



The Thetean: A Student Journal for Scholarly Historical Writing

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Front Matter/Preface

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The Thetean

The **Thetean**

A Student Journal for
Scholarly Historical Writing

Volume 48 (2019)

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The Thetean is an annual student journal representing the best of historical writing by current and recent students at Brigham Young University. All papers are written, selected, and edited entirely by students. Articles are welcome from students of all majors, provided they are sufficiently historical in focus. Please email submissions as an attached Microsoft Word document to theteansubmissions@gmail.com. Manuscripts must be received by mid-January to be included in that year's issue. Further details about each year's submission requirements, desired genres, and deadlines should be clarified by inquiring of the editors at the same address.

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Phi Alpha Theta, Beta Iota Chapter
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From the Editor

Preface

IN CONTEMPLATING THE ROLE OF HISTORY IN OUR SOCIETY, A COMMON misconception is that we study history in order to not repeat it. I say misconception because the person who says this forgets the impossibility of history repeating itself—how could it? We are different people with a new culture, living in a unique age, in a specific context, with problems humanity has never faced before. Perhaps a better way of configuring a historian's work, instead of merely looking back to diagnose the mistakes, injustices, and glories of the past and state a prognosis and prescription, rather is to formulate new solutions to the nuances of current realities by interpreting history and renewing it, making it relevant today. This may be why Thucydides, in *The History of the Peloponnesian War*, said that “history is philosophy from examples.”¹ This skill is invaluable not only to those who make history their profession but also to students who seek to better understand people and culture through a historical lens. The *Thetean* celebrates the efforts of undergraduates in the history department, under the guidance and expertise of the faculty, to apply their own perspective to the research they've done, benefiting their own worldview and that of their readers.

We are excited about the variety of subjects featured in this year's volume. Our very own Robert Swanson tells us of the unlikely development of Saudi Arabia after World War I made possible by Ibn Saud, and Ellie Vance describes how the Spanish Influenza affected American families. Abby Ellsworth gives us an interesting look at the public reputations of two female spies of the Civil War and how they reflect the political climate of the time. A few articles explore the stories of various groups of young women—Amy Jacobs discusses the treatment

1. This idea is attributed to Thucydides in Dionysius of Heraclea, *Art of Rhetoric*, 11.2.

of young female criminals in the nineteenth century, Cathy Davidson writes about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' response to 1960s and 70s counterculture through its teachings to the young women, and Kenzi Christensen studies young girls' involvement in the women's suffrage movement both in the US and in the United Kingdom. As we head over to early twentieth-century Italy, Benjamin Passey challenges how we interpret the policies of Pope Pius XI regarding Mussolini's fascist regime. And finally, Kayla Hofeling examines the late nineteenth-century painter Giovanni Boldini's portrait of Parisian celebrity Cléo de Mérode, capturing the zeitgeist of the Belle Époque through artistic style and technique.

To all the talented people who volunteered their skills to make this volume possible—we thank you. The faculty's influence and mentorship are not quickly forgotten by those who benefit from their wisdom and experience. For that, we thank the faculty members who taught and guided these students to excellence and those who took the time to review these students' work. Dr. Brenden Rensink, our faculty adviser, gave us the support and guidance we needed to continue the honored *Thetean* tradition. I personally give a heartfelt thanks to the *Thetean* editing staff—Emily, Katie, Kelsey, Jake, Maddie, Madeline, Makayla, Miranda, Sarah, and Rob—for their dedication to high quality, their thoughtfulness and skill in working with the authors, and their kindness in patiently working with me amid the busy schedules and tough choices we've made in putting this together.

We invite readers to study these essays with a mind open to reinterpreting today's world, making room for forgotten stories and perspectives never considered before. We hope they use history to step outside themselves and to reevaluate their present worldview in light of the things these authors teach them. Undergraduate students, authors and readers, will eventually leave BYU to start careers and families, and inevitably they will have their own unique problems to solve. The perspectives and skills developed in the history department will be pertinent to how they approach those situations. They will be aware of the vastness of human experience as they apply the past to their own lives to solve new problems, helping others do the same.

—Abigail Crimm
Editor in Chief



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Student Awards

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Student Awards

Awards for Outstanding Papers Written in 2018

Women's History Award

McKenzi Christensen, "‘Baby Suffragettes’: Girls in the Woman’s Suffrage Movement Across the Atlantic." Written for Rebecca de Schweinitz, Hist 490.

De Lamar and Mary Jensen Award in European History

Meredith Hanna, "La Fille Ainee de L'Eglise, La Fille Ainee de Paris: Imitatio Mariae in a Fourteenth Century Reliquary of Ste. Genevieve." Written for Elliott Wise, Art History 316.

Carol Cornwall Madsen Award in Mormon Women's History

Alyson Adams, "‘See, My Blood Is as White as Anyone’s’: Black Women Challenging the Priesthood Ban and Racism in the Early Church." Written for Rachel Cope and Valerie Hegstrom, Women’s Studies 332 & 492.

History of the Family Award

Ellie Vance, "The Spanish Influenza Outbreak of 1918: A Defining Characteristic in the Life and History of the American Family." Written for Karen Auman, Hist 378.

Family History Award

Hazel Scullin, "The Compiled Lineage of Victor Emanuel Johnson." Written for Jill Crandell, Hist 280.

Cultural History Award

Catherine Davidson, “A Promise of Something New?: Latter-day Saint Teachings to Young Women during the 1960s–1970s.” Written for Rebecca de Schweinitz, Hist 490.

William J. Snow Award in Western or Mormon History

Sarah Rounsville, “‘A Nation of Murderers’: Abortion Rhetoric in the LDS Defense of Polygamy.” Written for Rebecca de Schweinitz, Hist 390R.

History and Theory Award

Amy Jacobs, “Girls Gone Wild: Criminality among Young Girls in the Nineteenth-Century America.” Written for Jeff Hardy, Hist 490.

LeRoy R. Hafen Award in North American History

Abby Ellsworth, “Reconstructed Reputations: The Rise and Ruin of Two Civil War Spies.” Written for Matt Mason, Hist 490.

Fred R. Gowans Award in Nineteenth-Century Western US History

Rachel Hendrickson, “Did Overland Emigrant’s ‘Neglect their Obligations to God’?: Mobile Christianity and Religiosity along the Overland Trails.” Written for Jay Buckley, Hist 490.

Latin American History Award

Nathan Kitchen, “Spain’s Imperial Periphery and Power.” Written for Jon Felt, Hist 490.

History of Empire

Ellie Vance, “‘We Would Never Forget Him’: Ioann Veniaminov, Father of the Alaskan People.” Written for Jay Buckley, Hist 490.



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2019

The Rise of a King and the Birth of a State: The Development of Saudi Arabia in the Context of World War I

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Ibn Saud with his army

Paper

The Rise of a King and the Birth of a State

The Development of Saudi Arabia in the Context of World War I

Robert Swanson

ARABIA—A LAND WHERE THE *HAJJ* BRINGS ADHERENTS OF THE world's second largest religion to the holy sites of Mecca and Medina and where crude Arabian black gold lures investors hungry for oil to its shores. A place of prophets and jihadists, sheiks and ulema, kings and shepherds, Arabia was an Ottoman subsidiary that failed to capture the imperial interest of the European Great Powers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹ The eruption of World War I initiated the Ottoman Empire's final struggle for survival and embroiled Arabia in the international conflict. Four years of war ended with the Ottoman's formal surrender aboard the British flagship *Agamemnon* on the 28th of October 1918.² The Paris Peace Conference brought the final death blow to the Empire as the victors immediately began carving the Middle East into various mandates and spheres of influence. Saudi Arabia however, in an era of subjection and imperialism, became a sovereign state in the face of European domination. There naturally arises the question how the Saudis were able to achieve this feat, when so many other states with larger populations, more advanced economies and stronger militaries failed to remain independent. Saudi independence came primarily because of the strong

1. Mahmoud M. Ayoub, "Islam: Faith and History", 56–57.

2. Margaret MacMillan, *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed The World* (New York: Random House, 2003), 368–69.

leadership abilities of Ibn Saud who used the effects of World War I on the region to his advantage to carve out a personal kingdom for his family. He capitalized on the end of the Ottoman presence in the region, the increased British interest in a formal alliance, and European disinterest in managing the 'unprofitable' interior of Arabia after the war.

To understand the creation of Saudi Arabia it is critical to understand the rise of the Saudi tribe nearly a century prior. Before the creation of the Saudi state in 1927 the Arabian Peninsula was a collection of fractured and inter-warring sheikdoms, emirates, tribes and provinces of the Ottoman Empire. Though the interior of the peninsula never came under full Ottoman control, the Ottomans did dominate the region of Hijaz, located along the Red Sea coast, and the Hasa region located on the Persian Gulf coast. These provinces contained the most fertile regions of the peninsula, as well as the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, making them attractive targets to the rising powers of the interior looking to gain greater economic resources and tax inflow from the *Hajj* pilgrimage.

During the latter half of the 18th century the Saud tribe of the Najd was one of the most serious threats to Ottoman provinces of Hijaz and Hasa. From 1744–1818 the Saud tribe under the leadership of Muhammad ibn Saud, the family head and Amir of Dir'iyyah, and Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab, a Muslim religious reformer who created the extremely conservative Wahhabi sect, launched a successful war bringing the entire northern half of the peninsula under Saudi control.³ This unified Arabia gave the Saudis the ability to threaten the Ottoman Empire's fertile provinces of Mesopotamia and its lucrative trade routes. Raids by the Saudis into Mesopotamia lasted from 1801 to 1812 and ranged as far as Karbala in Iraq and Aleppo in Syria. The increase in raids not only proved luxurious for the raiders, but also indicated the growing Ottoman inability to defend their borders, further destabilizing the region.⁴

In 1811 the Ottoman Sultan, Mahmud II, responded to the raids and instability by sending Governor Muhammad Ali with his Egyptian army into the desert wastes in pursuit of the Saudis.⁵ Bloody fighting raged until 1818, when Ali's forces under the command of his son Ibrahim crushed the Saudi-Wahabi Emirate completely,

3. Madawi Al-Rasheed, *A History of Saudi Arabia* (New York; Cambridge University Press, 2002), 13, 16.

4. Al-Rasheed, *A History of Saudi Arabia*, 17–21; T. R. McHale, "A Prospect of Saudi Arabia," *International Affairs* (Royal institute of international Affairs 1944–), vol. 56, no. 4 (Autumn 1980), 625.

5. William L. Cleveland and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 6E (Boulder, CO; Westview Press, 2016), 67.

destroying its capital at Dir'iyah and sending the Saudi Amir Abdullah Saud to be beheaded in Egypt.⁶ The destruction of the Emirate was critical in two key developments in Ibn Saud's later conquest of Arabia. The first product was a Saudi animosity towards the Ottomans, which resulted in the Saudis' having no qualms about dealing double handedly with them and using their resources to the Saudi advantage. Another product of the Emirate was the Saudi alliance with the Wahhabi movement, which proved critical in the successes of Ibn Saud. This alliance provided Ibn Saud with the *Ihkwan*, or religious, soldiers as the base of his army, who were essential in conquering Arabia. The alliance also helped keep the populace loyal to the Saud family as the country was gradually united under a solitary religious banner. However, for the next hundred years the Saudis and the rest of Arabia remained relatively unimportant in Middle Eastern politics. This changed with the capture of Riyadh from the rival Arabian Rashid dynasty of the Ha'il region on January 15th, 1902 by fifty men under the daring command of Abd Al-Aziz ibn Abd al-Rahman ibn Faisal Al Saud, or more commonly known as Ibn Saud.⁷

Of Ibn Saud, one writer stated, "[he] was either the greatest Arab since the Prophet Muhammad, according to some, or an appalling despot, according to others. He was either a brilliant or a diabolical bandit—or possibly both . . ."⁸ J.B. Phillips, a British officer who associated with Ibn Saud said, "He had achieved his objective entirely by his own strong will and unshakable confidence in his destiny . . ."⁹ Dr. Stanley Mylrea, of the America Mission, said of his first meeting with Ibn Saud in 1914,

He was indeed a notable personality, of commanding height—well over six feet—and beautifully yet simply dressed . . . He impressed me immensely. Every line of him, face and figure told of intelligence, energy, determination, and reserves of compelling power. It was a good face too which bore witness to his reputation as a man of deep piety and devotion. It was not the face of a profligate upstart, but the face of a man who had disciplined himself and knew what it was to fast and to pray . . .¹⁰

6. Al-Rasheed, *A History of Saudi Arabia*, 22.

7. Barbara Bray and Michael Darlow, *Ibn Saud: The Desert Warrior Who Created the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia* (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2010), 95–103.

8. Ian Sansom, "Great Dynasties of the World: The House of Saud," *The Guardian*, (18 March 2011).

9. J. B. Philby, "Riyadh: Ancient and Modern," *Middle East Journal*, vol. 13, no. 2 (Spring 1959), 131.

10. C. Stanley and G. Mylrea, *Kuwait Before Oil* (unpublished, 1951), 66–68, as quoted in Paul L. Armerding, *Doctors for the Kingdom* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 30.

Nations rarely are the product of one man's will, but perhaps Saudi Arabia is one of the exceptions. With his strong leadership and diplomatic shrewdness Ibn Saud transformed the desert sheikdoms of Arabian into one unified state. Ibn Saud told one *hajj* pilgrim of his elder sister's counsel to him as a child, "Thou must revive the glory of the House of ibn Saud . . . thou must strive for the glory of Islam. Thy people sorely need a leader who will guide them in the path of the holy Prophet."¹¹ Saud spent his life creating the image of a strong ruler who could fulfill that vision. He physically looked the part of a leader; tall, strong and charming and he was articulate and persuasive.¹² He also appeared to possess a great deal of the highly valued Bedouin attribute of *hadh*, or luck and the gift of self-aggrandizement.¹³ But, maintaining an unruly realm requires far more than charm and luck as Saud demonstrated throughout his life.

To deepen his subjects' allegiance to him, he created the image of a generous and wealthy ruler. He did this through generous gifts to citizens and by providing social support such as food, money, lands, and medical care which made the people dependent on him for their prosperity.¹⁴ He once said speaking to an American doctor in 1917, "I see you think of those under you. It is the same with me. Even a ruler is the servant of his people."¹⁵ However, he also demonstrated strong leadership by exacting harsh penalties against those who refused to submit to his will or who sought to usurp his throne. Examples of this include the beheadings of political opponents who rebelled against him and by punishing groups, such as the *Ikhwan* who refused to exactly follow his orders.¹⁶ His notoriety as a strong ruler furthered his political influence in the regions of Hasa and Hijaz and lessened the resistance among these regions as they were conquered.

As the first decade of the 20th century closed, the residents of the Hasa region were increasingly frustrated with excessive taxes and government corruption under Ottoman rule. Ibn Saud capitalized on this frustration by offering strong leadership and domestic stability to the region. Many of the citizens readily welcomed the young Emir and his forces in 1913.¹⁷ Prior to Saud's arrival

11. Muhammad Asad, *The Road to Mecca* (New York; Simon and Schuster, 1954), 178.

12. Bray and Darlow, *Ibn Saud*, 105, 338.

13. Bray and Darlow, *Ibn Saud*, 105.

14. Photos in Bray and Darlow, *Ibn Saud*.

See also Armerding, *Doctors for the Kingdom*, 36; Bray and Darlow, *Ibn Saud*, 384.

15. Armerding, *Doctors for the Kingdom*, 35.

16. Bray and Darlow, *Ibn Saud*, 349.

17. Jacob Goldberg, *The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia* (Cambridge; Harvard University Press, 1986), 70, 86.

in the Hijaz region, the region was dominated by the Hashemites under the leadership of Sharif Hussein. With the decline of the Ottoman Empire Hussein increasingly worked with British agents (such as Lawrence of Arabia) to increase his own independence. Hussein during the First World War presumptuously declared himself “King of all Arabs” and openly accept British help in rebelling against his Ottoman masters.¹⁸ However, the Sharif was vastly unpopular among the locale due to corruption and extortion that was directly linked to himself.¹⁹

Initial opposition of Hijazites to the Saudi conquest centered on fears of Wahhabi extremism, however fears subsided as Saud maintained tight control of the Wahhabi leaders thus preventing them from enforcing too much the stricter Wahabi religion. Saud displayed his shrewdness in winning over the newly conquered inhabitants by restoring order and prosperity through strict enforcement of the laws, such as harsh punishments against criminals who assaulted pilgrims, such as chopping off their hands. He also made improvements to the transportation system of Hijaz to support larger numbers of pilgrims. The greater security provided for pilgrims by strict implementation of the law and improved infrastructure increased the numbers of pilgrims and as a result, increased the flow of cash into the region. The stability and economic revival from pilgrims soon quieted dissenting voices against his rule as the economy began to make a slow rebound after years of decline.²⁰

As Ibn Saud quieted voices of opposition within his own territories, he also used his diplomatic shrewdness to negotiate his way to independence. Throughout his life, Ibn Saud manipulated and played regional Great Powers against each other to secure the best deal for Saudi Arabia. His initial tutelage of manipulating Great Powers came after his family moved to Kuwait.²¹ His teacher, the local Sheik Mubarak, was exceptionally proficient in statecraft and used it to play the Great Powers off one another by maintaining contact with the British,

18. Goldberg, *The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia*, 139.

19. McHale, “A Prospect of Saudi Arabia,” 625; Timothy J. Paris, *Britain, the Hashemites and Arab Rule: The Sherifian Solution* (London; Frank Cass, 2003), 144–45; As quoted in McHale, “A Prospect of Saudi Arabia,” 625 footnote 4.

One American consul stated of King Hussein, “[he] feels himself to be so sure of his position, so far removed from the consequences of public opinion that no excesses are too great for him to consider, provided they are money getters. He lives to rob and the organization of the Hejaz Kingdom is a gigantic scheme for the wholesale fleecing of pilgrims.”

20. McHale, “A Prospect of Saudi Arabia,” 627.

21. Bray and Darlow, *Ibn Saud*, 59–60.

while at the same time professing loyalty to the Ottoman Sultan.²² This tutelage under the old sheik profoundly impacted Saud's style in diplomacy and his way of negotiating with Europeans.

Ibn Saud style mimicked his former mentor as he professed his loyalty to the Sultan, while sending repeated overtures to the British pleading for their recognition. His first appeal for British support was sent in May of 1902 and was out of hand rejected by the British India office who advised the Kuwaiti intermediaries to do nothing to encourage Saud or to associate with him.²³ Yet, Ibn Saud seemingly understood global power politics better than most Europeans gave him credit for. While seeking to negotiate with the British, Saud also met with Russian diplomats to galvanize the British into action. This was done with full knowledge of the Great Power rivalry between Britain and Russia that had increased over the expansion of Russian influence from the Caucasus into the Middle East. Saud met with Russian officials who, "had promised him guns and money . . ." to convince the British, his preferred patrons, to accept his offer, but to no avail.²⁴ Saud made at least eleven offers of alliance and subservience to the British before the outbreak of World War I.²⁵ Later, after the Ottoman threat had been eliminated and his own power increased, Saud refused to comply with British policy in the region without guarantees for his own sovereignty. He later negotiated with American Oilmen and sold them a concession to search for oil, which has since made Saudi Arabia one of the wealthiest nations in the world. His shrewdness enabled him to avoid binding treaties with any major power while still receiving benefits from all of them. He received British guns and ammunition, Ottoman money, and American gold to build up and profit the Saudi state.

Despite Ibn Saud's strong leadership and diplomatic shrewdness, his talents would have been useless if the Ottoman Empire had not collapsed during World War I. For hundreds of years the Ottomans used the distinct carrot and stick methods of keeping the local sheikdoms in line with the Empire's goals,

22. Bray and Darlow, *Ibn Saud*, 88.

23. Goldberg, *The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia*, 51.

24. Abd al Rahman, *Abd al-Rahman to Kemball*, 5 Safar 1320 [May 14, 1902]. As quoted in Goldberg, *The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia*, 51. In one letter to British officials Ibn Saud implored, "I beg to inform you about the Russian Consul at Bushire who had come and asked me to write him a letter describing the ill-treatment I have received from the Turk . . ."; Kemp, *Kemp to Rear-Admiral Drury*, March 14, 1903 (1903). As quoted in Goldberg, *The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia*, 52.

25. Goldberg, *The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia*, 50.

including the Saudis. The carrot method of pensions and imperial preference played a huge role in Arabia. After Ibn Saud captured Riyadh, he assured the Sultan that he was a loyal vassal of the Sultan through diplomatic overtures and letters. As a result of his efforts, Ibn Saud received a subsidy from Istanbul and was given a high degree of autonomy to manage his own affairs as a ruler of Arabia. Yet, Saud was not alone in receiving help from the Ottomans. The Rashids of Ha'il (another region located in the interior of Arabia) retained their power into the early 20th century because of their connection with Istanbul.²⁶ Also the Hashemites in the Hijaz region came to power directly because of the Ottomans. However, when local sheikdoms rebelled, the Ottomans resorted to the stick method of enforcing cooperation through military occupation. As events prior to World War I would show, the Ottoman military presence in the region was weakening. This allowed Saud to exercise greater autonomy and continue his relationship with the British despite Ottoman protests.

In spite of warnings from the Saud's rivals the Rashids, the Ottomans allowed Ibn Saud to build his forces unhindered to avoid wasting men and material which they didn't have to spare putting down an insurrection. This policy of allowing regional rulers to grow and harass their neighbors was part of a larger strategy of keeping the rulers of Arabia favoring Ottoman authority in power while preventing a solitary kingdom from emerging.²⁷ But, by 1904 at the behest of the Rashids, and because of their own concerns with Saud's annexation of the Ottoman province of Hasa, an Ottoman force of over 2,000 men were sent under the direction of Colonel Hasan Shukri to subject Saud.²⁸ Saud's forces emerged from the brutal battles that followed as the clear

26. London Standard, *The Fighting in Arabia* (London, 6 March 1902), 5. This British Newspaper contains a small glimpse of what rewards were given to those who submitted and supported the Sultan: "In connection with the reports of recent fighting in Arabia, and of the attempt by a descendant of the old Wahabi Ameer of Nejd to overthrow Ibn Rashid, it may be noted that the Constantinople Correspondent of the *Politische Correspondenz* learns, from a Turkish source, that Ibn Rashid arrived recently at Zobeir, near Basra, where [where] he was received by a Turkish battalion with Military honors . . ."

27. Ibn Rashid, *Wratistlaw to O' Connor, in O' Connor to FO, March 20; Ibn Rashid to the Grand Vezir, 21 Dhu al-Qa'da 1319 [March 2, 1902]*. As cited in Goldberg, *The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia*, 49. Original quote by Ibn Rashid, "[the British are] seeking to establish themselves in portions of Arabia which dominate the Ottoman possessions of Hasa and Qatif by means of Mubarak and Ibn Saud."

28. Alexi Vassiliev, *The History of Saudi Arabia* (London; Saqi Books, 1998), 217. Prior to a string of battles outside Riyadh, Colonel Shukri informed Saud that, "His Majesty the Great Caliph heard about the sedition in Najd directed by foreigner's hands [referencing

victors and sent the remaining Ottomans fleeing back to Mesopotamia shattered and shocked.

In the aftermath of the victory, British agents amusedly recorded, “Ibn-Sa’ud seems to have been somewhat alarmed at the completeness of his own success against the Ottoman troops . . .”²⁹ Ibn Saud, most likely foresaw his kingdom’s inability to sustain another Ottoman invasion. To deescalate the tensions, Ibn Saud quickly resubmitted to the Sultan’s authority as indicated in a telegram sent by his father, “Only the local authorities . . . have misrepresented this weak slave to the Caliph, making him appear a traitor and a rebel. I am submissive to every order and command of the Shadow of God . . .”³⁰ This subversion to the Sultan illustrated Saud’s awareness that though the Ottoman Empire was significantly weaker than it had been when it crushed the Saudi Emirate a hundred years prior, it was still a powerful force that was determined to not lose any more territories to interloping tribesmen and Europeans.

However, for the Ottomans, the Saudi rebellion was only part of a string of larger problems vexing them. The Ottomans, in an effort to exercise greater control over the interior of Arabia, sent an expeditionary force to stand between the Saudis and Rashids. But, by the end of 1905 that force had dwindled to almost nothing as conflicts in the Balkans and Yemen diverted troops from Arabia. This allowed Ibn Saud to regain his autonomy and rebuild his military force until the start of the Great War.³¹ After the outbreak of the World War I and the Ottoman alliance with the Central powers in October of 1914, the Caliph issued a call to *jihad*, or holy war, followed by a proclamation of the Sultan for Muslims to rise against the Allies.³² With this proclamation the Sultan

Ibn Saud’s contact with the British]. Therefore he sent me here to prevent bloodshed and a foreign intervention in the Muslim country.” Ibn Saud responded, “We do not accept your advice or recognize your suzerainty.”

29. John Gordon Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, ‘Oman, and Central Arabia* (Calcutta; Superintendent Government Printing, 1915), 1148.

30. Abd al-Rahman, *Abd al-Rahman to Sultan, January 28, in Townley to FO, January 31, 1905* (1905). As quoted in Goldberg, *The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia*, 63.

31. al-Rahman, *Abd al-Rahman to Sultan*. As quoted in Goldberg, *The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia*, 70; Bray and Darlow, *Ibn Saud*, 129–30.

32. Mehmed V, as quoted in Julia Clancy-Smith and Charles D. Smith, *The Modern Middle East and North Africa: A History in Documents* (New York; Oxford University Press, 2014), 102. The text says, “In the face of such successive proofs of wanton hostility . . . we turn to arms in order to safeguard our lawful interests . . . let the victory be sacred and the sword be sharp of those of you who are to remain in life.”

also sent a notice to Saud demanding he send an army to defend Mesopotamia against the advancing British and rise as a true Muslim.

Ibn Saud, who viewed the Ottoman Turks as religious heretics and as the destroyers of his family's kingdom, avoided commitment by stressing general problems in Arabia and his rivalry with the Rashids as motives why he could not send his troops.³³ The Ottomans, unable to control the Emirs of Arabia, and facing rebellions in the Hijaz, continued to send money to Saud hoping to encourage him to raise an army and defend Mesopotamia. In return they received excuses from the young Emir. The fall of Mesopotamia into the British's hands ended Ottoman imperial presence in the region and with it the petitions for Saud to rise to greater action and defend the last Islamic Empire. World War I diverted essential Ottoman forces needed to subject and control Ibn Saud and Arabia. The Great War also led the British to seek an alliance with Ibn Saud, after fourteen years of denials and treat him as an equal ruler of Arabia with King Hussein of Mecca to consolidate their position in Mesopotamia.

The British repeatedly rejected Ibn Saud's offers of an alliance prior to the war. The delay in recognizing Ibn Saud and his territories came out of fear of causing tensions with the Ottomans. As one author notes, "From the British point of view, their [the British's] rupture with the Ottomans over Kuwait was sufficient reason to avoid an additional fight over an area [referring to the Nejd] that lay beyond the sphere of their immediate interests."³⁴ The British, uninterested in an alliance with the rising emir, primarily wanted to avoid sending additional troops and money to protect the British protectorates of the Persian Gulf, such as Bahrain, Qatar, and Kuwait against the Ottomans. However, with the coming of war, the British Office suddenly became very interested in the Emir of Riyadh and sent diplomats to encourage an Anglo-Saudi alliance.³⁵ Saud's military prowess and success in conquering large swaths of territory gave the British valid reason to be concerned for the safety of their force from India marching on Mesopotamia, as well as the coastal sheikdoms of the Arabian Peninsula under British protection. Even more worrying for the British was the safety of the Iranian oil fields to the north that helped to fuel the British navy. Furthermore, as the first year of the war progressed, the quick victory that all the Great Powers had envisioned was nowhere in sight forcing the British to reevaluate their options.

33. Bray and Darlow, *Ibn Saud*, 129; Goldberg, *The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia*, 133.

34. Bray and Darlow, *Ibn Saud*, 51.

35. Bray and Darlow, *Ibn Saud*, 114.

The war that began with the idea as a quick war, had turned into a never-ending blood bath. The French and British were gridlocked with the Germans on the Western front, the trench warfare claiming millions of lives for both Germans and the Allies. Russia was losing on the Eastern Front and wracked by internal discord. And probably most significant for Saud, in the Gallipoli Peninsula the fighting was going very badly for the ANZACS who were pinned to the beaches by fierce Ottoman resistance.³⁶ The British who had ignored Ibn Saud and viewed his alliance as nonessential, suddenly discovered the Emir to be a vital asset to them. However, the proud Arabian was wary of them of the British sought an alliance and refused to fully commit himself to action against the Ottomans. It appeared that the simple desert king would not quickly forget the decades of past snubbing. Negotiations, which were progressing at a crawl already, were further slowed when Captain Shakespear, the British officer in charge of negotiations, was killed in the Battle of Jarrab against Rashidi forces.³⁷ Saud mourned the officer's death while continuing to stall in negotiations, preferring to wait till the Ottoman fate was sealed.

As negotiations progressed, instead of Saud committing himself to action as hoped by the British Foreign Office, Saud negotiated a treaty that required only inactivity to qualify for British protection. The British begrudgingly allowed this treaty because they had begun to view another Arabian ruler, King Hussein of Mecca, as a superior ally due to his advantages, "religiously, politically, strategically, and militarily . . ." In December of 1915, Ibn Saud signed the Anglo-Saudi Treaty which not only granted him significant rights and British protection, but also proclaimed him independent and recognized him as the "ruler of Nejd, el Hass, Qatif, and Jubail."³⁸ After signing, the Saudis limited their actions for the duration of the war to strikes against the Rashids, who favored the Ottomans. Throughout this period Ibn Saud and his forces received guns and money from the British, further consolidating Saud's power.³⁹ However, despite the gifts from the British during the war Saud understood the British leadership's

36. Elis Ashmead-Bartlett, *Letter to Prime Minister Herbert Asquith*, as cited in Clancy-Smith and Smith, *The Modern Middle East and North Africa*, 107–9.

37. "Report on the Najd Mission 1917–1918," (London, British Library), as cited in Daniel A. Lowe, *The Death of Captain Shakespear*, Qatar Digital Library (2018), accessed at: <https://www.qdl.qa/en/death-captain-shakespear>.

The death of Shakespear delayed Anglo-Saudi negotiation for a brief period but resumed as Sir Percy Cox arrived in Arabia.

38. Anglo-Saudi Treaty 1915, as shown in Goldberg, *The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia*, Appendix C.

39. McHale, "A Prospect of Saudi Arabia," 627.

preference to King Hussein. Saud worried he would be squeezed out of his territorial ambitions by a British backed Hashemite realm that he would be unable to conquer.⁴⁰

With the end of the war, European interest in the Arabian Peninsula quickly diminished. The lack of oil and other natural resource discoveries by British merchants in Saud's territory led Britain to view the Arabian Peninsula as an unfruitful backwater. One author said of the Paris Peace accords, "The Arabian Peninsula was not mentioned, presumably because no one thought all those miles of sand worth worrying about."⁴¹ As another author noted, "Indeed, little thought was given to Britain's post-war position in Arabia."⁴² The British leadership were content with a divided Arabia, but were split as to which ruler, Hussein or Saud, was more helpful to British policy in the region.⁴³ Undeterred by the British preferment of Hussein, Ibn Saud again led his forces to battle, this time to conquer the Hashemite kingdom of Hijaz.

On June 4th, 1924, Ibn Saud called a war council to discuss the invasion of the Hijaz. His forces, already battled hardened by years of conflict with the Rashids and in Yemen, were all to ready to march and retake the Holy Cities. By October of the same year, Mecca was in the possession of Ibn Saud with Jeddah and Medina both surrendering in December of 1925, leaving Hussein powerless and a king without a state to rule.⁴⁴ Two weeks later, on January 8th 1926, Ibn Saud was declared King of Hijaz and Sultan of Najd, resulting in the unification of all of Arabia under Saudi control, the first time since he ancestors had done so a hundred years prior.⁴⁵ However, it remained to be seen how Hussein's chief ally, the British would respond to the conquest by Saud.

The British, who had become exasperated with Hussein due to his ineffective policies, corruption, and nagging, responded to the conquest by renewing and remaking their treaty with Ibn Saud at his request in November of 1926.⁴⁶ Saud's bold move resulted in the British being forced to accept a renegotiation

40. Goldberg, *The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia*, 164.

41. MacMillan, *Paris 1919*, 384.

42. Paris, *Britain, the Hashemites and Arab Rule*, 149. However, at the Paris Peace Conference, King Hussein went and lobbied for his position as king of all Arabs. He instead only annoyed and frustrated the great power leaders.

43. Paris, *Britain, the Hashemites and Arab Rule*, 155–56.

44. Bray and Darlow, *Ibn Saud*, 229–305.

45. Bray and Darlow, *Ibn Saud*, 316.

46. David Fromkin, *A Peace To End All Peace* (New York; Avon Books, 1989), 512; Daniel Silverfarb, "The Treaty of Jiddah of May 1927," *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 18, no. 3 (July 1982), 276.

to maintain a balance of power in the region. The British, with no imperial plans for Arabia, saw Saud as a stable ally they could manipulate and direct in the future, just as they did with all the emirs and sheiks along the Red Sea and Persian Gulf coasts. In May of 1927, the Anglo-Saudi Treaty was ratified which granted the Saudis freedom from concessions and capitulations by recognizing the Saudi Kingdom as fully independent.⁴⁷

This new Saudi independence allowed Ibn Saud to consolidate his authority, while at the same time offered him the chance to explore treaties with other states at his leisure. It also afforded him the ability to further expand his power as a regional actor. In September of 1932, Ibn Saud renamed his kingdom the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, thus beginning the creation of a more centralized nation-state.⁴⁸ He also opened negotiations with various nations such as Holland, France and Germany during this time period. Yet despite these expansions, the Saudi state suffered from a crippling lack of income in order to support the weight of a nation-state. Social unrest and poverty were beginning to rumble in the desert sands throughout Saud's kingdom. The leader began to look desperately for more sources of incomes that could supplement the meager taxation fees and tribal gifts.

