

Militant Mothers:

Women and the Minnesota

Iron Range Strike of 1916

By
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On June 20, 1916, two weeks after the beginning of a Range-wide strike in the northern Minnesota Mesabi iron mines, Rosa Liberotti, a recently married sixteen-year-old daughter of Italian immigrants, visited the sheriff's office in the town of Hibbing to publicize the striking miners' grievances. She told the sheriff and local journalists of the low wages her husband earned and the difficult working conditions he faced as a mine worker. A reporter for the *Duluth Herald* disputed her story of low wages but noted that he had no doubt of Liberotti's sincerity: "So thoroughly was she aroused that when she left the sheriff's office she shook her fist and said: 'I ain't afraid to fight 'em.'" During the strike, Liberotti planned to support herself and her husband by washing five families' laundry each week.¹

That same day, other women joined striking mine workers on the picket lines in Hibbing. Female strike supporters congregated near mine entrances and verbally and physically confronted strikebreakers. According to a local newspaper report, when mining company deputies tried to arrest an Italian woman for picketing she "gave two of them a stiff fight before she was controlled."²

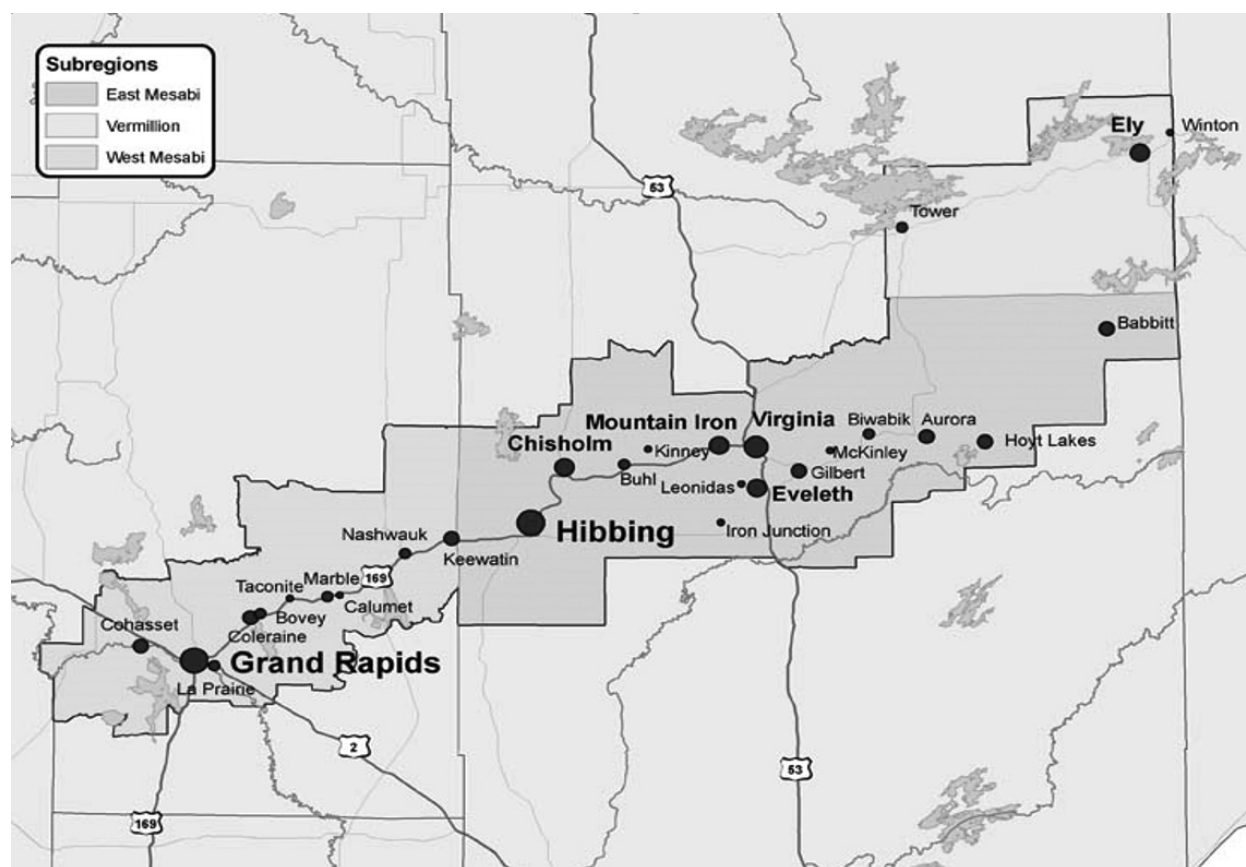
Rosa Liberotti and the unnamed female picketer provide two examples of the ways in which women figured prominently as catalysts, activists, and strategists in the 1916 Iron Range strike. Women led parades, battled company gunmen and law enforcement officials, appealed to local business owners for support, and cultivated cross-class alliances to publicize the miners' grievances. Both strike supporters and strike opponents portrayed women as victims in need of protection, but female activists refused to accept that role.

Female strike supporters embraced militant motherhood by integrating maternal duties and identities into a confrontational style of public activism. They fought with mine guards over resources for their families, brought their children to jail with them, and told journalists of injuries to their unborn children caused by deputies' attacks. In these and other instances, women emphasized their role as mothers, but at the same time attached meanings to that role which were at odds with those articulated by the dominant culture.

In the early-twentieth-century United States, white, native-born female reformers used the image of a gentle, pious, and nurturing mother to legitimate women's political participation; women's purported heightened morality and "natural" ability to care for others justified their involvement in

public policy-making.³ Through their words and actions, immigrant women on the Iron Range expanded and redefined "motherhood" to include public, at times violent, activism in support of class interests.⁴ Local newspapers used women's strike activism as a way to discredit the movement, branding female strike supporters as delinquent mothers and portraying the wives and children of strikebreakers as victims of lawlessness.

The 1916 Minnesota Iron Range strike has been the subject of a number of excellent studies, but little attention has been focused on women's contributions.⁵ Placing women at the center of analysis illuminates the contributions made by mine workers' wives and daughters to their communities in times of crisis. In addition, focusing on representations of women's strike activism reveals that both advocates and adversaries of organized



Towns on the Mesabi Range.

(Source: <http://lt.umn.edu/mage/curriculum/go-minnesota/iron-range/>)

labor used contested understandings of motherhood and femininity to disparage their opponents and gain public support. In their defense of striking miners, women challenged accepted gender roles and proved to be shrewd, creative, and bold strike activists. The radicalism displayed by unionists' female kin transcended the traditional female domains of home and family and defies characterization as simply "auxiliary" to the "real" labor activism of striking male mine workers.⁶

The Iron Range Strike of 1916

The strike began on June 2, 1916, when mine worker Joe Greeni walked off the job at the St. James Mine near Aurora on the eastern Mesabi Range after receiving a smaller-than-expected paycheck under the contract wage system.⁷ This spontaneous action inspired his shift workers to quit work as well, and soon the strike call spread throughout the Range. Within a week, many of the mines on the Mesabi were shut down.

A large number of ethnic groups participated in the strike, including Slovenians, Italians, Croats, Montenegrins, Finns, and Russians. Unorganized and lacking experienced leadership, the striking mine workers appealed to the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) to help conduct the strike.⁸ By June 24, groups of strikers meeting in Finnish halls and separated into groups by native language had developed and adopted a list of demands that included an eight-hour day, a daily scale of wages, twice-monthly pay days, and abolition of the contract system.⁹

When they decided to strike, the mine workers took on not only the largest corporation in the U. S., but one that staunchly opposed labor organizing efforts by its employees. The largest iron mining concern on the Range was the Oliver Mining Company, a subsidiary of U.S. Steel, which had a history of using its size and strength to combat organized labor. In 1892, members of the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers in Homestead, Pennsylvania, called a

strike against the Carnegie Steel Company, the forerunner of U.S. Steel. After a bloody gun battle between strikers and Carnegie-employed Pinkerton detectives, the governor ordered troops to Homestead. With militia protection, the mill reopened, and the steel workers' strike collapsed. Once the Homestead strike had been crushed, Carnegie Steel pledged to "never again recognize the Amalgamated Association or any other labor organization."¹⁰

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, similar conflicts between labor and capital played out in communities across the United States. After the Civil War, the nationwide trend toward industrialization and urbanization raised fundamental questions about the meaning of economic independence and citizenship. The move toward scientific management and the decrease in skilled labor in large-scale factories represented potential threats to American values grounded in individual autonomy and opportunity.

Some workers turned to labor unions in an effort to protect themselves against increasingly powerful employers and the financial insecurity resulting from periodic economic downturns. After the decline of the universalist Knights of Labor in the late 1880s, the moderate, craft-based American Federation of Labor (AFL) gained ascendancy. The AFL provided stability and security for its skilled members, but did not address the concerns of the vast majority of workers, including the unskilled, women, and those excluded from skilled labor on the basis of racial or ethnic differences.¹¹

From its organization in 1905, the IWW represented a radical alternative to the more conservative AFL. The IWW was established on the premise of an "irrepressible conflict between capital and labor," and its founding principles included a call for the "creation of a general industrial union embracing all industries."¹² As IWW organizers worked to unite laborers in factories, mines, and lumber camps across the nation, their revolutionary message garnered nationwide at-

tention.

In 1912, the IWW achieved a highly visible victory in the Lawrence, Massachusetts, textile workers' strike, resulting in thousands of new recruits and national publicity for the "One Big Union."¹³ However, the IWW's inability to make consistent gains for its members was demonstrated one year later, when striking textile workers in Paterson, New Jersey, saw their IWW-led effort go down in defeat. Nevertheless, in 1916 the IWW was one of the few resources available to laborers seeking to organize by industry and was the union that Mesabi iron mine workers turned to in their effort to unite against the mining corporations.

