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Melanie Gustafson, Kristie Miller, Elisabeth Israels Perry, eds. *We Have Come to Stay: American Women and Political Parties, 1880-1960*. Albuquerque, New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 1999. xiv + 205 pp. \$19.95 (paper), ISBN 978-0-8263-1970-8; \$35.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8263-1969-2.

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In *We Have Come To Stay*, Melanie Gustafson, Kristie Miller and Elisabeth Israels Perry have gathered seventeen essays considering the variety of women's experience in American political parties. They begin by identifying the idea that the passage of the suffrage amendment created a useful turning point in women's political activity. This premise holds that before suffrage women were not much involved in partisan politics, preferring an issue-oriented nonpartisan approach. After suffrage, women began to break into party politics. This collection of essays sets out to challenge this notion by demonstrating not only that women were already engaged in party political activity before the nineteenth Amendment, but also that they did not abandon the nonpartisan strategy after suffrage. Rather women's experience in politics was more complex and varied than the traditional view allows.

In general, the collection is very impressive. Many of the essays employ a biographical approach, often focusing on state or local level politics, illuminating the varieties of women's political activity and women's relationship to parties while taking note of variations in place and time. The book spans a period from the 1880s "when women began a systematic effort to find formal places in political parties" to the 1950s "before modern feminism began to grapple with new political challenges" (ix).

The first essays deal with an era when women are supposed to be have been focused on non-partisan reform activities. The authors show, however, a much more complex picture of women's political activism. Melanie Gustafson describes how Judith Ellen Foster attempted to negotiate a path incorporating both her loyalty to the Re-

publican Party and her commitment to the non-partisan temperance movement. As the Women's Christian Temperance Movement began to align itself with the Prohibition Party in the 1880s, Foster resisted, eventually forming the Non-Partisan WCTU. As Gustafson argues: "Foster wanted women to work with men in the partisan arena, but she also knew that women's collective presence made a difference in politics" (9).

Rebecca Edwards's piece discusses the impact of women's involvement in electoral politics on the character of campaigns and polling days in states where women were enfranchised before 1920. She shows that middle class women joined with middle class men in a call for "purer elections" and that women's participation in the political process encouraged a "more respectable" approach to election day (13). Edwards argues compellingly that the call for "purer elections" had both gender and class implications: "This effort was, in part, an attack on male privilege. It was also antagonistic to working class traditions. In movements to reform electoral campaigns, the gender identities of women served to reinforce, rather than bridge, class differences."(14)

In "Redefining 'The Political': Socialist Women and Party Politics in California, 1900-1920," Sherry Katz shows how socialist women blended partisan and non-partisan political strategies in their attempts to win election to political office. "Through their campaigns for office, they attempted to integrate women, gender-specific concerns, and the concept of a 'maternal' welfare state into partisan politics. As political candidates they also sought to build bridges between partisan electoral activity and the pressure group strategies of organized

womanhood” (31). Drew Vandercreek’s work on Lucretia Blankenburg’s role in her husband’s mayoral election in Philadelphia shows another way in which women bridged the traditional gap between clubwomen’s activism and partisan politics. “[T]he dense network of women’s clubs and organizations that Lucretia Blankenburg had helped build served as her husband’s de facto political organization” providing him with grassroots womanpower that few independent candidates are ever able to muster (33).

Robyn Muncy’s article focuses on Colorado where women’s suffrage was introduced in 1894. In particular, Muncy looks at the impact of Colorado’s equal representation law passed in 1910, which required equal numbers of men and women on all major party committees. She makes a strong case that this law reinforced the notion that women were somehow a different kind of political actor, separate and distinct from men. As a result, women found themselves competing against each other for a small number of women’s slots on the ballot rather than competing equally with men for nominations. Muncy also notes that women’s influence and bargaining power was dramatically increased in closely contested elections, when women’s votes might make all the difference. Muncy’s argument highlights a recurrent issue in these essays—the importance of the idea of a female political culture, distinct from men’s, that informed and shaped women’s behavior in a partisan context.

In her discussion of African-American women and their impact on Chicago politics after Illinois enfranchised women in municipal and presidential elections in June 1913, Wanda Hendricks exposes the complex interplay of race and gender in the political activism of African-American women. Hendricks argues that, while black men did not necessarily welcome women’s interest in politics, black women organized during the 1914 Republican primary to support an independent black candidate against the Republican machine’s white choice. Although their candidate did not win in 1914, the result was close enough to persuade Republican leaders that black candidates were a good idea, leading to the election of Oscar Stanton DePriest, the first black alderman in Chicago, the following year. Hendricks notes that DePriest then declared himself in favor of women’s suffrage because women had shown the “intelligence” to vote with their race (62).

