Communication through Illustration: How Charles Dana Gibson's Gibson Girl Spurred the Transformation of Femininity Beyond His Artwork

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The theme of NHD 2021 was communication; our project focuses on the communication of the transfer of ideas through media such as illustration and clothing choice. We were interested in the transformation of social and cultural attitudes during the turn of the 20th century and how that was affected and/or reflected by popular fashion, especially with regards to Charles Dana Gibson's illustrations of the Gibson Girl.

When conducting our research, we started with general information on the Gibson Girl and Charles Dana Gibson to get a basic understanding of our topic. Although our project is about American history, we included sources about Edwardian fashion because they included specific information about America and/or broad information that pertains to the Western world in general. In addition, we found that the term 'La Belle Époque', the more accurate term for the American period analogous to the British Edwardian era, has started to fall out of use in favor of the term 'Edwardian'; for this reason, we favored the latter term in our bibliography annotations in order to cater to a modern audience. We furthered our research by dividing our topic into different lenses: Charles Dana Gibson's illustrations, the Gibson Girl's impact on fashion in the United States, the Gibson Girl's direct and indirect impact on aspects of culture in the United States pertaining to femininity, and the Gibson Girl's impact on American society in the long-term. After each of us researched these specific portions of our topic, we combined our research to form a cohesive and detailed understanding of our topic to form our argument. After we received feedback at the state competition, we further researched modern opinions and perspectives on the Gibson Girl.

For the construction of our final product we utilized the digital exhibit template provided by NHD without changing its dimensions, collaboratively working on the board through Google Drawings. We sectioned the board by lenses in a general chronological order with emphasis on the effects Gibson's illustrations had on American culture, which could be observed through fashion, images, and quotes that revealed societal values. We maintained and ensured cohesiveness throughout the presentation through consistent verbal communication in conference calls.

After extensive research, we were able to combine our specific research topics into a general argument. We concluded that Charles Dana Gibson's drawings sparked a nationwide phenomenon that developed the ideal of the Gibson Girl, which encouraged women to express themselves confidently and pursue traditionally non-feminine disciplines in a manner that transformed the definition of femininity, resulting in wide-reaching effects present in modern society.

Charles Dana Gibson's illustrations of the Gibson Girl challenged societal expectations for women and emphasized that women can be active and intelligent while still being beautiful. This contributed to the beginning a redefinition of the bounds of femininity which had emerged

as a result of a rise in feminist reform during the Progressive Era and WWI. Such significant impacts reveal the impact of the Gibson Girl in advocating for societal change for women.

Annotated Bibliography

Primary Sources

Askew, Thomas. Four African American Women Sit on the Steps of a Building at Atlanta University, Georgia. 1899. Photograph. Library of Congress.

This image showcases black women in the Gibson girl style pursuing higher education. This links the Gibson girl style to racial and academic success.

"THE BICYCLE AND THE SKIRT: AN INNOVATION WHICH, THE WHEEL IS BRINGING ABOUT FOR RAINY DAYS." *The Sun (1837-1995)*, May 23, 1896.

https://search-proquest-com.dclibrary.idm.oclc.org/historical-newspapers/bicycle-skirt/doc view/535692283/se-2?accountid=46320.

In this article, accessed through ProQuest, the author presents through a series of interviews with women how bicycle skirts were starting to be adopted by women for rainy weather and even for walking during fair weather. The women and the author all agreed that this new shorter walking skirt had the possibility for popularity due to the increasing popularity of bicycling among women. This information was utilized in the middle portion of our exhibit to demonstrate the Gibson Girl's effect on bringing women into athletics and the changing definition of femininity.

Cather, Willa. "Cather Studies Volume 9." Willa Cather Archive, 1987, cather.unl.edu/scholarship/catherstudies/9/cs009.leichner.

Wila Cather details Office Wives' stories and Modern Women's work through the

perspective of a closeted lesbian woman during the dawning of the Gibson Girl. This information was used on the right side of our exhibit to represent the impact of the Gibson Girl on queer culture and femininity.

Direct Wire to the Times. "Messenger Boys Strike: Gibson-like Girls Take Their Places." *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, CA), August 1902. Accessed November 25, 2020. https://www.proquest.com/docview/164107750/497DF05C42AE4584PQ/1?accountid=1282.

This page of an article from the Los Angeles Times found on Proquest informs us of teenage girls dressed in Gibson Girl attire applying and working in jobs that are typically only for boys, which ultimately led to companies to start advertising positions for women as well. This source was used in the middle portion of the exhibit to inform the viewer of the societal impact of the Gibson Girl ideal communicated in Charles D. Gibson's drawings as he emphasized the independent and intelligent Gibson Girl symbol that encouraged teenage girls/women to engage themselves more into society.

"The Dressmaker: Making a Shirt-Waist." *The Delineator*, May 1902, 776-77. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uva.x002098991&view=1up&seq=44&q1=gibson.

This article, accessed through HathiTrust Digital Library, is from a digitized copy of an issue of The Delineator, which was a popular women's fashion magazine. It offered us an insight into the Gibson Girl's influence on fashion and was quoted in "The New Vogue" section of our exhibit.

From the New York Evening World. "The Beneficent Corset." *The Washington Post (1877-1922)*, Mar 12, 1903.

https://search-proquest-com.dclibrary.idm.oclc.org/historical-newspapers/beneficent-corse t/docview/144422181/se-2?accountid=46320.

This short article from the New York Evening World appears to be an opinion piece in reaction to some event about corsets involving the Dressmaker's Protective Association. The author of the article presents two sides of a debate around corsets and then presents an opinion between the two: that corsets, when worn correctly, are good (although the author doesn't claim this opinion) followed by describing the features of a healthy corset; we used this in our research to understand a significant component of Gibson Girl fashion.

Gibson, Charles D. *The Jury Disagrees*. 1904. Pen and ink over graphite underdrawing. https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/gibson-girls-america/high-society-scenes/Assets/gg0014_enl arge.jpg.

This original illustration made by Charles D. Gibson found in the Library of Congress depicts a Gibson Girl in a high society social event among upper class women and men; the Gibson Girl is walking in the foreground in a simple, sleek dress and is met with disapproving glares by the upper class women and appreciative smiles by the upper class men. With this drawing, Gibson emphasizes the Gibson Girl's natural purity and ability to navigate social situations effectively while also separating her from the values of high society. This information was used in the left part of our exhibit to portray the difference between the elegant Gibson Girl from the overly proud upper social classes that the creator of the Gibson Girl illustrated, representing that Gibson wanted the Gibson Girl to exude grace with ease.

———. *Picturesque America, anywhere in the mountains*. 1900. Pen and ink over graphite underdrawing. https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2010716157/.

This original illustration from Charles Dana Gibson found from the Library of Congress provides insight into the changing societal perspective on women. By depicting the fashionably dressed Gibson girls on an excursion in the mountains, Gibson highlights the idea of women leaving the home and enjoying physical activities with ease while still looking stylish. This source was used in the middle part of the exhibit to display the change in the role of women as Gibson girl fashion communicates the mobilization of women, which was very different from their previous role of staying at home and wearing heavy dresses.

Gibson, Charles Dana. *Another Moth.* January 9, 1902. Illustration.

This illustration depicts a man being blinded by the radiance of a glowing woman, which demonstrates Gibson's use of exaggeration and humor in order to make a point about the potent power of women. This image was used on the left side of the exhibit to visually portray the purity and power the Gibson Girl symbol exuded, communicated through Charles Dana Gibson's illustrations.

———, illus. *Drawings*. New York, 1896. http://www.gutenberg.org/files/62934/62934-h/62934-h.htm.

This is the first book in a series of illustrations drawn and compiled by Charles Dana Gibson. We used a decent amount of images from this compilation in the left side of the exhibit in order to allow for the audience to view and understand Gibson's raw work so that they could understand the connections between the illustrations, Gibson's intent, and public reception of his pieces.

——. Gibson Girl. Illustration.

https://www.commonwealthbooks.org/products/rare-beautifully-framed-1906-gibson-girl-life-cover-by-charles-dana-gibson.

This is a cover illustration by Charles Dana Gibson for Life Magazine. It depicts a woman noticing the viewer looking at her. This was used on the left part of the exhibit as an example of Gibson's work done for magazines and demonstrates his influence through being able to illustrate for a well known magazine.

