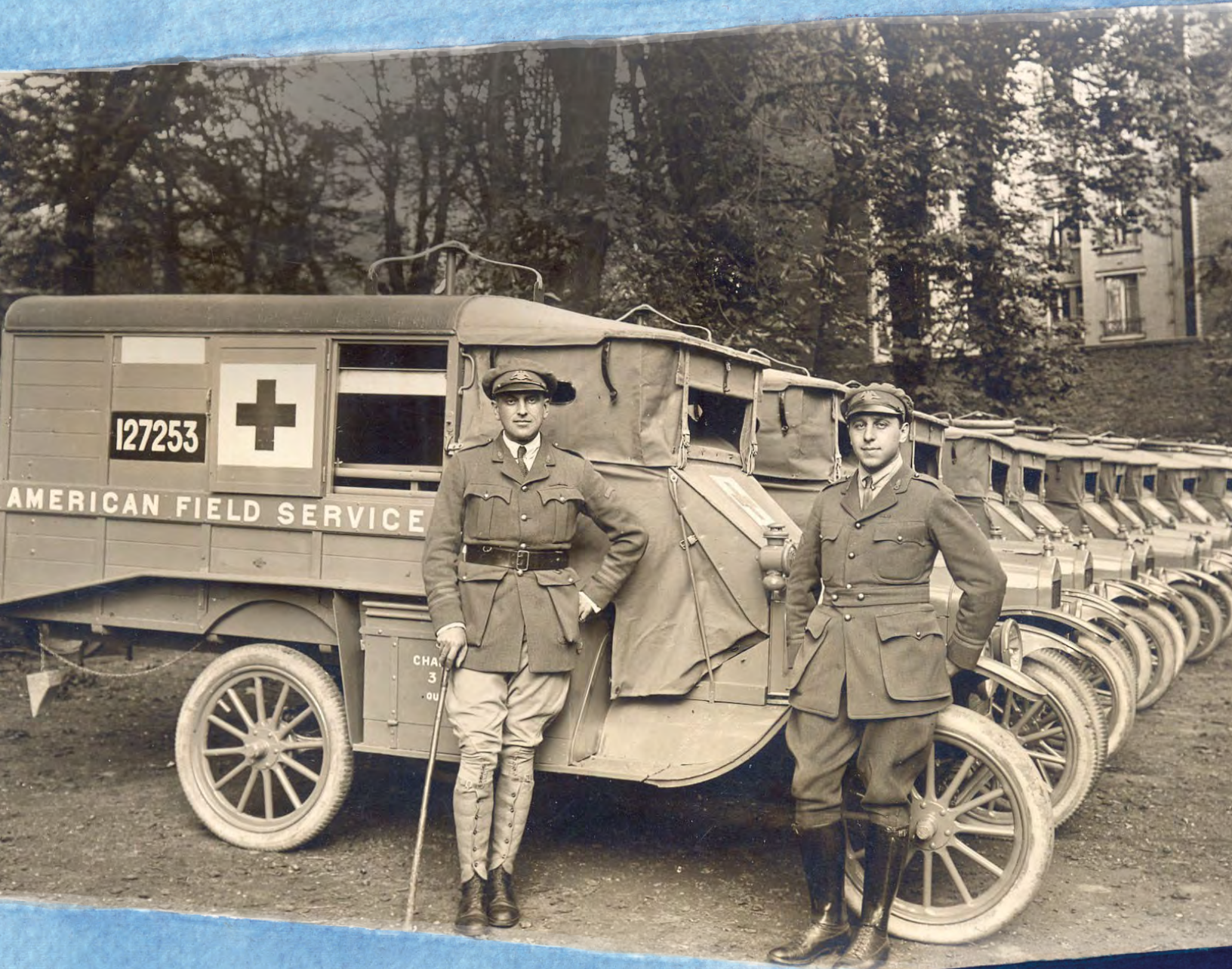




# THE Volunteers

Americans Join World War I, 1914-1919

CURRICULUM







*Connecting lives. Sharing cultures.*

Dear Educator,

Welcome to ***The Volunteers: Americans Join World War I, 1914-1919 Curriculum!***

Please join us in celebrating the release of this unique and relevant curriculum about U.S. American volunteers in World War I and how volunteerism is a key component of global competence and active citizenship education today. These free, Common Core and UNESCO Global Learning-aligned secondary school lesson plans explore the motivations behind why people volunteer. They also examine characteristics of humanitarian organizations, and encourage young people to consider volunteering today.

AFS Intercultural Programs created this curriculum in part to commemorate the 100 year history of AFS, founded in 1915 as a volunteer U.S. American ambulance corps serving alongside the French military during the period of U.S. neutrality. Today, AFS Intercultural Programs is a non-profit, intercultural learning and student exchange organization dedicated to creating active global citizens in today's world.

The curriculum was created by AFS Intercultural Programs, together with a distinguished Curriculum Development Committee of historians, educators, and archivists. The lesson plans were developed in partnership with the National World War I Museum and Memorial and the curriculum specialists at Primary Source, a non-profit resource center dedicated to advancing global education. We are honored to have received endorsement for the project from the United States World War I Centennial Commission.

We would like to thank the AFS volunteers, staff, educators, and many others who have supported the development of this curriculum and whose daily work advances the AFS mission. We encourage secondary school teachers around the world to adapt these lesson plans to fit their classroom needs- lessons can be applied in many different national contexts. The curriculum is meant to help students learn more about the volunteer efforts of young people during World War I, and inspire them to become active global citizens today.

Warm regards,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Vincenzo Morlini'.

**Vincenzo Morlini**  
President and CEO



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Melissa Liles'.

**Melissa Liles**  
Chief Education Officer



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Nicole Milano'.

**Nicole Milano**  
Head Archivist and Historical  
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THE NATIONAL  
**WWI MUSEUM**  
AND MEMORIAL



**PRIMARY  
SOURCE**

Global learning matters.

