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Goldilocks and the Trojan Horse

Creating and Maintaining Coalitions

"Now, the Star-Belly Sneetches
Had bellies with stars.
The Plain-Belly Sneetches
Had none upon thars.
Those stars weren't so big. They were really so small
You might think such a thing wouldn't matter at all.
But, because they had stars, all the Star-Belly Sneetches
Would brag, 'We're the best kind of Sneetch on the beaches.'
With their snoots in the air, they would sniff and they'd snort
'We'll have nothing to do with the Plain-Belly sort!'"

Dr. Seuss

Memories of her greatness have faded, but no one did more for women's suffrage in America than Lucy Stone. In 1855, she took a stand for women's rights that moved thousands to follow in her footsteps, calling themselves Lucy Stoners in homage. Over the next century, the Lucy Stone League included aviator Amelia Earhart, poet Edna St. Vincent Millay, and artist Georgia O'Keeffe. Among today's women who qualify as Lucy Stoners are Beyoncé, Sheryl Sandberg, Sarah Jessica Parker, and Spanx founder Sara Blakely.

Lucy Stone was the first woman in America to keep her own name after getting married. It was one of her many firsts: she was the first woman from Massachusetts to earn a bachelor's degree. She was the

first American to become a full-time lecturer for women's rights, mobilizing countless supporters and converting numerous adversaries to join the movement. She became one of only a handful of women who spoke in public at all, let alone on women's rights. She led national conventions, and she launched the country's foremost women's newspaper, the *Woman's Journal,* which ran for half a century. In the words of Carrie Chapman Catt, the suffragist who campaigned successfully for the Nineteenth Amendment, which gave women the right to vote: "The suffrage success of today is not conceivable without the *Woman's Journal*'s part in it."

In 1851, Stone organized a women's rights convention, but didn't take the podium until she was coaxed into speaking on the last day. "We want to be something more than the appendages of society," Stone pronounced, calling for women to petition state legislatures for the rights to vote and hold property. Her remarks became known as the speech that set the women's rights movement on fire. Her words made their way across the Atlantic Ocean, where they inspired British philosophers John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor Mill to publish a famous essay on the enfranchisement of women, which helped to mobilize women's suffrage activists in England.

In America, perhaps the most significant effect was on a Rochester teacher named Susan B. Anthony—Stone's speech inspired her to join the suffrage movement. Two years later, the other great suffragist of the era, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, wrote a glowing note to Anthony about Stone: "We have no woman who compares with her."

For the next decade and a half, Stone, Anthony, and Stanton collaborated as the renowned leaders of the women's suffrage crusade. But long before they could realize their shared goal of equal voting rights for women, their coalition crumbled.

In 1869, Anthony and Stanton severed their collaboration with Stone, splitting off to form their own women's suffrage organization. The former allies fought bitterly as rivals, publishing their own

newspapers, petitioning and fund-raising separately, and lobbying legislatures independently. "The division," historian Jean Baker laments, "led to a duplication of energies in a movement that was numerically small and organizationally limited." It also reinforced stereotypes that women were unfit for political life, encouraging newspapers to focus on the "hens at war" story rather than on that of the great cause itself. Anthony masterminded a plot to poach leaders from Stone's organization, and the animosity that Anthony and Stanton harbored toward Stone was so intense that they wrote her organization out of their history of the suffrage movement. This act appalled even Stanton's own daughter, who rectified the omission by writing a chapter on Stone's efforts herself. Since the three leaders shared a deep commitment to the same cause, why did they end up in such a heated, destructive conflict?

This chapter examines how originals form alliances to advance their goals, and how to overcome the barriers that prevent coalitions from succeeding. By definition, most efforts to change the status quo involve a movement by a minority group to challenge a majority. Coalitions are powerful, but they are also inherently unstable—they depend heavily on the relationships among individual members. Lucy Stone's conflict with Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton shattered the most important alliance in the suffrage movement, nearly causing its demise. Through an analysis of their challenges—along with a talented entrepreneur's struggle to convince people to give her idea a chance, a hit Disney movie that almost didn't get made, and the collapse of the Occupy Wall Street movement—you'll see how building effective coalitions involves striking a delicate balance between venerable virtues and pragmatic policies. In doing so, you'll find out why singing "O Canada" can help us form alliances, why common tactics can be more influential than common values, why Western states won suffrage sooner than states in the East and the South, and why it's often wiser to partner with enemies than frenemies.

The key insight is a Goldilocks theory of coalition formation. The originals who start a movement will often be its most radical members, whose ideas and ideals will prove too hot for those who follow their lead. To form alliances with opposing groups, it's best to temper the cause, cooling it as much as possible. Yet to draw allies into joining the cause itself, what's needed is a moderately tempered message that is neither too hot nor too cold, but just right.

The Narcissism of Small Differences

We assume that common goals bind groups together, but the reality is that they often drive groups apart. According to Dartmouth psychologist Judith White, a lens for understanding these fractures is the concept of horizontal hostility. Even though they share a fundamental objective, radical groups often disparage more mainstream groups as impostors and sellouts. As Sigmund Freud wrote a century ago, "It is precisely the minor differences in people who are otherwise alike that form the basis of feelings of strangeness and hostility between them."

White noticed horizontal hostility everywhere. When a deaf woman won the Miss America crown, instead of cheering her on as a trailblazer, deaf activists protested. Since she spoke orally rather than using sign language, she wasn't "deaf enough." When a light-skinned black woman was appointed as a law professor at one university, its Black Students Association objected on the grounds that she wasn't black enough. A radical environmental activist dismissed the more mainstream Greenpeace as a "mindless monster motivated by eco-buck profits" and "a dynamic threat to the integrity of the green movement." To explain why this kind of animosity happened, White led fascinating research on horizontal hostility in different movements and minority groups.

In one study, vegans and vegetarians evaluated members of their

own groups and one another's groups, relative to members of the general public. Vegans showed nearly three times as much prejudice toward vegetarians as vegetarians did toward vegans. In the eyes of the more extreme vegans, the mainstream vegetarians were wannabes: if they really cared about the cause, they wouldn't eat animal products like eggs. In another study in Greece, members of the most conservative party judged the most similar party more unfavorably than they did a progressive party, and members of the most liberal party were much harsher toward the progressive party than toward even the most conservative party. Orthodox Jews evaluated conservative Jewish women more negatively than Jewish women who didn't practice or observe religious holidays at all. The message was clear: if you were a true believer, you'd be all in. The more strongly you identify with an extreme group, the harder you seek to differentiate yourself from more moderate groups that threaten your values.