———. Gibson Girl. February 3, 1998. Illustration. U.S. Post Office, Public Domain.

This is an iconic Gibson illustration, first sketched by Gibson for a 32 cent postage stamp. This specific image was edited so that the Gibson Girl's head appears on a transparent background. This illustration was mainly used for decorative purposes.

This illustration by Charles Dana Gibson is used as the cover of an issue of Collier's Weekly magazine, which demonstrates a certain degree of growth in Gibson's career in order to be able to illustrate for a well known magazine. This image was used in the left part of the exhibit to not only hint at the Gibson Girl's popularity through being featured on a magazine, but also to depict some of the magazines that Charles Dana Gibson worked on in his life when we discuss Gibson's lifestyle.

This is a generic depiction of a Gibson girl that exemplifies defining traits of the Gibson Girl such as the unique coiffer and powerful expression.

——. A Kind Suggestion. 1893. Oil on Board.

This Illustration depicts the shifting view of the ideal woman with an illuminated Gibson girl looking to the left at a woman sitting in darkness. The Gibson girl appears more confident and self-assured while the woman on the left is more moderate and subdued. This image on the upper left part of the exhibit conveys the politeness and elegance that Charles Dana Gibson wanted the Gibson Girl to stand for.

— Lot 613: The Weaker Sex-"Design for Wallpaper." 1903. Illustration. https://www.invaluable.com/auction-lot/The-Weaker-Sex-Design-for-Wallpaper_CA447F 885F/.

This design for wallpaper is composed of multiple sketches of Gibson Girl heads and gave us an insight into the marketability of the Gibson Girl image. We used this piece to support our argument in the New Vogue section.

------. *Scribner's for June*. Illustration. Library of Congress. https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2002720198/

This illustration depicts a woman sitting on a bike. This was a popular image of its time that was a reflection of the increased popularity of bicycling among women and made bicycling look like an attractive endeavor for a respectable woman. We used in the middle portion of the exhibit to emphasize how Gibson utilized illustrations like this to encourage

women to pursue endeavors that they were historically barred from or unorthodox for women.

———, illus. *Sketches and Cartoons*. New York, 1900. https://www.gutenberg.org/files/62920/62920-h/62920-h.htm.

This book, containing 84 illustrations, is the second in a series of books of Charles Dana Gibson's published drawings, the other two being: "Drawings by C.D. Gibson" and "Pictures of People". We utilized illustrations from this book in the upper left part of the exhibit in order to compare earlier and later works to analyze Gibson's evolution in style. Some works from this book share a clear resemblance to real life models which gave us specific insight into one aspect of how Gibson created his work.

——. Sweetest Story Ever Told. Illustration. Library of Congress.

This illustration displays a girl playing a violin, encouraging women to branch out and engage in different studies. This was used in the left part of the exhibit to illustrate the visual aspects of the Gibson Girl and support our assertion that Gibson's illustrations emphasized women's capability. while also alluding to some of the talents and values that the Gibson Girl is said to represent, which would help us emphasize the Gibson Girl's influence as we include such images into our exhibit.

This illustration is pen and ink over graphite underdrawing which depicts four women observing a tiny man through a magnifying glass; one prods at the man with a pin. This illustration amusingly depicts the new dominance and power of the "Gibson Girl" and was

used in the upper left part of the exhibit to demonstrate Gibson's style and his mental view of the formidable power of the Gibson girl through exaggerated physical forms.

——. *Help! The Woman's Land Army of America, New Jersey Division, State House, Trenton.* 1918. Lithograph poster. https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2002712339/.

This photograph of a poster found in the Library of Congress depicts Uncle Sam welcoming a Gibson Girl, holding a gardening tool, into the Women's Land Army of America as he shakes her hand. The Women's Land Army of America was an organization of women volunteers including the Gibson Girls that were called "farmerettes" and tended to the farms while men were at war;, and this illustration by Gibson was used to fundraise and recruit for the organization. We used this source This source was used in the middle part of the exhibit to represent the influence of the Gibson Girls during WWI as they inspired women to take over men's jobs in time of war.

Gibson Girl Hair Tutorial | Historical Hairstyling. Narrated by Loepsie. Youtube, 2016. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eust9uTIrpk.

This modern-day hairstyle tutorial video, created by a YouTube creator with the username Loepsie, details step by step instructions for the famous Gibson Girl hairstyle. We used this video when we were looking for modern perspectives on the Gibson Girl and we found that this was one of many videos and content about how to achieve the Gibson Girl hairstyle/aesthetic.

"Gibson Girl' Skirts Return." The Washington Post, March 6, 1935, 12.

This news article marks a comeback in Gibson girl style, showing that the style is still relevant in the late thirties and beyond.

Holt, Ardern. "Fig. 29.--- New Woman." In Fancy Dresses Described: A Glossary of Victorian Costumes, 182. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2017. Originally published as Fancy Dresses Described, or What to Wear at Fancy Balls (London, England: Debenham & Freebody and Edward Arnold, 1896).

This illustration is from an unabridged republication of a book whose purpose was to provide examples and elements of get-ups for the wealthy who would participate in "Fancy Balls", which were essentially costume parties. The book was originally an English publication and so it does not contain specific insight into American society; however, English and American fashion and attitudes of the time are generally similar and comparable enough that this source is still relevant. An image of the "New Woman" and quote from this source was used in the middle portion of the exhibit to emphasize the Gibson Girl's sportiness and self-assuredness that inspired the emergence of the New Woman as a political figure.

Hotspur and Lady Percy. 1832. Illustration. The Keepsake.

This is a depiction of Lady Percy as a Steel Engraving Lady alongside Hotspur, a famous historical nobleman Sir Henry Percy, who is also a literary character. The Steel Engraving Lady in this image contrasts the Gibson Girl concept by being dependent on and complimenting the man beside her rather than being the focal point and standing confidently as a Gibson Girl would. This illustration was used in the exhibit to demonstrate the shift in attitude regarding the independence and role of women from the Steel Engraving Lady to the Gibson Girl.

"The Kangaroo Girl is to Go: WITH HER SISTERS, THE GIBSON GIRL AND THE MILITARY GIRL, SHE IS TO GIVE WAY TO THE MAID WITH SLOPING

SHOULDERS, SAYS MME. RUTH BAKER, PRESIDENT OF THE DRESSMAKERS' ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA." *The Sun (1837-1995),* Sep 27, 1903.

https://search-proquest-com.dclibrary.idm.oclc.org/historical-newspapers/kangaroo-girl-is-go/docview/536717952/se-2?accountid=46320.

This article, written by the President of the Dressmakers' Association of America at the time, prescribes a fashion forecast for the new year and the author provides suggestions as to what people should wear in order to be in-fashion and what styles they should avoid. The article proclaims that the Gibson Girl style is about to fade away and goes into detail about American fashion rather than Western fashion at large. This was used in the right part of our exhibit to understand the shift away from Gibson Girl fashion.

Library of Congress. Suffragists' March to the Capitol, Apr. 7, 1913. April 7, 1913. Photograph. Accessed February 24, 2021. https://www.loc.gov/item/2013648107/.

This photograph taken during a suffragist march depicts women in clothing influenced by Gibson Girl fashion advocating for women's rights as the Gibson Girl evolved into the politically active New Woman. This source was included in the middle section of our exhibit to emphasize the impact of the Gibson Girl and New Woman in Women's Suffrage.

Mary Church Terrell, 1920s. 1920. Photograph. Library of Congress.

This image of Mary Church Terrell, an African American civil rights activist and suffragist, was used to contextualize one of her quotes used within the board.

National Film Preservation Foundation. "The Strong Arm Squad of the Future." Video, 1:00. https://www.filmpreservation.org/preserved-films/screening-room/the-strong-arm-squad-of-the-future-ca-1912#. This silent film video found in the National Film Preservation Foundation, a nonprofit organization managed by the U.S. Congress, is an anti-suffragist political cartoon that portrays suffragists as old and masculine while portraying the Gibson Girl as a beautiful woman that seduced others into advocating for women's rights since she only had to use her looks while the other suffragists had to look fierce. The hairstyles of the other suffragists also resemble that of the Gibson Girl and suggest that many suffragists were trying to imitate the Gibson Girl but couldn't quite do so and faced mockery instead. This source was useful in seeing the perspectives surrounding Gibson Girls and suffragists and how influential the Gibson Girl was in the suffrage.

