"Waking Dreams": Networked Feminists and Idealist Feminism in Late-Nineteenth Century London

by

Jana Smith Elford

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in
English

Department of English and Film Studies
University of Alberta

**Abstract**

This dissertation explores how the networked feminists of the late-nineteenth century gave rise to a particular type of feminism that I call "idealist feminism." Beginning in the 1870s, largely after undertaking study at the first institutions of higher education in the world to admit women, feminist writers and thinkers moved to the distinctive cosmopolitan metropolis of London in increasing numbers. Here they became imbricated in overlapping networks of organizational, geographic, and intellectual affiliations. Scholars have typically studied these feminist writers and thinkers separately as socialists, animal-rights activists, suffragists, or new woman writers. Yet, despite their various affiliations, these women are connected by their shared, optimistic vision for a utopian future, which they believed was necessary to alter politics, education, society, and the individual, and bring about women's emancipation.

Each chapter examines how these feminists, in their lives and in their writings, worked to draw attention to this feminist ideal. Through their public activism, their involvement in predominantly masculine-dominated clubs and organizations like the Fabian Society and the Men and Women's Club, their writing in mainstream and alternative periodical publications, and by penning fictional texts, these women were drawn in conversation both with each other and with the broader culture of the late-Victorian period. Through their involvement in this culture, they discovered themselves as activists and writers and in turn developed and began to advocate a feminism particular to the Victorian fin de siècle era. My three case studies—on the overlapping networks in which Emma Brooke, Mona Caird, and Henrietta Müller mobilized and the dream-inflected language of the writing they produced—thus work to illustrate the ideologically

complex but cohesive nature of the late-Victorian feminist movement, which is not easily

organized into conventional political categories, but which nevertheless produced a

recognizable variety of feminism. Understanding the nature of this feminism has the

potential to alter our understanding of women's agency and access to political power and

the ways we conceive of women's political influence in the period.

## Preface

Portions of Chapter I and the Coda of this thesis has been published as

"Recovering Women's History with Network Analysis: A Case Study of the Fabian

News," *Journal of Modern Periodical Studies* 6.2 (2015): 191-213.

**Acknowledgements**

I am also indebted to numerous friends and colleagues for their thoughtful comments on various drafts of this material, which was presented at the North American Victorian Studies Association (NAVSA), the Victorian Studies Association of Western Canada (VSAWC), the Modernist Studies Association (MSA), the Alberta Labour History Institute, the British Association for Victorian Studies (BAVS), the Victorian Institute Conference, and the British Women Writers Conference (BWWC). I am grateful for invitations by Dr. Michelle Meagher to the Publishing Feminisms Symposium and Dr. Hannah McGregor to the Magazines and/as Media Workshop, both of which were extremely constructive forums that shaped my work in immeasurable positive ways. I would like to thank the numerous friends and colleagues who participated in writing groups with me over the course of this project, especially Clare Mulcahy, Liam Young, Alison Hurlburt, Margrit Talpalaru, Hannah McGregor, Andrea Hasenbank, Laura Schechter, Lisa Haynes, Shama Rangwala, Brent Bellamy, Joshua St. Pierre, and Kristin Rodier, whose support contributed abundantly to this project. There are many friends and colleagues, too numerous to mention here, without whom this project would have been a lonely endeavour indeed. I am particularly grateful to my fellow academic mothers who offered me solidarity, support, and friendship: Julie Kaye, Sarah Krotz, Marija Cetinic, Terri Tomsky, Kristin Rodier, and the lovely women writers at Hook and Eye. I appreciate those dear friends and colleagues who offered material support during difficult pregnancies and after the birth of my children, too many to mention here. I also want to thank Boyda Johnstone, with whom I began my academic career, whose friendship, sympathy, encouragement, and comradery has accompanied me ever since.

Finally, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my husband and partner Ian Elford, who contributed to this project in innumerable ways. I could not have done this without your dedicated love and support for me and our children.

This project is dedicated to my daughter Imogen and son Francis, who bookended this project, and who animated my work with cheerful chatter, laughter, big hugs, and occasional keyboard smashes. I dream for you a better world.

**Table of Contents**

**Figures**

Introduction: Networked Feminists and Idealist Feminism

The Victorian fin de siècle has been described by several literary and cultural

historians as a key moment in British history, characterized by its social, political, and

religious upheaval. In the two decades leading up to the dawn of the new century, Charles

Darwin's ideas had been broadly disseminated, leading to a crisis of faith in the Victorian

public,[1] and fears of an uncontrolled and unregulated rise in population, coupled with

hunger and impoverishment in the slums of Great Britain's cities, resulted in widespread

acceptance of the possibility of cultural and racial degeneration.[2] At the same time, many

individuals believed in the imminence of a new, progressive era and the necessity of

directing the path of social change. In the distinctive cosmopolitan culture of London,

individuals encountered and modified radical ideas of social, political, and cultural

reform as numerous clubs and associations disseminated and debated new ideologies like

socialism, feminism, and anarchism. People born in the heyday of liberal radicalism and

evangelical Christianity broke with their predecessors to adopt an optimistic—even

utopian—vision of humanism that recast the Christian "kingdom of God" in secular

terms, prophesying an imminent "kingdom of Man" (William Kingdon Clifford 429). In

her *A Vision of the Future,* for instance, Jane Hume Clapperton drew on Positivist

---

[1] Thomas Henry Huxley was to a large extent responsible for the popularization of Darwin's ideas. He wrote several articles, essays, reviews, journals, and lengthy works on the subject after 1859, and participated in several debates on evolutionary theory. He is perhaps best known for his debate about evolution with Archbishop Samuel Wilberforce at a meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science at Oxford on 30 June 1860, in which he soundly trounced his opponent. He apparently said in his conclusion that he "was not ashamed to have a monkey for his ancestor; but he would be ashamed to be connected with a man who used great gifts to obscure the truth" (Desmond, NP). For more on this debate see Adrian Desmond "Huxley, Thomas Henry (1825-1895)" in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

[2] For a particular instance of this, see Max Nordeau, *Degeneration* (1895).

thinkers[3] to explain her bright hope for a new religion of social progress:

> Positivist thinkers, who have based their teachings on materialist philosophy, have
>
> bright anticipations for the human race, although ages may elapse before the
>
> realization of their hopes; and the existence of poverty and misery in our midst is
>
> fully recognized, graphically described, and feelingly deplored. The exponents of
>
> Positivism are eloquence, cultured, refined. We want a new religion, they say, and
>
> without that, no rapid progress can be made. (9-10)

In contrast with the grim evolutionism of thinkers such as Max Nordau,[4] writers like

Clapperton drew on a visionary, dream-inflected language to articulate a hopeful,

progressive ideal, drawn from their understanding of the "rational, conscious epoch of

evolution" in which they lived, which would positively transform society, balancing both

individual freedom and social order (Clapperton 1, 13-14).[5] Women writers and thinkers

---

[3] Positivism, a philosophical system elaborated by Auguste Comte, a French thinker (1798-1857), recognized only observable phenomena and empirically-verified scientific facts. It rejected inquiry into origins or causes as belonging to theology or metaphysical thought, and instead embraced the idea of an organized humanistic religion to supplement traditional religions. This idea of humanism belongs to a tradition of secular humanism that John Stuart Mill, Matthew Arnold, August Comte, and other philosophers advanced in the nineteenth century, as Charles Taylor has shown. The idea of a "religion of humanity," for instance, was popularized by John Stuart Mill in England. Auguste Comte's ideas were broadly disseminated in 19th-century England by John Stuart Mill in his *A System of Logic* (1843) and later in his *August Comte and Positivism* (1865) (which, though it criticized Comte's later writings, still defended Comte's efforts to transform positivism into religion). Comte was also popularized by George Henry Lewes in his *Comte's Philosophy of the Sciences* and later as resident Comtist for the *Saturday Review* (Heydt 158, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* Tjoa 116-17). Some positivistic thinkers reconstructed spiritual significance in the process of evolution, while others merely deconstructed conventional religion.

[4] Max Nordeau was the author of *Degeneration* (translated into English in 1895)*,* in which he applied the ideas of evolution to art and culture. Influenced by Darwinian evolutionism, he held that if humanity could evolve into more complex forms, it could also devolve into simpler, less complex forms. Nordeau applied evolutionary ideas not only to nature but also to morality, arguing that degeneracy was "a morbid deviation from an original type . . . all degenerates lack the sense of morality and of right and wrong" (32). This grim thinking led him to argue that late nineteenth-century European art and culture evidenced cultural decay. While Clapperton and Nordeau both applied evolutionary thinking to morality, Clapperton argued that humanity was developing an advanced moral sense—a "triumphal chariot of moral[ity] and spiritual[ity]"—that would result in a collectivist society where "each individual is unhurtful to the other organic units incorporated in that society" (vi, 14).

[5] The scientific writing of many evolutionary thinkers in the late-nineteenth century contained this idealistic strain, as Lindsay Wilhelm outlines. Even Darwin's *Origin*, for instance, reflected an optimistic stance in

in the late-Victorian period focused in particular on the amelioration of the injustices women faced. Often taking advantage of the burgeoning opportunities for women's higher education, they contributed to extensive debates on social and political reform, and dedicated their time to advocating in support of their vision and persuading others of its importance. Attending to issues as widely variant as anti-vivisection, marriage law, anti-imperialism, birth control, female employment, religious freedom, suffrage, and domestic labour, these women intervened in numerous arenas to alter the direction of political and social change, both revealing the limitations of the current system and dreaming of an altogether different future—an ideal feminist[6] community, an alternative utopian social order.

This study examines the lives and writings of the feminist writers involved in dense and complex linked networks of organizational, geographical, and intellectual affiliations in London in the 1880s and 1890s, who have been studied separately as socialists, animal-rights activists, suffragists, new women writers, and spiritual leaders, yet who are connected by their shared vision for an alternative future. In contrast to the feminist networks of the mid-Victorian period, these feminist writers established their networks both from within and outside of mixed-sex and female-only social organizations at a moment when working, middle-class women were becoming ever more

---

relation to the new laws of nature: "there is a grandeur in this view of life . . . that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being, evolved" (Darwin, qtd. in Wilhelm 13). Herbert Spencer likewise celebrated an optimistic projection of human evolution. In *Principles of Psychology* (1873), he suggested that human life might be shaped by "aesthetic activities in general" (Spencer, qtd. in Wilhelm 14). He argued that humankind might develop alternative modes of evolutionary progress based on the cumulative effects of humane culture (Wilhelm 14).

[6] Although the word "feminist" itself does not circulate in the discourse of the period, these women devoted their lives to articulating their views relating to the oppression of women and working out ways to meliorate, resist, or revolt against it, which is why I have chosen, following Barbara Caine and other scholars of feminism, to refer to them as feminists (Caine *English Feminism* 4).

active in the public and literary spheres. These increasingly mobile women writers

fostered a different kind of feminist activism, one that assembled from within an

overlapping of networks, through multiple webs and affiliations not associated with any

singular campaign. While late-Victorian feminism has often been considered a backwater

of collective action, characterized by recent scholars as "a fractured collectivity of groups

and webs of affiliation marked by disagreement as much as by consensus," with political

action "in partial retreat, or in a faltering state of suspension, at least" (Beaumont 97), the

fact that the feminism of the period represented a "fractured collectivity" does not mean it

was politically ineffective. On the contrary, the degree to which late-Victorian feminism

constituted a network rather than a singular movement provided unique strengths and

opportunities. Feminists of the period—writers, activists, social reformers, and thinkers—

moved sometimes together and sometimes apart, encountering and influencing each

other's ideas through shared connections to particular places, social organizations, and

individuals. While they did indeed pursue involvement with a multiplicity of social

organizations, this speaks more to their commitment to widespread social change than it

does to their disloyalty to the feminist cause. Many late-Victorian feminists, like

Clapperton, committed themselves to "nothing less than a reconstruction of society and

regeneration of its life," a radical struggle for social transformation and a new utopian

order, holding a vision of equality that sought to transform politics, education, society,

and the individual, insisting on alterations in both private life and the public community

(*A Vision* 17). As a result, they were attracted to a variety of different social movements

that variously advocated their shared concerns—and not just the campaign for women's

suffrage. While late-Victorian feminism has largely been understood in terms of the later

women's suffrage movement, the late-Victorian women's movement should not be understood as simply culminating in the franchise: it was instead part of a movement of political hope that advocated complete human emancipation through radical democracy and the preservation of personal choice. Many of these women articulated their visions of feminist reform through a variety of organizations and movements not affiliated with any one campaign, through their writing in mainstream or alternative periodical publications, and by penning fictional texts that performed a propagandist function, and then enacted their feminist principles through the organizations they joined and founded. In the process, these women, connected to each other through overlapping literary, social, and political networks that all intersected in London in the 1880s, developed a distinct type of feminism—what I call "idealist feminism"—that influenced the culture of the era.

Idealist Feminism

I use the term "idealist feminism" to refer to the particular variety of optimistic, dream-inflected—even utopian—feminism that developed in this network of women who lived and worked in London in the 1880s. It is useful to think of this group of women, and the feminism they professed, beginning with the formation of the original Men and Women's Club in 1879 and its rebirth in 1885 under Karl Pearson, discussed at length in Chapter I, as it provides a locus at which to begin charting the ideas, activities, and strategies of these individuals since nearly all of them were either members, associates, or one degree removed from it.[7] The women circulating in and around the Men and Women's Club developed a variety of feminism with a shared ideology—focused on

---

[7] There may have been other organizations, clubs, or societies who better embody the ideas I chart here, but whose records were not so meticulously preserved.

complete human emancipation, radical democracy, the importance of personal choice,

and egalitarian fellowship—and a particular kind of visionary, dream-inflected utopian

language, whose features I explore below.

I use the term "idealist" because the words "ideal," "idealism," and "idealistic"

were used frequently by this group of women: Jane Hume Clapperton spoke of "the ideal

of womanhood," which she defined as "a rational education, embracing free play to

activities hitherto denied to the sex, and promoting physical development," believing that

these would "lift women to a superior level" (*A Vision* 95); F. Henrietta Müller described

"an entirely new ideal of marriage" where the "words 'duty' and 'right' would give place

to 'freedom' and 'equality'" ("The Future of Single Women" 74); and Mona Caird argued

that "we ought to sanction no compromise except for the sake of the ideal itself" ("Ideal

Marriage" 619), which she later defined as "[a]bsolute liberty . . . in the relations of men

and women" ("Ideal Marriage" 629).[8]

However, "idealism," as Elizabeth Carolyn Miller has noted, is a somewhat

slippery term in the late-Victorian period (114). Over the nineteenth century, the category

of "idealism" —or what Toril Moi describes as "aesthetic idealism" (29)— emerged

within a discourse by Victorian literary critics who used the term to mean "a moral vision

shaped by accepted religious and social values" (Marcus 304). As Sharon Marcus has

argued, Victorian literary critics who espoused idealism often blended realism with

---

[8] As I discuss below, Emma Brooke and Henrietta Müller also used the term "ideal." In a letter to Karl
Pearson, Brooke emphasized the need for women to "be allowed distinctly to work out for themselves their
own idea of what their duty and ideal is" (14 March 1886). In discussing her newly-launched paper, Müller
suggested that women readers would embrace "the highest ideal of excellence which the mind of humanity
has conceived" ("Our Policy 1). She had written previously of the "artificial ideal" of marriage and
motherhood which she contrasted with the "entirely new ideal of marriage" ("What Woman is Fitted For"
73-4). Müller suggested that "all can make some effort towards the ideal . . . their cries may be faint but
they will be heard and caught up by those who are more happily placed . . . such women will sow the good
seed which will ripen into a harvest of well-being to be reaped hereafter" ("What Woman is Fitted For"
75).

idealism, seeing little contradiction between "plausibility and conformity to a moral code" because they believed "*literary representations should be governed not by mimesis and fidelity to reality but by values, by adherence to ideas of the good*" (305).[9] This led writers and literary critics like Vernon Lee (Violet Paget) to rationalize the writings of "incontrovertible realists" like Zola by "turning them into idealists": Marcus explains that Lee "emphasized that her thoughts about [Zola's] work are 'connected rather with right and wrong than with ugly or beautiful, accurate or inaccurate,' and explains that her 'desire' is to 'suggest what moral lessons Zola might bring to his worthier readers, by showing what lessons he has conveyed to myself'" (307). Idealist literary critics thus focused on the moral lessons found within literary texts, measuring those texts against established social values.

The emergence of this sense of idealism in literary criticism appeared alongside the development of philosophical idealism, which Sandra Den Otter and others have argued was the "pre-eminent" school of philosophical thought in Britain (Den Otter 1; Wallace). Both, for instance, were part of a reaction against conventional utilitarianism and scientific materialism, and both infused philosophical and literary questions with a moral dimension. The parallels between the works of philosophers like F.H. Bradley, T.H. Green and the ethically-based feminism of idealists like Mona Caird and Henrietta Müller are multiple. Some of these include the desire to synthesize opposing views through a unity that does not obliterate but instead embraces genuine "unity in diversity" (Boucher and Vincent 5, Wallace), particularly in dualisms like individualism and collectivism. Others include the idea of humanity's "unity with the metaphysical subject

---

[9] Toril Moi's definition is similar: she defines idealism (which she also refers to as "idealist aesthetics" or "aesthetic idealism") as "the belief that the task of art (poetry, writing, literature, music) is to uplift us, to point the way to the Ideal. Idealists thought that beauty, truth, and goodness were *one"* (29-30)

(God)" (Sinclair 701) or the idea that "God is immanent in the world" (Boucher and Vincent 9), and the belief, drawn from it, that a "morally worthwhile existence" is the "extent to which the individual attempts to do God's work in the world" by achieving or "realiz[ing] [his/her] best self" as, in and of itself, a contribution to the common good (Boucher and Vincent 9, 11, Wallace). In this sense, idealist ethicists emphasized equally both individualism and what Bevir terms "social reformism" ("Welfarism, Socialism and Religion: On T. H. Green and Others," 641). Indeed, as Bevir suggests, the "belief in the universe as a single, spiritual whole encouraged the immanentists to call for a higher individualism, proclaiming both that individuals must follow their own instincts in their progress toward God, and yet that individuals are intrinsically part of a wider community" ("Welfarism, Socialism and Religion: On T. H. Green and Others," 647). The principles of philosophical idealism furthermore led to a strain of liberal socialism that was distinctly communitarian, where the state was in place to "remove obstacles to moral action" (Den Otter 71, 78) and to provide "conditions for individual moral development" (Boucher and Vincent 13, Wallace). According to philosophical idealist Henry Jones, "the liberal socialist state could not make men moral, but it could remove the obstacles to self-realization" (Boucher and Vincent 13). In this sense, the philosophical idealists, like idealist feminists, embraced a vision of society that was both moral and political (Wallace).

Despite these parallels, however, the "idealism" described by the feminists of this study is distinct from the "idealism" held by the philosophical idealists. While both groups developed in the same broader culture of the period, and while philosophical idealism "permeated political culture through interlocking circles of the metropolis" (Den

Otter 68), philosophical idealism had its origin in the halls of Oxford, and circulated

primarily in the intellectual networks of Oxford and the Scottish Universities (Boucher

and Vincent 2). No feminists described here had any significant connection to Oxford or

the Scottish Universities. While they were the first to benefit from the advances in

women's higher education, most attended Newnham and Girton at Cambridge, though

some attended no university at all. While philosophical idealism certainly permeated

much of the English-speaking world (Boucher and Vincent 2, Wallace), it was not taken

up in any systematic way by the women I study. Instead, these feminists drew their

influences from a range of different philosophical positions and social and political

ideologies that they encountered as they mobilized in the city. Furthermore, the idealist

feminists I study above all emphasized the social, political, and economic rights of

women, while the philosophical idealists paid little, or no attention at all, to the specific

concerns facing women.

There are closer parallels between the development of idealist feminism in

relation to the aesthetic idealism that developed in literary criticism, though, as we will

see, there is no simple line of inheritance from the aesthetic idealists of literary criticism

to the idealist feminists I discuss here. Most idealist literary critics, as Toril Moi points

out, held to "ideali[zed] notions of femininity" (32) that required women to heroically

"sacrifice[e] [their] life for love" (170) or be demonized if they refused. In contrast, the

idealist feminists I discuss here inverted these core values of the aesthetic idealists,

fundamentally rejecting their vision of "Ideal" womanhood. Yet feminist thinkers like

Caird, Brooke, and Clapperton still might be described as idealists in the sense that they

still held to ideas of the good, but they attempted to re-articulate their understanding of

this good in feminist terms. This explains, then, how Caird could emphatically declare "we ought to sanction no compromise except for the sake of the ideal itself" (619) and then simultaneously state that her "heroines have never been intended to represent ideal types . . . whether or not my heroine acted rightly or wrongly, wisely or foolishly, in this or that crisis, or in the conduct of life as a whole, is not the point with which the book is concerned" (Caird to Prof. Viëtor, qtd in Foerster 52). While feminist idealists held to the values of faith, altruism, self-sacrifice, and love, they recast these religious and social values in feminist and secular terms. In response to the crisis of faith, for instance, Jane Hume Clapperton called for a "new religion" of social progress (*A Vision of the Future* 9-10). Caird similarly adopted "new faith" ("A Defense" 253) in the progressive development of humankind. Feminist idealists rejected the idea of altruistic duty to family and home, and instead replaced this ethic with an altruistic commitment to humanity, and particularly to the daughters of humankind. Repudiating self-sacrifice for its own sake, they instead distinguished between the needless sacrifice of mothers and daughters who relinquish their interests and passions in favour of their "womanly duties," and those women who sacrifice their lives in order that the women who come after them might have a freedom they themselves did not enjoy. They embraced a sense of love and affection, but one that came out of equality, friendship, and equal lives of work, which they referred to variously as fellowship, comradeship, or comradery/camaraderie. I persist in defining these women as "idealist feminists" both because of their repeated reference to 'ideals' and the visionary, utopian quality of the writing they produced, but it would be a mistake to understand them as aesthetic idealists. The idealist feminists, in contrast to the aesthetic idealists, saw their writing as a means by which to articulate and

enact feminist social change. They embraced an optimistic, utopian-inflected vision for social progress that touched on numerous issues—including marriage law, socialism, imperialism, birth control, female employment, religious freedom, pro-suffrage activism, and domestic labour—combined a range of progressive beliefs not clearly under the purview of any one political party, and above all deeply believed in the possibilities of fellowship or camaraderie as a solution for social change. As Brooke's narrator explains in her novel *Transition*, "it is the affections that give acuteness to the great allegiance" (166). The idealist feminists believed these links of affection could lead to significant social change.

<u>Idealist Feminists</u>

The idealist feminists I study here, mainly born in the 1840s and 1850s, were the first to experience the benefits of the higher education campaigns of the 1870s and 1880s,[10] and were educated women, largely from the middle classes. Most were born in Britain, though some were born to British expatriates abroad, and others were the children of political exiles who settled in London as a result of Britain's liberal asylum policy. Each woman completed the majority of her literary and political activities between the years of 1880 and 1900. Living primarily in London in the 1880s and 1890s, they benefitted from the expansion of the mass-transit system, which helped facilitate their activities in the metropolis. Although some are less well-remembered than others,

---

[10] Late-Victorian feminism was informed by education advancements of the mid-Victorian period. In Britain, mid-Victorian feminists Emily Davies, Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon, Anne Jemima Clough, and Josephine Butler made considerable advances in the higher education of women, establishing Girton and Newnham Colleges, at Cambridge University, in 1869 and 1871, respectively. Middle- and upper-class women deemed superfluous by British society took advantage of burgeoning opportunities for study and established new egalitarian communities premised on critical thought and well-considered ideas.

these women included, among others, Eleanor Marx Aveling (Karl Marx's daughter and a member of the Social Democratic Federation, the Socialist League, and the Woman's Trade Union League); Emma Brooke (a founding member of the Fabian Society and author of the 1894 novel *A Superfluous Woman*); Clementina Black (secretary of the Women's Trade Union Association, president of the Women's Industrial Council, and executive committee member of the National Anti-Sweating League); Charlotte Wilson (founding Fabian, founding member of the Hampstead Historic Club, author of Fabian Tract 4 "What Socialism Is," and founder of the anarchist journal *Freedom*); Mona Caird (president of the Anti-Vivisection League, member of the Pioneer Club and the Theosophical Society, and author of the inflammatory 1888 article "Marriage"); Annie Besant (theosophist, socialist, and proponent of birth control); Jane Hume Clapperton (novelist and social theorist); Isabella Ormston Ford (author, speaker, and founding member of the International Labour Party); F. Henrietta Müller (labour activist, suffragette, anti-war advocate, contributor to the *Westminster Review,* and editor and founder of the *Women's Penny Paper*); Mathilde Blind (leading poet of the late-nineteenth century, author of the influential poem *The Ascent of Man* [1889]); Margaret Harkness (author of the socialist-feminist novels *A City Girl* [1887], *Out of Work* [1883], and *In Darkest London* [1889]); and Olive Schreiner (author of the first New Woman novel *The Story of An African Farm* [1883], the evocative collection of feminist visions, *Dreams* [1890], and her widely influential book on the Woman Question and its relation to socialist ideas, *Women and Labour* [1911]).

 As these women converged in a newly-interlinked London in the 1880s, their location gave unparalleled access to multiple networks of social and political clubs,

organizations, societies, campaigns, and movements that drew them in conversation both with each other and with the broader radical culture of the late-Victorian period. Eschewing a single or monolithic feminist agenda, these women were involved in various and overlapping social reform clubs and organizations, some with what we might today see as opposing ideological perspectives. They included political groups such as the Fabian Society, the Independent Labour Party, the Social Democratic Federation, the Socialist League, the Women's Liberal Association, the Women's Trade Union League, and the Women's Labour League. Other clubs and organizations that feminists participated in included clubs specifically formed in response to "the Woman Question,"[11] such as the Men and Women's Club and the Pioneer Club, as well as spiritual or religion-based associations, such as the Theosophical Society. These late-Victorian feminists were also associated with the periodical networks of the day, including the mainstream *Westminster Review* and *Nineteenth Century*, socialist periodicals such as the well-known *Labour Leader*, and the woman-centred *Women's Penny Paper* (which later became *The Woman's Herald*). They furthermore converged at locations in the city which were newly opened to women, including the Reading Rooms of the British Library.[12] Margaret Harkness's location in London, for instance, gave her access to the political activism of the nineteenth century: she was involved with Clementina Black in the first organized socialist political party in Britain, the Social Democratic Federation, and would march in support of the London Dock Strike of 1889

---

[11]The "Woman Question," was an ongoing discussion in the Victorian period about the nature and social role of women (Thompson 1).

[12] In the space of an eight-year span, for instance, Annie Besant (27 Feb 1875), Clementina Black (3 August 1877), Emma Brooke (25 July 1883), Mona Caird (4 November 1879), Margaret Harkness (26 July 1880), Eleanor Marx-Aveling (22 October 1877), Olive Schreiner (28 June 1883), and Charlotte Wilson (6 October 1883) each obtained Reader's Tickets at the British Library's Reading Room (Bernstein 144). Interestingly, Mathilde Blind gained her entry decades earlier, on 17 September 1859, as a very young woman (Bernstein 144).

which protested the unfair working conditions of Dock workers in the Port of London. Similarly, Clementina Black herself marched in support of the Matchgirls strike of 1888 in protest of the poor working conditions facing women working in the Bryant and May Factory in London. Black, Ford, Clapperton, and Brooke were also active participants in the International Congress of Women in London in 1899, which met for ten days in June and July to discuss the relation of women to labour, prison reform, business, education, the professions, literature, philanthropy, and political enfranchisement, among other issues. Furthermore, most of the above women participated in the discussions of Karl Pearson's Men and Women's Club in the 1880s, which debated the relations of the sexes. Established in 1885, the club devoted itself to "the free and unreserved discussion of all matters . . . connected with the mutual position and relation of men and women" (*Men and Women's* xvii), attempting to articulate and put into practice the principles of egalitarian fellowship between the sexes.

<u>Networked Feminism</u>

The multiple threads that connect these women to London, to each other, and to the social and political clubs, organizations, societies, congresses and campaigns listed above suggest that these feminist writers were part of a shared network that formed in London in the 1880s. The women in this network were active from the 1880s through the first decade of the twentieth century and beyond, though the content and inflection of their feminism, and the strategies they employed to achieve it, drastically shifted by the turn of the century and with the advent of the Great War. I have used the term "network" here as a metaphor for understanding the feminism of the period because the idea of

networks allow us to rethink the conventional metaphors for describing the ways in which distinct elements—or actors, or forms—might interact. Instead of opposing the individualist to the collectivist, for instance, or the anarchist to the communist, we can, following Bruno Latour, "simply follow . . . a given element" through its connections, refusing assumptions about causality or ideology in favour of simply observing points of contact between elements and the routes they take (372). By tracing these patterns of contact, we are better positioned to understand how feminists defined themselves both within and against the currents of radicalism, socialism, anarchism, and liberalism with which they came into contact in central London in the 1880s and 1890s. Through their involvement with each other and the predominantly masculine association-based networks of the period, these feminists discovered themselves both as activists and writers and in turn developed an idealist feminism unique to the Victorian fin de siècle era. Understanding the nature of this feminism has the potential to alter our understanding of women's agency and creative access to political power, shaping in turn the ways we conceive of women's political influence and power in the period. In Caroline Levine's words, paying attention to networks "allow[s] us to think in newly rigorous ways about political power and social experience" and furthermore helps to illuminate how networks themselves relate to and help constitute larger forms like "nations or cultures" (118). Levine argues that the network is thus "a form crucial to our grasp of significant assemblages—including society itself (118). Following Levine, my study thus attends to the "patterns of interconnection and exchange" between these feminist writers and thinkers, tracing their connections to each other, and exploring the ways in which they participated in overlapping networks and created their own (118). This study is thus an

attempt to understand the formation of idealist feminism and how it emerged in London within the feminist networks of the 1880s and 1890s, linking up to other assemblages, and overlapping networks, of the period. Attention to such patterns permits us new ways of understanding how feminist activists and writers joined together and mobilized both within and outside of the larger networks of late-Victorian radicalism[13] and progressive thought. My study follows Caroline Levine and others like her— Susan Hinely, Leela Gandhi, Ruth Livesey, Ilham Khuri-Makdisi, Mary Louise Roberts, and Mark Bevir[14]— who suggest the importance of alternative metaphors like the network for understanding the social movements that include feminism, anarchism, and socialism, among others, in the late-Victorian period and beyond. These authors push against oppositional understandings—of resistance and mimicry (Gandhi); the three strands of early socialism, including Marxist, Fabian and ethical socialism (Bevir); feminism and internationalism (Roberts, Hinely); anarchism, feminism, and socialism (Hinely, Khuri-Makdisi); radicalism and nationalism (Khuri-Makdisi); and socialism and aestheticism (Livesey)— and instead attempt to trace the global movements and linkages that produced these particular formulations of radical ideas. These scholars demonstrate that tracing networks and the radical thinkers and activists who mobilized within them is a powerful metaphor for understanding feminist history.

Rather than opposing individualism to collectivism, or socialism to anarchism or

---

[13] I follow Leela Gandhi, Susan Hinely, and Ilham Khuri-Makdisi in their understanding of late-Victorian radicalism as an umbrella term for the confluence of anarchist, socialist, and feminists ideas, among others.
[14] Leela Gandhi, *Affective Communities: Anticolonial Thought, Fin-de-siècle Radicalism, and the Politics of Friendship* (2006); Ruth Livesey, *Socialism, Sex, and the Culture of Aestheticism in Britain, 1880-1914* (2007), Susan Hinely, "Charlotte Wilson, the 'Woman Question', and the Meaning of Anarchist Socialism in Late Victorian Radicalism," (2012), "The 'Spirit of Internationalism' in the Prewar Women's Movement" (2015); Ilham Khuri-Makdisi, *The Eastern Mediterranean and the Making of Global Radicalism, 1860–1914* (2010); Mary Louise Roberts, *Disruptive Acts: The New Woman in Fin-de-Siècle France* (2002). Mark Bevir, *The Making of British Socialism* (2011).

to feminism, my study thus traces the connections between texts, bodies, places, and discourses that emerge in the lives of women writers immersed in the feminist network of late-Victorian London. I have taken notice of points of contact between actors, attempting to follow the links between them and the larger formations of the period. My study examines three of the feminist writers and thinkers mentioned above, tracing their individual linkages alongside the larger overlapping networks of late-Victorian radicalism and political thought. I attend to both the lives and writings of these women writers, and explore their understanding of feminism as they mobilized within and outside of London, participating in a wide range of political and literary activities. I have taken the late 1880s and early 1890s as my temporal centre, though several key events and texts spill over these temporal boundaries. I have limited my study to these women's pre-suffrage activities, when they were leading writers and members of several social organizations dedicated to wholesale political and cultural change. Although most women had two stages to their advocacy careers—several were re-invigorated and energized by later campaigns—their activities and actions in the decade of the 1880s constitute their major contributions to the feminism of the period.

While any of these women in the network listed above present a viable opportunity of study, I have chosen to focus on the activities and ideas of three of these middle-class feminist idealists as representative examples: Emma Brooke, Mona Caird, and Henrietta Müller. This is in part due to my desire to recover some of the lesser-known members of this network. But it is also because the three women who anchor this study—born between the years of 1844 and 1854—all moved to London in the late 1870s, participated in the Men and Women's Club to varying degrees in the 1880s, and

then mobilized both within and outside of the clubs and organizations that met in central London in significantly divergent ways. Emma Brooke was a pioneering member of the socialist Fabian Society and author of New Woman Novels,[15] participated in the Men and Women's Club anonymously, wrote a number of pseudonymously-authored fiction and non-fiction works that explored the Woman Question, and continually attempted to re-centre women's concerns in the male-dominated socialist organizations of which she was a part, using non-fiction, fiction, and personal letters. Mona Caird, who identified as a Liberal, attended one meeting of the Men and Women's Club and then wrote popular inflammatory articles in the mainstream periodical press, drawing on the ideas circulating at the Club. She also wrote polemical New Women novels. Henrietta Müller withdrew from the Men and Women's Club after three years of intense involvement to form a feminist newspaper. My aim is to demonstrate how these individuals provide evidence for the complex and contradictory ways in which feminist activists and writers linked to each other and engaged with the wider overlapping networks of the era. My study attends to these three women as instances of the ideologically complex nature of the late-Victorian feminist movement, which is not easily organized into conventional political categories, yet which nevertheless produced a recognizable variety of feminism. Although each woman studied here participated in diverse networks, and embraced a slightly different version of their feminist ideals, they maintained a similar vision for an emancipated womanhood, which embraced both individual freedom and collective equality, and which they believed was necessary to alter politics, education, society, and the individual, and bring about an ideal egalitarian future. This vision, they believed,

---

[15] The New Woman Novel examined in fictional form the issues women faced in the late-nineteenth century. It often depicted female characters who rebelled against the traditional roles of wife and mother, instead experimenting with social and sexual autonomy.

would be achieved through egalitarian fellowship or camaraderie.

My first chapter, "The Woman Question, Fiction, and Fabian Culture: Emma Brooke and the Idealist Feminism of the 1880s and 1890s," traces the networks in which Brooke circulated in order to understand how she related to and mobilized within the overlapping radical networks of the period; particularly the socialist and feminist networks in which she participated. Involved with several mixed-sex clubs and organizations (socialist and otherwise)—including the Hampstead Historic Society, the Fabian Society, the Hampstead Liberal and Radical Club, and Karl Pearson's Men and Women's Club—Brooke mobilized within and negotiated with these male-dominated social networks to advocate on behalf of women and draw attention to the Woman Question, as it was then called. While Brooke maintained her membership in these and other organizations, mobilizing within them and continually drawing attention to women's concerns, she simultaneously turned her efforts outside these organizations to advance her feminist ideals, publishing non-fiction treatises in feminist- and socialist-friendly journals (like Annie Besant's *Our Corner*), writing letters to potential allies, and penning fiction. I examine the characteristics of Brooke's feminism in these disparate sources to argue that she articulated a vision for an emancipated womanhood—her "feminist ideal"—that required the systemic transformation of social, sexual, economic, political, and educational institutions. Combining the precepts of liberalism and socialism and individualism and collectivism, Brooke theorized and attempted to propagate an entire program of social change that emphasized the importance of a moral individualism operating with the collective interest in mind. Although she gave priority to different campaigns over time, she continued to advocate for sexual emancipation as a cornerstone

of total human emancipation, upon which a new society would be built; this society would preserve individual freedom in an ideal communal order. Like her contemporaries, Brooke drew on the language of dreams and visions to advocate for this ideal emerging future, alluding to the possibility of egalitarian comradeship as a solution for social change.

My second chapter, "Mona Caird and the Radical Culture of Hampstead" traces Caird's geographic network, placing her in the same cultural and historical milieu as Brooke. While Caird has been characterized by her individualist feminism and often isolated from her feminist contemporaries, I argue that Caird is better understood in relation to her colleagues at the Men and Women's Club, the British Library, and to her neighbours in Hampstead, which was the seedbed for middle-class socialist and anarchist thinking in the 1880s and 1890s. In the absence of any significant correspondence and with the destruction of Caird's personal library, I argue here that the evidence provided by geographic proximity can fill a significant hole in the archive. As Caird moved through the city, encountering and influencing other women's ideas through shared links to places, organizations, periodicals, and individuals, she developed a variety of feminism that mirrors that of her colleagues. Like Brooke, Caird articulated a similar vision for an emancipated womanhood—her "feminist ideal"—that embraced both individual freedom and collective equality, which she believed was necessary to alter politics, education, society, and the individual, and bring about an ideal egalitarian future. Although she placed more importance on individual rights and limiting the power of the state, Caird's writings similarly display a visionary, optimistic, dream-inflected language that is characteristic of the anarchist- and socialist- inflected reform writing of this period. In her

fiction, Caird depicts how far the present social system is out of harmony with her feminist ideal, and in her articles in the periodical press, she outlines in depth her conception of the ideal principles of social relations, which never sacrifice part of women's freedom for the promise of greater universal human freedom. Throughout, her language emphasizes the importance of comradeship and cooperation, which she suggests would lead to collective equality.

My final chapter, "Henrietta Müller, the *Women's Penny Paper* and the 'Spirit of Camaraderie,'" explores the *Women's Penny Paper* as an alternative, woman-centred network that resulted from the male-dominated associational culture of the 1880s. As feminists engaged with, responded to, and mobilized within male-dominated social networks, they also established their own spaces to articulate and enact their feminist ideals. This chapter explores how Müller facilitated a polyphonic space for many women's voices by drawing on the networks of women she had encountered in her work across various clubs, organizations, and social spaces. I argue that the *Women's Penny Paper* was a crucial space for connecting feminists to each other and raising public consciousness of the women's cause. The paper was also representative of Müller's vision for the idealist feminism of the period, which focused on wholesale social reform related to a number of different areas, combined a range of progressive beliefs not clearly under the purview of any one political party, and above all deeply believed in the possibilities of female camaraderie as a solution for social change. Through the camaraderie ideal—the belief that women could and would band together on the basis of their sex, putting aside any political differences and class positions to advocate on behalf of all women— Müller believed that women would successfully advance a wholesale

transformation of British society. Like the fiction and non-fiction penned by Brooke and Caird, key articles, editorials, and poetry in the *Women's Penny Paper* drew on a visionary, spiritual language to herald the imminent dawning of a new era of equality between men and women.

My conclusion traces some alternative assemblages of the networked feminism of the period. Using the network visualization tool OrlandoVision, I explore how digital network visualizations—in this case, link-node graphs—illuminate alternative aspects of the idealist feminism of the period, prompting distinctive insights and revealing the need for further research. As scholars like Natalie Houston and Laura Mandell have suggested, "machine reading" (Houston 499) with network visualization tools can "encourage perceiving and investigating correlations among data that might have gone unnoticed without it ("The Poetess Archive" np). Whereas the primarily analog research I conduct in my three chapters is inflected by the biases of my attention, reason, and memory, network visualization software can help overcome these tendencies, enabling the discovery of alternative links and connections, and opening up new research possibilities.

Chapter I

The Woman Question, Fabianism, and Fiction: Emma Brooke's Idealist Feminism

On 13th October 1906, Emma Frances Brooke wrote a letter to Edward Pease,

offering a "brief retrospect" on the sex question and its relation to Fabian socialism in the

1880s and 1890s. Pease, who, with Brooke, had been a founding Fabian in 1884, had

served as the full-time Secretary of the Fabian Society from 1889, and would later

become the author of the first book of Fabian History. Brooke had corresponded regularly

with Pease for several years in the early-1890s after her election to the Fabian Executive,

but their correspondence had ended after her resignation from the Executive in 1896. But

Pease still held a pivotal role in the organization and management of the Society, sat on

the Executive Committee, and held sway in determining the direction of Fabian activities,

publications, and ideas. Brooke's 1906 letter, written nearly a decade after her

resignation, offers a glimpse into how feminists like Brooke mobilized within and

negotiated with male-dominated social organizations like the Fabian Society to advocate

on behalf of women and to draw attention to the Woman Question, as it was then

described. Furthermore, Brooke's retrospect, tempered by nearly two decades of

hindsight, offers a glimpse into how feminists broke into and redirected wider debates on

social change in late-Victorian Britain, including those relating to female sexuality,

marriage law, poverty, sexual violence, and the role of fiction in motivating social

change.

Just days before she penned her letter, Brooke had attended a Fabian lecture

delivered by H.G. Wells entitled "Socialism and the Middle Classes," which promised "a

strong revival, which was to carry the day for socialism at last" (Brooke 13 October 1906). In her own words, Brooke had gone to hear Wells speak, with her "mind not only open but eager" with anticipation (Brooke 13 October 1906). What she found instead amounted to "merely old porridge re-warmed": her own ideas on the 'Woman question' and the State-Maintenance of motherhood, elaborated over twenty years before, restated (Brooke 13 October 1906). If this wasn't enough to raise her ire, Wells' declaration that "the sex-question . . . was a horror & horror in the early eighties" was (Brooke 13 October 1906). Brooke took particular issue with Well's assumption that early members of the Fabian Society—herself included—had avoided the woman question, despite numerous petitions, tracts, articles, novels, and short stories dealing with the subject from the mid-1880s to the turn of the nineteenth century, many of them Brooke's own. In her letter to Pease, she attempts to correct Wells' misapprehensions about the Fabian's society's apparent "neglect" of questions relating to women's issues and concerns, writing:

> The very contrary is the fact. In the early eighties there was a <u>wide-spread</u> ferment upon these subjects. I remember that in every circle to which I belonged, in every circle to which I got netted or to which I was attracted, I found the subject in hot discussion; the attention paid it almost amounted to obsession. . . Most of us came tacitly to assume that the best way of treating the Sex-Question, is by way of representation:—that is by shaping parts of this many-sided subject into fictional examples (in novels, plays, "letters"), which can & do appeal to masses of people & leave them time to ponder quietly. Individual Fabians from the beginning of the Society to this day, have had cause to broach & handle the subject courageously

& persistently, each in the way for which he was best fitted. (Brooke 13 October

1906)

The turn to writing fiction, Brooke argued, was not because of "compromise and a spirit

of cowardice" as Wells had assumed, but instead because she and others—and here she

mentions Fabian Socialist Grant Allen as well as those related to Karl Pearson and his

"society of persons," Brooke's term for the Men and Women's Club—had decided this

was needed to accomplish anything relating to the 'woman question': to work at

changing public opinion gradually through fiction (Brooke 13 October 1906). For

Brooke, writing fiction was a crucial component of accomplishing social change: the

equivalent of modifying factory and marriage legislation or marching on Trafalgar

Square. Talking and talking and still coming to no "unity of opinion or idea" had, Brooke

said, "brought us 'no forrader' . . . we were only wandering about in the dark, and in the

dark sliding hollow words upon an unknotted string" (Brooke 13 October 1906). Brooke,

like the other women in this study, instead worked simultaneously and on multiple fronts,

uniting with other feminists on occasion for specific action. While advocating for social

change through other means, including "modify[ing] [legal] contracts through Factory

Legislation, Married Women's Property Acts & so on," Brooke concurrently turned her

attention towards depicting, in her fiction, her feminist ideal (Brooke 13 October 1906).

In addition to her efforts advocating for alterations in women's sexual and political

emancipation, Brooke's feminist arguments were developed into fully-drawn fictional

examples, which would "pierce through that dead rock of prejudice which enveloped the

subject" (Brooke 13 October 1906). With the force of twenty-two years of history behind

her, Brooke was able to argue that this pioneering work had "prepared the way" for Wells

and others like him—had, in fact, put the 'woman question' "within reach of anyone who desires to touch it" (Brooke 13 October 1906). Here Brooke pointed directly to her best-known novel, *A Superfluous Woman*, as well as Grant Allen's *The Woman Who Did*, as prime examples of the success of this kind of work. She also took care to note the ease with which Wells' had been able to publish his article in a leading mainstream journal: "To-day . . . Mr. Wells can sell his article for publication in the *Fortnightly Review*. In the Eighties he would not have been able to do this, neither the Editors nor the general public being prepared for the step" (Brooke 13 October 1906). Brooke herself had first-hand experience of the difficulty of publishing an article of this kind in the 1880s. When she submitted her manuscript "Women and their Sphere" to the *Westminster Review* in the fall of 1887, it was received enthusiastically—with the exception of her socialist-inflected ideas.[16] She was asked to revise and resubmit, removing all references to the State Support of Motherhood. Not wishing to compromise her socialism or feminism, she instead submitted to Annie Besant's *Our Corner*, a lesser-known magazine with far lower circulation numbers, but one that had no issue with her feminist ideas for social change.[17] The article was published in two installments in January and February 1888.

Brooke's contribution to the sexual and social politics of London in the late-nineteenth century has come under increased study in the last four decades as feminist recovery work has focused on her pioneering work as a New Woman novelist and an early member of the Fabian Society. With few notable exceptions, however, her ideas of social reform have been treated separately from each other rather than studied together. This has resulted in a dearth of information relating to both the particularities of Brooke's

---

[16] Brooke discusses the process of submitting to the *Westminster Review* in a letter to Karl Pearson on 29 October 1887.

[17] For more on her submission to *Our Corner*, see Brooke's letter to Karl Pearson on 23 November 1887.

contribution to the socio-historical milieu of late-nineteenth century Britain, and a limited understanding of the broad goals of the feminism of the late-nineteenth century, which did not simply culminate in the franchise but was instead part of a movement that focused widely on radical goals aligned with several social movements at the time, including but not limited to the women's suffrage cause. Yet largely because of Brooke's contribution to the Woman Question, she has "not been seen by historians of Fabian socialism as a significant member of the organization," even though she was a founding Fabian, on the executive committee for eight years, and a founder of the Fabian Women's group (Daniels 155). This is true of both contemporary and past Fabian histories. Pease's *History of the Fabian Society*, for instance, written just a decade after Brooke's letter in 1916, mentions her only once, in relation to the Fabian Women's Group which formed in 1914, saying nothing at all about her three terms on the Fabian Executive Committee in the 1890s, her position as the Secretary of the Hampstead Fabian Group, or her role as a founding member of the Society. Subsequent books by A. M. McBriar (1966), and Norman Mackenzie and Jeanne Mackenzie (1977) fail to mention her at all.

Recently, Mark Bevir's *The Making of British Socialism* (2011) has made an effort to rectify this trend. In his chapter on "Ethical Anarchism," he explains that several women in the late nineteenth-century "thought of socialism and feminism as twin expressions of the new ethic of human emancipation" (270), and connects their ideals to the wider socialist campaign of political hope that advocated radical democracy, social justice, and personal transformation. Bevir includes Emma Brooke in a "loose circle" of individuals who were inspired by Edward Carpenter, and describes her accurately as a "socialist with acknowledged anarchist leanings" (260). Yet Bevir, too, gives short shrift

to Brooke's contribution to the socio-cultural climate of the late-nineteenth century, only briefly mentioning her lengthy involvement with the Fabian Society. According to Bevir, Brooke's primary contribution to the nineteenth-century social milieu was to feminist political thought through her involvement with Karl Pearson's Men and Women's Club, of which, ironically, she was never a full member. Furthermore, while Bevir does mention Brooke's *A Superfluous Woman*, he suggests that the novel "deals with the gulf between the role that society imposes on women and their natural emotions" (271) and uses this as the basis from which to argue that Brooke remained embedded in a limited understanding of women's "natural" role, particularly as mothers.

Brooke's feminist cultural critique has been similarly overlooked by scholars of feminist literary history because of her socialist commitments, as scholars instead examine only one facet of her multiple interests rather than her commitment to broad social reform. Though she described herself as "chiefly a student of the woman question" (qtd. in Daniels 156), her feminist cultural critique has been limited to her most popular work of fiction—her New Woman novel *A Superfluous Woman*, a vociferous attack on "degenerate" men—with little attention paid to her non-fiction publications in the periodical press or her other novels, both of which detail more fully her commitment to structural social transformation. Ann Ardis, for instance, in her admirable and otherwise exemplary book *New Women, New Novels*, only examines *A Superfluous Woman*, which leads her to categorize Brooke, Caird, and other "New Woman" novelists as writers who did not "posit the existence of a 'universal[,] irresistible longing for radical [social] reformation'" (19). Ardis goes on to argue that though Brooke and others recognized "the need for such radical social change, they question[ed] the adequacy of the class-based

model of social analysis to explain gender and the history of gender relations," which seems not to take into account Brooke's commitment to socialism and feminism, and to social change aimed at dismantling both patriarchal and capitalist structures (19).

Brunhild de la Motte's article in H. Gustav Klaus' *The Rise of Socialist Fiction 1880-1914* (1987) is an early exception to this trend. In "Radicalism-Feminism-Socialism: The Case of the Women Novelists," de la Motte contends that Brooke, Clementina Black, and Constance Howell "criticized both class and gender roles as two aspects of the bourgeois social system" (30). De la Motte's detailed analysis of these authors' works of fiction provides an excellent starting point for studying together the various aspects of Brooke's politics. Kay Daniels' study of Brooke is also invaluable for its recognition of Brooke's relationship and contribution to the social and political milieu of late-nineteenth-century London. Daniels' benchmark article suggests that Brooke merits recognition for her contributions both to the feminism and socialism of Britain in the fin de siècle period for her broad activist efforts through various socialist organizations as well as her work in the literary sphere. Daniels examines Brooke's thought in detail over time through several of her disparate works—from articles and letters to novels and speeches—making special mention of her novel *Transition,* which portrays, in Daniels' words, "an insider's picture of Fabian and anarchist politics" (155), and points out that Brooke's analysis of 'the woman question' predates the better-known critique of H.G. Wells. Still, none have detailed Brooke's radical feminist commitment to social transformation, the nature of which emerges through her written work, and particularly through her fiction.

Brooke's thinking about transformative cultural change first took shape as she

formed her ideas around the woman question in the late 1880s with her first and most important piece on the 'Sex Question': her commentary on Karl Pearson's "The Woman Question," entitled "Notes on a Man's View of the Woman Question," the writing and publication of "Woman and her Sphere" (published in two instalments in Annie Besant's *Our Corner* in January and February 1888), and later with the publication of her two best-known novels *A Superfluous Woman* (1894) and *Transition* (1895). For Brooke the fictional representations in her novels found a necessary companion in her non-fiction, argumentative prose. In a letter written on 15 July 1887 to her friend and correspondent Karl Pearson, Brooke suggested that what was needed "above everything" in fiction was "a good moral fibre, and you don't get that through sophisticated arguments." Like Olive Schreiner, who found it necessary to write a series of visions or allegories alongside her argumentative feminist non-fiction because "whatever emotion these thoughts awaken I have not felt myself able adequately to express except in the other form" (Schreiner, *Women and Labour* 16), Brooke turned to fiction to portray accurately her feminist ideals.

Like her contemporaries Mona Caird, Olive Schreiner, and Henrietta Müller, Brooke too seamlessly and paradoxically combined the foundational beliefs of liberalism and socialism with individualism and collectivism. In her articles and fiction, Brooke merged materialist interests in a Lamarkian-based evolutionary theory, radical socialism, and sexual emancipation, and built onto them an idealist feminism inflected with her unassailable hope in transformative cultural change. Not content merely to work on one aspect of the social question at the expense of others, Brooke instead attempted to theorize and propagate an ideal program of total social change that never once sacrificed

the rights of one half of the human population in favour of the other: an ethic of complete human emancipation. Unlike her correspondent and friend Karl Pearson, a writer and socialist who contended that woman's primary function in society was "race reproduction," (*The Ethic of Freethought* 371) as early as 1886 Brooke instead differentiated "the *love of children"* from the "occult desire to exercise the function of childbearing," insisting that motherhood often did not correlate with women's personal choice (14 March 1886). Brooke's ideas of cultural and social change instead depended on a moral individualism operating with the collective interest in mind. Although her priorities shifted over time, she held to a vision for the transformation of society that would alter "the food question, the dwelling place, the length of the working-day, the school and religious teaching, the leisure, the modification of this driving speed" (13 October 1906), each of which would ultimately help alter the relationship between the sexes, and without which there could be only limited social transformation. Though she gave priority to different campaigns over time, she continued to press for total social change until her death in 1926, believing that "we must continue to labour" through all aspects of human life until "we may hope to lift the suffering masses to existence more hopeful and human" (13 October 1906).

If we understand Brooke's late Victorian beliefs as a radical struggle for social transformation and a new utopian order, with sexual emancipation as the cornerstone and foundation upon which a new society would be built, then the pre-suffrage women's movement in Britain that she and other socialist women later joined should likewise be reconsidered under these terms. The pre-suffrage women's moment should not be understood as simply culminating in the franchise: it was instead part of a campaign of

political hope that advocated complete human emancipation through radical democracy and the preservation of personal choice. For Brooke, at the heart of this campaign was an ideal of egalitarian comradeship between the sexes and a repudiation of female self-sacrifice, which would preserve individual freedom in an ideal communal order.

<div align="center">Background: Emma Brooke's Affiliations</div>

Emma Brooke was born in 1844 in the rural village of Bollington, Cheshire, to an entrepreneurial manufacturing family affiliated with the Anglican Church. Her grandfather on her mother's side was a cotton manufacturer in Bollington, who at one point owned all the mills in their small town and employed over two thousand people. Brooke attributed her "excessively gloomy and repressed" childhood to her "very religious" family, who likely attempted to endow her with the mantle of a dutiful and self-sacrificing Christian daughter (Waugh 383). The continuities between British socialism and the rhetoric of Christian sacrifice and accountancy have been noted by several historians,[18] and Brooke's writing certainly matches this pattern in so far as it is a palimpsest of moral duty, but with a definitive rejection of female self-sacrifice, reflecting dissent against those sexual and cultural norms.

Brooke first encountered radical ideas about social and cultural change as one of the eight pioneering students at Newnham College, Cambridge in its inaugural year. Established in September 1871, and then occupying Merton Hall at Cambridge, Newnham College was one of the first higher educational institutions in England to admit

---

[18] See Barbara Taylor, *Eve and the New Jerusalem: Socialism and Feminism in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1983); Hinely, Susan, "Charlotte Wilson, the 'Woman Question', and the Meaning of Anarchist Socialism in Late Victorian Radicalism" *International Review of Social History* 57 (2012): 3-36; Sheila Rowbotham and Jeffrey Weeks, *Socialism and the New Life: The Personal and Sexual Politics of Edward Carpenter and Havelock Ellis* (London, 1977); G.M. Young, *Portrait of an Age: Victorian England* (London, 1977).

women. Its vision for female education reformulated the evangelical values of duty, sacrifice, and charity in secular and radical terms. The idea of women living apart from their families to obtain an education designed for men was both a provocative and divisive idea in the 1870s, and Brooke encountered opposition from her family when she decided to attend at the age of 27. She joined the college in its second term in 1872, "early in the day," as she described it, and was strongly influenced by the fact that "men and [women] students were thrown much together" (14 March 1886). The resulting "mutual help and the modifications of view that come from the two sexes working together" later led her to establish numerous friendships with both sexes, and to advocate strongly for an ethic of equality and comradeship between men and women, which formed the base of her feminist ideology (14 March 1886).

When she first attended Newnham, Brooke was already in her late twenties. Nevertheless, she attended until 1874, though like all the other women at the time she left without a degree. By the 1870s, the debate over which economic system would yield the most vigorous "race" was already raging, a discussion that influenced all factions of the socialist movement. Respected scientists like Dr. Henry Maudsley advised against intellectual labour for women, accusing them of selfishly seeking "education at the price of a puny, enfeebled and sickly race" (472). But it was at Newnham that Brooke encountered and became friends with Charlotte Wilson, then Martin, "a forceful young bluestocking" like herself who had left Newnham feeling "deeply dissatisfied with the orthodox economics" she had learned there (Mackenzie and Mackenzie 63). Brooke, who undertook studies in Political Economics and Logic, left Cambridge feeling similarly dissatisfied, but left Newnham with an understanding of the rhetoric of positivist social

science and a fluency in the "masculine" discourses of evolution and economics. She also took with her a community of friends who together repudiated established patriarchal authority.

While her Cambridge friend Charlotte Wilson moved immediately to London and connected with the radical community living there, Brooke's subsequent "excessively troubled" years were instead spent back at her native Bollington, Cheshire, in her "gloomy and repressed" childhood home (Waugh 383). During this time she lost much though not all of her fortune "by a sudden blow" (Edwards 163). Though this event was initially devastating, it prompted her move from Bollington, Chesire, to Hampstead, London in 1879, to earn the "butter, if not the bread" of her living as a writer (6 January 1886). Here she again met up with Wilson and became involved at its inception with the nascent socialist movement of the early 1880s.

Brooke's vision of social and cultural reform developed in the next several years through her encounters with the community of middle-class intellectuals that surrounded her home in Hampstead Heath. The local Hampstead culture, which I discuss in depth in Chapter II, was deeply invested in debating social theories of history and economics and working to implement the ideas they had read, discussed, and championed. As early as 1882-3 Brooke had had "some fragmentary ideas concerning socialism," which she "crudely embodied in her first novel," *A Fair Country Maid*, published by Richard Bentley and Son in 1883, but it was in the Autumn of 1884 that she really began "her career as a Socialist" when Charlotte Wilson "had the happy idea of gathering together a circle of students for the purpose of seriously studying social questions, and especially the theories of Socialism which had already been propounded" (Waugh 383). That

organization, initially called the Karl Marx Club, then the Proudhon Club (when they

spent a year studying anarchism and the ideas of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon), eventually

became the Hampstead Historic Society. It met at Wyldes, the home of Charlotte Wilson

in Hampstead, early in 1885,[19] and eventually ended up at the Hampstead Public Library

(McBriar 30). Sidney Webb fondly called this study group "Mrs. Wilson's economic tea

parties" (4 November 1884), and members and associates included Fabians like Webb,

George Bernard Shaw, Graham Wallas, Sydney Olivier, and Annie Besant, and also

French and Russian political figures including Sergei Stepniak, literary and artistic

figures like Olive Schreiner, William Morris, and Edith Nesbit, as well as scientists of

sex and eugenics like Havelock Ellis and Karl Pearson (Hinely, "Charlotte Wilson" 13).

Some early members of the club like Ernest Belford Bax and F.Y. Edgeworth, J.L.

Joynes, John Burns, William Clarke and others helped formulate Fabian policy but did

not migrate over to lead the Fabian Society (McBriar 30, Morris 705). Over four years

the group undertook the study of socialist thought, and read papers on "the Women's

Movement" by Percival Chubb and "Humanitarianism" by Henry Salt ("Hampstead

Historic Club"). It voted to dissolve in 1888, since most of the members had by that point

become more involved with the Hampstead branch of the Fabian Society (Pease 3 June

1888).

   Brooke and Wilson also became early members of the Fabian Society, forming a

---

[19] Wyldes, which Wilson renamed, was a pre-industrial "cottage at the end of the heath," where "Fabians for many years held the most delightful of their social gatherings" (Edward Pease, qtd. in Hinely 86). The cottage had two rooms, study and kitchen, and hosted a range of anarchists, emigres, artists, and socialists of all types. The cottage had previously been let by painter John Linnell (1824-28), who was frequently visited by William Blake, and then Charles Dickens (1837). Wilson move to Wyldes in 1884, and lived there until 1905, when the property was slated for destruction to make way for the North End tube Station, but it was saved by Dame Henrietta Burnett and others, becoming an extension of Hampstead Heath (the Hampstead Garden Suburb) (Wadeson np). After Wilson left, the architect and town planner Raymond Unwin lived in the property until 1940 (Wadeson np).

local branch called the Hampstead Group. Brooke held key roles in both societies. She was elected the Secretary of the Hampstead Historic soon after its inception, and held the position of Secretary for the Hampstead Fabian group for eight years until she was elected to the Fabian Executive in 1893. When the "Fabian Essays" were written and published in 1889, she "hawked a bundle of essays by members of the Club in vain to the doors of two or three publishers" (Waugh 383). Together, she and members of the group worked on organizational initiatives ranging from socialist lectures to anarchist speeches, to conversational teas that attempted to persuade the upper-classes to adopt their ideals. The crosscurrents between the Fabian Society and the Hampstead Historic Group have been acknowledged by several Fabian historians, who concede that the Hampstead Historic exerted an influential role on the formulation of Fabian doctrine.[20] It has been described as "the seedbed of Fabian attitudes and policies" (MacKenzie 64).

These were just two of the numerous social reform organizations Brooke helped form or joined during this time, and she sat on the Executive for several. She was also the Secretary of the Hampstead Branch of the Kyrle Society, an organization that based its program on the belief that "a nation cannot be advancing as long as a large share of its citizens know only the scenes of ugliness and squalor . . . the ministry of beauty, then, is not a merely sentimental thing; it is an essential of social salvation" (Woods 204). Devoted to such aesthetic ideals, the society protected Hampstead's position as 'the lungs of London,' committing itself to blocking the encroachment of developers (Hinely 93). They also published guides to art museums, put on outdoor concerts by the Kyrle Choir, and formed the London Decorative Arts Committee, which enlisted the assistance of

---

[20] See MacKenzie and MacKenzie, pp.63-64; Radice, pp. 53-54; Britain, pp. 48, 76; Wolfe, pp. 285-286; Pierson, pp. 119-122, 126.

William Morris (Hill 317, Hinely 93). Other organizations included the New Debating

Club, the Society of Friends of Russia,[21] and the Hampstead Liberal and Radical

Association,[22] where she sat on the Executive Committee (Hinely 93). The overlap of

members in these Hampstead-centred organizations suggests an intimate network of

radical social reformers, closely connected to the local community. Each organization

helped to give direction and a practical outlet to Brooke's ideas for feminist social

change.

In late 1884 or early 1885, Brooke encountered Karl Pearson at a Hampstead lecture,

where he was giving a series of talks on socialism. Clearly intrigued by his ideas, and

wishing to enlist his help in organizing striking miners at the Denaby Main Mine in

Yorkshire, Brooke wrote to Pearson introducing herself in early July 1885 (9 July 1885).

She had recently read his pamphlet on socialism, "Socialism in Theory and Practice,"

which advanced a progressive, evolutionary socialism as the necessary remedy for the

impoverished slums of east-end London and a natural solution for an individualist system

of government. Though Pearson wrote back declining involvement, citing his

prioritization of East-End Londoners, Brooke's letter was the start of a lengthy

correspondence and intellectual friendship that brought her into contact with an

additional organization committed to social reform, extending her connections to a

---

[21] The Society of Friends of Russia was the precursor to the "Society of Friends of Russian Freedom" which formed five years later. The original organization was formed in the summer of 1885 by Wilson, Edward Pease, Annie Besant, with the help and assistance of Emma Brooke, and with Stepniak spearheading the propaganda effort. Members or attendees included Charles Bradlaugh, Madame Venturi, Anne Gilchrist, Henrietta Müller, May Morris, George Bernard Shaw. It ceased its public activities around six months later. Its successor, the "Society of Friends of Russian Freedom," was popular among influential liberals, and rallied anti-tsarist sentiment on an international scale when it began in 1890. Charlotte Wilson and Emma Brooke both wrote to Pearson to solicit his involvement in the organization (see Brooke to Pearson 2 December 1885 and 17 December 1885, and Wilson to Pearson 28 July 1885 and 8 August 1885) and arranged at least two meetings of the society, one that was held at Charlotte Wilson's home.

[22] The Hampstead Liberal and Radical Association attempted through the 1880s and 1890s to urge the Liberal party to grant women equal privileges with men in parochial matters under various Bills.

network of students and writers associated with the exclusive Men and Women's Club, on which she would have an unexpectedly strong impact, despite the fact that she never attended a meeting (9 July 1885).

<u>"It should become a little centre from which we might endeavor to some small extent to influence the outer world": The Men and Women's Club and Karl Pearson</u>

Like the other organizations with which Emma Brooke was affiliated in the early 1880s, the Men and Women's Club was composed of male and female authors, radicals, anarchists, socialists, and feminists who were devoted to discussing and debating ideas for broad social change, with the hope that they would eventually be able to put these ideas into practice. Unlike most other clubs, however, this one was selective and secret, at least in part because of the sensitive nature of its particular focus on "all matters in any way connected with the mutual position and relation of men and women," including marriage laws, free love, and birth control ("preventative checks"), each a highly charge and controversial topic at the time ("Men and Women's Club Minute Book"). In the first paper given to the club at its inaugural meeting on July 9th 1885, Karl Pearson drew on Plato's *Laws* to cast this vision for broad social change in explicit terms: "There appears to be need of some bold men and women," he wrote, "who specially honor plainness of speech, and will say outright which is best for the city and the citizens, ordaining what is good and convenient for the whole state" ("The Woman Question" 20). Pearson hoped that the discussion group, through "free discussion" between both sexes, might both form and exchange opinions, and then accomplish some degree of influence on the outside

world: "It should become a little centre from which we might endeavor to some small extent to influence the outer world" ("The Woman Question" 20).

