

MAINTAINING THE VITALITY OF A SOCIAL  
MOVEMENT: SOCIAL JUSTICE FEMINISM,  
CLASS CONFLICT, AND THE BRYN MAWR  
SUMMER SCHOOL FOR WOMEN WORKERS,  
1921-1924

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In January 1921 M. Carey Thomas, president of Pennsylvania's Bryn Mawr College, wrote a letter to labor activist Rose Schneiderman, president of both the national Women's Trade Union League (WTUL) and its New York branch (the NYWTUL). Thomas described in detail her plans to establish a summer school for women workers on the Bryn Mawr campus, and noted that the college board of trustees had unanimously approved her proposal. She concluded by requesting that Schneiderman attend an upcoming organizing conference. After receiving the support of her NYWTUL executive board, Schneiderman decided to go to Bryn Mawr.<sup>1</sup>

Out of this seemingly routine matter came the basis for a significant collaboration between Thomas and Schneiderman that helped establish the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers (the "Bryn Mawr Summer School"). As historian Maurine Greenwald noted nearly twenty years ago, the historiography concerning working women's contributions to feminism in the early twentieth century already constituted an extensive one.

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Recent studies, particularly Dorothy Sue Cobble's groundbreaking *The Other Women's Movement*, have extended that historiographical approach into the post World War II period. No one has examined, however, how Schneiderman's involvement in the creation of the Bryn Mawr Summer School contributed to working-class feminism in the 1920s. While her involvement lasted only for the first three years of the school's existence—1921 through 1924—this essay argues that the alliance between Thomas and Schneiderman to create the Bryn Mawr Summer School at one of Pennsylvania's most respected colleges constituted a significant development in the history of a movement called social justice feminism. Social justice feminism began in the late nineteenth century as a movement of women reformers determined to remedy the ravages of industrialization on workers in the United States. Schneiderman became the leading working-class proponent of social justice feminism by 1921. The early 1920s, however, saw a decline in the movement, as with progressivism in the United States overall, as a resurgent conservatism impeded further advances and stigmatized reformers as "bolsheviks" and "communists." With social justice feminism in decline, Schneiderman turned to one of her long-term goals: the education of young women workers. Through the establishment of the Bryn Mawr Summer School she not only helped provide needed education for young women workers, but also helped maintain the vitality of social justice feminism.<sup>2</sup>

This essay also discusses the importance of class conflict in the Bryn Mawr Summer School's initial years. While scholars have demonstrated the importance of women workers' education to the establishment of labor studies in the United States, the developments of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) among women garment workers in Philadelphia in the early twentieth century, and the overall importance of the Bryn Mawr Summer School, no one has examined how class tensions almost ended the school's existence in its first, critical years. Two sharply opposing viewpoints divided the Bryn Mawr Summer School's working-class and middle-class supporters. Schneiderman and her NYWTUL coterie wanted a pedagogy that emphasized both class and the corresponding need for trade unionism. Thomas, however, wanted to stay away from such goals, which she saw as inherently divisive and potentially harmful to the Bryn Mawr Summer School's future, and give the students a typical, non-ideological liberal arts education. Yet, despite these seemingly irreconcilable views, Schneiderman and Thomas eventually helped to forge compromises which overrode class tensions and firmly established the Bryn Mawr Summer School.<sup>3</sup>

## Workers' Education in the United States

As with most events, Thomas's 1921 letter to Schneiderman did not occur by accident. The history of English-speaking workers' education encompassed almost one hundred years and two countries. English radical workers in the early nineteenth century believed that education among workers could help build an egalitarian, liberated culture. In 1829 self-educated worker Rowland Detrosier led a movement in Manchester to begin a mechanics' institute. The Chartist labor movement instituted schools and improvement societies for its members. In the Victorian era, the drive for workers' education gained momentum. F. D. Maurice, a Christian Socialist, founded London's Workingmen's College in 1857, while the Fabians spread education through pamphlets, lectures, and traveling libraries. The most effective agent, however, became the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) of the late nineteenth century. Founded by Albert Mansbridge, the WEA gathered Anglican bishops, Oxford dons, and self-educated workers into an effective coalition. Infused with Mansbridge's belief in "the glory of education," the WEA sponsored social science courses that encompassed tutorial sessions of working men and women. The Association's educational method proved highly influential on future schools in the United States, including Bryn Mawr.<sup>4</sup> But the British workers' education movement did possess one central flaw: gender inequality. As one commentator has noted, British trade unions traditionally excluded working women. In addition, while male industrial workers in Great Britain possessed ready networks to continue their literacy efforts, women's domestic obligations, combined with their workplace responsibilities, prevented them from taking advantage of further educational efforts.<sup>5</sup>

Workers' education in the United States followed a different route. Although Samuel Gompers attended evening classes at New York City's Union College as a young cigar worker, by the time he became leader of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) in 1886 Gompers only wanted to concentrate on what he called "pure and simple" unionism, which focused on direct negotiations with management. The issue of educating the working class seemed so much nonsense from the "damned intellectuals," as Gompers called advocates of workers' education. "Intellectuals usually suspend their labor programs from sky hooks," he asserted in the AFL journal, the *American Federationist*, in 1918. "They can find nothing good in the practical structure of labor organizations." Because of this hostility among male union leaders,

the workers' education movement in the United States, unlike its British counterpart, began among women workers.<sup>6</sup>

Pennsylvania became a natural area after World War I for the burgeoning women workers' education movement for four reasons. First, as the nation's second largest state the Commonwealth represented a key contributor to the United States' industrial output. While New York contributed at least 10 percent of the United States' total annual production, in 1919 its neighboring state employed about 12 percent of the nation's manufacturing workers, with 25 percent of Pennsylvania's laboring population, or approximately 1,136,000 workers, working in factories. Moreover, while the state's steel production declined from 60 percent of the United States' total output in 1900 to about 50 percent of total output sixteen years later, its miners still produced the largest supplies of anthracite and bituminous coal. Second, although New York City became the United States' leading garment manufacturing center in the late nineteenth century, Philadelphia also became an important location. When over twenty thousand garment workers in New York City went out on strike during the winter of 1909, which became known as the famous "Uprising of Twenty Thousand," their counterparts in Pennsylvania staged sympathetic, if short-lived, walkouts. While the city remained, in the words of one ILGWU report, "unfavorable for successful trade unions," the labor organization did make some gains, holding a general strike of shirtwaist and dressmakers in 1915, and forming Local 15 thereafter.<sup>7</sup> Third, Pennsylvania women workers made significant contributions to the production effort during World War I. As historians such as Alice Kessler-Harris have demonstrated, the gains made by women industrial workers did not last long after the war, particularly with the millions of returning male soldiers forcing their women replacements out of work. But as Kessler-Harris also notes, the wartime emergency did enable hundreds of thousands of women to demonstrate their fitness for occupations previously considered "inappropriate" for them. "In entering new fields," she continues, "women challenged the physiological and social assumptions that justified discrimination against them." The center of this new-found agency occurred in Pittsburgh, the commonwealth's second largest metropolis. Its 250 plants employed over five hundred thousand men and women from 1917 through 1919. In the summer of 1918, Bethlehem Steel fell significantly behind in its scheduled production because of an unexpected labor shortage. After receiving approval from the federal government, three shifts of fully trained women workers began at the steel corporation's factories. Finally, and most

important, one of the most important women's colleges in the United States, Bryn Mawr, became one of the locations for the rapidly burgeoning women workers' education movement.<sup>8</sup>

### M. Carey Thomas and Her Interest in Women Workers' Education

Historian Rita Rubenstein Heller aptly describes the coalition of women who created the Bryn Mawr Summer School as a combination of "blue collars and bluestockings." As will be discussed later, while Rose Schneiderman represented the former, M. Carey Thomas definitely represented the upper-class contrast. Born in 1857, the daughter of deeply devout Quaker parents, Thomas grew up in what she later termed an insular world. After graduating from Cornell College, Thomas decided to enter the Johns Hopkins University graduate school to study Greek. She eventually left Johns Hopkins, however, depressed by the prevailing patriarchal attitude. Traveling to Europe, Thomas completed her doctorate *summa cum laude* in literature at the University of Zurich in 1882. Two years later, she became the dean of Bryn Mawr.

