on Washington Committee created to voice the Negro protest in the war emergency was in a sense a continuation of the nonpartisan general Negro movement represented by the Congress in its first year.¹⁶ Negro protest organizations are today working for F.E.P.C. and other Civil Rights legislation, using many techniques reminiscent of the Women's Suffrage Lobby and many similar to those used by the women's organizations today.

Both groups seem to be playing increasingly important roles in politics through which they may be expected to gain more rights and consideration.

16. Myrdal, *op. cit.*, 817-8.

CHAPTER IV

THE EDUCATION FACTOR

THE first education for members of both groups was almost completely religious in nature. In the 18th century there developed agitation for education, qualified by religious considerations, for both. The purpose was usually stated: to insure salvation of souls and to make the individuals more pious and useful either to masters or husbands and families.

It was understood that the education was to be character and religious training rather than intellectual. This agitation brought about the dame schools for girls, which taught such disciplines as needlework, composition and moral development;¹ and the foundation of the "Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts" incorporated by William III in 1701. This organization sent out missionaries to spread the philosophy of religious instruction throughout the plantations.²

Both movements met objections. Though some slave owners thought that it was their Christian duty to teach their slaves to read the Bible, more objected that religious instruction and Christianization absolved their status as slaves, and it was further argued that education in general would ruin slaves and would encourage them to leave their places. Just as earlier mediaeval Schoolmen urged that women should not be taught to write, and it was argued that a woman would forge her husband's or father's name if taught to read and write,³ it was argued also that a slave would forge passes and sign his master's name.

Agitation for women's education that favored more than the 3 R's—enough to read and decipher the Bible and Recipe Book—met the opposition argument that it would beget a distaste for the normal career of woman and raise a rebellion against wifeness and motherhood and menace the future of the race. It was feared

1. Mary Sumner Benson, *Women in Eighteenth Century America*, (N.Y., Columbia Univ. Press, 1935), 110.

2. David Humphrey, *An Historical Account of the Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts*, (London, 1730), 200-31, in William Sumner Jenkins, *Pro-Slavery Thought in the Old South*, (Chapel Hill, Univ. of N.C., 1935), 14.

3. Calhoun, *op. cit.*, II, 89.

and argued that education and training would not fit slaves for slavery and women for domestic pursuits. These objections are still heard today.

The education movements for both Negroes and women have been integral parts of the general movements for status. Education in America has traditionally been a chief means of climbing the social status scale, and this along with the American faith in education has made the close alignments of the movements for improvement of status and the movements for education natural associations. The ability to read and write have traditionally been tied up with status and prestige. Reading and writing was almost wholly confined to the priests and clergy of medieval ages and became so associated with them that the "benefit of clergy" of medieval England became the privilege of all males who could read and write. It was denied to women until the time of William and Mary.

It was argued in Colonial America that education of women was an infringement upon the domain of man and the education of slaves was an infringement upon the domain of the planter. There was some validity in these arguments. In the plantation economy the planter was one who did the reading, writing and figuring. As Charles S. Johnson pointed out "Literacy is not an asset in the plantation economy . . . Too much attention to reading about the outside, and particularly to figuring, on the part of the Negro tenants, would surely make them less satisfied with their status and bring them into harsh conflict with the system."⁴

Woman's sphere was to be a cheerful and efficient domestic worker and such domestic preparations were obtained through apprenticeship to her mother. This precluded any attention to formal learning. Such education for women as developed in the late 18th and early 19th century in the boarding schools and seminaries dwelt chiefly upon acquisition of accomplishments that she might embellish the home and society of her husband. They mostly gave training in polite accomplishments. A Virginia lady reported that very little from books was thought necessary for a girl. She was trained to domestic matters and learned the accomplishments of the day,

4. Charles S. Johnson, *Shadow of the Plantation*, (Chicago, Univ. of Chicago Press, 1934), 129.

to play upon the harpsichord or spinet and to work dragons and roses on canvas.⁵

"Ladylike" handwriting was an important part of their education. Special books were written for women, primers suited to their "natural" intelligence or to their untrained minds. Otherwise, in reading men's books it was thought they ran the risk of discouragement unless they "skipped." They followed St. Teresa's advice to her nuns, that when they read not to weary themselves with what they could not understand, with subtle discussions. 'This is not fit for women . . . Be always then, on your guard against perplexing your mind . . . Since women need no more than what suits their capacity.' And the Saint added contentedly and in a phrase many an anti-suffragist has since paraphrased: "And in this respect God confers a favor upon us."⁶ The double code of morals passed unchallenged and separate moral tracts were written for women. Books on Duties, Letters or Talks were addressed specifically to Young Ladies or to Young Gentlemen.

The modesty argument was used against educating girls. Mary Wollstonecraft mentions a lady, for example, who vehemently asserted to her that instruction in "the modern system" of botany was "impossible" for modest girls. In 1844 Paulina Wright gave public lectures in the United States upon physiology. When she uncovered her manikin, ladies would drop their veils or run from the room; sometimes they "fainted." In the latter part of the century the President of the British Medical Association, in referring to medicine as a profession for women, said publicly that he shuddered to hear of what the ladies were attempting to do. "One can but blush, and feel that modesty, once inherent in the fairest of God's creation, is fast fading away."⁷

It was argued that woman was too weak physically and mentally to stand the strain of the more "solid," formal education. It was often repeated that Winthrop's wife lost her mind because she left her proper duties and indulged herself in literary pursuits.⁸ Both universities and schools which prepared for universities ex-

5. Calhoun, *op. cit.*, I, 297-8.

6. St. Teresa, *Conceptions of Divine Love*, Tr. Dalton, (London, 1860), 225-26, in E. C. Parsons, *op. cit.*, 166.

7. E. C. Parsons, *op. cit.*, 220.

8. Woody, *op. cit.*, I, 93.

cluded girls. In Massachusetts, Boston girls were admitted to the "free schools" only during the summer term. Arithmetic was not in the summer curriculum, for of it, it was said, "all a girl needs to know is enough to reckon how much she will have to spend to buy a peck of potatoes in case she becomes a widow."

There was some opposition in the early 19th century to the current "finishing school" type of education and some advocated women's academies and college education to teach more than polite accomplishments. It was argued that it was much better for a girl to have "serious interests" than to spend all her time "calling" and dancing. It was carefully noted by Benjamin Rush and the agitators in the field, however, that this training was still to be given without injuring woman's domestic character. He argued that such training would make women more companionable and attractive and in reality able to see for themselves the limits beyond which they must not go. The right training made them more amenable to government instead of less so for the more they were trained in reasoning the less likely they were to defy authority.⁹

The results were the academies for girls or after-hours sessions for girls in the boys academies providing the more "solid" and "disciplinary" education. It was these schools that produced the women leaders in the education movements: Catherine Beecher, Emma Willard and Mary Lyon. Catherine Beecher in her *True Remedy* advocated higher education to cure the "want of reasoning capability; impetuosity in forming judgments" and "give our daughters the mental discipline and the breadth of outlook which young men get in a good college."¹⁰

In 1833 Oberlin College opened its doors to women with the patronizing purpose of "the elevation of female character by bringing within the reach of the misguided and neglected sex all the instruction privileges which have hitherto unreasonably distinguished the leading sex from theirs." The four women entrants were tolerated rather than encouraged, because the attempts at formal education for girls were generally ridiculed. "Learned wives" were proverbially to be avoided. In 1840 an audience was both amused

9. Benjamin Rush, *Thoughts upon Female Education*, (Philadelphia, 1787), 25, in Benson, *op. cit.*, 161.

10. Catherine E. Beecher, *The True Remedy for the Wrongs of Woman*, (Boston, Phillips, Sampson & Co., 1851), 75.

and shocked to hear girls conjugating Latin verbs at a public examination. Latin was the symbol of higher education and thought to be beyond the "weak female intelligence."¹¹ "From a braying mule and a girl who speaks Latin, good Lord, deliver us," was a popular jest.

With this definite agitation for college education for women the same arguments were revived. It was again argued that instruction for females should be adapted to their sphere of life. Women should be trained for their professions: i.e., to be housekeepers, wives, mothers, nurses of young children, seamstresses and domestics.

There were loud cries against the feminization of the colleges. The idea prevailed "that as soon as women broke into a college" the men would all take "to piling up fruits and flowers and birds on their hat brims," and university professors talked about "imperiled manhood" at the approach of woman. In 1850 Harvard refused to admit Harriet Hunt into its medical school after its students had pleaded "that whenever a woman should prove herself capable of an intellectual achievement, this latter would cease to constitute an honour for the men who had previously prized it."¹²

Aversion to coeducation has lingered on in some places. At the turn of the century a President of Dartmouth College declared that "almost every department of study, including classical studies, inevitably touches upon certain regions of discussion and allusion . . . which cannot be treated as they ought to be in the presence of both boys and girls."

There are many interesting parallels in the early movements for Negro education. Though the Movement for religious education of slaves, begun in the early days of slavery, had persuaded some slave owners that it was their Christian duty to teach their slaves to read the Bible it was forbidden in most Southern states to teach slaves how to read and write—a prohibition including free Negroes in some states. The few who had been taught to read the Bible, some house slaves who had learned without permission, and the few slaves who had received excellent training as artisans and handicraftsmen exemplified the heights of education for Negroes in the South before the Civil War.

11. Inez Haynes Irwin, *Angels and Amazons, A Hundred Years of American Women*, (Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday-Doran, 1933), 24.