#### Cover Photograph

AFS Founder and Inspector General A. Piatt Andrew and Assistant Inspector General Stephen Galatti at the AFS headquarters in Paris, France in 1917.

*Photograph by H.C. Ellis. Courtesy of the Archives of the American Field Service and AFS Intercultural Programs.*

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# AFS INTERCULTURAL PROGRAMS



AFS Intercultural Programs began as the American Ambulance Field Service (later known as the American Field Service or AFS), a voluntary ambulance and *camion* (truck) organization which emerged soon after the outbreak of World War I under the leadership of A. Piatt Andrew, a former director of the U.S. Mint. In April 1915 Andrew negotiated an agreement with the French military to have units of American ambulance drivers serve closer to the front lines of battle. The 2,500 AFS volunteers participated in every major French battle, carrying supplies and more than 500,000 casualties.

After the war ended, the AFS volunteers established an AFS Association to coordinate reunions and to administer the AFS Fellowships for French Universities program. The AFS Fellowships program ultimately funded 222 students to travel to and from France for advanced graduate study by the time it was discontinued in 1952.

AFS was reactivated at the start of World War II by Stephen Galatti, who had been an AFS ambulance driver and Assistant Inspector General during World War I. By the end of the war, 2,196 volunteers served in France, North Africa, the Middle East, Italy, Germany, India, and Burma, carrying more than 700,000 casualties.

In 1946 AFS volunteers from both World Wars assembled in New York City to discuss the future of the organization. Under the leadership of Galatti, they launched a secondary school student exchange program that they hoped would maintain and strengthen the international friendships they fostered during their wartime humanitarian work. The first AFS secondary school students arrived in the U.S. in 1947 on a scholarship program. In 1950 the Americans Abroad (AA) Summer Program was initiated, allowing U.S. American high school students to go abroad through AFS, and by 1957 AA students





had the option to spend several months abroad during the fall and attend foreign schools. In 1971, the AFS Multinational Program began, allowing students to travel to and from countries other than the United States. The AFS Programs continued to diversify over the years by adding community service projects and teacher exchange programs, and the number of participating countries rose steadily.

In February 1984 the Workshop on Intercultural Learning Content and Quality Standards affirmed AFS's commitment to intercultural learning and formally defined its Educational Goals. These 16 Educational Goals continue to define the educational approach, guide ongoing practices, and set AFS apart as a unique educational program.

Research efforts focusing on achieving a deeper understanding of the impact of exchange programs continued in the 21st century, from the cutting-edge Assessment of the Impact of the AFS Study Abroad

Experience study in 2005, to the AFS Long Term Impact Study in 2006. Building on these research results, the AFS Intercultural Link Learning Program launched in 2011. The purpose of this multi-step training and assessment program is to enable volunteers and staff worldwide to better support AFS students, families, and schools in the learning process.

Today, AFS is a global community of more than 50 partner organizations that support intercultural learning and promote active global citizenship education, primarily through exchange programs. AFS is dedicated to building an inclusive community of global citizens determined to build bridges among cultures as it moves into its second century.

Visit [www.afs.org](http://www.afs.org) to learn more!

**Photographs**  
(page 2) AFS ambulance drivers in Paris, France in 1917. *Photograph by O. King.*  
(page 3) Participants of the 100 Years Young! AFS Youth Workshop & Symposium held in Paris, France in 2014. *Photograph by Incorp Agency/Guillaume Deperrois.*  
*Courtesy of the Archives of the American Field Service and AFS Intercultural Programs.*

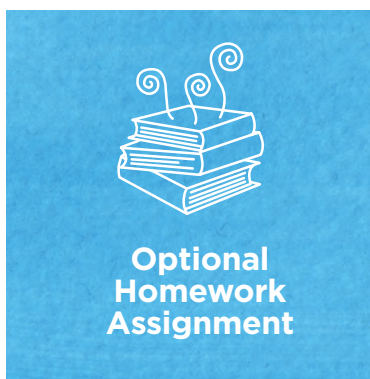
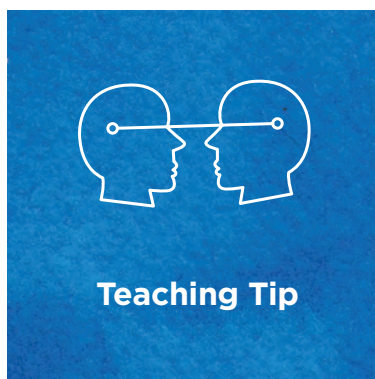
# ABOUT THE CURRICULUM

## Twenty-two lesson plans are made available through the following six topics:

- 1| U.S. American Volunteers in World War I, 1914-1917
- 2| U.S. American Women's Volunteerism and Suffrage in World War I
- 3| Diversity and Debate on the U.S. Home Front During the "European War"
- 4| Lost Generation Artists and Writers as World War I Volunteers
- 5| Humanitarian International Relief: A Legacy of Great War Volunteerism
- 6| Young People, Volunteerism, and Global Citizenship: From World War I to the Present

## Within each topic you will encounter and work with the following components:

- An **Overview** containing **Essential Questions** that frame the issues behind the topic; **Objectives** for student learning; **United States** and **International Curriculum Standards** for measuring **Assessment**; and estimated **Time** and necessary **Materials** needed to complete the lesson plans in each topic.
- A **Background Essay** written by a specialist and providing insight and context for the lesson plans. The essay can be read by both students and educators.
- **Instructions** for each lesson plan, including an **Activator** that elicits students' prior knowledge and serves to engage students in an underlying theme or question, helping to bridge between past and present and demonstrating the global learning implications of the historical material at hand; the **Lesson** or **Lessons**, which include handouts, questions for reflection and discussion, and tasks for students to complete using a wide array of unique primary sources; and an **Extension Activity** that engages students in global citizenship education, and complements, deepens, or extends learning of the historical topic, including through immersion in research tasks or presentations that can be adapted to the needs of your class or those of individual students.
- **Attachments** which can be used as lesson plan handouts. Additionally, each topic directs you to a curated collection of maps, articles, websites, books, and videos to support and enrich your teaching, found in the Resources section of the **Teacher Toolkit** at [thevolunteers.afs.org/resources](http://thevolunteers.afs.org/resources).
- Color-coded **Tips**, which will help to enhance your teaching experience, adapt activities to the global classroom, and provide optional, related homework assignments for students:







## TOPIC 2

### U.S. AMERICAN WOMEN'S VOLUNTEERISM AND SUFFRAGE IN WORLD WAR I

What motivated U.S. American women to volunteer for war service during World War I, domestically and abroad? How did their volunteer roles challenge traditional formulations of female duty to home and family? This topic, designed for secondary school learners, helps students explore the ways that women's lives and roles were transformed by volunteer service before and after 1917 through diverse primary sources. The lesson plans invite students, as well, to consider the interplay between women's volunteer service and women's pursuit of political and professional equality during World War I.

