**Peace and Protest in Ireland: Women's Activism in Ireland, c. 1918-1937: Senia Pašeta**

*Abstract:*

Political violence was a fact of Irish life in the early twentieth century, exacerbated by the sacrificial and martial cultures which grew out of nationalist and unionist politics. The Irish women's movement developed in this context, adjusting to the demands made on activists by these particular circumstances and playing a vital role in all the major political movements of the era. Buoyed by the achievement of partial women's enfranchisement in 1918, Irish women prepared to play an enhanced role in the formal life of the country. But they quickly found that the rights they believed they had won were less than secure, and they turned to both new and established feminist strategies in their efforts to adjust to the reality of independent Ireland.

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Neither the end of the First World War nor the partial enfranchisement of women in 1918 marked the end of violence or of Irish women's political activism. Although the declaration of war had helped to check acute political tensions in Ireland in 1914, in subsequent years it provided a context for the growth of sacrificial and militaristic cultures which fuelled the reinvigoration of republican politics. The continuation of violence after 1918 in the form of the Anglo-Irish and Civil Wars and the political schisms which followed both provided a rocky foundation on which to build an independent state. The role of women in the political life of the nation both shaped and was shaped by these developments. The Irish women's movement adapted to new circumstances as it adjusted to the potential and the reality of an increased role in the formal political life of the country. It adopted new strategies to take advantage of women's enfranchisement, but it also fell back increasingly on older methods as the reality of "the new Ireland" set in.

I

The nineteenth and early twentieth-century Irish women's movement had been built on decades of voluntarism. Women across the country had formed and sat on hundreds of committees, had fund-raised, lobbied, petitioned, marched and even starved for a wide variety of causes which had prioritised women's political and social advancement. The women's suffrage movement constituted one of the largest and most dynamic segments of the broader women's movement. In common with most women's social and political pressure groups across the United Kingdom, suffrage societies were often formed to reflect particular political, regional or confessional characteristics. The non-militant Irish Women's Suffrage and Local Government Associate (IWSLGA) was the country's oldest, but it was joined by a series of new comers in the early twentieth century, most notably the Irish Women's Franchise League (IWFL), a militant society founded in 1908. Dublin, Belfast and Cork were central to the movement as a whole, but regional societies also proved to be diverse and dynamic. So too did confessional organisations such as the (Anglican) Church League for Women's Suffrage and the Irish Catholic Women's Suffrage Association (ICWSA). After the establishment of a branch of the Conservative and Unionist Women's Franchise Association in Dublin in 1909, one commentator declared that "the Irish Woman Suffrage and Local Government Association may now be said to be a centre with a left, or nationalist wing, and a right, or Unionist".[1]

These apparent distinctions were not as clear-cut as this writer believed. Many women belonged to a number of organisations as well as being heavily involved in other political campaigns. Given that women's suffrage was an inherently political issue, it is not surprising that many of the women involved in that campaign were also keenly interested and active participants in the wider political issues of their day. The most significant of these in Ireland were nationalism and unionism. Neither nationalist nor unionist women were unified straightforwardly under their respective banners. Irish nationalism and Irish unionism were diverse and complex movements, both of which alienated feminist women at times. This was especially true for nationalist women who were effectively blocked from playing a meaningful role in the Irish Parliamentary Party, the most important and successful nationalist organisation until it was decimated in the General Election of 1918.[2] Unionist women fared somewhat better as their Ulster Women's Unionist Council expanded rapidly from its foundation in 1911 and ultimately played a key role in the consolidation of unionist power.

Given how divided Ireland was on national and confessional lines, let alone how divided suffragists were on the national question as well as on a host of other issues, the ability of the suffrage movement to maintain a broadly united front is striking. The idea that division characterised the Irish women's movement remained, until relatively recently, intrinsic to most studies of women's suffrage and it is not difficult to see why. The suffrage movement was, after all, composed of nationalists, unionists, militants and non-militants, as well as Home Rulers and Republicans. They did at times become embroiled in heated debates between and among themselves but were also able to cooperate, even in times of heightened national tension. In 1912, for example, when the Irish Party refused to insist on the inclusion of women's suffrage in the third Home Rule Bill, the sectional interests of nationalist and unionist women were put aside in the interest of a unified suffrage demand. "No other question", argued one commentator, "could produce such unity in the Ireland of today. No other amendment can unite the advocacy of Ulster to that of Munster, Leinster and Connaught".[3]

One of the main reasons that this was possible was because neither of the two major Irish parties – the Irish Parliamentary Party and the Ulster Unionist Party – supported women's suffrage. Although many individual members of each party were in favour, the national question always took precedence and no party adopted a formal pro-suffrage position. Some nationalist feminists remained loyal - though often critical - friends of their Party despite this,

but many others drifted away into the advanced nationalism of Sinn Fein. Some suffragists found Sinn Fein to be much more supportive of women's rights than the old Irish Parliamentary Party had been and railed against the nationalist women - particularly the non-aligned nationalist women - who refused to join them. Their reasoning was strong as Sinn Fein had opened its executive positions to men and women and had supported women's suffrage at an editorial level at least since its foundation. It became stronger still as Sinn Fein basked in the reflected glory of the Easter Rising of 1916, and expanded rapidly in its wake.

From 1916, feminist republican women were buoyed by the Proclamation of Independence, issued during the Easter Rising and thereafter imbued with an authority which was difficult to refute. One writer summarised feminist republican thinking when she emphasised that "in 1916 the aim of the signatories to the Proclamation of the Irish republic was to establish 'a permanent National Government, representative of the whole people of Ireland, and elected by the suffrage of all her men and women'".[4] As it expanded as a political party, Sinn Fein appeared to formalise this, most notably when it passed a strongly feminist resolution at its 1917 Convention. It read:

> Whereas, according to the Republican proclamation which guarantees 'religious and civil liberty, equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens', women are equally eligible with men as members of branches, members of the governing body and officers of both local and governing bodies, be it resolved: that the equality of men and women in this organisation be emphasised in all speeches and leaflets.[5]

This resolution was greeted with general feminist delight, and Sinn Fein itself benefited as a result from the ensuing support of women who registered voters and canvassed and campaigned on behalf of its candidates in the run-up to the 1918 election.[6] Some republican women claimed that 'chief credit' for Sinn Fein's recognition of women's equality should be given to Constance Markievicz and the 'other ladies of Sinn Fein who have earned us this equality'.[7] The republican Maud Eden's admiration for Sinn Fein's position was so strong that she even expressed the hope that the 'non-party' woman would vanish for once and for all.[8]

