Delivering a Voice to the Silenced
Kathryn Clarenbach: Wisconsin’s Unsung Heroine

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The 1960s submerged America into a brazen aberration intended to bring a voice to a population sulking in oppression: the Second Wave Feminist Movement. The era introduced the once baffling concept of organizations for and fueled by women. State governments established America’s first ever committees focused solely on promoting women’s equality. This emergence vexed their male counterparts; many strived to buffer these advancements through legislation and household oppression. The success of this movement would not be without its innumerable leaders collaborating to shatter the glass ceiling. Media glorified select leaders with the approval they deserved, but masked the accomplishments of other heroines. Among the unsung stands Wisconsin activist, Kathryn Clarenbach—a woman who fails to spark remembrance in far too many. Clarenbach utilized her ambition to empower American women through organization, legislation, and reform. Inspiring the era’s silent women to fight for their voice, she triumphantly succeeded in establishing women’s equality as a social norm. Her name tragically became lost in an entanglement of names, but her selfless impact will forever be felt.

**Activism during the Collegiate Years**

In a glorious era of more freedom than ever possessed, women still struggled to grasp the power held against them by patriarchy. Clarenbach’s catalyst for reform ignited within UW Madison’s Rathskeller, a room of study exclusive to men. In silent protest, Clarenbach sashayed through the room using it as a path to reach the women’s room of study\(^1\). Previously unconscious of the sexism on campus\(^2\), she discovered all female professors had a salary unjustly below their

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\(^2\) Ibid.
male co-workers. Naturally, Clarenbach attempted to reform this inequity by co-founding the Faculty Women’s Association, a major construct within the campus that received little recognition.

Beyond these developments, Clarenbach also sought involvement within the Women's Self-Government Association, in which she presented the needs of women to the campus board, the YWCA, in which she was vice president, the Junior Women’s Honorary Crucible, a nomination based society, and served as a member on the Student War Council. Graduating from UW Madison with an impact, she soon found herself returning to earn her doctorate in Political Science in 1946, finding elan in the field. Before any of her major accomplishments, Clarenbach had already begun setting the foundation for her future success in shattering female inferiority.

Advancing Educational Opportunities

Furthering her originality, Clarenbach climbed the academic ladder quite unconventionally. Shortly preceding graduate school, Clarenbach discovered her passion in teaching and began educating students in Political Science at Purdue University, but the stretch between Wisconsin and her husband’s residence soon pulled her away from Purdue to be

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3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid.
reunited with him on Staten Island. After the birth of three of her children, she returned to Madison, teaching at Edgewood College while simultaneously serving as Chairman of the Board of Trustees at Alverno College. Among her myriad of achievements, Clarenbach found a modest pride in successfully encouraging a woman to become the first female president of the college. Subsequently, in 1962 Clarenbach was appointed to Director of the newly created Education for Women Extension, giving rise to the beginning of her women’s movement.

Clarenbach constructed this UW Extension from the ground-up, implementing educational courses, women’s empowerment seminars, and conferences filled with inquisitive women questioning their role in society. Reflecting on the hardships and major goals of her students, Clarenbach confessed to the Green Bay Gazette, “I was not particularly conscious of disadvantages to women until I began working in the University’s extension program. Once I began questioning the system…a whole new world unfolded.” Over time, Clarenbach became increasingly aware and proud of the progress made by her students. These radical developments often evoked an uproar in men, feeling their superiority crumble. Some husbands went as far as labeling their wives as freaks, merely for their advancing their education. Women stepping out of society’s fabricated roles were seen as threats that many men took upon themselves to ridicule. Instead of firing back insults as retaliation to the misogyny, Clarenbach focused on

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12 Ibid.
13 Ware. 123.
16 Clarenbach, Kathryn. Seventh Interview Session. Conducted by Margaret Andreasen. op. cit. 3 Nov. 1987.
encouraging the male oppressors to take pride in their wives’ work.\textsuperscript{18} Clarenbach utilized her extensive educational background to gain confidence when tackling male oppressors, a practice she spoke on vigorously in her courses. Her empowering lessons impacted hundreds of women who had never challenged those depriving them of their potential.

