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FACULTAD de FILOSOFÍA Y LETRAS
DEPARTAMENTO de FILOLOGÍA INGLESA
Grado en Estudios Ingleses

TRABAJO DE FIN DE GRADO

Through Female Eyes: Abolitionism and Private Life in
Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton

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2016-2017

ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the political activism and private life of two nineteenth century feminist women: Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony. On the one hand, the focus of the dissertation is interpreting what was their role as abolitionists in the Anti-Slavery Movement of the United States and on the other hand, what were their private thoughts about topics such as marriage, religion or housekeeping. The information has been obtained by analysing several letters written by the two women, their own books and also documents by their relatives or near friends. It is known that thanks to their courage and strength, women can vote and have many rights that were transgressed for them in the past. But, why did they decide to get involved in abolishing slavery and which factors influenced their personal lives helping to develop their mindsets?

KEYWORDS: slavery, abolitionism, feminism, politics, marriage, religion

Este trabajo revisa el activismo político y la vida privada de dos mujeres feministas del siglo diecinueve: Elizabeth Cady Stanton y Susan B. Anthony. El objetivo del trabajo es interpretar cuál fue su papel como abolicionistas en el Movimiento Anti-Esclavista de los Estados Unidos y cuáles eran sus pensamientos privados sobre temas como el matrimonio, la religión o las labores domésticas. La información ha sido obtenida analizando varias cartas escritas por las dos mujeres, sus propios libros y también documentos escritos por sus familiares o amigos cercanos. Es sabido que gracias a su valor y dedicación, las mujeres pueden votar y acceder a derechos que eran transgredidos en el pasado para ellas. ¿Por qué decidieron involucrarse en la abolición de la esclavitud y qué factores influenciaron sus vidas ayudando a desarrollar su modo de pensar?

PALABRAS CLAVE: esclavitud, abolicionismo, feminismo, política, matrimonio, religion

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1. INTRODUCTION¹

Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony were two well-known feminists that initiated the Women's Suffrage Movement. They had some crucial moments in their lives that led them to the creation and development of their revolutionary profiles.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton was born in New York on 12 November 1815. She came from a wealthy family which gave her the opportunity of being educated, a difficult task for a woman at that time. Her education was finished after several years attending to Emma Willard's Troy Female Seminary. Her father, Daniel Cady, was a reputed lawyer who gave lessons at home and therefore he inculcated Stanton some notions about law. This knowledge seems to have inspired Stanton in her later fight in favour of Women's Rights. However, her father endorsed the social structure of the patriarchy that was so harmful for Stanton. Her husband Henry Stanton studied law with her since he was a pupil of Daniel Cady. Daniel Cady did not like Henry Stanton because he was an abolitionist orator and had no fortune so he did not consider him a good fiancé for his daughter. It is thought that the political activities of Stanton increased after the death of her father since she did not want to participate in activities against the ideas of her father and she did not want to disfavour her own family. Even, her mother, Margaret, signed a petition of Women Suffrage when she was a widow. Elizabeth Cady Stanton died in New York in 1902.

Susan B. Anthony was born in Adams (Massachusetts) on 15 February 1820. Her parents, Daniel and Lucy Anthony, were Quakers² and Susan B. Anthony was brought up according to this doctrine. Her father owned a little mill in Adams and due to the success of it, the family moved to New York where Daniel Anthony worked as a manager of another mill. After a financial crisis, her family lost most of their patrimony and she felt the necessity of helping them. That is the reason why she returned home and worked as a teacher in some

¹ Most of the information of the biographies of Stanton and Anthony has been taken from Gordon (1997): *The Selected Papers of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony: In the School of Anti-Slavery 1840-1846*.

² According to the Cambridge Dictionary, a Quaker was a member of a Christian group, called the Society of Friends, that does not have formal ceremonies or a formal system of beliefs, and is strongly opposed to violence and war.

schools. Then, in Rochester, her father, Daniel Anthony, worked in an insurance agency and joined the community of abolitionists and abandoned the Quakers. The decision of becoming abolitionist was followed by his family and it is clear that Anthony felt inspired by this decision which led her to become a reformist. When Anthony was 29, she left pedagogy. She was part of the New York State Teacher's Association that aimed at the equality of salaries for women and also claimed that women were capable of performing any kind of activity or job. Thus, in this aspect of women salaries, she was more committed than Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Susan B. Anthony never married and she died in New York in 1906.

In 1848, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and some other women made the Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions³ which was presented in the convention held at Seneca Falls. Women were demanding a more equal society since men had been assuming power and had not been taking into account Women's Rights. On the one hand, in the Declaration of Sentiments, women claimed their right to vote and asserted that men and women were equal because both were created by God and so they should have the same rights. They claimed that the Government should take into account these rights and if they could not be applied also to women, a new government should be formed. This new government had to safeguard their legitimate rights. Women had been submitted to the rule of men since practically the beginning of times, so a change was necessary. Men had denied women the elective franchise, therefore, women could not have legal representation and they were not permitted to think by themselves. Marriage implied that the husband was immediately like an owner whose property was his wife and he could administer her salary. Divorce implied that, in the majority of the cases, the husband was considered superior to the wife, so the custody of children would be given to his father. Besides, women were dismissed as students and could not receive an education, which also meant the impossibility of performing certain jobs. Moreover, they could not participate in decisions related to the Church. There were some acts that were considered as misconducts in a woman but they were not frowned upon if it was a man who did them. For instance, according to Barker-

³ The Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions has been retrieved from the same book by Ann D. Gordon.

Benfield (35-37), a man could talk to an unmarried woman first but she could not be the one who started the conversation. Also, a woman could not go to public events without the supervision of a man or a matron. It was rare that she went on a walk alone because she should devote her free time to her husband. On the other hand, there were also some resolutions that were very relevant for the cause. It was determined that those laws or principles that put men above women were not valid anymore. A major argument for determining this was that God did not make distinctions between man and woman, so both should be equal.

This is what Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony were fighting for. They fought for a society in which women were not seen as the weak gender, but as humans. A society in which women were recognized for having the same aptitudes and abilities as men. Women deserved to be visible. These women were widely known for being defenders of women's liberties and rights, feminists and forerunners of the Women Suffrage Movement. However, they participated in other movements that are barely studied since they have been overshadowed by the feminist role of these two women. One of these movements is the Abolitionist movement whose main aim was to abolish slavery and liberate African and Indian slaves. Stanton and Anthony were enrolled in this task during many years and some evidence of this are the letters that they wrote about slavery.

