Women marching, carrying signs and banners, and agitating against war are not recent occurrences. Buried in the forgotten history of the United States are the women who, more than 100 years ago, marched in silent procession down Fifth Avenue in New York City behind a white banner featuring a dove with an olive branch in its beak. On August 29, 1914, wearing the black dresses or white dresses with black armbands of mourning for deaths they hoped to prevent, 1,500 women participated in the Woman's Peace Parade. A front-page article in the New York newspaper, The Evening World, bore the headline, “WOMEN IN CREPE, OF ALL NATIONS, JOIN PEACE PARADE” and subhead, “Russians, Italians, Chinese, Americans, French, and Others in Line.”

Seventy-year-old Fanny Garrison Villard, who came from a family of abolitionists and suffragists, was the chief organizer of the march. It was less than a month after the outbreak of World War I in Europe, and President Woodrow Wilson and the public did not want to involve the U.S. in the war.

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Villard’s son reported that the public observed the march “with sympathy and approval” and that President Wilson himself, who at that time was not in favor of entering the war, was reported to be pleased.

The women’s march initiated a new era of peace activism. Prior to this, the anti-imperialist movement had opposed the Spanish-American War and U.S. expansionism, but that movement was confined to males and used tactics of persuasion and print, attempting to change policy through established political channels. Religious groups also opposed participating in war. The women’s peace movement saw the need for a different kind of war opposition. Denied the kind of access to institutions and established political channels that males enjoyed, and wanting a more open, secular organization, the women employed the activist organizing tactics of the suffragettes and labor, attempting to build support directly from the public.

The Women’s Peace Party

Though they were not even allowed the right to vote, following the march, women planned to expand their antiwar advocacy with the creation of a permanent women’s peace group, believing that women were more nurturing of human life than men. Their enthusiasm led to the birth of the Women’s Peace Party (WPP). The Swarthmore College Peace Collection, “Women’s Peace Party, 1915–1920,” describes how it happened:

On January 10, 1915, approximately 3,000 women met at the Willard Hotel in Washington (DC) to address the situation created by the outbreak of World War I. Jane Addams of Hull House and Carrie Chapman Catt, a leader of the international suffrage movement, called the conference in response to the efforts of Roskia Schwimmer, a Hungarian suffragist, journalist, and social worker, and of Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence, an English feminist, to convince women of the U.S. to join their European counterparts.
Women associated with the peace movement were contacted in each state and urged to start branches of the WPP. Across the country, the WPP’s campaign to sway public opinion included performances of the classical Greek tragedy *The Trojan Women*, demonstrating the effect of war on women.

**The International Congress of Women**

In April of 1915, at the invitation of European women, a delegation of 47 U.S. women—WPP members joined by women from the Immigrants Protective League, the Universal Peace Union, the Women's Trade Union League, and various individuals—planned to go to The Hague in the Netherlands to attend an international conference with women pacifists from 12 warring and neutral nations. A sharp critic of the American women’s endeavor was former president Theodore Roosevelt, who had played a prominent role in U.S. empire-building, acquiring territories beyond the North American continent. Roosevelt denounced the women as “cowards who sought peace without regard to righteousness” and called their mission “silly and base.”

To cross the Atlantic and enter a continent at war, the women sailed on a Dutch cruise ship through dangerous, mined waters when submarines were known to lurk in the sea. Apparently the British saw them as a real threat, because the Royal British Navy detained their ship in the British Channel for four days before finally releasing it. Further, the British government denied the passports of a delegation of British women to prevent them from attending the conference.

In spite of the harassment, the International Congress of Women convened on April 28, 2015, in the Netherlands. With
more than 1,000 women in attendance, the congress drafted antiwar resolutions, calling for disarmament and a repudiation of war. They also addressed a root cause of war by calling for the removal of the profit motive related to the production of armaments. Historian Howard Zinn noted that though the U.S. claimed it was remaining neutral, the U.S. government, in addition to supplying armaments overseas for the war, allowed private banks to supply funding: “J.P. Morgan began lending money in such great amounts as to both make great profit and tie American finance closely to the interests of a British victory in a war against Germany.”

The International Committee of Women for a Permanent Peace

Members of the women’s congress were impartial. They established the International Committee of Women for Permanent Peace with representatives from each country and delegated two groups of envoys to visit the governments of belligerent and neutral nations of Europe and the president of the U.S. in support of a conference for mediation of disputes between belligerent nations.

