

Picturing Political Power: Images in the Women's Suffrage Movement, by Allison K. Lange. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020. 320 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$45.00 paperback.

Reviewer Sara Egge is the Claude D. Pottinger Associate Professor of History at Centre College in Kentucky. She is the author of *Woman Suffrage and Citizenship in the Midwest, 1870–1920* (2018), which specifically examines the push for woman suffrage in the upper Midwest.

According to Allison K. Lange, visual politics were a strategic centerpiece of the woman suffrage movement. The photographs and images suffragists created contained arguments as important as the ones found in the written propaganda they produced. *Picturing Political Power* examines how both suffragists and anti-suffragists developed sophisticated visual campaigns. Nineteenth-century efforts were fragmentary, undertaken by individual women, but by the twentieth century, suffragists tasked press committees and publicity experts to construct appealing images of political women. Lange points out that the value of visual propaganda was its ability to change minds about gender and power. Activists rejected gendered expectations that idealized women's virtue within the feminine private sphere, depicting women instead as public, political, and masculine. But changing minds also required a vision of political womanhood that was white, motherly, and virtuous. In response, white suffragists increasingly classified themselves as separate from black advocates, which obscured black women's activism.

The earliest public images were portraits of prominent women, including Martha Washington, Mary Wollstonecraft, and Phillis Wheatley. Their images were exceptional, and they sought to project visions of political leadership and white masculinity. By the 1850s, more illustrated newspapers allowed opposition to woman suffrage to disseminate visual ridicule. In response, suffragists from Lucretia Mott to Sojourner Truth adapted strategies from the antislavery cause to showcase their femininity, but the portraits they produced also affirmed their political prowess. Susan B. Anthony and the editors of the multivolume *History of Woman Suffrage* further refined suffragist iconography, emphasizing racial distinctions between suffragists of color and white suffragists in the process. Lange closely scrutinizes the images in the first three volumes of the *History of Woman Suffrage*, and she argues that white advocates chose portraiture that aligned with conventional ideas of femininity while conveying notions of authority and patriotism. They also excluded black activists, a choice that reverberated beyond the 1880s and 1890s as the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) increasingly depicted the movement's leaders as attractive, adorned, and ambitious.

By the twentieth century, visual campaigns diverged at the national level as leaders in the National Association of Colored Women (NACW), including Mary Church Terrell, and National Woman's Party (NWP), including Alice Paul, designed propaganda that promulgated other views of political women. Black suffragists like Terrell sent propaganda depicting a vision of respectable, educated, and political black women to a black press that was not always convinced of the cause. Militant activists like Paul orchestrated parades and pickets filled with beautiful, young, white women to attract media attention. Halftone technology also dropped the cost to print photographs in newspapers, a fortuitous development that garnered additional coverage of these dramatic protests. Lange astutely appraises the divides among suffragists along lines of class, race, and age that produced images with conflicting messages. While the NWP embraced its militant triumph, NAWSA refused to mention the picketing. Instead, press officials in NAWSA depicted white suffragists as patriotic women who mobilized unreservedly and sacrificed publicly for their country.

Lange offers an overdue and compelling account of the visual campaigns disseminated by national suffragists. She effectively contextualizes the visual images that activists created, comparing them to images featuring male political leaders. White and black leaders like Anthony and Terrell emulated portraits of presidential candidates by selecting profiles, facial expressions, and symbols that conveyed masculinity and power. But Lange notes that portraits of black activists had to contest racist stereotypes as well as sexist ones. Lange argues that Terrell sought to appear as an "idealized lighter-skinned, elite, straight-haired black woman," someone who was refined, educated, and respectable (139). While members of the NACW debated the efficacy of Terrell's idealized image, it nevertheless publicly refuted racist attacks on black women.

Lange's emphasis on visual cultures among national suffragists invites further scrutiny of regional, state, and local images. Activists in Iowa and the Midwest relied on propaganda disseminated by national press officials, but they also produced their own that employed ethnic, racial, religious, and agrarian imagery. While Lange discusses the inclusion of Kansan Clarina Howard Nichols's portrait in the *History of Woman Suffrage*, she was the lone figure representing the Midwest. The absence of midwestern advocates is striking, and it is worth exploring the reasons for their exclusion. Scholars could start by following Lange's example, identifying how midwestern advocates defined political womanhood and how those visions deviated from national models.