12. S. Yudelson, "The Education and Professional Activities of Women," *Annals*. XXV, (1905), 121.

After the War there was a tremendous demand for Negro education. The Freedmen exhibited a naive, almost religious faith in education. Old and young rushed to the schools established by the Freedmen's Bureau and the missionary and church organizations. Northern charity sent teachers and financial support. The desire for literacy, a symbol of planter and free status, was a desire to escape from the dependent relationship under the old plantation system by means of literacy and education.¹³ The Reconstruction governments also strengthened this desire by laws, laying the basis for a public school system in the South and writing into the new Constitutions the first provisions for public schools in the South.

At the beginning of the education of Negroes the argument of "classical" or "industrial" education began, similar to that over domestic versus formal education for women. The New England school teachers in Negro schools started the tradition of "three R's" followed by Latin, Greek, geometry, rhetoric. This tradition was carried on at Fisk and Atlanta especially. Hampton Institute was established and Booker T. Washington established Tuskegee in the same pattern of continuing the skilled artisan tradition that existed among Negroes before the War. It was this message that found many followers among Southern white people. It was more in keeping with the insistence of the whites on keeping the Negro in his place. Such education would make him a better servant and laborer. Most whites argued that if the Negro stays in the only "place" where he should be, then he needed no education at all. If education there must be, however, let it be in keeping with their proper sphere. It was argued that Negroes were and must be servants, laborers, etc. and the training should be "industrial" and bother less with bookish learning and more with life in a humble status, concentrating on daily duties and the building up of character to produce better and more efficient servants.

There were also the same arguments for a particular kind of education suitable for Negroes as for women,¹⁴ arguing that both had lower capability of responding to education. It was argued that Negroes had weak minds, unable to stand the mental strains. These arguments often accompanied by stories of those who had lost their minds by too much education.

13. Johnson, *op. cit.*, 129.

14. *Supra.*, 46-7.

Just as there were similar arguments against education for Negroes and women, there was similar reasoning in the agitation for them. The argument of Booker T. Washington that education of the Negro would be beneficial to all society was often repeated by Southern "liberals" with many variations. Thomas Nelson Page stated that "the Negro race must be of far more value to the country in which it is placed, if the Negro is properly educated, elevated and trained, than if he is allowed to remain in ignorance and degradation."¹⁵

There was much validity in the objections to education for both groups on the grounds that education was responsible for Negroes as well as for women getting out of their places. Education ruined Negroes for servants or farm hands, making them less satisfied with their status and bringing them into conflict with the system. The whites were right when they argued that education would make the Negro conscious of "rights," make him dissatisfied where he had been "happy" and accommodated. The same was true of women, as women became educated and aware of discriminations they also demanded "rights." In 1882, a writer in the *North American Review* was gravely concerned that "girls are being prepared daily, by 'superior education,' to engage, not in childbearing and housework, but in clerkships, telegraphy, newspaper writing, school teaching, etc. And many are learning to believe that, if they can but have their 'rights,' they will be enabled to compete with men at the bar, in the pulpit, the Senate, on the bench."¹⁶

In a very real sense the Negro colleges and the segregated women's colleges created a self-consciousness which resulted in the movements for "rights." The creation of the N.A.A.C.P. grew out of the struggle between Negro leaders on the "classical" versus "industrial" education issue. W.E.B. DuBois as champion of the "classical" education went on to become the leader in the N.A.A.C.P. and to demand political and legal "rights." The woman's colleges produced the leaders in the Woman Suffrage Movement.

The offering of formal education to both groups called for disclaiming the inferiority imputed to them. The self-consciousness of the groups in many cases, however, did not stop at claiming only equality with the dominant group. During the aggressive

15. Myrdal, *op. cit.*, 896.

16. *North American Review*, (Aug. 1882) in Woody, *op. cit.*, 122-3.

period of woman's rights many women became scornful of men, disinterested in associating with them, happy without them, conscious of superiority to them. They even insisted on some special civic virtue inherent in womanhood which gave the female of the species a right to claim prerogatives because she was a woman though she denied the same right to man as man.¹⁷ The same phenomena developed among the Negro group with great emphasis on pride in Negro history, African culture and the deliberate cultivation of folk music.

The self-consciousness of the segregated women's college and Negro college also resulted in insistence on earnestness of purpose, on faithful scholarly performance and decorum. The "female colleges" and Negro colleges were objects of a good deal of curiosity, amusement and adverse criticism. Women and Negroes must prove their minds good enough to stand intellectual effort. The women must prove that it did not make them unwomanly and that they could stand the physical strain. Thus there was much early emphasis on health education to prevent broken health and on lady-like conduct and traditional proprieties to prevent the prophesied shattering of femininity. The Negro colleges, conscious of the general stereotype of the Negro as lazy and morally lax, insisted, by extremely strict rules of conduct, on adherence to strict middle class morals. It is still notable today that Negro colleges and women's colleges have more strenuous rules and regulations of conduct and chaperonage than white male institutions.

The early women's colleges and Negro colleges also had the problem of rote learning. Education was a badge of status and was worn as such. At first there were no ready opportunities for application or assimilation of knowledge, which led to a stereotyping of both the educated Negro and educated woman as pedants. Margaret Fuller described the education of women in 1839 and noted this problem in saying: "Women are now taught, at school, all that men are. They run over, specifically, even *more* studies, without being really taught anything . . . Women learn without any attempt to reproduce (their learning in active life as men do.) Their only reproduction is for purposes of display."¹⁸ In much less degree

17. Mildred McAfee, "Segregation and the Woman's College," *American Journal of Sociology*, XLIII, 19.

18. Woody, *op. cit.*, 109.

these problems still exist. The autocratic form of the Negro college insists on rote learning for those who come from intellectually sterile backgrounds. Many women, with no plans for later application of their formal learning, still learn by rote for their diplomas or grades to wear as prestige symbols. Those planning on marriage and domestic anonymity see no possibility of applying a formal education, and still treat such matters as merit badges. Rote learning seems to develop naturally among groups with intellectually sterile backgrounds and groups with prejudice against them. In their desire to get ahead quickly—to “show people” in the face of adverse criticism, rote learning results.¹⁹

With the coming of the industrial revolution in the South the argument for industrial training for Negroes was qualified so as not to include training for skilled jobs in industry. Whenever vocational training was argued to be more fitting it was understood to be training in cooking and menial service, not the vocational training for skilled jobs included in the white schools. The same is true of women's education facilities. Those who argued that vocational education was best for women meant training in domestic duties, sewing, cooking, child care. They did not imply, nor has there been provided, technical schools or professional schools other than those in the fields related to woman's sphere. It has been in the professional and technical schools that there has been the most discrimination against both women or Negro students, for it is here that direct economic competition and the positions of greater prestige are at stake.

On the whole the woman's college today is the stronghold of the liberal arts tradition. The Negro schools have remained largely “academic,” though on the average at a lower level of expenditure and effectiveness. There is still existent in many of them the influence of the caste system as exemplified by the leaflet from a privately controlled and privately supported North Carolina “Institute” which is meant to be something between a technical high school and a technical college. The course of study is described as follows:

While the school gives a thorough English Education, it must be remembered that it is strictly moral, religious and industrial. Every boy and girl is taught practical politeness,

19. Robert E. Park, “A Memorandum on Rote Learning,” *American Journal of Sociology*, XLIII, 23-36.

Farming, Housekeeping, Laundry, Dressmaking, Printing, Cooking, Brickmasonry, Plastering, and Automobile Mechanics. Students are taught self-reliance, race pride, independent man and womanhood. They are encouraged to remain at their homes in the South, to buy land, assist their fathers and mothers and to educate their fellows.²⁰

The present day segregated colleges for both Negroes and women are the objects of varying sentiments. There are those who argue for the segregated schools as an escape from categorization, humiliation and discrimination in order that their students can be individuals. There is discrimination against the woman teacher and the Negro teacher or administrative personnel in the non-segregated schools. Thus the segregated colleges are supported by those irked by these limitations and hoping to be judged as individuals rather than as representatives of their common sex or race and those who have vested interests in the segregation.

Some argue for the segregated school on the grounds that the Negroes do not learn enough about Negro problems in other schools, or become race conscious and join the movement and fight for their rights. Some also believe the segregated schools are necessary for special training for the jobs that are actually open to Negroes. This group believes that in this way some compromise can be made with the liberal white man. For the woman's college, some argue that women get no training in "leadership" or experience in "running" campus politics and other organizations in coed colleges due to the male-dominated tradition. Others argue for woman's colleges to provide training in dietetics and other traditional "women's professions," or to train them to be homemakers and mothers.

It is still true that women and Negroes are not welcome in all white male schools, the discrimination existing on the professional level in particular, and the segregated colleges are necessary in that respect.

The Negro colleges and the women's colleges have some similar interests in curricula and graduate training. Negro colleges and women's colleges are more interested in social work, welfare and community organization than the men's colleges. It is in both these fields that they find opportunities for employment. Courses in Race and Ethnic Groups are more popular in Negro colleges and women's

20. Myrdal, *op. cit.*, 949.

colleges than in men's schools.²¹ The fact that women are more interested in race relations than men may be due in part to the fact that departments of sociology, with their courses in Race Relations, have more prestige in the newer colleges, the old men's colleges being reluctant to admit the new "science." Part of the interest may also be that the women identify their discrimination and problems with race problems and are therefore psychologically more sympathetic.

21. Raymond Kennedy and Ruby Jo. Reeves Kennedy, "Sociology in American Colleges," *American Sociological Review*, VII, 661-675.