On May 29, 1933, Saud granted an oil concession to a group of Americans at the advice of British officials in order to generate more revenue accepting the Americans' offer of 50 thousand pounds of gold.⁴⁹ Though this concession did stir some development, overall the Arab kingdom's remained slow until 1938 when, while British dignitaries were visiting an American oil site, the Americans struck black gold.⁵⁰ The discovery of oil gave Saud the international importance that his kingdom needed in negotiating with world leaders, such as with the American President in 1945 when Ibn Saud met with Franklin D. Roosevelt on the Great Bitter Lake in the Suez Canal and discussed an alliance and 'friendship' between the states.⁵¹ Furthermore In 1945, Ibn Saud's son Faisal

47. Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, *Treaty between His Majesty and His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and of Nejd and Its Dependencies* (20 May 1927), accessed at treaties.fco.gov.uk/docs/.

48. Bray and Darlow, *Ibn Saud*, 372.

49. Bray and Darlow, *Ibn Saud*, 370–71.

50. Bray and Darlow, *Ibn Saud*, 399. Princess Alice is recorded writing home, "We British were awful juggins's as we were offered the concession for this remarkably rich oilfield and turned it down as being no good; the Americans came along . . . found oil—and we can't even have any of the share."

51. Taylor, "The First Time a US President Met a Saudi King."

represented Saudi Arabia in the initial meeting of the United Nations and was a founding member of the new international body.⁵² Previous European indifference was replaced by respect as Saudi Arabia began to increase its international presence and regional influence in the ensuing decades.

The Saudi Arabia of today was impacted by World War I in a way that was far different from any other Middle Eastern state. Unlike other regional states that came under the imperial control of the various European Great Powers, Saudi Arabia remained off the map for the global leaders leading the Paris Peace Conference of 1918. The First World War gave the Arabian Peninsula increased importance as the British sought alliances with King Hussein and Ibn Saud and eliminated the most serious threat to Ibn Saud's ambitions for a united Arabia, the Ottoman Empire. This left a power vacuum for the Saud and his kingdom to fill in the region. These factors, along with Ibn Saud's dynamic leadership abilities, led to the formation of the Saudi Kingdom in 1927. The arrival of American oilmen and the alliance of 1945 with the US led to the explosion of Saudi Arabia's economy, allowing it to become one of the key economic and political players in Middle Eastern politics and has allowed their government to export their ideas throughout the world. Saud's kingdom is a testament to the deep impact that the First World War had on the Middle East and of the drive of one man, Ibn Saud, in carving out a personal kingdom in the glaring desert sands.

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52. McHale, "A Prospect of Saudi Arabia," 623.



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The Spanish Influenza Pandemic of 1918: A Defining Characteristic in the Life and History of the American Family

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Figure 1. A barber wears a mask while at work to stay healthy. According to a young university student, individuals in flu masks reminded him of members of the Ku Klux Klan ("Local Barber—Cincinnati, OH" CDC, [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)).

Paper

The Spanish Influenza Pandemic of 1918

A Defining Characteristic in the Life and History of the American Family

Ellie Vance

PANDEMICS. AS A SOCIETY, WE ARE OBSESSED WITH THEM. THE LATEST media and literature spins tales of zombie apocalypses or dangerous viral outbreaks that sweep across the globe, infecting millions. Fortunately, in our day, global pandemics have remained largely in the world of fiction. However, in 1918, just over one hundred years ago, the things of today's fiction were a reality. In the fall of 1918, a young American university student recorded in his journal, "there's lots of excitement about the Spanish influenza. They say it is coming west. I don't believe it will hurt us."¹ Little did he know that the Spanish influenza would indeed be coming west, and when it finally struck American soil, the outbreak left a path of death and despair in its wake. Within a few short months, the Spanish influenza took the lives of 675,000 American men, women and children—nearly three percent of the population at the time.² Although the flu pandemic significantly impacted the American population, this important event is often neglected in history books. It is usually summed up in mere sentences, sandwiched between extensive chapters about the First World War and the Great Depression. Despite this lack of coverage, it is imprinted in the memories, lives, and experiences of

1. "A 'Fluey' Diary, 1918," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 37, no. 2 (1987): 62.

2. "History of the 1918 Flu Pandemic," *Center for Disease Control and Prevention*.

those left behind. Each and every grieving family experienced the outbreak differently in terms of social, emotional, and economic standing, which had the strongest impact on young children. The Spanish influenza pandemic of 1918 changed the structure of American families and became a defining characteristic in the lives of its survivors.

For a century, the 1918 flu pandemic has remained buried in the past, remembered primarily by its survivors. In recent years, however, epidemics including the Bird Flu in 2005 and the Swine Flu scare in 2009 have sparked a renewed interest in the Spanish influenza outbreak. Historians and medical professionals alike have sought to understand the social, demographic, and economic impacts of the flu, as well as understand how to prevent similar outbreaks in the future. In the past decade alone, a wealth of scholarly works have been created regarding this matter, examining the history and impact of the dreadful outbreak from many angles. According to historian Howard Phillips, in order to fully understand the pandemic's "complex, interconnected character, it must be viewed through numerous lenses at the same time."³ One lens that has not been extensively reviewed by historians is that of the American family. In a historiographical piece on the Spanish influenza, Phillips asked, "how did they [survivors of the flu] cope . . . with the death of a spouse, a child or a parent? What was the fate of the millions of widows and widowers and the hundreds of millions of orphans suddenly created by a pandemic like the Spanish Flu?"⁴ Phillip's question is one that remains largely unanswered.

The impacts of the Spanish flu on the American family have yet to be examined in a comprehensive work. Historian Eysyllt W. Jones, who studies the impact of the Spanish flu on families in Canada, suggests that there are "strong indications that the epidemic altered family configurations,"⁵ however, "the long-term impact of the disease [on families] has not been given a great deal of attention by historians."⁶ Thousands of Americans lost loved ones during the Spanish flu pandemic, which forever changed the lives of these families. Almost overnight, father, mothers and children perished, transforming spouses into widows and children into half or full orphans. Their grief was surely immeasurable, but, as

3. Howard Phillips, "The Recent Wave of 'Spanish' Flu Historiography," *Social History of Medicine* 27, no. 4 (2014): 791.

4. Phillips, "The Recent Wave," 806.

5. Eysyllt W. Jones, *Influenza 1918: Disease, Death, and Struggle in Winnipeg* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 141.

6. Jones, *Influenza 1918*, 141.

Phillips noted, “though grief cannot be measured, the number of those grieving can, and how such grieving influenced their lives, subsequently can, at least be recognized.”⁷ Although each and every grieving family experienced the effects of the pandemic in their own unique way, the Spanish Influenza changed the structure of the American family and influenced children socially, economically and financially. It was a defining event in the history of the American family.

Historical Background of the Spanish Influenza Pandemic of 1918

Although the exact origins of the 1918 flu pandemic have been heavily contested, by the autumn of 1918, close to a third of the world’s population had become infected.⁸ The United States reported its first case in March of 1918 and the virus quickly swept across the nation. By October 1918, the flu had reached epidemic proportions, not only in the United States, but across the globe. It was a pandemic in every sense and there was no stopping it. A vaccine to protect against influenza had not yet been developed and there were no antibiotics available to treat the infected. American newspapers encouraged their readers to avoid contact with crowds, stay indoors, quarantine those that were sick, and wear protective face masks (Figure 1).⁹ The press even warned against the dangers of spreading the sickness through kissing.¹⁰ It was certainly a frightening time, but some found ways to make light of the situation. A newspaper article in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* examined the pros and cons of kissing and found that “after due consideration . . . we’ll all simply have to take our chances.”¹¹ Meanwhile, a university student in Montana lamented the fact that with the onset of the flu, there would be “no more dates” as “the girls at the dorm are all quarantined.”¹²

7. Phillips, “The Recent Wave,” 807.

8. Laura Spinney, *Pale Rider: The Spanish Flu of 1918 and How it Changed the World* (London: Penguin Random House, 2017), 228.

9. “Safety First on Flu,” *Bee—Toledo News*, 5 October 1918, p. 8, col. 2–3.

10. “Safety First on Flu,” p. 8, col. 2–3.

11. “Through the Periscope: To Kiss or Not to Kiss,” *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, 6 November 1918, p. 13, col. 3.

12. “A ‘Fluey’ Diary, 1918,” 63.

Jokes aside, the flu was a serious problem with serious consequences. Nearly fifty million people perished worldwide, including approximately 675,000 American citizens. The flu infected people of all ages. However, those in the prime of their lives—aged twenty to thirty-nine—suffered the highest mortality rates.¹³ The deaths of these young adults created widows and widowers, as well as “half-orphans,” and children with neither a father or mother.¹⁴ The innocent children left behind were perhaps the flu’s greatest victims. Reports of parental death and orphaned children left to fend for themselves filled the pages of newspapers. An article in the *Washington Times* reported that “one of the most pitiful cases is that of the eight children of Mr. and Mrs. William Bowles. . . the mother died last Sunday and the father Wednesday afternoon of the influenza.”¹⁵ However, the plight of the Bowles’ children was common. In New York City alone, the flu produced nearly 31,000 orphans in just a matter of weeks.¹⁶ The ravages of the flu struck nearly every city across the nation and penetrated the homes of both city-dwellers and rural farmers alike, taking fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters to the grave.

Many families considered 1918 to be a terrifying time, but it was also a time of great generosity. Families and communities reached out to support each other, building strong relationships founded on trust and care. A survivor of the Spanish flu named Clella Brantley Gregory recalled her father helping the afflicted members of their community by milking cows, caring for farm animals and ensuring there was enough drinking water and a wood supply to keep families warm through the winter.¹⁷ Although choosing to help others meant risking his own life and his family’s, Eli Brantley pushed forward regardless of the consequences. In addition to Mr. Brantley’s example, thousands of Americans sought to help those suffering from influenza. People were kind and “they proved it. . . when neighbors would go in and take care of those afflicted with the disease, never for a moment thinking about their own health.”¹⁸ Everyday heroes became an irreplaceable source of relief for suffering families.

13. Jones, *Influenza 1918*, 141.

14. Jones, *Influenza 1918*, 141.

15. “Flu Makes Many Orphans in DC,” *Washington Times*, 19 October 1918, p. 4, col. 3–4.

16. Ashley Halsey, “The flu can kill tens of millions of people. In 1918, that’s exactly what it did,” *The Washington Post*, 27 January 2018.

17. Clella B. Gregory, “I Survived,” interview by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *CDC*.

18. “Caring for Little Ones Left Orphans by the Epidemic of Influenza,” *Albany Evening Journal*, 13 November 1918, p. 10, col. 1–2.

The Flu's Effects on Family Structure

During the pandemic and the years after its passing, families and neighbors struggled to find an answer to the difficult question: "what to do for the children made orphans by the Spanish Influenza?"¹⁹ According to historian Esyllt W. Jones, friends and community members were important factors in addressing this question.²⁰ Some individuals, such as Mrs. John C. McInnis of Worcester, Massachusetts, simply heard about the plight of the orphans and decided to take action. Mrs. McInnis opened her modest home to the "babies [that were] not wanted," and created a make-shift orphanage for children whose parents had perished in the influenza outbreak.²¹ With the aid of the Worcester Women's Club, Mrs. McInnis raised enough money to support local children impacted by the flu and cared for the little ones in her home-based orphanage (Figure 2).²² This illustrates that in the aftermath of the Spanish influenza pandemic, community members came together to care for orphans and were crucial to their survival.

Although many extraordinary women like Mrs. McInnis undoubtedly changed the lives of these orphaned children for the better, "the first and most important source of assistance was the family network."²³ Families were forced to piece together their lives following the deaths of loved ones, and the extended family played an essential role.²⁴ Relatives were primarily responsible for the wellbeing of their family members and frequently took in widows and children. Caroline Wernecké Pharris, whose father died from the flu, was sent to live



Figure 2. Mrs. McInnis and the Worcester Women's Club performed work very similar to what these women are doing here for young victims of the flu. These women and countless others undoubtedly changed the lives of flu orphans for the better ("Orphans and Other Infants tended by women of Auckland at Myers Kindergarten," NZ Herald).

19. "Flu Makes Many Orphans in DC," p. 4, col. 3-4.

20. Jones, *Influenza 1918*, 142.

21. "Mrs. John C. McInnes Hears of Orphan Babies, And Acts," *Worcester Daily Telegram*, 10 October 1918, p. 18, col. 1-2.

22. "Worcester Women's Club Members are Invited to Help Care for Babies at MacInnes House, Harvard Street," *Worcester Daily Telegram*, 11 October 1918, p. 9, col. 1-2.

23. Jones, *Influenza 1918*, 142.

24. Spinney, *Pale Rider*, 228.

with her grandparents at a young age. She recalled that “my grandparents were good to me,” and their support allowed her to grow up in a family-centered home.²⁵ Extended family played an essential role in the wellbeing and care of flu orphans.

While the aid of extended families was essential to the care of flu orphans, there were many who had no family to turn to. America’s large population of immigrants fell into this category. At the turn of the twentieth century, the United States experienced an explosion of immigration from across the globe. America’s extraordinary economic opportunities combined with Europe’s political unrest contributed to a considerable percentage of this mass migration. Ellis Island, a major immigration port, estimated that near the turn of the century, over twenty-seven million immigrants entered the United States.²⁶ These immigrants left everything behind—including their extended family—to come to a land of freedom and opportunity. When the Spanish influenza struck in 1918, first-generation flu orphans had no extended family nearby who could lend support. Since their relatives lived in foreign countries, these orphans were left to the mercy of private charities. Kind strangers adopted some orphans of immigrants, including siblings Elizabeth Jane and Edward Murray.²⁷ Elizabeth and Edward, twins born in Australia in 1914, were the children of poor immigrants who came to America in 1916.²⁸ Their parents died of the Spanish Flu in 1918, and with no family living in the United States, the two toddlers were utterly alone. Mabel J. Ricker and her husband “heard of the children whose lives had been darkened” and sprang into action.²⁹ The Rickers adopted the twins and raised them as if they were their own.³⁰

Following suit, other couples and families decided to adopt flu orphans. Countless newspaper articles reported adoptions from kind strangers who strove to make a happy home for the unfortunate children. An elderly man who lost his son in the Great War met two little orphans, and, driven by “an

25. Pharris, “I Survived.”

26. “Immigration Timeline: 1880–1930,” The Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, Foundation Inc, libertyellisfoundation.org.

27. “Wealthy Woman Adopts Two Flu Orphans,” *Wilkes-Barre Times Leader*, 29 January 1919, p. 11, col. 5.

28. 1920 U.S. Census, population schedule, Grinnel Township, Poweshiek, Iowa, ED 124, p. 64, sheet 11A, Ricker Family; database with images, *Ancestry* (<http://ancestry.com>); NARA.

29. “Wealthy Woman Adopts Two Flu Orphans,” p. 11, col. 5.

30. 1920 U.S. Census, p. 64, sheet 11A; *Ancestry* (<http://ancestry.com> : accessed 18 October 2018); NARA.

intangible bond of sympathy,” reported “I’m going to adopt you both and give you a real home. Since my boy has ‘gone west,’ I’m a childless father. You are fatherless and motherless. Wouldn’t you like to live at my house?”³¹ The two youngsters found a “real” home with this elderly man.³²

Adoption provided stability for some orphaned children, but there were thousands of others who lacked kind strangers to come to their aid. Some of these children worked hard to stay with their siblings, despite the economic hardships that this entailed. The Bowles family is one example of this extraordinary phenomenon. Mr. and Mrs. Bowles died just days apart and left eight young children parentless.³³ Rather than face separation at orphanages, the Bowles siblings decided to stick together and fend for themselves. The 1920 census reported seven of the eight children living together and Catherine Bowles—age eighteen—presiding as the head of the household. She played the violin at a cafeteria in order to support her younger siblings, all of which were still in school.³⁴ The youngest Bowles child, Joseph, lived at the nearby St. Ann’s Infant Asylum.³⁵ At scarcely two years of age, his older siblings likely found it difficult to care for him and turned to charity for support. Joseph, however, was only temporarily separated from his older siblings. At some point, Joseph left the orphanage, and in 1930, resided with four of his older siblings.³⁶ Older siblings likely sacrificed time and education in order to care for their younger siblings. These difficulties, however, appeared to be worthwhile in order to stay together.

Like young Joseph Bowles, there were thousands of children who spent their formative years in orphanages. An orphanage in New York told the story of a young orphan boy named William: “William is an orphan, having lost both his

31. “Father Who Lost Son in War Takes ‘Flu’ Orphans to His Heart and All Find Peace,” *The Pittsburgh Press*, 24 November 1918, p. 11, col. 2.

32. “Father Who Lost Son in War,” p. 11, col. 2.

33. “Flu Makes Many Orphans in DC,” p. 4, col. 3–4.

34. 1920 U.S. Census, population schedule, Precinct 2, Washington City, District of Columbia, ED 29, p. 132, sheet 2B, Bowles Family; database with images, *Ancestry* (<http://ancestry.com> : accessed 1 December 2018); NARA.

35. 1920 U.S. Census, population schedule, Precinct 3, Washington City, District of Columbia, ED 44, p. 40, sheet 5A, Joseph Bowles; database with images, *Ancestry* (<http://ancestry.com> : accessed 1 December 2018); NARA.

36. 1930 U.S. Census, population schedule, Precinct 10, Washington D.C., District of Columbia, ED 290, p. 121, sheet 7B, Bowles Family; database with images, *Ancestry* (<http://ancestry.com> : accessed 1 December 2018); NARA.



Figure 3. Religious figures such as these nuns played an influential role in caring for the orphans of the 1918 pandemic (“How Could We Turn a Deaf Ear?”—*Sisters of Mercy and the 1918 Flu Pandemic*, *Sisters of Mercy*, sistersofmercy.org).

parents during the recent influenza epidemic. He is a child who never knew what it was to want for anything and never did his happy parents dream that their only child would someday be an inmate of an orphanage.”³⁷

As a direct result of the 1918 flu pandemic, orphanages across the country experienced a huge influx of new orphans. An orphanage in Pennsylvania claimed, “the epidemic of influenza in the fall continues up to the present to complicate and increase our work.”³⁸ Due to high demand, orphanages appeared to spring up overnight and existing organizations were filled to capacity. As most orphanages were unfunded by the government, churches and aid societies stepped up to the plate.³⁹ Churches built orphanages and religious leaders of many different traditions sought to provide for both the spiritual and temporal needs of the children in their care (Figure 3).⁴⁰ With the breakdown of family struc-

tures, churches and orphanages sought to build an environment where children were cared for and nurtured—both physically and spiritually.

Emotional Consequences for Children

Despite the stability and care provided by orphanages, nothing compared to the love provided by a mother or father. A newspaper reported that “many of the children do not know that their mother or father, or both are dead. Many times in their sleep, some of the little ones can be heard calling for their mothers.”⁴¹ It is evident that the loss of parents at a young age had a substantial effect on

37. “Caring for Little Ones Left Orphans,” p. 10, col. 1–2.

38. “Thirty Seventh Annual Report of the Children’s Aid Society of Pennsylvania for the year 1918,” p. 3, *Influenza Archive*, <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.067oflu.0015.760>.

39. Michael Sherman, “Awful, Awful’: The Spanish Flu in Vermont, 1918–19,” *Historic Roots: A Magazine of Vermont History* 3, no. 1 (1998), 11–17.

40. Francis E. Tourscher, “Work of the Sisters During the Epidemic of Influenza October, 1918,” *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia* 30, no. 3 (September 1919), 198–99.

41. “Caring for Little Ones Left Orphans,” p. 10, col. 1–2.

the emotional well being of flu orphans.⁴² One flu orphan, reminiscing about a father who had died before she could remember him, reflected, “there are no happy memories of being with my father, only pictures and family stories. I’ve been told what a wonderful man he was, but couldn’t he have lived a little longer? Here I am, almost 90, and I still think of ‘what might have been.’”⁴³ Even nearly a century after her father’s passing, this now-elderly flu orphan continued to struggle with her tragic loss.

The pandemic left emotional scars that affected all survivors, even those who had not lost parents. In the words of historian Carla R. Morrissey, “a child did not have to lose parents to be forever marked by the Spanish Influenza.”⁴⁴ Just living through the troubling time affected the long-term emotional health of survivors and their loved ones. Jeanne Shinnick was only eight when the Spanish Influenza reached her small hometown just outside of Philadelphia. Jeanne came down with the flu and recovered, but others in her community were not so lucky. Even though her parents survived, Jeanne, like so many other young children, witnessed the death and despair that accompanied the outbreak. She later described a childhood experience where she stood on the porch and looked across the street at her neighborhood. All of her neighbors had died and the local authorities had stacked the bodies in a large pile in the front yard (see Figure 4).⁴⁵ Years later, her son Drew described his mother as a “professional worrier” and believed that the horrors of 1918 influenced this behavior. He claimed, “she was an eyewitness to the end of many worlds she lived in,” and the “event which I believe defined the woman who was



Figure 4. Scenes like this were common in the fall of 1918. Many young children—orphans or not—who witnessed the horror of widespread death were emotionally impacted for the rest of their lives. (“Demonstration at the Red Cross Emergency Ambulance Station in Washington DC during the influenza pandemic of 1918,” Library of Congress).

42. Tom Quinn, *Flu: A Social History of Influenza*, (London: New Holland, 2008), 154.

43. Pharris, “I Survived.”

44. Carl R. Morrissey, “The Influenza Epidemic of 1918,” *Navy Medicine* 77, no. 3 (May–June 1986), 13.

45. Drew Shinnick, “I Survived,” interview by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC, accessed 23 November 2018, cdc.gov.



Figure 5. A family photograph of Otto Wernecke and his wife Caroline. Otto died on December 3, 1918 of the Spanish flu and left his young wife a widow with several small children (Pharris, "I Survived," CDC).

to become my Mom . . . was the horrific 1918 pandemic."⁴⁶ This shows that the overwhelming presence of death in 1918 had a lasting emotional impact on children that would span for decades.

Changing the Economic Trajectory of Life

An important feature of the Spanish influenza pandemic was the long-term economic impact that it had on children. Caroline Wernecke Pharris was only an infant when her father Dr. Otto Wernecke, a prosperous dentist, passed away in December of 1918 (Figure 5). His wife, Mrs. Wernecke, was left to raise her three small children alone. When Otto died, "many people seemed to feel that since their dentist had died they didn't have to pay the money they owed for dental work he had done."⁴⁷ Otto's little family was left destitute and in order to support her children, Mrs. Wernecke found work in the millinery or hat-making business (Figure 6).⁴⁸ In addition to this meager income, Mrs. Wernecke likely drew on community aid to support her young family. According to an aid society statistic, in the several years following 1918, the number of widows asking for assistance increased by nearly sixty percent.⁴⁹ These funds were used to support families struggling after the loss of a male breadwinner.

Even with assistance, Mrs. Wernecke was unable to work and care for her children at the same time and sent her littlest ones to live with nearby relatives. Her youngest daughter, Caroline, never knew her father but claims that his death changed her life forever. Caroline wholeheartedly believed her "father's death in the flu pandemic affected [her family] economically, emotionally, and socially" and that "the flu pandemic of 1918 drastically

46. Shinnick, "I Survived."

47. Pharris, "I Survived."

48. 1920 U.S. Census, population schedule, Manitowoc City, Manitowoc, Wisconsin ED 97, p. 86, sheet 9B, Wernecke Family; *Ancestry*, <http://ancestry.com>; NARA.

49. Children's Home and Aid Society of Illinois, "Home Life for Childhood: Annual Report, 1918" p. 4, *Influenza Archive*, <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.028oflu.0015.820>.

changed the trajectory of our lives.”⁵⁰ Although Mrs. Wernecke worked hard to provide for her children, she did not earn enough to send them to college. Caroline had always dreamed of becoming a school teacher, while her brother Otto Jr. aspired to become an engineer. Unfortunately, because of their poverty following their father’s death, neither was able to attend college and fulfill their dreams.⁵¹ Likewise, another flu orphan recalled that “the devastation and poverty that pervaded [our] lives from that time on.”⁵² The pandemic changed the economic status of many orphans and half-orphans, not only temporarily, but in the following decades.

Conclusion

The Spanish Influenza pandemic of 1918 had significant effects on the American family. While it tore households apart, extended family and community members sought to recreate the stability of families by caring for widows, widowers, and their children. Relatives and community members provided crucial support structures to flu survivors, and although many consider 1918 to be a difficult time, it quickly became a year marked with generosity and love. American communities and religious organizations were united in fighting for the wellbeing of the families left behind. Innocent children were the most impacted victims of the flu and orphans were cared for by extended family, older siblings, orphanages, or adopted by kind strangers. Whatever fate had in store, family and community members strove to ensure that flu orphans were cared for. Even if children continued to live with their immediate families, the outbreak still left a tangible mark on their emotional wellbeing and economic status. Although “the circumstances of many must have been bleak, individual women, men and children



Figure 6. According to the 1920 Census, Mrs. Wernecke worked as a proprietor at Durst Millinery Shop. This photo was taken outside of the shop at the turn of the twentieth century “Drost Hat Shop, Manitowoc, Wisconsin,” University of Wisconsin, digicoll.library.wisc.edu).

50. Pharris, “I Survived.”

51. Pharris, “I Survived.”

52. Lois Miller Stougard, “I Survived,” interview by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC.

displayed considerable resilience and courage.”⁵³ The outbreak was a trying time, but one that was met with courage, strength and endurance—all of which became a defining characteristic of the American family.

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53. Jones, *Influenza 1918*, 163.



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Girls Gone Wild: Criminality among Young Girls in Nineteenth-Century America

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Young female delinquents in court

Paper

Girls Gone Wild

Criminality among Young Girls in Nineteenth-Century America

Amy Jacobs

THEY RADIATE AND DIFFUSE VICE AND EVIL AROUND THEM.”¹ Samuel Gridley Howe, a resident of Massachusetts and education reformer made this claim about young female criminals in an 1854 letter to the commissioners of a Massachusetts reform school for girls. Howe wrote to give his opinions on the construction and administration of the new school, with specific requests geared to the feminine nature of the inmates. While his statement was an assumption about the actions of female juvenile delinquents, some girls did spread what would have been considered an evil, as they continually rebelled against social expectations. Girls, usually ages eight to eighteen, were often sent to reform schools under the charge of “incorrigibility,” which meant they could not be controlled. The institution supposedly brought wayward girls back to a moral and chaste life.

This sort of reformation facility was not always available to young girls. Correctional institutions for children were still new in American society when Samuel Howe wrote his letter. State governments started building Reform schools in 1788 as child-saving institutions, following the actions of the London

1. Samuel Gridley Howe, letter to J. H. Wilkins, H. B. Rogers, and F. B. Fay, Commissioners of Massachusetts for the State Reform School for Girls, (Boston; Ticknor and Fields, 1854), 18.

Philanthropic Society.² Prior to this, children were placed in adult institutions with both male and female inmates,³ but reform laws later prohibited the imprisonment of children with adults.⁴ Steven Schlossman details the emergence of child reformatories in a brief history of the reform school. He argues that modern juvenile delinquency institutions have abandoned the idea of rehabilitation that surrounded their establishment.⁵ It may be the case that in the nineteenth century, reformation was not the primary objective for institutionalizing a young girl. Reformation for girls took a very different shape than reformation for young boys.

Young girls received their own institutions after penal reform movements brought about the separation of the sexes within the prison system.⁶ Estelle Freedman presents the history of American segregation of the sexes within the prison system. She argues that female prison reforms during the progressive era improved the condition of female inmates but did not promote an egalitarian system. The “Cult of True Womanhood,” which was the belief that women were passionless in their love and could, therefore, guide society back to virtue and Christ,⁷ motivated women to rectify society’s ills, one being the current prison system. She describes how prisons scrutinized female actions more harshly than their male counterparts because women were supposed to be morally superior, and therefore, any action of immorality was a “greater fall to sin.”⁸ One of the most obvious ways a woman could fall to sin was exposing herself as a sexual being.

Michel Foucault provides a history of sexuality starting in the seventeenth century. His work also acts as a study in the relationship between sexuality and power. He defines power as both a productive and restrictive force produced by multiple sources, and this definition will be used to view power as it relates to

2. Steven Schlossman, “Delinquent Children: The Juvenile Reform School,” in *The Oxford History of the Prison: The Practice of Punishment in Western Society*, ed. Norval Morris and David J. Rothman (New York: Oxford University Press: 1998), 326–27.

3. Schlossman, “Delinquent Children,” 326.

4. *The Legal Condition of Girls and Women in Michigan* (H. D. Reprogle & Co., 1894), 11, <http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/7CMQEo>.

5. Schlossman, “Delinquent Children,” 326.

6. Estelle Freedman, “Their Sisters’ Keepers: An Historical Perspective on Female Correctional Institutions in the United States: 1870–1900,” *Feminist Studies* 2, no. 1 (1974): 78.

7. Barbara Welter, “The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820–1860,” *American Quarterly* 18, no. 2 (Summer, 1966): 153.

8. Freedman, “Their Sister’s Keepers,” 77.

criminality for young girls in America during the second half of the nineteenth century, and briefly into the twentieth.⁹ The twentieth century has been studied in depth by Anne Knupfer, who uses a Foucauldian lens to argue that sexuality saturated the issue of female delinquency, finding its way into the first juvenile court and The State Industrial School for Delinquent Girls at Geneva, Illinois.¹⁰ She presents sexual acts as declarations of independence and autonomy within the institution. These actions were not limited to the twentieth century.

Girls in the second half of the nineteenth century used deviant acts as declarations of autonomy. This was true both in and outside of the institution. While this was not the case for every girl in America, it was the case for some who recognized they had desires outside of the prescribed roles laid out for them within the “Cult of True Womanhood.” There were girls throughout the United States trying to break out of the same tiny boxes¹¹ using similar tactics. They created power for themselves by disobeying moral expectations linked to both their identities, as women and children, based on Christian ideals pushed by the government through vague policy that allowed for arbitrary classifications of crimes. In committing these crimes, girls face a consequence—institutionalization—that restricted their already limited power; so they continued to rebel. At every stage, this rebellion was political because it went up against the philosophy of the government and current power structure.

The Code and Construction of Power

American society constructed a new position for children in the power structure during the nineteenth century, making it a good time for children to act. For the first time, children were considered in conversations regarding rights. An 1877 published history of American child-saving showcased this transition. An instance of child abuse was reported to the Illinois Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, which caused a re-evaluation of the current lack of protection given to

9. Michel Foucault, “An Introduction,” in *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 1, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Random House, 1978), 94.

10. Anne Meis Knupfer, *Reform and Resistance: Gender, Delinquency, and America's First Juvenile Court* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 2.

11. Drawing from Japanese theorist Kishida Toshiko's “Daughters in Boxes,” noting the harsh expectations on women in Japanese society. Kishida Toshiko, “Daughters in Boxes,” in *The Essential Feminist Reader*, ed. Estelle Freedman (New York: The Modern Library, 2007), 99.

children: “seeing no reason that a child should not be entitled to as much protection under the law as a dumb animal . . .”¹² Children gained the right to protection from the government. Although children were granted some rights, they were still considered property. The difference is that male children grew out of their status as a belonging, while female children belonged to their parents, then their husband, which established a limited citizenship for girls.

The citizenship of young boys and girls differed greatly. The government put a harsher positive liberty on girls than on boys. Positive liberty is forcing a person to reach an ideal version of themselves.¹³ A great debate surrounding this sort of liberty is that someone has to decide what is ideal for an individual. In this case, the ideal version of a woman was virtuous and useful.

This idea of positive liberty was repugnant to some in the nineteenth century. John Stuart Mill wrote in 1869 that the only justified use of power over individuals is to prevent them from harming others.¹⁴ According to Mill, the state does not have authority to prevent harm someone might do to themselves, which was often the motivation behind the child-saving movements. It is unlikely that young delinquents were reading Mill, but the rebellious ones were acting out against what they felt was an unfair use of power against them. They received the kind of protection the government offered, but they also suffered from the kind of abuse of power through the policing of morality Mill condemns.

The influences behind the positive liberty enforced on all children were based upon a common notion that children were more susceptible to immorality. One woman who spoke to a moral reform group in 1839 warned, “Panders

12. National Conference of Charities and Correction Session: Committee on the History of Child-Saving Work. *History of Child Saving in the United States: At the Twentieth National Conference of Charities and Correction in Chicago, June, 1893: Report of the Committee on the History of Child-Saving Work*; C. D. Randall, Coldwater, Mich.; C. L. Brace, New York; Chas. W. Birtwell, Boston; Mrs. M. R. W. Wallace, Chicago; Homer Folks, Philadelphia; Francis Wayland, New Haven; Mrs. C. E. Dickinson, Denver; Mrs. Sarah B. Cooper, San Francisco; S. J. Hathaway, Marietta, Ohio; Mrs. Samuel Cushman, Deadwood, So. Dakota; D. Solis Cohen, Portland, Ore.; Charles Martindale, Indianapolis; Mrs. Virginia T. Smith, Hartford, Conn.; H. W. Lewis, Owatonna, Minn. (Geo H. Ellis, 1893).

13. George H. Sabine, review of *Two Concepts of Liberty: An Inaugural Lecture Delivered before the University of Oxford on October 31, 1958* by Isaiah Berlin, 2.