2. THE NEED OF EXTERMINATING SLAVERY

2.1. SLAVERY IN THE UNITED STATES

It is known that both Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony were involved in activities against slavery. There are many documents and letters written by them in which they defend the rights of the coloured people. To begin with, it is important to tackle some aspects concerning the topic of slavery. According to Patterson, “slavery is one of the most extreme forms of the relation of domination, approaching the limits of total power from the viewpoint of the master, and of total powerlessness from the viewpoint of the slave” (1). Thus, slavery can be defined as the dominance of a certain individual or group of people by a person who concentrates the power. Slavery implied an involuntary servitude since the slaves were captured and mistreated by the owners that considered them as one of their material properties and therefore, they denied the rights of the slaves. The history of slavery goes along with the history of human race since it has existed in almost every culture and every historical period. Even nowadays there are some cases of slavery or human trafficking.

Nevertheless, this dissertation will be focused on the period of activity of Stanton and Anthony. The period in which they lived was the peak of the slavery in the United States, which was developed between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and was mostly characterized by the trafficking of African people. For understanding this, it is crucial to go back in time when Christopher Columbus settled in America in 1492. He and the rest of the conquerors exploited the original tribes of Indians that inhabited those unexplored lands until they died. Their deaths were caused by the treatment inflicted by the conquerors and the great number of epidemic diseases that had no cure in that time. They had to search for another way of making slaves so they began to bring Africans to America. When the British Empire reached the United States in the seventeenth century and began to colonize the territory, they acted like saviours of the slaves. But as they saw the benefit produced by slave trade and the huge amount of products that they could obtain using the slave

workforce, England allowed slavery in the colonies although it has been abolished in this country in 1807. There were no English laws about how the slavery issue should be treated (Morris, 38). This was controversial since slavery was not legal in the metropolis and there were no regulation or laws dealing with this aspect, so slavery would be regulated by the local laws of the colonies. Moreover, as Virginia was the first English colony and also the largest of the thirteen that England possessed in the territory now known as the United States, it was also the colony where the hugest number of slaves gathered. They would suffer multiple punishments if they tried to escape from their owner, for instance, they were condemned to serve the owner for a lifetime. However, if the person that escaped was European, he would not receive the same punishment. This was evidence that showed that there was a racial contempt regarding coloured people; they were considered as inferior by the majority of white people. There were also cases in which slaves could become free when they finished the indenture stipulated by their masters. So what is obvious is that there were no clear laws about slavery and that they were not the same for every slave and also they were different from those laws of white people. For instance, the Militia Act of 1639 stated that the entire male population, servants included, would be given arms in order to defend the colonies in case of rebellions or attacks from other metropolis. Nevertheless, the coloured population were excluded from this Act. This fact could indicate that there was a general apprehension in giving weapons to the Africans since they could use it against the white population making an uprising.

But slavery was not recognized until 1661 as a new law was approved in which the European servants that escaped accompanied by “negroes”⁴ should pay in kind for the lost or dead “negroes” or serve the master during a long period. This implied that coloured people were seen and treated as objects, not as the European white servants, although both were abused. One of the main differences is that Africans were named slaves and Europeans were named servants. This previously mentioned law gave more power to the owners of land and slaves and signified that they could have the service of slaves during their entire lifetime. Another issue was the mixing of the two races, Africans and

⁴ The term “negro” is used along this dissertation since it is written in this way in the documents analysed.

Americans, as the descendants would take the status of the father. This meant that although the mother of a child was a slave, if the father was a free man, the child would immediately become free. Contrarily, when two animals of different owners reproduced, the offspring would belong to the proprietary of the female animal. So then, it was resolved that the children of slave women would be a property of the owner of the mother making them new slaves and putting them in the same place as a female slave and an animal. This happened when the colony was governed by the Roman law instead of the Common Law. The Roman law dictated what to do with the animal offspring and what was the solution to legal problems that could appear so the masters were benefited (Allain, 111-113). This was a good strategy to gain new slaves in a cheaper way and an incentive to invest in female slaves. Besides, the owner could do what he pleased with the female slaves. As their bodies were his property, they could be sexually harassed and the owner was not punished because the law protected him.

According to Finkelman, there were two justifications for enslaving the Africans (112-113). The first one was that they were not Christians, so being a slave was a kind of disciplinary action. The second justification was that the duty of the Christians was enslaving the Africans in order to convert them to Christianity. Moreover, in some cases, freedom was granted to those slaves that agreed to convert to Christianity. But in the end, the conversion to Christianity only served to strengthen slavery since slaves were taught to obey their owners as it was the same as obeying God. Presumably, every African regardless of their precedence or parentage, even those who were baptized, were destined to be slaves in the eighteenth century. A clearer definition of the term “slave” was drawn up for that period taking into account all these aspects and could be summarized in this statement: coloured or non-Christian people, independently of their origin, who were submitted to the power of a master or owner and who acted as the master wished without having any fundamental rights were considered slaves. The term also encompassed those children of women who were slaves.

It was not until the American Revolution (1765 – 1783) that slavery began to be considered controversial. The Revolution brought to the forefront the different ideals supported by the Loyalists who move to the south and the Patriots in the north. The Loyalists were in favour of slavery as they thought that slaves were property and should not be added up in the taxes, by the contrary, Patriots viewed them as free men and considered that they should be regarded as that. In 1808, Congress decreed that the slave trade would be banned and several types of fines would be imposed to people who owned or traded with slaves. But this was not the end of slavery as the Government did not permit the smuggler's trade of slaves, but permitted their sale among the masters. That is to say, no more African slaves could be imported to America, however, the ones who were in the country were still property of their masters.

In 1861, Abraham Lincoln became president and the South was preoccupied about the idea of him abolishing slavery, but he could not do that because it went against the Constitution. He was very committed with the racial discrimination of those African Americans and Africans to the point that he even wanted to concede them the right to vote. However, he signed the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 which meant that slavery would not be contemplated in the United States anymore, along with the Thirteenth Amendment in 1865 (Finkelman 106-34). Slavery was a major harm that corrupted society and fostered the detrimental ideas that lead to an increase of the social racism. If the slave did not do what the owner said or tried to escape, owners could punish them cruelly, sometimes slaves were whipped until they died. Moreover, it was also permitted the sexual harassment towards women slaves, no matter how old they were. While European people, such as Dutch, Irish and Scottish, were sent by the British Empire to work in the colonies, they were called servants and the African people were immediately designated the term slave. So it can be deduced that black people were seen as inferior human beings, as property of wealthy people and as objects for producing wealth in self-benefit.