It was this kind of horizontal hostility that caused Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton to split off from Lucy Stone. Anthony and Stanton were relatively radical; Stone was more mainstream. The earth between them cracked in 1866, when Anthony and Stanton partnered with a known racist, George Francis Train, who supported women's suffrage because he believed women could help to curtail the political influence of African Americans. Stone was outraged to see them campaigning with Train and allowing him to bankroll their efforts.

The fault line only grew wider when Anthony and Stanton opposed the Fifteenth Amendment proposal to grant African-American men the right to vote. They drew a hard line: if women weren't given the right to vote, other minority groups shouldn't be allowed it, either. Their position was radical not only because it was inflexible, but also because they were trying to reach liberal constituents who favored the amendment. Stone was more sympathetic to the abolitionist cause. At an equal rights convention, she attempted to build a bridge between

black activists and Anthony and Stanton, announcing her support for a continued alliance:

> *Both are perhaps right. . . . Woman has an ocean of wrongs too deep for any plummet, and the negro too has an ocean of wrongs that cannot be fathomed. . . . I thank God for the Fifteenth Amendment, and hope that it will be adopted in every state. I will be thankful in my soul if any body can get out of that terrible pit.*

Anthony and Stanton viewed Stone's support of voting rights for black men as a betrayal of the women's cause. They reneged on their commitment to a joint organization and announced the formation of their own national women's suffrage organization the following week, in May 1869. Stone and a group of colleagues published a letter calling for a more comprehensive organization, but it was to no avail. By the fall, they had little choice but to form their own group. For more than two decades, they maintained their distance, working independently in some cases and at cross-purposes in others.

With the women's suffrage movement splintered, Lucy Stone needed new allies, as did Anthony and Stanton. They all found support in an unexpected place—the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), which had been formed to fight alcohol abuse, as drunken men often abused their wives and left their families in poverty. In contrast to the suffrage groups, the WCTU was heavily conservative. Its members tended to be middle- and upper-class women with strong religious beliefs and traditional values. Yet somehow, coalitions between the WCTU and suffragists sprang up in almost every state in the nation. The reasons for suffragists to partner with the WCTU were clear: the suffrage movement had stalled in influencing legislation, a surge of antisuffrage organizations was forming to work against them, and suffrage membership was dwindling. By the early 1880s, Stanton and Anthony's organization was down to just a hundred members. The

WCTU, meanwhile, was experiencing a membership explosion, growing from a few thousand in 1874 to thirteen thousand in 1876 and well over a hundred thousand by 1890. With the support of the country's largest women's organization, suffragists could make meaningful progress. The puzzle is why the WCTU agreed to partner with suffragists.

In a clever experiment, Stanford researchers Scott Wiltermuth and Chip Heath randomly assigned people in groups of three to listen to the national anthem "O Canada" under different conditions of synchrony. In the control condition, participants read the words silently while the song played. In the synchronous condition, they sang the song out loud together. In the asynchronous condition, they all sang, but not in unison: each person heard the song at a different tempo.

The participants thought they were being tested on their singing. But there was a twist: after singing, they moved into what was supposedly a different study, where they had a chance to keep money for themselves or cooperate by sharing it with the group. The few minutes they spent singing shouldn't have affected their behavior, but it did. The group that sang together shared significantly more. They reported feeling more similar to each other and more like a team than participants in the other conditions.*

In seeking alliances with groups that share our values, we overlook the importance of sharing our strategic tactics. Recently, sociologists Wooseok Jung and Brayden King of Northwestern University and Sarah Soule of Stanford University tracked the emergence of unusual alliances between social movements—like coalitions between environmental and gay-rights activists, the women's movement and the peace

* In an experiment led by Yale psychologist Erica Boothby, people liked chocolate better when they tasted it at the same time as another person. I hate chocolate, so this experiment would not have worked with me—but their follow-up study showed that eating disgustingly bitter chocolate was even more unpleasant when tasted simultaneously with someone else. Apparently, both positive and negative experiences are amplified when we share them, leading to even greater feelings of similarity.

movement, and a marine base and a Native American tribe. They found that shared tactics were an important predictor of alliances. Even if they care about different causes, groups find affinity when they use the same methods of engagement. If you've spent the past decade taking part in protests and marches, it's easy to feel a sense of shared identity and community with another organization that operates the same way.

Lucy Stone recognized that common goals weren't sufficient for a coalition to prosper, noting, "People will differ as to what they consider the best methods & means." Stanton, for her part, "pointed to the difference in methods as the 'essential issue' dividing the two associations." Stone was committed to campaigning at the state level; Anthony and Stanton wanted a federal constitutional amendment. Stone involved men in her organization; Anthony and Stanton favored an exclusively female membership. Stone sought to inspire change through speaking and meetings; Anthony and Stanton were more confrontational, with Anthony voting illegally and encouraging other women to follow suit.

The suffragists who formed alliances with the temperance activists were more moderate in their methods, which helped the two groups find common ground. At the same time that women were organizing local WCTU clubs, Lucy Stone introduced suffrage clubs. Both groups had extensive histories with lobbying and publishing. They began to work together to lobby and speak in front of state legislatures, publish articles and distribute literature, and hold public suffrage meetings, rallies, and debates.* Together, suffragists and temperance activists

* Shared tactics only facilitate alliances up to a point. When the overlap in tactics between groups was more than 61 percent, coalitions became less likely. When their methods are pretty much the same, groups simply have less to learn and gain from one another; their efforts are more likely to be redundant. Although the WCTU and suffrage groups shared a number of tactics, they also had some unique methods to teach one another. The suffragists began to march in parades and set up booths at fairs; the WCTU increasingly used petitions. Also, status differences mattered: Movements were more likely to align when one had moderately higher status than the other, as opposed to when there was no status difference or an extreme status difference. It's obvious that a lower-status movement would pursue the visibility associated with a

persuaded several states to allow women to vote. And in doing so, the suffragists discovered a profound principle about gaining allies. That principle is best illuminated by a young, visionary entrepreneur who found a surprising way to get naysayers to give her idea a chance.