Karl Pearson's Men and Women's Club was an off-shoot of another club that was similarly devoted to free discussion and interaction between men and women. The original club, informally referred to as "a men and women's Club" in records preserved by Maria Sharpe Pearson, was formed in late 1879. Although it had been less formal than its precursor—devoting itself not just to discussion topics and papers but also holding monthly socials—it was diverse and democratic in nature and similarly held regular debates on social change, though with considerably less focus on sexual questions. Members included writer and poet Ernest Radford, poet Caroline Maitland (later she published under her married name, Dolly Radford), writer Eleanor Marx (daughter of Karl Marx), labour activist Clementina Black, and her two sisters, Constance and Grace Black (an artist), as well as Karl Pearson, who joined in early 1884. Papers ranged from "The English Stage" and discussions of the Brownings, to government and socialistic tendencies. The club ran until 1884 when it became clear that it must "either live more robustly or die" (Black 11 December 1884). Writing to Karl Pearson in 1884, Clementina Black, then the secretary of the club, had acknowledged that "the club does not hold so important a place as it certainly did to many of its members at the beginning and even at the time when I first belonged" and suggested as a possible solution the idea that it should "extend itself and take in, especially, younger and less occupied members" (11 December 1884). Karl Pearson instead took the opportunity to make a new proposal for the club's constitution, shifting its focus to sexual difference, and limiting its number to twenty, equal numbers male and female. Although the club did recruit new members and

associates—among them, celebrated writer Olive Schreiner, birth control advocate Annie

Besant, evolutionary social theorist Jane Hume Clapperton, physician Elizabeth

Blackwell, writer and feminist Mona Caird, sexual radical Caroline Hadden, anarchist

and nihilist Sergei Stepniak,[23] aesthete poet Mathilde Blind, as well as Emma Brooke—

only one female member of the original club, Annie Easty, elected to join Pearson in his

new endeavor ("Men and Women's Club Minute Book"). Other original members,

including Clementina Black, Isabella Ford, Dollie Radford, and Eleanor Marx did not

support his resolution, perhaps in part because they felt, as Ruth Livesey has suggested,

that "Pearson's decision to make sexual difference the entire object of study in the later

Men and Women's Club [would in fact] fracture the ideal of heterosocial fellowship that

had sustained the original organization" (79).[24] Marx, for one, would attend as a guest.

Still, by 1885, Pearson had persuaded enough original club members to adopt his motion

that the original club dissolved. By June of that year, the new club was up and running. It

would prove a lasting influence on a number of middle-class feminists who joined or

were affiliated with the group, including Emma Brooke. Though Brooke never attended a

meeting, she kept abreast of its discussions and contributed one paper that was read

anonymously to all members, and another which was circulated amongst select members

of the group.[25]

 In July 1885, when Brooke first wrote to Pearson, he had just given his inaugural

paper for the reconfigured club the previous month, entitled "The Woman's Question". It

---

[23] Stepniak attended at least one meeting of the Men and Women's Club, in November 1886, and exchanged several letters with Karl Pearson (Sharpe, "Autobiographical History").

[24] In response to Pearson's suggestion, Clementina Black wrote back to say that she did not "see that an alternative motion like that you suggest would be much use" (Black 11 December 1884).

[25] For a more lengthy discussion of the Men and Women's Club influence on wider British culture, see Lucy Bland *Banishing the Beast*, especially chapter one, and Judith Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight,* chapter five.

had been privately printed for circulation among members, though it would later appear

in revised form in his book *The Ethic of Freethought* (1888). After several months of

correspondence, including Brooke's lengthy account of her mistreatment by the author

and sexologist James Hinton,[26] Pearson sent her a copy of this paper in late February

1886. When she replied with a short note that the merits of his paper were limited by its

"lack of real insight—of fruitful information" he invited her rebuttal (24 February 1886).

Brooke's handwritten "Notes on a Man's View of the Woman Question" ran to a

staggering thirty-nine pages.[27] With Brooke's permission, and promising her anonymity,

Pearson shared it with Olive Schreiner, who wrote in reply that she thought the paper

"*splendid* . . . the best paper by a woman I've ever read" (Schreiner 17 March 1886,

emphasis hers). Assuming the paper must have been written by feminist and novelist

Mona Caird—"the ideas are just like what she has expressed to me in speaking"—

Schreiner wrote that it gave her great "hope to hear such brave free words from a

woman" (23 March 1886). Brooke's commentary was supplemented with a series of

---

[26] Some associates of the club admired James Hinton's non-traditional view of human sexuality, but Brooke was not one of them. When Caroline Haddon anonymously published a Hintonian pamphlet on the subject of marriage in late 1885 entitled "The Future of Marriage," Brooke wrote to the publisher to reveal the predatory nature of Hintonian polygamy, based on her personal experience of Hinton, who had, when she was a young woman, "tr[ied] to force caresses and favours from a shrinking and terrified girl" (herself) (Brooke 4 December 1886). Using his status as a well-respected author, Hinton had attempted to lure Brooke into a polygamous relationship with him, with the support and approval of her friends. While impressing on her his unwanted attention, Hinton had suggested that Brooke should be concerned with "other's needs" and had spoken of the importance of "self-sacrifice" (Brooke 4 December 1886). As a result "the idea of sacrifice was forever exploded out of [her] life" (Brooke 4 December 1886). Hinton's advocacy of free sexual unions was essentially put on trial the following year when his son, Charles Howard Hinton, was placed under arrest for bigamy. In April 1886, Brooke was fearful of the possibility of being forced to testify in the case, and enlisted Pearson's advice and aid to avoid litigation. It is interesting to note that Brooke did not reject the premise of "free love" in its entirety: in "Women and their Sphere" she wrote approvingly of both George Eliot and Mary Wollstonecraft in terms of their rejection of marriage and adoption of free sexual relations. She distinguished these women from the Hintonians by their "*openness* of . . . conduct" and suggested that they "stand out . . . in the light of forerunners" because they "lived in their sexual life, in the eye of the world, outside of and apart from it" (9).

[27] The paper was sent for certain to one other member, Olive Schreiner, who then suggested that it should be mailed to Dr. Donkin, another member of the group. Whether it reached Donkin is unknown. It may have also been circulated to other members of the society.

letters that accompanied her more formal critique.

Brooke found Pearson's perspective on women and socialism deeply troubling. Though she fundamentally agreed with Pearson's later assertion that the "two most important movements of our era . . . [are] the socialistic movement and the movement for the complete emancipation of women" (Pearson, *The Ethic of Freethought* 430) and assented to his emphasis on the importance of education, and particularly sexual education, she strongly objected to Pearson's after-the-revolution mentality, evidenced by his later contention that "we have first to settle what is the physical capacity of women, what would be the effect of her emancipation on her function of race reproduction, before we can talk about her 'rights'" (Pearson, *The Ethic of Freethought* 371).[28] For Pearson, who was echoing the eugenic refrain that underlay much of the radical and socialist ideology of the late nineteenth century, and who would go on to further popularize the eugenic ideals that he first began to espouse here, women's prime purpose in a socialistic society was the physical production of new members: "The fundamental distinction between men and women," Pearson contended, "lies in the capacity for childbearing" ("The Woman's Question" 4). Women—educated women in particular—"owe a duty to society" to reproduce in order to prevent "those who are diseased, . . . the idle, be they poor or wealthy, those who follow mere instinct without reason" from becoming "the parents of future generations" ("The Woman's Question" 16). In order to promote "inherited intellectual development" for the community, intelligent women must

---

[28] In Pearson's original paper, given at the Men and Women's Club on July 9th, this clear statement of fact was instead phrased as a question: "we may ask whether the emancipation of women may not have a like excellent effect on the moral tone of men, but in nowise raise women to an intellectual equality" (4). By the time it was published publically in *The Ethic of Freethought* in 1888, Pearson's position on woman's emancipation was clear: he subordinated women's role as a public citizen to her role as mother of the superior British, as demonstrated by this quotation.

themselves reproduce, and in greater numbers than at present ("The Woman's Question" 16). Although Pearson advocated "preventative checks" or birth control in order to prevent excessive childbirth, Pearson qualified this as a "sacrifice" by women, whom he argued were "much less, certainly not more, influenced by sexual impulse" than men, and certainly more interested in bearing children ("The Woman's Question" 6). According to Pearson, "race-evolution" had already "implanted in woman a desire for children, as it has implanted in man a desire for woman" ("The Woman's Question" 5). In the new evolving socialist collective, women would be permitted to act out their instinctual desires for motherhood, which he believed was a small sacrifice for women to pay for the maternal labour that would so substantially advance the economic and racial superiority of the British state.

Pearson's vision of the socialist state, which he later expounded in an article for the *Fortnightly Review,* was "an organization of society turning essentially on capacity for work, on the provision of the best conditions for efficient activity, and on the replacement of individual dependence and personal control by State protection and State regulation" ("Woman and Labour" 574).  Like many social theorists at the time, Pearson's vision for the socialist state was heavily infused with evolutionary ideas. Both socialism and evolutionary eugenics—the science of selective breeding—were opposed to nineteenth-century radical-liberal individualism, and Pearson believed that in the hands of expert, educated leaders, the socialist state would aid the progression of natural selection, ensuring both national fitness and social advancement. Yet Pearson's consistent refrain throughout "The Woman's Question," was that in the evolving socialist state, woman's self-sacrifice was paramount, and her claim for 'rights' was far less important than the

collective goal of national racial progress, particularly since "the emancipation of women

may . . . in nowise raise women to an intellectual equality" ("The Woman's Question" 4).

Pearson instead held that the greater a woman's sacrifice, the greater the advancement of

the socialist state. Of the figure of the prostitute, for instance, who "exists under all forms

of society," Pearson argued that she "sacrifice[s] [herself] to a nobler calling to that of

wife" ("The Woman's Question" 11).[29] Pearson would go on to suggest that the

"intellectual handicap" of women—their "subjection"—was the necessary "penalty to be

paid for race-predominance" ("The Woman's Question" 16) and even went so far as to

hazard that subjection itself may be a blessing in disguise: "it may be that subjection has

in itself so chastened women, so trained her to think of others rather than herself; that

after all it may have acted rather as a blessing than a curse to the world" ("The Woman's

Question" 19). Though he later softened his argument with the acknowledgement that

motherhood was itself a kind of labour and by suggesting that the state would offset this

sacrificial role through state support, he would make no similar argument for state-

supported prostitution, and his essentialist argument in this piece still hinged on the

necessity of female self-sacrifice for the advancement of a complete socialist society. By

the essay's conclusion, Pearson was despairing of both the "vulgar soul" ("The Woman's

Question" 18) and "low intellectual tone of the average woman," ("The Woman's

Question" 17) evidenced by the "painful . . . sight which meets our eyes between three

and four in the afternoon" of "hundreds of women—mere dolls" who "gaz[e] intently

into shop windows at various bits of coloured ribbon," and comparing this to the figure of

---

[29] It is uncertain how Pearson conceived of prostitution as a "noble calling" (11). Pearson argued that because prostitution exists under all forms of human society, it must therefore be "an honourable profession"; he then makes a leap of logic to claim prostitution is not only honourable but also "noble" (11).

the prostitute—the "mob of women" who haunt the "very same streets between twelve and one at night" ("The Woman's Question" 17). Pearson here suggested that while prostitutes are deserving of pity and even deference for their desire to sacrifice themselves to a "nobler calling," ("The Woman's Question" 11) on the whole the "dolls" are only deserving of "scorn" ("The Woman's Question" 17). By focusing on the idea of self-sacrifice as a noble calling for women, Pearson had elevated the nobility of both the sacrificial prostitute and the wife, while he treated with derision the woman who refused self-sacrifice to instead pursue her own desires.

Brooke took issue with several of Pearson's arguments. While she drew on similar evolutionary and eugenicist arguments to buttress her thesis, Brooke's paper could not concede Pearson's idea that the sacrificial work of motherhood was the sole role and function of women in a socialistic society. Repudiating entirely Pearson's perspective on female self-sacrifice, Brooke instead provided a more nuanced view of female sexuality and promoted the value of women's work of any kind—regardless of apparent roles or types—on the same grounds as that of men. In a letter that followed her critique, for instance, she suggested to Pearson that:

> You ignored the transmission from generation to generation of inherited opinion and an inherited standard of morality. The man and woman who have no children can write their books and do their work and can change posterity materially for the better by the exercise of a distinct influence which is carried on in the next generation . . . Something besides the accidental acts, the animal activities, counts in the inherited tendencies of the race. Which is likely to have more effect in the world—the birth of young Browning or the influence of the books which the

father and mother Brownings wrote? (14 March 1886)

Though she drew on an evolutionary view of society similar to Pearson's, influenced more strongly by the Lamarckian theory of inherited characteristics, Brooke shifted the ground of the argument to suggest that the "inherited tendencies" of human society could be influenced more strongly by ideas than genetics. Writing, then, and certainly the writing of fiction, could have a stronger influence on humanity, since moral traits learned socially could be passed on to future generations. Women's role was not merely a biological one, Brooke argued; instead, both men and women could, through the propagation of ethical ideas, change the course of humanity for the better.

While Brooke agreed with Pearson on the role of the state in the support of motherhood (and she would detail her argument to this effect in an article that was read to the Men and Women's Club a year later), she disputed Pearson's evolutionary claims both in relation to women's co-called "love of children" and their apparently lack of sexual desire in comparison to men's. It might be easy to suppose, she suggested, that a woman "floats half-asleep on a smooth pool of Chastity all her life—unless [a man] awakens her passion", but the reality of women's sexual feeling was far more complicated and nuanced ("Notes on a Man's View of the Woman Question" 19). Putting women's sexuality on equal grounds as men's, she wrote, "Possibly a woman's passion is never so explicit, so nakedly physical as a man's; it is more delicate, but therefore more tenacious, more piercing and painful" ("Notes" 20). The difficulty of maintaining chastity was, for single women, Brooke suggested, "a hard battle resolutely and continuously fought through life. It is moreover a virtue which even in our upper middle classes does not escape untempted: few are so sheltered" ("Notes" 20). In effect, Brooke was arguing

for men's moral responsibility for their sexual desires and disputing the sexual double standard. By undermining supposed difference in the sexual desire between men and women, Brooke demanded men's equal accountability for keeping their desires in check.

In addition to her contention that Pearson underestimated female sexual passion, Brooke contended that Pearson's assessment of women's desire for children had no real basis in historical fact. Up to the present, she argued, women have been "comparatively speaking never consulted on [childbearing]; they have [children] whether they desire to have them or not *against* their express desire. Therefore there is no handing down from one generation to another of any special tendency to the desire of children" (Brooke 14 March 1886). In other words, because of enforced subjugation to childbirth, an evolutionary history could not predict the true desires of womankind or their apparent inherited tendencies. In fact, Brooke contended, in contemporary society, the reverse was actually true: women cried out in a voice "hoarse and desperate" for deliverance from the so-called "natural" desire for bearing children, demanding, "deliver us from enforced child-bearing, because it slays us!" ("Notes" 2). Brooke went on to detail precisely the consequences of this lack of choice:

> *Choice* in a matter so serious to herself will not be allowed her; she may have to face having her body racked and torn yearly until it is maimed and she is invalided; it includes the possibility of early death; it includes also the knowledge that her powers will be thwarted, her mental development checked, her character frittered away in carking household and child cares, her liberty to go, to learn, to see, to act, curtailed in every possible way. It includes the knowledge that the child is not wanted and that her suffering and sacrifice is worse than waste. . . .

[This is] the meaning of the dread that hangs over women. ("Notes" 6)

Brooke concluded that "the married woman's head grievance, then, is the being [sic] compelled against her own consent into perpetual child-bearing and its concomitant burdens, its useless waste and sacrifice" ("Notes" 14). The "*only moral basis of marriage*," she argued in contrast, was "the preventative check system" or birth control ("Notes" 13). Unlike Pearson, who argued for birth control on the grounds that it was a women's sacrifice to men's greater sexual desires, Brooke instead made birth control about women's personal choice. Birth control for a woman would mean that she could possess herself body and soul and freely *choose* motherhood. This in turn would mean that both parties, mother and child, would benefit substantially. As Brooke hazarded, "the difference to the child in being the centre of thoughtful and leisured care instead of being the victim of the mother's exhaustion and worry and secret discontent will be untold" ("Notes" 28). For Pearson, the history of women in society offered a model of self-abrogation that was the required moral basis of a future socialist state. As Theodore M. Porter concludes, Pearson felt strongly that it "was incumbent on woman not only to overcome her own individualism for the sake of socialist morality, but also, through rigorous adherence to an ideal of self-development, to control the individualism of man" (176). Pearson's idea of women's role in a socialist state left no room for the individual desires or personal choices of women. Brooke vehemently opposed Pearson's notion of female self-sacrifice—the idea that women should fall "a heap of invertebrate sacrifice, at the feet of every casual male need" ("Notes" 32)—instead arguing both for women's individual freedom of choice and equality of opportunity:

All that I ask is to be allowed to realize in myself, in the way that seems to me

best, freely my own greatness. And to what harm will men and the world come if

women be allowed freely to try and test their powers, and develop as they will?

Conceive the anguish to a gifted or active-minded woman of having a sphere

imposed upon her by men . . . Let the Writer of this Paper ask himself what would

be his own anguish if some obscure cause took him and from the beginning had

forbidden him thinking, studying, seeking, pursuing—testing knowledge and

trying his own powers. Such an anguish has been experienced by hearts not less

noble and brains, I think, potentially not less fine. ("Notes" 24)

Brooke went on to critique Pearson's idea of sacrifice, particularly his ideas about

the possibility that prostitutes might be, in fact, a necessary sacrifice for the benefit of the

whole human race. Pearson had contended that prostitution was the corollary and effect

of "our present social relations" ("Notes" 10) and had further argued that since it

appeared that prostitution "exists under all forms of society . . . we must openly face the

fact that prostitution is an honourable profession" ("Notes" 11). He went on to suggest

that "we must hold that prostitutes sacrifice themselves in a nobler calling to that of wife"

("Notes" 11). Brooke pointed out that Pearson's argument had a serious moral flaw:

The writer holds a woman 'noble' in proportion as she sacrifices—and therefore

debases herself in the service of Man. The wife is rather noble because she is

sacrificed; the Prostitute is nobler because she is much more sacrificed . . . The

more unhumanized a Woman allows herself to be for the sake of Man's physical

needs, the nobler is her calling. ("Notes" 30)

Women not only should not be forced to undertake this involuntary sacrifice, Brooke

argued, they also should not be permitted to do so:

A Woman who takes a right view of her duty as a Citizen of this World has *no right* to sacrifice her powers and health to render men service as a prostitute does or as a mere breeder of children does. She has no more right to do it than a man . . . if a man refuses to compromise his thinking powers for the sake of human imbecility, a woman no less must refuse to compromise her moral power and dignity for the sake of human corruption and vice. ("Notes" 31)

At the conclusion of her critique, Brooke suggested that,

"you men have murdered Love . . . you have killed the inspiration in Woman's heart by abuses of all kinds; you have enslaved the genius from which love springs. And, in return, you deserve to have about you that feeble clinging shrew, and to be chained to it, and to feel in your flesh and soul, the cruelty of the inhuman thing you have created. ("Notes" 38)

Pearson's interpretation of socialism as a rigidly defined social structure in which the female subject was nothing more than the sacrificial vessel of the human race ran entirely opposite to Brooke's strong belief in women's potential: Woman, who had not yet succeeded in gaining the self they were immediately supposed to renounce, certainly should not make a further sacrifice of themselves in the socialist state. Instead, Brooke suggested, "the thing to do is to raise the [woman] to a consciousness of her own individuality" (14 March 1886). Whereas Pearson demanded women's collective sexual subjugation for the benefit of humanity, Brooke instead argued for women's individual agency, and, by extension, their right to articulate and enact their own visions of social transformation. The woman question would not be solved, she suggested, "unless women may be allowed distinctly to work out for themselves their own idea of what their duty

and ideal is" (14 March 1886). Only then would women become active agents and champions in the process to achieve feminist social change.

At the end of her paper, Brooke concluded that Pearson had "looked at the question almost entirely from a man's point of view," and she suggested that Pearson's characterization of women was both unfair and "unsocialistic":

> Towards those you describe in your pamphlet as 'dolls' . . . I think you manifest a degree of scorn and hardness which somehow gives me pain . . . and then in your attitude towards the better women there is . . . a distinctly dominant tone, an inclination to lay down their duty for them . . . you underrate women, you do indeed. You are hard because you have so little knowledge of that very woman nature you cannot keep from despising. (14 March 1886)

In direct contradiction to what Pearson suggested, it was men, she argued, who needed to "put themselves on a moral footing with woman" and not the other way around: it was their "Socialist Duty" to do "useful work and leave off being a beast of prey . . . on women or labourers" (14 March 1886). According to Brooke, men were the equivalent to what Olive Schreiner would later term (of women) "sex parasites": in Pearson's apparently "socialist" society, men would subsist on the difficult and stringent labour of women. To Brooke, then, who understood socialism as a whole system of human emancipation that demanded ethical ideals, one of the key moral precepts was the necessity of individual choice with a deep respect for the wishes of others. Pearson's inability to do the same thus meant, from her perspective, that he could not have a genuinely socialist point of view. For Brooke, socialism and feminism were inextricably entwined, and Pearson's failure to grasp this complete ethic of human emancipation

meant that he was advocating socialism in name alone.

Emma Brooke was not the only associate of the Men and Women's Club who took issue with Karl Pearson's paper. Member Olive Schreiner, who had commended Brooke's "brave free words" (23 March 1886) felt similarly that Pearson had neglected "one whole field . . . the most important one . . . the omission was 'Man'" (10 July 1885). Like Brooke, Schreiner wrote in a letter to Pearson that she felt it was "entirely wrong" for the paper to read "as though the object of the club were to discuss woman, her objects, her needs, her mental & physical nature, & man only in as far as he throws light upon her question" (10 July 1885). She suggested that Pearson append a note to his published paper as follows:

> "In the foregoing paper . . . there has been an oversight, remarkable & very suggestive. One half of our problem has been left out. Man, his opinions, his intellectual & physical constitution, the wants of his nature, his use in the world, his dependence on the social circumstances by which he is surrounded; these, & the minor problems opening out of them are not even indicated. On these subjects many of us feel our ignorance reaches its profoundest depth; & that if our society fails to throw light on them, it must be pronounced a failure over half its field."
> ("Note" n.d.)

Pearson failed to do as Schreiner requested. Henrietta Müller, who attended Girton College at the same time as Brooke and Wilson attended Newnham, was the only woman to publically criticize Pearson's paper. In a response to him read at the Club in October 1885 entitled "The Other Side of the Question," Müller argued that biology was not the only division between men and women, but that difference originated in "man's license

and woman's self control" ("Men and Women's Club Notebook"). Instead of assuming that women were driven by biology, Müller suggested women were driven by morality, and contended that it was time for women to fulfill their function as humanity's saviour: "the sons of the earth have done their task and nature now calls upon her daughters to fulfill theirs—as the one has conquered the physical world, the other shall conquer the moral" ("Men and Women's Club Notebook"). Moral strength should now define those in positions of power, inverting men's social domination. Although Schreiner met Müller's response by characterizing her in a private letter to Pearson as "a plucky, fearless, brave, truthful little woman" (5 November 1885) the public Club response was less favourable. After their "desultory discussion," Maria Sharpe wrote in response that the paper was not given "in the spirit of scientific inquiry so much as in the spirit of a rebel" ("Men and Women's Club Notebook"). While Müller agreed, she contended in her defense that it was "justified by the slavery of women and by the fact that our danger lies in too ready submission to the claims of men" ("Men and Women's Club Notebook").

## Brooke's Idealist Feminism: "Women and their Sphere"

Brooke herself went on to further outline her ideals for total social reform in her article "Women and their Sphere," a paper presented anonymously to the Men and Women's Club on 14 March 1887 under the title "Women's Sphere in Modern Society" ("Men and Women's Club Minute Book").[30] It was later published under Brooke's

---

[30] "Women and their Sphere" was rejected by the *Westminster Review* on account of its socialism before it was accepted to Annie Besant's *Our Corner*, where it was published in two installments under a new title, "Women and their Sphere" in January and February 1888. The paper was one of the earliest published articles on the Woman Question that was written by a woman, preceded only by the article "The Woman

pseudonym, E. Fairfax Byrrne, in the January and February 1888 issues of Annie

Besant's *Our Corner*, a six-penny monthly with circulation likely numbering in the 500s,

published by the Freethought Publishing Company.[31] In this paper, Brooke pushed her

ideas about the socially-induced disabilities of women farther, recommending the

"simultaneous" introduction of several key reforms in order to rectify women's bleak

economic and social condition (66). The paper, which had been written for a Fabian

audience, was first presented anonymously to the Men and Women's Club in early March

1887.[32] Intended as it was for a public, socialist audience,[33] Brooke withdrew all

reference to sexual desire and simultaneously collapsed any distinguishing differences

between women's sexuality and reproduction. As Polly Beals suggests, this was likely a

deliberate political strategy intended to legitimize "women's reproduction as work, a

form of social production that must be backed by a program of endowed motherhood"

(127). Indeed, it demonstrates the degree to which Brooke negotiated with her perceived

socialist audience to legitimize childbearing as a type of work that should be funded by

the state. The article nevertheless displays more strongly her commitment to complete

---

Question" jointly authored by Eleanor Marx-Aveling and Edward Aveling and published in the *Westmister Review*. The quotations in this section are from the printed version of Brooke's paper, revised for Annie Besant's *Our Corner* and published in 1888.

[31] For more on *Our Corner*, see Carol Hanbery MacKay, "Annie Besant's *Our Corner*." Victorian Periodicals Review 42.4 (Winter 2009): 330. Brooke's article appeared in the final year of *Our Corner's* existence, and shared space in the January issue with Charles Brandlaugh, John M. Robertson, George Bernard Shaw, Ivan Turgenev, W. Murray Graydon, William Morris, W.H. Utley, Mary Reed, and, of course, Annie Besant herself. The periodical, which ran from 1883-1888, followed Annie Besant's progression from the individualism of Bradlaugh and the National Secular Society to the socialism of the Fabian Society. From 1886 onwards, Besant included a regular feature initially titled "Fabian Society and Socialist Notes," which later was titled simply "The Fabian Society" with the subtitle "a record of socialist progress in all lands" (MacKay 338-9). This underscores her commitment to socialism after she joined the Fabian Society in 1885. Brooke likely chose the venue because of Besant's commitment to socialist and feminist ideals.

[32] Emma Brooke subsequently read the paper to the Fabian Society in April 1887.

[33] The differences between the ideas Brooke advocated in her public periodical publications and her letters demonstrate the rhetorical moves and negotiations that were part of late-nineteenth century publishing for women writers and feminists.

feminist reform across several areas of contemporary life—social, political, and especially the economic. Furthermore, it also reveals Brooke's commitment to the idea of strong individual human rights operating cooperatively within a collectivist society, or, as Brooke herself puts it in the article, "the right of the individual, (whether male or female) to use his or her power as he or she thinks best, for the service of the community," (6) a perspective that falls precisely in line with her previous work and remains indicative of her variety of idealist feminism.

Brooke began her article by outlining her view that women were predominantly defined by their sexual value due to a long history of evolutionary origins. In early society, due to "the exigencies of motherhood," women were brought "into subjection to the man" (6). Yet while the physical necessities of motherhood—the "real" difference between the sexes—created a "natural" divide, the "prison" at present erected around them was the effect of a "non-natural and arbitrary" division in the social value attributed to men and women's labour by contemporary society (7). Whereas men were assessed by "their value as workers . . . their capacity and power for work and defence," women's "value as workers [was] a very secondary matter" (6) due to the fact that women, whether legal wives, celibates, or paid prostitutes, were "conditioned by their sexual resources" (7). According to Brooke, women's "sexuality [was] a saleable thing" because "marriage or prostitution is open to all and a reserve fund thus established in fact, their honest wages suffer" (7). As a result, men's work, whether "performed by male or female hands," gained "prestige" while women's work in contrast was held in "contempt" and paid accordingly (67). Although several women had managed to "throw off the preponderance of the sexual idea sufficiently to justify by their works a right to stand

independently of it" and thus "prepared the way for great and beneficial changes" (9), the "sexual sphere," as Brooke called it yet "remains almost intact" (9).

Brooke placed much of the blame of the continued preponderance of the sexual sphere on the unjust laws governing marriage. In present society, Brooke argued, marriage was nearly equivalent to slavery: men were permitted by law to treat women "as he will short of murder," akin to "female slave[s]" (12-13). Whether or not many married people may be living in "happy equity" was "an irrelevancy" Brooke argued, and simply suggested that "men are . . . a great deal better than the laws they have made" (12-13). These laws, Brooke contended, were surely "an error—a sign of a most imperfect state of society" (12-13). Brooke suggested that the marriage law should be re-written "to provide escapes in case the ties of nature and affection prove weak, or become torment and oppression" (13).

In addition to the freedom to dissolve marriage, Brooke suggested that four more conditions must be met in order for women to gain recognition for their work and achieve true emancipation in society. These included the equal education of men and women, women's achievement of political and social rights equal to those of men, the abolition of the regulation and licensing of prostitution, and the free education of children in state-licensed institutions. In this "new society," Brooke declared:

> A woman unites herself to one of the opposite sex by the free choice of free affection: the man has no power to bind the woman to himself save the power of love, and the woman has no power to bind the man to herself save the power of love. Each continues his or her separate work, independently of their union with each other. (69)

The only obstacle facing women in this society, then, Brooke went on to suggest, was childbirth. Even in Brooke's ideal society, if "a child . . . is to be born . . the economic condition of the woman is instantly altered. The woman thus situated no longer competes in an economic world *because she is already performing a necessary social function"* *(69).* Brooke's final suggestion to rectify the subordination of women was thus for "the function of reproducing and nourishing the new life of the State . . .[to] be therefore supported by the State" (67). She declared:

> The question of bringing new life into the world, and nourishing it while here, is of all questions *not* a personal one; it is a question of interest to the whole community—one which bears on future generations, on time to come, and on the welfare of the world at large. And therefore, it is one which the whole community is bound to look upon as a national charge, and a national responsibility. (69)

Here, as elsewhere, Brooke insisted on the moral importance of shifting the tide of reform in women's favour, using visionary, utopian-inflected language:

> Straining out of the decaying civilisation of the past faintly one discerns the fair face of a new time, and it is an offence to utter in that austere presence vaporing opinions gathered from a hasty survey of the manners of a long dead age, or of the possibilities within a coming one. Not an increase, but a decrease of sexuality is the aim and object of the reforming party—how best we may free men and women from the bondage of predominant sexuality, and set the sexual instinct in its right place. That such an aim might be fulfilled successfully by the breaking of the sexual sphere seems probable. For when women stand independently of and on an equality with men in the industrial world—when their sexuality is no more

a thing to be bought and sold—then, for the first time, sexual unions will depend

upon no other consideration than that of mutual choice, a regulating element of

feminine refinement and moderation will be brought into play, and a vast system

of temptation will be removed from the lives of both men and women. (72)

Brooke argues here that it was a "national *responsibility*" to value the worth of its own

children, and a moral necessity to free men and women from the restrictive and

constrained sexual sphere. While the new socialist era was advancing by the day, only

with the destruction of the sexual sphere would true morality exist and the new age of

equality be ushered in.

Brooke's paper was well-received at the Men and Women's Club, prompting a

lively discussion marked by "unusual warmth" with "occasionally several members

speaking together" ("Men and Women's Club Minute Book" 132-138). Members spoke

largely in favour of Brooke's ideas, particularly her critique of the sexual sphere, but her

proposal for state-supported motherhood drew some critiques from the liberal-leaning

audience members, most of them women. They felt, in the words of Maria Sharpe, that

"if the father's direct sense of responsibility for his children was removed his affection

for them would decrease . . . [because] we love those for whom we work and make

sacrifices" ("Minute Book" 134). This however was objected to by Henrietta Müller, who

pointed out the current disparity between legitimate and illegitimate children, with no

corresponding disparity in the father's affection. Karl Pearson was the lone voice of

unreserved enthusiasm for state-supported motherhood. When Pearson wrote to tell

Brooke of the responses and offer some advice for the paper's improvement, she wrote in

reply that "the State Support of Motherhood will not be the same difficulty at a Socialist

Club that it seems to have been at yours . . . I do not see how the principles of Socialism can be thoroughly carried out without it" (25 March 1887).

Despite their trenchant and critical debates, the Men and Women's Club would come to an end in 1889 just four years after it began, largely because of the difficulties these women faced within the meetings of the club. As it neared its end, Müller wrote in clear frustration that "the men lay down the law, the women resent in silence and submit in silence – There is no debate at all" (Müller 6 April 1888). Although the club purported to provide opportunities for friendships across gender distinctions and political divides, the female club members who spoke and critiqued Pearson faced a high degree of difficulty because of their sex as male members dominated discussions, prioritized their own concerns, and treated the female members as objects of study rather than equal members. This removed the possibility of equal female contribution, ultimately stalling efforts to articulate a new language of egalitarian social reform.

Despite the final failure of the Club to explore and articulate their desires for a transformation in social, sexual, and cultural institutions, the female members would go on to develop a distinct vocabulary for equality and sexual freedom, and in this sense, the club did succeed in its attempt to "become a little centre from which we might endeavor to some small extent to influence the outer world" (Pearson "The Woman's Question" 20). While they were unable to achieve this ideal within the confines of the Club, the Club motivated the women's efforts to articulate their own visions for emancipated femininity outside the organization. As we will see in Chapter III, members like Henrietta Müller would establish and circulate the *Women's Penny Paper*, the first women's paper "written by women and for women," which became its own centre, connecting numerous

women advocates to each other and helping to advance their feminist ideals. For Emma Brooke, however, like Olive Schreiner, these ideals would be primarily articulated through fiction.

Brooke's challenge in declaring the necessary changes that must occur and setting out her ideal society was making her ideal a recognizable possibility in the present. In order to alter the current condition of the sexual sphere, men and women needed to recognize an ideal future of sexual relations—men and women working courageously side by side as comrades and friends—in the clearest of terms. Rejecting an easy utopianism in her fiction, Brooke instead set her novels in the present, with the real portrayed alongside the ideal. In the mid-1890s, after successive novels depicting socialist ideals, her most famous work appeared: the New Woman novel *A Superfluous Woman* (1894), which promoted women's greater freedoms through contrasting depictions of the morally degenerate and rigidly class-conscious London bourgeoisie with the simple, honest living of men and women in the Scottish Highlands. Here Brooke encapsulated her view of total social reform, which she would go on to re-iterate in her next novel, *Transition* (1895).

<u>Brooke's Fiction and Idealist Feminism: *A Superfluous Woman*</u>

Emma Brooke's novel *A Superfluous Woman* appeared in early 1894, to near-immediate popular acclaim. Reviewers, though occasionally less-than-friendly (a review appearing on March 30th, 1894, for instance, suggested that the novel was an "ill-starred perversity" that "distorted . . . moral judgments" ("Fortnightly Review"), helped propel the novel's sales. As John Sutherland notes, *A Superfluous Woman* went through four editions in four months from January to April 1894 alone (620). Despite its popularity at

the time, subsequent critical attention to the novel has been limited. As I have suggested

above, some contemporary critics tend to read Brooke's novels independent of her other

private and public writings and political affiliations, and have not fully recognized her

advocacy of radical social transformation. Yet Brooke's *A Superfluous Woman* is a

representative example of her commitment to total social change, where moral

individualism operates with the collective interest in mind. Unlike her prior or subsequent

novels, however, this one focuses in detail on the consequences of society's construction

of sexual difference and the duplicity of the sexual double standard, demonstrating the

harm of stunting the development of the entire female sex. Thus, while *A Superfluous*

*Woman* draws on an evolutionary, eugenicist theory that echoes Karl Pearson's focus on

the importance of the "English race," it points the finger of blame not at women

themselves or the underclasses, as was typical in the time period, but instead at the

"whole hateful fabric of London society" (159), underscoring the necessity of structural

social change.

In her book on New Woman fiction, *New Women, New Novels*, Ann Ardis writes of

the "boomerang plot": fiction that depicts the rebellious New Woman heroine

capitulating to a conventional, safe marriage by contemporary standards (155). Given the

radical ideas expressed in her other writings, and her political affiliations, it might be

easy to expect a complete rejection of this type of plot in Brooke's fiction and the

substitution of a more imaginative model that reflects her desire for social transformation.

Yet in *A Superfluous Woman* Brooke only draws a shadowy, faint outline of an

alternative radical future, spending much of the novel instead detailing and critiquing the

consequences of conventional social norms in the life of her upper-class protagonist,

Jessamine Halliday, the "superfluous woman" of her title. When Jessamine escapes London Society to live a life of simplicity in the Scottish Moors and falls in love with Colin Macgillvray, a quiet, unassuming peasant whose "mind's just in his worruk" (52), a radical new cross-class union between equals seems possible, as Jessamine begins to understand the possibility of spiritual unity and comradeship:

> It was the first time Jessamine had tasted real comradeship with a man. Comradeship is impossible where sex is predominant, and in the refined world which she had forsaken sex stands opposite to sex, the stronger with the stirrings of an exhausted sensuality, the weaker comporting itself as a recherché morsel which knows its price. But here all was changed. (132)

Free from the corruption of upper-class society and immersed in the natural world, Jessamine discovers her affinity for work and finds herself viewed as an equal, a "serviceable human being," and soon both she and Colin forget to mark "the distinction of rank which hitherto [they] had been so careful to record" (72-3), embodying the principles of a natural, classless love that Brooke had encountered through the circles she shared with Edward Carpenter. But as the plot advances, Brooke's heroine, true to form, capitulates to a conventional, society-approved marriage, marrying the wealthy Lord Heriot, a degenerate peer. The devastating consequences of this marriage serve to demonstrate Brooke's re-working of this New Woman plot device in order to depict a total rejection of conventional inegalitarian Victorian marriage and its attendant demand of female self-sacrifice, and not, as one might perhaps expect, a lapse into socially-conservative politics. Through an interesting reversal of both class and gender roles, *A Superfluous Woman* strongly critiques conventional marriage, and the "useless waste and

sacrifice" of child-bearing, and demonstrates the possibility of a new kind of union

between men and women in the faintly-discernable future. In this novel, Brooke thus

underscores and makes public the critique of marriage she had outlined in her letter to

Karl Pearson, "Notes on a Man's View of the Woman Question," and elaborated in her

published article "Woman and her Sphere." *A Superfluous Woman* similarly emphasizes

women's equally strong sexual desires, demands men's moral responsibility for their own

sexuality, and underscores the importance of moral sexual education, while

simultaneously disclosing a glimpse of something far more elusive: a different kind of

love, and the possibility of a new ideal love-union.

New Woman fiction rarely depicts an utter rejection of marriage altogether; Ledger

suggests "the inability to think beyond heterosexual marriage as the only available route

to happiness and fulfillment for women . . . explains the pessimism of most New Woman

novels which reach an impasse on the marriage question" (61). Yet through her depiction

of egalitarian comradeship between Jessamine and Colin, Brooke offers the possibility of

a new type of relationship between the sexes, despite Jessamine's eventual marriage to

Lord Heriot. As Brooke suggested in a letter to Edward Carpenter shortly after *A*

*Superfluous Woman* was published, true love could exist apart from and outside of the

bonds of conventional marriage, giving "abiding satisfaction . . . in itself, without

reference to what in common parlance is called 'successful' or 'unsuccessful' issue . . . I

am convinced that to a great Love there is not such a thing as 'unsuccess'" (4 February

1894). According to Brooke, true love went well beyond "couples satisfied in an ordinary

happy love," or marriage. Brooke suggested to Carpenter that "the very fact of wise and

final *selection* of the heart, has to me an unspeakably deep meaning—without reference

to what is meant by Love's final consummation" (4 February 1894). By depicting the

"boomerang plot" and then detailing the horrific consequences of recapitulation on her

heroine whilst simultaneously demonstrating the possibilities inherent in a spiritual,

unrequited love, Brooke thus challenges both the conventional Victorian understanding

of sexual difference and marriage, and suggests what moral individualism might mean in

an ideal emerging, egalitarian, and community-oriented future.

Brooke directs her main critique in this novel at the social construction of sexual

difference, primarily evidenced by the "superfluous woman" of her title, the

"unemancipated daughter of the aristocracy, the plutocracy, and the upper and lower

middle classes . . . the idle lady" (19) whom she characterizes throughout as being the

natural product of a duplicitous society that demands "all sexuality on the one side, with

its correlative sensuality on the other" (20). Jessamine Halliday, the sympathetic but

entirely misguided heroine, is a "fatally feminine" creature, a "pretty piece of sexuality,"

and a "professional . . . beauty," who has been taught to think of herself as nothing more

than "a dainty bit of flesh which some great man would buy" (12). Instead of gaining

pleasure from her upper-class status, however, Jessamine is consistently depicted as

"tormented" by "ennui"; the victim of excessive uselessness which Brooke characterizes

as "a circle of the damned . . . a wheel round which, in slow immortal weariness, souls

damned for idleness were being drawn" (18-19). Although Jessamine tries "every

conceivable contortion by which to kill time," pursing at various times art, aesthetics, or

politics, she is bored by all and has decided that her "final resource is death" (12). She

begins the novel suffering from an apparent illness that has manifested itself in "a

splenetic seizure" and is near death (11). After a string of doctors who cannot cure her,

Jessamine is seen by the astute and progressive Dr. Cornerstone, who diagnoses her apparent "disease": she is suffering from nothing more than an "imagination . . . touched by the picturesque interest of mortal decay upon aesthetic furniture" (11). Compelled by the look in her eyes, which seems to him to cry "Rescue me! Rescue me!" (22), he treats her with "the pill which they call Reality" (11), telling her the tale of life in London's East End, and she revives and regains her strength. Although Dr. Cornerstone has some question about whether it is really "worthwhile to bring this pretty humbug back to life," he has "hopes of her" and for a time, his ministrations prove effective (13-14). Jessamine throws over her loathsome suitor, Lord Heriot, "the greatest catch in Europe, and the most debauched of men" (120), and escapes the false influence of London society for a "life of simplicity and usefulness," working as a hired hand in the Scottish highlands (28). Falling in love with the healthy and vigorous peasant, Colin Macgillvray, Jessamine experiences the "indecorously natural," and finds herself overwhelmed by her intense sexual desire (18). Yet despite her genuine feeling, Jessamine finds herself bound by her classed sense of "duty and good manners," and cannot move beyond her thoroughly inadequate sexual and social training (81).

Throughout the novel, the narrative presents Jessamine's poor choices as the result of an inadequate sexual education that has trained her only into "duty" and the "prim negation" of self, and taught her nothing of her natural sexual desires (81, 140). Her maiden Aunt Arabella, who stands in for society, has instructed Jessamine in her class- and sex-specific education, and is characterized throughout the narrative as having wholly unprepared her for her genuine passion for Colin:

She had been instructed by Aunt Arabella into the duty of a girl to repress feeling,

to hold herself poised between relative advantages until the event culminated from

the outside. As to her own nature, of that she had heard nothing; passion, she had

been taught, was an offensive word and an unladylike allusion. (90-1)

Although Jessamine feels deeply for Colin, she has not been taught to reason through the

difficult decision that faces her when she must decide what to do with her passion: she

has "no defenses of the mind" (138), she "can't tell one thing from another" (137), she

has a decided lack of ability to "solve . . . problems for [her]self," and has "no notion to

what she should be true" (141). Trained only to a mindless set of rules that "forbade her

to undertake a position for which she knew herself to be unfitted" (137), Jessamine finds

herself pushing against "God and the social laws" embodied in the figure of her Aunt

Arabella, who has dictated the impossibility of cross-class, egalitarian love between a

peasant and a woman of the upper-class, but she cannot think reasonably about how to

direct her internal "revolt" (139). Although Jessamine wishes to choose Colin as her

lover, she "cannot think . . . but the Aunt Arabella in me gets into it and spoils it" (94).

Eventually her inculcated duty to society dictates she must not revolt:

"I dare not!" she cried, "I dare not! My whole nature chooses him before all the

world for my lover. I prefer his strength and his simplicity and his wholesomeness

to all the culture in London. I am sick of culture. But I dare not! DARE NOT! It

isn't because I am good. I am not good any more." To be in revolt was the

recognized form of evil, and Jessamine had nothing in herself to oppose to the idea.

(140)

Although Jessamine feels a dim "sense of inadequacy of all she had been taught as a

guiding principle" (140), her insufficient training and misplaced sense of sacrifice means

that she cannot entirely throw over society for permanent sexual freedom and a life of

equality because this was the "recognized form of evil" (141). As a result of her

unreasoning, unguided mind and shrinking courage—her "fear of Aunt Arabella and her

set" (141-2)—she finds herself weighing two false options: give herself passionately to

Colin in order to bear his child outside of wedlock; or, concede "my duty and [run] away

from him" (139), rejecting a cross-class marriage in order to marry Heriot "with the

church and clergy behind, and the support of society" (141). Jessamine initially considers

it more thinkable to bear a child outside of marriage than to marry a man of a lower class,

and she first decides to give herself to Colin, hoping to produce his child. However,

because Jessamine has no moral centre and a lack of moral education, the novel

increasingly depicts this not as the answer to her quandary but an example of her missing

sense of responsibility, courage, and will, though this too is rooted in women's

misdirected education:

> Women, when they are frail, are so in great measure because they have not been
>
> instructed in the nature of choice, nor taught the art of selection, nor the meaning of
>
> responsibility. Willfulness they may know, but not too many are acquainted with
>
> will. Jessamine's mental debate was in an ever increasing darkness—if, indeed, it
>
> could be dignified with the name of debate. She was merely a prey to varying
>
> strong impulses, a thing passively delivered over to a struggle between opposing
>
> inducements. Shaken with longings and terrors either way, she stood wondering
>
> whither her fate would lead her at the last. There was an element in her passion,
>
> perhaps, unusually strong. She longed definitely and deeply after motherhood.
>
> (201)

In an interesting inversion of conventional gender roles, Brooke here depicts Jessamine as being guided not by purity or virtue, as would be typical of a Victorian woman longing for motherhood, but by an ungovernable passion rooted in poor education. In this sense Jessamine is not able to freely choose motherhood, as her lack of education has not given her the ability to reason. This inversion of gender roles can also be seen when Jessamine attempts to convince Colin to let her bear his child outside of wedlock. At this juncture, Colin's natural education gives him the upper hand, and he is characterized as the morally superior figure, willing to pledge a mutual "vow of devotion, protection, and plighted troth . . . the highest he could conceive of love's surrender," even though he, too, "had prized his freedom" (226). With an entirely different sense of sexual partnership, one rooted in mutual egalitarian love and surrender—he was, for instance, "unaware that lovely women were bought and sold in the London marriage market very much as Circassian slaves are sold to a Turkish harem" (211)—Colin's "will and conscience" (219) dictates that he must wait to give in to his physical desires until Jessamine has verbalized a public commitment of consent.[34] Jessamine, however, merely wishes to submit to her sexual desires and longing for motherhood, while forgoing the cross-class union that would be so unthinkable to the Aunt Arabella's of the London marriage market. Here, then, Jessamine embodies the typically masculine figure of the sexual profligate, while Colin reflects the pure and virtuous attributes typically reserved for Victorian women. Brooke thus undermines the sexual double standard by reversal, demonstrating that moral behavior is often rooted in limited sex-specific training, which is particularly conditioned by a false duty to class and sexual convention, rather than in

---

[34] The Scottish conception of marriage was a simple declaration of love in front of one or two witnesses, outside society's marriage market.

any innate or natural sexual difference.

The force of Brooke's critique of conventional Victorian marriage in this novel emerges most strongly when Jessamine capitulates to marry Lord Heriot. Realizing Colin's pure "self-sacrificing" intentions, Jessamine senses she has wronged him, feels "penit[ent] but disgraced" and flees (225). Her initial intention is not to marry Heriot—she just wishes to escape the sense of shame, anguish, and the "blank rejection" (226) of her desires—but her return to Aunt Arabella further deepens her shame, prompting "hate against her and against myself for being like, and against Society for turning out such creatures as we were," and she simply wishes to "end it in a moment" (266). Bursting with anger at the futility of her limited existence, Jessamine "fling[s] out at the traitor within, who spoke to me by the mouth of the traitor outside . . . who was impersonated and stood before me in the figure of my Aunt" (266-7). When Jessamine strikes her Aunt, her sense of inadequacy and disgrace becomes overwhelming, and she subsequently agrees to marry Lord Heriot out of a sense of penance and sacrificial duty:

> I married him of my own free will. My eyes were wide open—wider than you think
> . . . I would not quarrel with him, would not go back on my steps . . . I thought—
> "That way my duty lies." It was all the goodness I had ever learned about. I thought
> it linked me on to what I had lost. And in that idea I lived. I woke up day by day
> and clung to it. (269)

But the narrative displays the futility of Jessamine's devotion to duty. Brooke roots her argument against dutiful marriage in an appeal to the science of eugenics, a debate raging in the late-nineteenth century. This can be seen in her scathing depiction of the sexual vice of Lord Heriot, who she characterizes throughout by his degenerate family and

diseased sexuality. As Lucy Bland points out, the science of eugenics was typically used

by the middle- and upper-class minority to discourage the parentage of those deemed

"unfit" or "undesirable"—the lower classes—while encouraging those with "fit" or

"desirable" characteristics, be they mental, physical, or moral, to reproduce (222-223).

Unlike most contemporary thinkers, however, Brooke does not locate the root cause of

degeneracy in the underclasses, who, as Bland points out, "were no longer seen as

demoralized by their environmental conditions, but as suffering from . . . immoral and

deviant attributes and behavior which were indicative of, possibly even a cause of, a

wider social and national decay" (223). Instead, the focus of her critique is on those in the

upper strata, particularly the richest of the rich, embodied in the figure of the syphilitic

Lord Heriot, ironically seen as the "biggest catch in Europe" (30). From the beginning of

the novel, the narrative depicts Lord Heriot as degenerate: when he speaks, "a thread of

vice ran through [his voice] like the twang of a broken wire—a thin trickle of disease

dropped out with every syllable" (21), his tone is "saturated with mental disease and

feebleness" (243), and his entire mien reflects his debauchery, from "his 'hee-hee-hee'

his moist palm, his vile eyes," to his "heavily scented apparel" (120). Brooke's narrative

makes clear the hereditary nature of Heriot's disease, as his entire family has the same

traits:

> There had been a sameness in the history of the Heriots for generations; it was
>
> varied only by the differences in manifestation caused by the different tastes and
>
> fashions of the time. The lines of the resulting contour cut deep. Violence and
>
> excessive animation in the first instance—the unabashed and muscular tiger who
>
> founded the family—had, in the inevitable processes of time, degenerated into

meanness, irritation, and vice in such members as did not reap their heritage in

insanity, disease, and shocking malformation. (276-77)

Despite the Heriot family history, after Jessamine marries Heriot and commits herself to

duty and "self-sacrificing patience" (280), she finds herself again longing after

motherhood to become "a true wife to the man I had married" (272), hoping that "it will

redeem [her]" (269). Yet her desires turn into "terror and horror" (272) when the

immorality and disease of the Heriot line soon become apparent in the next generation.

Jessamine's first child is an "idiot girl" characterized by her "maliciousness" (278); her

second, a boy, is "a poor malformed thing—a child who lived in pain, and whose eyes

alone answered for him" (271). Both children reflect, in their "frail, tiny forms," the

"heritage of the fathers . . . the beaten brows, the suffering eyes, expiated in themselves

the crimes and debauchery of generations" (270-1). After the birth of her children,

Jessamine is caught in a web of horror from which she cannot extricate herself, not even

by death: "Death even hides his face at times from me. Responsibility holds me like a

vise, and breathes an icy breath upon my heart, and kills even that hope. I cannot yet

resolve to leave my post and die" (270). Although Jessamine has devoted herself to self-

sacrifice and duty, which she has been taught to embrace, the narrative demonstrates the

futility of her efforts, which are clearly represented as falsely directed: "God knows that I

meant rightly. It was what I had learned of right. Do efforts of right-doing turn to fruits

like those? . . . I strove—good God, how piteously!—to do, moment by moment, all the

duty and the right I knew of" (272). Here, Brooke's argument advances most clearly in

opposition to conventional inegalitarian Victorian marriage and its attendant demand of

female self-sacrifice, as the "boomerang" narrative underscores the senselessness of

Jessamine's dutiful subjection. In a direct subversion of Karl Pearson's suggestion that self-sacrificial motherhood was necessary for the elevation of the British race, Brooke uses the discourse of eugenics and degeneration to register the *consequence* of dutiful marriage and self-sacrificial motherhood not just on women themselves but on the whole of British society through Jessamine's propagation of "an effete and dissipated race" (273). This provides a means by which to understand the delivery of Jessamine's third and final child at the end of the novel, after her "malicious" daughter strikes and kills her helpless younger brother, and then expires in the effort:

> [Jessamine's will] had triumphed. In that moment she realized what a frenzy of willing she had thrown into her desire that the baby should not live; fixing her thought on it, clamoring hour by hour against Nature and God, casting the wild gauntlet of her single rebellion against Fate, and filling day and night and space and time with the relentless demand for the extinction of that life and the effacement of her crime. And the baby had not lived; it had fallen out as she had resolved . . . [she felt] the first quiet sense of achievement she had ever experienced. (301)

Unlike her first two children, who were born of Jessamine's own free will, this last one is the result of her husband's desire for an heir and not her own wish for motherhood. Jessamine's sense of triumph thus comes from her refusal of enforced maternity and her desire to "cancel [the fetus] from within" (274). At this point in the narrative, Jessamine for the first time repudiates both dutiful marriage and self-sacrificing motherhood, making her final rejection of conventional, society-approved marriage clear as she declares to her husband, "we have to stand each one alone" (303). Brooke thus

demonstrates that conventional, dutiful marriage by society's standards is a false idol, neither safe for the mother, as Jessamine goes on to die from the effects of childbirth, or the children, who are marked by the immoral traits inherited from their father.

Jessamine's inability to escape her circumstances except through her own death and the death of her children helps to reveal Brooke's project in this novel as an argument for the necessity of structural change to society, particularly to the class-and sex-specific rules that govern relations between the sexes, which leave "one-half the race under a real, permanent disadvantage" (250). This can be seen in particular near the novel's conclusion when Jessamine is visited by Dr. Cornerstone, who makes the unorthodox and socially-unacceptable suggestion that she abandon her husband:

> You think—many women do—that a marriage is an eternal thing which cannot be
> broken; but that is a mistake. We live in the nineteenth century and not in the
> Middle Ages. You can go away to-morrow, if you wish. Pluck up a will and
> escape . . . This bond is breaking you. I find you crushed. Moreover, it is a
> degradation. Escape from it. I say that it is the only right step left for you. (262)

Jessamine's blank response—"Escape? . . . How is that possible? Escape—from what?" (262)—indicates the degree to which the novel underscores the impossibility of individual action as a solution to a complete social problem. Jessamine's social agency, her ability to extricate herself, has been pre-determined by the poor education that has left her "under a real, permanent disadvantage" (250). In order to escape from her situation, Jessamine must be able to escape from herself. The novel thus suggests that the trajectory of one individual's life is contingent on social conditions, which can be totalizing, and inescapable. Near the conclusion of the narrative, reflecting on Jessamine's experience,

Dr. Cornerstone ventriloquizes this idea when he states the definition of inequality, which he argues is different depending on the sex of those considered: "Between men and men the only definition is, artificial inequality of conditions. Between men and women it is enforced inequality of development" (311). The narrative thus suggests that in order to alter the nature of the superfluous woman, one must entirely alter the conditions that structure her experience.

At the end of the novel the narrative returns again to the elusive egalitarian ideal suggested at the beginning, but this time the partnership ideal is couched in the language of dreams and visions. When Dr. Cornerstone returns to the Scottish Highlands to tell Colin of Jessamine's death, he finds that Colin, somehow, already knows. Colin explains:

> "Whiles I have felt as though it had all been a dreaming and a sleep, and as though I was just on the edge of waking. . . . It would be one evening last autumn that I was just dozing a bit by my fire after the day's worruk was done. And I will hardly know if I was dreaming or not. . . . I was hearing the rustle of her dress past the window. And then I knew she was running over the moor to my house. So then I sprang up and opened the doors and set them wide, and stood looking into the night, and stretching my arms for her. . . . And presently it seemed to me that the house I had been building was full. . . . You will understand, sir," said he in a low quiet voice, when he had regained his self-mastery, "that I just knew she was dead, and had come to me that way." (334)

Trying to make sense of this vision, Dr. Cornerstone contemplates the substance of Colin's vision and the value of his powerful love for Jessamine, and hers for him, wondering the value of such a dream:

To visions impossible as these, was there a substance and a counterpart? [Dr.

Cornerstone] thought, perchance, it might be so. He thought that he who silently

loves his friend, without one breath of the word "forgiveness" in between, who

wholly loves, accepting utterly, comes nearest—for all dividing space and years

and facts—to that most unattainable and sweetest of dreams. (257-8)

Thinking of Colin and Jessamine's egalitarian love, Dr. Cornerstone acknowledges the

value of the union the two have attained through mutual forgiveness and respect.

Although their partnership remains only in the spiritual realm and not the physical, their

union nevertheless shadows the elusive comradeship ideal. The narrative thus alludes to

the possibility of an egalitarian partnership as a solution for social change, though not in

the present physical world. Instead, it offers "joyful" hope for the burgeoning future and

"the first dawning conception of free man- and woman-hood" (323). In this sense, the

novel echoes the socialist movement's initial phase of idealism, yet with a distinctly

feminist inflection. With its faith in an unrequited, pure, erotic love that flows between

men and women, it offers the possibility of an entirely new relationship between the

sexes, one that had the potential to radically alter the individual's relationship to the

social whole.

<div align="center">Brooke's Fiction and Idealist Feminism: <em>Transition</em></div>

Brooke's novel *Transition* (1895) similarly depicts the importance of an

egalitarian ideal. In this novel, however, while Brooke again portrays the gendered

consequences of refusing such a necessary structural change, and depicts her

understanding of the ideal relationship between the sexes, she also depicts the

relationships among women as essential to structural social change. In *Transition*, a novel which depicts the complex and fraught relationship between socialism, anarchism, and feminism in the previous decade, the elision of the sexual sphere in the name of comradeship—among men and women, and among women themselves—emerges as the key moral precept, the cornerstone which will form the base of Brooke's ideal egalitarian society. In this novel, Brooke thus presents a synthesis of her views on socialism and sex, giving a clear voice to "the workings of the minds and methods of the socialists" (*The Royal Cornwall Gazette* 6), while ultimately depicting her commitment to transformative social change, which advocated complete human emancipation through radical democracy and the preservation of personal freedom and choice.

  *Transition* was initially written in response to the best-selling novel *Marcella* by Mary Humphrey Ward, in which the eponymous heroine is at first a radical Fabian ("Venturist," as the novel calls her), but finds herself increasingly influenced by a Tory landowner who is depicted as helping to moderate her views. *Marcella* ultimately displays the reconciliation between two opposing but well-meaning political perspectives through marriage, as the heroine concedes her radicalism and the Tory holds less conservative views. In contrast, *Transition* depicts its first heroine, Honora Kemball, as initially holding the bourgeois views of the educated elite, but gradually finding her way to Fabian socialism. The second heroine of Brooke's novel, Lucilla Dennison, is a socialist who is tempted by violent revolutionary anarchism "of the ultra-foreign type" (194), but in the final pages of the novel sees the error of violent methods when she herself experiences sexual violence.[35]

---

[35] Brooke described Lucilla as the "violent revolutionary type" of Fabian socialist who was "constantly at war with the established and successful method" (Waugh 384). Nevertheless, she saw Lucilla and other

The first of Brooke's dual heroines in this novel, Honora Kemball, personifies the fulfillment of a feminist ideal. Girton-educated, Honora begins the novel with an awareness of her sex's socially-constructed disabilities, yet has never tried her own abilities outside of the university classroom: her bourgeois education has left her ignorant of contemporary political movements and ill-prepared for the practical realities of a life of work. Initially impractical and self-serving—at the outset of the novel she has the idea that she will write a lengthy "original work" (17) on the topic of Greek Culture and art— Honora is forced to learn to live by her own hand when her father, a clergyman, decides to renounce his salary and reinvest the money in his parish. Taking a position as the head assistant mistress at a small, metropolitan high school in an impoverished part of town, Honora initially finds herself alienated from the other teachers and dissatisfied with her position due to her prejudices about the inferiority of such work. But Lucilla's offer of friendship to Honora opens space for the ties of affection, which eventually leads to allegiance to a greater social cause. In the novel, the narrator states that "it is the affections that give acuteness to the great allegiance" (166), suggesting that egalitarian friendship can give way to significant social change. And the plot demonstrates this to be true particularly in the relationship between Honora and Lucilla, when Lucilla leads Honora to join a socialist organization, and subsequently participate in a "great popular demonstration" of the underprivileged marching in London's East End (176). During this march, hearing a speech calling for the "end to the great contrasts of this vast city" (180), Honora begins to see socialism as the solution to social inequality, and her work as an educator as far more significant than she had realized. Honora soon discovers deep

---

anarchist-minded Fabians like her as "an excellent sign of life in the Society" and felt they did not represent "the tendency of members to go back on the faith altogether" (Waugh 384).

meaning in her work, leading her to declare at the conclusion of the novel her delight in the path she has taken:

> In this career I realize myself more than in any I had pictured. I did not know my own faculties and proclivities until I had tried them. Then my absolute independence suits me. I am standing on my own basis, and I do not find myself conquered by events, but, on the whole, conquering them. I have a worthy career, a definite place. What more than all this can I desire? I am satisfied. I shall never wish for anything different. (326)

After Lucilla's death by influenza, Honora decides to hand over an inheritance recently acquired from a relative "for the use of the community," signaling her choice to maintain her own life of work as a schoolmistress, but also demonstrating her decision to honor the memory of her friend through an act of service (318). The novel thus suggests that comradeship and affection between women is a significant step in the accomplishment of social change.

The novel concludes with Honora's engagement to her dear friend and fellow socialist, Leslie Lyttleton, who joins Honora in her work to further the cause. However, rather than a recapitulation to the unequal bond of marriage—the "boomerang plot" pervasive in the New Woman novel (155)—this secondary plot instead makes this ideal of egalitarian union possible only because of the freedom and self-sufficiency Honora has already gained: she has been able to "work out for [herself] [her] own idea of what [her] duty and ideal is" (Brooke 11 March 1886). The novel also underscores the importance of Leslie's perception of Honora's equality. Indeed, the novel frames Leslie's *perception* of Honora's independence as equally as important as Honora's achievement of it: Leslie

now sees Honora as an "independent woman . . . a different creature from the girl who had tried to coax him into helping her to achieve mere notoriety. He found her much more powerful and impressive and admired her more" (136). It is precisely because of Honora's independence and power that Leslie views Honora as his equal. The "tie of comradeship" (154) between Honora and Leslie, made possible because both are conscious of the other's equality and individuality, thus allows for their egalitarian union, signaling their participation in an emergent utopian future. The achievement of an ideal socio-political society, Brooke thus suggests, is contingent on equality between the sexes, and only with this achievement will revitalization of society be possible.

Brooke's second heroine, Lucilla Dennison, offers the counterpoint to Honora's story of an ideal fulfilled, instead personifying an ideal destroyed. Initially Lucilla attempts to achieve social transformation through egalitarian friendship with an anarchist, Achille D'Auverney, whom she believes views her as his co-revolutionary, "selected to bear forward the banner of revolt" (276). However, Achille's refusal to see her as anything but a sexual object soon becomes visible when he reveals to Lucilla his reason for maintaining their relationship: he wishes to make her his mistress. The narrative's representation of Achille as an "unruled, unguided force" (281) and a "tyran[t] of individualistic lawlessness" (283) makes it clear that this fellowship ideal is a necessary antidote to the selfish individualistic tyranny of the male revolutionary who refuses to acknowledge the equality of his female counterpart. Lucilla's coming-of-consciousness at this point, however, is at odds with much fiction associated with the New Woman novel of the 1890s insofar as it suggests that the very knowledge of the disabilities of her sex will metaphorically kill her:

Hitherto Sex had meant to her simply one of the conditions and modalities of
daily existence; she had been scarcely conscious of it. Its meaning was now
discovered to her, not through some glorious passion revealing her possession
of so sweet and dignified an attribute, but through the cruelest humiliation . . .
Every now and then a sigh of anguish escaped her: she was faint and giddy
under the blow. "I am killed," she said, "I am killed. I can never recover it—
never look with the same eyes again." (283)

Lucilla's symbolic spiritual death at this point in the narrative foreshadows her later
physical death. Unable to reconcile her spiritual ideal of male and female fellowship with
the present reality of the sexual objectification of her own body, Lucilla is overcome. As
her physical death approaches, she reflects that "I did not understand the Time nor the
Time me . . . I am a woman whose mind was pitched out of its own era. It is well to die
now. If I had lived, I should have been ground to powder" (308). There is an implicit
critique here both of violent revolutionary socialism, personified through the character of
Achille D'Auverney, and of an easy utopian idealism that fails to recognize the real,
tragic effects of sex on the bodies of those it has marked as "weaker" (126). Because of
Lucilla's utopian assumption about egalitarian comradeship between the sexes in the
current era, she is not fit for it: she must die or be suffocated by the slow pace of change.
The consequence of enmity between the sexes instead of unity, Brooke thus suggests, is
the spiritual and even physical death of women. If the sexes, and particularly the male
sex, continue to view women only in terms of their sexual value and not as true equals,
they will hardly be able to revitalize the whole of society.