Women Activists on the Iron Range

By 1916, men and women of many different ethnic backgrounds had traveled to Minnesota's Iron Range in search of economic opportunity. Wives and children accompanied many immigrant mine workers, and like their male counterparts, female émigrés sought better economic prospects in the region. Single young women worked either as domestic servants in private homes or in boardinghouses where they cooked, cleaned, and washed clothes for unmarried mine workers.¹⁴ Although few married immigrant women worked for wages outside the home, they contributed to their families' economies in a number of important ways.¹⁵

In addition to child care, cooking, laundry, and cleaning, women also tended gardens and livestock. Many mine workers' wives supplemented the family income by taking in boarders, earning money that provided a safety net and expanded economic opportunities for their families. Women's boardinghouse earnings supplied the money needed to sustain families in case of seasonal layoffs or disabling or fatal mine accidents. If the family managed to avoid economic hardship, women's labor provided funds that could be saved and eventually used to purchase a farm or a store. Women's work in the home, expended on

behalf of both family members and boarders, contributed significantly to their families' economic well-being.¹⁶

Given their investment and involvement in the economic life of their communities, it is not surprising that women participated in the strike from its outset.¹⁷ On June 16 in Virginia, one of the largest towns on the eastern Mesabi, IWW organizers called a meeting at the Socialist Opera House for women interested in the strike.¹⁸ The *Duluth Herald* reported that the meeting hall was "packed to the doors" and that the women were "keenly interested . . . to hear a speech by [IWW organizer] Carlo Tresca."¹⁹ Women attended subsequent meetings as well.²⁰

Male and female strike supporters also expressed solidarity at dances held in Virginia. On June 17, a Croatian orchestra furnished the music for "hundreds of strikers, their wives and sweethearts" who spoke "languages of different countries."²¹ The IWW sponsored additional dances throughout the summer as a way to create cohesion among ethnic groups.²²

Women and children also marched alongside striking mine workers in numerous parades organized by the union to showcase the strikers' strength and unity.²³ On June 15, the *Duluth Herald* reported that several women participated in a procession of strikers, including "a bride of two days [who] wore a hat of the latest vogue . . . and marched by the side of her husband from Aurora to Virginia yesterday. It was their honeymoon."²⁴ On July 28, when armed deputies attempted to stop a mine workers' parade outside Virginia, "several of the women marchers rushed to the head of the line," and defied the gunmen, "invit[ing] the thugs to shoot." The strike supporters took advantage of the deputies' ensuing hesitation and continued their parade.²⁵ The presence of women among the ranks of marching strikers became so commonplace that by mid-August the *Hibbing Daily Tribune* reported that women and children accompanied an IWW procession "as usual."²⁶

Women and Violence

Women participated in parades and other strike activities because they had a vested interest in improving the economic life of their communities but also because the IWW welcomed women's active and public support. As Meredith Tax points out, "strikers' wives became active in the IWW-led mass strikes because, unlike the AFL unions, the IWW made a deliberate attempt to involve them and to support them It enlisted the wives of male strikers in the IWW local itself, rather than relegating them to 'union label leagues' or women's auxiliaries."²⁷

In Iron Range mining towns, wives of mine workers developed their own grievances as oppressed members of their communities: they toiled to make homes for their families in often shoddy and inadequate housing, struggled to stretch meager budgets, and confronted daily the fact that husbands and sons might not survive the dangerous working conditions in the iron mines. The IWW recognized these concerns and encouraged women's activism, thereby incorporating entire working-class communities into struggles for economic justice.²⁸

Faced with the activism of male and female strike supporters, mining companies utilized a variety of tactics to break the 1916 strike. Like Carnegie Steel in the earlier Homestead strike, the Oliver Mining Company initially responded to the mine workers' demands by hiring hundreds of private gunmen to protect company interests and intimidate strikers. As the strike progressed, imported company deputies disrupted union marches and meetings and assaulted strike supporters in their homes and on the streets.²⁹

Female strike activists figured prominently in the violent confrontations of 1916. On June 22, before striking miners even had a chance to communicate their demands, mine guards fired into a group of strike supporters in Virginia and killed Croatian mine worker John Alar. The trouble began when Oliver deputies attempted to disperse

a large crowd so as to prevent the staging of a parade. One of the first shots fired in the confrontation came from the gun of Lucia Rosandich, an eighteen-year-old Croatian immigrant and mine worker's wife, who either opened fire on company deputies or returned their shots in self-defense. When the skirmish ended Alar was dead and at least three other men were wounded.³⁰

A second deadly confrontation occurred on July 3, when company gunmen entered the Biwabik home of striker Philip Masonovitch and his wife Milka, both Montenegrin immigrants, ostensibly to investigate complaints of an illegal still.³¹ The deputies told Mrs. Masonovitch that they had come to arrest her husband and one of their boarders. When Mrs. Masonovitch started to leave the room to get her husband's shoes, one of the gunmen pushed her and she fell, nearly crushing her sleeping baby. Various reports give different accounts of what happened next. According to some, Mrs. Masonovitch was a helpless victim, rescued from company deputies by the physical intervention of her husband and male boarders.³²

In other accounts, however, Mrs. Masonovitch was an active participant in the melee, striking Deputy Sheriff Edward Schubisky with a club and knocking him to the ground.³³ Anti-strike newspapers may have chosen to portray Mrs. Masonovitch inaccurately as aggressive and therefore "unwomanly" in an attempt to discredit the strike and its supporters. However, reporting that an armed deputy sheriff was prostrated by a club-wielding woman risked calling into question the law enforcement officials' manhood.

To safeguard Schubisky's masculinity, anti-strike newspaper reporters defined his actions as chivalrous. Schubisky retained his manliness by "playing 'possum" after being struck. He pretended to be dead, he said, because "I could not attack a woman."³⁴ Had Mrs. Masonovitch simply been a helpless victim, anti-strike reporters could have recorded a more straightforward account of the confrontation, one in which the deputy's mascu-

linity did not require explanation. This suggests that Mrs. Masonovitch did indeed play an active role in the conflict.

In the exchange of gunfire that followed Mrs. Masonovitch's felling of Schubisky, Deputy James Myron and bystander Thomas Ladvalla were shot and killed. Law enforcement officials arrested the Masonovitches and three of their boarders. In addition, police arrested several IWW leaders for murder, alleging the organizers' inflammatory speeches were responsible for the deaths of Myron and Ladvalla. All the defendants were held without bail, including Mrs. Masonovitch who kept her nursing child with her in her jail cell until she was released on bail in late August.³⁵

Women participated in other violent confrontations with mining company operatives as the strike progressed. In July, women's strike activism was centered in the town of Aurora. There, women joined forces with male strikers to prevent men from going to work in the mines.³⁶ On July 24, Slovenian immigrants Annie Sweigel, Agnes Anseltz, and Katherine Drassler, all residents of Aurora and wives of mine workers, threw rocks at strikebreakers and called them "scabs." When company deputies tried to restore order, the three women stoned them as well.³⁷

Aurora residents Anna Berdice and Louise Skerbec, also Slovenian immigrants, received jail terms of ten and twenty days, respectively, for throwing rocks at men who continued to work in the mines. The *Duluth News Tribune* reported that Berdice welcomed "a jail term . . . for the cause of the strike" but was distraught over being separated from her two-year-old daughter and pled, to no avail, to be allowed to keep the child with her in the county jail.³⁸

Like Masonovitch and Berdice, many arrested female strike activists attempted to bring young children to jail. For some, particularly those with nursing infants, their children's co-confinement may have been a necessity. Others may have sought incarceration with their children as a means of gaining positive publicity for the union

cause. Scenes of deputies manhandling mothers and infants' cries emanating from jail cells may have been calculated to elicit the sympathy of Range residents.

The possibility that some women planned in advance to be jailed with their children is evidenced by the experience of Slovenian immigrant Frances Lessar. As she was being arrested for picketing, Lessar's husband threw their infant child toward her over the heads of the crowd. The Lessars' attempt to send mother and baby to jail together failed when a deputy caught the child instead and arrested Mr. Lessar for child abuse.³⁹

As in Aurora, women in other Range towns assaulted strikebreakers and deputies and at times initiated and led pro-strike demonstrations. Men and women pickets at the Kittzville location near Hibbing stationed themselves along the roads leading to the mines in the morning and at the end of the work day; they used clubs, rocks, pepper, and rotten eggs to discourage men from going to work.⁴⁰ In Chisholm, Austrian immigrants Mary Deslich, Mary Prijately, and Katie Stark were arrested after they verbally assaulted a strikebreaker, scratched his face, and scattered the contents of his dinner pail.⁴¹

The *Daily Virginian* credited women as leaders in confrontations between strike supporters and mining company operatives, reporting that "any outbreaks attempted are usually led by the women of the households of striking miners."⁴² According to the *Duluth News Tribune*, women picketers in Virginia, who spat in the faces of strikebreakers and grabbed their lunch pails from their hands, "[gave] more trouble than the men."⁴³ When the strike made limited inroads into the Cuyuna Range, local newspapers reported that "women are . . . playing the most prominent parts," with "many gangs of the strikers' wives" on the picket line morning and night.⁴⁴

Women strike activists refused to be intimidated by company deputies and law enforcement officials. When sheriff's deputies arrested Croatian immigrant Frances Zbacnik at Kittzville, she

threatened to use a gun to defend herself and insisted on taking her three-year-old child and three-month-old baby to jail with her.⁴⁵ In Eveleth, when police officers arrived at the homes of Slovenian immigrants Angela Krevitz and Frances Podlogar to serve warrants for their arrest, they refused to accompany the officers to court unless an automobile was hired to take them.⁴⁶ After police in Crosby arrested Mrs. George Parovich, Annie Majnarich, Frances Hlacher, Aggie Smiljanich, and Julia Jamelia for picketing, the five women refused legal aid and argued their own cases in court; charges against Parovich were dropped, and the other women were assessed fines of five dollars each.⁴⁷ Women activists defied company gunmen and asserted their legal rights in support of striking mine workers.