This was a more controversial suggestion than might first appear. Though derided by some fervent republicans, the "non-party woman" had been central to the ability of the Irish suffrage movement to maintain any sort of unity. While women could and did maintain very pronounced

views on the national question, this did not prevent them from coming together at key points during the suffrage campaign. The ability and willingness to put aside party political feeling had made this possible, but this had caused tension within feminist-nationalist circles in particular. While some women insisted that the vote must come before all other political demands, others argued that it was perfectly "possible for some women … to imagine that the freedom – even the partial freedom – of a nation to be of more importance than the partial freedom of the feminist portion of it".[9] But this kind of neutrality in the suffrage cause became increasingly difficult as the country lurched towards revolution and war and as political women increasingly lined up in support of nationalism and unionism. Two major women's political organisations expanded - the Ulster Unionist Women's Council and Cumann na mBan, an advanced nationalist organisation founded in 1914. Cumann na mBan's feminist credentials had been fiercely debated since its foundation, but from 1917 the organisation became more explicitly feminist as it urged nationalist women to "participate in the public life of their locality, and to assert their right as citizens to take part in the nomination of candidates for Parliamentary and local elections".[10]

The Ulster Unionist Women's Council worked hard for unionist candidates while Cumann na mBan rallied behind Sinn Fein. Retaining neutrality on the national question became increasingly superfluous as women's enfranchisement and the general election of 1918 approached, and as Ireland's major parties began actively to court women voters. The treasurer of the UUWC was instructed to make payments of up to £5000 in connection with the registration and canvassing of women voters.[11] Cumann na mBan's executive acted similarly decisively, printing and distributing leaflets aimed at new women voters, and reminding them that their vote for Sinn Fein "might be the one to turn the poll at an election".[12] It looked as though the "non-party woman" had in fact become obsolete.

Some of the key feminists in the Irish Women's Franchise League who had refused to (openly) prioritise Sinn Fein or any other republican organisation before 1916 and who had repeatedly criticised the "slave women" who had given up "the struggle for citizenship in order to help the men",[13] began to soften their positions as Sinn Fein became synonymous with the Proclamation of Independence.[14] The IWFL leader, Hanna Sheehy Skeffington, wrote from America about the new dispensation in early 1917. Beginning with what was by then already a customary description of the radical and pioneering nature of the Proclamation of

Independence, she went on to associate women's citizenship rights with Irish republicanism, explicitly linked in her article with Sinn Fein:

> So we Irishwomen have the interesting contrast before us of an Irish Republic giving full and free citizenship to all adults, men and women, and a British Parliament timidly opening its doors to British women of thirty and excluding all Irishwomen. Is it surprising under the circumstances that we hanker after the Republic and an independent Ireland?[15]

Retaining some semblance of non-party partisanship, the IWFL pledged to support any women candidates in the run up the election. This was not too difficult in the end as neither the unionist nor the constitutional nationalist parties nominated women candidates. The Irish Labour Party had nominated the trade unionist Louie Bennett as a candidate, while Sinn Fein nominated three women: Hanna Sheehy Skeffington refused the nomination, Winifred Carney contested an unwinnable seat in Belfast, while Constance Markievicz contested and won Dublin's St Patrick's Division. She was, famously, the first woman to be elected to the House of Commons. The IWFL continued to insist that women were "far less slaves to party than are men", but they nonetheless campaigned hard for Carney and Markievicz.[16] These women had been selected on the back of hard lobbying by their female colleagues and it was largely the women of Sinn Fein, Cumann na mBan and the Irish Women's Franchise League who coordinated their campaigns.

As the election campaign went on, a number of feminist women began to air their doubts about Sinn Fein's commitment to gender equality. Markievicz was one of 17 women who stood around the United Kingdom and the only one to be elected. Her victory was a matter of 'great joy' for the IWFL, but some members privately denounced Sinn Fein and Cumann na mBan's poor efforts on behalf of their candidate.[17] Sheehy Skeffington insisted that Markievicz had been "let down by an inefficient committee", and that hers was the "worse managed constituency in Dublin".[18] The IWFL consequently set up its own constituency meetings independently of Sinn Fein.[19] Sheehy Skeffington's colleague, Margaret Connery, who was asked by Sinn Fein to manage Markievicz's campaign, was no less scathing in her analysis. In a letter to Sheehy Skeffington, Connery fumed:

> Please tell the committee I couldn't take charge of Madame Markievicz's election in my present state of health … The very nerve of Sinn Fein sets my teeth on edge. The one woman that they have thrown as a sop to the women of the country has her interest neglected and what is one to say of Cumann na mBan – surely it is their special duty to concentrate on the election of their own President! Why should the work be left to the chance care of 'outsiders' as they are so fond of calling us. They are too busy running after the men like the sea camp followers.[20]

Little to reassure Sheehy Skeffington and her comrades emerged in subsequent years as neither women's enfranchisement nor the radical promise of Sinn Fein led to a fundamental shift in the political culture of the country or its new parliament.

II

The involvement of women in the new national politics in independent Ireland appears to have been very limited and ultimately ineffective from a feminist point of view. Though unprecedented, Markievicz's victory in 1918 did not ultimately prove to be a catalyst for a more significant shift. The statistics alone make bleak reading. Between 1922 and 1972, the average Dáil Éireann (Irish parliament) contained four women or three per cent of the total number of deputies. Between 1922 and 1937, only seven women were elected to the Dáil.[21] When Máire Geoghegan-Quinn was appointed Minister for the Gaeltacht in 1979, she became the first woman to hold a cabinet post since Constance Markievicz had been appointed Minister for Labour in 1919. The election of six women in 1921 proved to be the highpoint until 1981 when eleven women were elected.

These figures are stark, but they do not reflect the totality of feminist activism in the period. Neither do they reflect some important shifts in feminist thinking in the early years of the independent Irish state. There is no question that many women believed that national independence would bring with it improved rights for women. The Proclamation served as their guarantee, and the increased role of women in nationalist politics suggested that the rights they had gained would not be reversed. Markievicz had herself hoped that her Dublin constituency would be a "rallying ground for women and a splendid centre for constructive work by women".[22] Her friend and fellow suffragist, Jennie Wyse Power, proclaimed that women would "get their share" and would be in a "position to bargain at the next election".[23] The *Irish Citizen*,

Ireland's feminist journal, even argued that Markievicz's election demonstrated that Dublin "leads in feminism" and that "Ireland proudly writes Progress on banner to show the world how much in advance she is of those who would rule her".[24]

Despite some lingering reservations, many feminists who had remained wary of party politics seemed to change their positions or at least to imagine that politics after the Representation of the People Act could stretch to accommodate women's views. Lucy Kingston, a leading pacifist and suffragist, captured this mood well when in 1918 she argued that once enfranchised "and leaving the national question to one side", existing suffrage groups would dedicate themselves to new political gaols. Some, she believed, would continue to agitate for the complete equalisation of men and women voters, while others would dedicate themselves to "social reform and educative work", otherwise known as social or maternal feminism.[25]

