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Constructing the Republican Mother: Women and the scientific aesthetic in the age of the French and American revolutions.

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by

Marian Gallant

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research through the Department of History
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts at the University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

1997

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ABSTRACT

This paper constitutes a comparative analysis of the way in which late eighteenth century French and American visual art, imbued with biomedical conclusions, aided in the construction and evolution of a uniquely female role in the post-revolutionary role period, a role which both French and American historians refer to as the Republican Mother. The basic premise of the thesis, derived from scrutinizing graphic art created between 1760 and 1800 in conjunction with period literature, magazine articles, debates of political assemblies, letters, diaries, and other sources of information is that the political climate of the two countries was opposed to the notion of female participation.

In both countries pictures, with few exceptions, demonstrated that women were suited only to domestic pursuits and were incapable of meeting the requirements for citizenship in the fledgling Republics of France and America. This definition of womanhood, propagated by Enlightened physicians, was held in common by pro-revolutionaries and pro-monarchists alike. Women of both countries became the target of criticism for blurring gender roles during the French and American Revolutions. It was the scientific aesthetic, particularly vicious in regards to portrayals of French women, that maintained the credibility of scientific precepts threatened by women's revolutionary activities. This graphic treatment of women had far-reaching consequences in defining women's role in the fledgling Republics and their ability to influence future public policy.

III.
DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this project to my parents and brother, Romeo, Patricia, and Martin Gallant. I would also like to dedicate this work to my grandparents, Harry and Mary Abson.
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There are many people whose support I found invaluable throughout the creation of this thesis. I would first like to thank Dr. David Klinck of the Department of History for directing me in this endeavour. It would have been an impossible project, indeed, without his able guidance, constant reassurance, and, above all, his faith in this effort.

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Last, but certainly not least, I would like to express my gratitude to my very understanding family and friends for their love and care.
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I. Introduction

In the late eighteenth century, two events took place on opposite sides of the Atlantic Ocean that resulted in the obliteration of the French monarchy and the separation of the American colonies from the British Empire. In 1775, thirteen colonies in North America instigated a successful struggle to sever their ties with the British Empire in order to exercise authority as an independent Republic. Fourteen years later, the world witnessed France's revolt against its King and the formation of yet another republican government. Not only did the two countries establish republican regimes, they also shared cultural and political bonds.

By the mid twentieth century, inspired by R.R. Palmer's 1959 work entitled The Age of the Democratic Revolution which revealed shared ideologies between Europe and America in the eighteenth century, historians began to focus on the parallels that existed between France and America during the revolutionary era. While Palmer focused on the rebellions in America and many other countries, historian Patrice Higgonet's Sister Republics, published in 1988, centered exclusively on comparing the early political developments of the French and American Republics. Historian Lynn Hunt made sporadic references to the revolutionary political culture of America in Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution (1984). Lloyd Kramer analyzed the political environments of the two countries in the revolutionary period by centering on the experiences of the Marquis de Lafayette in Lafayette in Two Worlds (1996).

Some academics incorporated a gender dimension when discussing the parallels in the revolutionary experience of late eighteenth century France and America. American historian Linda Kerber's 1976 article, "The Republican Mother: Women And The Enlightenment - An
American Perspective." broached the subject of a common intellectual heritage apparent in the revolutionary discourse and identified several French Philosophes whose ideas had an impact on the position of American women. Similarly, Kerber noted the French influence on American women in her more comprehensive 1980 study of ideologies which determined the status of American women, Women of the Republic, and her 1985 article, "The Republican Ideology of The Revolutionary Generation." Ruth Bloch's 1987 article, "The Gendered Meaning of Virtue in Revolutionary America" also made brief references to the influence of French thinkers on the role bestowed upon American women in the late 1700s.

The above feminist historians' research hinted at the link between the fate of American and French women in the late eighteenth century but none suggested substantive comparisons. Harriet Applewhite and Darlene Levy's introduction to their 1990 compilation of essays, Women and Politics in the Age of Democratic Revolution, offered a brief comparative analysis of the revolutionary participation of women of several countries, including France and the United States. Another study of women's lives in various countries during the period in question came in the form of Lynn Hunt's 1994 essay, "Male Virtue and Republican Motherhood," which consisted of a short, but informative section on the different connotations the role of Republican Mother held for French and American women. Linda Kerber's 1990 article, "I have Don .... much to Carrey on the War: Women and the Shaping of Republican Ideology after the American Revolution," also contained illuminating comparisons between the experiences of French and American women during the respective revolts.

The historians who incorporated gender in their research into their examination of the relationship between the American and the French Revolution demonstrated the viability of
examining women's associations with the public, political sphere. Historian Joan Wallach Scott accounted for the importance of women's ability to participate in the political arena by noting that it is the "realm" where "power relationships are formally negotiated."² Kerber, Hunt and others concurred that French and American women were increasingly ostracized from the public arena and, thus, the delegation of power between the sexes. Scrutinizing how the rhetoric of the revolution concerning women translated into legislation, political treaties, and political speeches, the historians revealed that women were defined as private, domestic beings. The aforementioned academics utilized magazines and literary productions to uncover how these ideas about women's place were disseminated into the political culture of both countries.

One mode of research not utilized by these historians consisted of studying the manner in which women were treated in pictorial representation of women and the feminine published during the time of the revolutions. Indeed, one of the premier methods of communication during the 1700s encompassed the deployment of allegorical pictures found in magazines and pamphlets, or in the form of engravings and paintings. Considering the proliferation of depictions of women in late eighteenth century France and America, studying in conjunction graphic art and its intended messages will shed light on notions concerning women and their prescribed place.

The importance of graphic art in the cultures of both societies cannot be overstated. The employment of iconographical depictions to publicize views was historically very pronounced in the political culture of both France and America. Since levels of literacy varied, especially in France, using pictures or including pictures along with, for example, a written political tract, heightened the efficacy of this practice. In addition, French and American citizens themselves
recognized the educative function of these forms of communication and often considered the
messages implicit in these works to be lessons in morality. In short, citizens of both countries
were already accustomed to and preconditioned to accept this type of political discourse long
before the revolutionary era.

French feminist historians, aware of the centrality of visual imagery in eighteenth century life.
have long recognized the utility of interpreting iconography in their approach to the period of the
French Revolution in reference to uncovering the fates of women. Some examples of works
which have profited from the integration of revolutionary artwork in their arguments were
Marianne Into Battle by Maurice Agulhon, Lynn Hunt's Family Romance of the French
Revolution as well as Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution, Women in the Public
Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution authored by Joan Landes, and Dorinda Outram's

Other historians of French women's history have relied almost exclusively on interpreting
visual renderings of the late eighteenth century in formulating their assertions. Exemplifying this
approach are the articles "Triste Amerique: Atala and the Postrevolutionary Construction of
Women" by Naomi Schor. Lynn Hunt's "The Many Bodies of Marie Antoinette," and Joan
Landes' "Representing the Body Politic: The Paradox of Gender in the Graphic Politics of the
French Revolution." Madelyn Gutwirth's 1992 work, Twilight of the Goddess, constituted the
most sophisticated and comprehensive art history approach because she chronologically
presented and interpreted visual imagery as well as literature in order to "reconstruct" the destiny
of French women.

Their counterparts in American history, though, have not produced any work on the effect of
the graphic arts on the status of women in the American Revolution. However, feminist American historians have recognized the power of the visual image in the formulation and promulgation of gender concepts. In their works, *Women of the Republic* and *Daughters of Liberty* respectively, prominent American historians Linda Kerber and Mary Beth Norton, showed a definite preference for primary source materials such as fictional novels, letters, newspaper and magazine articles. However, they both endeavoured to incorporate samples of relevant iconography in their historical discourses for the purpose of illustrating their arguments.

Despite the fact that histories of women in the American Revolution do not investigate the connection between the graphic arts and the position of women, this method is crucial to comprehending visual depictions of women or the feminine. As the works of French feminist historians demonstrated, allegorical images by their very nature hold meanings which are hidden. Hence, those who are not informed about eighteenth century gender perceptions cannot understand these graphic creations in isolation from the political culture of both countries. After all, as Grant Holly noted, allegory is, by definition, "veiled discourse." Thomas Maresca forwarded the supposition that the creation of allegory "conceals meaning" and "the interpretation of allegory .... reveals it." As French historian Lynn Hunt argued, however, revealing the hidden meaning is not always an easy task. Through her vast experiences with using art in her various works, Hunt discovered that the "political purposes" of artists are often difficult to comprehend because they do not always paint with readily apparent political agendas.

Lynn Hunt's observations further lend credence to the need to incorporate political and social discourses arising from the era of the French and American Revolutions. Clearly, these pictorial
images have to be viewed in the context of period literature, newspaper and magazine articles, debates of the political assemblies, letters, diaries, and other such sources of information in order to elucidate the symbolic meaning. This inclusionary mandate makes sense if one considers that effective allegorical imagery reflected the attitudes of artists who themselves are products of their own intellectual environments. Furthermore, the graphic creations must appeal to the collective psyche of their audience in order for the messages to be understood.

Immersion in the various discourses of the time will lead to an understanding of the iconography beyond even the primary intended message. Author Ralph Waldo Emersen alluded to this fact when he admitted that "a man may find that his words mean more than he thought when he uttered them." Indeed visual art productions must be understood as a form of language as meaningful, perhaps even more potent psychologically than the spoken word. Iconography, at the same time, reflects and disseminates the point of view emanating from the people who hold the means of controlling their creation and distribution. Maureen Quilligan submitted that "the limits of possibility" of any allegorical depiction were set by culture which engendered the graphic creation." It follows, then, that the decoding of these symbolic images must include the voices of both women and men who exist within the revolutionary cultures of France and America.

The creation and distribution of visual depictions which aided in the formulation of a society which was administered according to conventional conceptions of gender reflected the fact that the political climate of both France and America in the late eighteenth century was opposed to the notion of female political participation. The deployment of graphic art pieces that supported this exclusionary view was all the more potent due to the authority bestowed on the scientific
community which supplied these gendered definitions of nature.

An examination of iconography disseminated in France and America between 1760 and 1800 reveals that the female nature was described as lacking the qualities necessary to exercise power in the public, political sphere. This mandate to visually demonstrate the relationship between gender and nature was also indispensable in constructing a role for women, the Republican Mother, which would both channel women's patriotic aspirations into the domestic sphere and ensure for women no direct political voice in the Republics of France and America.

A comparative analysis of the French and American graphic agendas to keep women from exercising public influence will be discussed in four chapters. The first will reveal how women were re-defined by medical doctors during the latter half of the 1700s in such a way as to justify their exclusion from politics and their relegation to a decidedly maternal role. The relationship between science, the dominant intellectual movement of the revolutionary era, the Enlightenment, and the graphic arts will also be recounted to account for the widespread acceptance of the messages inherent in the iconography of the two revolutions.

The second chapter will provide an outline of the French and American women's traditions of public participation and their effect on the degree of female political participation during the time of the two rebellions. The third part will discuss the part played by eighteenth century biomedical science in the creation of visual art productions which depicted women's public deeds. Such graphic portrayals supported physicians who concluded that the female nature was incongruent with public life. The final chapter will consider the place of women put forth by a graphic campaign centred upon delineating duties appropriate to the eighteenth century concept of womanhood, which consummated in the post-revolutionary ideal of the Republican Mother.
II: Genesis of the Scientific Aesthetic

During the eighteenth century, the dominant intellectual movement of the time - the Enlightenment - provided a definition of womahood which directly influenced women's ability to assume an active part in the public, political sphere. This assessment of women was part of the Enlightenment's grand scheme to reconcile humanity with what Enlightenment thinkers deemed to be the laws of nature. Determining the rules of nature as they applied to women was the preserve of Enlightenment science, which theorized that women lacked the faculties necessary for the responsible wielding of authority. It was the attributes which Enlightenment science bestowed upon women that provided the justification for women's exclusion from power and, instead, prescribed for them a non-political, domestic, and secondary role.

Deliberations concerning the rightful place of women did not occur solely in the field of science, however. The precepts of Enlightenment medical science were transformed into visual art readily available to the general populace of France and America. One of the most prominent themes of French and American iconography disseminated between 1760 and 1800 were perceptions regarding the nature of womanhood. The fact was supported by the proliferation of allegorical imagery that depicted women and the feminine. However, French and American women played little if any role in the creation of these icons or the messages about the female nature that these pictures were intended to convey. Historian Susan Connor once described power in female terms as "the capacity to determine her own and others' actions."[^8] In light of these visual depictions of women in the revolutionary era, Connor's assertion must also include

the ability of women to define what constituted womanhood. French philosopher Simone De Beauvoir submitted that women have never been accorded the opportunity to define themselves as a group isolated from the male perspective. The inability of eighteenth century French and American women to delineate their own role supported the argument of De Beauvoir.

The circumstances surrounding the emergence of a new definition of womanhood during the late eighteenth century gave credence to De Beauvoir's observation. Perceptions of women reflected the point of view of the male-dominated whose findings and whose methodology, by the latter half of the century, were accepted by the Philosophes. The conclusions of physicians were predicated on observable biological differences between men and women. The desire to uncover the innate attributes of men and women was not unique to scientists of that period, however. This interest in the nature of men and women was directly related to the Enlightenment movement's thesis concerning the relationship between humans and nature.

The 1700s was a period during which the Enlightenment thinkers continually pondered the relationship between nature and humanity. The Philosophes were obsessed with learning about humankind's proper place in the natural world. Although such considerations were not confined to this period, the followers of Enlightenment precepts contributed an urgency to uncovering the mechanics of nature with their argument that God's will was synonymous with the workings of nature. To many Philosophes, God did not preside over or control in any way the day-to-day activities of human beings. Instead, God created a perfectly ordered universe in which all living things existed in complete congruence with their natural environment. Human beings, endowed by God with free will, at some point, strayed from these precepts set down by God and imbedded in nature. Fortunately, God also imparted to men a mechanism which allowed the
human mind insight into the laws of nature. Through correct usage of this God-given ability of "reason." the Philosophes contended that the rules of nature could be uncovered and would constitute the first step in the reconciliation between humanity and nature.\textsuperscript{11}

Of paramount importance to Enlightened thinkers in this quest to re-establish a natural order was the creation of a climate conducive to uncover natural laws. The Philosophes directed much of their criticism towards Monarchal regimes whose laws they believed to be artificial and unnatural because they infringed upon the liberty to investigate the natural world. Enlightened thinkers cited in particular the basic tenet of the British Monarchy and the French Monarchy - the notion that God intervened in human affairs - as superstition. The Enlightenment viewed superstition as antithetical to reason.\textsuperscript{12} The French Monarch was a particular target; the French Kings assumed a mantle of sacredness because they were appointed by God to rule and, hence, their dictates were interchangeable with those of God.