This topic is divided into five interrelated lesson plans that could be taught independently or as a whole, depending upon grade level, instructional objectives, and time:

1. Activator, *Advancing Toward Women's Equality in the U.S.*
2. Lesson I, *Images and Ideas about Women Volunteers*
3. Lesson II, *A U.S. American Nurse in France: A Primary Source Analysis*
4. Lesson III, *Women's Volunteerism and Suffrage in the U.S.*
5. Extension Activity, *Rights for Women Around the Globe: A Century of Change*

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**Photograph**  
American nurses assisting wounded soldiers during a meal in the jaw ward of American Red Cross Hospital No. 1 in Neuilly-sur-Seine, France. Courtesy of the National Library of Medicine.

# OVERVIEW

## ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

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1. How were U.S. American women and women's organizations changed by their volunteer work in World War I?
2. How did U.S. American women's volunteer roles in World War I adhere to and/or challenge the construction of "proper" female roles and behavior?
3. What were the connections between U.S. American women's volunteer service and women's campaigns for political and professional equality in the World War I era?

## OBJECTIVES

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1. Students will be able to describe the World War I-era debate in the U.S. about women's role in volunteer war service, and connect that debate to the actions of women volunteers before and after 1917.
2. Students will recognize the range of volunteer service that U.S. women performed.
3. Students will be able to identify several ways that service affected women volunteers.
4. Students will be able to draw connections between women's wartime volunteerism and the campaign for women's suffrage during World War I.

## STANDARDS: UNITED STATES

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### National Center for History in the Schools, National History Standards

#### *U.S. Era 7 - The Emergence of Modern America (1890-1930)*

- Standard 2C: The student understands the impact at home and abroad of the United States involvement in World War I.

#### *World Era 8 - Half Century of Crisis & Achievement (1900-1945)*

- Standard 2B: The student understands the global scope, outcome, and human costs of WWI.

#### *Historical Thinking Standards*

- Standard 3: The student compares and contrasts differing sets of ideas.
- Standard 4: The student obtains historical data from a variety of sources.

### Common Core Standards: Literacy in History/Social Science, Science, and Technical Subjects, Grades 6-12

- R1: The student reads closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cites specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- R6: The student assesses how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
- R7: The student integrates and evaluates content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.



## STANDARDS: INTERNATIONAL

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Educators outside the United States should consult their own national standards for comparable content and skills.

### UNESCO Global Citizenship Education: Topics and Objectives

*Topic:* : Actions that can be taken individually and collectively

*Learning objective:* Examine how individuals and groups have taken action on issues of local, national, and global importance and get engaged in responses to local, national, and global issues. Develop and apply skills for effective civic engagement.

- Factors contributing to success and factors limiting success of individual and collective action
- Analyzing factors that can strengthen or limit civic engagement (economic, political and social dynamics and barriers to representation and participation of specific groups such as women, ethnic and religious minorities, disabled people, youth)

*Learning objective:* Develop and apply skills for effective civic engagement.

- Rights and responsibilities of citizens, groups, and states in the international community

*Topic:* : Issues affecting interaction and connectedness of communities at local, national, and global levels


*Learning objective:* Assess the root causes of major local, national, and global issues and the interconnectedness of local, national, and global factors.

- Changing global forces and patterns and their effects on people's daily lives
- How history, geography, politics, economics, religion, technology, media or other factors influence current global issues (freedom of expression, status of women, refugees, migrants, legacies of colonialism, slavery, ethnic and religious minorities, environmental degradation)

## ASSESSMENT

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Components for assessment include full-class discussions, gallery walk responses, a graphic organizer for suffrage connections, and an optional writing exercise.



**Optional Homework Assignment**  
The [Background Essay](#) can be assigned as reading homework for students.

## TIME


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Three to four 50-minute class periods.

## MATERIALS

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- Whiteboard, blackboard, or Smartboard and computer for the Activator and Extension Activity
- Attachments for Lessons I, II, and III



**Teaching Tip**  
Visit the [Teacher Toolkit](#) for more information and resources for teaching this topic.

# BACKGROUND ESSAY

## U.S. American Women's Volunteerism and Suffrage in World War I

By: Susan Zeiger, PhD

The early twentieth century was an era of vast changes for women in the United States (U.S.), as it was for women in many industrializing countries. Women in the U.S. sought and found new opportunities for work, education, social reform, and political engagement. These changes were not universally welcomed: conservative Americans decried the “new woman,” calling for a return of what they regarded as women’s primary duty to home and family.

The war in Europe accelerated shifts in gender roles already under way. Women in the combatant nations were called to work by the tens of thousands in war industries and government offices, and enlisted in uniform for the female auxiliary corps. Women’s volunteerism likewise flourished in many nations, as women began finding innovative ways to serve the wounded, displaced, and other victims of war through relief and military support organizations.

During the years of U.S. neutrality, U.S. American women also engaged in voluntary war service abroad and in the United States. Women from elite backgrounds used their personal wealth and influence and their social reform experience to found or assist with new humanitarian, relief, and medical organizations in the war zone. Women on the home front volunteered for these efforts through donations of money and supplies and with their labor—knitting items for French soldiers and organizing and loading supplies at storage depots, among other activities.