Within five weeks, the envoys – Jane Addams among them – met and talked with 14 European governments. On her return to the U.S., Addams and others met with President Woodrow Wilson and his aides to try to convince them to initiate a conference of neutrals. At the same time and throughout the fall of 1915, the WPP worked to gain public support for such a conference.

Keeping Hope Alive

In December of 1915, the hope to keep the U.S. out of a war and for mediating a peace in Europe was still alive. When President Wilson didn’t respond by calling a conference, some women turned to auto magnate Henry Ford, who offered private financing and the chartering of a ship to bring American women to Europe. Accepting funding from Ford was controversial among the women; Jane Addams considered it a public relations gimmick. But funds were needed and the Henry Ford Peace Expedition sailed to Europe with the women to establish the Neutral Conference for Continuous Mediation. The conference met in Stockholm with delegates from Scandinavia, the Netherlands, and Switzerland, and remained in session from 1916 through early 1917. It publicized various peace proposals and kept the idea of mediation alive.

Back in the States, the WPP opposed U.S. preparations for war in Europe and also objected to U.S. imperialism in countries on the Caribbean Sea: the Virgin Islands, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Nicaragua, where issues of U.S. interference and imperialism are still alive today.

As entering the war appeared more
likely for the U.S., peace organizations across the country called for a popular referendum before there could be a declaration of war, but were unable to achieve this goal.

On April 4, 1917, Jeanette Rankin of Montana, a pacifist and non-interventionist and the first woman to hold a federal office, was one of the 50 members of the U.S. House of Representatives who voted against the nation’s entry into the war. (Rankin could serve in Congress because Montana was one of a handful of states that allowed women to participate in the political process prior to the 19th Amendment.) It is she who famously said: “You can no more win a war than you can win an earthquake.”

**War and Repression Begin**

Despite the best efforts of the antiwar advocates, on April 6, 1917, the U.S. entered the war. In June of that year, President Wilson reversed his stated position of U.S. neutrality. He then signed the Espionage Act passed by Congress, and it was used to imprison Americans who spoke or wrote against the war or did anything to obstruct the recruitment of the military services. Yet opposition to the draft was widespread. In Minnesota, *The Minneapolis Journal* headline of August 6 and 7 screamed: “DRAFT OPPOSITION FAST SPREADING IN STATE.” The government launched a propaganda campaign to change public opinion in support of the war and prosecuted dissidents under the Espionage Act. Crystal Eastman, a labor lawyer and Women’s Peace Party member, founded the National Civil Liberties Bureau. (It later became the ACLU.) The antiwar movement went into hiatus. The WPP remained pacifist but stopped protesting against war, and “stressed internationalism and support of a League of Nations” to mediate disputes between nations. Some WPP members turned to concern about having enough food to sustain the country while the U.S. military and allies overseas were being supplied. Jane Addams continued on page 6
Women Who Waged Peace
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In Pursuit of Peace

The Women’s Congress of 1919 and WILPF

A second International Congress of Women was called by the same European and American women who had convened the first congress in 1915. The 1919 congress was held in Zurich while the heads of warring nations were concluding the war with the Treaty of Versailles. The women met in Switzerland so that they could include delegates from Germany and the Central Powers who were not allowed in France.

To continue their work, the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) was established with headquarters in Geneva, across the lake from the League of Nations. Jane Addams, who presided over the women’s congress, was made president.

Most of the women approved of the establishment of the League of Nations but foresaw that the “war to end all wars” contained in it the seeds of another war. Though Germany was not allowed to participate in negotiating the treaty, the Allies threatened to go to war against the defeated nation if it violated the terms of the treaty. Further, the treaty blamed Germany for the war with Article 231, known as the “war guilt clause,” which forced the Germans to accept all financial and moral responsibility for the war. In addition, the U.S. never ratified or signed the treaty, meaning it wouldn’t promise not to go to war on Germany or on any of the other signatory countries.

UNIA and the Black Cross Nurses

Marcus Garvey, the leader of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), issued the following admonition: “…even as the war of 1914-18 was the most deadly we have experienced for ages…so long as the strong continues to oppress the weak; so long as this injustice continues; so long as the powerful nations arrange among themselves to oppress the weaker ones, and to keep the unfortunate of humanity in servdom, and to rob and exploit them, so long will the cause of war be fed with the fuel of revenge, of hatred, and of discontent.”