Among these galvanized women stood Gene Boyer, a women’s rights activist and founder of many organizations, such as the Wisconsin Women’s Business Coalition.\textsuperscript{19} Having attended one of Clarenbach’s motivational conferences, Boyer was awakened to the possibilities that lie within her grasp. Boyer described the conference as “a revelation...as it so accurately paraphrased [my] feelings about women's rights.”\textsuperscript{20} She proceeded to describe the solitude that consumed her in these convictions; the unity Clarenbach elicited had finally introduced her to the fundamentals of feminism.\textsuperscript{21} These statewide conferences attracted considerable crowds eager to absorb Clarenbach’s revolutionary words. One conference held Esther Peterson in attendance, a woman who would soon aid Clarenbach in priming the government with a women’s issues agenda.\textsuperscript{22}

After becoming acquainted, Peterson and Clarenbach began collaborating on the bold, incredibly necessary proposal to create the State Commission on the Status of Women: a more specific, and effective approach in solving Wisconsin women’s issues.\textsuperscript{23} The development of the commission

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid.
was successful and approved by Governor John Reynolds in May of 1964. Clarenbach now retained the vital responsibility of representing the interests of Wisconsin’s women, triumphing in her pursuit to shatter the oppression caging the women of her time.

**Legislative Leadership**

Unprecedented in Wisconsin, Clarenbach instituted a stringent women’s commission, to which she was appointed chair by Governor Reynolds himself. Reynolds, however, was hailed as the champion of this prominent advancement for equality, while Clarenbach’s assiduously earned accomplishments were overlooked. Instead of publicly claiming her indispensable contributions, she insisted all progress “represents an enormous effort on the part of a great many people who have worked their heads off.” The unsung heroine never wallowed in this misremembrance, but instead wore Wisconsin’s gradual reform as a badge of validation for her actions.

Reforms and programs proposed by the commission were often left stagnant by Reynolds and faltered under male opposition; many even ridiculed her actions with the derogatory term “bra-burner.” Regardless of these harridans, media circulating Wisconsin expressed immense admiration for her contagious advocacy. The commission tackled prevailing topics such as

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eduction, marriage rights, equal employment, domestic violence, family, and community life.\textsuperscript{30}

Reynolds’ perspective on the commission’s competence was outstandingly positive. He voiced the salient impact of Clarenbach and her members in the Governor’s Charge to the Commission letter (see Appendix A).\textsuperscript{31} Regardless of the changing principles of society, Clarenbach was aware that “The burden is on… women in numbers [to] step forward to offer and to insist on full participation that this will come to be. Not just women, but the entire nation, will be benefactors.”\textsuperscript{32} Lack of participation from males, industry, and private business determined the progress the commission strived to implement in society. Without their involvement, Clarenbach’s efforts would fade into the abyss of thousands of downtrodden efforts

Clarenbach’s team was relentless in its pursuit of equality for all, effectively confuting their opposers. Clarenbach found reforming Wisconsin’s education system the utmost priority, explaining foreclosed opportunities upon girls posed a major factor in the oppression of women.\textsuperscript{33} Though Clarenbach scorned schools for their neglect in educating and empowering elementary girls, she stood triumphant in reconstructing the common fallacy that a woman’s only purpose is to nurse, teach, or clean the house.\textsuperscript{34} She thwarted the discrimination brought down on girls through legislative action, ensuring future freedom and opportunity. Following every year of observance and research in the Wisconsin educational system, Clarenbach and her committee simplified their plan of action in an annual report, recommending legislation to the governor they


\textsuperscript{31} Ibid., p.12


\textsuperscript{33} Clarenbach, Kathryn. Eighth Interview Session. Conducted by Margaret Andreasen. op. cit..

\textsuperscript{34} Wisconsin. Governor’s Commission on the Status of Women. First Edition Major Report: Kathryn Clarenbach Introductory Letter. op. cit. p.3.
trusted would pass.\textsuperscript{35} These suggestions included electing a professional to the Board of Vocational and Adult Education,\textsuperscript{36} establishing an advisory committee to the State Department of Public Education,\textsuperscript{37} and reforming elementary and secondary curriculum to include an emphasis on the potential and importance of women.\textsuperscript{38} Clarenbach’s efforts never ceased to set the bar for revolutionary. Her actions did not intend to set women above men, but to bring both sexes to equal opportunity,\textsuperscript{39} deeming Clarenbach worthy of her illustrious reputation. Unfortunately, many of these bills were curtailed by male legislators; their ignorance was but a raindrop in the roaring flame of activism Clarenbach had set.