In this novel, as in *A Superfluous Woman*, Brooke again employs the language of

dreams and visions when Leslie Lyttleton reflects on the need for structural social change after Lucilla's death.[36] Lucilla, as a result of her perception and experience of class and sexual inequality, "the undisputed sway of evil in our metropolis" (315) was "ground to a powder" (308); she could not escape from the social conditions that structured her reality. However, at this juncture, rather than dismissing Lucilla's dreams or visions of a new society as utopian, Leslie Lyttleton embraces them:

> "There is no such thing," said Leslie, "as the fulfilment of a dream. The dreamer stammers out conditions that appear to sum it up, but, they being fulfilled, the vision itself looms larger and more distinct. My deepest faith is in dreams," thought he . . . And through this silence and solitude came to him a clearer sense—even than that which habitually haunted his mind—of the period of Transition in which he lived: —a knowledge, not mournful but tinged with solemn joy, that the Watchwords of the past are outworn and fading away to make place for the Watchwords of the future, dim and undefined at present, but charged with hope and progress and high inspiration. (321)

Although the narrative represents Lucilla's dreams and aspirations as somewhat misdirected, it nevertheless maintains them, giving them instead a new focus. In this sense, the novel straddles the ideal and the real, critiquing an easy utopian idealism that fails to acknowledge the realities of class and sexual violence, but embracing hope in a cross-class and cross-sex ideal that pushed for real change to the current social situation. In this novel, while Brooke's radical feminist commitment to social transformation is

---

[36] Is Lucilla a fictionalized representation of Eleanor Marx-Aveling? According to Kapp (*Eleanor Marx*), Marx suffered considerable violence to herself on Bloody Sunday when leading a contingent from the Clerkenwell radical Club to march on Trafalgar Square. This scene is depicted in *Transition* with some differences: Lucilla is saved from being literally crushed in the rioting crowd by Honora, who swoops in with manly strength to save her.

focused more strongly on the socialist project, her egalitarian ideals still form the base of her feminist argument. As we will see in the next two chapters, other feminist women made similar claims for total social change across a range of writing mediums.

Chapter II

Mona Caird and the Radical Culture of Late-Victorian Hampstead

When Karl Pearson sent Emma Brooke's anonymous paper "Some Notes on a Man's View of the Woman Question" to Olive Schreiner in early March 1886, Schreiner declared it was "*splendid* . . . the best paper by a woman I've ever read." She found herself in strong agreement with Brooke, she said, "on almost all points" (Schreiner to Pearson 17 March 1886). Deeply curious as to the writer's identity and suspecting she might know the author, Schreiner then asked, "who is the woman? . . . is the writer Mrs [Mona] Caird?" (Schreiner to Pearson 17 March 1886). In a subsequent letter to Pearson, Schreiner asked again about the author's identity, this time explaining her reason for suspecting Caird: "The ideas are just like what she has expressed to me in speaking," Schreiner suggested. She then added, "It gives one hope to hear such brave free words from a woman" (Olive Schreiner to Karl Pearson 23 March 1886).

Karl Pearson never divulged Brooke's identity as the author of the paper. But Schreiner's speculation that the words written by a Fabian socialist might have been instead written by Caird—a woman linked to the tradition of classic Liberal theory and John Stuart Mill, and who has been characterized by the individualist bent of her unique brand of feminism—raises questions about the affinity between the two authors. Further questions emerge when we consider the similar inflection of their writing, including the frequent use of the term "idealist." However, when we also consider the fact that both

women lived within a few blocks of each other in Hampstead, worked concurrently as readers at the British Museum, and moved together in the same social, political, and literary networks—including organizations like the Men and Women's Club—mistaking the work of one for the other seems much less implausible. Indeed, their similarity speaks to the ideology of the feminist reform culture of the fin de siècle, which embraced equally the values of individual freedom and collective equality.[37] Despite the inherent tensions within these ideas, feminist progressives like Caird, Brooke, and Schreiner held firmly to both.

Although scholars in the areas of print culture, literary history, and feminist cultural history have contributed significantly to the recovery of women like Brooke, Caird, and Schreiner, the distinct ideological categories of today are often still imposed on feminist reform writers of the late-Victorian period, despite their interest in a range of issues as diverse as female trade unions, marriage law, female sexuality, anti-vivisection, poverty, and sexual violence. Yet, as Terry Eagleton has pointed out, progressives at the fin de siècle, including feminists, "blend[ed] belief systems with staggering nonchalance, blithely confident of some invisible omega point at which Baudelaire and Kropotkin consort harmoniously together and Emerson lies down with Engels" (12). Like many of the women in the late-nineteenth century feminist movement, Caird maintained memberships in organizations with a diversity of belief systems and ideological patterns, merging interests in liberalism, individualism, vegetarianism, and spiritualism while

---

[37] I am indebted to Susan Hinely for her description of these equal but oppositional values in her biographical and historical analysis of feminist-anarchist Charlotte Wilson, who Caird lived close to in Hampstead. Hinely describes Wilson's support of "nihilism" as "a successful combination of fierce Russian individualism with a perfect form of village communalism, the 'mir,' an ideal that embraced, as did all of her descriptions of the good society, both of the fundamental but oppositional elements of the democratic formula" ("Charlotte Wilson" 12-13). Caird expressed similar ideals, and, as I discuss below, wrote the introduction to "Memoirs of a Female Nihilist," by Russian anarchist Sophie Wassilieff, published in *The Idler* in May 1893 (430-434).

engaging at length with the ideals of socialism—particularly its anarchist wing—and

collectivism. Anarchism, [38] an off-shoot of nineteenth century socialism,[39] rejected the

state as the means by which to achieve social change, instead advocating "spontaneous

and voluntary economic organization" and economic equality (Bantman 7). Caird, like

other feminists in this period, attended to a number of issues related to total social

change—marriage law, female economic independence, enforced maternity, and sexual

violence—aligned with both liberal and socialist ideals, and moved fluidly between them.

This chapter re-examines the relationship between what has been defined as

"socialist feminism" and "individualist feminism"[40] by tracing the development of

---

[38] I follow Constance Bantman, Benedict Anderson, Mark Bevir and others in their understanding of anarchism as an off-shoot of nineteenth-century socialism, with more strongly libertarian influences. Yet anarchism, as Constance Bantman points out, is "notoriously difficult to define" (7). Benedict Anderson describes it as a "gravitational field" rather than a movement, drawing together a variety of intellectuals and political refugees from a variety of locations in a loose network of individuals who critiqued late imperial capitalism and authoritarianism, while rejecting a socialism that sought power in the bourgeois state. Bantman defines it more concisely as "a libertarian strand of nineteenth-century socialism, based on the rejection of the state in favour of spontaneous and voluntary political and economic organization" (7). According to Bantman, nineteenth-century anarcho-communists "advocated economic equality and sought a new collective economic organization," and were highly active in nineteenth-century London (7). Anarchist communists were strongly influenced by the writings of Peter Kropotkin, who was a notable figure in Caird's network in Hampstead (and whom she refers to directly in her 1931 novel *The Great Wave*), closely connected to Hampstead resident Charlotte Wilson, with whom he edited the anarchist journal *Freedom: A Journal of Anarchist Socialism* (33). The first issue of the journal, which Wilson and Kropotkin co-founded, appeared on September 1886 (bearing the date October 1889). Wilson was the editor and publisher, while Kropotkin was the main theoretical columnist. Wilson remained in her position until 1895. The journal was run out of the office of the *Commonweal*, with William Morris's permission, and was printed at the Office of the Freethought Publishing Company, with the blessing of Annie Besant. Contributors included Havelock Ellis, Bernard Shaw, and trade unionist John Burns. Bantman notes that by the 1890s the Freedom group "had become the centre of a significant network linking up the main cities of the country" (33). For more on *Freedom*, see Donald Rooum, "Freedom, Freedom Press, and Freedom Bookshop: A Short History of Freedom Press" *Information for Social Change* 27 (Summer 2008): np, and David Goodway, "Freedom, 1886-2014: An Appreciation" *History Workshop Journal 79* (Spring 2015): 233-242.

[39] In 1886, Charlotte Wilson contributed to the writing of Fabian Tract 4, "What Socialism is," which divided socialism into two separate strands, anarchism and collectivism: "English Socialism is not yet Anarchist or Collectivist, not yet definite enough in point of policy to be classified. There is a mass of Socialistic feeling not yet conscious of itself as Socialism. But when the unconscious Socialists of England discover their position, they also will probably fall into two parties: a Collectivist party supporting a strong central administration, and a counterbalancing Anarchist party defending individual initiative against that administration" (6).

[40] In her book *Individualist Feminism of the Nineteenth Century: Collected Writings and Biographical Profiles*, Wendy McElroy defines socialist feminism and individualist feminism in opposition to each other.

Caird's writing against the backdrop of the social, political, and literary affiliations she held in common with feminists living and working in multiple overlapping networks in London. In particular, I examine the social connections Caird made by virtue of her close geographic proximity to the clubs and organizations that met and circulated in Hampstead and the larger Camden area in the 1880s. I argue here that Caird's writing should be understood in the context of her affiliation with this network of radicals, socialists, anarchists, and feminists despite her occasional disagreements with them. When we consider the absence of any surviving significant correspondence and the destruction of Caird's personal library, I suggest that this kind of analysis can fill a significant hole in the archive, helping to elucidate our understanding of Caird's literary and political affiliations, and further explain her fiction. I aim to show how the links between Caird and other members of the community living in and around Hampstead demonstrate the

---

She suggests that these two voices of feminism "establish the extreme ideological boundaries of feminism," and are in many ways "ideological mirror images of each other" (4). Socialist feminism, according to McElroy, suggests that "women can be the equals of men only after patriarchy—a combination of capitalism, white male culture, and the family structure—is eliminated" (6). In contrast, individualist feminism is a tradition based "on natural law theory and on the derivative belief that all human beings are sovereign, or self-owners" (1). McElroy suggests that individualist feminism "makes no reference to women being economically or socially equal, only to equal treatment under just laws," which "protect the freely chosen actions of individuals" (6). Drawing on the writing of American feminist Dr. Gertrude B. Kelley as representative of the Individualist Feminist perspective, McElroy explains that Kelly "viewed capitalism as a major cause of poverty" (9) yet "rejected any governmental remedy to social problems, including economic ills" (9). In McElroy's estimation, individualist feminists "considered the free market to be the natural remedy for capitalism" (9). Although McElroy focuses heavily on the American tradition, her book highlights the cross-currents between American and British feminists, including republications and quotations by British writers in American periodicals. She makes specific reference to Mona Caird's *Westminster Review* publications "Marriage," and "Ideal Marriage," which she notes were quoted in *The Word*, an American anarchist periodical emphasizing "free love and free labour" (10, 52). She also writes that Caird's "Ideal Marriage" was republished in its entirety in an issue "devoted to children" of the anarchist magazine *Liberty*, which she categorizes as an "individualist anarchist periodical" (141, 12). McElroy suggests that *Liberty* reads as a "virtual honor list of individualist feminists," including Gertrude Kelley, and Charlotte Perkins Stetson, among others, even though the periodical was not entirely friendly to women (12). McElroy includes Caird within her biographical profile of "day-to-day radicals," locating her place within the tradition of individualist feminist writers (48). (Caird's "Marriage" and "The Emancipation of the Family" were also reprinted in the American anarchist magazine *Fair Play*, which ran from 1888-1891 (Longa 60, 62). As I discuss below, several literary and cultural critics have followed McElroy in her understanding of the divergence between individualist and socialist feminism, and have categorized Caird by her focus on the individual.

particular nature both of Caird's variety of feminism, *and* the feminism of the period, which formed from within an overlapping of networks, through multiple webs and affiliations not associated with any singular campaign. Feminist thinkers, who moved sometimes together and sometimes apart, influenced each other's ideas through shared connections to particular places like Hampstead and the social clubs and organizations that circulated in and around it. As these women mobilized in the city, they encountered and influenced each other's ideas through shared links to places, organizations, periodicals, and individuals, in the process developing a particular variety of feminism, which I call "idealist feminism"—a vision of total social equality that embraced both individual freedom and collective equality, which they believed was necessary to alter politics, education, society, and the individual, through attention to both the transformation of private life and the public sphere. Rooted in the idea of individual moral transformation—and an emphasis on "self-realization [as] a moral duty" (Boucher and Vincent 3)—but placing equal importance on the collective, idealist feminists were strongly committed to enacting their ideals through propagation and implementation. That is to say, they believed that by practicing and propagating the ideas of feminism, they would realize their ideals.

Despite scant evidence of direct connection between feminists like Mona Caird and Emma Brooke, their contemporaneous links to the same individuals and locations, and the similar inflection of their writing and philosophical orientation, provide a different kind of evidence. When we think about Caird as imbricated in overlapping networks that link her to a wide variety of people, places, and organizations—even if we consider her peripheral to those networks—we may have another way of thinking about the circulation

of ideas, about influence, and about how individuals form their ideas in a neighbourhood, community, association, or group.

*** 

Despite the resurgence of critical interest in Mona Caird's fiction and prose, we still know remarkably little about her personal life, professional connections, and political influences. In the last three decades, since the 1989 republication of *The Daughters of Danaus* by the Feminist Press,[41] literary critics have productively situated Caird's writing and thinking in relation to the New Woman novel.[42] Her periodical publications have also received renewed attention, particularly her article "Marriage," published in the *Westminster Review* in 1888, which has been described as "the most famous newspaper controversy of the nineteenth century" (Richardson 180). Feminist cultural historians have begun to examine her role in the history of feminism by noting her connection to the Men and Women's Club,[43] feminist suffrage organizations like the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU),[44] and the reverberations of her writing with second-wave feminist thought.[45] Literary historians have also worked to reconstruct Caird's influences through her allusions to John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty* (1859), *The Subjection of Women* (1869), his *Autobiography* (1873), and his essays on "Nature" (published posthumously

---

[41] See Margaret Morgenroth Gullette, "Afterword," *The Daughters of Danaus* (1989).

[42] In addition to the scholarship listed below, see Patricia Murphy *Time is of the Essence: Temporality, Gender and the New Woman* (2001); Lisa Surridge *Bleak Houses: Marital Violence in Victorian Fiction* (2005), and Alexandra Warwick "Introduction," *The Wing of Azrael* (2010-11).

[43] See Lucy Bland, *Banishing the Beast* (1995) and Judith Walkowitz *City of Dreadful Delight* (1992).

[44] See Elizabeth Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement: A Reference Guide, 1866-1928* (2003), and Ann Heilmann, ed. *The Late-Victorian Marriage Question: A Collection of Key New Woman Texts* (1998), and *New Woman Strategies: Sarah Grand, Olive Schreiner, Mona Caird* (2004).

[45] See Ann Heilmann, "Mona Caird (1854–1932): Wild Woman, New Woman, and Early Radical Feminist Critic of Marriage and Motherhood" (1996).

in 1874).[46] These scholarly explorations of Caird's feminism, social networks, and philosophical influences have informed our understanding of this important late-Victorian feminist.

However, scholarly explorations of Caird's ideas of social transformation have tended to emphasize the idea that Caird held views distinct from her feminist contemporaries, emphasizing her Millian-influenced, individualist thinking. Tracey S. Rosenberg, for instance, following Wendy McElroy, categorizes Caird's feminism as "individualist feminism," and further argues that "the ways in which she integrates her individualist theories into an evolutionary model helps to explain why her theories differ so greatly from the ideas of her contemporaries" (Gender Construction 33, 19). Drawing on Angelique Richardson, Demelza Hookway similarly suggests that Caird's affinity with Millian ideas of freedom means that "Caird held very different views from many of the New Women writers with which she is habitually grouped" (Hookway "Liberating Conversations" 875). Even while situating her amongst her peers, and squarely within her socio-historical situation, Ann Heilmann, in her important book *New Woman Strategies*, still suggests that "Caird has . . . more in common with modern radical feminists like Adrienne Rich than with her feminist contemporaries" (Heilmann 161). Heilmann's explication of Caird's articles and fiction furthermore fails to nuance the individualist bent of Caird's work, arguing that she "always prioritized the rights of the individual over the rights of the collective . . . [condemning] the appeal to the greater benefit of the 'Community' as but 'another collective-term fetish'" (186). This leads Heilmann to

---

[46] See Angelique Richardson, *Love and Eugenics in the Late Nineteenth Century: Rational Reproduction and the New Woman* (2003), and Demelza Hookway "Liberating Conversations: John Stuart Mill and Mona Caird" (2012) and "'Falling over the same precipice': Thomas Hardy, Mona Caird, and John Stuart Mill" (2010).

suggest that Caird, throughout her literary career, completely "dismissed the idea of state socialism as beset with the perils of totalitarianism," which she sees as evident in Caird's 1915 novel *The Stones of Sacrifice* (169). While Caird's later writing, including *The Stones of Sacrifice*, certainly depicts a distrust of state-sanctioned socialism, a close examination of her writing and thinking reveals her affinity with the anarchist wing of the socialist movement, which rejected the accumulation of state power in favour of voluntary political and economic organization, and which advocated economic equality and sought collective economic organization. A close examination of Caird's writing and thinking helps to uncover her alternative feminist analysis, what Susan Hinely calls the "anti-authoritarian critique of late imperial capitalism that [has been] obscured by the ascendance of socialist parties seeking power in the bourgeois state" (6). Caird certainly rejected a state socialism that insisted on women's self-sacrifice and duty for the sake of the nation, yet she also advanced the idea that individual freedom was the product of and resulted in social equality.

Like Heilmann, Ann Ardis, in *New Women, New Novels,* suggests that feminists examining the Woman Question, including Caird and Brooke, "differed from women who became involved in the many socialist movements of the day because they refused to assume that distinctions of class were more fundamental than either sex or gender" (17). While noting that "the critics who were most threatened by the prospect of radical social change associated New Women with socialism" (19), Ardis dismisses any fluidity between individualist feminism and socialist feminism, instead splitting all socialists into two camps: "either, following Marx's lead, they did not include the family within the framework of their economic analysis . . . or, identifying the 'Woman Question' as one

aspect of the more general problem of social organization, they assimilated the former to the latter, the larger, 'Cause'" (17). Ardis's narrow definition of "socialist feminism" overlooks anarchism, the libertarian strand of the socialist movement, which was included within it until well into the 1890s. While male socialists certainly had a tendency to treat the Woman Question in this way, as I have shown in the last chapter, female socialists like Emma Brooke levelled critiques at both class and gender roles within the framework of their analyses, attempting to dismantle the entirety of the capitalistic economic system that privileged upper-class men.

Sheila Rosenberg's "Encounters in the *Westminster Review*: Dialogues on Marriage and Divorce" is a notable exception to this trend. Placing Caird's dual articles in the *Westminster Review* in the broader context of the periodical network serves as a corrective to the tendency to separate Caird from her radical, socialist, and feminist contemporaries. Rosenberg's argument does not diminish the significance of Caird's Marriage articles, yet it situates Caird's periodical publications within the context of the wider network of *Westminster Review* contributors, supporters, and readers. Rosenberg outlines how Caird's periodical publications "[were] not a singular achievement, a Halley's comet blazing a new trail against a darkened firmament," and instead followed "a path which many, often her own friends, had opened up before her in the *Westminster*, and on a topic which was being actively discussed in a wide circle of supporters and contributors . . . belonging to the more extended *Westminster* circle that included members of the Men and Women's Club" (119). Rosenberg furthermore emphasizes the influence of Mill on the entire publication circle of the *Westminster Review* and beyond, establishing his broader significance on the radical intellectual culture of the period—

including its socialist, anarchist, and feminist elements. Rosenberg thus discusses Caird within her network of contemporaries, emphasizing her similarity with, rather than distinction from them. Still, Rosenberg's article does not trace Caird's affiliation with socialism and anarchist ideas, the nature of which emerges through her journalism and her fiction.

Caird's acknowledged Liberal sympathies and affiliation with individualist ideas do not preclude her from intellectual affinity with other political organizations or philosophical points of view—including the ideas of socialism and anarchism— particularly given her affiliation with the intellectually fluid culture of Hampstead in the late-nineteenth century. Caird was influenced by the socio-historical milieu of late-nineteenth century London, and especially the bohemian culture of Hampstead, and was affiliated with the idealist feminism of the late-nineteenth century, which was aligned with several diverse social movements at the time. A thorough understanding of Caird's feminism and the idealist feminism of the period must consider the fluidity between liberalism, socialism, and anarchism in the 1880s, and the degree to which Hampstead "liberals" like Caird supported and drew on the ideas of their socialist and anarchist contemporaries as they pursued individual freedom and collective equality. In the 1880s, for instance, socialists and anarchists like Emma Brooke and Charlotte Wilson frequently held memberships in liberal, socialist, and anarchist organizations, unfazed by the distinctions between them. Even within avowedly socialist organizations like the Fabian society and the Hampstead Historic Society, in the 1880s, anarchism and socialism had not yet crystalized into distinct forms. In 1886, for instance, Fabian Tract 4 "What Socialism Is" explained that "English Socialism is not yet Anarchist or Collectivist, not

yet definite enough in point of policy to be classified" (6). The tract was split into two parts, part one, a summary of the views of August Bebel describing the collectivist position, and the other, written by Charlotte Wilson, describing the anarchist point of view. Wilson described anarchism as "a faith based upon the scientific observation of social phenomena," which drew on "radicalism and the philosophy of Herbert Spencer," to adopt "the individualist revolt against authority," while simultaneously revolting against "private ownership of the means of production, which is the foundation of Collectivism" (12). It is in the revolt again private ownership of the means of production, Wilson argued, that socialism and anarchism "find their common issue" (12). Wilson explained that anarchism was "a moral and intellectual protest against the unreality of a society which, as Emerson says, 'is everywhere in conspiracy against the [person]hood of every one of its members'" (12). Anarchism thus sought "by direct personal action to bring about a revolution in every department of human existence, social, political and economic" because "Every man owes it to himself and to his fellows to be free" (12). Focusing on Caird's difference from her contemporaries fails to nuance the degree to which Caird, like her feminist contemporaries, combined socialism and anarchism and built onto them her feminist ideals.

 In the late-nineteenth century, individuals with declared liberal affiliations also combined the ideas of individualism and collectivism and socialism and anarchism. John Stuart Mill, who was an influence on Caird and more broadly influential on the social reformers living in Hampstead in the late-nineteenth century, is one such example. While Mill certainly emphasized the importance of the individual rights, he similarly drew on

the ideas of socialist-communists like Marx and anarchist-communists like Kropotkin.[47]

As Graeme Duncan has pointed out, Mill shared with Marx a sense of "autonomy,

activity, a true consciousness and sociality . . . and there are surprising elements of

utopianism, glimpses of a radically different future, in Mill's social vision" (293).[48] Mill

furthermore shared with the anarchists an emphasis on anti-state and cooperative theories.

Thus, though he certainly emphasized the importance of individual freedom, he also

placed importance on the "pursuit of the general benefit of the community" (Mill qtd in

Taylor 79). Indeed, as Quentin Taylor suggests, Mill embraced "a far-reaching 'moral and

social revolution' that would transform a semifeudal England into an egalitarian,

postcapitalist cooperative order" (77). In Mill's later years, he recognized that his views

identified him "under the general designation of Socialist" (*Autobiography* 62). His 1873

*Autobiography*, for instance, he envisioned a new cooperative organization of society that

redistributed wealth and put an end to the wage system:

> We yet looked forward to a time when society will no longer be divided into the
>
> idle and industrious; when the rule that they who do not work shall not eat, will be
>
> applied not to paupers only, but impartially to all; when the division of the
>
> produce of labour, instead of depending, as in so great a degree it now does, on
>
> the accident of birth, will be made by concert on an acknowledged principle of
>
> justice; and when it will no longer be, or be thought to be, impossible for human
>
> beings to exert themselves strenuously in procuring benefits which are not to be

[47] Like Mill, Marx also emphasized the importance of the individual. In *The Germany Ideology* when he noted that class "achieves an independent existence over and against the individuals so that the latter find their conditions of existence predetermined, and hence their position in life and their personal development assigned to them by their class, become subsumed under it" (qtd in Duncan 121). He thus emphasized the individual as central to man's humanity, though class was a determining and vital fact of the present state of the world under capitalism.

[48] For more on the relationship of Marx to Mill, see Graeme Duncan *Marx and Mill* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973

exclusively their own, but to be shared with the society they belong to." (62)

Mill thus advocated "common ownership in the raw material of the globe, and an equal participation in all the benefits of combined labour" (62). While Mill did not offer a description of the means by which these ideals might be achieved, he did emphasize the importance of the "an equivalent change of character . . . in . . . the laboring masses, and in the immense majority of their employers" as essential to such a "social transformation," which he argued would occur only through "education, habit, and the cultivation of the sentiments," thus emphasizing the importance of education and environment in fostering social change (62). He further argued that at present "the deep-rooted selfishness which forms the general character of the existing state of society, is so deeply rooted, only because the whole course of existing institutions tends to foster it," and thus saw "all existing institutions and social arrangements as being . . . merely provisional" (62).[49] According to new liberal L.T. Hobhouse, these "brief exposition of the Socialist ideal given in [Mill's] Autobiography remains perhaps the best summary statement of Liberal Socialism that we possess" (Hobhouse 55). Hobhouse thus recognized the degree to which Mill combined socialist and liberal ideals as he sought social reform.

Like her contemporaries, Caird drew on the ideas of Mill as she formed her thinking about the Woman Question in response to the radical culture of Hampstead in the period. As Angelique Richardson points out, "Mill's ideas on nature, society, and the individual had a formative influence on Caird's thinking" (187). Indeed, Caird, like Mill,

---

[49] For more on Mill's socialism, see Quentin Taylor "John Stuart Mill, A Political Economist: A Reassessment" in *Independent Review* 21.1 (Summer 2016):73-94, and Wendy Sarvasy, "A Reconsideration of the Development and Structure of John Stuart Mill's Socialism" in *The Western Political Quarterly* 38.2 (June 1985): 312-333.

Brooke, and other idealist feminists, drew on the slave analogy, originated by Mary

Wollstonecraft, and well-used at the time.[50] In *The Subjection of Women*, Mill wrote, "I

am far from pretending that wives are in general no better treated than slaves; but no

slave is a slave to the same lengths, and in so full a sense of the word, as a wife is" (56).

Mona Caird cited Mill in her first article "Marriage," published in the Westminster

Review in 1888. In explaining the history of marriage, she suggests, "The woman became

the property of the man, his own right of conquest. Now the wife is his own by right of

law. It is John Stuart Mill . . . who says that woman was the first being who was

enslaved" (242). Caird's subsequent articles and novels reassert this analogy. Early

critical accounts of Caird by Patricia Murphy in *Time is of the Essence: Temporality,*

*Gender and the New Woman* (163), Lisa Surridge in *Bleak Houses: Marital Violence in*

*Victorian Fiction* (192), and by Alexandra Warwick in her introduction to the *Wing of*

*Azrael* (viii) have emphasized that Caird identified Mill's use of this metaphor to gain

authority for her analogous claims, similarly likening women's position under Victorian

marriage law and practice as equivalent to or worse than slavery. Nevertheless, these

critics have overlooked the degree to which Caird, like Mill before her, combined

individualist and collectivist thinking in their quest for wholesale social reform.

       Caird's thinking about individualism and collectivism formed in the late-Victorian

period in the midst of the radical culture of Hampstead. Her ideas about wholesale

---

[50] While Caird identified Mill as the first to use the slave analogy, it was in fact Mary Wollstonecraft who originated this analogy, writing in *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792) "how absurd and tyrannic it is thus to lay down a system of [women's] slavery; or to attempt to educate moral beings by any other rules than those deduced by pure reason" (64). Wollstonecraft went on to write: "if [women] be really capable of acting like rational creatures, let them not be treated like slaves; or, like the brutes who are dependent on the reason of man" (69). Henrietta Müller pointed out in her third issue of the *Women's Penny Paper* that Wollstonecraft was the first to originate this analogy (see my discussion in Chapter III), though Victorian feminists had been reticent to identify publically with her prior to this point, likely due to her perceived sexual profligacy, which may help to explain Caird's identification of the analogy with Mill, and not Wollstonecraft.

feminist reform can be traced in the articles and fiction she wrote in the late 1880s and early 1890s; in particular, her first article in the mainstream periodical press, "Marriage" (*Westminster Review*), her second "Ideal Marriage" (*Westminster Review*)—both of which draw on anarchist and collectivist ideas—and her novel *The Wing of Azrael*, which emphasizes the need for social transformation. Caird, like Brooke, maintained involvement in several clubs and organizations committed to a variety of radical goals, while simultaneously turning to multiple genres to contribute to the feminist consciousness-raising of the late-nineteenth century, advancing her feminist ideals in both non-fiction articles and fictional representations. Like Brooke's, Caird's writings display a particular kind of metaphorical language that slips between dream-life and real life, employing a visionary rhetoric that is characteristic of the anarchist- and socialist-inflected reform writing of this period. In her fiction, Caird depicts how far the present social system is out of harmony with her feminist ideal, and in her articles in the periodical press, she outlines in depth her conception of the ideal principles of social relations, which never sacrifice part of women's freedom for the promise of greater universal human freedom.

Although at various points she prioritized one element of her philosophy over others, for Caird, the women's campaign was a wholesale campaign that touched on all areas of contemporary life—social, political, and economic. Like Emma Brooke's feminism, Caird's too was rooted in an ideal of egalitarian friendship between the sexes, a wholesale refusal to submit to the conventional feminine "duties" of marriage and motherhood dictated by Victorian social norms, the need for collective cooperation in industry to alleviate the problems facing female labourers, and the necessity of a renewed

education system that equally educated men and women. The elements Caird targeted for

social transformation would, she believed, lead both to greater individual freedoms and

broader social equality. In this sense, her writing consistently sets up an idealist feminism

much like Emma Brooke's, rejecting the notion of female self-sacrifice and seeking to

implement a feminist ideal that combined aspects of liberal and socialist ideals along with

individualist and collectivist ones. Although Caird placed a high degree of emphasis on

the importance of individual freedom and limiting the power of the state, in her articles

and fiction, she simultaneously advocates cooperation in industry, and the importance of

fellowship: the need for comradeship among women and among women and men to bring

about an ideal egalitarian future. In her articles and fiction Caird thus advanced a variety

of idealist and politically-engaged feminism that in several respects echoes the feminism

of her female colleagues with whom she lived and worked in Hampstead.

Before turning to my analysis of Caird's writing, I first trace Caird's development

as a writer and thinker through her early biographical relationships and influences, then

by connecting her to the writers and thinkers whom she encountered in and around

Hampstead. I argue here that this kind of biographical and geographical tracing of Caird's

overlapping networks is the kind of analysis that calls into question the assumptions of

conventionally fixed ideological categories. When we examine the fluid influences and

ideas of one idealist feminist like Caird, we are required to take seriously how her actions

and beliefs might represent significant cultural countercurrents; accordingly, tracing her

movements and thinking offers a way to illuminate these underexplored currents of the

feminist history of the fin de siècle period. Placing Caird within her contemporaneous

networks helps illuminate and explain her varied interests in vegetarianism, anti-

vivisection, women's emancipation, and Russian anarcho-communism, and reminds us that imposing a coherent order or intellectual category on a historical period that was neither coherent nor precise does a disservice to those who lived in it.

<u>Background: Mona Caird's Early Influences and move to Hampstead</u>

Mona Caird was born Alice Mona Alison on 24 May 1854 in Ryde on the Isle of Wight to a professional, landowning family. Her father was an engineer and inventor of the vertical steam boiler from Midlothian, and her mother, Matilda Ann Hector, was of German origin, and nineteen when her only child was born. Caird's mother died young. Little is known about Caird's upbringing, though an article in *The Author: A Monthly Magazine for Literary Workers* describes her father as a "Scotchman of sturdy originality of mind" who "revolted against . . . strict religious training" and "threw off all dogma" to became an "uncompromising free-thinker" ("Personal Gossip About Writers" 123-124) This may have had some influence on Caird's burgeoning independent spirit. However, in an interview given to the *Women's Penny Paper*, Caird noted that "the usual idea prevailed" when she was raised "that a girl's only career was matrimony and a life of domesticity whether it suited her or not" ("Interview: Mrs. Mona Caird" 421). Despite her father's revolt against religious tradition, we do not know the degree of her religious upbringing, though we do know that Caird was married in the Church of England. It is also clear that she was familiar with the Calvinist, evangelical tradition, which she references extensively in her writings. In her 1915 novel *The Stones of Sacrifice*, for instance, Caird compares the doctrines of paganism and Christianity, referencing the Calvinist tradition:

How do you expect them to distinguish between the doctrines of Calvinist

Christianity and ancient Druid worship, if you go on like this?" she asked.

The Professor said he didn't see that there was anything to distinguish. (17)

Although it is difficult to know conclusively the extent of her religious training, Caird, like Brooke, rejected the idea of self-sacrificial femininity, rebelling against these cultural and sexual norms.

Caird, unlike several of her feminist contemporaries, did not take advantage of the newly-opened opportunities for higher education at Newton or Girton College. Instead she attributed much of her early feminist beliefs to her "natural" disposition towards revolt, apparent early in her childhood. Despite her "secluded" education (she was likely taught by a governess), her "views [about women's freedom] were pronounced at an early age" (421). In an interview published in *The Women's Penny Paper*, she suggested that

> As a child I rebelled against the current thoughts . . . It was not natural to me ever
>
> to take things as I found them . . . all the influence of my immediate surroundings I
>
> resisted obstinately. ("Interview: Mrs. Mona Caird" 421)

Caird's views on women's freedom found a natural outlet in the burgeoning struggle for women's suffrage, and by 1878, when she was 24, she had already subscribed to the Central Committee of the National Society for Women's Suffrage (NSWS). She also strengthened her views by engaging with the contemporary scientific and social thinkers of her day: she attributed to John Stuart Mill her first real understanding of the truth at the back of her inborn sense and belief in women's freedom, writing that he "was the first to bring these [natural] thoughts and feelings into form by his writing" ("Interview: Mrs. Mona Caird" 421). Caird also attributed to Percy Shelley "a strong influence" on her thinking, as well as "the modern scientific writers" including "Tyndall, Huxley, Herbert

Spencer, and . . . Darwin" (421). [51]

Spencer, Huxley, and Darwin were similarly influential on the radicals living in Hampstead at the time. Edward Pease, for instance, a contemporary of both Caird and Brooke, a member of the Hampstead Historic Society, and later, the Fabian Society's first historian, described the milieu of London in the late 1870s and 1880s as divorced from that of the previous generation, in large part because of the influence of evolutionary thinkers like Spencer and Darwin:

It is nowadays not easy to recollect how wide was the intellectual gulf which separated the young generation of that period from their parents. "The Origin of Species," published in 1859, inaugurated an intellectual revolution such as the world had not known since Luther nailed his Theses to the door of All Saints' Church at Wittenberg. The older folk as a rule refused to accept or to consider the new doctrine . . . The young men of the time I am describing grew up with the new ideas and accepted them as a matter of course. Herbert Spencer, then deemed the greatest of English thinkers, was pointing out in portentous phraseology the enormous significance of Evolution. Professor Huxley, in brilliant essays, was turning to ridicule the simple-minded credulity of Gladstone and his contemporaries. Our parents, who read neither Spencer nor Huxley, lived in an intellectual world which bore no relation to our own; and cut adrift as we were from the intellectual moorings of our upbringings, recognising, as we did, that the older men were useless as guides in religion, in science, in philosophy because they knew not evolution, we also felt instinctively that we could accept nothing on trust from those who still believed that the early chapters of Genesis

---

[51] In addition to her acknowledged influences, Caird engaged in depth with the ideas of Karl Pearson,

accurately described the origin of the universe, and that we had to discover

somewhere for ourselves what were the true principles of the then recently

invented science of sociology. (Pease np)

Caird and other Victorianists like Pease extended 19th-century evolutionary thinking to

the social realm, believing in humanity's ability to direct evolution and effect social

change. Caird similarly claimed these scientific and social thinkers as important

influencers on her ideas, but modulated them with her own feminist beliefs.

Caird's vision of social and cultural transformation developed over the course of the

1870s and 1880s alongside her engagement with the enclave of writers, artists,

bohemians, anarchists, and socialists surrounding her home in Hampstead. Although

Caird was born in Scotland, she spent much of her childhood in a house at Lancaster

Gate, Paddington, London, where her parents moved at some point before her marriage

(Gullette *The Daughers of Danaus* 521). In 1877, at the age of twenty-three, Caird was

married at Christ Church, Paddington, to a wealthy landowner, James Caird.[52] Shortly

after their marriage the couple began living at Leyland, Arkwright Road, Hampstead

(ODNB). Despite the fact that her husband owned a large estate in Scotland, Caird spent

most of her time at her home in London, and only a small portion of the year at his estate.

In 1885, Caird was still residing in Hampstead, but at 29 Broadhurst Gardens, South

Hampstead (Men and Women's Club Address Book). She remained there for the duration

of her married adult life, only moving locations in the early twentieth century, after her

husband's death.

---

[52] Her parents lived in Paddington during this time, near Arkwright Gate and the Church at which she was married (Gullette 521).

Hampstead and Caird's Networks

My attention here is on one portion of what we might think of as the dense and overlapping networks in which Caird lived, moved, and worked: the one connected to the metropolitan borough of Hampstead, London, and the links that spiral outwards from Caird's home in Hampstead to other groups and organizations. While sketching out all the networks rooted in Hampstead would be beyond the scope of this chapter, I want to draw out a few key threads of Caird's connection to them; in particular, the socialist, feminist, and anarchist elements that formed the core of Hampstead's radical culture in the late 1870s and 1880s.

Hampstead was a space, both literal and figurative, that facilitated connections and cooperation, fissures and frictions, as the reformers of the late-nineteenth century formed and attempted to implement their ideals. In the late 1870s and early 1880s, Hampstead became a central node for a network of radical writers, artists, and thinkers living and circulating in London. A rail station on the Heath was opened in the 1860s, and regular bus service began in the 1870s, opening the suburb to an infusion of radical, bohemian influences when these individuals began to make Hampstead their home. At the same time, residents easily maintained connections to various clubs, organizations, and landmarks in central London, including the British Museum, which was a haven for female writers in the 1880s.[53] For the women writers and activists living in this suburb, the male-dominated clubs, organizations, and salons of the area helped shape their thinking as they discussed, debated, and attempted to build what promised to be an

---

[53] For more on the British Library and the women writers who worked there, see Susan David Bernstein *Roomscape: Women Writers in the British Museum from George Eliot to Virginia Woolf,* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013.

egalitarian community rooted in an ethical or moral ideal.

Mona Caird lived less than a kilometre away from socialist-feminist Emma Brooke at 34 Downshire Hill, and socialist-eugenicisit Karl Pearson at Christ Church Cottage, and just a stone's throw from Beatrice and Sidney Webb, at 1 Netherhill Gardens. She also lived close to Fabian socialist and mystic Frank Podmore, who lived on Well Walk.[54] As I discuss in Chapter I, feminist-anarchist Charlotte Wilson lived in Hampstead from the late-1870s, at Wyldes, and formed a central node in the network of socialists and anarchists meeting there. In 1885, socialist-feminist Olive Schreiner stayed at 30 Downshire Hill, just a few houses down from Emma Brooke (Olive Schreiner to Havelock Ellis, 9 May 1885).[55] Other individuals living or staying in Hampstead in the 1880s included early socialists Henry Hyndman,[56] Ernest Belfort Bax,[57] socialist and

---

[54] Frank and Eleanor Podmore's home on Well Walk was another central node in the network of Hampstead radicals, but the conversations there tended towards a mystic brand of socialism more inflected by the Fellowship of the New Life, of which Frank Podmore was a founder. The early members of Podmore's Society for Psychical Research believed "they were exploring new worlds opened by modern science and disregarding irrational Christian assumptions about the afterlife" (Hinely 92). Hypnoticism at Well Walk and anarchism at Charlotte Wilson's home at Wyldes were both part of the Hampstead culture of radicalism (41). Caird may have met Frank Podmore at the Men and Women's Club on 9 May 1887 or may have known him before they both attended the same meeting. Either way, she was vigorously defended by him when Pearson accused her of plagiarizing his work in her "Marriage" articles in the periodical press (see Podmore to Pearson 20 August 1888).

[55] While in London, Schreiner often travelled to Hampstead to recover from the busyness of London and to write (Olive Schreiner to Havelock Ellis, 28 April 1885, Harry Ransom Research Center, University of Texas at Austin, Olive Schreiner Letters Project transcription). On 12 August 1885, for instance, Olive Schreiner wrote to Havelock Ellis inviting him to spend the day on the Heath at Hampstead as respite from his "heart weary" fatigue: "When it is a fine warm day & I am stronger we must go for the whole day to Hampstead Heath" (Olive Schreiner to Havelock Ellis, 12 August 1885, Line 5, 10-11). She also visited various friends in Hampstead. In October 1885, for instance, she wrote to Karl Pearson, asking about Charlotte Wilson, who lived just off the Heath in a rambling cottage: "I think I would like to see Mrs Wilson very much. Could you give me her address I often go up to Hampstead to rest & might go to see her" (Olive Schreiner to Karl Pearson, 17 October 1885, Lines 16-18). Schreiner returned to live at Hampstead after the turn of the century, when she moved to Alexi, 31 The Park, Hampstead. She stayed for at least a year. At this point, she wrote of Hampstead that it "is quite on the out skirts close to Golder's Green station—quiet country & yet I can easily get into London by bus. But I seldom want to" (Olive Schreiner to Betty Molteno, 17 March 1916, Lines 19-21).

[56] Henry Hyndman lived at 13 Well Walk, Hampstead, London. He was a socialist who joined the Social Democratic Federation (SDF) at its inception, and oversaw its split into the SDF and the Socialist League. He also visited Marx on the outskirts of Hampstead in the 1880s, and was a member of the Hampstead Historic Society. His influences include Henry Fawcett, Auguste Comte, JS Mill, and Marx. The early

literary critic Anne Gilchrist,[58] political exiles like Russian anarchist and nihilist Peter

Kropotkin (whom Wilson brought to London, and whom Caird cited in her 1931 novel

*The Great Wave*),[59] and Mathilde Blind, the daughter of German political exiles and Mona

Caird's close friend.[60] Anarchist Charles Malato also lived in Hampstead. Closer to the

twentieth century, Dr. Richard Garnett, [61] Keeper of Printed Books at the British Museum,

SDF, like the early Fabian Society, included individuals who held a range of political views, including revolutionaries and reformers like Morris and Hyndman, as well as several members who would become anarchists: Joseph Lane, Charles Mowbray, and John Turner. The Socialist League, which split from the SDF in 1884, became an anarchist group, rejecting the parliamentarianism of Hyndman and his nationalist positions. Hyndman attended the 8 February 1886 Trafalgar Square riot, and the London dock strike in summer 1889. In 1916, he and supporters left the anti-war British Socialist Party to form the National Socialist Party (ODNB).

[57] Ernest Belfort Bax was a Marxist theoretician and activist. He was a member of the Hampstead Historic Club, the Social Democratic Federation, and later the Socialist League, with Morris and Hyndman. Unlike many of his male colleagues, Bax was vocally anti-women, believing that prevailing moral and legal conventions permitted women to dominate men (ODNB). (See *The Legal Subjection of Men* 1896).

[58] Anne Gilchrist, who had moved to 12 Well Road in the 1860s, was an essayist, critic, and translator. She was good friends with William Michael Rossetti and his sister Christina Rossetti, and best known for her effusive defense of Walt Whitman's poetry in *The Radical*, titled "An Englishwoman's estimate of Walt Whitman (from late letters by an English lady to W.M. Rossetti)." She was largely responsible for popularizing Walt Whitman in England in the 1870s, described as "a major contributor to the success of Whitman's career" (Alcaro 16). Edward Carpenter visited her house at 12 Well Road in Hampstead in the early 1880s. Her daughter, Grace Gilchrist, also a Fabian, was well-known to Emma Brooke and friends with Charlotte Wilson, corresponded with George Bernard Shaw, and was a member of the Fabian Society (Alcaro 267-8). In the spring of 1888, Grace had an "almost-romance" with Shaw, which abruptly ended when Emma Brooke took it upon herself to intervene with the "philanderer" (he was then engaging five other young women in affairs and flirtations), but Shaw had apparently intended to break off the relationship before Brooke's involvement (Alcaro 267-8).

[59] Kropotkin lived at 55 Frognal, Hampstead, in 1893 (Romaniuk 158).

[60] Mathilde Blind lived at a range of addresses in Hampstead and on its fringes, including St. John's Wood, Primrose Hill, and Kentish Town. As a child, she went to school in South Hampstead (Helen C. Black 150), and lived with her mother and step-father, Friederike Ettlinger and Karl Blind, at 2 Adelaide Road, St. John's Wood (Diedrick 10). In July 1871, she moved to 3 Porteus Road, Paddington (Diedrick 82). By 1873, she was living just a few blocks away from her parents at Eaton House, Acacia Road (Diedrick 82). Her intimate friendship with Ford Madox Brown meant that she often travelled back and forth from Manchester, living within steps of him and his wife Emma in both cities at various times (Diedrick 182). In 1881, Madox Brown arranged housing for her at York Place, Cheetham Hill, near his lodging with Emma; in 1883, she was at Caroline House, Hampstead, near the Madox Brown's again (Diedrick 182); in 1887, she was at 27 Manchester Street, Manchester Square (behind Oxford Street) (See Vadillo 121, 125), and in 1889 was again close to the Madox Browns at 1 St Edmund's Terrace. In July 1891, she was living alone, again in Hampstead, at 3 Holly Bush (Diedrick 226). In 1894 and 1895 she lived with her friends Ludwig and Frida Mond (German-Jewish immigrants to London, like Blind herself), at "The Poplars," their mansion at 20 Avenue Road, St. John's Wood (Diedrick 243).

[61] Prior to 1890, the Garnetts lived at 3, St Edmund's Terrace, in Primrose Hill. Living close to them at the time were Ford Maddox Brown and William Rossetti (qtd in Johnson *Tea and Anarchy* 6). In 1890, they moved into residence at the British Library when Dr. Richard Garnett became head librarian (Keeper of Printed Books) at the British Museum, and it was there his adult son Edward met Constance Black. She would marry Edward in 1889 (Bernstein *Roomscape* 59-60). Constance, later well-known for her English,

would move to Hampstead, at 27 Tanza Road, where he lived close to his friends, the

Madox Browns and Rossettis.[62]

Hampstead has not been fully recognized as a hotbed of radical intellectual, literary,

or political activity, unlike its more famous sister in Camden, Bloomsbury.[63] However, as

I discuss in Chapter I, in the 1870s and 1880s, Hampstead residents were deeply invested

---

translations of Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, and Chekhov, was a frequent visitor at the British Library and a Librarian herself. Her sister was Clementina Black. Both sisters were members of the Original Men and Women's Club, attended meetings of the Fabian Society, and were heavily involved with establishing and coordinating female trade unions on behalf of poor female labourers. The organizing activity was primarily Clementina's pursuit, but Constance raised awareness for the conditions of East End workers by contributing to Charles Booth's sociological investigation, later published as *Life and Labour of the People in London*. Constance Black Garnett became interested in studying Russian after she met Sergei Stepniak at the British Library the late 1880s. They met through Dr. Richard Garnett, her father-in-law, for whom it was common to bring home literary acquaintances from the Library. For Black Garnett, meeting Stepniak was "one of the most important events of my life" (qtd in Bernstein Roomscape 61). Under his influence, she began studying Russian, and Stepniak "encouraged her to pursue her translations, and it was due to him that she began to have a sense of vocation to translate Russian literature" (Garnett 86 Roomscape 61). The home of Dr. Richard Garnett was intimately familiar with the ideas of anarchism not just through their acquaintance with Stepniak, but also through their connections with the Rossettis, Kropotkin, and the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom. For more on the radical culture surrounding the Garnetts in the 1890s, including letters detailing the anarchist ideas circulating in the period, see Barry C. Johnson, *Tea and Anarchy! The Bloomsbury Diary of Olive Garnett 1890-1893*, Bartletts Press, 1989). Olive Garnett was friends with Helen and Olivia Rossetti, nieces of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Ford Madox Brown, and Christina Rossetti (and the daughters of William Michael Rossetti), who began their anarcho-communist journal "The Torch" after reading Kropotkin's "Appeal to the Young" in 1891. The journal, which was in circulation from 1894-1896, first commenced printing in the basement of their home at St Edmund's Terrace, just steps away from where Mathilde Blind was staying in 1889. Barely teenagers when they began the journal, their anarchism substantially shifted over the course of their lives, and their pseudonymously authored *A Girl Among the Anarchists* is a conservative re-evaluation of their youthful zeal.

[62] Other notable individuals living in Hampstead in the 1880s included author Sir Walter Besant at 18 Frognal Gardens (brother-in-law to Annie Besant); illustrator, cartoonist, and novelist George Du Maurier at 27 Church Row, Hampstead, was notable for his *Punch* cartoons depicting the "new woman" in a series of patronizing drawings (ODNB); book illustrator and artist Kate Greenaway at 39 Frognal; preservationist and social reformer Octavia Hill; Catherine Ray, author, social reformer, and translator of Henrik Ibsen's *The Emperor and Galilean*, at a time when Ibsen was not well-known in London (she was also a member of the Primrose league and was committed to "advance the cause of *Woman*"); rational dress advocate Laura Ormiston Chant at 13 Canfield Gardens, South Hampstead, and Martina Bergman Österberg, promoter of women's exercise and advancement. In 1885 Österberg established the Hampstead Physical Training College for women at 1 Broadhurst Gardens, which trained women into the position of gymnastic teacher.

[63] The Borough of Camden was established in 1964. Prior to the development of the Camden borough, Hampstead was its own metropolitan borough (1899-1964), consisting of Primrose Hill, Hampstead, Belsize Park, West Hampstead, South Hampstead, much of Hampstead Heath and part of Kilburn and Cricklewood. It officially became part of the County of London in 1889. Prior to 1889, it consisted of the civil parish of St. John, Hampstead, Middlesex. Its boundaries were a continuation of existing boundaries that had existed under the civil parish. When the vestry became its own borough, the parish vestry was elevated to a borough council.

in debating social theories of history and economics and working to implement the ideas

they had read, discussed, and championed. Indeed, it was in Hampstead that Emma

Brooke, Charlotte Wilson, and Sidney Webb began to study Karl Marx in the early

1880s, in what would later be called the Hampstead Historic Society. Members and

associates included Fabian Socialists,[64] but also Russian political figures and anarchists,[65]

literary and artistic figures,[66] as well as scientists of sex and eugenics[67]—nearly all of

whom lived and worked at or close to Hampstead. When the Hampstead Historic group

voted to dissolve in 1888, most members had by that point become more involved with

the Hampstead Branch of the Fabian Society. Others moved into anarchist advocacy,

such as Charlotte Wilson (though she maintained her membership in the Fabian Society).

Others still become Theosophists and spiritualists, like Annie Besant. But the

significance of this organization in relation to Caird is the particular way in which it drew

people from a wide range of political and ideological affiliations. Although the

Hampstead Historic Society did indeed merge with the Fabian Society later in 1888, this

speaks more to the fluidity of Fabianism itself—which remained open to both anarchism

and socialism until well into the 1890s—than it speaks to what we might think of as the

de-radicalization of the individuals who were part of it.

Although there is no evidence to suggest Caird attended meetings of the Hampstead

---

[64] Fabian Socialists involved with the Hampstead Historic included Sidney Webb, George Bernard Shaw, Graham Wallas, Sydney Olivier, and Annie Besant.
[65] These included figures like Sergei Stepniak and Peter Kropotkin. Sergey Mikhailovich Kravchinksy, who called himself either Sergei or Sergius Stepniak (sometimes spelled Stepnyak), lived just outside Hampstead, in St. John's Wood (near Regent Park and the neighbourhood of Primrose Hill), at 13 Grove Gardens. For a map of this area in the 1880s and 1890s, see Ana Parejo Vadillo *Women Poets and Urban Aestheticism: Passengers of Modernity*, 121). Stepniak moved to England in 1884 after fleeing from Russia. For more on Stepniak, see B. Hollingsworth "The Society of Friends of Russian Freedom: English Liberals and Russian Socialists, 1890-1917."
[66] These included figures like Olive Schreiner, William Morris, and Edith Nesbit.
[67] Havelock Ellis and Karl Pearson.

Historic Society, she was directly connected to several of its socialist, feminist, and

anarchist members through several other clubs and organizations, including the Men and

Women's Club, discussed at length in Chapter I. In September 1885, when the Men and

Women's Club was soliciting members, Maria Sharpe (later Pearson), wrote to R.J.

Parker about possible guest members, and Mona Caird's name was raised as a possibility,

apparently suggested by Olive Schreiner. Although it is unknown exactly where Caird

met Olive Schreiner—perhaps at the Pioneer Club (Zhang 9-10), at the British Museum,

or through one of their many mutual acquaintances[68]—Schreiner was clearly familiar

with Caird's ideas, which led Schreiner to mistake Brooke's work for Caird's. According

to Sharpe, Schreiner had said that Caird was "not at all sympathetic to her and a little

artificial" (Sharpe to Robert J. Parker 30 September 1885), and Elizabeth Cobb, Maria

Sharp Pearson's sister, Pearson's friend and one of the founding members of the club, had

called Caird "a narrow one sided woman violently prejudiced against men, but as one

clever & likely to add life & interest to our discussion" (Sharpe to Parker 30 September

1885).[69] Whatever the feelings of Sharpe, Cobb, and Schreiner, in any event, Caird was

---

[68] Elizabeth Sharp's biography reports that she "met many common friends and interesting people of note" including Olive Schreiner, though she does not report where or through whom she came to know Schreiner. Caird may have first encountered Schreiner through her connection to Sharp, though there are a number of different circles in which the two may have met. By 1886, the two were already acquainted, and would go on to both participate in the Men and Women's Club in 1888, and the Women Writer's Dinner Club by 1893 (of which Mathilde Blind was president) and other social organizations (Diedrick 144).

[69] These quotations have been mistakenly attributed to Schreiner herself. In fact, they are the words of Maria Sharpe (later Pearson), who wrote a letter to Robert J. Parker attributing these feelings to either Olive Schreiner, Agnes Jones, or Elizabeth Cobb (Maria's sister). Sharpe writes: "Of Mrs Caird I have asked Miss Schreiner if she would wish to [unreadable] Miss Jones to propose her as a guest, but even if she does I suppose there is no need to ask her. She wrote to Mrs. Cobb of her I know [as] not at all sympathetic to her and a little artificial. She spoke to me of Mrs Caird as a narrow one sided woman violently prejudiced against men, but as one clever and likely to add life and interest to our discussion" (Sharpe to Parker 30 September 1885). The vague pronoun "she" makes it unclear to whom Sharpe is attributing these feelings, though I have surmised that the first quotation was referring to Schreiner and the last to Cobb. Regardless of who these feelings were attributed to, Maria Sharpe was clearly filtering Caird through her own experience. In the same letter, for instance, Sharpe goes on to "confess [her] personal feeling about all these people," saying: "I [am] inclined to hate half of them" (Sharpe to Parker 30 September 1885). For more on

invited to at least one meeting as a guest, attending on 9 May 1887, two years later.[70]

Although she only attended this single meeting of the Club, she kept abreast of its discussions and would engage in depth with the members' ideas as she was preparing her popular and controversial article "Marriage" for the *Westminster Review* (August 1888).

---

Agnes Jones, see Ruth Brandon *The New Women and the Old Men: Love, Sex and the Woman Question*. London: Flamingo, 1990, and Phyllis Grosskurth *Havelock Ellis: A Biography* London: Allen Lane, 1980.
[70] At this meeting, the Club examined the topic of Birth Control, and two papers were read: Kate Mills's anonymous paper "Checks to Population" (read by Maria Sharpe), and Henrietta Müller's "The Limitation of the Family" (Men and Women's Club Notebook). Mills's "Checks to Population" suggested that preventative checks, or birth control, would have an adverse effect on society because it would promote an excess of sexual activity. She considered this "excess," following Dr. James Paget, to have a "degenerating effect" on the fitness of the English race, resulting in "unwelcome and sickly progeny" who themselves may have "a predisposition to sexual excess" (M&W Club notebook). As an alternative, Mills argued in favour of sexual restraint for both men and women: "a life of chastity with recognition of the law that sexual intercourse exists among human beings, as among animals, for procreation only" (M&W Club notebook). Only this, she suggested, "will bring with it an emancipated womanhood, and well-born children" (M&W Club notebook). The discussion that followed both papers touched immediately the question of the sexual act itself, and "whether [it] was harmful or beneficial to heath" (M&W Club notebook). Several male club members, including Rhyle, R.J. Parker, and Pearson, thought sexual activity healthy if "exercised in moderation," though they did not consider it "necessary" (M&W Club notebook). The discussion then turned to women's sexual desire as compared with men's. Likely influenced by Emma Brooke's contention in 1885 that women's sexual desire was at least equal to men's, Karl Pearson argued that "the natural impulse in women [is] on a par with that of men" and Lina Eckenstein agreed, suggesting that "for women exercise of the sexual function is as necessary as for men" (M&W Club notebook). Karl Pearson then brought the discussion back to eugenics, suggesting that the "scientific question is whether the use of checks would end in the preservation of the fittest men and women" (M&W Club notebook). At this point, Caird spoke up to challenge the idea that the doctrine of the survival of the fittest pertained to the present-day class struggle, arguing instead that "the struggle of the present day does not bring out the fittest" (M&W Club notebook). She was the only one to voice this opinion. Pearson suggested in contrast that "our superiority over our ancestors" was accounted for only through "the social struggle," and RJ Parker agreed, saying, "that is the argument of Darwin and Spencer" (M&W Club notebook). Lina Eckenstein also agreed with Pearson, suggesting, as an example, that "the instinct to work is only developed through competition" (M&W Club notebook). The group then moved on to discuss the desirability of limiting births, both within marriage and outside it. Most agreed that limiting births outside marriage was highly desirable, in order to limit "the social slur cast upon . . . the mother of an illegitimate child" and to "prevent the unhealthy births of unfortunate children" (M&W Club notebook), but on the question of limiting births within marriage, Club Members were divided. Henrietta Müller and Mona Caird both expressed their support for preventative checks both within and outside of marriage. Caird suggested that "by limitation of population pressure of numbers would be relieved and social misery lessened" (M&W Club notebook), while Müller argued that a marriage that brought no children could nevertheless still produce positive social change. However, R.J. Parker disagreed, contending, "such people [who abstain from sexual intercourse or use preventative checks] leave no children to inherit their virtues" (M&W Club notebook). Müller countered, arguing, "That is the man's ideal of propagation, the woman knows that they would have many spiritual children" (M&W Club notebook). The meeting was then brought to a close. In many respects Müller's argument here follows Brooke's Lamarckian-inflected thinking about the importance of passing on moral traits, socially learned, and not just physical genetic characteristics. According to several of the women involved in the Men and Women's Club, passing on spiritual ideals could have an imperative influence on humanity, not merely through biological reproduction, but through the propagation of ethical ideals.

In many respects Caird echoes the feminist ideas voiced by Müller, Brooke, Wilson and the other women involved with the club, and their responses to Pearson and the male club members mirror her own. Indeed, to Maria Sharpe, as well as other club members:

> The correspondence in *The Daily Telegraph* . . . on "Is Marriage a Failure?" and Mrs. Caird's article in *The Westminster Review* . . . seemed in a way connected with our club because Mrs Caird's first article was evidently founded on Mr. Pearson's first woman articles in *The Ethic of Freethought*. (Sharpe, Autobiographical History np)

Karl Pearson's *The Ethic of Freethought* had appeared early in 1888, publishing in revised form most of the papers he had written for the Men and Women's Club, which had been printed for private circulation over the course of the previous three years.[71] Caird had cited the collection of essays for historical evidence and to dispute its conclusions.[72] Although neither Sharpe nor Stanton mention the influence of the female club members on Caird's article, it is important to note that Caird had also encountered these socialist-feminist women's ideas, both within the context of the club and outside it, including works by Müller, Schreiner, and club visitor Jane Hume Clapperton. Caird's ideas were thus built in the context of the men and women members of the club, many of whom lived and worked in Hampstead, and who had strong links with the socialism that developed there. Indeed, Caird quoted two Men and Women's Club associates and socialists in her first article in the *Westminster Review*: Not just Pearson, but also

---

[71] It is likely that Caird was reading the published version of Pearson's *The Ethic of Freethought,* which was based on the privately printed papers he presented to the Men and Women's Club, and revised and published in 1888, though it is also possible that she may have also read the unpublished versions of the papers.

[72] This influence is corroborated by a report by American suffragist Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who visited Caird in February 1888. Stanton wrote that Caird was "then reading Karl Pearson's lectures on 'Woman,' and expounding her views on marriage, which she afterward gave to the *Westminster Review* and stirred the press to white heat both in England and America" (Stanton *Eighty Years and More* 409).

Clapperton's *Scientific Meliorism*, a substantial work of socialist theory outlining the principles of evolutionary eugenics from a feminist perspective.[73]

In addition to the direct connections between Caird and the socialists who lived near her in her home in Hampstead, there are several socialists and anarchists one degree removed from Caird, connected through mutual friends, organizations, and individuals, who help to explain her multifaceted thinking, and the inflection of her feminist ideals. Although Caird's social network is not well-established, it is known that she was close friends both with Mathilde Blind, and with writers William and Elizabeth A. Sharp, who lived in Hampstead very near to Caird. The Sharps and Caird affectionately referred to the Sharp's home as Wescam, after their three names. In a memoir of William's life, Elizabeth describes Caird as a childhood friend with whom she maintained "many tastes and interests in common, not the least being all questions relating to women" (Sharp 25). When Elizabeth became engaged to William, it was to her "great satisfaction" that he became good friends with Caird, and she was happy to report: "out of the meeting . . . there grew deeply attached friendships that lasted throughout his life" (Sharp 25). Elizabeth described Wescam as a hive of intellectual and radical activity, and listed her most frequent visitors as feminists, socialists, anarchists, literary critics, and writers, including:

> Mrs Mona Caird, the eager champion of women long before the movement passed
> into the militant hands of the suffragettes; Walter Pater, during his Oxford vacation
> . . . Dr. [Richard] and Mrs. Garnett; John M. Robinson, who was living the "simple

---

[73] Clapperton had sent a copy of her book *Scientific Meliorism* to the Club's library in May 1888 (Clapperton to Sharpe 15 May 1888). It is possible Caird acquired the book through the club's "infant library," as Clapperton referred to it, though the book circulated widely among the reformers of the period after it was published in 1885 and there are several channels by which she may have encountered it.

life" of a socialist in rooms close by; . . . [and] Mathilde Blind—poetess novelist.

(Sharp 140-141)

She later mentions several "pleasant literary households that gave a welcome to us,"

including those of:

> Mr. and Mrs. Craik, Mr. and Mrs. George Robinson . . . Mr. and Mrs. Francillion,
>
> of Mrs. Augusta Webster, and of Dr. and Mrs. Garnett. In these and other houses
>
> we met many common friends and interesting people of note; most frequently,
>
> among others, Mr. Walter Pater, Mr. Robert Browning, . . . Mr. and Mrs. Ford
>
> Madox Brown, Mr. and Mrs. William Rossetti, Mr. and Mrs. William Morris . . .
>
> Miss Mathilde Blind, Miss Olive Schreiner, . . . Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Wilde, and
>
> Mrs. Lynn Linton. (103)

Sharp also included anarchist Sergei Stepniak among those she visited on occasion at his

home at 13 Grove Gardens. One can wonder if Caird accompanied Sharp on her visits to

Stepniak, or whether Caird met him at the home of Blind, whose parents were themselves

political exiles. In the late 1880s and early 1890s, Stepniak had become somewhat of a

sensation among the radical crowd in Hampstead. This was in large part due to the

organization which Charlotte Wilson founded, the Society of Friends of Russia, which

(with the help of Emma Brooke) organized public meetings intended to drum up support

for Stepniak's cause in London. [74] After this event in the mid-1880s, the cause of Russian

---

[74] The Society of Friends of Russia was the precursor to the "Society of Friends of Russian Freedom"
which formed five years later. For the organization of these meetings in London, see Brooke to Pearson 2
December 1885 and 17 December 1885, and Wilson to Pearson 28 July 1885 and 8 August 1885). At least
three meetings were held, two in August 1885 (one on 7 August 1885), and another in October. Wilson
tried to arrange the October meeting at the rooms of Henrietta Müller in London, but they were already let
(see Müller to Pearson 8 October 1885). The society ceased meeting after just a few months, largely
because Stepniak had decided the timing was not right for advancing his cause (Hinely 108). Shaw later
wrote that Stepniak felt that "the effusive rallyings round him of the little handful of toy revolutionists who
called themselves revolutionary "Social-Democrats," Anarchists, Fellows of the New Life, and so on . . .

Freedom became a popular topic in many circles in Hampstead and beyond. In her

memoir, American feminist Elizabeth Cady Stanton describes visiting Mona Caird at her

home in Hampstead in the late-1880s, and the paragraph describing this visit is

bookended with description of Stanton's visit first to Stepniak and then to Kropotkin.

We can further infer the influence of Stepniak, Kropotkin and other Russian

Nihilists in Caird's Introduction to "Memoirs of a Female Nihilist," [75] by Russian

anarchist Sophie Wassilieff, published in *The Idler* in May 1893 (430-434). In addition to

writing the introduction, Caird herself solicited the material, and may have recorded,

edited, or revised Wassilieff's words. Caird wrote that "the idea of writing her story did

not emanate from [Wassilieff]" (433), and says it was her "privilege" to "hea[r]from her

own lips all [Wassilieff] relates in this series of papers" (431), especially to "hear her tell

the tale in her own words" (433). Caird explained that she herself "had always taken a

strong interest in the political movements in Russia and in the Slavonic races," after

which she expounds on the evils of autocracy and the abuses of power by the

Government and the Church in Russia (431). That this memoir is hardly known and

infrequently mentioned in Caird scholarship might have something to do with the fact

that Caird has been so squarely understood as a capital L liberal feminist. [76]

---

were likely to do his cause a great deal of harm and no good whatever." Timing aside, Stepniak himself wrote that he felt "these enthusiasts and dreamers were men and women after his own heart" (*Tomorrow: A Monthly Review* 2 (February 1896): 101-3). Stepniak, like Caird, also attended a meeting of Men and Women's Club in November 1886 (Sharpe, "Autobiographical History of the Men and Women's Club"). He also exchanged letters with Karl Pearson in 1885.