A lack of fresh drinking water at mining camps was a particular concern of the strikers and their families and served as a flashpoint of violence between female strike supporters and mine guards. Mining officials at times cut off strike supporters' access to water from wells located on company grounds. The *Mesaba Ore* reported that when mine workers' wives tried to use the well at the Nelson location near Hibbing, company gunmen drove them away. It was the women's efforts to provide water for their families and not "rioting," the pro-labor *Mesaba Ore* editor argued, that led to the arrest of a number of women who were locked up "with suckling babies at their breasts and other little tots clinging to their skirts."⁴⁸

In two separate incidents, mine guards refused water to Julia Breznik and a Mrs. Koski. Both women fought back, kicking and scratching the men's faces but were overpowered and knocked to the ground; both women lost their unborn children.⁴⁹ When asked by a journalist later if she had in fact miscarried, Breznik answered, "Yes, ma'am . . . No cloud without a silver lining."⁵⁰ Breznik's meaning here is not clear: did she perceive the loss of her unborn child as the cloud or the silver lining? Historian Dee Garrison interprets these words to mean that Breznik viewed the miscar-

riage as a blessing, but it seems equally plausible that the silver lining for Breznik was the opportunity to physically punish a hated mine guard.⁵¹

Women and men at times tried to prevent the arrest of female strike activists and attended the women's hearings and trials to offer moral support. In late July, striking mine worker Louis Stremola was arrested for interfering with the arrest of a female picketer. Stremola's assistance allowed the woman to escape custody.⁵² On August 11, the *Virginia Daily Enterprise* reported that after deputies transported some women strike activists to the city jail, a "screaming, yelling, and jeering" mob gathered outside in an unsuccessful attempt to secure the women's release.⁵³ Those arrested included Croatian immigrant Caroline Malna and Italian immigrants Marie Teroni, Hilda Copeletti, and Elisa Ercoli, who bit a deputy's hand during a scuffle between picketers and company gunmen.⁵⁴ At the women's arraignment later that day, the municipal court was crowded with Italian women offering support for their arrested comrades.⁵⁵ Male and female strike supporters rallied around arrested women unionists, indicating a high level of support within the mining communities for women's strike activism.

Women's Non-Violent Activism

In addition to violent resistance, women used other, more peaceful methods to further the union cause. On July 22, the *Mesaba Ore* published a letter to the editor from an Aurora resident who identified herself as "A Woman of the Working Class." She stated that she was "not a striker nor . . . in any way connected with the I.W.W," but, as a resident of the iron mining district, she understood the mine workers' grievances and recognized the IWW's efforts on their behalf. By clarifying that she was not a "striker," the letter writer suggested that female strike supporters may have self-identified or been perceived as "strikers," even though they were not employed in the mines.

The letter writer voiced two main complaints

about the mining companies' relationship with their workers. First, she blamed the private police force hired by mining officials for instigating strike violence. Next, she used a class analysis to demonstrate the economic inequity that allowed mining officials' wives and daughters to travel to summer resorts and hire domestic servants to lighten their workload while "we women of the miners spend our vacation in a hot kitchen doing our own laundering, ironing, and many other heavy duties." She reminded those local businessmen who criticized the IWW ("the working class' best friend") that their incomes would be "slim indeed if it was not for the working class."⁵⁶

Other women in Aurora took this message directly to business owners in the town. On July 27, the *Duluth Herald* reported that "a committee of girls" had gone out that morning to "solicit funds among the citizens and business men . . . to aid the 'starving strikers.'" The women circulated a petition among local businesses in which they promised the patronage of striking mine workers and their families once the labor unrest was ended in return for contributions to the IWW relief coffers. According to the *Herald*, when the committee approached city officials for donations, "the intimation is given out by the girls that the strikers will remember next election."⁵⁷ These women asserted their rights as citizens and attempted to leverage the votes of their male kin against the power of the mining interests.⁵⁸

Female strike activists also forged cross-class alliances to expand their base of support. On August 15, IWW organizer Elizabeth Gurley Flynn met with the Woman's Welfare League in St. Paul to discuss women's participation in the strike and the hardships they faced as a result of their activism. Flynn came to the Iron Range to help lead the strike after local authorities arrested other IWW leaders for allegedly inciting violence. Known as one of the IWW's most powerful orators, by 1916 the twenty-six-year-old Flynn was a veteran labor organizer, having assisted strikers in the Lawrence and Paterson textile strikes.⁵⁹

The Women's Welfare League was organized in 1911 as a reform-minded offshoot of the elite Minneapolis Women's Club. League members' campaigns focused on protecting young women and included calls for anti-obscenity statutes, enforcement of child labor and curfew laws, and female police matrons.⁶⁰

Given the League's commitment to the defense of vulnerable women, Flynn and other female strike supporters may have anticipated League members' interest in the plight of young immigrant mothers on the Iron Range. Following Flynn's presentation to the group, club members requested the state labor department make an investigation of the conditions faced by women and children in the strike zone, with special reference to the case of Mrs. Masonovitch, who remained in jail with her infant child. After the labor department conducted its investigation and filed a report with the governor, the League appointed a committee of three of its members, one of whom was Mrs. Lenore Austin Hamlin, daughter of former Governor Horace Austin, to travel to the Range to follow up on the inquiry.⁶¹

In her report to the League, Hamlin provided details of her interviews with several women involved in the strike. Hamlin wrote that when deputies arrived at the Masonovitch home to arrest the male strikers, Mrs. Masonovitch asked them to wait until a trusted local police officer arrived to sort things out. Instead, the deputies drew their guns, and Mrs. Masonovitch struggled with one of the gunmen in an attempt to disarm him. Now, Hamlin reported, "a slender, dark-eyed Montenegren woman with a pale-face[d] baby at her breast . . . [is] charged with murder because she joined in defending her home and her family against an attack of armed and apparently lawless men."

In addition, Hamlin related the story of Alice Arcola (Elisa Ercoli) who, while picketing, bit the hand of a "big policeman" when he "grabbed her and left the black and blue marks of his five fingers on her breast." Reaching across class and ethnic

lines, Hamlin asked “what woman wouldn’t?” In her descriptions of Masonovitch’s and Arcola’s activism, Hamlin focused on the women’s attempts to defend their families and their dignity as women.⁶²

Although Hamlin was sympathetic toward the arrested and injured women, she did not cast them as helpless victims. She emphasized that each of the women interviewed fought back against company deputies’ abuses and inflicted damage on the men sent to intimidate and physically harass them. Hamlin noted that the women on the picket lines were “good soldiers,” whose public activism was motivated by both practical and ideological concerns. They picketed not only because they were less likely to be roughly handled than the men and because they could not be blacklisted but also because “they want[ed] to help their men.” According to Hamlin, the women “appreciate[d] the opportunity for co-operation and fellowship that has come from the struggle.” They believed in the cause and were prepared to suffer “cracked heads and bloody noses” in defense of the rights of free speech and assembly. These women, Hamlin argued, are “thoroughly ‘game’ . . . and we should be immensely proud of them.”⁶³

Negative Portrayals of Women’s Activism

While middle-class allies lent support to the cause of women strike activists, local anti-strike newspapers used women’s public activism as a means of calling into question immigrant men’s and women’s gender identities. The *Duluth News Tribune* charged that male IWW members “habitually hide behind the skirts of their women and shield their own cowardly hulk behind infants.”⁶⁴ Similarly, the editor of the *Buhl Advertiser* argued that members of the IWW had imported the “old country” custom of allowing “the women [to] do the work and bear the burden of the struggle for an existence.”⁶⁵ The Virginia chief of police boasted that his men’s handling of the strikers forced them to send “their wives and daughters to the

‘front.’”⁶⁶

These reports denounced strike supporters for their perceived transgression of accepted gender norms. Foreign-born men who sought protection behind women and children and immigrant women who fought with deputies in the streets violated native-born whites’ gender expectations and exhibited, through their lack of Americanization, unfitness for citizenship.

Anti-strike newspapers also portrayed female strike supporters as unfit mothers. The *Ely Miner* reported that women strike activists “risk babies’ lives to protect iron miners.” Deputies expressed frustration at their inability to use riot sticks to disperse strike activists since “mothers unhesitatingly raise their infants as protection for themselves and their men.”⁶⁷ These alleged actions prompted the *Duluth News Tribune* to report that “a mother dog has more consideration for her pups than have many of the miners’ wives for their children.”⁶⁸ In the pages of local newspapers, female strike activists who, out of necessity or inclination, brought their children to picket lines, parades, and jail cells were cast as irresponsible and negligent parents. IWW opponents used women’s public transgression of gender roles to disparage strike supporters and vilify the organization.⁶⁹

In its August 11 issue, the *Virginia Daily Enterprise* published a visual denunciation of the maternal skills and sensibilities of women strike supporters. A cartoon entitled “Virginia’s New Night Nursery at the Police Station” featured three “I.W.W. Babies” being attended to by a harried “Night Sergeant.” A male child is lying in a crib screaming, “Wow! I want Lizzie Flynn.” The sergeant holds two other babies, a boy and a girl. The boy pulls the man’s hair while the girl hits him over the head with a hammer and a brush and says, “Take me home to Father[,] Mother’s in jail.” The officer is clearly distressed; he is frowning, and the back of his head sports a large bump caused by the baby’s hammer blows. Scattered on the floor by the sergeant’s bare feet are some up-turned carpet tacks.

VIRGINIA'S NEW NIGHT NURSERY AT THE POLICE STATION.



Virginia Daily Enterprise,
11 August 1916.

Virginia Daily Enterprise,
7 August 1916.

NOTHING TOO SMALL FOR THE I. W. W.



CARS PICK UP CARPET TACKS NEAR GILBERT

GILBERT, August 7.—It is estimated that fully 100 teams have come to the village during the past week with flat tires. Roads leading to Gilbert have been strewn with carpet tacks and it has been difficult to drive over them without picking up one or two. A boy living here is reported to have bought \$1 worth of carpet tacks at one of the local stores early in the week. It is not known whether sprinkling the roads with tacks is the work of mischievous boys or strikers. The tacks made their first appearance immediately following the march from Hibbing to Virginia. Reports from other parts of the range show that this work has not been confined to the Gilbert district.

Four days earlier, the *Enterprise* reported that over a hundred cars had picked up carpet tacks in their tires after driving on local roads. Although the *Enterprise* acknowledged that “it is not known whether sprinkling the roads with tacks is the work of mischievous boys or strikers,” a cartoon accompanying the story showed a furtive character labeled “I.W.W.” placing tacks in front of oncoming cars. The presence of carpet tacks in the “Night Nursery” cartoon of August 11 suggests that the tacks had been strewn by “mischievous boys” (and perhaps girls) working on behalf of the IWW.⁷⁰

The “Night Nursery” cartoon emphasized the damage inflicted by female strike supporters. IWW organizer Elizabeth Gurley Flynn filled the heads of “child-like” strikers with foolish ideas. Those who follow her advice, the cartoon suggests, end up in jail, but like the babies pictured, they do not understand their predicament or know what to do next—they “want [need] Lizzie Flynn.”