The fight for freedom was a difficult task to fill out. For this reason, there were associations whose main purpose was the defence of coloured people rights, such as the

Anti-Slavery Societies that emerged in some American cities. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony were part of this Anti-Slavery Movement which was an important step that helped in their later feminist careers. If they could defend the rights of coloured people, they certainly would be able to demand the same rights for men and women, as the women collective had been subjugated to the power that men had been exerting over the centuries. Thus, they were enrolled in the principal association, the American Anti-Slavery Society. According to the Declaration of Sentiments (1-4) of this society itself, this association emerged in 1833 in Philadelphia as the situation happened to be that 17% of the population of America were slaves. Its main principle was basically the same as the statement of the Declaration of Independence that says: “all men are created equal; and they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” (1). The Society was against the use of arms because that is the method used by the oppressors and the evil should be defeated with love, and not with hatred. They were conscious of the deplorable situation of the slaves and also of their condition as property and as undomesticated beings. These ideas were supported by religion; the idea that God invites us to love our neighbours without expecting anything in return, so at the end of life, the Christian that has done good actions will be rewarded with the eternal life. Enslaving coloured people was considered a sin that must be punished as it was like harming an American citizen and racial differences should be avoided. They thought that if a slave had the same capacities and abilities as a free man, then he should be treated like that and he deserved the same payment. They also supported the idea that the owners must not receive a compensation for setting the slaves free since slavery was seen as a crime.

The creation of Anti-Slavery Societies was promoted almost in each city and for they should have representatives who looked out for the injustices and crimes committed in the society against coloured people. It was essential a revision of the internal regulations and prescriptions of churches since they had not helped the slaves but they permitted all the violence against them. Besides, they only gave Christian advice and promises of eternal salvation for those who were truly Christians, that is to say, the owners. The actual result

was that while priests were preaching that everyone should love their neighbour and do not commit murder, there were hundreds of slaves being mistreated and murdered in the plantations. Churches were acting against their own principles and against the Ten Commandments, so this could be seen as a kind of detrimental propaganda for the Protestant church and religion that was set up in the United States.

Another measure to take into account by the societies was to give preference to goods produced by freemen instead of goods produced by slaves. Moreover, the members of each society wanted people to repent for this treatment to slaves and recognized that the slavery system was not fair for anybody independently of their skin colour. They defined this system as “the most execrable system of Slavery that has ever been witnessed upon earth” (3), which means that they were aware of the situation. As it can be seen throughout the whole Declaration, the Associations were very religious and mentioned God in all the pages. They spoke as if they acted in behalf of God and they rejected slavery because it was against everything that their religion defended. Their main premise was “no union with slaveholders” and their final aim was to raise awareness of that issue in order to join together and fight slavery. Moreover, it is relevant this statement that appears in the Declaration:

Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of human rights, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall see most likely to effect their safety and happiness (3).

This means that the well-being of each citizen of the United States was above the economic benefits or the interests of wealthy people. But actually each citizen had the power to change the situation joining these associations. If they wanted to build a huge nation, practically from scratch, that was based on equality and freedom, they could not admit the existence of slaves. That would only harm the reputation of a newly founded country and could affect its prosperity and international relations with other countries.

2.2. CONTRIBUTION OF ELIZABETH CADY STANTON AND SUSAN B. ANTHONY TO THE ANTI-SLAVERY FIGHT

It is possible to know what these two women thought and did against slavery analysing some of their personal letters. There are 224 letters written by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony in the book *The Selected Papers of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, in the School of Anti-Slavery 1840-1866* by Ann D. Gordon. The selection of these letters has been based on the relevance with which Stanton and Anthony talked about slavery. The letters have been divided in three groups: letters on the influence of women in the Anti-Slavery Movement, letters on political and religious issues and letters on the commitment with anti-slavery. The first group contains letters written by or addressed to women or that are related to Women's Rights. The second group contains letters that include political views and the reactions of the Church to slavery. Lastly, the third group contains letters that depict the involvement of Stanton and Anthony against slavery.

a) Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Slavery

Although the father of Elizabeth Cady Stanton was not a revolutionary and it is known that she was not raised in an abolitionist sphere, she was certainly influenced by her husband Henry Stanton. As mentioned in the introduction, Henry Stanton was an abolitionist and he started to work in the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1835. When he and Elizabeth Cady Stanton married in 1840 (xxix), they went on a honeymoon in London because the World's Anti-Slavery Convention was held there and they wanted to assist. Henry Stanton instructed his wife initiating her into this sphere and introducing her to a group of friends that shared the same abolitionist ideas.

a.1.) Letters on Women and Anti-Slavery

These letters touch the themes of slavery and are related with the strife for achieving Women's Rights. Both issues were happening at the same time and implied the oppression of two groups of the population: slaves and women. So, generally, people who defended one cause, also defended the other.

In a letter sent by Henry Stanton to Elizabeth Cady Stanton on 1 January 1840 from Philadelphia, he mentioned that he was writing in the house of John G. Whittier, an abolitionist who was editing the *Pennsylvania Freeman* for the Anti-Slavery Society that was set in Pennsylvania (1). Henry Stanton could be in this town for one of the meetings that the Anti-Slavery Societies celebrated there. He also met Elizabeth Cady Stanton's cousin, Gerrit Smith who was the president of the Anti-Slavery Society in New York for three years. However, what is relevant here is the role of Gerrit Smith's wife, Ann Carroll Fitzhugh Smith, who not only was in the Anti-Slavery Convention of American Women, but also she was the vice president of the Convention held in New York. Having a relative fighting for the cause and being implicated in this type of events could have been a direct reference for Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Apparently, she was influenced by women who were in contact with her because they were her relatives. It was also very important that her husband Henry was an open-minded person and permitted her participation in this fight since at that time, women were still depending on their husbands' decisions (1-4).

The next document analysed has to do with the Women's Rights Convention held at Seneca Falls on the 19th and 20th of July 1848 and was signed by Stanton and Susan B. Anthony. Frederick Douglass participated at the discussion of the Declaration of Sentiments and also offered a speech. He was an African American slave who had run away from his owner in 1838 and then went to Massachusetts to earn a living. He participated in many events of the Anti-Slavery Society and became himself a lecturer since he wanted to recount the harms of slavery. He was a close friend of Stanton and Anthony. He is widely known for his work *The Life of Olaudah Equiano* (85). This is an example that shows that the Anti-Slavery

fight and the Women's Rights fight were intertwined at some points and normally were defended by the same people. They participated actively in both movements to overcome the situations of inferiority suffered by the part of the population considered "weak" and "valueless".