Enlightenment ideologues held to the conviction that God accorded humans mental and physical faculties which they could draw upon to control their own fates.\textsuperscript{13} They believed that these human attributes were most efficiently used when channelled into the scientific method developed during the seventeenth century. The confidence that the Enlightenment thinkers placed upon science was directly attributable to the fact that, in many ways, the Enlightenment was a by-product of the Scientific Revolution of the 1600s. This time of unprecedented discovery and invention challenged many of the basic tenants of organized religion. The fact that scientists like Galileo were able to back up their theories with some sort of visual evidence gave impetus to the Enlightenment view of God's distance from the observable natural world.

Considered the primary agents in the war against superstition because they provided the
optimum method to discover the fundamentals of nature, the Enlightenment thinkers bestowed upon scientists and their conclusions an absolute authority previously accorded to the dictates of Monarchs and Church leaders. In his historical discourse, The Enlightenment, historian Norman Hampson communicated the importance of the scientific world to the Philosophes with the argument that science during this century was the "key to the purpose of God, nature and man."\textsuperscript{14}

Hampson's reference to science discovering the purpose of, not only God and nature, but of man was apparent in the field of medical science. The Enlightenment recognized humans as playing a central role in nature and bestowed upon humanity the responsibility of realigning the natural order. Thus, discerning the nature of human beings assumed a high priority among Enlightened scientists. Firm in the belief that God's intentions were embedded in some form visible to the human eye, the logical subject for scientists was deemed to be the human body - the most tangible outward manifestation of human nature. It was the observable differences discerned by medical science between the male and female physique that provided the basis for the late eighteenth century view of womanhood and manhood.\textsuperscript{15}

Enlightenment science and, in particular, medical doctors radically altered the way in which the sexes had been perceived previous to the 1700s. For example, initial observations of the human body conducted primarily by biologists early in the century had already dispelled the position adhered to for centuries that women were "misbegotten" men.\textsuperscript{16} This presumption of women as deformed, propagated chiefly by the Greek philosopher Aristotle and later Roman Catholic theologian Thomas Aquinas, was extended by a second century physician named Galen. Galen posited that women and men were, in essence, the same except that women were physically flawed. This "one sex model" as Thomas Lacqueur termed it, posited that men were
the "measure of all things," perfect in every way.\textsuperscript{17} Women, on the other hand, were deformed men. Galen argued the case for female imperfection mainly on the basis that women's genitalia failed to extend externally and their "semen" was flawed.\textsuperscript{18} In fact, until 1700, as Lacqueur explained, there did not exist a name for a woman's vagina in Greek, Latin, or in any European language.\textsuperscript{19}

The notion of woman as a disfigured creation was replaced by the assertion that the male and female body were intentionally different in construct. Enlightenment science posited that neither sex was flawed and both were perfect in their own way. Women's bodies, no longer dismissed as imperfect, were now seen as worthy of close attention. While new theories predicated on the argument that women and men harboured anatomical differences served to refute and replace the long-held assertions of Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, and Galen, men still reserved for themselves the right to define women. Women during the eighteenth century did not take part in the scientific process, an absence which served to re-define womanhood from a decidedly male perspective.

These new conceptions of the sexes saw medical doctors viewing the human body in physiological terms - roughly defined as observing the body in regards to how it functions. In accordance with their idea of a distant, uninvolved Supreme Being, Enlightened thinkers proclaimed that good health was not a "gift" bestowed upon individuals by God. The maintenance of personal health was but one of the many responsibilities allotted to humanity by God when he set the world in motion.\textsuperscript{20} The medical community itself adhered to this new way of thinking because physicians no longer concerned themselves with ministering to the human soul.\textsuperscript{21} As inheritors of the Scientific Revolution which viewed the world in terms of a machine
whose parts must be studied for the purpose of understanding the way in which it functions. Enlightened medicine turned its attention to the human body and considered it a machine as well.\textsuperscript{22} Hence, doctors simultaneously sought to assure the health of the human body while endeavouring to understand the mechanics of the human body.

Naturally, this perception of the body as a machine functioned to further dispel the notion of a Supreme Being who supposedly interferes in human action. As historian Dorinda Outram contended, medical culture, like political culture, concerned itself with "desacralizing the body" by defining it outside of theological terms.\textsuperscript{23} It seemed perfectly legitimate, then, for Enlightened thinkers to enlist the help of physicians, already charged with the care of the human body, to ascertain and educate the public concerning ways to achieve optimum health.

Undertaking this invaluable task in conjunction with the precepts of the Enlightenment engendered a methodology unique to the world of medical science. Since, to the Philosophes, progress would ensue only when humans conducted themselves in keeping with the natural order as formulated by God, incorporating the entire natural world was necessary. Studying the natural environment assumed equal importance to deliberations concerning the physical structure of humans. The resulting medical scientific approach entailed examining the mechanics of the body both in isolation and in the context of the natural environment. Doctors also focussed on the way in which human beings related to each other as part of surveying the natural environment to which they all belonged.\textsuperscript{24} It was the utilization of this method which added the dimension of gender differences to the Enlightenment discourse concerning nature.

Most of the significant experimentation regarding the human body and its gendered functions occurred in France. Indeed, it was French physicians who were the most committed to the
Enlightenment prescription of focusing on human physiology. Many of the eighteenth century physicians who conducted this form of research operated under the hypothesis of anatomist George Stael who interpreted the Enlightenment's endeavour to discern the rules of nature using metaphysical terminology. To Stael, the human soul strove to "preserve" the physical body in order to reach its primary "goal of mental activity." Women, however, while still involved in this struggle to maintain the body, were more consumed with reproducing humans than with exercising their own minds. Child-bearing was women's unique contribution to the mandate to achieve mental activity. The implication of the Stael thesis was that it was the responsibility of the male mind to undertake the all-important quest to discover the rules of nature. For women, this argument implied a secondary role in relation to the pursuit to understand the natural order. Women, too subsumed by the act of reproduction - a function unique to their own sex - lacked the inclination to utilize their minds.

Stael's assertion that women were ruled by their reproductive function - child-bearing being women's "ultimate purpose" - was extended further by what can be best termed his "three affections theory." In his mind, the actions of the members of the female sex were determined by three "fundamental affections" related to their child-bearing ability. The first affection, he submitted, was that of pleasure - undoubtedly a reference to sexual pleasure - which was a prelude to the desire to become pregnant. To protect the fetuses that they conceived required an acute awareness of all possible dangers. Hence, the second affection that governed women, rationalized Stael, was that of fear. Women also assumed the mantle of what Stael called the affection "inconsistency." To the anatomist, this trait enabled women to "dispense affection" to all their offspring in equal measure.
The philosophy of George Stael achieved wide acceptance in France and was even incorporated into the curriculum of the medical school in Montpellier.26 The fact that Stael's convictions concerning the natural role of women gained acclaim in France was significant as France was the undisputed centre of the Enlightenment movement. French medical doctors during the late eighteenth century not only agreed in essence with Stael's position by maintaining the centrality of women's ability to reproduce in defining the role of women, but claimed to have substantiated his viewpoint through infallible scientific means. The majority of the traits assigned to women by these physicians were rooted in women's capacity to bear children, the most obvious biological differences between men and women. In fact, after 1775, Enlightened medical science was united in its assertion that the attributes they regarded as naturally assigned to women were put to best use in the context of motherhood.27

Although the physicians focussed on different aspects of the female physiology, they arrived at the same conclusions. Women, they believed, were unsuited to roles which required profound mental activity or subdued emotional responses. For Enlightened thinkers, assuming an active role in culture required a degree of stoicism and an ability to reason. The doctors concluded that women were incapable or, at best, less capable of exercising either trait than their male counterparts. Instead, based on observations of the mechanics of the female body, medical scientists submitted that women were created for functions associated with motherhood in the private, domestic sphere.

Perhaps the most representative of this group of physicians who believed that women were created solely to be mothers was Dr. Roussel who was, by most accounts, thoroughly versed in George Stael's thesis.28 Roussel postulated that there existed within a woman a conflict between

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her head and her uterus. He prescribed that a woman should let her uterus dominate or "work its way within her" and ignore any desire on the part of her mind to conduct mental activity. Dr. Cabanas also stressed the fact that the mental processes of women were innately suppressed by activities associated with reproduction and child-rearing. Basing his claims on the relative delicacy of female muscle fibre and cerebral pulp as juxtaposed to those of men, Cabanas reasoned that subjecting the female mind to "long and profound meditations" was far too arduous for women's weak physical structure. This fragility resulted in women acquiring a "volatile sensitivity" that allowed for them the limited roles of mother, nurse, and wife. Other examples of Enlightenment medical practitioners who acceded to the views of Cabanas and Roussel were Barthez and La Mettre. Dr. Barthez and Dr. La Mettre propagated the notion that women were more capable than men of wild feeling. Barthez, sounding like Dr. Cabanas, noted the existence of mercurial emotions produced by what he coined women's "delicate and feeble constitution." Therefore, in comparison with their male counterparts, Barthez resolved that women were more emotional. Dr. La Mettre also acknowledged that women, by nature, were more fragile than men, a trait which held women virtually hostage to their emotions. This weakness produced in members of the female sex strong feelings rooted "more on passion than on reason." The ideology of professional doctors, though, was not limited to expounding upon the fragility of women. In the eighteenth century, the female breasts incurred much attention and, according to medical science, added further credence to the notion that women's naturally ascribed role related to child-rearing.

Proof that the physical construction of women was suited best to the performance of duties primarily related to motherhood, explained physicians like Cabanas and Roussel, lay in the fact
that women were constructed with breasts - one of the most apparent anatomical differences between the sexes. To the minds of doctors, the breasts served two functions - the first being that they allowed women to nurse their young. Employing bottles to replace the breast in this endeavour was deemed to be unnatural by medical science. The second use for the breast was to sexually entice men which, again, related to women's capacity to reproduce, ideally in the context of marriage. Such scientifically proven convictions went further, however, than just assigning women to nurturing roles suited to their physiological attributes.

This medical view of womanhood held serious implications for women's ability to assume a part in the construction of culture. Anthropologist Sherry Ortner's comments concerning the relationship between culture and nature merit attention when discussing the eighteenth century discourse surrounding nature and culture. Ortner observed that culture has always been viewed as completely distinct from and "superior" to nature. This "superiority" was predicated upon the ability, in this case of men, to rise above and transform primitive nature by both thought and technology. According to the eighteenth century conception of womanhood, women were hostages to natural base impulses - particularly those associated with reproduction. Anthropologist L.J. Jordanova, whose work paid particular attention to the French medical discourse of the 1700s, noted that the mind and the body were seen as one structure. Physicians believed the body to be an "integrated" unit and, as such, all bodily parts were constructed to interact with each other. These two sentiments were both decisive and highly significant according to medical practitioners of that period.

Since women's thought processes were hindered by their pre-occupation with activities and emotions related to their reproductive function they could, as Roussel succinctly stated, assume
"no role in culture." Dr. La Mettre credited the weak mind of women as contributing to the close connection between their sex and nature. To La Mettre, the mental fragility of women caused them to be, as opposed to their male counterparts and like nature, more "spontaneous" and more apt to obey "nature's impulses."

Other observable and distinctive physical attributes of women served to further substantiate the notion that women were unable to resist nature's dictates. French medical science in the late 1700s conjectured that women's biological capability to nurse their young served to defend their claim that women functioned in close proximity to nature. Women, they argued, were created with the faculties to suckle their young which was a trait shared by "lower animals."

Such late eighteenth century definitions of womanhood tendered by some French physicians were not restricted to France or, for that matter, the continent of Europe. Not only did physicians practicing in the British colony of America share many of the same views of gender voiced by their French counterparts, but they displayed an avid interest in substantiation the gender explanations proffered by Enlightened scientists from Europe. Although the scientific inquiries taking place in America concerning gender differences were not as highly-developed or as organized as in France, the conduct of many American doctors just prior to the American Revolution - most notably in the burgeoning field of obstetrics - revealed this common interest in further delineating natural gender traits by means of "impartial" scientific observation.

William Smellie, a pioneer in American obstetrics, like most doctors practicing in the American colonies during the latter half of the century were trained in British and, particularly Scottish medical schools which had already embraced the Enlightenment. Thus, American
physicians were more influenced by the inclinations of the British medical field which, at the
time, entailed a growing interest in the new medical branch of obstetrics - a medical
specialization that focused its attention on tending to pregnant women.

The advent of obstetrics or "male midwifery" in America and France happened in conjunction
with the infiltration of Enlightenment precepts into medical science. As scientists began to
compare the functioning of nature to a machine, the medical field opted to view the object of
their interest - the human body - in much the same way. The emergence of obstetrics in both
countries was not only a direct result of these Enlightenment beliefs, but wholeheartedly
embraced its mandate to discover the laws of nature and dismantle superstition. Obstetricians,
regarding the child-bearing process in terms of a working machine sought, in their own practices,
to uncover the innate laws governing this uniquely female process. Like their French colleagues,
American male midwives approached their work well-versed in female anatomy and, more
significantly, in the biases pertaining to gender which increasingly assumed the mantle of
indisputable facts as the 1700s wore on.

If George Stael and his followers were the primary contributors to the biomedical gender
discussions of late eighteenth century France, then it was British-trained obstetricians who
extended this gendered medical outlook to the practice of medicine to America. Drawing from
the Enlightened scientific theories of womanhood of which the aforementioned French doctors
were strong proponents, American obstetricians defined women in accordance with their capacity
to bear children. Upholding the focus on women's reproductive function when characterizing
women served to further cultivate the idea that women were the feeblest sex. For instance, Dr.
Caspar Wistar delivered a lecture at the University of Pennsylvania Medical School describing
the act of delivering a child as an "affair of great delicacy." Wistar later complimented another prominent colleague in the field of obstetrics, Dr. William Shippen, as exhibiting a remarkable grasp of the "feelings of delicate women" during the course of Shippen's own speech on the topic of male midwifery.45

Like their counterparts in France, American obstetricians believed that it was their special duty, as members of the medical profession treating predominantly female clients, to elucidate the natural attributes unique to women. Colonial doctors were instilled with the same sense of urgency to aid and instruct the populace to live in accordance with nature which was, as aforementioned, the overriding agenda of the Enlightenment movement. Their medical training in Great Britain led American doctors to espouse the Enlightenment thesis that men and women were, in every possible way, opposite to each other. It was this assumption of gender difference that irrevocably aligned American medical doctors in theory and in practice with their French colleagues.

