During the first year of its publication, *The Lily* (the first newspaper in the United States targeted directly to women) ran the following, in its September 1 edition:

“Is it wrong to buy alcohol to make pickles?” asked a minister of the gospel of a D. of T. a few days since.

“Yes,” was the unhesitating reply.

“Alcohol is good in its place, and I don’t see why a person should abstain from the proper use of an article because of its abuse,” was the rejoinder.

“Good pickles can easily be made without alcohol, and I doubt whether that would be the proper use if there be such a thing,” replied the lady. “I do not wish to be the judge of your conscience,” she continued, “but it would be wrong for me to make pickles with alcohol;” and the D. of T. passed on and left the conscientious man to his own reflections.

In about half an hour they accidentally met again just before the open window of another minister’s study.

“Brother——” called out Mr.——“ is it wrong to buy alcohol to make pickles.”

“No sir. I always buy whisky for pickles,” was the reply.

“I have had quite an argument with this sister,” remarked Mr.——“ and she says it is very wrong.”

“Most assuredly it is wrong,” said the lady, “and in buying alcohol for such purposes you give your influence to the Rum seller.

“Dear reader the above incident, occurred not long since; and we fear it is no uncommon occurrence even for a “Son” who does not like to carry a jug through the streets, to take a covered pail to the apothecary’s and buy alcohol for pickles. His neighbor, who does not see the difference between water added before and water added after the purchase, goes to the grogshop and buys whisky for the same purpose. He also is a Temperance man and is very careful to say he was induced to purchase because Mr.—— a Son of Temperance, made pickles with alcohol.” [Source: *The Lily*, September 1, 1849.]

The D. of T. referenced was a Daughter of Temperance. The Daughters of Temperance was a women’s auxiliary to the Sons of Temperance, a reform movement launched in 1842 in the United States to combat the common practice across all classes of American Society of imbibing alcohol throughout the normal day. Although modern readers may smile at the broad wink used to rationalize the purchase and use of alcohol, readers of *The Lily* would have been deeply concerned by the deception so readily accepted by these two members of the clergy, who ostensibly would be responsible for the virtuous health of the community. The article continues its chiding tone as follows:

“They say the article is used to make pickles,” says the Rum seller, “but I am not all sure that all the liquor goes into the pickle-barrel, he adds with a sneer.”
The anonymous author concludes with:

“Last summer I saw barrel after barrel of whiskey carried out of the village by farmers, and when I asked the cause of such extensive purchases, the reply was invariably, “They intend to make pickles, I suppose.”

Not a few Temperance people in the village bought smaller quantities for that purpose—yet they would not for the world give their influence on the wrong side. Did they not by those purchases encourage the Rum seller and the Manufacturer?” [Source: The Lily, September 1, 1849]

Amelia Bloomer was owner, publisher and editor of The Lily and while her name now is more frequently associated with dress reform, during the 19th century, she was a significant figure in social reform. Both the temperance movement and the suffrage movement benefited from her active engagement.

Born in 1818, Amelia Jenks Bloomer initially earned her living as a schoolteacher. At the age of 22, she married Dexter Bloomer, who was both an attorney and a newspaper editor. Amelia gained experience writing for his paper, the Seneca Falls County Courier, as they resided in New York. In 1848, she attended the Seneca Falls meeting on women’s rights and during the following year, she launched her own paper, The Lily. The publication included in its inaugural edition the following resolutions of purpose:

Resolved, That as woman suffers most deeply from the evils of intemperance, so ought she to feel the deepest interest in removing the evils from the land.

Resolved, That we view with abhorrence the traffic in strong drink, and we cannot but look upon those who are engaged in the business, as among the worst enemies to society, to virtue, and to religion; and that if murder and robbery be crimes of the deepest dye, so must also be that business, which kills not only the body but the soul.

Resolved, That we will not use it ourselves, or furnish it as an article of entertainment to our friends, and we call upon all the friends of Temperance to do the same.

Resolved, That we will use our influence in all suitable ways, to discourage the use of strong drink in the community, that we will not use it ourselves, or furnish it as an article of entertainment to our friends, and we call upon all the friends of Temperance to do the same.