Peter A. Juley & Son Collection. *Charles Dana Gibson*. Photograph. Smithsonian American Art Museum

This is a photograph of Charles Dana Gibson. This was used in the upper left portion of our exhibit to aid in the discussion of Charles Dana Gibson's life and illustrations.

The Priscilla Publishing Company. "(Vol. XXXVI, No. I): The New in Dress." The Modern Priscilla, 6 Mar. 1922,

digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi-bin/GenderStudies/GenderStudies-idx?type=article&did=GenderStudies.ModernPriscillaMarch1922.i0005&id=GenderStudies.ModernPriscillaMarch1922&isize=M.

This particular article details the impacts of Gibson's illustrations on the fashion of the time. Particular clothing articles and their impact on the outfit is described. This was used in the right panel of the exhibit to discuss the large influence of Charles Dana Gibson's illustrations on modern fashion's emphasis on what an accessory communicated as well as how an outfit would come together cohesively.

Russel, R. H. "Among the Newest Books." *The Delineator*, January 1899, 256. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=iau.31858046091942&view=1up&seq=298&q1=gibs on.3

This is a review of a book by C.D. Gibson, "Sketches and Cartoons". This information is utilized on the left side of the exhibit to give us insight on how a typical member of society at the time would respond to such illustrations. Russel praises Gibson's works for their entertainment value as well as their commentary on female participation in society.

Sims, David. Untitled Photo from "The New Edwardian," Vogue, March 2020. March 2020. Photograph. Accessed February 10, 2021.

https://www.vogue.com/slideshow/edwardian-clothing.

This 2020 iteration of Gibson era clothing is a new take on the style as well as a reminder that the style's influence remains relevant.

Thayer and Chandler Chicago. "Gibson Pillow Top for Pyrography." *The Delineator*, February 1905, 297. https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015080400495?urlappend=%3Bseq=127.

This magazine found on Hathi Trust Digital Library has an ad for a Gibson Girl pillow top made from pyrography if one paid 35 cents. This was used in the left side of the exhibit to represent the prevalence of the Gibson Girl as there is merchandise of the Gibson Girl's face available, revealing how the Gibson Girl isn't just a fashion trend but also represents the ideal form of a woman that many people sought to include in their daily lives.

Ticknor, Caroline. "The Steel-Engraving Lady and the Gibson Girl." *The Atlantic Monthly*, July 1901, 105-08. Accessed November 25, 2020.

https://www.proquest.com/docview/203664120/24899B60DE624BDFPQ/1?accountid=1282.

This article from The Atlantic Monthly found on Proquest depicts and compares the Gibson Girl and the Steel-Engraving Lady as they meet and discuss their values and beliefs. This source reveals societal sentiment after the introduction of the Gibson Girl and emphasizes the athletic and success-driven nature of the Gibson Girl as she claims that she as educated as her brothers and is aiming to become a lawyer, which is met by shock by the Steel-Engraving Lady who inquires why the Gibson Girl is not content with staying at home and pleasing men. This was used in the middle part of the exhibit to describe the shifting values of society due to the rise of the Gibson Girl as women follow her example in educating themselves, engaging in sports, and growing more independent.

Unknown. Old Pen with Hand. Image. Accessed March 1, 2021.

https://www.vhv.rs/viewpic/hTwTbJb_old-pen-with-hand-png-transparent-png/.

This image of a hand holding a pen is reminiscent of the time period our project focuses on. We used it to decorate our exhibit.

U.S. Army Signal Corps. Women working in ordnance plants in World War I: making fibre powder containers for 3" Stokes gun - women crimping top on fibre containers at W.C. Ritchie & Co., Chicago, Ill. 1914. Photograph. https://www.loc.gov/item/2004673217/.

This photograph features two women in an ordnance plant during WW1. It was used in the middle portion of the exhibit to reveal how women worked began to work in factories and plants during WW1 and what that may have looked like to suggest how the Gibson Girl ideal prompted a societal movement to bring women into the workforce during a time where there was a need for labor.

Vogue. https://www.vogue.com/slideshow/edwardian-clothing.

This Vogue showcase focuses on modern interpretations of Edwardian clothing, of which the Gibson Girl era emulated. We used these images in a collage to represent the continued inspiration contemporary fashion draws form Gibson and his work.

The Washington Times (Washington, DC), December 1, 1902. Accessed November 25, 2020.https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84026749/1906-09-09/ed-1seq-13/#words =charles+dana+gibson+c.d.+girl+langhorne+beauties+nancy+astor+irene+american.

This newspaper article found in the Library of Congress depicts the story of Camille Clifford, who was able to embody the "walk" and figure of the Gibson Girl to consequently rise from poverty into comfortable living. She went from living on \$7.50 a week to earning \$20 a week and becoming a famous actress/Gibson Girl. This source was very informative and we used this research to see how the idea of the Gibson Girl helped women change social classes and also suggests that the Gibson Girl thrives in high class social settings while never losing sense of who she is.

Weingarten Bros. "The New Erect Form Corset." *The Delineator*, July 1900, 424. https://hdl.handle.net/2027/iau.31858046091975?urlappend=%3Bseq=432.

In this magazine found on Hathi Trust Digital Library, there is an ad for Erect Form corsets that come with a free print of Charles D. Gibson's illustration "His Vacation Over" that is printed on handmade, heavy watercolor paper. The quality of these prints and the fact that these prints are widely distributed represents the significance of the Gibson Girl and her societal popularity. This was used in understanding the societal impact of the Gibson Girl as she is beginning to grow popular.

West, Paul, and Alfred Solman. The Gibson Bathing Girl. Jos. W. Stern, New York, NY, 1907. Notated Music. https://www.loc.gov/item/ihas.200004341/.

This is a piece of sheet music with an illustrated cover that also has a photograph, all called "The Gibson Bathing Girl"; the photo and illustrations on the cover show the viewer what the title describes The lyrics of the song are from the point of view of the fictional "Gibson Girls" which Gibson had drawn, begging Gibson to draw them in swimsuits so that they can show off their legs and knees rather than wear the long skirts he draws them in. This piece of music is an example of the extent of the popularity of Gibson's drawings and the discussion they evoked around social norms for women. It was interesting to look into what the public's reaction was to this song and what the public opinion was about the length of skirts and of swimsuits.

Who was the Gibson girl? - The Edwardian Kardashians?! Narrated by Eternal Goddess. 2020. N.p., n.d. DVD. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hw9ILuA_sgA.

This is an informational video created by modern YouTube creator with the username "Eternal Goddess" in which she discusses the Gibson Girl's rise and how the original Gibson Girl, personified by Charles Dana Gibson's wife Irene Langhorne Gibson, was influenced by women like Camille Clifford and Evelyn Nesbit; she also explores the parallels between the Gibson Girl in the 1900s and the Kardashians today. We used this source as a way to understand modern perspectives about the Gibson Girl as part of our further research and development of our project upon entering the national level.

The Women's Suffrage Digitization Project. "Fannie Barrier Williams." Western New York Suffragists: Winning the Vote. Accessed March 1, 2021. https://rrlc.org/winningthevote/biographies/fannie-barrier-williams/.

This is an image of 1900s black activist Fannier Barrier Williams. We used her quote to communicate the black Gibson Girl's emphasis on political capability.

Secondary Sources

Battle, Lisa. "The Edwardian Style Evolution: Then and Now." L Style (blog). Entry posted February 2021. Accessed February 10, 2021.

https://lstyle-lisa.blogspot.com/2013/01/the-edwardian-style-evolution-then-now.html

This article found online details the Edwardian style and how it evolved through the decades with images portraying the style in fashion, items like umbrellas, and jewelry. This information was used in the rightmost part of our exhibit to discuss the long-term impact of the Gibson Girl style on fashion.

Bridges, Rebecca. "Women's Fashion Evolution: From Gibson Girl to Flapper." The Grace Museum, 17 June 2020,

www.thegracemuseum.org/online-learning-blog/2020/6/17/womens-fashion-evolution-from-gibson-girl-to-flapper.

This museum exhibit details the evolution of fashion and how the Gibson Girl style can be cited as influential and notable when looking at contemporary trends.