Established in 1885 by the advocacy of Joseph Wright Taylor, a Quaker doctor, Bryn Mawr represented a key example of the widespread development of women's colleges in the United States following the Civil War, including Mount Holyoke and Vassar. But the college's growth only began when Thomas became Bryn Mawr's president in 1894. Quickly establishing herself as a formidable national spokesperson for women's higher education in the United States, Thomas also proved to be a progressive educational thinker. She started a department of education, and then instituted in 1910 the Phebe Anna Thorne Model School, based on John Dewey's educational principles. When a wealthy Bryn Mawr graduate left \$750,000 to the college the next year, Thomas established a new graduate school for social work, which offered the United States' first doctorates in the field. Her elitist attitudes, moreover, broadened with the women's suffrage movement and the advent of progressivism. Thomas became an ardent suffragist, helping to raise \$60,000 for the National American Woman's Suffrage Association. By 1917, as biographer Helen Jerkewitz Horowitz notes, Thomas regarded herself as a "feminist, moving beyond issues of the vote and equal pay to espouse ... the notion of a distinctive women's culture." Thomas was then willing to expand her consideration of women's educational activities beyond the narrow confines established by her predecessors.<sup>9</sup>

The crucial turning point for Thomas's consideration of education for women workers occurred during her around-the-world trip of 1919–1920. As she later explained to Bryn Mawr Summer School students, the recent British enfranchisement of women, and the imminent ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment, prompted her to think about the need for women's cross-class solidarity. "I [then] remembered," she continued, "the passionate interest of the Bryn Mawr College students in fairness and justice and their intense sympathy with girls less fortunate than themselves." This prompted her, she recalled, to give an opportunity to those "women who, themselves just emerging from the wilderness, know best . . . what it means to be denied access to things of the intellect and spirit." When Thomas returned from her trip in the fall of 1920, she immediately consulted with the director of the graduate school, Susan M. Kingsbury, and the college's new dean, Hilda Worthington Smith, about establishing a Bryn Mawr Summer School for women workers, then wrote her letter to Rose Schneiderman.<sup>10</sup>

### Rose Schneiderman and Her Involvement in Social Justice

Rose Schneiderman encompassed many activities in her life of ninety years. Before she died in 1972, she had been a trade union organizer, president of two major women's labor organizations, a close friend of both Eleanor and Franklin D. Roosevelt, and head of the New York State Department of Labor. As a *New York Times* editorial remarked on her death, "Rose Schneiderman did more to upgrade the dignity and living standards of working women than any other American."<sup>11</sup> Such substantial achievements, however, never erased one regret from Schneiderman's mind: her inability to continue an education. Before immigrating to the United States from Polish Russia in 1890, Schneiderman had received an unusual education for a young Orthodox Jewish woman. As she later recalled, "Mother was determined that I learn Hebrew so I could read and understand the prayers recited at home and in the synagogue." But when her father Samuel died of spinal meningitis in 1892, Schneiderman left school to support her family. As she recalled in her memoirs, "I remember writing a composition about how much I loved school and wanted to continue . . . [b]ut the Fates had other plans." Schneiderman thus considered education important, and expressed this belief in her later support of workers' education.<sup>12</sup>

By the age of twenty-five Schneiderman had become an important labor organizer. In 1907, after meeting NYWTUL president Mary Dreier, she became a vice-president of the organization. The NYWTUL represented the New York branch of the national WTUL, established in 1903 to promote trade unionism among working women. Schneiderman's membership served two purposes, for the League needed working-class leaders to maintain credibility in the eyes of women workers, while Schneiderman wanted to create cross-class coalitions for labor legislation. These concurring needs were soon fulfilled. During the "Uprising of the Twenty Thousand," for example, Schneiderman and Dreier created a coalition of working and middle-class women to assist the strikers.<sup>13</sup>

As the two women established effective cross-class coalitions in New York City, a movement called social justice feminism took on national importance. Social justice arose as a concept in the late 1800s as women's organizations confronted the quandary of reconciling industrial and technological advancements with the need of preserving the dignity of working people. The term, with its social and religious implications, appealed to an American middle-class wary of Marxist theory. Definitions of justice in the United States, moreover, had previously arisen in a legalistic context, as Americans only used the term in the context of property rights. But reformers in the late nineteenth century, influenced by the Social Gospel and the harsh effects of a newly industrialized economy in the United States, used the term "social justice" to question social and economic inequalities.<sup>14</sup>

Florence Kelley, whom Felix Frankfurter later stated "probably had the largest single share in shaping the social history of the United States during the first thirty years of the [twentieth] century," initiated social justice feminism. Born in 1859, the daughter of a famed Pennsylvania congressman, she graduated from Cornell College in 1882. Moving to Chicago in 1891, she soon established herself as a leading reformer, and became Illinois's factory inspector in 1893.<sup>15</sup> After becoming general secretary of the National Consumers' League (NCL), a newly created national federation of women's consumer organizations in 1899, Kelley and her research secretary, Josephine Goldmark, coordinated their efforts with Boston attorney Louis Brandeis to successfully defend a state hours law for working women in *Muller v. Oregon* (1908). While working on court litigation to uphold the constitutionality of women's labor legislation, social justice feminists also expanded their efforts to promote and pass labor legislation, hoping that gender-specific labor



legislation could be an entering wedge for the eventual inclusion of all workers, regardless of gender. As Frankfurter, then the NCL's general counsel, declared in 1916, "Once we cease to look upon the regulation of women as exceptional . . . and shift the emphasis from the fact that they are *women* to the fact that it is *industry* . . . which is regulated, the whole problem is seen from a totally different aspect."<sup>16</sup>

Schneiderman became one of the movement's key leaders by the end of World War I. Dreier, who served as NYWTUL president from 1907 through 1914, brought her working-class colleague into social justice feminism. When the New York State legislature created the Factory Investigating Commission (FIC) after the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire of March 1911, Dreier became one of its nine Commissioners. Schneiderman also joined the Commission's investigatory staff, personally inspecting New York City factories and testifying before the Commission. She also later lobbied for the FIC's legislative agenda, including a 54-hour law and a minimum wage bill for working women. The FIC's successful promotion of fifty-six laws dealing with workers' health, workplace safety, and hours of labor from 1911 through 1915 provided a significant precedent for the New Deal.<sup>17</sup> Besides her natural leadership abilities, Schneiderman brought two other assets to the social justice feminist movement: a gritty sense of industrial realities to a movement which previously consisted of middle-class reformers and a gift for developing cross-class friendships. These personal qualities sustained Schneiderman through some difficult times.<sup>18</sup>

During this time Schneiderman also, not surprisingly, played a significant role in initiating education programs for women workers in the United States. In 1913 she and other NYWTUL members lobbied the national WTUL about organizing such programs. WTUL president Margaret Dreier Robins contacted several women's colleges, but received no response. Two years later Schneiderman and NYWTUL colleagues again urged Robins to initiate a school. This time the University of Chicago agreed to co-sponsor a program for working women, the Training School for Women Organizers. Under the leadership of rising labor leader Mary Anderson, the Training School laid out an ambitious agenda in its first few years. Qualified working women spent a year in Chicago, taking courses in economics and trade union history while also receiving training at the WTUL's national office. The Training School paid for the tuition and training expenses of the students, and also provided a weekly allowance. Schneiderman soon received confirmation of the program's value. Bella Cooper, a NYWTUL member,



attended the program in 1920, and subsequently thanked Schneiderman for the opportunity, explaining that her courses grounded the need for trade unions in reality. The Training School encountered constant financial problems and finally closed in 1926. But with forty-four students successfully completing the program, the WTUL effort inspired other labor organizations to follow its example. By 1916 the ILGWU initiated a workers' education program with the Rand School, following the dynamic leadership of Juliet Stuart Poyntz of the union's Local 25 in New York City. The trend continued and expanded after World War I, with the establishment of the Bryn Mawr Summer School, the Southern Summer School for Women Workers, and the Affiliated Schools for Women Workers by 1929.<sup>19</sup>

