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PRESS RELEASE

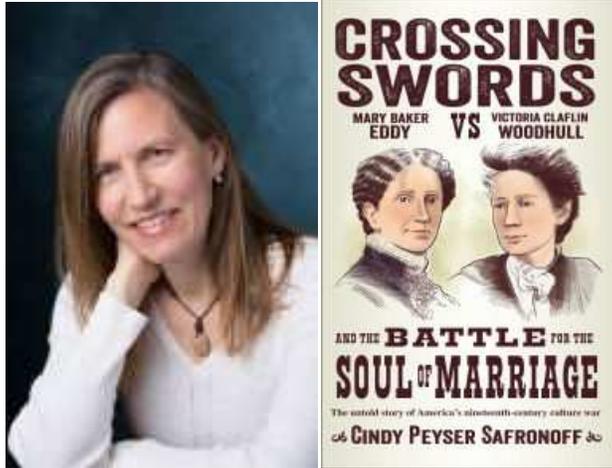
**Insights Into Women, Power, Marriage & Sex –
A Look at Contemporary Themes Against the
Historical Backdrop of America’s Suffrage Movement**

***Author Cindy Safronoff Captures
Long-Overlooked Aspects of the Fight for Equal Rights***

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EMERALD LAKE
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*“Crossing Swords” Sheds Light on the Divergent Views of
America’s First Female Candidate for President and
America’s First Powerful Female Religious Leader*

*Author to Speak at the Harvard Book Store
August 2 at 7:00pm – Cambridge, Mass.*

(Sherman, CT – July 8, 2016) Over the years, a number of familiar names have dominated the books written about the women’s suffrage movement of the late 19th century in the U.S. – notably, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony. According to author Cindy Safronoff, however, the story of two other pioneers in that civil rights movement – Mary Baker Eddy and Victoria Woodhull – have never been told in their entirety, until now.

As those who read Safronoff’s new book, *Crossing Swords: Mary Baker Eddy vs. Victoria Claflin Woodhull and the Battle for the Soul of Marriage* (This One Thing Publishing, July 2015), will learn, Eddy and Woodhull were each America’s most famous woman at the height of their careers.

Despite their fame in the late 19th century, both Eddy’s career as a religious leader, author, publisher, and newspaper founder, and Woodhull’s career as a stockbroker, author, newspaper founder, and the first woman to run for President of the U.S., have often been overlooked in the telling of American history. In *Crossing Swords*, Safronoff has set the lives, careers and public statements of both of these trailblazers into the historic context of the early women’s rights

movement and the ensuing civic debate over how women’s suffrage should impact the institution of marriage.

Surprisingly, the views of these two trailblazing women on the topics of marriage and “free-love,” perspectives that might best be described as “polar opposite” of one another, have never before been compared in any significant detail. *Crossing Swords* is the result of the author’s meticulous research into the writings, news reports and journals of Eddy and Woodhull, revealing and contrasting the views of these two influential women on these topics in a way that still resonates today.

Many narratives for the women’s suffrage movement suggest that those leading the charge were all of a similar mind, but Cindy Safronoff discovered that this portrayal of events is actually quite inaccurate. Instead, the “appropriateness” of Victoria Woodhull’s pursuit of the highest political office in the nation, and her views of women’s civil rights with respect to love and marriage, sparked fierce debate at the time. In fact, as reflected in the title of Safronoff’s book, Woodhull and Baker Eddy virtually “crossed swords” in their clash over these important issues. Mary Baker Eddy was adamantly opposed to the idea of “free love,” a concept that Victoria Woodhull embraced as a perfectly acceptable lifestyle for the woman of the late 19th century.

(Despite their divergent views, Eddy was a staunch supporter of a woman’s right to run for the highest office in the land.)

Nearly 150 years later, the questions that Eddy and Woodhull debated still have not been fully resolved. Unlike the books focusing on the history of the suffrage movement published to date, *Crossing Swords* calls attention to the wide-ranging debate over these issues that prevailed in the late 19th century. Safronoff presents the full spectrum of arguments on the topics of love and marriage, and then leaves it to the reader to conclude who was right at the time – and today.