Kingston's prediction about social feminism proved correct, as did her anxiety about the potential threat of party politics for the women's movement.[26] She was concerned that in the context of Ireland's extraordinary political situation, women would "fail to realise that they are members of a great body politic, but rather will remember that they are members of a party political".[27] Her concerns were consistent with the majority of her fellow feminists who had been intrinsically hostile to the party system, believing that it undermined democracy.[28] This is hardly surprising when one considers how often suffragists had been disappointed by their own political parties' refusal to take a stand on women's suffrage and by the tendency of individual MPs to vote against their consciences when Party loyalty dictated they must. This was especially problematic in Ireland where, as one suffragist argued, all parties put women last and obliged them to "choose sides" on the national question.[29]

Nonetheless, Irish women evidently were ready to test the possibility of party politics from 1918, presumably because it appeared to some that important democratic advances were being made and that party politics might not be quite as harmful to women as was once feared. Hanna Sheehy Skeffington herself became an organising secretary for Sinn Fein in 1919, travelling in her role around the country to garner support for the organisation despite the fact that it had been proscribed and canvassing on its behalf was dangerous work.[30] This appeared to represent a break with her non-party position, a stand set out clearly in the *Irish Citizen* in the same year.[31] In reality, her republican sympathies were well known by this time and while the *Irish Citizen* remained nominally unaligned, she did not. The *Irish Citizen* admitted that "no party,

unhappily, is yet free quite free from sin where women are concerned", while Sheehy Skeffington evidently believed that Sinn Fein promised enough to women to merit a leap of faith. This was unquestionably difficult for her as she had been badly scarred by earlier battles with the Irish Parliamentary Party, an organisation which was central to her family history and to her own political maturation. She had made a painful and very public break with it over its refusal to support women's suffrage in 1912 and had been a stern critic of party politics since.[32]

This shift is worth exploring in some detail for Sheehy Skeffington's change of heart heralded a brief period of experimentation with party politics for the most radical segment within Ireland's feminist community. The partial enfranchisement of women in 1918 goes some way towards explaining why Sheehy Skeffington dropped her own (public) non-party position. As no political party retained an anti-suffrage position after 1918, they could no longer be boycotted on these grounds. But this is only a partial explanation for a much more complex process of realignment and readjustment for Ireland's feminist movement. The terms of a feminist position which had been based around the extension of the franchise since the nineteenth century needed re-writing in the wake of enfranchisement. In common with feminists across the United Kingdom and beyond, Irish women had to re-assess their *raison d'être* in its aftermath. Pledging to continue to lobby until *all* women were enfranchised on the same basis as men was one obvious gaol, but moving beyond voting and into the formal political life of the country was another challenge altogether.

While initially buoyed by Markievicz's candidacy and election, the faith of feminist republican women in the new dispensation appeared to fade quickly. The *Irish Citizen* proclaimed in 1919 that the general election had taught that "reaction has not died out with the Irish Party".[33] Rosamund Jacob, prominent feminist and Sinn Feiner, argued in 1918 that women should stand for parties rather than as independents as that might give the "impression they didn't care about national issues".[34] By early 1920, however, she pronounced that "most of the Sinn Fein men will be just as hopeless about doing anything for the benefit of women as the old crowd were".[35] This would have alarmed the feminists who had pinned some hope on a progressive new generation of male comrades. Irish suffragists had consistently claimed that enfranchised women would transform their country by taking on issues that male politicians refused to grasp, issues such as the double sexual standard, prostitution and the abuse of women and children.[36] Their ability to do so rested on men recognising both their right and their particular ability to

do so. The *Citizen* even claimed that women's presence at the 1918 election had "raised the tone and purified the atmosphere".[37]

We cannot know if such issues would have been more prominently debated had Ireland moved into a period of political stability after 1918. While British women enjoyed a period of relative political calm after the end of the war and women's enfranchisement, Irish women had no such luxury.[38] They plunged from one crisis to another and finally into the ongoing and fraught task of nation building. Markievicz's own parliamentary trajectory provides a useful case in point. Like her Sinn Fein colleagues, she refused to take up her seat in London in 1918, pledging loyalty instead to Dáil Éireann, founded as an independent Irish parliament. Markievicz was herself in prison when she was elected and when the first Dáil met in early 1919. The Dáil's priority was to establish political legitimacy and a functioning *de facto* state while Irish republicans and British forces fought the War of Independence. A ceasefire in 1921 allowed only a temporary respite as the second Dáil split over the Anglo-Irish Treaty, a political settlement which promised southern Ireland dominion status rather than the Republic which many rebels insisted on. Pro-Treaty Teachtaí Dála, (TDs)[39] formed a new party, Cumann na nGaedheal and prepared to govern while those like Markievicz who opposed the Treaty, walked out of the Dáil. During the Civil War which followed, she threw herself once again into dangerous political activism and abstained from the Dáil in common with anti-Treaty colleagues until 1926. She then joined the newly established Fianna Fáil, but died before she took up her seat.

There was very little time to debate social issues in this frenetic context, despite the fact that a number of women, some of them feminists, soon joined Markievicz in the Dáil. Six women were returned unopposed to the Second Dáil in 1921; four of them were related to dead republican martyrs. The most obviously symbolic of these was Margaret Pearse, mother of Patrick Pearse, a 1916 leader who was executed after the Rising with his brother, William. Mrs Pearse had virtually no experience in politics before her election. Kathleen Clarke's husband has also been executed in 1916; Kate O'Callaghan's husband had been killed by Black and Tans in 1921 and Mary MacSwiney's brother had died on hunger strike in Brixton Prison in 1920. The other two were Ada English, elected to represent the National University, and Markievicz herself. Though too often represented as a cohort of political light weights and of little more than symbolic value, it is worth noting that Markievicz, Clarke, MacSwiney and Kathleen O'Callaghan had been active suffragists as well as republicans before 1918.