14. Tierney O'Rourke, “Coolies, White Slaves, and Purity Crusades: The Rise of Morality in U.S. Prostitution Legislation from Reconstruction to the Progressive Era,” *Penn Undergraduate L.J.* 85 (2013): 85.

of this vice [licentiousness] are secretly watching whom to destroy, and many are the youth that are taken in their snares.”¹⁵ This type of rhetoric stayed with reformers throughout the century. As children, girls were deemed wild and uncontrollable. They were a “dominion of animal passions . . . stimulated by the hot blood of youth.”¹⁶ These claims about the nature of children fit within Foucault’s term *scientia sexualis*, which means the science of sexuality. He explains that during the nineteenth century those in positions of power framed conversations on sexuality around scientific claims. These claims were not always based in truth. They were usually political opinions, oral statements, or traditional fears framed as facts.¹⁷ The “aim of such a discourse was not to state the truth but to prevent its very emergence.”¹⁸

Beliefs on the nature of womanhood were also affected by *scientia sexualis*, and this meant more positive liberty enforced upon young girls. The female body was analyzed in terms of sexuality, and therefore female nature was deemed sexual.”¹⁹ This rhetoric found its way into ideas on reform. In a document published by the Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church, the ecclesiastical leader stated, “Reform in behalf of women must be in two directions—anticipations of evils, and deliverance from evils.”²⁰ The first part of his plan for reform is extremely interesting. If religious leaders anticipated evil actions from women, it meant they believed women to be evil inherently.

Progressive women refuted this belief. They promoted the moral superiority of the female sex and pushed the “Cult of True Womanhood.” This had been a growing sentiment among women in the years leading up to the Progressive Era, as demonstrated by an address delivered to a group of female reformers in 1838. Mary Ann B. Brown asked the women to consider the hypothetical agony of a heartbroken mother bent over the “dishonored grave of her once virtuous daughter. . . .”²¹ Women who acted against their nature were considered dead in a sense; their fall from morality so great that it killed some part of them. This

15. Mary Ann B. Brown, et al, *An Address on Moral Reform: Delivered before the Worcester Female Moral Reform Society, October 22, 1839* (T. W. & J. Butterfield, 1839).

16. Howe, *A Letter*, 19.

17. Foucault, “An Introduction,” 55.

18. Foucault, “An Introduction,” 55.

19. Foucault, “An Introduction,” 104.

20. Archibald Alexander Edward Taylor. *The Social Problem: Seest Thou This Woman? A Discourse: by Rev. A. A. E. Taylor, Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church: Published by Request.* (Robert Clarke & Co., 1871.

21. Brown, *An Address on Moral Reform*, 6.

meant it must be controlled and prevented, which brought about heavy restrictions and legal action. Laws, or written codes, and unwritten social codes boxed girls into the Christian idea of a virtuous and useful woman. Reformatories used those two words to describe a woman successfully reformed.²² She was useful, like property, and virtuous, referring to the correct character of her being according to the standards set by the authorities acting over her.

The standards were arbitrary and capricious, set and administered by men. In 1878, *Woman's Exponent*, a women's magazine on political issues, stated, "... the men of the United States, are largely responsible for the moral and social atmosphere and condition of the capital of the nation."²³ Men were responsible for setting the standards for women, who had no representation within the government. Susan B. Anthony expressed her agreement with the previous statement and also frustration in the man-run system: "They, alone, decide who are guilty of violating these laws and what shall be their punishment, with judge, jury and advocate all men, with no women's voice heard . . ."²⁴ She detested the lack of female representation in the policy-making and the practice of the legal system. She realized that lack of representation made for an unequal system against women, with decisions left entirely up to the men.

The arbitrary nature of policies can be seen in the admittance process of The Connecticut Industrial School for Girls, which admitted girls who refused to obey authority, committed a crime, begged, or "found in circumstances of manifest danger of falling into the habits of vice and immorality."²⁵ These dangerous circumstances were arbitrarily decided by authoritative persons. It only took two respectable members of a community to file a complaint against a girl and send her to an institution until age 18.²⁶ This meant that any person was a possible informant against the girls. They were always watched, and even if they were not being watched, the possibility was always there, which made a

22. Connecticut Industrial School for Girls, *Fourth Report of the Directors of the Connecticut Industrial School for Girls Presented April 1st, 1874*, (Hartford: The Case, Lockwood and Brainard, 1874), 7.

23. J. M. Thompson, "Memorial of the Board of Trustees of the District of Columbia Girls' Reform School, and of Officers and Citizens of Washington," *Woman's Exponent*, 1 March 1878.

24. Susan B. Anthony, "Social Purity," in *The Essential Feminist Reader*, ed. Estelle B. Freedman (New York: The Modern Library, 2007), 90.

25. Connecticut Industrial School for Girls, *Fourth Report*, 17.

26. Connecticut Industrial School for Girls, *Fourth Report*, 19.

panopticon out of everyday life.²⁷ It was even more psychologically torturous for the girls because of the arbitrary nature of the laws. There was no description of which specific acts were outlawed. The circumstances of manifest danger as mentioned previously included things like wandering around streets, being in a public place without lawful business, not attending school, etc.²⁸ In an effort to reduce the chance of immorality, seemingly innocent activities were also outlawed to produce an ideal citizen under the standards set by men.

Breaking the Code

Girls were sent to institutions for rebelling against these standards. Their actions were usually targeted towards whatever authority had an overbearing guardianship over them, be it their parents acting underneath the social pressures discussed above and representing the views of the government, or the state institutions taking over the role of parents under the *Parens Patriae* Act.²⁹

It could be argued that girls were just acting out against their parents and not against some higher governmental power. A police report in 1898 recounts the tale of a young girl committed to a reformatory by her father, who said his daughter was incorrigible. He stated she “continually ran away from home and consorted with improper persons.”³⁰ When Bella, the young delinquent, was placed before the magistrate, she explained that would accept any punishment, but she did not want to go home. She did not have to go home since she was housed in an institution where she was able to consort with other “improper persons.” She exercised power by denying the authority of her father and received exactly what she wanted. Her actions were political by denying her father’s governance over her, therefore denying the terms of her citizenship in the eyes of the government. Political rebellion might not have been her intention, but she denied the authority that had direct governance over her, denying her position in governmental structure that relies on parents to govern over their children.

27. The term “panopticon” refers to the penitentiary built so that prisoners could not tell when they were being watched. Foucault claimed this was a corporal punishment of the mind in his book *Discipline and Punish*.

28. Connecticut Industrial School for girls, *Fourth Report*, 27.

29. Schlossman, “Delinquent Children,” 328.

30. “Artist Says His Daughter Is Incorrigible.” *Illustrated Police News*, 5 November 1898, 7.

Denying the structure looked different to other girls. Mary Madeline took a stab at the philosophy behind the morality laws when she mocked religion in her acts of rebellion. Mary Madeline was sent to the House of Refuge after confessing to her guardian, Mr. George Mulford, that she had been pretending to be possessed by the devil.³¹ After objects were thrown around the house, Mr. Mulford was urged by several members of the town to question Mary. He chastised her, speaking of someone else who was possessed: "She had seven devils in her; you seem to be poses of at least some of them to do all this mischief; tell me all about it; you must confess and forsake the evil."³² Mary confessed, but in her confession, she stated it was not the devil, but her own doing. Playing the role of the devil was a great act of dissent from expectations of piety for young women. She was charged with "incorrigibly vicious conduct," and sent to the house of refuge.³³

Confession brings up another Foucauldian concept of power. With confession, there is always some sort of power differential. There would be no confession if power were not involved. The one who is confessing believes that the one who is hearing the confession holds some sort of power to save this person from their actions.³⁴ This can be liberating, but it can also be constricting if a confession is needed for liberation. In Mary's case, her guardian demanded a confession from her and therefore demonstrated a power structure favoring the guardian, a man quite older than her.

She was not acting out against her guardian in the same way as Bella. Mary's guardian, Mr. Mulford, was a member of the Third Baptist Church.³⁵ Mary could have been rebelling against a religious household. Her confession was itself a mockery of religion and a rebellion against it. She made light of evil, which dominated the discourse regarding her nature as a woman. She loosened the fastenings on hanging objects and positioned others to fall to feign the presence of a spirit in the house.³⁶ Her confession brought forth a scary thought for a lot of people: she was not afraid of spirits and the devil. Faking their presence could have been a way of telling the world that its narratives regarding her being

31. "The Confession of the Girl: Committed to the House of Refuge." *Chicago Tribune*, 17 February 1866.

32. "The Confession of the Girl."

33. "The Confession of the Girl."

34. Foucault, "An Introduction," 61–62.

35. "The Confession of the Girl."

36. "The Confession of the Girl."

were also fake. She took away the power that religion had over her when she made a mockery of its greatest enemy and used it for her entertainment. Her joy in her rebellion showed that she did not care that “female irreligion is the most revolting feature in human character.”³⁷

Amelia Dorrington also found joy and liberation in her rebellion. Her previous classmate, Mrs. Graves, wrote a tale of caution to young women in 1844, using Amelia as the example. Amelia, also referred to as “The lost one,” rebelled against expectations regarding sexuality. Mrs. Graves wrote, “She appeared to take delight in violating all the rule of prudence.”³⁸ Mrs. Graves also quoted Amelia, remembering that she said, “I will do as I please, and people may think what they please.”³⁹ This was a huge statement during a time when moral standards were the legal standards, and repercussions for acting out against them was not merely gossip around the lunch table. Amelia had a past with the criminal court and knew talking would be the least of her concerns as a reaction to her actions. She framed the government as an entity producing thoughts, and not actions, therefore limiting their power. Although internally she believed her actions were acceptable and refused to be brought down by the law, she was not above it. Her story was used as a tale of caution because it did not end well. She had her child taken from her, was incarcerated for theft, and Mrs. Graves hints at Amelia having to turn to prostitution out of economic necessity.⁴⁰

Prostitution was one of the greatest enemies of a virtuous society, often used as the most extreme example of immorality. If benefiting economically from a sexual encounter can be counted as enjoying the action, prostitution confronted the idea that women were supposed to remain passionless about sexuality.⁴¹ It is likely that survival, not enjoyment, was the main reason women participated in prostitution. Susan B. Anthony wrote in 1875 that prostitutes were led to the devil’s occupation out of “extreme poverty, in many instances verging on starvation.”⁴² She also explained that prostitution was perpetuated by the fact that women did not have equal chances to gain employment.⁴³

37. Welter, “The Cult of True Womanhood,” 154

38. A. J. Graves, *Girlhood and Womanhood: or Sketches of my Schoolmates*, (Boston: T.H. Carter, 1844), 147.

39. Graves, *Girlhood and Womanhood*, 147.

40. Graves, *Girlhood and Womanhood*, 149.

41. Welter, “The Cult of True Womanhood”

42. Anthony, “Social Purity,” 88.

43. Anthony, “Social Purity,” 89.

Although there were abuses in the field, prostitution was an option when girls had none.

Economic gains provide more power in a capitalistic society, so prostitution produced power. There may have been other outside forces influencing girls' decisions to engage in sex work, however, a bank teller from New York City stated in 1839 that one half of all money coming into the bank came from a house of prostitution. She claimed, "This establishment is of the first respectability in the city."⁴⁴ The teller's statements expose an economic need for the establishment and a sentiment of respect. This sentiment rejected the moral norms. The epitome of immorality labeled as respectable confronted the normative status of prostitution. This could be true on an individual level as well. Prostitution brought girls of low economic status out of their economic class. In caring more about money than about the social expectations placed upon her, she put herself beyond the power of the moral claims of the time. She decided she did not care about the social implications of her actions. This was an individual way of claiming freedom and provides an explanation for the unabashed advertisement of prostitution in the streets during the nineteenth century by young girls.⁴⁵ If a girl entered sex work, she owned her vicious identity for economic salvation, and owning her identity gave her immediate power.

It was not just for pecuniary reasons that girls broke the law in such a manner. Nettie Smith chose prostitution because she wanted to be a prostitute. The sixteen-year-old girl ran away from home and entered a house of prostitution after a messy break up with a young man. Nettie was found by her male cousin who recognized her and begged her to leave.⁴⁶ She refused: "She had tasted of sin and its pleasures, and that she intended to lead the life of a courtesan."⁴⁷ She was from a wealthy family and was therefore not driven by economic necessity. She found liberation in engaging in restricted action. She wanted the freedom to choose something outside the positive liberty ideal the state wanted from her.

Sociologists Brian Donovan and Tori Barnes state that, "laws against prostitution are created and used in specific cultural contexts to serve agendas that have less to do with illegal sex and more to do with maintaining social hierarchies marked by gender, race, and ethnicity."⁴⁸ The same statement could be

44. Brown, *An Address on Moral Reform*, 4.

45. Brown, *An Address on Moral Reform*, 4.

46. "Nettie's Choice," *National Police Gazette*, 4 September 1880.

47. "Nettie's Choice."

48. O'Rourke, "Coolies, White Slaves, and Purity Crusades," 86.

used to speak on any law regarding sexuality in the nineteenth century. The laws based on pseudo-scientific and religious claims on the nature of womanhood were established to maintain stability in a post–Civil War era.⁴⁹ Reconstruction influencing morality laws is an idea shared in Tierney O'Rourke's article on prostitution legislation.

Some girls did not commit any sort of crime like prostitution but voluntarily submitted themselves into reformatories. The Girls Industrial Home of Suffolk County took in a set number of voluntary cases of girls who were not convicted of any crime, but still wished to be reformed.⁵⁰ Entering the institution was one way for a girl to take control of her life. She could take away the uncertainty of the near future, including the possibility of being incarcerated. By choosing a fate before it was unfairly dealt to her through unjust laws that applied only to young women, she was declaring her autonomy. Although she was admitting herself to a place of presumed limited freedom, she chose it, and in making that choice exercised power.

Institutions—New Codes and Rebellion

Entering the institution was only empowering for a few. These girls met a new power structure when they entered the institution. One of the goals of reformatories, as outlined by the Connecticut Industrial School for Girls, was to remove them from all vagrant associations and keep them from contaminating others.⁵¹ Some believed that keeping a large number of incorrigible girls together was a bad idea. Samuel Howe expressed this worry: "They radiate and diffuse vice and evil around them."⁵² He wrote this fear into a letter to the commissioners of a Massachusetts State Reform School for Girls. According to the schools themselves, this was not a valid fear, as most recorded girls were most always reformed successfully without incident.⁵³ This was not always the case, however.

In an annual report to the directors of the Connecticut Industrial School for Girls in 1874, it was stated that the school was very satisfactory, "notwithstanding

49. O'Rourke, "Coolies, White Slaves, and Purity Crusades," 86.

50. "Girls' Industrial Home." *Suffolk County Handbook and Official Directory*, 1896.

51. Connecticut Industrial School for Girls, *Fourth Report*, 6.

52. Howe, *Letter*, 18.

53. Connecticut Industrial School for Girls, *Fourth Report*, 6.

the disturbing influences growing out of a change in the superintendency, and most of the subordinate officers.”⁵⁴ It then reads: “All of these influences are now removed.” It is hard to tell from this source because it was written to make the school appear infallible, but disturbing influences could have been the expression of some sort of opposition to the school. Disturbing influences from the superintendent were no small matter. That office had direct control of the inmates and oversaw instruction and carried out the rules and interests of the institution. It was the highest office under the matron.⁵⁵

Girls did not leave behind their opposition to forces that limited their ability to act once they were in the institution. This was the case for Daisey Cole. Her mother sent her to the Baltimore House of Refuge for incorrigibility. In this instance, incorrigibility meant she rebelled against her mother’s demands.⁵⁶ Daisey and another girl, Gertrude Stalcup, who was also in the house at the request of her parents, staged a large act of rebellion. The girls, ages sixteen and eighteen,⁵⁷ broke into the matron’s office, removed their uniforms, and donned the clothing of the woman who had authority over them. They then left via the fire escape and climbed over a barbed wire fence to freedom.⁵⁸ They made sure their freedom from the institution held by obtaining husbands soon after their escape.⁵⁹ Daisey told her story to Captain William Wyatt, and he proposed on the spot.⁶⁰ This launched a debate on who had a claim on the girl: the state or the husband. Daisey was aware of her ongoing status as property and recognized how different entities competed for her as their belonging. She found liberation in a seemingly oppressive marriage as it was her ticket out of the institution, a *more* oppressive institution. The day after her marriage, she gave herself up to the state, but claimed it had “no further jurisdiction, as she was a wife.”⁶¹ Habeas corpus was issued, and the state dropped the case. Gertrude had a similar experience with her marriage to Edward Apt.⁶²

54. Connecticut Industrial School for Girls, *Fourth Report*, 5.

55. Connecticut Industrial School for Girls, *Fourth Report*, 30.

56. “Incorrigible Girl’s Romance.” *Illustrated Police News*, 30 January 1897, 7.

57. “Are Married After Their Escape: Two Girls Who Got Out of the Baltimore House of Refuge Find Husbands,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 19 January 1897.

58. “Incorrigible Girl’s Romance.”

59. “Are Married After Their Escape.”

60. “Are Married After Their Escape.”

61. “Are Married After Their Escape.”

62. “Are Married After Their Escape.”

The collusion between Daisey and Gertrude was important. It gave the fear on the congregation of vagrants radiating and diffusing evil some sort of validity. Organizing rebellion within the institution after unjust laws led to their imprisonment made them political prisoners. Padraic Kenney writes on the emergence of the political prisoner. His writing demands that in order to be a political prisoner, the prisoner had to use the institution for a political cause.⁶³ Some girls, like Bella, protested their guardian's right to them by preferring the institution. Voicing acceptance to imprisonment over current conditions was harsh criticism towards her current condition deemed acceptable by the government. Another qualification of political prisoners is that they must band together underneath an ideological framework against the government. There are almost no documents from the girls inside the institutions. It is hard to determine the rhetoric among the girls regarding their political philosophies.

The fact that there are limited records on what girls were saying within intuitions is also because girls were not allowed to express any sort of dissenting opinions. The Connecticut Industrial School for Girls' code required that "The manners and conversations of the girls must be strictly observed, and boisterous, rude and uncivil acts, or loud and angry talking, must not be permitted."⁶⁴ Strictly observing conversations brings about another Foucauldian principle of power: a monopoly on the conversation of sex. He argues that if sex is repressed, and silence is enforced with respect to sexuality, the entity that demanded the silence enacted power over all those who were silenced. The reformatories enacted power over young girls by limiting their conversations. The speaker's benefit is one way to limit this power: "A person who holds forth in such language places himself to a certain extent outside the reach of power."⁶⁵ There is no evidence of any girls in the nineteenth century who used colloquial efforts to employ the speaker's benefit as it referred to sexuality. There is evidence of girls continually committing prohibited actions that took away the power of the authority who placed the prohibition, and not just in terms of sexuality.

Recorded instances of their continued rebellion against certain expectations on their nature after admittance serve as descriptions of their political opinions. Daisey and Gertrude banded together to commit such an act of rebellion. Mary

63. Padraic Kenney, "I felt a kind of pleasure in seeing them treat us brutally": The Emergence of the Political Prisoner, 1865–1910," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, (2012): 867.

64. Connecticut Industrial School for Girls, *Fourth Report*, 34.

65. Foucault, "An Introduction," 6.

Madeline, the young devil impersonator, continued her disruptive behavior at the institution. She “was very saucy to the matron and used obscene language.”⁶⁶ These rebellions were much smaller than the one that got her admitted, but there were more factors acting against her in the institution. Institutional barriers added upon the already existing social and political barriers, so her actions could not retain their previous level of outright rebellion.⁶⁷

A group of girls at the Indiana State Woman’s Prison and Reform School for Girls also demonstrated this continued rebellious spirit as they banded together in 1892 to set their school on fire in hopes of escape.⁶⁸ Imogene Thompson, Mary Stevens, and Lydia Kinseley were credited by other girls to have started the fire after conspiring to escape in such a manner.⁶⁹ The connected women’s prison and reform school were both evacuated. A newspaper article on the event shared, “so far as known none of the prisoners made any attempt to escape, though some of the reform girls were discovered during the evening roaming about the city . . .”⁷⁰ The three girls successfully planned and executed an escape, although they were eventually captured and turned into authorities. Their rebellion was an act against the limitations of their freedom. They wanted to be free, so they set fire to the institution which held them from that freedom.

These three girls who set the fire were political prisoners because they were banded together underneath an ideological framework against their oppression. They are also political prisoners because they used the prison to support their cause. These girls literally burned down a physical manifestation of their oppression. This is not what Kenney intended when he claimed that in order to be a political prisoner, one must use the prison for the enhancement of the political goal. He meant the prison must become a marker of martyrdom for the movement.

A few years after the fire, another attempted escape was recorded in the *New York Times*, but the tone of this article was very different. The article detailed a mutiny in 1905, started when a girl tried to escape through a door left open. She was seized by a school official, which caused a great commotion, drawing the attention of the other girls who quickly seized improvised weapons, “Pokers,

66. “The Confession of the Girl.”

67. Schlossman, “Delinquent Children,” 328.

68. “Women Incendiaries: Prisoners in the Indiana Reform School Destroy the Building,” *New York Times*, 2 March 1892.

69. “Women Incendiaries.”

70. “Women Incendiaries.”

sticks, and other articles came into play and the mutineers had almost succeeded in subduing the authorities.” The police arrived and quieted the insurgence.⁷¹

This tells of the active rebellion at the reform school, the girls acting upon any opportunity they receive to escape. It might seem like there was no collaboration in this attempted escape, although the commotion caused by the initial attempt might be a signal to the other girls. Even if there was no collusion, the individual rebellion is still valid. If a chance provides itself, a girl cannot wait for all the others.

The article is framed as if the desired outcome of the reader was an escape for the girls. The writer encouraged the mutineers as he said, “The mutineers almost won their way to liberty.”⁷² It seems the writer had sympathy for the girls trying to escape the institution, perhaps, due to previous attempts of girls at other institutions, like Imogene Thompson, Mary Stevens, and Lydia Kinseley. Even if he was not moved by this specific instance, it is clear he has some level of sympathy for the girls at the institution.

Sympathy in writings on the experiences of girls in the prison systems can also be found in a political piece by Brad Whitlock, a political novelist. Whitlock published a work in the Red Book Magazine, a popular women’s magazine in 1908 on double standards regarding the criminality of prostitution. He tells the fictional story of two women who have been charged with loitering, which was a vague legal definition that indicated prostitution. A new, benevolent judge asks the man who arrested the women, “Within your knowledge or belief, there were always men doing the same thing, no less and no more, were there not? . . . Then why did you not bring the men in also.”⁷³ The man answered saying he had only done what society had expected from him,⁷⁴ which highlights the relationship between moral codes of society and the legal code.

As the judge questions the man who arrested these two women, he calls him out on “vouching for their bad character with perhaps a little more satisfaction than men oftentimes vouch for the good characters of others.”⁷⁵ which echo the words Susan B. Anthony said in years previous about the double standards facing women when it comes to sexuality. As this conversation takes place, the

71. “Mutineers in Petticoats: Washington Police Called Out to Protect Girls’ Reform School Officers,” *New York Times*, 24 July 1905.

72. “Mutineers in Petticoats.”

73. Brad Whitlock, “The Girl That’s Down,” *Redbook Magazine*, 1908.

74. Whitlock, “The Girl That’s Down,” 61.

75. Whitlock, “The Girl That’s Down,” 56.

woman on trial re-evaluates the laws to which she is bound. Whitlock portrays this woman becoming enlightened to the injustice of her situation after a man has demonstrated it to her, which does not give enough credit to girls like Daisey and Gertrude who understood the inequalities well enough to use them to their advantage. The fictional story continues, with the judge dismissing the case of the two girls. The girls leave the courthouse with a desire to change.⁷⁶

While a bit naïve in assuming that one dismissal from a court would turn the economic circumstances around and remove the motivating factors that drew girls to crime, this writing is important to consider because it shows that girls have gained sympathy from outside of the institution, and not just from women. There are people who do not think girls deserve to be institutionalized, or at least not unless the men are too.

Conclusion

Gaining sympathy was not the main goal of the girls as they rebelled against standards of civility and morality. Sympathy is important for political causes, but in this case, it did not cause a social revolution in the next century. Lisa Pasko explains in her research on the history of female juvenile delinquency that the state's criminalization of female sexuality in the 1800s carried through to the modern juvenile justice system with the condemnation of sexual promiscuity among girls and the policing of non-heteronormative sexuality among inmates.⁷⁷ The few young girls who rebelled against the harsh social standards did not have enough impact to change the whole system, but this was not their goal. Some political movements offer an alternative, while some just reject what is already in place. The rebellious girls were of the second thread. Their political attacks were very personal. They were interested in expanding their existence and refusing to give in to pressures which demanded they perform their femaleness a certain way while rejecting certain claims about their inherent nature. The girls who rebelled gave no deference to authorities they did not feel deserved it. They rejected the positive liberty framework saturated with morality. In this rejection, they created and claimed power. They wanted to shatter the boxes that held them, and they did. They were doing it at the same

76. Whitlock, "The Girl That's Down," 62.

77. Lisa Pasko, "Damaged Daughters: The History of Girls' Sexuality and the Juvenile Justice System," *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 100 no. 3 (Summer 2010): 1100.

time Japanese writer and feminist theorist Kishida Toshiko gave subversive talks called “Daughters in Boxes” around 1883. She passionately claimed: “If we enclose them in boxes; if we capture them when they try to escape and bind them in place, then just as the petals of the bound flower will scatter and fall, so too the bounty of the human mind will wither.”⁷⁸ We see patterns of bound women in boxes, but they can be shattered. Young girls, starting at the age of eight in America were shattering their boxes.

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78. Toshiko, “Daughters in Boxes,” 103.



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A Promise of Something New?: Latter-day Saint Teachings to Young Women 1960s-1970s

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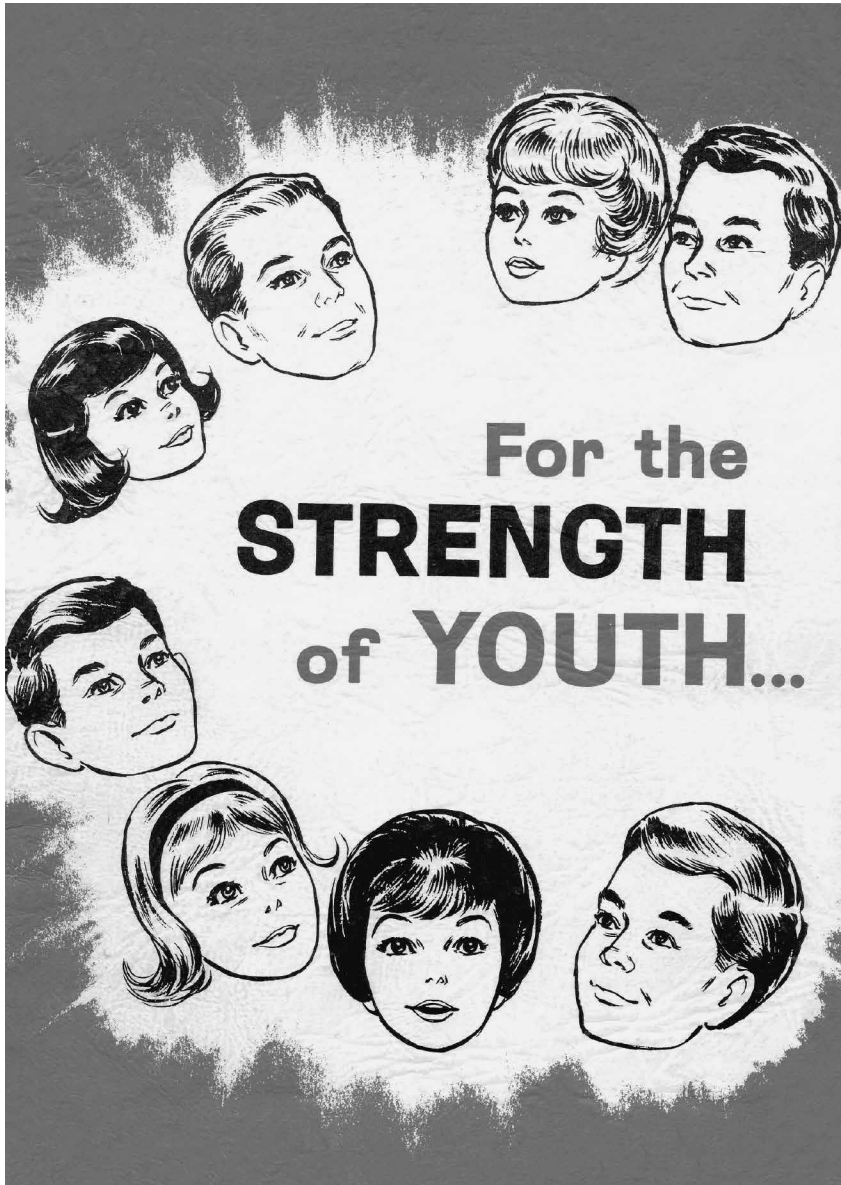


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For the Strength of Youth pamphlet, *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 1965

Paper

A Promise of Something New? Latter-day Saint Teachings to Young Women 1960s–1970s

Catherine Davidson

IN JUNE OF 2011, THE *friend*, A CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-day Saints magazine for children, featured a story about four-year-old Hannah, a girl who received a sleeveless dress from her grandmother. The dress, however, brought her sadness and anxiety rather than joy; she felt like she could not wear it since it exposed her shoulders. When the girl's mother gently suggested that she could simply wear a t-shirt underneath the dress to more fully cover her body, Hannah, her shoulders now covered, was "ready" for her day.¹ In 2013, the *Friend* published a similar story about young Stacey who experienced discomfort on a shopping trip when her friend suggested she try on a spaghetti-strap shirt. Stacey picked up the shirt, about to try it on, but knew that it was not right; she felt the Holy Ghost warn her not to try it on.² Although the article gave this slightly older girl the ability to solve her own dilemma, both girls strongly believed that showing their shoulders was disrespectful to their body. Both stories suggested that wearing immodest clothing sent a message that a girl is using her body for "attention and approval."³

In some ways these stories were unsurprising. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, known for its emphasis on modesty and chastity before

1. Tamra S. Arthur, "Hannah's New Dress," *The Friend*, June 2011.

2. Annie Beer, "The Orange Shirt," *The Friend*, May 2013.

3. Beer, "The Orange Shirt."

marriage, regularly stresses those themes in material for youth. Yet, these stories met widespread disapproval—including from Latter-day Saint women. While many readers were used to (and may have supported) the Church's instruction for female members to pay careful attention to their dress and to not display too much of their bodies, the stories raised alarm. Was the Church really telling girls as young as four that they needed to think about their bodies as sexual objects? Should young girls feel ashamed of themselves for wearing a sundress or tank top? Could a child's clothing even be considered immodest?

Strong messages about modesty and the female body are not new to the twenty-first century Church. Latter-day Saint youth manuals and talks by Church leaders from the 1960s and 1970s reveal the subtle—and sometimes not-so-subtle—messages that girls needed to be careful to cover and control their bodies. Such instructions were a central part of Latter-day Saint teachings for girls. At the same time that Church materials emphasized appropriate dress and modesty, they also stressed girls' future roles as wives and mothers, and their need to remain close to the Church and support its leaders. This emphasis on traditional gender roles and conservative values was not incidental; Church leadership used these instructions as pushback to the changing social norms incurred by second-wave feminism, the Sexual Revolution, and the youth counterculture of the 1960s and 1970s.

Scholars have only recently begun to examine young people in Church history. Rebecca de Schweinitz's work, "Holding on to the 'Chosen Generation': The Mormon Battle for Youth in the Late 1960s and Early 1970s," examines the Church's efforts to hold onto youth membership during the late twentieth century, a time when youth in America were becoming more secular. It also recognizes the gendered ways that the Church thought about young people, but includes little research directly about girls. Her work on the *Young Women's Journal* (YWJ) likewise explores youth in Church history, as she analyzes girls' experiences in the Church during late nineteenth century through the fictional stories in the YWJ. These stories explored themes of "women's health, education, clothing, suffrage, and marriage,"⁴ and presented characters that were ambitious and who longed for freedom, but eventually "relinquished their independent lives . . . for marriage and motherhood."⁵ De Schweinitz's work,

4. Rebecca De Schweinitz, "Preaching the Gospel of Church and Sex: Mormon Women's Fiction in *The Young Women's Journal*, 1889–1910," in *Dimensions of Faith: A Mormon Studies Reader*, ed. Stephen C. Taysom (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2011), 391.

5. Schweinitz, "Preaching the Gospel of Church and Sex," 416.

however, pays little attention to the girls to whom the YWJ was directed to and instead spends more time on the women authors who wrote its content.

Latter-day Saint women's history is a vibrant and growing field. Although most Latter-day Saint women's history scholarship centers on the nineteenth century, Neil J. Young's *Fascinating and Happy: Mormon Women, the LDS Church, and the Politics of Social Conservatism* focuses on Latter-day Saint women's experiences in twentieth century. He considers the relationship between the Church and women's bodies, as women were encouraged to "defend God's plan for human sexuality and the traditional family against the threats of women's liberation."⁶ Young also explores how Latter-day Saint women became politically active in opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) during the 1960s and 1970s, and how these political views stemmed from Church doctrine and culture. Young writes that, "church leaders frequently implored LDS women . . . to conform to strict gender roles, [and] avoid all unchaste behavior outside of wedlock."⁷ Young argues that Latter-day Saint women's conservatism came from their belief that, as wives, they were morally superior because of their adherence to said gender roles and chaste behavior, and the ERA would threaten the pedestal upon which they sat.⁸

Scholarly explorations of Latter-day Saint women's experiences take on new meaning when examined through the lens of race. Amanda Hendrix-Komoto's "Mahana, You Naked!: Modesty, Sexuality, and Race in the Mormon Pacific" addresses ideas about race and female sexuality. She shows that during the late twentieth century Church members believed there was an overt sexuality about Pacific Islanders, and this belief caused great concern over interracial marriage within the Church. Members' beliefs about the sexuality of Pacific Islanders came in part from their exposure to the Church College of Hawaii's Polynesian Cultural Center (PCC); student workers at the PCC were asked to "uncover parts of their bodies . . . so they better embodied Polynesian culture."⁹ The discrepancies between modesty standards for Polynesian and white students

6. Neil J. Young, "Fascinating and Happy: Mormon Women, the LDS Church, and the Politics of Sexual Conservatism," in *Devotion and Desires: Histories of Sexuality and Religion in the Twentieth-Century United States*, ed. Gillian Frank, Bethany Moreton, and Heather R. White (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2018), 195.