During the post-war period, many African American women were likely to work on justice and social concerns with the UNIA, which had grown to the largest mass movement in African-American history with two million members in chapters in the U.S. and a Pan-African dimension, reaching other parts of the world. Women were very influential throughout the organization from its founding and made up the majority of local UNIA divisions after leader Marcus Garvey, was imprisoned in 1925 and deported in 1927. Women such as “Queen Mother” Audley Moore and Henrietta Vinton Davis were among those who held national leadership roles.

The Black Cross Nurses Association was created as an auxiliary of UNIA by Henrietta Vinton Davis in 1920 as a result of inequalities in medical treatment. Ten thousand black women received professional nursing education and worked with healthcare concerns and related social needs in the black population. This included the care of black soldiers wounded in the war.
The war had taken a massive toll. Estimates for total civilian and military casualties range from an astounding 37 to 40 million, with 15 to 19 million civilian and military deaths. Military men had been subject to the horrors of trench warfare, poison gas, and the new lethal technology of machine guns. There were more than a hundred thousand U.S. military deaths. In addition, even more people died in the influenza epidemic of 1918 than in war; U.S. National Institute of Health studies indicate that the epidemic spread to civilian populations from the military due to conditions of war. According to the National Archives, 25 percent of the U.S. population was wiped out by influenza. Worldwide, 50 million died, more than had died from direct causes of war.

The Committee to Outlaw War
The horror of war was sinking deeply into the public consciousness, and the idea of outlawing war began to take root. A prominent resident of Chicago, Samuel O. Levinson, created the Committee to Outlaw War in 1921 and the Outlawry movement was embraced by people of all economic and social classes and endorsed by large organizations such as the National Association of Parents and Teachers, and National League of Women Voters (the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote was passed in 1920).

The Women's Peace Union
Many groups were open to both men and women, but a few were strictly women's groups. In August of 1921, a group of Canadian and U.S. women held a peace conference at Niagara Falls, New York, and created the Women's Peace Union for the Western Hemisphere (WPU) with branches in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, and several other Latin American countries. Like the Outlawry movement they wanted to make war illegal, but they were considered “radical absolutists” among pacifists because they believed in total and complete disarmament, not even arming for self-defense. WPU member Gertrude Franchot Tone announced, “So far as we are concerned, we have no fears of evil results if we are the first country to disarm completely.”

In 1924–1925, the WPU announced a bold manifesto: the Declaration of Independence from the Tyranny of War. On July 4th, they would conduct street corner demonstrations and campaigns. They declared that war is evil and people have the choice to abolish it before it abolishes the whole human race.

The Women’s Peace Union was a very small group with 14 active members, but it maintained its connection with peace and suffrage activists, focusing on the idea that women are “the mother half of humanity” and naturally opposed to sacrificing their children to the war machine.

While the Committee to Outlaw War had convinced Senator Bohr of Idaho to introduce into the Senate a resolution making war illegal, the WPU had come to believe that the only way to outlaw war was to obtain a constitutional amendment. The WPU drafted an amendment making war and the preparation for war illegal. Its members lobbied Congress tirelessly, and organized other peace organizations to join them. The WPU found a sympathetic ear in Senator Frazier of North Dakota, a prairie populist who had supported women's suffrage and was opposed to war. Through the efforts of this small group of which 14 were active, a constitutional amendment was introduced, though it never

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passed, in every Congress from 1927 through 1939.

The Cause and Cure for War
In 1925, Carrie Chapman, who had been the president of the International Suffrage Alliance and a force in the creation of the WPP and women's congresses, developed a largely educational organization called the Cause and Cure for War. This organization set up a network of guided local study groups in which women could learn about and discuss structural issues of war and peace. The Cause and Cure grew to encompass 11 organizations representing five million women participants and included such mainstream organizations as the American Association of University Women, the National League of Women Voters, the National Women's Trade Union, the National Board of Young Women's Christian Associations, and the National Council of Jewish Women. The Cause and Cure national office was located in New York City’s Grand Central Terminal.

The Outlawry Movement
At the same time, the movement to outlaw war was having reverberations across the Atlantic among the French, who were seeking to secure alliances for their national security. To this end, France saw it as useful to enter into an agreement with the U.S. to outlaw war between France and the United States. Foreign Minister Aristide Briand was reportedly influenced by the ideas of U.S. peace activists in the Outlawry movement. But to avoid becoming ensnared in France’s foreign policy issues, the U.S. didn’t want a treaty restricted to the U.S. and France. The proposed treaty was expanded by U.S. Secretary of State Frank Kellogg (a native of St. Paul, Minnesota) to be open to signatories of all nations.