One example of a U.S. American woman whose volunteer service had wide impact was Mrs. W. K. Vanderbilt. Born Anne Harriman, Mrs. Vanderbilt was a rail-

road heiress, socialite, and noted philanthropist. Living with her husband in Paris, France, at the war’s outbreak, she was determined to aid the nation that had become her second home. Mrs. Vanderbilt was one of the leaders in founding the American Ambulance Hospital in Neuilly-sur-Seine. She also donated ambulances to the newly created American Ambulance Field Service (later known as the American Field Service or AFS), and toured the front to promote the work of the organization back home. An admiring male colleague from the AFS described her in 1916: “She immediately saw our difficulties and briskly and crisply set about to clear them away, accomplishing more in a month than our ambassador ... has accomplished in two years. Mrs. Vanderbilt is a wonderful personality. She has a man’s intelligence and force and a woman’s grace and charm.”

After the U.S. joined the war, the opportunities for women volunteers expanded in some ways, but contracted in others. The Red Cross, YMCA, YWCA, Salvation Army, American Library Association, and other organizations engaged tens of thousands of female volunteers in the U.S. and Europe. Women of working-class backgrounds, previously barred from overseas volunteer service by the high cost of a steamship ticket, now found a route to serve. Other women had their work downgraded after 1917, as did the hospital volunteers now replaced by trained graduate nurses enlisted with the Army and Navy Nurse Corps. Female physicians from the U.S. found themselves rejected for service by their own nation, even though their expertise was previously tapped by the French government.

It was perhaps inevitable that U.S. women’s volunteer



war service would collide with the question of women's political equality in the United States, as the battle for women's suffrage reached its peak. Suffragists divided on the question of whether and how to support the war. Months before the U.S. declaration of war, the mainstream suffrage movement, led by the National American Woman Suffrage Association, made the calculation that full-on support and patriotic war volunteerism, with suspension of political agitation for the war's duration, would demonstrate women's worth as citizens and win American women the vote. The smaller, militant wing of the suffrage movement, led by

Alice Paul and the Women's Congressional Union, took a different tack: picketing the White House and court-ing arrest, they refused to serve a war for democracy that excluded women from democratic rights.

For every U.S. American woman who volunteered for service in the First World War, this complex matrix of countercurrents—patriotism, gender equality, profes-sional and personal self-interest, political conscience, and public censure—were considerations that shaped her experience in a time of fluidity for gender roles and rights in the United States.

# INSTRUCTIONS



## Activator

Advancing Toward Women's Equality in the U.S.

**1.** Ask your class to brainstorm a list of advancements toward equality that women in U.S. society have achieved since 1900. Prompt students to consider the categories of political, economic/employment, and social equality. Collect responses on the board where they can be seen. Have the students categorize the equality gains under the three headings above, adding other categories if needed.

**2.** In pairs or small groups, ask students to pick the equality gain that is most familiar to them. Have them pool their knowledge and summarize when, why, and how this gain came about. Call on groups to report their findings.

**3.** Conclude with a group discussion using some of these prompts:

- In what periods of time were most gains made by women? What patterns of change do you detect?
- What factors do you identify as most important in bringing these changes about?
- In which categories have women advanced the most? Where do they feel equality has been the most elusive?
- Which advancements do you consider the most incomplete? Are there any you consider fully achieved?



### Global Classroom Tip

Students can brainstorm about the equality gains that have been made in their own society and why, when, and how they came about. They can discuss the patterns of change in gender equality and compare them to the patterns or periods of change in the U.S

**Photograph**

French soldiers and American nurses at the American Ambulance Hospital.  
*Courtesy of the William L. Foley Collection.*





# Lesson 1

## Images and Ideas about Women Volunteers

**1.** Review what students know about changing roles for U.S. American women in the early twentieth century in regard to employment, education, and social reform. Also revisit national debates about women's citizenship, rights, and responsibilities. Make students aware there were both pro-suffrage and anti-suffrage women and men at the time.

**2.** Have students read the selected passages from a government report about women's volunteerism during World War I. (See lesson attachment: **Excerpts from *The Woman's Committee: United States Council of National Defense. An Interpretive Report.***) The report was an official history of the Woman's Committee, written at the close of the war by one of its executive staff members, Emily Newell Blair. Blair describes the voluntary mobilization of American women for the war. Help students to analyze the assumptions embedded in this report. Some questions they might consider:

- What tasks ("departments") did the Woman's Committee assign to women, and how could these be significant (e.g., Department of Food Production and Home Economics, Department of Child Welfare, etc.)?
- How does Blair characterize women's role in war volunteerism? What does she identify as women's "greatest duty" in wartime? What does this characterization reflect about prevailing views of women's role?
- What internal contradictions might students find in this passage?

Help the class discuss and decide if this document serves as a primary or secondary source for the questions being asked.

**3.** Invite students to visit a "gallery" of archival photographs, displayed on tables or walls where they can be well seen, depicting women's volunteer

**Photograph**  
Mrs. W. K. Vanderbilt looking for a grave in the cemetery at Pont-A-Mousson, France in 1916.  
Courtesy of the Archives of the American Field Service and AFS Intercultural Programs.

service before and after 1917. (See lesson attachments: **U.S. American Women Volunteers in World War I, Gallery Items #1-8.**) You might analyze one photograph as a class to provide students with a model. As students circulate the room and visit the photographs, direct them to pose observations, inferences, and questions about what they see. They can write their comments in the margin around each photo or in an individual log of their own notes. Challenge them to assign each of their comments to one of the categories (observation, inference, or question).

Post these questions to prompt students' thinking:

- What tasks do you see women undertaking in this photograph?
- With whom and for whom were the women working, and in what settings?
- How would you describe the women's appearance, attire, expression, and emotion in each image?
- Were women in charge of the work, working side by side with men, or subordinate to male supervisors? Did the women appear to take pride in what they were doing? What makes you think that?