On another level, the cartoon depicted the dangers caused by women strike activists who stand on picket lines and get arrested rather than stay home to care for their children. Gender norms are violated when women neglect their domestic duties and male police officers and fathers are forced to care for small children. In addition, children raised by female strike supporters learn to use violent methods to solve disputes and have no respect for law and order. The babies in the cartoon pull hair, assault a police officer with weapons, and scatter carpet tacks to injure the innocent and unsuspecting. Even small children represent dangerous threats to society when indoctrinated with IWW propaganda. Mothers who do not provide a “proper” home environment or who neglect their domestic duties upset societal order with their own actions but, more importantly, encourage lawlessness and disrupt the process of Americanization for generations to come by failing to train their children to become good citizens.⁷¹

Local newspapers also utilized images of

motherhood under attack to portray the wives of strikebreakers as sympathetic victims of criminal anarchy. According to the *Duluth News Tribune*, the “I.W.W. gang . . . widowed wives and orphaned children.”⁷² The July 8 headline of the *Virginia Daily Enterprise* announced that the “I.W.W. . . . Attempts Murder of Women and Children” after several sticks of dynamite were thrown into the home of mine worker Michael Kovich. In addition to Kovich’s wife and children, nine boarders, all of whom continued to work during the strike, were sleeping in the house when the explosion occurred; no one was injured.⁷³

In another case, several Range newspapers blamed Mary Betanti’s insanity on IWW supporters’ threats to blow up her home unless her husband stopped working in the mines.⁷⁴ Emphasizing her victimization at the hands of the allegedly lawless organization, the anti-strike media reported that her children had been sent to an orphanage because the father could not care for them while their mother was ill.⁷⁵

These reports attempted to bolster opposition to the strike by emphasizing the vulnerability of innocent mothers and children, who required protection from the purported criminality of strike supporters. Such consideration was not extended to strikers’ wives victimized by company gunmen. Female strike activists forfeited their rights to the protections typically extended to women who adhered to prescribed gender norms.

Positive Portrayals of Women’s Activism

In contrast, pro-strike publications portrayed female strike activists as both fighters and innocent victims abused by heartless company deputies. In August and September, strike supporters published their own newspaper, the *Hibbing Strikers’ News*, to counteract the anti-IWW, anti-strike coverage printed by the majority of Range newspapers.

In its account of Frances Zbacnik’s arrest for picketing, the *Strikers’ News* reported that she and

her three-month-old baby were “brutally dragged to the patrol wagon,” after which Zbacnik received a “severe bruise” on her left arm from the deputy’s tight grip. A company deputy clubbed Rosie Romea, who was pregnant at the time, and “punched her twice in the abdomen with his clenched fist.” Between them, Zbacnik, Romea, and Starka Rojocich brought nine children to the county jail. The cries of the children drew the attention of passersby who, according to the *Striker’s News*, expressed “strong indignation that their city should be disgraced by such an exhibition of Steel Trust brutality.”

Despite their injuries, the women remained in good spirits and “showed a determination to see the game through to the end which would be a credit to any rebel.” The *Strikers’ News* singled out Zbacnik as a “real I.W.W. from the ground up,” since she refused bail until assured that no union funds would be used. “She was willing to let the county feed her and her children until they got tired of it.” The *Strikers’ News* ended its report with an appeal on behalf of “such fighters as these. . . . They expect your support and they should have it.”⁷⁶

The *Strikers’ News* emphasized female strike supporters’ femininity through its recognition of their role as mothers and, to garner public support, focused on law enforcement’s mistreatment of women. In its coverage of the arrest of Helen Pintar, the *Strikers’ News* reported that the pregnant woman was attacked by a company deputy while picketing and as a result was bed-ridden and expected to miscarry. The *Strikers’ News* used this incident to define company officials and their hired gunmen as inhuman brutes: “There is no race of men, however savage they may be, who do not recognize the sanctity of motherhood. . . . Not even a wolf will attack a female of his species when in such a condition, but the thugs of the Steel Trust outrage the laws of decency and of nature as freely as they do those of the state.”⁷⁷ In the pages of the *Strikers’ News*, strike supporters claimed the moral high ground for strike activist mothers and

used the rhetoric of motherhood to condemn the actions of mining company operatives.

The Meanings of Women’s Activism

In the pages of both pro-labor and anti-strike newspapers, women’s public activism represented a powerful ideological symbol. Company-controlled media focused on women’s transgression of gender norms as a means of questioning immigrants’ fitness for citizenship, and used the specter of threatened “motherhood” to highlight the presumed danger posed by lawless, alien agitators. Pro-strike reports cast female strike supporters as militant but overmatched victims of corporate greed.

Through their words and actions, female strike activists emphasized their domestic roles and identities along with their efforts to confront, at times violently, the agents of the mining interests. The women’s words and actions revealed an understanding of motherhood that made space for traditional maternal duties alongside militant activism in pursuit of class interests, a conception that challenged the dominant culture’s emphasis on motherly tenderness and restraint.

Unfortunately for the miners, the 1916 strike ended in defeat for the IWW and its supporters. Mining companies on the Range refused to negotiate with the mine workers or to recognize their union. Violent repression and economic hardship forced strikers to return to the mines beginning in early September without having achieved any of their demands. Mining companies voluntarily increased wages in the fall, but the hated contract system stayed in place and mine workers remained without recognized union representation.

However, the strike was not a total failure. Strikers demonstrated the ability to come together in support of common interests, forcing mining companies to address at least some of their grievances. For historians, the 1916 strike illustrates the scope of working-class women’s political activism during an important episode of early twen-

tieth century labor unrest.⁷⁸

Women's participation in the 1916 Iron Range strike demonstrates their commitment to improving their families' economic situation and their utilization of different tactics to achieve their goals. Female strike supporters claimed public space as militant mothers whose maternal responsibilities included open and aggressive defense of their and their families' rights. They also used more peaceful methods to advance their cause, attempting to bridge class and ethnic differences in order to leverage their community's economic and political influence against the strength of the mining interests.

Women strike activists faced public censure when anti-strike reporters and editors denounced female strike supporters as unfit mothers and suggested that an IWW victory would lead to the breakdown of family and society. Reports in the strikers' own newspaper carried a different message, one that emphasized not only company deputies' cruelty but also women's active and aggressive resistance.

A study of the 1916 Iron Range strike that places women at the center of analysis demonstrates that Iron Range women were shrewd strike activists who used a variety of strategies to accomplish their goals, and that both strike opponents and supporters attempted to sway public opinion through a contested understanding of motherhood. Female strike supporters sought to incorporate militant resistance to oppression into their maternal duties and in so doing were successful, at least temporarily, in claiming public space as political actors in their communities. ■

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The following is a list of all female strike activists identified in my search of extant Iron Range newspapers and other sources. Each woman's nationality was identified using federal census, obituary, or Minnesota naturalization records. In those instances in which I could not find the woman's name listed in any of these records, I have listed her nationality as "Unknown." In many cases, women's names were spelled differently in newspaper reports than in state and federal records. I generally use the spelling given in census or naturalization records. The "Activity" recorded for each woman is taken from the 1916 newspaper account or other source in which she was named. If the woman activist was identified from a newspaper report, the "Source" column identifies one of the newspaper editions in which she was listed. Many women were named in more than one report, but due to space considerations I have listed below only the first account in which each woman was identified.

1916 Iron Range Strike—Women Strike Activists

Name	Nationality	City	Activity	Source (1916)
Rosa Liberotti	Native-born	Virginia	Spoke to press about low wages, carried wreath at Alar funeral	<i>Duluth Herald</i> 6/21
Lucia Rosandich	Croatian	Virginia	Fired rifle at deputies	<i>Virginia Daily Enterprise</i> 6/23
Mrs. John Laetiz	Unknown	Eveleth	Threatened to gain striking husband's release from police	<i>Eveleth News</i> 6/29
Milka Masonovitch	Montenegrin	Biwabik	Attacked deputy with club	<i>Duluth News Tribune</i> 7/4
Sarah Saylor	Native-born	Hibbing	Wrote letter to editor in support of strikers	<i>Duluth News Tribune</i> 7/14
Hulda Jambak	Finnish	Aurora	Cut air hoses on railroad ore cars	<i>Virginia Daily Enterprise</i> 7/22
Annie Sweigel	Slovenian	Aurora	Stoned strikebreakers and deputies	<i>Duluth News Tribune</i> 7/25
Agnes Anseltz	Slovenian	Aurora	Stoned strikebreakers and deputies	<i>Duluth News Tribune</i> 7/25
Katherine Drassler	Slovenian	Aurora	Stoned strikebreakers and deputies	<i>Duluth News Tribune</i> 7/25
Anna Berdice	Slovenian	Aurora	Threw eggs and rocks	<i>Virginia Daily Enterprise</i> 7/26
Louise Skerbec	Slovenian	Aurora	Threw eggs and rocks	<i>Virginia Daily Enterprise</i> 7/26
Mary Tichar	Croatian	Chisholm	Picketed	<i>Hibbing Daily Tribune</i> 7/26
Helen Pintar	Croatian	Gilbert	Threw eggs, called men scabs	<i>Virginia Daily Enterprise</i> 7/27
Katie Stark	Yugoslavian	Chisholm	Picketed	<i>Chisholm Tribune Herald</i> 7/28
Frances Lessar	Slovenian	Chisholm	Picketed	<i>Chisholm Tribune Herald</i> 7/28
Annie Minerich	Croatian	Chisholm	Picketed	<i>Duluth Herald</i> 7/29
Mollie Essen	Native-born	Two Harbors	Recitation at Socialist picnic in support of strike	<i>Two Harbors Socialist</i> 7/29
Tecla Ahlquist	Swedish	Two Harbors	Sang at Socialist picnic in support of strike	<i>Two Harbors Socialist</i> 7/29
Frances Zbacnik	Croatian	Kittzville	Threw rocks and eggs, threatened to blow up strikebreaker's home	<i>Hibbing Daily Tribune</i> 8/1, <i>Duluth News Tribune</i> 8/8
Mary Polgnac	Slovenian	Unknown	Threatened strikebreaker's wife	<i>Duluth Herald</i> 8/1