[75] According to Caird's introduction, Wassilieff "insisted on styling the more moderate party to which she belongs" as "Revolutionists," and not "Nihilists" (432). Nevertheless, the title of the article remained "Memoirs of a Female Nihilist," perhaps an editorial decision made by Caird or by the editor of *The Idler* since in "Western Europe [it was frequently] call[ed] the Nihilistic Movement" (435).

[76] The appearance of this work in *The Idler* met the notice of mainstream and fringe publications. In the *Review of Reviews,* the anonymous author announced her new publication, writing, "that Mrs. Caird sympathises with the Nihilists goes without saying; she is the priestess of revolt, and sympathises with revolters everywhere" ("Mrs. Mona Caird in a New Character" 519). The nihilist journal *Free Russia*, the monthly newsletter of the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom, also gave notice of Caird's publication,

Sharp's memoir reveals a network of radicals congregating both in Hampstead and outside its verdant Heath, and Caird as a key member of this circle. Not only did Caird host the Sharps at her home, but she also visited them at their cottage, and even travelled abroad to Rome with Elizabeth. Elizabeth's diary recalls meeting with Caird, Mathilde Blind, Frank Rinder, and Ernest Rhys on a Sunday, and then the next day meeting again with Caird, Blind, Lillian Egmont Hake, W. Earl Hodgson, and "Miss Shedlock." Hampstead clearly afforded Caird an opportunity to capitalize on the value of community, maintaining and sustaining friendships both within and outside its borders, and shaping her response to the Woman Question in the late 1880s.

Caird's other known friend was Mathilde Blind, a mutual friend of hers and the Sharps, who similarly adopted a variety of idealistic and politically-engaged feminism in Hampstead in response to the radical community living there. Blind had moved just south of Hampstead with her parents in the fall of 1852, in St. John's Wood, after the suppression of the revolutionary movement in Germany. She later lived in Hampstead both alone and with Ford Madox Brown and his family. Under the influence of the radical, intellectual community of political exiles who gathered in and around her childhood home, Blind penned poetry, fiction, essays and biography concerned with women, social class, evolutionary theory, and the religion of humanity. According to Dr. Richard Garnett, her long-time friend and literary advisor, "from the age of about five-and-twenty onwards the question of raising the status of women occupied a large share in Mathilde's thoughts" (qtd in *Dictionary of Literary Biography 199*: 31). Blind's writing

---

writing "Caird "has shown us before powerfully enough the influence on the character of women of the false ideal of self-sacrifice for its own sake. This makes her a fitting person to introduce to us a character whose self-sacrifice is the inevitable outcome of devotion to a cause—the cause of the Russian people" ("Bibliography" *Free Russia* 4.6 (1 June 1893): 87).

has come under renewed attention since the publication of Isobel Armstrong's *Victorian Poetry: Poetry, Poetics, and Politics* in 1993 and more recently come to prominence with her first biography by James Diedrick in 2016. Diedrick describes Blind as a socialist whose "career coincided with the revival of socialist internationalism in Britain, Europe, the Americas, and Australasia" and whose poems "express a kind of apocalyptic socialism" (3). Explaining her mixing of both liberal and socialist ideals, Diedrick writes that while Blind "supported the formation of independent national states . . . and later Home Rule, she was also one of those who looked towards an altogether different future" (5). In defining Blind's socialism, Diedrick draws on Regenia Gagnier's description of the late-Victorian who "perceived no conflict between individualism and the social state" and who easily sees socialism as compatible with individualism (5). Caird similarly combined individualist and socialist ideas, looking forward to a radically different future. Blind interacted with freethinkers and radicals who frequented her home, including Guiseppe Mazzini, an Italian revolutionary, French socialist Louis Blanc, and Karl Marx.[77] Her writing and thinking was also closely connected to aesthetes like Richard Garnett, William Morris, William Michael Rossetti, whose work she reviewed for the *Westminster Review*,[78] and Ford Madox Brown. Madox Brown became her friend and mentor in the early 1870s after she lectured and then published a critique on William Michael Rossetti's edition of *The Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, and she

---

[77] Blind's stepfather Karl Blind met Louis Blanc and Karl Marx in Paris after May 1849, where he was sent as an envoy of the Baden provisional government. Louis Blanc was then a member of the provisional government of France, and Karl Marx was supporting the revolution. Blind met both Marx and Blanc when all three were reunited after they were granted political asylum in London. Blind and Marx, along with other German expatriates, established the Committee of Support for German Political Refugees in London in September 1849 (Diedrick 7). In October 1851 Marx was living at 28 Dean Street, Soho, but by 1875, he was living at 41 Maitland Park Road, on the outskirts of St John's Wood, Hampstead, and Kentish Town, within walking distance of Hampstead Heath (Hunt 187, Pareja Vadillo 120).

[78] This article, "Shelley," was a critique of Rossetti's edition of *The Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley*. Mathilde Blind published this article anonymously, though her authorship of it was well-known.

subsequently lived with him and his second wife Emma in Manchester and Hampstead.[79]

Blind was the subject of several etchings and paintings by Madox Brown during this

time, and was also painted by Madox Brown's daughter Lucy Madox Brown Rossetti in

1872. The network of artists, thinkers, and writers surrounding Madox Brown and his

circle was tightly interleaved: Blind had met Richard Garnett through Madox Brown, and

frequently attended salons at the homes of Garnett, Madox Brown, and the Rossetti's.

She also visited anarchist Charlotte Wilson at her home Wyldes, on Hampstead Heath.

Like her aesthete colleagues, Blind was influenced by the Romantic Poets Wordsworth,

Coleridge, and especially Percy B. Shelley, who was the focus of her first public lectures,

which she then published as a review essay in the *Westminster Review.* In her 1870 essay

on Rossetti's edition of Shelley, Blind writes of the importance of moral conviction,

suggesting that tragic dramas such as *The Divine Comedy* and *Paradise Lost* would not

exist without such conviction, for they have their "foundations laid in the ethical

convictions of mankind" (86).  In the 1880s, Blind was a founding member of the Shelley

Society with W.M. Rossetti, Richard Garnett, and F.J.  Furnivall, and she attended

meetings alongside several members of the early Fabian Society, including the Reverend

Stopford Brooke and George Bernard Shaw (Diedrick 269, "The Inaugural Address to the

Shelley Society" 1-22).

Like the Men and Women's Club, the Shelley Society was a meeting ground for

socialists, feminists, anarchists, aesthetes, writers, and thinkers, many of whom lived and

worked in Hampstead. The popular society[80] was inaugurated on 10 March 1886 with the

---

[79] In Manchester in the 1880s, Blind observed factory conditions firsthand and formed allegiances with socialists including Charles Rowley and Eleanor Marx (Diedrick 23).

[80] Over 500 people attended the inaugural meeting, and by June 1886, the Society had 144 full-fledged members ("Notebook of the Shelley Society" 8). By January 1887 membership rose to 400. These

purpose of "throwing light on the poet's personality and his work," by discussing

Shelley's ideas, staging plays, republishing his under-published works, and,

> above all, to do something to further the objects of Shelley's life and work, and
>
> perhaps to better understand and love a genius which was ignored and abused in his
>
> own time, but which had risen from the grave into which the critics had trampled it
>
> to live in the hearts of men. (*Notebook of the Shelley Society* 1888: 1-2)

In 1888 lecture topics included Shelley's faith, his views of women, and his socialism,

with lectures on "Shelley's Women" by Blind herself, "On Shelley's Socialism" by

Edward Aveling and Eleanor Marx, and "On Shelley's Faith" by W.K. Parkes. Oscar

Wilde also attended meetings of the group. As these lecture topics suggest, the members

and associates of the club viewed Shelley as an important and inspiring thinker on the

topic of social reform that touched on several areas of contemporary British life. At its

first meeting, for instance, it is widely reported that George Bernard Shaw informed

members that he too was "like Shelley, a Socialist, Atheist and Vegetarian" (Shaw 58*)*.

Members viewed Shelley as an influence on both their writing and their social activism.

Although this society did not meet in Hampstead, several members lived in Hampstead

and congregated there, including Blind, Rossetti, and Eliza Lynn Linton. As such, it

formed an important node in the network of radical reformers living and meeting in

Hampstead. Given Caird's professed allegiance to Shelley, and her close friendship with

Mathilde Blind, it seems likely that she would have attended meetings of this society,

though no record of her attendance has been traced.

      Not only did Caird circulate in a network that centred in and around Hampstead,

---

membership numbers do not include members of the general public, who were allowed to attend meetings ("Shelley Society Papers" 5).

she also actively contributed to the intellectual life of Hampstead on her own, establishing neighbourhood clubs in the late 1880s. Although we know little about how long these clubs ran—they may have easily fizzled out as quickly as they began—on 16 March 1889, the *Women's Penny Paper* reported "Mrs. Mona Caird's new scheme for establishing "Neighbourhood Clubs," which the editor felt was "an excellent idea" ("Current News About Women" 2). According to the periodical, "The gatherings were to be non-political, but all other subjects are to be open to discussion" ("Current News About Women" 2). A few weeks later on 27 March, the conservative political periodical *Judy: The Conservative Comic* corroborated this report, stating that Caird was "the active genius" behind the "Neighbours' Clubs" commencement ("Pepper and Salt" 152). The paper reported the same goals of the club as *The Women's Penny Paper,* but with a satirical bent:

> Politics there are to be impolitic, and art, literature, and social matters are to be the order of the day. Here, then, friends and foes may meet under a flag of truce . . . Mr. Smith, the Home Ruler, may meet with Mr. Jones, the Unionist, without either expecting to brain the other with an unneighbourly club. ("Pepper and Salt" 152)

Caird was involved in various Clubs and Organizations in Hampstead, establishing her own, and keeping abreast of contemporary discussions with its anarchist and aesthete members, particularly those related to women. Indeed, she described Hampstead's socialist contingent in her retrospective novel *The Stones of Sacrifice* (1915).

Caird engaged in depth with the ideas she encountered as she moved in concert with this group of writers moving in and around Hampstead, developing a variety of idealistic and politically-engaged writing in response to the location and the circles in

which she moved. In the absence of Caird's literary estate—the dismantling of her personal library, the loss of any significant personal letters, and no known correspondence with publishers—understanding more about the neighbours, clubs, and the social alliances she formed as she lived in Hampstead in the 1880s can help us better understand her political influences and commitments, and her feminist commitments in particular. This, in turn, helps us to understand the ways in which her writing exhibits a variety of idealist feminism; that is, a commitment to total social reform that simultaneously embraced what we might consider two oppositional values: individual freedom and collective equality. In her *Westminster Review* articles "Marriage" and "Ideal Marriage," Caird, like her socialist-feminist contemporaries, outlines her feminist view of complete social reform that claimed "absolute liberty" as a product of and precondition for collective equality, and thus denied the role of traditional self-sacrificial womanhood for the progress of the race. In several respects the arguments she makes parallel similar arguments made by Brooke, Wilson, Schreiner, Blind, and Müller. Like her contemporaries' writings, Caird's prose, and later, her fiction, took issue with the contention that women's desire for marriage and motherhood was inherent in their inalterable nature. Caird challenged the idea, advanced by male socialists like Pearson and others like him, that "as [woman] was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be—!" (240). Instead of subordinating women to their biological function, Caird sought to redefine woman's role in marriage and more broadly in society. Using the language of her contemporaries—a visionary language inflected with spiritual metaphors—Caird advocated the complete transformation of the institution of marriage through the transformation of related social structures, emphasizing the importance of individual

economic freedom, cooperation, egalitarian fellowship between the sexes, and educational equality. Like Emma Brooke, who attacked the institution of marriage in her article "Women's Sphere in Modern Society," Caird argued that the institution of marriage had a broad economic, political, moral, and social effect on the condition of Victorian England. In her pointed analysis of marriage as an institution, Caird touches on each area in its turn—the social, political, and economic—noting that the failure of marriage resulted from regressive forces in each sphere. In this sense, Mona Caird's involvement with the anarchists, socialists, and feminists who moved in and around her home in Hampstead would prove a lasting influence on her feminist argument. Like Brooke, Müller, and Schreiner, Caird went on from her encounter with the male members of Victorian club and social culture to express her particularly feminist ideals. Alongside Brooke and Schreiner, in her prose and fiction, Caird developed a vocabulary to advocate for individual freedom and collective equality, both locally within the male-dominated clubs and societies in Hampstead and in turn on a national scale.

## Caird's Idealist Feminism: "Marriage"

Caird had already written two New Woman Novels by the time of her first article in the periodical press, yet it was the publication of "Marriage" in the *Westminster Review* in October 1888 that introduced her concerns to a wide segment of the public, establishing her position as an advocate writing for the cause of women. "Marriage" appeared in a long line of articles that discussed and debated the woman question— including Emma Brooke's *Our Corner* article "Women and their Sphere," Henrietta Müller's and Eleanor Marx's *Westminster Review* articles "What Woman is Fitted For,"

and "The Woman Question: From a Socialist Point of View"—yet Caird's first article

drew a far broader audience than any article published prior to it, erupting into a public

debate that drew over 27, 000 letters in response to her work.[81] The paper, which was

written for a public audience, was published under her own name. It appeared in the

"Independent Section," which, as I discuss in Chapters One and Three, distinguished the

articles that appeared within it from the editorial approval of the rest of the newspaper.

Although it appeared in the "Independent Section," the article nevertheless accorded with

the radical and feminist character of the periodical, which had been run by J.S. Mill until

the 1860s and which built on the radical ideas of Mill under the editorship of John

Chapman. [82] In this article, Caird outlines the historical contingency of both "women's

nature" and the institution of marriage, recommending the moral necessity of several key

changes to social structures to alter women's bleak social, economic, and political

condition, and to improve society as a whole, or, in her own words, to "gladden and give

new life to all humanity" (252). The article thus displays Caird's commitment to the

principles of idealist feminism circulating in and around Hampstead in the period, which

for Caird included a commitment to total social reform that sought to balance strong

---

[81] Caird's article provoked extensive responses, some of them angry, in the *Daily Telegraph*. The newspaper had asked its readers, in response to her article, "Is Marriage a Failure?," though Caird had already declare that it was. A parallel surge of letters appeared in the USA in *Cosmopolitan*, demonstrating, as Ann Heilmann has suggested, the "extraordinary resonance" that Caird's writing provoked (*New Woman Strategies* 165). In her 1934 memoir, Annie S. Swan noted that Caird "had thrown a flaming bomb into the camp of the thoroughly smug and respectable ranks" and was "banned and shunned like the plague in certain circles" as a result (39). Judith Walkowitz notes that the *Daily Telegraph*'s letter-writing flurry was only bumped off the front page by the sensationalized Whitechapel Murders.
[82] That Caird's article even appeared in the *Westminster Review* was enabled by a shift in journalistic practice by then-editor John Chapman, who had only recently—in 1887—changed the format from quarterly to monthly, and over the course of that year began to publish "shorter, more journalistic articles, many of which were written by obscure contributors publishing no more than one article" (*The Wellesley Index* 3: 552). Still, the essay's appearance in the "Independent Section," suggests that even Chapman, a radical, did not want to align himself too closely with Caird's views. The article appeared with the caveat that these "able Articles, which, though harmonizing with the general spirit and aims of the Review, may contain opinions at variance with the particular ideas or measures it advocates" ("Marriage" 186).

individual human rights within a humane society that functioned under cooperative principles instead of competitive ones.

Caird began her article by drawing on an understanding of evolution influenced by Darwin and Lamarck, following their analysis of the importance of the environment in influencing evolutionary change. In doing so, Caird departed from the conventional narrative about "women's nature" as static, and rooted in their unchanging role as wives and mothers, to instead contend that women are similarly subject to evolutionary change. At the beginning of "Marriage," Caird wrote that "Our philosopher takes the same view of women as certain Indian theologians took of the staple food of their country. 'The Great Spirit,' they said, 'made all things, except the wild rice, but the wild rice came by chance'" (240). Disputing this idea, Caird instead argued that both "women's nature" and even "human nature" were substantially influenced by a long history of evolutionary development: the doctrines of evolution and natural selection do not merely apply to every other facet of society. Indeed, women's nature, like other social structures and natural phenomena, is the result of historical and evolutionary forces. "The nature of women is the result of their circumstances," Caird asserted, which have been "adapted . . . to the misfortune of captivity" (241). Women's nature has been severely limited, and therefore has adapted to its limitation. Although Caird argued that women's nature had been restricted and thus adapted to its limitation, her understanding of Lamarck meant that she believed it was possible to direct evolution and effect social change: "evolution has ceased to be a power driving us like dead leaves on a gale; thanks to science, we are no longer entirely blind, and we aspire to direct that mighty force for the good of humanity" (252). Although women had been subjected to restricting conditions, under the

influence of "constant" and "improved conditions" they may develop positively, which would "rapidly tell upon the whole state of society" (251).

Lamarck was broadly influential on the feminist and anarchist writers and thinkers who lived in Hampstead, including Brooke, Schreiner, and Kropotkin. As I discuss in Chapter One, for instance, Brooke responded to Karl Pearson's evolutionary view of society by emphasizing the Lamarckian theory of "use-inheritance," or the idea that acquired traits or characteristics could be passed on to future generations. The theory was an attempt to account for the transmutation of species, suggesting that organisms could develop structural and functional changes *without struggle* in response to changes in their environment. Successful adaptation, Lamarck argued, was transmitted to successive generations. The theory placed a strong emphasis on the environment; as a result, Lamarckian social thinkers often placed an emphasis on moral education, which they saw as the key to the progress of individuals and social groups. Brooke, for instance, argued that "the transmission from generation to generation of inherited opinion and an inherited standard of morality . . . can change posterity materially for the better by the exercise of a distinct influence which is carried on in the next generation" (Brooke to Pearson 14 March 1886). The anarchist Peter Kropotkin similarly drew on Lamarckian ideas, becoming one of the leading proponents of Lamarckism in the nineteenth century. In his essays in *Nineteenth Century,* later published in a book entitled *Mutual Aid* (1902), Kropotkin argued that evolutionary characteristics that were socially learned in groups of animals could be passed on to successive generations and even intensified in later ones. He further contended that adaptation provided relief from competition, writing that:

Each new species is continually tending to enlarge its abode . . . forming new

habits, moving to new abodes, and taking to new sorts of food. In all such cases

there will be no extermination, even no competition—the new adaptation being a

relief from competition, if it ever existed . . . if we admit, with Spencer, all the

Lamarckians, and Darwin himself, the modifying influence of the surroundings

upon the species, there remains still less necessity for . . . extermination. (*Mutual*

*Aid: A Factor of Evolution* 66)

Kropotkin thus argued that co-operation was an essential characteristic of evolution. Like

Brooke and Kropotkin, who drew on scientific thinkers to explain the social realm, Caird

drew on an understanding of evolution that fit with her conception of society,

emphasizing cooperation over competition, and opposing the idea of the "survival of the

fittest." Following other Lamarckian thinkers, Caird thus advocated education,

cooperation, and social reform to in response to what she saw as the failures of Victorian

marriage.

After discussing the evolutionary reasons for "women's nature," Caird launched

into a critical examination of the evolutionary development of the institution of marriage.

Here she rooted the failure of marriage in several related social systems—political,

religious, and economic—noting that the failure of marriage resulted from regressive

forces in each. After describing the "matriarchal age," where the mother was "the head of

the family, priestess, and instructress in the arts of husbandry" (241), Caird describes

women's reduced position in both the "father-age," where it took centuries to deprive

woman of "her powerful position as head of the family," and the "monastic age," where

she came to be viewed as "an ally of Satan, seeking to lead men away from the paths of

righteousness" (242). She then links the greatest failure of marriage to the ideas of Luther

and the Reformation. It was Luther, Caird argues, who "placed marriage on the lowest possible platform" and who defined women's role as "one of duty and service" and figured her worth only in so far as she was "the legal property of a man" (243). Luther's ideas led to "commerce, competition, [and] the great *bourgeois* class," which began to inflect the institution of marriage with a commercial and mercenary spirit (239). This led to the problems of the Victorian marriage system:

> We now see completed our own way of settling the relations of the sexes. The factors of our system are: respectability, prostitution, strict marriage, commercialism, unequal moral standard for the two sexes, and the subjection of women. (246)

Caird argues that Victorian society locates women's value in their ability to be exchanged or purchased as property. The modern marriage system ignores women's claims to their own bodies, and subjects them to the commercialism of the market, where women are "carried off by the highest bidder" (243). Women are also at the mercy of the physically devastating doctrine of motherhood, which destroys women's bodies because they are forced to bear "an unlimited number of children" which gives them "anguish and weariness" and a "thousand painful disabilities" resulting in many cases in their invalidity (244). The effect of these, according to Caird, equates the position of the prostitute with the position of the wife, since both are physically devastating and degrading. Caird here again departs from the conventional narrative about the institution of marriage as an impermeable, unchangeable institution, and instead contends that it was the result of historical and evolutionary factors, and thus subject to evolutionary change.

Caird's historical and evolutionary description of marriage parallels several of the

ideas circulating in the Hampstead community. In her analysis of marriage, Caird engages

both explicitly and implicitly with the varying views taken by the contemporaries she

lived near to and met in Hampstead. Besides Brooke and Kropotkin, Caird engages with

the ideas of Karl Pearson, Jane Hume Clapperton, Eliza Lynn Linton, and Theodore

Stanton. She also draws on the intellectual influences common to this geographic

community of thinkers: not just Darwin and Lamarck, but also John Stuart Mill and

August Bebel.

Caird directly cites the work of August Bebel, Karl Pearson, Jane Hume

Clapperton, Eliza Lynn Linton, and Theodore Stanton. She draws on the authority of

socialist August Bebel to make her point about the strict marriage system as it developed

under Luther; specifically his conception of "healthy sensualism," which was regulated

by the law and the Church (244).[83] She also indirectly draws on Bebel's idea that "if

woman is an inferior creature today, she is only, like the proletarian, a victim of the

circumstances in which she is placed" (*Commonweal* July 1885, qtd in Hannam 63). She

cites Jane Hume Clapperton's *Scientific Meliorism* as evidence for the plight of

unmarried women. She draws on Eliza Lynn Linton's claim for the unhappy plight of

---

[83] August Bebel became widely influential on British feminism after the publication of Eleanor Marx's "The Woman Question: From a Socialist Point of View," which reviewed from and drew on Bebel's *Die Frau in der Vergangenheit, Gegenwart und Zukunft* (1879) and the English translation by Harriet Walther, *Woman in the Past, Present and Future*, published in English in 1885. Bebel's book was later as *Women and Socialism*. It was Marx's essay, the first on the Woman Question, that claimed, following Bebel, that there could be no emancipation of humanity without the social independence and equality of the sexes. Bebel was read by Brooke, Schreiner, Wilson, and many more who were interested in the Woman Question during this time, including Caird. As a testament to Bebel's influence on the women's movement, his work was anonymously reviewed in *The Woman's Herald* on November 9th, 1893 ("Herr Bebel: A Socialist Champion of Women" *WH* (9 November 1893): 598). The reviewer declared: "I have read all the books on the [Woman Question] that have ever come to my hand, and have taken occasion to have as many come there as time and opportunity would in any wise allow; but except "The Subjection of Women," by John Stuart Mill, I have never read a book that seemed to me to strike at the root of the matter as does Herr Bebel's volume" (598). Marx differed from Caird in her belief that all inequalities between men and women would be redressed in a socialist state. Caird saw the need for social change but felt injustices would be gradually improved through spontaneous cooperation rather than social revolution.

bored husbands, going on to suggest "we have well-meaning husbands and wives harassing one another to death for no reason in the world but the desire of conforming to current notions regarding the proper conduct of married people" (248). She employs Theodore Stanton's claim in *The Woman Question in Europe* that "the question is not to make woman a man but to complete man by woman," to advance the comradeship ideal, or "making friendships irrespective of sex, and for giving and receiving that inspiring influence which apparently can only be given by one sex to the other" (251). Caird also directly cites Karl Pearson, drawing on his authority for her argument about the "maternal age" (241), and indirectly disputing his classification of two kinds of women—childless and childbearing—by emphasizing the price all of society pays for men's sexual license. Like Brooke, Caird drew on Mill and the slavery metaphor, using Mill's authority to argue that "woman was the first being who was enslaved" (242), and further employing this argument to elaborate on the injustices of the Victorian laws that ensure woman's continued ownership by her husband. Brooke had similarly written in her January and February 1888 *Our Corner* article "Women and their Sphere" that marriage was equivalent to slavery. Married women are akin to "female slave[s]" (12) wrote Brooke, and this was permitted by law. Also like Brooke, who suggested that sexuality must "no more be a thing to be bought and sold" ("Women and their Sphere" 72), Caird similarly rooted the sexual union in a mercenary and mercantile system, arguing for the necessary changes to the "mercenary spirit" in "the idea of marriage," where "women were bought and sold as if they were cattle" (243). Caird also echoed Brooke's claim that women wanted freedom from childbearing—"having her body racked and torn yearly until it is maimed and she is invalided," ("Notes" 6)—similarly describing it causing invalidity and

disability. Caird's parallels here with Brooke's claims, which similarly root the mercenary system of marriage in a complete, interconnected social system that limits the freedom of women—evidences her similarities with her feminist contemporaries in Hampstead.

While Caird's similarity with her contemporaries is more significant than her departures, she nevertheless maintains some differences of opinion, even from her feminist contemporaries. Unlike Brooke and Eleanor Marx, Caird did not see the state as a necessary partner for sexual equality. Whereas both Brooke and Marx described the state as a crucial partner in the achievement of equality—providing women with freedom to choose motherhood through paid maternity, and state-licensed institutions with free children's education—Mona Caird instead emphasized spontaneous, non-violent cooperation. This precisely distinguishes the divide between socialist and anarchist factions in the reform movements of the nineteenth century: one holding to the importance of state intervention; the other skeptical of the state, and instead desiring spontaneous collaboration. Yet rather than a diametrical opposition, these feminists embraced similar ideals, placing importance on both individual freedom and collective equality.

Caird's dual emphasis on individual freedom and collective equality emerges more distinctly as she describes her understanding of the egalitarian ideal in the latter half of her article. Ideal marriage, which Caird describes as "a union prompted by love, by affinity or attraction of nature and by friendship" (248) is formed only when it is truly "*free*" (249, Caird's emphasis):

> So long as love and trust and friendship remain, no bonds are necessary to bind two
> people together; life apart will be empty and colourless; but whenever these cease

the tie becomes false and iniquitous, and no one ought to have the power to enforce it. The matter is one in which any interposition, whether of law or of society, is an impertinence. (250)

Despite the "dangers and difficulties" inherent in such a position, Caird suggests that the social and legal laws governing marriage must not be enforced by anyone but the two persons concerned, and to do otherwise is a "system of legalized injustice" (252). Caird thus emphasizes the freedom of the individual to choose her partner while the "state and society stand aside" (250).

Caird further places importance on the freedom of the individual as she describes women's right to her own body: In addition to free marriage, there must be "a full understanding and acknowledgment of the obvious right of the woman *to possess herself* body and soul" within marriage and outside it (250). Caird argues at this juncture that this is a "moral right" without which "no ideal could hold up its head" (250). As such it forms one of the core elements of her argument, "and its denial implies ideas . . . low and offensive to human dignity" (250). Instead, women must "protect individual dignity," (245) and have the right to her own selves. This means the right to economic independence as the "first condition of free marriage," so as to prevent women being "tempted to marry, or to remain married, for the sake of bread and butter" (250). For Caird, the moral importance of the individual rights of women is a cornerstone of her feminist beliefs, without which complete human emancipation was impossible, yet she places the rights of the individual within a larger egalitarian collective.

Following the socialist- and anarchist-inflected line of thinking that took its cue from the late-Victorian culture in Hampstead, Caird's idea about women's economic

independence argued that the "competitive system" currently in existence was a serious problem, and women's addition to this system merely compounded the issue: "our present competitive system, with the daily increasing ferocity of the struggle for existence, is fast reducing itself to an absurdity, woman's labour helping to make the struggle only the fiercer" (250). Caird contended that while women's sale of themselves for the sake of food would not occur unless "this absurd and useless competition" was "reduced . . . within reasonable limits, and to bring about in its place some form of cooperation" (252). Following other Lamarckian thinkers like Kropotkin, Caird advocated cooperation as a necessary evolutionary development, particularly in a society that committed itself to progressive, egalitarian ideals.

Caird also advocated the importance of the equal co-education of both men and women as a solution for combatting the problems facing Victorian society, thus revealing her emphasis on change that impacted not only the lives of individual women but also society as a whole. According to Caird, separating the sexes from birth led to numerous issues:

It is our present absurd interference with the natural civilizing influence of one sex upon the other, that creates half the dangers and difficulties of our social life . . . and [is] certainly not productive of a satisfactory social condition. (251)

By uniting the sexes again, the social conditions between men and women would totally alter. This ought to extend not just to schools but also the workplace, and all places of meeting:

Meeting freely in their working-hours as well as at times of recreation, men and women would have opportunity for forming reasonable judgments of character, for

making friendships irrespective of sex, and for giving and receiving that inspiring

influence which apparently can only be given by one sex to the other. (251)

At this point, Caird asserts the necessity of new relations between men and women in

order to bring about "new and stimulating influences . . . on society," and create genuine

"social change" (251). Like the female members of the Men and Women's Club, who

attempted to practice a fellowship ideal by advocating egalitarian comradeship between

men and women, Caird argued at this juncture that "no man has the right to consider

himself educated until he has been under the influence of cultivated women, and the same

may be said of women as regards to men" (251). This fellowship ideal would lead to

numerous positive social changes, including "healthier, better equipped, more reasonable

men and women, possessing well-developed minds, and hearts kindly disposed towards

their fellow-creatures" (251). This in turn would lead to a rapid improvement upon "the

whole state of society," and following that, complete social transformation (251).

Caird's emphasis on not just women but also men in her analysis gives weight to

the claim that her feminism was concerned with collective as well as individual equality.

Caird also includes men's misery in her analysis of the failure of marriage, emphasizing

the legal, political, and religious restrictions on marriage that have affected men. As

Sheila Rosenberg points out, this portion of her analysis comprises one of the "unique

contribution[s]" Caird made to the debate on marriage and divorce (129). Caird writes:

> If the wife feels [she has claims of injustice] we may be sure the husband thinks he
>
> has his grievances also, and when we place this not exaggerated description side by
>
> side with that of the unhappy plight of bored husbands . . . there is no escaping the
>
> impression that there is something is very "rotten in the state of Denmark" . . .We

have well-meaning husbands and wives harassing one another to death for no

reason in the world but the desire of conforming to current notions regarding the

proper conduct of married people. These victims are expected to go about

perpetually together, as if they were pair of carriage horses; to be for ever holding

claims over one another; exacting or making useless sacrifices, and generally

getting in another's way. The man who marries finds that his liberty has gone, and

the woman exchanges one set of restrictions for another. . . . The luckless man finds

his wife so *very* dutiful and domesticated, and so *very* much confined to her "proper

sphere" that she is, perchance, more exemplary than entertaining. It is no wonder

that . . . we have so many unhappy wives and bored husbands. (248-9)

Caird thus emphasized the importance of structural social change so as to achieve not just

individual but collective equality.

Near the end of her article, Caird returns to her emphasis on evolutionary change,

insisting on the importance of redirecting the forces of evolutionary change to advantage

both the individual and the collective, in this case using the visionary, spiritual language

of her feminist peers. Drawing on the language of the Christian tradition, Caird employs

the agricultural imagery of the Parable of the Sower, prefiguring Schreiner's suggestion

for the necessity of a spiritual awakening or coming-of-consciousness for both men and

women:[84]

The time has come . . . for gradual alteration of opinion which will rebuild [sex

relations] from the very foundation. The method of the most enlightened reformer is

to crowd out the old evil by a new good, and to seek to sow the seed of the nobler

---

[84] In *Dreams* (1890), Schreiner depicts the gradual coming-of-consciousness of both men and women, who must first work to come to terms with their individuality before joining together as equals.

future where it alone can take root and grow to its full height: in the souls of men

and women. (252)

To move to a higher stage of human existence, both men and women must awaken to the

power of both sexes in order to progress towards a world renewed. This progression from

the "old evil" to the "new good" will not only transform the position of women in society,

but will also affect social transformation "for the good of humanity" (252), ushering in a

new age.

Caird concludes her article by again underlining the importance of a fellowship

ideal. Here she again seems to preempt the vision in Schreiner's *Dreams,* which describes

a woman lying on the ground, tied with ropes to a man, against whom she struggles to

pull herself to rise.[85] In Caird's version of this metaphoric struggle, women and men "pull

against and neutralize the workings of another," causing both to restrict the progress of

humanity, or "check . . . our progress" (252). Like Schreiner, who suggests that if men

and women do not work together, they will necessarily work against each other, Caird's

article argues for the necessity of equality rather than enmity between the sexes. In the

last paragraph of her article, she underscores the central importance of this ideal for the

complete alteration of social systems:

With this belief we shall seek to move opinion in all the directions that may bring

us to this "consummation devoutly to be wished" and we look forward steadily,

hoping and working for the day when men and women shall be comrades and

---

[85] See Schreiner's "Three Dreams in a Desert." In the first dream, which depicts women's historical oppression, Schreiner's narrator sees a woman lying motionless and prostrate in the desert with her legs pinned beneath her. The woman cannot move because of the "burden of subjection," which is tied onto her back with the "broad band of Inevitable Necessity," placed on her by the "Age-of-Dominion-of-muscular-force" (70). Attached to her by a long cord is a man, symbolizing their mutual lack of freedom and inability to move forward together, despite the fact that the man himself is unburdened save by the woman. Like Schreiner, Caird argues that women must struggle together alone, individually, before they can achieve egalitarian comradeship with men.

fellow-workers . . . [this] shall gladden and give new life to all humanity. (252)

Only when the relations between men and women become one of unity, rather than enmity, when they become "comrades and fellow-workers," will society progress to a new, morally-just order.

Caird concludes her article with a quotation from Lewis Morris's poem "Brotherhood," published in late 1883 in a volume of poetry called *Songs Unsung*:[86]

When men and women in an equal union

Shall merge, and marriage be true communion. (252)

Morris, who was a well-respected poet in London literary circles at the time, was in all likelihood personally known to Caird since he lived in Hampstead from the 1860s until 1883 (ODNB).[87] Morris's ideas here are indicative of the radical culture of Hampstead at the time, which advocated personal internal transformation alongside broader social change; or, in other words, simultaneous individual and collective transformation.[88] Caird's use of his ideas here signals her approval of the sensibilities he advanced in the poem from which she quoted, which expresses faith in a new order of humanity, characterized by universal brotherhood, egalitarian education for women and men, true spiritual marriage between equal partners, and a respect for individual human rights within the context of a larger commonwealth. Caird's article thus signals an affinity with the radical ideals circulating in Hampstead, though, like her feminist contemporaries, she inflected them with more determinedly feminist ideas.

---

[86] Caird mistakenly attributed the poem to a volume entitled *The New Order*. In fact, "The New Order" was the title of another poem published in *Songs Unsung* (1883).

[87] Caird and Morris had met for certain by 1891, when they both attended a dinner given by the British Society of Authors ("News and Notes" 181).

[88] Morris's lived ideals about marriage in particular seem to have cost him the poet laureateship in 1896, when he was rejected by Queen Victoria who disapproved of his common-law wife and illegitimate children.

While advocating for the transformation of marriage as an institution, Mona Caird simultaneously advocated for a transformation in the social systems that made the institution so restrictive in contemporary Victorian society. In "Marriage," Caird thus advances several conditions that must change in order to advance a truly egalitarian community: a shift in the understanding of women's supposedly "fixed" biological nature, freedom to dissolve marriage, women's imperative right to her own body, individual economic independence, the co-education of women with men, and a comradeship ideal. This suggests that Caird's commitment was to structural feminist reform across several areas of contemporary life, which she argued was the key to a new political and spiritual age.

<div align="center">Caird's Idealist Feminism: "Ideal Marriage"</div>

Mona Caird's "Ideal Marriage," published in the October 1888 issue of the *Westminster Review,* similarly displays her commitment to the principles of idealist feminism circulating in Hampstead during the period, simultaneously embracing the values of individual freedom and collective equality. Yet where her first article "was intended to lay down general principles" about the historical origin of these oppressions and "suggest ideas" for their solution, the purpose of her second article is to "justify" her ideas in detail (628). The article also further demonstrates Caird's engagement with the eugenics-inflected ideas present at Pearson's Men and Women's Club. While Caird demonstrates her belief in the power of social evolution, she refuses to concede the sacrifice of women on behalf of the human race.

At the beginning of "Ideal Marriage," Caird's call for social progress makes an indirect reference to the hopeful evolutionary theory of Lamarck and Kropotkin, which

held that humans could advance in positive directions towards a new social order. For

Caird, as for these thinkers, the environment was all-important in both the development

of the individual, which occurred socially, and the development of the social, which

occurred historically. At the beginning of her article she thus outlines the foundation for

her belief in the transformation of society by stating directly the connection between her

philosophy of history and this hopeful theory of evolution, which focuses on sympathy

and cooperation as the driving forces in social development. Contrasting her ideas with

those who "see in social movements a mere *oscillation*, a wave-like motion to and fro,

without any real progress"—what she calls the "pendulum theory of history"—Caird's

philosophy of history holds a conviction in the inevitable improvement of society, since

she believed that evolution is not deterministic (618). Refusing to assent to the belief that

humanity is eternally immobile and static, Caird asserts that, in contrast, "the sympathetic

and rational impulses of man's nature" will naturally "be developed, or 'evolved' to so

triumphant a dominion that they will finally subdue the savage and sensual instincts" in

humankind (618). Moreover, Caird strongly believes in the ability of individuals to

command this progress: she holds "*Belief in the power of man to choose his direction of

change*" (619, Caird's italics). This progress has the potential to lead to the development

of a strong "moral sense" (619), which will "substitute knowledge for ignorance, insight

for stupidity, sympathy for aggression, love for indifference [and] move towards

salvation" (628). Caird advances the dialogue on evolutionary social progress here by

connecting women's subjugated position in contemporary society to social progress.

Without women's freedom, society cannot advance to a new, positive future. This

*Westminster Review* article, like her first, thus illustrates how idealist feminists drew on an alternative social evolutionary discourse to argue for complete social transformation.

Responding to the attitudes within the letters printed in the *Daily Telegraph*, Caird reasserts the oppressive nature of the marital institution in order to justify its transformation. Here Caird again underscores the importance of structural social change, arguing that individuals alone cannot be held responsible for the failure of a social order that teaches them how to act: "The letter-writers," Caird writes, "blame not the social order, but the victims of that order" (621). Caird insists that the true origin of the failure of marriage is not "those unfortunate girls" who have responded to their environment and "act as they are taught to act," rather, the source of this inadequacy is found in "the public opinion of [the] world" (621). This public opinion tells the young woman that marriage is her right and proper duty, and warns her that without marriage she will be viewed as a social outcast. In an imaginary dialogue that Caird creates in her article, the personification of Society says to a young woman:

> "My dear, marry, and ask no questions: who are you that you should criticize an institution which has lasted for centuries? Marriage is your natural and proper career . . . if you can't get a husband we are extremely sorry for you, and we feel that your good parents will regard you as a failure . . . who has been rejected and cast out." (622)

Yet this same society condemns the young woman when her marriage fails. Caird likens this to teaching a child "to put a lighted match to a train of gun-powder" and then subsequently punishing that child severely "because he has caused a disastrous explosion" (623). This is clearly unjust, Caird argues, as is the current attitude towards

the failures of marriage: since society is responsible for the environment under which the institution of marriage has developed, it must likewise take responsibility for its shortfalls and collectively seek its transformation.

As in "Marriage," in "Ideal Marriage" Caird advances her critique of the marital institution's regressive influence on women in particular and society in general through an explicit parallel with prostitution, describing the oppressive effects of marriage on women and society through a rhetorical strategy that conflates wives with slaves. Again drawing on the slave metaphor, Caird argues that according to the current socially-determined system of marriage, women's sole value lies in her ability to be bought or sold as property; moreover, this evaluation of individuals as property extends to her children:

> Just as the slave-girl belongs to her master, with all the children that she may have, so the wife belongs to her husband, and her children also. According to the odious current phrase, the wife "presents" her lord with a son or a daughter . . . The mother . . . risks her health, her life, her reason . . . through the perpetual strain, anxiety and worry entailed by the cares of a family. (634)

In spite of the bodily sacrifice that a woman endures for the sake of her children, she has no rights to either her self or her children; indeed, a wife has no freedom at all. This restriction of freedom inevitably hinders society's progress: "We must consent to give play to the individual," Caird contends, "or our democratic institutions will plunge us into a slavery from which there is no redemption" (626). Without freedom, society will fail to evolve into its ideal formation, for "to curtail freedom is to cut away the foundation of further progress" (628). Caird thus again insists upon the ethical necessity of a

transformed marriage contract, which must not restrict the freedom of women. According to Caird, the marriage system must be altered to protect individual freedom, which in turn leads to collective equality.

In this article, Caird also responds to the particular variety of social evolutionary theory advocated by Karl Pearson and others at the Men and Women's Club, which suggested the health of the race depended on the sacrifice of the few. In "Ideal Marriage," Caird makes a clear argument against this theory of "our deity—'the greatest number'" (626). Unlike Pearson, who in his articles in *The Ethic of Freethought* argued for the subordination of the rights of women to the rights of the collective, arguing that "we have first to settle on what is the physical capacity of women, what would be the effect of her emancipation on her function of race reproduction, before we can talk about her rights" (371), Caird insisted on the importance of women's individual rights, without which, she argued, the whole community would suffer:

> There are miseries which no one ought to be called upon to endure by the laws of his country, which every human being is justified in resisting at all hazards, and in spite of every law, written or unwritten. Passive endurance in such cases is not for the good of the "greatest number"; it is simply for the degradation of human dignity and the torture of human souls, and by that the "greatest number" never reaped a benefit. Even if it did, it ought not to exact this awful sacrifice. Of what value is "the good of the community," if in that community individuals can suffer thus under the wing of the Law? What is the meaning of the term "the welfare of society," if not the comfort and security of the individuals composing it . . . it is impossible to wound one part of the social organism without hurting the whole.

(626)

The "good of the community" as Caird understands it, is only as good as the rights of its weakest members. In Caird's ideal social order, described here, the rights of individuals must be equal to the rights of the collective, which will improve substantially as the rights of the few are acknowledged. This in turn substantially aids the evolution of the whole social organism, fostering its progression to an altogether different future.

At the close of her article, Caird draws on the visionary, spiritual language common to her feminist contemporaries as she makes a spiritual appeal for the redemption of society:

> With shouts and empty laughter we have crucified this saviour who has come into the world to redeem it; we have nailed him to the cross of our laws and conventions, and left him there among our shams and our whited sepulchers in lonely passion to bear our sins upon his shoulders . . . How much longer must he bear it, who deserts us not even in the hour of his bitterest anguish? When will men consent to their redemption? (636)

Here Caird declares the need for the deliverance of all humanity from the empty customs and codes that have signaled individual women's oppression and society's collective regression. Instead, Caird asserts the need for a "new era" (635) of progress, where freedom and sympathy abound in the relationships between women and men. While women are currently restricted by both biological and religious determinism, Caird calls for the hastening of the "day of women's redemption," where women's rights are respected within the social whole (636). As in "Marriage," Caird's article "Ideal Marriage" reveals her vision for an ideal egalitarian society that protects both individual

freedom and collective equality. As she underscores the need for total social change to alter women's subjugated state, she reflects the ideas of her feminist contemporaries who moved in and around Hampstead similarly advocating these ideals.

Caird's dual articles that appeared in the *Westminster Review* were produced as a part of the expanded *Westminster Review* network that included her contemporaries in Hampstead, and as such, she drew directly and implicitly on the ideas of these thinkers— including Kropotkin, Mill, and Pearson—as well as the thinkers influential on that network, including Lamarck, Darwin, and Mill. The debate her article triggered, which I describe in depth in Chapter Three, also drew other feminist reform writers into the fray, who wrote in support of Caird's conception of a feminist ideal. Jane Hume Clapperton, who Caird had quoted in her first article, wrote her own article in the October 1888 issue of the *Westminster Review* entitled "Miss Chapman's Marriage Reform: A Criticism," suggesting that the laws of marriage must allow for the possibility of divorce. Clapperton's specific response was to an article by Elizabeth Rachel Chapman in the September 1888 issue of the *Westminster Review*, entitled "Marriage Rejection and Marriage Reform," but was clearly part of the debate, since it immediately followed Caird's and Chapman's article. While Chapman claimed that her article was not was "not intentionally a reply to Mrs. Caird's article" since "it was written some time before that article was published," it is likely that the editors of the *Westminster Review* had intended the pieces to juxtapose. It certainly served as a response when it was published in the issue immediately following Caird's. Clapperton's article addressed Chapman's arguments against divorce, drawing increased attention to the idea that the legal institution of marriage allowed men to dominate women—the topic that had been

initiated by Caird. This is one example of the ways in which feminists moving in overlapping networks in and around Hampstead articulated their own distinct vocabularies, working together to voice a vision for social change.

Caird's articles about the Woman Question and those that followed marked a turning point in the woman's movement, when the debate about women's rights began to insert itself into the public consciousness. No longer simply the topic of private correspondence, secret club debate, limited-audience lecture, or controversial small-circulation periodical, the topic became a pressing concern for large segments of the Victorian populace as it was debated widely in the *Westminster Review*, *Daily Telegraph* and even across the Atlantic. The New York publication *Current Literature: A Magazine of Records and Review*, for instance—which had published a copy of Caird's article in the pages of its October 1888 issue—called the article "one of the literary features of the year" (December 1888, 468). Caird had clearly touched upon a sensitive topic with her provocative analysis of the constraints placed on women, and her article helped foster a decade of nearly constant media attention to the Woman Question, including issues related to marriage, motherhood, and sexual freedom.

<div align="center">Caird's Fiction and Idealist Feminism: <em>The Wing of Azrael</em></div>

Caird's affiliation with the idealist feminism circulating in Hampstead in the 1880s can be further seen in her 1889 novel *The Wing of Azrael*, which depicts in fictionalized form her understanding of the need for strong individual human rights operating within a society committed to collective equality. In this novel, Caird focuses in particular on the relationship between comradeship and social change, emphasizing the degree to which

one individual's action cannot be the solution to social change. Instead, the novel represents freedom as coming out of and resulting in social comradeship and fellowship. In a letter describing her novels, written to a German Professor of literature in 1896, Caird explained that her novels set out to reveal "the unrecognized tragedy of womanhood" by showing "it dependent not on natural laws but on human despotism and stupidity" (Caird to Vietor 5 December 1896, qtd in Foerster 52). She argued that to show this was to "reveal directly the dim pathways of redemption and hope" (Caird to Vietor 5 December 1896, qtd in Foerster 52). In this novel, Caird thus underscores and further advances the critique of marriage she had first made public in her *Westminster Review* essays, but does so by contrast, portraying the real in order to reveal the "dim pathway" to the ideal.

Like the Hampstead feminists she circulated among, Caird identified the devastating consequences of society's construction of sexual difference, its failure to protect the freedoms of its members, and its hypocrisy in demanding the sacrifice of the few in order to protect the (false) well-being of the many. Her novel thus suggests the need for alteration in the systems that train women to the self-sacrificial duties of marriage and motherhood and nothing else. While its primary intent is to critique contemporary society, the novel simultaneously portrays an outline of Caird's vision for an emancipated femininity, rooted in female comradeship, egalitarian education between the sexes, and absolute legal freedom. It depicts the relationships among women as central to this social transformation, suggesting female comradeship and partnership as a solution for social change. Like Henrietta Müller, who had seen the need for women to put aside differences of political and class affiliation to advocate on behalf of women's

issues, Caird identified comradeship among women as an essential step in the achievement of social equality. Although Caird's heroine ultimately fails to realize egalitarian comradeship with either a woman or a man, this is portrayed in the novel as the consequence of Viola's poor education, lack of opportunities, and the restriction of her freedom, which has limited her development. Like Olive Schreiner, who argued in allegorical form that man cannot help woman in her own personal struggle for freedom— "He cannot help her: *she must help herself*" (73 emphasis Schreiner's)—Caird believed it was woman's first duty to stand individually, on her own, which she saw as a crucial first step in the achievement of her feminist ideals.[89]

*The Wing of Azrael* depicts heroine Viola Sedley as she realizes the truth of social relations after struggling to live according to the dictates of self-sacrificial duty, to which she has been trained since she was just a small child. Despite the fact that Viola's inborn nature has a "singularly strong . . . sense of individual dignity" (Ch. III, Loc. 1273), and particularly of her right to her own body and will, her education has confused her sense of self, subordinating it to duty and masculine well-being:

> Her whole training dictated subordination of self, above all when the welfare of her
>
> father or her brothers was concerned, she absorbed this teaching readily, for she
>
> was her mother's ardent worshipper, and promised to be a credit to that exemplary
>
> lady. (ch. II, loc. 693)

---

[89] Like Schreiner, Caird also believed in the possibility of egalitarian comradeship between men and women in the future. In Schreiner's vision, once woman has achieved her own standing, man comes "close to [woman], and look[s] into her eyes with sympathy" (74) as she stands to her feet, symbolizing the possibility of egalitarian fellowship after woman has achieved her own independence. Though Caird does not allude to the possibility of comradeship between men and women in this novel, in her next, the *Daughters of Danaus,* she does advance this possibility. At the conclusion of *The Daughters of Danaus*, Algitha, sister to the heroine Hadria, ends the novel in an egalitarian marriage with Wilfrid Burton, a socialist. In this narrative, which parallel's Hadria's own, Algitha first leaves home to pursue a life of self-sufficiency by working in London's east end. After achieving her own independent life of work, she is then able to enter into egalitarian marriage with Wilfrid Burton.

Deeply oppressed by an overwhelming sense of duty to her family, yet socialized to refuse to even attempt self-liberation, Viola Sedley finds herself in an impossible situation when she is offered a proposal of marriage by Philip Dendraith, her wealthy but cruel childhood companion. Her family, which has been declining for years because of her father and elder brothers' excessive spending, faces the loss of its estate if she does not marry for money. Trained to a life of ascetic self-sacrifice, Viola accepts Philip's proposal of marriage to save her family from sure poverty and to prevent aggravating her parents' poor health. However, when she witnesses her fiancé brutally beating a horse, she demands release from her promise of marriage. Philip's response is to identify Viola as his possession, with no right to withdraw her permission:

> "You are mine," he said, taking her hands in his firmly, "you have no right to withdraw from our engagement . . . I would have you, Viola." She tried to loosen the grasp of his hands, but in vain. "You have given me the power; you cannot take it back." (ch. XVI, loc. 4021)

There is an implicit argument here against the idea of possessing any sentient being, whether animal or human, and an ominous foreshadowing of the emotional manipulation and cruelty that will soon characterize Viola's relationship with Philip. The narrative also alludes to the future possibility of marital rape, inviting the reader to identify Philip's view of marriage in parallel with his view of the sexual act. In both instances, Caird underscores the importance of women's individual liberty: her moral right to "*possess herself*, body and soul" without any other qualifications ("Marriage" 250). Yet polite society demands she continue to sacrifice her own wishes to prevent Philip and her family's discomfort.

When Viola tells her family members and social circle of her desire to withdraw from her promise of marriage, she is unequivocally told that she should not risk her family's wealth and health for what would amount to a social faux pas. For instance, in order to avoid the appearance of a slight, her mother attempts to minimize Viola's concern for her husband's lack of moral compass:

> "Dearest, you must not judge a man's character by his behavior towards animals; the most tender-hearted of men, after all, find their greatest pleasure in slaying the dumb creatures over whom God has given us dominion. Men are all like that, and though I agree with you that Mr. Dendraith was wrong to lose his temper as he did I cannot think that it would justify you in withdrawing from your engagement. The family would regard it as a mere pretext or a deliberate slight; and think of your poor father!" (ch. XVII, loc. 4100)

Instead, she suggests that Viola exercise her womanly powers after marriage to help inspire Philip's morality:

> "You can use your influence to induce him to treat his animals more humanely; he is devoted to you, and I have no doubt that he will do that for your sake. Gentleness, patience, and obedience in a wife can work wonders." (ch. XVII, loc. 4109)

When a friend of Viola's voices his opposition to the marriage, another acquaintance scoffs at the idea of interference, dismissing the idea of women's rights to her own person: "'A man has no right to marry a woman against her will; it is monstrous!' 'Pooh! What's a woman's will?'" (ch. XVII, loc. 4128). According to conventional society, women have no rights to refuse marriage; indeed, they have been trained for nothing else.

Throughout the novel, the narrative presents the inevitable trajectory of Viola's life as the result of an inadequate education that has trained her only to "duty" and "sacrifice" (ch. XXXII, loc. 7891)—"a system of restraint and arbitrary rule"—and nothing else (ch. XXIII, loc. 5383). When Viola attempts to persuade her father that she should not marry Philip, he lambasts her attempt to reject her "natural" role:

> "Not want to marry? Not want to marry?" Mr. Sedley yelled, with a burst of fury. "You—you—miserable little fool! . . . what do you think would be the use of you if you didn't marry? What can you do but loaf dismally about the place and serve as a wet blanket to everyone's enjoyment? What's the good of a woman but to marry and look after her husband and children? What can she do else?" (ch. IX, loc. 2391)

Mr. Sedley claims that woman's position is the result of her naturalized role as a wife and mother, but the narrative in contrast argues she has been restricted by inadequate education, with no chance to demonstrate her value through talent or innovation. When Viola suggests that she might attempt to earn a living by her own hand, Mr. Sedley smiles disparagingly, saying that she could doubtless "become a shining light" in whatever profession she chooses (ch. IX, loc. 2401). Viola is forced to concede that she has no talents whatsoever, and no ability to support herself at all:

> What was she? What did she know? What had she seen? What could she do? To all this there was only one answer: nothing. Books had been forbidden her; human society had been cut off from her; scarcely had she been beyond the gates of her home. (ch. IX, loc. 2407)

As she wracks her brain for some alternative to marriage, the list of items she can undertake is painfully menial:

"I could sweep away withered leaves, or hoe out weeds; I could dust or cook, or

wash, or—or anything that requires only health and strength. I might be like Miss

Bowles and teach, but it would have to be very young children,—I know so little,

so little!" (ch. IX, loc. 2453)

In effect, Mr. Sedley's derision proves a self-fulfilling prophecy: because she has been

giving such a limited education, she is unfit for anything other than marriage or

motherhood. There is virtually nothing else she has been trained to do.

Unsurprisingly, Viola soon succumbs to social pressure and marries Philip "in a fit

of self-sacrificing ardour" (ch. XVIII, loc. 4399), though she tells him while standing at

the altar, "'Please do not forget that I come here against my own wish . . . what I say to-

day is said with my lips only'" (ch. XX, loc. 4798). After their marriage, Viola's sense of

individual liberty is in constant conflict with her trained sense of self-sacrifice, but,

initially at least, she is held by her "[firm] sense of duty"[90] (ch. XXIII, loc. 5182) both to

her husband and social mores, convinced that "duty is better than happiness, . . . and

better than love" (ch. XIX, loc. 4599). Interestingly, at this juncture Caird entirely rejects

the "boomerang" plot that depicts the rebellious New Woman heroine recapitulating to a

conventional, safe marriage, displaying the opposite instead: the effects of a restrictive

marriage on a woman with a strong "sense of individual dignity" (ch. III, loc. 1273). The

remainder of *The Wing of Azrael* describes the devastating consequence of this marriage

born of coercion and the futility of Viola's devotion to "false ideas, false hopes, false

pieties" (ch. XIX, loc. 4616), demonstrating Caird's rejection of this plot device to depict

a total rejection of conventional inegalitarian marriage and its attendant demand for

---

[90] As Ann Ardis notes, this probably alludes to the fact that they do consummate their marriage, though
Viola does not produce an heir (70).

female self-sacrifice. It also serves to display the difficulty women face when attempting to regain personal autonomy, which Caird depicts as impossible while immersed in conventional society and conventional social mores.

Caird's critique of Victorian marriage emerges most strongly after Viola marries Philip, when Viola is increasingly torn between what she sees as her duty—she "can only cling to what [she] has been taught, and try to do [her] duty accordingly" (ch. XIX, loc. 4619)—and the unbearable circumstances of living under Philip's "dominating and resistless will" (ch. XIX, loc. 4670). The circumstances of her marriage "as often happens in life . . . have obliged her to do violence to one side or other of her nature" (ch. XII, loc. 3214) and in this case, it is a constant struggle between self-sacrifice and her "need [for] close fellowship and passionate love" (ch. XIX, loc. 4604). The narrative characterizes her life as a desperate battle, as she "fight[s] that desperate fight against her self and her own nature which fills the life of so many women with inward storm and wreckage" (ch. XXIII, loc. 5185). At this point, Caird underscores the significance of women's position in society under the law and the injustice it does to their human nature. Mere moments after Viola marries Philip, for instance, he demands that she hand over an ornamental antique paperknife that had been given to her as a wedding gift from her friend, Harry Lancaster. Although Viola questions his right to ask that she rescind the gift—"Am I always to be your wife, never myself? I have not questioned your authority, but you ask for more than authority. You ask me to surrender my personality" (ch. XX, loc. 4865)—Philip points out that her only social position is as a wife, and she has no other legal or social standing: "The world regards and criticizes you now as my wife, and nothing else. What else are you? You possess no other standing or acknowledged existence" (ch. XX,

loc. 4869). Philip views Viola's selfhood as subsidiary to her position as a wife, and the law and society privilege his point of view.

Although Viola attempts to devote herself to a life of duty and self-sacrifice as Philip's wife, Philip's assault on her personality gradually erodes her commitment to this obligation until it becomes clear to Viola that she can no longer hold these views, and her nature "began to put forth pale little shoots towards the light" (ch. XXIII, loc. 5384). At this juncture, Caird roots her description of Viola's coming-of-consciousness in the language of dreams and visions, as Viola escapes from the tyranny of her daily life by dreaming of a better world:

> With her head pillowed upon the soft grass, she could watch the clouds drifting and melting and streaming, wind-intoxicated, across the heavens. Scarcely was the earth visible at all; she grew conscious only of a brilliant circle of blue hills and a shimmer of universal light. The sense of trouble faded away. (ch. XXIII, loc. 5586)

When her brother Dick interrupts her reverie to ask if he can know her dream, she describes a world "of wind and waves—of a world where there is romance and happiness and rest" (ch. XXIII, loc. 5597). This is entirely opposite to the earlier narrative description of her life as a "waking-dream" (ch. XVII, loc. 4198) or "awful dream" (ch. XXII, loc. 5129) from which "her whole being sought to escape in the frantic horror-stricken helplessness of a nightmare" (ch. XXII, loc. 5129). Here Caird hints at the possibilities for social change using the language of dreams and visions as she draws a parallel of Viola's reality alongside a potential alternative. Viola's reality—the waking nightmare of her world of duty and self-sacrifice—appears alongside her dream of a new world of happiness, romance, and rest. Although her lack of autonomy and her conscious

devotion to duty have restricted her freedom, Caird here presents a new world of dreams that await in an alternative future.

Viola becomes more and more conscious of the futility of duty and self-sacrifice as the narrative advances. One Sunday morning as she sits in church listening to the biblical story of Job, she begins to feel his pain is unjustifiable, however devoted he is to duty. Soon she finds herself unable to reconcile Job's devotion to duty and sacrifice in the midst of his continual pain and indignity:

> Why did God, she asked herself wildly, forbid his forsaken children, whom he had permitted to be degraded, to wash out stains and memories unendurable in the waters of death? Why did he force them to return to be tortured anew, with indignity heaped upon indignity? . . . Where were the previous morning's faith and peace? All gone, and in their place: doubt, hatred, disgust, wounded dignity, wounded affection, devouring anxiety. (ch. XXVIII, loc. 6844)

The religious teaching to which she had devoted much of her life suddenly becomes horrific to her, and the unjustified pain that shapes her daily life overwhelms her. At this point, Caird melodramatically presents Viola's realization of the "indignity" of her misplaced sense of duty in the form of a terrifying vision (ch. XXVIII, loc. 6844). As Viola attempts to leaves the church, head spinning, she becomes suddenly faint, and blood appears before her eyes:

> Ah, pitiful God! She *dared* not cross that threshold, for—or was she dreaming?— there was blood upon it! Yes, *blood*; a stream which seemed to be oozing slowly under the door, stealthily moving forward to the steps till it dripped, dripped— (ch. XXVIII, loc. 6849)

Although Viola has finally come to a consciousness of her subject position and the futility of her devotion to duty, the narrative represents this not as the simple solution to her painful and unjustifiable position. Viola's horrific vision of blood after she realizes her sense of duty has been misplaced is an indictment of the religious system that trains women to self-sacrificial duty and then exacts painful punishment when they attempt to escape from it. A coming-of-consciousness to the futility of duty and self-sacrifice does not here represent Viola's escape, because her entire nature and selfhood have been violently fit into a mold that the novel represents as impossible to reshape. Indeed, as her friend Sibella hopelessly puts it, women who have internalized the social principles of duty and self-sacrifice are "ready-made martyr[s]" who "nothing can save" (ch. XXVII, loc. 6400), because one cannot "rescue individuals who expiate the sins against Reason of the forefathers of the race" (ch. XXVII, loc. 6395). Instead, *The Wing of Azrael* sets up the need for a transformation of the conventional religious, education, and economic systems that indoctrinate this false moral ideal. Caird represents Viola's coming of consciousness as not the solution to social transformation but only one portion of the structural social reform that must include a completely altered education system. Although Viola has finally realized the futility of duty, she is still conditioned to duty and self-sacrifice because she has been "brought up in such a manner as to make her at once intensely sensitive and intensely conscientious" (ch. XXVII, loc. 6399). The narrative thus represents the trajectory of Viola's life as contingent on the social condition of her education and upbringing, which are impossible to escape.

Despite the fact that Viola has been conditioned to duty and self-sacrifice, she nevertheless feels she can no longer throw away all hope of happiness simply because of

her "store of 'principles,'" (ch. XXIX, loc. 6960) and she eventually decides to leave her

marriage, accompanied by her childhood friend, Henry Lancaster, who has professed his

undying love for her. Soon after she makes this realization, Viola encounters Sibella

Lincoln, a woman who herself has recently left a coerced inegalitarian marriage much

like Viola's own. At this point Caird offers a glimpse of the possibilities of female

comradeship and partnership as a solution for social change:

> Perhaps Sibella saw or divined her feelings, for she sat quietly down on the shingle
>
> by her side and began to talk. She spoke with personal reference, but with a subtle
>
> implication of comradeship which touched Viola's loneliness, as the glow of the
>
> fireside is welcome to one shivering and belated. Then, more fancifully, she spoke
>
> of the sea, of its perpetual variety, its endless range of expression and meaning. She
>
> went on to speak about the down country inland, contrasting it with the tame fields
>
> and pastures among which she had spent her childhood and married life. Viola grew
>
> interested, and the more Sibella told her, the more breathlessly interested she
>
> became. There was a strange resemblance to her own experience in the story Sibella
>
> told. She too had been strictly and watchfully brought up; she too had begun life
>
> with a store of "principles"—enough (Sibella said) to stock the Bench of Bishops.
>
> Before half-an-hour had passed, Viola was speaking as she had never before spoken
>
> to a human being; her cheeks were flushed, her eyes burnt with excitement. (ch.
>
> XXIX, loc. 6954-6962)

Sibella's story, so similar to Viola's own, validates her experience, making her feel as

though what she has felt and understood is genuine, meaningful, and significant. In a kind

of psychological opposite to gaslighting, Sibella sheds light on the truth of Viola's

experience, affirming her understanding that it is indeed real. Gently nudged by Sibella's sympathetic truth-telling, Viola opens up into the warm light of friendship and truth. Interestingly, it is Sibella's depiction of the landscape, particularly the wild, freely moving sea, that first draws Viola's attention and sympathy. Throughout the novel Caird employs the sea as a symbol for women's liberty and independent selfhood, a compelling and occasionally "wicked" draw (ch. XVII, loc. 4257). When Viola ventures on a forbidden sea trip with Harry, for instance, she soon feels that she must put an end to the trip because of her fear of social exclusion and judgment: "Why are you talking like this and making me feel so wicked?" she questions Harry. "What would my mother say to it? . . . Mr. Lancaster, please take me home" (ch. XVII, loc. 4270). The sea, which both attracts and repels Viola, is here drawing her in, with Sibella's help, to an alternate life of freedom.

The location and description of the visual landscape at the moment when Viola meets Sibella further illuminate Caird's vision for an alternative to the bleak, restrictive life of women. Their meeting occurs just below a cliffside-pathway on a narrow stretch of sand between the sea and cliff, where "for centuries the sea had beaten, just as to-day, on the crumbling coast" (ch. XXIX, loc. 6921). The location here signifies both the limited social space available to women for even a simple discussion of an alternative to socially-constructed gender roles, and the glacial pace of social change. Yet despite the limited space and the slow rate of change, the narrative also offers hope in the person of Sibella, who emerges from the cliffs enveloped in shades of scarlet and gold. In contrast to Caird's earlier description of Viola's vision of blood, at this stage, the narrative links the blood-red images that surround Sibella to beauty, light, and power:

Deeper and deeper grew the blood-red stain upon the waters; and the land seemed

to have caught fire. The swiftest cloud-streaks were overtaken, and their cool white

turned to gold. At the wet wave-line upon the sand a figure clad in red [Sibella] was

slowly strolling, stopping now and again with swift movement to snatch some

feathery sea-weed from the tide. (ch. XXIX, loc. 6939)

Whereas Viola had fainted in horror at the earlier appearance of blood on the threshold of

the church, at this stage, the blood-red sea fades into white and then gold, symbolizing

the appearance of blood as but a mirage—a play of sunlight on the water. Sibella's

association with fire suggests a destructive, renewing power, and her action—snatching

seaweed from the tide—seems to indicate a retrieval of new knowledge from the depths

of the wildly changing sea. Both thus indicate the potential for social change. The

narrative again suggests the importance of partnership and comradeship as critical to

social transformation. Indeed, Sibella's offer of sympathetic comradeship soon becomes

the means by which Viola is able to formulate a plan of escape, though not without

inevitable social scorn and exclusion. Sibella will entertain Philip while Viola escapes to

France with Harry by sea, since Philip can easily be seen in Sibella's presence without

risking any social judgment due to the sexual double standard.