- What point of view do you think the photographer had toward his/her subject in this photograph? What makes you think that?
- What could be missing from this photograph?
- What questions does this particular photograph raise for you?

For class discussion after the activity, use these questions to synthesize students' understanding:

- Which images were most surprising—why and in what way?
- How closely does this gallery of images, taken as a whole, match Emily Newell Blair's characterization of women's wartime service?
- Where do the representations of women in the photographs diverge from the homemaker role, and where do they reinforce it? (Note to teacher: multiple perspectives on these questions are valid and students may debate these points; for example, some may argue the nurses were fulfilling a traditional female caretaker role, while others may point out that, as trained workers serving in a war zone, nurses were pushing the boundaries of what were traditional gender roles for the early twentieth century.)





## Lesson II

### A U.S. American Nurse in France: A Primary Source Analysis

**1.** Hand out transcribed letters by “Mademoiselle Miss,” a young American woman who volunteered for service with the French Red Cross as a nurse in a French military hospital. (See lesson attachment: **Excerpts from “Mademoiselle Miss”: Letters from an American Girl Serving with the Rank of Lieutenant in a French Army Hospital at the Front.**) The anonymous author wrote these letters to her family between September 1915 and January 1916. In them she described the significant work she accomplished on the wards despite primitive and trying conditions, and reflected on her growing sense of purpose and civic engagement as the months passed by. The letters were published in the U.S. with the cooperation of her family, and used to build public support for the American Fund for French Wounded and the Allied cause more generally.

Ask students to read the letters once through individually, annotating for significant details, repeated themes, and unfamiliar vocabulary. Have them compare their responses with a partner or small group using these questions for guidance:

- Who was the author? For whom was she writ-

ing? What were her purposes in writing?

- What do students know about the time and place that might help explain meaning or significant details in the letters?
- What details (about professional role, physical deprivation, relations with male co-workers, effects of war, etc.) reveal the author’s views and beliefs?
- What were some notable choices the author made about language and style (e.g., juxtaposing words like “golden,” “radiant,” and “delights” with phrases connoting death and damage)? What do you infer from these choices?

Have students conclude by discussing these summative questions as a class:

- What does this document say overall about one female volunteer’s experience of war front service?
- If your class completed Lesson I, *Images and Ideas about Women Volunteers*, invite them to compare and contrast the letters with the photographs. How do the impressions of this document compare/contrast with those from the photographs?

#### Photograph

A ward in the American Ambulance Hospital in Neuilly-sur-Seine, France. Courtesy of the Boston Medical Library in the Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine.



## Lesson III

### Women's Volunteerism and Suffrage in the U.S.

In this lesson, students will explore connections between women's volunteer service and women's suffrage through a case study pertaining to female physicians in World War I.

**1.** Review with students their background knowledge about U.S. women's fight for the vote during Woodrow Wilson's presidency and the First World War. They should read this very short article linking women's suffrage and women's war service to fill in gaps: "[A Voice in Their Own Government: Suffrage and WWI.](#)"

Remind students that during the war period, some U.S. women seized upon volunteer service as a route to greater political equality and/or professional access. The wartime campaign of female physicians to gain full professional and civic equality is a case in point.

**2.** Share the document excerpted below from *The Woman's Medical Journal*. (See lesson attachment: **Excerpts from *The Woman's Medical Journal*, July 1918.**) Distribute a copy to each student.

Explain that women in medicine, like those in other health care fields, made notable professional and organizational strides in the years surrounding U.S. involvement in World War I, even as they faced numerous obstacles to their full participation in their professions. Female physicians in the neutrality period advanced humanitarian health care for refugees and civilians, especially women and children, and worked in military hospitals for France and other nations. Female physician-leaders organized and ran full hospital units in Europe, including the all-female American Women's Hospitals and Women's Overseas Hospitals. Many of the nation's leading female physicians were also activists and leaders in the U.S. women's suffrage

**Photograph**  
Suffragette and Chief Marshal Portia Willis FitzGerald (right) and other participants of a women's peace parade down Fifth Avenue in New York City on August 29, 1914. George Grantham Bain Collection. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.



movement. The National American Woman Suffrage Association, for example, the main coalition agitating for suffrage in the United States, was official sponsor of the Women's Overseas Hospitals.

For the **first** reading of the document, students should work with these historical analysis questions, taking individual notes:

- Who is the author or producer of this source?
- What type of source is this? When, where, and why was it created?
- Do you think it is a reliable source? Why/why not? What biases might be embedded in the source?
- What connections or references do you find here that relate to your previous historical knowledge?

For the **second** reading, ask students to work in small groups and answer the following text-specific questions. The questions also appear in a student hand-out. (See lesson attachment: **Making a Claim about Female Physicians in World War I.**)

1. What evidence do you find of female physicians volunteering for their nation's service during

World War I?

2. What evidence indicates that female physicians were frustrated by governmental or societal limitations placed upon them?
3. What tactics do you observe women employing to push for greater equality in this document?
4. What rhetorical or argumentative strategies do you notice women using to assert their claim to equality?

For concluding class discussion, ask students to pool their ideas and respond to these questions:

- What could this case study of women physicians in the First World War tell us about the outlook of women volunteers more generally? In what ways, on the other hand, could female physicians be atypical?
- What insights do you now have to respond to the essential question—*How would you characterize the relationship between women's volunteer service and women's campaigns for political and professional equality during World War I?*—that you did not have before?



# Extension Activity

## Rights for Women around the Globe: A Century of Change

1. Prepare your students for this research activity with the following directions:

Work individually or in a small group. For a country of your choice outside of the United States, answer these questions using the interactive map/timeline below from *The Guardian* (and any additional sources you like):

- When did women in your target country win the right to vote?
- What connection do you discern between World War I and women's suffrage in your target country?
- Do women in your selected country today have strong or weak access to political, social, or economic equality? Cite two to three points of evidence to support your answer.

