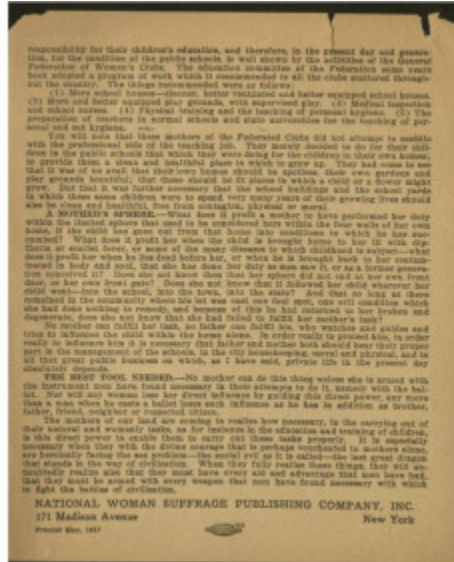


[Madeline McDowell Breckinridge, "A Mother's Sphere" \(New York: National Woman Suffrage Pub. Co., Inc., May 1917\)](#)

Image published by Randolph Hollingsworth on Tuesday, July 24, 2018

[breckinridge-motherssphere-nawsa-may1917.jpg](#)

Madeline McDowell Breckinridge Papers, 1867, 1888-1923. 52M3: Box 5, folder 42. University of Kentucky Special Collections Research Center, Lexington, Ky.



Description:

Author: Madeline McDowell Breckinridge

Title: "A Mother's Sphere"

Publisher: New York: National Woman Suffrage Publishing Company Inc., May 1917

Image courtesy of U.K. Special Collections Research Center from pamphlet in Madeline McDowell Breckinridge Papers, 1867, 1888-1923. 52M3: Box 5, folder 42. University of Kentucky Libraries Special Collections Research Center, Lexington, Ky.

According to Sophonisba Breckinridge in her biography of her sister-in-law, Madeline wrote this essay for the Political Science Committee of the General Federation of Women's Clubs. Breckinridge accepted the traditional view that a woman's role in the domestic sphere was to raise children - but that included oversight of the public sphere where the children go also. Women then have a duty as mothers to make sure that they children are well cared for in schools and cities. So, says Breckinridge, mothers must participate in the "great public business" on which the family's private life depends and that a woman's sphere "led wherever the child goes." This requires that women have access to the vote.

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