The performance of these women in parliament and especially the views they took on the Treaty have dominated historiographical discussion of women's political activism in the interwar period. The Treaty question was thrashed out around the country and in Dail Éireann, where all six women members opposed it. They wore black to the debates, representing their connection to their relatives, and they made powerful speeches against the Treaty, often in the name of the dead.[40] They spoke, as Jason Knirck has argued, the language of sacrifice, and this sacrifice allowed them some parliamentary leverage, albeit in a highly gendered form.[41] At the same time, women worked through various channels to try to bring about an end to the ensuing Civil War. Lucy Kingston and Rosamund Jacob represented Ireland at a meeting of the International Women's League at which they proposed that a committee be appointed to "study the means of pursuing practical pacifism".[42] In the following year, a number of Irish members urged rival nationalist factions to "bring about a peaceful settlement".[43]

There were many other such initiatives organised by women in this period, but the idea of the "hysterical" denunciation of the Treaty by these women politicians has become almost emblematic of women's politics in the 1920s. P. S. O'Hegarty's 1924 history of Sinn Fein set the tone when he described republican women as "practically unsexed", animated by "swashbuckling and bombast and swagger" and utterly incapable of understanding the complexities of politics.[44] Contemporary republican women including Maire Comerford attempted to counter such views, as did feminists like Jennie Wyse Power who predicted in 1924, "that Ireland will lay the blame for much of the present warfare on the shoulders of the women who, in December 1921, cried, 'Traitor' to those who believed that the Treaty afforded a surer path to freedom than the fanatical civil war that followed".[45]

A seasoned suffragist herself, Wyse Power knew better than most that the idea of the hysterical woman politician was well embedded in political discourse by 1922 and that feminists had been arguing against it since the nineteenth century. Anti-suffragists had long predicted that enfranchised women would in fact debase parliamentary politics by introducing emotion and prioritising empathy over hard reason and logic. Very few women argued that women's contribution would be no different from men's, but rather than debasing parliament, they looked forward to women introducing a "healthier atmosphere" to parliamentary politics while encouraging cooperation between classes, sexes and nations.[46]

When the six women elected in 1922 participated in the Treaty debates they did do as political actors in their own right, as relatives of the dead, and as test cases for a new politics in which they were involved. More than any of the men who were elected at the same time in what was an unusual assembly by any definition, these women were scrutinised and judged. The Representation of the People Act of 1918 was the product of a long, hard and difficult campaign. The fact that it took so long to pass in the United Kingdom even while its Dominions progressively capitulated, reflects the strength of the opposition to women's citizenship and to their direct involvement in national political life. Given the predications of their critics, it hardly surprising that elected women did speak in emotional language. In their deliberate framing of themselves as representatives of dead republican martyrs, the anti-Treaty female TDs behaved both as they were expected to, and in a way in which their views might be taken seriously. It is difficult to imagine how they could have appeased all their critics while simultaneously overturning centuries of male dominance of politics.[47] The fact that most women politicians were anti-Treaty exacerbated this as this cause was increasingly identified as unrestrained, illogical and irrational.

According to Knirck, these women were attacked not for their views on "women's issues", but as representatives of a wider republicanism which was depicted as overly emotional, unstable and inherently incapable of leadership of the new Irish State.[48] Male TDs also spoke for, about and even on behalf of dead republicans, but while they tended to speak of the dead as soldiers or comrades, the women usually spoke of them as relatives.[49] After the Treaty was narrowly accepted in the Dáil, the government of the new Irish Free State sought stability above all else, emphasising law and order and sound and rational debate over militarism, republicanism and emotional femininity.[50] Women, especially "outspoken" anti-Treaty women were vilified along with doctrinaire republicanism and both were held to account for many of the ills of the new state.[51] The leap from this to a general suspicion of women in politics was small.

Knirck has argued that the collusion of these female politicians in their portrayal of a particular "embodiment of Irish republican tradition" both during and after the Treaty debates played a role in their own banishment from Irish political life.[52] It also, he claims, contributed to making "politics a more hostile place for women in the early years of the Free State".[53] Mary Daly agrees, adding that women's decision to base their political allegiances in the 1920s on their position on the Treaty entrenched such marginalisation and led to "self-exclusion" from politics by capable women.[54] Only two women were returned in the 1922 election which was

effectively a vote on the Treaty. When the pro-Treaty side won, hard-line republicans walked out of the Dail. When these hardliners reconvened as Fianna Fáil in 1926, six women sat on the new Party executive. Their numbers soon dwindled, however, with two of them leaving the party in protest against its decision to take their seats in the Dáil. The Treaty once again cast its shadow over women's political participation in modern Ireland and it would be a very long time before women came anywhere near the dizzy heights of the early 1920s.

One might conclude that this highpoint was primarily a product of an unusually radical period in Irish history, a period in which gender equality was enshrined in the Proclamation and women played an abnormally active and influential role in Irish political life. In other words, it was a blip and a temporary break in the natural order. One might also argue that the relative lack of women in formal politics after the revolutionary period might reflect the determination to establish political and social stability which is common in many post-war and post-revolutionary societies. An emphasis on family and traditional values is common in such contexts and Ireland proved to be no exception. This can be seen in a series of legislative measures which primarily affected working women. But there were other factors at play too, including the failure of parliamentary culture to adapt to women's involvement in it, and the failure of the major political parties to adapt to women in leadership and representative roles. Structural issues were important too. The weakness of the left as well as the almost complete collapse of the Irish Parliamentary Party and southern unionism deprived Ireland of pools of potential support and female candidates. It is difficult not to conclude that there was neither the will nor the appetite within the major parties to uphold and even expand the rights women had won. Instead, Ireland moved from the early 1920s into a period of political and social conservatism in which women's rights came under mounting assault.

## III

Historians of the British suffrage movement have increasingly questioned the once widespread view that the feminist movement went into terminal decline after the vote was won in 1918, and that a backlash against the limited shift in gender equality which had been achieved ensued. Pat Thane has argued that the strongest evidence for this view seems to be the low number of women standing and being elected to the House of Commons in this period.[55] But she also reminds us that these statistics represent only one aspect of a complex story and obscure both continuities and innovations in the interwar period. Her analysis can usefully be applied to

Ireland too. There is no question that women's suffrage constituted a powerful unifying demand around which women who had little else in common could combine. This led to powerful shows of strength and resolve over several decades, not least in Ireland where political divisions ran particularly deep. Once votes for women ceased to provide a unifying position, the women's movement inevitably appeared fragmented, weakened and less effective. But closer analysis reveals that Irish feminism adapted, evolved and sometimes reverted to older positions in the context of an intense and sometimes hostile political environment after 1918.