7. Young, "Fascinating and Happy," 197.

8. Young, "Fascinating and Happy," 207.

9. Amanda Hendrix-Komoto, "Mahana, You Naked!: Modesty, Sexuality, and Race in the Mormon Pacific," in *Out of Obscurity: Mormonism Since 1945*, ed. Patrick Q. Mason and John G. Turner (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 194.

caused community members to question “how Polynesian bodies were valued.”¹⁰ Hendrix-Komoto also argues that it was the presence of white students at the Church College of Hawaii that raised concerns about interracial marriage and protecting white purity. She also points out that while the Church was concerned about protecting white women’s sexuality, it had no problem displaying the bodies of Polynesian students.

Outside of Church history, other scholars have looked more broadly at young people growing up in America. Jon Savage’s work *Teenage: the Creation of Youth Culture* explores this very theme. By studying the work of social scientists from the mid-twentieth century, he argues that the category of teenager emerged primarily as a marketing group, and he draws the conclusion that many societies tried to define but also control adolescence.¹¹ Like Savage, Grace Palladino argues that teenagers were valued most as consumers, therefore it mattered a great deal what they wore. Consequently, marketers tried to influence youth and set the standard for how they should appear. She also argues that as teenagers spent more time in peer groups they gained greater autonomy. This autonomy led to experimentation not just with fashion, but with their private lives and their sexuality.

Some historians have explored, in particular, the history of girls. Kelly Schrum’s study of teenage girls’ diaries, yearbooks, advertisements, and magazines shows that teenagers were consumers and trendsetters, and parents and marketers were often at odds, as both tried to influence young women and the decisions they made about their bodies. More often than not, girls absorbed the message that proper appearance contributed to success in life. This message led teenage girls to comply with what they deemed popular and acceptable fashion and makeup trends, despite parents’ objections. Joan Jacobs Brumberg expands the scholarship about teenage girls by focusing on their bodies, namely menstruation and sexuality, and explores “what it means to grow up in a female body.”¹² She argues that by the end of the twentieth century, “the body [was] regarded as something to be managed and maintained, usually through

10. Hendrix-Komoto, “Mahana, You Naked,” 194.

11. Jon Savage, *Teenage: The Prehistory of Youth Culture, 1875–1945* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2007).

12. Joan Jacobs Brumberg, *The Body Project: An Intimate History of American Girls* (New York: Random House, 1997), xxv.

expenditures on clothes and personal grooming items.”¹³ Brumberg also links girls’ feelings of identity and individualism to feelings about their bodies. Like Schrum, she contends that marketers and advertisers became the new educators and standard-setters for teenage girls.

To understand the history of the Church and its young female membership, it is important to take a broader approach. Scholars have only recently differentiated women and girls, and many of those historians have addressed the broader topic of youth history and how the idea of adolescence came to exist. Other scholars have studied youth history but through the lens of teenage fashion and appearance. While existing scholarship has explored girls’ history and Latter-day Saint women’s history, historians have yet to fully examine the experiences of Latter-day Saint girls specifically. This study will combine these fields and focus on female youth in the Church and how the Church instructed girls on proper clothing and appearance, family roles, and religious commitment. There are several under-utilized sources that illustrate the type of messages the LDS Church directed to girls; these sources include youth lesson manuals, dress and grooming guides, and talks given by Church authorities, all of which will be used throughout this study. These sources also give a glimpse into how the Church responded to youth counterculture, the Sexual Revolution, and second-wave feminism, as they attempted to instruct girls about proper behavior for their teenage years and their adult lives.

Body, Dress, and Modesty

In 1965 the Church introduced a new pamphlet, *For the Strength of Youth*, that outlined the behavioral standards for youth. With sections on good grooming, hair fashions, dating, and clean living, the *For the Strength of Youth* pamphlet was intended to teach youth how to have the companionship of the Holy Ghost and how to keep their focus on being worthy to enter the temple. The pamphlet also aimed to provide theological frameworks for thinking about these topics. Suggesting that young people’s choices reflected spiritual principles, it linked specific scriptural references to the Church’s guidelines. The Dress and Appearance section, for instance, began with a verse from 1 Corinthians: “Know ye

13. Brumberg, *The Body Project*, xxi.

not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? . . . The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.” Likening young people’s bodies to a holy temple, the inclusion of this scripture gave the instructions in *For the Strength of Youth* spiritual weight. Both young men and young women learned that their bodies were sacred and worthy of the utmost care, yet sources repeatedly suggest that Church authorities were especially concerned about girls’ bodies and choices.

For the Strength of Youth was not the first time the Church gave instructions to girls about their bodies. In the 1962–1963 edition of *The Beekeeper’s Handbook* (a manual for the religious leaders of girls age twelve to thirteen) is found the following excerpt: “God our Father, who made our bodies, knows what is good for them, has told us about it in most simple words and terms, and has given us some glorious promises if we will follow his instructions in taking the proper things into our bodies.”¹⁴ Instructions for girls about how to present and handle their bodies is significant because of this belief that God created their bodies, and He alone knows the best way to treat a physical body. Manuals for girls aged twelve to eighteen contained a myriad of instructions for girls about their bodies with the underlying assumption that these instructions came from heavenly direction. Like the *For the Strength of Youth* pamphlet, youth manuals incorporated scripture and quotes from general Church authorities to establish a theological foundation and spiritual authority for the instructions within.

Many of the instructions for maintaining the body directed at girls revolved around the ideal of beauty. A Beehive (girls age twelve to thirteen) manual from 1971 contains a lesson entitled “The Paradox of Beauty,” which outlines the expectation that girls should be actively trying to make themselves more attractive. From this lesson, girls in the Church were directed to make attractiveness a priority, and that others around them would be more responsive to an attractive face.¹⁵ In the same manual is another lesson entitled, “How Girls Can Be Happier If They Keep Their Bodies Fit.” At the outset, the title of this lesson suggests a healthier relationship for girls and their bodies, but instead the lesson contains tips on how to ward off the effects of aging and how proper appearances makes girls happy. The very first entry in the list of reasons why

14. “Understand Beauty,” *Beekeeper’s Handbook* (Salt Lake City: The General Board of the Young Women’s Mutual Improvement Association, 1960), 115.

15. “The Paradox of Beauty,” *A Promise of Something New* (Salt Lake City: The General Board of the Young Women’s Mutual Improvement Association, 1971), 53–56.

girls should keep their bodies fit is because it makes them prettier: “A physically fit body is more likely to be slim and shapely. . . . A fit person even has smoother, clearer skin and prettier hair and eyes than her sluggish counterpart, and her posture and carriage will be better.”¹⁶ These lessons suggest that bodies were designed to be physically appealing, and that it was a girl’s responsibility to keep her body attractive.

The beauty ideal for girls to remain attractive throughout their lives was prominent in Church publications. A 1963 Beehive manual included a letter from the Young Women Mutual Improvement Association General President in which is found the following quote: “Like a bubbling brook a very special beauty is yours too! . . . The Beehive Program is a way of life to guide you through the years ahead in making wise choices and developing into the beautiful woman our Father in Heaven intended you to be.”¹⁷ Church leaders taught girls that their path in life was to become a beautiful woman; this pathway emphasized improving their physical bodies.

One medium through which girls were encouraged to improve their bodies was through their clothing. Church manuals recommended that girls buy items for their wardrobes that were comfortable and could withstand passing trends, with an emphasis on buying feminine and modest clothing; “Choose feminine styles, but styles that are not too fussy, too tight, too bare, or too loud. Clothing that is comfortable and in good taste can be worn again and again with a feeling of assurance and ease.”¹⁸ Clothes were seen as an outward sign of a young woman’s morality. Girls were told to demonstrate “the supreme importance of modesty, purity, and chastity”¹⁹ through their clothing.

It is important to note, however, that these instructions on dressing and taking care of bodies came during a time of changing social norms for American girls. The 1960s and 1970s were a time of youth experimentation; teenagers were

16. “The Shape of Things to Come,” *A Promise of Something New* (Salt Lake City: The General Board of the Young Women’s Mutual Improvement Association, 1971), 47.

17. *Beehive Girls; Handbook* (Salt Lake City: The General Board of the Young Woman’s Mutual Improvement Association, 1963), 2.

18. “Add-A-Pearl for Beauty,” *Laurel Manual* (Salt Lake City: The Young Women’s Mutual Improvement Association, 1964), 219.

19. “Standards,” *Executive Manual For Officers of the Young Men’s and Young Women’s Mutual Improvement Associations* (Salt Lake City: The General Boards of the Mutual Improvement Associations, 1951), 45.

reshaping the fashion world, as well as exploring their sexuality.²⁰ Second-wave feminists were also reclaiming female sexuality, as the sexual revolution and free love movement were gaining popularity. Supporters of these movements rejected the traditional, Puritanical belief that women were void of sexual appetites, and that girls were expected to remain chaste while boys were encouraged to try on different sexual partners.

The Church's concern about shifting social norms and increased sexual activity among youth was evident in its vast instruction to young girls about remaining chaste and virtuous. These instructions from youth manuals about proper appearance and clothing were not simply encouragement for girls to look their best, but they were also pushback against loosening sexual standards for young people. Church leaders linked their messages about dressing modestly and protecting virtue with the message that girls needed to cover up their bodies and avoid any sort of sexual experimentation.

Instructions about remaining chaste came not only from official Church publications, but also from larger Church culture. In 1969, Helen Andelin—a Church member—published *The Fascinating Girl*, with the goal of instructing girls about how they could prepare for their future marriages. Andelin's books taught girls that they needed to look a certain way in order to attract and please a man; it encouraged women to develop a "feminine dependency" on men, and that that quality was essential for a successful marriage. *The Fascinating Girl* also contains an entire section dedicated to the importance of chastity. Like young women lesson manuals, Andelin stated that chastity was an integral part of preparing for a happy marriage.²¹ Moreover, she denounced the free love movement as contrary to the law of God:

"There has come into existence a 'new morality' which teaches an opposite doctrine. This new code teaches our youth that chastity is no longer important, that they can engage in 'free love' with anyone, and that marriage is no longer required. It is strange that they think they can take a god-given law . . . and toss it out, without ill effects. One need only to look around to see the results of the 'new morality.' Are those who engage in it people of worth? Are they the builders of nation and the strength of society? . . . No, they are the 'free loaders' who are drifting downstream."²²

20. Grace Palladino, *Teenagers: An American History* (New York: Basic Books, 1996).

21. Helen Andelin, *The Fascinating Girl* (Santa Barbara: Pacific Press, 1969), 100.

22. Andelin, *The Fascinating Girl*, 100.

Andelin boldly proclaimed that those who supported the free love movement and engaged in sexual relationships before marriage were not people of worth who could contribute to society. She expanded this message and directed it to young Latter-day Saint girls; Andelin admonished them to “listen to those who know the answers,”²³ and suggested that those with the answers were Church leaders who similarly taught that chastity before marriage was necessary for one’s own happiness and for showing proper deference to God’s law.

While the Church manuals for young women contained an abundance of instructions on how girls should handle their bodies, these manuals also contained warnings about what could befall a girl should she choose to ignore those instructions. In a Laurel (girls age sixteen to seventeen) manual from 1973 is a quote from the past prophet David O. McKay; it says, “There is a beauty every girl has—a gift from God, as pure as the sunlight, and as sacred as life. It is a beauty all men love, a virtue that wins all men’s souls. That beauty is chastity. Chastity without skin beauty may enkindle the soul; skin beauty without chastity can kindle only the eye.”²⁴ Here, the former prophet suggested that if girls focused solely on outward beauty and embraced the worldly trends of beauty and fashion, then they would lose their inner virtue. Virtue was one of the most desirable qualities and should be a shining guidepost for young women in the Mormon Church. Hence, McKay’s warning that young women could lose their virtue was a dreadful warning indeed.

The 1962 *Beekeeper’s Handbook* contained an entire lesson on virtue and the consequences of living an unvirtuous life. The lesson outlined the importance of sexual purity, as these mortal bodies were gifts from a Heavenly Father and should be treated as such, and if a girl desired to return to live with her Father in Heaven then she must remain pure her whole life; “You only have one body for this world and for the world to come. Do not soil it, for if you do you will feel worse than Lady Macbeth who could never get free of the spot of sin she tried so hard to erase.”²⁵ Despite the Church’s doctrine on repentance and forgiveness, these sources suggested that being sexually impure was so terrible that the damage could be irreversible. In a 1971 Beehive manual, a lesson about

23. Andelin, *The Fascinating Girl*, 101.

24. *Horizons: Laurel Teaching Aids Kit* (Salt Lake City: The General Board of the Young Women’s Mutual Improvement Association, 1973), 5.

25. “Virtue—Its Price Above Rubies,” *Beekeeper’s Handbook* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1962), 125.

relationships between boys and girls ended with several suggested object lessons: "A rose is passed around the class. It is fresh and delicately perfect until it is handled by the girls. Its wilted, brown-edged petals might symbolize the damaged virtue of a girl who has been 'passed around.' . . . A piece of candy passed around from hand to hand and then given to a girl to eat. The sticky, handled sweet loses much of its appeal."²⁶ These object lessons reiterated the earlier point that a girl who lost her purity might never restore it and could live the rest of her life as unclean and undesirable. Consequently, leaders taught the young women about proper dress in an attempt to keep them chaste.

In addition to keeping themselves chaste, girls were encouraged to dress appropriately to safeguard against boys' advances. That same lesson on relationships between boys and girls contained instructions on how girls should prepare for dating, and part of that preparation involved asking oneself certain questions, such as, "What kinds of parties will she attend? How will she dress?"²⁷ Later on in the lesson was another similar question: "How can they make sure that unpleasant or unchaste things will not happen to them?"²⁸ The questions posed in this lesson placed the onus of responsibility on girls to keep themselves sexually clean, despite external forces. If a girl avoided unsupervised gatherings or parties where morally questionable activities occurred, then she would protect her chastity. If a girl wore modest, appropriate clothing that did not expose her body, then she would protect her chastity. And if girls did attract unwanted attention from their male peers, then it was because of something they did. In sum, girls could choose to be chaste no matter the circumstances, so long as they were clothed correctly and handled their bodies with care.

Lastly, if girls strayed from a chaste life, then they were susceptible to Satan's influence. A quote from a 1962 Beehive manual illustrated this point; "Satan delights to control your thoughts and actions and lead you into trouble a little at a time."²⁹ The Church believed that evil forces were at work to lead youth away from the standards they knew were true and good. But this did not come as a surprise to the leaders of the Church. They had been warned by a watchful God "of this evil that we are subjected to . . . trying to get us to defile our

26. "Boys and Girls Together," *A Promise of Something New* (Salt Lake City: The General Board of the Young Women's Mutual Improvement Association, 1971), 79.

27. "Boys and Girls Together," 75.

28. "Boys and Girls Together," 76.

29. "Youth and Truth," *Beekeeper's Handbook* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1962), 176.

bodies with things that are not good for us.”³⁰ Church manuals suggested that, though seemingly innocuous, immodest dress was one of the ways in which Satan attempted to lead the youth of the Church down a path of immorality, for immodest dress led to immodest action and sexual impurity.

Marriage, Family, and Motherhood

Just as immodest dress was considered an impediment for Latter-day Saint girls' spiritual safety, Church leaders also considered immodesty a distraction from girls' ultimate goal of becoming a wife and mother. Leaders warned girls that “the time is not far distant when you will be taking on the responsibilities of womanhood;”³¹ for girls in the Church, these responsibilities were to marry in the temple and to bear children. In the “Boys and Girls Together” object lesson in which a rose and a piece of candy were passed around and then lose their desirability, the authors emphasized this point about protecting virtue and modesty in the context of marriage and motherhood. The Church required chastity before marriage for those seeking to marry in the temple. Thus, this lesson suggested that if a girl compromised her sexual purity, then she also compromised her potential to get married in the temple.

These messages surrounding temple marriage become significant when considering the importance that Latter-day Saints placed on marriage. A 1962 Beehive manual offered these words about temple marriage: “You will have the privilege of finding a choice companion in due time and [marriage] will be the happiest experience of your life if you obey the commandments of the Lord and keep yourself clean and appealing for this joyous future day. . . . Qualifying for this reward [temple marriage] is worth every thought and act upon the earth.”³² Church leaders continually reinforced such messages. Apostle Bruce R. McConkie claimed that temple marriage was an integral part of salvation and eternal progression; “Celestial marriage is a holy and an eternal ordinance. . . . Its

30. “Youth and Truth,” 176.

31. “Prepare for Motherhood,” *Beekeeper's Handbook* (Salt Lake City: The General Board of the Young Women's Mutual Improvement Association, 1960), 136.

32. *Beekeeper's Handbook* (Salt Lake City: The General Board of the Young Women's Mutual Improvement Association, 1962).

importance in the plan of salvation and exaltation cannot be over estimated.”³³ General conference talks and Church manuals suggested that members of the Church should start planning and preparing during their youth for temple marriage, for it was an irreplaceable step in their journey for spiritual progression. Consequently, girls received messages about the importance of and the need to prepare for temple marriage from General Church Authorities, local leaders, manuals, and magazines.

More than just proclaiming its importance, Church leaders exhorted youth to stay morally upright in their personal lives so that they could one day qualify to marry in the temple. As earlier sources in this paper suggest, sexual purity was of the utmost importance for Latter-day Saint girls. Entire sections of manuals for youth leaders were dedicated to teaching girls how to protect their chastity at all costs. In one such youth manual, Apostle Mark E. Peterson was quoted, saying, “Your virtue is more important to you than your life—protect it above your life. If the time ever comes when you must choose between the two then sacrifice your life but under no circumstances ever sacrifice your virtue.”³⁴ Church teachings on chastity reflected theological beliefs about the importance of temple marriage. For members of the Church, temple marriage was the key that unlocked the door of eternal progression, so naturally Church leaders urged youth to keep themselves morally clean by any means necessary. Similarly, messages to girls about their clothing and modesty fit with the importance of chastity before—and *for*—temple marriage.

Despite this emphasis on marriage, it was not enough for Latter-day Saint girls to simply find a spouse. In the first book of the Bible is the commandment to multiply and replenish the earth. While this commandment was originally extended to Adam and Eve, this responsibility to bear children was also placed upon the Church’s youth. The November 1969 edition of the *Improvement Era*, a magazine for youth, featured an article by Truman G. Madsen about his observations on marriage. He wrote, “Vibrant love is inseparable from marriage, that happy marriage is inseparable from Christ, and that the most divine form of married love is inseparable from children.”³⁵ To be married was good; to be married and produce children was best. Madsen—and other Church leaders at

33. *Horizons: Laurel Teaching Aids Kit* (Salt Lake City: The General Board of the Young Women’s Mutual Improvement Association, 1973), 7.

34. *Beekeeper’s Handbook*.

35. Truman G. Madsen, “Blowing On the Coals Within,” *Improvement Era*, November 1969, 13.

the time—proposed that a true celestial marriage could only reach its highest potential when husband and wife were joined with children, for celestial love shared between spouses would ultimately lead to children.

As youth leaders taught girls that their ultimate potential could only be unlocked through motherhood, these same leaders tried to prepare these girls for that future role. A 1963 Beehive manual introduced girls to the concept of true womanhood in a Latter-day Saint context. The lesson “Honor Womanhood” contained myriad suggestions for how girls could start planning and preparing for their role as mother in their future families. For the present, girls were advised to be good daughters; the recommended activities for the lesson suggested that being a good daughter—and, consequently, good future wife—were restricted to proper child care and homemaking. The activities included were as follows: “Give your mother a full day off by doing the cooking, serving the meals, cleaning and performing other necessary duties;” “Assist in the care and training of your own small brothers and sisters for one week. Help them dress and undress, eat, brush their teeth, etc.,” and “Assist a new mother . . . in caring for small children, assisting with meals, washing, folding clothes, mending, keeping the house tidy, or whatever will help keep the home running smoothly.”³⁶ According to this lesson, true womanhood revolved around domestic labor, and honoring that womanhood meant making said labor a woman’s highest priority.

The Church also sent its young female membership the message that a woman’s work existed only in the home. A lesson entitled “My Work and My Glory” from a 1970 Beehive manual made this point very clear: “For every girl, this role [homemaker] should be a beautiful, future goal, an essential ingredient in successful wifehood and motherhood.”³⁷ Girls were taught that being a homemaker was not a pleasant possibility or something to daydream about, but it was a serious and integral part of being a wife and mother. This lesson emphasized this point further with the following quote: “Ever since Adam and Eve were placed outside the Garden of Eden, women have kept the world’s homes. We know that homemaking is not only a woman’s most important work, but also her glory.”³⁸ The lesson title, “My Work and My Glory,” is a reference to a

36. “Honor Womanhood,” *Beehive Girls: Handbook* (Salt Lake City: The General Board of the Young Women’s Mutual Improvement Association, 1963), 60.

37. “My Work and My Glory,” *A Girl’s World of Discovery* (Salt Lake City: The Young Women’s Mutual Improvement Association, 1970), 168.

38. “My Work and My Glory,” 170–71.

concept found in scripture that God's greatest work is to bring about salvation and exaltation for all His children. This title implied that there was no greater work for a woman than to commit herself to homemaking.

This emphasis on fulfilling proper family roles was an intentional strategy used by the Church, as feminists started to reject traditional gender roles. During the 1960s, second-wave feminism was gaining traction on the national stage. In 1961, President John F. Kennedy ordered the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women, a commission that exposed the systemic sexism in America's workforce, education and legal systems. Just a short while later in 1963, Betty Friedan published her seminal work *The Feminine Mystique*. Friedan addressed the "problem that has no name," meaning the widespread unhappiness and unfulfillment that American housewives experienced at the time. Her solution was that housewives needed to find fulfillment outside the home, for women had lost their identities in their domestic work.

Church leaders' anxiety about women rejecting their traditional (and what they deemed proper) familial roles translated into greater emphasis on marriage and family toward youth. Girls were told that marriage was their ultimate goal and that nothing should distract from that. The Church taught them to embrace their responsibilities as future mothers, and encouraged them to practice motherly responsibilities within their own homes as devoted daughters. Youth leaders taught entire lessons dedicated to the importance of homemaking; they taught girls to see domesticity as valuable work worthy of their time and attention.

It was not just official Church publications that espoused these messages of marriage and family. In 1963, Helen Andelin published her book *Fascinating Womanhood*—the precursor to *The Fascinating Girl*—with the goal of providing a solution to American housewives who had become disillusioned with their marriages and their lives. While contemporary feminists were posing their own progressive solutions to this problem, Andelin claimed that women needed only embrace their femininity and wifely duties in order to find satisfaction in their marriage.³⁹ Her message echoed what Church leaders taught their young women: true joy came from focusing all efforts towards raising children and maintaining a home. The evidence can be seen in lessons from Church manuals entitled "Joy in Homemaking" that proclaimed, "Joy must come from

39. Andelin, *Fascinating Womanhood*.

perfecting a task, from noting results, from enthusiasm, and from loving those you work for.”⁴⁰ It can be seen in the hope for every girl that “she will be able to participate in the most joyful experiences—having a baby of her own with a husband whom she loves.”⁴¹ Messages from official Church publications and from typical Church members were alike in that both urged girls to make home and family their focus during a time when women in America were starting to long for something outside the domestic sphere.

Andelin not only gave instructions to American housewives, but also to young girls on how to prepare for their domestic role. She devoted an entire chapter instructing girls on how they could become “domestic goddess[es]” and, consequently, a good wives. She urged girls to take seriously their responsibilities as homemakers, for young men found girls more attractive if they had domestic skills and were seen as “good wife material.”⁴² A good wife not only embraced but enjoyed her domestic work. Andelin shared brief details about women who were happy when completing homemaking tasks; she wrote, “They enjoyed their domestic life, just as they enjoyed being women.”⁴³ Domesticity came as naturally to women as did simply being a woman, and it was something innate in every girl.

Domestic work was also described as just that: work. Andelin wrote, “Nothing worthwhile in life is easy and it certainly is not easy to be a good homemaker. You can expect it to be work.”⁴⁴ She proclaimed that homemaking required concentration, organization, and rigid schedules, and it was not a pastime or something to be done halfheartedly. Andelin’s messages about homemaking reaffirmed the Church’s instructions to girls. Homemaking was valued work and was something worth the time and attention of each Latter-day Saint girl. Andelin also supported Church youth manual messages in that she felt it necessary for women’s work to remain in the home. While she acknowledged that there were legitimate reasons that may require a woman to work outside the home, this work should only be viewed as “temporary assistance.”⁴⁵ A good

40. “Joy in Homemaking,” *Mia Maid 1967–1968: Discovery* (Salt Lake City: General Board of the YWMIA, 1967), 258.

41. “Boys and Girls Together,” 76.

42. “Boys and Girls Together,” 122.

43. “Boys and Girls Together,” 126.

44. “Boys and Girls Together,” 127–128.

45. Helen B. Andelin and Aubrey P. Andelin, *The Fascinating Girl* (Santa Barbara: Pacific Press, 1969), 82.

wife knew that her talents and skills were best suited for domestic labor, and that it was in this labor that she would find fulfillment.

Andelin also emphasized motherhood as a critical component of domestic work. She stated that women may be tempted to make some notable contribution to the world, but there is no contribution to society greater than being a wonderful mother. Conversely, there was no greater mistake for a woman than “deserting [her] post as a mother, and as a result causing a whole family to fail to reach their potential.”⁴⁶ Women were created specifically for the role of mother, thus childrearing was a responsibility delegated entirely to women; it was up to them to raise the “precious souls that God has given [them] and to do the finest job of mothering that [they] possibly can.”⁴⁷ Andelin was quick to point out the sacred, spiritual responsibility of motherhood. Though her audience was too young to have children of their own, Andelin’s message to Latter-day Saint girls was clear: “[it is] our sacred responsibility to rear children, and . . . not only *be* a mother, but to have an overabundant willingness to do so and to be the most wonderful mother possible.”⁴⁸ Contrary to what feminists at the time were suggesting—that women could have fulfilling lives beyond childrearing and homemaking—Andelin and Church leaders firmly proclaimed that women would only find real satisfaction and fulfillment once they embraced their proper wifely and motherly role as homemaker and childbearer.

Girls’ Relationship to the Church

As scholars show, youth in the 1960s and 1970s pushed back against traditional values. During this period, many religious groups started to lose the younger members of their congregations; as a response, these religious groups loosened some of their moral standards with the hope that that would encourage their youth to keep their religious traditions. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints had the opposite approach. Rather than become lax with its expectations, the Church emphasized its moral standards, called on its youth to ignore the trends of the world, and instructed them to be a light and an example

46. Andelin and Andelin, *The Fascinating Girl*, 132.

47. Andelin and Andelin, *The Fascinating Girl*, 132.

48. Andelin and Andelin, *The Fascinating Girl*, 133.

of virtue in an increasingly secular environment.⁴⁹ Existing scholarship suggests that the Church worried more about young men rejecting these values than they did young women.⁵⁰ Church publications, however, reveal the Church's efforts to retain its youth membership included messages directed specifically to girls about how they needed to remain close to the Church.

In the November 1969 edition of the *Improvement Era*, David O. McKay counseled youth to keep their good names unsullied, for if they protected their own reputations then they were also protecting the reputation of the Church.⁵¹ For girls, protecting their reputation essentially meant protecting their chastity. Girls were inundated with the message that it was their responsibility to not only protect their chastity, but also to ward off unwanted advances. The Beehive manual lesson "Boys and Girls Together" provides a clear example of this type of messaging; in the lesson, the girls are posed with the question, "How can they make sure that unpleasant or unchaste things will not happen to them?"⁵² The answer? Being modest in dress, action, and speech. Being mindful about what parties they might attend. Avoiding indulging in any physical desires, namely petting.⁵³

Proper dress was especially important for girls as they sought to uphold the Church's reputation. A 1971 Beehive lesson "When You Know, Share!" instructed young girls about the importance of sharing the gospel and being a representative of the Church in all things. From this lesson, youth leaders taught girls that "all of us present an image to others, and our image influences people's attitudes toward the Church just because we are Mormons."⁵⁴ It was just as important for girls to live their standards as it was for them to appear that they lived their standards through proper dress. Their image, they were taught, could either be a force for good or evil. While modest dress was used as a means to keep girls sexually pure, it was also a tactic to keep girls close to the Church.

49. Rebecca De Schweinitz, "Holding on to the 'Chosen Generation': The Mormon Battle for Youth in the Late 1960s and Early 1970s," in *Out of Obscurity: Mormonism Since 1945*, ed. Patrick Q. Mason and John G. Turner (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

50. De Schweinitz, "Holding on to the 'Chosen Generation.'"

51. David O. McKay, "Oh Youth, Keep That Which Is Committed To Thy Trust," *Improvement Era* 72 no. 11 (November 1969): 2–3.

52. "Boys and Girls Together," 76.

53. "Boys and Girls Together," 75–77.

54. "When You Know, Share!," *A Promise of Something New* (Salt Lake City: The General Board of the Young Women's Mutual Improvement Association, 1971), 158.

As girls were taught that they acted as representatives of the Church, their dress became a physical symbol of their commitment to their religious institution.

While the Church taught each girl to be a figurative representative of the Church, sister missionaries were representatives of the Church in a more literal sense. They were taught that their dress played a significant role in their service, and though this does not show up in official missionary guidelines, mission presidents gave sister missionaries specific instructions about their bodies. One woman who served as a missionary in 1978–1979 recounted how her mission president encouraged her and the other sister missionaries to lose weight. He would offer this encouragement during personal interviews, which typically happened every six weeks, and he “would mention it in every interview.”⁵⁵ This sister “had this pressure . . . to lose weight at the back of [her] mind [her] whole mission.”⁵⁶ The pressure led her to experiment with different types of diets in an attempt to lose weight before her next interview with the mission president. She tried “lemon juice mixed with oats, tomato juice for most of the day, and then a diet without any white sugar or white flour,”⁵⁷ which proved difficult, as sister missionaries often ate at Church members’ homes. This same mission president also instructed the sister missionaries to cut their long hair; his reasoning was that the sisters would look “sharper and more mature . . . but there was a rumor that he did it so [sister missionaries] would not be as attractive to the elders [male missionaries].”⁵⁸ According to this mission president, sister missionaries’ physical appearance was more important than their spirituality was toward their success as missionaries.

Just as missionary guidelines taught the sisters to defer to the authority of their mission president, Latter-day Saint leaders taught girls deference to priesthood authority in an attempt to retain girls’ commitment to the Church. Deference to priesthood authority was another means through which Church leaders attempted to hold onto their youth membership, especially female youth. In the Church, priesthood authority is a concept based on the belief that authority from God to operate His church can only be held by worthy men who are already members of the Church. In other words, female members were excluded from the ordained leadership; they were, however, still encouraged to

55. Rhonda Davis, “Experience as a missionary,” email correspondence, 2018.

56. Davis, “Experience as a missionary.”

57. Davis, “Experience as a missionary.”

58. Davis, “Experience as a missionary.”

support priesthood leadership. A manual for the youth Mutual Improvement Association contained the following instruction: "Honor the priesthood. Sustain each and every leader of our Church by word and action."⁵⁹ Girls could not hold the priesthood themselves, but they could sustain their leaders by following their God-given counsel.

Much of this God-given counsel revolved around remaining close to the Church through appropriate dress and behavior, and avoiding behavior that typified American youth during this period. As the post-war era came to a close, sociologists, economists, and parents alike began to realize the power of peer groups.⁶⁰ Evidence suggests that the leaders of the Church also started to recognize the influence of peer groups. Lesson manuals, magazines, and talks from General Authorities instructed youth about associating with the right people, and not letting the desire for popularity cloud their judgment or compromise their standards. Leaders specifically instructed girls about not associating with the "wrong crowd," for fear of being misjudged and "falling into habits of conduct that give you a bad reputation."⁶¹

The youth counterculture was also typified by a certain look. Girls during this period experimented with fashion and even dabbled in men's clothing, adopting them to create new styles and trends. Consequently, the instructions for girls to look "clean," "polished," "well-groomed," and "appropriate"⁶² took on additional meaning. The emphasis for girls to keep up proper appearances distinguished them from the youth counterculture, and it distanced Latter-day Saint girls from their peers. The Church recognized the power of peer groups and thus wanted their young female membership to prioritize their identity as Latter-day Saints before their identity as teenagers. To maintain this priority, Church leaders taught girls to carefully represent the Church through dress and behavior, and to be obedient to priesthood authority.

59. "Standards," *Executive Manual For Officers of the Young Men's and Young Women's Mutual Improvement Associations* (Salt Lake City: The General Boards of the Mutual Improvement Associations, 1951), 45.

60. Grace Palladino, *Teenagers: An American History* (New York: Basic Books, 1996).

61. "Dating Data and the Man in Romance," *Mia Maid Manual* (Salt Lake City: The Young Women's Mutual Improvement Association, 1957), 303.

62. "The Habit of Beauty," *A Promise of Something New* (Salt Lake City: The General Board of the Young Women's Mutual Improvement Association, 1971), 57–66.

Conclusion

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints taught girls from a young age that appearances mattered, that how they presented and handled their bodies mattered. They learned from lesson manuals and Church leadership that proper appearance and hygiene was a way to show respect and reverence for their bodies. Church leaders also taught girls that chastity was a necessary step toward temple marriage, something that every girl should strive for and put all her efforts toward. Though it was required for eternal progression, marriage was not the ultimate goal for girls; their ultimate goal was to become a mother and homemaker. While second-wave feminists were pushing back against the traditional idea that women's work was restricted to the home, the Church was teaching girls that childrearing and homemaking were sacred responsibilities that were valuable and worthy of their attention. Ultimately, the Church believed young women were impressionable and easily swayed by peer groups and social trends, and as such were in need of direction about how to handle their bodies, their identities, and their commitment to the Church.