Perseverance was key in a time where equal rights were often demonized. Clarenbach advocated persistently for bills, including Assembly Bill 23 of 1974, which dealt with legislation and reforms regarding the issues of pay equity, marital property, divorce, and education.\textsuperscript{40} The bill encompassed equality entirely—an action notoriously sexist Senator, Gordon Roselep, fanatically froze once passed to Senate.\textsuperscript{41} Without a unanimous vote, or any consensus, the bill would simply shrivel from existence.\textsuperscript{42} A frightening notion indeed, but with fervor, Clarenbach enforced the importance of it passing throughout Wisconsin. Her commission had been functioning without a budget,\textsuperscript{43} but in 1974 (five years after its establishment), they finally were

\begin{footnotes}
\item[37] Ibid., p.35.
\item[38] Ibid., p.14.
\item[43] Clarenbach, Kathryn. Eighth Interview Session. Conducted by Margaret Andreasen. op.cit.
\end{footnotes}
granted half of the pleaded budget.\textsuperscript{44} Though the amount was meager, Clarenbach still expressed her gratitude for it and the progress it would help to achieve. With it, the commission planned six regional conferences entitled, “Homemaking and the Family: Changing Values and Concerns.”\textsuperscript{45} These conferences influenced thousands of Wisconsinites to establish a sense of individualism that allowed them to delve into the present politics and legislation directly affecting them. Though it is unclear if these conferences were efficient in passing legislation, the redundant opposition of Senate had finally given America their first glimpse of Clarenbach’s fierce side of politics.\textsuperscript{46} Clarenbach pursued and persevered, representing women through government involvement. In return, she granted future generations morals of equality past eras had not experienced.

Concealing Clarenbach’s myriad of triumphs is a murky wall of oblivion, shaping her into the unsung heroine she is. Considering Clarenbach’s impact on Wisconsin and America, her actions were felt by millions, but known by few. This repercussion agitated Clarenbach in the least, for she was truly focused on the equal opportunity of women \textit{and men}, only finding fault when her fellow feminists had created political tension, impeding their progress.\textsuperscript{47} Among her unnoticed accomplishments stands her success in persuading the Unemployment Compensation Board to change a ruling that prohibited pregnant women from collecting unemployment benefits,\textsuperscript{48} a change that impacted Wisconsin women then, as well as now. In 1965, Clarenbach also requested the governor to ban a law prohibiting mothers to sign their child’s driver license.

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{48} Clarenbach, Kathryn. Eighth Interview Session. Conducted by Margaret Andreasen. op. cit.
permission form.\textsuperscript{49} This was overruled, determining men to be the only power of the house capable of this power.\textsuperscript{50} Though Clarenbach was livid with the ruling, she was not discouraged. Even the slightest flaws were fought by Clarenbach in the name of an equality she pictured for future generations.

**Organizing NOW**

Many in America worship the memory of Betty Friedan, renowned author of “The Feminine Mystique”, and co-founder of the National Organization of Women (NOW).\textsuperscript{51} Little known, however, was Clarenbach’s instrumental involvement in organizing NOW. Her influence was the force that held NOW together in its stages as a “fragile flower”, as described by the leader of the Milwaukee NOW Chapter.\textsuperscript{52} Together, Friedan and Clarenbach campaigned across America, aiming to move women to join their fight; but with the relentless ridicule from men, many women found it intimidating to become involved.\textsuperscript{53} Gaining supporters and making a stance within the government would prove to be a challenging feat.

Clarenbach and Friedan were not quite in harmony with each other (See Appendix B),\textsuperscript{54} Friedan had been weary of Clarenbach’s methods, she admitted her suspicions towards Clarenbach’s mannerisms often,\textsuperscript{55} but in truth, Clarenbach’s genial manner balanced Friedan’s truculent behavior.\textsuperscript{56} The cultural diversity of their group often attracted backlash from media,

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{50} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{51}“Honoring Our Founders \& Pioneers.” *National Organization for Women*, National Organization of Women Foundation, 2011, now.org/about/history/honoring-our-founders-pioneers/.
  \item \textsuperscript{54} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
describing the organization as a ‘militant lady cat-fight’. This posed a paltry setback.