This did not mean that organised political feminism ceased to exist as a movement. A number of women's groups continued to lobby for the equalisation of the parliamentary franchise. In early 1922, several associations including the Belfast Women's Advisory Council, the Irishwomen's Association of Citizenship and the Londonderry branch of the IWFL collectively affiliated to the International Women's Suffrage Association, and lobbied politicians for the recognition of the equal franchise in the new constitution of the Irish Free State.[56] Kathleen O'Callaghan proposed a decree to allow votes for women on the same terms as votes for men in the State's new constitution. This was passed and the Irish Free State's constitution enfranchised women over twenty one, equalising citizenship rights between Irish men and women in advance of the United Kingdom which followed suit in 1928. This did not of course produce any immediate shift either in the number of women entering the Dáil or in the "the character of Irish politics". This, argued one commentator in early 1923, would be "too much to expect".[57] Its impact was also limited because it too was caught up in the politics of the Treaty.[58] A delegation led by Hanna Sheehy Skeffington had urged leading politicians to include women in any settlement.[59] Citing the 1916 Proclamation, "the Irishwomen's charter of liberty", she called on all women:

> no matter what their political views, to make their will in this matter felt, so that it may be made clear to our male legislators that they received no mandate from women voters to restrict women's rights of equal citizenship and equal opportunity with men.[60]

They found many willing allies, but some of their motives remained dubious. Éamon de Valera, leader of the anti-Treaty faction of Sinn Fein, for example, probably supported this because he believed, as did many of his contemporaries, that younger women might vote against the Anglo-Irish Treaty.[61]

The Treaty cast its shadow over the extension of the franchise in 1922, just as it did over Irish feminism more generally. Women who had worked together for years found themselves on opposite sides of the debate and this did have an impact on feminist organising. Cumann an mBan was one of the first nationalist organisations to split over the Treaty. One faction formed the rival Cumann na Saoirse, under the leadership of women "whose services to Ireland are well known".[62] This was a deeply painful break, not least because it ruptured old friendships between women who had fought and campaigned together for years. Maire Comerford, who opposed the Treaty, remembered with regret that Cumann na mBan lost some 'fine' women, some of whom were "foundation members, others executive members who had helped to guide [them] through the war years; all had proved themselves".[63]

Nonetheless, women continued to organise and to adapt to the new politics. It is important, as Lindsey Earner-Byrne has reminded us, to remember that many Irish women found strength and fulfilment in traditional roles and that it was in fact tradition which allowed many of them to engage in public life. Measuring women's political activism in numbers of seats won in the Dáil gives a very partial view of their engagement. Religion, family life and a commitment to social service provided some Irish women with paths into activism and with models of women affecting change.[64] While some women's groups fragmented in the early 1920s, new ones emerged and others reformed. The Irish Women's Suffrage and Local Government Association amalgamated with the Irishwomen's Association of Citizenship in 1923, becoming the Irish Women Citizens' Association, for example.[65] It was joined by a host of new and revamped women's groups, many of them focusing on issues which primarily affected family life, children and social issues including health. While many of their members found strength in their faith, the development of a largely conservative and Catholic state and its confirmation in the country's legislation also galvanised many women into action.

Irish and British women activists had markedly different levels of success in their campaigns to directly improve conditions for women and children after 1918. British women were instrumental in a number of important shifts including the Sex Disqualification Act (1919) the Criminal Law Amendment Act (1922) and the Matrimonial Causes Act (1923). These signalled a new departure in British feminism as women MPs and women's groups campaigned extensively on social legislation which directly impacted on women's and children's lives.[66] Several pieces of important social legislation which affected women emerged in Ireland in the 1920s and 1930s, but they tended to restrict women's lives, especially the lives of working

women. The dearth of Irish women parliamentarians who were committed to pursuing a kind of maternal feminism in the Dáil (with Helen Concannon as the only real exception to this),[67] meant that parliamentary support for legislative change remained lukewarm at best. Irish legislators in fact adopted more conservative and more restrictive legislation which explicitly affected women after independence as the years went on.

The enactment of legislation including the 1923 Censorship of Films Act, the Intoxicating Liquor Acts of 1924 and 1927 and the banning of divorce reflected Ireland's conservative turn. These provoked opposition, but three pieces of legislation which explicitly affected women galvanised women's groups into new phases of activism: the Juries Acts of 1924 and 1927, the Conditions of Employment Act and the 1925 Civil Service Regulations Act.[68] All attempted to curtail women's citizenship rights by imposing limits on their right to work, especially in the civil service, and to serve on juries. As Maria Luddy has argued, such legislation impacted directly on women's citizenship rights and it was on these terms that women's groups emerged or reformed to oppose them.[69]

One of the first to organise was the Women Citizens' Association. It grew out of the campaign for the equalisation of the franchise and went to play an important role in opposing the restrictions on women's jury service.[70] It was also at the forefront of opposition to the Civil Service Amendment Act which attempted to restrict examinations for junior administrative positions to men. Opposition to this amendment developed in the Dáil, including from women senators such as Jennie Wyse Power, an experienced suffragist.[71] Other groups which lobbied against it included the Women's National Health Association, the Women's Cooperative Guild, the Irish section of the Women's International League and the Nurses' and Midwives' Union. Such groups adopted a maternalist language in arguing that all women should sit on juries for "every case involving women or children", but they added that women should take on jury duty as citizens.[72]

This campaign represented a victory for opponents as the Senate rejected the bill, but it also marked the beginning of a long battle to safeguard women's rights, particularly employment rights. The introduction of marriage bars to the civil service in 1924 and to women who became primary teachers from 1934 sparked further opposition from women's groups. The Conditions of Employment Act (1936) which allowed ministers to limit the number of women in certain industries, once again provoked a coordinated campaign of opposition from women's groups. Their opposition was built around two main themes: women's intrinsic rights as citizens, as

recognised in the Proclamation of 1916 and the constitution of 1922, and of women's "special interest" in social questions. But it was also predicated on a growing realisation that Irish political life had become less rather than more open to women since 1918. As Hannah Sheehy Skeffington lamented in 1930, "what was given first with gladness has been gradually filched away. Equality has ceased to be accorded to us, save on paper".[73]

## IV

Any hope that some women may have had for a shift in parliamentary and party political culture in the wake of enfranchisement seem to fade rapidly in the 1920s. By 1927, the Irish Women's Citizens' Association lamented "the absence of women in the Dáil, free from party ties, who would make their first object the welfare of women and children".[74] It attempted to break this party-political hold by supporting an independent candidate, but most feminists responded by reverting to older patterns of organisation, to voluntarism, to lobbying and to organising among women. The National Council of Women of Ireland claimed that its successful all-Ireland organisation was "evidence of the unity among the non-party women's organizations".[75]

In addition to reviving a number of established groups, women launched a host of organisations which aimed to protect their existing rights and to lobby for further legislative protection. The Irish Women's Equality League was founded in 1927 to:

> safeguard the rights and interests of Irishwomen and to band them together, independent of party for the purpose of maintaining whatever rights they have had up to the present achieved and to press for the fullest social, political and economic freedom for women, wherever such is now lacking or wherever it is threatened with curtailment.[76]