Though this study is focused on the 1960s and 1970s, the legacy of the Church's relationship with its young female membership extends into the modern day. In July of 2018, a story hit local Utah news outlets that left some members of the Church speechless: a bishop refused a woman of his congregation her temple recommend because he felt she was immodest, as she had breastfed her child in church.⁶³ Latter-day Saint women recognized that this woman was being punished not for immodesty, but for using her body as it was meant to be used. This story, however, fits with Church history; for decades, Church leadership taught its young membership that the female body needed to be managed, and this rhetoric continues as young girls grow into adult women. As evidenced by this news story, Latter-day Saint women are shamed for not only displaying their bodies, but also for using their bodies to fulfill their motherly role.

Latter-day Saint women have been taught their whole lives that motherhood is the ultimate goal, yet when a woman uses her body in an effort to satisfy her child's needs, she is deemed immodest and unworthy of spiritual blessings.

The stories from the *Friend* magazine also fit with this Church history. Young Hannah and Stacey felt uncomfortable even at the thought of wearing

63. Peggy Fletcher Stack, "Mormon Feminists Urge LDS Authorities to Remind Local Leaders that Breastfeeding isn't Sexual," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 28 July 2018.

clothes that would expose their shoulders. Out of context, it is alarming that girls as young as four are told to cover their bodies for the sake of modesty, with the implication that their bodies are innately sexual. When considering the Church's past messages to girls about bodies and modesty, however, these stories are unsurprising. Church manuals from the 1960s and 1970s suggest that Mormon leaders have a long history of anxiety about the female body, hence their constant instructions about how girls should dress and handle their bodies.

In the past, Church publications have suggested there may be new ways to consider what it means to embrace femininity when in fact they simply reinforced traditional values and gender roles. Church leaders and lesson manuals pushed back against social change and instead promoted archaic feminine ideals. "A Promise of Something New" did not actually promise any new options for Latter-day Saint girls. Such youth manuals only promoted the same message that the Church had been promoting all throughout the 1960s and 1970s, which was for girls to remain beautiful and chaste so that they could marry in the temple, become mothers, and stay close to the Church and support its leadership through obedience and respect to priesthood authority. For Latter-day Saint girls in the past and still today, there is only one way to be female.

Catherine Davidson is a graduate from Brigham Young University with a Bachelor of Arts in history. Catherine has had a passion for history since she was in elementary school, and her professors at BYU only added to her interest and curiosity. While pursuing her degree, she became especially interested in African American history and women's history. Originally from Ashburn, Virginia, Catherine loves to read, sing, and travel.



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Girls Gone Wild: Criminality among Young Girls in Nineteenth-Century America

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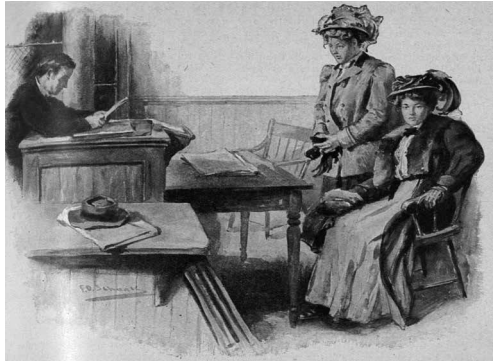


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Young female delinquents in court

Paper

Girls Gone Wild

Criminality among Young Girls in Nineteenth-Century America

Amy Jacobs

THEY RADIATE AND DIFFUSE VICE AND EVIL AROUND THEM.”¹ Samuel Gridley Howe, a resident of Massachusetts and education reformer made this claim about young female criminals in an 1854 letter to the commissioners of a Massachusetts reform school for girls. Howe wrote to give his opinions on the construction and administration of the new school, with specific requests geared to the feminine nature of the inmates. While his statement was an assumption about the actions of female juvenile delinquents, some girls did spread what would have been considered an evil, as they continually rebelled against social expectations. Girls, usually ages eight to eighteen, were often sent to reform schools under the charge of “incorrigibility,” which meant they could not be controlled. The institution supposedly brought wayward girls back to a moral and chaste life.

This sort of reformation facility was not always available to young girls. Correctional institutions for children were still new in American society when Samuel Howe wrote his letter. State governments started building Reform schools in 1788 as child-saving institutions, following the actions of the London

1. Samuel Gridley Howe, letter to J. H. Wilkins, H. B. Rogers, and F. B. Fay, Commissioners of Massachusetts for the State Reform School for Girls, (Boston; Ticknor and Fields, 1854), 18.

Philanthropic Society.² Prior to this, children were placed in adult institutions with both male and female inmates,³ but reform laws later prohibited the imprisonment of children with adults.⁴ Steven Schlossman details the emergence of child reformatories in a brief history of the reform school. He argues that modern juvenile delinquency institutions have abandoned the idea of rehabilitation that surrounded their establishment.⁵ It may be the case that in the nineteenth century, reformation was not the primary objective for institutionalizing a young girl. Reformation for girls took a very different shape than reformation for young boys.

Young girls received their own institutions after penal reform movements brought about the separation of the sexes within the prison system.⁶ Estelle Freedman presents the history of American segregation of the sexes within the prison system. She argues that female prison reforms during the progressive era improved the condition of female inmates but did not promote an egalitarian system. The “Cult of True Womanhood,” which was the belief that women were passionless in their love and could, therefore, guide society back to virtue and Christ,⁷ motivated women to rectify society’s ills, one being the current prison system. She describes how prisons scrutinized female actions more harshly than their male counterparts because women were supposed to be morally superior, and therefore, any action of immorality was a “greater fall to sin.”⁸ One of the most obvious ways a woman could fall to sin was exposing herself as a sexual being.

Michel Foucault provides a history of sexuality starting in the seventeenth century. His work also acts as a study in the relationship between sexuality and power. He defines power as both a productive and restrictive force produced by multiple sources, and this definition will be used to view power as it relates to

2. Steven Schlossman, “Delinquent Children: The Juvenile Reform School,” in *The Oxford History of the Prison: The Practice of Punishment in Western Society*, ed. Norval Morris and David J. Rothman (New York: Oxford University Press: 1998), 326–27.

3. Schlossman, “Delinquent Children,” 326.

4. *The Legal Condition of Girls and Women in Michigan* (H. D. Reprogle & Co., 1894), 11, <http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/7CMQEo>.

5. Schlossman, “Delinquent Children,” 326.

6. Estelle Freedman, “Their Sisters’ Keepers: An Historical Perspective on Female Correctional Institutions in the United States: 1870–1900,” *Feminist Studies* 2, no. 1 (1974): 78.

7. Barbara Welter, “The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820–1860,” *American Quarterly* 18, no. 2 (Summer, 1966): 153.

8. Freedman, “Their Sister’s Keepers,” 77.

criminality for young girls in America during the second half of the nineteenth century, and briefly into the twentieth.⁹ The twentieth century has been studied in depth by Anne Knupfer, who uses a Foucauldian lens to argue that sexuality saturated the issue of female delinquency, finding its way into the first juvenile court and The State Industrial School for Delinquent Girls at Geneva, Illinois.¹⁰ She presents sexual acts as declarations of independence and autonomy within the institution. These actions were not limited to the twentieth century.

Girls in the second half of the nineteenth century used deviant acts as declarations of autonomy. This was true both in and outside of the institution. While this was not the case for every girl in America, it was the case for some who recognized they had desires outside of the prescribed roles laid out for them within the “Cult of True Womanhood.” There were girls throughout the United States trying to break out of the same tiny boxes¹¹ using similar tactics. They created power for themselves by disobeying moral expectations linked to both their identities, as women and children, based on Christian ideals pushed by the government through vague policy that allowed for arbitrary classifications of crimes. In committing these crimes, girls face a consequence—institutionalization—that restricted their already limited power; so they continued to rebel. At every stage, this rebellion was political because it went up against the philosophy of the government and current power structure.

The Code and Construction of Power

American society constructed a new position for children in the power structure during the nineteenth century, making it a good time for children to act. For the first time, children were considered in conversations regarding rights. An 1877 published history of American child-saving showcased this transition. An instance of child abuse was reported to the Illinois Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, which caused a re-evaluation of the current lack of protection given to

9. Michel Foucault, “An Introduction,” in *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 1, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Random House, 1978), 94.

10. Anne Meis Knupfer, *Reform and Resistance: Gender, Delinquency, and America's First Juvenile Court* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 2.

11. Drawing from Japanese theorist Kishida Toshiko's “Daughters in Boxes,” noting the harsh expectations on women in Japanese society. Kishida Toshiko, “Daughters in Boxes,” in *The Essential Feminist Reader*, ed. Estelle Freedman (New York: The Modern Library, 2007), 99.

children: “seeing no reason that a child should not be entitled to as much protection under the law as a dumb animal . . .”¹² Children gained the right to protection from the government. Although children were granted some rights, they were still considered property. The difference is that male children grew out of their status as a belonging, while female children belonged to their parents, then their husband, which established a limited citizenship for girls.

The citizenship of young boys and girls differed greatly. The government put a harsher positive liberty on girls than on boys. Positive liberty is forcing a person to reach an ideal version of themselves.¹³ A great debate surrounding this sort of liberty is that someone has to decide what is ideal for an individual. In this case, the ideal version of a woman was virtuous and useful.

This idea of positive liberty was repugnant to some in the nineteenth century. John Stuart Mill wrote in 1869 that the only justified use of power over individuals is to prevent them from harming others.¹⁴ According to Mill, the state does not have authority to prevent harm someone might do to themselves, which was often the motivation behind the child-saving movements. It is unlikely that young delinquents were reading Mill, but the rebellious ones were acting out against what they felt was an unfair use of power against them. They received the kind of protection the government offered, but they also suffered from the kind of abuse of power through the policing of morality Mill condemns.

The influences behind the positive liberty enforced on all children were based upon a common notion that children were more susceptible to immorality. One woman who spoke to a moral reform group in 1839 warned, “Panders

12. National Conference of Charities and Correction Session: Committee on the History of Child-Saving Work. *History of Child Saving in the United States: At the Twentieth National Conference of Charities and Correction in Chicago, June, 1893: Report of the Committee on the History of Child-Saving Work*; C. D. Randall, Coldwater, Mich.; C. L. Brace, New York; Chas. W. Birtwell, Boston; Mrs. M. R. W. Wallace, Chicago; Homer Folks, Philadelphia; Francis Wayland, New Haven; Mrs. C. E. Dickinson, Denver; Mrs. Sarah B. Cooper, San Francisco; S. J. Hathaway, Marietta, Ohio; Mrs. Samuel Cushman, Deadwood, So. Dakota; D. Solis Cohen, Portland, Ore.; Charles Martindale, Indianapolis; Mrs. Virginia T. Smith, Hartford, Conn.; H. W. Lewis, Owatonna, Minn. (Geo H. Ellis, 1893).

13. George H. Sabine, review of *Two Concepts of Liberty: An Inaugural Lecture Delivered before the University of Oxford on October 31, 1958* by Isaiah Berlin, 2.

14. Tierney O'Rourke, “Coolies, White Slaves, and Purity Crusades: The Rise of Morality in U.S. Prostitution Legislation from Reconstruction to the Progressive Era,” *Penn Undergraduate L.J.* 85 (2013): 85.

of this vice [licentiousness] are secretly watching whom to destroy, and many are the youth that are taken in their snares.”¹⁵ This type of rhetoric stayed with reformers throughout the century. As children, girls were deemed wild and uncontrollable. They were a “dominion of animal passions . . . stimulated by the hot blood of youth.”¹⁶ These claims about the nature of children fit within Foucault’s term *scientia sexualis*, which means the science of sexuality. He explains that during the nineteenth century those in positions of power framed conversations on sexuality around scientific claims. These claims were not always based in truth. They were usually political opinions, oral statements, or traditional fears framed as facts.¹⁷ The “aim of such a discourse was not to state the truth but to prevent its very emergence.”¹⁸

Beliefs on the nature of womanhood were also affected by *scientia sexualis*, and this meant more positive liberty enforced upon young girls. The female body was analyzed in terms of sexuality, and therefore female nature was deemed sexual.”¹⁹ This rhetoric found its way into ideas on reform. In a document published by the Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church, the ecclesiastical leader stated, “Reform in behalf of women must be in two directions—anticipations of evils, and deliverance from evils.”²⁰ The first part of his plan for reform is extremely interesting. If religious leaders anticipated evil actions from women, it meant they believed women to be evil inherently.

Progressive women refuted this belief. They promoted the moral superiority of the female sex and pushed the “Cult of True Womanhood.” This had been a growing sentiment among women in the years leading up to the Progressive Era, as demonstrated by an address delivered to a group of female reformers in 1838. Mary Ann B. Brown asked the women to consider the hypothetical agony of a heartbroken mother bent over the “dishonored grave of her once virtuous daughter. . . .”²¹ Women who acted against their nature were considered dead in a sense; their fall from morality so great that it killed some part of them. This

15. Mary Ann B. Brown, et al, *An Address on Moral Reform: Delivered before the Worcester Female Moral Reform Society, October 22, 1839* (T. W. & J. Butterfield, 1839).

16. Howe, *A Letter*, 19.

17. Foucault, “An Introduction,” 55.

18. Foucault, “An Introduction,” 55.

19. Foucault, “An Introduction,” 104.

20. Archibald Alexander Edward Taylor. *The Social Problem: Seest Thou This Woman? A Discourse: by Rev. A. A. E. Taylor, Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church: Published by Request.* (Robert Clarke & Co., 1871.

21. Brown, *An Address on Moral Reform*, 6.

meant it must be controlled and prevented, which brought about heavy restrictions and legal action. Laws, or written codes, and unwritten social codes boxed girls into the Christian idea of a virtuous and useful woman. Reformatories used those two words to describe a woman successfully reformed.²² She was useful, like property, and virtuous, referring to the correct character of her being according to the standards set by the authorities acting over her.

The standards were arbitrary and capricious, set and administered by men. In 1878, *Woman's Exponent*, a women's magazine on political issues, stated, "... the men of the United States, are largely responsible for the moral and social atmosphere and condition of the capital of the nation."²³ Men were responsible for setting the standards for women, who had no representation within the government. Susan B. Anthony expressed her agreement with the previous statement and also frustration in the man-run system: "They, alone, decide who are guilty of violating these laws and what shall be their punishment, with judge, jury and advocate all men, with no women's voice heard . . ."²⁴ She detested the lack of female representation in the policy-making and the practice of the legal system. She realized that lack of representation made for an unequal system against women, with decisions left entirely up to the men.

The arbitrary nature of policies can be seen in the admittance process of The Connecticut Industrial School for Girls, which admitted girls who refused to obey authority, committed a crime, begged, or "found in circumstances of manifest danger of falling into the habits of vice and immorality."²⁵ These dangerous circumstances were arbitrarily decided by authoritative persons. It only took two respectable members of a community to file a complaint against a girl and send her to an institution until age 18.²⁶ This meant that any person was a possible informant against the girls. They were always watched, and even if they were not being watched, the possibility was always there, which made a

22. Connecticut Industrial School for Girls, *Fourth Report of the Directors of the Connecticut Industrial School for Girls Presented April 1st, 1874*, (Hartford: The Case, Lockwood and Brainard, 1874), 7.

23. J. M. Thompson, "Memorial of the Board of Trustees of the District of Columbia Girls' Reform School, and of Officers and Citizens of Washington," *Woman's Exponent*, 1 March 1878.

24. Susan B. Anthony, "Social Purity," in *The Essential Feminist Reader*, ed. Estelle B. Freedman (New York: The Modern Library, 2007), 90.

25. Connecticut Industrial School for Girls, *Fourth Report*, 17.

26. Connecticut Industrial School for Girls, *Fourth Report*, 19.

panopticon out of everyday life.²⁷ It was even more psychologically torturous for the girls because of the arbitrary nature of the laws. There was no description of which specific acts were outlawed. The circumstances of manifest danger as mentioned previously included things like wandering around streets, being in a public place without lawful business, not attending school, etc.²⁸ In an effort to reduce the chance of immorality, seemingly innocent activities were also outlawed to produce an ideal citizen under the standards set by men.

Breaking the Code

Girls were sent to institutions for rebelling against these standards. Their actions were usually targeted towards whatever authority had an overbearing guardianship over them, be it their parents acting underneath the social pressures discussed above and representing the views of the government, or the state institutions taking over the role of parents under the *Parens Patriae* Act.²⁹

It could be argued that girls were just acting out against their parents and not against some higher governmental power. A police report in 1898 recounts the tale of a young girl committed to a reformatory by her father, who said his daughter was incorrigible. He stated she “continually ran away from home and consorted with improper persons.”³⁰ When Bella, the young delinquent, was placed before the magistrate, she explained that would accept any punishment, but she did not want to go home. She did not have to go home since she was housed in an institution where she was able to consort with other “improper persons.” She exercised power by denying the authority of her father and received exactly what she wanted. Her actions were political by denying her father’s governance over her, therefore denying the terms of her citizenship in the eyes of the government. Political rebellion might not have been her intention, but she denied the authority that had direct governance over her, denying her position in governmental structure that relies on parents to govern over their children.

27. The term “panopticon” refers to the penitentiary built so that prisoners could not tell when they were being watched. Foucault claimed this was a corporal punishment of the mind in his book *Discipline and Punish*.

28. Connecticut Industrial School for girls, *Fourth Report*, 27.

29. Schlossman, “Delinquent Children,” 328.

30. “Artist Says His Daughter Is Incorrigible.” *Illustrated Police News*, 5 November 1898, 7.

Denying the structure looked different to other girls. Mary Madeline took a stab at the philosophy behind the morality laws when she mocked religion in her acts of rebellion. Mary Madeline was sent to the House of Refuge after confessing to her guardian, Mr. George Mulford, that she had been pretending to be possessed by the devil.³¹ After objects were thrown around the house, Mr. Mulford was urged by several members of the town to question Mary. He chastised her, speaking of someone else who was possessed: "She had seven devils in her; you seem to be poses of at least some of them to do all this mischief; tell me all about it; you must confess and forsake the evil."³² Mary confessed, but in her confession, she stated it was not the devil, but her own doing. Playing the role of the devil was a great act of dissent from expectations of piety for young women. She was charged with "incorrigibly vicious conduct," and sent to the house of refuge.³³

Confession brings up another Foucauldian concept of power. With confession, there is always some sort of power differential. There would be no confession if power were not involved. The one who is confessing believes that the one who is hearing the confession holds some sort of power to save this person from their actions.³⁴ This can be liberating, but it can also be constricting if a confession is needed for liberation. In Mary's case, her guardian demanded a confession from her and therefore demonstrated a power structure favoring the guardian, a man quite older than her.

She was not acting out against her guardian in the same way as Bella. Mary's guardian, Mr. Mulford, was a member of the Third Baptist Church.³⁵ Mary could have been rebelling against a religious household. Her confession was itself a mockery of religion and a rebellion against it. She made light of evil, which dominated the discourse regarding her nature as a woman. She loosened the fastenings on hanging objects and positioned others to fall to feign the presence of a spirit in the house.³⁶ Her confession brought forth a scary thought for a lot of people: she was not afraid of spirits and the devil. Faking their presence could have been a way of telling the world that its narratives regarding her being

31. "The Confession of the Girl: Committed to the House of Refuge." *Chicago Tribune*, 17 February 1866.

32. "The Confession of the Girl."

33. "The Confession of the Girl."

34. Foucault, "An Introduction," 61–62.

35. "The Confession of the Girl."

36. "The Confession of the Girl."

were also fake. She took away the power that religion had over her when she made a mockery of its greatest enemy and used it for her entertainment. Her joy in her rebellion showed that she did not care that “female irreligion is the most revolting feature in human character.”³⁷

Amelia Dorrington also found joy and liberation in her rebellion. Her previous classmate, Mrs. Graves, wrote a tale of caution to young women in 1844, using Amelia as the example. Amelia, also referred to as “The lost one,” rebelled against expectations regarding sexuality. Mrs. Graves wrote, “She appeared to take delight in violating all the rule of prudence.”³⁸ Mrs. Graves also quoted Amelia, remembering that she said, “I will do as I please, and people may think what they please.”³⁹ This was a huge statement during a time when moral standards were the legal standards, and repercussions for acting out against them was not merely gossip around the lunch table. Amelia had a past with the criminal court and knew talking would be the least of her concerns as a reaction to her actions. She framed the government as an entity producing thoughts, and not actions, therefore limiting their power. Although internally she believed her actions were acceptable and refused to be brought down by the law, she was not above it. Her story was used as a tale of caution because it did not end well. She had her child taken from her, was incarcerated for theft, and Mrs. Graves hints at Amelia having to turn to prostitution out of economic necessity.⁴⁰

Prostitution was one of the greatest enemies of a virtuous society, often used as the most extreme example of immorality. If benefiting economically from a sexual encounter can be counted as enjoying the action, prostitution confronted the idea that women were supposed to remain passionless about sexuality.⁴¹ It is likely that survival, not enjoyment, was the main reason women participated in prostitution. Susan B. Anthony wrote in 1875 that prostitutes were led to the devil’s occupation out of “extreme poverty, in many instances verging on starvation.”⁴² She also explained that prostitution was perpetuated by the fact that women did not have equal chances to gain employment.⁴³

37. Welter, “The Cult of True Womanhood,” 154

38. A. J. Graves, *Girlhood and Womanhood: or Sketches of my Schoolmates*, (Boston: T.H. Carter, 1844), 147.

39. Graves, *Girlhood and Womanhood*, 147.

40. Graves, *Girlhood and Womanhood*, 149.

41. Welter, “The Cult of True Womanhood”

42. Anthony, “Social Purity,” 88.

43. Anthony, “Social Purity,” 89.

Although there were abuses in the field, prostitution was an option when girls had none.

Economic gains provide more power in a capitalistic society, so prostitution produced power. There may have been other outside forces influencing girls' decisions to engage in sex work, however, a bank teller from New York City stated in 1839 that one half of all money coming into the bank came from a house of prostitution. She claimed, "This establishment is of the first respectability in the city."⁴⁴ The teller's statements expose an economic need for the establishment and a sentiment of respect. This sentiment rejected the moral norms. The epitome of immorality labeled as respectable confronted the normative status of prostitution. This could be true on an individual level as well. Prostitution brought girls of low economic status out of their economic class. In caring more about money than about the social expectations placed upon her, she put herself beyond the power of the moral claims of the time. She decided she did not care about the social implications of her actions. This was an individual way of claiming freedom and provides an explanation for the unabashed advertisement of prostitution in the streets during the nineteenth century by young girls.⁴⁵ If a girl entered sex work, she owned her vicious identity for economic salvation, and owning her identity gave her immediate power.

It was not just for pecuniary reasons that girls broke the law in such a manner. Nettie Smith chose prostitution because she wanted to be a prostitute. The sixteen-year-old girl ran away from home and entered a house of prostitution after a messy break up with a young man. Nettie was found by her male cousin who recognized her and begged her to leave.⁴⁶ She refused: "She had tasted of sin and its pleasures, and that she intended to lead the life of a courtesan."⁴⁷ She was from a wealthy family and was therefore not driven by economic necessity. She found liberation in engaging in restricted action. She wanted the freedom to choose something outside the positive liberty ideal the state wanted from her.

Sociologists Brian Donovan and Tori Barnes state that, "laws against prostitution are created and used in specific cultural contexts to serve agendas that have less to do with illegal sex and more to do with maintaining social hierarchies marked by gender, race, and ethnicity."⁴⁸ The same statement could be

44. Brown, *An Address on Moral Reform*, 4.

45. Brown, *An Address on Moral Reform*, 4.

46. "Nettie's Choice," *National Police Gazette*, 4 September 1880.

47. "Nettie's Choice."

48. O'Rourke, "Coolies, White Slaves, and Purity Crusades," 86.

used to speak on any law regarding sexuality in the nineteenth century. The laws based on pseudo-scientific and religious claims on the nature of womanhood were established to maintain stability in a post–Civil War era.⁴⁹ Reconstruction influencing morality laws is an idea shared in Tierney O'Rourke's article on prostitution legislation.

Some girls did not commit any sort of crime like prostitution but voluntarily submitted themselves into reformatories. The Girls Industrial Home of Suffolk County took in a set number of voluntary cases of girls who were not convicted of any crime, but still wished to be reformed.⁵⁰ Entering the institution was one way for a girl to take control of her life. She could take away the uncertainty of the near future, including the possibility of being incarcerated. By choosing a fate before it was unfairly dealt to her through unjust laws that applied only to young women, she was declaring her autonomy. Although she was admitting herself to a place of presumed limited freedom, she chose it, and in making that choice exercised power.

Institutions—New Codes and Rebellion

Entering the institution was only empowering for a few. These girls met a new power structure when they entered the institution. One of the goals of reformatories, as outlined by the Connecticut Industrial School for Girls, was to remove them from all vagrant associations and keep them from contaminating others.⁵¹ Some believed that keeping a large number of incorrigible girls together was a bad idea. Samuel Howe expressed this worry: "They radiate and diffuse vice and evil around them."⁵² He wrote this fear into a letter to the commissioners of a Massachusetts State Reform School for Girls. According to the schools themselves, this was not a valid fear, as most recorded girls were most always reformed successfully without incident.⁵³ This was not always the case, however.

In an annual report to the directors of the Connecticut Industrial School for Girls in 1874, it was stated that the school was very satisfactory, "notwithstanding

49. O'Rourke, "Coolies, White Slaves, and Purity Crusades," 86.

50. "Girls' Industrial Home." *Suffolk County Handbook and Official Directory*, 1896.

51. Connecticut Industrial School for Girls, *Fourth Report*, 6.

52. Howe, *Letter*, 18.

53. Connecticut Industrial School for Girls, *Fourth Report*, 6.

the disturbing influences growing out of a change in the superintendency, and most of the subordinate officers.”⁵⁴ It then reads: “All of these influences are now removed.” It is hard to tell from this source because it was written to make the school appear infallible, but disturbing influences could have been the expression of some sort of opposition to the school. Disturbing influences from the superintendent were no small matter. That office had direct control of the inmates and oversaw instruction and carried out the rules and interests of the institution. It was the highest office under the matron.⁵⁵

Girls did not leave behind their opposition to forces that limited their ability to act once they were in the institution. This was the case for Daisey Cole. Her mother sent her to the Baltimore House of Refuge for incorrigibility. In this instance, incorrigibility meant she rebelled against her mother’s demands.⁵⁶ Daisey and another girl, Gertrude Stalcup, who was also in the house at the request of her parents, staged a large act of rebellion. The girls, ages sixteen and eighteen,⁵⁷ broke into the matron’s office, removed their uniforms, and donned the clothing of the woman who had authority over them. They then left via the fire escape and climbed over a barbed wire fence to freedom.⁵⁸ They made sure their freedom from the institution held by obtaining husbands soon after their escape.⁵⁹ Daisey told her story to Captain William Wyatt, and he proposed on the spot.⁶⁰ This launched a debate on who had a claim on the girl: the state or the husband. Daisey was aware of her ongoing status as property and recognized how different entities competed for her as their belonging. She found liberation in a seemingly oppressive marriage as it was her ticket out of the institution, a *more* oppressive institution. The day after her marriage, she gave herself up to the state, but claimed it had “no further jurisdiction, as she was a wife.”⁶¹ Habeas corpus was issued, and the state dropped the case. Gertrude had a similar experience with her marriage to Edward Apt.⁶²

54. Connecticut Industrial School for Girls, *Fourth Report*, 5.

55. Connecticut Industrial School for Girls, *Fourth Report*, 30.

56. “Incorrigible Girl’s Romance.” *Illustrated Police News*, 30 January 1897, 7.

57. “Are Married After Their Escape: Two Girls Who Got Out of the Baltimore House of Refuge Find Husbands,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 19 January 1897.

58. “Incorrigible Girl’s Romance.”

59. “Are Married After Their Escape.”

60. “Are Married After Their Escape.”

61. “Are Married After Their Escape.”

62. “Are Married After Their Escape.”

The collusion between Daisey and Gertrude was important. It gave the fear on the congregation of vagrants radiating and diffusing evil some sort of validity. Organizing rebellion within the institution after unjust laws led to their imprisonment made them political prisoners. Padraic Kenney writes on the emergence of the political prisoner. His writing demands that in order to be a political prisoner, the prisoner had to use the institution for a political cause.⁶³ Some girls, like Bella, protested their guardian's right to them by preferring the institution. Voicing acceptance to imprisonment over current conditions was harsh criticism towards her current condition deemed acceptable by the government. Another qualification of political prisoners is that they must band together underneath an ideological framework against the government. There are almost no documents from the girls inside the institutions. It is hard to determine the rhetoric among the girls regarding their political philosophies.

The fact that there are limited records on what girls were saying within institutions is also because girls were not allowed to express any sort of dissenting opinions. The Connecticut Industrial School for Girls' code required that "The manners and conversations of the girls must be strictly observed, and boisterous, rude and uncivil acts, or loud and angry talking, must not be permitted."⁶⁴ Strictly observing conversations brings about another Foucauldian principle of power: a monopoly on the conversation of sex. He argues that if sex is repressed, and silence is enforced with respect to sexuality, the entity that demanded the silence enacted power over all those who were silenced. The reformatories enacted power over young girls by limiting their conversations. The speaker's benefit is one way to limit this power: "A person who holds forth in such language places himself to a certain extent outside the reach of power."⁶⁵ There is no evidence of any girls in the nineteenth century who used colloquial efforts to employ the speaker's benefit as it referred to sexuality. There is evidence of girls continually committing prohibited actions that took away the power of the authority who placed the prohibition, and not just in terms of sexuality.

Recorded instances of their continued rebellion against certain expectations on their nature after admittance serve as descriptions of their political opinions. Daisey and Gertrude banded together to commit such an act of rebellion. Mary

63. Padraic Kenney, "I felt a kind of pleasure in seeing them treat us brutally": The Emergence of the Political Prisoner, 1865–1910," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, (2012): 867.

64. Connecticut Industrial School for Girls, *Fourth Report*, 34.

65. Foucault, "An Introduction," 6.

Madeline, the young devil impersonator, continued her disruptive behavior at the institution. She “was very saucy to the matron and used obscene language.”⁶⁶ These rebellions were much smaller than the one that got her admitted, but there were more factors acting against her in the institution. Institutional barriers added upon the already existing social and political barriers, so her actions could not retain their previous level of outright rebellion.⁶⁷

A group of girls at the Indiana State Woman’s Prison and Reform School for Girls also demonstrated this continued rebellious spirit as they banded together in 1892 to set their school on fire in hopes of escape.⁶⁸ Imogene Thompson, Mary Stevens, and Lydia Kinseley were credited by other girls to have started the fire after conspiring to escape in such a manner.⁶⁹ The connected women’s prison and reform school were both evacuated. A newspaper article on the event shared, “so far as known none of the prisoners made any attempt to escape, though some of the reform girls were discovered during the evening roaming about the city . . .”⁷⁰ The three girls successfully planned and executed an escape, although they were eventually captured and turned into authorities. Their rebellion was an act against the limitations of their freedom. They wanted to be free, so they set fire to the institution which held them from that freedom.

These three girls who set the fire were political prisoners because they were banded together underneath an ideological framework against their oppression. They are also political prisoners because they used the prison to support their cause. These girls literally burned down a physical manifestation of their oppression. This is not what Kenney intended when he claimed that in order to be a political prisoner, one must use the prison for the enhancement of the political goal. He meant the prison must become a marker of martyrdom for the movement.

A few years after the fire, another attempted escape was recorded in the *New York Times*, but the tone of this article was very different. The article detailed a mutiny in 1905, started when a girl tried to escape through a door left open. She was seized by a school official, which caused a great commotion, drawing the attention of the other girls who quickly seized improvised weapons, “Pokers,

66. “The Confession of the Girl.”

67. Schlossman, “Delinquent Children,” 328.

68. “Women Incendiaries: Prisoners in the Indiana Reform School Destroy the Building,” *New York Times*, 2 March 1892.

69. “Women Incendiaries.”

70. “Women Incendiaries.”

sticks, and other articles came into play and the mutineers had almost succeeded in subduing the authorities.” The police arrived and quieted the insurgence.⁷¹

This tells of the active rebellion at the reform school, the girls acting upon any opportunity they receive to escape. It might seem like there was no collaboration in this attempted escape, although the commotion caused by the initial attempt might be a signal to the other girls. Even if there was no collusion, the individual rebellion is still valid. If a chance provides itself, a girl cannot wait for all the others.

The article is framed as if the desired outcome of the reader was an escape for the girls. The writer encouraged the mutineers as he said, “The mutineers almost won their way to liberty.”⁷² It seems the writer had sympathy for the girls trying to escape the institution, perhaps, due to previous attempts of girls at other institutions, like Imogene Thompson, Mary Stevens, and Lydia Kinseley. Even if he was not moved by this specific instance, it is clear he has some level of sympathy for the girls at the institution.

Sympathy in writings on the experiences of girls in the prison systems can also be found in a political piece by Brad Whitlock, a political novelist. Whitlock published a work in the Red Book Magazine, a popular women’s magazine in 1908 on double standards regarding the criminality of prostitution. He tells the fictional story of two women who have been charged with loitering, which was a vague legal definition that indicated prostitution. A new, benevolent judge asks the man who arrested the women, “Within your knowledge or belief, there were always men doing the same thing, no less and no more, were there not? . . . Then why did you not bring the men in also.”⁷³ The man answered saying he had only done what society had expected from him,⁷⁴ which highlights the relationship between moral codes of society and the legal code.

As the judge questions the man who arrested these two women, he calls him out on “vouching for their bad character with perhaps a little more satisfaction than men oftentimes vouch for the good characters of others.”⁷⁵ which echo the words Susan B. Anthony said in years previous about the double standards facing women when it comes to sexuality. As this conversation takes place, the

71. “Mutineers in Petticoats: Washington Police Called Out to Protect Girls’ Reform School Officers,” *New York Times*, 24 July 1905.

72. “Mutineers in Petticoats.”