The purpose of The Lily was to advocate for full abstinence from alcohol in American society and thereby eliminate a source of illness, domestic violence, and abuse.

In The History of Woman Suffrage, written by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Matilda Joslyn Gage and Susan B. Anthony, the close ties between the temperance movement and the crusade of the suffragists was noted in a speech by Matilda Joslyn Gage to an audience of male legislators:

“The city papers of the national capital, once bitterly opposed to all effort in this direction, now fully recognize the dignity of the demand, and have ceased to oppose it. One of these said, editorially, to-day, that the vast audiences assembling at our conventions, the large majority being women, and evidently in sympathy with the movement, were proof of the great interest women take in this subject, though many are too timid to openly make the demand. The woman’s Temperance movement began two years ago as a crusade of prayer and song, and the women engaged therein have now resolved themselves into a national organization, whose second convention, held in October last, numbering delegates from twenty-two States, almost unanimously passed a resolution demanding the ballot to aid them in their Temperance work. We who make our constant demand for suffrage, knew that these women were in process of education, and would soon be forced to ask for the key to all reform.” [Source: History of Woman Suffrage, Chapter XXVII, pp. 10-11.]

Captured in that quote is the critical point that the driving motivation behind gaining the vote for women was the belief that doing so would result in achieving the goal of the temperance movement. Amelia Bloomer further influenced the Suffrage Movement when she introduced the two pillars of that movement, Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton to one another on the street near her home.

[Source: Image of Matilda Joslyn Gage, Public Domain.]
D.C. Bloom in his 1907 work, *The Life and Writings of Amelia Bloomer*, quotes Bloomer’s account of the meeting

“It was in the spring of 1850 that I introduced Susan B. Anthony to Mrs. Stanton. Miss Anthony had come to attend an anti-slavery meeting in Seneca Falls, held by George Thompson and William Lloyd Garrison and was my guest. Returning from the meeting, we stopped at the street corner and waited for Mrs. Stanton, and I gave the introduction which has resulted in a life-long friendship. Afterwards we called together at Mrs. Stanton’s house and the way was opened for future intercourse between them. It was, as Mrs. Stanton says in her history, an eventful meeting that henceforth in a measure shaped their lives. Neither would have done what she did without the other. Mrs. Stanton had the intellectual and Susan the executive ability to carry forward the movement then recently inaugurated. Without the push of Miss Anthony, Mrs. Stanton would probably never have gone abroad into active life or achieved half she has done; and without the brains of Mrs. Stanton, Miss Anthony would never have been so largely known to the world by name and deeds. They helped and strengthened each other, and together they have accomplished great things for women and humanity. The writer is glad for the part she had in bringing two such characters together.” [Source: *The Life and Writings of Amelia Bloomer*, D.C. Bloomer, pages 54-55].

To participate in such Temperance work was seen as well within the scope of womanly duties. In the same year of 1850, *The Lily* carried an article about the temperance work of ordinary ladies in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Amidst a picnic spread on cloth covered tables, “upon which the animal, vegetable, pie and cake kingdoms were most faithfully represented”, attendees heard from a variety of impassioned speakers:

“Miss A. Preston described in glowing colors the danger of indulging the animal appetite, and the duty of restraint, and closed with a beautiful appeal on behalf of temperance, to the higher feelings of humanity. Mr. C. Darlington alluded to the necessity of legal restraint, canvassing the most expedient plan of obtaining a prohibitory law. Mr. E. Brown spoke of the advancement of reforms, the capabilities and sphere of women, and the healthful influence of rightly directed intellectual and moral effort.”