Buszek, Maria Elena. *Pin-Up Grrrls: Feminism, Sexuality, Popular Culture*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press Books, 2006.

This book explores what it meant to be a woman in the time of the Gibson girl, and how the Gibson Girl movement aided in sexual liberation. The sensationalization of models is also explored, which contributed heavily to our research on Evelyn Nesbit and how she served as a prelude to modern aesthetics.

Carlson, Shirley J. "Black Ideals of Womanhood in the Late Victorian Era." The Journal of Negro History 77, no. 2 (Spring 1992): 61-73. Accessed February 10, 2021. https://doi.org/10.2307/3031483.

This source was a comprehensive analysis of black struggles in feminism and fashion, from 1900 to the late 1940s. This led us to other sources and outlined many important historical figures.

"Charles Dana Gibson." *Artists*. https://americanillustration.org/project/charles-dana-gibson/.

This article details Charles Dana Gibson's background and how he grew his career from illustrating for Life magazine, buying the company, and ending with his retirement. This was especially useful in understanding Gibson's lifestyle and in making connections between Gibson's values and the values of the Gibson Girl. It also provided suitable information to briefly describe the creator of the Gibson Girl to include in our final product.

"Charles Dana Gibson." *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Last modified September 10, 2020. https://www.britannica.com/biography/Charles-Dana-Gibson.

A basic summary of who Gibson was that acted as a good starting point in order to figure out specifics of Gibson to research. This source provided a brief description of Charles Dana Gibson's life that we used to compose a basic understanding of who the creator of the Gibson Girl was and how his values led to the formation of the Gibson Girl within our exhibit

"Corsets Early 19th Century -- Edwardian." Vintage Fashion Guild. Last modified July 11, 2012.

Accessed December 2020.

https://vintagefashionguild.org/lingerie-guide/edwardian-corsets-early-19th-century/.

This article, published on the website of the Vintage Fashion Guild, summarizes the types of corsets throughout the early 19th century to the Edwardian period; the sections about the late 19th century and the Edwardian period contain relevant information about how women at that time period achieved the fashionable silhouette through their underpinnings and at the bottom of the article is a series of photographs of corsets from the time periods described in the article. These photos served as a valuable reference while reading primary sources because it provided context and knowledge about corsets that the primary source assumed its audience has but the modern reader likely doesn't possess.

DeVoe, Catherine. "The Evolution Of The American Woman." The American Woman. Last modified May 18, 2015. Accessed February 13,2021. https://americanwomenproject.weebly.com/.

This source found online described the evolution of multiple fashion ideals for women such as the Steel Engraving Lady, the Gibson Girl, the Flapper, and more. Not only did this provide information that we included in the exhibit, but it also provided images that were used to convey the difference of the Steel Engraving Lady from the Gibson Girl.

Downey, Fairfax Davis. *Portrait of an Era as Drawn by C.D. Gibson: A Biography*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936.

This biography of Charles Dana Gibson discusses Gibson's life and the rise of the Gibson Girl in American culture. Not only did this give us a better understanding of who Gibson

was as a person, but it also helped us see how the Gibson Girl came to be popular and what ideals the Gibson Girl represented that was popular within society, which we were able to include in our exhibit to illustrate the rise of the Gibson Girl chronologically.

Franklin, Harper. "1890-1899." Fashion History Timeline. Last modified August 1, 2019. Accessed December 15, 2020. https://fashionhistory.fitnyc.edu/1890-1899/.

This article is about American fashion history from 1890-1899 and is a part of the Fashion History Timeline, which is a project from the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT), a State University of New York college that details various aspects of American fashion, including womenswear and the influence that the Gibson Girl had on fashion. Throughout the article, there are photographs of real dress pieces and people from that time period. This information was a valuable resource for the exhibit by detailing Edwardian dress through a more accessible modern perspective and acted as a useful starting point to understand how the Gibson Girl affected America, and in turn how America affected the idea of the Gibson Girl because the article includes discussion of historical contexts.

Gernsheim, Alison. *Victorian and Edwardian Fashion: A Photographic Survey*. New York: Dover, 1981. Originally published as *Fashion and Reality* (London, England: Faber and Faber, 1963).

This book chronicles fashion history from circa 1839 to the Edwardian era, supported by a collection of photographs spanning those years; although it focuses on English fashion and society, it also references American fashion and society. English and American fashion of the time are similar enough that the information from the book is still relevant. The information in this book was useful to our final product in several ways: for a general overview of fashions and society in the Western world during the 19th century and early 20th century, for its photographs and descriptions of those photographs, and for its Biography and Study List, which provided titles of primary source reading.

"The Gibson Girl." *Encyclopedia of Fashion*.

http://www.fashionencyclopedia.com/fashion_costume_culture/Modern-World-1900-1918/ /The-Gibson-Girl.html.

This web page details the career of Charles Dana Gibson as well as relating the emergence of the Gibson Girl to the Industrial Revolution and the "New Woman." This information was used in our final product to provide context for Charles Dana Gibson's artistic career and the Gibson Girl's impact in forming the New Woman and changing societal ideals for women.

The Gibson Girl's America: Drawings by Charles Dana Gibson. https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/gibson-girls-america/overview.html.

This compilation and analysis of Gibson's works allowed us to see the evolution of Gibson's craft and how his work influenced media beyond his illustrations with the Gibson Girl ideal. We used this information in the left part of our exhibit to discuss Charles Dana Gibson and his illustrations' effects.

Gordon, Lynn D. "The Gibson Girl Goes to College: Popular Culture and Women's Higher Education in the Progressive Era, 1890-1920." *American Quarterly* 39, no. 2 (Summer 1987): 211-30. https://doi.org/10.2307/2712910.

This article from the American Quarterly journal found on JSTOR discusses the Gibson Girl's effect on female college students and explains how the Gibson Girl affected women's increasing involvement in education (that the New Women also championed) without portraying a woman as overly masculine and also beautiful. The article also goes into some of the societal challenges that these educated women faced after college, as they struggled to find opportunities, further their careers, and faced issues in their personal

lives since their families or love interests didn't accept intelligent women that had no home skills, revealing that the Gibson Girl helped society accept women's higher education but it didn't completely lead to social change. This source's information was useful in explaining the impact of the Gibson Girl on societal change in education around the Progressive Era with stories from female college students within our final product.

Horn, Maurice. "Charles Dana Gibson." Smithsonian Libraries.

This is a basic outline of Gibson's life, which aided in a better understanding of Gibson's life, education, career, and immediate impact on American society through illustrating for various companies such as Life and Collier's Weekly. This information was used in our final product to depict Charles Dana Gibson's lifestyle and discuss what led him to create the Gibson Girl.

Kitch, Kitch L. *Girl on the Magazine Cover: The Origins of Visual Stereotypes in American Mass Media*. Chabel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2001.

This chronological book details the Gibson Girl's impact on celebrity culture, feminine silhouette, and media attention. Other fashion trends are mentioned and their shifts and edwardian influences are explored.

"1900 to 1910." Vintage Fashion Guild. Last modified June 3, 2012. Accessed December 2020. https://vintagefashionguild.org/fashion-timeline/1900-to-1910/.

This is an article published on the website of the Vintage Fashion Guild (VFG) which summarizes Western fashions from 1900 to 1910 and describes the trends and elements of dress during that time period; because the VFG is an international organization, there is not a focus on American fashion but rather the Western fashion scene and therefore

primarily Paris and the designers at the very top of the fashion chain. The article supplies a good list of Haute Couture design houses, which allowed us to know what to look for when researching fashion influences contemporary to Charles Dana Gibson. In addition, there is a series of photographs at the bottom of the article of clothing from that time period that provided references to use when examining other sources that described certain elements of Edwardian fashion.

Olian, JoAnne. Introduction to *Victorian and Edwardian Fashions from 'La Mode Illustrée'*, edited by Joanne Olian, iii-ix. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1998.

The introduction of this book was written by JoAnne Olian, who is a curator emeritus of the costume collection at the Museum of the City of New York. The introduction outlines Victorian and Edwardian fashions, specifically in France, America, and England, with a special emphasis on the history of La Mode Illustrée and the context surrounding the fashions of the time. The introduction was quoted in the upper left of our exhibit because it provides evidence for the implications and importance of the Gibson Girl's departure from the Steel Engraving Lady trope.