Tempered Radicals

In 2011, a college senior named Meredith Perry noticed that something very basic was wrong with technology. She didn't need a cord to make phone calls or connect to the internet. Everything that used to be wired was now wireless . . . except for one thing. Sitting in her dorm room, she was still tethered to the wall by the most ancient component of her devices: the power that charged them. To use her phone and her computer, she had to plug them in. She wanted wireless power.

She started thinking of things that could beam energy through the air. The signal in a TV remote was too weak, radio waves were too inefficient, and X-rays were too dangerous. Then she came across a device that could convert physical vibration into energy. If you put it under a train, for example, you could collect the energy the train generated. Although it wasn't practical to have people gathering near trains to capture their energy, she realized that sound travels through the air by vibration. What if she could use ultrasound, which is invisible and silent, to generate air vibrations and convert them into wireless power?

Her physics professors said it was impossible. Ultrasonic engineers agreed; it couldn't be done. Some of the world's most respected scientists told her she was wasting her time on the effort. But then she won

higher-status partner, but there are benefits to the higher-status group, too. Sociologists Jung, King, and Soule explain: "As challengers to the established social order, movements need to refresh and update their agenda continuously in order to be seen as cutting-edge, authentic, and relevant. If they fail to innovate their movement agenda and engage with new ideas, a movement can become obsolete and lose touch with its original constituency. For this reason, high-status movements may seek to absorb newly emerging or previously ignored vintage issues."

an invention competition, and a journalist challenged her to demo the technology at a digital conference just four weeks later. With a proof of concept, but no working prototype, she had a chicken-and-egg problem: she needed funding to build a prototype, but her idea was so radical that investors wanted to see a prototype first. As the solo founder of a technology startup, with no engineering background, she needed allies to move forward.

Three years later, I met Perry at a Google event. After landing $750,000 in seed money from Mark Cuban, Marissa Mayer, and Peter Thiel's Founders Fund, her team had just finished its first functional prototype. It could power devices faster than a wire, at longer distances, and would be ready for consumers in two years. By the end of 2014, her company, uBeam, had accumulated eighteen patents and $10 million in venture funding.

Perry took her place onstage in a lineup that included Snoop Dogg, a Nobel Prize winner, and former President Bill Clinton. She was the only one to get a standing ovation. Debate continued about how well the product would work, but she had overcome the fundamental barrier to proving the viability of the technology. "Every single person that is now working for the company didn't think it was possible or was extremely skeptical," Perry said.

Perry faced an extreme version of every original's struggle in challenging the status quo: overcoming the skepticism of potential key stakeholders. Her initial efforts fell flat. She reached out to scores of technical experts, who were so quick to point out the flaws in the math and physics that they wouldn't even consider working with her. It probably didn't help that she was offering to hire them as contractors on deferred payment—they might never see a check.

Finally, Perry made a move that flew in the face of every piece of wisdom she had heard about influence; she simply stopped telling experts what it was she was trying to create. Instead of explaining her plan to generate wireless power, she merely provided the specifications

of the technology she wanted. Her old message had been: "I'm trying to build a transducer to send power over the air." Her new pitch disguised the purpose: "I'm looking for someone to design a transducer with these parameters. Can you make this part?"

The approach worked. She persuaded two acoustics experts to design a transmitter, another to design a receiver, and an electrical engineer to construct the electronics. "In my head it all came together. Worst comes to worst, somebody would sue me," Perry admits. "There was no other way, given my knowledge and skill set." Soon she had collaborators on board with doctorates from Oxford and Stanford, with math and simulations confirming the idea was viable in theory. It was enough to attract a first round of funding and a talented chief technology officer who had initially been highly skeptical. "Once I showed him all the patents, he said, 'Oh sh*t, this actually can work.'"

In a popular TED talk and book, Simon Sinek argues that if we want to inspire people, we should start with *why*. If we communicate the vision behind our ideas, the purpose guiding our products, people will flock to us. This is excellent advice—and when you're doing something original that challenges the status quo, you have to be careful about how you communicate your why. When people championing moral change explain their why, it runs the risk of clashing with deep-seated convictions. When creative non-conformists explain their why, it may violate common notions of what's possible.

Researchers Debra Meyerson and Maureen Scully have found that to succeed, originals must often become tempered radicals. They believe in values that depart from traditions and ideas that go against the grain, yet they learn to tone down their radicalism by presenting their beliefs and ideas in ways that are less shocking and more appealing to mainstream audiences. Meredith Perry is a tempered radical: she made an implausible idea plausible by obscuring its most extreme feature. When she couldn't persuade technical experts to take a leap with her, she convinced them to take a few steps by masking her purpose.

Shifting the focus from why to how can help people become less radical. In a series of experiments, when people with extreme political views were asked to explain the reasons behind their policy preferences, they stuck to their guns. Explaining why gave them a chance to affirm their convictions. But when asked to explain how their preferred policies work, they became more moderate. Considering how led them to confront the gaps in their knowledge and realize that some of their extreme views were impractical.

To form alliances, originals can temper their radicalism by smuggling their real vision inside a Trojan horse. U.S. Navy lieutenant Josh Steinman had a grand vision to open the military up to outside technology by creating a Silicon Valley hub. Steinman knew he would face resistance if he presented a radical, sweeping proposal for rethinking the navy's entire approach to innovation, so he led with a more tempered pitch. He presented some new technology for doing real-time updates in the air to Admiral Jonathan Greenert, the chief of naval operations. Intrigued, Admiral Greenert asked what would come next, and Rear Admiral Scott Stearney threw a softball question at Steinman, inquiring about how the military should think about the technical future. "That's when we threw the strike," Steinman recalls. "Sir, the future is going to be about software, not hardware, and we need an entity of the U.S. Navy in Silicon Valley."

A few months later, after other junior officers made similar cases about the importance of software, the CNO gave a speech advocating for the idea, which also circulated around the Pentagon. Not long afterward, the secretary of defense announced an embassy in Silicon Valley. Steinman leveraged what psychologist Robert Cialdini calls the foot-in-the-door technique, where you lead with a small request to secure an initial commitment before revealing the larger one. By opening with a moderate ask instead of a radical one, Steinman gained allies.

