Becoming a Detective: Historical Case File #4—Pickets, Arrests, and Riots

At the request of the textbook committee your class has been asked to investigate whether Hazel Hunkins deserves to be included in the next edition of the textbook. This case cannot be solved without an understanding of the National Woman's Party's decision to commit civil disobedience. As a member of the commission selected to review the case, your job is to examine the following documents to better understand the details of this campaign.

- What did the NWP hope to gain from picketing despite threats of arrest?
- How were the picketers treated?

Step 1: Review Background Information

Members of the National Woman's Party began picketing the White House on January 10, 1917, demanding that President Wilson mobilize Congress to pass a woman's suffrage amendment. At first, the president tolerated the pickets. But, according to suffrage activist Doris Stevens,

"The manifestations of popular approval of suffrage, the constant stream of protests to the Administration against its delay nationally, and the shame of having women begging at its gates, could result in only one of two things. The Administration had little choice. It must yield to this pressure from the people or it must suppress the agitation, which was causing such interest. It must pass the amendment or remove the troublesome pickets.

"It decided to remove the pickets."

Stevens wrote about what came next in her book, *Jailed for Freedom*, which she published in 1920, just after the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution. According to Stevens, some officials proposed establishing "a military zone around the White House" on the assumption that "Women could not advance on drawn bayonets." Others proposed a raid on the National Woman's Party headquarters.

"Finally a decision was reached embodying the combined wisdom of all the various conferees. The Chief of Police, Major Pullman, was detailed to 'request' us to stop 'picketing' and to tell us that if we continued to picket, we would be arrested.

" 'We have picketed for six months without interference,' said Miss Paul [the leader of the National Woman's Party]. 'Has the law been changed?'

" 'No,' was the reply, 'but you must stop it.'

" 'But, Major Pullman, we have consulted our lawyers and know we have a legal right to picket.'

" 'I warn you, you will be arrested if you attempt to picket again.' " (From Doris Stevens, *Jailed for Freedom,* New York: Liveright Publishing, 1920, pp. 93-94. Available at https://books.google.com/books?id=ASoEAAAAYAAJ&source=gbs_navlinks_s)

Step 2: Investigate the Evidence

Expect to spend about ten minutes on each of the sources in your packet, available online here at http://mhs.mt.gov/education/women/HazelHunkins.

Exhibit 4-A Newspaper article: "Capital Police End Suffrage Picketing," *Daily Missourian*, June 22, 1917

Exhibit 4-B Photograph: "Police Arresting Picketers outside White House," August 1918, Harris and Ewing, photographer. Harris & Ewing Collection, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C. http://www.loc.gov/item/mnwp000301/

Exhibit 4-C Newspaper article: "Thirty-Seven Suffs Taken and Retaken," *Washington Herald*, August 13, 1918

Exhibit 4-D Typed document: Hazel Hunkins' response to charges in court (typed), Hazel Hunkins-Hallinan Papers, MC 532, box 61, folder 9, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute

For each source, answer all the questions on the Document Analysis Worksheet. **Note: You will be sharing these answers with your class in an "exhibit" format—so write legibly!**

Step 3: Search for Clues

1. List three things that you did NOT know about the woman's suffrage movement before reading these documents that you know now.

2. Did you find any instances when the documents contradicted one another? If so, describe them. Which account do you think is more accurate? Why?

3. How persuasive do you find Hazel Hunkins' response to the court charges? How persuasive do you think her contemporaries would have found it?

4. Do you believe this tactic—getting arrested—helped advance the suffrage cause? Why or why not?

Step 4: Crack the Case

Based on your analysis of the documents, and citing evidence to support your answer, please create a presentation to share with the other members of the textbook committee (your class) that answers the following questions:

1. What did the NWP hope to gain from picketing despite threats of arrest?

2. How were the pickets treated—by the police, by the crowd, by the court, by the press, by their fellow suffragists?

3. Whose perspective was not represented in the material you read? How might other perspectives change your analysis?

4. How does the material you analyzed relate to Hazel Hunkins and the committee's larger question: whether she should be included in the next edition of the textbook?

Make sure to include in your report:

- Specific examples! Quote from the documents.
- Information about where and how the documents contradicted each other (if this occurred) and how you decided which ones to trust.
- A list of any additional questions you still have that were left unanswered through your investigation.

After your presentation is complete, organize your material into an "exhibit" so your fellow committee members can easily access your evidence when creating their briefs. Your exhibit must include your answers to the following questions:

- What is the source called?
- Who created it?
- When was it created? How soon after the event it describes?
- Who was the audience for this document?
- Why was it created?
- Did you find evidence of bias or point of view? If so, what?
- How do these factors affect the source's credibility?