The narrative's focus on female comradeship as a possible solution for social

change becomes more apparent later in the narrative when Viola's friend Adrienne

confronts Sibella about the advice she has given to Viola for escaping her marriage.

Adrienne believes that marriage is a "most sacred duty" (ch. XXX, loc. 7181) and cannot

be revoked for any reason, and for a few moments the two sit "bandying words" (ch.

XXX, loc. 7222) until Sibella abruptly shifts the conversation to discuss the importance

of sisterhood instead:

> We forget our sisterhood in foolish opposition . . . We *are* sisters . . . we are only separated because we can't see clearly into one another's minds. That is all. It is only dimness of sight that holds us back . . . you deny our common nature which makes us sisters against our will. We stand as the poles asunder; but that is only in words, believe me! We are one, we are human. (ch. XXX, loc. 7222-8)

After introducing the concept of sisterhood, Sibella goes on to tell Adrienne a metaphoric parable that describes in visionary language the need for unity among women in order to advance social change. I quote the scene at length because the motifs of love and darkness combine here to leave the reader little doubt of Caird's focus on the darkness that comes from and results in social exclusion and separation:

> "We stand shivering between two eternities; we came out of the darkness, and we see the darkness waiting for us a little way ahead—such a little way! And we have to pick our steps among rough stones, and our feet bleed, and we try to roll some of the stones away! And they are too heavy for us, and we are lonely, and the Place of Stones where we toil is very bleak, and we cry out that we must have love and hope or we die. And love comes, and our hearts leap up, and every stone at our feet breaks into colour, and every wave and every dewdrop gleams. Then a cloud comes into the sky, and dims all the glory, and love goes away shivering; and with him go joy and sympathy and brotherhood hand in hand. But we yearn after him still, and we seek for him all our days. This is your story and mine. There is no real difference between them. Opinions, things of rule, haunt us like Phantoms, and we bend the knee to them, and let the incense that they swing before our faces mount to

the brain and deaden it. And when, in our wanderings, we come across a fellow-

struggler, the Phantoms crowd round us and shake him off, saying 'This creature is

accursed; do not commune with him; *us* he will not acknowledge. Touch him not,

accost him not, he is no brother of yours;' and we pass on. But our hearts bleed and

cry out for the love and the brotherhood that we turn from. We want it, we droop

and pine for it; but the Phantoms assure us that all is well, and we try to crush down

our longings, and march on obediently, Phantom-led, into the darkness' . . . each

one has his life-struggle to go through, and death to face; each with his attendant

Phantoms must pass from mystery into mystery. Believe me, only the Phantoms

hold apart soul from soul." (ch. XXX, loc. 7230-7244)

Sibella's parable describes the difficulty that women face in their attempts to achieve

social change. The path to an alternate future, paved with heavy, rough stones, can only

be tolerated with the bright light of love, which both comes out of and in turn results in

brotherhood, sympathy, and joy. In contrast, the phantoms of conventional opinion and

law divide and separate. The "phantoms" that represent the force of conventional

"opinions" and "things of rule" mask the truth, preventing those relationships from

forming, and breaking apart the sympathetic comradeship that Sibella suggests will lead

to freedom and truth.

 Although Adrienne does not respond favourably to the sentiment that Sibella

expresses—asserting, "the differences between us have little to do with what you call

Phantoms . . . [they] represent black and white, positive and negative, good and evil!"

(ch. XXX, loc. 7252)—the narrative nevertheless underscores the possibility of

fellowship and comradeship as solutions for social change. If only women could band

together and banish the phantoms, they might be able to roll the stones away together, and experience love rather than social isolation. This sentiment also appears at the end of Sibella and Adrienne's discussion, when Caird again uses a visionary language to depict the possibilities of social change and the barriers to their realization:

> [Sibella] took up, in evident absence of mind, the pen that lay beside her on the table, and began to trace outlines on a scrap of paper. A procession of grim but shadowy forms followed close upon the heels of a more substantial figure, and from every side troops of shadows crowded up out of the dimness in attitudes of command, or exhortation, or entreaty, or sadness. Far away was a range of high-peaked mountains, but the shadows were very near and loomed large, so that only now and then for a brief moment could the human being, so close beset, catch a glimpse of the eternal hills, and when he did so, the vision was so strange and new and startling that he felt afraid, and thought that he had gone mad. Then the shadows bent down comfortingly and closed up their ranks, till the vision was forgotten. (ch. XXX, loc. 7254-7260)

In this instance, Caird represents the ideal future as a distant mountain range of "eternal hills"[91] that signifies a new order of society, yet it is unreachable while the community of women in the present remain apart. These figures obscure the ideal future with shadows, to the point that when it is glimpsed, "the vision was so strange and new and startling that he felt afraid" (ch. XXX, loc. 7258). With these visions, Caird reiterates the need for an ideal egalitarian future, while condemning the current conditions that restrict women's freedom: this ideal future cannot be reached while women remain limited to their

---

[91] Sibella has earlier in the narrative described this as a "splendor[ous] . . . vision . . . a green land and fair cities beyond the desert" (ch. XXVII, loc. 6463))

circumscribed roles as wives or mothers, and separated from each other by false

conceptions of morality.

The novel climaxes as Viola waits impatiently for the day of her escape to arrive.

When her husband catches her trying to leave and attempts to detain her with the veiled

threat of marital rape,[92] she stabs him with the paperknife Harry had given her—the

symbol of her attempt to grasp her selfhood as a woman, and not a wife. Yet Philip's

death does not bring Viola's freedom. Instead, the narrative denies that Viola can achieve

freedom through destroying another being, instead accompanying Philip's death with the

"moan and lamentation" of the sea (ch. XXXVIII, loc. 9417). After Harry arrives to

discover Viola standing over her husband's body with the knife in hand, he shrinks from

her in horror. In turn, Viola gives the "cry of a spirit hurled from its last refuge, cut off

from human pity and fellowship, cast out from the last sanctuary of human love" (ch.

XXXVIII, loc. 9467) and flees to the "pitch-black, rayless, impenetrable darkness" of the

sea (ch. XXXVIII, loc. 9681). At this point, the sea—which had earlier signified the

potential for freedom, representing the key to Viola's achievement of independent

identity—instead denies both her freedom and selfhood as she is separated from those

around her due to her destructive act. This is clear from the description of the chapter title

("Darkness"), the "lamentation" of the wind (ch. XXXVIII, loc. 9417), and the inky

blackness of the sky, which has entirely blocked out the moon. While the novel

represents individual freedom coming out of and resulting in closer connection and

---

[92] Earlier in the narrative Philip insists that he will "exact what is due" (ch. XXXIV, loc. 8457) with reference to an heir that Viola has not produced. At this juncture, he kisses her against her wishes, with the implication that he will do more: "[Philip] advanced quickly and took her in his arms, bending down to kiss her as she struggled violently to free herself. . . . overcoming her frantic resistance, he kissed her long and steadily on the lips, partly because it pleased him to do so, partly it seemed, because it tortured her. 'Don't touch me, don't touch me, I tell you, or I shall go raving mad'" (ch. XXXVIII, loc. 9359-83).

comradeship, it cannot occur in the absence of comradeship, fellowship, or love: it cannot occur with an act of destruction.[93]

Although Caird intends the reader to experience the horror of Viola's murderous act, she does not indict Viola herself but instead the whole system of society that has trained her for the sole role of wife and mother, demanded she sacrifice her freedom for her family's comfort, and then dictated she remain in a torturous marriage in the service of false dutiful ideals. This becomes a means by which to understand the conclusion of the novel, when Harry attempts to "save" Viola as she flees.  In response, Viola replies "But I can't be saved . . . don't you see? I am lost and cast out forever . . . I must go alone" (ch. XXXVIII, loc. 9480). Viola understands that she will be "cast out" from conventional society and cannot be saved due to the social circumstances that have resulted in her murderous act, but she also perpetuates her own demise, "cut[ting] herself off from her fellow-creatures, even from those who would face all risk for her. She seemed to be thirsting for punishment" (ch. XXXVIII, loc. 9620). Although she remains "unrepentant" for killing her husband, she nevertheless cannot exempt herself from the sense of sacrificial duty to which she has been trained, and is thus impossible to save, because she cannot save herself. This idea is emphasized again in the last paragraph of the chapter, as Harry wanders in darkness at the edge of the sea, searching for a trace of Viola:

> And as he ran, the stern, terrible words which Sibella had so often quoted were
> rhythmically ringing, clear and hard as a peal of bells, in his memory, "But the goat
> on which the lot for Azazel fell shall be presented alive before Jehovah, to make

---

[93] This is a response to anarchism's "propaganda by the deed." Although Caird embraced some aspects of anarchism she very clearly rejected any and all violent actions.

atonement with him, to let him go to Azazel in the wilderness." (ch. XXXVIII, loc. 9654)

The allusion to the sacrificial lamb of Judah—the lamb of death—here is a clear parallel to the treatment Viola has endured through the course of the novel, and Caird means for the reader to understand that Viola is the scapegoat on which society's lot has fallen. Although society purports to protect its weakest members, Viola cannot be saved either with help from Harry or Sibella, nor can she save herself. The society that has trained her to duty and sacrifice has come to exact its due.

By depicting the injustices that women face in a society that trains them for marriage, motherhood, and nothing else, Caird identified the need for a complete alteration in the education, economic, and social systems that circumscribe their identity. Caird understood that a systemic transformation of society was needed to alter inegalitarian Victorian sexual and social relations—and not simply a transformation of the individual. While Caird certainly advocated for the individual rights of society's weakest members, portraying the importance of comradeship, fellowship, and love as the first steps in the achievement of social change, she simultaneously understood that the whole of society must shift its moral judgement and the educational practices that restrict women to a life of maternity and motherhood, and give them no options for autonomy. According to Caird, individual action is not sufficient to solve a complete social problem. In order to transform social relations, women must band together in comradely solidarity; only then might they reach their feminist ideals. As we will see in the next chapter, Henrietta Müller would attempt to articulate and implement these feminist ideals through the medium of the *Women's Penny Paper.*

Chapter III

Henrietta Müller, the *Women's Penny Paper,* and the "Spirit of Camaraderie"

In early spring 1888, Frances Henrietta Müller wrote a pair of letters, one to Olive Schreiner and one to Karl Pearson, explaining her recent resignation from the Men and Women's Club.[94] In her letter to fellow club member Olive Schreiner, Müller expresses her disappointment in the direction the club had taken:

> I have decided that the Club is a piteous failure. The men lay down the law, the women resent in silence and submit in silence . . . there is no debate at all . . . the less men have to do with women the better for women . . . men are like gardeners who have nailed & pruned & clipt women into fantastic shapes like this [a little stylized sketch of a tree]. They can't help it, & therefore the *only* chance for a woman to find out what her own shape is, is for her to grow *alone*, according to her own sweet will, under the open ske [sic] of Heaven. (6 April 1888)

Dismayed by a repeated pattern of male members' dominance and female member's resentful submission, Müller suggested instead the need for women's growth, alone, under the "open ske [sic] of Heaven"—a space in which women might discover their own individual selves and agency. Müller's letter to Karl Pearson, the founder of the Club, written just a week before, similarly asserts the need for a female-centred space:

> [The Men and Women's Club] has become worse than useless to me, I hope to start a rival club for discussing the same class of subjects, but no men will be admitted—you will say 'this is prejudice,' I will not stop to deny it. I will merely say that in my club every woman shall field a voice, and shall learn how to use it;

---

[94] She had joined three years before, in 1885.

it matters not in the first instance what her opinion may be, it does matter very

much that she should learn to express it freely and fearlessly. (29 March 1888)

Echoing Emma Brooke's earlier assertion that women must "be allowed distinctly to

work out for themselves their own idea of what their duty and ideal is," these letters

confirm Müller's desire for a female collective in which women might find their

individual voices (14 March 1886).

Müller's letters give another example of how feminists engaged with, responded

to, and mobilized both within and outside male-dominated social networks as they

attempted to advance the cause of women. Müller herself had come to believe the space

for transformation in the relation between the sexes could not occur in a secret, mixed-

sex debate club. For her, the Men and Women's Club had failed in its mission to

"become a little centre" from which it could accomplish some degree of "influence [on]

the outer world" (Pearson "The Woman Question" 20). Despite its stated desire to discuss

and debate "all matters in any way connected with the mutual position and relation of

men and women," with the intent that they would eventually be able to put these ideas

into practice ("Men and Women's Club Minute Book"), Müller believed the Club had

missed in its attempts to either discuss or institute any kind of sexual reform—and

particularly, any egalitarian comradeship between the sexes. Instead, the Club reproduced

the inegalitarian relations between the sexes they had desired to alter, as the men

dominated the discussion, contributing their own ideas about the Woman Question and

failing to allow women's voices to be heard. This led Müller to seek an alternative

female-centred space. She believed that only by creating these spaces would women

become active agents in the process to achieve social change.[95]

Müller's desire for a female-centred space in which "every woman shall field a voice," manifested itself—just six months later—in the establishment of the *Women's Penny Paper,* the first general interest newspaper in Britain written by and for women (Doughan and Sanchez 13).[96] While women like Mona Caird and Emma Brooke authored single-voiced works of non-fiction and fiction, Müller facilitated the creation of a polyphonic space for many women's voices, including her own. Born as a result of the association-based social reform culture of the early 1880s, the *Women's Penny Paper* functioned as a means by which women could further connect to each other and advance their feminist ideals from outside of male-dominated social spaces. Drawing on the network of women Müller had encountered through her work across various clubs and organizations—but especially those like-minded women involved with the Women's Printing Society, the *Westminster Review* and the Men and Women's Club—Müller facilitated a space for articulating and enacting her feminist ideal, which she believed was a crucial component of accomplishing broader social change. In addition to her efforts advocating for social change through other groups, campaigns, boards, and organizations, Müller's desire for female camaraderie was given life anew in the medium of a female-centred paper.

---

[95] The project was certainly woman-centred, yet it was not a sex-exclusive project. Although it served as a means by which women could express and articulate their feminist ideals, it simultaneously welcomed male allies. As Tusan points out, the correspondence section included a number of letters written by male readers, one of whom styled himself "A Man who Believes in Women," who wrote to advocate for female chairmen at women's meetings, claiming that the men who hold these positions in effect impeded social and political progress (113). The paper also showcased the writing of progressive men in its reviews section. For instance, one of the first reviews that appeared in the paper was of Edward Carpenter's *England's Ideal*. The paper clearly welcomed male supporters, but did not want men to dominate and "silence" women's voices (Müller to Schreiner 6 April 1888).

[96] It is difficult to know with any certainty why Müller abandoned the idea of the club, but we do know that in the late 1880s, several women's clubs were either in the process of establishment, or had already been in existence for some years. Meanwhile, there were no general interest women's papers, which had the potential both to bring together women and serve a propagandizing function.

While Emma Brooke and Mona Caird's contributions to the Woman Question in the late-nineteenth century have come under increased study in the last four decades, Müller's involvement with and contribution to the sexual and social politics of London in the late-nineteenth century has received scant attention. Part of the reason for this is undoubtedly her long absence from England from 1892 until her death in 1906. But it is also in part because of the continued neglect of the significance of feminist periodical culture to the radical social movements of the late-nineteenth century. Despite the contributions of scholars like Maria Dicenzo, Lucy Delap, Michelle Tusan, Martin Conboy, Adrian Bingham, and others, who have drawn on the press as an integral part of the making of histories in questioning the reliability of the standard historical source and offering a more complex account of the history of the era, the woman-centred press remains marginal to social reform movement histories of the era.[97] Studies such as Mark Hampton's *Visions of the Press in Britain, 1850-1950* (2004), Martin Conboy's *The Language of Newspapers: Socio-Historical Perspectives* (2010), Andrew King's and John Plunker's *Victorian Print Media: A Reader* (2005), while they have contributed to the recovery of both mainstream and boutique periodicals in the Victorian press, pay little attention to women's periodicals. Contemporary and past scholarship in the field of periodical studies, media studies, and media history have paid little attention to the importance of Müller's *Women's Penny Paper* in facilitating a network of women from which to mobilize feminist agitation, which later resulted in a number of different single-issue campaigns, including the women's suffrage movement. Despite discussions about

---

97 See, for instance, Maria DiCenzo with Lucy Delap and Leila Ryan, Feminist Media History: Suffrage, Periodicals and the Public Sphere (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Michelle Tusan, Women Making News: Gender and Journalism in Modern Britain (Urbana and Chicago: The University of Illinois Press, 2005); Martin Conboy and Adrian Bingham, "Journalism and History: Dialogues," Media History 19.1 (2013); Martin Conboy, Journalism: A Critical History (London: Sage, 2004).

the proliferation of the periodical press in this period—including publications ostensibly directed towards narrow and specialized readerships—women's periodicals are still marginalized in the media histories of the era.

Müller's neglect has been further compounded as a result of the suffrage-focus of existing histories of the women's movement. With few notable exceptions, histories of the woman-centred press tend to remain focused on the single-issue journalism of the women's suffrage campaign, or the organizationally-affiliated newssheets of organizations like the Women's Liberal Association. The *Women's Penny Paper*, which began with no organizational affiliations at all, has thus occupied a peripheral status, even while feminist recovery efforts have unearthed several woman-centred periodicals within late-Victorian culture, including both the *Women's Penny Paper* and *Shafts*. Thus, despite the fact that David Doughan and Denise Sanchez have characterized the *Women's Penny Paper* by its "lively and uncompromising feminism," considering it "the most rigorous feminist paper of its time," (13) no study has been conducted on the paper, its role in connecting feminist activists to each other to promote the cause of women, and the significance of its founder's vision. As a result, the particularities of Müller's contribution to the socio-historical milieu of late-nineteenth century Britain has been relegated to footnotes focusing on the importance of her dissenting feminist voice in the meetings of the Men and Women's Club, or her contribution to women's employment through her participation on the London School Board.

While these are indeed significant contributions, I argue here that Müller's contributions to the women's press in the form of the *Women's Penny Paper* represents her most significant contribution to late-nineteenth-century feminism, reflecting the

idealist-inflected feminism of the period, which was not a "backwater period" when the movement was forced to "snatc[h] at every encouraging symptom," but was instead a broad social movement that advanced a range of ideas and committed itself to structural social reform (Lady Frances Balfour, qtd in Rubenstein 158). It furthermore helps us redefine our conception of the political outside of the formalized institutional spaces of clubs and organizations like the Fabian Society, the Women's Liberal Federation, the Primrose League, the National Society for Women's Suffrage, and the (ostensibly unpolitical) Men and Women's Club. Under Müller's supervision, the *Women's Penny Paper* (27 October 1888-27 December 1890), which she later renamed *The Woman's Herald* (3 January 1891-23 April 1892), became an important node in an activist network that connected women to each other and raised public consciousness of the women's cause, providing evidence of the essential role of the newly-formed woman's press in the feminist movement for structural social reform. I focus my attention here on the *Women's Penny Paper* and the *Woman's Herald* under Müller's leadership from 27 October 1888-23 April 1892, which I contend formed a particular feminist readership that helped advance the idealist feminism of the period.

Aside from a few key exceptions, most recent articles and books mentioning the *Women's Penny Paper* discuss it in brief—in order to note that a particular Victorian woman was featured in the regular biography section, for instance—or only in relation to a canonical author, usually of novels, again privileging the fictional or creative form. Marina Cano-López, for example, in her 2014 *Victorian Periodicals Review* article "The Outlandish Jane: Austen and Female Identity in Victorian Women's Magazines," discusses the *Women's Penny Paper* in relation to Jane Austen's perceived role as a

"model of ideal femininity" (255). Cano-López argues that Austen's representation in late-nineteenth century periodicals like the *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine, The Girl's Own Paper,* and the *Women's Penny Paper* demonstrate that each of these periodicals, though "uneven" in their representation, were ultimately committed to advocating for conservative gender roles, and held up Austen as "the 'womanly' ideal" (263). Of the *Women's Penny Paper* Cano-López notes that while it was a "radical feminist publication," its representation of Austen "contains shades of more conservative ideology" (264). She cites examples of the advertisements—for "Improved Ventilated Refrigerators," for instance—on pages that juxtapose discussion of Austen to demonstrate that the paper was "dissonant" in its representation of women, and thus maintained an "antiquated model of femininity out of step with modern conceptions of the 'woman' reader" (264), which seems not to accord with the radical goals of Müller's feminist publication. Although Cano-López makes a significant contribution to the fields of women's literature and periodical studies, arguing for a shift in our understanding of Austen through an understanding of her representation in women's periodicals, her study teaches us little about the *Women's Penny Paper*. Focusing on Austen, it provides only a sampling of the periodical, which does not take into consideration the paper's representation of women throughout the course of Müller's editorship. That is to say, it does not consider the significance of the *Women's Penny Paper* as a feminist cultural object, nor the complexity of the *WPP*'s representation of feminism during Müller's time as editor.

Although Elizabeth Gray's 2012 *Victorian Periodicals Review* article "Poetry and Politics in The Women's Penny Paper/Woman's Herald, 1888-1893: 'One swift, bright

fore-gleam of celestial day'" similarly pays attention to the fictional or creative form that

appeared within the *Women's Penny Paper*, her nuanced examination of the context of

the periodical is a significant contribution to establishing the importance of the *Women's*

*Penny Paper* as a feminist cultural object. Her attention to "examining the physical,

symbolic, and historical contexts of a page on which a poem appears—as well as the

involvement of the editor and publisher, the marketing of the periodical, the target

readership, and other contextual factors" offers a significant contribution to periodical

studies and to the study of the *Women's Penny Paper* itself (135). Gray argues

convincingly for the importance of periodical poetry both within the *Women's Penny*

*Paper*—revealing editorial slant and the cultural politics of the paper as a whole—and

outside of it, where it "offer[s] clues as to the development of significant currents of

thought well beyond the domestic sphere" (134). Ultimately, Gray contends that

"contextualized readings of the verse . . . suggests complementary rather than conflicting

visions of female advancement," which helps to form the entire paper's "myth of

divinized femininity" and "sanctions and powers the appeal for political rights" (136).

While Gray advances our knowledge of the *Women's Penny Paper*, she misrepresents the

periodical as "first and foremost a women's suffrage advocacy publication, representing

the voice of the Central National Society" (136).[98] This contributes to scholarly

tendencies to overlook the broad, inclusive goals of the paper at the beginning of its run,

and the *Women's Penny Paper*'s initial intention to facilitate a community of women

---

[98] While the paper reported the activities of the Central National Society for Women's Suffrage from its beginnings, and by 1890 had made arrangements to publish weekly reports written by the society (and not the paper's staff), the *Women's Penny Paper* was never officially affiliated with the Central National Society for Women's Suffrage. Indeed, the regular reports were always followed by the disclaimer: "The Society is not responsible for the opinions expressed in any other part of the paper" ("Central National Society for Women's Suffrage" *WPP* 93 (2 August 1890): 489).

across both political and class divides.

Maria DiCenzo's 2010 article "Pressing the Public: Nineteenth-Century Feminist Periodicals and 'the Press,'" published in *Nineteenth Century Gender Studies,* also pays close attention to the context of the *Women's Penny Paper*, as well as several additional women's periodicals, emphasizing the importance of the *Women's Penny Paper,* the *Englishwoman's Review* and *Women & Progress* as feminist cultural objects that dissented from the mainstream periodical press in the Victorian period. DiCenzo contributes to a broader understanding of the significance of the *Women's Penny Paper* and others as she explores how each women's paper engaged in public, mainstream debate "in overt and strategic ways," in order to dispute the claims put forward in the mainstream periodicals of the late-Victorian period. DiCenzo employs the argument in Aled Jones's *Powers of the Press* to argue that "the newspaper press became . . . a crucial point of reference for reform group and movements" like the first-wave feminist movement in their struggle "to gain visibility and credibility in public debates." According to DiCenzo, the *Women's Penny Paper* "encouraged a critical perspective on current sources of news and information" by "exposing distortions and omissions in [mainstream] press coverage and practices." DiCenzo's argument for a renewed understanding of the significance of the women's press in providing "insights into the social, political, and cultural history of the period" is a substantial contribution to how we understand the *Women's Penny Paper* and its importance to the late-Victorian feminist movement. However, while DiCenzo's article is an important step in the exploration of the significance of the women's press in the late-Victorian period, it is beyond the purview of her article to examine the *Women's Penny Paper* beyond a description of one

or two key incidents which demonstrate how it engaged with the mainstream periodical press to draw attention to issues facing women.

Molly Youngkin's *Feminist Realism at the Fin de Siecle: The Influence of the Late-Victorian Woman's Press on the Development of the Novel*, has made an effort to rectify this trend. Through her treatment of periodicals like the *Woman's Herald* and *Shafts* (established just four years later than the *Women's Penny Paper*, on 5 November 1892), Youngkin argues that the feminist periodicals of the 1890s, particularly *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald*, articulated a consistent literary aesthetic that she calls "feminist realism," which "advocated realistic representation of women in fiction, especially representation of the difficult cultural conditions women faced and the triumphs of women over these conditions" ("Abstract"). This literary aesthetic, she contends, "privileged feminist consciousness over speech and action," thus "encourag[ing] authors to push the boundaries of traditional realism and anticipate the modernist aesthetic" ("Abstract"). Youngkin's book fills a gap in our knowledge of the late-Victorian feminist press and its influence on the novel, but it nevertheless still privileges the novel as a cultural form. Her chapters, for instance, make arguments for new readings of novels by Caird, Hardy, and Schreiner, which Youngkin contends cannot be understood unless read alongside the reviews in both *Shafts* and the *Woman's Herald*. While a significant contribution to our understanding of the form of the novel—which emerges, as Youngkin shows, alongside the feminist press—Youngkin does not examine the significance of Müller's vision for the paper, nor its important role as a central node in a network of reform-minded women, connecting women to each other and to the broader women's cause. Furthermore, Youngkin does not examine any other content of the periodical in

detail, aside from the portion of the paper concerned with fiction.

Michelle Tusan's *Women Making News: Gender and Journalism in Modern Britain* is another notable exception to the approach necessitated by the form of the article. Tusan's book examines in detail the trends in women's journalism from the early Victorian period, exploring the ways the women's press developed and expanded in Britain from its inception through to the 1920s. Tusan's study provides crucial information about the links between individual publishers, printers, and readers, demonstrating how seemingly disparate histories are in fact connected. She also details the significance of numerous periodicals like the *Women's Penny Paper* whose status as a political and cultural object has been overlooked. Tusan's informed examination of the *Women's Paper Paper*, explored in the larger context of women's reform culture, contributes to the recovery of the paper's significance. Furthermore, Tusan makes her case for the significance of women's periodical culture as a whole by examining it within the larger context of mainstream journalism. By drawing distinctions between women's political and periodical culture and mainstream political and periodical culture, Tusan makes clear the importance of women writing reform—what she calls the "woman-centred reform agenda"—in Victorian Britain (102). However, while Tusan's book advances knowledge of women's reform culture in Britain, she does not pay attention to the ways in which feminist writers of the late-nineteenth century were imbricated in several different organizations and print mediums advocating for social change—not just those related to periodical culture. Indeed, no scholar has examined in detail the particular variety of feminism advocated by Müller and the woman-centred network reading and contributing to the *Women's Penny Paper*.

As this chapter details, Müller's involvement in the overlapping networks of the association-based reform culture of late-nineteenth century London helped her imagine the possibility of a community of like-minded women who worked simultaneously and on multiple fronts to bring attention to women's subjugation, while uniting with other women on occasion for specific action. Through her creation of a female-owned and -operated newspaper that rejected gender and class-based exploitation, Müller facilitated the space for social action on a wide range of issues concerning women. Central to this space was Müller's vision for an alternative, cooperative feminist ideal—a "spirit of camaraderie" that would unite women across the political spectrum ("London School of Medicine for Women" *WPP* 1.1 (27 October 1888): 2). Like many of her contemporaries, Müller combined a range of progressive beliefs not clearly under the purview of any one political party.[99] In her editorials and articles that appeared on the pages of the *Women's Penny Paper*, she merged interests in evolutionary theory, sexual emancipation, and the cooperative movement, and built onto them an idealist feminism inflected with her unassailable belief in the possibility of social change. Rather than simply advocating for the vote, Müller saw the achievement of suffrage as merely one part of a total social equation. Like her trade unionist friend Emma Paterson, who unequivocally stated, "I don't think the vote the only panacea for all the sufferings of the weaker sex . . . I hope to induce Englishwomen to try whether they cannot help themselves, as men have done, by

---

[99] In her position as an elected member of the London School Board, Henrietta Müller stood as an Independent, not aligned with either the Progressive or Moderate parties. As Jane Martin suggests, "on the one hand [she was] too independently feminist, on the other [she] espoused more radical politics" (44). In the 1870s party organizations grew increasingly important in School Board elections, and by the 1880s, individuals often ran on either a Progressive or Moderate platform. Moderates tended to be aligned with the Conservative Party and the Anglican clergy, while Progressives included a range of Liberal opinion and policy, increasingly influenced by new Socialist groups (Martin 45). Despite her Independent platform, Müller aligned herself more often than not with progressive politics, and as a result was voted out of her position in the "progressive backlash" of 1885 (Martin 42). For more, see Jane Martin *Women and the Politics of Schooling in Victorian and Edwardian England* (Bloomsbury, 2006).

combination" (Paterson qtd. in Dilke 852), Müller worked on multiple fronts, advancing

a number of progressive ideals, at the heart of which was the transformation in the

relation between the sexes. Thus, while she gave priority to different campaigns over the

course of her life—and moved to India in the 1890s in order to further her feminist vision

among "the natives in the hills"—she continued to press for total social change until her

death on 4 January 1906 ("Obituary: Henrietta Müller" 6).

      The *Women's Penny Paper* provides an excellent example of how the feminism of

the late-Victorian period constituted itself as a network and worked through a campaign

of political hope that emphasized complete human emancipation through both radical

democracy and the preservation of individual choice. Regardless of differences of

opinion among the readership of the *Women's Penny Paper*, Müller believed in the

joining together of women across political and social divides to address the pertinent

issues of the period. Through the camaraderie ideal—the belief that women could and

would band together on the basis of their sex, putting aside political differences and class

position in order to advocate on behalf of all women—Müller believed that women

would work through multiple arenas, literary, political, and cultural, to advocate for the

transformation of British Society. The *Women's Penny Paper* was the expression of

Müller's vision. Where the middle-class, mixed-sex world of the Men and Women's Club

had failed, Müller believed her periodical, with its broader readership, would succeed: in

the venue of the woman's paper, as she expressed it in an interview to Cara E. De

Moleyns, women would "have a newspaper of their own through which to voice their

thoughts" (De Moleyns, 916); they would "field their voices, and learn how to use

[them]" (Müller to Pearson 29 March 1888).

If we understand the *Women's Penny Paper* as a means by which late-Victorian feminists articulated and then enacted their feminist ideals (which I explore in depth below), then the women's movement of the period should be likewise reconsidered in this light. Although the women's movement has been understood as a "fractured collectivity of groups and webs of affiliation marked by disagreement as much as by consensus" (Felski 147), with political action "in a faltering state of suspension" (Beaumont 97), in fact, the degree to which late-Victorian feminism constituted a network rather than a singular movement provided unique strengths and opportunities. The *Women's Penny Paper* is just one example of how the women's movement petitioned for the improved status of women: by informing its readers of women's multiple talents and capabilities, facilitating the articulation of their feminist ideals, and then by motivating women's actions to enact those ideals—both individually and on a broad social scale.

Before turning my attention to my analysis of the *Women's Penny Paper*, I first explore Müller's early networks at Girton, the Women's Printing Society, and the Men and Women's Club, which she would later draw on extensively to promote the women's cause. I then discuss her experience at the *Westminster Review*, which linked her to an additional community of women concerned with the Woman Question, as well as giving her the valuable publishing experience necessary to launch the *Women's Penny Paper*. Finally, I discuss how the *Women's Penny Paper* drew together the various overlapping networks to which Müller belonged, working on multiple fronts to connect its readers to each other and advance the cause of women. As I discuss in detail below, the paper first worked to *inform* its readers of the injustices women faced and of women's multiple abilities. Second, the paper worked to *facilitate* the self-discovery and self-expression of

women. Third, and finally, the paper worked to *motivate women's action*, both individually and collectively, in order to advocate for an alteration in women's subjugated state.

<u>Background: Henrietta Müller's Early Network</u>

Henrietta Müller was born in 1844 in Valparaiso, Chile, to a wealthy German businessman and an English mother. She spent "an unusually happy childhood" exploring the hills near the town of Valparaiso in her beautiful childhood home, where she also had the opportunity of observing "a good deal of masculine tyranny" (De Moleyns 916-917). When she was nine years old, her family left Chile, sailing from Cape Horn to Boston, and then on to London, where she was educated for two years. Her initial education was "not of the school," and in her early life she was taught by governesses ("Obituary: Henrietta Müller" 6; De Moleyns 916). Her family established itself permanently in London when she was eleven. A few years after arriving in England, Müller became "weary" of "the usual round of social duties as girls generally did then" and was "discontented with [her] idle life" (De Moleyns 916). She thus overcame "a great deal of difficulty and opposition" (De Moleyns 916) from her family and friends to become an early beneficiary of the new opportunities for study at Cambridge University, as "one of the early Girton students who when past girlhood eagerly embraced the opportunities for the higher education of women" (("Obituary: Henrietta Müller" 6). Despite opposition from her family, particularly her father, her mother subscribed to the Central Committee for Women's Suffrage as early as 1873, and thus Müller was, at least on her maternal

side, part of a feminist tradition. As a young girl, she "did not approve of the position which people seemed to consider it quite natural for women to occupy" (De Moleyns 917), but it took until she was twenty-one to for her to even begin "to realise the deep hold that this question [of women's role in society] had taken of [her]" (De Moleyns 917). Supplemented by her early education, Müller became fluent in French, Spanish, German, and Italian, and was competent in Latin and Greek, which would later aid in her efforts to advocate for the women's cause.

Müller's radical ideas about feminist social change continued to develop through the course of her education at Girton College, Cambridge. At the time, Girton College, along with Newnham College, was one of two higher educational institutions in England admitting women.[100] The admission of women into higher educational institutions in England had a formative impact on Müller's thinking about social change. She enrolled in Girton College when she was in her late-twenties in 1873—just four years after it was established by Emily Davies in 1869—and completed her education in Moral Sciences with Honours in 1877.[101] In October 1873, the college had just moved closer to Cambridge, from Hitchin to Girton, and, as a result, Girton students could more easily attend university lectures, and more freely mingle with their colleagues at Newnham. Müller was one of six new students admitted to Girton in the October 1873 term (Davies to Fitch, 27 May 1873, 402). During her time at Girton, Müller adopted a radical feminist perspective, abandoning the fundamentalist religiosity of her contemporaries, and "made

---

[100] University College London began admitting women just a few short years later, in 1878.

[101] The new tripos consisted of four groupings of subjects: History and Philosophy, Physics, Logic and Political Economy, and Ethics. As Pauline Phipps has pointed out, the Moral Sciences tripos gave women an equal opportunity with men, primarily because "neither [men nor women] had taken the subjects previously," and thus men did not have an advantage. In contrast, the Classics and Natural Sciences tripos contained numerous subjects men had previously studied in primary and secondary school (65).

a deliberate choice to devote herself, body, soul, and spirit to what was then the unpopular cause of women's emancipation" (De Moleyns 917). By the mid-1870s, the notion of "progress through the discoveries of natural science," was adopted by many professors at Cambridge, influenced by Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* and *The Descent of Man*, and extended from the field of science to philosophy to religion (Phipps 66). Professors Henry Sidgwick and Henry Fawcett, who taught both Newnham and Girton students, drew on the works of Mill, Seeley, and Spencer to argue for an alteration in the understanding of human history, drawing together secularism, evolutionary history, and revolutionary economics. Together these new understandings challenged the subordinate position of women in Victorian society.

While at Girton, Müller belonged to a community of women who together rejected patriarchal and religious authority. In her first year, Müller encountered and became friends with Malvina Borchardt[102]—who held German heritage in common with her—and who maintained "nonreligious, materialist" views (Phipps 71). In subsequent years she became friends with Hertha Marks (later Ayrton), a "heathen" of Jewish heritage, who, as a teenager, changed her name from Phoebe to Hertha after a heroine in an Algernon Swinburne's poem that criticized organized religion (Crawford 428; Sharp 57).[103] Aligning herself with the radical "Free-thought" camp of women that included

---

[102] Malvina Borchhardt entered in the same year as Müller, 1873, and attended until 1877, when she similarly completed her education in the Moral Science Tripos. She was the daughter of German physician and radical-liberal Louis Borchardt, who had affiliations with Marx, Engels, and Wilhelm Wolff, among other German exiles—though Marx described him as "a philistine liberal" (Henderson 285). After attending Girton, Borchardt taught at Hackney and Maida Vale High Schools, then became Headmistress of Devonport High School for Girls. She subsequently opened a hostel for women students in Gower Street (*Emily Davies: Collected Letters 1861-1875* n. pag).

[103] Hertha Marks Ayrton overlapped with Müller at Girton for one year. She began attending Girton in 1876, and attended until 1880, when she completed her degree in the Mathematics Tripos. Ayrton had came into regular contact with Girton students like Müller the year before she began her studies, while she was studying for her scholarship examinations in the fall of 1876. While at Girton, Ayrton joined Borchardt and

Borchardt, Müller vocalized her opposition to literal readings of the Bible, which she saw

as illogical, dogmatic, patriarchal and unscientifically-based (Phipps 76). While Müller

never rejected her Christian beliefs outright—she would later declare that "to further the

emancipation of women in every direction and in every land . . . [is] part of the Mission

of Christ in spite of what is advanced to the contrary" ("Our Policy" 1)—she nevertheless

opposed narrow interpretations of the Bible based on patriarchal dogma. If women were

to gain equal rights to men, Müller believed that women must learn *themselves* how to

read the Bible, rejecting masculine hermeneutics. Müller's opposition to patriarchal

religion drew the ire of some of her Girton contemporaries, including Constance

Maynard, who saw Müller's influence as a "corrupt[ing] power" (Phipps 76). Maynard,

who had taken to "red-hot Evangelizing" during Müller's first year at Girton, was the

leader of a significant anti-secularist and traditionalist religious faction that advanced the

"flames of hell" doctrine, preaching everlasting retribution (Phipps 77), and she described

Borchardt and Müller as her "arch enemies" (Phipps 71). Due to the influence of

Borchardt and Müller, Maynard started a "'private weekly Bible gathering' as a means to

block [Borchardt's and Müller's] control" (Phipps 71). Likely in part because of her

experience with Maynard, Müller later reflected that, during her time there, Girton still

attempted to mold female students along "narrow" lines—"the tone of the place is narrow

and there is a great want of . . . ab[ility] to talk with other people who have other ideas"

(De Moleyns 916). However, Girton marked the beginning of her activism on behalf of

---

Müller in the "non-religious" camp, and she and Müller were both members of a debating club at Girton. On one occasion, they debated each other on the topic, "It is expedient that, in the present state of civilization in England, the ties of blood relationship should involve some duties," for which Müller took the opposing stance (Sharp 57). After attending Girton, Ayrton became a distinguished scientist, awarded the Hughes Medal in 1906 for her work on electric arcs, the formation of sand-ripples in water, and the "Aryton Fan". She also supported the suffrage movement. She is believed to have inspired the character of Mirah in George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda*. For more on Hertha Marks Ayrton, see Evelyn Sharp *Hertha Ayrton 1854-1923: A Memoir* (Edward Arnold, 1926).

women, and the start of her attempts to draw together like-minded women in order to

promote the women's cause.  The network of intellectual women that Müller began to

establish at Girton would serve her well over the following two decades as she worked

and lived in London, advancing the feminist cause.

While still at Girton, Müller became involved with Emma Paterson's efforts to

advance women's trade unions (Crawford 429), and simultaneously contributed to the

founding of what was initially called the Women's Cooperative Printing Society, which

soon became the Women's Printing Society (Crawford 429).[104] Both organizations would

later become significant connections in her attempt to create a network of like-minded

women which Müller drew on to advance the feminist cause. Established in February

1876 by Emma Paterson (with the assistance of Emily Faithfull and Müller, among

others), the Women's Printing Society employed working- and middle-class women as

printers (Tusan "Performing Work" 103). It soon became "the most successful and long-

standing women's printing organization of the Victorian era" and beyond, operating

successfully until the early 1950s (Tusan "Performing Work" 115, 119).[105] Paterson

envisioned the Women's Printing Society as an institution created for women, by women,

and her radical model "went beyond anything imagined" by other cooperative modes at

the time (Tusan "Performing Work" 116). Although similar models had been employed

by socialist Robert Owen and others in the early nineteenth century, Paterson's society

---

[104] During the late 1880s and early 1890s, the Women's Printing Society was located at 21B Great College Street, Westminster SW ("Advertisements" *WPP* 42 *(*10 August 1889): 12)

[105] The Victoria Press, founded by Emily Faithful, was an important feminist precursor to the Women's Printing Society. The Victoria Press was the first to train female compositors and proofreaders (ODNB, under Emily Faithfull). The Women's Printing Society—with which Emily Faithfull was also associated through Emma Paterson's Women's Protective and Provident League—expanded this work, training female compositors, impositors, proofreaders, and also women who did "making up," which consisted of "making up the type into pages and placing them in the iron frame or chase for printing" (ODNB, under Emily Faithfull). The *Women's Penny Paper* also employed female journalists.

inverted not only class but also gender hierarchies. Using "combination" and cooperation, Paterson's feminist, community-based model hired female employees only, paying them at the same rates as men, while offering them shorter hours and a three-year apprenticeship (male employees at other shops received seven year apprenticeships). If the company had surplus profit, each employee received a bonus, adding five to seven percent to their regular wage. Shareholders, meanwhile, received no more than a five percent dividend, after profits were divided among employees. Paterson's model relied on a "network of supporters" including patrons and shareholders who agreed not just with the model but with the whole enterprise's goal of upending traditional class and gender roles (Tusan "Performing Work" 115). In Michelle Tusan's words, as the society attempted to "test the boundaries of class-based industrial gender hierarchy through the institutionalization of new theories of political economy," it created a "utopian model of reform based on a maternalist cooperative ideal" ("Performing Work" 105). The society not only helped women make inroads into a male-dominated marketplace, but it also facilitated the creation of a comradely community of women across divisions of politics and class. Although the nature of Müller's contribution is not fully known, it was likely in the form of patronage—as a director of the board and shareholder—due to her substantial wealth. By 1876, Müller was acting as a director of the firm, while Emma Paterson was the manager, a role which she maintained until her death in 1886 (Brake 684). Müller's participation in this venture would later help her imagine the possibility of a female-owned and -operated newspaper that rejected class and gender based exploitation, while advancing an alternative, cooperative feminist ideal. Müller's encounters with the cooperative movement contributed to her vision of social and cultural reform, which

continued to develop over the next decades through her encounters with the community of reform-minded women that expanded from Girton, into London, and beyond.

This network of women became increasingly important to Müller's advancement of feminist ideals, both facilitating and contributing to her creation of the first general interest woman's newspaper, and in turn spurring the creation of like networks of women intent on advancing the feminist cause. In other words, due to the growth of women's networks, more networks like them were created. To give just one example of how this network operated, Müller's relationship with Mary Stewart Kilgour was first established at Girton College when Kilgour began attending in October 1874. Kilgour took the Mathematical Tripos in 1878, and soon after moved to London. Just a few years later, in March 1882, Müller presided over a meeting to appoint a committee for establishing a hall of residence for women at University College London and the London School of Medicine for Women ("Obituary: Henrietta Müller" 6), for which Kilgour offered considerable assistance, and Annie Leigh Browne was appointed Honorable Secretary. Browne also had a connection to Müller through their mutual work with Emma Paterson and the Women's Printing Society. After meeting Emma Paterson at a Women's Suffrage Meeting in July 1874, Browne joined the movement for trade unions for women and the Women's Protective and Provident League, then became one of the directors of the Women's Printing Society when it was formed in 1876. The connections among these three women helped facilitate the formation of the committee to establish one of the first women's halls of residence in London. In Browne's words, "During the winter of 1881, I, in conjunction with my sister and Miss Kilgour, endeavoured to obtain support for the scheme [to establish women's collegiate residences] . . . [and] the encouragement given

by other eminent persons in the educational world was so great that a committee was formed, of which I became Hon. Secretary" ("Interview: Miss Browne" *Woman's Herald* 223 (4 February 1893): 7). Müller's position as a London School Board Trustee doubtless made her one of the "eminent persons in the educational world" who gave her support to the scheme ("Interview: Miss Browne" 7). The residence, which became known as College Hall, was first established at Byng Place, Gordon Square, at the end of 1882, with Miss Grove as the principal. In 1883 the Hall was enlarged with the addition of No. 2, Byng Place, and then three years later was established on a permanent basis as College Hall, London, in March 1886, and at that point accommodated thirty-three students.

After completing the requirements for her degree, Müller moved back to London, becoming a prominent activist for the cause of women and employing her many talents in the service of social reform. She became a popular speaker while she held elected office as a member of the London School Board (LSB) for Lambeth beginning in November 1879, which she undertook at the suggestion of her Girton Professor Henry Fawcett and Milicent Garrett Fawcett, coming out "head of the Poll for all London" (De Moyens 916). She presided over the first meeting of the new board ("Obituary: Henrietta Müller" 6). As one of the LSB's first female elected officials, she advocated for wage parity between genders and the abandonment of corporeal punishment. During this time she gained a reputation for herself as a devotee to the cause of women's emancipation, which in at least in one case drew the ire of her fellow board members. An account of her contribution to the workings of the Board by her fellow board member Thomas Gautrey, for instance, which is included among the portraits of "sixty-five notable members," reads as follows:

This lady was one of the early women on the Board. . . . She claimed to be an emancipated woman and 'freed from the old dogma which condemned every woman to be a wife and mother'. 'Old maids,' she said, 'used to be nerveless, inactive creatures; but now,' she added, the celibate woman is the object of envy not only to the poor deluded married woman, but to the men whose past had been ever robbed of the bloom which is life's sweetest gift.' Her sacred function as a femme libre was 'to protect the helpless and guard the young.' It cannot be said that this pioneer 'feminist' added much to efficient administration. By the end of her six years she seemed to tire, and faded out. (Gautrey, n.d. 73, qtd in Martin 44)

Here Gautrey mis-quotes at length from Müller's celebratory article on the spinster, "The Future of Single Women," which she wrote in the *Westminster Review* in January 1884. In so doing, he mocks Müller's attempts to advance the cause of women, inadvertently underscoring the difficulty women must have faced due to their minority position as female—and in Müller's case, feminist—members of the board. Her resignation from her position on the board in 1885, in addition to being the result of her defeat at the polls because of a "progressive backlash" in the elections of 1885 (Martin 42, 44), was likely in part because of the emotional fatigue of dealing with adversarial members such as these. Nevertheless, she continued to work "for the enfranchisement of women . . . unremittingly to the end of her life" ("Obituary: Henrietta Müller" 6).

During her time on the London School Board, Müller remained a highly active member of the political and intellectual networks in London, working tirelessly to advance the cause of women. The women in her social circle—many of whom she had

met while at Girton— became key collaborators as they together worked to advance

feminist social reform. In 1881, for instance, she helped to found the Society for the

Return of Women as Poor Law Guardians with her sister Eva McLaren[106] and Caroline

Ashurst Biggs.[107] Müller had been a Poor Law Guardian herself before her election to the

London School Board. Müller stood as the first secretary of the Society in 1881, then

Biggs took the position until her death in 1889. The non-partisan organization, which

worked to promote the election of women into local government board member positions

as Poor Law Guardians, was enormously successful in its first decade of work. The

society's membership grew as local societies sprang up in places like Southport and

Liverpool, and by May 1890, the society reported a total of thirty-six lady Guardians

elected in London, and one hundred elected in the council, which it claimed "accentuated

the advance in the position of women, which is occurring all along the line" ("Lady Poor

Law Guardians" WPP 80 (3 May 1890): 330). The society itself contributed "in no small

measure" to the "wonderful result of the change of public opinion from what it was, even

two years ago" ("Lady Poor Law Guardians" WPP 80 (3 May 1890): 330). In 1889,

Müller's mother hosted a conference of Poor Law Guardians at her home at 86 Portland

---

[106] Müller's sister Eva McLaren was a social reformer, suffragist, and political activist, who became the honorary treasurer of the Women's Liberal Foundation. Eva was Müller's closest sibling, with whom she often campaigned. Together, Eva and Henrietta were involved with numerous political and intellectual groups, and participated in organizing the *Women's Penny Paper*. Eva married Walter Stowe Bright McLaren, Liberal MP, on 18 April 1883. Eva McLaren worked tirelessly to pressure the Liberal party to adopt female suffrage as a point of policy in her various roles in the Women's Liberal Foundation, and with the help of her husband, who worked frequently to promote legislation that advanced the cause of women in his role as a Liberal MP.

[107] Caroline Ashurst Biggs, novelist, journalist, anti-slavery advocate, and women's suffrage campaigner, became an early Victorian feminist and advocate of women's social and political emancipation under the influence of her mother, Matilda Ashurst Biggs. During the 1860s she began actively campaigning for women's political freedom with Henrietta Taylor, Millicent Garrett Fawcett, Lydia Becker, and Helen Blackburn. In addition to founding the Society for Promoting the Return of Women as Poor Law Guardians, Biggs was also the editor of the *Englishwoman's Review* from 1870 until her death in 1889. Müller's connection with Biggs likely helped her envision a woman's general interest paper along broader lines than the narrowly suffrage focused *Englishwoman's Review*.

Place, with Müller's sister Eva McLaren presiding, which included at least 30 attendees, including female Poor Law Guardians themselves, members of the society, and their supporters ("Conference of Poor Law Guardians and Others at Mrs. Müller's" WPP 60 (14 December 1889): 90). Müller herself also attended the meeting. Among those present were several women who Müller had encountered through her activity in political, literary, and intellectual circles, including her friends and College Hall founders Annie Browne and Mary Kilgour, (mentioned above), physician and social reformer Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, Fabian and social reform advocate Louisa Temple Mallett (Mrs. Charles Mallett), and Emma Cons (alderman of the London County Council). Member of the society not present at the meeting included suffrage and educational advocate Emma Knox Maitland,[108] and long-time Society member Ellen McKee.

In November 1888, the Society for Promoting the Return of Women as Poor Law Guardians gave birth to a similar society—The Society for Promoting the Return of Women as County Councillors—in response to the passing of the Local Government Act of 1888, which provided for the establishment of County Councils and allowed a limited number of female householders to vote for them. In order to advocate for women's place on the councils, several members and supporters of the first Society migrated to the second (while maintaining support for the first), including Mallet, Browne, Kilgour and McLaren (Martin 70). Members of the organization thought that "great good would be achieved if women could take part in the Council Councils," given the evidence of the

---

[108] Emma Maitland (birth name Rees) was an early suffrage advocate and elected member of the London School Board for Marylebone from 1888-1891, then for Chelsea from 1894-1903. Little is known of her early life, but she was married at 18 to Frederick Maitland in 1862, and together they lived in Hampstead from the 1870s, at 18 Primrose Hill. Her suffrage activism and advancement of educational reform began after her six children were grown in the late 1880s, when her daughter could manage the household without her. With Emma Brooke, Maitland was a member of the Hampstead Liberal and Radical Association before becoming Vice-President of the Women's Liberal Federation in 1890.

"increasing number of women elected as Poor Law Guardians, and their usefulness" on such government boards ("Women County Councillors" *WPP* 85 (7 June 1890): 388). The Countess of Aberdeen (also the President of the Executive of the Women's Liberal Federation) was elected as first President, with McLaren as the first Honorary Treasurer, and Mallet and Browne as joint Secretaries of the Committee. The Society was renamed the Women's Local Government Society in 1893, and worked continuously to promote the eligibility of women to elect and serve on all local governing bodies on a non-party basis. Both these organizations included members from a wide range of political perspectives—liberal, conservative, and socialist—and were explicitly operated on a non-partisan basis. For instance, the Society for the Return of Women as Poor Law Guardians included a Fabian socialist (Louisa Temple Mallet), several liberals (including Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell), and women independent of party, like Müller herself, who ran on an independent platform. The high concentration of members from the Society for Promoting the Return of Women as Poor Law Guardians who moved on to work in this organization demonstrates how the feminism of the period constituted itself as a network, and worked to bridge several separate spheres of social action. Müller's work to draw attention to the work of this society within the pages of the *Women's Penny Paper* from 1888 onwards would further help form these networks of social reform-minded women and feminist activists as they entered woman-centred campaigns.

Just a few years later, in 1890, following the publication in the *WPP* of a letter by poet and social worker Warner Snoad,[109] who asked, "Why do not women combine to

---

[109] Warner Snoad, who later became the president of the Women's Progressive Society, was a writer, editor of *Work and Leisure*, and a social worker and reformer. In 1881 she was the co-founder of the Belmont Home for Poor Gentlewoman in London. She was of Quaker descent, the daughter of a widowed mother, the cousins of William Fowler, Liberal MP for Cambridge, and married to Frank Snoad (*The Woman's*

prevent the return of men, by supporting those candidates only who will vote for us?"

Müller also aided in the establishment of the Women's Progressive Society

("Correspondence" *WPP* 92 (26 July 1890): 475). The society's mandate advanced well

beyond the suffrage question—"any measure in favour of granting women the

parliamentary vote"—to broad social goals, including: campaigning "to put down sex

bias" and "class prejudice" and "to educate public opinion on the necessity for the

financial independence of all women" (qtd in Carlier 81). Indeed, Snoad defined the

Women's Progressive Society as "more social and educational than political", and

emphasized that it had "no class distinctions, believing that all classes alike need

assistance; men are welcome equally with women and our Society is cosmopolitan . . . we

are in touch with women all over the world" (qtd. in Carlier 80-1). The society gathered a

wide range of radical feminists together from around the world who held broad views on

women's emancipation, suffrage, economic independence, social purity, and sexual

reform. Members stressed the importance of the economic independence of women and

the need for marriage reform, discussing the theories of both Karl Pearson and Edward

Carpenter. The society included members such as the soon-to-be founder and editor of the

feminist periodical *Shafts*, Margaret Shurmer Sibthorpe, Laura Morgan-Browne, who

would become one of her contributors, Emily Massingberd, a suffragist and the founder

of the Pioneer Club, and Alice Grenfell, who became the honorary secretary of the

---

*Herald* 180 (9 April 1892): 3-4). Warner Snoad was a regular contributor to the *Women's Penny Paper*
throughout the course of its existence. She first contributed a poem "Mrs. Maybrick" on August 31, 1889
(*WPP* 45 (31 August 1889): 2), became a regular contributor to the "Correspondence" column, and wrote
several signed poems and articles for the paper. For more on Warner Snoad and the Women's Progressive
Society, see Carlier, Julie "A Forgotten Instance of Women's International Organising: The Transnational
Feminist Network of the Women's Progressive Society (1890) and the International Women's Union
(1893-1898)" in *Gender History in a Transnational Perspective: Networks, Biographies, Gender Orders*
eds Schonpflug, Daniel and Oliver Janz (2014), and "Interview: Mrs. Warner Snoad" *The Woman's Herald*
180 (9 April 1892): 3-4).

Women's Progressive Society. In 1893, members of the Free Women's Association in France, the Association for Women's Solidarity in Brussels, and the German Women's Association affiliated with the Women's Progressive Society, and it promoted several of key members of these associations into vice-presidential roles, including German radical feminist Lina Morgenstern, socialist and feminist writer Brune Sperani (Beatriz Speraz), Henrik Ibsen, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton.[110]

These are just some of the organizations Müller helped found or joined during this time—some that drew together men and women, and others that relied on women alone. She was also member of the managing committee of the Society for Promoting the Employment of Women from 1880 until at least 1892. Throughout the 1880s, with her mother, she was a member of the National Vigilance Association (NVA) and the Personal Rights Association (PVA), which both campaigned against the sexual exploitation of women and girls. However, while the NVA demanded the closure of brothels, the PRA expressed concern about the double standard implicit in any closures, which would, they pointed out, unequally cause hardship for women more than for men (Bland 101-2). Müller resigned from the PVA in 1888, after disagreeing with its characterization of birth control pamphlets as "vicious literature" and because of its zeal for closing brothels (Bland 111). In 1891, she was the hostess of a conference of the Ladies' National Association for the Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act, and in 1892 she held a peace meeting at her home. During this time she also resolved to undertake "the novel and unusual resolution not to pay my taxes as a protest against being denied the right to vote,"

---

[110] Julie Carlier notes that the network established by the Women's Progressive Society "clearly shows an overlap between socialist and so-called 'bourgeois' feminists" and that the key to their overlap was "the conviction that the economic independence of women was a fundamental prerequisite for their emancipation" (82).

as a result of which "the Women's Suffrage Cause had a splendid boom in the papers"

(De Moyens 916).[111] Throughout the 1880s, while advocating for material changes to the

lives of women in the form of their advancement in politics, education, and employment,

Müller remained committed to the women's suffrage cause, preparing lectures on

women's enfranchisement and taking the platform at various events throughout England.

In the 1880s she joined the National Society for Women's Suffrage, and following the

split in 1888, became a member of the Central National Society for Women's Suffrage in

1889.[112] On 4 November 1880, she spoke at the Grand Demonstration in favour of

women's suffrage at Colton Hall, in Bristol. On 27 February 1882, she spoke at the

Sheffield Grand Demonstration with Viscountess Harberton, Eliza Sturge, Miss Corbutt,

and Lydia Becker. During this time she was a regular speaker at various venues including

local suffrage meetings and London liberal and radical clubs. In 1889, she signed the

Declaration in Favour of Women's Suffrage.

     Müller also became involved in a variety of single-issue campaigns. On 22

August 1885, following the passage of the Criminal Law Amendment Act (which, after

---

[111] Like Gandhi, who attended law school in London from 1888-1891 and was heavily influenced by Thoreau's "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience" (1849), Müller may have been influenced by Thoreau not to pay her taxes.

[112] The Central National Society for Women's Suffrage is the name given to the remaining faction of the National Society for Women's Suffrage, after the break-away faction led by Millicent Garrett Fawcett left to form its own group in 1888 (confusingly called the Central Committee of the National Society for Women's Suffrage). Müller affirmed the group's annual report in 1889 that suggested the need for women to band together with "political and social organizations of all shades of opinion" because "it is by the cooperation of organizations as well as individuals that the Suffrage movement will be advanced" (qtd in Crawford 103-104). As such, the organization pursued affiliation with other organizations, whose aim was not primarily to obtain women's enfranchisement, but who supported it in their policy. In practice, this meant that the Central National Society for Women's Suffrage affiliated with many Women's Liberal Associations in the belief that women's enfranchisement would be granted by a Liberal government. Women such as Eva McLaren (wife of Liberal politician Walter McLaren and sister to Müller), Jane Cobden, Laura Ormiston Chant, Mrs. Ashton Dilke, Dr. Kate Mitchell were members of this organization, while break-away faction members included Fawcett, Caroline Biggs, Maude Pember Reeves, Helen Blackburn, Isabella Ford, and others. Despite the split, the two factions would work together on a number of measures, including the Special Appeal Committee and Mr. Faithfull Begg's women's suffrage bill, which then paved the way for the formation of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies in 1897 (Crawford 104-5).

languishing for five years in the government house, had nearly been forgotten before

W.T. Stead drew attention to the problem in his "The Maiden Tribute of Modern

Babylon"), Müller led a contingent of the members of the Women Trade Unions and

employees of the Army Clothing Establishment, to demand rigorous enforcement of the

new legislation, which had raised the age of consent from 13 to 16, and made it a

criminal offence to abduct or procure girls for prostitution (Walkowitz 104-5). Unlike the

Contagious Diseases Act, which had criminalized female prostitutes alone, the Criminal

Law Amendment Act was seen by feminists to work against the sexual double standard.

The "enormous" demonstration to demand its enforcement was held in Hyde Park, and

was driven in large part by social reformers like Müller (Walkowitz 104) but, like many

single-issue campaigns of the late-nineteenth century, it drew on a wide range of

constituents from a variety of types of reformist organizations. Newspaper commentators,

as Judith Walkowitz has pointed out, characterized the protestors as "essentially a

working men and women's demonstration" ("The Press on the Demonstration" *PMG*

*Daily News,* 25 August 1885). Indeed, participants included feminists, trade union

advocates, socialists, Anglican bishops, nonconformist temperance advocates, and

radicals, among others. Members of the Ladies National Association for the Repeal of the

Contagious Diseases Acts, with which Müller would later become affiliated, arrived in

carriages dressed in sombre black, while Müller's contingent dressed in virginal white,

flying the banner "innocents will they be slaughtered" ("The Press on the Demonstration"

*PMG Daily News,* 25 August 1885).

  Like Olive Schreiner, Emma Brooke, and Mona Caird, Müller was, as Joy Dixon

has described her, "clearly an exceptional woman by late-Victorian standards," who was

involved in a range of social groups and organizations across the literary, political, and cultural spheres, all in order to advance the cause of women (174). The overlap of members in these organizations suggests a closely entwined network of radical feminist social reformers, committed to advancing the cause of women through involvement in various activities and organizations across political, social, and literary spheres.

By 1885, Müller's political, social, and literary activity had drawn the attention of intellectual Karl Pearson and his colleague, Elizabeth Cobbe, in their attempt to solicit female members to the Men and Women's Club.[113] Although Cobbe described Müller as a "man-hater," who was "one-sided," and "warped in her moral nature," because she felt Müller might pose a challenge if allowed to "set the tone" of the club, Müller was nevertheless asked to join, and readily accepted the invitation (Cobbe qtd in Bland 13). As detailed in Chapter I, Müller presented a paper in response to Karl Pearson's *The Woman Question* in October 1885 entitled "The Other Side of the Question," at the second meeting of the club. Like Emma Brooke and Olive Schreiner, Henrietta Müller drew on the idea that women had more to offer than simply propagating the human race: through the advancement of ethical ideals, women might change the course of humanity for the better. Müller's public response to Pearson at the Men and Women's Club drew the ire of Cobbe, who described her as paper as given "in the spirit of a rebel" ("Men and Women's Club Minute Book"). But Müller's full response to Pearson and others like him was her withdrawal from mixed-sex social reform groups like the Men and Women's Club to women-focused networks like those constituted around the *Women's Penny Paper*. As I contend in this chapter, Müller's feminist ideals for radical social reform

---

[113] Müller may have come into contact with Karl Pearson through her position as a writer for the *Westminster Review*. John Chapman, the editor of the *Review* from 1851, corresponded with Karl Pearson from the 1880s.

advanced within the *Women's Penny Paper*, both shaped by and shaping the feminism of the period.

After joining then abandoning the Men and Women's Club in the 1880s, Müller founded *The Women's Penny Paper* in 1888 "to further the emancipation of women in every direction and in every land," bringing female occupations, education, and suffrage to the front of the public's attention, while simultaneously staging public protests through her political activism (De Moleyns 916). Müller edited the *Women's Penny Paper* during the whole of its run from 27 October 1888 until 3 January 1891, and maintained her role as editor when the paper changed its name to *The Woman's Herald* thereafter. After 23 April 1892 she passed off the reigns to her sister Eva Maria McLaren and the Woman's Liberal Federation in order to travel to India to live "as a native among the natives in the hills" ("Obituary: Henrietta Müller" 6).

Müller's frustration with the mixed-sex Men and Women's Club led her to establish a women's-only venue for raising the public's consciousness of the feminist cause. As a central node in a network of social-reform minded women, the *Women's Penny Paper* was focused both internally on connecting women to each other across political and class divides, but simultaneously worked to speak back to the male-dominated social, political, and cultural institutions of the period. Although not without its failures, the paper facilitated a radical feminist community that connected women to each other because of their common goal of advancing the woman's cause. A large part of its success relied on the premise of a particular feminist practice: the idea that women could and would join together for the cause, putting aside "petty" differences of political and class affiliation to advocate on behalf of women's issues. Despite Müller's belief that

the Men and Women's Club had not realized a fellowship ideal—which had been held by

the female club members and associates who had hoped that that men and women could

join together across sex to advocate for women's issues—Müller renewed this vision,

giving it a new focus in the comradely relationships among women themselves.