CHAPTER V

DEFENSIVE BELIEFS

DEFENSIVE beliefs function to make people's actions seem expedient, in line with current ideals, or, at least, inevitable. Termed by someone "vital lies," these excuses, and distortions seem necessary to justify and rationalize the various discriminations, and necessary also to defend and perpetuate the relationships.

Social stratification in Europe had been based on dominance and subordination between men and women, and slavery had been existent in many times and situations. Therefore, many of the justifications of both these institutions were ready-made and the 18th and 19th century defenders of the old order had but to draw from this body of thought.

The first rationalizations for both were directly religious. The Puritan idea of election, and a literal interpretation of Scripture provided abundant justification, and Biblical arguments were readily available to keep both in their "God-given" places. The final basis was the curse on Canaan and the Curse on Eve which proved that subjection was still "the portion of the daughters of Eve" and the "children of Canaan." The Puritan idea of election was completely out of harmony with a theory of social equality. The Biblical argument for slavery rested especially upon Leviticus 25:44-46, the divine dispensation to Israel to possess slaves, and I Corinthians XII, 13-26 where St. Paul set forth his philosophy of grades and orders. The scriptural basis for women's inferiority was established, and the line of duty and honor for wives had been clearly laid down by St. Paul when he ordered them to be "in subjection to their husbands, to reverence them and to be chaste and sober, keepers at home."¹

In the case of the Negro the traditional rationalization used in Europe in the time of Mohamedan slavery was also brought to use in the New World situation. The Negroes were even called "Blackamoors" and the slave traders and planters claimed to be bringing the infidels into a Christian Society.

The beginning of social unrest, the vague discontent and dis-

1. Timothy 2:11: I Corinthians 14:34: Titus 2:5.

tress of the eighteenth century, was expressed in pleas for mitigation of the severity of the existing practices rather than for any overthrow of the institutions themselves. The Puritan advocates of humanitarian treatment of both slaves and women emphasized the care of the soul and the amelioration of physical hardships, rather than any equalitarian reformation for the absolving of the status.

Every thrust against the *status quo* of slavery or the subjection of women called forth philosophical debate. Defenses became necessary to keep both groups "in their places." These movements to ameliorate the systems thus met many serious objections.

In the slavery question the traditional justification for slavery was that the Negro was a heathen or infidel. This broke down with his Christianization for the belief was prevalent that the administration of the sacraments to a slave absolved his status as a slave. Bishop Berkeley said the notion prevailed throughout the colonies that "being baptized is inconsistent with a state of slavery."²

This idea has been traced to the patristic theory that slavery was based upon man's original sin rather than upon nature.³ So long as the slave was a heathen, slavery was lawful, but the administration of the sacraments washed away original sin and the basis of slavery fell.

The idea that enslavement lawfully depended upon infidelity goes far back in the history of the common law as noted by its definite legal sanction in two early English cases⁴ and the rule of the unwritten law of England which absolved the status of slave by baptism.⁵

So predominant was this idea and apprehension that the Bishop of London in charge of missionary work among the plantations sent a pastoral letter to the masters in 1727 to dispel the fear that

2. Jenkins, *op. cit.*, 18.

3. See R. W. and A. J. Carlyle, *A History of Mediaeval Political Theory in the West*, (Edinburgh & London, 1927), 116-124.

4. Butts v. Penny 1677, 2 Lev. 20:83 Eng. Rep. 518, and Gelly v. Cleve 1694, (Hill, term 5 Will, and Mar. C. B.) cited in Chamberlain v. Harvey. I. Ld. Raym. 146: 91 Eng. Rep. 994. William Holdsworth in *A History of English Law*, (London), VII, 484, traces the theory of these cases back to Coke's opinion in Calvin's Case (1608). Coke drew upon the medieval laws of war which recognized a modified property of the captor in the captive enemy until ransom was paid. He then laid down the rule that infidels were perpetual prisoners or slaves. Jenkins, *op. cit.*, 18, footnote no. 46.

5. See footnote 48 in Jenkins, *op. cit.*, 20.

baptism would destroy the property of the master in his slave. He cited St. Paul as authority, I Cor., 7:20 "let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called."⁶ To further convince them, an opinion of His Majority's attorney and Solicitor General was procured and dispensed throughout the colonies, in which they pledged themselves to the planters for the legal consequences of baptizing the slaves. In addition to this some of the colonies deemed it necessary to override this supposed rule of the common law by statute law so as to set at rest the apprehension of the slave owners. The statute law on this in the colonies is quite extensive.⁷

There were countless alarmist arguments against the education of women. It was pointed out above that when reading was first taught to women it was opposed on the grounds that woman would forge her husband's or father's name if she learned to read and write. This followed the old church doctrine that woman through her greater wickedness fell more readily than man into evil practices. The fact of a woman's possessing knowledge served to bring her under the suspicion and accusation of the church for witchcraft, because knowledge had first been introduced into the world through woman's obedience to the devil.⁸ Ignorance was regarded as an especial virtue in woman. It was argued that any higher education would beget a distaste for the normal career of woman and raise a rebellion against wifehood and motherhood and menace the future of the race.⁹ It was further objected that education made women pedantic and disagreeable.

Another objection or justification for opposition to religious education for women and Negroes was that neither had souls and thus they could not gain salvation. This argument that women had no souls is an echo of the debate at the Council at Macon in 1585 which discussed at length "Does Woman possess a soul?" It was decided to classify her, not as a brute, but as a bad and weak human

6. Jenkins, *op. cit.*, 19.

7. Va. Act 1667, C. 3: "That the conferring of baptism does not alter the condition of the person as to his bondage or freedom that divers masters, freed from doubt, may more carefully endeavor the propagation of Christianity by permitting children though slaves . . . to be admitted to that sacrament." W. W. Hening, ed., *The Statutes at Large, being a collection of the laws of Virginia*. (N. Y., 1833), in Jenkins, *op. cit.*, 21-22, footnote 50.

8. Matilda Joslyn Gage, *Woman, Church and State*, (Chicago, Charles H. Kerr & Co., 1893), 238-40.

9. Calhoun, *op. cit.*, III, 92.

being. In the sixteenth century an anonymous work was published arguing that women were no part of mankind but a species of intermediate animal between the human and the brute creation.¹⁰ This argument, although probably rare in the eighteenth century, was discovered by Sewell who in his pleas for religious education of women argued against the notion that women had no place in heaven. He argued that women as a class were not barred from heaven.¹¹ Even as late as the mid-19th century, after one of the first Woman Suffrage meetings, a minister challenged the women present to first prove they had a soul.

Bishop Berkeley who visited the colonies around 1730, testified before the "Society for the Propagation of the Gospel" that "an irrational contempt of the blacks, as creatures of another species, who had no right to be instructed or admitted to the sacraments, has proved a main obstacle to the conversion of these poor people."¹² This anticipated the later more developed idea of "race" and the less subtle defenses such as Charles Carroll's *The Negro A Beast*. These early attacks and justifications of both relationships had mostly been on religious grounds. Rationalistic arguments entered the scene during the preliminaries to the Revolution.

The Quaker opposition to slavery and the natural rights philosophy of this period shaped a large body of liberal thought, much agitation and many emancipation societies, thus producing a formidable attack calling for more rationalistic defenses. The agitation for women's education began to take the broader form of agitation for political and social rights, and the defenders of the *status quo* of women's status also developed more rational justifications.

The defenders of both slavery and the subjection of women had first to deny the argument that all men have a natural right to freedom. Chancellor William Harper stated this argument in its finished form: "Is it not palpably nearer the truth to say that no man was ever born free and two men were never born equal, than to say that all men are born free and equal? . . . Man is born to subjection

10. Gage, *op. cit.*, 56.

11. Benson, *op. cit.*, 120.

12. Bishop Berkeley, *Works*, (London, 1820 ed.), III, 247, in Jenkins, *op. cit.*, 17.

. . . . The proclivity of the natural man is to domineer or to be subservient."¹³

A defense to combat the natural rights attack was seen in the Harvard Commencement debate in 1773 on whether the enslaving of the Africans was agreeable to the law of nature. The affirmative defined the law of nature in utilitarian terminology rather than in terms of natural rights, arguing that any principle of society was "in its nature fit and proper, just and right" and therefore conformable to the law of nature if "concomitant circumstances being considered," it "tends to the happiness of the whole community." The speaker undertook to demonstrate "the agreement of the law of nature with the idea of slavery in general, in opposition to that principle of natural equality, which is so zealously contended for by advocates for universal liberty." He thought that the right of authority in one being, involving subordination in another being, was universally acknowledged in "the right of the Governor of the universe to govern and direct the conduct of all finite existence," and in "the right of parents to govern and direct the conduct of their children." He concluded, therefore, that the principle of authority and subordination between individuals was justifiable because of "the vast inequalities observable between different individuals of the human species."¹⁴

This same utilitarian argument was expounded for discriminations against women:

In this country we believe that the general good requires us to deprive the whole female sex of the right of self-government. They have no voice in the formation of the laws which dispose of their persons and property We treat all minors much in the same way Our plea for all this is, that the good of the whole is thereby most effectually promoted . . .¹⁵

Noah Webster expressed his belief in the natural inferiority of women and exhorted them to concern themselves only with domestic

13. Chancellor William Harper in "Memoir on Slavery" a paper read before the Society for the Advancement of Learning of South Carolina, Annual meeting at Columbia, South Carolina, 1837 (1838), 6-8, in Myrdal, *op. cit.*, 87.