Patterson, Martha H. *Beyond the Gibson Girl: Reimagining the American New Woman,* 1895-1915. Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2005.

Beyond the Gibson Girl explores the Gibson Girl in depth, especially the nuances of it's influence on black, queer, and feminine culture. The book provides numerous essays and examinations on the social rapture Charles Dana Gibson wrought. We found this to be the most interesting of reads, and a welcome addition to reading for pleasure as well as academics.

Picken, Mary Brooks. A Dictionary of Costume and Fashion: Historic and Modern.

Newburyport: Dover Publications, 2013. Originally published as *The Fashion Dictionary* (New York, NY: Funk & Wagnall's, 1957).

This book is an unabridged republication of a 1957 dictionary of terms used for costumes, fashion, and sewing. It includes a wide range of terms spanning centuries of fashion history, as well as simple illustrations and some photographs, which were used in the exhibit to discuss fashion during the time of the Gibson Girl. It was a useful resource to refer to when examining primary sources which were composed by those who assume that the reader has knowledge of niche sewing terms, or who use terminology that is obsolete to the modern reader.

Powell, Savannah Dawn. "Queer in the Age of the Queen: Gender and Sexuality in the Mid Modern Period in Victorian England and North America." Molly Brown House Museum. Accessed February 10, 2021.

https://mollybrown.org/queer-in-the-age-of-the-queen-gender-and-sexuality-of-the-mid-modern-period-in-victorian-england-and-north-america/.

This journal article details the struggles of the queer community in the Edwardian era. It also led us to notable images such as the image of Lilly Elsie and Miss Andre Adwarde.

Rabinovitch-Fox, Einav. "New Women in Early 20th-Century America." Oxford Research Encyclopedia. Last modified August 22, 2017. Accessed December 13, 2020. https://oxfordre.com/americanhistory/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199329175.001.0001/ac refore-9780199329175-e-427.

This article, found in the Oxford Research Encyclopedia, looks at the Gibson Girl, suffragette, and flapper and how they came to define the New Woman; it goes into detail about how Charles Dana Gibson wanted the Gibson Girl to embody a flirtatious, modern,

independent, athletic, white middle-class woman. However, it also explores the Gibson Girl's political impact, especially among African-American women. This source was useful in exploring the use of the Gibson Girl in not just women's rights but also racial equality, and was used in the middle portion of the exhibit to explain the New Woman and the Gibson Girl's influence.

Rogers, Agnes. "Gibson Girl of '90s Mirrored High Life." *The Washington Post* (Washington, DC), February 21, 1960. Accessed November 25, 2020. https://www.proquest.com/docview/141276340/9F2F5A29461B4EAAPQ/1?accountid=1282.

This Washington Post, Times Herald newspaper article found on Proquest recollects the impact of the Gibson Girl. The author goes into detail about how the appeal of the Gibson Girl is still prevalent decades after her introduction because she represented the emphasis on outdoor life accepted in upper class circles, rose in a time when society was less complex and there was a widespread interest in doing what was socially significant, and her influence extended to lower society as she was printed on merchandise. This information was used in the middle portion of the exhibit as the Gibson Girl made society before WWI less dull for girls and advocated for a more optimistic society in grave times.

Scarbrough, Emily. "'Fine Dignity, Picturesque Beauty, and Serious Purpose': The Reorientation of Suffrage Media in the Twentieth Century." The Alliance for Networking Visual Culture. Last modified February 25, 2015. Accessed February 9, 2021. https://scalar.usc.edu/works/suffrage-on-display/gibson-girl.

This source details the influence of the Gibson Girl in the women's suffrage movement with the inclusion of primary sources such as the Victory illustration featuring the Allender Girl, an important political symbol of the women's suffrage created by Nina E. Allender, a woman's rights activist whose cartoons were used in political magazines like

The Suffragist and print media. Not only did this source provide us with valuable images to include into the exhibit, but it also informed us of an important political figure and background information about the women's suffrage movement and the Gibson Girl.

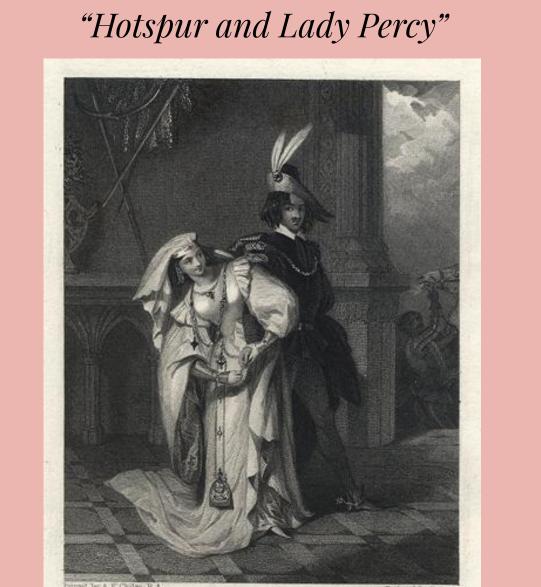
The Thing not Named (Willa Cather) O'Brien, Sharon. "'The Thing Not Named': Willa Cather as a Lesbian Writer." Signs, vol. 9, no. 4, 1984, pp. 576–599. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/3173612. Accessed 30 Dec. 2020.

This source, found on JSTOR, describes writer Willa Cather, a sapphic writer who shared the impact the Gibson Girl had on her as a queer woman. This source explores Cather's internalized queerphobia and how the Gibson Girl ideal was seen as liberating and a combattant to her internalized aggressor.

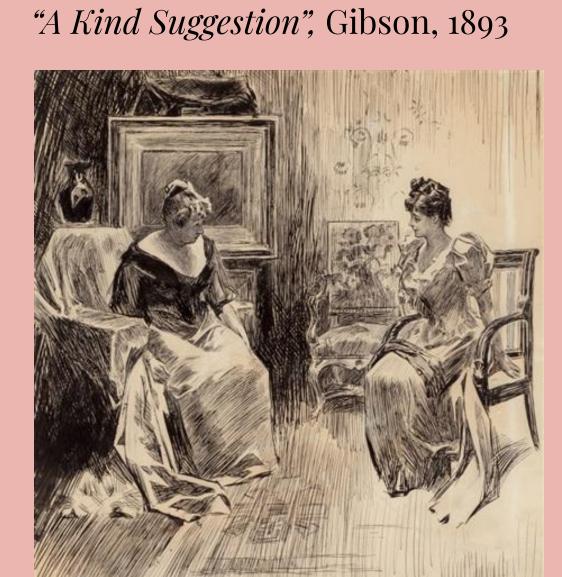
Ursch, Blake. "Willa Cather's Longtime Creative Partnership Was a Romantic One as Well, UNL Professor Says." *Omaha World Harold*. Accessed February 9, 2021. https://omaha.com/lifestyles/willa-cathers-longtime-creative-partnership-was-a-romantic-o-ne-as-well-unl-professor-says/article-a9b542a2-fae1-11e7-be0f-c782d5356a90.html.

This article discusses Gibson Girl inspired novelist Willa Cather and her romantic relationship with her editor, Edith Lewis. Both women were confident and led strong careers; they were both renowned proponents of feminism who took inspiration from the Gibson Girl. This was put in the right section of the board where lasting impacts are discussed and demonstrates the impact the Gibson Girl had outside of Gibson's original intention; from this source specifically, in queer culture.





The Gibson Girl marked change from the docile Steel-Engraving Lady ideal.