Under Müller's editorship, the *WPP* advanced and helped to facilitate a particular

variety of feminism: an idealist feminism characterized by its commitment to structural

social change. Embracing an optimistic vision for social progress that touched on

numerous issues across political divides, idealist feminism was a radical struggle for

social transformation and a new utopian order that sought to transform politics,

education, society, and the individual, insisting on alterations in both private life and the

public community. Not content to work on merely one aspect of the Woman Question, the

*Women's Penny Paper* combined ideas from a range of political perspectives, giving

voice to the idea of complete social reform that advocated a moral individualism

operating with women's collective interests in mind. For Müller, at the heart of this

campaign was an ideal of comradeship among women. Müller, who had developed her

feminism in the "culture of expectancy" of the late-nineteenth century, believed that

creating a space for women's voices to be heard was at the heart of the woman question

so debated in the period (Beaumont 7). In addition to the belief that women must "aim at

the sun" (Müller "Our Policy" 1), or advocate for the advancement of the "highest

[feminist] ideals"; in practice, Müller became increasingly focused on facilitating a "spirit

of camaraderie" among women ("London School of Medicine for Women" 2)

The paper itself worked on several fronts—the literary, political, and cultural—to

communicate this intent and advance the cause of women. First, it worked to *inform* its

readers, both of the injustices facing women (across multiple nationalities and classes) and of women's multiple abilities. Through regularly occurring columns like the News columns, Interviews, and the Leaderettes, the paper drew readers' attention to women's unequal and unjust treatment across political, social, and cultural institutions but simultaneously apprised them of women's high capacity for work in government, social service, and science, among other activities in the public sphere. As a key part of its informative function, the paper worked to speak back to the male-dominated mainstream news. Second, the paper worked to *facilitate* the self-discovery and self-expression of women. Müller's contribution to founding the Women's Printing Society at Girton and her experience as a writer for the *Westminster Review* pushed her to imagine and call into being a periodical completely "written, edited, printed and published" (*WPP* 1.2 (3 November 1888):1) by and for women, and the paper's articles and correspondence sections were contributed nearly exclusively by women, helping women to debate and discuss the articles that had appeared in previous issues. Third, and finally, the paper worked to *motivate women's action*, both individually and collectively, in order to advocate for an alteration in women's subjugated state. One of the main ways the paper worked to do this was to set up the moral imperative of a collective feminist ideal, inviting the larger community of female readers to meet that ideal in whatever way they felt was best for both each individual and the broader community of women. Political action was then made possible through the medium of the woman's press, as the network of feminist readers suggested, publicized, and then participated in various activities related to the broader woman's cause.

Müller's Periodical Network: The *Westminster Review*

By the time the first issue of the *Women's Penny Paper* appeared in September

1888, Müller had a wide variety of experience in the field of late-Victorian print culture.

In addition to her work with the Women's Printing Society, Müller established herself as

an author in her own right, first as a contributor to *MacMillan's Magazine*, and then as a

regular writer for the *Westminster Review* (*C19: The Nineteenth Century Index*). Her first

known article, "Schools in Florence,"—an assessment of the Florentine scholastic

system—was written as a result of her work with the London School Board, and appeared

in *MacMillan's Magazine* in October 1881.[114] Although Müller's first foray into writing

for these mainstream periodicals came as a result of her work with the London School

Board, her subsequent writing dealt directly with the Woman Question, when she

became, anonymously, a regular writer on the position of women for the *Westminster

Review*. Her first article "Common Sense about Women," appeared in January 1883, and

then the remainder appeared bi-annually until 1886 and annually until June 1888.[115]

Müller's experience with the *Review*, in addition to giving her the valuable publishing

experience necessary to launch the *Women's Penny Paper*, would have a formative

impact on the way the Woman Question was discussed in progressive circles and by the

---

[114] The article was reproduced in *Littell's Living Age* and *Appleton's Journal: A Magazine of General Literature* in November and December, respectively.

[115] In this review article, Müller evaluated Thomas Wentworth Higginson's book of the same name. Higginson had advanced the cause of the women's movement and female suffrage with an appeal to sensibility. Müller began her article with a declaration of her support for the woman's cause: "[t]he Woman's Question is rapidly becoming a question of humanitarianism, just as did the question of the Emancipation of the Slaves; and as such, it will surely sooner or later come to be decided," then outlined the key arguments in Higginson's book ("Common Sense About Women." *Westminster Review* LXIII (January 1883): 155). She concluded that "it is a pity that some other writers whose aim is to effect conversion, do not express themselves so agreeably as Mr. Higginson," expressing her belief in the impeccable logic of his argument, which she believed would prove "ultimately . . . irresistible" ("Common Sense About Women." *Westminster Review* LXIII (January 1883): 165).

general public, bringing her into contact with an additional network of social reformers affiliated with radical, liberal, and feminist literary circles, and helping to influence the Woman Question debate nationwide.

Like the other networks in which Müller moved, the network of individuals surrounding the *Westminster Review* was made up of a variety of socialists, anarchists, feminists, and radicals who committed themselves to advancing social reform and to the woman's cause. From the 1880s onward, supporters and contributors discussing the woman question in the *Westminster Review*'s circle included socialist and feminist Eleanor Marx Aveling, sexologist Henry Havelock Ellis, social theorist and feminist Jane Hume Clapperton, American feminist Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Theodore Stanton (Stanton's son), and feminist Mona Caird.[116] Many of these writers already were or would go on to become members or associates in the Men and Women's Club with Pearson, Schreiner, Brooke, and Müller, and most would later be featured in the pages of the *Women's Penny Paper*, either as interview or book review subjects, contributors, or correspondents. All of the individuals in this network were readers of each other's writing, and, as Sheila Rosenberg has noted, they formulated responses to them both within the *Westminster Review* and outside of it. They also read and were influenced by the same key authors and texts on the topic of the Woman Question, including J.S. Mill,

---

[116] Emma Brooke, though she was not a member of the circle of reformers direct involved with the *Westminster Review*, might be defined as on the periphery of it, due to her relationships with many of its members, including Karl Pearson. Pearson was himself a correspondent of John Chapman and had published his article "Humanism in Germany" in the *Westminster Review* in April 1883, and "Martin Luther: His Influence on the Material and Intellectual Welfare of Germany" in January 1884. He was also cited in Mary Chapman's "Marriage Rejection and Marriage Reform," discussed at length below. In May 1887, Brooke submitted her article "Women and their Sphere" to the *Review*, though it was rejected on account of its socialism. She also read and commented on several of the articles in the *Review*, including Eleanor Marx's "The Woman Question From a Socialist Point of View" and Havelock Ellis's article "The Changing Status of Women" in October 1887, which she discussed with Karl Pearson in her letters of 11 March 1886 and 29 October 1887. She also read Jane Hume Clapperton's *Scientific Meliorism* (See Brooke to Pearson 19 October 1886).

August Bebel, Olive Schreiner, and Henrik Ibsen, among others. Significantly, each of these authors drew on and engaged with the Woman Question and each other's works in their public dialogue on the pages of the *Westminster Review* through the use of footnotes, references, and citations, beginning with Müller's article "The Future of Single Women" in 1884. This worked to promote the cause of women in an ever-widening circle, although, as I detail below, several of the most progressive of these feminist voices were excluded from the fray, or relegated to the "Independent Section" as a means by which the *Westminster Review* could dissociate itself to a degree from their potentially negative impact.

Despite its somewhat cautious approach to the Woman Question, The *Westminster Review* had been long committed to the woman's cause, a commitment that extended from John Stuart Mill's editorship in 1835 through to John Chapman's editorship from 1851 onwards. In July 1851, for instance, just before Chapman took over the editorship, the *Westminster Review* published "The Enfranchisement of Women" by John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor. Mill himself had published a number of articles on the subject of women's rights throughout his tenure, and John Chapman continued this tradition from 1851 onwards. In October 1856 and January 1857, for instance, Chapman published two articles by Caroline Cornwallis advocating for women's legal ability to hold property and attacking the English law of divorce.[117] Other articles on the unjust English divorce laws appeared in April 1856 and January 1867.[118] Subsequent issues relating to women's

---

[117] These included "The Property of Married Women," which appeared in October 1856, and "Capabilities and Disabilities of Women," which appeared the following January (*Westminster Review* 66 (October 1856): 331-60; *Westminster Review* 67 (January 1857): 42-72).

[118] See John Paget's anonymously published "The English Law of Divorce," *Westminster Review 65* (April 1856): 338-55, and Helen Taylor's support for "The Ladies' Petition," *Westminster Review* 87 (January 1867): 63-79.

causes included Chapman's support in 1869 and 1870 for Josephine Butler's campaign to repeal the Contagious Diseases Act, when he wrote to stress the inefficiency and injustice of the Acts and a pair of articles, in July 1876 and April 1883, on the unfair treatment of prostitutes in England and the state regulation of prostitution in Paris.[119] By the time Müller joined the *Review* as a writer in 1883, Chapman had already proved himself a progressive on issues relating to women in several notable respects. Indeed, on 23 September 1885, Chapman wrote to Karl Pearson after Chapman had read Pearson's inaugural paper for the Men and Women's Club, "The Woman's Question," to say:

> It represents more exactly and completely my views on that question than any other essay I remember to have read. To me the Woman's Question—What ought to be the relation of the sexes? is the most important question of our time . . . Throughout the period . . . during which the Westminster Review has been in my hands it has been the advocate of [the] Woman's Cause in its various aspects.
>
> (Chapman to Pearson 23 September 1885)

Chapman clearly had none of the reservations expressed by the female club members who had read Pearson's paper (Müller included). His identification of the "Woman's Question" as "the most important question of our time" and his commitment to popularizing it on the pages of the *Westminster Review* identify him as a progressive on matters concerning women. For Chapman to add Müller to the regular roster of writers at the *Westminster Review* was clearly no compromise of principles.

---

[119] See Chapman, John, "Prostitution in Relation to the National Health," *Westminster Review* 92 (1869): 179-234; "Prostitution: Governmental Experiments in Controlling It," and "Prostitution: How to Deal with It," *Westminster Review* 93 (1870): 119-79, 477-535; "Compulsory Medication of Prostitutes by the State" *Westminster Review* 106 (July 1876): 137-88; and, finally, "Prostitution in Paris," *Westminster Review* 119 (April 1883): 494-521.

While Chapman maintained progressive, radical, feminist views in private, the *Review* still maintained a cautious approach when it came to publishing feminist writers—primarily in order to balance the competing demands of a financially viable, mainstream periodical. Beginning in 1852, Chapman thus increasingly relied on the Independent Section to publish feminist articles. In this way, he could maintain the backing of readers and financial supporters, while introducing some progressive ideas to his readership—Rosenberg "calls this a "statement . . . of limited editorial approval" ("Encounters in the Westminster Review: Dialogues on Marriage and Divorce" 122). All the articles in this section between 1852-October 1888 were introduced with the following disclaimer:

> Under the above title a limited portion of The Westminster Review is occasionally set apart for the reception of able Articles, which, though harmonizing with the general spirit and aims of the Review, may contain opinions at variance with the particular ideas or measures it advocates. The object of the Editors in introducing this department is to facilitate the expression of opinions of men of high mental power and culture, who, while they are zealous friends of freedom and progress, yet differ widely on special points of great practical concern, both from the Editors and from each other.

The introductory wording was changed slightly in November 1888 and afterwards, with the publication of Mona Caird's article "Marriage," to read "*writers* of high mental power" instead of "men" (*WR 130* (November 1888): 617). Despite his use of the Independent Section, Chapman still deemed some writers too independent even for it: as I mention in the first chapter, Emma Brooke's "Women and their Sphere," for instance,

submitted in May 1887, was rejected "on the grounds of its Socialism" (Brooke to

Pearson 23 November 1887). Although Chapman asked Brooke to write again, she chose

not to excise the portions dealing with Socialism, and instead submitted the article as

written to Annie Besant's *Our Corner.* Nevertheless, despite the limitations of the

*Westminster Review,* it would still contribute substantially to the discussion on the

Woman Question, particularly during the 1880s, helping to form public opinion and

promote the debate nationwide.

From 1884-1889, several *Westminster* contributors engaged in dialogue about the

topic of marriage and divorce, drawing on previously published works from within the

*Review* and on mutual nodes of recognition outside of it. In her January 1884 article,

"The Future of Single Women," for instance—which appeared in the main body of the

*Review*—Henrietta Müller helped to inaugurate the debate with her argument for single

women's essential role in advancing "social progress" (152). Rather than mere

superfluous women, here Müller argued that single women, by "deliberately choos[ing]"

(155) the single, celibate life, might "have filled worthily a wide sphere of social and

public usefulness" (153), instead of being constrained by marriage and motherhood into a

far narrower sphere of action. As a key part of her argument, Müller drew on Mona

Caird's novel *Whom Nature Leadeth* to paint a portrait of the inequitable nature of

marriage.[120] Later, in her revised and republished tract, she also drew on Henrik Ibsen's *A

Doll's House*.[121] Frances H. Lord had recently published a translation of the famous play

under the title *Nora* in 1882, and it was this translation that first fanned the flames of

---

[120] Mona Caird published this novel under her pseudonym, G. Noel Hatton.

[121] Müller's tract of the same name, which also appeared in 1884, was "Reprinted, by permission, from *The Westminster Review*, with additions" (*The Future of Single Women* 2). I have cited primarily from the original *Westminster Review* article here, except to note where Müller's additions in her tract drew further parallels with the *Westminster* network of writers and supporters.

Ibsenism in England. In her translation, Lord hailed Ibsen as a visionary who attempts to "awake[n] [women] to the consciousness that we possess senses as well as souls," a consciousness which is, in her view, "exactly what a poet should rouse and help to set in order" (Lord x). In her first article, Müller argues that Caird's text "ably illustrates" precisely how marriage demands of women, "with almost savage jealousy and greed, that every thought, every talent, every power and project should be subordinated to its overwhelming claims" (152). Following Caird, Müller advocates for freedom from the "dogma" that condemns "every woman to be a wife and a mother, and [stamps] the unmarried with reproach" (152). Instead, Müller outlines the single woman's valuable contribution to a progressive society in "industrial, public, or professional life" (156) and her right to "claim an important share in public affairs" from which she shall "bring justice and mercy to the womanhood of the world" (159, 162). Müller went on to argue for necessary alterations to current marriage laws and custom so that it might be "pleasurable and painless" for both men and women to marry (156). This included the necessary prerogative of a woman's "liberty" so that she could refuse becoming "the subject of every existing authority" when she marries (156). In Müller's republished tract, she made this claim using stronger language by drawing on the slave metaphor, when she emphasized the necessity of "a woman's freedom of choice" so that she could refuse becoming "a slave to her husband" in marriage (*The Future of Single Women* 9). Müller's use of the slave metaphor, similarly used by Mill, Lord, and Caird, is another point of contact with writers in the *Westminster Review's* social circle. While unique in the way that it treated the single woman, Müller's article thus demonstrates a clear knowledge of the debates surrounding the Woman Question that had already been discussed both on the

pages of the *Westminster Review* and outside it by the network of contributors and
supporters.[122]

Another key contributor to the *Westminster* dialogue on marriage and divorce was
Eleanor Marx Aveling. In her January 1886 article, "The Woman Question from a
Socialist Point of View" Marx similarly drew on members of the *Westminster* network to
advance her views about the Woman Question.[123] In her article, Marx quotes from Olive
Schreiner's *The Story of an African Farm*, recording Lyndall's despairing cry that
equality between the sexes only comes after death (217). While the article is mainly a
review of the first English translation by Harriet Walther of August Bebel's *Die Frau in
der Vergangenheit, Gegenwart und Zekunft* (later translated in English as *Woman under
Socialism*),[124] identifying the political, social and economic disadvantages that women
face under capitalism, Marx goes beyond Bebel to denounce enforced commercialized
marriage, the unfair (English) laws surrounding divorce and prostitution, and makes the
case for free unions "of a purely private nature, without the intervention of any public

---

[122] Müller followed up her article on "The Future of Single Women" with a favourable review of Theodore
Stanton's "The Woman Question in Europe" in July 1884. Stanton, the son of American feminist Elizabeth
Cady Stanton, edited the collection of writings on what Müller called "that all-important problem—the
irrepressible Woman Question," (212) which included contributions from Frances Power Cobbe, Millicent
Garrett Fawcett, and others. France Power Cobbe contributed the introductory note, and the remainder of
the essays were also contributed by women, detailing "the status of European women,—how they are doing
in literature, art and philanthropy; how they are treated by the various codes; their moral, social and
industrial condition" (212). After her review of Stanton's book, Müller wrote an article detailing (and
entitled) "The Work of Women as Poor Law Guardians," in April 1885, which explains how "the work [of
a poor law guardian] is especially fitted for women; for it is only domestic economy on a large scale"
(387), and then "Girton College in 1885," a celebratory article on the topic of female education.

[123] Marx co-wrote this article with Edward Aveling, but, as Sheila Rosenberg has noted, there is significant
evidence that the version published in the *Westminster Review* was "more her work than his" (Rosenberg,
"Marriage and Divorce in the *Westminster Review*" 127). As such, I follow Rosenberg in referring to the
work as authored by Marx. For more on this evidence, see Yvonne Kapp, *Eleanor Marx* II (London: Virago
Press, 1979): 3-4.

[124] In a letter from Havelock Ellis to Olive Schreiner date 30 July 1884, Ellis notes that he himself was then
reading Bebel at the time. Bebel was clearly a node of mutual recognition for the authors involved in the
debate over the woman question in the circles surrounding the *Westminster Review*.

functionary" (222).[125] Like Müller, Marx also makes an extensive comment on the despised position of the single women, who "bear upon their brows this stamp of lost instincts, stifled affections, a nature in part murdered" while conversely their "more fortunate brothers bear no such mark" (212). Drawing on Frederick Engels's *Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State*, Marx then draws an analogy between women and the working class, showing how women's oppression would be redressed in a socialistic society. Marx's commitment to socialism ensured the article was placed in the Independent Section, but Marx acknowledge in a letter that Chapman had nevertheless shown courage by publishing her article, while other periodicals had refused it (Kapp 83).[126] Her article would circulate widely, not just in the *Westminster* network itself but well beyond, helping to further the influence of these feminist writers and thinkers.

Müller herself again drew on the ideas of the larger network of *Westminster Review* contributors and affiliates in her January 1887 article on the Woman Question entitled "What Woman is Fitted For." In this article, which appeared in the main body of the *Review*, she extended and expanded her argument about woman's capacity for an increased role outside the home, which she again argued would advance the progress of humanity. For a second time, Müller directed the force of her critique against the institution of marriage, the "wrong and unjust" system of society that "places one sex in a

---

[125] Havelock Ellis would make a similar argument in his October 1887 article "The Changing Status of Women", but while Marx advocated for these unions to be outside state control, Ellis advocated for free unions with the approval of the state.

[126] It is unclear why Chapman elected to published Marx's article, while refusing Brooke's. However, it seems likely that Brooke's article was refused because she made concrete policy recommendations pertaining to state-subsidized motherhood. While Marx advocated generally for a socialistic society, and described women's egalitarian role within it, she failed to make specific policy recommendations for how to bring it about. Sheila Rosenberg also notes that there was an ongoing conflict in the *Westminster Review*'s social circle "between the exponents of extreme laissez-faire individualism and those committed to more socialist views of economic and social structures," with those holding socialist views in a "minority" position ("The 'Wicked Westminster': John Chapman, His Contributors and Promises Fulfilled" 238-9). Brooke's rejection, therefore, may have also been a case where those holding "extreme laissez-faire" views won over those in the minority socialist position.

dependent and cramped position . . . forc[ing] all women, with their varied characters and powers, into the same kind of occupation" (65). The "artificial ideal" (72) of marriage, set out for every woman, "cramped and distorted" her nature, which affects not only her own, but also man's development: "very often the man has much to suffer also from the narrowing influence of a conventionally arranged marriage" (73). Echoing the broader *Westminster* circle—and in particular, her female colleagues at the Men and Women's Club—Müller then suggested that the "narrowing influence" of the domestic sphere consequently narrowed and restricted the next generation: "mothers stunt their own humanity in their children's services, and in revenge the children are stunted too . . . and thus human beings grow up to perpetuate the mistakes and wrongs of which they have been the victims, and to hand them down as heirlooms to the next generation" (72).[127] Müller instead advocated for a shift in the relations of women and men, particularly in marriage, which would mean "a step in the direction of progress" (70). Drawing on Lamarckian-inflected evolutionary social theory, Müller argued that "no one has a right to prejudge the question of woman's future possibilities" (66). Instead, she suggested the "removal of social and legal disabilities" that restrict and hamper women (70), which would result in "the real woman . . . the truly womanly woman who develops the power that is within her freely and without reference to artificial ideals" (71). Advocating, like Mona Caird would later, for humanity to "develop in intelligence" and "consciously make [evolution] run in the direction [it] may choose" (71), she then suggested that the new womanhood would result in "men and women . . . *spiritually* united" (72) and a

---

[127] Emma Brooke depicted this argument in fictionalized form in her 1894 novel *A Superfluous Woman* through the character of Jessamine Halliday, and her husband, Lord Heriot, a debauched and immoral peer. Because of her inadequate moral education, Jessamine passed down "insanity, disease, and shocking malformation" (276-77) to the next generation, her children.

genuine rather than a false ideal, signifying the development of humanity as a whole, or,

"the free development of womanhood, and through it a larger development for all

humanity" (73). In this "new order," as she put it, based on "an entirely new ideal of

marriage" the "words 'duty' and 'right' would give place to 'freedom' and 'equality'"

(74). Müller then offered three preliminary ways to improve the "general social

condition": the "spread of education," "the removal of the fear of poverty" (74) and "co-

operation in domestic life," echoing her colleague at the Men and Women's Club and

*Westminster* contributor Jane Hume Clapperton (70).[128] Müller closed her article with an

appeal for change, using the inspired, visionary language of her feminist contemporaries:

> All can make some effort towards the ideal . . . their cries may be faint but
>
> they will be heard and caught up by those who are more happily placed,
>
> those who are moving forward to the front of the battle and conquering by
>
> endurance and sacrifice new ground for themselves and their sisters.[129]
>
> Such women will sow the good seed which will ripen into a harvest of
>
> well-being to be reaped hereafter, and the day is coming when their
>
> spiritual children of future generations will rise up with one accord and
>
> call them blessed. (75)

---

[128] Jane Hume Clapperton wrote on "Unitary" or "Cooperative Homes" first in her *Scientific Meliorism,* and subsequently in her novel *Margaret Dunmore; or A Socialist Home*.

[129] Like Emma Brooke, Mona Caird, and Olive Schreiner, Henrietta Müller did not reject the idea of sacrifice outright. While she repudiated entirely the idea that women ought to sacrifice themselves for husband and children, she believed that sacrifice for the cause—the advancement of women's individual rights and freedoms—was acceptable in order to win the battle for a new womanhood, and indeed a new humanity. In this sense, much in the same way that there is an "artificial ideal" (71) of womanhood, there is similarly an "artificial ideal" (71) of sacrifice: the self-sacrificial work of maternity and wifehood. Despite the "artificial ideal," however, Müller believe there existed simultaneously a genuine "ideal", one that sanctions self-sacrifice for the appropriate cause: in this case, the cause of women's freedom and equality. As I noted in Chapter One, Emma Brooke similarly shunned the assumption of women's sacrifice for marriage and maternity, opposing the idea that women should fall as "heap[s] of invertebrate sacrifice, at the feet of every casual male need" ("Notes" 32). I similarly noted in Chapter Two that Mona Caird rejected the idea of sacrifice on behalf of marriage and maternity.

Here Müller expressed her vision for a feminist ideal by drawing on the metaphor of the biblical Parable of the Sower—a well-used metaphor at the time—drawing a clear line of inheritance between the future ideal and the work of women in the present. The "new ground" conquered by women, though it would not immediately produce fruit, would eventually ripen into a "harvest of well-being": the alternative radical future of freedom and equality between men and women. Like Emma Brooke, who drew on the Lamarckian idea that inherited social traits could effect more change than inherited physical traits, Müller similarly argued that the "spiritual children" of women would have a stronger influence than biological ones. Women's role was not merely for the propagation of the human race; instead women, through their ethical ideas, could change the course of humanity entirely.[130] In her argument, Müller again drew on Henrik Ibsen (this time "Ghosts," as translated by Francis Lord (70)), and demonstrated that she had read and digested both Bebel's piece and Marx's review of it in citing Bebel in several instances throughout her article.

The next contributor to the *Westminster* dialogue on the Woman Question was Havelock Ellis's June 1887 article "The form of Capture in Marriage Ceremonies," followed by his October 1887 article "The Changing Status of Women". Both these articles appeared in the main body of the *Review*. Ellis, like Marx, identified the root of woman's subjection as primarily economic, arguing that as women gain greater economic freedom, there will be greater equality between the sexes, resulting in the eventual disappearance of prostitution in its entirety. Although Ellis advanced the idea of free sexual unions, he differed from Marx in arguing for their sanction by and registration

---

[130] In a letter to Karl Pearson, Brooke argued that "the man and woman who have no children can write their books and do their work and can change posterity materially for the better by the exercise of distinct influence which is carried on in the next generation" (14 March 1886).

with the state. A number of similarities emerge with Marx's article; namely, a consideration of and quotation from Olive Schreiner's *The Story of an African Farm*, which Ellis had also read and wished to comment on,[131] and a consideration of August Bebel's *Die Frau*. Both Schreiner and Bebel were clearly significant influences on the *Westminster* network, functioning as important influence on progressives debating the Woman Question in the period.

The next article to appear in the *Westminster Review* was Mona Caird's August 1888 "Marriage," which I noted in the last chapter was one of the best-known periodical articles on the Woman Question in the period, helping ignite what some have called "the most famous newspaper controversy of the nineteenth century" (Richardson 180). In her article, Caird, too, draws on the wider network of *Westminster* reformers—extending from the Men and Women's Club and beyond—and assumes a readership already familiar with the articles published in the pages of the *Review*. Caird, already herself cited on the pages of the *Review* in order to provide ammunition for Müller's argument demanding the dismantling of the current marriage system, like Müller, makes reference to Jane Hume Clapperton's book of social theory *Scientific Meliorism* in her article to advance her argument about the "superfluous woman," or the fact that in England there was "a large majority of women" compared to men. Because there were more women then men, not all could marry, even if they had the "fascinations of Helen of Troy and Cleopatra rolled into one" (Clapperton qtd in Caird 247). Caird also drew on the ideas of August Bebel to demonstrate the "sufferings of unmarried women" (195), and from Karl Pearson, from whom she drew substantial historical information about woman as the

---

[131] Sheila Rosenberg notes that Chapman asked Ellis to remove the passage considering *The Story of the African Farm*, likely because Marx had also drawn on it in a similar fashion ("Encounters in the Westminster Review: Dialogues on Marriage and Divorce" 126).

"first agriculturist . . . herbalist, the initiator . . . of all civilization" (241). Although she

drew on him for historical information, Caird nevertheless opposed Pearson in her

emphasis on the miseries of socially and sexually enforced child-bearing and rearing.

Caird's call for free marriage amplifies Eleanor Marx's call for the removal of the state

from the marriage contract, and her ideas about the gradual development of humanity

through co-operative principles echoes Müller's claim in "The Future of Single Women,"

that "the principle of organization [will] spread like a network over the country, [and] the

necessity of mutual help and co-operation [will be] everywhere recognized" (155). Caird,

then, was clearly responding to, extending, and amplifying the arguments that had already

appeared on the pages of the *Westminster Review* by previous contributors and

commentators in order to draw further attention to the Woman Question. The sole reason

for her article's placement in the Independent section—and the general uproar that ensued

after its publication—appears to be due to her declaration that marriage *was* an

unabashed failure, as Rosenberg notes, and not her more general identification of its

problems as a social, cultural, and religious institution ("Encounters in the Westminster

Review" 129).

In the months that followed the publication of Caird's article, the debate on

marriage in the *Westminster Review* was extended further when in the next issue,

September 1888, Elizabeth Rachel Chapman[132] directly rejected the possibility of divorce.

Her article, entitled "Marriage Rejection and Marriage Reform,"—which appeared in the

---

[132] Elizabeth Rachel Chapman was not related to John Chapman, the editor of the *Review.* She was, as
Rosenberg notes, "a belletrist, and a Comtist social commentator" ("Encounters in the Westminster
Review: Dialogues on Marriage and Divorce" 136). She wrote *The New Godiva* (London: T. Fisher Unwin,
1885), *A Comtist Lover and Other Stories* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1886), *A Companion to In Memorium*
(London: Macmillan and Co., 1888) and *Marriage Questions in Modern Fiction* (London and New York:
John Lane, 1897).

main body of the *Review*—had not been explicitly intended as a rejoinder to Caird but nevertheless served as one when it was published in the issue immediately following Caird's. Although Elizabeth Chapman had previous written (in "The Christian Harem," in July 1884) to condemn the sexual double standard and the inequalities faced by women in marriage—indeed, her call for "equality of virtue" was cited approvingly by Havelock Ellis in a letter to Olive Schreiner (Ellis to Schreiner 30 July 1884 qtd. in Drazin 116)— this article was a drastic departure and took an altogether different stance. Drawing on Olive Schreiner, Karl Pearson, and to a small extent, Mona Caird, as "marriage rejecters," she acknowledged that while their concerns had some value, the idea of free union could not be sustained without a public, state-sanctioned commitment of marriage. Her solution was therefore to reform, rather than reject marriage, and she completely rejects divorce, because it would mean "the relief of the few at the expense of the well-being of the many" (376). Citing from *The Story of an African Farm*, Chapman argues that while Lyndall, the heroine, is not misguided in her support for "a union which shall be something higher, truer, and better than legal marriage," (365) she holds that legalized marriage must simply be renewed, rather than thrown out altogether.

Clapperton's article, "Miss Chapman's Marriage Reform: A Criticism" addressed Chapman's arguments against divorce, drawing increased attention to the woman question advanced by the authors who had already published on marriage in the *Westminster* circle, and particularly the idea that the legal institution of marriage allowed men to dominate women. In her article, which appeared in December 1888, Clapperton (whose *Scientific Meliorism*, as noted above, was favourably cited by Caird in her own article) attacked Chapman's refusal to allow for the possibility of divorce. Although

Clapperton agreed with Chapman's description of the inequalities and misery in many marriages, and similarly deplored "'obsolescent customs' such as wife-purchase, husband purchase, and marrying for money or position," she contends that Chapman's suggestions for reform fall well short of the necessary transformation in the relation between the sexes and the subjugated state of women (713). Like previous contributors, Clapperton draws on the slave metaphor to describe marriage as "the despotic rule of the man . . . [with] the stigma of slavery for evermore on the brow of the woman" (714). Unlike Chapman, Clapperton contends that the well-being of future generations depends on the possibility of divorce: Unless society allows for the dissolution of "uncongenial marriages," it will set in motion a "tide of forces . . . in the wrong direction" (712). Only if divorce is readily available will society evolve "spontaneously forming life-unions of ideal perfection" (711). Her article, like Caird's and Marx's, was placed in the Independent Section.

The debate between Chapman, Caird, and Clapperton continued over three more articles published in the *Westminster Review* from February 1889 to April 1890. Elizabeth Chapman wrote two more articles: "St Paul and the Woman Movement", which appeared in February 1889, and "The Decline of Divorce," in April 1890. The first of these was again placed in the main body of the review, and provided an analysis of the responses to Caird's "Marriage" through the letters to the *Daily Telegraph*. Her second was a direct response to Clapperton's criticism. In between these two articles, Mona Caird published her own response to the *Daily Telegraph* correspondents, publishing "Ideal Marriage" in the *Westminster Review* in November 1888. The marriage debate was concluded in the *Westminster Review* by January 1891 in Elizabeth Cady Stanton's short

but pointed article "Patriotism and Chastity," which appeared in the main body of the *Review*. Here Elizabeth Cady Stanton added an international dimension to the debate, advocating for both sexual equality and, interestingly, Home Rule.

These are just some of the ways that the network of feminist reformers surrounding the *Westminster Review* drew on, quoted from, and engaged in dialogue with the ideas of other members of their network in order to advance the cause of women. Not only would Müller contribute to the beginnings of this conversation, she would go on to adopt some of the same tactics employed in the *Review* in her own journal. In the *Women's Penny Paper*, as we will see, Müller published articles and reviews by several members of this *Westminster* network, and also maintained a series of references and cross-references to their work, drawing attention to their writing and activism and further promoting the women's cause. Müller, then, not only contributed to the Woman Question in the form of her articles in the *Review*; she also facilitated further connections among the feminist women writing for the *Westminster Review* by establishing a new network from which they could mobilize social action. Where the *Westminster Review* was a radical publication with limitations due to its political affiliations and benefactors,[133] the *Women's Penny Paper* had no such limitations due the fact that it maintained no links

---

[133] As Rosemary Ashton details, under Chapman's editorship the *Westminster Review* "never covered its cost" (xi), and as a result relied on the goodwill of "certain wealthy individuals" (xi) to keep the journal afloat. These included Positivists like Federic Harrison, Harriet Martineau, and Richard Congreve; liberal Anglicans like Mark Pattison and Henry Bristow Wilson; atheists and agnostics like Edward Lombe and T.H. Huxley, lassaiz-faire businessmen Samual Courtauld and Octavius Smith, phrenologist George Combe, and, "most surprisingly" (xi), Tory MP and Cabinet member Lord Stanley, who later became the fifteenth Earl of Derby. J.S. Mill was also an occasional benefactor. Chapman had to tread carefully to keep each of his heterogeneous and contentious benefactors pleased with the direction of the journal, but they all agreed on the principle of "fearless and free debate" (Rosenberg "The 'Wicked Westminster': John Chapman, His Contributors and Promises Fulfilled" *VPR* 33.3 (Fall 2000): 231). For more on the financial troubles of the *WR*, see Ashton, *142 Strand: A Radical Address in Victorian London* (Chatto and Windus, 2006); for the hetereogeneous benefactors and writers, see Sheila Rosenberg, "The 'Wicked Westminster'" *VPR* 33.3 (Fall 2000).

with, nor received subsidies from, established political persons or parties.[134] Instead,

funded entirely by Müller (with a donation from her mother),[135] the paper was able to

implement Müller's feminist ideals, drawing women into a feminist community with the

intent to give voice to their multiple concerns. This is another example of the way the

feminists of the period worked on multiple fronts to draw attention to the Woman

Question: in this case, both through the mainstream press and through the creation of an

alternative, woman-only space.

Articulating and Enacting Idealist Feminism: Müller and the *Women's Penny Paper*

The first issue of the *Women's Penny Paper* appeared on Saturday, October 27,

1888, only six months after Müller had resigned from the Men and Women's Club and

just four months after her final anonymous article appeared in the *Westminster Review*.[136]

The paper combined Müller's interest in the Woman Question along with her directorship

at the Women's Printing Society and her experience writing for mainstream journals like

the *Westminster Review*, and demonstrates how she further developed and promoted her

feminist ideals, again within a network of women. According to Müller, both the mixed-

sex club and mainstream print journals had proved themselves insufficient venues for the

advancement of women's issues and concerns: women also needed a space of their

own.[137] She thus facilitated the creation of another periodical network, this one written by

---

[134] Müller also relied on advertisement revenues, which the *Westminster Review* never had.

[135] When she was interviewed for the *Women's Penny Paper*, Müller reported that "without the sympathy and assistance of [her] mother this hope [of a women's newspaper] would never have been realised. The *Woman's Herald* is her generous and royal gift to the women of England." Most scholars have inferred that her mother gave both emotional and material support to the venture (De Moleyns 916).

[136] Müller's final known article to appear in the *Westminster Review* was titled "Some Aspects of the London School Board," and appeared in the June 1888 issue. She had recently lost her seat on the Board, and this piece presented some reflections on her experiences as an elected official.

[137] Müller suggested that the women's papers then in existence had similarly failed in bringing the attention of women's concerns into the public sphere because they were "exceedingly conservative in spirit and in

and for women. When reflecting on her reasons for launching the journal several years later, she wrote:

> One of the things which always humiliated me very much was the way in which women's interests and opinions were systematically excluded from the World's Press. . . . I realized of what vital importance it was that women should have a newspaper of their own through which to voice their thoughts, and I formed the daring resolve that if no one else better fitted for the work would come forward, I would try and do it myself. (De Moleyns 916)

Even though the *Westminster Review* had raised the profile of the Woman Question with its series of articles giving the topic increased attention, Müller nevertheless felt that a separate women's press was also necessary to foreground women's concerns and build a platform from which women and their allies could join to advocate for their own interests. The paper thus invited readers into a network of female solidarity and friendship, built on a vision of an alternative, cooperative feminist ideal—a "spirit of camaraderie" that would unite women across a range of classes and political affiliations ("London School of Medicine for Women" 2).

Initially, the paper appeared without identifying an editor, until Müller began to use the editorial pseudonym Helena B. Temple in 1888.[138] Müller later explained that she did not attach her name to the paper "in order that my own individuality should not give a colouring to the paper, but that it should be as far as possible impersonally conducted and

---

treatment," running "in a mechanical way along the old lines" and appearing "to dread nothing more [than departing from the norm] and leaving the grooves already formed" ("Our Policy" 1).

[138] Müller first used the pseudonym H.B. Temple in issue 5 when she put out the call to hire a "Lady Canvasser for Advertisements" (with "previous experience"). The advertisement directed applicants to "apply by letter to H.B. Temple, Argyll Chambers, 86, Strand" (*WPP* 1.5 (24 November 1888): 8). Müller kept her editorial pseudonym low-key until 16 February 1889, when she attached "edited by H. B. Temple" to the masthead of the journal (*WPP* 1.17 (16 February 1889): 1). Tusan notes that while Müller used Helena B. Temple as a pen-name, "her status as editor was widely known" (*Women Making News* 113).

therefore open to reflect the opinions of women on any and all subjects" (De Moleyns

916). The political neutrality of the paper, along with its commitment to appeal to women

across class, helped to distinguish it from the *Westminster Review*, which primarily

targeted a mixed-sex, educated, middle- and upper-class readership. Whereas the

*Westminster Review* had been established on radical-liberal lines as an alternative to the

Whig *Edinburgh Review* and Tory *Quarterly Review* and explicitly rejected

conservatism,[139] the *Women's Penny Paper* placed "reports of Women's Political

Associations [including] the Primrose League and the Liberal Federation . . . amicably

side by side" (*WPP* 3.1 (10 November 1888): 7). Indeed, Müller felt that the paper was to

be "the medium for the expression of opinion on all subjects for all women" (*WPP* 3.1

(10 November 1888): 7) and "open to all shades of opinion, to the working woman as

freely as to the educated lady; to the conservative and the radical, to the Englishwoman

and the foreigner" ("Our Policy" 1). Shortly after its inception, it was receiving notices in

the *Daily News*, *Pall Mall Gazette*, *Leeds Mercury*, *Evening Standard*, and other

newspapers, which attests to its success in both creating a comradely community for

women and giving a broad platform for those women's voices to speak back to the

established and predominantly male mainstream periodical press.

  The *Women's Penny Paper* intended to facilitate a united feminist community—

across divides of politics and class—committed to advancing the cause of women. This

commitment is evident from its mode of production, to its masthead and advertisements,

through to its recurring columns. From its inception, it was committed to drawing

together like-minded women in a network of activists dedicated to the feminist cause.

---

[139] For more on the political leanings of the *Westminster Review*, see Ulin, Don, *Dictionary of Nineteenth Century Journalism*, under "Westminster Review".

Over the course of its first several issues, the paper identified the particular borders of its feminist community as it articulated its feminist ideal and invited women to join together to advance this ideal, pointing to the writings of Mary Wollstonecraft, Olive Schreiner, J.S. Mill, and Henrik Ibsen—among others—as inspirations, drawing attention to other recognizable figures in the burgeoning women's movement, and interviewing feminists with a wide range of political beliefs.[140] The paper functioned to inform this community of women of their multiple capacities, and the injustices they faced, to facilitate further connections among these women, and to motivate women's actions to enact their feminist ideals. But the paper itself also worked to put into practice these ideals through its very function as a feminist journal.

The feminist networks in which Müller already moved due to her involvement with Girton, the Women's Printing Society, the Men and Women's Club, and the *Westminster Review* enabled her to conceive of a journal that was "conducted, written, printed, and published" entirely by women, and it was the women involved in these overlapping networks who both enabled and supported Müller in her venture (*WPP* 1.2 (3 November 1888): 1). The paper published interviews and poetry by members of this network, and worked continuously to draw attention to their work advocating on behalf of women by maintaining a series of references and cross-references to their work. Some of the women mentioned in early issues included writers or activists like Olive Schreiner, Eleanor Marx, Mona Caird, Jane Hume Clapperton, and others like them who had first been involved with the Men and Women's Club, published in the *Westminster Review*, and were advancing the women's cause simultaneously and on multiple fronts.

---

[140] Over the course of its first ten issues, for instance, the *Women's Penny Paper* profiled Priscilla Bright McLaren, a liberal, Milicent Garrett Fawcett, a liberal, and Annie Besant, a socialist, Amie Hicks, a labour candidate, and Dr. Olga Von Oertzen, who did not support female suffrage at all.

In addition to soliciting original works of allegorical poetry from Olive Schreiner, for instance,[141] who had been a member of both the *Westminster Review* network and the Men and Women's Club, the paper worked to draw further attention to Schreiner's literary, political, and everyday activities in a variety of columns and articles. By the third issue of the paper, Müller had referenced Schreiner in her special article on Mary Wollstonecroft's *Rights of Women*. In this article, Müller outlines Wollstonecroft's original contribution to the woman's cause, claiming that "Mary Wollstonecroft lived at least a hundred years before her time: she seems to us like the voice of one crying in the night of ancient prejudices to ear that could not hear" ("Mary Wollstonecroft's 'Rights of Women'" 6). After detailing the central claims of Wollstonecroft's writing, Müller draws a link between Wollstonecroft and Schreiner, noting that Schreiner's *Story of an African Farm* is the only novel of the day that "plainly declare[d]" the "root of women's slavery," which Wollstonecroft herself had first outlined ("Mary Wollstonecroft's 'Rights of Women'" 5).[142] The paper also regularly listed Schreiner's recent or forthcoming publications in the "Current News," "Editorial Notes," "News," and "Varieties" columns, reviewing new allegories like "The Sunlight Lay Across my Bed" (published in the *New Review*) ("Editorial Notes" 306) and giving multiple notices of the release of her book

---

[141] The Women's Penny Paper published three original poetic allegories by Olive Schreiner, which were commissioned by Müller: "I Thought I Stood," published on 8 December 1888 (*WPP* 7 (8 December 1888): 1); "Once More I Stood," on 15 December 1888 (*WPP* 8 (15 December 1888): 1; and "Life's Gifts" on 14 September 1889 (*WPP* 1.47 (14 September 1889): 7). Schreiner was somewhat upset that Müller had printed "Once More I Stood" without first returning the proofs to her to edit, because it was written "dash in a hurry one night" (Schreiner to Ellis 22 December 1888).

[142] Wollstonecraft had drawn the slave analogy in 1792, writing in *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* "how absurd and tyrannic it is thus to lay down a system of [women's] slavery; or to attempt to educate moral beings by any other rules than those deduced by pure reason" (64). She went on to write: "if [women] be really capable of acting like rational creatures, let them not be treated like slaves; or, like the brutes who are dependent on the reason of man" (69). Many Victorian feminists, like Caird, had instead identified Mill as the originator of this analogy, likely because of Wollstonecraft's perceived sexual profligacy. Müller's decision to do otherwise attests to her commitment to demonstrating women's talents and capabilities for higher thought.

*Dreams*, which appeared in 1890. In the regularly occurring column *Current News About Women*, the *Women's Penny Paper* noted Schreiner's political activities, cataloguing her attendance and speeches at events like the British Women's Temperance Society meeting on July 23, 1889, where she "addressed warmest words of welcome to the guest [Mrs. Mary C. Leavitt, from America]" and added that "she had for many years been the only woman who spoke on temperance, and that she was considered to be doing a monstrous thing in going on a public platform" ("British Women's Temperance Association" 3). The paper also discussed the visits Schreiner received from other notable women writers and activists, including Margaret Harkness (*WPP* 13 (19 January 1889): 2). In this way, the paper worked to publicize Schreiner's feminist writing and activism, which in turn further promoted the women's cause.

The paper drew similar attention to the work of Eleanor Marx Aveling, reporting her literary and political activities. In the "Forthcoming Books" column, for instance, the paper gave notice of Eleanor Marx Aveling's translation of "The Lady from the Sea" by Henrick Ibsen, which appeared with an introduction by Edmund Gosse ("Forthcoming Books," 12 October 1889, 11). The paper would subsequently remark that this translation was published by T. Fisher Unwin ("English News," 23 November 1889, 51), and then was "brought out at a *matinee*" in 1890 ("Current News About Women" 603). The *Women's Penny Paper* also reported Marx Aveling's work with "Silvertown India Rubber Workers," where she had spoken "of the success which had attended her efforts to form a ladies' union among the women" ("English News" (19 October 1889): 5). In the issue of 30 November 1889, the paper gave notice of Aveling's formation of a "Trades Union of Women Type-writers" ("They Say" (30 November 1889): 68). A September 1890 issue

reported of Marx Aveling's translation of the authorized edition of the *Prose Dramas of Henrik Ibsen,* edited by William Archer, with "An Enemy of the People" translated by Marx ("Current News About Women" (6 September 1890): 545). These reports functioned to legitimize both the political and literary activities of women, promoting them to a wide network of readers who were encouraged to pursue like-causes.

As the *Women's Penny Paper* drew on and promoted the work of key actors in the networks in which Müller had moved, it also drew on the Women's Printing Society for publication of the journal. From its very first issue and through the first two years of its existence,[143] the journal was "printed and published" by the Women's Printing Society, who employed female-only compositors,[144] proofreaders, and impositors[145] (*WPP* 1.2 (3 November 1888): 1). The Women's Printing Society helped working women achieve ongoing employment and advance further into a trade that had been traditionally dominated by men. This helped the *Women's Penny Paper* to fulfill its mandate to advocate for the multiple capacities of women. The journal also employed female journalists to write articles.[146] Through her support of the Women's Printing Society for

---

[143] Müller stopped using the Women's Printing Society by 29 March 1890, nearly two years after starting the paper, due to increased costs not made up by advertisement revenues ("Correspondence—'Our Paper.'" *Women's Penny Paper* (21 June 1890): 416). It is unclear exactly why these costs suddenly became unaffordable. The masthead was initially changed to read, "The only Paper Conducted and Written by Women" (*WPP* 75.2 (29 March 1890): 265) until a few issues later when it was revised to read, "The only Paper Conducted, Written, and Published by Women" (*WPP* 76.2 (5 April 1890): 277). However, by 17 October 1891, the paper returned the motto "The only Paper Conducted, Written, Printed, and Published by Women" to the Masthead, when Müller herself began printing the paper (*WH* 155.4 (17 October 1891): 819). According to a small note on subsequent issues, it was "Printed and Published by Helena B. Temple & Co at 86 Strand WC" (*WH* 158.4 (7 November 1888): 880).

[144] The job of the compositor was to set up the type, including corrections.

[145] Impositors set up the type into pages, and then did the "making up," placing the page in an iron frame or chase for printing (ODNB under Emily Faithful).

[146] The correspondence section did offer a select number of letters written by men, and a man wrote at least one interview for the paper, though this opened the journal up to criticism. For instance, as Michelle Tusan points out, when the *St. James Gazette* noticed the journal had published an interview by a man, it suggested that there must have been a lack of qualified women interviewers. This prompted Müller to respond by saying: "some people would rather *not* believe that a paper can be conducted and written by

the printing and publication of the paper and her employment of female journalists for articles, Müller thus actively enacted her feminist ideals—the ideals professed on the pages of the *Women's Penny Paper*—further contributing to an expansion of the political and economic space necessary for women to advance in autonomy. As she herself put it in January 1891:

> We ourselves claim to have accomplished a great deal. The fact that there is a woman's organ, in which women may freely ventilate their opinions, and which is continually quoted by the daily Press, is in itself an assertion of the rights of women which cannot be overlooked. We have called attention to the stupid and senseless regulation which deprives women of the power to earn their living . . . and as we did so, the whole of the English speaking world was reminded that questions concerning the larger half of our nation are rarely heard. ("A Retrospect *Woman's Herald* (3 January 1891): 169)

In a very practical way, Müller was acting to inform both this community of women and the larger populace of the possibilities for female employment, autonomy, and self-sufficiency through all elements of the production of the paper itself.

The first issue of the *Women's Penny Paper* appeared with only a simple Masthead that included, in large, bold letters, the name of the paper, followed in small letters by the number and volume, date of the paper, and its price [See Fig. 1].

---

women only. *The Women's Penny Paper* proves this fact, and proves it up to the hilt" ("The Saint James Gazette on the WPP" WPP (26 April 1890): 318).
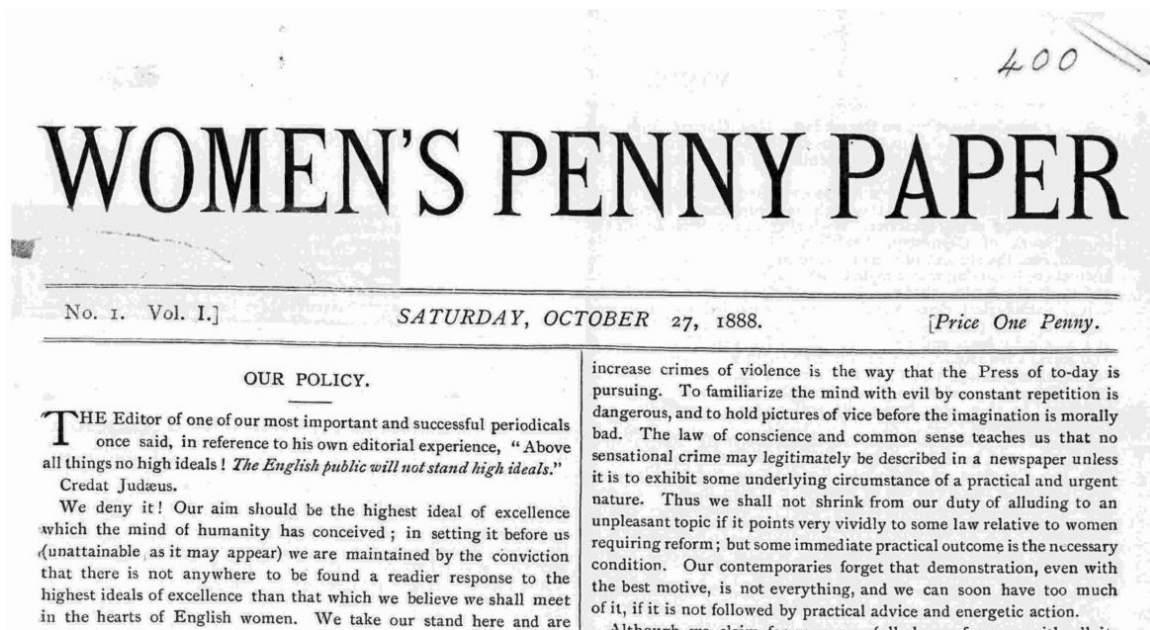
Fig. 1: Masthead, *Women's Penny Paper* 1.1 (27 October 1888): 1

However, from the second issue onwards, Müller proclaimed the fact that the *Paper* was

"The only Paper in the World Conducted, Written, Printed and Published by Women" in a

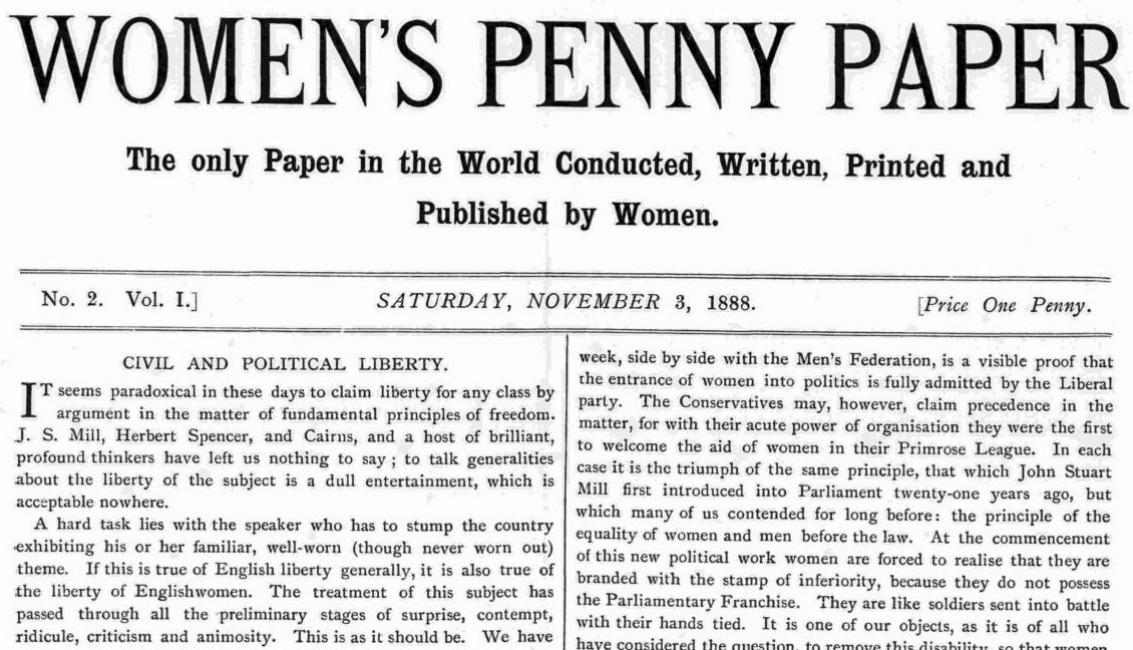byline just below the title of the paper [see Fig. 2].



Fig. 2: Masthead, *Women's Penny Paper* 2.1 (3 November 1888): 1.

Her decision to announce this fact on the front page of every issue speaks to the significance of utilizing a women-run print shop. Choosing to employ women for every aspect of the paper made a clear statement about women's abilities, promoting their advancement into the print culture field, but also worked to critique exclusionary industries that restricted women's right to work in them. Under Müller's editorship, the Masthead of the paper continually worked to promote women's egalitarian social, political, and economic rights, spurring further action to enact this ideal as the paper evolved over the course of the next three and a half years.

After adding "Edited by H.B. Temple" to the Masthead, along with the paper's offices at "Argyll Chambers, 86, Strand, W.C.," on February 16, 1889 (*WPP* 17.1 (16 February 1889): 1), the next major change to the Masthead drew additional attention to the work of the paper itself, as well as urging further feminist action. On November 2, 1889, for instance, at the proposal of reader and correspondent F. Dehersant, Müller added to the masthead a quotation by W.E. Gladstone, made on 26 October 1889 as the paper's motto [see Fig. 3]: "Seventy years ago a man might rise to high positions in Parliament or the State and take no notice whatever of the humbler classes. *They had no votes and could be safely neglected*" (*WPP* 54.2 (2 November 1889): 13).

# WOMEN'S PENNY PAPER
## The only Paper Conducted, Written, Printed and Published by Women.

EDITED BY
HELENA B. TEMPLE.

"Seventy years ago a man might rise to high positions in Parliament or the State and take no notice whatever of the humbler classes. *They had no votes and could be safely neglected*."
(W. E. Gladstone, October 26th, 1889.)

Offices—86, STRAND, W.C.
Registered at the G.P.O. for transmission abroad.

No. 54. Vol. II.]     NOVEMBER 2, 1889.     [*Price One Penny*.

**Interbiew.**

reached New York, and she returned to Ireland quite unprovided for. Her strong desire was to go out herself as a missionary, and an appointment to establish and conduct a mission school at Agra was offered to her. By the express wish of her mother she decided not to go out again, and she obtained a post as head mistress of a country school, hers being the hundred and twenty-fifth application. Thus she was enabled to support her boy as well as herself, and to decline the £20 a year to which as a missionary's widow she was entitled till he was eighteen. She did not think it right to take from others what she could herself provide. The sense of capacity was strong within her, she felt something must be done, and that she could do what a man did, if she had his good opportunities, " but there we parted," as she said in telling the story. Bereft of fortune for the second time in her short life, she learned by bitter personal experience the necessity of women being allowed equal advantages with men. "The great want of the time educated me," she says, " I saw the dire need." But before she could follow the altruistic bent of her nature, and labour for the good of others, it was necessary to establish a position for herself. She took a bold course, and started a boarding

Fig. 3: Masthead, *Women's Penny Paper* 54.2 (2 November 1889): 13

The position of this quotation at the forefront of the paper signaled the desire of the feminist community surrounding the *Women's Penny Paper* both to underscore what women had already accomplished, and take note of what yet remained to be done. Although the paper itself was successfully achieving notice in mainstream publications, women yet remained vote-less and thus still "could be safely neglected" (13). The first motto thus acted as a means by which women could point to their accomplishments and simultaneously encouraged action to achieve additional rights. The motto remained on the paper's Masthead until Müller adopted a new motto on 19 July 1890, 8 months after she made the decision to drop the Women's Printing Society for printing and publishing due to increased cost and distance.[147] On this date, she simultaneously rearranged the

---

[147] In a letter to her readers on 21 June 1890, Müller explained that the paper withdrew its custom from the Women's Printing Company "not because we were dissatisfied with the work done, nor because any firm that we have come across can print cheaper, but because the printing office was a long way off, and inaccessible to us by omnibus or Metropolitan. This distance from our offices involved us in delay, and also in expense" ("Our Paper" *WPP* 2.87 (21 June 1890): 416). Both had recently moved offices.

Masthead [Fig. 4]. The new motto achieved much of the same as the previous motto, with a biblical inflection. It read: "Speak unto the People that they go Forward," (*WPP* 91.2 (19 July 1890): 457), quoted from Exodus 14:15.[148]



Fig. 4: Masthead, *Women's Penny Paper* 91.2 (19 July 1890): 457

In this biblical story of the Parting of the Red Sea, God urges Moses to guide the children of Israel through the deep waters to escape the pursuing Egyptians, their enslavers. Despite the clearly impossible task of walking through a sea of water, God exhorts Moses to make his voice heard so that the Israelites will follow him to their freedom. When they do so, Moses raises his staff, strikes the water, and the sea miraculously parts in two, allowing the Israelites to walk to freedom. By adopting this motto, Müller thus aligned the cause of women's emancipation with the biblical story of the Israelites' escape from slavery, pointing to the significance of the voice of a leader—in this case the *Women's*

---

[148] In the King James Version, this quotation reads: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward."

*Penny Paper*—in exhorting action to achieve freedom. In this way, Müller makes a

parallel between the enslavement of the Israelites and the enslavement of women. In

using this quotation, she also asserted women's ability to interpret scripture, a claim she

made throughout her term as the paper's editor. The use of this motto thus signaled

Müller's desire to inform women of their capacity for biblical hermeneutics, as well as

the injustices they faced as enslaved beings, and her simultaneous call to act to radically

alter their subjugated state. The motto remained throughout the transition in the name of

the *Women's Penny Paper* to *The Woman's Herald* on 3 January 1891 [see Fig. 5]

(*Woman's Herald* 115.3 (3 January 1891): 161).



Fig. 5: Masthead, *Woman's Herald* 115.3 (3 January 1891): 161.

The paper's change of name, announced on 22 November 1890, was made "in deference

to the wishes of many friends and subscribers," in order to further emphasize the paper's

"aim to herald the New Womanhood" ("Important Announcement" *WPP* 109 (22

November 1890): 72). Müller's announcement assured readers of the paper's unchanging

goals:

> Our policy will be in the future, as it has been in the past, to reflect truthfully and
>
> accurately every phase of women's work and thought, and to further in every

direction the emancipation of Womanhood . . ., and to promote her development

in any and every direction which she herself believes to be right. ("Important

Announcement" *WPP* 109 (22 November 1890): 72)

Although the change in name altered the Masthead in a significant way, it again signaled

the goals of the paper: to inform women of their abilities, to advocate on their behalf, and

to spur their collective action towards emancipation. The "Speak unto the People" motto

last appeared on 4 April 1891 (*Woman's Herald* 128.3 (4 April 1891): 369), when it was

altered again, this time to the longer, visionary motto that would remain until the paper

changed editorial hands in 1892:

> I was the chosen trump where through
>
> Our God sent forth awakening Breath
>
> Come Chains! Come Death! The Strain I blew
>
> Sounds on, outliving chains and death. (369)

This final motto again worked to indicate the paper's self-positioning as the herald of a

new womanhood, drawing on the inspired language of Müller's reformist

contemporaries. Using the final stanza of the poem "Kossuth" by James Russell Lowell,

an American poet and journalist, Müller again signaled the paper's vision of idealist

feminism by declaring the paper's role as the "awakening breath" of the late-Victorian

era. Despite the possibilities of "chains" or "death"—which Müller welcomed,

demonstrated by her shift in punctuation from the original question marks following

"Came chains? Came death?" to the assertive: "Come chains! Come death!"—the paper

declared its desire to inaugurate an alternative radical future of freedom and equality for

women.

The paper's adoption of a "Creed" further emphasized the paper's vision for freedom and equality for women, and furthermore worked to promote an ideal of comradeship among women. "'Our Creed': A Universal Sisterhood" first appeared on 2 August 1890, on the eighth page of what was now the sixteen-page paper, shortly before the Editorial. It read: "She who does not practice altruism, she who is not willing to share her last morsel with another woman, she who neglects to help her sister woman, of whatever race, nation, or creed, and who is deaf to the cry of women's misery; she who hears another woman slandered and does not undertake her defence as she would undertake her own defence, is No True Woman" ("Our Creed" *Woman's Herald* 118 (24 January 1891): 216). On 14 February 1891, after removing the segment from the paper for two issues, Müller reinserted "Our Creed," with a slight alteration in the wording, framing it in the positive: "She who practices altruism, she who is willing to share her last morsel with another woman, she who never neglects to help her Sister Woman, of whatever race, nation, or creed, and who is not deaf to the cry of woman's misery; she who hears another woman slandered and ever undertakes her defence as she would undertake her own defence, is a True Woman." ("Our Creed" *Woman's Herald* 121 (14 February 1891): 264). This creed worked to further emphasize the importance of female community as a crucial step to feminist action.

Like other newspapers of the era, the *Women's Penny Paper* sold for one penny,[149] and began publication as an eight-page weekly printed in two-column format. Within six months, it had expanded to twelve-pages, which gave it more space for additional "new

---

[149] *The Pall Mall Gazette*, for instance, likewise sold for one penny during this period.

journalism"[150] features and serialized fiction. By the following year, with the addition of

more advertisements, the paper was sixteen pages in length. Illustrated advertisements

had appeared from the first issue onwards, on the final page of the eight-page long paper.

Initially the paper began with just a half-page of advertisements, but by 1890, three full

pages of the now twelve-page paper were devoted to mixed large and small copy

advertisements. With the expansion of the paper to sixteen pages, the advertisements

began to appear throughout the paper, appearing at the bottoms of regular columns of

text. Müller had full control over which advertisements she allowed to appear in the

journal, and as a result, the advertisements worked to amplify and extend the arguments

made in the paper's prose. They drew attention to women's employment opportunities,

promoted women's excellent work in the literary field, and offered products promoted for

their usefulness. For instance, the paper frequently advertised books or journals by or

about women, who were often also subscribers of the paper, directed readers to

appropriate resources, such as the "Ladies' Employment Society", and informed them of

available scholarships, like the "Byron, Shelley, Keats In Memoriam Yearly Prizes for

Women Writers" (*WPP* 5.1 (24 November 1888): 8). It also recommended a select

number of often-used women's products like the "Izod's Patent Corset" which was

verified by "medical opinion . . . for the HEALTH" (8).

---

[150] Matthew Arnold coined this term in May 1887 while critiquing popular democracy. He referred to the trend of journalism in the late-nineteenth century as "*featherbrained,*" demonstrating a fear of middle and working class readers, and their influence on the press (for more, see Baylen, J.O. "The 'New Journalism' in Late Victorian Britain" *Australian Journal of Politics & History* 18.3 (September 1972): 367-85). Arnold's phrase was often conflated with sensation journalism in the late-Victorian world of print culture, but today scholars use it more generally to describe the changes to the press that occurred in the late Victorian period. Dillane, for instance, describes New Journalism as a "capacious term" for innovations to traditional style, form, content, and tone, as well as to printing technologies within conventional journalistic practices (149-150). Tusan describes it in similarly broad strokes, to include "mass market techniques and new technologies" (*Women Making News* 11).

Regular columns also worked to amplify and extend the work of the paper. As part of its goal of educating women, the paper worked to provide women readers with easily accessible news, making particular note of those items which concerned women. On the front page of the *WPP*'s first issue, Müller printed "Our Policy," a statement of the goals of the *WPP,* writing:

> We shall endeavor to supply our readers with general English and Foreign News in such a way as to place before them the leading questions of the day in plain and concise language, so those busy women who have not leisure to read the daily papers may so far acquaint themselves with important events of the day, so as to be able to form and express their opinion upon them. ("Our Policy" *WPP* 1 (27 October 1888): 1)

"Our Policy" further emphasized the importance of women using "their intelligence and their conscience" to "see[k] for *themselves*" (1) the "spiritual truth" of the Bible in order that they might offer their "fellow creatures" their unfettered "strength" (1). Providing women with the means—the information—by which to form opinions would remain a central tenet of the paper under Müller's editorship and beyond. Müller intended the *WPP* to provide a space in which an emancipated femininity could educate—and claim truth— for themselves, in order to serve the broader community. In the opening page of the paper, the *WPP* thus established the importance of women's own voices, intelligence, and interpretation in seeking an educated, emancipated womanhood, helping to articulate a feminist ideal.

Other regularly occurring columns like "English News," "Foreign and Colonial News," and the "Leaderettes"[151] helped women educate themselves on timely issues and identify the injustices women frequently faced. The first "Leaderettes" column, for instance, reported on a "scandal" within the justice system: when a tailoress was brutally beaten, the assailant was punished only by "a fine of 40s," yet a case documenting "gross cruelty to a cat" garnered the sentence of "21 days' hard labour" (*WPP* 1 (27 October 1888): 4). By drawing attention to the injustices women faced alongside their accomplishments, the paper worked to draw attention to what they could and must overcome, including the barriers within the judicial system.

The paper further attempted to inform its community through several innovative journalistic features, like the "Book Review" column, which solicited books both "about women" and "by women," in order to advance the literary work of women, and the *Interview* column, which was the first of its kind to feature women.[152] In the paper's first issue, Müller featured Mrs. Priscilla Bright McLaren, a "pioneer worker in the cause of women's rights," and her sister Eva McLaren's mother-in-law (*WPP* 1 (27 October 1888): 4). In the *Interview* column, which portrayed a wide range of famous women of various classes and political affiliations—from feminist reformers, conservative activists,

---

[151] Susan Hamilton notes that Leaders are "much like an editorial in today's newspaper" containing "a statement of position, on any number of topics, presented in an unsigned column on the front page of a daily newspaper" (*Frances Power Cobbe and Victorian Feminism* 16). A "Leaderette" was similarly a statement of position, but in the case of the *Women's Penny Paper* it rarely appeared on the first page. The added "ette" portion of the word appears to be in reference to the length of the opinion piece: in the *Women's Penny Paper*, the *Leaderettes* were rarely longer than a paragraph, and never more than two.