Regardless, passion and purpose drew immense attention from the Midwest, and gradually, the organization became nationally and presidentially recognized.58

In October of 1966, Clarenbach was appointed as the first chairperson of NOW, beginning her national movement in Women’s rights.59 Significantly, NOW deterred oppression by pushing the approval of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) through the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC),60 a task pursued so crudely by the President’s Commission on the Status of Women, it sparked the idea of NOW.61 Clarenbach advocated these issues on a nation-wide recruiting expedition to persuade others to join the movement. She and Alice Rossi had even implemented special admittance fees as to not discourage low-income supporters from joining. Ultimately, the group’s pursuit played a major role enacting ERA in over 20 states in 1972.62 Today, it is still NOW’s mission to ratify ERA.

What is most admirable is not Clarenbach’s plethora of titles within NOW, but her astonishing achievements through the group. Not only did she confront and combat oppressive legislators, but she also served as president of the NOW Legal Defense & Education Committee and organized the National Women’s Conference in Houston in 197763. Her actions intended to raise more women to higher political power, and represent them, and their rights, through

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government effort. Her work in NOW reflects on the the daily lives and rights of American citizens today, and the astonishing progress NOW has made for its women throughout the decades.

**Triumph of the Unsung Heroine**

Dr. Kathryn Clarenbach’s scrupulous efforts in activism have impacted the lives of generations of women; America and its citizens are beholden to her. Her work had not been pursued in lust for praise, instead, her dedication had been for the creation of a new, accepted equality. Clarenbach, proud of her influence, described her new America,

...ultimately allowed American women a greater respect, acceptance and credibility. And...recognitions that women have more potential, ability, and diversity than was acknowledge. I see it reflected in women’s self esteem and participation.64

Without Clarenbach’s diligence and ethic, the 1960s feminist movement may not have progressed the rights of modern day America as it exists today.65

Among Clarenbach’s accomplishments were organizations that modeled future progressions, such as the founding of the National Women’s Political Caucus and heading the U.S. Commission for Observance of International Women’s Year (1975-76).66 Clarenbach faced major hardships in pursuing these efforts, and tragically, her most prominent commission was annulled after fifteen years of relentless work by governor Lee Dreyfus, who found its purpose insignificant.67 Dissolving the commission was disheartening, but Clarenbach beat on, replacing

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64 Clarenbach, Kathryn. “Interview with Dr Kathryn Clarenbach.” Conducted by Smail, Laura. Wisconsin Women’s Network http://womeninwisconsin.org/kathryn-clarenbach/


the commission with the Wisconsin Women’s Network, an association still representing Wisconsin today. Not a memoir, book, documentary or memory exists sufficiently portraying the significance of Clarenbach’s assiduous triumph. Though she and her impacts were virtually forgotten, her influence was able to inspired the oppressed to rise against the crushing weight of inequality. Through a pure fervor for change, her reforms in education, and women’s representation, continue to reflect in the pursued potentials of today’s women. The unsung still triumph in the shadows of their misremembrance.
Appendix A

**Governor’s Charge to the Commission**

MADISON, WISCONSIN

The role of women in American society is changing rapidly. In past years we have seen the doors to higher education opened more widely to women. We have seen the woman, once housewife, freed from much of her domestic burden. We have seen greater participation by women in business, labor, politics, and community affairs. Yet despite all of these advances, the American woman remains a second class citizen.

The report of the President’s Commission on the Status of Women pinpointed many of the problems facing the American woman today. Wisconsin’s first annual Governor’s Conference on the Changing Status of Women discussed many of these problems as they apply specifically to Wisconsin. A two-day conference, however, could only outline the areas of concern. The major task lies ahead. Your part in this task is to more fully investigate the role of women in Wisconsin and to suggest ways in which women can become fuller participants in our society. You should suggest both public and private approaches to this problem. Certainly the part that government can play should be carefully studied, but the importance of industry and other private sectors should not be ignored.

I would hope that your final major report could be ready by March of 1965. It would be most appropriate to convene the second annual Governor’s Conference on the Changing Status of Women at that time and to formally present the report at the Conference. This schedule allows the months for the task. I would further request that an interim report of the Commission be submitted to the midway through this period, in October of this year.