The importance of sustaining these gender distinctions was elaborated by physicians like the Scot, Dr. John Gregory, who was a proponent of the late eighteenth century notion that the sexes were different and, at the same time, equal. Gregory's highly influential conduct book published in 1774, A Father's Legacy to His Daughters, asserted that women's "happiness" and "equality" were possible only if women nurtured their own naturally apportioned traits instead of emulating attributes prescribed by medical science for men.46 Gregory's advice unmistakably resounded with the Enlightenment position that a harmonious society resulted from the genders existing in accordance with nature.

The belief system of doctors like John Gregory coincided with the ideological basis upon
which American obstetricians operated. The degree to which the presumption that men and women were dichotomous by nature was adhered to by the infant American medical field was evident in the way that male midwives functioned in the late 1700s. Since gendered experimentations thought to be so essential in ascertaining the intentions of nature were less established in America than in France, obstetricians conducted informal investigations of the female physiology in the course of their practice.

From the time of their arrival in America, obstetricians demonstrated a fervent determination and commitment to cultivating Enlightenment principles in the context of their own medical practices. Not only did male midwives oversee the child-bearing process as their field of specialization dictated, but they seized upon the opportunity to dissect the bodies of women who died during childbirth. Midwife Sarah Stone remarked that she personally witnessed "many women opened." While the more traditional female midwives were allowed to participate in routine births for a time, they were never allowed to take part in these autopsies. The underlying reason for excluding women echoed the suppositions of French medical doctors who argued that women's constitutions severely inhibited them from tolerating such "protracted study." Unquestionably, this view led to the decline in the female midwifery trade as women, barred from university, could not attain medical licenses and faced serious competition in the face of the more respectable field of obstetrics.

The encroachment of the male medical establishment in an area once administered by women in America was symptomatic of the move to relegate women to the domestic setting where they could best undertake their naturally ascribed role as mothers. On the issue of women's place, then, both France and America agreed, in essence, that woman's physiology was intended for the
sole purpose of reproduction. If women were prisoners of their natural physical impulses to reproduce, medical science, predisposed to view the genders as diametrically opposite, forwarded an assessment of the male body that resulted in dismantling any notion that men were also subject to nature. Indeed, it was suggested by French doctors in regards to their definition of male physiological realities, that men were capable of resisting natural impulses, proving that men's innate energies were best deployed in the context of constructing culture outside of the domestic setting.

The perception of men as naturally public, political beings was established on the assumption that men were, in every physiological sense, different than women. Men, contended the physicians, were anatomically unable to provide sustenance for their young and, thus, bore no similarities to lower, more savage animal races. The inference was that men were not as consumed by nature's whims as were women. The fact that men also were not physically designed to reproduce, as were other animals, reinforced the notion that men could rise above nature. By transcending nature's impulses, men were thereby freed to exercise their minds. The physicians postulated that men were invariably more impassive emotionally and thus had a greater tendency towards reason. The belief that men were, by natural design, physically and mentally stronger than women was also used as verification for this notion that men were more prone to reasoned thinking than were women.

The doctors who were involved in formulating conceptions of gender dichotomies were assumed by Enlightenment thinkers to be both impartial and dispassionate because they used what was considered the soundest scientific methodology possible. However, it must be categorically stated that the medical communities of eighteenth century France and America were
certainly not free from prejudices which would, in turn, skew their results. The fact that women were denied a voice in defining gender attributes was indicative of the fact the allegedly impartial scientific medical community was subject to beliefs concerning women exhibited in the larger society. Therefore, supposedly objective Enlightened views concerning nature also reflected the preconceptions of both the scientists and the society to which they belonged. As anthropologist Carol P. MacCormack noted, because ideas having to do with nature cannot be separated from the culture in which they were created, the conception of nature is, therefore, not a "given" and, like culture, is a construct.53 Needless to say, the Philosophes with their absolute faith in an impartial scientific method being able to accurately discover the laws of nature did not recognize the role that preconceived notions played in the creation of eighteenth century scientific facts.

The fact that the Enlightened thinkers refused to acknowledge the possibility of human bias in their scientific endeavours was mirrored in what Grant Holly termed the "scientific aesthetic" which appeared during this period. As Holly explained it, this aesthetic was predicated on the high esteem the Enlightenment placed upon what it considered to be the truths of nature. This respect for the laws of nature was evident in both the visual arts and literary works which were created during the second half of the 1700s. Since these facts emanated from the world of science, works which communicated scientific findings of the age were considered to be unfettered by biases.54

One of the most prolific forms in which scientific findings were presented, most notably in the visual arts, was by indirect representation. Also, as with the medical community, the body, its
functions, and the environment in which it operated was the subject of the majority of this kind of iconography. This method of communicating these truths about humans and their nature in a visual, allegorical fashion was effective, as Holly asserted, in allowing people who viewed these pictures to place themselves in the picture. The efficacy of this method lay in the fact that the people and the environment depicted were drawn in almost completely abstract terms, but specific enough for the viewer to elucidate that, for example, the subject of the picture was a man or woman. Hence, the viewer was given a point of reference via some concept or depiction that was familiar and obvious to them.

Able to relate to some aspect of the iconographical image, the viewer was then able to grasp the meaning of picture. This exchange between the viewer and the visual image was precisely what the creators of the images wanted as the intent of the depictions was primarily to instruct the populace. The individuals who experienced and were expected to learn from this iconography during the 1700s did not interpret allegorical images in a vacuum. The eighteenth century audience viewed the iconography in the context of period literature, newspaper and magazine articles, debates of the political legislatures, and other sources of ideas in order to understand the deeper symbolic meaning.

Given the absolute authority that the Philosophes placed upon the findings of scientists in conjunction with the growing acceptance of Enlightenment precepts which culminated in the latter half of the 1700s in America and France, the notions inherent in these icons were clearly important. The ideology that the Philosophes held to be fact-based and, thus, natural constituted one definition of truth. To stray from their truth, argued the Philosophes, was to subvert nature. As American historian Cathy N. Davidson postulated, ideas are embraced only when the
intended audience comes to view them as "normal, natural, definitive and thus destined to endure." The iconography of the period in form and content worked to establish in its audience this type of receptiveness to the Enlightenment vision of society.

Couched in terms of being natural - or unnatural if in conflict with Enlightenment beliefs - the ideology communicated to the populace of revolutionary France and America was a powerful agent in the hands of those rebelling against the old order. In consideration of the fact that writer Jean-Jacques Rousseau justified the waging of rebellion "on behalf of an outraged nature," the new revolutionary elite of France and the United States endeavoured to establish regimes which adhered to the laws of nature. In that light, Enlightened medical science had already outlined the role of men and women in the new natural order destined to be set up after the Revolutions.

Yet, the women of France and America were faced with new challenges raised by the chaos of revolution. During the revolutionary period, they, by necessity or by the invitation of male revolutionaries, became involved in the struggle to set up a more democratic regime. The attributes that women displayed during this struggle, however, were quite the opposite of what Enlightened science - namely medical science - ascribed to them based on the physiological differences between their bodies and those of men. The exploits of women during this time which were deemed contrary to the eighteenth century perception of womanhood were overshadowed by iconographical depictions of women and the feminine which declared to reflect the truths of nature.

These images, laden with assumptions issued by medical science, not only indicated the extent to which theories of medical science had disseminated in France and the United States, but de-constructed the real experiences of women during the American and French Revolutions.
The widespread use of the scientific aesthetic in the construction of more democratic regimes resulted not only in expanding the ideas of Enlightenment science to the populace, but, as will be proven, contributed to the fact that these theories reached their full expression during this time of great social upheaval.
III. Challenging Science: Women in the French and American Revolutions

During the French and American Revolutions, the extraordinary and perhaps unprecedented wartime mobilization of the female population threatened to blur gender distinctions established by eighteenth century medical science. In America, this threat manifested itself in the forging of a connection between women's traditional activities, previously conducted in the household for the benefit of the family, and the public, political sphere which was supposed to be the reserve of men. This association between private and public interests, already recognized by French women, was further strengthened by the demands of revolution. It was the anxiety over the obscuring of gender roles and its potential to debase the entire body of Enlightenment ideology that determined the nature of the revolutionary iconography which depicted women's revolutionary experiences.

Historian Joan Wallach Scott argued that when the fighting of wars was not confined to professional armies and directly involved civilian populations, a "forced renegotiation of gender roles "occurred as a consequence.\(^{58}\) Indeed, during the American and French Revolutions the citizenry of both countries found themselves embroiled in the fight for more democracy. As a result of the demands of rebellion, women, like men, assumed new roles and demonstrated abilities which Enlightenment science believed foreign to women. These revolutionary female roles, however, posed threats to the viability of Enlightenment ideas concerning womanhood.

Indeed, the publicization of the revolutionary activities of American women and, to a far greater extent, French women in visual forms would have forced the inhabitants of both countries to reconsider the infallibility accorded to Enlightenment science. There was a disjuncture
between theory and practice. According to Enlightenment theory, women were supposed to be isolated or choose to shelter themselves from the harsh realities of politics, but women's exploits during the American and French Revolutions threatened to redefine these sensibilities. The contributions that women made towards the cause of democracy in both 1776 and 1789 have been well-documented by historians. During the process of rebelling against their respective governments, women were key players in a series of acts that further enhanced the position of those citizens desiring change.

Women of both countries served the interests of the revolutionaries through economic boycotts and the manufacturing of medical supplies. Female patriots - as they were often called - encouraged their men to participate in protests against an oppressive form of government and event exhorted their men to enter into military service. In fact, during the entire revolutionary period, women who adhered to the principles of the revolts - namely the desire for more democracy - displayed a remarkable grasp of the strategies required.

Women repeatedly demonstrated abilities thought impossible by Enlightened physicians. Their actions during the revolutionary period flew in the face of biomedical researchers who believed that they had unequivocally proved through scientific methods the fragility of the female sex who were ruled by fear and sought to avoid danger. French and American women were far from being passive observers who operated solely within the confines of the home; they also endeavoured to publicly show their support for their revolutions in a number of ways. Women of both countries marched in public protests alongside, and sometimes without, men. They strove to protect their property, their fellow citizens, and the cause by bearing weapons - in some cases alongside men in battle. French women even attended political deliberations in legislative
assemblies, often loudly offering their own opinions on the proceedings. The women of France and America also formed clubs in which they devoted much time for the express purpose of preserving and spreading within their communities the ideals of the Revolution. Certainly, these public and often militant acts undertaken by women subverted the notion that women lacked courage and fortitude when confronted with life-threatening adversities.

These unusual activities by French and American women, for the most part, were a direct outgrowth of their ascribed roles as mothers and nurturers whose primary purpose it was to protect their families. The upheaval and chaos ensuing from the two rebellions created an atmosphere which made it necessary for women to enter the public sphere in order to execute what used to be exclusively private maternal duties. Even though French and American women were motivated to action by similar reasons, the nature and intensity of these public activities undertaken by women differed sharply between the two nations.

For America, the pattern of female intervention in areas which were utterly unimaginable before the revolutionary period was surprising. In keeping with Joan Wallach Scott's thesis concerning the re-definition of gender roles arising from the civilian population's direct involvement in warfare, the majority of American women's experience with warfare was limited. Indeed, colonial wars fought prior to the American Revolution did not always involve the entire populace. Hence, American women, in most cases, were unaccustomed to the demands of total mobilization and had been sheltered from direct threats to their lives and communities.

Before the American Revolution, the majority of women tended to accomplish tasks associated with motherhood within the confines of the domestic sphere. The ideological dispute
between England and its colony which provoked the military battle for American independence was fought on American land and, therefore, engaged soldiers and civilians alike. In defiance of Enlightenment precepts, women used physical force and often weaponry in the course of defence or protection. Examples of American women who willingly assumed militant roles for the interests of the Revolution were rampant. The trait common to all these acts of female militancy in America was that, in nearly every case, they were unplanned and, therefore, represented spontaneous responses to threatening situations. To explain further, American women rarely made use of physical force unless they deemed it unequivocally necessary to their mandate to maintain the welfare of their families and their communities. This disposition accounted for the sporadic nature of American women behaving as militant citizens.

One conspicuous case in point concerned the incident at Groton, Massachusetts which occurred in April of 1775 while Groton's male population were involved in the fighting at Lexington and Concord. The women of Groton did not hesitate in the face of what they thought was imminent danger. Acting upon a false report that their British enemies were encroaching upon their town in a murderous, pillaging rampage, the women disguised themselves as men and took up pitchforks and various other weapons. In their efforts to halt the advance of the British invaders, the women assumed what was traditionally a male responsibility - to take up arms for the purpose of defence and protection. The women of Groton soon determined that the invasion was simply a rumour, but did apprehend a British soldier for questioning.  

In addition to defending their communities in instances of enemy invasion, American women employed physical force in their successful efforts to ensure equal allocation of necessary goods during wartime. During the 1770s, for example, the women of Beverly and Boston,
Massachusetts forcibly prevented hoarding on the part of merchants who refused to sell necessary provisions such as sugar for what the women considered to be affordable rates. To the incredulous stares of male bystanders, the women in Boston and Beverly actually went so far as to break into warehouses of the offending storekeepers while physically preventing any intervention on the part of merchants. Such examples of women rising against storeowners whom they considered unpatriotic were by no means isolated incidents and resulted in merchants, fearing the repercussions, selling women their wares at prices agreed to by the women during the War of Independence.

American women's venture into the public sphere during the revolutionary era and exposing themselves to danger extended to their willing involvement in demonstrations against what they judged as oppressive and unfair policies of the British government. One of the most volatile protests sprang up in Boston in March of 1770 and constituted a response to a heated argument between British soldiers, employed by Britain to oversee the execution of British custom taxes, and a group of Bostonians. The encounter between the two sides turned violent when the soldiers fired their weapons at their adversaries. In defiance of the soldier's guns, both men and women left their homes to join the Bostonians already under siege, thereby forcing the British to back down.