Mr. Brown’s emphasis on the capabilities and influence of women is an indication of the social expectation of the period that, if permitted, women could and would construct a morally superior environment to the benefit of all. Later in 1850, the editor of *The Lily* would further underscore the uneven standard established by organizations such as the Sons of Temperance to model and enforce the behaviors they knew to be right:

“Every man is in duty bound to be a sober man; and while he who so far degrades his manhood as to stoop to the debasing practice of selling or drinking the intoxicating beverage, is deserving of the rebukes and scorn of the temperance community, the temperance man can claim no credit for being what his duty to his God, to himself, and to his fellow men, requires him to be. — Temperance men have a work to perform which requires their unceasing labor. Their joining th is or that order or organization, amounts to nothing, if they carry not with them strength and zeal, and a hearty determination to fight till the last for the deliverance of their country from the blighting curse which rests upon it. “Sons of Temperance” have made greater professions than others and placed themselves in a position which draws all eyes to them. They must not complain then, if, when they abandon their principles, and desert the standard they have raised so high, the people should begin to enquire what they are doing, and what they propose to do, towards putting a stop to the cursed traffic.” [Source: *The Lily*, November 1850]

Over the course of the following decade (1850-60), the energies applied to achieving a broad agenda of social reform -- instilling habits of temperance, the right of women to vote -- were overshadowed by the divisions arising from issues of slavery. In the wake of the Mexican American War and the subsequent expansion westward, pressures associated with admission of new states to the Union as being either “free” or “slave” meant that attention was significantly directed towards the abolitionist cause. At the same time, temperance-minded legislators such as U.S. House of Representative Mr. Brown’s emphasis on the capabilities and influence of women is an indication of the social expectation of the period that, if permitted, women could and would construct a morally superior environment to the benefit of all. Later in 1850, the editor of *The Lily* would further underscore the uneven standard established by organizations such as the Sons of Temperance to model and enforce the behaviors they knew to be right:

“All through the scenes of a night-session of Congress do not, always, differ, in all respects, from the scenes of a dram shop. I was present, a part of the night-session, in which the final vote on the Nebraska bill was taken; and I was well convinced, that Congress should avoid all unnecessary night-sessions, until Congress loves temperance more and rum less. Never did I witness more gross drunkenness, than I witnessed on that occasion. I had to remain until eleven o’clock - for I had to remain, until I could record my vote against the pro-slavery bill. After that, I hurried away, full of shame and sorrow.” [Source: *The National Era*, August 1854, “Gerritt Smith to his Constituents.”]

The Civil War minimized most temperance activity, due at least in part to the need for the respective governments to collect revenues from taxes on alcohol for use in funding the war. However, once that conflict had ended, those most committed to social reform resumed their drive.

Susan B. Anthony wrote in her weekly publication, *The Revolution* launched in 1868, of the continuing influence of alcohol on politicians. “It is truly shameful that to all the other calamity of this poor country, it must afflict itself with drunken men in all its high places. It seems bent on destruction in spite of all the forbearance of God and the efforts of good men and women. The Chicago Tribune, certainly good Republican authority, says in reference to Senator Yates (who has just made a confession to his constituents which no sound, sober and truly sane man could ever make), he has other vicious and debasing habits which he ought to reform, and adds that it would be in better taste to reform once, without issuing a proclamation, than to be continually issuing proclamations and never reforming. The Chicago Times (Democratic) is also very bitter upon Mr. Yates and his habits and his pledges. The temperance people, too, continue to be dissatisfied; and the Senator will evidently have to keep his promise a good while before he wins back the good opinion of the State he represents.” [Source: *The Revolution*, May 7, 1868]

Anthony’s commitment to the temperance movement however meant that she would not accept the advertising of alcohol and other spirits in the pages of *The Revolution*; the newspaper closed after only two years of publication. When voting rights for women failed to be included in the wording of Fifteenth Amendment granting the vote to black males, accepted in 1870, that failure split long standing alliances between those working in the interests of abolitionism and those crusading for other social reforms.
Even that setback did not discourage the Temperance crusaders who continued to emphasize the need for women to vote to bring about their goal. In the early 1870’s, a Missouri suffragist, Virginia Minor, challenged the interpretation of the meaning of the Fifteenth Amendment when as a woman, she attempted to register herself as a voter in St. Louis. Both the Supreme Court of Missouri as well as the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that the Constitution did not specifically extend the right to women. Minor could not vote until the Constitution was in some way amended.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony wrote of the impact that ruling had on the Women’s Movement in Chapter XXVIII of their History of Woman Suffrage: “But when the final decision of the Supreme Court in the case of Virginia L. Minor made all agitation in that direction hopeless, the National Association returned to its former policy, demanding a sixteenth amendment. The women generally concluded that if in truth there was no protection for them in the original constitution nor the late amendments, the time had come for some clearly-defined recognition of their citizenship by a sixteenth amendment.” The sixteenth amendment was to be specific as to the rights of women.”