The Training School's short-lived but vibrant existence probably provided some comfort for Schneiderman in a difficult period. Although domestic progressivism in the United States faded with the United States' involvement in World War I, social justice feminists hoped that the postwar period could continue previous legal and legislative advances. Thus, in September 1918, a coalition of over twenty New York working and middle-class women's organizations formed the Women's Joint Legislative Conference (WJLC). Schneiderman became a key leader in the new coalition through her NYWTUL presidency. The WJLC originally propounded an aggressive six-point agenda, which not only included hours and minimum wage legislation for working women, but also health insurance for private employees. But the initial optimism soon ended. A now-conservative New York State legislature refused to consider the WJLC's agenda, while social justice feminists faced accusations of "bolshevism" and "communism." Schneiderman became a particular target because of her previous socialism and opposition to American entry into the war. The public nadir came when the president of the New York State Federation of Labor called her "Red Rose" before a legislative committee. In addition, Schneiderman's third-party candidacy for New York's U.S. Senate seat in 1920 alienated middle-class colleagues in the WJLC who supported a Democratic candidate. By 1923, when the Supreme Court declared minimum wage legislation for women unconstitutional in *Adkins v. Children's Hospital*, social justice feminism seemed a movement virtually in retreat.<sup>20</sup>

The postwar malaise of social justice feminism echoed the general trend of progressivism throughout the United States in the early 1920s. Even the 1923 election of progressive iconoclast Gifford Pinchot to Pennsylvania's governorship could not eliminate the overall disappointment of the Commonwealth's

progressive reformers, particularly in the area of labor. From 1917 through the armistice of November 1918, union membership in the United States increased from approximately three to over five million. Wages also rose, and the eight-hour day became a reality for many workers. Thus many workers hoped to continue their gains after the war, particularly with the federal government's extensive participation in labor-capital relations. Before the United States' entry into World War I in April 1917 federal authorities either enforced judicial orders or actively took the side of business in major labor strikes. Now with the war effort demanding maximum production, the federal government created several governmental agencies, particularly the National War Labor Board. But after the war the federal government withdrew as a mediator between labor and capital. In addition, widespread labor strikes—over 3,000 alone in 1919—failed. A leading example became the steelworkers' strike in Pittsburgh, which ended in early 1920 with no significant labor gains. Although an eight-hour day and a 25 percent increase in wages did become reality in 1923, moreover, the principle of collective bargaining remained unrecognized until the late 1930s.<sup>21</sup>

As social justice feminism struggled in the early 1920s, Schneiderman expanded her involvement in the burgeoning women workers' education movement. She became vice-president of the United Labor Education Commission, and successfully lobbied against an amendment in Congress that proposed to abolish the Federal Board for Vocational Education and to transfer its activities to the Veterans' Bureau. Schneiderman's new emphasis on worker education received a strong confirmation from WTUL colleague Alice Henry. "Our greatest need of the hour," Henry wrote to Schneiderman, "is for women labor leaders, who will help to bring the women workers into the labor movement." Thus the letter from Thomas came at a fortuitous time for Schneiderman and social justice feminism.<sup>22</sup>

### The Formation of the Bryn Mawr Summer School

In early March 1921 Schneiderman attended the organizing conference, which consisted of Kingsbury, Smith, Thomas and other women leaders of the labor movement. Course curriculums, school goals, and students' living arrangements became the major topics of discussion. By the time the conference ended, all attendees agreed that the Bryn Mawr Summer School



**FIGURE 1:** Putting Theory Into Reality. Students at the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers in Industry performing a skit, "Wealth and Poverty," in 1930. Photo courtesy Bryn Mawr College Library.

students would receive scholarships and live in a campus dormitory. In a decision that carried great weight for the new school's future, Kingsbury became the head, with Smith as her assistant. Thomas accomplished perhaps the most pressing issue, financial assistance, through her alumni connections. She, Kingsbury, and Bryn Mawr alumnus Cornelia Bryce Pinchot raised the initial budget of \$14,000. Eventually a wide variety of supporters, including John D. Rockefeller Jr. and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA), joined the list.<sup>23</sup>

Schneiderman's acceptance of the Bryn Mawr Summer School became easier through the participation of her fellow social justice feminist, Mary Anderson. A fellow emigrant to the United States, the Swedish-born Anderson possessed a long work history before she joined the WTUL at the age of thirty-one in 1903. She quickly gained a leadership position within the fledgling organization. When Chicago's garment workers successfully struck in 1910, Anderson assumed the responsibility of ensuring worker compliance with the new agreement. In 1918 she came to Washington as a special investigator for the wartime Ordnance Department and eventually became assistant director of the newly established Women in Industry Service. After serving as a labor delegate to the postwar peace conference in Paris, Anderson assumed the directorship of the newly created Women's Bureau

in the U.S. Department of Labor. She became the first woman labor leader consulted by Thomas and Kingsbury about the Bryn Mawr Summer School in late 1920, while her labor contacts widened support for the proposal.<sup>24</sup>

After returning to New York City, Schneiderman reported to the NYWTUL emphasizing that seventy women workers would receive scholarships for the first Bryn Mawr Summer School session, and noting that five trade unionists served on the executive board, as well as on the school's committees. As the application deadline for the first summer session approached, Schneiderman urged NYWTUL members to publicize the new school through their trade unions and other organizations.<sup>25</sup> Perhaps Schneiderman's most important contribution came through the creation of a committee to consider local applications. The original plan for the Bryn Mawr Summer School called for the following qualifications for applicants: evidence of character, ability, "and sincere desire for opportunities offered," the ability to read and write English, a common school education and a minimum age of eighteen years, with a preference for those applicants between twenty and thirty. Schneiderman traveled through the New York City area in the late spring of 1921, interviewing prospective applicants and helping them fill out the school applications. She and the other NYWTUL committee members narrowed the applications to twelve in class "A," a class established by the Bryn Mawr Summer School for women possessing leadership abilities, and four in class "B," or a non-leadership class. By May 1921, the committee selected sixteen finalists for the upcoming, first summer session.<sup>26</sup>

Schneiderman's interest in advocating trade unionism among the Bryn Mawr Summer School students came through in her NYWTUL reports about the committee's final decisions. Noting that most of the successful applicants came from the ACWA, the United Garment Workers, and the United Textile Workers unions, Schneiderman also reported that "the most intelligent [women] were the union girls." Non-union applicants, such as those recommended by the Young Woman's Christian Association, did not fare as well. "[W]hile most of them . . . had millinery and sewing and athletics," Schneiderman continued, these aspirants seemingly applied not because they possessed "vision or knowledge as to the [labor] struggles that are going right before them," but because their mentors told them that the experience would be a "good thing." "They were," Schneiderman concluded, "a real example of what welfare work does to the worker." Thus Schneiderman definitely wanted committed women workers, not indifferent middle-class participants, as students for the new school.<sup>27</sup>

## The Complexities of Class and the Bryn Mawr Summer School

While all parties concerned with the Bryn Mawr Summer School acted with the best of intentions, class complexities inevitably became crucial to the new school's continued existence. Although Schneiderman and the NYWTUL embraced the idea of a labor school for women workers at an exclusive campus in Pennsylvania, fellow Jewish working-class women activists remained skeptical. When Anderson, for example, originally contacted Fannia Cohn of the ILGWU, Cohn refused to participate because of her fears of coercion by upper-class women indifferent to trade unionism. While Cohn eventually changed her mind, her reluctance demonstrated the concern that working women's education would be diluted in the interests of social conformity.<sup>28</sup>

Cross-class alliances between labor leaders and wealthy social reformers did not begin in the 1920s, as witnessed by the NYWTUL alliance previously made between Dreier and Schneiderman. But these alliances solidified during the 1920s, not only in the context of summer schools for working women, but in other labor issues. Sidney Hillman, head of the ACWA, joined the Taylor Society, an international organization created in 1916 in memory of the famous labor expert Frederick Winslow Taylor. The Taylor Society, as Hillman's biographer notes, became "a crossroads not only for democratically-minded efficiency experts and for those rather rare labor leaders like Hillman, but also for a diverse assortment of . . . manufacturers and investment houses and banks."<sup>29</sup> Labor leaders also reached out to wealthy benefactors. When David Dubinsky and the ILGWU faced possible bankruptcy in the mid-1920s, for example, the multimillionaire Herbert H. Lehman and a group of fellow businessmen raised \$25,000 to save the union.<sup>30</sup>