Patriotic women's involvement in the Revolution, in their minds a righteous and necessary enterprise, was not limited to spontaneous displays of militancy or exposing themselves to hazardous situations. American women also entered into the movement to separate from Britain by banding together to form clubs composed solely of women and exploiting their own spending power to further the interests of an independent America. The activities of these groups was yet
another example of the blurring of gender roles which occurred during the period of Revolution as the execution of women's traditional duties as household managers became connected for the first time with politics.

Throughout the 1770s, many female coalitions were organized in the American colonies in sympathy with the cause of rebellion. The women of these clubs converged in the aspiration of diverting American money - usually procured by what many Americans deemed unfair custom taxes on British goods - from expanding the coffers of the British government. One such organization was formed in Edenton, North Carolina to raise public awareness of what its members believed to be excessive taxation placed by the British government on British tea exports. The organization of women to boycott household necessities originating from the Mother Country was perfectly logical considering that the purchasing of such items was normally their responsibility.

Refusing to buy British imports was more than a simple show of patriotism, expressed in the context of women's traditional domestic function. The patterns of female consumerism during the revolutionary period proved that women were considering political issues traditionally associated with men. This new focus propelled women to reconsider the extent to which they could decide the fate of their country. A case in point was the women of Edenton, whose club mandate reflected the possibility that women were willing to go further than simply denouncing tea taxes. The women of Edenton vowed to commit themselves to working for the nation's welfare in any possible capacity.

Many women's revolutionary organizations made similar pledges although most groups confined themselves to promoting American embargoes of British goods. Yet, the promises
made by members of these revolutionary clubs indicated a new sense among women that the
spheres of family and politics were not mutually exclusive. By conscientiously undertaking
domestic duties in light of current political situations, women realized that they could exert
influence over public policy and, thus, the destiny of their nation.

Certainly many of the female members of these patriotic organizations were aware they were
meddling into affairs of state, perhaps more than ever before, but asserted that to do otherwise, as
the President of the Philadelphia branch of the Ladies Association noted, was not demonstrating
good citizenship in America's time of need.67 To be sure, the struggle between America and
Britain catapulted American women into what became an epic conflict between two countries,
but it also engaged women in the kinds of political discussions formerly reserved for men.
Women banding together to serve the interests of American succession comprised one
consequence of this immersion into government affairs. A by-product of women's organizations
immersing themselves in governmental concerns was the club members' awareness that they had
the ability to comprehend matters of state. Bolstered by the success of their revolutionary
contributions in various areas, American women realized that they, in contrast with the
assumptions of eighteenth century medical science, had the means to assist in the shaping of
politics.

This new confidence in their abilities to be productive citizens who could be of benefit to their
country did not result in women collectivizing to agitate for female suffrage nor for women
having the right to hold political office in America.68 The period saw an astonishing number of
American women involved in the enterprise to garner support for the cause of Revolution while
maintaining the well-being of their families through various organized and spontaneous
activities. Nevertheless, American women rarely ventured beyond playing supporting - albeit necessary - roles in governmental affairs.

The vow made by the women of Edenton, for example, never challenged the notion that women were domestic beings charged with the care of their families. The most profound change in American women's perception of themselves was that they had the ability to assist their male counterparts who were the primary political operators, responsible for formulating public policy. During the latter half of the eighteenth century, the most formal expression of American women's concerns to the government assumed the guise of petitions, even after America separated from Britain. These petitions were easily disregardable because, as historian Lynn Hunt indicated, petitioning on the part of American women was generally an individual act. This fact combined with the often sporadic, supporting roles assumed by women during the American Revolution contrasted to a great degree with the part played by French women during their own Revolution in 1789.

The public involvement of French women in the French Revolution was so significant that they actually shaped the course of the Revolution itself. Most of these political acts, especially those classified as militant, were not radical departures for French women and were performed more frequently during the French Revolution than in the American Revolution. This comparatively dynamic exertion of militant citizenship on the part of French women was partially owing to tradition. French women, especially the working class Parisiennes, for example, often resorted to public demonstrations against the government in times of bread shortages long before 1789. Also, working class Parisiennes like the Dames des Halles who oversaw the running of markets were highly visible actors in the public arena. Female public
participation, then, as well as public protesting had already assumed the mantle of normalcy for the citizenry of Paris.

The motivations for the Parisiennes' acts of militancy were indeed quite similar to those of American women. In most cases, they were attempts to ensure the health and safety of their families - an extension of their domestic role - but often ended up having broader implications in terms of the political regime.\(^{76}\) One important case in point was the women's march on Versailles which took place in 1789 at the outset of the Revolution. The incident at this palace, for the women at least, constituted yet another example of their long history of agitating for the distribution of adequate food provisions.\(^{77}\) Imploring the King - who was stationed at Versailles - for adequate food provisions plunged women into the ensuing revolutionary debate. The women were steadfast and refused to disperse unless the King returned to Paris. The reluctance of the King to submit to the women's demand prompted the women to force the royal family back to Paris, a move which, according to many who sided with the rebellion, saved the Revolution.\(^{78}\)

Despite the fact that the march on Versailles was considered a crucial turning point in the course of the French Revolution by many contemporaries of the revolt, it was highly significant for other reasons. Although French women made a habit of taking their concerns directly to the locus of power in the form of collective protests before 1789, never before had the interests of women encroached upon the course of national politics to the degree of the Versailles experience.\(^{79}\) What was also unique about the Versailles campaign in regards to French women's tradition of protesting in times of crisis was the appearance of women carrying weapons.\(^{80}\) As it turned out, the march on Versailles foreshadowed and determined the character of female popular agitation from the years 1789 to 1795.
The appearance of women carrying arms and their constant concerted efforts to directly influence public policy became a dominant theme of the French Revolution. Instances of uprisings which included women serve to illustrate this point. In 1792, a succession of six armed crowds composed of women, men, and children paraded through the National Assembly, demanding to participate in the political process. The following year witnessed working-class Parisiennes again asserting their influence in governmental affairs with their instrumental role in enlisting popular support for the Jacobin political faction who were attempting to wage a coup d'état over the Girondist party who dominated the National Assembly.

The power that the female crowd assumed during the French Revolution had long been recognized in France. Leaders like Jacques Roux, disenchanted with the current political situation, exploited women's ability to alter public opinion by encouraging women to participate in riots. In 1793, for instance, women rioted against merchants who denied them vital requirements such as soap and candles. The hoarding and the inflating of prices by storekeepers were problematic for women who needed to work as laundresses to supplement their families' income. Similar to American women, they raided both the stores and warehouses of shopkeepers who they believed guilty of such infringements on their ability to make a living and adequately care for their families.

The mandate of many working class Parisiennes to ensure that their particular concerns were addressed reached its full expression in 1793 with the establishment of the Society of Revolutionary Republican Women. According to French historians Harriet Applewhite, Darlene Levy, and Mary Johnson, the founding of this particular association was a momentous accomplishment as it constituted the "first political interest group for common women in
Western history." Although the group did not challenge the belief that women's primary concerns lay with their families, they asserted that their domestic duties could only by realized by involvement in the broader society. The group's mission statements reflected this call for social involvement as they pledged to defend France.55

For these supporters of the Revolution, defence took on dual connotations. Not only were the members stating their intention to sacrifice their lives for their country should the need arise, but were asserting their intention to protect their vision of the Revolution which, for them, was a movement to ensure a better life for their families. Attending to the well-being of their families - a private concern undertaken in the public arena - often translated into sending delegations of members to the Legislative Assembly to voice their opinions on the political proceedings. As with American women, they made use of the written petition as another avenue of female expression into the political discourse of the nation. However, petitioning on the part of French women garnered much more attention in France than in America because French women often signed and presented their written concerns as a group.56

There can be no doubt that the collective nature of French women's moves to exercise citizenship, which led to the blurring of private and public interests in France, set French women apart from their American counterparts who had undergone their own Revolution ten years earlier. French women's collectivity was the source of their power - both before and during the Revolution. Women uniting to further their interests made French women far more vocal and visible throughout the revolutionary period. Before 1789, French working class women belonged to professional women's guilds and were accustomed to operating in groups. Many guild members utilized their organizational skills to aid in the establishment of political women's
groups during the Revolution. The most significant of the female political clubs was the Society of Revolutionary Republican Women.

The boldest statement concerning not only women's militancy, but their future intentions as fully active male citizens of France and not just supporters of active male citizens came from Pauline Leon, co-leader of the Society of Revolutionary Republican Women. Aware that the first mark of citizenship in a republican government was the ability to conduct an armed defence of the state, Leon drafted a petition to the French government in 1792 asking for women's legal right to bear arms.

Citing a provision entrenched in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen that guaranteed French citizens the right to carry weapons, Leon and her supporters contended that this freedom should be granted to women as well in order, as Leon argued, for women to defend themselves, their families, and the new Republic. Unlike American women, Leon and her followers, in essence, were requesting gender equality under the law with their plea to arm themselves. In the eighteenth century, only men were expected to lay down their lives for their country, aided by their uniquely masculine courage. This move to win for women the capacity to protect the nation, given the importance of defending the state in relation to citizenship in a Republic, constituted perhaps the most direct challenge to biomedical science's concept of womanhood.

The revolutionary experiences of women proved that they were capable of exercising traits like strength, ingenuity, and courage thought to be necessary requisites for publicly operating in a responsible manner. These activities opened up the possibility of French and American women
participating in public life after the revolts. This notion of allowing women to operate in the
public sphere was made possible because the Philosophes largely failed to delineate the sphere of
women in an Enlightened regime. Linda Kerber, reviewing the works of Enlightenment thinkers
from America, France, and England cited that the position of women garnered little attention
from those who fabricated the precepts of Enlightened government. Kerber observed that the
texts, mostly published before the two Revolutions, neglected to define the relationship between
the state and its female citizenry. The language utilized by the Enlightenment ideologues also
left open the change that women could attain full citizenship rights. This was most evident in
their failure to specifically designate the citizen or "unit of national sovereignty" mentioned in
France's Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen as being of the male gender.

The admission of women into politics, however, meant defying the assumptions of
eighteenth century biomedical science which postulated that womanhood was incompatible with
the demands of the public sphere. Exposing gendered medical science to ridicule was a
particular concern for French and American revolutionaries because it was science which verified
the teachings of the Enlightenment which were employed to legitimize and justify the two
rebellions. Hence, maintaining the conventional view of the nature of womanhood was
paramount to sustaining the credibility of the entire Enlightenment movement.

In the absence of Enlightened political ideology to justify the exclusion of women from the
public, political sphere in the new regime, the scientific aesthetic, imbued with the theories of
Enlightened medical science concerning gender differences, was employed to define the
relationship between women and politics. It was left to graphic artists to reshape those
revolutionary enterprises of French and American women which cast doubt on the dependability
of Enlightened science in a manner which conserved the authority of Enlightenment philosophy.
IV. The Aesthetic Treatment of Women's Revolutionary Activities

Iconographical depictions of women, dispersed during the period of the American and French Revolutions, were invariably endeavoring to reassert the authority of eighteenth century biomedical definitions of gender. These efforts involved purging and preventing the kind of female intervention that occurred in both countries as a result of the demands of wartime. Implicit in this agenda was the deployment of highly stylized renditions of real or concocted events which forwarded the assertion that women needed to adhere to nature by confining themselves to a maternal, domestic role lest they subvert the broader society. The scientific aesthetic worked to justify this exclusionary mandate by visually discrediting the only ways that French and American women could assert political influence during the second half of the 1700s - through public protests and forming alliances with politically powerful men.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, prominent writer and Philosophe, accused politically ambitious women of trying to "turn men into women" in light of their evident failure to become men.91 This fear voiced by Rousseau resonated in the iconographical treatment of American and French women, whose activities during their Revolutions threatened to usurp the authority of biomedical science which dictated that the public, political domain was a male reserve. For Enlightenment medical science, the only function possible and, hence, proper for women was to procreate and rear children in the safe haven of the domestic arena. By the onset of the French and American Revolutions, these prescriptions for the sexes were firmly entrenched in the minds of both populations, making any real or imagined deviation from these gendered modes of behaviour disdainful to the public sensibilities of the time. One of these assertions was that women, the
weaker sex in mind and body, were supposed to exist under the protection of men which, in light of the revolutionary experiences of women of both countries, was not always the case.

Americans, unused to the sight of women taking combative public stances, appeared predisposed to regard such activities as perversions of the natural order as was evidenced by revolutionary graphic images. Both British and American artists employed female figures to allegorically represent Britain and America in political graphic propaganda during the latter half of the 1700s. The inclusion of two women in battle to represent Britain and America in conflict was common among colonial iconography disseminated before the outbreak of the American Revolution.

Opting to align the feminine with militancy - an association which already offended the sensibilities of American colonists - to characterize an adversarial political situation affected more than a message of discord. The deployment of women in aggressive conflict, innately subversive in itself, served as a commentary on current relations between the two countries. It followed, then, that allegorizing Britain and America as openly antagonistic women was meant to exemplify the abnormalities inherent in the relationship between Britain and its colony. One case in point was an early 1776 print entitled "The Female Combatants."

"The Female Combatants" was one of a number of icons created in America that applied the gendered principles of Enlightened physicians in order to exemplify what many disgruntled Americans perceived to be their unnatural association with the Mother Country. Since the relationship between America and Britain was often likened to that of a parent and her child, the women combatants were portrayed as mother and daughter. The sketch captured the overall thrust of America's dispute with Britain as being over the latter's refusal to concede certain
freedoms to its American colony as the maternal Britannia, resplendent in her aristocratic finery, violently refuses to concede liberty to her daughter, clad in a simpler, native costume.

The latter sketch clearly implicated Britannia as a negative maternal figure: she was the aggressor who diverged from the Enlightened ideal of the placid, gentle mother. This notion of Britannia being unnatural was evident in the proliferation of imagery surrounding Britannia, imagery which represented ideals denounced by Enlightenment thinkers. As the banner beside her and her words to her daughter indicated, she stood for forced obedience instead of liberty. In contrast to the healthy strong tree topped by a liberty cap situated next to her daughter, Britannia's values, not harmonious with the natural order, weighed heavily upon her own tree which buckled under the weight of her shield. Yet, while her daughter, the heroine of the piece, exhibited resilience and courage in the face of her oppressive mother, the America of "Combatants" was not meant to be a model for American women.

