

Autobiography:

~~I have sought it out in historical work because~~
I wish to find out what the experience of the world had been with women in public life, and I turned to the French Revolution for help and out of that ~~has come~~ came Madam Roland, and I was not so convinced as I might be by her exhibits. It was not until some time after I had finished the Standard Oil and was floundering around what was best to do that I undertook the articles on ~~American Women and Their Achievements.~~ ~~What~~ I was instigated to do this by a method of propaganda which always irritates me and that is the unwillingness to consider the background, the place from which we have come, to give any credit to anybody before your day for having worked toward the aim which you had at heart. I thought that there was too much, unjust, ignorant, and I may say intellectually dishonest, campaigning going on by women in their over-emphasis on what they called door mat theory. And so I began to pull out one after another specimen of aggressive militants of the past who had done really great jobs beginning with Abigail Adams I think. (Put in list of women treated in article)

These articles brought me criticism from some of my best and most honest friends. Why should I who had been working on the industrial schemes turn to these ladies of the past? Well, I suppose the truth is that I had always seen what we call the American scene, that is the world which went on about me, more or less as a whole and the relations of the women to the whole situation seemed to me that it ought to be figured out, put in its

place. My thesis ran in my own mind, something like this:-

Women are responsible to a degree for the industrial situation. There is something more fundamental than the vote necessary to right these things. It isn't fair that the women of the past who had^l played in my mind so great a part in building up society, civilization, should be kicked off the place. Even Mrs. Van Rensselaer said to me, "Why in the world are you fooling with that unmeaning stuff?"

But it meant something to me. The trouble is that I launched it without sufficient explanation of what I had in mind.

It was a little clearer when later, along about 1920 I think, I came to the Business of Being a Woman. Then it did stir up something. (Picture of the public meeting.