

## Introduction

What is significant about the year 1892 in American history? Grover Cleveland is in the White House, Ellis Island becomes the reception area for new immigrants, and a seventy-six year old woman from Johnstown New York presents a speech that will move generations to come. Elizabeth Cady Stanton devoted her life to improving that of others and changing women's role in society. Her idleness as a stay at home mother and lack of intellectual stimulus urged her to voice her frustration by congregating with like-minded women. These woman, Lucretia Mott, Martha Coffin Wright, Susan B. Anthony and many more, helped to pioneer a movement that would become the historic Woman's Suffrage Movement (Anthony 17). These women made it their job to speak out against the patriarchal society they lived in and fight for equality. During their life women were forced to give their earned money to their husbands or fathers, had a limited choice of jobs, had unequal pay, were not allowed to own property, were not allowed to go to college, could not speak out in public meetings and were not allowed to vote in any election (Anthony 15). They were forced to be dependent on their male counterparts.

The feminist of this time period became invested in changing the status quo and changing the lives of their daughters and granddaughters. Elizabeth Cady Stanton's "Solitude of Self" speech used humanistic appeals to persuade her male audience of the innate right for individual autonomy. This masterpiece of an address was presented on three historic occasions (Campbell 304). The speech was revolutionary for its vehicle in communicating feminism. It reminds the male audience that the right to vote is not the only aim of feminism but the need for equality is vital as well (Campbell 311). This message is conveyed through the use of the human condition and the structure of the speech. In addition to the structure, the message comes to life as Elizabeth Cady Stanton takes her audience on a voyage through the human life (Stormer 51). I

argue that Elizabeth Cady Stanton's speech "Solitude of Self" embodies feminist ideology with the call for self-realization and self-governance by advancing her argument with transcendental thought. Her use of metaphors, imagery, references and the structure of her poem, the lyric, add to the pathos of her argument and touch the human soul.

### Background of Rhetor

Unlike most women in society Elizabeth was educated. She helped to organize the historic Seneca Falls Convention in New York. Elizabeth and her partner Susan B. Anthony formed two different organizations the National Woman Suffrage Association and the American Woman Suffrage Association, both fighting for equality in society (Man 6). These two organizations eventually merged to form the National American Woman Suffrage Association and Elizabeth Cady Stanton became the first president (Man 52). From a young age Elizabeth Cady Stanton dedicated her life to changing the norm of society.

Part of her responsibility as president, she often traveled to give speeches and lectures (Man 143). She also joined the Lyceum Circuit where she embarked on an eight-year career traveling and lecturing for months during the year. This allowed for her name to become recognized, provided lecturing practice, was a way to spread her ideas to the public and advance her career as a member of the women's rights movement (Man 143). This venture did not only bring in money for Elizabeth but also helped to shape her into a refined orator. This experience provided her with the means to spread the word about feminist ideals and move the fight forward. Not only was she an activist but an orator, a writer, an author, and an outspoken social and political commentator. Elizabeth died in October in 1902 only eighteen years shy of women acquiring the right to vote (Man 143).

### Significance of "Solitude of Self"

This speech has been commonly referred to as unique primarily because it does not explicitly state an argument or provide evidence (Campbell 305). Lacking these essential rhetorical aspects it is profound that the speech had such a significant impact. With the help of Elizabeth Cady Stanton "The Solitude of Self" has contributed in shaping the world that we live in today. This speech is very empowering to women because it reminds them what previous generations fought for in order to have the status we have today in society. Women have come far from lobbying in the Congress for the right to vote to acquiring the vote and now being seated in Congress. That being said, it is also significant since not all women enjoy the same equality we have here in America. There are many cultures where inequality still exists and the speech "Solitude of Self" still breathes meaning into their lives. Even today Elizabeth Cady Stanton's words are able to speak to women and empathize with them. She helped to push American society forward and called for the integration of women into all facets of society and even today women living in unequal societies can turn to this movement and particularly this speech for empowerment.