The last two essays dealing with the pre-suffrage amendment years broaden the focus to consider women’s participation in national presidential campaigns in 1912

and 1916. Kristie Miller examines the role played by Daisy Harriman in support of Wilson’s bid for the presidency in 1912. Harriman founded the Women’s National Wilson and Marshall Organization in July, 1912 to promote the Democratic ticket, but wished to avoid obvious identification with the party, hence the name derived from the candidates. “She believed all women should stand for certain measures ‘irrespective of parties’”, but her progressive position was compromised to some extent by the ticket’s failure to endorse women’s suffrage (67-8). So the WNW&MO focused on Wilson’s record as governor of New Jersey on women’s issues, especially the cost of living. Although it is hard to assess the influence of Harriman’s efforts on the election result, “[h]er activities as head of the WNW&MO signaled a new level of political participation for women” (65) and helped to launch Harriman’s own political career.

Molly Wood examines the Woman’s Hughes Campaign Train of October, 1916: “Completely organized, funded, and staffed by women, the Hughes train was a unique example of women’s partisan political activity before the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment” (77). The organizers of the train assumed that few American women were well informed about politics and that those who were interested, primarily concerned themselves with local issues. They hoped to present national issues to women voters in the West and persuade them to vote for Hughes. Their strategy involved avoiding both engaging in local partisan issues and making any statement on the controversial subject of women’s suffrage, even after Hughes had endorsed the suffrage amendment. Wood argues that “[t]he strategy of downplaying partisanship shows an insightful recognition by the women campaigners of the various stages of political awareness and activism among women across the nation” (80). However, she also notes the hostility that greeted the train in various parts of the West, not least because of the shrewd countermeasures undertaken by the Democratic National Committee that identified the wealthiest women on board the train and succeeded in dubbing it the “Women’s Billionaire Special” (82). The weakest part of the argument revolves around the question of strategy as Wood comments both that “the campaigners angered many women by refusing to take a clear partisan stand, especially on issues of local importance;” and then in the same paragraph notes the angry reaction of Montana women to Elizabeth Freeman’s call for them to elect Jeannette Rankin to Congress (83). Since Wood also notes that some of the campaigners were unable to resist coming out in favor of suffrage, it seems

that the general strategy of those involved was inconsistently pursued and it is a little unclear whether it was the strategy itself or the lapses from it that caused greater problems for the train campaign.

The focus of the collection then shifts to the post-suffrage era, beginning with Anna Harvey's consideration of the question "why women did not gain more access to the party hierarchies upon receiving the vote" (87). Harvey notes that current interpretations explain this by reference to the different political cultures of women and men—women's was non-partisan and aimed at serving the public good; men's was partisan, competitive, and focused on winning office. "As a result, women either shunned or did not advance far in male partisan politics and largely continued a tradition of female voluntary organizations, which operated outside of the context of partisan politics" (88). Harvey sets out to test this thesis using strategy theory from political science, which suggests that winning elections is the primary goal of parties and candidates and therefore, that policy-oriented groups must deliver votes to get attention. She argues that if the culture thesis is correct women should have gained access to party positions only gradually as their political culture (and indeed men's) evolved, reducing gender differences. However, if the strategy thesis is correct, she suggests that women would have won early influence within the parties, while men still believed that they could deliver a women's voting bloc, but, as this proved not to be the case, that influence would be lost. Although Harvey effectively demonstrates that women in New York enjoyed a brief period of access to party committees that they quickly lost, the essay fails to convince on a number of grounds. Firstly, by characterizing women as a "policy-seeking group," Harvey accepts as a basic premise of her argument that women did have a different political culture from men—a culture that encouraged them to focus on issues rather than partisan victories (88). Thus, it seems clear from the start that the situation was considerably more complex than Harvey's casting of the question allows. Surely this is not a simple dichotomy as Harvey's title—"Culture or Strategy?"—implies. Significantly, Harvey's study extends only to 1930. One cannot help wondering whether a longer view would not reveal that, as the culture thesis suggests, women have gained increasing access to party influence over time, demonstrating, in other words, that both the culture AND the strategy models apply. Later essays provide support for this supposition. Moreover, as other essays in the collection demonstrate, women responded to their party political opportunities in a multi-

tude of different ways and thus no single explanation of their experiences seems satisfactory.

One such essay is Elisabeth Israels Perry's "Defying the Party Whip," which examines the experience of Mary Garrett Hay in the Republican Party. Perry argues that although "party leaders showed some interest in integrating women into their power structures," the means employed—women's divisions, 50-50 laws—"kept women in auxiliary roles [and] gave them little room for the exercise of independent judgment or leadership" (97). During the 1910s, Hay achieved a position of considerable influence for a woman in the New York State Republican Party, but when she chose to place her support for prohibition above party loyalty after James W. Wadsworth, Jr., who opposed prohibition on states' rights grounds, announced he would run for re-election to the Senate, she found herself quickly marginalized. Perry's view shows a sophisticated understanding that culture and strategy could function side by side as influences on both men's and women's partisan politics.