2. Resources for this exercise include:

- [“International Women’s Day: Political Rights around the World Mapped.”](#) *The Guardian*, interactive map and timeline
- [“Women and WWI—Feminist and Non-Feminist Women: Between Collaboration and Pacifist Resistance.”](#) FirstWorldWar.com
- Joshua S. Goldstein, [“The Women of World War I.”](#)

from *War and Gender: How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa* (Cambridge University Press, 1997)

Additional resources are available through the [Teacher Toolkit](#).

3. Help students add their research findings to a digital map such as [Google Earth](#). What observations do they make from the map? What factors might explain the very different pace of women's enfranchisement in different places?



**Global Classroom Tip**  
Lead a discussion as a group comparing the pace of women's enfranchisement in the U.S. with that of your own country.

**Photograph**  
Red Cross nurses standing behind guns at an Army and Navy Tea Room during a fundraiser for the Actor's Fund. *George Grantham Bain Collection*. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.



# ATTACHMENTS

The following pages contain printable attachments meant for classroom distribution. In some cases, multiple copies should be printed. Pages should be printed single-sided. Please consult the directions provided under Lessons I, II, and III for more information.

**EXCERPTS FROM**  
***The Woman's Committee: United States Council of National Defense.***  
***An Interpretative Report***

**CHAPTER I**  
**Creation of the Committee**

At the first session of the Committee, May 2-9 [1917], a tentative Plan of Work was drawn up ... and presented to the Council of National Defense for approval. [Approved July 5, 1917.] There was recommended certain departments of work, ... a department of Food Production and Home Economics was to look after whatever related to the production or saving of foodstuffs, ... a department of Food Administration was created to cooperate with the [federal] Food Administration in reaching the women of the country ... Women in Industry was the name of a department to cooperate on the work planned and executed by the [federal] Department of Labor ... A department of Child Welfare was to be conducted with the advice and cooperation of the Chief of the Children's Bureau, ... The program of the Health and Recreation Department was to bring the forces of local women to the assistance of the Commission on Training Camp Activities [to create a homelike and moral environment for soldiers and sailors on military bases] ... That of Educational Propaganda was to stimulate patriotism through meetings, pageants [and] parades ...

As will be seen, this comprehensive and ambitious program had no less an objective than to tie the women of the country to every activity and interest of the Government. ... It is generally recognized that the greatest duty of women in war times is to keep social conditions as normal as possible. At that day when the sound of war preparations had almost drowned every other note from the land, the Woman's Committee sounded its bugle of reminder, both to the Government and to the women as to this last but important duty of women: To keep the home fires going, while the men fight for the country's defense.



# U.S. AMERICAN WOMEN VOLUNTEERS IN WORLD WAR I

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Gallery Item #1

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**American nurses and doctors working on a patient at the  
American Ambulance Hospital in Neuilly-sur-Seine, France in 1915.**



Gallery Item

*Courtesy of the Boston Medical Library in the Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine*

# U.S. AMERICAN WOMEN VOLUNTEERS IN WORLD WAR I

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Gallery Item #2

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**Salvation Army volunteer Stella Young holding a container  
filled with doughnuts for American soldiers.**



Gallery Item  
*Courtesy of the Salvation Army Archives*



# U.S. AMERICAN WOMEN VOLUNTEERS IN WORLD WAR I

Gallery Item #3

**Aviator Lieutenant C. W. White, Miss Marion White in an airplane,  
preparing to drop Liberty Loan circulars over Chicago in 1918.**



Gallery Item  
Courtesy of the Chicago History Museum, DN-0070522

# U.S. AMERICAN WOMEN VOLUNTEERS IN WORLD WAR I

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Gallery Item #4

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**Mrs. W. K. Vanderbilt with an American Field Service (AFS) ambulance driver at a dressing station near the battle of Verdun in August 1916. Mrs. Vanderbilt wore the uniform of a nurse while touring the front with an AFS unit, and wrote a promotional booklet titled *My Trip to the Front* about her experience when she returned home.**



Gallery Item

Courtesy of the Archives of the American Field Service and AFS Intercultural Programs



# U.S. AMERICAN WOMEN VOLUNTEERS IN WORLD WAR I

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Gallery Item #5

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**Army nurses at the American Red Cross Hospital No. 1 in  
Neuilly-sur-Seine, France, after the United States joined the war.**



