



JOINING THE MEN'S CLUB

For just the second time in U.S. history, a woman is going to appear on American paper currency. So what's all the controversy about?

BY ALESSANDRA POTENZA

IT'S EASY TO SEE WHY the U.S. Treasury Department's plan to feature a woman on the \$10 bill has sparked excitement. After all, only one woman's portrait has ever appeared on U.S. paper currency. That was Martha Washington's, on a one-dollar silver certificate* issued in the 1800s.

Amid the cheers, however, there has also been unexpected controversy. Why the \$10 bill instead of a more widely used **denomination**? Why replace Founding Father Alexander Hamilton instead of a less popular

figure, such as President Andrew Jackson, who's on the \$20 bill?

"Our goal was to trigger a real conversation in this country about who are the women who helped build our country, who built our democracy, what does democracy mean to Americans," Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew said recently. That seems to be what he's gotten—and much more.

The U.S. Bureau of Engraving and Printing, which has designed and printed the nation's paper money since 1862, has put billions of bills

into circulation. Other than the Martha Washington certificate, every one has featured a portrait of a man.

Women have fared somewhat better on coins. For example, Susan B. Anthony, the 19th-century social reformer who fought to get women the right to vote, was featured on a dollar coin starting in 1979. Sacagawea, the Native American guide to the Lewis and Clark expedition of 1804-1806, appeared on a dollar coin beginning in 2000. But neither of those coins is still being minted for circulation.

*Silver certificates, issued by the Treasury Department from 1878 to 1965, allowed people to deposit silver coins in exchange for the paper certificates, which were easier to carry around.

Choosing a Champion

Women's rights groups have long called for a woman on U.S. bills. Finally, last June, Lew announced that one would be featured on a new \$10 note. He asked the public for help in selecting a woman "who was a champion for our inclusive democracy."

Several million people, many using the hashtag #TheNew10, have responded to Lew's invitation. Top contenders include former First Lady and human rights advocate Eleanor Roosevelt, **abolitionist** Harriet Tubman, aviator Amelia Earhart, civil rights pioneer Rosa Parks, and Susan B. Anthony. (By law, no living person can appear on U.S. currency.)

None of those names have proved controversial to the public. But there has been a slew of complaints that the \$10 bill was selected and not the \$20.

Denomination Debate

Critics point out that the \$20 bill is much more widely circulated than the \$10 note, both in the U.S. and abroad, and is the most common currency issued at ATMs. They say that putting a woman on the \$10 note suggests that women are of lesser worth than men.

"We feel that it's important to have a woman's portrait on a bill that will be seen as widely as possible," says Susan Ades Stone of Women on 20s, an organization pushing for a woman to be featured on the \$20 bill.

Last year, Senator Jeanne Shaheen, a Democrat from New Hampshire, introduced legislation in Congress calling for a woman's portrait on the \$20 note. But the Treasury chose the \$10 bill because it's the next one due to be revised for security reasons. (Paper currency is redesigned every 7 to 10 years to deter counterfeiters.)

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Who Goes, Who Stays?

Comparisons of \$10 and \$20 notes have led to another debate: one about whose portrait should be replaced.

Instead of switching out Alexander Hamilton, many people say, it would be better to replace Andrew Jackson. Hamilton, who has been pictured on the \$10 bill for 87 years, was the first Treasury Secretary (1789-1795) and the architect of the U.S. finance system. Jackson's record of violence has made him much less popular. As president (1829-1837), he championed the Indian Removal Act of 1830, which forcibly relocated some 125,000 Native Americans.

In January, Senator James Lankford, a Republican from Oklahoma, a

state that is 9 percent Native American, sponsored a **resolution** calling for Jackson to be replaced.

Meanwhile, the Alexander Hamilton Awareness Society began a social media campaign, #SaveHamilton, to keep him on the \$10 bill.

So far, the Treasury has stuck to its plans for the \$10 bill. Lew assured Hamilton supporters that Hamilton would remain on the bill somehow, presumably as a secondary figure. But that only provoked more objections.

"That sounds pretty second-class to me," presidential candidate Hillary Clinton said in July. "I think a woman should have her own bill."

The Treasury's decision will be announced sometime this year. The final redesign will be unveiled in 2020, just in time for the centennial of the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, which guaranteed women the right to vote. Despite the heated controversy, advocates say, the fact that a woman will be seen on U.S. currency one way or another is cause for celebration. ♦

SHOW HER THE MONEY!

Several countries feature women on their paper money, including:



ENGLAND

Queen Elizabeth II appears on all pound notes. A new 10-pound bill to be issued this year will feature author Jane Austen (1775-1817).

MEXICO
The image of Mexican painter Frida Kahlo (1907-1954) appears on the 500-peso note.



CS-STOCK/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO (QUEEN ELIZABETH); COMUIGNERO SILVANA/FOTOLIA (FRIDA KAHLO)



Which woman should appear on a U.S. bill? Should she replace Hamilton or Jackson? Explain.



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