Name	Nationality	City	Activity	Source (1916)
Rosie Romea	Italian	Hibbing	Threw eggs and rocks	<i>Duluth News Tribune</i> 8/3
Starka Rojocich	Austrian	Hibbing	Threw eggs and rocks	<i>Duluth News Tribune</i> 8/3
Angela Krevitz	Slovenian	Eveleth	Threw eggs	<i>Daily Virginian</i> 8/4
Frances Podlogar	Slovenian	Eveleth	Threw eggs	<i>Daily Virginian</i> 8/4
Frances Sterze	Unknown	Eveleth	Threw eggs	<i>Daily Virginian</i> 8/4
Mary Shaoka	Unknown	Eveleth	Assaulted strikebreaker's wife	<i>Virginia Daily Enterprise</i> 8/5
Mary Shukle	Yugoslavian	Sparta	Assaulted strikebreaker's wife	<i>Daily Virginian</i> 8/5
Martha Karakash	Unknown	Hibbing	Testified for striker	<i>Hibbing Daily Tribune</i> 8/7
Agnace Pelse	Unknown	Kittzville	Swore out warrant for deputies	<i>Hibbing Daily Tribune</i> 8/8
Mary Dolinar	Slovenian	Hibbing	Picketed, threw pepper	<i>Duluth News Tribune</i> 8/9
Mary Jugovich	Croatian	Buhl	Unlawful assembly	<i>Duluth News Tribune</i> 8/9
Elisa Ercoli	Italian	Virginia	Picketed, bit policeman	<i>Virginia Daily Enterprise</i> 8/11
Hilda Copeletti	Italian	Virginia	Shouted and spit at strikebreakers	<i>Virginia Daily Enterprise</i> 8/11
Marie Teroni	Italian	Virginia	Shouted and spit at strikebreakers	<i>Virginia Daily Enterprise</i> 8/11
Mary Morelli	Unknown	Virginia	Shouted and spit at strikebreakers	<i>Virginia Daily Enterprise</i> 8/11
Caroline Malna	Croatian	Virginia	Shouted and spit at strikebreakers	<i>Duluth Herald</i> 8/12
Mrs. Geo. Parovich	Unknown	Crosby	Picketed	<i>Crosby Crucible</i> 8/19
Mrs. John Looger	Unknown	Crosby	Picketed	<i>Crosby Crucible</i> 8/19
Aggie Smiljanich	Croatian	Crosby	Picketed	<i>Crosby Crucible</i> 8/19
Julia Jamelia	Croatian	Crosby	Picketed	<i>Crosby Crucible</i> 8/19
Annie Majnarich	Croatian	Crosby	Picketed	<i>Crosby Crucible</i> 8/19
Mary Ranta	Unknown	Biwabik	Disorderly conduct	<i>Duluth News Tribune</i> 8/19
Jascelia Vranich	Croatian	Kittzville	Assaulted strikebreaker's wife	<i>Virginia Daily Enterprise</i> 8/23
Hilda Helma	Finnish	Crosby	Picketed	<i>Crosby Crucible</i> 9/2
Anna Johnson	Finnish	Crosby	Picketed	<i>Crosby Crucible</i> 9/2
Empi Teskanen	Unknown	Crosby	Picketed	<i>Crosby Crucible</i> 9/2
Katie Maki	Finnish	Crosby	Picketed	<i>Crosby Crucible</i> 9/2
Mary Palso	Finnish	Crosby	Picketed	<i>Crosby Crucible</i> 9/2
Sophie Halanden	Finnish	Crosby	Picketed	<i>Crosby Crucible</i> 9/2
Frances Hlacher	Slovenian	Crosby	Attacked strikebreakers	<i>Crosby Crucible</i> 9/2
Barbara Stark	Slovenian	Chisholm	Threatened strikebreaker	<i>Chisholm Tribune Herald</i> 9/8
Mary Deslich	Croatian	Chisholm	Threatened strikebreaker	<i>Chisholm Tribune Herald</i> 9/8
Mary Prijately	Austrian	Chisholm	Threatened strikebreaker	<i>Chisholm Tribune Herald</i> 9/8
Julia Breznik	Yugoslavian	Unknown	Fought with mine guard	Vorse, <i>A Footnote to Folly</i>
Mrs. Koski	Finnish	Unknown	Fought with mine guard	M. M., "Union Comes to Mesabi"

Notes:

1. "Agitators Trying to Get Out Hibbing Men," *Duluth Herald*, 21 June 1916; "Murdered by Oliver Gunmen' in Red Leads Striker's Funeral," *Duluth News Tribune*, 27 June 1916; U. S. Bureau of the Census, Federal Census 1910, 1920 (<http://0-persi.heritagequestonline.com>). Liberotti had arrived with her husband from Colorado several months before the strike began and, according to the *Duluth News Tribune*, had been involved in the coal miners' strike at Ludlow.
2. "Agitators Trying to Get Out Hibbing Men."
3. For a discussion of maternalism and maternalist activism, see, for example: Seth Koven and Sonya Michel (ed.), *Mothers of a New World: Maternalist Politics and the Origins of Welfare States* (New York: Routledge, 1993); Molly Ladd-Taylor, *Mother-Work: Women, Child Welfare, and the State, 1890-1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994); and Gwendolyn Mink, *The Wages of Motherhood: Inequality in the Welfare State, 1917-1942* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995).
4. Caroline Waldron Merithew finds a similar focus on motherhood in her study of Italian anarchist women living in Illinois coal towns in the early twentieth century. "Anarchist mothers" believed that the education of their children, including a critique of capitalism and patriarchy, represented the first step toward their own emancipation and the achievement of their ultimate goal: equal partnership with men in the revolution. (Caroline Merithew, "Anarchist Motherhood: Toward the Making of a Revolutionary Proletariat in Illinois Coal Towns," in: Donna Gabaccia and Franca Iacovetta (eds.), *Women, Gender, and Transnational Lives: Italian Workers of the World* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 217-46.)
5. David Joseph LaVigne, Jr., argues that gendered studies of Iron Range history represent one of three major silences in the region's historiography. (David LaVigne, "Mesabi Histories: Immigration, Industry, and Identity in American Historical Memory during the Twentieth Century" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Minnesota, 2009), 161-4.)

Some historians of the Iron Range strikes largely ignore the presence of female strike supporters. See, for example: Hyman Berman, *Education for Work and Labor Solidarity: The Immigrant Miners and Radicalism on the Mesabi Range* (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota, 1963); Melvyn Dubofsky, "Miners, Lumberjacks, and a Reorganized IWW, 1916," in his *We Shall Be All: A History of the Industrial Workers of the World* (New York: Quadrangle/New York Times Book Co., 1969), 319-46; Douglas Ollila, Jr., "Ethnic Radicalism and the 1916 Mesabi Strike,"

Range History 3, no.4 (Dec. 1978): 1-4, 10; Gerald Ronning, "Jackpine Savages: Discourses of Conquest in the 1916 Mesabi Iron Range Strike," *Labor History* 44, no. 3 (Aug. 2003): 359-82; and Donald G. Sofchalk, "Organized Labor and the Iron Ore Miners of Northern Minnesota, 1907-1936," *Labor History* 12, no. 2 (Spr. 1971): 214-42.

Other studies mention women but fail to analyze the full extent and variety of women's participation. See, for example: Neil Betten, "Riot, Revolution, Repression in the Iron Range Strike of 1916," *Minnesota History* 41, no. 2 (Sum. 1968): 82-94; Robert M. Eleff, "The 1916 Minnesota Miners' Strike Against U.S. Steel," *Minnesota History* 51, no. 2 (Sum. 1988): 63-74; Philip S. Foner, "The Mesabi Range Strike," in his *History of the Labor Movement in the United States, Vol. IV: The Industrial Workers of the World, 1905-1917* (New York: International Publishers, 1980), 486-517; Michael G. Karni, "Finnish Immigrant Leftists in America: The Golden Years, 1900-1918," in Dirk Hoerder (ed.), *Struggle a Hard Battle: Essays on Working-Class Immigrants* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois Univ. Pr., 1986), 199-226; and Peter Rachleff, "Turning Points in the Labor Movement: Three Key Conflicts," in Clifford E. Clark, Jr. (ed.), *Minnesota in a Century of Change: The State and Its People Since 1900* (St. Paul: Minnesota Hist. Soc. Pr., 1989), 195-222.

Those historians who discuss women's involvement in the strike tend to focus on strike organizer Elizabeth Gurley Flynn. See: Helen C. Camp, *Iron in Her Soul: Elizabeth Gurley Flynn and the American Left* (Pullman: Washington State Univ. Pr., 1995); and Michael G. Karni, "Elizabeth Gurley Flynn and the Mesabi Strike of 1916," *Range History* 5, no. 4 (Win. 1981): 1-6. Although I acknowledge Flynn's involvement as a strike organizer and strategist during the 1916 Iron Range strike, in this essay I focus on the contributions of women who resided in Range mining towns.

6. Historians writing about female supporters of striking male kin tend to emphasize the "auxiliary" nature of women's participation. See, for example: Stephane E. Booth, "Ladies in White: Female Activism in the Southern Illinois Coalfields, 1932-1938," in John H. M. Laslett (ed.), *The United Mine Workers of America: A Model of Industrial Solidarity?* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State Univ. Pr., 1996); Temma Kaplan, "Female Consciousness and Collective Action: The Case of Barcelona, 1910-1918," *Signs* 7, no. 3 (Spr. 1982): 545-66; and Susan Levine, "Workers' Wives: Gender, Class, and Consumerism in the 1920s United States," *Gender & History* 3, no. 1 (Spr. 1991): 45-64.

My findings are consistent with those of Caroline Waldron Merithew, who argues for a reevaluation of the conservative attributes typically ascribed to women's auxiliaries. In her study of miners' wives' participation in the Women's Auxiliary of the Progressive Miners of America, she argues that women used divisions caused by the mine union wars of the 1930s as opportunities to challenge conventional gender roles and assert their right to claim public space as union supporters. (Caroline Merithew, "We Were Not Ladies': Gender, Class, and a Women's Auxiliary's Battle for Mining Unionism," *Journal of Women's History* 18, no. 2 (Sum. 2006): 63-94.)