Gallery Item  
*Courtesy of the National Library of Medicine*

# U.S. AMERICAN WOMEN VOLUNTEERS IN WORLD WAR I

Gallery Item #6

**Girl Scouts sewing for the war effort with members  
of the American Red Cross in 1917.**



**Gallery Item**  
*Harris & Ewing Collection, Courtesy of the Library of  
Congress Prints and Photographs Division*



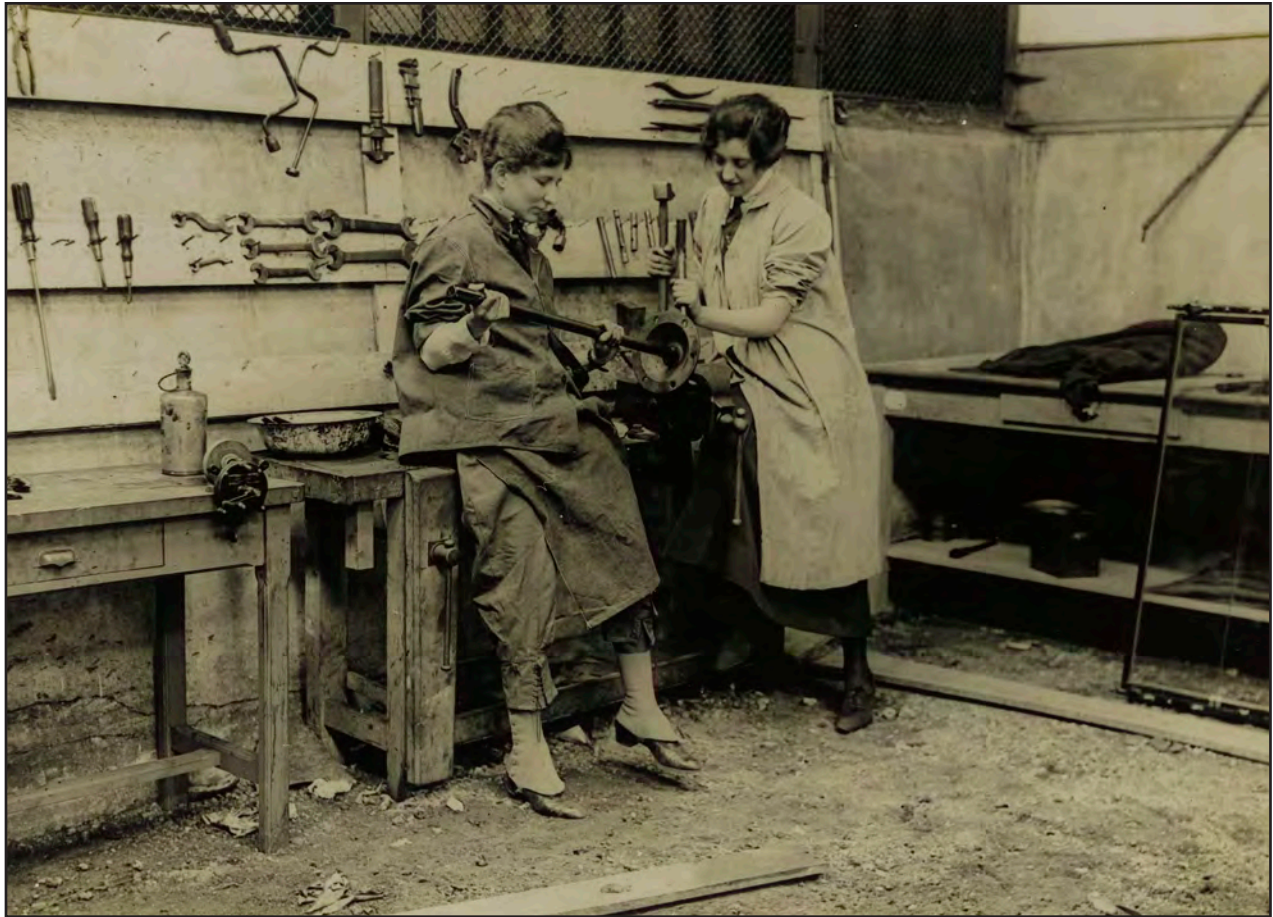
# U.S. AMERICAN WOMEN VOLUNTEERS IN WORLD WAR I

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Gallery Item #7

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**Miss Hughes and Miss Wilde, volunteers for the American Committee for Devastated France, in the organization's garage.**



Gallery Item

*Courtesy of the Musée Franco-Américain du Château de Blérancourt  
©RMN-Grand Palais/Art Resource, NY*

# U.S. AMERICAN WOMEN VOLUNTEERS IN WORLD WAR I

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Gallery Item #8

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**American Red Cross volunteers Luella Barton (left) and Beth  
Dysart (right) in West Trier, Germany.**



Gallery Item

*Courtesy of the Archives of the American Field Service and AFS Intercultural Programs*



**EXCERPTS FROM**  
***“Mademoiselle Miss”: Letters from an American Girl Serving with the Rank of Lieutenant in a French Army Hospital at the Front***

**September 20, 1915**

The changing scenes of the last few hours keep dancing before my eyes like spots when one has looked at the sun ... The lovely vista of the Marne Valley, ... the arrival in a station crowded with men and munitions, our billeting each in a separate house in the village, supper off tin plates in a long dingy barrack with desperate wounded behind the partition, ... and a night spent in trying to lie flat in a huge feather bed, listening between rapid dreams to the booming of the guns,--these are the elements. In fact, everything goes splendidly so far. I'm a soldier now, and get my orders straight from General Headquarters. I seize the shining moment this golden afternoon [to write] while they finish putting the roof on this new hospital. The wounded may arrive in two days, and tomorrow we shall be tremendously busy with beds and compresses.

**September 28, 1915**

I can't let you go longer without news ... I have installed the whole place, from base-boards up, as a very up-to-date looking operating room, sterilized, and in short very neat and complete. The surgeon is very satisfied. And now I have a huge favor to ask. Will you do a little for our soldiers? The cotton gauze here is scant. We use so much! And will you ship to me at once?

**October 2, 1915**

Work has begun in earnest. ... I dare not take the time from sleep for more than a hasty scrawl, but when one puts in twelve hours' work daily, one must guard jealously the other twelve. Actually for the first time in my life I begin to feel as a normal being should, in spite of the blood and anguish in which I move. I really am useful, that is all, and too busy to remember myself, past, present, or future. I have the operating ward, and have assisted the surgeon at 22 cases in two days. It is perhaps the most important post in the hospital, requiring a head set square. The surgeon, one of the most particular in the Army, hasn't yet corrected me. I have also been directing the sterilization, and yesterday afternoon the Head Surgeon told me he wished me to take charge of the seriously wounded of the celebrated Dr. Tuffier [French physician who pioneered a method to avoid infection of shattered limbs].

**October 18, 1915**

I have an hour of liberty—an unheard-of luxury. I never dreamed what real work was before, but now I know, and am learning mighty quick to accommodate myself to the revelation, --never to take two steps when I can arrive in one, never to bend over the low beds if I can sit ... It is a marvelous life; and strangely enough, despite all the tragedy, I call it a healthy one.

## November 28, 1915

The Germans are trying to take back Tahure, and the guns, silent these last days, have been sounding with a dread persistency across the frozen miles.

...

You will like to hear of the living skeleton with wounds in back and hands and shoulder that they brought me filthy and dead from another pavilion [hospital section]. That was nine days ago. I diagnosed him as a case of neglect and slow starvation, and treated him accordingly—malted milk, eggs, soap, and alcohol to the fore. His dressings [bandages] took one and a half hours every day, and all nourishment given a few drops at a time, ... for he was almost too weak to lift an eyelid, much less a finger. This morning he actually laughed with me and tried to clench his fist inside the dressings to show me how strong he was. He's saved, and that makes up for much.