In the same chapter, a few pages on, the following note appears: “ELIZABETH BOYNTON HARBERT of the Chicago Inter-Ocean, spoke on the temperance work being done in Chicago,” (pg. 72) in connection with the advocacy of the sixteenth amendment and on page 104, there is reference to the need of women to vote specifically in the interests of the temperance movement:

“Immediately after this hearing Mr. Frye of Maine, in presenting in the House of Representatives the petitions of 30,000 persons asking the right of women to vote upon the question of temperance, referred in a very complimentary manner to Mrs. Hooker’s argument, to which he had just listened. Upon this prayer a hearing was granted to the president and ex-president of the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Frances E. Willard and Annie E. Wittenmyer.” [Source: History of Woman Suffrage, Chapter XXVIII, pp. 57-149.]

Frances E. Willard was one of the primary organizers of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) in 1874. Just as Susan B. Anthony had used a newspaper to promote her ideals and advocate for her cause, Willard used a similar model in launching the WCTU weekly publication, The Union Signal. The growth and importance of the WCTU in the various states should not be underestimated. Of one activist in the state of Kansas, Stanton and Cady wrote “Mrs. Clara Hoffman, of Kansas City, is State president, and a woman of great force. She, as well as other leading lights in the Women’s Christian Temperance Union, is strongly advocating woman suffrage as a sine qua non in the temperance work.”

As a side note, it was a matter of pride in the State of Kansas that they had been one of the early states to pass legislation in the interest of temperance. In one of the many county histories included in the Accessible Archives collection, Clara Francis, the librarian of the Kansas State Historical Society documented that pride in 1918: “Prohibition in Kansas was no sudden uprising of a people against the liquor traffic; no movement of a few fanatics, long haired men and short haired women; nor should it be attributed to a puritanical desire to legislate morals into a state. Rather it was a crystallization of the slowly developed sentiment of a majority of the people in Kansas into an expression on the dram shop laws under which the liquor traffic was operated.

That Kansas should have been the first state to incorporate a prohibitory amendment in her constitution is not unique. She was zealously striving for a better liquor law; she had the benefit of the experience of other states. And furthermore, she was young; she had no traditions to violate and few precedents to follow. With her the times were plastic. One of her enemies was the liquor traffic, and with a vision far beyond her years she started out to destroy it.

Between the passage of the prohibitory amendment and the vote upon it, nearly two years elapsed. And they were two years of strife, each faction contending vigorously for its own belief. There was not a household in which prohibition and anti-prohibition wore not discussed; there was not a pulpit from which the principles of temperance were not heard; there was not a platform whereon the advocates of one side or the other had not expounded its views. The newspapers argued the question pro and con, sometimes with extreme bitterness and sometimes with tranquil earnestness and justice, desiring only the “greatest good to the greatest number.”

...The vote was the final word of the people of the whole state, not of any one locality, nor of any one nativity, for it came from a population that had been drawn from nearly every quarter of the United States...” [Source: American County Histories, Kansas: A Standard History of Kansas and Kansans - Volume II, Chapter LIV: “Prohibition in Kansas,” William E. Connelley. Lewis Publishing Company, 1918, pp. 788]

Willard’s presidency of the W.C.T.U represented a dedicated organizational approach to the interests of the temperance movement. Her approach was a campaign to achieve the right of women to vote on local issues (as women had already succeeded, particularly in the Western states, in winning the right to vote at a municipal or state level on specific issues.) From Chapter XXXV of Cady and Stanton’s History of Woman Suffrage: “Let us exchange congratulations on this occasion, that so much has been gained toward the final triumph of our cause.