Class complexities at the Bryn Mawr Summer School became apparent even before the first summer session started in June 1921. Four months earlier, the special committee had decided that the students would mainly study economics, English literature, political and social history, and English composition, with additional lectures given on such topics as labor economics and women in the labor movement.<sup>31</sup> But curriculum implementation soon created problems. When one professor angrily sent a telegram to Schneiderman after discussing the courses with Thomas, the Bryn Mawr president immediately sent a letter to the NYWTUL president explaining her viewpoints. While Thomas emphasized that her viewpoints did not represent official policy, and that she did not want to interfere with the "freedom of teaching," she still recommended that the subjects taught at the new school

become “as they are taught in the best colleges and universities today, that is, without teaching them in a special way that may seem to us particularly adapted to workers in industry.” She suggested that an English course not just emphasize the writings of the famous English socialist William Morris, and that an art history course discuss not just pictures with “some relation to the women workers’ occupations.” Thomas concluded her letter by asking Schneiderman to discuss the matter further with her.<sup>32</sup>

Thomas’s May 1921 letter to Schneiderman reflected two crucial issues in the college president’s mind. First, Thomas evidently wanted the Bryn Mawr Summer School to follow the strictly non-ideological precedent established by the WEA in Great Britain. Second, the letter reflects her implicit concern that the new school not attract controversy because of any apparent “socialistic” or left-wing connections. One can understand Thomas’s apprehensions; the national “Red Scare” only ended about a year before her letter to Schneiderman. But the missive also reveals a disconcerting naiveté, for Thomas evidently did not realize that by welcoming women workers to her college campus, class issues would inevitably arise. As Smith later reflected, “President Thomas didn’t realize that a workers’ school would plunge Bryn Mawr into the heart of the organized labor movement.”<sup>33</sup>

Unlike Thomas, Schneiderman knew the importance of class issues in the context not only of labor, but also in the area of women’s reform. Although she became an important facilitator between Jewish, radical working women and native, middle-class women reformers in her early years at the NYWTUL, the bridging came at a cost. As historian Joyce Antler points out, Schneiderman’s increasing focus on legislation “distanced [her] from many . . . Jewish colleagues in the industrial labor movement.” Moreover, she still faced the subtle condescension of her middle-class colleagues. For example, when Schneiderman received an invitation in May 1910 to speak at the banquet of the national WTUL, she also received the recommendation that her speech center on “the Uprising of the Girls” or “the Foreign Girls.” Even close friend and NYWTUL secretary Helen Marot strained their friendship when she suggested that only “American girls” should be organized. Schneiderman temporarily left the NYWTUL from 1912 through 1917 because of increasing class tensions within the organization.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, she continued to confront class conflicts when she joined the social justice feminist movement. Ostensibly both middle-class and working-class social justice feminists believed in the same goal. Schneiderman’s goal of “industrial justice” received apparent confirmation when the middle-class, college-educated Frances

Perkins declared in 1929 that “social justice is possible in a great industrial society.” But years later Perkins declared, “I’d rather pass a law than organize a union.” She added, “We would drag Rosie Schneiderman up and say, ‘See, she’s the President of a union.’ But it was a pretty weak union back of her . . . . [Women workers] would never had their hours reduced, if we hadn’t gotten the legislation first.” While Schneiderman never reacted to these remarks, made confidentially by Perkins in the 1950s, the evidence suggests that she would have sharply disagreed with this assessment. In her view, while labor legislation provided permanent protections, the slow legislative process produced no immediate solutions for desperate workers. If employers violated agreements with unions, a strike could quickly change the situation. As Schneiderman later explained, “We only began to stress legislative measures when we discovered, almost accidentally, a stepping stone cause and effect relationship in the American labor movement.” Thus, unlike the inexperienced, somewhat sheltered Thomas, Schneiderman remained sensitive to the factor of class throughout the creation of the Bryn Mawr Summer School.<sup>35</sup>

No record exists of how Schneiderman and Thomas eventually resolved the curriculum controversy, but the first summer session apparently reflected a variety of pedagogical approaches. While leading radical Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana taught English, apparent conservative Amy Hewes still presented pro-union principles in her economics classes, including the argument that individual workers could not stand alone against capitalism’s great economic power. As one student later recollected, the first summer session thus encompassed “ideological disagreements between right and left.”<sup>36</sup> The overall situation may have resolved itself not only because of Thomas’s tactful handling of the situation, but also because of Schneiderman’s respect for the Bryn Mawr president. In her memoirs, the NYWTUL president described with admiration how Thomas overcame gender bias not only as a graduate student, but also as a college administrator. Thus Schneiderman and Thomas found it easy to collaborate, a critical factor, as subsequent events proved.<sup>37</sup>

Despite this apparent compromise, class tensions continued to affect the first summer session. The Bryn Mawr Summer School students demonstrated in three ways that they remained determined to be active agents, not passive receptacles of perceived wisdom, in their educational endeavors. First, students lost their patience with a male economics professor who refused to discuss trade unionism in his classes. As Schneiderman later remembered the situation, she traveled to Bryn Mawr to resolve the situation. The attempt at compromise failed; as Schneiderman related, “[W]hen I got back to the



[NYWTUL] office on Monday morning, I had a splitting headache and had to have an ice bag on my head.” (Another cause of her headache probably came from the fact that she could not easily afford the round-trip railroad fare.) Second, the students objected to Bryn Mawr’s employment of maids without working-hour restrictions, and successfully lobbied Kingsbury to establish a regular workweek. Finally, the students advocated the admission of African-American women, a request finally implemented in 1926. These three matters clearly demonstrated that working-class students would not automatically accept the decisions of elite college administrators.<sup>38</sup>

### The Joint Administrative Committee and the 50-50 Plan

Class tensions came to a climax over the structure of the Joint Administrative Committee (JAC), which oversaw the Bryn Mawr Summer School. As originally established, the JAC consisted of nine representatives from the trade union movement, including Anderson, Freida Miller of the Philadelphia WTUL, Agnes Nestor, president of the WTUL, and Schneiderman; nine representatives from the Bryn Mawr administration and board of trustees, including Thomas, Smith, and Frances Fincke Hand, wife of the distinguished jurist; and seven representatives from the Bryn Mawr alumni community.<sup>39</sup>

The exact two-to-one ratio of Bryn Mawr administrative and alumni representatives to labor movement members on the JAC, concerned Schneiderman and Ernestine Friedman, the JAC secretary who, as a NYWTUL member, became a ready ally.<sup>40</sup> The two apparently discussed a proposal where the JAC would be remodeled so as to have an equal representation of labor leaders, Bryn Mawr College administrators, and college alumni. In addition, the remodeling, otherwise known as the “50-50” plan, allowed students to elect the labor representatives. When the first summer session ended in August 1921, Friedman discussed the proposal with Kingsbury.

Susan M. Kingsbury remains the enigma in the Bryn Mawr Summer School’s early years. Thomas provided the impetus for the school, while Smith carried the school through its often-tumultuous seventeen years of existence. Kingsbury’s overall influence, however, remains vague. Fifty-one years old in 1921, and a doctoral graduate from Columbia University, Kingsbury came to the labor school after six years as head of Bryn Mawr’s graduate department of social work. While she had established a reputation as someone able

to survive academic conflicts, Kingsbury also became known for her marked temper, which one scholar describes as an "extraordinary combination of quick, but well-controlled, anger and equally ready wit." The available evidence suggests that Kingsbury's abrasiveness alienated Friedman.<sup>41</sup>

Schneiderman first received indications of the conflict in September of 1921. When she received notification of an upcoming JAC meeting, two subsequent letters, one from Thomas, the other from School administrators, further urged her to attend.<sup>42</sup> Final confirmation came in October through a long, emotional letter from Friedman. Her discussion of the 50-50 plan with Kingsbury did not go well, she reported. When Friedman argued that the proposal constituted a leading factor for "confidence" in the Bryn Mawr Summer School (evidently meaning the confidence of labor leaders such as Schneiderman), Kingsbury reacted negatively. Telling Friedman that she remained a "very definite detriment," Kingsbury declared that the proposal should not be considered at the JAC's fall meeting.<sup>43</sup>

Friedman's frustrations increased as she continued her letter. Kingsbury and Thomas, she reported, did not want to rephrase the Bryn Mawr Summer School's purpose statement to reflect the suggestions of the previous year's students. Evidently the students did not care for the original statement, which declared, "The School is not committed to any dogma or theory," and which also took a rather condescending tone by adding, "It is expected that . . . the students will gain a truer insight into the problems of industry."<sup>44</sup> In addition, Friedman asserted that the Bryn Mawr Summer School's first report remained ensnared in controversy. In fact, she added that she might leave the school if the 50-50 plan did not receive consideration in the forthcoming meeting. Friedman concluded by urging Schneiderman to force a consideration of the 50-50 plan.<sup>45</sup>