In September 1848, Stanton wrote an address on woman's rights in which she mentioned that in eastern countries there were many female slaves that were changed for money. Although each country had its own traditions, in the majority of them, women were subjugated to men and had to carry out all the domestic tasks, gave birth to children and also work hard in the fields. Therefore, the role of woman as a slave could be considered worse than that of a man. The fact that women were seen as children bearers was a purely physiological reason but apart from working from sunrise to sunset they had to do all the things that were considered "female tasks". Stanton included these fragments of the poem "The Corsair" by Lord Byron:

I am a slave, a favoured slave
At best to share his pleasure and seem very blest,
When weary of these fleeting charms and me,
There yawns the sack and yonder rolls the sea,
What! Am I then a toy for dotards play
To wear but till the gilding fleets away? (97)

The woman of the poem feels like she was only an object for his owner. She must pretend that she is happy for belonging to a man and she has to enjoy his gladness. But when the man gets tired of her because she is growing old, he leaves her aside and moves on. She compares herself with a toy, another property for the owner and again refers to the fading of her youth in the last line with the metaphor "the gilding fleets away". She chose this poem because it describes perfectly the situation of women slaves and generally speaking what meant to be a woman at that time. It is a combination of the two evils: slavery and women's oppression.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Elizabeth W. McClintock wrote a dramatic play⁵ dating from the 12th of November 1849 whose characters were some people that they knew because they were abolitionists. This document has been included in this section because the topic of slavery is intertwined with the view of women. The character of Rush Plumley talks about the shadow of oppression and “the dark-browed slave, who toils on Southern plains” (qtd. in Gordon 153). He blames the rich people who are now living a luxurious life for the sufferings of coloured people because these coloured people are the ones who toil for them. Coloured people produced a lot of benefits to the masters as they had very low salaries and worked for more than twelve hours in some cases. This character cannot help feeling guilty for having privileges only because he was born white. The play touches the topic of Women’s Rights and mentions this fact: “Let her [woman] remain in the lofty position assigned her in our statute books – on a full equality with Africa’s noble sons” (qtd. in Gordon 156). This could refer to the fact that women and Africans of a higher status were more integrated in the society than those who belonged to the lower classes. However, it is possible that this was an irony and of course, it cannot be forgotten that this meant that men were superior to women and coloured people in any circumstance (152-163).

On 11 January 1851, Abigail Kelley Foster, another participant of the Anti-Slavery movement, addressed Stanton to express her admiration and gratefulness for the work done to put an end to slavery. She told that Stanton was in charge of anti-slavery issues in Seneca Falls and that many of the members of the Society had lost interest in this topic. This woman wanted to have a meeting with Stanton, probably to discuss something related to slavery (176-177).

On 11 December 1854, Stanton wrote an appeal titled “To the Women of the State of New York from Seneca Falls”. Although this appeal was about Women’s Rights, she used some facts about slavery on which she could rely. She asserted that if there were laws that permitted that huge numbers of women were in bondage, it had to be women who protested

⁵ The play is mentioned in *The Selected Papers of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, in the School of Anti-Slavery 1840-1866* by Ann D. Gordon, though no title is given.

and tried to fight against all these laws (285). What Stanton was trying to explain was that there was not any difference between the coloured women who toil the fields and the white women who were free but also subjected to these laws and to their husbands. However, these white women were the ones who could actually have the opportunity to complain about the situation. Those women who closed their eyes in the face of slavery and Women's Rights were being disrespectful to God and to their religion. She compared this with the case of Frederick Douglass who did not give up although he passed through many hardships but, he continued seeking his liberty (285-288).

In the address to the Eight National Woman's Rights Convention of the 13th May 1858, Stanton claimed that the Woman's Rights Movement as such was originated due to the Anti-Slavery Movement. Although there were more minor movements before, the Anti-Slavery Movement was considered the engine that initiated everything. Stanton highlighted that in the Anti-Slavery Societies there was not a differentiation of genders, that is to say, men and women could occupy any position in these societies. Stanton herself or Susan B. Anthony are a clear example of this. Nevertheless, the Church was not so pleased with women being able to speak in public because they were not expected to give their opinion but to obey and agree with their husbands (361-372).

a.2.) Letters on Political and Religious Issues

Elizabeth Cady Stanton was interested in politics because in this sphere were made the decisions concerning slavery. The final aim was to promote laws against this cruel practise until its total abolition. She also talked about the religious aspect and what was the position of the Church.

On 4 March 1840, Stanton sent a letter to Ann Smith, apparently from Seneca Falls, because she was concerned about the illness of Gerrit Smith. As she wrote:

We cannot afford to lose such a champion for “negroes” and woman’s rights, particularly at a crisis when, (as they say) the antislavery cause was on the wane, its friends having proved its enemies by their political action (qtd. in Gordon 5).

Gerrit Smith, Henry Stanton and others had founded an antislavery party which was criticized by some members of the Anti-Slavery Society because they had different ideas (5-6). It is possible to interpret that Stanton was afraid that her husband could be expelled from the society since some members had become enemies and they could not continue fighting for the cause. If the Society was divided, they could not stop the southern parties’ actions in favour of slaveholders. At this point, Stanton was already aware of the social injustices that occurred all over the country and started to be committed and worried about the future of the Anti-Slavery Societies.

On 26 November 1841, Stanton wrote a letter to Elizabeth J. Neall, a woman from an abolitionist family and who was a delegate for the Female Anti-Slavery Society of Philadelphia at a convention held in London. In this letter, Stanton shows some traces of her political views. For her, the government of the country must have been run by “good men” and she considered that at that moment, the “good men” could only be the abolitionists. Thus, an Abolitionist party should be in charge of politics because they would take into account the rights of all men independently of their skin colour. She asserted that: “Slavery is a political question created and sustained by law, and must be put down by law” (qtd. in Gordon 25). That is to say, the law decided the limits of slaveholders and it was able to prohibit slavery. Stanton expressed that the current situation in the country was that the principal political parties were full of corrupt politicians. This could have been dangerous if the same happened to the Abolitionist Party. That was a point in favour for the abolitionist party as it would not be influenced by the wealthy people and would take the fairest decisions (19-28).

The next year, on the 3rd February 1843, Stanton wrote to Elizabeth J. Neall. In this letter, Stanton talks about the Intermarriage Law. Abolitionists had sought for ten years the

suppression of this law of 1786 that banned all marriages between “negroes” and white people (Jacobs 13). This same year the law was repealed and Stanton felt very proud of what they were achieving thanks to the “small majorities” as she said. She mentioned that in Boston, from where she was sending the letter, she had attended many lectures and meetings. She heard the speech of Abigail Fulsom, Foster and Beech that were three important and fierce abolitionists of that time (41-44).

There is a letter that dates from the 28th of December 1853 and was written by William H. Channing in which he informed Stanton about a situation that caused his concern. Slavery was going to be banned in the state of Nebraska but he was worried about the actions and decisions of the people from the South. As it was usual, the South rejected the proposal in the Senate and a lot of coloured people were left in the hands of the settlers. In spite of this, he thought that although there were many differences among the political parties and their position in favour or against slavery, the new mentality that had been flourishing through those years shaped a brand new concept of justice (235-237). This meant that the country was changing and those people who were in favour of slavery started to think that maybe they had gone too far with the policies against slaves. Stanton was much respected in the Anti-Slavery Society since a lot of members of it took her into consideration. The fact that a man wrote to a woman about things like slavery could show this.