14. Theodore Parsons and Eliphalet Pearson, *A Forensic Dispute on the Legality of Enslaving the Africans*, (Boston, 1773), in Jenkins *op. cit.*, 44-46.

15. Charles Hodge, "The Bible Argument on Slavery," in E. N. Elliott (editor), *Cotton is King, and Pro-Slavery Arguments*, (1860), 859-60, in Myrdal, *op. cit.*, 1074.

affairs.¹⁶ One perfectly accommodated wife in South Carolina received the following praises from her husband, Dr. David Ramsey:

. . . She was well acquainted with the plausible reasoning of modern theorists, who contend for the equality of the sexes In practice she acknowledged the dependent subordinate condition of her sex, and considered it as a part of the curse denounced on Eve as being the first in the Transgression.¹⁷

Another type of rational defense that developed was that of the necessity of the systems. Charles Brocker Brown in 1798, a radical follower of Mary Wollstonecraft, stated that the only acceptable apology for the prevailing inferior position lay in the fact that some part of the community had to be condemned to servile occupations and that it perhaps made little difference whether such assignment was based on sex or on some other distinction.¹⁸

It also became customary to justify slavery on the plea of necessity. Montesquieu's view that tropical countries could not be developed without Negro slaves was often used to support this argument. This plea was largely used by Georgia in petitioning the trustees to allow slavery. Thomas Stephens in "A Brief Account of the Causes that have Retarded the Progress of the Colony of Georgia in America,"¹⁹ argued "that Negroes are as essentially necessary to the cultivation of Georgia as axes, hoes or any other utensil of agriculture."

Whitefield explained his advocacy of slavery as "The Providence of God has appointed this country rather for the work of black slaves than for Europeans, because of the hot climate, to which the Negroes are better than white people."²⁰

Enos Hitchcock spent some time in combatting the idea of female inferiority, but concluded by saying that as there must be a head in every society, it should be a man.²¹ His books contained a letter, supposedly from a Philadelphia lady, thanking him for denying the necessity or blind submission by women and for giving them

16. Benson, *op. cit.*, 157-8.

17. *Ibid.*, 185.

18. *Ibid.*, 173.

19. *Georgia Historical Society Collections* II, 93, in Jenkins, *op. cit.*, 40.

20. Jenkins, *op. cit.*, 41.

21. Enos Hitchcock, *Memoirs of the Blooms Grove Family*, 2 vols., (Boston, 1790), II, 15-17, in Benson, *op. cit.*, 160.

rational grounds for conduct. The argument carried through that education was good for women since it made them more attractive and useful to men and better able to see for themselves the limits beyond which they must not go. The right training made them more amenable to government instead of less so, for the more they were trained in reasoning the less likely they were to defy authority.²²

Defenders declared that chaos would reign should the *status quo* be upset. In *An Essay on Liberty and Slavery*, Bledsoe declared that:

... If our women are to be emancipated from subjection to the law which God has imposed upon them, if they are to quit the retirement of domestic life, where they preside in stillness over the character and destiny of society; ... if, in studied insult to the authority of God, we are to renounce in the marriage contract all claim to obedience, we shall soon have a country over which the genius of Mary Wollstonecraft would delight to preside, but from which all obedience and all virtue would speedily be banished. There is no form of human excellence before which we bow with profounder deference than that which appears in a delicate woman, ... and there is no deformity of human character from which we turn with deeper loathing than from a woman forgetful of her nature, and clamorous for the vocation and rights of men.²³

The New York *Mechanic's Advocate* wrote after the First Woman's Rights's Convention that:

We are sorry to see that the women ... are holding ... Woman's Rights Conventions ... This is all wrong ... It is unwomanly ... The males must change their position ... in an opposite direction and discharge an equal share of the domestic duties ... if women are allowed to exercise all the rights claimed by these Convention-holders ... The order of things ... would be completely broken up ... This change is impracticable, uncalled for, and unnecessary ... it would demoralize and degrade from their high sphere and noble destiny, women of all respectable and useful classes and prove a monstrous injury to all mankind ...

22. Rush, *op. cit.*, 25, in Benson, *op. cit.*, 161.

23. Albert T. Bledsoe, *An Essay On Liberty and Slavery*, (1857), 223-5, in Myrdal, *op. cit.*, 1074.

The Lowell Massachusetts *Courier* stated,

They should have resolved at the same time, that it was obligatory also upon the lords aforesaid, to wash dishes, scour up, be put to tub, handle the broom, darn stockings, patch breeches . . . look beautiful, and be as fascinating as those blessed morsels of humanity who God gave to preserve that rough animal man, in something like a reasonable civilization.²⁴

Many others justified both slavery and the subjecting of women by glorifying the paternalistic pattern. George Fitzhugh in his *Sociology for the South*, published in 1854, wrote:

The kind of slavery is adapted to the men enslaved. Wives and apprentices are slaves; not in theory only, but often in fact. Children are slaves to their parents, guardians and teachers. Imprisoned culprits are slaves. Lunatics and idiots are slaves also

A beautiful example and illustration of this kind of communism, is found in the instance of the Patriarch Abraham. His wives and his children, his men servants and his maid servants, his camels and his cattle, were all equally his property. He could sacrifice Isaac or a ram, just as he pleased. He loved and protected all, and all shared, if not equally, at least fairly, in the products of their right labour. Who would not desire to have been a slave of that old Patriarch, stern and despotic as he was? Pride, affection, self-interest, moved Abraham to protect, love and take care of his slaves. The same motives operate on all masters, and secure comfort, competency and protection to the slave. A man's wife and children are his slaves, and do they not enjoy, in common with himself his property?²⁵

All the slavery rationalizations became bound together into an elaborate defense ideology. The development of the idea of "race" bound it together into a system of justifications which has remained almost intact to rationalize present-day race relations.

This idea of the biological inferiority of the Negro—of his being of a different species—was stated in 1775 by Bernard Romans in his *Natural History of East and West Florida* in which he criticized the philosophers as restraining use of this "naturally subjected species of mankind." He further showed that slavery was sanctioned by

24. Stanton, Anthony and Gage, *op. cit.*, I, 803-4.

25. George Fitzhugh, *Sociology for the South*, (1854), 86, 297, in Myrdal, *op. cit.* 1073-4.

scripture and was lawful. He argued that the Negro was by nature suited for the hot climate and the production of staple commodities.²⁶

The emerging study of the human body and the recognition of *Homo sapiens* as only a species of the animal world was the philosophical basis on which an idea of race was possible. This same intellectual background made possible a biological theory to support discriminations against women. There developed the theory that nature, in making special provision for child-bearing, caused women to breathe costically while men breathed abdominally, and that this "deep seated structural difference affecting every organ, every cell in the body—making a difference throughout the entire structure, the brain included,"²⁷ rendered it forever impossible for men and women to be treated alike.

The ideas of biological inequality, and of innate inferiority were the product of the same rational, secular society which produced the Natural Rights, equalitarian doctrine. The "race" ideas were born out of the conflict between the obviously existent, non-equalitarian relationships and the faith in human liberty and democracy.

The natural-rights, equalitarian doctrine was used to oppose the doctrine of racial and sex inferiority, and yet called forth both dogmas to justify the blatant exceptions to it. As Myrdal points out, a country without the fervent belief in democracy could live happily in a caste system, with a less intensive belief in the biological inferiority of the subordinate group. Race and sex prejudice are then functions of equalitarianism. The former are perversions of the latter.²⁸

From the race and sex ideologies are drawn the justifications for the daily discriminations and aggressions against women and against Negroes and defenses to keep both in their places.

The exceptions and contradictions to the beliefs are often overlooked without a realization that an exception to the general view is being stated. Southerners will say, for example, that all "niggers" are worthless and lazy, but that Jack really runs the place, is a good manager and smart as a whip. Men will say that all women are

26. Jenkins, *op. cit.*, 43.

27. Clelia Duel Mosher, *Personal Hygiene for Women*, (Stanford Univ. Press, 1927), I, in Breckinridge, *op. cit.*, 104.

28. Myrdal, *op. cit.*, 89.

irrational and can't reason, but that Mrs. Jones has the keenest mind ever encountered.

Other exceptions may cause the beliefs to be slightly amended but the main assumptions are not destroyed. As shown previously, the belief that neither women nor Negroes were capable of certain industrial jobs was changed, in the presence of obvious contradictions, to the belief that perhaps they could do these, but they were definitely incapable of supervisory and managerial types of work. After the theory of woman's costical breathing was proved wrong there still remained the belief that physiological differences of "femininity" produced differences of mind and personality.

The general pattern of defensive beliefs used today for both groups is this:

- (1) Religious defense—The relationships are willed of God; they are differences made by God, and any change is thus on affront to God.
- (2) Biological defense—There are innate inferiorities and biological incapacities. Many hear the Negro referred to in the South as a savage, a brute, or a mere animal; and he is compared to a mule or a bird dog.²⁹ Thus with weaker minds neither women nor Negroes can comprehend subtle points or intricate and difficult matters.
- (3) "Own-fault" defense—We have a system of honest competition with a fair start for all around. It is then their own fault if they lose out. Obviously it is because both groups are irrational, unstable, untrustworthy and lack initiative. Both groups are also capricious, unaccountable, mysterious and child-like.
- (4) Aggression defense—Both groups only wish to dominate. Examples of "aggressive and uncontrolled" behavior prove that "if you give them an inch, they'll take a mile." Negroes wish to kill all white men and marry the white women. Women wish to take men's jobs and make men cook and care for the children.
- (5) Contented defense—This is the myth of the happy, carefree Negroes and contented women, who do not want suffrage,

29. John Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town*, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1937), 368-9.

civil rights or equal opportunities. In confining them to their places, it is argued that it is not against their true interests. In one sense there is truth in this myth. Many members of both groups have tended to accept their inferior status, or at least they get used to it and regard it as one of the conditions of life. Discontent is then accounted for by asserting that someone has "put ideas into their heads," or there have been "outside agitators." The discontent exists because they have been corrupted by alien ideas, not because of any defects in the current social arrangements.