Friedman's concerns apparently increased Schneiderman's apprehensions about the school. Not only did she not like the apparently elitist construction of the JAC, but Schneiderman also believed that the first summer session did not fully reflect her goal of promoting women workers' education. Six months after receiving Friedman's letter, she confided to Anderson:

I feel that we have to make a special effort to get as many of our trade union girls in as possible this year, otherwise the non-trade unionists will be in the majority, and that would give rise to a great deal of misunderstanding among labor ranks, in view of last year's mix-up. It would give people fuel for gossip.<sup>46</sup>

With this concern in mind, Schneiderman apparently feared that if the 50-50 plan did not receive approval, the Bryn Mawr experiment might lose further credibility among working women. Schneiderman's apprehension also reflected the declining situation of trade unions in the United States during the 1920s, particularly in the women's garment industry. "I wish [women workers] would realize that joining the union would bring untold benefits during the five years they are in trade," Schneiderman lamented in 1924, "not to mention how it would help the girls who come after them." Schneiderman apparently feared that if the Bryn Mawr Summer School failed, trade unionism would continue to decline among working women.<sup>47</sup>

As she prepared for the meeting Schneiderman contacted her fellow labor members. Nestor promised, despite a "very difficult week," to attend the JAC meeting.<sup>48</sup> The meeting, held at the Deanery, Thomas's campus house, initially witnessed class tensions among the JAC members. As Smith carefully described the situation in her 1929 official history of the school, non-labor members of the JAC felt that "danger seemed apparent in trusting the control of an educational institution to a group of people who had little experience in educational matters." Anderson later, and more vividly, remembered the meeting. Alys Russell, the former wife of British philosopher Bertrand Russell and a cousin of Thomas, argued against the 50-50 plan, adding, "What would the working woman know about academic education?" Anderson immediately replied, stating that "it was not academic education that we were trying to give the girls, but rather information that would be useful in their everyday lives." At this point Thomas adjourned the meeting for lunch. Immediately taking Anderson aside, Thomas asked her to invite some former students to the luncheon.<sup>49</sup>

As later described by Smith, the students discussed the need for the 50-50 plan during the luncheon, with one describing how a professor ignored the class's knowledge of the labor system.<sup>50</sup> "Convinced after that conversation that the workers desired a liberal course related to their own problems," as Smith related, Thomas later proposed adoption of the 50-50 plan. With the effective support of perhaps the most important member of the JAC, the motion passed unanimously. Schneiderman later, triumphantly related this success at the NYWTUL's regular meeting.<sup>51</sup> Other evidence suggests, however, that Thomas's support of the 50-50 plan did not suddenly occur. As evidenced by her September 1921 letter to Schneiderman, Thomas apparently worried that the conflict between Kingsbury and Friedman could eventually cause the NYWTUL president's withdrawal from the JAC.

In addition, Smith played a crucial part in resolving the situation. While she only possessed "general responsibility" for the Bryn Mawr Summer School at that time, Smith was not only an alumnae of Bryn Mawr, but also acted as dean of the college. Thus she could easily facilitate private discussions with Thomas. In addition, she liked Friedman, later crediting her with creating a "solid foundation" for the labor school.<sup>52</sup> Smith and Friedman called upon Thomas a few weeks before the JAC meeting. Significantly, Kingsbury was out of town. During their "splendid talk," as Friedman later described the meeting to Schneiderman, Thomas reaffirmed her support of the Bryn Mawr Summer School, stating "that in these days when everyone is fighting the existence of a labor movement, she felt it was a miracle that we could have a summer school at all." Thomas thus quietly signaled to Friedman and Smith her willingness to support the 50-50 plan without directly contradicting Kingsbury, a classic political move.<sup>53</sup>

Another factor that helped in the adoption of the 50-50 plan concerned Schneiderman's eagerness to promote workers' education. As previously mentioned, the early 1920s represented a crucial turning point for social justice feminism. Deprived of the ability to promote legislative agendas, the movement needed some forum, which apparently lay in women workers' education. If the Bryn Mawr Summer School failed, that possibility might end. Although Schneiderman, as usual, did not disclose her concerns, her understanding of the value of cross-class alliances apparently led to the alliance of Thomas over the JAC.

The successful adoption of the 50-50 plan, and the subsequent diminution of Kingsbury's administrative duties, did not mean the total elimination of class tensions. Thomas still wanted to emphasize a liberal arts education, while the students advocated a more practical curriculum. Thomas's resignation as Bryn Mawr president in 1922, and Smith's assumption of complete authority over the labor school the next year, marked central turning points. While the liberal arts curriculum remained, students now received opportunities to express their working-class concerns through field trips, creative writing, and amateur theater productions. In addition, Friedman continued as the Bryn Mawr Summer School's executive secretary until 1924, when she became supervisor of the Barnard summer school for women workers.<sup>54</sup>

When she wrote a foreword to Smith's history of the Bryn Mawr Summer School, Thomas declared that without the efforts of Anderson, Smith, Kingsbury, and Schneiderman, the experiment would never have succeeded. For once the usually assertive Thomas gave herself too little credit. The

survival of the Bryn Mawr Summer School depended in large part to her willingness to listen to working-class women, particularly students from the Summer School. Thomas thus never let her natural elitism conflict with her administrative acumen.<sup>55</sup>

### Schneiderman's Involvement with the Bryn Mawr Summer School Ends

The Bryn Mawr Summer School's constitution provided that JAC members could only serve a maximum of two consecutive terms. When Schneiderman came up for re-election in August 1922, she received a note of appreciation from Friedman and Smith. "We . . . want you to know how much your service and co-operation," their letter read, "has meant in making the School what it is today." "We are very grateful to you for the faith you have had in this co-operative form of workers' education," the missive continued, "[and hope that] you will continue your helpful interest." Thus the Bryn Mawr Summer School administrators made it clear that they wanted Schneiderman to continue on the JAC.<sup>56</sup>

Schneiderman did receive re-election, but only for another year at her request. The reason for this truncated term remains unclear, but the primary factor probably lay in her changing priorities. While Schneiderman continued to speak about labor education for working women, she now helped lead the battle against the Equal Rights Amendment, which social justice feminists feared could, if ratified, eliminate women's labor legislation. She also became involved in Democratic Party politics.<sup>57</sup> When Schneiderman received re-election to the JAC, she promised that she would find a successor who encompassed both "experience and integrity." When she finally left the Committee in November 1923, Mabel Leslie of the NYWTUL replaced her. An alumnae of the Training School and an experienced union organizer, Leslie naturally embodied the qualities that Schneiderman wanted in her successor.<sup>58</sup>

In subsequent years the importance of the Bryn Mawr Summer School to social justice feminism became more apparent. The WJLC continued to find its legislative agenda impeded in the New York State legislature, while the *Adkins* decision led to the dissolution of the NCL legal network. By 1925, however, the momentum behind social justice feminism's original goal, the promotion and passage of women's labor legislation, began to

increase. Schneiderman and Leslie attended meetings of the WJLC's steering committee, which now centered its efforts on a forty-eight-hour bill for working women in New York. Leslie eventually became the Conference's lobbyist in Albany, and her efforts proved successful when the legislature adopted the proposed hours bill in March 1927. Thus, although Schneiderman and Leslie continued to support the Bryn Mawr Summer School, their major efforts, as well as the main impetus of social justice feminism, after 1925 centered on labor legislation and political organizing. Thus the partnership between the school and social justice feminism came to a quiet end.<sup>59</sup>

## Conclusion

The Bryn Mawr Summer School continued through the 1920s and into the early 1930s. By 1931 almost two-thirds of the students were between the ages of twenty-two and twenty-nine, with 46 percent coming from trade unions, more than double the national percentage of women in industrial trade unions (18 percent).<sup>60</sup> But the reactions of working-class students to their education varied. While some students enjoyed the freedom of eight weeks to study subjects such as English and economics, they subsequently discovered that using a liberal arts education in the industrial workplace was not easy. A few graduates, however, did become leaders in the women's trade union movement; for example, Rose Pesotta eventually became vice president, of the ILGWU.<sup>61</sup> Regardless of this mixed record, by 1934 the Bryn Mawr Summer School educated at least one hundred women workers every year, with two-thirds of students coming from trade unions. The school's left-wing reputation, however, concerned conservative Bryn Mawr trustees. When two Bryn Mawr professors reported their dramatic eyewitness accounts of a violent union strike to Philadelphia newspapers, the college's board of trustees subsequently demanded the closing of the school because the professors had allegedly violated an explicit agreement not to participate in strikes. Evicted from the campus during the summer of 1935, the Bryn Mawr Summer School finally closed in 1938.<sup>62</sup>