Another decisive document written by Stanton was her Address to the Legislature of New York the 14th February 1854. She began with this statement:

The thinking minds of all nations call for change. There is a deep-lying struggle in the whole fabric of society; a boundless, grinding collision of the New with the Old (241).

This is linked with the declaration mentioned before by William H. Channing. Stanton is basically expressing the same feeling and showing the controversy between the old way of thinking and the new way of thinking. She is talking about slavery but also about all the

injustices including the theme of Women's Rights. She complains about women being treated as insane or ignorant people or "negroes" (240-260). In fact, she says:

And here you place the negro, so unjustly degraded by you, in a superior position to your own wives and mothers; for coloured males, if possessed of a certain amount of property and certain other qualifications they are not subject to direct taxation (243).

She was asserting that coloured people were free in some cases and even had the right to vote under specific circumstances which was quite unusual as they had been significantly oppressed for their race. As in some places of America slavery had been abolished, it seems that many "negroes" were treated as the rest of white people (N.Y. Const. 1846 art. II secs. 1,3). But if they had some requisites that they needed to accomplish, were they actually free? It is obvious that they were not completely liberated from the chains of slavery if they had to possess property in order to vote while the right to vote was granted to any white male in the country. However, it was an advance in the Anti-Slavery cause because coloured people started to be seen as white people.

a.3.) Letters on the Commitment with Anti-Slavery

The central point of these letters was the active participation of Stanton in activities and events against slavery and her position in the American Anti-Slavery Society. A letter was sent by Stanton to Gerrit Smith the 3rd of August 1840. In this letter it can be seen how Stanton began to participate in activities of the Anti-Slavery Society. She told Smith that she and her husband were visiting many British cities with the purpose of warning British people about what was happening in America with the "negroes". The reactions of British people were of shame and they showed an intolerant attitude towards the fact of slavery. Citizens united in a mass movement and created associations and 'modes of social mobilization' in order to apply pressure to the pro-slavery institutions (Jansen 124). People

wanted to exterminate slavery. This pleased Stanton so much since they were scandalized about the cruel practices against slaves. That could mean that they had found a huge support in England. In fact, it was socially frowned upon to be in favour of slavery and the clergy declared that clergymen in America that did not defend the antislavery cause should feel embarrassed and did not deserve to be clergymen (15-17).

On 12 February 1842, Stanton addressed a letter to Elizabeth Pease in order to tell her about the advances of the Anti-Slavery Movement. She remarks that the mobilization was progressing positively and that the disharmony between those who were in favour of slavery and those who wanted to forbid slavery was not harming the cause, but it was strengthening it instead. She declares herself sympathetic to the third party, the Radical Abolitionist Party, and a supporter of William Lloyd Garrison. She asserts that Garrison gave greater priority to the interests of the Anti-Slavery Society than to his own political ambitions. He defended Human Rights and he thought that there must have been an inclusion of the coloured people and “negroes” should be treated as the rest of the population. Therefore, there could not exist a distinction of rights but a common set of rights for everybody. Maybe Stanton was not impartial in her opinion about Garrison because he was friends with her husband, she could have been influenced in this aspect also. Nevertheless, it is clear that she was deeply involved now in the Anti-Slavery Society. She promoted the idea that the third party should be formed and it should support political action so that the legislative and executive powers did not devolve upon people without principles that only wanted to safeguard the rights of empowered people (29-31).

b) Susan B. Anthony and Slavery

Contrary to Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony’s father became an abolitionist although at first, he and his family had been Quakers. Thus, the tendency of Anthony to defend the Anti-Slavery Movement was probably instilled by her father.

b.1.) Letters on Women and Anti-Slavery

In a letter sent to Matilda Joslyn Gage on 28 June 1854, Anthony requested this woman to circulate a text that she had written about Women's Rights. Anthony referred to slavery in this way:

I know that Slavery is the All-absorbing question of the day, still we must push forward this great Central question, which underlies all others, not excepting that of Slavery even (274).

It can be seen again that the question of Women's Rights is tangled with the question of slavery. As mentioned before, there were also disadvantages for female slaves and those who were called free women were not free, in the broadest sense of the word, as they had not possessed the same rights as men (273-274).

The next letter dates from the 26 May 1856, Anthony send a letter to Elizabeth Cady Stanton from Rochester. She informs Stanton about her last activities and the places she had visited in order to attend some lectures and meetings. She talks about some aspects of Women's Rights as usual. She also comments that she went to the anniversary of the American Anti-Slavery Society and that everything was perfect in spite of the bad weather. It is possible that Stanton could not attend because she had had a baby in the previous months (319-320).

On 20 April 1857, Anthony addressed to Stephen Foster and Abigail Kelley Foster in order to tell them that they had been an inspiration for her in the sphere of anti-slavery. She also wanted to tell them an anecdote. When she was in a meeting, a little girl began to sing an anti-slavery song. This girl told her that she was present in all the lectures and meetings as she used to go with her now deceased mother. Her mother introduced her in the sphere of abolitionism and she declared herself as an abolitionist (338-341). Anthony felt proud and hopeful because the little girl was aware of what slavery meant. In my opinion, if it was possible that a little girl knew that slavery was wrong and against religion, for it was a sin

to harm other human beings, it could be also possible that other children were educated with the same ideas. Education could be used as a powerful weapon to fight slavery. Moreover, if little girls had the capacity of rejecting slavery, they could also realize that women were oppressed and these future generations could have an open mind. They could be the new generations that fight for Women's Rights and for the equality of genders and races. Anthony had finished the campaign of winter and spring by April and the results were very successful as asserted in the following statement:

My spirit has grown in grace, and that the experience of the past winter is worth more to me than all my Temperance and Woman's Rights labors – Though the latter were the school necessary to bring me into the Anti-Slavery work (340).