Although some in the women’s movement warned that the arms manufacturers would undermine the treaty, this was the moment many peace activists had been hoping and working for.

The women who had launched the antiwar movement were energized to support the treaty – officially called the General Treaty for Renunciation of War as an Instrument of National Policy – but referred to as the Kellogg-Briand Pact after the French and American officials involved. Carrie Chapman threw her support to it, and members in The Cause and Cure for War became a force lobbying for the pact. Throughout the U.S., women participated in conferences in their states to pressure the Senate, the treaty-ratifying body of the U.S. government. Jane Addams was also a strong supporter of the pact in the U.S. and Europe. She led a delegation delivering 30,000 signatures to the White House and to ambassador Aristide Briand in Paris. The treaty was signed on August 27, 1928 by 15 nations. By 1933, the number expanded to 65. Jane Addams was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931 for her years of peace activism.

The treaty did not prevent World War II, the rise of the military-industrial complex, and subsequent wars, but its moral and legal outlines can be seen in the United Nations Charter, international law, and the establishments of norms for a nation’s behavior in the world community.

An easily recognizable contemporary example of such norms is the nearly universal condemnation of the U.S./
British “coalition of the willing” war on Iraq as a war of aggression and a “crime against peace.”

**Women on the March Today**

Many of the early peace activists were not even allowed to vote and yet they courageously persisted against seemingly impossible odds through a world war and beyond. And they acted without modern forms of transportation and communication while having to keep their hair pinned up and avoiding their long skirts tripping them up! They have left us a legacy of antiwar and peace action, civic involvement, and a refusal to relinquish the world to the masters of war.

Today, despite being unable to stop war, activist women have not stopped building resistance. Just as women of the Settlement House Movement acted in solidarity with immigrants and struggling people, people are now rallying in solidarity with immigrants and struggling people. Like their compassionate predecessors, many of the same people also rally against war.

In January of 2017, five million women and their supporters filled the streets of Washington, D.C. and cities and towns throughout the country in a movement that even reverberated around the world. The Women's March, advocating against the misogynist and racist statements of the newly elected president, has called for another march in January of 2019. Imagine if, like many in the Women’s Suffrage Movement, contemporary women welded the Women's March to a massive anti-war message. Not only could women have their rights and dignity, but there could be an end the maiming and killing of people abroad and enough to take care of human needs within the U.S. if we demanded that even a portion of $700 billion U.S. military budget was liberated from paying for war and deadly weapons.

Polly Mann, co-founder of Women Against Military Madness (WAMM), asks: “How long should one struggle to support justice and peace in a situation that seems to be everlasting? We know that some struggles have been going on for so long in the face of such tremendous adversity that to abandon them is unthinkable.”

**WAMM at International Conferences and Campaigns**

Since what affects one part of the world, affects all, grassroots organizations around the world connect internationally. Minnesota-based WAMM launched a Campaign to End Nuclear Weapons and became an affiliate organization of the International Campaign to Ban Nuclear Weapons.

Recently, WAMM members joined 300 people from 35 peace, justice, and anti-war organizations in a march to end nuclear weapons. WAMM members have also been active in local and national campaigns to end nuclear weapons.

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and environmental organizations around the world for the International Conference Against U.S./NATO Military Bases in Dublin. This conference kicked off an international campaign to end the U.S./NATO world domination through military might. In these efforts, WAMM coordinates with Women’s International League of Peace and Freedom (WILPF), which had its start at the International Congress of Women in 1919.

Endnotes
1. The Evening News distinguished “Americans” from women “of all nations,” indicating the presence of visitors or recent immigrants. The Settlement Movement brought diverse groups together when American women “settled” in urban areas to live in solidarity with and serve immigrant and lower income populations.

2. It’s also worth noting that while the U.S. was claiming a neutral stance in the war, it was secretly sending armaments to Britain in the hold of civilian passenger ships. The month after the women arrived in Europe, the British ocean liner the RMS Lusitania was sunk by a torpedo fired from a German submarine. 128 Americans were among the more than 1,000 passengers who drowned. It was carrying 173 tons of ammunition for the war in its cargo.

Correction:
In the article, “Solidarity Among People: A Response to Israel’s New Nation-State Law,” Fall II, Vol. 36, No. 6, Endnote No. 1 misidentifies “Druz” as “Druids.”

WAMM Membership

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Make checks payable to WAMM, 4200 Cedar Avenue South, Suite 3, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55407
Wamm Calendar

Please note that Wamm's provision of information on other groups' events is not meant to convey or endorse any action contrary to public policy that would be inconsistent with exempt purposes under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c) (3), i.e., charitable purposes.