The strength of character exhibited by the allegorical America was not an indication of qualities America valued or desired in its own women. Serving to support this argument was the artists' infusion of reality and fantasy in the way in which the female figures were clothed. The artist chose to sketch Britannia in a costume consistent with other court ladies of Britain, making her appear similar to other late eighteenth century aristocratic women. Britannia's appearance thus served to forward the assumption that those qualities embodied by Britannia were somehow consistent with those of real women. On the other hand, America was represented by an aboriginal woman because natives were thought to be closer to nature than Europeans. Her physical features and manner of dress did not resemble those of their British colonial counterparts. The deliberate construction of an allegorical America whose facade was not in
keeping with real European Americans indicated that the noble character of the fictional America was an image of fantasy.

The attitude that women who embroiled themselves in overtly militant activities upset the fundamentals of nature manifested itself differently in relation to women's real experiences with militant citizenship during the course of the American Revolution. American artists, ordinarily vigilant in their efforts to chart the proceedings leading up to the establishment of an America independent from Britain, as a matter of course, disregarded incidents of women exercising militant citizenship. These deeds were replaced with graphic scenes that rested on the biomedical argument that women had a propensity to feel fear which heightened their sensitivity to danger and propelled them to protect their young in the context of the safer domestic environment.

One of the images which most epitomized this strategy to reassert scientific beliefs was a painting entitled "Paul Revere's Ride," which showed Paul Revere warning a couple standing on the steps to their home about the coming of the British. According to this graphic narrative, only Revere and the armed man Revere was addressing appeared ready to constructively respond to the impending peril of enemy invasion. The woman, by contrast, kept close to the doorway, cowering behind her husband. Her only action consisted of pulling her robe up close to her face denoting her terror and need for security.

Mirroring this painting's portrayal of passive womanhood which, again, promulgated late eighteenth century stereotypes about innate female attributes, was Alonzo Chappel's painting, "Capture of Fort Ticonderoga." Reminiscent of "Paul Revere's Ride," the female subject embodied fear and inertia, opting to shrink behind her husband in the doorway at the sight of a
British soldier. Only her husband maintained a calm, almost defiant stance as he courageously confronted the enemy.

By no means were these paintings which publicized the prevalent Enlightenment assertion that women were unable to summon the courage to deal with adversity unusual in the graphic records of revolutionary events. American historian Ruth Bloch commented that the majority of visual depictions of women created during the 1770s indicated that women's revolutionary experiences were confined to being victimized by the British and seeing their sons off to war. Indeed, these kinds of portrayals of women in dangerous situations confirmed that women required the protection of men.

The superimposing of images revealing women during absolutely nothing except reacting to threatening situations by appealing to their husbands ad home for security on the reality of women's revolutionary experiences, implied that American women chose to remain inside the protective confines of their homes while their husbands waged the important battles of the Revolution. In the context of graphically depicting the American Revolution, such oversights of American women's militancy were not difficult to make. As discussed in the previous chapter, the aims of women who protested against the unfair practices of merchants and defended their communities were limited to resolving the particular situation at hand. While the public exertion of aggression on the part of American women was mostly overlooked in revolutionary visual art, the same did not hold true of their female counterparts in France during their own Revolution.

The visual artists of France were not afforded the luxury of being able to disregard examples of female militancy because of sporadic nature or low visibility of such incidents. The preceding chapter outlined the comparatively vigorous campaign of French women to promote their own
concerns to the political elite. Occasions when French women publicly assembled to embark upon armed protests accumulated so much public awareness because of the frequency of such acts. Also, many of the Parisienne's activities were intrinsic to the course of the French Revolution and involved important political figures such as the King of France. Hence, French artists were obligated to memorialize these deeds in artwork.

In contrast to the revolutionary depictions of American women which were limited in scope, French women's most significant acts of militancy occurred in Paris. Since they took place in Paris - the highly-populated centre of the French Revolution - their deeds were witnessed by a great number of people.\textsuperscript{94} The location, the frequency, and the collective nature of the Parisiennes' militant activities ensured that illustrators of the French Revolution base their pieces on either actual events or situations which were widely taken to be real. For artists to disperse images of female timidity in the face of adversity were simply too far-removed from reality to be taken seriously in the early 1790s. As the 1790s wore on, however, women increasingly became subject to artists' rebukes for not adhering to the biomedical ideal of the natural mother who sought to protect the interests of her family by remaining in the domestic arena. These graphic reproachments mirrored the increasing virulence of women's public use of force throughout the revolt.

Implicit in this comparatively more intense propaganda and recalling American artists' renditions of American women, French artists sought to maintain the principles of the scientific aesthetic in their endeavour to convince the French people that women's attributes were incongruous with the demands of responsible citizenship. French artists, like their American counterparts, based their arguments on women's maternal function. Instead of focusing on
women's allegedly heightened sense of fear. France's graphic creators resorted to exploiting another biomedical conclusion. Their art pieces contended that women's ability to think rationally, deemed a necessary precursor to sound defence, was hindered by their innate preoccupation with physiological functions related to child-bearing. To conduct themselves outside of the sphere of domestic motherhood resulted in women acting irrationally and becoming forces of societal destruction.

One important case in point was the depiction of the women's march on Versailles. The notion that women were acting against their own nature during the October days was embedded in "Triomphe de l'armée Parisienne reunis au Peuple a son Retour de Versailles le 6 Octobre 1789." Historian Joan Landes stated that this picture was designed to celebrate the march which reportedly saved the Revolution. The sketch, however, presented disturbing images which communicated the idea that women's behavior during the event was cause for alarm and necessitated a curbing of similar future endeavours.

The artist of "Triomphe" injected several allusions to eighteenth century medical science to support his graphic allegations that the campaign conducted by this mostly-female contingent at Versailles was neither entirely heroic nor noble in their efforts to lobby the King for adequate food provisions. In this depiction of the Versailles march, many of the female characters were portrayed as overtly fierce to the point of parody; a few of the women were so caught up in the event that they seemed on the verge of propelling themselves into a state of unbridled excitement. This behavior supported the medical assertion that sensitive women would become overly zealous when confronted with the tumults inherent in the public arena. This assumption was advanced by including the figure of a Parisienne who forgot herself to the degree that she
straddled a cannon. Underscoring the potential outpouring of uninhibited female emotionalism was the disorderly, almost haphazard march of the women. Clearly, this display of organized female militancy deviated sharply from an ideal army characterized by the stoicism and dignity of its soldiers.

The sexual overtones and the belief that women were not capable of rational thought which reverberated in "Triomphe" recalled the initial reactions of pro-royalist and pro-revolution journalists. Both sides stressed that the Versailles action was undertaken by a predominantly female crowd by describing their feats utilizing distinctly female terminology. Moderate and conservative journalists who were clearly against the Revolution branded the female activists "harlots" and "furies," accusing them of being manipulated by the Duc d'Orleans. The more radical liberal writers, while commending the women as "heroines," denied that the women had the mental faculties to carry out such a crusade. In his article, "Les Heroines de Paris," a liberal writer credited the instigation and the ultimate victory of the protests to the intercession of "Providence."

Denying women the initiative for organizing and carrying out such a crucial event in the annals of the French Revolution was an example of the insults directed towards women when compared to what were believed to be the implications of a collective outburst of female emotionalism. "Triomphe" presented a strong argument that the release of erratic, irrational female emotions held dire consequences for women and, more significantly, for the broader society, particularly in reference to men's ability to retain their manhood. This fear was very apparent in "Triomphe" since one of its most graphic and disturbing images was of female marchers bearing pikes upon which were mounted the heads of male aristocrats. Weapons
assumed a prominent position in much of the visual art because the presence of weaponry was a new addition to the traditional bread protests.

Highlighting the introduction of arms to the bread marches functioned as a tactic to instill fear in French men. As historian Linda Kelly rightly pointed out, the sight of working class women carrying weapons had an adverse effect on the ability of women to attain full citizenship during the Revolution. On the surface, the severed heads paraded down the street symbolically showed the victory of the popular classes over the oppressive aristocracy. Yet, when viewed in conjunction with two other visual depictions, "Grand Debandment de l'armee anti-constitutionelle" and "A People Is without Honour and Merits Its Chains," there is revealed a deeper meaning suggestive of a gender war arising from the militancy of women - a war which threatened to further subvert nature.

Both "Grand Debandment" and "A People" presented concocted situations of unnaturally aggressive women wielding their weapons either against men or in place of men. "Grand Debandment" depicted an imaginary battle between the female supporters of the Revolution, led by the famous Theroigne de Mericourt, and a division of Austrian royalist soldiers. Hidden behind the women - presumably in a state of fear - was a group of Jacobin men. The other icon, most likely created by an anti-monarchist artists, showcased the French Queen, Marie Antoinette, as half monster who was in the process of spearing her husband, King Louis XVI, with a sword, thus usurping the strength of the most powerful man in France. Both portrayals revealed a preoccupation with the idea that the actions of militant women directly called into question the ability of French men to indeed be real men in accordance with the precepts of Enlightenment science.
The fact that the two sketches represented both sides of the revolutionary dispute indicated the existence of a common belief that all French men, from the King down to the lower class Jacobins, were in palpable danger of having their identity as defenders systematically dismantled by women acting outside of their role as the sex that needs protection. These sentiments echoed Jean-Jacques Rousseau who asserted that public women, failing in their goal to become men, altered their original quest by attempting to turn men into women. This theme of men changing into women was seized upon by French visual artists and permeated both depictions. Men in both pictures were shown as having adopted attributes innate to women such as fear, passivity, and weakness. However, the treatment of the women in the drawings did not suggest that a successful role reversal was possible.

Both artists were shrewd enough to convey the message that the women's motivation for assuming male roles was to satisfy their own need for power, making their needs neither heroic nor righteous. Pressing the argument that women were somehow ruining the natural order, the women were shown as being completely out of their element which, in turn, was detrimental to a moral society. As such, the female figures included in the icons were not only extremely lewd in regards to the manner in which they displayed their bodies, but were overtly and gratuitously violent.

The assumption that the militant activities of women served as an assault upon French manhood was further evidenced given that, in both depictions, the violence was specifically directed at the male characters. The threat posed by openly aggressive women using force to victimize men was readily apparent to the audience of "A People." The manifestation of female violence towards men. Queen Marie Antoinette, seated amid an atmosphere of decadent
celebration, held her husband immobile with a spear - a reference to the arming of women taking place all over Paris. This notion of men under attack by openly aggressive women also had undercurrents in "Grand Debandment." Instead of implying the female threat by picturing women carrying the heads of men mounted on pikes as in "Versailles," the female force of "Grand Debandment" expounded upon the theme of a gender war in a far more descriptive and disturbing manner as this army of women brandished both sausages and hams on pikes.

Images of women spearing hams and sausages was meant to have a profound psychological impact on the male population of France. Historians Lynn Hunt and Joan Landes both concur that this portrayal referred to a symbolic castration. By inferring the savage act of male castration, the artist made the scene of Jacobin men cowering behind women all the more telling. Clearly, both icons communicated the message that women acting against nature and aspiring to assume male roles could only result in a violent and irreversible denigration of manhood.

This fictitious war conducted by overly forceful women against men and everything noble about the revolutionary movement was most developed in the graphic treatment of the assassination of the journalist and revolutionary Jean-Paul Marat in July of 1793 by Charlotte Corday. The early 1790s were particularly significant to the topic of French women and militancy. During this time, the Society of Revolutionary Republican Women was established with the mandate to involve themselves in affairs of state. In keeping with their agenda, the club circulated a petition that demanded women be guaranteed the right to bear arms.

The way in which the killing of Marat, one of the Deputies to the National Convention, was visually presented to the French public was a definitive in turning public opinion firmly against women taking up arms in the public sphere. In life Marat, while not an obscure revolutionary
figure, certainly was not as revered as he was in death. Only after Charlotte Corday stabbed Marat to death in her quest to preserve that she described as her own vision of the Revolution against the policies proposed by Marat in his journal, did Marat achieve mythic proportions.\textsuperscript{100}

This new persona bestowed upon Marat by the revolutionary elite propelled the circumstances of an otherwise inconsequential assassination - namely being murdered by a woman - to the forefront of public discussion.

Marat's post-mortem reputation was shaped in part by the way in which Marat was subsequently depicted in visual art. A 1793 engraving of Marat, "L'Ami de Peuple" showing Marat in death provided a perfect instance of the mandate to transform the slain journalist into a Messiah figure. This engraving depicted the dead Marat with a peaceful expression on his face - unnerving in view of the violent nature of his death - with what appeared to be a laurel wreath on his head, reminiscent of the crown of thorns worn by Christ during his crucifixion. Lynn Hunt, concurring with the fact that Marat was cast as Christ-like, cited that the inscription underneath the image of Marat immortalized the formerly obscure revolutionary as "father" to the French people.\textsuperscript{101}

The naming of Marat as the father of France served to further reinforce Marat's new reputation as being both a moral and a holy figure. Previous to the French Revolution, the French Monarch - considered God's representative on Earth - was also called the father of the people. Other icons concerning the death of Marat also appealed to the religious sensibility of the French people.

One of the most profound images disseminated on the subject was "Assassinate De J.P. Marat." Unlike L'Ami de Peuple," however, Marat was not the sole focal point of the illustration as this act of murder involved two people - the victim Marat and his murderess Corday.
The manner in which the event was portrayed in "Assassinat" worked to draw the viewers' eyes immediately to the remorseless, menacing Corday, then shifted the audience's attention to her evil deed in the guise of the dead Marat. The artist's rendition of the death of Marat further stressed the notion that Marat was in some way sacred by conjuring up in the viewers' minds visions of Christ being taken down from the cross by the way the noble, luminous body of Marat was being lifted from his bed. In keeping with the religious imagery, the female figure located in between Marat and Corday had her hands clasped in prayer suggesting that the slain journalist was indeed an object worthy of worship.

Formulating iconography that separated the death of Jean-Paul Marat from the many assassinations that took place in France during this time deliberately acted to persuade the French people against the involvement of women in militant activities. Marat was deemed to be both father and friend to the French people only after his demise and came to represent all that was good and just about the Revolution. Lynn Hunt observed that the dead Marat was the object of the largest "cult" ever constructed around one revolutionary figure. In this cult, the villain was certainly Corday who came to encompass all militant women. Her story was adapted iconographically as a lesson for the French people about what might happen to the revolutionary process if women were allowed active involvement.