This organisation reflected a pattern which would become common in the interwar period of a membership composed of women who were established campaigners and who had taken different sides in the Treaty debate. Equality League members included Hannah Sheehy Skeffington, Margaret Connery and Mary Kettle. At the same time, women from various political backgrounds retained and even reignited their interest in internationalism, coming together as they had during the suffrage campaign despite their differences on the national question. Lucy Kingston and Rosamund Jacob represented Ireland at the Conference of the

International Women's League for Peace and Freedom in Vienna in 1922, and a number of by now veteran female peace activists including Isabella Richardson, Louie Bennett and Helen Chenevix, remained active in the Irish branch of that organisation.[77] Lucy Kingston spearheaded this activism through her commitment to the Women's International League whose bi-annual congress met in Dublin in 1926. She claimed that a "broader international outlook in Ireland … encourages the Irish public to work for peace".[78] But the society also engaged directly in Irish political issues, insisting in 1927 for example, that legislation affecting women was "weaker" in the Irish Free State than it was in Britain or Northern Ireland.[79] Other energetic Irish branches of international organisations included Save the Children, a society in which Mary Sheehy Kettle, Helen Laird, Kathleen Lynn and Helena Molony – who represented a range of positions on the Treaty - were very active.[80]

The Central Council of Women in Ireland, founded in 1922, attempted to coordinate some of these internationally minded and civic feminist bodies. It consisted of organisations and individual members from both the Irish Free State and Northern Ireland, and drew in a number of societies which had originally been suffrage organisations. Well known leaders included the veteran suffragists, Mary Hayden, Dora Mellone and Elizabeth Montgomery, all of whom were very well acquainted with the aims of the society. It lobbied politicians on issues including safe drinking water, children's health, education, women police and jury service.[81] It is striking how often new and reformed women's groups addressed such issues, many of which they had been campaigning on for more than twenty years. Women police, for example, had been a long-fstanding demand for women's groups, as had school meals and the monitoring of court cases concerning women and children.[82]

Though vigorous, such lobbying and activism was clearly not enough. The idea of a women's party or independent women candidates had been suggested well before enfranchisement, but active moves towards the realisation of such an idea began in the early 1920s. The Women's Independent Association was formed in 1923, to "send forward independent women candidates for election to the Dáil, to obtain adequate representation of women on public boards, and to unite women of all political views for the purpose of promoting the interests of women as a class". The organisation was "strictly non-party" and speakers at its inaugural meeting included the unionist Lady Dockerall, the republican Patricia Hoey, the constitutional nationalist Mary Hayden and Constance Markievicz herself.[83] After it unsuccessfully ran two candidates on the Independent Women's Party platform in 1923, it seemed to disappear, but the idea of a

women's party remained alive as did the desire to work across party lines.[84] In 1926, the Irish Women's Citizens' Association pledged to try anew to elect at least one women who was "free from party pledges" to the Dáil.[85] It insisted that the choice of women candidates had been "too much left to the ordinary party organisations, and thus the women returned have not always followed the maxim 'women and children first'".[86]

Political differences between feminists almost certainly hindered such initiatives. While it is clear that Hannah Sheehy Skeffington, for example, increasingly despaired of the lack of women in Dáil Éireann, she understood the dearth of women in very specific political terms. In 1927, she objected to the election of Margaret Collins-O'Driscoll on the grounds that she was nothing more than a "party henchwoman", chosen only because she was the sister of the murdered pro-Treaty TD, Michael Collins. Men apparently preferred to "select women of this type, faithful to party, selected because of sentimental reasons, and because the party machine is still for the most part controlled by men".[87] Sheehy Skeffington believed that women's rights had been improved and guaranteed during the revolutionary period, but "then came the Treaty. The women deputies (then six in number) all voted against it, and the present Government has never quite forgiven our sex ever since".[88]

Sheehy Skeffington claimed to despair of all the major Irish parties, but she was a member of Fianna Fail, the anti-Treaty faction of Sinn Fein which had refused to take its seats in Dáil Éireann after the Treaty had been accepted. She left Fianna Fail in 1927, when its parliamentarians decided to take their seats in the Dáil despite the continuing insistence on an Oath of Allegiance to the British monarch.[89] Thereafter, she became a more outspoken critic of all the major Irish parties' failure to nominate women candidates, though she did continue to insist that Cumann na mGeadheal, the pro-Treaty party, had the worst record of anti-feminism.[90]

Her view on the assault on women's right sunder independence was highly partisan. She did not, for example, mention the fact that four of the six first deputies were themselves relations of prominent republicans. Neither did she point out that both Jennie Wyse Power and Eileen Costello, opposed the Conditions of Employment Act, despite their party allegiance.[91] Nonetheless, her thinking on the impact of party politics on women's rights was more widely shared. Margaret Cousins, her close friend and co-founder of the Irish Women's Franchise League, advocated the formation of a "woman's movement independent of all Parties, with its

sole objective solely the complete emancipation of women". She insisted on the establishment of a "Women's Party", and as we have seen, she was not alone in this aspiration.[92] A number of factors, including the complete dominance of the Treaty issue, the increasing catholicisation of the state and the lack of a local feminist press, all made feminist organisation difficult. It was only in the mid-1930s, when the prospect of a new state-supported attack on women's rights emerged, that women were galvanised in anything like the same way as they had been during the suffrage campaign.

Feminist organising reached an inert-war crescendo when the (by then) Taoiseach de Valera abolished the Irish Senate in 1936 and the composition of a new upper house began to be discussed. The Joint Committee of Women's Societies and Social Workers (JC), founded in 1935 to represent 14 women's groups, maintained that "women should have equal representation with men on the Seanad" and that women should be deemed to be the "best judges of who should represent their interests".[93] It also argued that women must be included in the new senate because they were best qualified to deal with a number of questions "of vital importance to women" including the care and feeding of children, "matters connected with the home" and "social problems".[94]

The Senate issue faded into the background when a draft version of a new constitution was published in 1937. Opponents objected to the constitution on various grounds, but the most concerning were articles 9, 16, 40.1, 41.2 and 45.4. Article 41.2 proved to be the most controversial. It read:

1° In particular the State recognises that by her life within the home, woman gives to the State a support without which the common good cannot be achieved.
2° The State shall, therefore, endeavour to ensure that mothers shall not be obliged by economic necessity to engage in labour to the neglect of their duties in the home.