7. Under the contract system, each mine worker received payment based on the amount of ore he extracted each day, but mine workers did not know in advance the level of their monthly take-home wages. The rate paid per carload of ore fluctuated daily and mining companies subtracted from this total inflated charges for necessary supplies.
8. Berman, *Education for Work and Labor Solidarity*, 47-8; Betten, "Riot, Revolution, Repression," 83; Foner, "Mesabi Range Strike," 494-5; Eleff, "1916 Minnesota Miners' Strike," 67-8; Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All*, 322-5; Marion B. Cothren, "When Strike-Breakers Strike: The Demands of the Miners on the Mesaba Range," *The Survey* 36 (26 Aug. 1916): 535; Karni, "Finnish Immigrant Leftists in America," 218; Mary Heaton Vorse, *A Footnote to Folly: Reminiscences of Mary Heaton Vorse* (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1935), 132; George P. West, "The Mesaba Range Strike," *New Republic* 8, no. 96 (2 Sep. 1916): 108; Ollila, "Ethnic Radicalism," 2; Leslie H. Marcy, "The Iron Heel on the Mesaba Range," *International Socialist Review* 17, no. 2 (Aug. 1916): 75; Sam Aluni Oral History, Iron Range Research Center, Chisholm, MN (hereafter IRRC); "St. James Mine Men Quit Work," *Duluth Herald*, 2 June 1916; "Miners at Miller Mine, Aurora Are Out on Strike," *Daily Virginian*, 5 June 1916; "Strikers Join I.W.W. Organization \$2.50 Initiation," *Daily Virginian*, 7 June 1916; "Aurora Miners to Hibbing," *Hibbing Daily Tribune*, 7 June 1916; "Strikers Decide to Continue Out," *Duluth Herald*, 9 June 1916; "Strikers Are Arrested on Way to Mines," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 9 June 1916. The exact number of striking miners is impossible to determine. At the time, Cothren estimated that six thousand men had walked out, noting that the IWW placed the number at eight thousand while the mining companies put the total at three thousand.

"Mesaba" is an alternate spelling of "Mesabi" common in the early 1900s; a number of newspapers used the term regularly.

9. Berman, *Education for Work and Labor Solidarity*, 48-9; Betten, "Riot, Revolution, Repression," 84-5; Foner, "Mesabi Range Strike," 494-7, 500-1, 506-7; Eleff,

"1916 Minnesota Miners' Strike," 68; Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All*, 324-5; Mary Heaton Vorse, "The Mining Strike in Minnesota," *Outlook* 113, no. 18 (30 Aug. 1916): 1036-7; Cothren, "When Strike-Breakers Strike," 535; Karni, "Finnish Immigrant Leftists in America," 218; Rachleff, "Turning Points in the Labor Movement," 198; "Miners' Strike, Mesabi Range," *Fifteenth Biennial Report of the Department of Labor and Industries of the State of Minnesota, 1915-1916* (Minneapolis: Syndicate Printing Co., 1916), 168-71; "Vote on Strike Will Be Taken Tonight," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 15 June 1916; "Miners at St. James Quit Work," *Two Harbors Socialist*, 17 June 1916; "Industrial Workers of the World Hold Meeting at the Socialist Hall," *Hibbing Daily Tribune*, 19 June 1916; "Iron Miners' Strike on Range Assumes Alarming Magnitude," *Duluth News Tribune*, 21 June 1916; "Speakers at Hibbing Stir Large Audience," *Duluth News Tribune*, 28 June 1916; "What Strikers Are Demanding," *Hibbing Daily Tribune*, 28 June 1916.

10. Samuel Yellen, "The Homestead Lockout," in his *American Labor Struggles* (1936; reprint: New York: Arno Press, 1969), 72-100; David Brody, *Labor in Crisis: The Steel Strike of 1919* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1965), 17-8.
11. Yellen, *American Labor Struggles*, *passim*; Alice Kessler-Harris, *Out to Work: A History of Wage-Earning Women in the United States* (New York: Oxford Univ. Pr., 1982); Gwendolyn Mink, *Old Labor and New Immigrants in American Political Development: Union, Party, and State, 1875-1920* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Pr., 1986); David Montgomery, *The Fall of the House of Labor: The Workplace, the State, and American Labor Activism, 1865-1925* (New York: Cambridge Univ. Pr., 1987).
12. Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All*, 78.
13. Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All*, 227-62.

14. As in other areas of the nation in the early twentieth century, women's occupational choices were limited on the Iron Range. Most native-born women worked as teachers, nurses, or clerks. Language barriers and cultural preferences further constricted immigrant women's employment options, and most performed some type of household labor, as domestic servants, in hotels or boardinghouses, or in their own homes. See: Arnold A. Alanen, "Years of Change on the Iron Range," in Clark, *Minnesota in a Century of Change*, 176-7. I found no documentation of women working in the iron mines during this period. It is possible that some women may have disguised themselves as men to obtain employment in the mines, as did a woman in the coal fields of Washington, PA, who worked with her husband for three years before a mine accident led to her discovery. (See: "Wears Man's Garb, Assists Husband," *Duluth News Tribune*, 1 Aug. 1907; and "Woman Works as Man Miner,"

Chisholm Herald, 9 Aug. 1907.)

15. In a 1918 survey of women workers in Minnesota, only 13 percent of employed women, both native-born and immigrant, were married at the time. Nationwide, in 1910, 7.1 percent of foreign-born married women worked outside the home, compared to 6.1 percent of married native-born white women. By 1920, the proportions had risen to 7.8 and 6.4 percent, respectively. Given the limited employment options available to women on the Iron Range, and the language barriers faced by immigrant women, it seems unlikely that the employment rates of married foreign-born women would have exceeded the 13 percent aggregate for all married women. See: Alanen, "Years of Change on the Iron Range," 176-7, and Ileen A. DeVault, "Family Wages: The Roles of Wives and Mothers in U.S. Working-Class Survival Strategies, 1880-1930," *Labor History* 54, no. 1 (2013): 7.
16. "Interview with Henry Antila," Folder 8, Box 2, Federal Writers' Project, Duluth, Northeast Minnesota Historical Center, University of Minnesota, Duluth, MN; Untitled Autobiography, Anthony Grebenc Papers, Slovene American Collection, Immigration History Research Center, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN; Karni, "Finnish Immigrant Leftists in America," 206; Sam Aluni, Mary Bovitz, Ann Fondrulia, Segundo Gentilini, and Joe Deslich Oral Histories, IRRRC.
17. Please see the accompanying table for a list of all women strike activists identified in my search of extant newspapers and other sources.
18. "Vote on Strike Will Be Taken Tonight"; "Ordered from Virginia; Agitators Are Defiant," *Duluth Herald*, 16 June 1916; "By Unanimous Vote Miners Fired by I.W.W. Incouragement [sic] Vote to Strike," *Daily Virginian*, 16 June 1916; "Women Called Up to Assist in Strike," *Daily Virginian*, 17 June 1916; "I.W.W. Agitators' Efforts to Call Strike Prove Futile," *Duluth News Tribune*, 17 June 1916.
19. "Peaceful Parade for Sunday is Permitted," *Duluth Herald*, 17 June 1916.
20. "Are Using the Sympathy Plea," *Hibbing Daily Tribune*, 21 July 1916; "I.W.W.'s Break Into Melody," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 25 July 1916; "Eveleth Miners Hear Mrs. Flynn," *Eveleth News*, 3 Aug. 1916; "Elizabeth Flynn Will Address a Women's Meeting," *Daily Virginian*, 10 Aug. 1916; "Range Newspapers Come in for Attack at Hands [of] 'Orator' Joseph Ettor," *Hibbing Daily Tribune*, 16 Aug. 1916; "Addresses a Small Meet," *Hibbing Daily Tribune*, 23 Aug. 1916.
21. "The Strikers Dance at Their Hall," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 19 June 1916.
22. "Strikers Urged to Do Violence by Agitators," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 24 July 1916; "Sensation Sprung at I.W.W. Meeting," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 26 July 1916.
23. Iron Range newspapers carried many accounts of women marching in strike parades. The *Hibbing Daily Tribune's* reports on the subject provide evidence that women marched throughout the strike's duration. See: "Strikers at Virginia Mines," *Hibbing Daily Tribune*, 15 June 1916; "Children in Line of March," *Hibbing Daily Tribune*, 26 July 1916; "Strikers Quiet in the Hibbing District," *Hibbing Daily Tribune*, 14 Aug. 1916; "What the Press Has to Say About the I.W.W. and the Range Strike," *Hibbing Daily Tribune*, 18 Aug. 1916; "Minnesota's Striking Iron Miners," *Hibbing Daily Tribune*, 26 Sep. 1916. See also: Cothren, "When Strike-Breakers Strike," 535-6; Vorse, *A Footnote to Folly*, 142; John Begich Oral History, IRRRC.
24. "I.W.W. Men Are Active," *Duluth Herald*, 15 June 1916.
25. "Parade Has Good Effect," *Hibbing Strikers' News*, 4 Aug. 1916.
26. "Pickets Become Bolder at Nelson Location," *Hibbing Daily Tribune*, 21 Aug. 1916.
27. Meredith Tax, *The Rising of the Women: Feminist Solidarity and Class Conflict, 1880-1917* (New York: Monthly Review Pr., 1980), 127.
28. Despite its relatively progressive stance toward women, the IWW's outreach to working women was limited; "it never did the follow-up, the day-to-day organizing, or the special work around the oppression of women that would have enabled it to hold onto them as members." (Tax, *Rising of the Women*, 128.) In addition, in the pages of IWW journals, the "Rebel Girl," though portrayed as a loyal helpmate to her male comrade and a teacher of revolutionary values to her children, was nevertheless relegated to a "fundamentally domestic and inspirational" role in the great class struggle. See: Ann Schofield, "Rebel Girls and Union Maids: The Woman Question in the Journals of the AFL and the IWW, 1905-1920," *Feminist Studies* 9, no. 2 (Sep. 1983): 335-58.
29. Berman, *Education for Work and Labor Solidarity*, 49-52; Betten, "Riot, Revolution, Repression," 85-8, 91; Foner, "Mesabi Range Strike," 497-504; Eleff, "1916 Minnesota Miners' Strike," 69-74; Sofchalk, "Organized Labor," 220, 230; Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All*, 320, 325-7; Cothren, "When Strike-Breakers Strike," 536; Vorse, "Mining Strike in Minnesota," 1036; Carl H. Chrislock, *The Progressive Era in Minnesota, 1899-1918* (St. Paul: Minnesota Hist. Soc., 1971), 117; Karni, "Finnish Immigrant Leftists in America," 219; West, "Mesaba Range Strike," 109; Frank L. Palmer, *Spies in Steel: An Expose of Industrial War* (Denver: The Labor Press, 1928), *passim*.