In conclusion, two key developments occurred in the initial years of the creation of the Bryn Mawr Summer School. The first key development centered on how a new emphasis on women workers' education maintained the vitality of social justice feminism as a movement in the early 1920s. The initial

enthusiasm of social justice feminists after World War I, encapsulated in their creation of the WJLC and the subsequent promotion of a major progressive agenda, soon became blunted by a resurgent conservatism. By early 1921 the WJLC leadership, faced with continuing rejection by the New York State legislature, could only hope to pass one item on their agenda: hours and wages legislation. Even this limited goal faced problems, as social justice feminist leaders continually confronted accusations that their proposal promoted “anti-Americanism.” Confronted with this discouraging reality, Rose Schneiderman pursued her old objective of promoting women workers’ education. Her major opportunity came through Thomas’s letter discussing the creation of the Bryn Mawr Summer School in January 1921. Through the successful creation of the school, social justice feminism returned to its roots, found new strength, and continued its existence until its leaders resumed the original goal of gender-specific legislation in the mid-1920s.

The second key development demonstrated the ability of working-class women and their upper-class, college-educated counterparts to unite in a common cause. A summer school for women workers in Pennsylvania seemed a logical idea, given both the Commonwealth’s great industrial strength and the significant presence of women workers. But this seemingly natural development could have easily been thwarted by cross-class tensions. Working-class people feared that too much control by seemingly well-intentioned middle-class reformers could extinguish any real benefits of an educational curriculum. For people on the other side of the social and economic divide, the possibility of accusations of “radicalism” clashed with their desire for social conformity and political survival. Yet, through careful negotiation and constant communication, Schneiderman and Thomas, along with other creators of the Bryn Mawr Summer School, avoided making such class complexities insuperable obstacles. Thus Pennsylvania became one of the most important states for women workers’ education in the early twentieth century.

## NOTES

1. The author wishes to thank the anonymous reviewers at *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* for their patience and suggestions. Unfortunately, the letter from Thomas to Schneiderman does not exist in either the Rose Schneiderman papers or in the NYWTUL papers. Schneiderman, in addition, mistakenly stated in her memoirs that Thomas’s letter came to her in late 1920; she actually did not receive any approaches from Thomas until January 1921. Hilda Worthington Smith,



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- Women Workers at the Bryn Mawr Summer School* (New York: Affiliated Bryn Mawr Summer Schools for Women Workers in Industry and American Association for Adult Education, 1929), 35. Minutes of the Executive Board Meeting, February 25, 1921, in the New York Women's Trade Union League Papers, New York State Department of Labor (Papers of the Women's Trade Union League and Its Principal Leaders, Microfilm Edition), (hereinafter "NYWTUL Papers, Microfilm Edition") Reel 2, Minutes and Reports, 1913–1924.
2. Maurine Greenwald, *Women, War, and Work: The Impact of World War I On Women Workers* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1980; reprint, Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1990), xiv. Dorothy Sue Cobble, *The Other Women's Movement: Workplace Justice and Social Rights in Modern America* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2004). The term "social justice feminism" originally comes from the preface to Kathryn Kish Sklar, Anja Schuler, and Susan Strasser, eds., *Social Justice Feminists in the United States and Germany: A Dialogue in Documents, 1885–1933* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998), 5–11. See also John Thomas McGuire, "From the Courts to the State Legislatures: Social Justice Feminism, Labor Legislation and the 1920s," *Labor History* 45:2 (May 2004): 225–46. For the historical context concerning the term social justice, see Preface, Sklar, et al., *Social Justice Feminists*, 5–11.
  3. For the argument that women workers' education laid the foundation for labor studies, see, for example, John Russo and Sherry Lee Linkon, "What's New About Working-Class Studies?" in John Russo and Sherry Lee Linkon, eds., *New Working-Class Studies* (Ithaca, N.Y.: ILR Press, 2005), 2. Kenneth C. Wolensky, Nicole H. Wolensky, and Robert P. Wolensky, *Fighting for the Union Label: The Women's Garment Industry and the ILGWU in Pennsylvania* (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002). The definite authority on the Bryn Mawr Summer School remains the works of Rita Rubenstein Heller. See her "The Women of Summer: the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers, 1921–1938" (PhD diss., The State University of New Jersey, 1986) and "Blue Collars and Bluestockings: The Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers, 1921–1938," in Joyce L. Kornbluth and Mary Frederickson, eds., *Sisterhood and Solidarity: Workers' Education for Women, 1914–1984* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984). See also Rita Rubenstein Heller and Susan Baumann, *The Women of Summer*, 55 min. (New York: Filmmakers' Library, 1986). I also found helpful Ellen Durrigan Santora, "Bridging Differences in Culture and Class: The Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers in Industry," paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the College and University Faculty Assembly, Phoenix, Ariz., November 21, 2002, available at <http://www.courses.rochester.edu/santora.readings.html>. Another valuable source that explores the pedagogy of the Bryn Mawr Summer School is Karyn L. Hollis, *Liberating Voices: Writing at the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers* (Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 2004). None of these invaluable sources, however, examine the class tensions during the establishment of the Bryn Mawr Summer School in great detail. For example, Heller, "Blue Collars and Bluestockings," 112, 115–16, 118, 125–27, only discusses class tensions in the school's later stages. Another important source about Bryn Mawr, Cornelia Meigs, *What Makes A College?: A History of Bryn Mawr* (New York: Macmillan, 1956), only briefly discusses the origins of the Bryn Mawr Summer School on pp. 117–19.
  4. Trygve R. Tholfsen, *Working-Class Radicalism in Victorian England* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), 64–65, 107–8; J. F. C. Harrison, *Learning and Living, 1870–1960: A Study in the History of the English Adult Education Movement* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961),

- 263, 269; Marius Hansome, "The Development of Workers' Education," in Theodore Brameld, ed., *Fifth Yearbook of the John Dewey Society: Workers' Education in the United States* (New York: Harpers, 1941), 52–53; and Margaret T. Hodgen, *Workers Education in England and the United States* (London: Kegan, Paul, Trench, Tubner, and Co., 1925), 140. For more information on an important agent of the workers' education movement, please see William Henry Brown, *The Rockdale Pioneers: A Century of Co-Operation* (Manchester, England: The Co-Operative Union, 1950).
5. Donald M. MacRaild and David E. Martin, *Labour in British Society, 1830–1914* (New York: St. Martin's, 2000), 124 and Stannim Meacham, *A Life Apart: The English Working Class, 1890–1914* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977), 106.
  6. Gompers quotations from Hansome, "The Development of Workers' Education," 52, and John H. M. Laslett, "Samuel Gompers and the Rise of American Business Unionism," in Melvyn Dubofsky and Warren Van Tine, eds., *Labor Leaders in America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 74. Gompers's union philosophy and his early educational efforts are described in Laslett, "Samuel Gompers and the Rise of American Business Unionism," 62, 66.
  7. For the garment industry in Philadelphia during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the ILGWU's initial efforts in that city, see Wolensky, et al., *Fighting for the Union Label*, 16–20. The historiography concerning the "Uprising of the Twenty Thousand" is quite extensive. Important sources include Richard A. Greenwald, *The Triangle Fire, the Protocols of Peace, and Industrial Democracy in Progressive Era New York* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005); Carolyn D. McCreesh, *Women in the Campaign to Organize Garment Workers, 1880–1917* (New York: Garland, 1985); and Nancy Schrom-Dye, *As Equals And As Sisters: Feminism, the Labor Movement, and the Women's Trade Union League of New York* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1981).
  8. Alice Kessler-Harris, *Out to Work: A History of Wage-Earning Women in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982; reprint, New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 218–24. The quotation comes from p. 219. Greenwald, *Women, War, and Work*, 72–73. David R. Contosta, "Reforming the Commonwealth, 1900–1950," in Randall M. Miller and William Pencak, eds., *Pennsylvania: A History of the Commonwealth* (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002), 260 and Philip S. Klein and Ari Hoogenboom, *A History of Pennsylvania*, 2d. ed. (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1980), 431.
  9. Klein and Hoogenboom, *A History of Pennsylvania*, 384 and Meigs, *What Makes A College?*, 6, 16–7, 29, 84, 86. Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, *The Power and Passion of M. Carey Thomas* (New York: Knopf, 1994), 1–435. The quotation is from Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, "M. Carey Thomas," in John A. Garraty and Mark C. Carnes, eds., *American National Biography*, Vol. 21 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 521.
  10. M. Carey Thomas, "1922 Address to the Bryn Mawr Summer School," quoted in Smith, *Women Workers at the Bryn Mawr Summer School*, 4. Thomas quotation from *Opening Vistas in Workers' Education: An Autobiography of Hilda Worthington Smith* (Washington, D.C., 1978), 113–14. Horowitz, *The Power and Passion of M. Carey Thomas*, 434. The approval of Bryn Mawr's board of directors comes from Smith, *Women Workers at the Bryn Mawr Summer School*, 5.
  11. The two major sources on Rose Schneiderman are Annelise Orleck, *Common Sense and a Little Fire: Women and Working-Class Politics in the United States, 1900–1965* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), and Alice Kessler-Harris, "Rose Schneiderman and the Limits of Women's Trade