- (6) "Dominate me" defense—It is argued that both Negroes and women expect aggression and mastery from the white man and are not content unless they get it. They force any given "superior" to conform and carry on the traditional practice.
- (7) Idealization defense—There is an idealization of the "old-timey" Negroes and the "old-fashioned" women. By idealizing the past agrarian home with mother in the kitchen baking apple pies and idealizing the old plantation with the cheerful "darkey" and the black mammy, the present-day realities are avoided and it is not necessary to take account of the actual changes in Negro status and women status.³⁰

This defense also serves to demand that the present-day Negro and present-day woman fit into the old stereotype and accept the limitations to personal maturation and status advancement which were characteristic of the "old-timey" Negroes and "old-fashioned" women.

30. Dollard, *op. cit.*, 382.

CHAPTER VI

THE STRUGGLE FOR "RIGHTS"

THE nineteenth century was a period of reform movements and organized struggles for rights. The social unrest back of these began to be verbalized and enter the realm of discussion in the eighteenth century, but the more significant agitation and organization could not come into existence until modern times. Reform movements are necessarily linked with industrialism, commercialism and the communication of diverse opinions and ideas producing a more rationalistic and more secular life. Reform movements are necessarily rational—achieving their ends by agitation and discussion.

All the reform movements of the century were linked together. There were many obvious links between the woman suffrage movement, the fundamental political doctrine of equality and faith in representative government, the first labor movement, the emancipation of the slaves and the temperance movement.

In a very real sense the movement for the emancipation of the slaves and the early woman's movement were one and the same. The organized woman's movement grew out of the other and the early philosophical debates on both issues have many similarities.

The earliest concerted movement for the abolition of slavery developed among the Quakers, who also gave great impetus to the 19th century movement for Woman's Rights—producing the first leaders and the first examples of women's independence.

George Fox, the father of Quakerism, earnestly contended that women had been placed in subjection by the Fall but redeemed by the restoration of holiness; in Christ, they were equals of men. Whereas the Puritans demanded that women follow the Pauline doctrine of silence in church, the Quakers found scriptural warrant for the calling of women to preach. The Quakers used women teachers as early as 1702, and such educational provisions as the Quakers made were for both sexes. The very form of the Quaker marriage ceremony, an agreement made by both parties together and not a pronouncement by a minister, tended to place the sexes on a more equal basis.¹

1. Benson, *op. cit.*, 263-4.

George Fox, in 1671, and William Penn, in 1682, advised freedom for slaves after they had served a number of years.² The earliest record preserved for us, penned in American, protesting against chattel slavery came from a group of Mennonites and German Quakers living in Germantown, Pennsylvania. Francis Daniell Pastorius wrote this protest against "the traffic of mens-body" and "the handling of men as cattle."

After 1700 there was an increase in opposition to slavery among the Quakers, and in these early writings the seeds of the anti-slavery movement in America were sown and spread by itinerant Quaker ministers advocating emancipation, and by the prolific pamphleteer Anthony Benezet. In 1776 the Friends at their Yearly Meeting followed their doctrines to the logical conclusion of disowning slave-owning members.

The Quaker viewpoint converged with the natural rights philosophy of the Revolutionary Period to form the rationalistic nexus in which agitation and reform movements were possible. Thus, after the Revolution, organization of manumission and emancipation societies took place at a great pace. The agitation for women's education took the broader form of a struggle for political and social rights, and the two movements, allied in interests and convictions became in many respects one movement.

During the Revolutionary period Abigail Adams and Mercy Otis Warren were notable for their interest in the natural rights philosophy. Mrs. Adams applied this to the position of women in writing to her husband in the Continental Congress in March 1776:

I long to hear you have declared an independency, and by the way in the new code of laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make, I desire you would remember the ladies, and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of husbands If particular care and attention are not paid to the ladies, we are determined to foment a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound to obey any laws in which we have no voice or representation.³

Hannah Lee Corbin of Virginia, sister of General Richard Henry Lee, wrote him protesting against the taxation of women un-

2. Jenkins, *op. cit.*, 7.

3. Stanton, Anthony, and Gage, *op. cit.*, I, 32.

less they were allowed to vote.⁴ Natural rights arguments began to enter the slavery argument and James Otis included the slave in his assertion of the natural and innerent rights of man as he pleaded the cause of the colonists.⁵ Benjamin Coleman stated that

our poor brethren the Africans . . . are as free by nature as we, or any other people, and have a natural right to liberty and freedom as much as we and it is only by power and tyranny that they are brought and kept under this cruel yoke of bondage.⁶

The natural rights theory was in the bill of 1767 introduced in the Massachusetts House of Representatives "to prevent the unwarrantable and unnatural custom of enslaving mankind,"⁷ and the argument that a logical extension of the Revolutionary principles would cover slavery was extensively promulgated in the South, notably by Thomas Jefferson and Arthur Lee. Not only the moral righteousness, but the socio-economic advantages of slavery came to be doubted. William Pinckney in his youthful enthusiasm used the argument in the Maryland House of Delegates to advocate manumission.⁸

St. George Tucker, proposing to the Virginia Legislature in 1779 a plan of gradual abolition, argued on the basis "that all men are by nature equally free and independent." And as late as 1831 the Virginia legislature considered a plan for the gradual emancipation of slaves; the plan, inspired by Thomas Jefferson, introduced into the legislature by his grandson, Thomas Jefferson Randolph, was debated for months and finally defeated by a single vote.⁹

Thomas Paine published an essay attacking slavery and proposing abolition, asserting that as these people are not convicted of forfeiting freedom, they have still a natural, perfect right to it; and the

4. Stanton, Anthony, and Gage, *op. cit.*, I. 33.

5. Jenkins, *op. cit.*, 23.

6. Joshua Coffin, *A Sketch of the History of Newburg, Newburyport, and West Newbury, from 1635 to 1845*, (Boston, 1845), 339, quoting from the *Essex Journal*, July 20, 1774, in Jenkins, *op. cit.*, 24.

7. *Ibid.*, 25.

8. Jenkins, *op. cit.*, 37.

9. William E. Dodd, *Statesmen of the Old South* (1911), 80, in Myrdal, *op. cit.*, 1311.

Government should, in justice set them free, and punish those who hold them in slavery.¹⁰

At the beginning of the 19th century the dogmas of Calvinism were losing authority, as the great revivals became a sort of religious continuation of the humanistic liberalism of the Enlightenment. Jacksonian democracy triumphed with the extension of popular knowledge and the enlargement of economic opportunity. William Ellery Channing declared "The lesson of this age is that of sympathy with the suffering, and of devotion to the progress of the whole human race."¹¹

Through the Revival period the upper classes looked upon the movement as "a religious distemper" which spread like a contagious disease, and they pointed out that it made its greatest appeal to "those of weak intellect and unstable emotions, women, adolescents, and Negroes." This religious doctrine back of the revivals, that all men were equal in the sight of God, brought the more sophisticated natural rights theory of the Enlightenment to the masses.¹² It produced a more widespread belief and passion for equality and by 1830 the Great Revival had spread over the whole country. From these revivals came the passionate converts with all their ardor to form benevolent societies to cure all social ills and reform all sinful conditions.

There were societies formed to promote home and foreign missionary endeavors, distribute Bibles and religious tracts, finance Sunday Schools, promote temperance, to save the sailors, to reform prisons, to stop the carrying of the mail on the Sabbath, and the wearing of corsets. Women began forming auxiliaries to all the benevolent societies, to do their part in saving the nation and mankind, even though there were many questions as to "whether it was quite *delicate* for a lady to join a temperance society."¹³

Among these were Anti-Slavery Societies. The first woman's club with a political object—the Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery

10. Thomas Paine, "African Slavery in America," *Writings*, Conway, ed. published in the Postscript to the *Pennsylvania Journal* and the *Weekly Advertiser*, (Philadelphia, March 3, 1775), in Jenkins, *op. cit.*, 33.

11. William Ellery Channing, *Memoirs*, III, 224, in Gilbert Hobbs Barnes, *The Antislavery Impulse 1830-1844*, (N.Y., D. Appleton-Century Co., 1933), 3.

12. Myrdal, *op. cit.*, 10.

13. *New York Evangelist*, Nov. 30, 1833 in Barnes, *op. cit.*, 140.