Coalitions often fall apart when people refuse to moderate their radicalism. That was one of the major failures of the Occupy Wall

Street movement, a protest against economic and social inequality that began in 2011. That year, polls showed that the majority of Americans supported the movement, but it soon fell apart. Activist Srdja Popovic marvels that its extreme positioning alienated most of its potential allies. Its fatal error, he argues, was naming the movement after the radical tactic of camping out, which few people find attractive. He believes that had the group simply relabeled itself "The 99 Percent," it might still exist. The Occupy name "implied that the only way you could belong was if you dropped everything you were doing and started occupying something," Popovic writes. "Occupying is still just a single weapon in the enormous arsenal of peaceful protest—and, more to the point, one that tends to invite only a certain type of dedicated person. . . . Movements, which are always fighting uphill battles, need to draw in more casual participants if they are to succeed." "The 99 Percent" is inclusive: it invites everyone to get involved and to use their own preferred tactics. By tempering the brand of the movement and broadening its methods, it might have been possible to gain the support of more mainstream citizens.

In the women's suffrage movement, this is where the narcissism of small differences reared its ugly head. When Anthony and Stanton partnered with the racist George Francis Train in 1867, Stone wrote that Train's support of suffrage was "enough to condemn it in the minds of all persons not already convinced," and her husband warned Anthony that the alliance would mean "irreparable harm to the cause of votes for women *and* blacks."*

* A longtime ally, William Lloyd Garrison, begged Anthony to back away: "In all friendliness, and with the highest regard for the woman's rights movement, I cannot refrain from expressing my regret and astonishment that you and Mrs. Stanton should have taken such leave of good sense as to be traveling companions and associate lecturers with that crack-brained harlequin and semi-lunatic, George Francis Train. . . . You will only subject yourselves to merited ridicule and condemnation, and turn the movement which you aim to promote into unnecessary contempt. . . . He may be of use in drawing an audience, but so would a kangaroo, a gorilla or a hippopotamus."

But Anthony would not budge from her radical conviction that if women couldn't gain the right to vote, blacks shouldn't, either. She campaigned with Train throughout Kansas and accepted his funding to create a suffrage newspaper. When Stone confronted her about tarnishing the reputation of their equal rights association by linking it to Train, Anthony became defensive: "I know what is the matter with you. It is envy, and spleen, and hate, because I have a paper and you have not." Stanton sided with Anthony, endorsing her decision to partner with Train: "It would be right and wise to accept aid from the devil himself," she said, "provided that he did not tempt us to lower our standard."

The alliance proved costly: Kansas had a chance to become the first state to adopt suffrage, but ended up losing the vote—and the black suffrage proposal lost as well. Many insiders held the alliance with Train accountable for both defeats. A couple years later, when Stanton and Anthony had formed their own association, instead of learning from the mistakes of the past, they refused to moderate their extreme stance that anyone who supported suffrage was a friend. Forming another alliance that cast a dark cloud over the movement, Stanton joined forces with Victoria Woodhull, an activist who became the first woman to run for the American presidency, but undermined the suffrage movement with a radical agenda. Woodhull, whose past included time as a prostitute and a charlatan healer, advocated for sexual freedom, proclaiming that she had an "inalienable, constitutional, and natural right to love whom I may, to love as long or as short a period as I can, to change that love every day if I please."

Suffrage opponents used Woodhull's position as evidence that the movement was really about sexual promiscuity rather than voting rights. Members withdrew in large numbers from Anthony and Stanton's organization, to the point that they couldn't even gather sufficient attendance for a convention. Even supportive legislators advised suffragists to put their quest for the vote aside. Suffragists remarked that Woodhull's campaign "is the most efficient agent employed to

frighten people from our ranks" and "set the cause back twenty years." The alliance "precipitated a storm of criticism" so severe, Anthony's biographer would later write, that it made the prior attacks look like "a summer shower to a Missouri cyclone."

In maintaining the alliance with Woodhull, Stanton failed to recognize the value of tempered radicalism. She drove Stone and many other past and potential allies away by overlooking the dramatic differences in how insiders and outsiders judge coalitions. Her error is illuminated in a new study by management researchers Blake Ashforth and Peter Reingen, who find that insiders and outsiders have distinct ideas about who represents a coalition. For insiders, the key representative is the person who is most central and connected in the group. For the suffragists, that was clearly Stanton and Anthony. But for outsiders, the person who represents the group is the one with the most extreme views. That was Woodhull: her personal scandal overshadowed the suffrage cause and alienated many who were open to the relatively moderate idea of voting rights but not the more radical ideas of sexual independence for women. As outsiders judged the suffrage movement by the extreme company Anthony and Stanton kept, Stone had little choice but to distance her organization further from their efforts.

Enemies Make Better Allies Than Frenemies

In *The Godfather: Part II,* Michael Corleone advises, "Keep your friends close, but your enemies closer." But what should we do about people who don't fall neatly into either category?

Typically, we view our relationships on a continuum from positive to negative. Our closest friends have our backs; our greatest enemies are actively working against us. But research shows that we need to draw two independent axes: one for how positive a relationship is and

a separate one for how negative the relationship is. Along with purely positive and wholly negative relationships, we can have connections that are both positive and negative. Psychologists call them ambivalent relationships. You might know them as frenemies—people who sometimes support you and sometimes undermine you.

		Positivity	
		Low	High
Negativity	Low	Acquaintances: indifferent	Friends: consistently supportive
	High	Enemies: consistently undermining	Frenemies: ambivalent

Stone's relationships with both Stanton and Anthony were deeply ambivalent—they had been both allies and adversaries. On the one hand, she admired Stanton's wit and Anthony's industriousness, and they had a proven record of productive collaboration. On the other hand, Stone objected to their "lunatic friends" and "wild alliances," which threatened the respectability of the women's suffrage movement. And Anthony and Stanton had a pattern of duplicity. They signed Stone's name to an ad complimenting their racist benefactor without her permission. More recently, Stone had written to Stanton in the fall of 1869, proposing the "hearty active cooperation of all the friends of the cause, better than either could do alone," and assuring her that Stone's organization "shall never be an enemy or antagonist of yours." Yet at the convention launching Stone's group, Anthony

attempted an ill-fated coup to elect Stanton as president. Stone invited her to the podium, and Anthony concluded by accusing Stone of attempting to "nullify and crush out" her organization.