The Joint Committee the Irish Women Workers' Union and the National Council of Women in Ireland sent deputations to de Valera, and continued to argue against any dilution in the right of women to engage in paid work under the same conditions as men. The Joint Committee's chair told de Valera that her organisation maintained its belief in "the principles of equal opportunities for both sexes, and equal pay for equal work". She objected to article 45.4 2° on

the grounds that it might be used to "limit women's legitimate choice of occupation, on the ground that their strength is inadequate". She also predicted that "sex antagonism" might arise "out of legislation restricting women's right to work".[95]

The arguments offered by women's groups once again fell into the two broad categories of citizenship rights – as guaranteed in the Proclamation and the 1922 constitution - and women's particular strengths and interests. They condemned the new constitution as an affront to the "national cause" and the "nation's history".[96] The Association of Old Cumann na mBan joined the debate, arguing that "the Proclamation of Easter Week 1916 gave to us women equal rights and equal opportunities in simple language that no legislation could change or tamper with, and on the Declaration of Independence did Cumann na mBan base its Constitution".[97] A number of well-known women republicans including Dorothy Macardle, Maud Gonne and Kathleen Clarke joined the campaign, but even women who had not supported the Easter Rising or the republican struggle based their arguments on what Mary Kettle described as "the classic simplicity of the language of the Proclamation of the Republic".[98] The women's groups which objected to the constitution enjoyed very little public support, and ultimately both the Dail and the Irish public voted to accept it in the face of the women's campaign.

When they conceded that they could not change de Valera's mind on the new constitution, the many women's groups which were allied to the Joint Committee decided that a "society was urgently needed to deal with the political problems affecting women". By November 1937, the Women's Social and Political League (WSPL) had been established.[99] Many of the women who were drawn to this new organisation, including Hanna Sheehy Skeffington herself, had been Fianna Fail voters but found they could no longer support what they deemed to be an anti-woman party. Others were not republicans and had supported a variety of other parties, but these political differences were buried in this new venture. It did not last long: its application in 1938 for registration as a nominating body on a Senate panel was refused, and it changed its name from Political to Progressive. But it did run four women candidates in the early 1940s, including Sheehy Skeffington, on the slogans of "equal pay for equal work" and "equal opportunities for women".[100] All were strictly non-Party, though Sheehy Skeffington had hoped that if elected, they might form the "nucleus of a Woman's Party". None were successful, though Sheehy Skeffington continued to insist that the greatest impediment to the election of women who prioritised women's issues remained "the party machine". She believed that

running four women independents had down the seeds for the development of a cohort of independent women parliamentarians.[101]

Sheehy Skeffington's optimism was clearly misplaced, but she did accurately identify a major obstacle to women's parliamentary success. It is undoubtedly the case as Mary Daly has argued, that Irish women self-excluded from formal politics. But it is also true that many experienced and committed political women who wished to prioritise women's issues were unable to find a home in any of the major parties or in a parliament which seemed intent on restricting their rights. Activist women attempted to combat these structural issues in a number of ways, including running independent candidates and even supporting a woman's political party.

These were genuinely innovative strategies, suggesting that the Irish women's movement did evolve after 1918. Yet, both were unsuccessful, largely because they were expensive and jarred with increasingly conservative ideas about women's public and private roles and stubbornly entrenched party-political loyalties. Rather than viewing the rise and rapid fall of women in parliamentary politics in inter-war Ireland as an inevitable result of the solidifying of the Catholic and conservative state or of women's self-exclusion, we might also see it as a product of a brief and ultimately failed experiment with party politics.

Ultimately, feminists reverted with ever more enthusiasm to older forms of activism - to lobbying, to committee work, to fund-raising, and to internationalism. As they had before the vote was won, they organised across party and confessional lines and they primarily organised as women. They innovated where they could, but they also worked to their existing strengths. One of those strengths was precisely the ability to campaign as a class on issues which primarily affected them. As Lucy Kingston argued:

> Anything that tends towards unification in Ireland carries with it the germ of hope, and enfranchisement, irrespective of class, creed or party, should give women a common bond, one with another, and in doing so help to break down old prejudices and political and religious barriers.[102]

This is not to suggest that Irish feminists organised unproblematically after independence. Just as had been the case during the suffrage campaign, women could disagree profoundly on many

issues, while maintaining a unity built around a specific issue. This had been true before 1918 and it remained true after enfranchisement. Although no one issue emerged which could rival the vote in its appeal to an exceptionally wide constituency, a series of (actual or attempted) acts of parliament, did once more provide a glue for the interwar Irish women's movement.

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[2] S. Paseta, *Irish Nationalist Women, 1900-1918* (Cambridge 2013) 63-91.
[3] *Irish Citizen*, (8 June, 1912).
[4] Elizabeth Blham, *A Call to Irishwomen* (Dublin, 1917[?]). (Bloxham's emphasis in the quotation).
[5] Resolution of the League of Women Delegates adopted at the Sinn Fein Convention of 1917, quoted in M. Ward (ed.) *In Their own Voice: Women and Irish Nationalism*, (Dublin 2001) 84.
[6] Paseta, *Nationalist Women*, 256-9.
[7] *Irish Citizen* (January 1918).
[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid (May 1914).
[10] Cumann na mBan, *Rules and Constitution* (Dublin 1918).
[11] D. Urquhart (ed.) *The Minutes of the Ulster Women's Unionist Council and Executive Committee, 1911-40* (Dublin 2001), 103-4.
[12] Cumann na mBan, *The Present Duty of Irishwomen*, (Dublin, no date) 3.
[13] Hanna Sheehy Skeffington, 'How Suffrage Stands in Ireland', *Suffragist*, 6, 12 (1918), 6.
[14] M Connery to *New Ireland*, ii, 61 (15 July, 1916) 365.
[15] Sheehy Skeffington, 'How Suffrage Stands', 6.
[16] *Irish Citizen* (December, 1918)
[17] Ibid (January, 1919)
[18] H Sheehy Skeffington to Nancy Wyse Power in Ward, *In Their Own Voice*, 92-3.
[19] Ibid.
[20] M Connery to H Sheehy Skeffington, Sheehy Skeffington Papers, National Library of Ireland, MS 22, 684.
[21] M McNamara and P Mooney, *Women in Parliament: Ireland, 1918-2000* (Dublin, 2000), 16.
[22] C Markievicz to Hanna Sheehy Skeffington, 12 December, 1918, CO 904/164/4, postal censorship 4th report, 1/12/18-15/12/18, PRO.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Irish Citizen, (January, 1919)
[25] Lucy Kingston, quoted in L Earner-Byrne, 'Aphrodite Rising from the Waves: Women's Voluntary Activism and the Women's Movement in Twentieth-Century Ireland', in Esther Breitenbach and Pat Thane, *Women and Citizenship in Britain and Ireland in the Twentieth Century: What Difference Did the Vote Make*? (London 2010), 95.
[26] Ibid,
[27] L Kingston, 'The Irishwoman's Outlook', *Englishwoman*, 37, 111, (1918) 216.
[28] P. Thane 'What Difference Did the Vote Make?' in A Vickery (ed.) *Women, Privilege, and Power: British politics, 1750 to the present* (Stanford 2001) 268.
[29] *Irish Citizen* (December, 1912)