Society was formed.¹⁴ This group petitioned Congress for Abolition in the District of Columbia and the Territories of the United States. Lucretia Mott, a Quaker minister, took the lead in the petition which was signed by more than 2,000 women. In an attached note Mrs. Mott somewhat apologetically expressed hope that women's applications to Congress would not "be considered intrusive Nothing less than a deep conviction of the necessity of the measure could have induced the petitioners to appear in this public manner." It was sent to the Speaker of the House and was presented by him.¹⁵

Women became the American Anti-Slavery Society's chief volunteers. The *Emancipator* urged them to send petitions to Congress: "if the ladies of this country really take the business in hand *it will go*." The society urged women's participation: "Female Societies probably did more for the abolition of slavery in Great Britain than those of the other sex They scattered anti-slavery tracts . . . they circulated petitions Let the female sex, then, throughout the land, emulate . . . their sisters over the ocean."¹⁶

Women's interference by petition in "the external and political duties of societies," Caleb Cushing prophesied, would be at the sacrifice of

all that delicacy and maternal tenderness which are among the highest charms of woman. Hers be the domain of the moral affections, the empire of the heart; [let her] leave the soulhardening struggles of political power to the harsher spirit of man, that he may look up to her as a purer and brighter being, an emanation from some better world irradiating like a rainbow of hope the stormy elements of life.¹⁷

There was much reproach, even among Abolitionists, when in 1836 Pinckney reported that women's names preponderated on the petitions. It was deemed unscriptural for woman to "so far unsex herself as to be meddling in man's affairs, interfering by petition."¹⁸ Congressmen were outraged and truly "pained to see names of so many American females to these petitions. It appeared . . . exceedingly indelicate that sensitive females of shrinking modesty should pre-

14. Irwin, *op. cit.*, 140.

15. House Files, Box 52 in Barnes, *op. cit.*, 264.

16. A Circular of the American Anti-Slavery Society Printed in *Liberator*, V, 198, in Barnes, *op. cit.*, 140.

17. *North American Review*, (April 1836), in Barnes, *op. cit.*, 140.

18. *Zion's Herald*, VII, 38 in Barnes, *op. cit.*, 141.

sent their names here as petitioners."¹⁹ Adams was almost alone as he defended the right of women to be heard by petition on the floor of Congress.

Women carried petitions from door to door. Women auxiliaries multiplied, and the volunteers many times increased, and in 1837 a National Convention of American Anti-slavery Women convened in Philadelphia. Petitions were called "the only mode of access . . . women . . . have to Congress" and the women proclaimed petitions as initiating "a new era of the world, so far as respects the dignity of [woman's] character, and the power and extent of their influence on the destinies of the human race."²⁰

This petition movement among the women released a prodigious impulse toward anti-slavery effort. Lucretia Mott and Lydia Maria Child commanded the forces in Pennsylvania and Massachusetts. In the ranks labored Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Their very names make the petition movement and the Woman's Rights movement a continuity. The preponderance of signers of petitions were women. They sustained the greater part of the campaign. "There would be but few abolition petitions," said a weary Congressman, "if the ladies . . . would let us alone."²¹

Lydia Maria Child, who had been writing harmless books, "proper for a woman,"—*The Mother's Book, The Girl's Book, A Biography of Good Wives*—in 1833 came forth with the first ambitious American Anti-slavery book, *An Appeal on Behalf of that Class of Americans Called Africans*.

The first American women who ever dared to speak in public, Abby Kelley and Angelina and Sarah Grimké began speaking against slavery. The Grimké sisters were daughters of a wealthy planter in Charleston, S. C. who emancipated their slaves and went North to lecture on the evils of slavery. Angelina was a fervent orator and they both drew crowds. They also drew opposition, even among the Abolitionists, and the clergy especially questioned their scriptural right to speak in public places. Angelina spoke in a series of public hearings on slavery in Massachusetts in 1838 and her meetings were thronged. At first they spoke only to women's auxi-

19. *Congressional Globe*, 24th Congress, 1st S., 337, in Barnes, *op. cit.*, 141.

20. "TO THE WOMEN OF THE UNITED STATES," on petition form, House Files, Box 133, in Barnes, *op. cit.*, 143.

21. *Congressional Globe*, 24th Congress, 1st S., 337, in Barnes, *op. cit.*, 144.

liaries but "one brother wanted to come" wrote Sarah, "and another thought he had the right, and now the door is wide open. Whosoever will come and hear our testimony may come." Soon they were speaking regularly to "promiscuous assemblies."²²

Garrison began to view the doctrine of woman's rights as one bound up with the cause of human freedom and he pronounced the Grimké sisters pioneers in the movement to free humanity from the bonds of family, church, law and government. This further antagonized the clergy whose opposition became quite formidable. The conclave of Massachusetts ministers who ruled Abolition agents out of their churches resolved to condemn "the mistaken conduct of those who encourage females to bear an obtrusive and ostentitious part in measures of reform." This pastoral letter called on churches to close doors to Abolitionists who had set aside the laws of God by welcoming women to their platform and allowing them to speak in public.

Garrison and Angelina reached the agreement that if she were to continue to speak against slavery she must defend the rights of women to speak. In a letter to Weld in 1837,²³ she wrote: "We must establish this right, for if we do not, it will be impossible for us to go on with the work of Emancipation. . . . If we surrender the right to petition next year and the right to write the year after and so on." For this new Crusade Sarah Grimké wrote a series of letters to the *Spectator* which were published in 1838 under the title *Letters on the Condition of Women and the Equality of the Sexes*.

The Abolition movement divided over this policy. Whittier wrote the sisters: How could they, at a time like this, forget "the great and dreadful wrongs of the slave in a selfish crusade against some paltry grievance . . . some trifling oppression, political or social" of their own? He told them that in their course toward woman's rights they appeared to be "abandoning in some degree the cause of the poor and miserable slave."²⁴ Sarah wrote that despite the importance of woman's rights it was unfortunate "that this or any other extraneous doctrine should be made an apple of discord" in the anti-slavery movement.

22. Barnes, *op. cit.*, 155.

23. *Ibid.*, 272.

24. *Ibid.*, 157-8.

Abby Kelly, who had also been making public speeches against slavery met much opposition and even mob violence, howls and decomposed eggs and contents of stables and outhouses hurled by her listeners. Ministers preached against her, quoting the scripture on Jezebel and calling her a hyena. A Methodist presiding elder called the Garrisonian societies "no government, no-sabbath, no-church, no-bible, no-marriage, woman's rights societies."

At the Convention of the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1839 doubt was cast upon women's right to participate in the convention, so a resolution was proposed that hereafter women delegates should have votes as well as men. A majority of the delegates opposed but the women present insisted on voting and their votes gave the resolution a majority. In 1840 the American Anti-Slavery Society and the Anti-Slavery Convention of American Women met as one. After this Convention the World Anti-Slavery Convention met in London and several women were among the delegates. The *History of Woman's Suffrage* states that "the movement for woman's suffrage, both in England and America, may be dated from this World's Anti-Slavery Convention." When the American delegates arrived at the convention the women delegates were not seated and the formal protest of the American group created a debate on Woman's Rights. One clergyman stated that the seating of the women would "be not only a violation of the customs of England, but of the ordinance of Almighty God." After a day of discussion the question was defeated in vote by "an overwhelming majority."²⁵

The women delegates were made to sit behind a curtain in the gallery and in stinging humiliation they noted the irony of it all. They later wrote that though the Abolitionists had been compelled to fight both church and Bible to prove the black man's right to liberty, conscience forbade them to stretch those sacred limits far enough to give equal liberty to woman. It was here that the women felt the striking similarity between the condition of the white wife and the black slave. They wondered:

Had Frederick Douglass and Robert Purvis been refused their seats in a convention of reformers under similar circumstances . . . had *they* listened one entire day to debates on their peculiar fitness for plantation life, and unfitness for

25. *Proceedings of the General Anti-Slavery Convention*, 44-5, in Barnes, *op. cit.*, 172.

the forum and public assemblies, and been rejected as delegates on the ground of color could [the chairman] have so far mistaken their real feelings, and been so insensible to the insults offered them, as to have told a Convention of men who had just trampled on their most sacred rights, that 'they would no doubt sit with as much interest behind the bar, as in the Convention'?²⁶

Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton walked down Great Queen Street that night, reviewing the days experiences and agreed to hold a women's rights Convention on their return to America, as the men to whom they had just listened "manifested their great need of some education on the question."

The first Woman's Rights Convention met in Seneca Falls, N. Y. in 1848. Here they resolved that woman being man's equal ought to be enlightened as to the laws so that she would no longer be satisfied; "that woman had too long rested content in the narrow limits worked out for her by corrupt customs and a perverted application of the scriptures," that women should now secure their rights. The same people present were those who were leaders in the Abolition Movement. Frederick Douglass spoke and James Mott presided over the meeting. A "Declaration of Sentiments" was drawn up, a recital of wrongs in the style of the Declaration of Independence. The more radical parts were those paragraphs for suffrage which were opposed by many present. The women were not quite certain that the suffrage idea would be accepted by women universally throughout the country. A Negro and a former slave, Frederick Douglass, persuaded them that their right to vote was the most important part. After debate and by a marrow margin, the convention passed intact the charter of woman's rights.

As many critics have noted, the document was strong in its inference that men as a class were tyrants, an expression of persecution. No doubt much of this was a result of their identification with the persecuted slaves in their work in the Abolition Movement.

That same year another Convention was held at Rochester and two years later an Ohio Convention was held—both of these with women presiding. These Conventions were still related in leadership and support to the Abolition Movement. Garrison and

26. Stanton, Anthony and Gage, *op. cit.*, 60.

Frederick Douglass were frequent speakers. Sojourner Truth, a Negro woman born in slavery, spoke at the 1851 meeting.