As many of Anthony's letters show, she has been focused on the Temperance Society which occupied most of her time. But then she was more and more committed with the American Anti-Slavery Society which made her felt much fulfilled.

b.2.) Letters on Political and Religious Issues

There is an entry in Anthony's diary between the 21st March and the 28th April 1854 from Washington in which she talked openly about slavery. She was upset because when talking with Mrs. Melvin, an affiliate of the Methodist Episcopal Church South that was in favour of slavery, this lady described slavery as a patriarchal system. That is to say, it was a relationship of the dominant and the dominated. A relationship that had always been that way and cannot change because each person has their specific function in the world. The reaction of Anthony is summarized in these lines: "My blood chilled in my veins at the thought of a professed Christian, thus so entirely losing sight of the great principle of love" (264). Anthony accuses her of violating the principles of the Church and not following the word of the Bible. Churches must have helped the slaves and not abandon them to their

fate. The founder of the Coloured Girls School in Washington met with Anthony and talked about her plans of educating coloured girls which then would become teachers. At the same time, she seemed to be interested in the women's fight. In essence, both causes were interrelated and had many things in common and inside the women's cause should be a space for slavery because female slaves were treated even worse than male slaves.

She continued the letter on the consecutive days. She did not understand why there were many people in favor of slavery that only had been in the South once or had never been there. They could not see what the situation was and therefore, they could not have a correct opinion of what they did not know. She declared that she hated slavery and that it was ruining society (265). Anthony was going to Baltimore and she spent the night on a boarding house. She found that the five servants of that boarding house were slaves. She was overwhelmed by the fact that these five girls were in charge of all kind of tasks in that house. They were doing a job that actually needed more workers. They were being exploited. Slavery is a very harmful form of labor. Coloured people who were paid did not do as much work as the slaves. Anthony said that the owners from the North were fairer than the ones in the South because they demanded the same amount of work to a free worker than to a slave. Another proof that shows that the South still was stuck in slavery. The next days she was attending to lectures and meetings and she mentioned with emphasis the way in which some meetings were opened. A man said a kind of prayer:

O Lord we thank thee, that our lives have been cast in places and that we live in a land where every man can sit under his own vine and fig tree, and none dare to molest or make him afraid (268).

Anthony felt very offended by such words and she thought that it was a lie. Those words were only true to white people. Obviously, slaves were molested and they also felt afraid, how cannot they be afraid if they were being mistreated? (264-272)

On 2 August 1857, Anthony wrote again to Lucy Stone to inform her about a Teachers Convention in which she had proposed some resolutions regarding the discrimination of

coloured people in schools and superior forms of education. Although there were many people that agreed with her, there were others, such as the president of the Convention, that did not take her ideas seriously. Anthony felt desperate about that since this was a result of slavery. At this time, there were more free coloured people but they did not have the same rights as white people and it was another issue to fight. She wanted to raise awareness of this situation as she was in direct contact with this discrimination due to her job as a teacher. She recognized in this letter that she was actually more inspired to write and think about anti-slavery issues than about Women's Rights. At this point, she was concerned about slavery and racial discrimination as she expresses in the papers (346-351).

b.3.) Letters on the Commitment with Anti-Slavery

On 3 May 1853, Anthony addressed to Lucy Stone from Rochester asking her to go to the anniversary of the American Anti-Slavery Society and also a meeting of the Temperance Society. It seems that, at that time, Anthony was more focused on the Temperance Society than in the Anti-Slavery Movement. Although she is giving hints in her letters showing that she is concerned with the Anti-Slavery cause, she did not explain what they did in the meeting. However, she explained what the situation was in the Temperance Society and what the role of women in that society was (220-221).

It is very interesting that within the records of Susan B. Anthony a specific type of documents were found. These documents were financial accounts which had to do with the American Anti-Slavery Society. She kept the accounts from 1856 to 1860 since the executive committee of the Society wanted her to be the representative in New York. The income consisted on money provided by different people committed with the Anti-Slavery Movement that were members of the Society. The expenses consisted mostly on the organization of conventions and lectures, bills and informative leaflets that had to be printed, advertisements in some remarkable papers and accommodations for some members

of the Society (330-333). Thus, she occupied an important position in the Society or otherwise she would not have had access to the accounts.

The same year of 1857, Anthony addressed to Elizabeth Cady Stanton on the 29th of September. She informed Stanton about the progresses of her trip around the country in behalf of the Anti-Slavery Society. Her purpose was to continue with her lectures, meetings and speeches and try to instil the social values of freedom, fraternity and equity among people that were illiterate or were not informed about what was happening with slavery. One of her tasks was to initiate people in that scope. She tried to convince people to join their society to defeat the slavery system once and for all. Therefore, it was very important to carry out this tour around the principal cities of the United States (352-353).

3. THE INNER THOUGHTS OF ELIZABETH CADY STANTON AND SUSAN B. ANTHONY: PRIVATE LIVES

Although Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony devoted much of their lives to the public arena and to humanitarian activities, they also shared their opinions in other topics that were more private. The topics analysed in this dissertation are marriage, religion and housekeeping. They had different opinions on these themes because of the events that happened in their lives and that conditioned these spheres. In most of the cases, these topics are widely related to their fight in favour of Women's Rights since they implied the participation of women due to the time in which they developed.

3.1. THOUGHTS OF ELIZABETH CADY STANTON

a) Marriage and Divorce

For a long period of time, Stanton was the only woman that talked or wrote about divorce. Divorce was not granted to women in many states and that was a worrying situation mostly because of the possibility of violence to women by their husbands. Stanton was motivated to advocate for a law on divorce because of personal motives; she had a friend that suffered domestic violence in her marriage (Stanton, *Eighty Years and More* 216). She made some resolutions in favour of divorce that were rejected by many men. She complained about the unequal conditions present in the contracts of marriage. Women could marry at twelve years old while men must have had more experience. Husband and wife were not in the same position as wives did not exist legally for they took their husbands name. She considered ironic the fact that an unmarried woman had many rights as she could have property, for example, but the married woman did not have anything because her possessions were passed to her husband (Stanton, *Eighty Years and More* 221-223). Moreover, if a woman was adulterous the husband was entitled to divorce her, but if it was the man who was adulterous, the woman did not have the right of divorcing. Stanton demanded that the laws concerning divorce and marriage should be equal in all the states.

She supported the idea that children should be educated in order to respect marriage and respect each person and so, relationships would be less problematic. She considered that divorce should not be a decision of the Church or the government but a decision of the married couple (Stanton, *Eighty Years and More* 215-233).

On April 1850, she wrote an article titled “Divorce”⁶ that was published in *The Lily* newspaper. In this article, she stated that “instead of compelling a woman by law, to live with a Drunkard, they ought to pass laws forbidding Drunkards to marry” (Gordon 162). This is another reference to the violence that could be inflicted in women because their husbands were alcoholic, and even sometimes they could get to the point of killing their wives. So, it was not just a question of end of love in the marriage but a question of personal security and dignity. Stanton was very committed in this issue of marriage and divorce because it also injured Women’s Rights and posed a risk in the life of many women of the nineteenth century.

b) Religion

Elizabeth Cady Stanton was educated in a Presbyterian family but early in her life she became sceptic and promoted religious liberalism (Mace 9). In spite of this, she wrote many documents about her religious ideas. She aspired to give a new perspective of the theological views since she thought that Church was an obsolete institution. One of her purposes was to show that the concept of Jesus and God had been corrupted by the Church. For her, God was compassionate and not a revengeful character whose function was punishing everyone for their sins (Kern 108-111). As she grew older, she began to change her mind about religious aspects and adopted rationalist views. She pointed out the following statement:

⁶ This article was retrieved from *The Selected Papers of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony: In the School of Anti-Slavery 1840-1866* by Ann D. Gordon.