If Marat was redefined to symbolize goodness and purity, then Corday necessarily represented a kind of evil which was rooted in women acting against their own nature and corrupting the broader society with their unnatural deeds. The graphic treatment of Corday's assassination of Marat served to punctuate and confirm pre-established prejudices against militant women. For the French, the Corday story supported Enlightenment science's argument that women, already
prone to wild emotions, would become even more irrational when engaging themselves in roles reserved for men. In the context of the French Revolution, given the proliferation of militant acts executed by women, this Enlightened precept was voraciously adopted by iconographers who were unable to ignore the existence of female militancy in their endeavour to record revolutionary events.

Condoning women's exemption from politics based on the argument that women's physical impulses ruled their minds extended beyond the issue of women's militancy. Exposing the supposed sexual deviance of political women was also part of the mandate to deny women a voice in government. For these types of depictions, French and American iconographers portrayed a third force related to child-bearing which Enlightened physicians credited with determining the behaviour of women in their artwork. Artists drew upon the conviction that women were ruled by pleasure - namely sexual pleasure - which caused them to desire to become pregnant. In keeping with the theme of women becoming dangerously out of control when exposed to power found in the public sphere, many visual artists opted to characterize women who transgressed into politics as aggressively and perversely oversexed.

In both the visual imagery and the literature of the day, it was suggested that women with political ambitions used their own bodies to entice and manipulate men in order to elevate their own power. Further apparent in the suppositions of Enlightenment science and late eighteenth century writers and artists was the belief that women's first experience with the pleasure of sexual intercourse caused their bodies to develop overwhelming and uncontrollable sexual appetites. Failure to restrain this female desire held the possibility that oversexed with political aspirations would take over the reins of government.\textsuperscript{104} This theory denoted that if sexually experienced
women were not kept within the confines of the domestic sphere under the supervision of their husbands who were able to transcend physical impulses, women would repeatedly endeavour to satisfy their lust for sensual enjoyment.\textsuperscript{105}

As with the depictions of militant women, however, American and French artists differed in regards to iconography concerning the sexual nature of political women. The theme of women prostituting themselves to gain political influence to the detriment of society was merely hinted at in the revolutionary iconography of America. America also opted to educate the female populace by graphically depicting dangers posed to women's bodies should they venture into public political discourse. The underlying fear demonstrated by the iconography was of allowing women with political interests sexual liberty. It was believed that women gained political power and input by seducing politically powerful men. The graphic images communicated that this failure to restrain the sexuality of politically ambitious women threatened to shift the balance of power in favour of women who were not capable of responsibly managing that kind of power.

America was well-versed in the archetypal story of Adam and Eve which warned of the dire consequences of man acting against his sounder judgement when faced with the sexual enticement of a woman. For the Americans, as historian Jan Lewis deduced, the most menacing attributed of Eve was her ability to seduce her husband.\textsuperscript{106} Thus, the fear of women's sexuality and the power that it implied was certainly a part of the collective religious experience of the predominantly Christian Americans.

One of these icons which delineated the relationship between politics and female sexuality was the 1774 British caricature of the patriotic organization formed in Edenton, North Carolina. The vow made by members of this club to work for their country in any capacity - as historian
Mary Beth Norton contended - set this club apart and incited reaction from people as far away as Great Britain who shared their American adversaries' suspicion of female political involvement. The result of this distaste for female politicians was an imagined rendering of the Edenton club entitled "A Society of Patriotic Women" which consisted of two focal points. The first depicted a sexually suggestive interaction between a man and one of the group's younger members, confirming the stereotype that political women were oversexed. The second consisted of a small child unable to capture any of the women's attention in spite of the large number of women in the room.

The inclusion of the child moved this particular image beyond the realm of gender-neutral political propaganda as it served to remind the audience of women's naturally ascribed role as mother. Women who involved themselves in matters other than those present in the domestic sphere, it was argued, were unable to properly execute their innate duty to nurture children. This perception that motherhood and politics were incompatible with each other was one of the main messages of "A Society:" its portrayal of budding female politicians revealed them to be too engrossed in their own affairs to care for even one child.

In the context of American iconography, despite the proliferation of women's clubs formed during the Revolution which garnered the unflattering attention of writers on both sides of the Ocean, American artists chose not to depict political women - sexually or otherwise. Yet, graphic art that arose from the American Revolution that depicted women indicated that the Americans did ponder the relationship between female sexuality and the political sphere. Despite the fact that the depictions in these icons were undeniably fictitious, the messages they emitted served to reinforce the view that the feminine was incompatible with politics.
These types of portrayals were utilized by both British and American propagandists and implied rape and male violence. In both examples, the use of a woman to portray victimization acted as a warning to women as to what they might expect should they transgress into the public arena. First, to win public support against the British tea taxes. Freebetter's New-England Almanack published "The able Doctor, or America Swallowing the Bitter Draught." in 1776. The illustration showcased America, represented by a woman, in the process of being physically restrained by male British politicians, forced to drink tea. The act of impending rape as revealed in the picture, though, was perhaps even more engaging to the eyes of the viewers than its anti-tax message. The allusion to rape was accentuated by the image of a half-clad "America" being compelled to lie down by two of the politicians while the third attempted to pry her legs apart.

Interestingly enough. America's depiction of "The able Doctor" was the second version of an allegorical depiction of the same name. First published in Britain in 1774, the British sketch was the mirror image of the American version and contained all the elements which foreshadowed rape. The only difference between the two was that they were sketched by two different artists. The fact that the same kind of imagery was used by artists on both sides of the revolutionary argument reinforced the hypothesis that both shared a view of women's place. Reminding women of their physical vulnerability and need for male protection, members of the two ideological persuasions, even with their disagreements, concurred with Enlightenment science that women's place was in the home. The rape imagery categorically warned women that the employment of their feminine wiles would not translate into political influence.

While American iconographers addressed the theme of women's sexuality, French artists
offered a much more blatant and vicious attack on the sexual nature of women deemed to be politically ambitious. As with the Americans and the British, the iconography arising from artists positioned on opposite sides of the French Revolution demonstrated a common mandate to deny women political power. Despite this universal belief in the dangers posed by political women, the most serious denunciations of the sexual character of political women centred upon Queen Marie Antoinette.\textsuperscript{111} It was the revolutionaries themselves who devised the most vicious and relentless attacks in their campaign to besmirch the reputation of the Queen. For them, she provided the platform upon which the revolutionary elite could condemn women who reputedly used their female wiles to manipulate men and, thereby, enter into the realm of government.\textsuperscript{112}

Without a doubt, the forces which supported the King viewed pro-revolutionary women as sexual subversives. This was unmistakable in their handling of one of the more prominent revolutionary figures, Thérèse de Mericourt. Mericourt - one of the few women who demanded gender equality in the areas of employment, law, politics, and education during the Revolution - was accused by monarchists of being a loose woman who was disposed to engage in sexual relation with any politician.\textsuperscript{113} Most appropriately, then, one of the most sexually-explicit visual images originating from the royalists centred upon Mericourt.

Historian Vivian Cameron argued that "Grand Debâcle de l'Armée anti-constitutionelle" placed Mericourt in the middle of the throng of women showing their buttocks - commonly referred to as the "locus of desire" in paintings and literary works.\textsuperscript{114} Mericourt was the only woman facing the Austrian royalist army, showing her pubic region which incidentally the President of the Paris Commune, voicing men's fear of female sexual power, considered the area of women's "natural despotism."\textsuperscript{115} Fear of women using their bodies to make men submissive
and irrational was also implicit in "Grand Debandment." This was communicated in the castration imagery which implied the removal of the "virility" of men in the form of sausages and hams on the pikes carried by the female army and extended by the Jacobin men hiding behind the women.

The widespread alarm concerning the potential power of women drawing upon their full sexual capacities to entice and subjugate men was most pronounced in the iconography surrounding Marie Antoinette. Indeed, in an underground pamphlet entitled "Les crimes des reines de France" distributed just prior to 1789, the author echoed a charge previously made by Jean-Jacques Rousseau that women's most potent "weapon" was the "intoxicating caresses" intrinsic to the female seduction process.\textsuperscript{116} The iconography and literature concerning Marie Antoinette characterized her as the most politically powerful woman in France and, as such, she was duly described as the embodiment of the insatiable sexual deviant who attained her influence through sexual liaisons.\textsuperscript{117}

In fact, in view of graphic images of the Queen disseminated during the period of the French Revolution, the Queen's sexual energy, not to mention her sexual preferences, appeared to know no boundaries. The pamphlet entitled "Vie privée, libertine, et scandaleuse de Marie Antoinette d'Autriche" contained at least two explicit engravings of the Queen's supposed sexual escapades. The first depiction of the Queen, as noted by Lynn Hunt, showed her in a compromising position with the princesse de Guemenee.\textsuperscript{118} Another extremely suggestive picture portrayed the Queen wearing a large headpiece sandwiched between a man and a woman. This stressing of her degenerate and very active sex life in the visual arts worked to solidify the argument that the Queen gained absolute power and influence in France through her willingness to sleep with
anyone.

Marie Antoinette's alleged source of power was drawn from her successful efforts to de-man her husband, King Louis XVI, the most politically powerful man in France, with her sexual aggressiveness according to the pro-revolutionary media. Several visual images served to confirm rumours that the King was unable to sexually fulfil his wife. Even though writers blamed King Louis for his "impotency," the iconography distinctly portrayed the Queen as physically oppressing the King. 

The icon that most dramatically communicated the reputed unhealthy relationship which existed between the royal couple and suggested female violation was " A People is without Honour and Merits its Chains." Here, a half beast, half female representation of the Queen was displayed spearing the King with her sword, rendering her mate powerless while she held court. Included in the picture was a dead baby, ignored by the participants, located at the feet of the King which, again, forwarded the suggestion that female involvement in political affairs was incompatible with good mothering. This atmosphere of female-inspired evil was further impressed upon the viewer by a statue of the Devil overseeing the subversive festivities.

All of the images depicting the sex life of Marie Antoinette were meant to insinuate that it was she, not her husband whom she made impotent sexually and politically, who presided over the nation. Since she was believed to be the sovereign, it was easier for revolutionaries to denounce the monarchy as operating against the rules of nature. The notion of an unnatural monarchy was extended by accusations that the Queen conducted an incestuous affair with her son, the Dauphin, thus implying that the monarchy would continue to be tainted by female influence. In effect, the Queen's alleged sexual relationship with her son who, in light of her
list of lovers, might be illegitimate, would probably result in the Queen maintaining her position as ruler of France. This malicious denunciation of Marie Antoinette and other women who supposedly utilized their unsupervised, unrestrained sexuality to transcend the restrictions placed on them by nature and enter the public political sphere rallied public opinion against female political involvement in France. By the time Marie Antoinette was put to death in 1793 for her alleged crimes against the French people, the militant Parisiennes, for whom public and private interests were often indivisible, were among her most vocal detractors.

Graphically discrediting French and American women's transgression into the sphere of politics - whether their public protests or their alliances with politically powerful men - effectively closed the only avenues open to women to influence public policy during the late eighteenth century. The iconography justified the exclusionary laws which outlined French and American women's relationship with the political sphere. American women, banned from using formal means to voice their concerns, resorted to drafting petitions to the government to disclose their concerns.

French women, more publicly active during their Revolution, were subjected to a stronger graphic campaign. French visual art contributed to an supported the formulation of laws which prevented them from organizing themselves into political clubs. This was devastating to French women's ability to participate in politics because it was their collectivity which made them a formidable presence in the arena of public opinion.
V. The Graphic Construction of the Republican Mother

Just as revolutionary illustrations strove to reconstruct the true complexion of women's wartime activities for the purpose of reasserting the belief that women were unsuited to politics, artwork of the revolutionary age aided in solidifying women's exclusion from the political sphere by rallying endorsement for a new role for French and American women in the infant Republics. To accomplish public support for limited democracy and to quell potential protests from women who desired to continue augmenting the cause of republicanism during the post-war period, the iconography depicted the exigency of women assuming the private maternal duties of the Republican Mother as intrinsic to the survival of the Republics. While it appeared that the importance given to women's domestic functions in the guise of republican motherhood increased the status of women in the French and American Republics, a select number of visual images emanating from the revolutionary era showed that this role was nothing more than a glorified reaffirmation of the negative perception of the female nature proposed by eighteenth century Enlightenment science.

The influence that visual imagery assumed in determining the status of women after the fall of the old regimes cannot be overstated. Artwork disseminated during the revolutionary period drew together ideas concerning the nature of womanhood from varied sources during the latter half of the 1700s for the purpose of turning the attention of women who had patriotic aspirations from public political institutions and into the private arena of the family.

Even though the republican politicians of France and America successfully consigned women to the periphery of government by constructing legislation which denied them the vote, they had
yet to deal with the concerns of women who were disgruntled with the prospect of being politically isolated. For a number of American women, politicized through years of exposure to the discourse of revolt, complete prohibition from government affairs was unacceptable. Although this yearning to be of service to their country did not necessarily translate into widespread demands for full citizenship rights, a few women like Abigail Adams believed that women should indeed have the ability to vote. This notion of female enfranchisement, however, was not intended to conflict with women's role as family caretaker. Adams intended women's formal political involvement to precipitate the election of politicians responsive to the needs of families.126

Despite the fact that the language of female suffrage in revolutionary America was couched in terms of women's traditional familial obligations, the new republican elite was not prepared to make any provisions that would allow women direct political participation. Politicians John Adams and James Sullivan reflected the prevailing posture of the new American political elite towards women's place in the late 1700s. When confronted with the possibility of including women in the franchise after separating from Britain, Adams and Sullivan dismissed such a possibility, arguing that such a concession would bring about endless difficulties for legislators. They contended that if women were accorded the right to vote, "there will be no end to demands" for enfranchisement and even predicted that children would be next to agitate for the vote.127 The attitude expressed by the two men mirrored the feelings of their fellow politicians. American women, though, while readily acquiescing to operating in the capacity of homemakers, wanted some sort of outlet for their patriotism. Hence, the subject of female enfranchisement remained an issue requiring resolution.
The republican government of France faced similar difficulties about women's political participation. Despite the new French political elite's resounding admonitions that French women should remain at home - a viewpoint which resulted in a plethora of repressive laws bent on preventing female participation in government in 1793, the customary bread riots continued well into the year 1795. Legislation did not appreciably curb the journees because the Parisienne working class perceived their public agitations for sustenance as an integral component of domestic administration.