The period 1850-60 saw much activity in Anti-slavery and Woman's Rights. Woman's Rights, second only to slavery in political interest, exceeded it in legislative concessions during the period. They very nearly achieved their aims when the progress of the campaign was stopped short by the Civil War and the political exigencies of Reconstruction. It was argued that the Woman's campaign was distracting the federal government in the prosecution of the War. The Woman's Movement had been so much a part of the Abolition Movement that in the urgencies of the times they willingly left their cause to work for the Negro. Many were so identified with the slaves that they believed freedom and suffrage for the Negro would also give them freedom and suffrage.²⁷

The woman suffragists however were disappointed and the Woman's Movement revived with great vigor upon learning that the 14th Amendment proposed to include the word "male" in the qualification for voting. Up until this time the Federal Constitution had not limited the franchise—that being done only by the State Constitutions. Their campaign became so vigorous that even their supporters among the Negroes and men Abolitionists criticized them as hurting the Negro Movement. The remark, "This is the Negro's hour," became the universal response to the woman's appeal. A few Democrats, really not in favor of the extension of the suffrage to anyone, had sought to make political capital out of the women's demands, and said with Senator Cowan of Pennsylvania, "If I have no reason to offer why a Negro man shall not vote, I have no reason why a white woman shall not vote." Horace Greeley pointed out to the women:

This is a critical period for the Republican party and the Nation. It would be wise and magnanimous in you to hold your claims, though just and imperative I grant, in abeyance until the Negro is safe beyond peradventure, and your turn will come next.

The women replied: "No, this is the time to press the women's claim; we have stood with the black man in the constitution for

27. Carrie Chapman Catt and Nettie Rogers Shuler, *Woman Suffrage and Politics*, (N.Y., Scribners, 1926), 32f.

half a century and it is fitting that we should pass through the same door now opened to his political freedom."²⁸

Women petitioned, spoke and agitated considerably to be included in the 14th Amendment. Men who had supported the women and worked with the women in the Abolition and Temperance movements and who had earnestly and eloquently espoused the woman's cause now boldly chided the women for their selfish intrusion upon this, "the Negro's Hour."

After losing in Congress suffrage leaders turned to New York and Kansas to get woman suffrage amendments submitted with the Negro suffrage amendments. In New York the convention refused to submit a woman suffrage amendment though it submitted a Negro suffrage amendment which lost. Both propositions were lost in the Kansas battle. Horace Greeley, Henry Ward Beecher, Wendell Phillips, William Lloyd Garrison, Frederick Douglass reproached the women for having killed Negro suffrage. Negroes were aroused against the woman's amendment as an impediment to the success of Negro suffrage. They commonly said that "the black man has the woman question hitched on him."²⁹

The competition between them caused a rift in the two movements noted in the *Revolution*, the Woman Suffrage paper, of the day which said:

Charles Sumner, Horace Greeley, Gerrit Smith and Wendell Phillips with one consent bid the women of the nation stand aside and behold the salvation of the negro. Wendell Phillips says: 'One idea for a generation, to come up in order of their importance. First, Negro suffrage, then temperance, then the eight-hour movement, then woman suffrage.' Three generations hence, woman suffrage will be in order. What an insult to the women who have labored thirty years for the emancipation of the slave now, when he is their political equal, to propose to lift him over their heads.³⁰

While Congress was making ready to submit a 15th Amendment, the first suffrage convention held in Washington took place in January 1869. Several Negro men appeared and denounced the women for jeopardizing the black man's chances for the vote and one, declared that "God intended the male should dominate the

28. Catt and Shuler, *op. cit.*, 50.

29. *Ibid.*, 56.

30. *Ibid.*, 62-3.

female everywhere." Abolitionists, too, were there to defend the black man's prior claim and the spirited debate ran on for many hours, the women contending that it was "never expedient to deny justice."³¹

That the two movements had been closely tied together was symbolized by Garrison's *Liberator* which, for years, carried the likeness of a kneeling female slave, with the legend, "Am I not a Woman and a Sister?"³²

In speaking of Susan B. Anthony at her death, Garrison referred to "a half century ago, when the fresh and earnest Quaker school-mistress entered upon her consecration to the cause of the imbruted slaves and to the uplifting of oppressed womanhood. Out of the first movement," he declared, "the second grew, and what was more natural than the impulse which led the new disciple to seek acquaintance with the abolition leaders."³³

That the women psychologically identified themselves with the slaves was obvious. The similarities in status, though there were tremendous differences both in actual status and in tone of sentiment in the respective relations, were felt to be almost identical. Elizabeth Cady Stanton in a letter in 1850 wrote that:

A married woman has no more absolute rights than a slave on a Southern plantation. She takes the name of her master, holds nothing, owns nothing, can bring no action in her own name; and the principle on which she and the slave are educated is the same. The slave is taught what is considered best for him to know—which is nothing A woman can not follow out the impulses of her own mind in her sphere, any more than the slave can in his sphere. Civily, socially, and religiously, she is what man chooses her to be, nothing more or less, and such is the slave³⁴

Mrs. Jane G. Swisshelm in a letter to the editor of the *Saturday Visitor*, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania stated that:

Man in his code of laws, has assigned woman a place somewhere between the rational and irrational creation. Our Constitutions provide that all free white male citizens of a certain age shall have a right to vote. Here Indians,

31. Catt and Shuler, *op. cit.*, 68.

32. Woody, *op. cit.*, I, 434.

33. Ida Husted Harper, *Life and Work of Susan B. Anthony*, (Indianapolis, Hollenbeck Press, 1908), III, 1435.

34. Stanton, Anthony, and Gage, *op. cit.*, I, 811.

Negroes, and women stand side by side. Our gallant legislators excluded the inferior races from the elective franchise Women and Negroes stand side by side in this case, and also in that of exclusion from our colleges. A Negro can not be admitted into one of our colleges or seminaries of the highest class. Neither can a woman But free Negroes can acquire property, can sell it, keep it, give it away, or divide it Woman is deprived of that distinction; for all that she has and all that she can acquire, belongs to her master Women has been set down midway between free Negroes and baboons.³⁵

Though the competition between the two movements appeared and a rift occurred, there was a deeper relation, however, which still exists today. Leaders in both movements often see the problems as common and have, like Dubois, made ardent appeals for women's interests as well as those of the Negro. Women have played a considerable part in the organizations of the Negro movement. The Y.W.C.A., women's groups of the Protestant churches and similar women's organizations have been leaders in interracial work in the South. Such organizations as the Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching have developed.³⁶

One often hears a spontaneous comparison between the status of women and Negroes by women irritated with some discrimination. They protest that the only other group so limited is the Negro. A Southern woman, a leader in the Methodist Woman's Organization, was heard to remark recently that people always want to keep women and Negroes *in their places*.

35. Stanton, Anthony, and Gage, *op. cit.*, I, 808.

36. See Jesse Daniel Ames and Bertha Payne Newell, "*Repairers of the Breach*," *A Story of Interracial Cooperation on Between Southern Women; 1935-1940*, (Atlanta, Ga., Commission on Internal Cooperation, December 1940).

CHAPTER VII

AMERICAN DILEMMAS

THE problems back of the woman movement and the Negro movement not only break out in the lives of individual Negroes and women as personal difficulties but also become problems of public concern.

Many of these problems have resulted fatefully and unavoidably in the breaking up of the pre-industrial economic and social arrangements of paternalism. Though paternalism has lost its economic basis and is losing out as an ideal, many of the cultural attitudes and patterns associated with it remain. Such attitudes and patterns have in many instances become highly valued and are defended with great vigor. This has brought about a conflict of impulses and habits, values and standards, due to the effort of trying to combine two dissimilar worlds.

We have seen how many of these paternalistic forms and attitudes have persisted and have been protected so as to exclude women and Negroes from places of equality in political, economic, educational and prestige positions in society. White men still prefer a less professional and more human relation, more paternalistic and protective, in personal relations with both women and Negroes. In the South, whites have a "pet nigger" and men sometimes marry the pet woman, carrying out the paternalistic scheme. But, even if they do not, they tend to deal kindly with her as a client and a ward, not as a competitor and an equal.

Despite the disappearance of both slavery and the patriarchal, agrarian home many of the cultural attitudes persist and are slow to change. The persistence of these forms has the result that the feudal lady and the plantation Negro are still with us. The attitudes which are a heritage of the paternalistic systems are socially transmitted and are still visible in many women and in many Negroes today.

Both, having been prohibited from full participation in a white man's world, have not developed fully socialized selves. The two movements—the woman's movement and the Negro movement—have thus had a double task, that of making women and Negroes conscious of their relations to a social order and that

of showing society the necessity for a social-consciousness on the part of all its members.

The woman and the Negro, having been allowed to remain passive and having been given no part in the system of control, have developed little sense of responsibility for any of the results which accrue. Society in striving to keep the form of plantation race relations, and the form of the agrarian home as they both were in the "good old days" has not permitted either women or Negroes the status of fullfledged, rational human beings. They have participated vicariously, having no part in directing the forces which determined the family, determined the least detail of domestic life, or determined their own personal relationships. Society, in retaining the lady of chivalry and the plantation Negro, at the expense of socially conscious citizens has only encouraged impulsive reactions to the simple situation at the price of deliberate reflection and social consciousness which alone are effective under the complex conditions of today.¹

Not only have both Negroes and women had the conflict of the etiquette, methods, standards and values of paternalism preserved through them with the methods and values dominating the white man's world, but also the conflict of their own smaller selves with enlarged social environment.