73. Brad Whitlock, “The Girl That’s Down,” *Redbook Magazine*, 1908.

74. Whitlock, “The Girl That’s Down,” 61.

75. Whitlock, “The Girl That’s Down,” 56.

woman on trial re-evaluates the laws to which she is bound. Whitlock portrays this woman becoming enlightened to the injustice of her situation after a man has demonstrated it to her, which does not give enough credit to girls like Daisey and Gertrude who understood the inequalities well enough to use them to their advantage. The fictional story continues, with the judge dismissing the case of the two girls. The girls leave the courthouse with a desire to change.⁷⁶

While a bit naïve in assuming that one dismissal from a court would turn the economic circumstances around and remove the motivating factors that drew girls to crime, this writing is important to consider because it shows that girls have gained sympathy from outside of the institution, and not just from women. There are people who do not think girls deserve to be institutionalized, or at least not unless the men are too.

Conclusion

Gaining sympathy was not the main goal of the girls as they rebelled against standards of civility and morality. Sympathy is important for political causes, but in this case, it did not cause a social revolution in the next century. Lisa Pasko explains in her research on the history of female juvenile delinquency that the state's criminalization of female sexuality in the 1800s carried through to the modern juvenile justice system with the condemnation of sexual promiscuity among girls and the policing of non-heteronormative sexuality among inmates.⁷⁷ The few young girls who rebelled against the harsh social standards did not have enough impact to change the whole system, but this was not their goal. Some political movements offer an alternative, while some just reject what is already in place. The rebellious girls were of the second thread. Their political attacks were very personal. They were interested in expanding their existence and refusing to give in to pressures which demanded they perform their femaleness a certain way while rejecting certain claims about their inherent nature. The girls who rebelled gave no deference to authorities they did not feel deserved it. They rejected the positive liberty framework saturated with morality. In this rejection, they created and claimed power. They wanted to shatter the boxes that held them, and they did. They were doing it at the same

76. Whitlock, "The Girl That's Down," 62.

77. Lisa Pasko, "Damaged Daughters: The History of Girls' Sexuality and the Juvenile Justice System," *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 100 no. 3 (Summer 2010): 1100.

time Japanese writer and feminist theorist Kishida Toshiko gave subversive talks called “Daughters in Boxes” around 1883. She passionately claimed: “If we enclose them in boxes; if we capture them when they try to escape and bind them in place, then just as the petals of the bound flower will scatter and fall, so too the bounty of the human mind will wither.”⁷⁸ We see patterns of bound women in boxes, but they can be shattered. Young girls, starting at the age of eight in America were shattering their boxes.

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78. Toshiko, “Daughters in Boxes,” 103.



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"Baby Suffragettes": Girls in the Women's Suffrage Movement across the Atlantic

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Figure 1. Bessie Watson, The Piping Times, 1910.

Paper

“Baby Suffragettes” Girls in the Women’s Suffrage Movement across the Atlantic

McKenzi Christensen

APRIL 1912, NEW YORK CITY: IT IS A RAINY MORNING AS A YOUNG schoolgirl steps up confidently onto the platform, facing a crowd of skeptical onlookers. “Miss Dorothy Frooms,” someone announces beside her, “the youngest suffragette in the world, a lady who is giving her early years to the cause of justice to women. Listen to her, you men who praise the ballot, the youngest, the most enthusiastic and the most intelligent of all the suffragists!”¹ Sixteen-year-old Dorothy clears her throat and begins to speak. Across the Atlantic, another sixteen-year-old, Dora Thewlis, kicks and screams as police officers drag her through the streets of London. Newspapers soon detail the arrest and prison sentence of “little Dora,” the newly famous “baby suffragette” who tried to storm Parliament with fellow woman’s rights suffragists.² Dorothy and Dora were among dozens of girls known in the United States and the United Kingdom, aged nine to twenty-one, who actively participated in the woman’s suffrage movement and thought of themselves as passionate suffragists. Newspaper articles documented the efforts of these young girls, highlighting and often criticizing their ages. Their activism was also recorded in diaries, memoirs, letters, and photographs. Despite the range of sources that

1. “Girl Speaks Sans Riot” *The New York Tribune*, 28 April 1912.

2. “The Baby Suffragette,” *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 28 March 1907.

depict the involvement of young girls in the suffrage movement, few scholars have explored the topic.

Some historians have examined the role of girls within the larger woman's suffrage movement. Jill Liddington, in *Rebel Girls: How Votes for Women Changed Edwardian Lives*, addresses the broader woman's suffrage movement and highlights a dozen women involved in Northern England, several of which happened to be younger girls—girls like Dora Thewlis and Adela Pankhurst.³ Her research shows that mothers and daughters often worked together for the vote. Liddington, however, does not discuss the implications of young girls participating in woman's suffrage and how that differed from the experience of adult women. In *Rise Up, Women! The Remarkable Lives of the Suffragettes*, Diane Atkinson similarly offers a broad history of the militant woman's suffrage movement across the United Kingdom.⁴ She highlights dozens of suffragettes, including young suffragettes such as Olive Beamish and Nellie Hall. However, Atkinson does not address their involvement at length or the importance of these girls' young ages.

Focusing particularly on young girls, historian Carol Dyhouse's *Girl Trouble: Panic and Progress in the History of Young Women* surveys a range of issues that English girls faced from the early nineteenth century to the twenty-first century.⁵ Dyhouse briefly discusses girls' involvement in the suffrage movement in the nineteenth century. She suggests that many school teachers—who were also passionate suffragists—inspired their students by introducing women's rights figures and role models to their students.

While some historians have brought attention to British girls participating in the woman's suffrage movement, fewer highlight American girls' involvement in the movement. Margaret McFadden, in her article "Boston Teenagers Debate the Woman Question 1837–1838," introduces two young American participants, Ednah Dow Littlehale and Caroline Wells Healey. McFadden analyzes the girls' correspondence about women's rights.⁶ She identifies the

3. Jill Liddington, *Rebel Girls: How Votes for Women Changed Edwardian Lives* (London: Virago, 2015).

4. Diane Atkinson, *Rise Up Women! The Remarkable Lives of the Suffragettes* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018).

5. Carol Dyhouse, *Girl Trouble: Panic and Progress in the History of Young Women* (London: Zed Books, 2014).

6. Margaret McFadden, "Boston Teenagers Debate the Woman Question, 1837–1838." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 15, no. 4, (1990).

continuity in how the girls wrote about women's rights as young girls and later as adults. McFadden reevaluates the way scholars see teenage correspondence as immature or juvenile, arguing that they should take them as seriously as writings by adult suffragists. Notably, she points out that young girls talked about women's rights using more personal language, suggesting that girls' sources create a more authentic look into the minds of women's rights activists.

Other scholars have focused on the role of age in the suffrage movement. Mary Celeste Kearney, in "Coalescing: The Development of Girls' Studies," highlights girls' activism within each wave of the feminist movement.⁷ Kearney argues that the study of girls has been not only ignored by general scholarship but particularly by feminists. Arguing that feminists have had a long tradition of "uneasy identification and, sometimes, disidentification with girls," she notes the divide between adult suffragists who argued that attaching young girls to the suffrage movement would label the whole movement as childish.⁸ Corrine Field's recent research on the generational divides between suffragists further shows how age played a role in how suffragists worked together.⁹ Field argues that while most political movements have used children to represent possibility and the future, the suffrage movement allied themselves with older women to represent maturity, drawing a sharp line between minors and adults allied together in the woman's suffrage movement.

Finally, Berry Mayall highlights suffragists fighting for children's rights and encouraging youth to participate in politics.¹⁰ In *Visionary Women and Visible Children, England 1900–1920*, he argues that some suffragists looked beyond the vote to broader social issues such as socioeconomic impacts on children. He also draws attention to youth organizations such as the Junior Suffragettes, created by Sylvia Pankhurst, and shares examples of how they inspired young people to stand up for their rights. Like other scholars, Mayall argues that children and youth are not "deficient or incomplete adults, not developmental projects, not just objects of concern," but capable of thinking and reasoning.

7. Mary Celeste Kearney, "Coalescing: The Development of Girls' Studies." *NWSA Journal*, (2009).

8. Kearney, "Coalescing: The Development of Girls' Studies," 8.

9. Corrine T. Field, "Grand Old Women and Modern Girls: Generational and Racial Conflict in the US Women's Rights Movement, 1870–1920" (unpublished MS).

10. Berry Mayall, *Visionary Women and Visible Children, England 1900–1920: Childhood and the Women's Movement* (New York: Springer, 2017).

Building on the work of these scholars, and drawing on newspaper articles and archival sources such as diaries, interviews, letters, and memoirs from the Women's Library at the London School of Economics, this study argues that, though often forgotten and pushed aside, young girls were active participants in the woman's suffrage movement across the United States and United Kingdom. Although these young girls have been generally overlooked, this study identifies factors which led girls to become active in the movement and highlights youth suffrage groups formed by both adult suffragists and young people themselves. Further, this study addresses the varying reactions of the press and adult suffragists, and in doing so provides insight into the reasons why young girls have been forgotten in the movement.

Schools and Suffragettes

Many young girls learned about the suffrage movement through their schools, teachers, and peers. In 1912, Winifred Starbuck and her classmates at an all-girls school in England "followed the suffragette movement with a good deal of excitement," decorating their desks with the Women's Social and Political Union colors, hanging pictures up of their favorite suffragette heroines, and "scanning the press anxiously" for any news about the movement. In general, their teachers kept quiet about their own involvement in the movement, though the girls knew that "the suffragettes were making a deep impression on some teachers" and that many had "thrown themselves into the movement with heart and soul." In March 1912, as the schoolgirls were scanning a list of arrests in the papers, they saw the name of their teacher, who had been arrested for throwing a brick in a window directly in front of a police officer and who had proceeded to go on a hunger strike in prison. The courage of their teacher inspired the girls and they began taking "a small part in the activities of the suffragettes, such as attending meetings, and distributing leaflets." Their teacher served not only as a role model for the girls but provided them with the space to learn about the movement and form understandings of justice and equality. By 1914, their school fired many of their teachers because of their participation in the movement and "it was clear that the teachers put in their place were not suffragettes." Thinking this was outrageous, the girls began to protest. They first persuaded their parents to sign a petition for the reinstatement of their teachers. When this amounted to nothing, they "began a term of disorder." Winifred Starbuck describes a "joyous anarchy" taking over the school. Soon

all of the schoolgirls refused to enter the building, taking the school bell and gong with them, "galloping about on the outskirts of the field," and pretended not to hear their teachers calling them in. Soon Starbuck and all the girls in her year were suspended and forbidden to enter the school grounds. Refusing to accept this, Starbuck walked straight into the building, "opened the side doors and windows to admit the others," and they all "broke up in style." Later, she and the other girls broke "into the school at night by a window one of the girls had left open" and wrote "Votes for Women" slogans all over the walls.¹¹ Winifred Starbuck and her classmates' experience reflects that the example and activism of a teacher could help students gain an understanding of concepts such as justice and equality, thereby giving the students space and courage to challenge the injustices and inequalities they began to see around them.

Other girls, such as Vera Brittain and Annabel Huth Jackson, were also inspired by their teachers and peers at school.¹² School became a place where girls could develop their individual identities and find peers who felt the same discontent, anger, and commitment to a common cause.¹³ This was the case for fifteen-year-old Annabel Huth Jackson who was attending an all-girls' boarding school in Cheltenham, England. One of her classmates "smuggled in *The Story of an African Farm*" and after reading it, Jackson said that "the whole world seemed aflame and many of us became violent feminists."¹⁴ Similarly, sixteen-year-old Vera Brittain's teacher at St. Monica's boarding school in Surrey, Miss Heath Jones, both "inspired and intimidated the girls," and was an "ardent though always discreet feminist."¹⁵ Teachers could not openly discuss their involvement in suffrage activity to their students, but many, like Miss Jones, provided their students with information regardless. She provided Brittain with books on the women's movement and took her and several of the other girls to suffrage meetings. Brittain had suspicions that Miss Jones was "secretly in

11. Winifred Starbuck, interview with Marjorie Anderson, "A Term of Disorder," BBC Radio Woman's Hour, 1958.

12. Born Claire Annabel Grant-Duff. She later married, changing her last name to Huth Jackson and chose to go by middle name Annabel. She used Annabel Huth Jackson as her pen name.

13. Carol Dyhouse, *Girls Growing up in Late Victorian and Edwardian England*. (Abington, UK: Routledge, 2012), 172.

14. Annabel Huth Jackson, *A Victorian Childhood*. (Abington, UK: Routledge, 2016), 160–61.

15. Vera Brittain, *Testament of Youth: An Autobiographical Study of the Years 1900–1925*. (London: Gollancz, 1933), 32.

sympathy with the militant suffrage raids and demonstrations.”¹⁶ Brittain later described the profound influence that Miss Jones had on her interest and further action in the women’s movement.¹⁷

Similarly, Esther Knowles grew up “knowing all about the suffragettes.” She was a small child when she met future suffrage leader Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence, who formed a girls club at her school in London. Several times, she walked from school to the gates of Holloway prison in order to greet the newly released suffragette prisoners. Even at her young age, she sold *Votes for Women* newspapers on the street. As Knowles reached her teenage years, Pethick-Lawrence asked her if she would like to become one of the office girls for the Women’s Social and Political Union, the leading militant suffrage organization in the country. She “jumped at the chance and gladly forgot all” about her other future plans and put her “heart and soul in the movement.” She even wished that she could go to prison with the other suffragettes. When the police raided the WSPU office in 1913, Knowles was not even sixteen. As her leaders were being arrested, she courageously hid the WSPU’s money under her dress so that the police could not confiscate it. She then returned to the front door and “confronted the constable standing outside and explained that [she] was a member of the WSPU staff.” When she later presented the money to her leaders, “a cheer went up and [she] was the heroine of the hour.”¹⁸

“A Family Ordeal”: Like Mother, Like Daughter

Just as girls often became active in the movement through the influence of their teachers and peers, many also followed the examples of their suffragist family members. For example, Adela Pankhurst grew up in a prominent suffragist family. When she was eighteen, her mother Emmeline Pankhurst and older sisters—the leading suffragettes in the women’s movement in England—formed the Women’s Social and Political Union in their home.¹⁹ From a young age, Pankhurst read “everything [she] could lay [her] hands on concerning social

16. Brittain, *Testament of Youth*, 38.

17. Brittain, *Testament of Youth*, 39–41.

18. Grace Knowles, Autobiography, October 1972, TH830, 1, The Jill Craigie Archives, The Women’s Library, The London School of Economics.

19. Vera Coleman, *Adela Pankhurst: The Wayward Suffragette* (Melbourne: University Press, 2003) 33–34.

evils and a desire to begin [a] career as a crusader for social righteousness stirring in [her]."²⁰ Throughout her childhood, her home was a center of political life, and she would quietly listen and try not to be seen. She began publicly speaking for the movement at eighteen. Pankhurst went from being "a shy, somewhat melancholy girl" to a "self-confident woman who could hold crowds of thousands" before she was even nineteen.²¹ In one particular speech, she was repeatedly hounded by an anti-suffragist man who said, "If you were my wife I'd give you a dose of poison." Pankhurst cheerfully replied, "No need of that my friend, if I were your wife I'd take it."²² She would continue to give five to ten public speeches a week before she turned twenty.²³ While young girls typically had no space to express themselves in public life or politics, the woman's suffrage movement gave girls like Adela Pankhurst an opportunity to share their opinions when they otherwise may have kept silent.

Olive Bartels, a young girl from Ireland, remembered her mother going to London to speak at the House of Commons and protest for votes for women. Growing up, she watched as her mother would sell suffrage papers outside of the post office, and "admired her enormously." Inspired by her mother's example, she and her sister began chalking for the movement, drawing "Votes for Women" slogans on the streets. As Bartels went to school, she became more involved in the militant movement and lost all of her friends because of it. She described, "if you became militant you lost all of your friends. They would have nothing to do with you—terrible hostility—they just dropped you." The public, and even many suffragists, did not approve of militant action. An adult suffragette was one thing, but a young militant girl was a horrifying concept. Not being able to "make friends her own age," Bartels clung to the older women in the "very close knit" movement.²⁴

Factory worker Elsie Flint also came in contact with the suffrage movement through her parents. Brought up by socialist parents, Flint was active in political life from a young age. Her parents had her attend a socialist Sunday school and it inspired her to study social issues such as woman's suffrage. She heard her

20. Liddington, *Rebel Girls*, 560.

21. Liddington, *Rebel Girls*, 649.

22. Liddington, *Rebel Girls*, 648.

23. Coleman, *Adela Pankhurst*, 35.

24. Olive Bartels, Oral Interview, 27 March 1976, Box 1, Disc 17, Oral Evidence of the Suffragette and Suffragist Movements: The Brian Harrison Interviews, The Women's Library, The London School of Economics.

parents always "talking about how women should have the vote and that sort of thing." Woman's suffrage was often tied to socialism. Many prominent suffragettes were also socialists, such as Sylvia Pankhurst. At sixteen, Flint protested for better working conditions alongside Sylvia Pankhurst. Elsie Flint and her mother and sisters would go to meetings together each week and felt like they "were going to move mountains."²⁵

Another young girl, nine-year-old Bessie Watson, used her skills to push the woman's movement forward alongside her mother. Watson joined the WSPU with her mother in Scotland. She described walking with her mother and stopping to look at the window of the WSPU office. Watson described, "When we came out, my mother and I were members of the WSPU and I was booked to play in the Historical Pageant." Bessie Watson was a skilled bagpiper and the WSPU recognized that her talent could promote votes for women. At her first suffrage pageant she "wore a white dress with a purple, white, and green sash bearing the words 'Votes for Women.'" She was later invited to travel to London to play in a women's march when she was ten years old. She would frequently "race home from school" and play her bagpipes outside of the Calton Jail in Edinburgh for the suffragette prisoners. Throughout "this most exciting time of [her] life," she "followed the newspapers and attended meetings with [her] mother."²⁶

Nellie Hall's parents helped found the Women's Social and Political Union, alongside the Pankhursts. Their involvement profoundly influenced her participation in woman's suffrage. Hall explained, "Considering my family history, it is really not surprising that I have always been prepared to make a stand when I am deeply concerned about matters. It was inevitable that I should become closely connected with the women's movement."²⁷ Both of her parents were active suffragists, and growing up she watched as her parents were repeatedly arrested for the cause. At fourteen, Nellie Hall walked home from school every day to the prison and sang freedom songs for the suffragette prisoners, all the while having rotten vegetables and eggs thrown at her by anti-suffragists. At

25. Elsie Flint, Oral Interview, 19 December 1974, Box 1, Disc 7, Oral Evidence of the Suffragette and Suffragist Movements: The Brian Harrison Interviews, The Women's Library, The London School of Economics.

26. "The Lone Piper: Elizabeth Somerville Autobiography" *The Piping Times*, 1998.

27. Nellie Hall, "A Personal Experience: the Beginnings of Women's Liberation", n.d., 7JCC/01/03, The Jill Craigie Archives, The Women's Library, The London School of Economics.

sixteen, she was first arrested herself for trying to send a press telegram about a suffrage meeting that her father was holding. Hall's younger sister Emmeline was also involved in the movement, and at times the entire family was arrested together. When Hall was nineteen, she was in charge of disrupting a dinner that the prime minister was to be attending. She set off the fire alarm, making it impossible for him to enter the building. She then threw a brick through the window of his car, and "Immediately [she] was surrounded by a crowd of policemen who hauled [her] through a long line of onlookers, all of whom contributed their opinion of [her] as [she] passed."²⁸ While in prison, she was force fed 137 times.²⁹ She vowed that while held there, "more militancy would take place and more houses would burn."³⁰ During the court sentencing, her "mouth was very much cut, clothes badly torn and hands swollen and bruised and [she] made a magnificent effort to stop the proceedings."³¹ Even though she "scarcely had the strength to sit upright, one felt she was stronger than any other human being in that court. By sheer force of spirituality she conquered and dominated the scene."³² As she was being dragged out, she shouted, "It doesn't matter, we shall go on fighting, fighting, fighting."³³

Elsie Duval also grew up in a family of passionate suffragists. She became a suffragist herself at the age of fifteen. Her parents thought she was too young at the time to become involved in militant action, but by nineteen she threw herself into the militant movement. In 1911, police arrested her for breaking a window and sentenced to one month in prison, where she went on hunger strike and was force fed over nine "excruciatingly painful" times.³⁴ Duval describes refusing food, and clinging to the framework of her bed as they tried to force a tube down her throat.³⁵ Despite the ordeal of the treatment, she wrote, "To win we must be prepared to fight and suffer. There are clouds gathering and it will not be long before another storm will burst forth." Her actions were in part due

28. Hall, "A Personal Experience: the Beginnings of Women's Liberation."

29. Hall, "A Personal Experience: the Beginnings of Women's Liberation."

30. *The Times*, 9 June 1914, pg. 4.

31. "Terrible Scenes in Court" *The Suffragette*, 5 June 1914.

32. "Miss Nellie Hall at the Old Bailey" *The Suffragette*, 3 July 1914.

33. *The Times*, 3 June 1914, pg. 3.

34. Elsie Duval, "Local Suffragists' Prison Experiences," 11 October 1912, 7HFD/D/33, Papers of Hugh Franklin and Elsie Duval, The Women's Library, The London School of Economics.

35. Duval, "Local Suffragists' Prison Experiences."

to her protesting her own mother's imprisonment and force feedings.³⁶ While she was in prison both her mother and sisters were in prison as well. Fighting for votes for women was a family ordeal.³⁷

"Baby Suffragettes": Attitudes towards Young Girls in the Movement

The press often ran stories on girls in the woman's suffrage movement, both criticizing them and marvelling at their young ages. News reporters called Elsie Duval's accountability and sanity into question because of her age and involvement in the movement. One newspaper related an account of a magistrate who had Duval examined by a doctor because he could not believe that a young girl would get involved in the militant suffrage movement unless she was mentally insane or coerced into joining by controlling adults. He said to Duval, "I did not think you were responsible for your actions . . . the doctor says you are apparently quite sane but he goes on to say that by reason of your youth you are apt to be led away and excited by other unscrupulous and hysterical persons." She countered this, saying, "I was excited by absolutely no-one. What I did was entirely on my own." She proceeded to say that she was not sorry for what she had done. The magistrate then called her a "silly little girl" who couldn't influence anybody, much less a government.³⁸

Newspapers across the United Kingdom documented and critiqued the age and accountability of another young girl, sixteen-year-old Dora Thewlis, a factory girl from Huddersfield, who stormed the House of Commons in 1907 with a procession of suffragettes. Dozens of newspapers detailed the event and her arrest, labelling her the "baby suffragette."³⁹ Headlines highlighted her youth, calling her "the little suffragette," "the girl suffragette," "the child suffragette," and "little Dora."⁴⁰ These headlines were so intriguing to the public that Dora's

36. "Local Suffragette Smashes Windows," 7 July 1912, 7HFD/D/33, Papers of Hugh Franklin and Elsie Duval, The Women's Library, The London School of Economics.

37. Due to complications of being force fed in prison, Elsie died at the young age of twenty-six, only two years after marrying fellow suffragette Hugh Franklin.

38. "Local Suffragette Smashes Windows," 7HFD/D/33, Papers of Hugh Franklin and Elsie Duval, The Women's Library, The London School of Economics, 7 July 1912.

39. "The Baby Suffragette" *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 28 March 1907; "Baby Suffragette" *The Leeds Mercury*, 27 March 1907.

40. "The Little Suffragette," *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 26 March 1907.; "Huddersfield Girl Suffragette," *The Shipley Times and Express*, 29 March 1907; "Child Suffragette Released," *The*

story quickly became popular and appeared in over twenty-five newspapers in the space of a few days.⁴¹

The magistrate over Dora Thewlis's case, Horace Smith, was "shocked" by her age.⁴² He asked, "Who let you escape from Huddersfield?"⁴³ He told her, "You are only a child. You ought to be in school. Will you go home again? Here is a young girl of sixteen enticed from her home in Yorkshire and let loose in the streets of London. I think it was perfectly disgraceful and the circumstances reflect the gravest discredit on all concerned bringing you up to London."⁴⁴ In response, her parents wrote to the magistrate, saying,

We find ourselves in agreement with his Honour when he says that girls of sixteen ought to be at school. But we respectfully remind his Honour that girls of Dora's age in her station of life are . . . compelled in their thousands to spend ten hours per day in health-destroying factories . . . sanctioned by law, in the making of which women have no voice. What wonder is it if Dora should have turned a rebel and joined hands with the dauntless women who risk their life and liberty in the hope that thereby justice may the sooner be conceded to their sex.⁴⁵

One newspaper ridiculed this letter sent by Thewlis's parents, calling it "artificial" and in the "style of the cheapest melodrama."⁴⁶ However, the letter reflects additional motivation for Thewlis wanting to join the movement. Life as a mill girl, subject to awful working conditions, could have lead her to want to have a voice in changing laws regarding working conditions. As her parents wrote, it was inevitable that "Dora should have turned rebel . . . that thereby justice may be sooner conceded."⁴⁷ During her time in prison, her mother wrote her saying, "Dear child—I am very proud of the way you have acted, so keep your spirits up and be cheerful . . . You know what you went to London for, and what you are doing. You are a member of the Women's



Figure 2.
Dora
Thewlis.
21 March
1907. The
Daily Mir-
ror. Cap-
tion under
picture read:
"One of the
attacking
party strug-
gling in
the grasp of
two burly
constables."

Daily Mail, 28 March 1907.

41. "The Little Suffragettes"; "Huddersfield Girl Suffragette"; "Child Suffragette Released."

42. "The Girl Suffragette," *Hull Daily Mail*, 25 March 1907.

43. "Suffragists at Court," *The Christchurch Times*, 30 March 1907.

44. *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 28 March 1907.

45. *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 28 March 1907.

46. "The Surrender of Dora," *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 28 March 1907.

47. *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 28 March 1907.

Social and Political Union, who are looking after you, so do your duty to the WSPU."⁴⁸ As her mother's letter illustrates, Dora was regarded as a full member of the movement rather than simply a pawn in the hands of adult suffragettes.

Many newspapers portrayed Dora Thewlis as a child incapable of thinking for herself. "You couldn't put a suffragette's head on a girl's shoulders," they argued.⁴⁹ The *Dublin Evening Mail* called her "poor little Dora," a "simple minded little factory girl," a "pawn in the hands of women who should have known better . . . who couldn't care a tuppenny ticket about the franchise; she would probably prefer to interest herself in a doll."⁵⁰ Thewlis did not want to be a suffragette, they argued, but she was manipulated by the leaders of the woman's suffrage movement: "Dora was never really a suffragette at heart. She was a suffragette by temptation."⁵¹ It seemed unfathomable to the press that a girl of sixteen could think rationally and of her own volition. Instead, she must have been coerced. They painted the women's suffrage leaders as villains who exploited "a terror stricken child to gain a move in the political game."⁵² Many newspapers put the blame fully on the adult suffragists, arguing that Thewlis was "not to be blamed. It is those who have filled her young mind with the 'emancipation of women' that bear the responsibility."⁵³ It was a "mistake of The Women's Social and Political Union" they argued, for "allowing a girl as young as sixteen to take so prominent a part in the campaign for votes for women."⁵⁴ These newspaper portrayed girls like Thewlis as infants with no coherent thought or individuality yet they expected them at this age to be fully eligible for marriage or to work tireless hours in factories. Maturity then, in their eyes, lay not in age or individuality, but in a submissive and dutiful nature.

Using Thewlis as an example, many newspapers questioned the use of young girls in the movement. The *Yorkshire Evening Post* argued that, "It is a cruel and barbarous thing that these women suffragists are doing in recruiting young girls in their ranks." They continued, "To expect that their cause is to be advanced by obtaining the support of minors is too grotesque for consideration. The experience of Dora is a lesson to other young girls of adventurous spirit, who might

48. *The Daily Mail*, 27 March 1907.

49. "Back to Mamma," *Dublin Evening Mail*, 29 March 1907.

50. "Back to Mamma."

51. "Back to Mamma."

52. "Back to Mamma."

53. "Back to Mamma."

54. "The Yorkshire Girl Suffragist" *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 27 March 1907.

be tempted to indulge in similar exploits." They concluded, "In any case it is to be hoped they will not again have young girls amongst them . . . it is hardly possible to take such a youthful enthusiast seriously."⁵⁵ By painting Thewlis as a manipulated child forced into the movement against her will, the press perpetuated the stereotypical views of young girls at the time as being mere objects, incapable of individual thought or action.

The *Hull Daily Mail* countered this idea, displaying Thewlis as a capable young woman, saying, "Dora is not so much a wayward child as a purposeful young woman earning a good income, and acting with the distinct approval of her natural guardians . . . Dora feels that she has just as much right to sacrifice herself for her beliefs."⁵⁶ Thewlis's mother, herself an ardent suffragette, reaffirmed this, saying, "She thoroughly understands the cause for which she is suffering. Ever since she was seven she was a diligent reader of the newspapers and can hold her own in a debate on politics."⁵⁷ "[Dora] may be a child in years," she insisted, "but she is not in sense or determination."⁵⁸ More importantly, Thewlis herself reject the notions that she was manipulated or forced, saying, "I am quite capable. I understand what I am fighting for, and prepared to go to prison for the cause. I feel that women ought to have their rights, and it will be an honour to go to prison."⁵⁹ "I came to London last week with the full consent of my parents, who, of course, know what my object is. My mother could not come, and as I thought the family should be represented, I decided to come myself. I am old enough to take care of myself."⁶⁰ Thewlis fought back against the claims and assumptions that she was a child or "baby suffragette" who was unable to think or act for herself.

After Dora Thewlis challenged the press's claims that she was only a child, newspapers took another tactic. Many newspapers tried to portray Thewlis as no longer interested in woman's suffrage after her arrest. The *Daily Mail* painted as "a pathetic little figure . . . with a tear stained face . . . and a very repentant demonstrator now who has changed her views entirely and now resents the suffragette movement."⁶¹ They claimed that she said, "I have had enough of prison . . .

55. *The Daily Telegraph*, 6 April 1907.

56. *Hull Daily Mail*, 25 March 1907.

57. *Hull Daily Mail*.

58. "The Future of Dora Thewlis," *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 28 March 1907.

59. *Hull Daily Mail*, 25 March 1907.

60. *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 26 March 1907.

61. "Child Suffragette Released," *The Daily Mail*, 28 March 1907.

I am ashamed of myself.”⁶² Countering this however, after returning home from prison, Thewlis said that “However, after returning home from prison, Thewlis said that she “had not carried her fight far enough and was ready to go back to London.”⁶³ She continued, “I am determined to go back to London and fight until women get their votes. I am not a baby.”⁶⁴ Thewlis resented and challenged the label given to her of “baby suffragette.” She requested, “Don’t call me baby suffragette. I am not a baby really.”⁶⁵ In prison they tried to “ridicule [her] as a ‘baby’ or ‘child.’ The taunts that [she] was a child made [her] see the futility of continuing the agitation at present, so [she] gave in, but wrote “mark my words . . . I shall continue to fight as long as I can.”⁶⁶ Dora’s experience in London was perhaps one of the most publicized and criticized experiences of young suffragettes. The press used her as an example and warning against young girls joining the movement. However, young girls across the Atlantic continued to join and fight in the woman’s movement despite criticism and opposition.

The press also labelled Dorothy Fooks, a sixteen-year-old from Bayonne, New Jersey, as a “baby suffragette.”⁶⁷ One newspaper described her as “an infant phenomenon.”⁶⁸ She was “hailed as the youngest campaigner for women’s suffrage in the United States.”⁶⁹ Fooks became involved in the woman’s suffrage movement at the age of eleven, speaking before large street audiences.⁷⁰ When she first joined the movement, “her family opposed the campaign for women’s votes, but [then] she converted them irrevocably to the cause.”⁷¹ At the age of fifteen, Fooks was president of the Equal Justice League for Young Women in Bayonne.⁷² She enlisted “one hundred school children in her cause as fighters for equal suffrage.”⁷³ She “conducted a single handed crusade” to

62. “Miss Dora Thewlis,” *Leeds Mercury*, 27 March 1907.

63. “Treated Unfairly,” *The Leeds Mercury*, 29 March 1907.

64. “The Future of Dora Thewlis,” *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 28 March 1907.

65. “Treated Unfairly,” *The Leeds Mercury*, 29 March 1907.

66. “The Future of Dora Thewlis,” *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 28 March 1907.

67. “Baby Suffragette Declares She Will Become First Woman President of United States,” *The Guthrie Daily Leader*, 20 March 1912.

68. “Mrs. Ruhlin’s Fight Not So Very Awful,” *The New York Times*, 28 October 1911.

69. “She Talks for Votes at 15,” *Jeffersonville Daily Reflector*, 30 March 1911.

70. “She Talks for Votes at 15”; Dorothy Fooks, *Lady Lawyer* (New York: R. Speller, 1975), ii.

71. “She Wants to Be President,” *Perth Amboy Evening News*, 18 March 1912.

72. Ida Husted Harper, *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 6:1900–1920 (New York: National American Woman Suffrage Association, 1922), 419.

73. “Schoolgirl Candidate for President in City,” *The Washington Herald*, 28 July 1910.

turn her fellow students into suffragettes and believed she finally "won them over."⁷⁴ One newspaper called her "the little suffragette with big aspirations," as she declared that her plans were to become a "lawyer, then a judge, after that a United States senator, and then . . . the first woman president of the United States."⁷⁵ Later Fooks would go on to achieve many of these goals while still a young adult. Before she was even twenty-five, she became a lawyer and the first woman attorney admitted to the Supreme Court bar, served in the navy, published several books, and ran for Congress and for mayor of New York City.⁷⁶

Dorothy Fooks was a very eloquent speaker at her young age. "She's got fine delivery, that girl has," an onlooker at one of her speeches described, "She's not like those old maids that come down here . . . you see, they listened to her because she was interesting."⁷⁷ One newspaper characterized her as "one of the best of the suffragist orators . . . making ringing campaign addresses every night in New York City."⁷⁸ Another newspaper called her the "best known of the suffragist orators" despite her being relatively forgotten in the history of the suffrage movement.⁷⁹ At fourteen, Fooks herself said, "I have several times spoken in public and I believe I have converted over two thousand persons."⁸⁰ She spoke with logic and rhetoric, saying, "You all know about the sinking of the Titanic. That great ship was the pride of the sea, and was believed to be unsinkable. But she went down. Why? Because she did not have all the modern improvements. Even so, our great



Figure 3. Dorothy Fooks, fifteen years old, in "Miss Dorothy Fooks Champion Orator," *The Detroit Times*, 8 November 1910.