Damey Reynolds, the first Chairman of the President’s Commission, stated shortly before her death that “If I feel confident that in the years ahead some of the outstanding unmet barriers to women’s aspirations will disappear.” The task that I have assigned to you—and it is an easy task—is to help in removing the barriers still facing the American woman.

Governor John W. Reynolds

The First Commissioners Meeting
Thursday, May 21, 1964

This document gives insight into the true relationship between Governor Reynolds and the Governor’s Commission on the Status of Women. Reynolds was immensely encouraging of the commission’s work and the letter validated the true progress and reform the commission implemented in Wisconsin. Furthermore, it demonstrated Reynolds’ investment in the committee through his suggestion of broadening the commission’s attention in equality to private businesses as well. Media often depicted the commission as inutile and catty, the letter further explains the true strategies and purpose of Clarenbach and her team.

Appendix B

This famous image depicts Clarenbach (left) and Friedan (right) at one of NOW’s earliest meetings. The two founders were arguing the priorities of their rising organization and its Bill of Rights for Women. The meeting proved to be a challenge; the expressions displayed by both women portray their conflicting attitudes and composure during the construction of NOW. The two comrades, polar in work ethic and behavior, unified in order to raise the organization they trusted would liberate the oppressed women of America. Though Friedan’s overwhelming prominence in media was compelling to many ‘radical’ women, Clarenbach’s humble personality made many average women, who had adapted to the modest housewife persona, feel drawn, and even welcomed, into the empowering force.

Annotated Bibliography

Primary Sources:


Bletzinger interviews Clarenbach intending to further inform her community on the progress and current issues of Clarenbach, the chair of the Governor’s Commission on the Status of Women. There is an insufficient amount of information detailing Clarenbach’s speeches and purpose in conferences, Bletzinger’s interview shone a light on Clarenbach’s purpose and enthusiasm for advocating and educating women through these statewide conferences. Meager in the documentation, this article finally gave insight into Clarenbach’s renowned conferences.


Though its grainy audio quality posed an obstacle in interpretation, this short, yet significant, interview illustrates Clarenbach’s illustrious eloquence and further outlines the pride in her achievements. Clarenbach opens up on the goals she fulfilled, and the corroborating progress she, herself, is able to see in the minds of women. More often than not, sources solely describe Clarenbach’s actions, this interview relays first-hand developments made by Clarenbach.


In this article, Clarenbach openly admits to her unknowingness of the true discrimination her own sex was enduring on campus. A statement that truly boggled me; even an awakened woman such as herself was unaware of the true hardships lurking in Wisconsin.
Madison’s Oral History Project: a phenomenal source for first hand, specific knowledge on lives once lived. The utilization of this fourteen-hour history of Clarenbach’s became entirely essential in furthering my research into the specifics of her actions, and in developing knowledge on the otherwise unknown particulars of Clarenbach. The oral history transcript opened my mind to Clarenbach’s true character, family life, education, and forgotten achievements.


I found this article of great use after finding difficulty retrieving information relating to the reactions and ethics of Clarenbach and her team. Friedan, the author, spoke of the difficulties they faced in passing vital legislation, such as ERA. Though Clarenbach always remained humble, this article describes the anger occasionally felt by Clarenbach when her work was unjustly impeded.


This article displayed the true horrors of sexism and oppression Clarenbach had dedicated her life’s work to. The article describes senator Gordon Roselep and his infantile bigotry in the equal rights movement. Roselep denied passing Clarenbach’s legislation solely based on sexism, validating the ignorance and hardships Clarenbach combatted in order to pursue her feminist activism.


Clarenbach’s direct quote to the press, “[this progress] represents an enormous effort on the part of a great many people who have worked their heads off,” truly encompasses the selflessness and modesty that authors often describe Clarenbach as. Not only that, but she is stepping down from the pedestal of fame to allow her other comrades the credit they deserve; something that Clarenbach hoped would be given to them naturally one day.

This documentation became vital in comprehending the issues and discrimination Clarenbach observed within her state. Recommendations for enacting legislation, raising new committees, and suggestions for direct reform were also included in the report. The documentation allowed me to further process the mindset of Clarenbach, her ambitions, and her priorities in progressing equal rights.