CAPITAL POLICE END SUFFRAGE PICKETING

Militants Are Forbidden to Flaunt Banners or Stand Near White House.

MANSION IS GUARDED

Measures Are Result of Conference With Leader of Suffragettes.

By United Press

WASHINGTON, June 22.—Police today put an end to all suffrage picketing at the White House following two days of near rioting. Major Pullman issued strict orders against permitting the militants to flaunt banners or stand near the White House.

Formal notice was served on the women at 9:30 o'clock this morning that they could not continue their picketing. Then Major Pullman strung a line of patrolmen and police women from the suffragette headquarters a block away from the White House up to and along the avenue which the mansion fronts.

"The period of leniency has passed," the major told the United Press after issuing this order. The order came as a result of a conference of Major Pullman, Inspector Grant and Miss Alice Paul, leader of the suffragetes. Just what Miss Paul told the officers was not made public.

Exhibit 4-A "Capital Police End Suffrage Picketing," *Daily Missourian*, June 22, 1917. Full page available at http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn89066314/1917-06-22/ed-1/seq-1.pdf

Historical Case File #4—Pickets, Arrests, and Riots

Exhibit 4-B "Police Arresting Picketers outside White House," August 1918, Harris and Ewing, photographer. Harris & Ewing Collection, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.

Historical Case File #4—Pickets, Arrests, and Riots

THIRTY-SEVEN SUFFS TAKEN AND RETAKEN

Militants Arrested, Released; Repeat Offense; Re-arrested, Released.

LAFAYETTE PARK FARCE

Six Hurt in Station House Scramble; One Man Arrested.

Thirty-seven militant suffragettes representing seventeen States, attempting a suffrage demonstration again yesterday in Lafayette Park, opposite the White House, were arrested, hauled to the police headquarters in patrol wagons, and private autos, were released on their own recognizance, again marched to the park again and were again arrested and frede, all within two hours. Of the thirty-seven arrested today, twenty had been arrested in the police raid of last week and were out on five and ten dollar cash bonds.

The cases from last week are supposed to come up in police court today and those arrested yesterday on Wednesday, though the few arrested all agreed that they would not appear in court and refused to promise the authorities that they would.

"We'll have to come for you with patrol wagons to your houses," said an inspector. "All right," replied the women. "You come or you won't see us."

Petty Riot at Station.

For a while after the second demonstration and the second arrests there was panic in the halls of the District Building. The arrested women had been locked in one large room where they were being booked, and examined. Police women sought to remove their yellow sashes and regalia from about their waists and shoulders.

The prisoners protested that the ribbons were their own property and not subject to police removal. During the argument some became hysterical. Shrieks rang through the closed and guarded doors.

Husbands Attempt Rescue.

Sympathizers who had followed the prisoners from the park rushed toward the room only to be forced back by the police guard. Husbands of three of the women inside, led by Gilson Gardner, well known Progressive, attacked one of the doors but were restrained by another detail of police, who assured them that no one was being hurt, but refused to let them see their wives.

The Casualty List.

The casualty list as announced from the Women's headquarters later included:

Mrs. Ruby Koenig, Hartford, Conn., whose arm was badly wrenched last week in the demonstration, and has been in a cast since. Arm again injured. Doctor fears bone may be cracked; X-ray ordered.

Miss Julia Emory, Baltimore, back sprained, when shoved over table.

Miss Hazel Hunkins, Billings, Montana, wrist sprained.

Miss Lucy Burns, Brooklyn, wrist sprained.

Miss Edna Purcell, Hartford, Conn., wrist sprained.

The police also announced that police matron, Mrs. Keyes, was injured in the melee. They said that she was kicked in the stomach.

The police said they would hold two of the arrested suffragettes on assault and battery charges in connection with this case, but failed to do so, though threatening warrants later.

Suffragettes also had a list of numbers of policemen whom they accused handling women roughly, and against whom they plan to prefer charges.

The women had left their headquarters on Jackson Prace across from the park, pased before the White House and approached the Lafayette statue. This was surrounded by policemen, but as the women advanced carrying their yellow suffrage banners and two big signs on which were printed "Mr. President, How long must women wait for liberty?" and "Justice delayed is justice denied," the police opened up a long lane through the gathering crowds and permitted the marchers to group themselves across the Pennsylvania avenue pedestal of the statue.

Mrs. Lawrence Lewis, of Philadelphia, stepped to the front and began to speak. "Take them, boys," cried a burly officer and the arm of each woman was firmly taken by a policeman and each was urged down the steps and to the waiting police wagons.

Refused to Bond.

At the tation the women refused to put up cash bonds as they had the week before.