Women and Negroes both must be allowed to participate more fully in the economic, political, and social life of our nation. A change in the methods of the industrial world, perhaps providing more part-time work, may be necessary so that woman may pass freely from the home to the factory without such violent changes of attitude as to disrupt the harmony of the self and render the personality inconsistent.

It must be recognized that a woman's life today usually falls into discontinuous sections, and that the question of vocation or family should not be a compulsory either/or proposition. It should be accepted and society should arrange things so that its women could work at several different periods in their life. That the vocation will probably become an avocation during the years when they are bringing-up a family is quite necessary, but with the previous training and their planning for later work, women, instead of being

1. See Taft, *op. cit.*

confronted in the 40's with relative unemployment and the loneliness, frustration and suffering which go with it, would be ready to use their experience and talents creatively outside the home.

Perhaps this would solve our present-day problem of the frustrated, "idle" women. The Bureau of Labor Statistics lists 20 million women essentially idle. They have no children under 18, they are not members of the labor force, they do not work on farms, nor are they aged or infirm. Many of them are petted by devoted and hard-working husbands but they remain still unsatisfied. Many are over 40 and belong to a generation which frowned on work for any but poverty-stricken women. Their husbands have worked hard to give them a life of ease. Now that they have it, it is a burden. This is because an untrained woman has difficulty finding satisfying tasks to fill her days. Social work, which once busied many women, is now largely handled by professionals. As a result, many of these "idle" women fall back on increasing rounds of club meetings and card-playing. They read a great deal of low-grade fiction and escape readily into dream realms of movies and soap operas.

This group has become the butt of the cartoonists and of critical social commentators. Marynia Farnham and Ferdinand Lundberg, in their best-seller, *Modern Woman: The Lost Sex*, complain, "Some unknown percentage of the women classified as housewives are functionally more than wastrels seething into afternoon movies, tea shops, cocktail lounges, expensive shopping centers."² Philip Wylie, in *Generation of Vipers* sounded the cry, "Gentlemen, mom is a jerk," which has led a violent school of critics of this group of women.

The specialization of the husband's occupational role has also made it more necessary for women to be allowed to participate more creatively in the economic world. The husband's specialization has narrowed the range in which sharing of common human interests can play a large part. The woman whose interests still remain so completely segregated is deprived of her husband's companionship during the long hours of the day when he is away from home and then the evening finds him preoccupied and disinterested in the affairs that concern her.

2. Ferdinand Lundberg and Marynia F. Farnham, M.D., *Modern Woman: The Lost Sex*, (N.Y., Harper, 1947).

Outside there is notable inhibition against easy social intercourse in mixed company. There is the tendency to segregate and men talk shop and politics while women talk domestic affairs, schools, children or personalities. On personalities, mixed conversation is apt to flow more freely.

With a society so in need of an alert citizenry, of a great number of individuals conscious of the full meaning of all their social relations, it seems a stupid waste to have two large classes of its people, women and Negroes, existing in an unreal world wilfully maintained for that purpose. Nor will the white men be able to develop fully socialized selves, in so far as they are formed by their relations with the only partially self-conscious Negroes and women.

The personality problems which result with members of both groups growing up under the label of inferiority, greatly limited in the fields of ambition and work, are public problems of mental hygiene. Society also has the problem of the effect on the children of a mother's economic and social domination by her husband. Women are most seriously connected with the personalities of their children, and the mothers' personalities, formed under the limitations of the remaining paternalistic attitudes and customs, are important in their interaction with the lives of their children. John Dollard suggests that perhaps there is a large element of hostility of mothers toward their children, hostility largely related to the limitations placed on women in our present day society.³

The most confusing part about the dilemmas of both groups is that every woman finds herself classified with all women, and every Negro finds himself classified with all Negroes. They become categorically endowed with all the virtues and all the faults ascribed to the group and people act toward them as if these were present. People are forever saying that all women are thus and so, and all Negroes are thus and so; whereas neither women nor Negroes are all thus and so. Members of both groups are confined to being the mythical characters: "the American woman" and "the American Negro." Neither are ever looked upon and judged as individuals, A Negro may never become just a good singer or a good poet or a bad criminal. He is always a good Negro singer, a good Negro poet, and a Negro criminal. Women are likewise disturbed by never being

3. John Dollard, "Mental Hygiene and a 'Scientific Culture,'" *International Journal of Ethics*, XLV, 34-35.

described as individuals and always being assessed in terms of womanliness. Dorothy Sayers commented on this problem:

Probably no man has ever troubled to imagine how strange his life would appear to himself if it were unrelentingly assessed in terms of his maleness If from school and lecture-room, press and pulpit, he heard the persistent outpouring of a shrill and scolding voice, bidding him remember his biological function. If he were vexed by continual advice on how to add a rough male touch to his typing, how to be learned without losing his masculine appeal, how to combine chemical research with seduction His newspaper would assist him with a 'Men's Corner.' . . . If he gave an interview to a reporter . . . he would find it recorded in such terms as these: 'Professor Bract, although a distinguished botanist, is not in any way an unmanly man. He has, in fact, a wife and seven children.' . . . And at dinner parties he would hear the wheedling unctuous predatory female voice demand: 'And why should you trouble your handsome little head about politics?' If, after a few centuries of this kind of treatment, the male was a little self-conscious, a little on the defensive and a little bewildered about what was required of him, I should scarcely be surprised. It would be more surprising if he retained any rag of sanity and self-respect.⁴

These methods of social control have been long used to keep both groups in their places—to continually remind them that they should and must remain Negroes and women. In so doing they must keep the attitudes, behavior patterns and personality traits ascribed to them.

As noted earlier, however, these personality traits ascribed to race or sex groups are really only aspects of the whole gamut of human temperament, and in specializing personality along the lines of sex and race we actually extirpate artificially "unfitting" personality traits in some children and create artificially proper personality traits in others. All women and Negroes are not thus and so, and a pattern of life entirely satisfying for one kind of woman or one kind of Negro will be torment for another.

Society should perhaps provide greater freedom for individual differences. We have begun to recognize genuine individual gifts as they have occurred in either sex and either race in such fields as

4. "American Woman's Dilemma," *Life Magazine*, (Jan. 16, 1947), 112.

writing, art, music; recognizing that beneath the superficial classifications of sex and race the same potentialities exist, recurring generation after generation, only to perish because society has no place for them. This is the ground work for building a society that would permit the development of many contrasting personality gifts in each sex and race. Educational institutions could be shaped to develop to the full the boy who shows a capacity for maternal behavior, the girl who shows an opposite capacity, the Negro who shows leadership ability and aptitude in "white man's skill." No skill, no special aptitude, no vividness of imagination or precision of thinking would go unrecognized because the child who possessed it was of one sex or race rather than the other, no child would be relentlessly shaped to one pattern of behavior, but instead there should be many patterns in a world that had learned to allow to each individual the pattern which was most congenial to his gifts.

Virginia Woolf pointed out how in the past society has lost the gifts of the talented among subjected groups:

Yet genius of a sort must have existed among women as it must have existed among the working classes. Now and again an Emily Bronte or a Robert Burns blazes out and proves its presence. But certainly it never got itself on to paper. When, however, one reads of a witch being ducked, of a woman possessed by devils, of a wise woman selling herbs, or even of a very remarkable man who had a mother, then I think we are on the track of a lost novelist, a suppressed poet, of some mute and inglorious Jane Austen, some Emily Bronte who dashed her brains out on the moor or mopped and mowed about the highways crazed with the torture that her gift had put her to. Indeed, I would venture to guess that Anon, who wrote so many poems without signing them, was often a woman. It was a woman Edward Fitzgerald, I think (suggested who made the ballads and the folksongs, crooning them to her children, beguiling her spinning with them, or the length of the winter's night.⁵

Where we now have patterns of behavior for women and patterns of behavior for men, patterns of behavior for Negroes and patterns of behavior for whites, we would then have patterns of behavior that expressed the interests of individuals with many kinds of endowment. Recognizing the whole gamut of human potentialities

5. Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*, (N.Y., The Fountain Press, 1929), in Irwin, *op. cit.*, 2.

ties, weaving a less arbitrary social fabric, we would have a society in which each diverse human gift would find a fitting place.⁶

The peculiarly unhappy positions of the woman and the Negro are realities and not illusions. All the hopeless conflict among impulses which they both feel they have legitimate right, even moral obligation, to express, all of the rebellion against stupid, meaningless sacrifice of powers that ought to be used by society, constitutes the force, conscious or unconscious, which motivates the two movements and will continue to vitalize them until some adjustment is made.

The movements for "rights" for both groups have only followed in the steps of those who earlier demanded the rights that inhere in every human being. Women received little encouragement from the Revolutionary leaders when they claimed these rights as belonging to women also. Both Negroes and women were often told that special limitations by God and Nature forbade their appealing to the doctrines on which men based their claim. Nevertheless, appeals were made by such persons as Mary Wollstonecraft and Elizabeth Cady Stanton and supported by such men as Condorcet and John Stuart Mill.

The whole philosophy of human rights has now accepted both Negroes and women as human beings with the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the General Assembly of the United Nations notes that "everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status."⁷

The chief task of all social movements, then must be at first to impress upon the rest of society the right of unsatisfied and unexpressed human impulses to constitute a real problem worthy of attention. This they will never bring about until there is a sufficient number of people who are so socially sensitive and adaptable that they feel within themselves as their own the impulses and points of view of both races and both sexes.

6. See Mead, *op. cit.*

7. "Universal Declaration of Human Rights", *The Crisis*, LVI, no. 2, 53.

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