Cotton, gauze and needles and gloves have finally all come—the last a week ago—a gift from the very gods all of it. ... I breathe freely to think that at the next attack there will be a pavilion in the Hospital fit to receive the wounded.

## January 16, 1916

I have been the radiant recipient of a thousand yards of gauze, 100 pounds of absorbent cotton, six needles, ... six dozen pairs of gloves, and 25 lbs. of ether [following a major donation shipment from volunteer donors in the United States]. All at once America has become ... a Promised Land, flowing with ether and cotton and all sorts of surgical delights ... I find myself growing patriotic, to a degree I never knew in former days. ... Some day I may be a better American.

### Back page of book:

The American Fund for French Wounded, organized to purchase and forward Hospital Supplies to the Front, working in closest cooperation with the French Government, is able to make deliveries within a few weeks from date of shipment.

Subscriptions will be gratefully received at either of these addresses:

MISS EDITH BANGS, Chairman,  
American Fund for French Wounded  
306 Boylston Street, Boston

MISS ANNE MORGAN, Treasurer,  
American Fund for French Wounded  
5 East 37th Street, New York City

Source  
*"Mademoiselle Miss": Letters from an American Girl Serving with the Rank of Lieutenant in a French Army Hospital at the Front* (Boston: W. A. Butterfield, 1916).

## EXCERPTS FROM *The Woman's Medical Journal, July 1918*

### THE AMERICAN PRESS AND MEDICAL WOMAN IN WAR WORK BY BERTHA VAN HOUSEN, MD, CHICAGO, IL

No medical woman, however much she may complain as to the injustices of conditions brought to her by the war, can say that she has not been treated as a favorite sister by the American press. From January 1 to July 1, 1918, the clippings from the American press regarding women physicians would fill a book two feet high and two feet square ... and ... [not] one word ... of discouragements or ridicule ...

...

The Portland *Journal* writes:

#### THE INTRUDERS

"Women physicians are not yet welcome in the Army. ...

Rejection of women physicians who applied for Army commissions was on the ground that they are 'ineligible.' Presumably their ineligibility is due to the fact that they are women. If so, it will not always be so. Moldy conservatism will have to give way in time ... Some of us can remember when the bare idea of a 'lady doctor' seemed preposterous to us then as the Army doctress is now to atavistic generals. But women doctors are here. There seems to be no lack of efficiency in their diagnosis or treatment of cases in spite of the fact that they wear skirts."

...

The St. Joseph (Mo.) *Gazette* ... brings up the question of the rank and title of women physicians in war work.

"... Perhaps there will be no Major Marys, or Captain Catherines, or Lieutenant Louises, but the feminine members of the Medical Department of the Army will know in their womanly hearts that they are entitled to be addressed thus. And why not really commission them and give them the formal titles?"

...

There is no really good reason for denying women doctors in the service of their country equal rights and equal privileges."

...

The Portland (Oregon) *Journal* of May 5 prints an interesting account ...

#### WOMEN DOCTORS FIND OPPORTUNITY DOES NOT "KNOCK"

"With a curt 'not eligible' Surgeon-General George Gorgas of the United States Army has dashed the aspirations of four Portland women physicians who have applied at Vancouver barracks for commissions as medical officers.

... They motored to the base hospital and stated their ambitions to the major in charge. He had no answer ready, although a long debate was held. He finally volunteered to telegraph General Gorgas for the ultimate word. The reply came next day, and the major sent copies by mail to the women who had called upon him.

The four called at the post to enlist their learning and skill in response to repeated calls from the



Army for 'more doctors.'

'With their breasts heaving with patriotism women doctors must read ever and again the repeated calls from the front for doctors and more doctors,' explained one of the women, 'but they are not accepted. ...'

'Just why can't we go?' we asked, but got no answer. 'We could relieve for service at the front hundreds of doctors in the base hospitals, performing their duties, dressing wounds, and caring for the sick precisely as we are doing at home. Women may go as nurses, as social and canteen workers, but as doctors—no!'

...

'We women meant business. We had a sneaking hunch that we were not wanted, so we went over ready and armed to take the examinations, don the uniforms and salute the privates—just as though we had never dreamed of defeat.'

...

The opinion of many of our leading thinkers among men and women have been gratifying in the extreme. Miss Jeanette Rankin expresses herself in the *Washington Times*, March 29, 1918, as follows:

#### **SHOULD BE OFFICERS**

"'American women physicians working in military hospitals behind the firing line in France should have the same military rank as men performing the same tasks,' is the opinion of Miss Jeanette Rankin, member of Congress from Montana. She says that she intends to introduce a bill in Congress, designed to give women physicians and surgeons the same military rank as that accorded men in the medical officers reserve corps."

...

#### **DOCTORS WHO SAILED FOR FRANCE IN APRIL**

The following doctors sailed for some port in France on April 16, 1918:

DR. HAZEL DELL BONNESS, 704 Pine St., Stillwater, Minn. Degrees—B.S., M.D., University of Minnesota, 1913.

DR. JESSIE WESTON FISHER, Cherry Hill, Md. Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania, 1893; specially trained in serology, bacteriology, psychiatry.

DR. ELSIE REED MITCHELL, 404 Bank Building, Berkeley, Cal. M.D. University of Colorado, 1897. Class of work done—Medicine, surgery, and obstetrics. Speaks French and German.

Source

*The Woman's Medical Journal* 28, no. 7 (July 1918)

# MAKING A CLAIM ABOUT FEMALE PHYSICIANS IN WORLD WAR I

1. What evidence do you find of female physicians volunteering for their nation's service during World War I?

2. What evidence indicates that female physicians were frustrated by governmental or societal limitations placed upon them?

3. What tactics do you observe women employing to push for greater equality in this document?

4. What rhetorical or argumentative strategies do you notice women using to assert their claim to equality?

Make a claim: How did the volunteer war service of U.S. female physicians connect to the campaign for women's suffrage in the United States?