[152] Other columns, added subsequent to the first issue, promoted women's work of any kind. These included the "To Women Inventors" column, which supplied "a weekly list of patents applied for by women," and the "To Women out of Work" column, which advised women searching for employment. The advertisements in the paper worked to further reinforce women's abilities by directing them to societies to help them find work, such as the Ladies' Employment Society (*WPP* 5.1 (24 November 1888): 8).

and liberal politicians, to vaudeville performers[153]—Müller worked to apprise readers of

women's multiple capacities and abilities by educating them on what women had already

accomplished, in spite of the barriers they had faced. Indeed, Müller felt the interview

column was:

> One of the strongest weapons which the women's party possesses. Hitherto our
>
> opponents have been able to charge women with incapacity generally and
>
> specifically, they have been free to deny them powers or faculties which women
>
> undoubtedly possess, and at the same time they have been able to suppress those
>
> facts in the lives of living women which proved that they possessed them. Now
>
> the barrier of silence is being broken, every account published of a woman who
>
> has talent, or pluck, or industry, gives the lie in the most effectual way to those
>
> who deny her powers only because they fear them. ("Editorials: Our Interviews"
>
> *WPP* (21 December 1889): 102)

The column's purpose was to inform readers of women's possession of powers and

faculties, her talents, pluck, and industry. By the third issue of the paper, the column,

which first appeared on the fourth page, had moved to the front and centre, a testament to

both its popularity and significance. Indeed, other women's papers soon began carrying

similar features. According to Müller, "The *Queen* and the *Echo* have largely introduced

'Interviews' during the last year" as a result of the *WPP*'s pioneering efforts. She

remarked, "it is astonishing how many newspapers and magazines have discovered that

there are some notable women in the world whose lives are worth recording and whose

---

[153] A sampling of the interviewees during Henrietta Müller's editorship included women like Annie Abbott, "the little Georgia magnet," an American magician who received acclaim on the London stage, social reformer and birth control advocate Annie Besant, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, the President of the American Women's Suffrage Association, and Mrs. Humphrey Ward, a conservative British novelist.

deeds it is well to make known to others . . . The discovery does not date back very long and we are glad that one of our aims is thus being accomplished" ("Editorials: Our Interviews" *WPP* (21 December 1889): 102). The paper clearly intended to inform and educate its readership of women's multiple capacities and abilities.[154]

Other features that first appeared in the initial issue of the *Women's Penny Paper* helped reform-minded women to build a platform from which women and their allies could join together and advocate for women's interests. The "English News" and "Foreign and Colonial News" columns, while informing women of news concerning women, also featured regular reports on a range of associations, federations, and clubs—temperance, philanthropic, educational, co-operative, woman's suffrage, musical, artistic, and scientific. The column described the activities of several branches of the Women's Liberal and Radical Federations, the National Women's Christian Temperance Union, and various missions, later expanding to include accounts of bodies such as the Leeds Weavers, the Central National Society for Women's Suffrage, the London School of Medicine for Women, the London School Board, and Newnham College. As an important part of these columns, the paper reported past events, and promoted upcoming meetings. In this way, readers could identify those groups or associations that captured their interests, and join together with other women at events that would soon occur. Editorials and single-issue articles further reinforced the imperative for women to act in "support of fellow sisters" in several different causes, including the establishment of female trade unions, education reform, rational dress, legal injustices, and suffrage. An article entitled

---

[154] In addition to regularly occurring columns, the paper also featured individual articles informing readers of women's capabilities. For instance, in the first issue, a column titled "University Intelligence" publicized the names of women who had obtained scholarships at Girton and Cambridge, and those who obtained honours (first class, second class, third class, and fourth class) (*WPP* 1 (27 October 1888): 6).

"Women as Electors," for instance, outlined the unfairness of masters who "sacrifice the rights of the women to the privileges of the men" by giving "the best building and the largest playground to the boys," despite girls outnumbering boys by more than double. It urged women's action in response: readers were to "give all your votes to the lady candidate" and "when there is none, give them to the man who is in favour of Women's Suffrage—it is a tolerably safe test" (WPP 4 (17 November 1888): 4).

Other editorials worked to draw further attention to concerns first brought up by members of the *WPP*'s feminist community, encouraging the community to act on pertinent issues. In the correspondence section of issue 7, for instance, a working-class woman, E.A., wrote to address "a subject that affects one class of working women very seriously . . . the system of credit" that operates for poor working dressmakers ("Cash Versus Credit" *WPP* 7 (8 December 1888): 6). Working dressmakers, the writer explained, often "have to live from hand to mouth" because, unlike factory and shop girls who "receive their wages when their week's work is done," dressmakers often fail to receive the money for the gown "until another gown is required" (6). E.A, who wrote her letter because she had "seen in the first article of your first issue that your pages are open to the working woman, as freely as to the educated lady," and believed it was the paper's "earnest desire to help all classes of women," described the effect of the system on the dressmakers themselves:

> I have had seventeen years' experience and my spirits have been crushed, my
> health impaired, and my whole life made hopeless by the system. Only the
> religious and moral training I have received has enabled me to walk uprightly
> through it. I dread to think how many have drifted away. I read in one of the daily

papers some time ago, of a poor girl brought in to the magistrates for stealing, and

her plea was that she would not have been a thief if the ladies she had worked for

had paid her for the gowns she had made them. (6)

A Leaderette published on the same date worked to further emphasize the issue by

pointing readers' attention to the letter itself, and motivating their action, writing, "we

hope that one of the practical ends of the *Women's Penny Paper* will be met by making

known the views and experiences of those who have practical grievances—grievances,

moreover, which need only be known to be remedied" (4). It then encouraged women

"who err in this respect" to read the letter to inform themselves of their dressmakers "dire

needs," and thus remedy the situation by paying on time. In a subsequent issue, another

"Working Dressmaker" wrote in to again inform the readers of the difficult position

dressmakers were put in because of "ladies" who are "so slow to pay," writing that "often

a dressmaker has to refuse work which she depends upon because she has already spent

all her little cash on a dress that is not yet paid for" ("Correspondence" *WPP* 10 (29

December 1888): 7), further emphasizing how the credit system disadvantages working-

class women. In this way—through the regular rhythms of periodical publication—the

paper worked to connect women to each other, inform them of the difficulties they faced,

and motivate action on issues of concern.

  Indeed, the "Correspondence" section frequently functioned as a means by which

women could connect to each other, respond to the news on the pages of the *Women's*

*Penny Paper,* and act in support of the feminist cause. "Your excellent paper," a

correspondent declared, "is the cause of so much thankfulness for what is has already

done—drawing women together" (*WPP* (7 June 1890): 392). Through the

correspondence section, readers formed new connections, joined progressive feminist clubs and associations at the promptings of other readers, and spurred further feminist activism. For instance, as I mention above, the Woman's Progressive Society was first formed as a result of a letter written to the *Women's Penny Paper* by Warner Snoad on 26 July 1890, when she wrote to suggest that "women combine to prevent the return of men who hold [anti-women's suffrage positions]" and instead "supporting those candidates only who *will* vote for us," regardless of political affiliation ("Correspondence: Wanted A Suffrage Union" *WPP* 92 (26 July 1890): 475). In the following issue, Müller drew attention to Snoad's letter in the "Editorial Notes" column by writing of how women should unite to form "the biggest [women's suffrage] organisation in the world" working "for their liberation and for the improvement of [women's] condition" ("Wanted A Suffrage Union" *WPP* 93 (2 August 1890): 486). Müller suggested that such an organization could follow the nonpartisan ideal at the heart of the *Women's Penny Paper*, joining together "Primrose Leagues, Women's Liberal Associations, Women's Suffrage Associations, and all Philanthropic Societies" (486). Müller then submitted that "voices reach us from all sides, demanding" such "a union of all the women who are working in different directions," and she pointed to the Correspondence section for evidence of this desire. In the Correspondence section, one representative writer "Themis," wrote to say "how heartily [she] endorse[d] the letter of Mrs. Warner Snoad" and expressed how she would "like to join a society formed for the purpose of opposing every candidate for Parliament who is opposed to giving women the Parliamentary vote" (487). She then signed her name, "Yours for Women first and Party second," expressing an idealist

feminism that emphasized camaraderie and solidarity among women ("Wanted—A Suffrage Union" *WPP* 93 (2 August 1890): 487).

The Correspondence sections of the following issues are suffused with such letters expressing a desire to form a Suffrage Union, taking up a significant amount of space in the column, and urging women to take action. Warner Snoad herself wrote back in the August 9th issue to suggest that women "should lose no time in forming" such a union, and proposed a specific course: "women willing to join should send in their names to [the Editor of the *Women's Penny Paper*], then meet, and consolidate the movement" ("Correspondence: Wanted—A Suffrage Union" *WPP* 94 (9 August 1890): 499). She then implored women to join together across the boundaries of political party, saying, "Let us *do* it, not talk about it, and sink alike in party ''isms' and individuality in the common cause" (499). Following her letter, four more appear by "M," "Esperance," "Mrs. H.W.," and "M. Langdon-Down" indicating these correspondents' similar desire to join the union, expressing their affiliation with "every true woman" who desires to "help forward the good *work,"* echoing the earlier language employed by Müller in "Our Creed" ("Correspondence-Mrs. H.W." 499).

This emphasis on the "true women" appears again in the issue of 16 August 1890, when another reader wrote in to the Correspondence section, "ready to join" the suffrage union which would "promot[e] the return of candidates who will vote for Woman Suffrage" ("Ready to Join" *WPP* 95 (16 August 1890): 511). On 16 August 1890, "M.G. McK." wrote to say that she would be happy to join "as a member of the oldest Women Suffrage Societies in both England and Scotland," adding that it was "entirely in accordance with the views I hold, as to the action every true woman should take in regard

to this subject" (*WPP* 95 (16 August 1890): 511). Another reader and regular contributor

Marion Leslie[155] suggested an expansion of comradeship so that it would include men:

> It has occurred to me that the time is ripe to ask for the co-operation of men in this
>
> great question . . . Men and women should work together for the good of each
>
> other. There are, I feel sure, numbers of men sympathisers who would join our
>
> union for the purpose of furthering the enfranchisement of women . . . Instead of
>
> men being pitted against women, and women pitted against men, the warfare
>
> should be between men and women in favour of female Suffrage and men and
>
> women against it . . . The more men and women work together, the greater will
>
> grow the trust in each other. ("Correspondence: Men Must Join the Union" *WPP*
>
> 98 (6 September 1890): 547)

---

155 "Marion Leslie" was the pen name of Mrs. Sarah A. Tooley (Glasgow Herald 281 (23 November 1895): 9). Under her pseudonym, she contributed a regular column entitled "Forward" to the "Notes on Women" segment of the *Women's Penny Paper* from 15 February to 13 December 1890, and also published an interview of "Mrs. Beecher Stowe" (*WPP* 76 (5 April 1890): 278) and other miscellaneous articles. She also published articles under her own name in the *Women's Penny Paper*, *Woman's Herald*, and *Woman's Signal*. Her first article under her own name in the *Women's Penny Paper* appeared on 7 December 1889, when she reported the first address of a woman to the Baptist Union. After her experience with the *Women's Penny Paper*, she went on to contribute articles to *Lady's Realm*, *Young Woman*, *Woman at Home*, *Temple Magazine*, *Review of Reviews*, *Young Man*, and *Quiver*, also under her pseudonym (C19: The Nineteenth Century Index). In her early career, she contributed a wide range of articles on various subjects, before she became primarily known as an interviewer. As Terri Doughty notes, "Sarah Tooley . . . published interviews with some of the best-known celebrities of the day," including Clementina Black, Beatrice Webb, William Morris, Sarah Grand, Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, Beatrice Harraden, Josephine Butler, Alice Meynell, and Lady Henry Somerset, among others (172-3). Her interviews appeared in *Christian Weekly,* the *Pall Mall Gazette*, *Daily Chronicle*, *Westminster Gazette*, *Young Woman,* and *Woman at Home* before she was herself interviewed for the *Woman's Signal* on 15 March 1894 (Doughty 168; "Mrs. Sarah Tooley" *WH* 169.11 (15 March 1894): 169). She also wrote a biography of Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Life of Harriet Beecher Stowe*, published in early 1891, among other lengthier works. There is an interesting divide between the works Tooley published under her own name and those that she published pseudonymously. She herself never publically acknowledged that she wrote under a pseudonym, and the only mention of her ownership of the pseudonym is by a photographer accusing her of using his photographs without permission. Her articles published under her own name appear to be affiliated more with her public position as the wife as a Baptist minister, while those under her pseudonym give a wider range to her feminist beliefs. For more on Sarah Tooley (though she does not note her pseudonym), see Terri Doughty "Representing the Professional Woman: The Celebrity Interviewing of Sarah Tooley" in *Women in Journalism at the Fin de Siècle: Making a Name for Herself,* edited by F. Elizabeth Gray.

Leslie went on to argue that with the assistance of men, who are "*voters* in a constituency," the union would have "a lever then to work the candidate" (547). On 13 September 1890, "Minerva" wrote in to second the motion, suggesting she "heartily endorse[d] Marion Leslie's suggestion" that "women should invite the co-operation of men to obtain the suffrage for women," and that she herself would "be glad to join" such a society ("A National Suffrage Union" *WPP* 99 (13 September 1890): 559).

The Women's Progressive Society formed on 16 September 1890. Though it first formed without the assistance of male members, it did eventually expand, taking in male allies as members and even promoting some into vice-presidential roles. The *Women's Penny Paper* reported on the first meeting of what was initially called "The Women's Union". Members did not claim to achieve "perfect agreement"—they explained that "where members have not each their own opinions any society is certain to die of inaction and weariness"—yet they nevertheless agreed on "the necessity that women should work together to return only such men to Parliament as would vote for female enfranchisement and the well-being of the weaker sex" ("The First Meeting" *WPP* 100 (20 September 1890): 570). Another meeting was subsequently scheduled "to be held in the course of the next few weeks" (570). Members at the first meeting included Emily Massingberd (founder of the Pioneer Club), Warner Snoad, Margaret Shurmer Sibthorpe (later founder of *Shafts*), Emmeline Pankhurst, Mrs. Ashton Dilke (Maye Dilke, suffrage campaigner and later holder of Henrietta Müller's lost seat on the LSB for Lambeth), and Mrs. Grenfell, among others. Later Vice-Presidents included, in addition to the ones mentioned above, members of the *Westminster Review*'s expansive network: Sara Hennell (close friend of George Eliot), Mathilde Blind (poet and close friend of Mona Caird),

Henrik Ibsen, Müller herself, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. The society's mandate was

very close to the mandate of the Union of Practical Suffragists, but unlike that union, was

not affiliated with the Liberal Party. Instead, following the *Women's Penny Paper*'s

political neutrality, the organization linked to no single political party. The Women's

Progressive Society[156] eventually expanded in scope, "forming a net-work of influence

through the United Kingdom," and affiliating internationally with other feminist,

libertarian, and socialist organizations (Day, Harriet "Lord Salisbury's Liberalism"

*Woman's Herald* 145 (8 August 1891): 666). The Women's Progressive Society

demonstrates precisely how the *Women's Penny Paper* functioned as a means by which

like-minded women connected to each other and acted to advance the feminist cause.

The feminist ideals that Müller had earlier articulated in the *Westminster Review*

were further developed in the context of the *Women's Penny Paper*, which not only

advocated for women in the public sphere, but also invited women into a feminist

community that aimed to connect women to each other and to the larger women's cause.

In her opening issue, Müller articulated her aims for the paper in her editorial, "Our

Policy," which articulates the premise on which the *Women's Penny Paper* was formed,

inviting women into a woman-centred space that aimed first to advocate on behalf of

women, second to further articulate feminist ideals, and third to enact those ideals on a

wide social scale. In "Our Policy," Müller argues for the importance of "high ideals" (1).

Taking aim at "the editor of one of our most and important and successful periodicals,"

one of the mainstream periodicals, who had apparently claimed "*The English public will*

---

156 The headquarters of the society were located at 30 Theobald's Road, London WC (Crawford 725). The
society also went by a few other names: the Women's Progressive League and the Golden Riband Women
("Notes and Letters" *Woman's Herald* 145 (8 August 1891): 666).

*not stand high ideals,"*[157] Müller in contrast suggested the most important thing for the

*Women's Penny Paper* was to embrace the "highest ideal of excellence which the mind of

humanity has conceived" (1). Although Müller acknowledged the difficulty of achieving

this ideal (because it may "appear . . . unattainable" (1)), she nevertheless argued that

English readers—women in particular—would embrace an ideal, however illusive it

might appear:

> In setting it before us . . . we are maintained by the conviction that there is
>
> not anywhere to be found a readier response to the highest ideals of
>
> excellence than that which we believe we shall meet in the hearts of
>
> English women. (1)

Müller went on to suggest the importance of the highest ideals in achieving any real

progress, conflating progressive policy with the presence of an ideal at which to aim: "we

believe that the highest excellence and progress are identical, and conversely, that want of

excellence is want of progressive power or decay; no real success can be attained without

the highest excellence as the aim" (1). Here Müller suggests that the absence of an ideal

will result in a decided lack of success, and the "cynical denial" of this "basic principle"

has in fact "brought our civilization to the *impasse* of to-day" (1). Müller took additional

aim at the "miserable form of skepticism" (1) which she argued "is more corroding than

that which goes by the too euphonious name of 'Modern Cynicism'" because it asserted

the idea that "moral excellence and success are incompatible, and that success can only

---

157 It is unclear which Editor Müller was targeting in her article. This claim, however, was backed up by at least one other newspaper which gave notice of Müller's new venture. The *Crewe Guardian* claimed the idea "that the English public will not stand high ideals" was a "familiar calumny" (qtd. in "What Some of Our Contemporaries Say of Us" *WPP* 3.1 (10 November 1888): 7).

be measured by gold" (1). In contrast, Müller declared that the *Women's Penny Paper* would "aim at the sun" (1).

In this foundational article, Müller outlined her vision for idealist feminism, suggesting the way in which her progressive ideals would impact both the practical policy of the paper, its views, and its policy. She thus articulated the vision for emancipated femininity that laid at the heart of the *Women's Penny Paper*. At the root of her ideals was a progressive political policy that would not limit itself to a single political party but instead aimed to join together women across divisions of politics and class.

### The Women's Penny Paper After Müller

Müller was editor of the *Woman's Herald* until 23 April 1892, when she moved to India and relinquished all involvement with the paper, selling it to the newly-formed "Woman's Herald Co," and shareholder Lady Henry Somerset. On 30 April 1892, the *Woman's Herald* continued under the editorship of Somerset, with the assistance of Mrs. Frank Morrison and Christina S. Bremner. Somerset, an ardent supporter of Temperance and for twenty years the president of the British Women's Temperance Association, affiliated the paper with the Liberal Party, thus effectively ending its nonpartisan character. The paper changed immediately, replacing "The Only Paper Conducted, Written, Printed, and Published by Women" (*Woman's Herald* 182 (23 April 1892): 1) with "A Liberal Paper for Women" (*Woman's Herald* 183 (30 April 1892): 3). It removed Müller's subheading—"I was the chosen trump where-through / Our God sent forth a wakening breath / Come Chains! Come Death! The strain I blew / Sounds on, outliving

chains and death! (*Woman's Herald* 182 (23 April 1892): 1)—and dropped the "Women's Penny Paper" that had remained a part of the masthead since Müller changed the name. Instead, it adopted "Our Objects,": First, "To promote the adoption of Liberal principles in the Government of the country"; Second, "To promote just Legislation for women, which includes Parliamentary Enfranchisement"; and Third, "to protect the interests of children" (*Woman's Herald* 183 (30 April 1892): 3). While the paper maintained "Our Creed" with no alterations, it nevertheless signaled its substantial change in tack from its predecessor through these key features. Furthermore, despite the fact that the paper itself argued that "women's interests" would trump the party line—the affiliation, the editors wrote, "is distinctly an addition to, and not an alteration of [the paper's] former object . . . it will still remain the fearless and uncompromising advocate of women's question that it has ever been, nor will it hesitate to blame the Liberal Party if that Party should be untrue to its Liberalism in matter affecting women" ("Change in Ownership of the Herald" *WPP* (30 April 1892): 3)—it nevertheless alienated many of its readers when it made the decision to affiliate with a single political party. In an article in the April 1898 issue of *Shafts*, for instance, editor and former *WPP* employee Margaret Shurmer Sibthorpe noted that, while the paper retained its "excellence" throughout its existence, when it "became a liberal organ," in 1892 it "ceased to be absolutely a woman's paper" (78).

Somerset made a number of changes to the *Woman's Herald* in addition to her decision to affiliate more closely with the Liberal Party. She hired a male sub-editor, Edwin Stout, assistant editor of the *Review of Reviews* and who had worked at the *Pall Mall Gazette*, who added eye-catching illustrations depicting images of saintly women, a triple-column format, and more advertising, thus moving the *Herald* "closer to the

mainstream journalistic establishment" (Tusan *Women Making News* 124). Somerset also

changed the name to the *Woman's Signal* in January 1894, and aligned the paper more

closely with the aims of the Temperance movement. As such she adopted a "crusading

rhetoric" (Tusan *Women Making News* 125) that described the English people as a

"nation of drunkards," and depicted the ideal feminist reformer as a morally-superior

savior of the English nation:

> The *Woman's Signal* will go into battle. Its mission will be to rally the
>
> multitude of earnest women who feel that they are responsible for the use
>
> of all the energy and influence which highest Power has given them, and
>
> who believe also that they will have to account, not only for any whom
>
> they may have caused to perish, but for those also whom they might have
>
> saved. ("Ring out the Old" *Woman's Herald* (21 December 1893): 2)

The paper also adopted the motto, "For God & Home and Every Land," which it

presented alongside an image of Madonna and child, reflecting the moral maternity of

Somerset's vision of ideal womanhood. These decisions, as Michelle Tusan has

explained, narrowed the readership substantially, converting it into a "highly specialized

community of readers," rather than a broadly expansive network. Indeed, after a year and

a half of plummeting circulation, the newspaper nearly failed. Somerset decided to

remove herself as editor, and was replaced with Florence Fenwick-Miller in 1895

(*Women Making News* 125). Fenwick-Miller reshaped the newspaper so it more closely

resembled its predecessor under Müller's editorship, attempting to make it "catholic and

cosmopolitan," to "reflect the interest that modern women should feel in public welfare

and progress" (Van Arsdel 102). She changed the paper's motto to "A Weekly Record and

Review of Woman's Work and Interests at Home and in the Wider World," and targeted a broader audience, hoping to "interest and be of use to *all* women" (qtd in Tusan *Women Making News* 125). Nevertheless, the paper still retained the morally-inspired theme of Somerset's vision, imagining the ideal feminist reformer as the "moral guardian of the nation and Empire" (Tusan *Women Making News* 127). While there remained consistency in the book reviews and literary articles columns, the vision of the paper, and particularly its editorial bent, altered substantially when Müller rescinded involvement in the paper.

The vulnerability of the paper to such a substantive change in vision under the editorial guidance of Somerset and Fenwick-Miller speaks to the *Women's Penny Paper's* reliance on Müller's particular vision and the force of her personality in bringing together the network of women that surrounded the paper. Despite its success bringing this feminist community together through the medium of the paper, its amorphous, multi-faceted vision nevertheless relied on a singular editorial voice to sustain it. While the horizontal model of the paper allowed women from a multiplicity of classes and opinions to gather together to voice their concerns and further their activism, the paper relied heavily on Müller herself to fund, print, publish, and publicize the paper within this network of radical women and beyond.

Nevertheless, Müller's original vision for the paper was carried on by the other women who had adopted her ideals, even though they did not maintain involvement in the *Women's Penny Paper* itself. In many ways, the vision for the *Women's Penny Paper* and *Woman's Herald* under Müller was continued through Margaret Shurmer Sibthorpe, who had learned the newspaper business when she held a position at the *Woman's Herald* under Müller. Sibthorpe founded *Shafts* in November 1892 after leaving the *Woman's*

*Herald,* when she objected to Somerset's decision to affiliate with the Liberal Party. Like the *Woman's Herald, Shafts* intended to facilitate a comradely feminist community from its mode of publication through to the feminist activism it attempted to facilitate as it drew together women in a network of social activists. *Shafts* similarly used the Woman's Printing Society for publishing, declared itself a news medium produced "for and by women," (qtd. in Tusan *Women Making News* 128) drew women together from a range of classes and political beliefs—its masthead declared it "A Paper for Women and the Working Classes" (qtd. in Tusan *Women Making News* 127)—and had been formed with the explicit intention to allow women "an opportunity of expressing publicly their thoughts," much in the same way as the *Women's Penny Paper* (qtd. in Tusan *Women Making News* 127). It also drew on the same figures for inspiration as the *Women's Penny Paper*, including Ibsen, Wollstonecraft, Schreiner, and Caird. In this sense, *Shafts* continued the inclusive feminist community as it had existed in the *Woman's Herald* under Müller's editorship. Despite the fact that the network surrounding and maintaining the *Women's Penny Paper* shifted drastically in the months and years following Müller's resignation, it was reinvigorated and reborn as *Shafts,* and Shurmer Sibthorp kept the best of Müller's vision, working to further its commitment to women's rights in an inclusive feminist community drawn across divisions of politics and class.

Both *Shafts* and the *Woman's Signal* continued publication until 1899 (the *Woman's Signal* ceased operations in March, while *Shafts* ran until October). In 1898, Sibthorp wrote an impassioned tribute to the *Woman's Herald* as it had appeared under Müller's editorship:

[The *Woman's Herald*] was full of power and grand outreaching; it was

edited and superintended by a woman of unique force of character; it

never aimed at anything short of the emancipation of women, socially,

industrially, educationally, and politically . . . all women owe a deep debt

of gratitude to *The Woman's Herald*. It was a pioneer, it *led the way*, and it

left the world of women's hopes and struggles toward freedom, many

paces ahead of the point it had reached when the journal was started.

("Two Women's Papers" 79)

While Müller's vision was indeed vulnerable to takeover in practical terms, the ideals

forged within the paper under her guidance outlived the paper itself. This made possible

the rebirth of the network of women in *Shafts,* from which feminists continued reform

movement agitation until the end of the century and beyond.

Conclusion: Networked Feminists, Network Visualization Tools, and Directions for

Future Research

This dissertation has undertaken to explore, through its three individual case

studies, how the overlapping networks of the late-nineteenth century gave rise to an

identifiable type of feminism that I call "idealist feminism." Characterized by its

optimistic, utopian vision of social reform, idealist feminism sought to transform

numerous issues—including marriage law, socialism, imperialism, birth control, female

employment, religious freedom, pro-suffrage activism, and domestic labour—combined a

range of progressive beliefs not clearly under the purview of any one political party, and

above all advocated fellowship or camaraderie as a solution for social change. Each

chapter has explored the overlapping networks of three representative feminist idealists to

examine how these feminist writers mobilized within their social, geographic, political,

and literary networks to advance the cause of women. I have examined multiple texts—

letters, novels, newspapers, and other print media—to demonstrate how these women

writers articulated their visions for feminism, and how they used their writing to

articulate and enact their ideals, mobilizing action both within and outside of explicitly

feminist organizations. My examination of the feminism of the period arrives at a crucial

moment as scholars begin to understand the degree to which radical writers and thinkers

of the period met and converged under varying labels, encountering each others' opinions

as they participated in various clubs, organizations, and groups to examine pertinent

social, political, and personal questions of the day. This project also emerges alongside

the creation and dissemination of network visualization software, which holds significant

implications for the future of Victorian studies.

This project was influenced by the digital network visualization tools that have developed both prior to and over the course of this study. These include, among others, free, open-access tools like Gephi and NodeXL, which allow for the charting of social networks of any types, with a range of input data.[158] They also include tools for the charting of specific networks, including the various instantiations of OrlandoVision and its cognate HuViz, both bespoke tools created for visualizing the networks within the born-digital, interactive textbase *Orlando: Women's Women's Writing in the British Isles from Beginnings to the Present*, one of the earliest digital humanities projects and one of the first to focus on women's writing.[159] These tools enable the distant- or machine-reading of textual or spatial data, including literature, historical records, social media, or locations of people, places and events. The term "distant reading," first coined by Franco Moretti, refers to the abstraction, via computer visualization, of such data, though I prefer Houston's term "machine reading," which resists the intentional positioning of "distant reading" against the "close reading" practiced by many literary scholars. Houston's definition is widely inclusive: any "method of literary research and interpretation that draw[s] upon computational analysis to move beyond the human limitations of vision, memory, and attention" (499). Houston's definition is similar to what Stephen Ramsey has termed "algorithmic criticism": the "creation of alternative [computer generated]

---

[158] I have written elsewhere of digital network visualization tools like NodeXL and OrlandoVision. See Kathryn Holland and Jana Smith Elford, "Textbase as Machine: Graphing Feminism and Modernism with OrlandoVision." *Reading Modernism with Machines: Digital Humanities and Modernist Literature*. Eds. Shawna Ross and James O'Sullivan. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2016: 109-134; Jana Smith Elford, "Network Analysis and the Historical Recovery of Women: A Case Study of the *Fabian News*." *Journal of Modern Periodical Studies* 6.2 (2015): 191-213; and Jana Smith Elford, Susan Brown, et. al., "'Elevating Influence': Victorian Literary History by Graphs." *Victorians Institute Journal Digital Annex* 38 (2010).
[159] This project would not have existed without my experience as a Research Assistant with the Orlando project. I began researching and writing *Orlando* entries in the first year of my Master's degree at the University of Alberta, and published entries on Emma Brooke, Henrietta Müller, and other late-Victorian feminists.

textualities," which "serves the ordinary purpose of allowing us to generate meaning from what we read" (45). By Moretti's definition, extremely vast corpora of texts, such as the entirety of nineteenth-century novels, or full runs of journals, are necessary for this process of aggregating, visualizing, and analysizing data. Yet, as Houston has shown, "machine reading" can operate in conjunction with close reading, and need not refer to vast corpora of texts.

Scholars like Laura Mandell are optimistic that machine reading with digital network visualization tools will "encourage perceiving and investigating correlations among data that might have gone unnoticed without it" ("The Poetess Archive" np). Paraphrasing Marshall McLuhan, Jonathan Gray et al suggest that "data visualizations … amplify our senses and our abilities to make sense of the world around us" helping us to, for instance, "analyze, filter, browse, and explore complex information" (227-8). Lev Manovich points out that visualization tools are already inspiring new analyses in the fields of media studies, art history, and cultural studies, which encourages scholars to address whether "visualization [can] also support—and hopefully augment—the key method of humanities: systemic and detailed examination of *cultural artifacts themselves*, as opposed to only the *data about the social and economic lives of these artifacts*" (5, emphasis Manovich's). Indeed, as Manovich emphasizes, researchers need to combine "microscopic and telescopic vision, close reading and distant reading—'reading' the actual artifacts and 'reading' larger patterns abstracted from very large sets of these artifacts," in order to construct meaning (5). Manovich further emphasizes the importance of understanding the "new interpretation and meanings" that come from such abstractions, which is a reinterpretation of the original artifact itself (12). Quoting Bruno

Latour, Manovich suggests that "every narrative and map we construct is only one possibility— . . . 'a provisional visualization which can be modified and reversed at will, by moving back to the individual components, and then looking for yet other tools to regroup the same elements into alternative assemblages" (20). This study has conducted a primarily analog examination of the idealist feminism of the late-nineteenth century, paying attention to the letters, novels, newspapers, and print media produced by Caird, Brooke, and Müller. By way of conclusion, I gesture towards some "alternative assemblage[s]" of the idealist feminism of the period via an exploration of the network visualization tool OrlandoVision. Using graphs drawn from the comprehensive feminist literary history *Orlando*, I aim here to advance understandings of how such digital network visualizations—in this case, link-node network graphs—might illuminate alternative aspects of the idealist feminism of the late-Victorian period, prompting distinctive insights as well as revealing the need for further research. This examination suggests that readings of analog texts alongside network graphs is a powerful resource in the practice of feminist literary history.

The graphs I generate here are drawn from the *Orlando* textbase, which contains more than 1,300 collaboratively-authored encoded entries on canonical and lesser-known female and some male writers, British and international. Unlike many other digital humanities resources,[160] *Orlando* focuses on women's writing across periods, genres, and

---

[160] Early examples of digital surrogacies include scholar-built digital archives, like the Women Writer's Project, the Rossetti Archive, the Walt Whitman Archive, and subsequent scholar-built archives like the Shelley-Godwin Archive, and Leigh Hunt Online, among other. Scholars of the nineteenth century have contributed digital projects of various kinds, including the digital federation NINES (Networked Infrastructure for Nineteenth-Century Electronic Scholarship), and, among others, *Reframing the Victorians*, *The Field of Victorian Poetry 1840-1900, Understanding Victorian Poetic Style*, *Yellow Nineties Online*, *The Victorian Web*, *The Proceedings of the Old Bailey, 1675-1913*, *19th Century Disability: Cultures and Context,* and *Songs of the Victorians*. Other digital projects include works devoted to women across time periods, like Alison Booth's Collective Biographies of Women (CBW) project, or

locations, instead of focusing on defined time periods. And while other digital humanities projects frequently explore primary texts directly, the textbase contains original writing that delves into the lives and writings of women writers, not their writing alone. *Orlando*'s interpretive markup, which shapes the content of each textbase entry and determines the context of the links that appear throughout the textbase, is made visible by the tagging structure that undergirds the textbase. These tags—over 100 in total, which appear in a nested structure—link each individual author-entry to other individuals, organizations, places, and texts, either in a specific entry or in events, a parallel, stand-alone catalogue of significant social, political, and cultural events. OrlandoVision generates network graphs from the tagged content of the textbase, revealing the imbrication of people, texts, organizations, and ideas in the lives and writings of women across periods.

The *Orlando* textbase goes a long way towards recovering women writers who have been written out of or marginalized in conventional literary or political histories, and OrlandoVision furthers this work by easing the navigation challenges presented by the *Orlando* textbase, which can be difficult for users to search. By representing the text in Orlando as a link-node network graph, it is easier to navigate the large amounts of data presented in the textbase. The tool's search feature, for instance, allows the user to type in a phrase (including topic, author, text, organization, and beyond) and then limit by "narrow" or "broad."[161] The resulting graph—the visual depiction of the relationships

---

the collaboratively authored *Orlando: Women's Writing in the British Isles from Beginnings to the Present,* discussed in detail below.

[161] "Narrow" means the resulting graph will show only those entries in which the phrase appears, whereas the resulting graph if "broad" is selected will list all the entries which contain that phrase and the people to whom those entries are connected. In this way, users can decide both what portion of the textbase they wish to explore and how wide to cast their exploratory net.

described in the Orlando textbase—allows users to machine-read large amounts of information from the textbase in abstract form, where the women writers in the textbase are represented as nodes, connected to each other and other people by edges, or links. OrlandoVision also offers sorting by the textbase's substantial tagset, including <politics>, <intertextuality>, <culturalformation> and <periodicalpublication>, among others. The tool encourages both distant readings of the abstracted graph, as well as close readings of the *Orlando* textbase itself. When users click on an individual edge or node, the textpane under each graph explains the context of the link, an excerpt from the relevant *Orlando* entry, listing which tags encode the textual information. After first examining the graph created by the tool, users are thus prompted to explore the context of the links in the graph through the textpane, which explains the meaning of each edge and reveals additional critical information in the textbase prose from which it is drawn. This in turn directs them back to the full *Orlando* entry.

My exploration with OrlandoVision is another attempt to understand the overlapping relationships and networks that led to the patterns of feminism in the period, as well as to illuminate additional directions for future research. The network visualizations that appear here are not intended to replace my description of the overlapping networks I describe above, but instead should be understood as another means of conceptualizing these networks and the idealist feminisms that formed within them. I focus in particular on one portion of the Men and Women's Club network, which I see as a crucial node in the formation of the feminism of the period.

The Men and Women's Club, as I explain in my introduction, is a useful point at which to begin charting the ideas, activities, and strategies of the idealist feminists of the

late-Victorian period, since nearly all of them were either members, associates, or a

degree removed from it. As I detail above, Karl Pearson's reinvention of the Club, which

started in 1885, was one of the points at which feminists of the period met to discuss their

ideas related to the "Woman Question," as it was then called. Comprised of several male

and female authors, radicals, anarchists, socialists, and feminists, the Club was devoted to

discussing and debating ideas about social change, with a focus on "all matters in any

way connected with the mutual position and relation of men and women," including

marriage laws, free love, and birth control ("preventative checks"), each a highly charge

and controversial topic at the time ("Men and Women's Club Minute Book"). Although

the club eventually fell apart because of the difficulties women faced within the meetings

of the club—indeed, Henrietta Müller wrote in frustration that "the men lay down the

law, the women resent in silence and submit in silence-there is no debate at all" (Müller 6

April 1888)—the female members would go on to develop a distinct vocabulary for

equality and sexual freedom as they articulated a new language of egalitarian social

reform. Thus, while they were unable to achieve the egalitarian ideal within the confines

of the Club, it motivated the women's efforts to articulate their own visions for

emancipated femininity outside the organization. This understanding of the Men and

Women's Club, built within the context of the club's papers, letters, and minutes books,

as well as the fictional and non-fictional texts of these writers, led me to anticipate that

my search for the Men and Women's Club in OrlandoVision would reveal the

organization as a site of convergence of such feminist writers of radical, socialist, and

anarchist persuasions. In particular, I expected the graph to show how an organization

like this one could serve as a point of connection between a wide range of people, who

encountered and influenced each other's ideas through their shared links to places,

organizations, periodicals, and individuals, in the process influencing the formation of the

feminism of the period.

I began my search by selecting my keywords ("Men and Women's Club") and

deciding to undertake a "Broad" search, which links all textbase entries that mention the

Men and Women's Club *and* all the people to whom they are connected, to cast a wider

net intended to capture the larger indirect connections between the Men and Women's

Club and the feminist culture of the period. I did this because of my conceptualization of

the feminist activism of the period—which assembled from within a series of overlapping

networks, through multiple webs and affiliations not associated with any singular

campaign—and because of my understanding that while the Men and Women's Club is

an important starting point for understanding the idealist feminism of the period, it is by

no means restricted to it. Indeed, the degree which idealist feminism was constituted both

within and outside the Men and Women's Club is an important part of my understanding

of the feminism of the period.

Initial graphs of the Men and Women's Club feature several known feminist figures

represented as nodes dominating a network graph with green and pink links, which

signify *Orlando* textbase tags, contextualizing the ways the feminist figures are linked
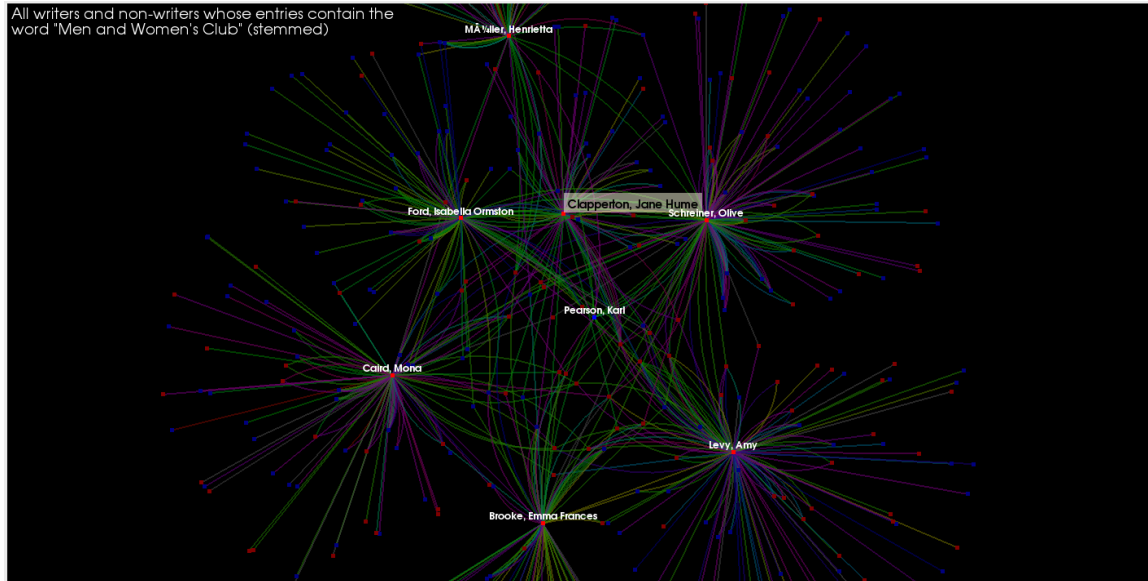
[Fig. 6].

Fig. 6: Initial Graph of "Men and Women's Club," with Labels

Pink refers primarily to these women's texts, either their <reception> history or their

<textualfeatures>, while green signifies aspects of their biographies, including the

<politics>, <lifeevents>, and <FriendsandAssociates> tags. Any lighter green, yellow, or

dark blue tags, which also populate the graph, refer respectively to the <family>,

<education> or the <production> history of their texts. The graph depicts several large

starbursts rimming the periphery and extending into the centre of the graph. The graph's

force-directed layout algorithm represents the nodes with the most edges between them as

being closer together in the graph, whereas nodes without any links between them tend to

be drawn further apart. The force-directed layout means that nodes with links to many

different nodes tend to be in the middle of the graph.[162] The red nodes[163] at the centre of

each of these large starbursts, from the top and running clockwise, represent Henrietta

Müller, Jane Hume Clapperton, Olive Schreiner, Amy Levy, Emma Brooke, Mona Caird,

---

[162] For more information on OrlandoVision and its layouts, see
cwrc.cs.ualberta.ca/index.php/General:OVis.
[163] Red nodes denote writers with entries in the *Orlando* textbase.

and Isabella Ford. In the middle of the graph, with long arcing lines connecting to the

figures rimming the periphery, is Karl Pearson, represented by a blue node.[164] A number

of nodes with intersecting links appear alongside Karl Pearson at the centre of the graph
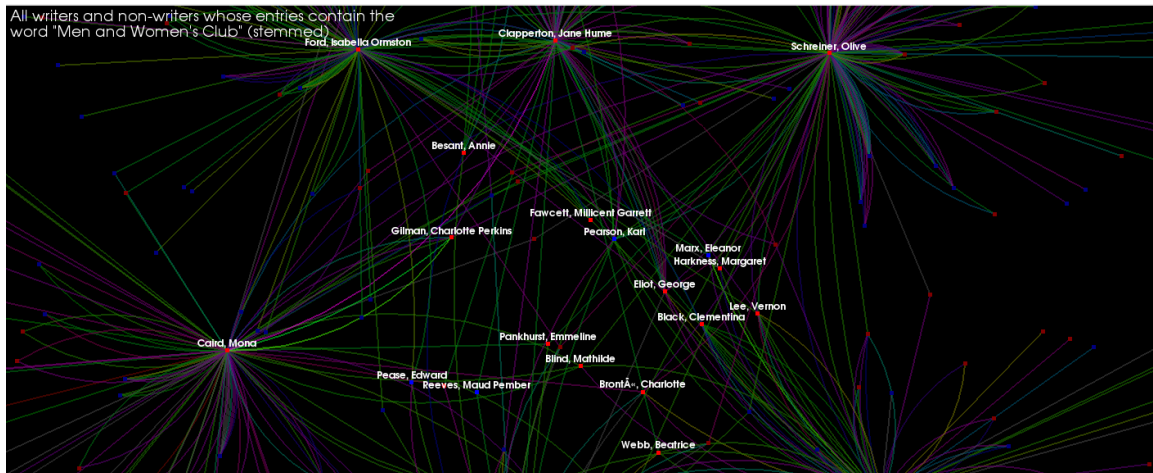
[Fig. 7].



Fig. 7: Graph of "Men and Women's Club" Zoomed in, with Additional Labels

These nodes, while they have less overall links attached to them, contain several links

that stretch across the graph, connecting them to the larger starbursts rimming the

periphery. These include a number of figures connected to the prominent literary,

cultural, political, and social institutions and movements of the day (From the top,

roughly clockwise): Millicent Garrett Fawcett, Eleanor Marx, Margaret Harkness,

Vernon Lee, Clementina Black, George Eliot, Beatrice Webb, Charlotte Brontë, Mathilde

Blind, Emmeline Pankhurst, Maud Pember Reeves, Edward Pease, Charlotte Perkins

Gilman, and Annie Besant.

The graph approximates what I expected to see in a graph of this nature, with some

notable exceptions. Mona Caird, Henrietta Müller, and Emma Brooke figure prominently,

---

[164] Blue nodes denote other people linked in the *Orlando* textbase, who have not been given their own entries.

as does Olive Schreiner. Karl Pearson's appearance at the very centre of the graph, with numerous connections to many different nodes, seems an accurate representation of his central role in both the formation of the Club and in attendance at its meetings. Due to his central role and high attendance at Club meetings, Pearson was connected to many more Club members and guests. Indeed, as the graph shows, he is connected—sometimes multiple times—to nearly all the feminist figures represented here. However, Isabella Ford and Jane Clapperton are more noticeable than I expected—with many links connecting them to others in the graph—especially given the fact that Ford was not a member of the Men and Woman's Club as it existed under Pearson, but instead a member of the Original Men and Women's Club, which began in 1879 and ran until 1885. Other members of the Club are conspicuous by their absence, or by their strange position in the graph or lack of links. For instance, Maria Sharpe Pearson does not appear in the graph at all, and Eleanor Marx and Annie Besant, prominent associates of the Club and more broadly in the feminist culture of the period, only have a handful of links to others in the graph, even though I know they were connected to numerous figures in the late-Victorian period. I am furthermore surprised by the appearance of Amy Levy in the graph, who I did not know was connected to the Men and Women's Club (I found no traces of her in the archive of Pearson's Men and Women's Club, and she is mentioned in neither Walkowitz nor Bland's study). Yet by close-reading the narrative information provided by *Orlando* alongside machine-readings of the abstract information in the graph, the graph itself becomes readable, spurring new interpretations of the feminism that formed within the literary, cultural, and social institutions of the period. Reading the graph in this context represents the figures within it in greater detail, explaining their representations

in the graph, and regrouping the feminism of the period into a different kind of—though similarly recognizable—assemblage.

The respective positions of Eleanor Marx and Annie Besant prompt my first detailed exploration of the graph, including the textpane feature. A quick survey of the contexts of the links to Besant and a cursory search of her entry in the *Orlando* textbase reveals that Besant does not figure prominently in the graph because, while she certainly attended meetings of the Men and Women's Club, her entry does not list her membership. Thus, she only appears in the graph because other entries mention her connection to the Club. Her omission is thus a product of her *Orlando* entry's focus on her other, perhaps more substantial, contributions, and not because of her actual position in this feminist network. A similar examination of the node representing Eleanor Marx makes evident the reason for her questionable position in the graph: the node that represents her is the colour blue, indicating that she has no entry in the *Orlando* textbase [Fig. 8].
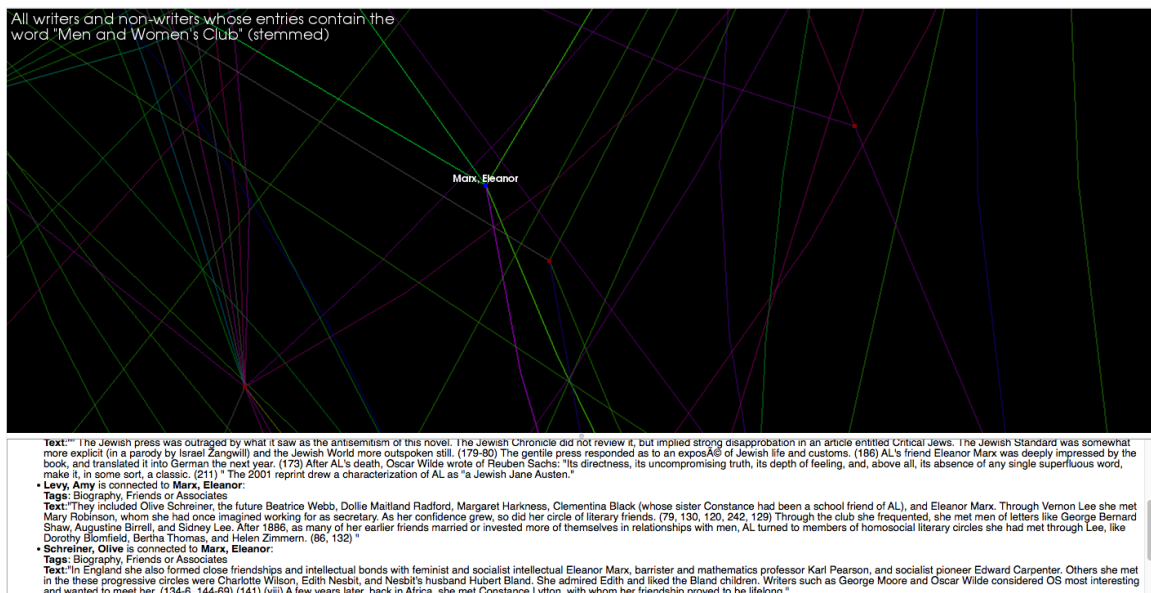


Fig. 8: "Men and Women's Club" Graph with Eleanor Marx Highlighted

This is not entirely surprising, given that the textbase, while monumental in terms of the writers it does represent, cannot be wholly exhaustive in its representation of the British women writers of the period. The fact that Marx is directly connected to four of the writers in this graph (Amy Levy and Olive Schreiner via the <Friends or Associates> tag, and Isabella Ford and Jane Clapperton via the <politics> tag), and indirectly connected to several more—the textpane of the graph reveals she was an attendee of the Men and Women's Club along with Annie Besant, Olive Schreiner, Elizabeth Blackwell, and Henrietta Müller, as well as a member of the Pioneer Club with Isabella Ford, Olive Schreiner, and Dora Montefiore[165]—attests to her importance in the feminist literary and political culture of the era. Even without an entry in the textbase, Marx appears in the centre of the graph, with several links to the other feminists who appear here. This indicates the degree to which she contributed to the networked feminist culture of the period, though the graph does not fully demonstrate it. Indeed, as these examples suggest, in order to construct a meaningful interpretation of the graph, the machine-generated patterns must be juxtaposed alongside close-readings of the text from which the graph emerged.

My confusion at the prominent position of Isabella Ford in this graph prompts a close examination of both the graph and the textpane below it, which spurs further explorations of Ford's place in the feminist and literary networks of the period, and the variety of feminism she developed within them. Highlighting Isabella Ford's connections in the graph and then perusing the textpane [see Fig. 9] reminds me that Ford was cousins with Edward Pease (secretary of the Fabian Society)—they are connected via the

---

[165] Although OrlandoVision is able to link writers with entries to each other in the graph, it is not able to infer additional relationships among those listed in entries, like Eleanor Marx and the other women who appear in this list.

<family> tag—and also, with Pease, a member of the Fabian Society, which connects them again via the <politics> tag.
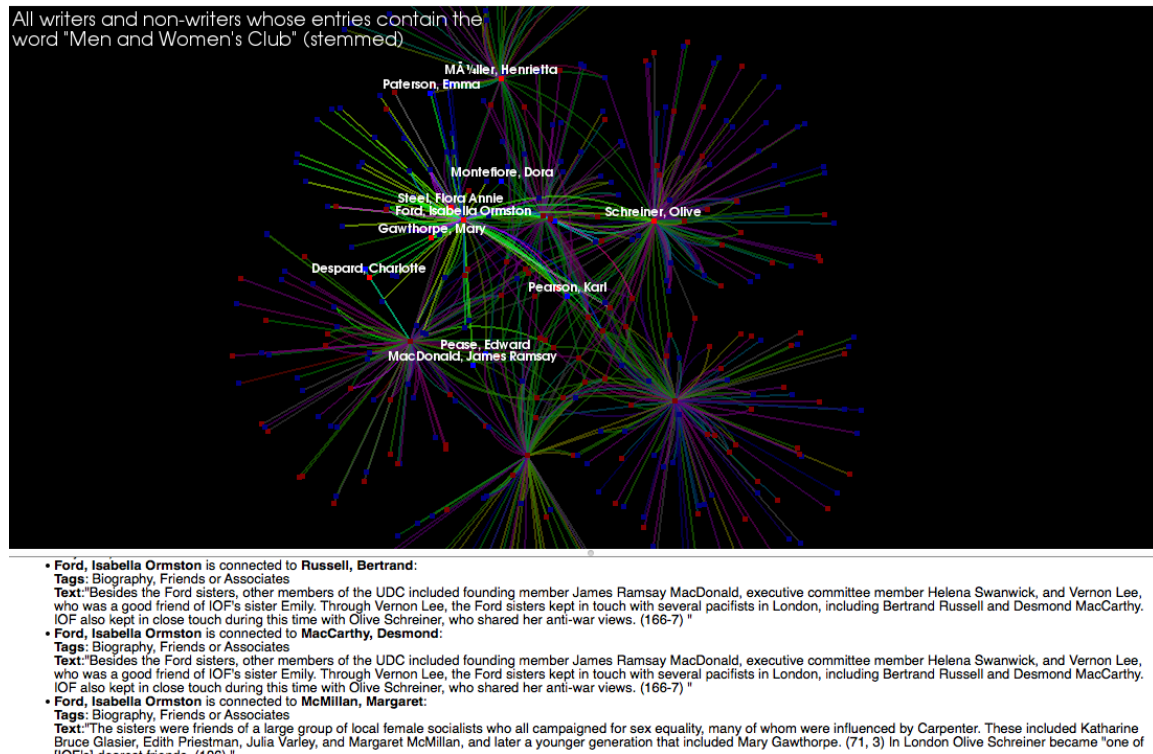


Fig. 9: "Men and Women's Club" Graph, with Isabella Ford Highlighted

Ford was furthermore connected to the Pioneer Club, the Writers' Club, several trade union organizations, the National Union for Women's Suffrage Society (NUWSS) and other suffrage organizations, all of which linked her to innumerable prominent socialist, anarchist, and feminist figures, including Karl Pearson (their mutual memberships in the precursor to the Men and Women's Club is categorized by the <politics> tag), Millicent Garret Fawcett (via the <friends or Associates> tag), Eleanor Marx (via the <politics> tag), and Sergei Stepniak (via the nested <writing> and <reception> tags), among others. Ford, who has an entry in the textbase, was thus a highly-connected figure in this late-Victorian field, with several notable links to prominent social and political figures of the period. Reading the textpane also alerts me to the fact that several of Ford's connections

to other people in this graph are related to her writing activities. This prompts me to alter

the graph by filtering out all biographical information, so that only the tags related to

writing activity appear within it [see Fig. 10].
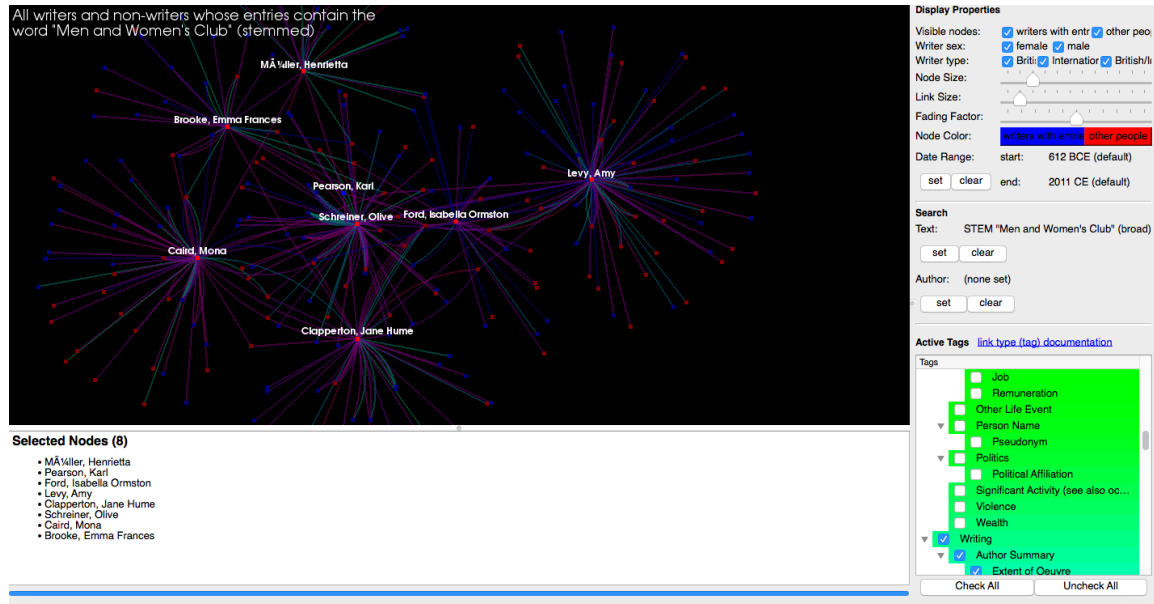


Fig. 10: "Men and Women's Club" Graph, with Biography Tags Deselected

In this altered graph, the nodes representing Brooke, Müller, Caird, Clapperton,

Schreiner, Levy, Pearson, and Ford have all shifted positions. Olive Schreiner appears at

the very centre of the graph, with Ford similarly close to the centre, on the right.

Selecting the links between Ford and the other figures in the graph gives more

information about Ford's writing activity, and how she engaged in her writing with other

women writers in this field. For instance, she is connected via the <periodical

publication> tag to numerous well-known women writers of the period—feminists,

socialists, unionists, or anti-temperance advocates—all concerned with social reform,

including Eliza Lynn Linton, Florence Fenwick Miller, Laura Ormiston Chant, Eva

McLaren (Henrietta Müller's sister), Annie Besant, John Strange Winter, Clementina

Black, and Millicent Garrett Fawcett. Selecting the <periodical publication> tag makes

these links visible in the graph [Fig. 11].
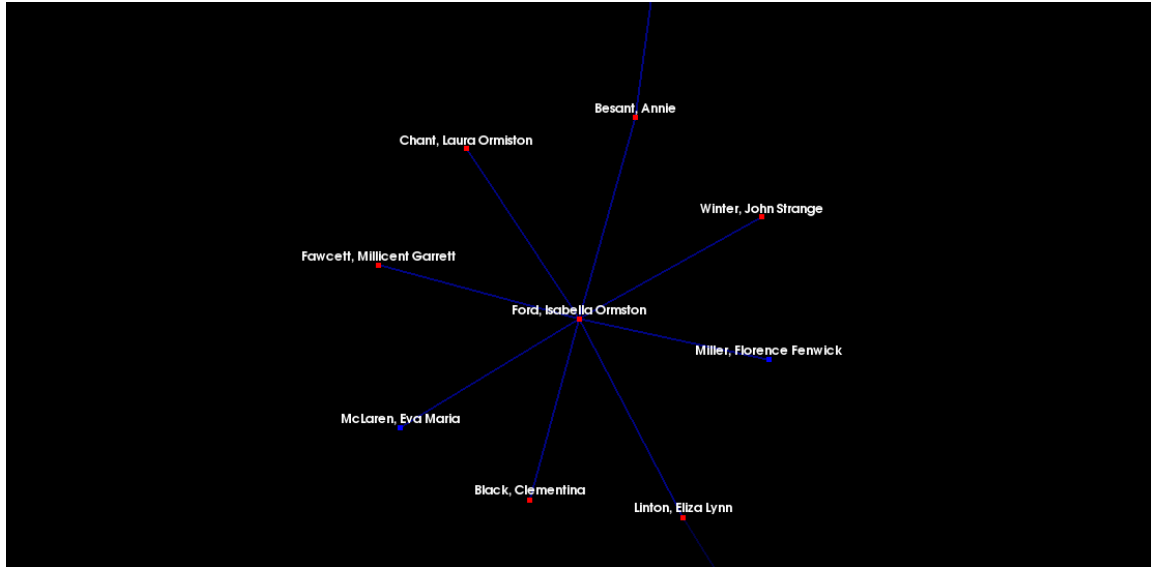


Fig. 11: "Men and Women's Club" Graph, with <periodical publication> tag selected

As the textpane explains, all these writers, including Ford herself, contributed to a special

series of the *Leeds Times* on "Social and Political Questions by Representative English

Women."  Ford's article, "Women and the Labour Party," appeared on 23 April 1892.

That such a series appeared in the Leeds Time in 1892 suggests additional understandings

of the feminism of the period. Although this dissertation has explored the networks that

emerged primarily in London in the 1880s, this suggests the importance of mainstream

periodical publications in extending the feminism of the period outside the London

centre. Reading the graph thus informs an expanded understanding of the feminism of the

period, as it represents unfamiliar points of contact among women then illuminates the

need for further research into the overlapping networks of periodical culture with which

they engaged.

Ford's connection via the <Intertextuality> tag to Karl Pearson helps further

understandings of Ford's variety of feminism, which emerged alongside that of Caird,

Brooke, Müller, and Schreiner, and which, like them, emerged in contradistinction to the socialism of Pearson. The textpane of the graph notes that her tract "Women and Socialism," was written in response to Karl Pearson's idea that that the Labour Question and Woman's Question go hand in hand, which he discussed in his opening paper for the Men and Women's Club [Fig. 12].



- **Ford, Isabella Ormston** is connected to **Pearson, Karl:**
  **Tags:** Writing, Textual Features, Intertextuality
  **Text:**"" As her biographer June Hannam notes, IOF engages substantially with the work of Karl Pearson for Women and Socialism, especially his idea that "there has never been a Labour Question without a Woman's Question also," which she uses to build her own ideas in this tract. (104-5) "
- **Ford, Isabella Ormston** is connected to **Pearson, Karl:**
  **Tags:** Biography, Politics
  **Text:**"In London in the early 1880s, IOF and her sisters became members of a precursor to Karl Pearson's Men and Women's Club (lauched in October 1885). Referred to simply as a men and women's club in the preserved records, it was formed of radicals, feminists, and socialists of both sexes with the purpose of building "upon the shared experiences of young people of both sexes entering upon life in the metropolis." The original club fell apart as the Men and Women's Club was born, and IOF did not attend beyond this point. (25, 103-5) (79) "

Fig. 12: Textpane of "Men and Women's Club" Graph, with link between Ford and Pearson selected

Reading the *Orlando* entry for Isabella Ford gives additional information about Ford's article, and her response to Pearson in it. In this article, Ford attempted to draw together the arguments made by socialist and suffragist activists into an argument for wholesale social reform. She suggested that both the Labour movement and the women's movement have "common origin and aims . . . the more they work alongside or together, the more each will strengthen each other" (Ford qtd in *Orlando*). Ford thus built on Pearson's assertion that the "two most important movements of our era . . . [are] the socialistic movement and the movement for the complete emancipation of women" (Pearson, *The Ethic of Freethought* 430), but instead of emphasizing women's sacrifice in the socialist state, Ford emphasizes her egalitarian understanding of socialism, which "aims at binding the workers of all nations, regardless of sex or race or caste into one great whole" (qtd. in *Orlando*). Ford closed her article by emphasizing the need for both movements to work together: since both "mak[e] for the reconstruction and regeneration of society," each can "benefit each other enormously," with the aim of all-encompassing social change (qtd. in

*Orlando*). Ford's article is another example of the way that feminist idealists of the period worked to accomplish total social reform, by drawing together women despite their gender, class, or political inclinations. It furthermore demonstrates the importance of the Men and Women's Club—and its precursor—in forming the idealist feminism of the period. As these women engaged and interacted with the Woman Question in the context of Pearson's ideas, they emphasized alternative lines of thinking, more focused on women's perspectives and concerns.