Similar to the First Report of the Governor’s Commission on the Status of Women, this documentation allowed for further insight on the inner workings of Clarenbach’s many installments within the state government. This collection of papers uniquely gave further particulars regarding Clarenbach and her team’s goals within Wisconsin.


Similar to the First Major Report, this booklet of documentation recorded extensive insight of the work of Clarenbach’s commission. Being the second year of the commission, this specific document furthered my understanding of the progress made in just two years. It also gave a comparison of the changing priorities in the committee.


Impressively lengthy and informative, a page of this book was utilized in determining the fate of Clarenbach’s prominently pushed bill, in which partially melded her myriad of encouraged reforms into one assembly bill. Though it was determined the bill would only be denied with unanimous ‘noes’, it was implied that the bill was dissolved due to freezing it from further passage.


This gives an authentic display of the both Clarenbach and Friedan’s work ethic and true manners. Often times, it was difficult to decipher the inner workings of NOW, as media vigorously obscured their behaviors in an ill manner. This image gave an understanding of the women’s work ethic, along with an understanding of how their personalities affected others.
Secondary Sources:


This book’s contents proved to be a useful stepping stone in understanding the purposes and impacts of NOW. The book categorized the prominent aspects of now and included various other feminists vital to NOW’s operation. The book illustrated the importance of NOW in its original time, and its present effects on America.


Carabillo summarizes the process, infrastructure, and inner workings of NOW, along with insight on innumerable co-founders of NOW unrecognized by history. This book displayed the relationships and conflicts seen between the women, as well as dialogue, and multiple women’s impressions of other members. Carabillo’s thorough analysis and research gave a unique perspective of NOW’s formulation, as well as glossing over the conflict between the members and society, vital in understanding the perseverance of Clarenbach and her team.


This digital article offered further insight on ERA, informing on the otherwise unknown success in partially passing the amendment, but its tragedy in failing to become national. Explaining NOW’s past, and present reason for pursuing equal rights as a priority.


Written by another Clarenbach-enthusiast, this digital article was particularly eye-opening to the obscure, yet significant, organizations Clarenbach began in an attempt to discover a lasting group capable of her pursued goals. These little known organizations yet again validated the unjust disreminence of Clarenbach, and also her relentless activism.


Boyer rose as a prominent feminist and business leader, one of whom accredited her accomplishments to the moving eloquence and advocacy. The website provided information on the accomplishments of Boyer, allowing for connections to be made between Clarenbach and Boyer; a feminist who influenced another to rise.
The NOW website sparked research of the ideas namely significant to Clarenbach that influenced her reform. This brief summary allowed for a glimpse into the accomplishments of Clarenbach and validated the choice of spreading her impactful story.

The first web search of Kathryn Clarenbach will send you to this notable website which describes the major accomplishments, relations, commissions, and annulments of her organizations. Though inferior in providing information, this website evoked intrigue and curiosity, a motivation to further develop knowledge on her history and impact.

A literary collage of notable women, this novel focuses on Clarenbach and her relations with others. Namely, Esther Peterson, a prominent activist who had aided Clarenbach in starting the Governor’s Commission on the status of women. Peterson and Clarenbach were in commune with each other and often motivated one another to pursue their goals. The novel particularly opens perspectives on the army of female connections that made Clarenbach’s fate possible.

Novak’s article namely verified the undeserving credit men in power were given for work pursued by women by accrediting the Governor’s Commission on the Status of Women to governor Reynolds. The article gave an example of Clarenbach’s influence on Wisconsin women, while maintaining her truculent composure, but also giving a voice to others while being suppressed herself.

Ware’s collection of miniature women's histories allowed for the discovery of Clarenbach’s influence on others, a find that motivated in-depth research of Clarenbach’s true talent in moving crowds of oppressed. A particular example being her speech’s influence on Gene Boyer, that ultimately moved her to become a co-founder of NOW and an avid feminist.
Uniquely, this collaboration of notable women gave specific insight into the strengths of Clarenbach that enabled her to rise to the influence she came to be. Namely, female media and multiple government officials, rare prospects of compliments given the discrimination of the time. These first-hand quotes allowed for multiple perspectives into the mindset of Clarenbach, and the immense impact she brought on America.