### The Speech, Occasion, and Audience

In thirty-seven paragraphs Elizabeth Cady Stanton takes her audience on a journey through human life stressing the need for individuality of each human soul. She begins the speech by bluntly stating her reason for being before the Congress committee and jumps into her speech by providing reasons why women should enjoy the same rights as men. She then moves into the progression of life and its many stages. She first references a little girl, a young woman, then the mother figure and finally old age. It is through this journey that she describes to her audience the trials and tribulations of life and the necessity for personal responsibility and self-

sovereignty. Embedded in this journey is the argument for “the full development of her facilities” (Stanton). The need for education and the right tools to face the trials and tribulations that life will present to her.

In the “Solitude of Self”, Stanton uses allusions that resonated with her audience such as comparisons to Shakespeare’s play *Titus and Andronicus* and *Robinson Crusoe*. She also uses examples of experience and situations that the men in her audience could relate with. For instance she references a young girl of sixteen which men in the audience who have daughters and more broadly children would relate with. She illustrates a girl thrown out into the world trying to support herself and find a place in society without the right faculties. She references the temptations that this girl would have to resist and how she needs more than intuition to get by, she needs an educated mind (Stanton). There are many short episodes of realistic situations that help the persuasive element of this speech. By the time she presents the speech before the Congress committee Elizabeth Cady Stanton has already delivered this speech twice. This could affect how comfortable she was with the content and how eloquently she delivered the speech to the Congress committee.

Who is entitled to a human being? Elizabeth Cady Stanton attempted to answer this question at seventy-six years old in her farewell address as president to the National American Woman Suffrage Association (Campbell 304). She delivered the speech, “The Solitude of Self” on three momentous occasions. The first two were spoken on the eighteenth of January in 1892 to both the House committee on the Judiciary and to the National American Woman Suffrage Association. Shortly after, she spoke before the Senate Committee on Woman’s Suffrage and the speech was also printed in *The Woman’s Journal* (Campbell 304). “As presented to congressional committees, the speech was part of a yearly lobbying effort of the association,

made in conjunction with its national convention in Washington, D.C., to persuade Congress to pass federal suffrage amendment” (Campbell 304). Elizabeth was speaking in front of many men in society, including government policy makers. “Elizabeth Cady Stanton was a skilled rhetor who had spoken and testified frequently before legislature groups since her address to the New York State Legislature in 1854” (Campbell 305). It is particularly interesting to examine her strategy for speaking in front of the Congress committee. “According to Campbell, it is unusual in the context of nineteenth-century woman’s activism because it ‘violated nearly all traditional rules’ of persuasive discourse, particularly those rules common to women’s advocacy Stanton herself helped pioneer” (Stormer 51). She took a different approach in order to get the attention of the men. Instead of focusing on gender differences she accentuated our similarities as human beings. “The problem she faced, that feminists have continually faced, is that the evidence of equality resides in the blunt fact that women’s existence but women have consistently been embodied (politically as well as biologically) as less than human, or less deserving humans than men” (Stormer 54). She then must materialize individuality and create women’s identity as more than a mother or a wife. This was unlike any approached used before and struck a cord with her audience.

“Exhorting the audience to seek ‘full human development,’ she posits that to face life challenges and learn from them each must have all society can offer in education, health, and opportunity” (Stormer 53). These are facilities she feels all humans should have in order to be self-governing citizens of society. She is asking her audience to recognize this. Her audience was both males and females. Thousands of women would have been present when Elizabeth recited her speech at the National American Woman Suffrage Association. When delivering the speech to the Congress in 1892, the only audience would have been white male policy makers. Once the

speech was published in *The Woman's Journal* virtually anyone could have read it. In 1892 her message would have been controversial and her audience would have had strong opinions about woman's suffrage. Many people did not know how to react to this radical way of thinking. "She read these words into a silent room. No one clapped, no one spoke. Not because the audience, as when Lincoln delivered the Gettysburg Address, was profoundly moved, but because a voice speaking existential truth was not, at this politically practical moment, wanted" (Gornick 3). Clearly, Elizabeth Cady Stanton had a difficult job talking to a room full of men where she was unwanted.