Iron Range newspapers printed numerous accounts of company deputies attacking strike supporters and disrupting strike activities. Illustrative examples include: "Battle Ends Parade of Striking Miners," *Duluth News Tribune*, 22 June 1916; "Pick-

- ets and Police Have Battle on Third Avenue," *Hibbing Daily Tribune*, 30 June 1916; "Governor Insults the Range Courts," *Mesaba Ore and Hibbing News*, 8 July 1916.
30. "Range Miners Strike for More Pay!" *Bear River Journal*, 22 June 1916; "Striking Miner is Killed on the North Side," *Daily Virginian*, 22 June 1916; "Pitched Battle Between Strikers and Oliver Police," *Duluth Herald*, 22 June 1916; "Striker Shot and Killed by Deputies in Virginia Riot," *Eveleth News*, 22 June 1916; "Striker Shot by Police," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 22 June 1916; "One Miner Dead, Two Wounded, in Virginia Clash," *Duluth News Tribune*, 23 June 1916; "Bullet from Pistol Caused Alar's Death," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 23 June 1916; "Oliver Police Thug Murders Striker on the Range," *Two Harbors Socialist*, 24 June 1916; "Alar Funeral to be Held on Sunday," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 24 June 1916; "Strikers Will Parade Today Despite Ruling," *Duluth News Tribune*, 25 June 1916; *Federal Census*, 1920. Rosandich was not charged for her role in the incident.
 31. Mrs. Masonovitch's given name was recorded in numerous ways, including "Milka" (Mesonovich) in the *Federal Census* of 1920, "Coroner's Jury Brings Verdict at Biwabik," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 6 July 1916, and "Slayers of Myron 'Unknown to this Jury' the Verdict," *Duluth News Tribune*, 6 July 1916; "Malica" in "Inquiry Begins Before Smallwood," *Duluth News Tribune*, 22 July 1916; and "Militza" in Otto Christensen, "Invading Miners' Homes," *International Socialist Review* 17, no. 3 (Sep. 1916): 161. I use "Milka" because this is the name provided by Mrs. Masonovitch or someone in her family to federal census enumerators. Also, the two newspaper articles in which Mrs. Masonovitch is identified as "Milka" both recount court testimony provided by eleven-year-old Nick Masonovitch, whose parents are identified as "Philip and Milka." Presumably Nick provided his parents' given names as part of his testimony.
 32. Berman, *Education for Work and Labor Solidarity*, 50; Cothren, "When Strike-Breakers Strike," 536; "Victory is Sure," *Industrial Worker*, 29 July 1916; Marcy, "The Iron Heel on the Mesaba Range," 77; and Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, *The Rebel Girl: An Autobiography, My First Life (1906-1926)* [rev. ed.] (New York: International Publishers, 1973), 207.
 33. "Deputy Sheriff J. C. Myron of Duluth and T. Ladvalla Hit by Strikers' Bullets," *Duluth News Tribune*, 4 July 1916; "Tresco, Gilday, Little, Scarlet and Smith to the Grand Jury," *Daily Virginian*, 5 July 1916; "Back Bone of Strike is Broken," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 5 July 1916; "Coroner's Jury Brings Verdict at Biwabik," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 6 July 1916; "Two Killed at Biwabik," *Eveleth News*, 6 July 1916.
 34. "Myron and Ladvalla Hit by Strikers' Bullets."
 35. "Myron and Ladvalla Hit by Strikers' Bullets;" "Slayers of Myron 'Unknown to this Jury' the Verdict;" "Inquiry Begins Before Smallwood;" "Back Bone of Strike is Broken;" "Coroner's Jury Brings Verdict at Biwabik;" "Tresco, Gilday, Little, Scarlet and Smith to the Grand Jury;" "Two Killed at Biwabik;" "Deputy Myron and Bystander Killed," *Duluth Herald*, 4 July 1916; "Must be Stopped," *Ely Miner*, 7 July 1916; "Woman Held for Murder Released Under Heavy Bail," *Daily Virginian*, 28 Aug. 1916; "Is Released Temporarily," *Eveleth News*, 31 Aug. 1916; "Mine Workers Protest Hand-Picked Grand Jury Indictment," *Bear River Journal*, 14 Sep. 1916; Christensen, "Invading Miners' Homes," 161-2; *Federal Census*, 1920. In later court testimony, Schubisky did not mention Mrs. Masonovitch's attack and instead claimed to have been overpowered by two of the male boarders. ("Inquiry Begins Before Smallwood.")
 36. "Aurora Pickets Dispersed While Bothering Hudson Men," *Duluth Herald*, 19 July 1916; "Labor Leader Does Not Believe Minnesota Labor Federation Will Mix in Strike," *Daily Virginian*, 20 July 1916; "Case of Alleged Picket Adjourned," *Duluth News Tribune*, 27 July 1916; "Secure Jury in Aurora Riot Case," *Duluth News Tribune*, 1 Aug. 1916.
 37. "Aurora Has Picket Row," *Duluth Herald*, 24 July 1916; "Aurora Women Fined for Throwing Rocks," *Duluth Herald*, 25 July 1916; "Trio of Aurora Women Are Fined," *Duluth News Tribune*, 25 July 1916; *Federal Census*, 1920; "Petition for Naturalization, Katherine Sterk Drasler," p. 70, v. 10, reel 33, St. Louis County (Virginia), Minnesota Naturalization Records, IRRC. The *Duluth Herald* reported that Anseltz's husband was angry that she paid the fine, stating that he wanted his wife and three children placed in jail instead.
 38. "Aurora Woman Pleads for Child," *Duluth News Tribune*, 28 July 1916; "Seeks to Take Child to Jail," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 26 July 1916; *Federal Census*, 1920; "Petition for Citizenship, Anthony Berdice," p. 46, v. 29, r. 41, St. Louis County (Virginia), Minnesota Naturalization Records, IRRC. Aurora resident and Finnish immigrant Hulda Jambak pursued a different strategy. On July 19, she began cutting air hoses on railroad cars to prevent the transportation of iron ore and continued her acts of sabotage, damaging a total of 170 cars, until her arrest three days later. (See: "Aurora Miners Start Parade," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 19 July 1916; "Still Cutting Air Hose on D. & I. R. Cars," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 21 July 1916; "Arrested for Hose Cutting," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 22 July 1916; "Woman Arrested for Cutting Hose," *Duluth Herald*, 22 July 1916; "Federal Conciliators Are Coming Here," *Daily Virginian*, 22 July 1916; *Federal Census*, 1920.)
 39. "Throws His Own Child Over Crowd at Chisholm," *Duluth Herald*, 26 July 1916.

40. "Wring is Hit in Head this A.M. in Kittzville," *Hibbing Daily Tribune*, 2 Aug. 1916; "150 Deputies Prevent Riot," *Duluth News Tribune*, 4 Aug. 1916; "Picketing Case Starts," *Hibbing Daily Tribune*, 7 Aug. 1916.
41. "Assaulted and Bucket Taken," *Duluth Herald*, 8 Sep. 1916; "Women Again Annoy Workers," *Chisholm Tribune Herald*, 8 Sep. 1916; "Attempt to Again Start Picket Work," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 8 Sep. 1916; *Federal Census*, 1920; "Petition for Naturalization, Jozef Deslich," p. 225, v. 11, r. 24, St. Louis (Virginia), Minnesota Naturalization Records, IRRC; "Mary Deslich Obituary," p. RGS24, v. 3, Obituary Records, IRRC; "Alien Registration and Declaration of Holdings, Mary Prijately," Minnesota Alien Registration Records, IRRC. Joe Deslich, Mary's son, later remembered that his mother liked to sing but had little time to do so after caring for six children and six boarders. (Joe Deslich Oral History.)
42. "Strike News Scarce," *Daily Virginian*, 4 Aug. 1916.
43. "I.W.W. Renews Violence," *Duluth News Tribune*, 12 Aug. 1916.
44. "Woman Picket at Crosby Unarmed," *Duluth News Tribune*, 18 Aug. 1916; "Women Get Busy in Strike near Crosby," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 18 Aug. 1916.
45. "Two Witnesses Arrested After Giving Evidence," *Duluth Herald*, 1 Aug. 1916; "Women Resume Picketing at Carson Lake and at Kittzville [sic] Last Night," *Hibbing Daily Tribune*, 1 Aug. 1916; "Deputy Hurt at Kittzville [sic]," *Duluth News Tribune*, 3 Aug. 1916; Hibbing Arrest Record, p. 59, IRRC; *Federal Census*, 1920; "Petition for Naturalization, Frank Zbacnik," p. 183, v. 2, r. 6, St. Louis County (Hibbing), Minnesota Naturalization Records, IRRC; "Frances Zbacnik Obituary," CB178, Obituary Records, IRRC. The charges against her were later dismissed for lack of evidence. The *Duluth News Tribune* reported on August 8 that Zbacnik was arrested again for threatening to blow up the home of a strikebreaker, but the Hibbing Arrest Records do not contain any entries documenting a second arrest.
46. "Pay \$12.50 for Throwing Eggs," *Eveleth News*, 10 Aug. 1916; *Federal Census*, 1920; "Declaration of Intent, Toni Podlogar," p. 373, v. 18, r. 9, St. Louis County (Virginia), Minnesota Naturalization Records, IRRC.
47. "Women Get Busy in Strike near Crosby," *Crosby Crucible*, 19 Aug. 1916; "Women Turn Out for Picket Duty," *Crosby Crucible*, 2 Sep. 1916. Majnarich, Smiljanich and Jamelia were Croatian immigrants, and Hlacher was from Slovenia. I could not find Parovich listed in the Federal Census, Obituary Records, or Minnesota Naturalization Records. See: *Federal Census*, 1920; "Petition for Naturalization, Matt Majnarich," p. 68, v. 3, r. 7, Crow Wing County, Minnesota Naturalization Records, IRRC; "Declaration of Intent, John Hlacher," p. 31, v. 3, r. 1, St. Louis County (Ely), Minnesota Naturalization Records, IRRC; "Petition for Naturalization, Agata Mlinarich Smiljanich," p. 104, v. 5, r. 9, Crow Wing County, Minnesota Naturalization Records, IRRC; "Declaration of Intent, Julia Peris Gumlia," p. 41, v. 5, r. 3, Crow Wing County, Minnesota Naturalization Records, IRRC.
48. "Women and Suckling Babies in Jail," *Mesaba Ore and Hibbing News*, 5 Aug. 1916. The *Mesaba Ore* editor later lauded the Hibbing jury that "refused to convict the woman (and her baby) brought in by mining company gunmen for picketing." ("Some Decency Left on Mesaba," *Mesaba Ore and Hibbing News*, 12 Aug. 1916.)
49. M. M., "Union Comes to Mesabi," in Meridel Le Sueur, et al. (eds.), *The People Together: One Hundred Years of Minnesota, 1858-1958* (Minneapolis: People's Centennial Book Committee of Minnesota, 1958), 27; Vorse, *Footnote to Folly*, 137-8; *Federal Census*, 1920; "Declaration of Intent, Julia Breznik," p. 374, v. 10, r. 4, St. Louis County (Hibbing), Minnesota Naturalization Records, IRRC; "Julia Breznik Obituary," p. RGS87, v. 7, Obituary Records, IRRC.
50. Vorse, *Footnote to Folly*, 137.
51. Dee Garrison, *Mary Heaton Vorse: The Life of an American Insurgent* (Philadelphia: Temple Univ. Pr., 1989), 111.
52. "Clark Mine Opens Today at Chisholm," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 14 Aug. 1916.
53. "I.W.W. Skulks behind Skirts of Women and Crying Babies to Intimidate Miners," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 11 Aug. 1916.
54. "I.W.W. Skulks behind Skirts," "I.W.W. Renews Violence," "Strike Riot in Virginia," *Duluth Herald*, 11 Aug. 1916; "Three Women and Twenty-Six Men Arrested Today," *Daily Virginian*, 11 Aug. 1916; "Two Pickets Are Arrested," *Duluth Herald*, 12 Aug. 1916; "District Court Hearing Appeal in Biting Case," *Daily Virginian*, 6 Sep. 1916; *Federal Census*, 1920; "Declaration of Intent, Frenk Malnar," p. 295, v. 23, r. 11, St. Louis County (Virginia), Minnesota Naturalization Records, IRRC; "Declaration of Intent, Enrico Ercoli," p. 74, v. 16, r. 8, St. Louis County (Virginia), Minnesota Naturalization Records, IRRC.
55. "I.W.W. Skulks behind Skirts." Copeletti, Malna, and Teroni were eventually fined \$25 each. ("Court Makes its Verdict in Cases Following Strike," *Daily Virginian*, 16 Oct. 1916.)
56. "The Other Side of the Argument," *Mesaba Ore and Hibbing News*, 22 July 1916.
57. "Aurora Strikers Soliciting Help," *Duluth Herald*, 27 July 1916; "Mob at Aurora Takes Striker Away from Village Officers," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 31 July 1916.
58. In 1876, the Minnesota legislature passed legislation that enabled women to vote on school questions and to hold school offices, and in 1898 women gained the right to vote and serve on library boards. How-