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- Unionism," in Dubofsky and Van Tine, eds., *Labor Leaders in America*, 160–85. An excellent short biography can be found in Kathleen Banks Nutter, "Rose Schneiderman," in John A. Garraty and Mark C. Carnes, eds., *American National Biography*, Vol. 19 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 407–8. Quotation from "Rose Schneiderman," editorial, *New York Times*, August 14, 1972, 22.
12. Rose Schneiderman with Lucy Goldwaithe, *All for One* (New York: Paul S. Erickson, 1967), 10–14, 27–28, 34.
13. Carolyn Daniel McCreesh, "On the Picket Line: Militant Women Campaign to Organize Garment Workers, 1880–1917" (PhD diss., University of Maryland, 1975), 98–99, 130–33, 147–48.
14. See sources cited in endnote no. 2 for a further elaboration.
15. For Frankfurter's evaluation of Florence Kelley's overall impact see his introduction to Josephine Goldmark, *Impatient Crusader: Florence Kelley's Life Story* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1953), v. The best source on Florence Kelley's life up until 1899 is Kathryn Kish Sklar, *Florence Kelley and the Nation's Work: The Rise of Women's Political Culture, 1830–1900* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1995). See also Kathryn Kish Sklar, "Hull House in the 1890s: A Community of Women Reformers," *Signs* 10 (1985): 665–66, and Jane Addams, *Twenty Years of Hull-House, With Autobiographical Notes* (New York: Macmillan, 1910; reprint, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990), 77.
16. For the early history of the National Consumers' League, see Maud Nathan, *The Story of an Epoch-Making Movement* (New York: Knopf, 1926; reprint, London: Garland Publishing, 1926) and Landon R. Y. Storrs, *Civilizing Capitalism: The National Consumers' League, Women's Activism, and Labor Standards in the New Deal Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 13–40. Kathryn Kish Sklar, "Two Political Cultures in the Progressive Era: The National Consumers' League and the American Association for Labor Legislation," in Linda Kerber, Alice Kessler-Harris, and Kathryn Kish Sklar, eds., *Women's History as U.S. History: New Feminist Essays*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 51 and Felix Frankfurter, "Hours of Labor and Realism in Constitutional Law," *Harvard Law Review* 29 (February 1916), 367 (emphases in original).
17. John Thomas McGuire, "A Catalyst for Reform: The Women's Joint Legislative Conference (WJLC) And Its Fight For Labor Legislation In New York State, 1918–1933" (PhD diss., State University of New York at Binghamton, 2001), 38–52.
18. Orleck, *Common Sense and a Little Fire*, 67. See letter from Rose Schneiderman to Eleanor Roosevelt, September 6, 1924, in NYWTUL Papers, Microfilm Edition, Reel 12, as well as Schneiderman, *All for One*, 50 and Joseph Lash, *Eleanor and Franklin* (New York: Norton, 1971; reprint, New York: Smithmark, 1995), 281.
19. Schneiderman's contributions to the Training School can be found in *All for One*, 140, 145. Letter from Bella Cooper to Rose Schneiderman, December 11, 1920, in NYWTUL Papers, Microfilm Edition, Reel 7, Correspondence, January 1920–May 1921. Robin Miller Jacoby, "The Women's Trade Union League Training School for Women Organizers, 1914–1926," 6–8 and Susan Stone Wong, "From Souls to Strawberries: The International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union and Workers' Education, 1914–1950," 41, 48, in Kornbluth and Frederickson, eds., *Sisterhood and Solidarity*. Ironically, Rose Schneiderman had resigned from the ILGWU in 1916, claiming that the union's leadership had "little valued" her "keen regard for results." Letter from Rose Schneiderman to Abe Baroff, ILGWU Secretary-Treasurer, February 15, 1916, Rose Schneiderman Papers,

- Taminent Library, New York University (Microfilm Edition of Papers of the Women's Trade Union League and Its Principal Leaders), Reel 2 (hereinafter "Schneiderman Papers, Microfilm Edition"). See also Mary Frederickson, "Recognizing Regional Differences: The Southern Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers," 150, and Marion W. Roydhouse, "Partners in Progress: The Affiliated Schools for Women Workers, 1928–1939," 191, also in Kornbluth and Frederickson, eds., *Sisterhood and Solidarity*.
20. McGuire, "A Catalyst for Reform," 82–130.
  21. For Pinchot's gubernatorial election, see Contosta, "Reforming the Commonwealth," 279, as well as Klein and Hoogenboom, *A History of Pennsylvania*, 441. For the federal government intervention in labor-management relations during World War I, see Joseph A. McCartin, *Labor's Great War: The Struggle for Industrial Democracy and the Origins of Modern American Labor Relations, 1912–1921* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); Melvyn Dubofsky, *The State and Labor in Modern America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994) and Valerie Jean Conner, *The National War Labor Board: Stability, Social Justice and the Voluntary State in World War I* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1983). Discussions of the postwar labor situation can be found in Dubofsky, *The State and Labor in Modern America*, 76–77 and David Montgomery, *The Fall of the House of Labor: The Workplace, The State and American Labor Activism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 370–457. For the 1919–1920 Pittsburgh steel strike and its aftermath, see Klein and Hoogenboom, *A History of Pennsylvania*, 431–36.
  22. Letter from M. Feinstone, Secretary, United Labor Education Commission, to Rose Schneiderman, August 3, 1920 with "Minutes of First Session of First Labor Educational Conference," in NYWTUL Papers, Microfilm Edition, Reel 7. Letter from Elton J. Clayton, Clerk, U.S. House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee, to Rose Schneiderman, August 3, 1921, and letter from U.S. Senator Reed Smoot to Rose Schneiderman, August 3, 1921, both in NYWTUL Papers, Microfilm Edition, Reel 8, Correspondence, June 1921–August 1922. Letter from Alice Henry to Rose Schneiderman, June 25, 1921, in NYWTUL Papers, Microfilm Edition, Reel 8.
  23. The Bryn Mawr Summer School's financial arrangements for the first year are described in Smith, *Women Workers at the Bryn Mawr Summer School*, 46. Heller, "Blue Collars and Bluestockings," 139–40, fn. 13 describes the other sources that eventually supported the Bryn Mawr Summer School.
  24. For Mary Anderson, see her memoir with Kathy Winslow, *Woman at Work* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1951), as well as McGuire, "A Catalyst for Reform," 219–20. Greenwald, *Women, War, and Work*, 70–71, describes Anderson's personal experiences with Pennsylvania factory women workers. Thomas's and Kingsbury's approach to Anderson can be found in Smith, *Women Workers at the Bryn Mawr Summer School*, 34–35. For her connections, see Heller, "Blue Collars and Bluestockings," 114.
  25. Reports of Work, March and April 1921, in NYWTUL Papers, Microfilm Edition, Reel 2.
  26. Qualifications from Appendix B, "Original Plan for A Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women in Industry, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, by Professor Susan M. Kingsbury," in Smith, *Women Workers at the Bryn Mawr Summer School*, 268. Report of Work, May 1921, in NYWTUL Papers, Microfilm Edition, Reel 2.
  27. Report of Work, May 1921.
  28. Orleck, *Common Sense and a Little Fire*, 185–86. Wong, "From Souls to Strawberries," 48–49.