Stanton is not appealing to only women but to all individuals. She is asking the men to not only see them as women but as individuals that deserve equality in society. Campbell argues: "This is a speech for woman's rights broadly conceived; more properly, it is a speech for human rights" (Campbell 310). Stanton breaks down society to its basic level: human beings going through life alone. In sum she says, "We see reason sufficient in the outer conditions of human being for individual liberty and development, but we consider the self dependence of every human soul we see the need of courage, judgment, and the exercise of every faculty of mind and body, strengthened and developed by use, in woman as well as man" (Stanton 8). She references how society has progressed and with it should equal rights. Stanton assures that the right to vote will not radically change their lives but enrich society.

### The Arrangement of the Speech

"Solitude of Self" closely mimics the structure of a lyric. "Typically, a lyric poem attempts to explore and express all facets of a feeling or attitude in a series of statements referring to a single idea or theme" (Man 36). "Solitude of Self" is comprised of a single idea: the solitude of human self. It goes further and attempts to explore all aspects of this concept.

Stanton lays out her argument by first talking about the individual, second her duties as a citizen, and third the rights she has acquired from the incidental relations of life (Stanton). The speech expresses all facets by relying on personal experience and metaphors that create a connection with her audience. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell explains, "The lyric is intimate in tone, relies on personal experience, and uses sensual or aesthetic materials, including metaphor, to induce a response in the audience" (Man 136). In fact a lyric is so intimate it seems inappropriate to be heard in public which provides a personal touch.

Staying consistently with the lyric "Solitude of Self" "develops through enumeration" (Campbell 305). Stanton takes her audience on a journey through human life. She starts with childhood and works her way to old age where she talks about the various roles that one may take in their lifetime such as daughter, mother, or wife. After the audience listens to her speech they will have lived the human experience through her words. But what life comes down to is that the individual is unique, responsible, and separate. Since the individual is completely alone they naturally must govern themselves. Also resembling the lyric "Solitude of Self," maintains an intimate and figurative tone throughout the speech. Stanton takes her audience on a solitary journey through life that is rather lonely. "And yet, there is a solitude which each and everyone one of us has always carried with him, more inaccessible than the ice-cored mountain, more profound than the midnight sea; the solitude of self" (Stanton). Stanton is opening her audiences minds to the reality that no one can be responsible for anyone but themselves and in order to fully take responsibility for one's self they need the proper tools. These proper tools that Stanton is referencing are individual rights.

Stanton uses imagery and personal experience to resonate with her audience. "On divine heights of human attainment, eulogized and worshipped as a hero or saint, we stand alone, in

ignorance, poverty and vice, as a pauper or criminal, alone we starve or steal..." (Stanton).

Stanton uses imagery to illustrate that it does not matter if you are a saint or a sinner you stand alone in life. She fills her speech with imagery and personal experience to relate to her audience and develop an intimate relationship. Although Stanton creates an intimate relationship with the audience her approach is indirect. Stanton uses a more personal style that feels as if the audience is listening to her diary. This indirect approach is one that is consistent with the structure of a lyric.

### Tragic perspective

Unique to this speech is the perspective that Stanton employs. She uses that of a tragic perspective. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell describes why in her opinion this perspective is rare in rhetoric: "Most speeches take a comic perspective because they affirm that groups can act successfully to produce change, whereas tragedy focuses on destiny or fate as it affects the individual" (Man 139). Whether or not this perspective is common in rhetoric, it is what drives Stanton's message of each individual being "unique, individually responsible, and separate—alone" (Stanton). Stanton's style may be flowery but nothing about her message is.

Tragedy and comedy have been traditionally seen as two sides of one coin. Susane K. Langer explains the relationship between these two opposites, "The tragic rhythm of action is the rhythm of man's life at its highest powers in the limits of his unique, death-bound career. Tragedy is the image of Fate, as comedy is of Fortune. Tragedy is a fulfillment, and its form therefore is closed, final and passionate" (Campbell 308). Tragedy is restricted and isolates the individual from society focusing on individuals in moments of hardship. Following in suit, Stanton focuses on the individual and the cynical reality of life's journey. Aside from whether women acquire the right to vote, the truth remains everyone is alone. "But when all artificial



trammels are removed, and women are recognized as individuals, responsible for their won environments, thoroughly educated for all positions in life they may be called to fill...they will in measure be fitted for those hours of solitude that come alike to all whether prepared or otherwise.” Consistent with the tragic perspective, Stanton is focusing on the individual and the inevitable fact that everyone is alone in this world.