You will remember when this association was last in session, July 1878, that the bill giving the women of New Hampshire the right to vote on the public-school questions, was pending in our legislature...The present degree of progress indicates the fact that we are not to obtain the full recognition of our rights at one bound, but that they are coming step by step...Why, no sooner had Massachusetts, following the example of New Hampshire, obtained the school ballot for women, than the Woman’s Christian Temperance Unions all over the State were a unit for the temperance ballot, and the past year have had their agents canvassing the State in the interest of school suffrage and “home protection.”

All who read the reports last winter of Frances E. Willard’s labors in Illinois in behalf of her Home Protection bill (for it originated with her), of the list of petitioners of both sexes she secured and took to Springfield, of the delegation of women who accompanied her there to advocate her bill, must acknowledge the educating force of all such untiring devotion for the right to vote.” [Source: History of Woman Suffrage, Chapter XXXV, pp. 377.]
Willard envisioned a global temperance movement and embarked on an international tour to launch the World’s Women’s Christian Temperance Union. In that effort, she was introduced to Lady Henry Somerset, a woman of extraordinary wealth as well as position in England. Somerset served as President of the British Women’s Temperance Association and became a vital long term-partner for Willard in establishing international cooperation for the movement.

A sense of the glamour and importance of Lady Somerset was documented in an 1892 article appearing in Godey’s Lady’s Book:

“The duty lying nearest her was the welfare of a large tenantry. At the very threshold of her care for these people she was confronted with the drink problem. This made her a temperance woman and worker. In 1885, in the little village of Ledbury, at her castle gates, she signed the pledge with forty of her tenants. She had large possessions in the east of London as well as in the beautiful hills of Kent that we have described, her tenants in the city numbering one hundred thousand. Over these she felt her heart stirring like that of a mother, and she, who had been the light of the West End drawing-rooms, now went to the London missions to seek and save those that are lost. Lady Henry became one of the chief supporters of the great work undertaken by Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, in St. James Hall. She went to him and offered to receive into her country home some of the destitute souls in the slums of Soho; she gave fetes to probably ten thousand poor people at a time; so Eastnor Castle had new visitors.

Mrs. Hannah Whitall Smith seems to have been the connecting link between Lady Henry Somerset and the British Women’s Temperance Association, of which she is President (and therefore Vice-President of the World’s W.C.T.U.). They had never met, when Mrs. Smith went to Ledbury, a year or two ago, to give a series of Bible Readings. Here they communed concerning the things of the Kingdom, and each discovered in the other a kindred spirit. When God led Lady Henry into this wide sphere, he touched her lips with a coal from off the altars of inspiration. There is something fresh and unackneyed about her expressions. She comes into the philanthropies from another sphere and has learned none of the accustomed phrases. She takes broad views of the situation and is not afraid to express herself on the current movements of the day. One of her famous phrases is, “All reformers are stoned until they succeed;” another runs as follows: “She who is life-giver ought to sit among the lawgivers,” and another: “It is the most salient characteristic of our time that the existence of evil is no longer considered necessary.”

Invited by Miss Frances E. Willard, President of the World’s W.C.T.U., escorted by Mrs. Hannah Whitall Smith, and accompanied by her son, now eighteen years of age, Henry Somers Somerset and his accomplished tutor, Arthur H. Pollen, A.M., Lady Henry Somerset came to America last year, remaining nearly seven months. She visited all our large cities and spoke to immense audiences on the work of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union. She gave the annual sermon in Tremont Temple, Boston, before the eighteenth convention of that society, and was made Vice-President-at-large of the World’s W.C.T.U. at its meeting in Faneuil Hall in November last. She also spoke before the ecumenical council of the M.E. Church in Metropolitan Church, Washington, D.C. … she became, with Miss Willard and Miss Mary Allen West, editor of the Union Signal, the organ of the white-ribbon movement of the world and furnished for that paper a most unique series of character sketches.”

[Source: Isabel, Lady Henry Somerset, Godey’s Lady’s Book, December 1892.]

Lady Henry’s wealth and generous financial donations to the W.C.T.U would eventually create a public relations issue for Willard’s leadership of the organization, as allowing an inappropriate amount of influence of the British organization on the American cause. At the same time, there is no doubt that without that support, the World W.C.T.U. would have foundered.