74. "School Girl a Suffragette," *The Guthrie Daily Leader*, 24 December 1909.

75. "Baby Suffragette Declares She Will Become First Woman President of United States," *The Guthrie Daily Leader*, 20 March 1912.

76. *The Morning Tulsa Daily World*, 30 April 1922; *Evening Star*, 18 July 1937; *The Sun and New York Daily Herald*, 5 September 1920.

77. "Girl Speaks Sans Riot," *The New York Tribune*, 18 April 1912.

78. "Miss Dorothy Fooks, Campaign Orator," *The Spokane Press*, 8 November 1910.

79. "Miss Dorothy Fooks The Great Champion Orator," *The Detroit Times*, 8 November 1910.

80. "School Girl a Suffragette," *The Guthrie Daily Leader*, 24 December 1909.

country will go down if you don't have all the people progress together. Who are the people? Not men alone. The men are only half the people."⁸¹ Fooks also understood the importance of her age in relation to her activism. At one speech, an older man who was an advocate for woman's rights accompanied her. Fooks announced to the crowd, "Ladies and Gentleman, no doubt you can see by these white hairs that it is not only the young who are working for woman's rights . . . He is old and I am only a schoolgirl. We are symbolic of the world's attitude toward the movement."⁸²

Youth and Maturity: Reactions of Older Suffragists

Not all suffragists wanted to associate themselves with young girls in the movement. The suffragist Helen Taylor argued that if women associated themselves with youth, men would see them as immature and incapable of thinking politically. She said, "For with whom do we share those disqualifications? With criminals, with idiots, with lunatics, and lastly with minors—young people whose minds have not arrived at maturity. [Men] will always feel that if women are classed, for political purposes, along with the childish, the wicked, the mentally incapable, it must be because there is some resemblance between them."⁸³ Like the many aforementioned newspapers, even some suffragists, such as Helen Taylor, connected youth with the idea of insanity and incapability. Dr. Corrine Field suggests that age was a strategy women used to push for women's rights. She wrote, "Woman's rights activists were particularly concerned with using chronological age to define a clear transition between girlish dependence and womanly independence."⁸⁴ Lavena Saltonstall, an adult suffragette, detailed the antagonism towards young girls becoming involved in women's suffrage. She wrote,

Should any girl show a tendency to politics, or to ideas of her own, she is looked upon by the majority of women as a person who neglects doorsteps and home matters, and is therefore not fit to associate with their respectable

81. "Girl Speaks Sans Riot," *The New York Tribune*, 18 April 1912.

82. "Girl Speaks Sans Riot."

83. Helen Taylor (1870), "Women's Suffrage 3," in *Sexual Equality: Writing by John Stuart Mill, Harriet Taylor Mill, and Helen Taylor*, eds. Ann P. Robson and John M. Robson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994) 280–81.

84. Corrine T. Field, "Are Women . . . All Minors? Woman's Rights and the Politics of Aging in the Antebellum United States," *Journal of Women's History* 12, no. 4 (2001): 120.

daughters and sisters. If girls develop any craving for a different life or wider ideas, their mothers fear that they are going to become Socialists or Suffragettes . . . Who is going to tell these mothers that daughters were not given to them merely to dress and domesticate? Who is going to tell them that it is as cruel to discourage a child from making use of its own talent or individuality as it would be to discourage a child from using its limbs?⁸⁵

Even though girls were not always seen as intelligent or mature enough to be participating in the women's movement, some girls fought back against this idea. For example, at a dinner party, sixteen-year-old Vera Brittain felt too young and inexperienced at first to join in on a discussion of women's rights, even though she was already decidedly a feminist and suffragist. She described one adult woman's attitude towards her saying, "[She] always seems to try and make me feel my own inexperience and youth and she sometimes succeeds but she didn't tonight. I believe I have advanced too far now to lose a certain amount of faith in myself; young and inexperienced as I am, I have thought and studied." Then, commenting on the attitude towards youth and maturity, she wrote, "I wonder if one of the consolations of increasing years is to try and crush the youth that they have lost and belittle it in the light of their advanced experiences and ideas. But history itself often proves the youth in the right."⁸⁶

Other girls felt inadequate because of their youth. When Norah Balls, a girl suffragette from Northern England, and other young girls in the movement would go to meetings, they would put their hair up to try "to look a little older and look a little more dependable and reasonable."⁸⁷ Similarly, suffragette Grace Roe said, "I suffered very much from looking too young and I used to think if only I were thirty they'd listen to me. But they didn't." Instead, Roe wrote for the movement because when people read her arguments they "thought [she] was much older."⁸⁸ Likewise, Katherine Milhous, an "ardent girl suffragist" from Pitman, New Jersey who had been a suffragist "ever since she was born," felt that because of her age she could not "talk with any force."

85. "The Letters of a Tailoress," *Highway* 3, February 1911.

86. Vera Brittain, *Chronicle of Youth: War Diary, 1913-17*. (London: Gollancz, 1981), 54.

87. Norah Balls, Oral Interview, 16 April 1977, Box 1, Disc 31, Oral Evidence of the Suffragette and Suffragist Movements: The Brian Harrison Interviews, The Women's Library, The London School of Economics.

88. Grace Roe, Oral Interview, 4 October 1974, Box 1, Disc 3, Oral Evidence of the Suffragette and Suffragist Movements: The Brian Harrison Interviews, The Women's Library, The London School of Economics.

However, she said, "I decided to draw what I thought, and hope that that would have some weight." Many prominent newspapers published Millhous's sketches and comics about equal suffrage.⁸⁹

Youth Suffrage Groups

While some adult suffragists saw young girls as immature and incapable, others actively advocated for them to become involved in the movement. In 1914, Sylvia Pankhurst formed the Junior Suffragettes, an organization aimed at encouraging young girls between the ages of fourteen and eighteen to become suffragettes.⁹⁰ The group held speeches, debates, concerts, and parades.⁹¹ One young member of the Junior Suffragettes, Rose Pengally, a fourteen-year-old factory worker, was so inspired by her fellow young suffragettes that she led a strike at her work, marching her other young coworkers out and leading them to the Women's Hall where the Junior Suffragettes met each week. Her coworkers nicknamed her "Sylvia" after Sylvia Pankhurst, and many of the factory girls said that Pengally inspired them to become enthusiastic about votes for women.⁹²

While the Junior Suffragettes group was formed by adults wanting to inspire young girls, other suffrage groups developed that were formed by the youth themselves. One of these groups was the Young Purple, White, and Green Club. The name was representative of the main WSPU colors: purple, white, and green. The group featured both young girls and boys, with members such as Rachel Ferguson, Irene and Janet McLeod, Hugh Franklin (later the husband of girl suffragette Elsie Duval), Stefan Moxon, and Gwenda Rowe, among many others.⁹³ Their main aim was writing and performing suffrage plays that addressed issues such as the plight of working women and challenged societal gender roles.⁹⁴ One newspaper described, "This newly formed club . . . proved

89. "Girl Suffragist Makes Clever Sketches," *Evening Public Ledger*, 1 April 1915.

90. *The Women's Dreadnought*, 2 January 1915.

91. *The Women's Dreadnought*, 4 July 1915.

92. E. Sylvia Pankhurst, *The Suffragette Movement—An Intimate Account of Persons and Ideals* (London: Virago Limited, 1977), 542–43.

93. "Letter to Hugh Franklin," 7FHD/A/2, The Women's Library, London School of Economics. Other members include Roma Ferguson, Helen Fraser, Norah Trowell, Helen Reinold, Ruth Lowry, Gladys Larad, Iris Rowe, Winifred Walker, Jessie Bartlett, and Margaret Douglas.

94. "The Young Purple White and Green Club," *Votes for Women*, 13 May 1910.

that the rising generation of suffragettes has not started out to reform the world without a sense of humour."⁹⁵ While little information is known about each of the members, it is clear that as a whole they were in favor of militant action as they sent letters of congratulations to each of their members who underwent prison sentences for militant activity.⁹⁶

Another of these groups formed by and for young suffragettes was the Young Hot Bloods. The Young Hot Bloods, or YHB, was likely formed by the young Jessie Kenney and Adela Pankhurst in 1907.⁹⁷ The Junior Suffragettes group may have featured concerts and parades, but the YHB was a secret, militant, internal organization within the WSPU. Their aim was to "form a nucleus of young suffragists willing to support the WSPU in militant action."⁹⁸ Married women or women over the age of thirty were not permitted to join.⁹⁹ Women who joined had to make a pledge that they were prepared to perform any militant action and that they would never divulge the meaning of the letters YHB.¹⁰⁰ These women, "most of them young, toiled through the night across



Figure 4. Junior Suffragettes Club in Victoria Park, Norah Smyth. 1914. Photo provided by the East London Suffragette Festival.

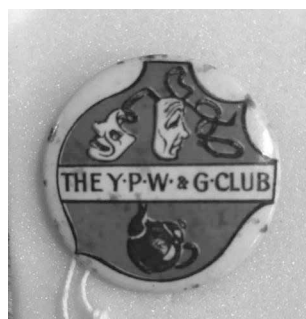


Figure 5. Button for the Young Purple, White, and Green Club, 7HFD/D/10, The Women's Library, London School of Economics.

95. "The Young Purple White and Green Club."

96. "Letter to Hugh Franklin," 7FHD/A/2, The Women's Library, London School of Economics.

97. Fern Riddell, *Death in Ten Minutes: the Forgotten Life of Radical Suffragette Kitty Marion*. (London: Hodder and Stroughton, 2018), 160; "Active Rebellion," *Nottingham Evening Post*, 8 May 1913; "Young Hot Bloods," *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 9 May 1913.

98. "Secret Suffrage Band," *Birmingham Daily Gazette*, 9 May 1913.

99. "Young Hot Bloods," *Leicester Daily Post*, 9 May 1913; "Secret Suffrage Band," *Birmingham Daily Gazette*, 9 May 1913.

100. "Secret Suffrage Band," *Birmingham Daily Gazette*, 9 May 1913.

unfamiliar country, carrying heavy cases of petrol and paraffin.”¹⁰¹ Newspapers reported them as terrorists.¹⁰² The name developed after a newspaper wrote, “Mrs. Pankhurst will, of course, be followed blindly by a number of the younger and more hot-blooded members of the Union.”¹⁰³ One newspaper characterized them, saying,

Some of the younger members of the Women’s Social and Political Union are still more difficult to deal with . . . Curiously enough, these young hot bloods are not the women who would get a vote . . . they own no property, and are not married women . . . none of them are likely to get the vote, and personally, I am convinced that they don’t care about it. What they want is the excitement and morbid satisfaction of doing something wrong.¹⁰⁴

Militancy was seriously looked down upon by the public, and when performed by young suffragettes, such as the Young Hot Bloods, it was a sign of immaturity as well—just young girls looking for “excitement and morbid satisfaction.”¹⁰⁵

Girls Joining the Movement Independently

Some girls joined the suffrage movement on their own. One such girl was Vera Wentworth, a member of the Young Hot Bloods.¹⁰⁶ Before joining the YHB, Wentworth became a suffragette in 1906 at the age of seventeen. She “became one of the most militant suffragettes,” and at eighteen she was sentenced to six weeks in prison but had to serve an extra day because she scratched “Votes for Women” onto her cell wall, a penalty she described as “well worth the extra day. They will never get it out. . . . I believe that inscription will stand as a lasting memorial of our work today.”¹⁰⁷ She always tried to make her fellow suffragette prisoners laugh, “playing ‘Votes for Women’ tunes on [her] comb.”¹⁰⁸ Police arrested her again that same year, and she served a three month sentence this

101. Pankhurst, *Suffragette Movement*, 446–47.

102. “A Smashed Conspiracy,” *Illustrated Police News*, 10 July 1913.

103. *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 8 May 1913.

104. “Young Hot Bloods,” *Sheffield Evening Telegraph*, 16 May 1913.

105. “Young Hot Bloods.”

106. Vera Wentworth was born with the name Jessie Spinks. She changed her name 1907 when she became a full-time suffragette.

107. “Jokes in Holloway Gaol,” *The Daily Telegraph*, 20 March 1908.

108. “Jokes in Holloway Gael.”

time around.¹⁰⁹ The next year, while she was nineteen, she was arrested four times, went on hunger strike, and was force fed many times.¹¹⁰ During this sentence, she was put in a pitch black room of solitary confinement for singing suffragette songs as well as handcuffed to her bed when she broke through her cell windows after hearing the screams of her fellow suffragettes being force fed.¹¹¹

Similarly, Jessie Stephen joined the movement on her own in 1910 when she was sixteen-years-old in Glasgow, Scotland, and was the youngest member of the delegation there.¹¹² She sold *Votes for Women* papers on the street: "I used to be a great salesman, shouting 'Votes for Women.' Being so young, I had more people coming up to buy the paper than if I'd been older." She traveled to London that year to lobby for votes, with women who "were twice and three times [her] age." As she and crowds of women "were marching peaceably across Westminster bridge some men came out and broke up [their] demonstration." "They tore my hat off my hair," she related, "pulling out my hair by the handful and tore my coat. And the police were there mind you and they didn't do a thing to stop it."¹¹³ Early on she became involved in militant activity. She dropped acid bombs into pillar boxes across Glasgow: "It was organized in a military precision," she described, "we were all handed the box of acid or whatever and we were told the exact time that we had to drop it in. And we covered the whole city of Glasgow. And nobody was ever caught."¹¹⁴ Inspired by her work in the suffrage movement, Jessie Stephen formed the Domestic Workers' Union in Glasgow when she was seventeen. She spoke to crowds of two hundred girls, inspiring them to stand up for better working conditions as domestic laborers.¹¹⁵



Figure 6. Vera Wentworth wearing an apron to advertise a WSPU London Procession, June 21, 1908, Women's Library, London School of Economics.

109. "The Militant Demonstrations," *Votes for Women*, 2 July 1908.

110. "Release of the Bristol Prisoners," *Votes for Women*, 3 December 1909.

111. "Release of the Bristol Prisoners."

112. Jessie Stephen, Oral Interview, 1 July 1977, Box 1, Disc 32, Oral Evidence of the Suffragette and Suffragist Movements: The Brian Harrison Interviews, The Women's Library, The London School of Economics.

113. Stephen, Oral Interview.

114. Stephen, Oral Interview.

115. Stephen, Oral Interview.

Sixteen-year-old Rebecca Hourwich from Washington D.C. joined the women's suffrage movement after reading the news. She wrote, "When I read in the papers that the Women's Party was aiming to give women freedom, and were going to have a suffrage parade in Washington, here was a group that would have many brave, wonderful women whom I wanted to meet."¹¹⁶ Acting on what she read, she "went downtown to the Woman's Party Headquarters and simply said, 'I would like to be a volunteer to help in the parade.' I don't know what they thought but they immediately arranged for me to do what a little errand girl would do."¹¹⁷ She participated in the 1913 Women's March on Washington after the inauguration of Woodrow Wilson. She described the riotous crowds, with men on the street shouting "insulting and obscene" things. Men tried to lift her skirt and she felt that they "wanted to do injury to the women who were parading on foot."¹¹⁸ Throughout her teenage years, she worked with the woman's suffrage organizations and older women "got a lot of work out of [her] for nothing."¹¹⁹ She attended "all the meetings like an eager, young beaver. I sat in on very important key meetings with a group of older, dedicated women."¹²⁰ She met Alice Paul, a prominent suffragist in the US, and worried that Miss Paul saw her "just as a little softy and needed toughening up."¹²¹ For Hourwich, "Campaigning for suffrage had become [her] full-time program. Sixteen hours a day, seven days a week." She was a "seasoned campaigner" before she was eighteen.¹²² She continued working for woman's rights throughout her life. She traveled and lived throughout the world as a journalist, writing many books about international women's rights, particularly African women's rights.¹²³



Figure 7. Rebecca Hourwich, sixteen-years-old, National Woman's Party Records, 1913.

116. Rebecca Hourwich Reyher, *Search and Struggle for Equality and Independence* (Berkeley: University of California, 1977), 56.

117. Reyher, *Search and Struggle for Equality and Independence*.

118. Reyher, *Search and Struggle for Equality and Independence*, 57.

119. Reyher, *Search and Struggle for Equality and Independence*, 59.

120. Reyher, *Search and Struggle for Equality and Independence*, 60.

121. Reyher, *Search and Struggle for Equality and Independence*, 76.

122. Reyher, *Search and Struggle for Equality and Independence*.

123. Reyher, *Search and Struggle for Equality and Independence*.

Conclusion

Many young girls still remain forgotten or unnamed in the history of the woman's suffrage movement. Some girls received brief recognition in news articles, but little other information remains. Police arrested Alice Noble, a sixteen-year-old girl from Leeds, England, for storming Parliament in 1907 with Dora Thewlis.¹²⁴ Despite their similar ages, Alice was pushed aside and forgotten while Dora was labelled the "baby suffragette" and plastered all over the papers. Similarly, seventeen-year-old Anne Evelyn Armstrong from Blackpool, England was arrested along with Dora and Alice when storming Parliament, yet she was only mentioned once in the newspapers.¹²⁵ Other young girls show up in photographs campaigning for women's rights, yet they remain unnamed.

The young suffragettes found in this study add to the understanding of girls as significant historical actors who meaningfully contributed to the woman's suffrage movement. Rather than simply assisting on the sidelines, girls actively took the initiative to join the woman's suffrage movement, give speeches, form suffrage clubs, perform militant action, and go to prison. These girls were not just supporting characters in the story of the woman's suffrage movement, but were active, passionate participants.



Figure 8. "Three Girls Holding Placards advertising Votes for Women" TWL.2002.592, *The Women's Library, London School of Economics*.

McKenzi Christensen is a senior at Brigham Young University studying history teaching and minoring in global women's studies and English teaching. McKenzie's passion for women's history, mixed with her capstone theme of the history of childhood and youth, led her to discover forgotten young suffragettes in both the United Kingdom and the United States. McKenzie was able to travel to archives in London, Boston, and New York to complete this research. McKenzie is currently continuing this research for her women's studies capstone and hopes to continue finding as many "baby suffragettes" as she can to make their stories known.

124. "Leeds Suffragettes Passionate Protest," *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 15 February 1907.

125. *Manchester Courier*, 28 March 1907.



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Reconstructed Reputations: The Rise and Ruin of Two Civil War Spies

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Ellsworth: Reconstructed Reputations



Belle boyd (left) and Elizabeth Van Lew (right)

Paper

Reconstructed Reputations The Rise and Ruin of Two Civil War Spies

Abby Ellsworth

WHEN THE CIVIL WAR BEGAN IN 1861, A FORTY-THREE-YEAR-old woman and an eighteen-year-old girl both living in Virginia found themselves wondering how they could support the war effort. By contemplation, or by coincidence Elizabeth Van Lew and Belle Boyd both entered into a perilous spy career. One was cautious, the other careless. One worked for the Union, the other for the Confederacy. And in the end, one's reputation plummeted and the other's soared. One would expect that vigilant Van Lew, who labored as a Union spy, would enjoy a radiant reputation. However, in an unexpected reversal of fortunes, society dismantled Van Lew's reputation, while Boyd's reputation ascended. The reputations of these women can be attributed to the political climate after the war. As the nation scrambled to reconcile in favor of the South, radical abolitionists and African Americans were shunned resulting in Van Lew's horrendous reputation, and Boyd's rise to fame.

Belle Boyd and Elizabeth Van Lew are relatively well-known historical figures. Historians such as Donald Markle, who wrote *Spies and Spymasters of the Civil War*, Elizabeth Varon, author of *Southern Lady, Yankee Spy*, and Ruth Scarborough, who wrote *Belle Boyd, Siren of the South*, have all focused predominantly on these ladies' careers as spies during the Civil War. However, focusing on the excitement of spying means that historians have overlooked their fate after the war and their reputation. The lives and reputations of Belle Boyd and

Elizabeth Van Lew after the Civil War illuminates the nation's opinions on newly freed African Americans and the political climate of the nation. It also reveals the extent to which the nation turned a blind eye toward atrocities that the South committed in order to reunify the white population of the country.

Elizabeth Van Lew's Secret Career and Unblemished Reputation

In order to understand how drastically Van Lew's reputation changed after the war, her reputation during the war must be considered. Elizabeth Van Lew was born in 1818 in Richmond, Virginia. Her father founded a prosperous hardware business, which enabled him to own several slaves and live in a mansion on Church Hill. He sent his daughter to a Quaker school in Philadelphia, which contributed to her intense abolitionist tendencies. Van Lew took the opportunity to act on these sentiments when her father passed away in 1843 and freed her family's slaves.¹ She continued to express her abolitionist dispositions after the war as well. She sought to publish an address to the "Federal Army" stating her support for the outcome of the war as well as for African Americans.² She also wrote several letters to Congress begging them to rectify the injustices committed against freedmen.³ While these actions establish Van Lew's political stance and abolitionist inclinations, since they never became public knowledge it had no influence on her reputation after the war.

Although Virginia seceded in 1861, Van Lew's passion for abolition made picking sides easy. Instead of succumbing to Southern influence, Van Lew found ways to support the Union. Van Lew began to visit Union soldiers in Libby prison in Richmond. At first, she brought food and helped tend to soldier's wounds, but as time went on, she started to smuggle intelligence⁴ out of enemy territory and into the hands of Union soldiers in various ways. At first, she tore messages into pieces to transport individually.⁵ Later, she developed her

1. William Gilmore Beymer, "Famous Scouts and Spies of the Civil War," *The Boston Sunday Globe*, 29 December 1912.

2. Elizabeth R. Varon, *Southern Lady, Yankee Spy: The True Story of Elizabeth Van Lew* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 199.

3. Varon, *Southern Lady, Yankee Spy*, 201–4.

4. "The Civil War Fifty Years Ago Today," *Buffalo Evening News*, 5 September 1911.

5. Michael DeMarco, "Elizabeth Van Lew (1818–1900)," Lewis A. Armistead, (1817–1863).

own cipher and used invisible ink.⁶ Van Lew built up a network of spies that carried her coded messages in hollow eggs,⁷ soles of shoes,⁸ or spools of thread.⁹ Her extensive network made it possible to send General Ulysses Grant newspapers and fresh flowers from her garden on several occasions.¹⁰ Additionally, she managed to place a spy, Mary Bowser, in the White House of the Confederacy.¹¹ Thus, of her own volition and without any formal training, Van Lew became a successful spy.¹²

During the war, Van Lew's reputation remained untarnished. Although the Confederacy placed guards in her yard, and searched her house multiple times, they never found evidence of her espionage during the Civil War.¹³ Van Lew successfully hid her activities because of her extensive network, and meticulous attention to detail which allowed her to cover her tracks. Additionally, no one suspected that a respectable woman of the Virginian gentry could be involved in such underhanded activities.¹⁴ Had she been unable to obscure her connection to the Union, her reputation would have been ruined. *The Richmond Dispatch* published the only paper that mentioned Van Lew during the Civil War. In 1861, the newspaper mentioned that Van Lew and her mother, Eliza, frequently visited Libby prison to render their assistance to Union soldiers. This secessionist paper understandably berated these women for their strange attention to wounded Yankees. Nevertheless, no one suspected Van Lew's entanglement in spying.¹⁵ Her reputation as a Southern lady and well-hid involvement kept her reputation intact after Richmond fell into the hands of the Union for the last time.

6. Varon, *Southern Lady, Yankee Spy*, 182.

7. "Battle Stories of the Civil War," *Los Angeles Daily Times*, 5 September 1911.

8. "Famous for Her Work as Union Spy in Richmond Death of Miss Van Lew," *The Courier Journal Louisville*, 26 September 1900.

9. "Battle Stories of the Civil War."

10. "Famous for Her Work as Union Spy."

11. "Elizabeth Van Lew, Grant's Woman Spy, at the Confederate Capital," *Honolulu Republican*, 2 December 1900.

12. Donald E. Markle, *Spies and Spymasters of the Civil War* (New York: Hippocrene Books, 2004), 108.

13. J. Park Alexander, "A Famous Woman," *The Beacon Journal* (Akron), 11 August 1900.

14. Varon, *Southern Lady, Yankee Spy*, 181.

15. Varon, *Southern Lady, Yankee Spy*, 205.

Elizabeth Van Lew's Ruined Reputation

A year after the war, Van Lew continued to preserve her reputation. Ulysses S. Grant, the leader of the Union Army during the war, came to visit Van Lew in full view of her neighbors in 1865.¹⁶ Strangely, this encounter remained unreported in newspapers. In 1866, a Unionist paper called *Harper's Weekly* published a piece on her father's death and briefly mentioned Van Lew and her mother's visits to Libby Prison during the war. However, the paper failed to acknowledge her involvement in spying. Instead, it praised Van Lew and her mother calling them "ministering angels."¹⁷ Up through 1866, since Van Lew's kept her spying secret, her local reputation remained unblemished and she had yet to gain national attention.

Van Lew only temporarily conserved her unsullied post-war reputation. Van Lew depleted much of her family's wealth in order to maintain her extensive spying. In 1866 financial difficulties forced her to consider her options. Van Lew kept an extensive journal during the war and toyed with the idea of publishing a memoir as a solution to her financial problems. The pro-slavery paper *The Richmond Inquirer* caught wind of her intentions and criticized her, claiming that her memoir would portray Confederate heroes in a terrible light.¹⁸ Fearing public backlash, Van Lew decided not to publish her memoir. This article marked the first time it became public knowledge that Van Lew spied for the Union during the Civil War. At this time, Van Lew experienced minimal consequences confined to the local level in Richmond. However, in the next few years, papers across the nation—especially in the South—used the knowledge that Van Lew spied for the Union as ammunition to tear down her reputation.

Since Van Lew decided not to publish her memoir, she remained in the throes of financial difficulties. She sought to resolve her problem by petitioning the government for the money she believed they owed her for her efforts during the war. Van Lew's prominent Union friends George Sharpe and Ulysses Grant lobbied the government in an attempt to help her. Sadly, they only managed to secure minimal, insufficient funds.¹⁹ As a result, Van Lew languished alone in her house with meager resources for four years.

16. Varon, *Southern Lady, Yankee Spy*, 196.

17. "The Residence of Mrs. Van Lew," *Harper's Weekly*, 7 July 1866.

18. Varon, *Southern Lady, Yankee Spy*, 207.

19. Varon, *Southern Lady, Yankee Spy*, 208.

When General Grant assumed the presidency in 1869, the tide turned for Van Lew. Up until then, she hid away in her mansion on Church Hill, where one or two papers mentioned her name. Only locals in Richmond paid attention to Van Lew and her reputation. Since Van Lew still lacked monetary means, when President Grant offered her the prestigious position of Postmaster of Richmond in 1869, she accepted. This office would give Van Lew a considerable amount of political influence as she would have the power to censure which newspapers circulated. If Van Lew wanted, she could prohibit the distribution of papers that did not reflect her political opinions. This post launched Van Lew onto the national stage, and she became renowned across the country. Her appointment became a topic of national debate, and her reputation would suffer immensely.

The majority of Union citizens predictably reacted positively to Van Lew's appointment as reflected in their newspapers. One Unionist paper in Massachusetts exclaimed, "God bless Miss Van Lew! At the risk of her life, and with the prospect of losing her valuable estate, by confiscation, this noble woman aided in every way she could the suffering Union soldiers."²⁰ Another paper in Massachusetts called *The Congregationalist and Boston Recorder* accepted her appointment exaggerating that "thousands of our soldiers received kindness at [her] hands."²¹ Papers in Vermont echoed these sentiments and lauded Van Lew for "rendering inestimable service to our army during its operations."²² Another Northern paper in Ohio, *The Daily Cleveland Herald*, defended Van Lew's appointment stating that "Northern soldiers are largely indebted to her for their freedom and lives." Overall, Northern citizens found that Van Lew's appointment "reflect[ed] credit on the judgment, good sense, and justice of the President."²³ Van Lew's support originated from the idea that she had been an invaluable Union spy during the war. None of these reviews on her appointment included her qualifications or experience. Instead, Van Lew's career as a spy formed the basis for her outstanding reputation among Union citizens.

Although the Union citizens typically supported Van Lew's appointment, some citizens from Union states opposed her. A handful of papers merely reported the facts, choosing to remain politically neutral on the topic. A paper

20. "The New Post Mistress of Richmond," *Lowell Daily Citizen and News* [Lowell, MA], 10 April 1869.

21. "Multiple News Items," *Congregationalist and Boston Recorder* [Boston, MA], 25 March 1869.

22. "Washington Items," *Vermont Chronicle* [Bellows Falls, VT], 27 March 1869.

23. "The Richmond Post-Mistress," *Daily Cleveland Herald* [Cleveland, OH], 1 April 1869.

in Ohio briskly stated, “Mrs. Van Lew . . . is to receive the appointment of post-mistress in Richmond, Virginia.”²⁴ Other papers outwardly expressed their hostile opinions on her appointment. Multiple papers in The District of Columbia published their antagonistic sentiments on the matter. *The Daily National Intelligencer* angrily quipped that, “General Grant seems to have elected Miss Van Lew without regard either for qualification, party interest, or popular opinion” and “No one in Richmond cared one iota for Miss Van Lew, she never had, before or since the war, any social recognition or admission into any respectable society.”²⁵ Another paper in Washington declared, “It may be doubted whether anyone could have been appointed who is more offensive to the people of Richmond, or in whose character they would have less confidence than this person.”²⁶ These Northern paper’s politics and goals should have aligned closely with Van Lew’s. However, by 1869, Democrats had already taken back a significant amount of power in the government. Thus, these papers reflected democratic political outlooks, namely, a distaste for the rights of freedmen and for the abolitionists who supported them. Furthermore, the North wished to reconcile with the South. If the North continued to support outspoken abolitionists such as Van Lew, their goal would be unobtainable. Thus, these papers objected to Van Lew on the foundation of her character and her political orientation, not her capability.

Van Lew’s gender also prompted antagonism against her from both the North and the South. Some newspapers, like this paper in Maine, merely stated Van Lew’s appointment as Postmaster adding at the end that “this is looked upon as a big thing for the women’s rights people.”²⁷ Meanwhile, other papers openly opposed Van Lew based on her gender. The Northern paper *The Vermont Chronicle* commented that “The appointment of Miss. Van Lew, as Postmaster at Richmond, Va., has drawn a huge crowd of hungry applicants of the sex to the doors of the White House.” The paper went on to comment that the effect of women seeking and holding office might “rent our whole social and civil structure” or even result in a woman running for the presidency.²⁸ Van Lew’s gender had no bearing on her qualifications, but it sparked resentment among multiple states, including Union states. Van Lew’s support of women’s rights exacerbated the problem. Van Lew desperately wished to vote, and each year

24. “From Washington,” *Newark Advocate* [Newark, OH], 19 March 1869.

25. “The Baltimore Commercial of Yesterday Has the Following,” *Daily National Intelligencer* [Washington, DC], 20 March 1869.

26. “A Bad Appointment,” *Daily National Intelligencer* [Washington, DC], 18 March 1869.

27. “Political and Personal,” *Bangor Daily Whig & Courier* [Bangor, ME], 18 March 1869.

28. “Female Office Seekers,” *Vermont Chronicle* [Bellows Falls, VT], 27 March 1869.

when she paid her taxes, she protested that if she had to pay taxes, she should be allowed to vote.²⁹ Van Lew's position represented a direct affront to how things had always been—women did not belong in office, they belonged at home. Anyone could rally behind this point whether they hailed from the North or the South. The fact that Van Lew blatantly backed women's rights meant that she became controversial on two political fronts, first for her outspoken support for African Americans both during and after the war, and second, for her public support of women's suffrage.

The former Confederacy greeted Van Lew's appointment with either indifference or hatred. *The Charleston Courier* reported the occurrence in one sentence, "The President nominated Mrs. Van Lew Postmistress at Richmond."³⁰ In another issue, the same paper dedicated, again, one sentence to the new Postmaster when Congress confirmed her nomination, briskly stating "An Executive session confirmed the appointment of Mrs. Van Lew to the Richmond post office."³¹ A Southern Georgian paper *The Weekly Georgia Telegraph* demonstrated the highest degree of disapproval related to Van Lew's appointment. They bitterly pointed out that "Mrs. Van Lew . . . was regularly tried and convicted as a spy during the war . . . The people heartily detest her."³² Multiple papers in Richmond, according to *The Boston Daily Advertiser*, welcomed Van Lew's appointment with "a chorus of detraction and insult." The city viewed her as "a traitor and a spy."³³ The appointment of Van Lew as Postmaster brought a flurry of insults upon her and her reputation founded upon her career as a spy against the Confederacy. Public knowledge of Van Lew's spy career created an environment where her reputation suffered. Both Northern and Southern papers criticized her appointment based on her politics. Van Lew only found support from citizens from the North who admired her occupation as a Union spy.

In the next few years, papers soiled Van Lew's reputation by reporting her poor performance in office. During her first year as Postmaster in 1869, newspapers berated Van Lew for failing to close the post office on Memorial Day. Eventually, the President intervened and closed the post office for the day.³⁴ In

29. "Current Mention," *Independent Statesman* [Concord, NH], 9 August 1877.

30. "By Telegraph," *Charleston Courier*, Tri-Weekly [Charleston, SC], 20 March 1869.

31. "By Telegraph," *Charleston Courier*, Tri-Weekly [Charleston, SC], 23 March 1869.