### Feminist Influence

In a general sense Feminism, “is the set of beliefs and ideas that belong to the broad social and political movement to achieve greater equality for women. As its governing ideology, feminism gives shape and direction to the women’s movement and, of course, is shaped by it. Women seek equality in all spheres of life and use a broad array of strategies to achieve that goal” (Stanford 2). The term feminism did not come to mean anything other than “having the qualities of a female” until the mid-nineteenth century (Man 3). “In the 1890s the term came into use, primarily by anti-suffragists, to refer negatively to woman’s rights activists, that is, those committed to the legal, economic, and social equality of women” (Man 3). It was then, after the turn of the century when suffragists took the term feminism enhanced it and started to use it as their own (Man 3). Through the years feminism has been broken down into three different waves.

The beginning of feminism was a fight against patriarchy and the necessity for equality in society. First Wave feminist focused on abolition, voting rights and temperance causes. “The struggle to achieve basic political rights during the period from the mid-19th century until the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920 counts as “First Wave” feminism” (Stanford). The 1848 Seneca Falls Convention in New York is commonly the event associated with the start of the First Wave of feminism in the United States. There is a lull between the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup>

amendment and the start of the Second Wave. Second Wave feminism kicked back up again during the 1960s and 70s. “Second Wave feminist concentrated on the ERA and wage equality; developed “gender” and “sexism” as key categories of analysis, critiqued beauty culture, and fought for black, gay and New Left movements” (Stanford). They started to branch out into the social and economic spheres and fight for equality.

Third Wave feminism began around the 1980s and can be argued is still around today, includes the struggle with race and class along with gender. “Third Wave feminists often critique Second Wave feminism for its lack of attention to the differences among women due to race, ethnicity, class, nationality, religion, and emphasize “identity” as a site of gender struggle” (Stanford 2). This phases starts to look at equality in the general sense not just gender. The ideology of the Third Wave feminism was their belief that in order to end oppression in general, all forms of oppression must be removed. Feminism started with the fight for women to have a say in their government 163 years ago and the fight for equality still exists today. “Solitude of Self” calls for equality in the political realm and particularly the right to vote fitting under Wave One feminism.

Women during Wave One were living in a male dominated world. Women of this time period faced many barriers, one of which was the denial to speak. “Quiet simply, in ninetieth-century America, femininity and rhetorical action were seen as mutually exclusive. No “true woman” could be a public persuader” (Campbell 9-10). If a woman did speak out she was seen as being “masculine” and unwomanly. But at the same time women had to demonstrate their expertise, authority and rationality in order to be seen as credible by their audience (Man 12). This contradiction made it hard for women to succeed. A positive outcome of this oppression is it pushed woman to develop a feminine style in rhetorical discourse.

Karlyn Kohrs Campbell relates women's craft-learning- cooking, sewing, childbearing, etc- to characteristics in discourse. Similar to craft-learning characteristics such as personal tone, personal experience, inductive structuring, and audience participation are also present in rhetorical discourse. Also an effort to create identification with the audience through personal experience is an important characteristic. "The goal of such rhetoric is empowerment, a term contemporary feminist have used to refer to the process of persuading listeners that they can act effectively in the world, that they can be 'agents of change'" (Bitzer 1968). These characteristics also describe the stylistic features of consciousness-raising. Consciousness-raising works well for people advocating social change since many oppressed groups have passive communication style and consciousness-raising creates a comfortable environment. "Whether in a small group, from the podium, or on the page, consciousness-raising invites audience members to participate in the persuasive process- it empowers them" (Man13). This can be very persuasive when the speaker and the audience are able to identify with common values and shared experiences.