The perseverance of the protests to the government for food showcased the initial failure of the vicious and intense onslaught of icons meant to indoctrinate the French population about the dangers inherent in women's public activities. The extent to which the journees were still embraced as moral endeavours by many in the Paris working class was partially indicated by the significant numbers of women organizing and taking part in these militant movements. The acceptance of female agitation for food was also confirmed by the sight of male participants marching alongside women during the protests, thereby offering their endorsement. While such pre-arranged public calls for adequate food provisions undertaken primarily by women were violently routed by French officials in 1795, it was clear that the French public needed to be definitively convinced that, regardless of women's intentions, women operating in the public arena were immoral, detrimental to the nation and to the family.

France and America respectively were summoned to devise a way to purge women of the idea that formal participation in politics was the only avenue available for citizens wanting to serve the Republic and that domesticity was a viable option. As alike as their problems regarding women's position in society were, the two countries had to handle the differing attitudes arising
from their diverging traditions of female participation in the public sphere. Lynn Hunt argued that, from the standpoint of America, its women seemed overwhelmingly content to remain in the home setting in order to care for their families as they had done before the onset of rebellion. Thus, the challenge was to convey to women at least a semblance of political influence in the area of national welfare without actually giving them any formal political role.¹³⁰

The French, on the other hand, were forced to counteract the traditional assumptions shared by many French people. As was evidenced by the journees, the French believed that, at times, owing to mitigating circumstances, families were best served by female intervention in public affairs, interventions which precluded a direct appeal to government officials. This viewpoint engendered the mandate of the Society of Revolutionary Republican Women who reasoned that their endeavours in government attested to their devotion to their families. The reluctance of many Parisiennes to relinquish their conventional ties to government which enabled them to directly influence public policy, set them apart from American women. This custom drove French artists to persuade the population that the most effective manner by which women could complete their familial obligations was by staying at home, thereby transferring the responsibility for creating government policies to men.¹³¹

France and America were summoned to define the role of women in a Republic in a fashion which did not debase the assumptions of Enlightenment science, was responsive to the specific circumstances of their respective countries and attempted to placate those women who wanted to carry on labouring for the welfare of their nation. For both Republics, the solution which would address all of these issues lay with Jean-Jacques Rousseau, a famous French author and Enlightened thinker whose ideas dominated the political landscape of both countries during their
rebellions. While the Philosophe himself died soon after the outbreak of the American
Revolution and thus did not witness first-hand the revolutionary activities of women, his
prescriptions for the role of women were adapted to serve the discourse about the proper position
of women.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau's idea of model womanhood was first outlined in his novel Emile,
published in 1762. Through his fictional account of the self-development of his protagonist,
Emile, Rousseau communicated a view of womanhood which was strikingly consistent with the
assertions of Enlightenment physicians. For this French Philosophe, women who behaved
according to nature willingly submitted themselves to their husbands as devoted wives, prolific
mothers, and efficient household managers. Their only tangible communal responsibilities -
other than spawning male citizens, of course - consisted of nurturing loyalty to the state in their
offspring and making sure that their husbands' conduct epitomized this same quality. Women
who failed to carry out their family obligations and, instead, opted to involve themselves in
public life threatened both society and their own nature.133

As was apparent in the iconography, Rousseau's belief that public women posed a danger to
society was embraced by many graphic artists. Conversely, Rousseau's vision of the ideal
female role chronicled in Emile provided artists with the model for the flawless republican
woman in the figure of Sophie, Emile's wife, who was pre-disposed to extricate herself from the
public sphere for the love of her country.134 This description of womanhood in its most perfect
state was imbedded in much of the iconography published throughout the revolutionary age.

Given the rationalization that acting in the capacity of wife and mother in a domestic setting
was a role instinctive to women and hence natural, the graphic descriptions of the Republican

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Mother constituted a definite departure from visual depictions of women transgressing into the public sphere. Whereas pictures of public women were deliberately constructed to highlight the female nature in chaos, maternal imagery celebrated women who behaved in ways viewed as natural by Enlightenment scientists. Accordingly, these graphic creations were aesthetically pleasant as the artists strove to achieve confluence, balance, and beauty in their works. However divergent the pictographic renderings of public and private women appeared to be, they were all designed to both justify and, to a degree, mask a deeply-gendered power disparity that countered the Enlightenment promise of inclusivity.

 Conjuring up what historian Joan Gundersen labelled an exclusively female definition of "virtue" obscured the passive nature of the role prescribed to women by Rousseau. Without a doubt, the rhetoric of the new Republics of France and America was frequently laden with references to the exigency of fostering virtue among its citizenry to produce unanimity in a Republic. On this point, Gundersen pointed out that eighteenth century convention dictated that personifying this attribute was explicitly linked to national public service, ostensibly in the capacity of soldier or voter. This traditional republican meaning of virtue - a term often interchangeable with heroism in late eighteenth century dialogue - which precluded a kind of public operation was believed to be incongruous with the female nature. As a result, a decidedly female description of republican virtuosity was set forth for women, providing them with another mode of behaviour that was, by the standards of the 1700s was both acceptable and natural.

 In light of women's behaviour, the adjective "virtuous" described women's conduct which was called natural by Enlightened physicians. It followed then that the sort of female virtuosity that was promulgated to a great extent by visual productions throughout the revolutionary era

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accommodated the conclusions of medical science by glorifying tasks associated with domestic motherhood. Women shunning the public arena except to offer praise for male heroism and embracing private maternal duties were common images found in much of the more flattering iconographical depictions of the feminine in France and America.

Since virtue was judged to be the most important characteristic of a good republican citizen, a relationship was thus forged between female patriotism and domesticity. This delineation between the private and public arenas was widened by the graphic art of the time. Visual artists encouraged women to associate their routine household work with national welfare by constantly depicting the political meaning behind these duties. Out of this fabricated link between domestic duties and politics arose the prototype of the Republican Mother who demonstrated virtue by fastidiously living up to the standards set for her by science.

Fulfilling what was required of this venerated female role simultaneously encompassed silent capitulation to the chronic revision of women's true realities to fit the mould of Enlightened science's prescriptions about the nature of womanhood. reconstruction which occurred above all in the graphic arts. To make these amendments palatable to women and to persuade women to emulate the behaviour of the female subjects in the iconography, the visual art stressed that women would be rewarded if they were apolitical. Pictographs of women adopting the demeanour of the Republican Mother were portrayed as eliciting respect from and bringing order to their nation. These illustrations of the effects of this ideal female virtuosity effectively neutralized the radical implications of women's revolutionary in France and America.

The sentiment that women would be more valued and fare better under a republican government than under monarchical regimes was implicit in the pre-revolutionary writings of two
prominent Philosophes, Charles Montesquieu and John Locke. Montesquieu proclaimed that the condition of women would be much improved because women were liberated by laws implemented by a republican government. He argued that in a "despotic society" - a reference to a monarchical government - women were "reduced to a state of servitude."\(^{127}\) Notwithstanding the ambiguity of his reference to women being guided by manners, his statements, along with those of John Locke, seemed to imply that the Enlightenment intended to impart an increase in status for all, irrespective of gender. Indeed, Locke's own belief that the natural order translated into "equality" and "reciprocity" inferred that all citizens would receive some measure of profit under republican rule.\(^{128}\)

Paradoxically, the allegations of both men were at once confirmed and refuted in J.L. Morton's visual description of "Washington's Reception on the Bridge at Trenton" which encompassed the artist's vision of appropriate gender relations. "Reception," based on an actual event that occurred in 1789, portrays an adoring group of women of different ages surrounding the paternal figure of George Washington and his entourage of male soldiers.\(^{139}\) Facilitating the conviction that men were the only significant actors in the war with Britain, the banner stretched above the head of Washington and his entourage of male soldiers read "The Hero Who Defended the Mothers Will Protect the Daughters." The banner's narrative was strikingly reminiscent of this iconographical mandate to forget American women's revolutionary acts of bravery. The female characters of the work evidently participated in this obliteration of women's war-time contributions by their enormous outpouring of gratitude to Washington and, ostensibly, all American soldiers, as was evident in their zealous endeavours to pay homage to the General by strewing flowers in his path.
Morton's illustration disclosed that the women who accepted the myth of female war-time passivity were twice rewarded. First, the artist's female subjects wore laurels of flowers on their heads which, common to neo-classical art pieces, connoted heroism and added honour for the wearers. Second, this virtuous female deference to the dictates of revisionists would also warrant the benefit of male protection, thereby identifying male defence as the remuneration offered to women for their complicity. This compensation for women for consenting to embody a passive posture did not translate into the fair reciprocity for all citizens proposed by John Locke. Judith Hicks Stiehm's arguments about the asymmetrical nature implicit in the relationship between those who "protected" and those who were "defended" are particularly useful in disputing the pretence of an egalitarian affiliation between the sexes in Morton's model.\textsuperscript{140}

For Stiehm, casting women in the role of "protected" meant that they were dependent on men to whom society granted the privilege to utilize force and often encompassed weaponry.\textsuperscript{141} To quote a Massachusetts magazine published in 1790, a woman who retains her delicacy elicits protection and respect from men.\textsuperscript{142} Refusing to supply women with some allowances which enabled men to function as the decidedly more powerful sex rendered women helpless and propelled them into a state resembling servitude. Part of this compliance to male rule, she explained, sometimes involved collusion where those who defend gain the aid of those who are dependent upon them for protection. This kind of co-operation occurs for the purpose of enhancing the protector's ability to provide more effective protection. Stiehm revealed that, at its most "extreme," this collaboration resulted in "female seclusion."\textsuperscript{143} This final remark was especially noteworthy in light of the policy of France and America in the latter half of the 1700s to marginalize women from the supposedly dangerous public sphere to the safe harbour of the
household.

Even though Morton's "Reception" opted to depict ideal republican womanhood in a public environment, the thrust of his message remained consistent with other images of female respectability. These types of portrayals communicated the natural morality inherent in women operating under the close male supervision - which implied the shelter of the home - as did the female subjects of "Reception." Such gendered prescriptions voiced by both Rousseau and medical science which were implicit in the elements of the Morton piece, were also intimated in the artwork of the French Revolution. Augustin le Grand's 1784 engraving, "Jean-Jacques Rousseau," although appearing at first glance to have little in common with "Reception," in actuality constituted an ideological counterpart to Morton's effort.

Grand's creation was even more explicit than Morton's work in its endorsement of female subordination to male governance. In light of the standards set forth by doctors and the hypothesis of Judith Hicks Stiehm, this depiction supported the seclusion of women in private life. Designated as the "man of nature" by the artist, offering praise and encouragement to a mother who positioned herself in the vicinity of her home while suckling one of her two children at her breast. ¹⁴¹ Her stance of maternal domesticity clearly elicited the favour of Rousseau who was the translator of natural law. He offered her a bouquet of flowers, imparting to the viewer the notion that she was a woman of great virtue.

Grand's illustration did more than sermonize about the mandatory conduct of a good mother who as, in every way, the antithesis of the militant Parisienne agitating for adequate food provisions. The tranquil scene of the engraving belied its indictment of women's traditional public activities, namely in the form of the journees. To demonstrate the conventional eighteenth
century belief that human behaviour directly affected the mechanics of nature. Grand included images of healthy children and animals amid a lush setting of trees and shrubbery. The wholesome spectacle served to support the idea that the positive nature of the woman's endeavours to respect her own nature somehow nourished the life around her. Her reverence for the workings of nature would also benefit herself and her family as symbolized by Grand's inclusion of a full basket of fruit. The fruit represented the sustenance supplied to the baby by the mother. This metaphorical image inferred that nature, whether in the guise of breast-milk or fruit, would provide food if the natural order was maintained. This graphic support for domestic maternal nursing asserted that public protests for food would be unnecessary if women behaved according to laws of nature.

In short, Grand's portrait of proper maternity conveyed the notion that women were of most use to their families by remaining in the private arena. This allegorical denouncement of the customary journeymen tendered one reason for women to exempt themselves from the concerns of public life. "Jean-Jacques Rousseau" also portrayed an ewe nursing her young as a counterpart to the human mother's act of breast-feeding her own baby. The injection of a female human and a female animal involved in the same, uniquely female physiological activity was no coincidence. Enlightened medical doctors, observing the female breast, emphasized that this capability to nourish children was confined to animals of lower orders. Being endowed with mammary glands made women closer to nature than men, which meant that only the male sex could adequately rise above nature in order to uncover its rules.

The majority of French iconography which portrayed proper womanhood concerned breast-feeding on some level. Expounding upon the theme of maternal nursing allowed visual artists to
concurrently bolster the precepts of Enlightenment medicine and discredit the public deeds of women. For both France and America, the discourse surrounding the issue of maternal nursing was profoundly complex. The simple act of transferring breast milk from mother to child became a forum for discussing female sexuality and, to some degree, the essence of womanhood itself. Graphically, the subject of breast-feeding was resolved in a fashion that redefined maternal nursing in political terms, while further compounding the rigid gender views of the revolutionary age.

Maternal nursing, by the late eighteenth century, took on metaphysical connotations which inspired the two Republics to attach a political, patriotic purpose to this activity. Two of the pre-eminent authorities on breast-feeding, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Marie Anal Le Rebous, recommended this exchange between biological mother and child because they claimed that it enhanced the mother's attachment to her young.145 This love bond was crucial, explained Le Rebous in his 1767 handbook on breast-feeding entitled Avis aux meres qui veulent nourir enfants which remained popular throughout the revolutionary period, since breast milk had "persuasive powers" which, if originating from a respectable mother, could enhance the child's propensity towards moral action.146

For the express reason that breast milk was thought to have such a great impact on children and, conversely, the broader society, Le Rebous emphasized the exigency of biological mothers nursing their own young. In light of the conventional notion that breast milk contained elements of blood, the author hypothesized that the exchange of mother's milk was tantamount to "preserving the bloodline."147 In the new Republics, family cohesion was fervently promoted because the family was seen as the "Republic in miniature," where children received instruction
in the gendered views epitomizing republican patriotism. Le Rebous sharply reprimanded French women's common old regime practice of engaging wet nurses. He warned that, in essence, wet nursing was detrimental to families because it led children to form attachments outside of their families. Furthermore, if milk was dispensed to children by women of unknown origin, the child could be exposed to corruptive influences or, equally as problematic, be immune to the milk's persuasive abilities since the wet nurse's milk was "alien" and destructive to the spirit. 