In 1872, Stanton reached out to Stone with a proposal for reconciliation, urging her to "let bygones be bygones. Let all personalities be buried in the work that is before us." Stone took some conciliatory steps, sharing Stanton's articles and speeches in her newspaper. Then came a letter from Anthony, proposing to "cooperate and make a systematic campaign," inviting Stone to Rochester to "settle the question that we are all together as one grand woman." Stone declined.

With the benefit of hindsight, it's easy to judge Stone's refusal as a stubborn mistake. Had she accepted, the organizations might have won the right to vote years earlier. But if you examine how ambivalent relationships affect our stress levels, you will find some wisdom in Stone's resistance.

To discover the most effective way to handle ambivalent relationships, Michelle Duffy, a management professor at the University of Minnesota, led a study surveying police officers on how often they were undermined and supported by their closest coworker, as well as their levels of stress and absence from work. Not surprisingly, negative relationships were stressful. When officers felt undermined by their closest coworker, they were less committed, took more unauthorized breaks, and were absent from work more often.

What happened when the undermining colleague was also supportive at times? Things didn't get better; they got worse. Being undermined and supported by the same person meant even lower commitment and more work missed.* Negative relationships are unpleasant, but they're predictable: if a colleague consistently undermines you, you can keep your distance and expect the worst. But when you're dealing with an

* The good news is that when officers were undermined by one person but supported by a different person, they were better off. Support from a colleague or a supervisor had a buffering effect, protecting officers against the stress and absences that undermining otherwise caused.

ambivalent relationship, you're constantly on guard, grappling with questions about when that person can actually be trusted. As Duffy's team explains, "It takes more emotional energy and coping resources to deal with individuals who are inconsistent."

In a series of groundbreaking studies, psychologist Bert Uchino found that ambivalent relationships are literally unhealthier than negative relationships. In one study, having more ambivalent relationships predicted higher rates of stress, depression, and dissatisfaction with life. In another, older adults rated their relationships with the ten most important people in their lives, and completed two anxiety-provoking tasks: delivering a speech with little preparation and taking a rapid-fire math test. The more ambivalent relationships the participants had, the more their heart rates spiked on both tasks.

Lucy Stone understood the risks of forming alliances with ambivalent ties. In 1871, she wrote that it was best "not to strike hands with those people. . . . They were our late enemies. We don't know that they are our friends." American studies expert and biographer Andrea Moore Kerr notes that Stone was "unable to predict or control the behavior of either Stanton or Anthony." In response, according to Baker, Stone "sought to keep her organization free from infection by 'the dreaded incubus' of the Stanton-Anthony forces."

Our instinct is to sever our bad relationships and salvage the ambivalent ones. But the evidence suggests we ought to do the opposite: cut our frenemies and attempt to convert our enemies.

In efforts to challenge the status quo, originals often ignore their opponents. If someone is already resisting a change, the logic goes, there's no point in wasting your time on him. Instead, focus on strengthening your ties with people who already support you.

But our best allies aren't the people who have supported us all along. They're the ones who started out against us and then came around to our side.

Half a century ago, eminent psychologist Elliot Aronson conducted a

series of experiments suggesting that we're often more sensitive to gains and losses in esteem than the level of esteem itself. When someone always supports us, we take it for granted—and can discount it. But we regard someone who began as a rival and then became an enthusiastic supporter as an authentic advocate. "A person whose liking for us increases over time will be liked better than one who has always liked us," Aronson explains. "We find it more rewarding when someone's initially negative feelings toward us gradually become positive than if that person's feelings for us were entirely positive all along."

While we'll have an especially strong affinity toward our converted rivals, will they feel the same way toward us? Yes—this is the second advantage of converting resisters. To like us, they have to work especially hard to overcome their initial negative impressions, telling themselves, *I must have been wrong about that person.* Moving forward, to avoid the cognitive dissonance of changing their minds yet again, they'll be especially motivated to maintain a positive relationship.

Third, and most important, it is our former adversaries who are the most effective at persuading others to join our movements. They can marshal better arguments on our behalf, because they understand the doubts and misgivings of resisters and fence-sitters. And they're a more credible source, because they haven't just been Pollyanna followers or "yes men" all along. In one of Aronson's studies, people were most persuaded to change their opinions by those who had started out negative and then become more positive. And more recently, corporate executives were subtly influenced by board members who argued with them initially and then conformed—which signals that their "opinion appears to stand up to critical scrutiny."*

* Of course, not every negative relationship can be turned around. Essayist Chuck Klosterman draws an important distinction between ordinary nemeses—adversaries who might become allies—and archenemies: "You kind of like your nemesis, despite the fact that you despise him. If your nemesis invited you out for cocktails, you would accept the offer. . . . But you would never have drinks with your archenemy, unless you were attempting to spike his gin with hemlock."

Instead of avoiding her enemies, Lucy Stone sought them out and actively engaged with them. She helped convert Julia Ward Howe, a prominent poet who wrote "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." Howe had been invited to attend a suffrage meeting and came only reluctantly, "with a rebellious heart," regarding Stone as one of her "dislikes." But after listening to Stone's speech, Howe became a close ally and one of the great leaders of the movement.

In 1855, a heckler disrupted a convention by describing suffragists as unfit for marriage, disparaging the movement as "a few disappointed women." Instead of ignoring him, Lucy Stone addressed him directly in her speech, and the audience roared with applause:

> *The last speaker alluded to this movement as being that of a few disappointed women. From the first years to which my memory stretches, I have been a disappointed woman. . . . I was disappointed when I came to seek a profession . . . every employment was closed to me, except those of the teacher, the seamstress and the housekeeper. In education, in marriage, in religion, in everything, disappointment is the lot of women. It shall be the business of my life to deepen this disappointment in every woman's heart until she bows down to it no longer.*

When Stone walked around hanging up posters announcing abolition speeches, young men often followed her and ripped them down. Stone asked them if they loved their mothers. Absolutely. Did they love their sisters? Of course. She explained that in the South, men their own age were sold as slaves, and would never see their families again. As Kerr explains, "She then invited them to attend the evening's lectures as her 'special guests.' Such street recruits proved useful allies, able to defuse other troublemakers."