It is this feminist influence that makes "Solitude of Self" so persuasive. The way that Stanton is able to connect with her audience through personal experience creates identification. She mentions various roles woman have in society and how much more proficient they could be in these roles if woman first focused on improving themselves as an individual. This identification used by Stanton pushes her argument into reality. It also allows for a degree of trust from her audience. Stanton assures her audience that she understands where they are coming from. Her credibility is boosted since she is seventy-six years old and her journey of life is coming to an end. This identification coupled with empowerment persuades listeners to be the agent of change. It allows them to feel they can make a difference. It is Stanton's use of consciousness raising which allows for her audience to feel comfortable participating in the woman's

movement. Through “Solitude of Self” Stanton creates a group of individuals who have a message they are willing to preach, the support of like-minded individuals and a cause to fight for.

### Transcendentalism and its influence

Transcendentalism emerged in America in the 1830 through the 1840s as a movement against intellectualism and Unitarianism taught more specifically at Harvard University. In a general sense they believed in the transcendence of the physical through individual intuition. Grodzins states,

“Transcendentalism emerged from Unitarianism, or “liberal Christianity”—an anti-Calvinist, anti-Trinitarian, anticreedal offshoot of Puritanism that had taken hold among the middle and upper classes of eastern Massachusetts. The founders of transcendentalism were Unitarian intellectuals who came of age, or became Unitarians, in the 1820s and 1830s (180).

From Unitarianism, the leaders of the transcendentalist period adopted beliefs in “self-culture, a sense of moral seriousness, a new Platonic concept of piety, a tendency toward individualism a belief in the importance of literature, and an interest in moral reform” (Grodzins 180). It was German philosophical idealism that transcendentalists agreed with. It was philosophers such as Immanuel Kant that were revered. “The transcendentalists liked the Kantian approach, which gave the mind, not matter, ultimate control over the shape of human experience. The name of their movement was derived from Kant’s philosophical term” (Grodzins 180). They were not concerned with what name they gave themselves but were instead referred to as “like-minded.” Orestes Brownson attempted to explain the Transcendentalist: “nothing can be more unjust to

them, or more likely to mislead the public than to lump them all together, and predicate the same things of them all” (Gura 5). So in simple words they united to differ.

This philosophy surely was influential in Stanton’s writing. She was exposed to the rhetoric of transcendentalist writers and their message was in tune with what Stanton believed. For instance, her eight-year stint being a lecturer for the Lyceum Circuit exposed her to emerging popular thought of the time. Transcendentalism was an emerging popular thought at the time. The most identified figures of this movement are Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau. Emerson was a Harvard graduate and initially was a Unitarian clergyman but realized he wanted to become a lecturer. Emerson is known for his controversial first publication of *Nature*. *Nature* was criticized for its distinct style that was unseen before. Thoreau was also a Harvard graduate and became Emerson’s protégé. He is known for his masterpiece *Walden* where he uncovers his unique perspective on nature. These men’s ideas can be seen in Stanton’s writings. Thoreau commented on a piece by a colleague, “we must first succeed alone before we maybe enjoy our success together” (Gura 204). This is the main message of “Solitude of Self” and what Stanton is asking her audience to understand.

The most prominent Transcendentalist woman of the time was Margaret Fuller. She was active in the transcendentalist movement through her job as the editor for the quarterly periodical, *The Dial*. It was a vehicle for transcendentalist writers and thinkers to publish their work and get their ideas out to the public. Margaret her self was published in *The Dial* one of her pieces being “The Great Lawsuit. Man versus Men, Woman versus Women” (Gura 129). She was an advocate for women’s right as well during her time: “(She) criticized the lack of educational, political, and economic opportunities for women of the era. In the famous series of “conversations” she led for women (1839–1844), Fuller set out to encourage their intellectual

development, and in her *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (1846), issued a famous manifesto in favor of women's rights" (Grodzins 181). This is consistent with what Stanton is arguing in her "Solitude of Self." The push for woman to develop their own faculties and be allowed into all spheres of life. In the article "The Great Lawsuit, Man versus Men, Woman versus Women" she advocates for the individual enlightenment and for women to be seen as equals. In the essay she explains, "Male and female represent two sides of the great radical dualism" (Fuller 460). Just like in Stanton's speech she is arguing that man and woman are not that different they are both individuals with the same intellectual abilities. Fuller and Stanton are both poster women for the advancement of woman's rights and woman's place in the world.