"I was persuaded there was no worthier ambition than to bring life and joy and beauty into a household" - Caroline Ticknor, American author and social commentator, 1901

"Men and women inhabited separate spheres, with the home being woman's domain. Hence, the total absence of men in the [fashion] plates before the JoAnne Olian, historian/curator, 1998

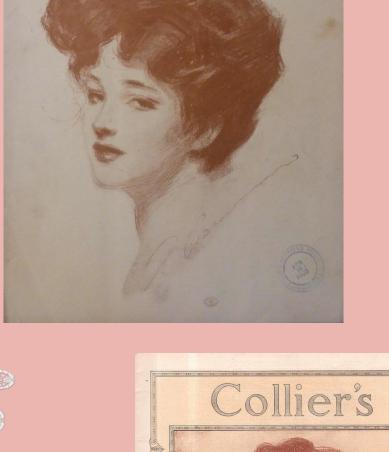


does man like?' but 'what does woman prefer?' That is the keynote of modern thought." - Ticknor, 1901

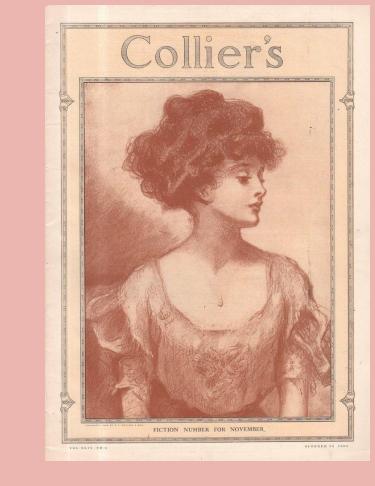
"We have progressed in every way. When a man approaches, we do not tremble and droop our eyelids, or gaze adoringly while he lavs down the law. We meet him on a ground of perfect fellowship and converse freely on every topic" - Ticknor, 1901

Charles Dana Gibson

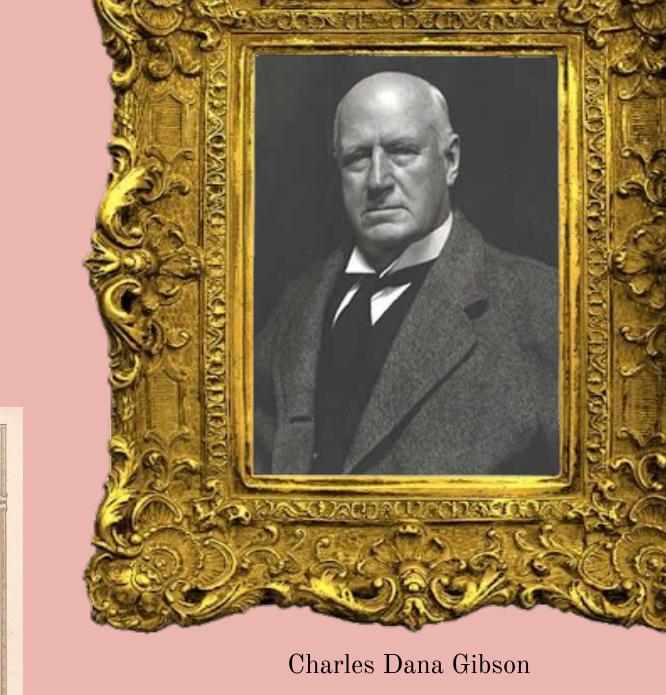
"Charles Dana Gibson (1867–1944) came of age when the expansion of women's roles and increasing social mobility were changing America." - Library of Congress



Gibson grew up in Roxbury, Massachusetts and illustrated for magazines.



"This is the third successive year we have welcomed a handsome collection of Gibson's drawings... the 'Gibson Girl' being delineated in every attractive pose." -The Delineator, 1899



"Another Moth", Gibson, 1902



"The Sweetest Story Ever Told"-

Gibson, Collier's Weekly

Upper-class women were often Gibson's focus, illustrating women's capability.



Gibson, "Sketches and Cartoons"

Via "Victorian and Edwardian

Fashion: A Photographic Survey"

"It is not really too worshipful of women; it is only fair to women, Our women are beautiful and good and our artists see that." - C.D. Gibson, 1910

The New Vogue

Cover of music from "The Follies of

"The Weaker Sex-'Design for Wallpaper'", Gibson, 1903

1907". The Ziegfeld Follies was

immensely popular.

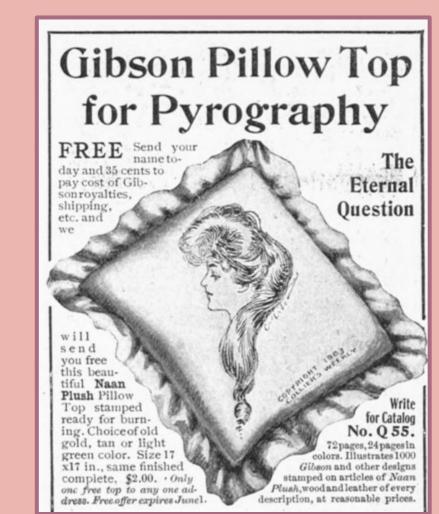
"The Weaker Sex -- II Collier's Weekly", Gibson, 1903



People emulated the style of the women Gibson drew, creating the "Gibson Girl" cultural ideal which was communicated through various media.



"The Jury Disagrees", Gibson, 1904



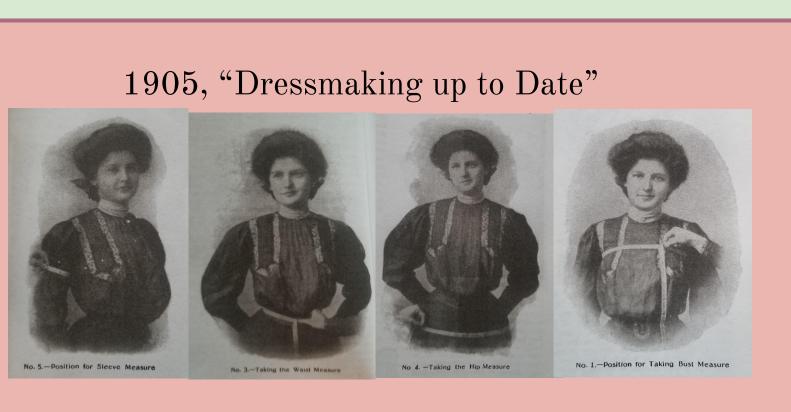
The Delineator, 1905

"The Gibson Girl became an archetype of American upper-middle class womanhood, a fashionable ideal..." - Harper, 2019

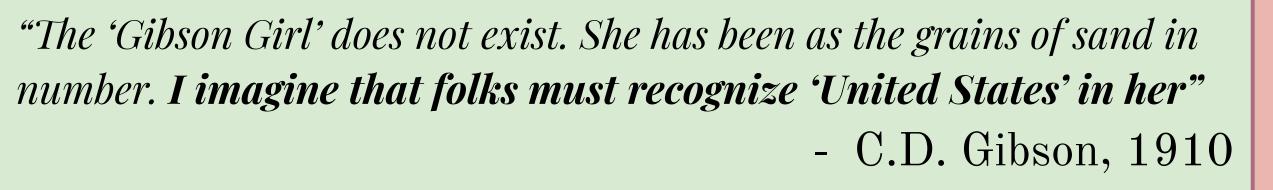
"The newest shirt-waists are known as the 'Gibson' and are characterized by broad plaits at

> sleeves..." - The Delineator, 1902

the shoulders, generally extending over the





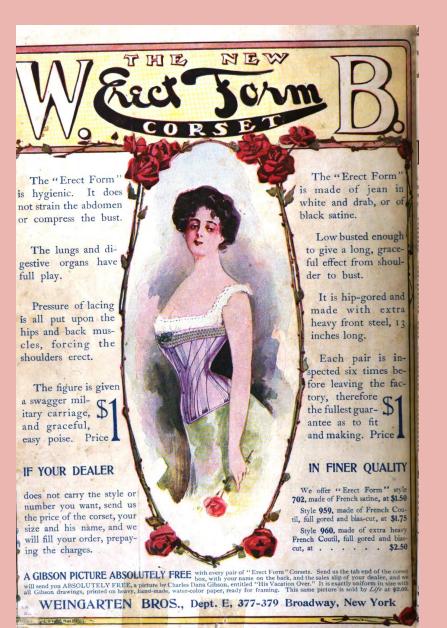


Form' Corsets." -Weingarten Bros., The Delineator, 1900

"A Gibson picture

absolutely free with

every pair of Erect



- Ardern Holt, "Fig. 29--New Woman", 1896.

Holt's "New Woman" represents the athletic Gibson Girl.

