

## **PARSONS, LUCIA GONZÁLEZ (1853–1942)**

“We, the women of this country, have no ballot even if we wished to use it, and the only way that we can be represented is to take a man to represent us.”  
Speech to the IWW in 1905.

Described as “more dangerous than a thousand rioters” by the Chicago police department in the 1920s, Afro-Latina human rights activist and labor leader Lucia González was a brilliant journalist and a rousing public speaker. In newspapers like *Freedom* and *Liberator*, she and her husband, Albert Parsons supported a Communist revolution, encouraged workers to strike for the eight-hour workday, denounced racism, lynching and the exploitation of the masses. The two edited *The Alarm*, a paper published by the International Working People’s Association. To help ends meet, Lucia opened a dress shop, and spoke at public meetings on workers’ and women’s rights. The International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union (ILGWU) met in her shop. When Albert Parsons was incarcerated accused of conspiracy in the Haymarket Strike, Lucia wrote *The Life of Albert Parson*, (1899) proclaiming his innocence. She toured the country on his behalf. After his execution, she continued to write and promote the beliefs both had so passionately defended. For the rest of her life she commemorated November 11, the anniversary of the Haymarket nine, defending their deeds in essays and speeches. In later life she continued to work on behalf of workers and political prisoners. In 1942 a fire destroyed all her writings, papers, and personal belongings. It claimed the life of this courageous woman as well.