The underlying ideology of Transcendentalism can be seen in Stanton's speech "Solitude of Self." One of the major concepts of transcendentalism, the belief in individualism, is the main message in "Solitude of Self." Stanton defends her arguments in the speech by outwardly saying, "this occasion is the individuality of each human soul; our Protestant idea, the right of individual conscience and judgment – our republican idea, individual citizenship" (Stanton). Stanton builds the foundation of her speech on ideas such as these. Just as transcendentalists preach the importance of "mind not matter having control over shaping human experience," Stanton argues the same in "Solitude of Self." The bones of her argument include the "full development of one's faculties." She claims that through the mind one can be free and take personal responsibility for their individual life. It is the transcendentalist influence that is the foundation for her message.

#### The Development of Transcendentalism and Feminism Ideology in "Solitude of Self"

Transcendentalism made its way to America in the early to middle 19<sup>th</sup> century. This new ideology, "was not primarily a philosophy or a reform movement: it was a mental and spiritual

attitude. Essentially, it sought to find the source of all truth within the nature of man. Where the intellect failed to supply the necessary grounds for knowledge, 'the soul', or spiritual intuition, came to the rescue" (Gohdes 10). Transcendentalism emphasized the individual soul and connection with the spiritual world. "Transcendentalism is best considered as a way of perceiving the world, centered on individual consciousness rather than on external fact" (Gura 8). The ideology goes even further to mention the spiritual principle innately presented in each individual super cedes any outward laws or injunctions (Gura 10). This movement called for people to look into themselves for the moral compass in society.

"Solitude of Self" embodies the feminist tenets of consciousness-raising, risking of self, and deliver's the message of equality of the individual through transcendentalist ideology. Elizabeth Cady Stanton relates to her audience by using personal experience and examples, engaging her in consciousness-raising. She initially takes her audience on a voyage through human life describing examples of difficulties that may arise during each period of life. "The girl of sixteen, thrown on the world to support herself, to make her own place in society, to resist the temptations that surround her and maintain a spotless integrity, must do all this by native force or superior education" (Stanton). This can be universally applied to her audience. For the women who have had this happen to them, for the parents who have let go of a daughter and for those parents who still have a young daughter. This common value of love for yourself and child resonates with her audience. She then uses the emotional appeal to empower her audience to not let this happen to your daughter and in order to secure her safety she needs the ability to exercise her faculties. She continues to use examples like these that urge her audience to see the cognition for self-sovereignty and ultimately the justification for giving women the right to vote.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton's ability to be the voice for millions of woman came with a cost. She willingly risked herself by being one of the leaders for the women's suffrage movement. It was not uncommon for male members of congress to outwardly show their disinterest when Elizabeth Cady Stanton presented speeches before them. "The peculiarly aggravating feature of the present occasion was the studied inattention and contempt of the chairman... He alternatively looked over some manuscripts and newspapers before him, then jumped up to open or close a door or window" (Man 135). She is outwardly rejecting a concept that patriarchy accepts- the idea that women should have the right to vote. But the way the speech is constructed does not outwardly attack patriarchy instead it presents arguments against why society thinks women should not have the right to vote. She does this by talking about the individual, nature, and the solitude of self. Her main mode for equalizing the genders is through transcendentalist ideology.

Instead of constructing gender in a particular way "Solitude of Self" takes a unique approach by focusing on the individual and therefore erasing genders. This transcendentalist ideology that is embedded in the speech breaks down gender difference and focuses on the individual and what nature intended. One of Elizabeth Cady Stanton's arguments is centered on "incidental relations of life" such as becoming a mother, a sister, a wife and she questions why these "incidental relations of life" do not restrict males. "In discussing the sphere of man we do not decided his right as an individual, as a citizen, as a man by his duties as a father, a husband, a brother or a son, relations some of which he may never fill" (Stanton). Since we are all individuals before we become any of this "incidental relations of life" we should fully develop our facilities first in order to be better equipped for these incidents. She continues by saying, "Just so with woman. The education that will fit her to discharge the duties in the largest sphere of human usefulness will best fit her for whatever special work she may be compelled to do"



(Stanton). To break it down, once you strip away the restricted labels we are all just individuals capable of furthering our faculties, becoming better individuals, and therefore more successful citizens.