This is especially clear in Kathryn Anderson's study of Emily Newell Blair, Vice-Chairman of the Democratic National Committee from 1922-28. Anderson traces "the evolution of [Blair's] thinking from confidence that women would change politics to consciousness of men's resistance and the difficulty of organizing women in their own interests" (109). Although Blair entered the post-suffrage period, "expect[ing] women and men to be different kinds of partisans because they performed different social roles, she neither expected nor desired a woman's bloc" (112). By the end of the 1920s, however, Blair's view had changed. "Sex consciousness in politics was inevitable; women might think of themselves as Democrats, but leaders and voters saw them as women. Dropping the 'sex line' was a mistake for feminism. It meant that men could retain control without paying much attention to women" (117).

The problems of reconciling gender identity and female political culture with party politics is explored further by Glenna Matthews's essay on Florence Prag Kahn and Maureen Flanagan's study of Anna Wilmarth Ickes. Kahn entered Congress in 1925, after winning a special election necessitated by the death of her husband, Julius Kahn. Although Matthews's examination of Kahn's career, which included brief service as Acting Speaker of the House of Representatives and appointment to the House Military Affairs Committee, is rather narrative, she does note that "[t]o accomplish what she did while getting re-elected, Florence Kahn executed what can only

be called a gender straddle or maybe a gender minuet” (136). Kahn declared politics to be a man’s job and described her own businesslike approach as masculine, but at the same time she was happy to allow the media to portray her as a mother and a housewife. Although she denied being a feminist, she saw herself as a representative of American women generally, not just those from her own constituency.

Ickes, unlike Kahn, did not follow her husband into politics. Rather her politics derived from her mother and countered her husband’s. Flanagan explores the issue of different, gendered political cultures arguing that “[w]omen’s partisanship did not mimic male partisanship, and Wilmarth Ickes stands as an exemplar of the former, as she strove simultaneously to be a -*woman* partisan and a partisan *woman*. Her political life encompassed a woman’s strategy both for entering the male world of politics and once there, for pursuing a policy agenda that would draw upon the female models of achievement and politics that she had learned early in life from other women” (142). In this way, Flanagan suggests, women tried to redefine male definitions of partisan behavior. The weakness of her argument is that her evidence is drawn only from campaign rhetoric—one would wish to know a little more about Ickes’s legislative record.

Two of the remaining articles, Paula Baker on grass-roots party organizations and Jacqueline Braitman on the impact of California’s 1937 50-50 law, shift the focus away from the biographical approach to consider broader structural questions about women’s influence and opportunities in the parties. Baker notes that as candidates relied less on parties for campaign work and more on consultants and specialists, there were fewer opportunities and rewards for party workers. These changes opened the way for women to pursue party work, especially middle class women who had more time and less need for economic remuneration. Baker argues that such women were “not especially driven by a reformist agenda or ‘women’s issues,’” which is suggestive of the declining gulf between male and female political cultures that Harvey postulates would occur if the culture thesis ap-

plied (158, 90) Braitman’s discussion of California’s political parties also gives support to the culture argument, as she notes how that state’s 50-50 law “dramatically increased women’s membership in political parties”(177). Although Braitman points out that this was not necessarily accompanied by greater influence, she shows that women began to play significant roles in the parties in the 1940s and 50s, earlier than most histories suggest, paving the way for later, more visible achievements.

The two other essays in the collection—Nancy Beck Young’s study of Miriam Ferguson, twice governor of Texas in the 1920s and 30s, and Elizabeth Salas’s examination of the careers of three Hispana politicians, Soledad Chavez Chacon, Adelina Otero-Warren and Concha Ortiz y Pino—seem a little out of place, since they do not have much to say about women’s experience in political parties. Young’s discussion of Ma Ferguson, in particular, strikes a discordant note, since she argues essentially that Ferguson’s tenure had little impact on women’s position in Texas and was influenced less by her gender than by her family, concluding that “Texas voters accepted Miriam Ferguson as governor only because they knew Jim Ferguson would have control of state affairs” (128). Salas’s essay provides a fascinating study of the intersection of ethnicity, gender and family in the experiences of three Hispana politicians in New Mexico, noting especially the importance they attached to bilingual education, but the role of party politics remains unclear.

Nevertheless, the collection provides a compelling case for reevaluating historical assumptions about women’s partisan activity. Not only did women play an active role in political parties before suffrage, but they brought nonpartisan perspectives with them into political parties and thus helped to develop new models of party political activism. Moreover, the essays raise some fascinating questions about the nature of gendered political culture and its relationship with party political strategies.

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