The theory that breast milk had a potent educative function that could be of advantage to the state was adopted by the architects of the new French Republic. Their obsession with breastfeeding was in evidence during the revolutionary festivals - succinctly defined as dramatic events designed to supplant the ideas of the old regime with adherence to the dictates of the new Republic. Indeed, one festival stipulated that women's "true part" in the revolutionary movement was birthing children and supplying them with milk so that the children "develop their martial virtues." This admonition was explicitly promoted by the sheer proliferation of graphic depictions of patriotic French women suckling their children during the era of revolution.

The association between patriotism and maternal nursing was readily apparent in the French engraving "Republican mother and child," probably created in 1793. Both mother and child were clothed, as historian Mary Jacobus pointed out, in the republican red, blue, and white cockade. Dressing the mother in this way signified that she was a patriot. Her love of country was apparent in her nursing efforts which, ostensibly, would transfer her republican sentiments to her infant. The certainty that this familiar milk and the corresponding maternal love were well-received by the baby was communicated in the serene mood of the engraving. Moreover, the
baby's equally patriotic costume symbolized the efficacy of the mother's milk in infusing the child with republican values.

America, a country where the writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau became even more popular as the eighteenth century neared its end, enthusiastically supported the practice of maternal breast-feeding. America, however, did not face the daunting task of having to dismantle a tradition which allowed the prolific use of wet nurses. Scrutinizing correspondence spanning from the late 1770s to the early 1790s, historian Mary Beth Norton observed that the hope was often expressed to new mothers that they be good nurses to their children. To be sure, wet nurses existed in colonial America but were seldom used by American mothers, who preferred to minister milk to their own children.

The Americans shared with France the presumption regarding breast milk's supernatural faculties as was perceptible in a 1795 speech delivered at Columbia College aptly titled "Female Influence." Using different wording but, nonetheless, offering the same account of women's proper role in a Republic as did the architects of the revolutionary festivals, the orator explained that "accomplished" American women were distinguishable by the health of their children, a direct by-product of breast-feeding. The orator's use of the word "accomplished" obviously denoted virtue. The orator tied women's goodness to their willingness to bear children and dispense "the nutritive fluid" to them, fluid which was imbued with the ability to persuade children to be patriotic in accordance with the theme of the address.

Endowing mother's milk with powers essential to the rearing of virtuous future citizens ensured that American iconographers would make repeated allusions to maternal nursing. Since American women were already predisposed to suckling their young, maternal nursing was not as
explicitly depicted in the American graphic arts. Instead, unlike in "Republican mother and child," incitements to breast-feeding were merely hinted at and usually assumed the form of female figures constructed with one naked breast visible. According to art historian, Anne Hollander, the showing of one breast was a traditional visual reference to maternal nursing.\textsuperscript{155}

Joseph Strutt's allegorical depiction of 1778, "To Those who wish to Sheathe The Desolating Swords of War," was typical of this formate common to American visual imagery which worked to propagate the supposition that maternity was an intrinsic component of female patriotism. One woman, one breast exposed, was shown to be kneeling at the grave of a dead American patriot, Warren Mercer. This act of reverence for Mercer and the appearance of the women was meant to juxtapose male and female heroism. Men's highest calling consisted of defending and possible dying for their nation, which was implied by the woman's endeavour to pay her respect to Mercer.

This engraving, however, argued that women had the power to assuage the grief of this sacrifice. The woman attempting to memorialize Mercer was portrayed in the process of gazing at the light streaming down from the heavens. Her mission to replenish the country with similarly heroic men, insinuated in the showing of the breast, would effectively re-establish hope in the nation. Her act of adulation assured that Mercer and other patriots did not die in vain. The graphic veneration of female fecundity was accentuated by the inclusion of another female figure who, according to Linda Kerber, depicted "Plenty."\textsuperscript{156} Appropriately, the naturalness of "Plenty" was punctuated by images representing the ideal role of women.

"Plenty" further developed the message about women's proper role in a society aligned with nature. She was shown carrying a burdensome cornucopia filled with fruit and vegetables. This
image was a reference to women's traditional responsibilities to provide food for their families which propelled American women, like their French counterparts, into the public arena during war. This denoted that acceding to the natural order translated into a society with no wants. The female figure was accompanied by children, another allusion to motherhood, and was situated in close proximity to animals, a metaphor for the workings of her own body.

The graphic discourse surrounding maternal nursing entrenched the acts of child-bearing and nursing as necessary endeavours for the survival of the Republic. The same art pieces also advanced a concept of female sexuality which further elucidated the nature of this maternal domestic role ascribed to women. Anne Hollander argued that the figurative display of a single breast, which was evident in the majority of iconographical depictions of proper womanhood in France and a significant number in America, symbolized maternity as well as innocence.¹⁵⁷ In other words, the women were unconscious of the fact that their breasts were sexually-enticing, as Hollander pointed out. Undoubtedly, this applied to depictions of nursing mothers, like the female subject of "Republican mother," who were completely subsumed by the task at hand to the exclusion of everything else.

The graphic lauding of female sexual ignorance was in contrast to the iconographical condemnation of the women who flaunted their sexuality to gain political power, as was discussed in the preceding chapter. Admittedly, child-bearing and sexual inexperience were a contradiction in terms, unattainable to women whose desired intention was to serve their nation. Anthropologist Sherry Ortner asserted that motherhood often obscured the "sexual reproductive aspect," so that women could still be viewed as pure.¹⁵⁸ In Emile, Jean-Jacques Rousseau proclaimed that a woman's chastity was pursuant to her consignment to the home.¹⁵⁹ Rousseau's

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direction mirrored the pervasive message of countless art productions which argued that female modesty - also definable as delicacy - could only be preserved under the protection of men in the domestic sphere. Ortner herself noted that virginity necessarily meant purity, a passive quality requiring protection.  

The celebration of the convergence of virginity and maternity in the Republican Mother, unaware of her potential to sexually entice men, was presented to the public as politically expedient. The idea that exciting sexual passion in women impeded the performance of their nursing duties circulated in France. Equally as detrimental to the nation was women's recognition of their ability to seduce and impose their will on their male counterparts. The 1795 Columbia College oration. "Female Influence," typified the male fear of being subsumed by sexually aggressive women in its advisement to women that they retain the virtue of chastity because "important men" spent much time in their company.  

Between 1760 and 1800, France and America became saturated with art pieces expounding upon the passivity and sacrifice involved in the conduct of proper female sexuality and maternal nursing. Virtue in republican women became linked with the services they were able to provide to their country, their husbands, and their children. The absence of reciprocity which marked model gender relations during the second half of the eighteenth century accentuated the imbalance of power between the sexes. Women's principal focus in life, to yield to the dictates of others for the common good of their respective countries, meant that women's worth or heroism lay in the degree to which they could sacrifice their own needs for the sake of others.  

Revolutionary art which instructed women in this respect constantly impressed upon women their dependence on others in regards to their attainment of respectability. Female propriety
ensured that female subjects, almost never pictured alone, were always accompanied by children and sometimes other women. In the case of France, women were habitually displayed in the process of nursing their children and were thus literally attached to them. Displaying women in a collective was illustrative of their marginality from real citizenship. After all, as Joan Gundersen asserted, citizenship was an "individual act." The revolutionary aesthetic treatment of heroic manhood corroborated Gundersen's claim.

The fact that personal autonomy was a precursor to exercising citizenship was presented in Charles Wilson Peale's 1780 painting of George Washington. Unlike the plethora of nameless female subjects indicative of iconography which sought to instruct women about their maternal role, the painter of "George Washington at the Battle of Princeton" endeavoured to depict a real human being. Although much about Washington illustrated what was revered in men as was readily visible to the viewer in Washington's stoic stance, he was not intended to be a composite American man. The painter's mandate to preserve Washington's individuality evident in the title of the picture which bore the name of the subject and, in contrast to the visual imagery which showed women performing a number of fixed duties, Washington was pictured on a battlefield to signify that it was his soldiering exploits which distinguished him from other American men.

Portraits such as the one of George Washington which memorialized the deeds of individual men persuaded to the citizenry to believe that men were the real actors in any epic struggle or event, whereas women simply functioned to support their crucial endeavours. Rousseau claimed that it was "degrading" for women to aspire to garner similar public acclaim, irrespective of their abilities. France's graphic handling of men was similar to American art in that the artist structured his piece to make a statement about the character and the unique patriotic contribution
of the individual man. French painter Jacques-Louis David's 1794 portrait of heroic boyhood, "The Death of Bara," recalled Charles Wilson Peale's efforts to maintain the individuality of his muse, George Washington. David's work recounted thirteen-year old Joseph Bara's ultimate sacrifice for the Republic during a battle with Vendee rebels. Bara provided the artist with an ideal subject since he seemed to exemplify male virtue, forfeiting his young life for the greater cause of republicanism.

Since, as was made abundantly clear by the depictions of individual male acts of heroism, it was men who were involved in events of real worth, it was incumbent upon women to passively subordinate their own needs if they clashed with those of their male counterparts. One American writer advised women to maintain a conciliatory stance with their husbands in order to avoid disagreements which could impede marital unity. For the sake of harmony, the French politician Amar justified the barring of women from the public arena by professing in 1793 that women would invariably engage in disputes with men. This subscription to the notion that women should maintain a compliant temperament directly affected the manner in which proper girlhood and young women's education was portrayed in the graphic arts.

The discourse of the new French and American elite, as was evident in the graphic arts, asserted that the education of young girls was not intended to precipitate independent female citizens. Reminiscent of Amar's fear of discord between married couples, the author of the commencement speech, "Female Influence," supported female education to the extent that it did not harm the relationship between husband and wife. The writer assured the audience that female education posed no danger if girls and boys were schooled in a manner "proportionate to their different powers of reception." This belief mirrored the conclusions of Enlightened
medical practitioner's who theorized that girls had a lower intellect than boys because their natural vocation in life did not include the utilization of powers of reason to uncover the laws of nature.

In America as well as France, the various pictographs accustomed young girls to copy their chaste yet fertile mothers and, at best, to use whatever level of education they possessed to serve men while maintaining harmony. The American illustration of "The Old Soldier" by the artist Samuel Hill depicted an old man, identified by the title as a soldier, lounging under a shady tree in front of a hut. Ostensibly, after being fed by the older woman to his left as was indicated by the empty bowl on the ground next to him, the younger girl, emulating the older woman's charitable demeanour, attempted to entertain him by reading a book. This sketch worked to illustrate the sacrificial nature inherent in the republican idealization of womanhood. The female figures' deeds were for the express purpose of providing reverence in the form comfort to a man who, in his younger life, assumed the position of protector.

The Frontispiece to Jean Jacques Rousseau's Emile, to which both American and French readers were exposed, was even more explicit in its message about gender training. An obviously prolific young mother was shown in the foreground in the process of breast-feeding one infant, diapering another, while overseeing several other children. Positioned next to the mother was a young girl who appeared intent on versing herself in the role exemplified by the older woman. The male youths, on the other hand, operated in an entirely separate arena from the women, the girl, and the small children. The boys appropriately took their lessons from two older men who were apparently instructing the children about the ideology of Rousseau himself as was evidenced by the boys' veneration of the statue of Rousseau, the central focus of the
picture.

As was communicated by "The Old Soldier" and the "Frontispiece to Emile," the training of young people in the latter half of the eighteenth century was deeply gendered. Young women were called upon by graphic artists to be both compliant and fertile. They were subjected to messages implicit in visual art productions that their worth was tied to their ability to serve the needs of others. Thus, any education women received was to be used in the context of the family, not for their own development as autonomous citizens or for public recognition. Young women of France and America, immersed in this kind of revolutionary rhetoric implicit in the graphic arts, assured the continuity of this passive, subordinate female role.
VI. Conclusion

The graphic art employed during the revolutionary period in both France and America propagated Enlightened science's perception of the female nature. The visual art played a central role in marginalizing women from the public, political sphere. Even in the face of significant threats to the credibility of biomedical conclusions emanating from women's wartime activities, the scientific aesthetic maintained the viability of the exclusionary politics evident in the two countries. The efficacy of visual imagery in relegating women to the periphery of the governmental arena was due in part to its ability to recreate women's revolutionary contributions to accommodate the precepts of Enlightened science.

Equally essential to preserving the reliability of conventional medical definitions of womanhood, the scientific aesthetic aided in the creation and evolution of a uniquely female form of patriotism befitting the maternal domestic role prescribed by physicians for women. Channelling women's love for their country into the private realm by imbuing duties associated with child-rearing with political meaning convinced women that their household function was necessary for the well-being of their country. Hence, Enlightenment thinkers and artists ensured that women who wanted to be seen as respectable or patriotic would not protest the restrictions placed upon them in the fledgling French and American Republics.

In addition to disseminating the agenda to confine women to the domestic sphere, artists' works conveyed that Enlightenment science's assumptions about the fundamental qualities found in women were held in common by members of society who, ostensibly, did not subscribe to the precepts of the Enlightenment. The British are creation, "The Women of Edenton" and the
French pro-monarchist's sketch, "Grand Debandment de l'armee anti-constitutionelle" exposed the shared fear of the corruption inherent in female political involvement. Thus, irrespective of the type of regimes governing France and America, female domestication was inevitable. The two revolutionary movements merely served to speed up an eventual construction of two separate, gendered spheres.

While the pictorial representations of women in both France and America mirrored the beliefs of the medical community about the ideal place of women, the relative vigour of the French iconographical campaign in comparison to the American one generated divergent consequences for the two female populations beyond the revolutionary age. In light of the French custom of female public participation, French iconographers were far more vicious and prolific in denigrating women's wartime acts. Not only did they denounce the actual deeds themselves, but presented a frightening vision of a society ruled by women. American artists, by contrast, were not confronted with such a tradition and confined themselves to publicizing images of female passivity.

Since American women were not the focus of the same vicious graphic attacks on womanhood, Americans who supported female advancement often were successful in improving the education of women on the grounds that well educated women could better instruct future republican citizens. The politicization of domestic motherhood gave a semblance of respect to a function which American women already embraced before, during, and after the separation from Britain.

Stripped of their power to affect public policy, French women were denounced to such an extent that they could not base calls for reforms in female schooling on the need to educate future
mothers. The graphic art explicitly denounced women having access to any institution that could possible lead to a re-establishment of the influence and independence they enjoyed before the Revolution. Therefore, the nature of the visual art disseminated during the revolutionary period in both France and America in part accounted for the similar fate shared by the two female populations. It also explained the relative regression of French women's position in society.
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