"She... is armed at all

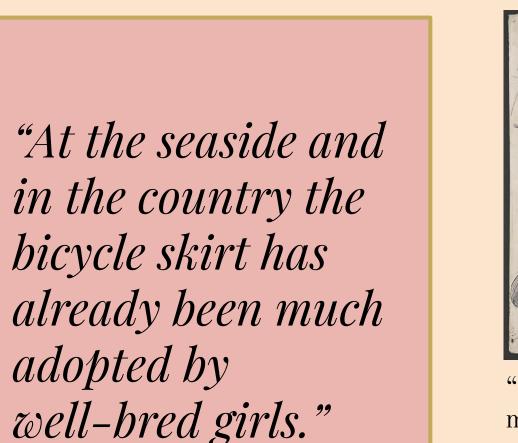
points for conquest."

Communication Through Istration:

How Charles Dana Gibson's Gibson Girl Spurred the Transformation of Femininity Beyond His Artwork

Charles Dana Gibson's drawings sparked a nation-wide phenomenon: the Gibson Girl, who encouraged women to express themselves confidently and pursue traditionally non-feminine disciplines in a manner that transformed the definition of femininity, resulting in wide-reaching effects

present in modern American society.



adopted by

Sun, 1896

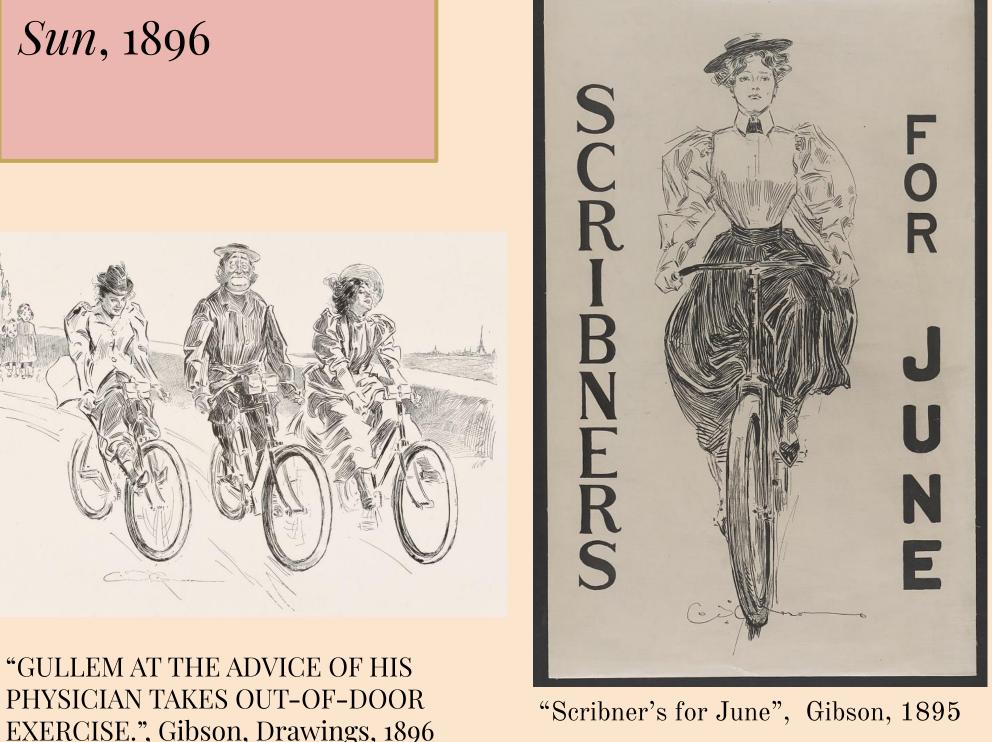
-The Baltimore

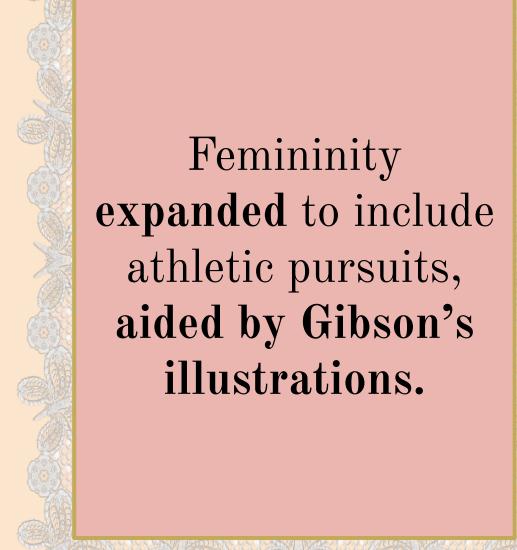
"Picturesque America, anywhere in the mountains", C.D. Gibson, 1900

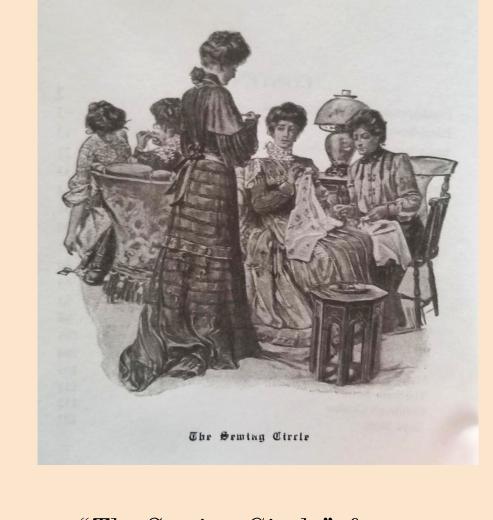


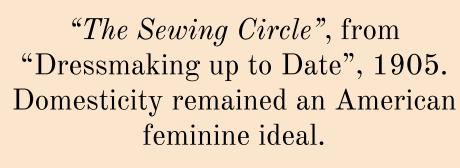
the century was reshaping their view of themselves, and sports transformed their view of feminine beauty. The demure lady of the 1860s had finally become a woman..." -Olian, 1998

Women's Sports

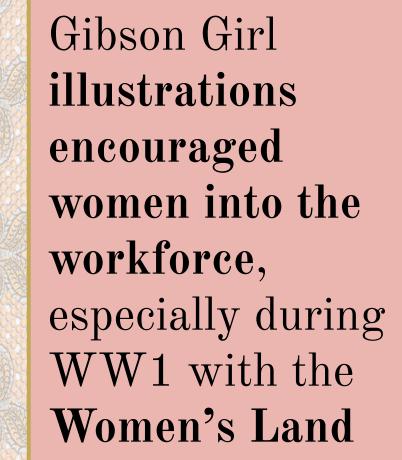


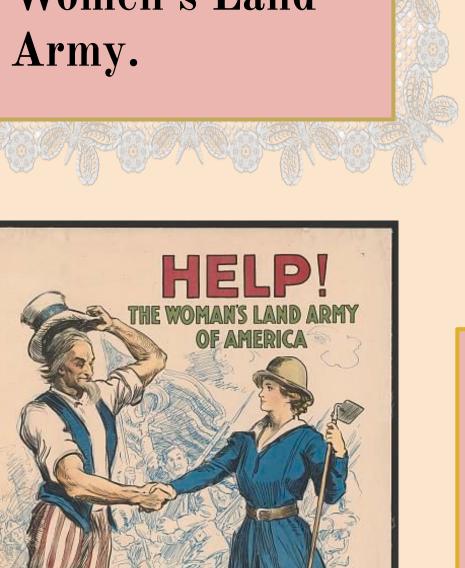






Education & the Workforce





NEW JERSEY DIVISION

STATE HOUSE, TRENTON

"Help! The Woman's Land Army of

America, New Jersey Division, State House,

Trenton", Gibson, 1918

"Building on the association of the Gibson Girl with Americanism. and on women's dual roles as producers and consumers of fashions, working women presented themselves as ladies while also promoting their status as workers."