- ever, not until the state legislature ratified the Nineteenth Amendment on September 8, 1919, did Minnesota women gain full suffrage rights. See: Barbara Stuhler, *Gentle Warriors: Clara Ueland and the Minnesota Struggle for Woman Suffrage* (St. Paul: Minnesota Hist. Soc., 1995).
59. Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All*, 180-1. Flynn had also travelled to northern Minnesota in December 1907 for an IWW speaking tour of Iron Range towns. (Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, *I Speak My Own Piece: Autobiography of "The Rebel Girl"* (New York: Masses and Mainstream, 1955), 74-6.)
 60. Leigh Ann Wheeler, "From Reading Shakespeare to Reforming Burlesque: The Minneapolis Women's Club and the Women's Welfare League, 1907-1920," *Michigan Historical Review* 25, no. 1 (Jan. 1999): 44-75.
 61. Flynn, *Rebel Girl*, 208-9; Vorse, *Footnote to Folly*, 147-8; *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 18 Aug. 1916; "Says Women Will Demand Two Prisoners," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 18 Aug. 1916; "Woman Probes Strike," *Duluth Herald*, 22 Aug. 1916; "Woman Probes Strike on Range," *Duluth News Tribune*, 22 Aug. 1916; "Trustify Labor Says Mrs. Flynn," *Eveleth News*, 24 Aug. 1916; "Study Conditions of Miners Wives," *Duluth Labor World*, 26 Aug. 1916; "Woman's Views of the Brutal Gunmen's Work," *Mesaba Ore and Hibbing News*, 16 Sep. 1916.
 62. "Says Woman Investigator is Best Judge," *Hibbing Daily Tribune*, 24 Aug. 1916; "Says Deputies Are Too Hasty," *Duluth Herald*, 15 Sep. 1916; "Blames Private Police for Violence in Miners' Strike," *Duluth Labor World*, 23 Sep. 1916. Charges against Ercoli were eventually dropped after she appealed her fine and a jury failed to agree on a verdict in her case. ("Jurors Out 30 Hours," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 9 Sep. 1916; "Jury Deliberates 31 Hours," *Daily Virginian*, 9 Sep. 1916.)
 63. "Woman's Views of the Brutal Gunmen's Work," "Blames Private Police for Violence in Miners' Strike," "Miss Flynn Given Praise," *Hibbing Daily Tribune*, 7 Sep. 1916.
 64. "Amazing Impudence," *Duluth News Tribune*, 7 Aug. 1916.
 65. Quoted in Editorial, *Chisholm Tribune Herald*, 11 Aug. 1916, and "Hiding Behind Skirts," *Daily Virginian*, 17 Aug. 1916.
 66. "Few Prisoners; Strike Wanes," *Duluth News Tribune*, 29 Aug. 1916. According to historian Troy Rondonone, the use of military terms such as "the front" to describe conflicts between capital and labor dominated the media's framing of strike coverage during the period between the Civil War and the end of World War II. This rhetorical framework served to portray strikes as dangerous episodes that needed to be contained and ended and tended to stifle a more in-depth analysis of the economic and social conditions that led to periods of labor unrest. Rondonone's study focuses on large, nationwide strikes of male workers. The use of martial terminology in coverage of the Iron Range strikes suggests that as a rhetorical framework, the metaphor of war was flexible enough to represent both women's and men's labor activism. (Troy Rondonone, *The Great Industrial War: Framing Class Conflict in the Media, 1865-1950* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers Univ. Pr., 2010).)
 67. "Risk Babies' Lives to Protect Iron Miners," *Ely Miner*, 11 Aug. 1916.
 68. "Deputy Hurt at Kitzville." It is important to note that only anti-strike newspapers reported such actions, so we cannot know the extent to which women may have placed their children at risk in order to protect their husbands and themselves. Photographs and reports from pro-strike journalists document children's presence in parades and on the picket line, but such accounts do not cast female strike supporters as irresponsible parents.
 69. Kim E. Nielsen argues that during the Red Scare of 1919-20, anti-radicals similarly "used the conviction that radicals lived perverted gender roles to discredit political movements and discourage women's political involvement." (Kim Nielsen, *Un-American Womanhood: Antiradicalism, Antifeminism, and the First Red Scare* (Columbus: Ohio State Univ. Pr., 2001), 37.)
 70. "Nothing Too Small for the I.W.W.," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 7 Aug. 1916; "Virginia's New Night Nursery at the Police Station," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 11 Aug. 1916.
 71. As Katrina Irving points out, numerous early twentieth century writers focused on the dangers posed by immigrant mothers. Nativists viewed foreign-born women as the embodiment of the feminized "other," representing the unassimilability of inferior European races in terms of both a biological and an economic threat to national integrity. "Naturally" fecund immigrant women carried and transmitted "degenerate" genes, and, as the primary financial decision-makers for their families, they inhibited economic progress through their innate parsimony. In these discourses, immigrant mothers became the focal point for an articulation of presumed biological and cultural inferiority. (Katrina Irving, *Immigrant Mothers: Narratives of Race and Maternity, 1890-1925* (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Pr., 2000).)
 72. "Myron and Ladvalla Hit by Strikers' Bullets."
 73. "I.W.W. In Desperation Attempts Murther of Women and Children," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 8 July 1916.
 74. "Intimidation Causes Woman to Go Insane," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 18 July 1916; "Becomes Insane; I.W.W. the Cause," *Eveleth News*, 20 July 1916. Whether due to the strain of the strike or other causes, Betanti was still confined at the Fergus Falls

- State Hospital for the Insane four years later. (*Federal Census*, 1920.)
75. "Take Children to Duluth," *Eveleth News*, 27 July 1916; "Home is Broken Because Of Range Strike," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 29 July 1916. In addition to the Betanti case, local newspapers reported that other strikebreakers' wives were driven insane by threats of violence. These include Mary Abidanel, a "most pitiful" case, who was separated from her children and taken to Duluth for further medical evaluation. ("Dynamite Being Stolen from Mines of Ranges," *Daily Virginian*, 15 July 1916.) Both the *Duluth News Tribune* ("Miner's Wife Gives Way Under Worry of Threats of I.W.W.") and the *Duluth Herald* ("Strikers' Threat Scares Woman") reported on 11 July 1916 that Mrs. Kofte Santi had suffered a mental breakdown after strike supporters threatened violence against her strikebreaking husband.
76. "Women and Children in Jail in Hibbing," *Hibbing Strikers' News*, 4 Aug. 1916.
77. "Women and Children in Jail in Hibbing."
78. Berman, *Education for Work and Labor Solidarity*, 53-5; Betten, "Riot, Revolution, Repression," 93; Foner, "Mesabi Range Strike," 511-7; Eleff, "1916 Minnesota Miners' Strike," 74; Sofchak, "Organized Labor," 238-40; Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All*, 327-31; Rachleff, "Turning Points in the Labor Movement," 201-2; Olila, "Ethnic Radicalism," 3; "Range Strike is Broken for This Year Says I.W.W. Leader," *Duluth News Tribune*, 27 Aug. 1916; "Strike Declared Off in the Village of Biwabik," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 16 Sep. 1916; "I.W.W. Strike Called Off on Mesaba Range," *Hibbing Daily Tribune*, 18 Sep. 1916; "I.W.W. Declares Strike Off," *Virginia Daily Enterprise*, 18 Sep. 1916; "Is Only Truce, Declare I.W.W.'s," *Duluth News Tribune*, 19 Sep. 1916; "Strike on Range Called Off," *Eveleth News*, 21 Sep. 1916.