In 1859, a college student named Frances Willard wrote in her journal that Lucy Stone was in town, and noted, "I don't like her views."

Given her own conservative opinions, Willard joined the temperance movement, but years later became one of the most influential suffrage leaders. She reflected that Stone was a force behind her change of heart:

> *I remember when I was dreadfully afraid of Susan, and of Lucy too. But now I love and honor these women, and I can not put into words my sense of what it means to have the blessings of these women who have made it possible for more timid ones like myself to come along and take our places in the world's work. If they had not blazed the trees and pioneered the way we should not have dared to come.*

In 1876, Willard led the effort to align suffragists with temperance workers. Research would later show that over the next two decades, every time Willard visited a state, the odds of a suffrage-temperance alliance spiked. How did she convince the conservative WCTU members to partner with the liberal suffragists? A clue to her success can be found in Hollywood, where movies live and die based on how well writers can persuade executives to buy into their visions.

Familiar Makes the Heart Grow Fonder

In the early 1990s, a group of screenwriters proposed something that had never been done at Disney: they wanted to make an animated movie based on an original concept. Departing from a half century of hits with time-honored tales like *Cinderella* and *Snow White*, they set out to write a fresh story from scratch. Studio chief Jeffrey Katzenberg was skeptical, telling colleagues it was an experiment. "No one had any confidence in it," director Rob Minkoff recalls. "It was seen as the B movie at Disney."

The script eventually became *The Lion King*, which was the highest-grossing film of 1994, winning two Oscars and a Golden Globe. Katzenberg had said he would get down on his knees in appreciation if it brought in $50 million. By 2014, it had earned over $1 billion.

Like many original ideas, the movie almost never got off the ground. It was conceived as "*Bambi* in Africa with lions" (instead of deer as the protagonists). But after the first script failed, five of the writers gathered to rethink it. They sat together for two days, batting around ideas and weaving an epic tale about the succession of kings, and then pitched the story to a group of Disney executives. The first to respond was CEO Michael Eisner, who wasn't getting it. Grasping for a hook, he asked, "Could you make this into *King Lear*?"

Coincidentally, Minkoff had reread that Shakespeare play a few weeks earlier, and he explained why the concept didn't fit. Then, from the back of the room, a producer named Maureen Donley raised another Shakespearean suggestion: "No, this is *Hamlet*."

Suddenly, everyone got it. "There was a collective sigh of recognition," Minkoff says. "Of course it was *Hamlet*— The uncle kills the father, and the son has to avenge his father's death. So then we decided it was going to be *Hamlet* with lions." In that pivotal moment, the film got the green light.

To understand what saved the movie from the cutting-room floor, I turned to Justin Berg, the creativity expert at Stanford. The writers had to begin with lions, Berg explains. Had they started with *Hamlet*, they would have ended up with an animated knockoff of Shakespeare. Beginning with a novel template was the key to originality, but it also posed a challenge.

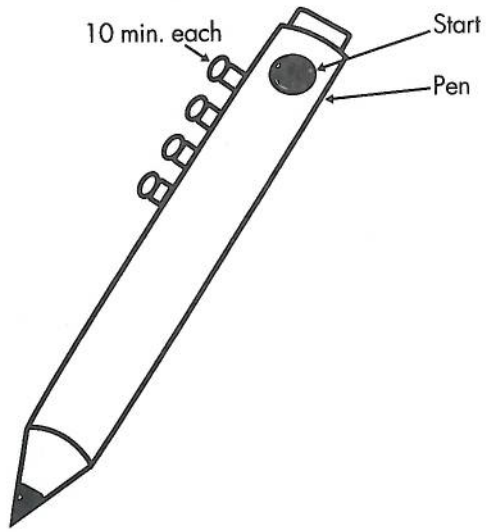
In an experiment, Berg asked people to design a new product to help college students succeed in job interviews. He instructed them to start with the familiar concept of a three-ring binder, and then come up with something novel. Bookstore managers and customers rated the resulting ideas as utterly conventional.

According to Berg, the starting point in generating ideas is like the first brushstroke that a painter lays down on a canvas: it shapes the path for the rest of the painting, constraining what we imagine. Beginning with a three-ring binder led Berg's participants down the path of proposing obvious products like a folder with pockets for résumés and business cards—hardly a game-changing idea. To come up with something original, we need to begin from a more unfamiliar place.

Instead of the three-ring binder, Berg gave some participants a more novel starting point: an in-line skate for roller blading. They were no longer captives of the conventional: they generated ideas that scored 37 percent higher in originality. One participant observed that during job interviews, it's often difficult to know how much time has passed, and you don't want to appear rude by looking at your watch, breaking eye contact with the interviewer. The proposed solution was to build a watch that tracks time by touch, with physical elements like the wheels on roller skates that change shape or texture as time passes.

Although a novel starting point does help foster the originality of our ideas, it doesn't necessarily make them palatable and practical to our audiences. While the Rollerblade led to a creative idea for subtly tracking time, squeezing your watch is an odd behavior. To solve this problem, Berg gave people the novel starting point of the in-line skate, but added a twist: after they developed their ideas, he showed them a picture of products that people typically use in job interviews, then asked them to spend a few additional minutes refining their concepts. For the person who wanted a polite method of timekeeping, this made all the difference. Instead of a watch that tells time by touch, after taking a look at the kinds of products that were familiar in job interviews, the same inventor designed a pen that tells time by touch.

The most promising ideas begin from novelty and then add familiarity, which capitalizes on the mere exposure effect we covered



earlier. On average, a novel starting point followed by a familiarity infusion led to ideas that were judged as 14 percent more practical, without sacrificing any originality. As Berg points out, if you started the experiment with a pen rather than an in-line skate, you'd probably end up with something a lot like a conventional pen. But by starting with something unexpected in the context of job interviews, like an in-line skate, and then incorporating the familiarity of a pen, you can develop an idea that is both novel and useful.