While primarily focused on the temperance movement, The World’s WCTU (WWCTU) was also concerned with other women’s issues such as domestic violence and prostitution. A number of International Conventions were held throughout the 1890s in major world capitals and in conjunction with other major events, such as the Chicago World’s Fair.

Referring back to the anecdote which opened this article, alcohol in the 19th century as a household expenditure had both its positive as well as negative uses. It took enormous bravery for women in the 19th century to take on well-established institutions of Church and State to change habitual practices of the time. The activities of these women in the temperance movement had a mixed set of impacts. Their work in ensuring that women ultimately received the right to vote was finalized in 1920 with the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. In the same year, the Eighteenth Amendment prohibited the sale of “intoxicating beverages” but proved less of a success. A dramatic rise in violent crime and risk to the general welfare of American citizens resulted in its repeal in 1933 with the adoption of the 21st Amendment. Daily life in the United States was dramatically changed by the likes of Amelia Bloomer, Susan B. Anthony, Frances E. Willard and even Lady Henry Somerset. Much of that work is only visible through the primary source materials digitized by and housed on Accessible Archives.

Works Consulted:

The Life and Writings of Amelia Bloomer, D.C. Bloomer, Arena Publishing Company, 1895.

Last Call: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition, Daniel Okrent, Scribner, 2010

Accessible Archives Collections Used in Preparing This White Paper

Accessible Archives provides diverse primary source materials reflecting broad views across American history and culture have been assembled into comprehensive databases. The following collections were utilized in composing this white paper.

**African American Newspapers:**
This collection of African American newspapers contains a wealth of information about cultural life and history during the 19th and early 20th century and is rich with first-hand reports of the major events and issues of the day. The collection also provides a great number of early biographies, vital statistics, essays and editorials, poetry and prose, and advertisements all of which embody the African-American experience. These newspapers are included: **The Christian Recorder, Weekly Advocate/The Colored American, Frederick Douglass’ Paper, Freedom’s Journal, The National Era, The North Star, Provincial Freeman, The Freedmen’s Record, and The Negro Business League Herald.**

**American County Histories:**
American County Histories provide vivid portraits of people, places and events, putting a state’s local history into current context with the examination of demographic, social, economic, and cultural transformations. With over a million pages, this collection is the largest, most comprehensive collection of histories from all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The collection is available by region and individual state.

**Godey’s Lady’s Book:**
The magazine was intended to entertain, inform and educate the women of America. In addition to extensive fashion descriptions and plates, the early issues included biographical sketches, articles about mineralogy, handicrafts, female costume, the dance, equestrienne procedures, health and hygiene, recipes and remedies and the like. Gradually the periodical matured into an important literary magazine. Godey’s Lady’s Book also was a vast reservoir of handsome illustrations which included hand-colored fashion plates, mezzotints, engravings, woodcuts and, ultimately, chromolithographs – the Accessible Archives collection is the only one with the full color images.

**History of Woman Suffrage:**
A compilation of first-person accounts, History of Woman Suffrage has been described as “the fundamental primary source for the women’s suffrage campaign” and “the major, if not the definitive, collection of primary source materials on the nineteenth-century movement.” Edited by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony and Matilda Joslyn Gage, this history of the women’s suffrage movement, primarily in the United States, is a major source for primary documentation about the women’s suffrage movement from its beginnings through the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which enfranchised women in the U.S. in 1920.

**Women’s Suffrage Collection:**
The 19th Century women’s rights movement built upon the principles and experiences of other efforts to promote social justice and to improve the human condition particularly the Abolitionist Movement. After the Civil War, many abolitionist activists joined the Temperance and Women’s Suffrage movements. This collection covers much of the eighty years from the Seneca Conference to the ratification of the 19th Amendment. It includes newspapers that had some overlap between the temperance and women’s rights movements, as well as an anti-suffrage paper -- **The Lily, 1849-1856; National Citizen and Ballot Box, 1878-1881; The Revolution, 1868-1872; The New Citizen, 1909-1912; The Western Woman Voter, 1911-1913; and, The Remonstrance, 1890-1913.**