The outcome of the 2016 Presidential race holds the potential to reshape American history – and, with the emergence of a female nominee representing one of the nation’s leading political parties, has already done so. Likewise, a tipping point of acceptance of women at the highest levels of leadership throughout the religious sphere seems imminent, with women filling increasingly significant roles.

In *Crossing Swords*, Cindy Safronoff explains the important role that both Victoria Woodhull and Mary Baker Eddy played in laying the foundation for the historic milestones we are witnessing today. Through her book, readers will discover that a much richer debate was actually taking place in the late 19th century regarding ideas of love and marriage than has ever before been acknowledged, an understanding that will result in a deeper level of appreciation for what these issues mean in our society today.

Praise and Awards for *Crossing Swords*

“*Crossing Swords* tells the intertwined tales of Victoria Woodhull and Mary Baker Eddy—two fearless American iconoclasts whose work on sex, love, and women’s rights changed the course of American culture. Cindy Peyser Safronoff does a great job of bringing these fascinating women back to life in all of their brilliance and eccentricity for a new generation of readers.”

–Debby Applegate, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning biography *The Most Famous Man in America: The Biography of Henry Ward Beecher*

“A remarkably even-handed exploration of the little-known debates – and occasional ironic convergences – between two charismatic 19th century women whose support for women’s rights was attached to very different views about marriage and sexuality.”

-- Stephanie Coontz, author of *Marriage, a History: How Love Conquered Marriage*

“*Crossing Swords* is a fascinating look at two Victorian woman leaders in the female cultural war of their day. Mary Baker Eddy, the famed founder of Christian Science, battled Free Love while flamboyant Victoria Woodhull championed it. Safronoff deserves our praise for a well-crafted biography about two riveting opposites, who both fought fiercely for their avante garde rights, no matter how far apart, and never gave up.”

-- Myra MacPherson, author of *The Scarlet Sisters: Sex, Suffrage, and Scandal in the Gilded Age*

Crossing Swords is the winner of nine book awards, including:

- Women’s Issues from Independent Publisher Book Awards (IPPY)
- Next Generation Indie Book Awards – 2016 Winner in Religious Nonfiction and Finalist in Women’s Issues
- New England Book Festival – 2015 Winner in Regional Literature, 2015 Runner-Up in Spiritual category, and 2015 Honorable Mention in Biography
- National Indie Excellence – 2016 Finalist in History: United States
- Readers’ Favorite – 2015 Honorable Mention in Nonfiction Drama category

- USA Best Book Awards – 2015 Award-Winning Finalist in History: United States category
- Illumination Book Award – 2016 Enduring Light Bronze Metal in Christian Thought category

***Crossing Swords* Author to Speak at the Harvard Book Store**

On Tuesday, August 2 at 7:00pm, the Harvard Book Store in Cambridge will welcome Cindy Safronoff, author of *Crossing Swords*, for a reading and signing event. A perfect venue for intellectual conversation sparked by the themes of this comparative biography, this prestigious bookstore has been a Cambridge landmark since 1932. Safronoff looks forward to discussing the provocative and inspiring ideas featured in her book with those seeking a more accurate understanding of this important and transformative chapter of American history.

About Cindy Peyser Safronoff

Whether undertaking a climb of Mount Rainier with an all-woman team or researching little known aspects of the early years of America's suffrage movement, Cindy Peyser Safronoff has devoted much of her life to exploring the nuances of women's empowerment. She graduated from the Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington, and completed the Genealogy and Family History certificate program at the University of Washington. Safronoff has applied all that she has learned through her studies to uncovering a deeper understanding of two iconic figures in the women's rights movement. Safronoff currently divides her time between the liberal, high-tech city of Seattle and the conservative suburbs of St. Louis – a division that she has found helped her understand differing viewpoints within American culture, such as the clashing views of Victoria Woodhull and Mary Baker Eddy.

For more information, visit <http://www.crossing-swords.com/>
http://www.harvard.com/event/cindy_safronoff/

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