[30] M. Ward, *Hanna Sheehy Skeffington, Suffragette and Sinn Feiner: her Memoirs and Political Writings* (Dublin 2017), 174-5.
[31] *Irish Citizen* (October, 1919).
[32] Paseta, *Irish Nationalist Women*, 63-80.
[33] *Irish Citizen* quoted in Earner-Byrne, 'Aphrodite', 97.
[34] R Jacob to H Sheehy Skeffington, no date, Sheehy Skeffington Papers.
[35] Ibid, 18 January, 1920, MS 32,582(36).
[36] Irish Citizen, (December 1918)
[37] Ibid, (January 1919).
[38] Thane 'What Difference Did the Vote Make?'
[39] Members of parliament.
[40] J. Knirck, Women's Political Rhetoric and the Irish Revolution', in Thomas E Hachey (ed.) *Turning Points in Twentieth-Century Irish History*, (Dublin, 2011), 44-5.
[41]Ibid, 42.
[42] *Freeman's Journal* (16 July, 1921).
[43] Ibid (1 December 1922).
[44] P S O'Hegarty, *The Victory of Sinn Fein*, (Dublin, 1924/1988) 73-4.
[45] Jennie Wyse Power, 'The Political Influence of Women in Modern Ireland' in W. G. Fitz-Gerald (ed.), *The Voice of Ireland: a Survey of the Race and Nation from all Angles*, (Dublin 1924), 161.
[46] *Irish Independent* (21 June, 1917)
[47] Thane, 'What Difference', 253-4.
[48] Knirck, 'Women's Political Rhetoric', 39-40.
[49] Ibid, 47.
[50] J Knirk *Women of the Dáil: Gender, Republicanism and the Anglo-Irish Treaty*, (Dublin 2006), 14-5.
[51] Ibid, 15.
[52] Ibid, 18-20.
[53] Ibid, 18.
[54] M Daly 'The 'Women Element' in Politics: Irish Women and the Vote, 1918-2008' in Breitenbach and Thane, *Women and Citizenship in Britain and Ireland in the Twentieth Century*, 82-3.
[55] P Thane, 'Women and Political Participation in England, 1918-1970' in in Breitenbach and Thane, *Women and Citizenship in Britain and Ireland in the Twentieth Century*, 13.
[56] *International Woman Suffrage News*, (March, 1922) p. 87.
[57] *Irish Statesman*, I, 20, (26 January, 1923) 613.
[58] *Irish Times* (25 February, 1922)
[59] R. Cullen Owens, *A Social History of Women in Ireland, 1870-1970*, (Dublin 2005), 125.
[60] *Freeman's Journal* (2 October, 1922)
[61] C McCarthy, *Cumann na mBan and the Irish Revolution*, (Cork 2007), 187.
[62] *Irish Independent* (March 14, 1922).
[63] Maire Comerford Papers, University College Dublin Archives, LA18/42(4)
[64] Earner-Byrne, 'Aphrodite', 96-8.
[65] Ibid, 97-8
[66] Thane, 'Women and Political Participation', 19-23 and Thane, 'What Difference', 273-82.
[67] Daly, 'The Women Element', 84.
[68] C Beaumont, 'After the Vote: Women, Citizenship and the Campaign for Gender Equality in the Irish Free State, 1922-1943', in L Ryan and M Ward (eds.) *Irish Women and the Vote: Becoming Citizens*, (Dublin 2007) 237.
[69] M Luddy, 'The Problem of Equality: Women's Activist Campaigns in Ireland, 1920-40' in Hachey, *Turning Points*, 61.
[70] Gaelic Churchman, viii, 1 (February, 1927).
[71] Luddy, 'The Problem', 64.
[72] National Council of Women of Ireland, Memorandum re women on juries, NAI.
[73] H Sheehy Skeffington, 'Irish Women's Place in the Sun', *The Vote* (15 August 1930), 1.
[74] *Gaelic Churchman*, viii, 1 (February, 1927).
[75] *Woman's Leader* (19 November, 1926) 369.

[76] Irish Women's Equality League minutes, Sheehy Skeffington Papers, 33,620(9).
[77] *Freeman's Journal (*1 December, 1922 and 16 July, 1922).
[78] *Gaelic Churchman*, vii, 2, (April-May, 1926).
[79] *Irish Times*, 19 October, 1927.
[80] Ibid, (17 September, 192)1 and *Irish Times* (21 February, 1931).
[81] *The Vote*, (29 August, 1924), 277.
[82] *Gaelic Churchman* viii, 2, (March, 1927) 18, *Irish Times* (21 February, 1931); JCWSSW minutes, 12 March 1935, National Archives of Ireland.
[83] *Irish Times* (26 September 1923).
[84] Ibid, (17 August, 1923).
[85] *Woman's Leader* (19 November, 1926) 368.
[86] Ibid, (21 September 1923) 269
[87] Ward, *Hanna Sheedy Skeffington*, 242.
[88] *The Vote* (15 August, 1930) 1.
[89] Ward, Hanna Sheehy Skeffington, 198.
[90] Ibid, 317.
[91] C Beaumont, 'After the Vote: Women, Citizenship and the Campaign for Gender Equality in the Irish Free State, 1922-1943, in L Ryan and M Ward (eds.), *Irish Women and the Vote: Becoming Citizens*, (Dublin 2007) 238.
[92] *The Vote* (7 August 1925) 253.
[93] *Irish Independent* (19 November, 1936)
[94] *Irish Independent* (19 November, 1936)
[95] Joint Committee to de Valera, 24 May, 1937. D/T, S. 9880, National Archives of Ireland.
[96] IWCA to de Valera, 20 May, 1937, D/T, S.9880, NAI.
[97] Association of Old Cumann na mBan to de Valera, 18 May, 1937, D/T, S.9880, NAI.
[98] *Irish Press* (11 May, 1937)
[99] Joint Committee of Women's Societies and Social Workers, notes and minutes, 98/14/6/1, NAI.
[100] *Irish Times* (25 June, 1943) and Hanna Sheehy Skeffington, 'Women in the Politics', *The Bell*, (7 November 1942) in Ward, *Hanna Sheehy Skeffington*, 384.
[101] Hanna Sheehy Skeffington, 'Women in the Politics', *The Bell*, (7 November 1942) in Ward, *Hanna Sheehy Skeffington*, 386-8.
[102] Kingston, 'The Irishwoman's Outlook', 213.