I have endeavoured to dissipate these religious superstitions from the minds of women and base their faith on science and reason, where I found for myself at last that peace and comfort I could never find in the Bible and church (qtd. in Kern 112).

Now, focusing on the individual souls was more important than focusing on praying to God because there was no way of demonstrating his existence. Therefore, Stanton found more satisfaction in the facts that could be explained by the new scientific discoveries. Besides, she was not complacent with the Church as it did not put women in the same position as men. For instance, they could not have the same positions, women could not be deacons or delegates for the Church.

Over the years, Stanton sought a religion which put men and women in an equal position, but she was disillusioned about the other options that she took into consideration. As Stanton once stated: “You can go over the world and you will find that every form of religion which has breathed upon the earth has degraded woman” (“Address to the 17th...” 60). Due to all this, she became an agnostic person and a freethinker. Freethinkers searched ways of substituting religion and criticized the Christian morality (Kern 117). In 1895, Stanton published a book called *The Woman’s Bible* in which she did a deep review of the chapters of the Bible that made a direct reference to women. It also included the texts that did not incorporate women because they were marginalized (Stanton, *The Woman’s Bible* 6). Christian religion undervalued women while one of its premises is that we are all sons of God, then, why did it make a distinction between genders? Men were above women also when analysing religious aspects. For instance, women could not be deacons or delegates for the Church. On account of this, Stanton distanced herself from Church.

c) Housekeeping

Elizabeth Cady Stanton wrote an article on September 1850 titled “Housekeeping”⁷ that was also published in *The Lily* newspaper. She expressed her views on household management. In the article, she complains about men assuming that cleaning and organizing the house was exclusively a female task. She tells an anecdote about her supposed cousin Barbary who has a large family, a lot of money and servants, but still she suffers from anxiety. This is because she has a strange method for ordering her house. As she has little children, she needs to hide the domestic utensils just in case the children may have an accident (Gordon 172-174). Due to this, she has more work since she has to figure out where she put each object. The conclusion that Stanton reaches is that you should “have one place for every thing, and train your household to put things in their proper places” (Gordon 173). She advises women to maintain their houses organized methodically in order to facilitate their own work in the house and educate each family member to tidy up the objects that they have used. Therefore, housekeeping does not only depend on women but on the rest of the family.

According to Griffith (74), Susan B. Anthony moved to Seneca Falls and sometimes when Stanton had a lot of work, Anthony took care of her children. So Stanton could focus on her speeches and public appearances. Stanton clearly desired to dedicate herself to her role as reformist and tried to leave aside the domestic sphere. However, she had young children and it was very difficult for her to move between housekeeping and the public agenda (Griffith 85). She considered more important to raise her children and it was not possible for her to combine her work with the domestic activities anymore. So she began to spend more time at home reading and writing and decided to resume the feminist cause when her children grew up (Griffith 86-88). But she continued having children and as she said “my whole thought for the present must centre on bread and babies” (qtd. in Griffith 88). Although she was a reformist, she devoted herself to motherhood and acted as it was expected for a woman of that time.

⁷ This article was retrieved from *The Selected Papers of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony: In the School of Anti-Slavery 1840-1866* by Ann D. Gordon.

3.2. THOUGHTS OF SUSAN B. ANTHONY

a) Marriage

Still in the nineteenth century marriage and motherhood were considered the main purposes of a woman's life and the key elements to be called a successful woman. Nevertheless, Susan B. Anthony did not fulfil any of these requirements, but her life was not unhappy since she devoted it to work for improving the lives of the voiceless people that were suffering in the United States. She is one of the best examples of independent woman who did not need to find a man because she could do things by herself. Maybe, her job as a teacher when she was very young and the fact that she was earning a salary, although it was little money, helped her to construct her mentality and thus, she did not search the comfortable life of the average woman of that time (Gordon xxvii). The ideas of the Feminist Movement encouraged women to practice physical exercise and to look for employment in order to be self-sufficient. In that way, women could contribute to pay the expenses of the household like men. Moreover, education for women was beneficial. Instead of being taught coquetry techniques, they would learn how to explore the morality of men to find a suitable companion (Cruea 191-192). Anthony decided to dedicate her time to meetings, lectures and some writing and if she had married, she would not have had the same disposal to focus on her political issues. Although the feminist ideas of that time were not against marriage, Anthony preferred to focus on her professional career.

As her friend Stanton stated in her book *Eighty Years and More* (171-172), Anthony did not make a statement about her love life and there was no man associated with her. She was very private in this aspect and did not seem to pay special attention to any man. Anthony thought that she could not believe in the institution of marriage when women were like slaves because they did not have the same rights as men in the marriage. She saw marriage as an unequal union in which the husband had all the authority. The task of the wife was to be submissive and she had to be willing to fulfil the wishes of her husband. Her dreams and longings were never taken into account. Wives were just seen as objects and child bearers

at the Enlightenment era when the civilization was supposed to progress (Stanton, *Eighty Years and More* 219-220).

She was interviewed in 1896 by Nelly Bly and he asked her about her view of marriage. She said:

True marriage, the real marriage of soul, when two people take each other on terms of perfect equality, without the desire of one to control the other, is a beautiful thing; it is the highest condition of life; but for a woman to marry for support is demoralizing; and for a man to marry a woman merely because she has a beautiful figure or face is degradation (qtd. in Harper 859).

She regarded marriage as a corrupted institution because in that century there were many marriages of convenience. A lot of families or the women who were going to marry sought financial stability and comfort. She thought that it was denigrating for women that men chose them because of their beauty and not because of their intellect and personalities. That is one of the reasons why she was a fierce upholder of Women's Rights.

b) Religion

As stated before, Susan B. Anthony was raised in a Quaker family, but she had also other influences coming from her ancestors who belonged to the Universalist and Baptist churches (Harper 5). When she was seventeen years old, she became a member of the Quakers because that was the only way in which she could participate in the discussions among the members. Otherwise, she would be excluded as her father was the only member of the Quaker church as such. At this age, she seemed to be curious and involved in religion. She expected to find God in her soul and that was a way of finding herself and examining her inner thoughts and feelings. Anthony was inspired by William Henry Channing who was a reverend that encouraged her to explore her spirituality. In 1890, she was offered the possibility of participating in a suffrage convention in which the speakers

were warned to not pronounce anything that could offend Christianity. Anthony's response was:

I wonder if they'll be as particular to warn all other speakers not to say anything which shall sound like an attack on liberal religion. They never seem to think we have any feelings to be hurt when we have to sit under their reiteration of orthodox cant and dogma (Harper 2: 678).