"Women working in ordnance plants in World

War I: making fibre powder containers for 3'

Stokes gun - women crimping top on fibre

U.S. Army Signal Corps, 1914

tainers at W.C. Ritchie & Co., Chicago, Ill",

- Historian Einav Rabinovitch-Fox, 2017



"The Study Hour (The College Girl at Her Studies)", 1908, via "The Gibson Girl Goes to College: Popular Culture and Women's Higher Education in the Progressive Era, 1890-1920"

Black women in

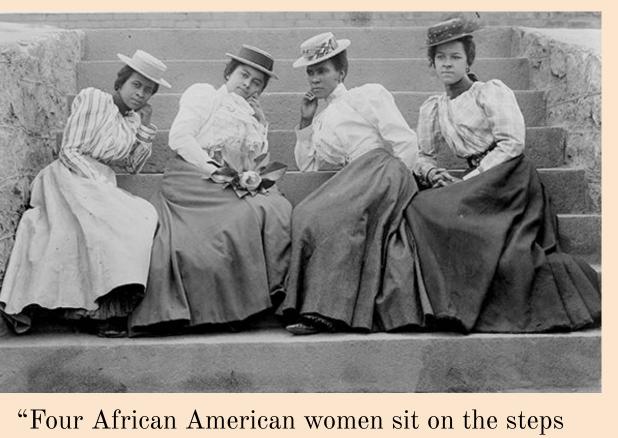
particular used

the Gibson Girl

respect as women

as a tool of

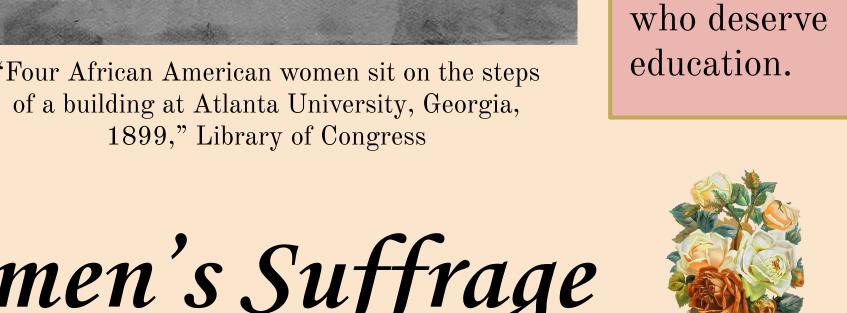
"Calling them 'college girls,' and depicting them as typical, fun-loving, middle-class Gibson Girls, popular literature of the Progressive Era softened the disturbing image of educated women." - Gordon, 1987



marriage and birth rates, and

a rising number of divorces."

- Gordon, 1987



New Woman & Women's Suffrage

The New Woman was a

politically progressive but

feminine identity for

suffragists, stemming from the

Gibson Girl.

"The ready-made shirtwaist that became



so identified with the Gibson Girl image allowed working-class and immigrant women to shape their version of the New Woman and her meanings." - Rabinovitch-Fox, 2017

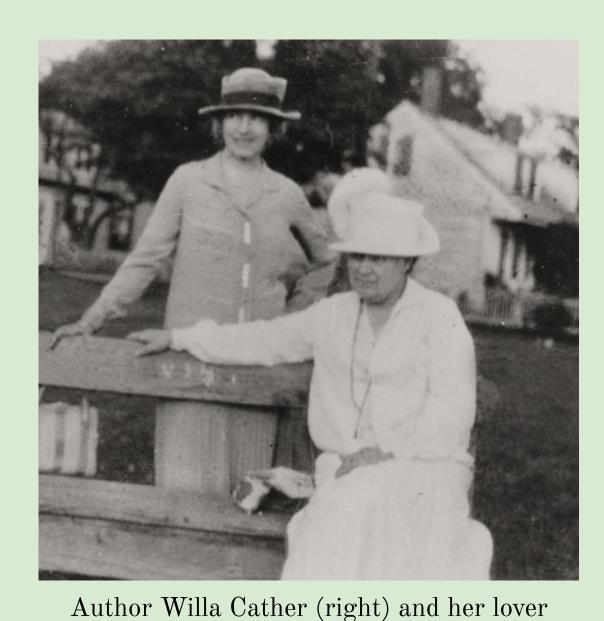




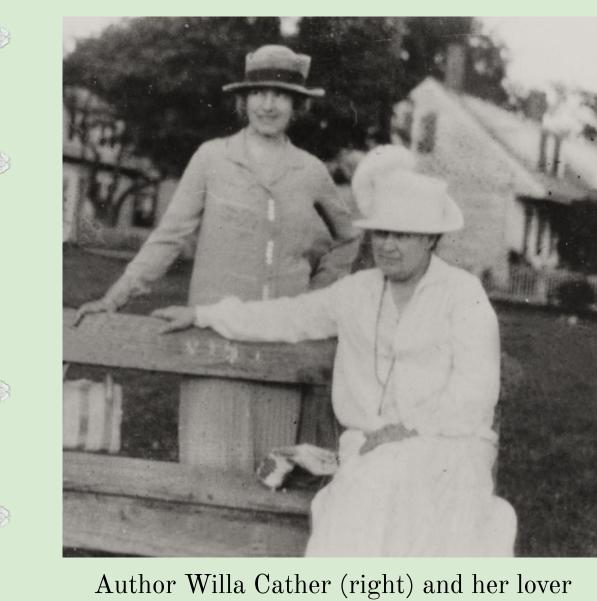
suffragists for emulating the "promiscuous" Gibson Girl.

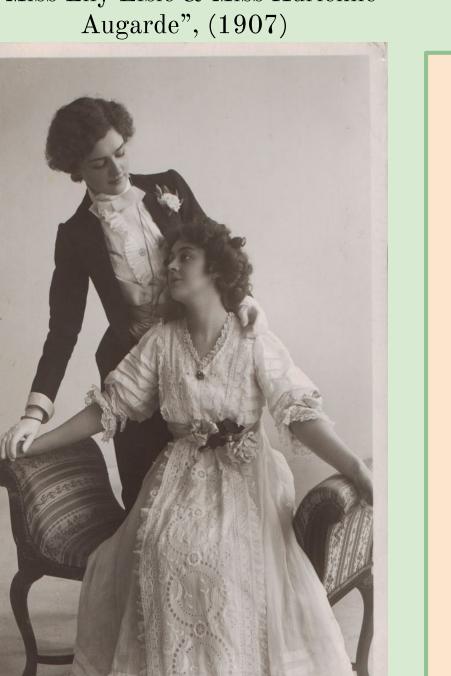
LGBTQ+ Influence

The ideas that the Gibson Girl image communicated resonated with sapphic individuals who celebrated the idea that women are capable.



Edith Lewis, 1926





"The New Woman became associated with the rise of feminism and the campaign for women's suffrage, as well as with the rise of consumerism, mass culture, and freer expressions of sexuality that defined the first decades of the 20th century." -Rabinovitch-Fox, 2017



Willa Cather, a

woman and prolific

closeted queer

"Lili Elbe, 1926", a Danish artist, inspired by the Gibson Girl, laid the groundwork for gender reassignment surgery. Trans women incorporated the elegance of Gibson Girl-era fashion into their gender expression in acts of bold authenticity.

The Black, Gibson Girl



"to do more than other women . . We must go into our communities and improve them . we must organize ourselves as Negro women and work together." - Mary Church Terrell (left),

extended beyond suffragists. "...the Gibson Girl assumed political meanings as African American,

working-class, and immigrant women

used the style to enhance their claims

for respect, rights, and inclusion"

- Rabinovitch-Fox, 2017

The Gibson Girl's

political influence

Black women were often disregarded within suffragette spaces, but the accessibility of Gibson Girl fashion made it easier for black women to cultivate their self expression and empowerment in a world that disregarded them.

"...the term New Negro Woman was used to denote a modern take on middle-class respectability, domesticity, and race progress, serving as a political trope to counter racist stereotypes of the 'black mammy."



"The Negro woman's club of today...represents the New Negro with new powers of self-help." - Fannie Williams (right), 1902



Modern Influence

Woman in Gibson Girl style, 1890



Via "Victorian and Edwardian

Fashion: A Photographic Survey"

The Gibson Girl laid the groundwork for how femininity further transformed during later eras.

"As her star faded, the Gibson Girl's active, vital persona paved the way for future icons, such as the flapper of the 1920s." - Library of Congress, "The Gibson Girl's

America: Drawings by Charles Dana Gibson"



Post-1900 iterations of the Gibson Girl style demonstrate its legacy.

"Accordion pleated skirts are back--shades of the days of middy blouses and Gibson Girls!" - The Washington Post, 1935

While we reap the modern benefits of the Gibson Girl's impact, modern attitudes tend to focus on the Gibson Girl's aesthetic rather than her political impact, as popular media about the Gibson Girl is often about her iconic style.

> "Respect for women is really quite American." - C.D. Gibson, 1910







Charles Dana Gibson's drawings contributed to and communicated the expanding boundaries of femininity in America; his work still influences modern fashion and culture.