In the case of *The Lion King*, that is what happened when Maureen Donley suggested that the script could be like *Hamlet*. The dose of familiarity helped the executives connect the novel savannah script to a classic tale. "It gives a large group of people a single point of reference," Minkoff explains. "With absolute originality, you can lose people. Executives have to sell it, so they're looking for those handles. It gives them something to hang on to." The *Lion King* team went on to take a cue from *Hamlet*. Realizing that they needed a "to be or not to be" moment, they added a scene in which the baboon, Rafiki,

delivers a lesson to Simba about the importance of remembering who he is.

In the women's suffrage movement, temperance workers didn't come on board until an emerging leader offered a familiarity infusion. Vanderbilt sociologist Holly McCammon identified two main arguments that suffragists used in their quest to earn the right to vote: justice and societal reform. The justice argument focused on fairness, emphasizing that women had the unalienable right to vote. The societal reform argument focused on social good, highlighting how women's nurturing, domestic, and moral qualities would improve the country. At the time, the justice argument was considered the radical one, as it violated traditional gender-role stereotypes by proposing that women and men were equals in all domains. The societal reform argument was more moderate, as it affirmed gender-role stereotypes in suggesting that the unique qualities conservatives already valued in private life could also contribute to public life. In a form of "public motherhood," enfranchised women could benefit society by promoting education, limiting government corruption, and helping the poor.

When McCammon and colleagues coded suffrage speeches, newspaper columns, banners, and leaflets that were produced over the course of a quarter century, the justice argument appeared earliest and most frequently. Overall, suffragists wielded the justice case 30 percent of the time, compared with barely more than half that often for the societal reform argument. But justice arguments fell on deaf ears with the WCTU members, who clung to traditional gender roles and rejected the notion that women were the equals of men. The societal reform argument also failed to resonate with familiar values: conservative temperance workers were aiming for stability, not change. It was Frances Willard, now an emerging WCTU leader, who ingeniously reframed the pitch and made it widely acceptable.

How the West Was Won

Frances Willard didn't use the justice argument or the societal reform argument. She didn't even present the issue as a suffrage ballot.

Instead, she called it a "home protection ballot."

Willard saw suffrage as "a weapon of protection . . . from the tyranny of drink." Likening the ballot to "a powerful sunglass," she promised to use it to "burn and blaze on the saloon, till it shrivels up and in lurid vapors curls away like mist." Protecting the home was a familiar goal for the WCTU members. Now, suffrage could be used as a means to a desirable end: if temperance advocates wanted to fight alcohol abuse, they needed to vote. As Baker writes:

> *It was an indirect approach to suffrage made on the religious grounds of protecting the home, but it linked the two most powerful women's reform movements in the United States. Suffrage, a universal entitlement required in the minds of Anthony and Stanton on the grounds of natural rights, was a tool for Willard . . . a tactical appeal to domestic women.*

When McCammon led a study of four decades of alliances between the WCTU and suffragists, the data showed that after suffragists made the justice argument in a particular state, there was no increase in the likelihood of an alliance with the WCTU in that state the following year—in fact, an alliance became slightly less likely. But once suffragists presented the home protection framing, the odds of joining forces with the WCTU in that state increased significantly, as did the odds that a state would eventually pass suffrage.* Ultimately, Willard's

* Willard's home protection argument consistently moved the needle, but just how far depended on timing. She had the biggest impact when the WCTU was under threat. When she visited

leadership enabled women to gain full voting rights in several states and school board election voting rights in nineteen states. This argument was particularly effective in the West. Before the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution gave women full voting rights, 81 percent of the Western states and territories passed suffrage laws, compared with only two in the East and zero in the South.

It's highly unlikely that Frances Willard would have started the women's suffrage movement. Justin Berg's research suggests that if women had begun with the familiar goal of protecting their homes, they might never have considered the vote. Radical thinking is often necessary to put an original stake in the ground. But once the radical idea of voting was planted, the original suffragists needed a more tempered mediator to reach a wider audience. Frances Willard had unique credibility with the temperance activists because she drew upon comfortably familiar ideas in her speeches. She made heavy use of religious rhetoric, quoting regularly from the Bible.

Frances Willard was the quintessential tempered radical. "Under Willard, nothing seemed radical," writes Baker, even "as she was moving toward more progressive causes." Her actions offer two lessons about persuading potential partners to join forces. First, we need to think differently about values. Instead of assuming that others share our principles, or trying to convince them to adopt ours, we ought to present our values as a means of pursuing theirs. It's hard to change other people's ideals. It's much easier to link our agendas to familiar values that people already hold.

Second, just as we saw in the case of Meredith Perry's disguising

states after prohibition legislation failed or saloons became more widespread, WCTU coalitions with suffragists were the most likely. The conservative WCTU members felt that their mission was at risk, and began to see suffrage as a valuable weapon in their war against alcohol abuse. "Willard helped WCTU members make sense of their political defeats by interpreting them to be the result of political weakness," McCammon and a colleague explain. "By convincing WCTU members that women's voting rights could help win prohibition laws, Willard aligned WCTU thinking with that of the suffragists."

her real objective of creating wireless power, transparency isn't always the best policy. As much as they want to be straightforward with potential partners, originals occasionally need to reframe their ideas to appeal to their audience. Willard smuggled the vote inside the Trojan horse of fighting alcohol abuse.

But that argument didn't work with every group she addressed. The justice argument attracted the most radical women to the cause, as they favored equal gender roles. With the highly conservative temperance activists, the most tempered argument for home protection cemented coalitions. But for converting other allies to actually join the suffrage movement, the home protection argument was *too* tempered. McCammon's research shows that to convert more women to believe in suffrage as an end, not simply as a means to other ends, a Goldilocks pitch was necessary: the moderate societal reform argument. For movement leaders to "succeed in organizing potential recruits, they must strike the appropriate balance between resonating with the existing cultural repertoire and challenging the status quo." Membership in state suffrage organizations didn't change after suffragists framed their issue in terms of justice or home protection, but it spiked after they accentuated how women could improve society—and so did the passage of suffrage laws. "Originality is what everybody wants, but there's a sweet spot," Rob Minkoff explains. "If it's not original enough, it's boring or trite. If it's too original, it may be hard for the audience to understand. The goal is to push the envelope, not tear the envelope."