Ongoing Peace/ Justice Vigils

Vigil to End War
Every Wednesday, from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Lake Street/Marshall Avenue Bridge. Signs available on St. Paul side. Brief circle up for announcements after the vigil at St. Paul side. FFI: Call Wamm 612-827-5364.

Vigil to End the Occupation of Palestine
Every Friday, 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. corner of Summit Avenue and Snelling Avenue, St. Paul. Sponsored by: Prospect Franklin Avenue Bridge, Minneapolis. FFI: Call Wamm 612-827-5364.

Peace Vigil
Every Tuesday, 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. on the east side of the Franklin Avenue Bridge, Minneapolis. FFI: Call Wamm 612-827-5364.

Grandmothers for Peace Vigil
Every Wednesday, 4:45 to 5:45 p.m. 50th Street and Halifax (1 block west of France), Edina. FFI: Call Marian Wright 612-927-7607.

Immigrant Solidarity Vigils
Every Tuesday, 7:30 a.m. Stand up for justice, say NO to family separation, deportation. Gather weekly with signs (bring your own or use one provided) at ICE entrance closest to Fort Snelling Light rail station. Vigil on Minnehaha Ave., Minneapolis by the sign at the driveway entrance to ICE. Rain or shine. (If using GPS – 6000 Minnehaha Ave, Minneapolis). Info: Pepper 612-701-6963 or Mary Lou 612-280-0354

Second Tuesday of every month
Interfaith Coalition on Immigration (ICOM) gathers in solidarity with immigrants and refugees to achieve justice and stand up to systems of oppression. Vigil outside the Bishop Whipple Building, 1 Federal Drive, Fort Snelling. St. Paul. FFI: Facebook: Interfaith Coalition on Immigration (ICOM).

Wamm Committee Meetings
Board Meeting
Third Tuesday of every month, 6:00 p.m. 4200 Cedar Avenue South, Minneapolis. FFI: Call Wamm 612-827-5364.

Book Club
Episcopal Senior Living Complex, Welcome Center, 1860 University Avenue West, St. Paul. Call Wamm for meeting time and date. FFI: Call 612-827-5364.

End War
First Monday of every month, 6:00 p.m. 4200 Cedar Avenue South, Minneapolis. FFI: Call Wamm 612-827-5364.

Ground All Drones
Times/dates pending. FFI: Call Wamm 612-827-5364.

Middle East
Second Monday of every month, 10:00 a.m. at Wamm, 4200 Cedar Avenue South, Suite 3, Minneapolis. FFI: Call Wamm 612-827-5364.

St. Joan of Arc/Wamm Peacemakers
Fourth Tuesday of every month, 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. St. Joan of Arc Church, Parish Center, 4537 Third Avenue South, Minneapolis. FFI: Call Barbara 612-722-4444.

Tackling Torture at the Top (T3)
Second Wednesday of every month, 10:00 a.m. 4200 Cedar Avenue South, Minneapolis. FFI: Call Wamm 612-827-5364.

Ongoing Events
People of Faith Peacemakers Breakfast
Second and fourth Wednesdays of every month, 8:00 to 9:30 a.m. African Development Center, Riverside and 20th Avenues South, Minneapolis. Peace with justice resource, support group. FFI: Visit justviewpoint.org or call 612-333-4772.

Grandmothers for Peace
First Wednesday of every month, 8:00 to 9:30 a.m. Eden Public Library, 5280 Grandview Square, Edina. Justice issue programs for understanding our role in changing systems. FFI: Call 952-929-1566.

Pax Salons
Every Tuesday, call for details and location. Small donations accepted. FFI: Call 651-227-3228.

Peacemakers
Sunday, January 19, 10:00 a.m. on the National Mall, Washington, D.C. Third annual mass mobilization.

Women’s March on Washington
Saturday, January 19, 10:00 a.m. on the National Mall.

Women’s Wave Minnesota
Saturday, January 19, 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Minnesota State Capitol, 75 Rev Martin Luther King Blvd, St. Paul. FFI: admin@womensmarchmn.com.

Report Back: the Global Campaign against U.S./NATO Military Bases
Wednesday, January 16, 6:00 p.m., 4200 Cedar Ave. S., Minneapolis. Three Wamm members report back from November conference in Dublin. FFI: 612-827-5364.
Wishing you and yours peace and love this holiday season!
From all of us at WAMM

WomenAgainstMilitaryMadness.org

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