She was offended because of the lack of respect to other religions different from the Christian and she thought that one of the bases of the modern societies was respecting each human being equally. Nevertheless, Anthony changed her mind at the same time that she was growing old and became an agnostic (Stanton, *Eighty Years and More* 160-161).

In a speech that dated from the 27 May 1983, Anthony talked about the religious press. The speech was titled "The Moral Leadership of the Religious Press" and appeared on the *Chicago Tribune*. She was mocked and called "infidel" by the religious press because her father was a Quaker. Besides, she was upset since the Christian church was not supporting the Anti-Slavery cause or claiming the need of equal rights for women (Gordon, *Body-Politic* 516-521). That could be one of the reasons of her agnosticism since she could not understand religions that undervalued a collective of people because of their colour or their gender.

In the same interview with Nelly Bly aforementioned, they touched the religious scope. When she was asked about immortality, she said that if there is a supreme order that organizes everything that happens in the world, there should be something beyond. That is to say, she believed in live after death although she did not know if there was a heaven or even a God. She might not have believed in a God understood as the universal concept of God for all religions, but in this supreme order that at least was useful to give sense to life and to comprehend what was the engine that made things happen. Then, she said that she was always praying because for her praying was the same as working. She stated that she was praying when she worked for achieving the equality between men and women and when she vindicated the rights of women, the universal rights. She thought that a God that

made people kneel or was pleased about the fact that everyone praised him could not exist (Harper 2: 859). The religious sphere was often present in Anthony's life and although she had an opinion about many religious aspects, it cannot be said that she was a religious person as she was more focused in other aspects.

c) Housekeeping

Anthony was one of the managers of the State Industrial School in Rochester where abandoned or poor children had an opportunity to receive an education. In this school, they also had to do domestic tasks such as the laundry. What she provided was a reorganization of the tasks in order to facilitate sewing or cleaning to the children, mainly to girls, who were more exploited with domestic tasks (Harper 2: 216-217). When she was about seventy years old, she was described as a perfect housekeeper and she did many domestic tasks herself such as dusting, cleaning the floor or preparing the tables. Anthony enjoyed preparing meetings at her house. Her house was exceptionally tidy and ordered as stated by her guests. Anthony said once that:

I wish I had nothing else to do the rest of my life, but to sit quietly down in my own home and darn stockings and hem towels, and gathered my friends about me and have one read while the rest of us listened and then all discuss it (qtd. in Harper 3: 1300).

It seems that she really took pleasure in put her house in order with her own hands to ensure that everything was perfect for the gatherings that she held at home. In this respect, she differs from Stanton who was not preoccupied about social meetings. Stanton focused on her role as mother. As she had to take care of a family, this did not leave her much time to take care of the house. It is clear that Anthony and Stanton had different mentalities since Anthony was a spinster and Stanton was a married woman with children.

Anthony also instructed her nieces to perform the domestic tasks meticulously. Perhaps, she devoted more time to the domestic sphere because she was recommended by her friends to stop her busy life of conventions and trips around different countries and continents (Harper 2: 706). Her hospitality made her a famous host that everybody loved and she had a good reputation as a housekeeper as many letters of her friends have shown. She preferred doing domestic tasks by herself because she was very perfectionist and she wanted to ensure that her house was immaculate for her visits.

4. CONCLUSIONS

All things considered, it can be asserted that Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony were two revolutionary women that went beyond the limitations of that time. Being a woman was not an easy task when most of the times they were invisible to society and they had to live behind the shadow of their husbands. Marriage was regarded as a kind of salvation since that was the way in which women could participate in social events or help their husbands in their business. Thus, Stanton and Anthony had to overcome the constraints imposed by a patriarchal society and they took the lead and not follow the established canons of conduct for a woman. They were not submissive, in fact, they were very active women socially and politically speaking. Nevertheless, Stanton's husband influenced her positively in her political views and did not oppress her as he accepted willingly that she was a woman with initiative. Anthony found inspiration in her father who was an abolitionist preoccupied about the Human Rights. In both cases, they were influenced by a male figure but they went further and started their own fight. They were supported by these figures but they initiated their own campaigns helping in this process of abolition of slavery.

Analysing the letters written by both women, it was possible to extract direct information about which was their level of involvement in the Anti-Slavery cause. Stanton was influenced by some female relatives that informed or asked her about the latest news in abolitionism topics. What is clear is that she was interested and committed with the cause since it was present in her personal correspondence. Stanton was an active member of the Anti-Slavery Society and she attended to almost every meeting and Anthony also was a member of the Society but she was more focused on her work for the Temperance Society. However, it can be said that Stanton was more committed with Abolitionism than Anthony since there are more documents and letters about this topic written by Stanton, or addressing Stanton, than written by Anthony. The Anti-Slavery Movement was closely intertwined with the Women's Rights Movement because both implied the oppression of a social group that was considered a weak group. For this reason, in many of the encounters

in favour of Women's Rights in which Stanton and Anthony participated, there was space for touching the topic of slavery. Moreover, in several speeches written by them also about the woman question, they mention slavery as a great concern and huge problem in the country. Their role as abolitionists was relevant since they educated hundreds of people to act against slavery.

Their visions of controversial topics such as marriage, religion or housekeeping were crucial to define their personalities and to know why they were so important in the Women's Rights cause as professed feminists. Stanton thought that marriage always favoured the husband and she advocated for a law of divorce for women because that only existed for husbands and a lot of wives were mistreated at that time. Anthony thought that wives were treated like slaves and were subjugated to their husbands. Both women coincided in their opinions about this aspect. As for religion, both were educated by their families to believe in God. However, as time went by and they educated themselves and experimented changes in their lives, they became agnostic. Since the new era of the Industrialization had developed in that century, they believed in the changes brought by science. For them, their work and political activism were more important than worshipping to someone whose existence could not be proven. Finally, as housekeeping was seen as a feminine activity, Stanton complained because she thought that all members of the family should contribute to the management of the house. Furthermore, Anthony was known for being an excellent host and she knuckled down to keep her house perfect. So they had more and more an open mentality and contributed to the creation of a new way of viewing life for women. They did not need to follow the established rules, instead they needed to start having their own opinions. It can be also asserted that they contributed to end slavery in the United States thanks to their political activism and their ability as orators.

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