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29. Steven Fraser, *Labor Will Rule: Sidney Hillman and the Rise of American Labor* (New York: The Free Press, 1991), 268.
30. Allan Nevins, *Herbert H. Lehman and His Era* (New York: Scribner's, 1963), 86.
31. Smith, *Women Workers at the Bryn Mawr Summer School*, 57.
32. Letter from M. Carey Thomas to Rose Schneiderman, May 25, 1921, NYWTUL Papers, Microfilm Edition, Reel 7.
33. Esmond Wright, *The American Dream: From Reconstruction to Reagan*, vol. 1 (Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 218–19. Heller, “Blue Collars and Bluestockings,” 111. Interview with Hilda Worthington Smith, March 1976, quoted in Heller, “Blue Collars and Bluestockings,” 115.
34. Joyce Antler, *The Journey Home: Jewish Women and the American Century* (New York: The Free Press, 1997), 95. The WTUL banquet speaking suggestion can be found in letter from Althea Somerville to Rose Schneiderman, May 6, 1910, in Schneiderman Papers, Microfilm Edition, Reel 1. Marot quotation from Orleck, *Common Sense and a Little Fire*, 67. Kessler-Harris, “Rose Schneiderman and the Limits of Women’s Trade Unionism,” 167–68.
35. “Extracts from Address Delivered by Miss Rose Schneiderman Before the Women’s Industrial Conference ... Jan. 20, 1926: The Right to Citizenship,” Mary van Kleeck Papers, Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts, Box 71, Folder 1171 and “Address at Testimonial Luncheon in [Frances Perkins’s] Honor,” typed copy in Frances Perkins Papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Collection, Butler Library, Columbia University, New York City, Box 44, “Speeches, 1929–1930.” Perkins quotations from 1950s can be found in the New York Times Oral History Program, Columbia University, New York City, Oral History Collection, “Reminiscences of Frances Perkins, Book I” (Owen Rock, N.J.: Microfilming Corporation of America, 1976), 58. Schneiderman quoted in Kessler-Harris, “Rose Schneiderman and the Limits of Women’s Trade Unionism,” 181. For more on Perkins’s approach to trade unionism, see Winifred D. Wandersee, “‘I’d Rather Pass A Law Than Organize A Union’: Frances Perkins and the Reformist Approach to Organized Labor,” *Labor History* 34:1 (Winter 1993): 5–32.
36. Heller, “Blue Collars and Bluestockings,” 109, 120. Hewes eventually became one of the Bryn Mawr Summer School’s longest-serving and revered professors. Heller, “Blue Collars and Bluestockings,” 119. For more on Hewes’s later championing of labor reform and her mentoring of Connecticut’s first female Governor, Ella Grasso, see John E. Purmont, “The Education of Ella Grasso,” entry at the Connecticut’s Gateway Heritage website, <http://www.ctheritage.org/encyclopedia/HRJ/EducationEllaGrasso.htm>. The entry originally appeared in the *Hog River Journal*’s August/September/October 2004 issue.
37. Schneiderman, *All for One*, 144–45.
38. Schneiderman, *All for One*, 142–44. See also letter from Rose Schneiderman to Ernestine Friedman, June 5, 1921, in NYWTUL Papers, Microfilm Edition, Reel 8, in which she requests reimbursement of \$7.76 of railroad fare “real soon.”
39. Smith, *Women Workers at the Bryn Mawr Summer School*, 36–37.
40. Letter from Ernestine Friedman to Rose Schneiderman, October 7, 1921, in NYWTUL Papers, Microfilm Edition, Reel 8.
41. Horowitz, *The Power and Passion of M. Carey Thomas*, 380, 415–16. Heller, “Blue Collars and Bluestockings,” 114. Mildred Fairchild Woodbury, “Susan Myra Kingsbury,” in Edward T. James,

- Janet Wilson James, and Paul S. Boyer, eds., *Notable American Women, A Biographical Dictionary, 1607–1950, Vol. II, G–O* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971), 335–36.
42. Letters from Vera R. Deardoff to Rose Schneiderman, September 27, 1921, M. Carey Thomas to Rose Schneiderman and Vera R. Deardoff to Rose Schneiderman, September 28, 1921, all in NYWTUL Papers, Microfilm Edition, Reel 8.
  43. Letter from Friedman to Schneiderman, October 7, 1921.
  44. "School Purpose," from Smith, *Women Workers at the Bryn Mawr Summer School*, Appendix B, 265.
  45. Letter from Friedman to Schneiderman, October 7, 1921.
  46. Letter from Rose Schneiderman to Mary Anderson, April 24, 1922, in NYWTUL Papers, Microfilm Edition, Reel 8.
  47. For NYWTUL efforts for trade unionism among working women after World War I, see "Report of the Eastern Conference of Trade Union Women Held October 20, 21 [1919].... Under the Auspices of the Women's Trade Union League of New York," in Schneiderman Papers, Microfilm Edition, Reel 2. Schneiderman quotation from Zoe Beckley, "Finds Hard Job Organizing Girls Whose Aim Is To Wed," *New York Telegram and Sun*, June 18, 1924, 4.
  48. Letter from Agnes Nestor to Rose Schneiderman, October 7, 1921, in NYWTUL Papers, Microfilm Edition, Reel 8.
  49. Smith, *Women Workers at the Bryn Mawr Summer School*, 40. Anderson, *Woman at Work*, 225.
  50. Smith, *Women Workers at the Bryn Mawr Summer School*, 40–41.
  51. Minutes of Regular Meeting, November 7, 1921, in NYWTUL Papers, Microfilm Edition, Reel 2. Smith, *Opening Vistas in Workers' Education*, 160.
  52. Ibid., Introduction, 94 and 157. Smith, *Women Workers at the Bryn Mawr School*, 43–44.
  53. Letter from Friedman to Schneiderman, October 7, 1921.
  54. See Santora, "Bridging Differences in Culture and Class," as well as Hollis, *Liberating Voices*. M. Carey Thomas, foreword to Smith, *Women Workers at the Bryn Mawr Summer School*, vii and viii. American Labor Education Service Records (hereinafter "ALES Records"), No. 5255, Kheel Center, Industrial and Labor Relations Library, Cornell University, Box 12, Folder 85, "M. Carey Thomas, 1928–1931." Smith, *Women Workers at the Bryn Mawr Summer School*, 44.
  55. Thomas, foreword to *Women Workers at the Bryn Mawr Summer School*, viii.
  56. Letter from Hilda Smith and Ernestine Friedman to Rose Schneiderman, August 15, 1922, in NYWTUL Papers, Microfilm Edition, Reel 8.
  57. Letter from W. H. Holmes, Superintendent, Department of Public Instruction, to Rose Schneiderman, October 29, 1921, letter from Toscan Bennett, Brookwood Labor School, to Rose Schneiderman, January 16, 1922, both in NYWTUL Papers, Microfilm Edition, Reel 8. Letter from Rose Schneiderman to Pauline Newman, October 17, 1922, in NYWTUL Papers, Microfilm Edition, Reel 9, Correspondence, September 1922–March 1923.
  58. McGuire, "A Catalyst for Reform," 156–94, as well as John Thomas McGuire, "From Socialism to Social Justice Feminism: Rose Schneiderman and the Quest for Urban Equity, 1911–1933," *Journal of Urban History* (forthcoming). Report of Work, November 1922, in NYWTUL Papers, Microfilm Edition, Reel 2. McGuire, "A Catalyst for Reform," 205–7. Schneiderman, *All for One*, 145.

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59. McGuire, "A Catalyst for Reform," 228–36. Reports of Work, February and December 1924, in NYWTUL Papers, Microfilm Edition, Reel 2.
60. Heller, "Blue Collars and Bluestockings," 117.
61. Sara M. Evans, *Born for Liberty: A History of Women in America* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989; reprint, New York: Free Press, 1997), 191–92, and Kessler-Harris, *Out to Work*, 243–45.
62. Heller, "Blue Collars and Bluestockings," 122. See also Marion Edward Park, "The Relationship of the Bryn Mawr Summer School to the College," *Bryn Mawr Alumnae Bulletin*, April 1935, in ALES Records, Box 3, Folder 31.