Throughout her life, Lucy Stone continued to reference justice and equality when speaking to women who were already involved in the suffrage movement. But when addressing audiences of outsiders, she was more careful to incorporate the societal reform argument and respect traditional gender roles. In 1853, when an unruly audience interrupted the proceedings of a women's rights convention, Stone took the platform. Instead of leading with justice, she affirmed the contributions of women in the domestic sphere: "I think that any

woman who stands on the throne of her own house, dispensing there the virtues of love, charity, and peace, and sends out of it into the world good men, who may help to make the world better, occupies a higher position than any crowned head." She suggested that women could contribute more, and described how they were entering professions, taking care not to compare them to men. When she mentioned a woman who became a minister, the audience hissed, and Stone again reminded the audience that she supported women's domestic roles: "Some men hiss who had no mothers to teach them better."

United We Stand: Creating Coalitions Across Conflict Lines

After two decades of conflict, the two suffrage organizations finally began to converge in philosophy and tactics. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony had avoided radical alliances for more than a decade, and they were now investing their energy in educating the public. Stanton led the writing of a history of the movement; Anthony traveled around the country to lecture and lobby, and saw eye to eye with Lucy Stone on the value of an alliance with temperance workers and a more moderate campaign focusing solely on suffrage rather than other women's issues.

Years ago, when studying the conflict between Israel and Palestine, Harvard psychologist Herbert Kelman observed that conflicts *between* two groups are often caused and intensified by conflicts *within* the groups. Although Stone's organization was aligned on the benefits of reuniting, there was strife within Anthony and Stanton's organization. Stanton objected to the alliances with temperance workers and the limited focus on suffrage; various members questioned whether suffrage should be enacted at the state or federal levels, and whether it should be full or partial.

As effective as Stone was in converting allies, she was the wrong

person to negotiate with Anthony. When distrust runs as deep as it did between these two women, coalitions depend on the warring individuals serving not as leaders, but as lightning rods. As Blake Ashforth and Peter Reingen write, this could have allowed members of each organization to "blame the divisiveness of competition" on Stanton's radical stance, so that "each side could blame conflict more on the other side's firebrands," while setting the stage for them to "cooperate with other members of the rival group." To build coalitions across conflict lines, Kelman finds that it's rarely effective to send hawks to negotiate. You need the doves in each group to sit down, listen to each other's perspectives, identify their common goals and methods, and engage in joint problem solving.*

Stone and Anthony recognized the value of removing the hawks from the discussion, deciding to each designate seven members of their organizations to a joint committee that would negotiate the terms of a unification agreement. But the principles laid out by Stone and Anthony were not sufficient to create a foundation for consensus, as the committee from Anthony's organization experienced such discord that they had to appoint a separate eight-member committee to help them. When they finally reached consensus, their proposal fell so far outside the scope of the agreed-upon principles that Stone's committee lacked the authority to decide on it.

In 1890, three years into the effort to reunite, Stone recognized the challenges of solidarity and the value of passing the torch: "The younger

* In 1990, Kelman brought together a series of influential leaders from Israel and Palestine for a series of unofficial workshops, meeting regularly over three years. A typical workshop involved between three and six representatives from each country, along with two to four facilitators. The representatives shared their perspectives, avoiding blaming each other and justifying their own views, and focusing on analyzing the effects of their interaction on the conflict. After all participants expressed their concerns and understood and acknowledged those posed by everyone else, they embarked on joint problem solving. Shortly after the workshops ended in 1993, the Oslo Accords were signed. It was the first time the Israeli government and the Palestine Liberation Organization had reached a face-to-face agreement. The leaders won the Nobel Peace Prize for it, and insiders credited Kelman's efforts as a catalyst.

ones want to unite and the old ones who remember the causes of division will soon be gone." Her daughter and husband successfully negotiated the terms of an alliance with Anthony's committee, and their organizations merged. For her part, Anthony came to understand the value of tempered radicalism, to the point that Stanton complained, "Lucy and Susan alike see suffrage only. They do not see religious and social bondage. Neither do the young women in either association, hence they may as well combine for they have only one mind and one purpose."

Although Anthony and Stanton never mended fences with Stone, when Stone passed away, the sheer force of her contributions compelled them to speak glowingly of her. "There is none more winning than Lucy Stone," Anthony declared. "We have never had a woman in our whole fifty years of this movement who could go before an audience and melt the heart of every one in it like that woman. She stood alone."

In Stanton's eyes, "The death of no woman in America had ever called out so general a tribute of public respect and esteem." Stone was the "first who really stirred the nation's heart on the subject of women's wrongs," and their disagreement many years earlier was because Stone "felt the slaves' wrongs more deeply than her own—my philosophy was more egotistical."

"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it," philosopher George Santayana wrote. That would prove to hold true for the American women's suffrage movement, on at least two occasions. In 1890, two members of Anthony's organization, furious at her scheming to create a national organization and the move toward tempered radicalism, split off to form a rival group that attacked the efforts to unify. Anthony and Stanton quashed it, but they were not around to warn their successors against the narcissism of small differences. At the turn of the twentieth century, in the twilight of their lives, they handed the leadership of the national suffrage organization

on to Carrie Chapman Catt, then a temperance activist and WCTU member.

But a more radical woman named Alice Paul, not content to pursue suffrage with tempered tactics like lecturing, writing, and lobbying, favored bolder actions. She embarked on a hunger strike, and rejected Catt's nonpartisan position, blaming the Democratic Party for the failure to grant suffrage. Paul's actions were so radical that she was expelled from the national suffrage organization, and she formed her own in 1916. As of 1918, the national organization boasted over a million members; Paul's had only ten thousand, and like her predecessors, she avoided alliances with African Americans. Her group picketed the White House and ridiculed President Woodrow Wilson, which might have helped to move the needle. "But it was Catt's leadership—progressive but not radical—that finally led Wilson to throw his support behind the amendment," one onlooker wrote.

In her dying breath in 1893, Lucy Stone whispered four words to her daughter: "Make the world better." It would be twenty-seven more years before the Nineteenth Amendment passed. But when women gained full voting rights nationwide, Stone's footprint of tempered radicalism was powerful and visible. As Kerr sums it up: "The organizational model Stone provided would be adopted by Carrie Chapman Catt in the final, successful march to an amendment in 1920."