"On the last occasion we put up the bail demanded," said Miss Alice Paul, chairman of the Woman's party, "with the result that the court refused to try and our case was postponed, that no charges have even yet been filed against us and our money is therefore held even yet, practically as a fine. This time we prefer to be held than give bail, with the possibility of incurring the same unjust consequences."

All thirty-seven of the women were shortly freed, but had no sooner left the building in marching line than

CONTINUED ON PAGE THREE.

THIRTY-SEVEN SUFFS TAKEN AND RETAKEN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE.

the police were again hurriedly called out for the second demonstration. Again they and the police went through the same maneuvers, the women were allowed on the monument lot, Mrs. Lewis advanced to speak, the police closed in, the women were arrested and taken to the station and freed.

One Man Arrested.

Only this time a man was arrested. He had been watching the proceedings, and after it was about over, quietly strolled over to Lafayettes statue and sat down. He gave his name at No 1 precinct as Norman Ives, 1775 P street northwest. He was booked on the charge of trespassing on a government reservation contrary to the statutes, the same charge being placed against the women. He is the first man to be arrested on such a charge in Lafayette park, but as the arresting officer said, "Why, I'd just arrested a bunch of women for the same thing and what could I do?"

Despite the fact that thousands of people were walking on the grass and on everything else that could be possibly walked on, the police only arrested one man.

Ives, according to the police, sat down at the foot of the statue of Lafayette, directly in violation of the park regulations. He was charged with the same offense as the suffragists, and deposited $5 collateral at No. 1 precinct.

Exhibit 4-C "Thirty-Seven Suffs Taken and Retaken," *Washington Herald*, August 13, 1918. Full page available at http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045433/1918-08-13/ed-1/seq-1.pdf and http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045433/1918-08-13/ed-1/seq-3.pdf

It is absurd to say that I obstructed the public highway, or any portion thereof. The sidewalk proper at the place charged is about 25 feet in width, perhaps twice as wide as the ordinary sidewalks of the District. The roadway is likewise unusually spacious, probably approximating 80 feet in width. My body occupied a space in this vast area perhaps one foot square.

The court, in the trial of the other defendants, seemed to proceed upon the theory of a sort of constructive blocking of the street and highway by exhibiting banners, which exhibition caused a large crowd to assemble. As to this, I would beg to suggest the following:

That many hundreds of persons have stood on the sidewalk in front of the White House with banners similar to the one which I carried for months preceding the day in question; that these persons walked to and fro with the banners exposed without causing more than passing interest and certainly without any unusual number of persons gathering upon the streets and sidewalks attracted by the banners or the persons carrying them; that there was no inscriptionuupon the banner which I carried, nor were the inscriptions upon any of the banners of a violent or startling nature. It is conceded that there was nothing in my conduct or actions which, in itself, would evoke excitement or interest upon the part of passers-by.

Obviously, therefore, the unusually large assemblage of people was caused by something entirely aside from any act of mine.

To any intellectually honest and discerning mind, the cause of the assembling of the crowd was the following:

The police officials declarged in published statements, preceding my arrest, that they had decided to completely change their attitude towards myself and associates, in this: That they would send large numbers of the district police to a point in front of the White House, who would forcibly seize any banners from the hands of persons who might be carrying the same and would arrest and convey to the police station any women exercising what had theretofore been construed as their legal right; to thus peaceably call attention to the justice of the cause which they sought to present to the public.

This reversal of policy on the part of the police, so openly and notoriously proclaimed, naturally excited great public interest, so that a large crowd of

Exhibit 4-D Hazel Hunkins' response to charges in court (typed), Hazel Hunkins-Hallinan Papers, MC 532, box 61, folder 9, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute

persons repaired to the place, who otherwise would not have been there, and hundreds of pedestrians stopped at this point whose everyday habit was to proceed about their more or less busy ways. These were palpably curiosity seekers, gathered for the purpose of witnessing the execution of the published threats of the police to seize myself and others and confiscate our banners.

The crowd was caused to congregate, therefore, primarily and directly by the actions of the police and not by any act of mine. The moral responsibility must be laid at the door of the persons who gave the orders to Captain Sullivan and the police acting under him. The names and identity of the person or persons have not been divulged, so that I have not met my accuser or accusers face to face.

It logically follows, therefore, that I am innocent of the offense charged against me in the information, or of any other violation of the law.

If the court, notwithstanding this, inflicts punishment upon me, I wish to say, in addition to the foregoing, that no torturings or twistings of the legalistic mind can convince me that I have not been condemned in arbitrary and high handed violation of the following substantial rights of my American citizenship:

1. The right of trial by jury:
2. The right to be faced by my real accusers:
3. The right to a separate trial, so that I might have the judgment of the court upon the merits of my individual case.