Stanton uses the imagery of life as a solitary voyage and argues individuals need all the tools necessary in order to navigate properly. “To guide our own craft, we must be captain, pilot, engineer; with chart and compass to stand at the wheel; to match the wind and waves and know when to take in the sail and to read the signs in the firmament over all” (Stanton). The crux of what she continues to say does not matter if the voyager is a man or woman because all of us are individuals. She continues to refine the argument, “Nature having endowed them equally, leaves to their own skill and judgment in the hour of danger, and if not equal to the occasion, alike they perish” (Stanton). Again she is stripping away gender by using transcendentalist ideology of nature’s endowments to individuals. The claim that nature endowed both man and woman equally takes away societal constrictions. The only part that matters is the individual and it is the individual that must navigate through life with the necessary tools to help them.

Another motif embedded in the speech is the concept that “each man bears his own burden.” Stanton justifies this statement with an analogy of fitting an army. She argues there is no way that an army can be successful as a whole until each individual is prepared and suited with the right tools. Stanton continues, “We provide alike for all individual necessities, then each man bears his own burden” (Stanton). Asking society to provide each individual with the opportunity to be a full functioning individual and in the end we will be a better nation for it as a whole. This claim is further supported with the realization that individuals with their own resources are thrown out into the world at a young age. “The great lesson that nature seems to teach us at all ages is self-dependence, self-protection, self- support” (Stanton). Again, we see

transcendentalist ideology shedding through with the mention of nature and the idea that nature transcends the here and now. That there is a bigger force out there that should be recognized. Stanton's argument of nature and nature's intentions downplays societies rules through the transcendentalist ideology.

She ends the speech with the realization that we are all alone. "And yet, there is a solitude, which each and every one of us has always carried with him, more inaccessible than the ice-cold mountains, more profound than the midnight sea; the solitude of self" (Stanton). This argument does not alienate people as by themselves but rather is a synecdoche that we are all alone in this together. As transcendentalist ideology harps on the power of the individual. She leaves her audience with a question that seems evident. "Who, I ask, can take, dare take, on himself the rights, the duties, the responsibilities of another human soul?" (Stanton)

### Conclusion

Elizabeth Cady Stanton's "Solitude of Self" speaks to her audience and has moved generations in the process. Through the arrangement of the speech, the lyric, she captivates her audience by leading them on a journey through life. This journey through life is a tragic one but it is through this realization that one can appreciate the true importance in life- solitude of self. Toward the end of the speech Stanton soberly describes, "And yet, there is a solitude, which each and every one of us has always carried with him, more inaccessible than the ice-cold mountains, more profound than the midnight seas; the solitude of self" (Stanton). With this realization Stanton argues that no one can act for any other human being and in order to fully live every individual should have the opportunity to develop their own faculties. It is through the feminist ideology that strengthens her argument and calls for independent woman who are responsible for themselves. Stanton embarks on an indirect approach that does not demand equal rights but

instead lures her audience. Her speech is a call for equality for woman and embodies the essences of the feminist movement.

Transcendentalist ideology is apparent in “Solitude of Self” with the emphasis on the individual and the endowment of intellectual stimulation. She delivered this speech at the end of a long career of fighting for equality and even today this speech speaks to advocates for equal rights around the world. This speech incorporates many ideologies and helps to educate people on the feminist movement. It has been incredibly informative for my own knowledge and is capable of open other’s eyes to the importance of individual freedoms. “Solitude of Self” is intimate, moving, and incredibly honest. Elizabeth Cady Stanton may have passed on, but her fight and spirit lives on. Even today her words are encouraging women.

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