An exploration of Amy Levy's position in the graph, like Ford's, also suggests new understandings of the feminism of the period, and emphasizes the need for additional inquiries. As I mentioned above, I was surprised to see Levy in a graph of the Men and Women's Club, to which I was unaware that she belonged. Returning to the graph with all tags selected, I am prompted to search for Levy's connection to the Men and Women's Club within it. I start by selecting the three links between Levy and Karl Pearson, which reveals the two are connected by the graph in distinct ways: first, through the <Intimate Relationships> tag; second, through the <Leisure and Society> tag; and third, through the <Friends or Associates> tag [Fig. 13].
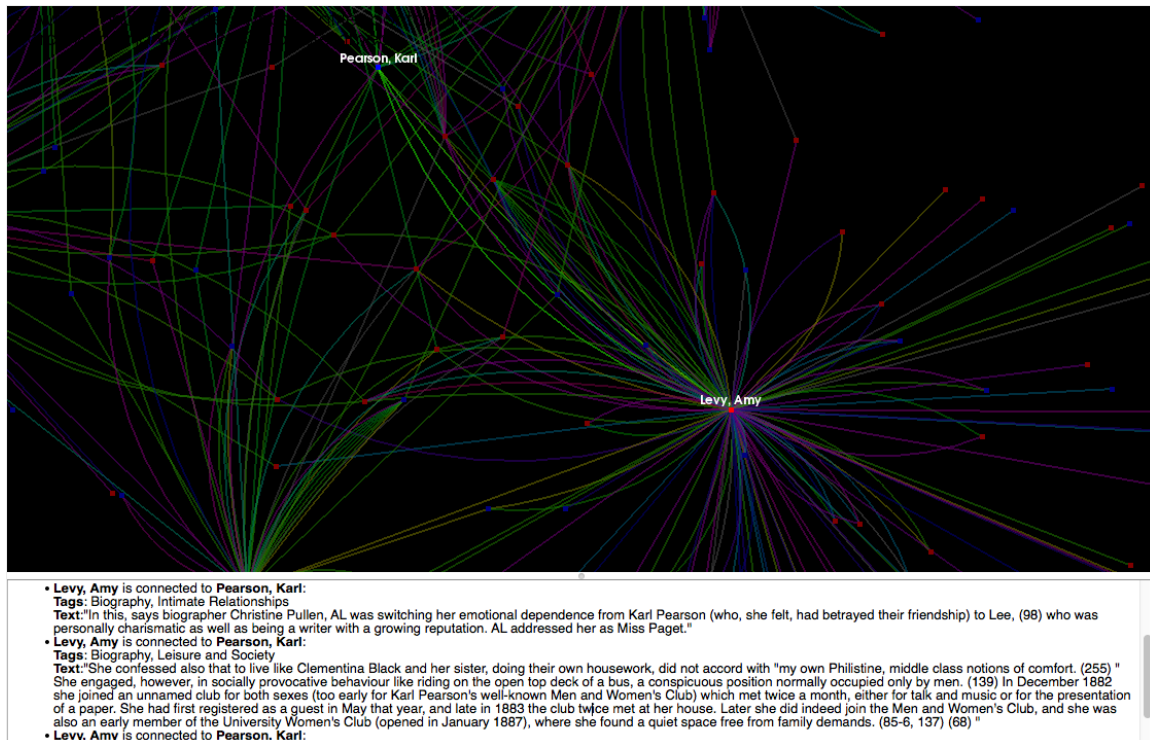
- **Levy, Amy** is connected to **Pearson, Karl**:
  **Tags**: Biography, Intimate Relationships
  **Text**:"In this, says biographer Christine Pullen, AL was switching her emotional dependence from Karl Pearson (who, she felt, had betrayed their friendship) to Lee, (98) who was personally charismatic as well as being a writer with a growing reputation. AL addressed her as Miss Paget."
- **Levy, Amy** is connected to **Pearson, Karl**:
  **Tags**: Biography, Leisure and Society
  **Text**:"She confessed also that to live like Clementina Black and her sister, doing their own housework, did not accord with "my own Philistine, middle class notions of comfort. (255) " She engaged, however, in socially provocative behaviour like riding on the open top deck of a bus, a conspicuous position normally occupied only by men. (139) In December 1882 she joined an unnamed club for both sexes (too early for Karl Pearson's well-known Men and Women's Club) which met twice a month, either for talk and music or for the presentation of a paper. She had first registered as a guest in May that year, and late in 1883 the club twice met at her house. Later she did indeed join the Men and Women's Club, and she was also an early member of the University Women's Club (opened in January 1887), where she found a quiet space free from family demands. (85-6, 137) (68) "
- **Levy, Amy** is connected to **Pearson, Karl**:

Fig. 13: "Men and Women's Club" Graph with Links Between Levy and Pearson Highlighted

Reading about the context of the links in the textpane is illuminating. The prose of the graph suggests that the two were very close friends, until Levy felt that Karl Pearson betrayed their friendship (this appears in the <Intimate Relationships> tag; Pearson also appears in a list of her friends in the <Friends or Associates> tag). Second, the textpane notes that Levy joined an unnamed mixed-sex club in December 1882, which the collaboratively-authored entry says is "too early for Karl Pearson's well-known Men and Women's Club." The textpane further explains that the club "met twice a month, either for talk and music or for the presentation of a paper." Although the *Orlando* entry suggests that this club is too early for the Men and Women's Club, its authors seem unaware of the existence of the original club, which neither Bland nor Walkowitz's book mention. Suspecting that Levy might have indeed been a member of the original club, I

search the archival images I collected in my research trips to the Pearson archive. These confirm her attendance at the original club. She first attended as a guest on 11 May 1882, and joined as a full member on 19 December 1882 [see Fig. 14].[166]
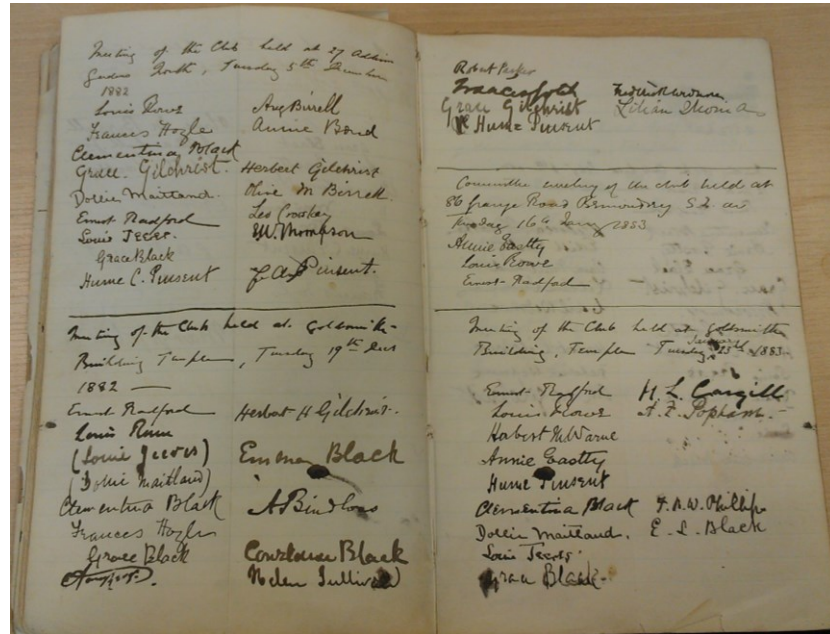


Fig. 14: Original Men and Women's Club Record Book, December 1882.

Levy had appeared in the graph because the authors of the *Orlando* entry wanted to make note that she did not belong to the Men and Women's Club. Ironically, I confirm her attendance at the Original club because of this information. Yet Levy's attendance at the original club provokes additional questions: how influential was this original club in the formation of the feminism of the period? And on Levy's feminist thinking in particular? In the 1880s, Levy wrote a poem on the relation of religion to marriage. Reflecting on the crisis of faith, Levy suggested that "the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost / Pale and defeated, rise and go" then suggests "Marriage must go the way of God" (Levy np). Was Levy's understanding of the failing institution of marriage formed in the context of the original

---

[166] Amy Levy's signature is on the bottom left, under the "Members" column. It is quite stylized, with a loop extending from the y to the A. She later dropped the loop.

club? Did Levy, like Schreiner, Müller, Brooke, and Caird, form her feminism as a reaction to Pearson? How important was Karl Pearson himself within the original club? The original club's records are sparse, consisting of only one item, the club's attendance book, which lists Karl Pearson's first attendance on 8 June 1882. Additional information may be gleaned in the letters written among members, though many of these have been lost. These searches reveal that more work remains to be done on the relation of this unnamed mixed-sex club to the feminism of the period. Indeed, reading the archival images alongside these graphs suggest the need for further explorations of the way the Woman Question, among other feminist ideas, was discussed at the original Men and Women's Club at the time, and within the other clubs, organizations, relationships, and texts that contributed to the club's formation, and other institutions like it.

These graphic representations of the Men and Women's club are another example of the convergence of literary, political, and social figures via the overlapping networks of the late-Victorian period. The Men and Women's Club served as a point of connection that linked a wide range of people, who encountered each other's ideas and reacted to them as they shared numerous links to places, organizations, and periodicals. The idealist feminism of the period was developed in such a moment of convergence. Although this dissertation has explored one narrative possibility with my focus on Caird, Brooke, and Müller as representative examples, an alternative assemblage with Levy and Ford as representative examples might offer complementary perspectives or distinctive emphases.

**Coda**

This study has explored, through its three case studies and conclusion, the multiple ways in which a group of women writers in London linked to each other and engaged with the wider overlapping literary, geographic, socialist, and feminist networks in the late-Victorian period. Each chapter has examined the relationships, affiliations, and patterns of connection that organized the social and political experiences of these women writers, and gave rise to an identifiable type of feminism that I call "idealist feminism." Characterized by their optimistic, utopian vision for social progress, idealist feminists sought structural social change that touched on a range of issues related to women—the sexual double standard, birth control, marriage law, education, prostitution and economic cooperation—, combined a range of progressive beliefs not clearly under the purview of any one particular political party, and above all advocated fellowship or camaraderie as a means by which to achieve social change. Each of my chapters has examined the various ways in which these representative feminist writers contributed to extensive debates on social and political reform, and dedicated their time to articulating and enacting their feminist ideals. My first chapter traced Emma Brooke's relationships and affiliations in order to understand how she engaged with and mobilized within the overlapping feminist and socialist networks of the period—particularly the Fabian Society, the Hampstead Historic Society, and Karl Pearson's Men and Women's Club—in order to draw attention to the women's concerns, and then how she turned her attention to fiction in order to depict her feminist ideal. My second chapter explored the relationships and affiliations in Caird's geographic network in order to understand how she developed a feminist ideal that is remarkably similar to the socialist-anarchist-feminist writers living and writing in

Hampstead, London, despite the fact that she is typically characterized as an individualist, Liberal feminist. My final chapter explored the feminist networks that emerged within the *Women's Penny Paper:* As women thinkers and writers engaged with, responded to, and mobilized within male-dominated social networks, they simultaneously established their own networks to articulate and enact their feminist ideals, connect to each other, and draw further attention to the women's cause.

These women writers did not belong to a singular, cohesive, static network. Instead, they belonged to multiple, dynamic, overlapping networks, formed by virtue of geography or political affinity, because of the connections established through correspondence, or periodical publication, or through mutual links to shared nodes. Their networks were both intensely local—formed within the radical suburb of Hampstead and at the Clubs, study spaces, and lectures halls of the socialist and feminist organizations that met in central London—and distant, like the networks of letters and periodical publications that placed long spaces between nodes. These women participated in discursive networks with various identifiable nodes of mutual recognition, like the works of Mary Wollstonecraft, J.S. Mill, Olive Schreiner, August Bebel, and Henrik Ibsen. As they moved through time and space, they joined additional clubs, organizations, and communities to further their ideals, and in so doing, created more networks like them. Yet in the dense overlapping and colliding of these multiple networks, these feminist writers, through their multiple connections to each other, emerged in a recognizable form, with a particular type of optimistic, utopian-inflective feminism, based on relationship and affinity, that pushed against the dominant cultural norms.

The identifiable feminism that emerged among these group of women was

different from the mid-Victorian feminist movement in several significant ways. In contrast to the earlier feminist networks of the mid-Victorian period, these feminist writers and thinkers were more strongly influenced by the radical social movements of the late-nineteenth century, including the socialist movement. Unlike most mid-Victorian feminists, who lost touch with the current of feminist-socialism that had been earlier evident in the Owenite movement,[167] the late-Victorian feminists studied here combined critiques of patriarchy with critiques of capitalism, attempting to dismantle both. While contemporary scholarship has tended to focus on the "uneven fractured history [of socialism's] relationship to feminism," (Taylor x), including the degree to which women who continually pressed feminist issues from within the socialist movement "were frequently condemned as bourgeois 'women's rightsers" (Taylor 285), these women writers nevertheless combined aspects of individualism and collectivism, liberalism and socialism, seeing them all as expressions of complete human emancipation. As such, these women writers identified several socialist-feminist writers as nodes of mutual recognition within their movement, including Bebel, Ibsen, Schreiner, and Eleanor Marx.

These late-Victorian feminists also were significantly different from their mid-Victorian counterparts in their rejection of the respectability codes of sexual morality, and the sexual double standard, which demanded higher sexual standards of women than men. While mid-Victorian feminists rejected the sexual double standard in principle, in practice they were careful not to associate with any perceived sexual profligate in order to avoid censure on their movement; this is particularly evident in their refusal to mention or draw links between themselves and Mary Wollstonecraft. As Barbara Caine notes, mid-

---

[167] For more on the relationship of socialism to mid-Victorian feminism, see Barbara Caine, *Victorian Feminists*, introduction. For more on Owenite Feminism, see Barbara Taylor *Eve and the New Jerusalem: Socialism and Feminism in the Nineteenth Century*.

Victorian feminists "seem neither to have read Wollstonecraft," nor have "said anything about her" (*Victorian Feminists* 23). In contrast, each late-Victorian feminist writer explored in this study either privately affirmed a type of affiliation with Wollstonecraft as they participated in meetings of Karl Pearson's Men and Women's Club—the club was referred to, among members, as the "Wollstonecraft Club"—or publically linked themselves to her. Emma Brooke, for instance, affirmed Wollstonecraft's ideas (and actions) in her *Our Corner* article "Woman and her Sphere," mentioning both Wollstonecraft's rejection of marriage and her adoption of free sexual relations. Brooke distinguished Wollstonecraft by her "*openness* of . . . conduct" and suggested that she "stand[s] out . . . in the light of forerunners" because she "lived in [her] sexual life, in the eye of the world, outside of and apart from it" (9). Henrietta Muller's public praise for the *Vindication* of Mary Wollstonecraft, published in the third issue of the *Women's Penny Paper*, similarly identified Wollstonecraft as an important feminist forebear for her feminist ideals.

The late-Victorian feminists were certainly advantaged by the significant achievements of the mid-Victorian women's movement, particularly in terms of the opening of higher education and occupations to women. Yet it would be a mistake to suggest they are synonymous with them. While they worked together on various single-issue campaigns, and agreed on the basic principles of feminism, these late-Victorian feminists articulated and enacted a vision that was uniquely their own.

While scholars in the last four decades have contributed enormously to the extensive uncovering of the literature, theater, art, and culture of the late-Victorian feminist movement, and to the platform speeches, tracts, and media of the women's

suffrage campaign, the Late-Victorian feminist movement has tended to be characterized as a "backwater period" when the movement was forced to "snatc[h] at every encouraging symptom" (Balfour, qtd. in Rubenstein 158). Late-Victorian feminists have been viewed by scholars as "a fractured collectivity of groups and webs of affiliation marked by disagreement as much as by consensus" (Felski 147) their resulting politics "in partial retreat, or in a faltering state of suspension, at least" (Beaumont 97). Yet, simply because the feminism of the period was a "collectivity of groups and webs of affiliation" does not mean it was politically ineffective (Felski 147). These women writers fostered a different kind of feminist activism, one that assembled from within an overlapping of networks, through multiple webs and affiliations not associated with any singular campaign. Although these women did not gain the achievements of the later suffrage movement, these women, mobilizing within an overlapping of networks, contributed immeasurably to wider social change. As they interceded in numerous areas both within and outside of specific campaigns, these feminists challenged established values and belief systems, playing a significant role in shaping social, literary, and cultural practices in the Victorian period and beyond.

More than a decade after her feminist activity charted above, Emma Brooke helped to establish the Fabian Women's Group on 14 March 1908, following months of increasingly intense suffrage campaigning. With her colleagues at the Fabian Society, Brooke wanted to establish stronger connections between the "two most vital movement[s] of the time, Socialism and Women's emancipation" ("The Fabian Women's Group to the Members of the Society," qtd. in Alexander 146). The group was established in order to assist the suffrage movement in its efforts to obtain the

enfranchisement of women. In line with their socialist beliefs, the group simultaneously aimed "to study women's economic independence in relation to socialism" (qtd. in Alexander 5). To this end, members produced papers, wrote lectures, and marched in demonstration in London in support of women and labor, women and motherhood, and the women's suffrage cause. In their first report, the Fabian women took the opportunity to gesture backward in order to recognize the pioneering efforts of several female Fabians who were members of nearly a dozen different suffrage organizations, eleven of whom had recently been "amongst the Fabian prisoners for the suffrage cause" (Daniels 159). Though Emma Brook herself was not one of these prisoners, the group made particular mention of Brooke and other early Fabian feminists who had "seized a crucial moment" and made important efforts on behalf of women in the past (Daniels 159). It was because of Brooke and others like her, the Women's Group suggested, that the "action of our Group has caused the Fabian Society to become the pioneer Socialist body supporting the Suffrage agitation" (Daniels 159). In short, the ideas and activities of the later Fabian feminists did not simply emerge fully formed after the turn of the century, as members of the group themselves acknowledged. Rather, these post-Victorian women were part of a long tradition of feminist activism that emerged from within an overlapping of networks, making numerous and multiple contributions to the making of the feminist movement.

I end with this anecdote because it is an example of the way that later feminists involved in the women's suffrage movement attempted to acknowledge the pioneering feminist activity of the women who came before them. These women themselves recognized the need for an alternate view of their shared feminist history, one that acknowledged the contributions of earlier feminist writers, thinkers, and activists to the

formation of the movement in which they now took part.

Works Cited

"A National Suffrage Union" *Women's Penny Paper* 99 (13 September 1890): 559. *19ᵗʰ Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 13 August 2016.

"A Retrospect." *Woman's Herald* (3 January 1891): 169. *19ᵗʰ Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 19 August 2016.

"Advertisements." *Women's Penny Paper* 5.1 (24 November 1888): 8. *19ᵗʰ Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 17 August 2016.

Alcaro, Marion Walker. *Walt Whitman's Mrs G: A Biography of Anne Gilchrist*. London: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1991. Print.

Ardis, Ann. *New Woman, New Novels: Feminism and Early Modernism*. New Brunswick and London: Rutgers University Press, 1990. Print.

Armstrong, Isobel. *Victorian Poetry: Poetry, Poetics, and Politics*. London and New York: Routledge, 1993. Print.

Ashton, Rosemary. *142 Strand: A Radical Address in Victorian London*. Chatto and Windus: 2006. *Google Books*. Web. 10 November 2017.

Bantman, Constance. *The French Anarchists in London, 1880-1914: Exile and Transnationalism in the first Globalization*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013. *University Press Scholarship Online*. Web. 9 October 2017.

Baylen, J.O. "The 'New Journalism' in Late Victorian Britain." *Australian Journal of Politics & History* 18.3 (September 1972): 367-85. *Wiley Online Library.* Web. 1 November 2017.

Beals, Polly. "Fabian Feminism: Gender, Politics, and Culture in London 1880-1930." Doctoral Dissertation, Rutgers University, 1989. Print.

Beaumont, Matthew. *Utopia Ltd.: Ideologies of Social Dreaming in England: 1870–1900.* Leiden: Brill, 2005. *Ebsco.* Web. 30 November 2015.

Bebel, August. *Woman in the Past, Present and Future*. 1879. Translated by H. B. Adams Walther. New York: John W. Lovell, 1886. Print.

Belfort Bax, Ernest. *The Legal Subjection of Men: A Reply to the Suffragettes.* 1896. New Edition. London: The New Age Press, 1908. *Internet Archive.* Web. 11 October 2017.

Bernstein, Susan David. *Roomscape: Women Writers in the British Museum from George Eliot to Virginia Woolf.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013. Print.

Bevir, Mark. *The Making of British Socialism.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011. Print.

—. "The Rise of Ethical Anarchism in Britain, 1885-1900." *Historical Research 69* (1996): 143-165. *Wiley Online Library*. Web. 1 November 2017.

—. "Welfarism, Socialism and Religion: On T. H. Green and Others." *The Review of Politics* 55.4 (September 1993): 639-661. *Cambridge University Press Journals Digital Archive.* Web. 3 November 2017.

"Bibliography." *Free Russia* 4.6 (1 June 1893): 87. *Google Books*. Web. 23 September 2017.

Bjorhovde, Gerd. *Rebellious Structures: Women Writers and the Crisis of the Novel 1880-1900.* Oslo: Norwegian University Press, 1987. Print.

Black, Clementina. Letter to Karl Pearson. 11 December 1884. MS. Karl Pearson Collection. Special Collections, University College London. Print.

Black, Helen C. *Notable Women Authors of the Day*. London and Glasgow: The

University Press, 1893. Print.

Bland, Lucy. *Banishing the Beast: Sexuality and the Early Feminist.* 1995. London: New

Press, 2005. Print.

Blind, Mathilde (Unsigned). "Shelley." Review of *The Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe

Shelley.* A revised text, with Notes and a Memoir, by William Michael Rossetti.

*Westminster Review* 38.1 (July 1870): 75-97. *British Periodicals*. *Proquest.* Web.

11 September 2016.

Booth, Charles. *Life and Labour of the People in London*. London: William and Norgate,

1889. Print.

Boucher, David, and Andrew Vincent. *British Idealism and Political Theory*. Edinburgh:

Edinburgh University Press, 2000. Print.

Brandon, Ruth. *The New Women and the Old Men: Love, Sex and the Woman Question*.

London: Flamingo, 1990. Print.

Brake, Laurel, and Marysa Demoor, eds. *Dictionary of Nineteenth Century Journalism:

In Great Britain and Ireland.* London: Academia Press and the British Library,

2009. Print.

 "British Women's Temperance Association." *Women's Penny Paper* 40 (27 July 1889): 3

and *Women's Penny Paper* 13 (19 January 1889): 2. *19th Century UK Periodicals.

Gale Cengage.* Web. 13 August 2016.

Britain, Ian. *Fabianism and Culture: A Study in British Socialism and the Arts 1884-

1918*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. Print.

Brooke, Emma Frances. *A Superfluous Woman*. New York: The Cassell Publishing Co.,

    1894. *Internet Archive*. Web. 11 November 2017.

—. *A Tabulation of the Factory Laws of European Countries in so far as they relate to

    the hours of labour, and to special legislation for women, young persons, and

    children.* London: Grant Richards, 1898. Print.

—. (as "The Author of *A Superfluous Woman*"). Letter to Edward Carpenter. 4 February

    1894. MS. The Papers of Edward Carpenter. Sheffield Archives, Sheffield

    Libraries and Information Services. Print.

—. Letter to Edward Pease. 13 October 1906. MS. Fabian Society Archives. Archives

    and Special Collections, London School of Economics. Print.

—. Letter to Karl Pearson. 9 July 1885. MS. Karl Pearson Collection. Special

    Collections, University College London. Print.

—. Letter to Karl Pearson. 14 July 1885. MS. Karl Pearson Collection. Special

    Collections, University College London. Print.

—. Letter to Karl Pearson. 2 December 1885. MS. Karl Pearson Collection. Special

    Collections, University College London. Print.

—. Letter to Karl Pearson. 17 December 1885. MS. Karl Pearson Collection. Special

    Collections, University College London. Print.

—. Letter to Karl Pearson. January 6 1886. MS. Karl Pearson Collection. Special

    Collections, University College London. Print.

—. Letter to Karl Pearson. 24 February 1886. MS. Karl Pearson Collection. Special

    Collections, University College London. Print.

—. Letter to Karl Pearson. 11 March 1886. MS. Karl Pearson Collection. Special

Collections, University College London. Print.

—. Letter to Karl Pearson. 14 March 1886. MS. Karl Pearson Collection. Special

Collections, University College London. Print.

—. Letter to Karl Pearson. 4 December 1886. MS. Karl Pearson Collection. Special

Collections, University College London. Print.

—. Letter to Karl Pearson. 25 March 1887. MS. Karl Pearson Collection. Special

Collections, University College London. Print.

—. Letter to Karl Pearson. 15 July 1887. MS. Karl Pearson Collection. Special

Collections, University College London. Print.

—. Letter to Karl Pearson. 29 October 1887. MS. Karl Pearson Collection. Special

Collections, University College London. Print.

—. Letter to Karl Pearson. 23 November 1887. MS. Karl Pearson Collection. Special

Collections, University College London. Print.

—. *Life the Accuser. A Novel.* London: W. Heinemann, 1896. Print. *Internet Archive.*

Web. 8 November 2017.

—. "Notes on a Man's View of the Woman Question." ND. MS. Karl Pearson Collection.

Special Collections. University College London. Print.

—. *Transition. A Novel.* London: W. Heinemann, 1895. *Internet Archive.* Web. 11

November 2017.

—. (as Byrrne, E. Fairfax). "Women and their Sphere." *Our Corner* 11 (January 1888):

5-13. *British Periodicals. Proquest.* Web. 10 November 2017.

—. "Women and their Sphere*." Our Corner* 11 (1 February 1888): 65-73. *British Periodicals. Proquest*. Web. 10 November 2017.

Brown, Heloise. *The Truest Form of Patriotism: Pacifist Feminism in Britain, 1870-1902*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 2003. *Ebsco*. Web. 10 November 2017.

*C19: The Nineteenth Century Index. Proquest*, 2005-2017. Web. 10 November 2017.

Cady Stanton, Elizabeth. "Patriotism and Chastity." *Westminster Review* 135 (January 1891): 1-5. *British Periodicals. Proquest.* Web. 11 September 2016.

Caine, Barbara. *Victorian Feminists*. Oxford: Claredon Press, 1993. Print.

—. *English Feminism: 1780-1980.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997. Print.

Caird, Mona. "Ideal Marriage." *Westminster Review* 130 (November 1888): 615-636. *British Periodicals. Proquest*. Web. 14 August 2017.

—. Letter to Professor Viëtor. 5 December 1896. In *Die Frauenfrage in den Romanen Englischer Schriftstellerinnen der Gegenwart.* Edited by Ernst Forester, 52-54. Marburg, Germany: N.G. Elwert-sche Veriagsbuchhandlung, 1907. *Internet Archive.* Web. 10 November 2017.

—. "Marriage." Reprinted in *Criminals, Idiots, Women, & Minors*. 2nd ed. Ed. Susan Hamilton. Plymouth: Broadview, 2004: 239-253. Print.

—. Introduction. "Memoirs of a Female Nihilist." By Sophie Wassilieff. *The Idler* 3 (May 1893): 430-434. *British Periodicals. Proquest.* Web. 10 November 2017.

—. "The Emancipation of the Family: Part 1." *The North American Review* 150.403 (June 1890): 692-705. *JSTOR.* Web. 10 November 2017.

—. "The Emancipation of the Family: Part 2." *The North American Review* 151.404 (July 1890): 22-37. *JSTOR.* Web. 10 November 2017.

—. *The Stones of Sacrifice*. London: Simpkin, Marshall, 1915. Print.

—. *The Wing of Azrael.* 1888. London: Pickering & Chatto, 2010. Kindle AWZ File.

Cano-López, Maria. "The Outlandish Jane: Austen and Female Identity in Victorian

Women's Magazines." 2014 *Victorian Periodicals Review* 47.2 (Summer 2014):

255-273. *JSTOR*. Web. 10 November 2017.

Carlier, Julie. "A Forgotten Instance of Women's International Organising: The

Transnational Feminist Network of the Women's Progressive Society (1890) and

the International Women's Union (1893-1898)." *Gender History in a*

*Transnational Perspective: Networks, Biographies, Gender Orders*. Eds Daniel

Schönpflug and Oliver Janz. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2014.

*EBSCO*. Web. 10 November 2017.

"Cash Versus Credit." *Women's Penny Paper* 7 (8 December 1888): 6. *19th Century UK*

*Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

"Change in Ownership of the Herald." *Women's Penny Paper* (30 April 1892): 3. *19th*

*Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

Chapman, John. Letter to Karl Pearson. 23 September 1885. MS. Karl Pearson

Collection. Special Collections, University College London. Print.

—. "Prostitution in Relation to the National Health." *Westminster Review* 92 (July 1869):

179-234. *British Periodicals*. *Proquest.* Web. 23 September 2016.

—. "Prostitution: Governmental Experiments in Controlling It." *Westminster Review* 93

(January 1870): 119-79. *British Periodicals*. *Proquest.* Web. 23 September 2016.

—. "Prostitution: How to Deal with It." *Westminster Review* 93 (April 1870): 477-535.

*British Periodicals*. *Proquest.* Web. 23 September 2016.

—. "Compulsory Medication of Prostitutes by the State." *Westminster Review* 106 (July 1876): 137-88. *British Periodicals*. *Proquest.* Web. 23 September 2016.

—. "Prostitution in Paris." *Westminster Review* 119 (April 1883): 494-521. *British Periodicals*. *Proquest.* Web. 23 September 2016.

Chapman, Elizabeth Rachel. "The Christian Harem." *Westminster Review* 122 (July 1884): 105-15. *British Periodicals*. *Proquest.* Web. 23 September 2016.

—. "Marriage Rejection and Marriage Reform." *Westminster Review* 130 (September 1888): 358-77. *British Periodicals*. *Proquest.* Web. 23 September 2016.

—. "St Paul and the Woman Movement." *Westminster Review* 131 (February 1889): 135-47. *British Periodicals*. *Proquest.* Web. 23 September 2016.

—. "The Decline of Divorce." *Westminster Review* 133 (April 1890): 417-34. *British Periodicals*. *Proquest.* Web. 23 September 2016.

Clapperton, Jane Hume. "Miss Chapman's Marriage Reform: A Criticism." *Westminster Review* 130 (December 1888): 707-17. *British Periodicals*. *Proquest.* Web. 23 September 2016.

—. *Scientific Meliorism and the Evolution of Happiness.* London: Kegan Paul, 1885. *Internet Archive.* Web. 10 November 2017.

—. *Margaret Dunmore; or A Socialist Home.* 2nd Edition. London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1894. Print.

—. *A Vision of the Future based on the Application of Ethical Principles*. London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co Limited, 1904. Print.

Clifford, William Kingdon. "Cosmic Emotion." *Nineteenth Century* (October 1877): 411–29. *British Periodicals*. *Proquest.* Web. 3 November 2017.

Chapman, Elizabeth Rachel. "Marriage Rejection and Marriage Reform." *Westminster Review* 130 (September 1888): 358-77. *British Periodicals*. *Proquest.* Web. 23 September 2016.

Conboy, Martin. *The Language of Newspapers: Socio-Historical Perspectives*. London: Bloomsbury Press, 2010. Print.

—. *Journalism: A Critical History*. London: Sage, 2004. Print.

—, and Adrian Bingham, "Journalism and History: Dialogues," *Media History* 19.1 (2013): 1-2. *Taylor and Francis Online*. Web. 10 November 2017.

"Conference of Poor Law Guardians and Others at Mrs. Müller's." *Women's Penny Paper* 60 (14 December 1889): 90. *19ᵗʰ Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

Cornwallis, Caroline. "The Property of Married Women." *Westminster Review* 66 (October 1856): 331-60. *British Periodicals*. *Proquest.* Web. 23 September 2016.

—. "Capabilities and Disabilities of Women." *Westminster Review* 67 (January 1857): 42-72. *British Periodicals*. *Proquest.* Web. 23 September 2016.

"Correspondence." *Women's Penny Paper* 10 (29 December 1888): 7. *19ᵗʰ Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

"Correspondence." *Women's Penny Paper* (7 June 1890): 392. *19ᵗʰ Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

"Correspondence." *Women's Penny Paper* 92 (26 July 1890): 475. *19ᵗʰ Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

"Correspondence: Men Must Join the Union" *Women's Penny Paper* 98 (6 September 1890): 547. *19ᵗʰ Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

"Correspondence-Mrs. H.W." *Women's Penny Paper* 94 (9 August 1890): 499. *19th Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

"Correspondence—'Our Paper.'" *Women's Penny Paper* (21 June 1890): 416). *19th Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

"Correspondence: Wanted A Suffrage Union" *Women's Penny Paper* 92 (26 July 1890): 475. *19th Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

"Correspondence: Wanted—A Suffrage Union" *Women's Penny Paper* 94 (9 August 1890): 499. *19th Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

Crawford, Elizabeth. *The Women's Suffrage Movement: A Reference Guide, 1866-1928.* 1999. London: Taylor and Francis, 2003. *Coutts.* Web. 10 November 2017.

"Current News About Women." *Women's Penny Paper* 21 (16 March 1889): 2. *19th Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

"Current News About Women." *Women's Penny Paper* 98 (6 September 1890): 545. *19th Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

"Current News About Women." *Women's Penny Paper* 103 (11 October 1890): 603. *19th Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

Daniels, Kay. "Emma Brooke: Fabian, Feminist and Writer." *Women's History Review* 12.2 (2003): 153-168. *Taylor and Francis Online.* Web. 12 February 2012.

Davies, Emily. *Emily Davies Collected Letters 1861-1875*. Eds. Ann B. Murphy and Deirdre Raftery. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2004. *EBSCO.* Web. 10 November 2017.

Day, Harriet. "Lord Salisbury's Liberalism." *Woman's Herald* 145 (8 August 1891): 666. *19th Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

de la Motte, Brunhild. "Radicalism—Feminism—Socialism: The Case of the Women
Novelists." *The Rise of Socialist Fiction: 1880-1914.* Ed. Gustav Klaus. Sussex:
Harvester Press, 1987. Print.

De Moleyns, Clara E. "Interview. Miss F. Henrietta Müller." *Woman's Herald*. 161.4 (28
November 1891): 915-916. *19th Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9
October 2016.

Den Otter, Sandra. *British Idealism and Social Explanation: A Study in Late Victorian
Thought.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996. Print.

Desmond, Adrian. "Huxley, Thomas Henry (1825-1895)." *Oxford Dictionary of National
Biography. Gale Cengage*, 2017. Web. 17 October 2017.

*Dictionary of Literary Biography Complete Online. Gale Cengage*, 2017. Web. 17
October 2017.

DiCenzo, Maria. "Pressing the Public: Nineteenth-Century Feminist Periodicals and 'the
Press.'" *Nineteenth-Century Gender Studies* 6.2 (Summer 2010): n.pag.
www.ncgsjournal.com. Web. 10 November 2017.

—, with Lucy Delap and Leila Ryan. *Feminist Media History: Suffrage, Periodicals and
the Public Sphere*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011. Print.

Diedrick, James. *Mathilde Blind: Late Victorian Culture and the Woman of Letters.*
Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2016. *Proquest Ebooks.*
Web. 10 November 2017.

Dilke, Emilia F.S. "Benefit Societies and Trade Unions for Women." *The Fortnightly
Review* 51 (1889): 852-6. Print.

Dillane, Fionnuala. "'A Fair Field and No Favour': Hulda Friedrichs, the Interview, and

    the New Woman." *Women in Journalism at the* Fin de Siècle*: 'Making a Name*

    *for Herself.'* Ed. F. Elizabeth Gray. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave

    Macmillan, 2012. 148-164. Print.

Dixon, Joy. *Divine Feminine: Theosophy and Feminism in England*. 2001. Baltimore and

    London: The John Hopkins UP, 2003. *Proquest Ebook Central.* Web. 10

    November 2017.

Doughan, David and Denise Sanchez, eds. *Feminist Periodicals 1855-1984: An*

    *Annotated Bibliography of British, Irish, Commonwealth and International Titles*.

    Brighton: Harvester Press, 1987. Print.

Doughty, Terri. "Representing the Professional Woman: The Celebrity Interviewing of

    Sarah Tooley." *Women in Journalism at the* Fin de Siècle*: 'Making a Name for*

    *Herself.'* Ed. F. Elizabeth Gray. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan,

    2012. 165-181. Print.

Drazin, Yaffa Claire, ed. *'My Other Self': The Letters of Olive Schreiner and Havelock*

    *Ellis* (New York: Peter Lang): 1922. Print.

Duncan, Graeme. *Marx and Mill: Two Views of Social Conflict and Social Harmony*.

    Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973. Print.

"Editorial Notes." *Women's Penny Paper* 78 (19 April 1890): 306. *19$^{th}$ Century UK*

    *Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

"Editorials: Our Interviews." *Women's Penny Paper* (21 December 1889): 102. *19$^{th}$*

    *Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

Edwards, Joseph, ed. *The First Labour Annual 1895: A Year Book of Industrial Progress and Social Welfare*. 1895. Brighton and Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1971. Print.

Ellis, Havelock. Letter to Olive Schreiner. 30 July 1884. *Olive Schreiner Letters Project*. 2012. Web. 18 January 2016.

—. "The Form of Capture in Marriage Ceremonies." *Westminster Review* 128 (June 1887): 283-94. *British Periodicals*. *Proquest.* Web. 23 September 2016.

—. "The Changing Status of Women." *Westminster Review* 128 (October 1887): 818-28. *British Periodicals*. *Proquest.* Web. 23 September 2016.

"English News." *Women's Penny Paper* 52 (19 October 1889): 5. *19th Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

"English News." *Women's Penny Paper* 57 (23 November 1889): 51. *19th Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

The Fabian Society. "Tract No. 4: What Socialism Is." London: George Standring, 1886. Print.

Felski, Rita. *The Gender of Modernity.* Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1995. Print.

Foerster, Ernst. *Die Frauenfrage in den Romanen Englischer Schriftstellerinnen der Gegenwart.* Marburg: N. G.: Elwert'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1907. *Archive.org*. Web. 30 January 2018.

"Forthcoming Books." *Women's Penny Paper* 51 (12 October 1889): 11. *19th Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

Gandhi, Leela. *Affective Communities: Anticolonial Thought, Fin-de-Siècle Radicalism, and the Politics of Friendship*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006. Print.

Goodway, David. "Freedom, 1886-2014: An Appreciation." *History Workshop Journal* 79 (Spring 2015): 233-242. *EBSCO*. Web. 22 October 2017.

Gilchrist, Anne Burrows. "An Englishwoman's Estimate of Walt Whitman (from late letters by an English Lady to William Michael Rossetti)." 20 November 1869. *Anne Gilchrist, Her Life and Writings*. Ed. Herbert Harlakenden Gilchrist. 2nd Ed. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1887. 287-307. *Internet Archive*. Web. 9 January 2018.

Gray, F. Elizabeth. "Poetry and Politics in *The Women's Penny Paper/Woman's Herald*, 1888-1893: 'One swift, bright, fore-gleam of celestial day'." *Victorian Periodicals Review* 45.2 (Summer 2012): 134-157. *JSTOR*. Web. 10 November 2017.

Gray, Jonathan, Liliana Bounegru, Stefania Milan, and Paolo Ciuccarelli. "Ways of Seeing Data: Toward a Critical Literacy for Data Visualizations and Research Objects and Research Devices." *Innovative Methods in Media and Communications Research*. Eds S Kubitschko and A Kaun. Palgrave Macmillan, 2016. 227-251. *SpringerLink*. Web. 10 November 2017.

Grosskurth, Phyllis. *Havelock Ellis: A Biography*. London: Allen Lane, 1980. Print.

Gullette, Margaret Morganroth. "Afterward." *The Daughters of Danaus*. By Mona Caird. 1894. New York: The Feminist Press, 1989. 493–534. KindleAWZ File.

Haddon, Caroline (as Anonymous). "The Future of Marriage." London: Foulger, 1884. Print.

Hamilton, Susan. *Frances Power Cobbe and Victorian Feminism*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006. Print.

Hampton, Mark. *Visions of the Press in Britain, 1850-1950*. Urbana and Chicago:

    University of Illinois Press, 2004. Print.

"Hampstead Historic Club, Programs of Lectures." 1887. TS. Fabian Society Archives

    Archives and Special Collections, London School of Economics. Print.

Hannam, June and Karen Hunt. *Socialist Women: Britain, 1880s to 1920s.* London and

    New York, Routledge, 2002. Print.

Harrison, Royden J. *The Life and Times of Sidney and Beatrice Webb, 1858-1905: The*

    *Formative Years*. London: Palgrave, 2000. Print.

Heilmann, Ann. "Mona Caird (1854–1932): Wild Woman, New Woman, and Early

    Radical Feminist Critic of Marriage and Motherhood." *Women's History Review*

    5 (1996): 67–95. *Taylor and Francis Online.* Web. 12 February 2012.

—. *New Woman Strategies: Sarah Grand, Olive Schreiner, Mona Caird*. Manchester and

    New York: Manchester University Press, 2004. Print.

—, ed. *The Late-Victorian Marriage Question: A Collection of Key New Woman Texts.* 5

    vols. London: Routledge ⁄ Thoemmes Press, 1998. Print.

Henderson, W.O. *The Life of Friedrich Engels*. Vol. 1. London and New York:

    Routledge, 1976. Print.

"Herr Bebel: A Socialist Champion of Women." *Woman's Herald* (9 November 1893):

    598. *19th Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

Heydt, Colin. Introduction to *Utilitarianism* by John Stuart Mill. Peterborough:

    Broadview, 2010. Print.

Hinely, Susan. "Charlotte Wilson, the 'Woman Question', and the Meaning of Anarchist

    Socialism in Late Victorian Radicalism." *International Review of Social History*

    57 (2012): 3-36. *Cambridge Core*. Web. 10 November 2017.

—. Charlotte Wilson: Anarchist, Fabian, and Feminist. Unpublished Doctoral

    Dissertation. 1987. Print.

Hobhouse, L.T. "Liberalism." 1911. *Liberalism and Other Writings*. Ed James

    Meadowcroft. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994. Print.

Hollingsworth, Barry. "The Society of Friends of Russian Freedom: English Liberals and

    Russian Socialists, 1890-1917." *Oxford Slavonic Papers* 3 (1970): 45-64. Print.

Hookway, Demelza. "Liberating Conversations: John Stuart Mill and Mona Caird."

    *Literature Compass* 9.11 (2012): 873-883. *Wiley Online Library*. Web. 10

    November 2017.

—. "'Falling Over the Same Precipice'": Thomas Hardy, Mona Caird, and John Stuart

    Mill." *The Thomas Hardy Journal* 26 (2010): 132–50. *Proquest*. Web. 10

    November 2017.

Houston, Natalie M. "Towards a Computational Analysis of Victorian Poetics." *Victorian*

    *Studies* 56.3 (2014): 498-511. Print.

Hunt, Tristram. *The Frock Coated Communist: The Revolutionary Life of Friedrich*

    *Engels*. London and New York: Allen Lane, 2009. Print.

Huxley, Leonard. *Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley*. 1900. Volume 1. London:

    Macmillan, 2011. Print.

"Important Announcement." *Women's Penny Paper* 109 (22 November 1890): 72. *19th*

    *Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

"Interview: Miss Browne." *Woman's Herald* 223 (4 February 1893): 7. *19ᵗʰ Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

"Interview: Mrs. Mona Caird." *Women's Penny Paper* 88 (1890): 421. *19ᵗʰ Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

"Interview: Mrs. Priscilla Bright McLaren." *Women's Penny Paper* 1 (27 October 1888): 4. *19ᵗʰ Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

"Interview: Warner Snoad." *The Woman's Herald* 5.180 (1892): 3-4. *19ᵗʰ Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

Johnson, Barry Cornish. *Tea and Anarchy! The Bloomsbury Diary of Olive Garnett 1890-1893*. London: Bartletts Press, 1989. Print.

Kapp, Yvonne. *Eleanor Marx*. Vol II. London: Virago Press, 1979. Print.

Khuri-Makdisi, Ilham. *The Eastern Mediterranean and the Making of Global Radicalism, 1860–1914.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010. Print.

King, Andrew and John Plunkett. *Victorian Print Media: A Reader*. Oxford: OUP, 2005. Print.

Kropotkin, Petr Alekseevich. *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution*. 1902. London, Freedom Press, 1998. Print.

"Lady Poor Law Guardians." *Women's Penny Paper* 80 (3 May 1890): 330. *19ᵗʰ Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

Latour, Bruno. "On Actor-Network Theory: A Few Clarifications, plus more than a Few Complications." *Soziale Welt* 47.4 (1996): 369-381. *JSTOR.* Web. 2 March 2018.

"Leaderette." *Women's Penny Paper* 7 (8 December 1888): 4. *19ᵗʰ Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

"Leaderettes." *Women's Penny Paper* 1 (27 October 1888): 4. *19th Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

Ledger, Sally. *The New Woman: Fiction and Feminism at the Fin de Siècle*. New York: Manchester University Press, 1997. Print.

Levine, Caroline. *Forms: Whole, Rhythm, Hierarchy, Network*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2015. Print.

Livesey, Ruth. *Socialism, Sex, and the Culture of Aestheticism in Britain, 1880-1914*. Oxford, Oxford UP, 2007. Print.

"London School of Medicine for Women." *Women's Penny Paper* 1.1 (27 October 1888): 1-2. *19th Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

Longa, Ernesto A. *Anarchist Periodicals in English Published in the United States 1833-1955: An Annotated Guide*. Lanham, Md: Scarecrow Press, 2010. Print.

Lord, Henrietta Frances. "Life of Henrik Ibsen." *Nora: A Play*, by Henry Ibsen, 1879, London, Griffith and Farran, 1882, pp. v-xxiv. Print.

MacKay, Carol Hanbery. "Annie Besant's *Our Corner*." *Victorian Periodicals Review* 42.4 (Winter 2009): 324-58. *JSTOR*. Web. 10 November 2017.

Mackenzie, Norman, and Jeanne Mackenzie. *The First Fabians*. London: Wiedenfld & Nicolson, 1977. Print.

Mandell, Laura. "The Poetess Archive Database." *Digital Humanities Quarterly* 3.3 (2009): n.p. Web. 6 November 2017.

Manovich, Lev. "Visualization Methods for Media Studies." *Oxford Handbook of Sound and Image in Digital Media*. Eds Carol Vernallis, Amy Herzog, and John Richardson. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. 253-78. Print.

Marcus, Sharon. "Comparative Sapphism." *The Literary Channel: The Inter-National Invention of the Novel*. Ed. Margaret Cohen and Carolyn Dever. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2002. 251–85. Print.

"Marion Leslie." *Glasgow Herald* 281 (23 November 1895): 9. *19th Century British Library Newspapers*. *Gale Cengage.* Web. 10 November 2017.

Martin, Jane. *Women and the Politics of Schooling in Victorian and Edwardian England.* London: Bloomsbury, 2006. *EBSCO.* Web. 10 November 2017.

Marx Aveling, Eleanor and Edward Aveling. "The Woman Question from a Socialist Point of View." *Westminster Review* 125 (January 1886): 207-22. *British Periodicals*. *Proquest.* Web. 23 September 2016.

Maudsley, Henry. "Sex in Mind and in Education." *The Fortnightly Review* 15 (Jan-June 1874): 466-83. Print.

McBrier, A.M. *The Fabian Society and English Politics, 1884-1918.* Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1966. Print.

McElroy, Wendy. *Individualist Feminism of the Nineteenth Century: Collected Writings and Biographical Profiles*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2001. Print.

"Men and Women's Club Minute Book." 1885-1889. MS. Karl Pearson Collection. Special Collections, University College London. Print.

Mill, John Stuart. *Autobiography.* 1873. Auckland, NZ: The Floating Press, 2010. Web. 23 August 2017.

—, and Harriet Taylor Mill. "The Enfranchisement of Women." *Westminster Review* 55 (July 1851): 289-311. *British Periodicals*. *Proquest.* Web. 23 September 2016.

—. *The Subjection of Women*. 1869. Auckland, NZ: The Floating Press, 2009. Web. 23 August 2017.

—. *A System of Logic.* 1843. 8th ed. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1882. *Project Gutenberg.* Web. 23 August 2017.

—. *August Comte and Positivism.* 1865. *Project Gutenberg.* Web. 23 August 2017.

Miller, Elizabeth Caroline. "Twilight of the Idylls: Wilde, Tennyson, and Fin-de-Siècle Anti-Idealism." *Victorian Literature and Culture* 43 (2015): 113-130. *JSTOR.* Web. 10 November 2017.

Moi, Toril. *Herik Ibsen and the Birth of Modernism: Art, Theatre, Philosophy.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006. *Google Play*. Web. 10 November 2017.

Morreti, Franco. *Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for a Literary History.* London: Verso, 2005. Print.

Morris, Lewis. "Brotherhood." *Songs Unsung*. London: Paul, Trench and Co., 1883. Print.

Morris, William. *The Collected Letters of William Morris*. Ed. Norman Kelvin. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984. Print.

"Mr. G. Bernard Shaw at Hampstead: 'Socialism and the Middle Class.'" *Hampstead and Highgate Express* (1 June 1907): 6. *British Newspaper Archive.* Web. 10 November 2017.

"Mrs. Beecher Stowe." *Women's Penny Paper* 76 (5 April 1890): 278. *19th Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

"Mrs. Sarah Tooley." *Woman's Herald* 169.11 (15 March 1894): 169. *19th Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

"Mrs. Mona Caird in a New Character." *Review of Review* 7 (May 1893): 519. *British Periodicals. Proquest.* Web. 10 November 2017.

Müller, F. Henrietta. (As Anonymous). "Common Sense About Women." *Westminster Review* 119 (January 1883): 155-165. *British Periodicals*. *Proquest.* Web. 23 September 2016.

—. (As Anonymous). "Girton College in 1885." *Westminster Review* 124 (July 1885): 72-79. *British Periodicals*. *Proquest.* Web. 23 September 2016.

—. Letter to Karl Pearson. 8 October 1885. MS. Karl Pearson Collection. Special Collections, University College London. Print.

—. Letter to Karl Pearson. 29 March 1888. MS. Karl Pearson Collection. Special Collections, University College London. Print.

—. Letter to Olive Schreiner, enclosed in letter from Olive Schreiner to Edward Carpenter. 6 April 1888. *Olive Schreiner Letters Project*. 2012. Web. 18 January 2015.

—. (As Anonymous). "Mary Wollstonecroft's 'Rights of Women.'" *Women's Penny Paper* 3.1 (10 November 1888): 6, and *Women's Penny Paper* 4 (17 November 1888): 5. *19$^{th}$ Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

—. (As Anonymous). "Our Policy" *Women's Penny Paper* 1.1 (27 October 1888): 1. *19$^{th}$ Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

—. "Schools in Florence." *Macmillan's Magazine* 44.264 (October 1881): 480-488. *British Periodicals*. *Proquest*. Web. 10 November 2017.

—. "Some Aspects of the London School Board." *Westminster Review* 129 (January 1888): 701-712. *British Periodicals*. *Proquest.* Web. 23 September 2016.

—. (As Anonymous). *The Future of Single Women*. London: Ballantyne, Hanson & Co.,
1884. Print.

—. (As Anonymous). "The Future of Single Women." *Westminster Review* 65.121
(January 1884): 151-162. *British Periodicals*. *Proquest.* Web. 23 September 2016.

—. (As Anonymous). "The Woman Question in Europe." *Westminster Review* 122 (July
1884): 185-212. *British Periodicals*. *Proquest.* Web. 23 September 2016.

—. (As Anonymous). "The Work of Women as Poor Law Guardians." *Westminster
Review* 123 (April 1885): 386-395. *British Periodicals*. *Proquest.* Web. 23
September 2016.

—. (As Anonymous). "What Woman is Fitted For." *Westminster Review* 127 (January
1887): 64-75. *British Periodicals*. *Proquest.* Web. 23 September 2016.

Murphy, Patricia. *Time is of the Essence: Temporality, Gender and the New Woman*.
Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001. Print.

"News and Notes." *The Writer: a monthly magazine to interest and help all literary
workers* 5: 8 (August 1891): 18. Print.

Nordeau, Max. *Degeneration*. 7th ed. London: D. Appleton & Co, 1895. *Ovid*. Web. 13
August 2017.

*Notebook of the Shelley Society*. London: Reeves and Turner, 1888. Print.

"Notes and Letters." *Woman's Herald* 145 (8 August 1891): 666. *19th Century UK
Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

"Obituary: Henrietta Müller." *The Times* 37919 (17 January 1906): 6. *The Times Digital
Archive. Gale Cengage.* Web. 10 November 2017.

"Our Creed." *Woman's Herald* 118 (24 January 1891): 216. *19th Century UK Periodicals.*

    *Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

"Our Creed." *Woman's Herald* 121 (14 February 1891): 264. *19th Century UK*

    *Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004-2016.

    oxforddnb.com. Web. 17 October 2017.

Paget, John (as Anonymous). "The English Law of Divorce." *Westminster Review 65*

    (April 1856): 338-55. *British Periodicals*. *Proquest.* Web. 23 September 2016.

Pearson, Karl. "Humanism in Germany" *Westminster Review* 119 (April 1883): 315-33.

    *British Periodicals*. *Proquest.* Web. 23 September 2016.

—. "Martin Luther: His Influence on the Material and Intellectual Welfare of Germany"

    *Westminster Review* 121 (January 1884): 1-44. *British Periodicals*. *Proquest.*

    Web. 23 September 2016.

—. *The Ethic of Freethought: A Selection of Essays and Lectures*. London: T. Fisher

    Unwin, 1888. Print.

—. "The Woman's Question." 11 July 1885. TS. Karl Pearson Collection. Special

    Collections, University College London. Print.

—. "Woman and Labour." *Fortnightly Review* 329 (1894): 561-577. Print.

Pease, Edward. *History of the Fabian Society.* New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1916.

    *Project Gutenberg.* www.gutenberg.org/files/13715/13715-h/13715-h.htm Web.

    10 November 2017.

Pease, Marjory Davidson. Letter to George Bernard Shaw, 3 June 1888. MS. George

    Bernard Shaw Papers. Archives and Manuscripts, British Library. Print.

"Pepper and Salt." *Judy: The Conservative Comic* (27 March 1889): 152. *British Periodicals. Proquest.* Web. 10 November 2017.

"Personal Gossip about Writers." *The Author: A Monthly Magazine for Literary Workers* 1.8 (15 August 1889): 123-124. Print.

Phipps, Pauline A. *Constance Maynard's Passions: Religion, Sexuality, and an English Educational Pioneer 1849-1935*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015. *EBSCO*. Web. 10 November 2017.

Pierson, Stanley. *Marxism and the Origins of British Socialism.* Ithica: Cornell University Press, 1973. Print.

Podmore, Frank. Letter to Karl Pearson. 20 August 1888. Karl Pearson Collection. Special Collections, University College London. Print.

Porter, Theodore M. *Karl Pearson: The Scientific Life in a Statistical Age*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004. Print.

Radice, Lisanne. *Beatrice and Sidney Webb: Fabian Socialists*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984. Print.

Ramsay, Stephen. *Reading Machines: Towards an Algorithmic Criticism*. Urbana, Chicago, and Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2011. *EBSCO*. Web. 10 November 2017.

"Ready to Join." *Women's Penny Paper* 95 (16 August 1890): 511. *19th Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

Richardson, Angelique. *Love and Eugenics in the Late Nineteenth Century: Rational Reproduction and the New Woman*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2003. Print.

"Ring out the Old." *Woman's Herald* (21 December 1893): 2. *19th Century UK*

 *Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

Roberts, Mary Louise. *Disruptive Acts: The New Woman in Fin-de-Siècle France.*

 Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002. Print.

Romaniuk, S.K. *Russkii London*. Moscow: Astrel, 2009. Print.

Rooum, Donald. "Freedom, Freedom Press, and Freedom Bookshop: A Short History of

 Freedom Press" *Information for Social Change* 27 (Summer 2008): np.

 libr.org/isc/ Web. 10 November 2017.

Rosenberg, Sheila. "Encounters in the Westminster Review: Dialogues on Marriage and

 Divorce." *Encounters in the Victorian Press: Editors, Authors, Readers*. Eds.

 Laurel Brake and Julie F. Codell. Basingstoke Palgrave Macmillan, 2005: 119-

 137. *Springer Link*. Web. 10 November 2017.

—. "The 'Wicked Westminster': John Chapman, His Contributors and Promises

 Fulfilled" *Victorian Periodicals Review* 33.3 (Fall 2000): 231-9. *JSTOR*. Web. 10

 November 2017.

Rosenberg, Tracey S. Gender Construction and the Individual in the Work of Mona

 Caird. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. 2006. Print.

—. "A Challenge to Victorian Motherhood: Mona Caird and Gertrude Atherton."

 *Women's Writing* 12 (2005): 485–504. *Taylor and Francis Online*. Web. 10

 November 2017.

Rowbotham, Sheila and Jeffrey Weeks, *Socialism and the New Life: The Personal and*

 *Sexual Politics of Edward Carpenter and Havelock Ellis.* London: Pluto Press,

 1977. Print.

*The Royal Cornwall Gazette* 4783 (28 March 1895): 6. Web. 18 February 2014. *British Library Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 10 November 2017.

Sarvasy, Wendy. "A Reconsideration of the Development and Structure of John Stuart Mill's Socialism." *The Western Political Quarterly* 38.2 (June 1985): 312-333. *JSTOR.* Web. 10 November 2017.

Schönpflug, Daniel and Oliver Janz. *Gender History in a Transnational Perspective: Networks, Biographies, Gender Orders.* New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2014. *EBSCO.* Web. 10 November 2017.

Schreiner, Olive. *Dreams.* 1890. Ed. Elisabeth Jay. Birmingham: Birmingham University Press, 2002. EPUB file.

—. "I Thought I Stood." *Women's Penny Paper* 7 (8 December 1888): 1. *19th Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

—. Letter to Betty Molteno. 17 March 1916. *Olive Schreiner Letters Project.* 2012. Web. 18 January 2015.

—. Letter to Havelock Ellis. 9 May 1885. *Olive Schreiner Letters Project.* 2012. Web. 13 October 2017.

—. Letter to Havelock Ellis. 22 December 1888. *Olive Schreiner Letters Project.* 2012. Web. 18 January 2017.

—. Letter to Karl Pearson. 10 July 1885. *Olive Schreiner Letters Project.* 2012. Web. 18 January 2015.

—. Letter to Havelock Ellis. 12 August 1885. *Olive Schreiner Letters Project.* 2012. Web. 13 October 2017.

—. Letter to Karl Pearson. 17 October 1885. *Olive Schreiner Letters Project*. 2012. Web.

    18 January 2015.

—. Letter to Karl Pearson. 5 November 1885. *Olive Schreiner Letters Project*. 2012.

    Web. 18 January 2015.

—. Letter to Karl Pearson. 17 March 1886. *Olive Schreiner Letters Project*. 2012. Web.

    18 January 2015.

—. Letter to Karl Pearson. 23 March 1886. *Olive Schreiner Letters Project*. 2012. Web.

    18 January 2015.

—. "Life's Gifts." *Women's Penny Paper* 47 (14 September 1889): 7. *19th Century UK

    Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

—. "Note." N.d. *Olive Schreiner Letters Project*. 2012. Web. 28 November 2015.

—. "Once More I Stood." *Women's Penny Paper* 8 (15 December 1888): 1. *19th Century

    UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

—. *Woman and Labour*. 1911. London: Virago, 1978. Print.

Sharp, Elizabeth A. *William Sharp (Fiona MacLeod): A Memoir*. New York: Duffield &

    Co, 1910. Print.

Sharp, Evelyn. *Hertha Ayrton, 1854-1923*. London: Edward Arnold, 1926. Print.

Sharpe, Maria. Letter to Robert Parker. 30 September 1885. MS. Karl Pearson Collection.

    Special Collections, University College London. Print.

—. "Autobiographical History." 1889. MS. Karl Pearson Collection. Special Collections,

    University College London. Print.

Shaw, George Bernard. *Sixteen Self Sketches*. London: Constable, 1949. Print.

*Shelley Society Papers.* London: Reeves and Turner, 1888. Print.

Sibthorpe, Margaret Shurmer. "Two Women's Papers" *Shafts* 6.3 (1898): 77-79. *The*

    *Gerritson Collection. Proquest.* Web. 10 November 2017.

Sinclair, May. "The Ethical and Religious Import of Idealism." *The New World: A*

    *Quarterly Review of Religious Ethics and Theology* 2.8 (December 1893): 694-

    708. Print.

Snoad, Warner. "Mrs. Maybrick." *Women's Penny Paper* 45 (31 August 1889): 2. *19th*

    *Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

Stanton, Elizabeth Cady. *Eighty Years and More: 1815-1897.* New York: European

    Publishing Company, 1898. Print.

Stanton, Theodore. *The Woman Question in Europe: A Series of Original Essays.*

    London: Sampson Low, Searle & Rivington, 1884. Print.

Surridge, Lisa. *Bleak Houses: Marital Violence in Victorian Fiction*. Athens, Ohio: Ohio

    UP, 2005. Print.

Sutherland, John. *The Longman Companion to Victorian Fiction*. 2nd ed. Harlow: Pearson

    Longman, 2009. Print.

Swan, Annie S. *My Life: An Autobiography*. London: Nicholson and Watson, 1934. Print.

Taylor, Barbara. *Eve and the New Jerusalem: Socialism and Feminism in the Nineteenth*

    *Century.* 1983. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993. Print.

Taylor, Charles. *A Secular Age*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2007. Print.

Taylor, Helen. "The Ladie's Petition." *Westminster Review* 87 (January 1867): 63-79.

    *British Periodicals. Proquest.* Web. 23 September 2016.

Taylor, Quentin. "John Stuart Mill, A Political Economist: A Reassessment."

    *Independent Review* 21.1 (Summer 2016): 73-94. *EBSCO*. Web. 10 November

    2017.

"The First Meeting." *Women's Penny Paper* 100 (20 September 1890): 570. *19th Century*

    *UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

"The Press on the Demonstration." *Daily News* 12284 (25 August 1885): 80. Print.

"The Saint James Gazette on the WPP." *Women's Penny Paper* (26 April 1890): 318. *19th*

    *Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

"They Say." *Women's Penny Paper* 58 (30 November 1889): 68. *19th Century UK*

    *Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

Thompson, Nicola Diane. *Victorian Women Writers and the Woman Question*.

    Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999. Print.

Tjoa, Hock Guan. *George Henry Lewes: A Victorian Mind*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard

    University Press, 1977. Print.

"To Women Investors." *Women's Penny Paper* 5.1 (24 November 1888): 8. *19th Century*

    *UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

"To Women out of Work" *Women's Penny Paper* 5.1 (24 November 1888): 8. *19th*

    *Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

Tusan, Michelle Elizabeth. "Performing Work: Gender, Class, and the Printing Trade in

    Victorian Britain." *Journal of Women's History* 16.1 (Spring 2004): 103-126.

    *Contemporary Women's Issues. Gale Cengage.* Web. 10 November 2017.

—. *Women Making News: Gender and Journalism in Modern Britain*. Urbana and

    Chicago: The University of Illinois Press, 2005. Print.

Ulin, Don. "Westminster Review." *Dictionary of Nineteenth Century Journalism*. Eds.

    Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor. Gent: Academia Press, 2009. Print.

"University Intelligence." *Women's Penny Paper* 1 (27 October 1888): 6. *19$^{th}$ Century*

    *UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

Vadillo, Ana Parejo. *Women Poets and Urban Aestheticism: Passengers of Modernity*.

    Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005. *Springer Link*. Web. 10 November 2017.

Van Arsdel, Rosemary, and J. Don Vann, eds. *Victorian Periodicals and Victorian*

    *Society*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995. *DesLibris*. Web. 10

    November 2017.

Vickery, Amanda. *Women, Privilege, and Power: British Politics, 1750 to the Present*.

    Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001. Print.

"Wanted A Suffrage Union." *Women's Penny Paper* 93 (2 August 1890): 486. *19$^{th}$*

    *Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

"Wanted—A Suffrage Union." *Women's Penny Paper* 93 (2 August 1890): 487. *19$^{th}$*

    *Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

Wallace, Jo-Ann. Fellowship, Progressive Idealism, Necrophilia: Edith Lees Ellis's 'The

    Idealist.' *VSAWC 2016: Victorian Intimacies.* Winnipeg, MB. 22 April 2016.

    Unpublished Conference Paper.

Walkowitz, Judith. *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-*

    *Victorian London*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992. Print.

Waugh, Arthur. "The Author of 'Transition'." *The Critic* 692 (25 May 1895): 383-4.

    Print.

Warwick, Alexandra. "Introduction." *The Wing of Azrael.* By Mona Caird. London:

> Pickering & Chatto, 2010. vii–xxii. Vol. 3 of *New Woman Fiction, 1881–1899*.

> Carolyn W. de la L. Oulton, gen. ed. 9 vols. 2010–11. Print.

Webb, Sidney. Letter to George Bernard Shaw. 4  November 1884. MS. George Bernard

> Shaw Papers. Archives and Manuscripts, British Library. Print.

*The Wellesley index to Victorian periodicals, 1824-1900: Tables of Contents and

> Identification of Contributors, with Biographies of their Articles and Stories.*

> 1964. Eds. Walter E. Houghton, Josef L. Althoz, et al. London: Routledge & K.

> Paul, 1966. Print.

 "What Some of Our Contemporaries Say of Us" *Women's Penny Paper* 3.1 (10

> November 1888): 7. *19th Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengace.* Web. 9 October

> 2016.

Wilhelm, Lindsay. "The Utopian Evolutionary Aestheticism of W.K. Clifford, Walter

> Pater, and Mathilde Blind." *Victorian Studies* 59.1 (Autumn 2016): 9-34. Print.

Wilson, Charlotte. "Anarchism." *Tract No. 4: What Socialism Is*. Ed. The Fabian Society.

> London: George Standring, 1886: 9-12. Print.

—. Letter to Karl Pearson. 28 July 1885. MS. Karl Pearson Collection. Special

> Collections, University College London. Print.

—. Letter to Karl Pearson. 8 August 1885. MS. Karl Pearson Collection. Special

> Collections, University College London. Print.

Wadeson, Oliver. "Britain's most artistic farmhouse: From Constable to Dickens… the

> home with an astonishing array of famous residents." *Mail Online*. 20 July 2014.

> dailymail.co.uk. Web. 10 November 2017.

Wolfe, Willard. *From Radicalism to Socialism: Men and Ideas in the Formation of Fabian Socialist Doctrines, 1881-1889.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975. Print.

"Women as Electors." *Women's Penny Paper* 4 (17 November 1888): 4. *19th Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

"Women County Councillors." *Women's Penny Paper* 85 (7 June 1890): 388. *19th Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

*Women's Penny Paper*. Ed. Helena B. Temple (F. Henrietta Müller). Woman's Printing Society and Helena B. Temple & Co, 27 October 1888-27 December 1890, London. *19th Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

*Woman's Herald*. Ed. Helena B. Temple (F. Henrietta Müller). Helena B. Temple & Co, 3 January 1891-23 April 1892, London. *19th Century UK Periodicals. Gale Cengage.* Web. 9 October 2016.

Woods, Robert Archey. *English Social Movements*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891. Print.

Young, G.M. *Victorian England: Portrait of an Age*. London: Oxford University Press, 1936. Print.

Youngkin, Molly. *Feminist Realism at the Fin de siècle: The Influence of the Late-Victorian Woman's Press on the Development of the Novel*. Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 2007. Print.

—. "Abstract: Feminist Realism at the Fin de siècle: The Influence of the Late-Victorian Woman's Press on the Development of the Novel." *Loyola Marymount*

*University.* faculty.lmu.edu/mollyyoungkin/wp-

content/uploads/sites/21/2016/10/book-1-abstract.pdf. Web. 24 January 2017.

Zhang, Quichen. The Class Problem in Clubland: A Social History of the Pioneer Club,

1892-1900. Unpublished Master's Thesis. 2013. Web. 16 October 2017.