32. "Multiple News Items," *Weekly Georgia Telegraph* [Macon, GA], 2 April 1869.

33. "The Appointment of Miss Van Lew to Be Postmistress of Richmond Was Hailed by the Newspapers of That City with a Chorus of Detraction and Insult," *Boston Daily Advertiser* [Boston, MA] 7 April 1869.

34. "In General," *Boston Daily Advertiser* [Boston, MA], 15 June 1869.

1870, a paper in Ohio called *The Daily Cleveland Herald* portrayed Van Lew as a “regular martinet and [not showing] proper judgment . . . requiring an unreasonable amount of work.”³⁵ In 1872, a paper from California and Arkansas reported that Van Lew had a “tyrannical disposition.”³⁶ As a result of her treatment, several clerks resigned. These accusations were minimal compared to the improvements that Van Lew made, such as increased routes and delivering efficiency. The complaints from both the North and South were unrelated to Van Lew’s politics or spy career. However, since the North and South deeply disliked Van Lew’s political stances, these papers may have been attempting to tear down her reputation in whatever way possible in order to extricate her from a highly political office. Papers looked for any excuse to paint Van Lew in a negative light.

Citizens of the nation also disapproved of Van Lew as Postmaster because of her political leanings. In 1873, the Maine paper *The Bangor Daily Whig & Courier* published a scathing review stating that many “laugh to scorn that she has faithfully and effectively performed her duties” and that Van Lew “rendered no services in the late political campaign that entitle her to this appointment.”³⁷ As urgency for reconciliation mounted in the nation, Northern support increasingly waned for Van Lew. They could not afford to support a divisive force while trying to reunify.

By 1875, resentment flared up once again against Van Lew. Even though she had two more years left in her appointment, papers proposed replacing her. Republican *Inter Ocean* paper from Illinois explained that an effort to reorganize and strengthen the Republican party meant that Judge Mortan would be a more suitable candidate for Postmaster than Van Lew.³⁸ *Galveston Daily News* from Texas concurred. Two years before her time for reappointment, the North and South already spread rumors about her successor. The Republican party should have supported African American rights and by extension Van Lew. Instead, they turned their backs on her and discussed cutting off her radical political influence by taking her position away.

35. “News of the Day,” *Daily Cleveland Herald* [Cleveland, OH], 28 May 1870.

36. “This Evening’s Dispatches,” *Daily Evening Bulletin* [San Francisco, CA], 13 March 1872. “Latest Dispatches,” *Daily Arkansas Gazette* [Little Rock, AR], 14 March 1872. “MISS VAN LEW, of the Richmond, Va. Post Office, is a Tartar,” *Daily Arkansas Gazette* [Little Rock, AR], 8 May 1877.

37. “Local and Other Items,” *Bangor Daily Whig & Courier* [Bangor, ME], 17 March 1873.

38. “Washington,” *Inter Ocean* [Chicago, IL], 15 November 1875.

In 1887, Van Lew's time for reelection rolled around again. This time, papers gunned for her removal and used arguments based on her politics. Missouri, a former slave state, admitted in a paper entitled *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* that while Van Lew possessed high amounts of integrity there was "much fault in her politics."³⁹ A petition in Richmond, printed in Philadelphia and Maine newspapers begged for Van Lew's removal from office as she was on a "satanic crusade."⁴⁰ Meanwhile, a paper from New Hampshire explained that Richmonders disliked Van Lew because "she publicly insulted Richmond's aristocracy by asserting her independence to the extent of speaking out her political opinions without fear."⁴¹ The resentment against Van Lew was rooted so deeply in the hearts of Richmonders that they went to Washington to petition the President for her removal.⁴² It is not surprising that the former capital of the Confederacy and other Confederate states opposed Van Lew so vehemently. Their interests and politics ran directly opposite of Van Lew, so they focused on her adversarial politics, not her qualifications. The South sought to soil Van Lew's reputation through papers, petitions, and even trips to the White House. Van Lew's politics also ran contrary to the North because they desired to reconcile the country. This did not mesh well with Van Lew's unadjusted, radical politics relating to African American rights especially.

Only Northern citizens who still admired Van Lew's service and commitment to the country continued to support her. *The Milwaukee Daily Sentinel* defended Van Lew against Southern slander exclaiming that her "removal is demanded upon the simple ground that she is a loyal woman!"⁴³ *The Newark Advocate* reported that people in Ohio hoped that Van Lew would maintain to her position, and predicted that she would keep her appointment.⁴⁴ *The Daily Arkansas Gazette* begrudgingly disclosed that people from Michigan also hoped that Van Lew would retain her position.⁴⁵ These papers avoided mentioning Van Lew's political leanings, and instead focused on her service to the nation as a Postmaster, and former spy. While she had remained loyal to the nation, these

39. "Pour Les Dames," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* [St. Louis, MO], 8 July 1877.

40. "The People Who Want to Be 'Conciliated'," *Bangor Daily Whig & Courier* [Bangor, ME], 7 April 1877.

41. "Editorial Notes," *Independent Statesman* [Concord, NH], 29 March 1877.

42. "Our Bonds Abroad," *North American* [Philadelphia, PA], 24 April 1877.

43. "We Are Very, Very 10th to Call Attention to These Southern Prejudices Against Northern People," *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel* [Milwaukee, WI], 11 April 1877.

44. "Miss Van Lew Keeps Her Grip," *Newark Advocate* [Newark, OH], 6 April 1877.

45. "Washington," *Daily Arkansas Gazette* [Little Rock, AR], 17 April 1877.

papers would not go so far as to support Van Lew's political leanings. Unfortunately for Van Lew, her politics were too contradictory to the nation at this time, and she lost her position as Postmaster. *The Boston Daily Advertiser* watched sadly as Van Lew left her position with "forced grace."⁴⁶

Since Van Lew no longer occupied a political position in the government, papers ceased to mention her name and she began to fade into obscurity. In 1881 *The St. Louis Globe-Democrat* smugly commented that calls for Van Lew to return to her Postmaster appointment halted,⁴⁷ eliminating the threat of her political influence. In 1883 Van Lew found herself in financial turmoil again. She attempted to apply for a position as a librarian at Congress but they denied her the position,⁴⁸ likely due to her political stance. In desperation, she turned to her old friend Ulysses Grant, who scrounged up a lowly clerk job for her. *The St. Louis Globe-Democrat* made sure to point out that Van Lew only received the position through Grant's influence.⁴⁹ The only way that Van Lew could obtain a job was through patronage as her reputation was so thoroughly disfigured because of her politics. After harassment from multiple papers,⁵⁰ in 1887 Van Lew was removed from her office as she became old⁵¹ and a "troublesome relic of the war."⁵²

A sprinkling of Northern papers protested Van Lew's removal from her clerkship as it represented Southern revenge.⁵³ Another in Maine angrily indicated that the government refused to pay Van Lew, a loyal Union subject, while they simultaneously subsidized a man who helped the secession of Southern states advance.⁵⁴ The government declined to support abolitionists like Van Lew, yet supported former Confederates because they longed for a unified nation.

46. "Multiple News Items," *Boston Daily Advertiser* [Boston, MA], 4 July 1877.

47. "Each Side in Earnest," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* [St. Louis, MO], 26 March 1881.

48. "Washington Notes," *News and Observer* [Raleigh, NC], 13 May 1882.

49. "National Capital," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* [St. Louis, MO], 9 July 1883.

50. "A Miss Van Lew, of Richmond, Has Been Made an Issue by Certain of the Republican Papers of the North," *News and Observer* [Raleigh, NC], 14 July 1887. Odelia Blinn, "Miss Van Lew," *Daily Inter Ocean* [Chicago, IL], 9 July 1887.

51. "Union soldiers who were in Libby Prison during the war remember with gratitude the service rendered them by Miss Van Lew, a woman of wealth and position," *Morning Oregonian* [Portland, OR], 16 July 1887.

52. "Battle Stories of the Civil War," *Los Angeles Daily Times*, 5 September 1911.

53. "How Is This, Mr. Vilas?" *Daily Inter Ocean* [Chicago, IL], 1 July 1887.

54. "The death of Mr. Hunter calls attention to a peculiar inconsistency of the Administration, and it is an inconsistency which perhaps is not without significance, says a Washington dispatch," *Bangor Daily Whig & Courier* [Bangor, ME], 22 July 1887.

Van Lew's ruinous reputation made the last few years of her life extremely difficult. Jobless, Van Lew returned to her stately house on Church Hill in Richmond. Still grappling with financial difficulties, Van Lew attempted to sell her family's home, however, her neighbors hated her so much that she could not obtain a fair mortgage.⁵⁵ Parents encouraged their children to avoid her, and soon, nicknames such as hag, crone, and witch surfaced.⁵⁶ Locals viewed Van Lew as a traitor and ostracized her. Van Lew lamented that "I live here in the most perfect isolation. No one will walk with [me] on the street, no one will go with [me] anywhere."⁵⁷ Even her family's most intimate friends did not visit her for 35 years.⁵⁸ Alone, in 1900, Van Lew quietly passed away. Only one local newspaper gave her an obituary, *The African American Richmond Planet*. Only the freedmen that she fought so hard for cared enough to give Van Lew an obituary. Even the North, for a time, forgot her. After her death, Van Lew held a terrible reputation. People reported seeing her ghost around Richmond, and as a result, the government bought and demolished the Van Lew home in 1911. Van Lew's inability to adjust her radical political ideologies after the war and her lingering career as a spy caused her to die alone and disgraced.

Belle Boyd's Conspicuous Career and Renowned Reputation

Unlike Van Lew, the nation celebrated Belle Boyd after the Civil War. Boyd's spy career during the war is important since the North and South knew about Boyd's activities. After the war, Belle's national reputation was already well-established. Knowing about her war reputation is crucial to understand the substantial changes it underwent after the war. Boyd resided in the same state as Van Lew, in Martinsburg, north of Richmond. Belle Boyd was born in 1844 and at 18 she became involved in spying by coincidence. When Boyd started spying, the Union controlled Martinsburg. According to Boyd, a band of Union spies came to her house to investigate a rumor that she adorned her room with Confederate flags. The soldiers attempted to hang a Union flag outside of her house and cursed Boyd's mother when she refused to let them. Enraged, Boyd

55. Varon, *Southern Lady, Yankee Spy*, 237.

56. Varon, *Southern Lady, Yankee Spy*, 246.

57. Beymer, "Famous Scouts and Spies of the Civil War."

58. Alexander, J. Park, "A Famous Woman." *The Beacon Journal* (Akron).

shot and killed the perpetrator.⁵⁹ Although the soldier died from the wounds Boyd inflicted, Northern generals acquitted her. However, this incident resulted in soldiers being posted outside of her house. Boyd used this opportunity to become acquainted with the soldiers to obtain information to forward to Confederate forces. Boyd attained information from soldiers and other ladies whom she chatted with. She then promptly wrote it down and sent it to General Jackson through a trusted “colored servant.”

Unfortunately, Boyd did not possess the characteristic of being secretive. Not even a month after the North acquitted her, Union forces intercepted a note Boyd wrote. Boyd used her own handwriting and signed the note. Luckily for her, Union generals let her off with only a warning.⁶⁰ This prompted her parents to move her further south to live at her aunt’s hotel. While she stayed with her aunt, Boyd became a courier for the Confederacy smuggling weapons and medicine.⁶¹ During the time that Boyd resided with her aunt, Union forces captured her aunt’s hotel and used it as a headquarters. Soon after, Boyd met Union Captain Keily. Although Captain Keily knew that Boyd spied for the Confederacy, he was enamored and attempted to court her. Boyd mined this relationship to gain knowledge. One day while they spent time together, Keily let it slip that Union forces were about to hold a tactical meeting downstairs. Boyd knew the layout of the hotel well. She snuck upstairs, pressed her ear to a hole in the floor and heard everything the Union soldiers discussed. Afterward, Boyd mounted a horse and relayed the intelligence to Jackson herself.⁶² From then on, Boyd helped the Confederacy by passing information to them using fake passes.

By 1862, both the North and the South knew about Boyd’s spying activities. A Northern paper in Massachusetts called Boyd “the celebrated spy.”⁶³ In 1862, a Northern paper in Ohio complained that after they confiscated letters from Boyd, she still passed on all the information through memory, causing the North to lose a battle.⁶⁴ Although she was young and quite conspicuous, Boyd still presented a danger to the Union. The North reported Boyd’s activities and

59. Belle Boyd, 1844–1900, *Memoir of Belle Boyd, in Belle Boyd in Camp and in Prison* (New York: Blelock & Co., 1865), 464.

60. Ruth Scarborough, *Belle Boyd, Siren of the South* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997), 21.

61. Scarborough, *Belle Boyd, Siren of the South*, 27.

62. Scarborough, *Belle Boyd, Siren of the South*, 39.

63. “General Pope’s Movements,” *Lowell Daily Citizen and News* [Lowell, MA], 1 August 1862.

64. H. S. S., “Banks’ Retreat,” *Daily Cleveland Herald* [Cleveland, OH], 31 May 1862.

whereabouts to keep tabs on her. The North understandably detested her for her loyalty to the Confederacy, which earned her a deplorable reputation.

As time went on, Boyd became too confident. Boyd often flirted with and used men to gain information. She thought she did the same thing to a young soldier who claimed to be loyal to the Confederacy, when he was, in fact, a Union spy. Boyd entrusted him with a letter to give to General Jackson. Instead of the letter reaching its intended reader, the young soldier used it as evidence of Boyd's involvement in spying. The Union threw Boyd into Washington Capitol prison in 1862. Northern papers such as *The North American*, *The United States Gazette* from Philadelphia, and *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* from New York greeted this news with enthusiasm and celebrated her arrest.⁶⁵ A paper in Ohio jubilantly broadcasted the capture of the woman who "[betrayed] our forces" and proceeded to harshly degrade her. The paper denounced descriptions of Boyd as beautiful or educated and replaced them with claims that she was devoid of any brilliant qualities. In fact, they alleged that she was a courier and only fit for an insane asylum. The Union happily locked away this large political threat and thorn in their side.

The Union's joy that resulted from Boyd's capture was short-lived. In 1862, the North released Boyd from custody in a prisoner exchange. Union papers such as *The Boston Daily Advertiser*, *The North American*, and *The United States Gazette*, mournfully announced the news in their papers.⁶⁶ Meanwhile, the South rejoiced. North Carolina condemned the "dirty Yankees" treatment of her⁶⁷ but remained happy to have her back, safe and sound. Boyd's reputation flourished in the South as she continued to demonstrate her loyalty.

In 1863 Boyd's name was found again in the papers while she stayed in Tennessee. North Carolina paper *The Fayetteville Observer* smugly commented that throngs of admirers gathered outside of Boyd's window to see her after her release from prison.⁶⁸ Northern paper *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* tried to spin the story in a negative light commenting on Boyd's lackluster response to the crowd.⁶⁹ Upon Boyd's release, the North forbid Boyd from

65. Special Correspondence of the N. Amer. & U. S. Gaz, "By Magnetic Telegraph," *North American and United States Gazette* [Philadelphia, PA], 4 August 1862.

66. "By Telegraph," *Boston Daily Advertiser* [Boston, MA], 30 August 1862. "By Magnetic Telegraph," *North American and United States Gazette* [Philadelphia, PA], 30 August 1862.

67. "Multiple News Items," *Weekly Raleigh Register* [Raleigh, NC], 10 September 1862.

68. "Multiple News Items," *Fayetteville Observer* [Fayetteville, NC], 2 March 1863.

69. "Epitome of the Week," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* [New York, NY], 14 March 1863.

traveling north of Richmond. Boyd broke this requirement when she traveled to Martinsburg and allegedly passed information to the Confederacy.⁷⁰ Northern papers criticized Boyd when the Union threw her back into Old Capitol Prison.⁷¹ Meanwhile, the South tried to portray the story positively. South Carolinian paper *The Camden Confederate* cheerfully reported that Boyd drove her jailors mad by singing Confederate songs throughout the night.⁷² These newspaper reports demonstrate how the North and the South used papers to control public opinion concerning Boyd. The North attempted to degrade her and present her in the worst possible light, while the South used Boyd as a symbol of hope and faith in the Confederate cause. Her reputation directly reflected the political chasm between the North and South.

Boyd only resided in prison for a short time. Multiple Northern newspapers announced that the Union had sent Boyd to the South where she was to remain for the duration of the war.⁷³ Since Boyd could not effectively spy for the Confederacy contained in the South, she decided to travel to Europe. There, she hoped to persuade Britain to support the South in the war. Southern papers caught wind of the news and commented that Boyd's "many admirers will no doubt regret to hear that the South will soon be deprived of the presence of one of the most patriotic and heroic women."⁷⁴ The South not only valued Boyd for her information but also for the symbol of rebellion that she represented.

Unfortunately for Boyd, Northern interest conflicted with her plans to travel to Europe. The North refused to risk Boyd continuing her work as an agent for the Confederacy in Europe. As a result, Union soldiers intercepted Boyd on the *Greyhound*.⁷⁵ The North could not keep Boyd in custody, and soon, they released her.⁷⁶ As a result, Boyd seized the opportunity to escape to Canada.⁷⁷ Northern papers continued to report Boyd's whereabouts in Canada,

70. "Epitome of the Week," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* [New York, NY], 12 September 1863.

71. "Latest News," *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel* [Milwaukee, WI], 31 August 1863. "Telegraphic," *Daily Cleveland Herald* [Cleveland, OH], 29 August 1863.

72. "Multiple News Items," *Camden Confederate* [Camden, SC], 6 November 1863.

73. "By Telegraph," *Boston Daily Advertiser* [Boston, MA], 4 December 1863. "From Fort Monroe," *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel* [Milwaukee, WI], 4 December 1863.

74. "Midnight Despatches," *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel* [Milwaukee, WI], 9 February 1864.

75. "Telegraphic to the Whig & Courier," *Bangor Daily Whig & Courier* [Bangor, ME], 14 May 1864.

76. "A young man named George W. Nichols has been swindling the people in Franklin county in a novel way," *Lowell Daily Citizen and News* [Lowell, MA], 3 June 1864.

77. "Epitome of the Week," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* [New York, NY], 18 June 1864.

in order to keep tabs on the notorious spy and to make sure that she did not return to the United States. Just as the North feared, Boyd made her way to England in 1864, and *The Daily Richmond Examiner* proudly reported that Boyd was “making a sensation.”⁷⁸ Since Boyd’s name was constantly splashed on both Southern and Northern newspapers, as time went on, she became sensational. She led an exciting life, and people wanted to follow it. Northern newspapers tried to curtail this development by reporting in newspapers that she had “no beauty” and was “a sorry picture of a newspaper heroine.”⁷⁹ Despite the North’s efforts, Boyd did not fall from fame.

Belle Boyd’s Rise to Fame

Interestingly, when Boyd reached England, the nature of her reputation changed. Both the North and the South began to report on the events of her life, rather than how she affected the Civil War. The South continued to print papers about Boyd because of her status as a beloved heroine. Northern papers previously published about Boyd because she was a spy and a hazard. Presently, their articles still held the remnants of their hatred toward Boyd because of the political threat that she represented. However, now these reports centered on occurrences that were unrelated to her status as a spy. As time went on, their reports became nearly identical to Southern newspapers. For example, near the end of 1864, both Northern and Southern papers noted that Boyd got married in England to Samuel G. Hardinge.⁸⁰ A Southern newspaper, *The Daily South Carolinian* even called her marriage a “first class romance.”⁸¹

Boyd remained married to Hardinge for only a short time. He passed away soon after they got married, and left Boyd alone and pregnant without a way to support her child. As a result, Boyd enlisted the help of George Augustus Sala to publish her memoir.⁸² He agreed, and Northern papers followed Boyd’s career as an author, announcing that her memoir would be published in England.⁸³

78. “Jenny Lind’s husband has become a London editor,” *Daily Richmond Examiner* [Richmond, VA], 27 August 1864.

79. “Multiple News Items,” *New Haven Daily Palladium* [New Haven, CT], 18 May 1864.

80. “In General,” *Boston Daily Advertiser* [Boston, MA], 8 September 1864.

81. “Northern News,” *Daily South Carolinian* [Columbia, SC], 25 September 1864.

82. Michael DeMarco, “Belle Boyd (1844–1900),” Lewis A. Armistead, (1817–1863).

83. “The adventures of Miss Belle Boyd with the Confederato army will soon be published in England,” *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel* [Milwaukee, WI], 26 November 1864.

Soon after, *The Boston Daily Advertiser*⁸⁴ announced that the United States had published Boyd's work. The Union received Boyd's book poorly as they were still prejudiced against her even though she no longer a spied for the Confederacy. *The North American and United State Gazette* from Philadelphia boldly claimed that "a greater mass of folly, falsehood, conceit, and malice is rarely put between two covers."⁸⁵ Clearly, bias against Boyd persisted even after the last shot of the war was fired, which *The North American and United States Gazette*, *The Congregationalist*,⁸⁶ and *The Boston Daily Advertiser*,⁸⁷ among others, all promulgated. Boyd possessed a negative reputation immediately after the war because the North had not yet forgotten the services she offered to the Confederacy during the war. Furthermore, directly after the war, the North basked in their success, unable to see the need to reconcile with the South and accept former Confederates back into their ranks.

Perhaps the North began to pity Boyd when she lost her husband and became destitute.⁸⁸ When Boyd announced that she was going to try her hand at acting in England, Northern papers actually responded positively. They commented that Boyd attracted "universal sympathy" and that "her appearance on stage will no doubt prove a distinguished success."⁸⁹ From then on, the North reported on Boyd quite objectively, and she still held on to her esteemed status in the South. When Boyd began acting, Southern newspaper *The Natchez Daily Courier* quickly reported that Boyd was a raging success, and "brought the house down in thunders of applause."⁹⁰ Boyd's reputation shifted to include acting rather than spying and thus reports were devoid of slander or political discussions.

The next year in 1867, Boyd benefited from the benevolent policies of Andrew Johnson and consequently came back to the United States.⁹¹ When Boyd returned to America, she continued to pursue her acting career. She traveled across the

84. "In General," *Boston Daily Advertiser* [Boston, MA], 21 June 1865.

85. "Literary Notices," *North American and United States Gazette* [Philadelphia, PA], 20 July 1865.

86. "Literature and Art," *Congregationalist* [Boston, MA], 28 July 1865.

87. "In General," *Boston Daily Advertiser* [Boston, MA], 12 September 1865.

88. "In General," *Boston Daily Advertiser* [Boston, MA], 21 February 1865.

89. "In General," *Boston Daily Advertiser* [Boston, MA], 12 September 1865.

90. "Telegraphic," *Natchez Daily Courier* [Natchez, MS], 16 August 1866.

91. Newburyport Herald, "'Belle Boyd,' the notorious rebel spy during the war, passed through town on Friday evening, over the Eastern Road, on her way from St. John to Boston," *Lowell Daily Citizen and News* [Lowell, MA], 23 February 1867.

United States acting in theatres in both the east and the west.⁹² Boyd received mixed reviews, Wisconsin called her both a “rising star”⁹³ and a “failure,”⁹⁴ while Wyoming (also in the North) lauded her for her success in St. Louis.⁹⁵ Predictably, Southern paper *The Daily Arkansas Gazette* reported Boyd’s success.⁹⁶ It is evident from these papers that Boyd had become a sensation. People followed her life as if she were a celebrity in a tabloid. Since Boyd avoided political affiliations and espousing her former hatred of the Union, her reputation soared. Her improved reputation likely stemmed from the fact that the nation had begun the process of reconciliation under Andrew Johnson. The North gradually began to forgive individuals like Boyd who aided the Confederacy during the war.

Since Boyd made the transition from a controversial political figure to a sensational celebrity, when she dipped her toe into political waters she remained surprisingly unscathed. Tired of acting, in 1868 Boyd decided to make a living touring the country and telling stories of her wartime spy career.⁹⁷ Northern papers met this development with enthusiasm. The Northern Paper *The Daily National Intelligencer* noted that “Belle is a lady with talents of a high order, and she has beforehand appeared on the “tragic boards” with some success, it is but fair to suppose that the entertainment offered will be satisfactory to all those who attend.”⁹⁸ Boyd traveled all over the nation visiting places such as Cincinnati,⁹⁹ Galveston,¹⁰⁰ and Sacramento¹⁰¹ lecturing on her wartime experience. Boyd traveled to 28 states giving her lectures,¹⁰² receiving mostly positive reviews. *The Milwaukee Sentinel* reported that Boyd was “one of the best before the public.”¹⁰³ Another newspaper from Wisconsin stated that Boyd “[entertained] hundreds of persons daily with incidents of the exciting events

92. “City Items,” *Evening Republican* [Little Rock, AR], 25 July 1867.

93. “Dramatic,” *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel* [Milwaukee, WI], 13 September 1867.

94. “Personal Items,” *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel* [Milwaukee, WI], 20 September 1867.

95. “Items,” *Cheyenne Leader* [Cheyenne, WY], 26 October 1867.

96. “It is rumored that Mrs. Lincoln is going to write a book, assisted by Miss. Olive Logan, who is now in Chicago,” *Daily Arkansas Gazette* [Little Rock, AR], 13 November 1867.

97. “In General,” *New Hampshire Statesman* [Concord, NH], 20 March 1868.

98. “City News,” *Daily National Intelligencer* [Washington, DC], 5 March 1868.

99. “News of the Day,” *Daily Cleveland Herald* [Cleveland, OH], 25 November 1868.

100. “In General,” *Boston Daily Advertiser* [Boston, MA], 19 December 1868.

101. “Personal and General,” *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper* [New York, NY], 16 October 1869.

102. “Rebel Spy on Deck,” *Boston Daily Advertiser* [Boston, MA], 23 August 1895.

103. “Amusements,” *Milwaukee Sentinel* [Milwaukee, WI], 15 March 1886.

in her life during the war,”¹⁰⁴ Meanwhile, in the South, North Carolina paper *News and Observer* noted, “Belle Boyd’s lecture here last night has been highly spoken of. A good size crowd was present, and all went away greatly pleased.”¹⁰⁵ Boyd received some negative reviews from both the North and the South, but in general, she received positive reviews across the board, and the halls she lectured in were typically full.¹⁰⁶ Even when Boyd associated herself with the Civil War again, she maintained a positive reputation in both the North and the South. She achieved this by revising her own political beliefs to be neutral instead of extreme. Furthermore, the North aspired to reconcile with the South, which caused acceptance of former Confederates like Boyd back into society.

While the nation closely followed Boyd’s career, papers simultaneously tracked her personal life. *The Daily News and Herald* in Georgia reported her divorce¹⁰⁷ along with papers in Massachusetts,¹⁰⁸ Maine,¹⁰⁹ and California,¹¹⁰ among others. Papers also commented on another one of her marriages,¹¹¹ the birth of a child,¹¹² her brief retirement in St. Louis,¹¹³ and her separation from her last husband, Hammond,¹¹⁴ among other events in her life. Boyd became famous for political reasons when she spied for the Confederacy, but she continued to be a celebrity after the war in both the North and the South because she

104. “‘The Mikado’ Tonight,” *Milwaukee Daily Journal* [Milwaukee, WI], 18 March 1886.

105. “Belle Boyd at Wilson,” *News and Observer* [Raleigh, NC], 2 September 1894.

106. “Scalpers Being Scalped,” *Macon Telegraph* [Macon, GA], 2 October 1895.

107. “By Telegraph,” *Daily News and Herald* [Savannah, GA], 18 January 1868.

108. “The action of the British authorities in arresting George Francis Train and other supposed terrible Fenians from America, furnished another illustration, entirely unnecessary, of the tendency John Bull has to write himself down an ass,” *Lowell Daily Citizen and News* [Lowell, MA], 21 January 1868.

109. “Multiple News Items,” *Bangor Daily Whig & Courier* [Bangor, ME], 23 January 1868.

110. “Details of Eastern News,” *Daily Evening Bulletin* [San Francisco, CA], 10 February 1868.

111. “All Sorts of Items,” *Daily Evening Bulletin* [San Francisco, CA], 16 June 1869.

112. “The Mormons are said to be growing hostile towards the Gentiles, and to have formed a camp of fifteen thousand men, and the United States Government is said to have organized movement of military toward Utah in consequence,” *Georgia Weekly Telegraph and Georgia Journal & Messenger* [Macon, GA], 14 December 1869.

113. “Belle Boyd, who during the civil war gained reputation as a Union spy, is living a retired and quiet life in St. Louis,” *Daily Evening Bulletin* [San Francisco, CA], 23 February 1876.

114. “Sparks from Dallas,” *Galveston Daily News* [Houston, TX], 5 August 1884.

detached herself from politics and became politically neutral. The nation ate up news items that occurred in her life on a month-by-month basis throughout her lifetime. Yet, Boyd was not a sweetheart, she was sensational. Boyd became so popular, in fact, that impostors plagued her throughout her life.¹¹⁵ Newspapers often reported false deaths when one of Boyd's impersonators passed away.¹¹⁶ However, the reports of her death became real when she toured the country delivering her lectures. Papers mourned Boyd's unexpected death from a heart attack when she was only fifty years old, in Wisconsin.¹¹⁷

Fundamental Divisions and Resulting Reputations

Why the discrepancy between Belle Boyd and Elizabeth Van Lew? Peering into the state of the nation directly after the Civil War sheds an immense amount of light on the subject. Immediately after the war, the North and the South were still fundamentally divided. The North attempted to do create a united nation and to establish rights for freedmen. In 1866 when Congress reconvened, they began Radical Reconstruction which would include "black suffrage, a full declaration of citizenship for the freedmen, temporary disenfranchisement for ex-confederates, and a short-term military occupation of the South."¹¹⁸ Even though initially the South seemed ready and willing to accept anything the North proposed,¹¹⁹ the South still held radically different views than the North. First off, the South was reeling from the economic consequences that the Civil War imposed. Southerners lamented that they saw no future for blacks as free laborers.¹²⁰ Their profitable plantations would be difficult to restore to their former glory without slaves.

Economic consequences were not the only difference between the North and the South. The South viewed themselves as the victims, calling themselves

115. "Who wouldn't be a woman in Atlanta, Georgia?" *Cleveland Daily Herald* [Cleveland, OH], 14 November 1874.

116. "Belle Boyd, the Confederate spy, who died recently at Plymouth, Eng., is living at Corsicana, Texas, in easy circumstances," *News and Observer* [Raleigh, NC], 26 March 1882.

117. DeMarco, "Belle Boyd (1844–1900)."

118. David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 47.

119. Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 44.

120. Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 36.

“slaves of the Yankees.”¹²¹ As a result, the South combatted Northern goals which included Radical Reconstruction, and black rights.¹²² Southerners asked those who supported these aims if they either “loved the negro or hated the white man of the south?”¹²³ Even though the war ended, and the South lost, they were unprepared to accept their status or the status of freed African Americans. Their bubbling resentment resulted in mob violence against Unionists.¹²⁴ They viewed Radical Reconstruction as an imposed regime. Instead, Southerners favored their immediate admittance back into the Union without any changes of policy or behavior.¹²⁵ They wanted the easy way out.

In light of these circumstances, the Radical Reconstruction that the North hoped would be a quick solution after the war, fell flat. This created a divided North. Some, like Republican Senator Henry Wilson, preached a policy of kindness and urged Northerners to forget the feelings of the war that pitted the North against the South.¹²⁶ Others hadn’t quite bought into this idea, and instead proclaimed that “The murderers must answer to the suffering race.”¹²⁷ Getting off easy, as the Southerners hoped, seemed to be an option that the North could not fully embrace. Nonetheless, since the North accepted that they bore the burden of “forgetting and forgiving”¹²⁸ the South, the North began to implement policies that would mend the rift between them. President Grant readmitted most of the Confederate states into the Union.¹²⁹ The country began to remember the Civil War through the valor of soldiers on both sides and through generals.¹³⁰ It was better that the war was remembered as “Blue and Gray” rather than “Black and White.”¹³¹ Soon, Southern policies once again found a place in the government, when in 1872 Democrats won several Congressional elections.¹³²

121. Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 40.

122. Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 42.

123. Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 48.

124. Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 49.

125. Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 100.

126. Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 50.

127. Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 51.

128. Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 53.

129. Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 107.

130. Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 103.

131. Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 313.

132. Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 130.

The North obtained some small victories. Congress passed the fifteenth amendment in 1869, however, it allowed for the South to treat Blacks poorly. The amendment allowed qualification tests and poll taxes to continue to exist. Many African Americans could not pass these tests or pay the tax, restricting their right to vote.¹³³ Additionally, many Northerners viewed the ratification of the fifteenth amendment as the end of Reconstruction. By 1877, many thought that Reconstruction had achieved its purpose.¹³⁴ Now, the North focused on reconciling the nation rather than achieving equality and rights for blacks. This meant the North turned a blind eye toward several atrocities that occurred in the South. Discrimination ran rampant, and the South laid Jim Crow laws in place to segregate blacks from white society.¹³⁵ Poll taxes, qualification tests, and black codes¹³⁶ that the South established all limited black voting. Additionally, the Ku Klux Klan led mob violence against blacks.¹³⁷ Finally, to solve their economic problems, the South implemented sharecropping, which “employed” blacks at extremely low wages, resulting in large amounts of debt that kept African Americans tied to the land, even though they were technically free.¹³⁸ Increasingly, African Americans were sacrificed on the altar of reunion.¹³⁹

These conditions set the stage as to why Elizabeth Van Lew became so widely hated, and how Belle Boyd slipped by, unscathed. Both of these women resided in the South, and thus Southern opinions and values reigned king. The South hated Van Lew because of her politics. She identified herself as an abolitionist and wanted equality for blacks. The South could not allow these types of political ideas to flourish. The South had established and successfully admitted a new method of discrimination against African Americans into law. They would bury any of the threats that stood in their path. As a result, the South sought to tear down individuals such as Van Lew. They were so effective at this, in fact, that the harmful laws towards African Americans that they had set in place would not be abolished until 1964 in the Civil Rights Act. Furthermore, while the

133. Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 107.

134. Joshua Horwitz, and Casey Anderson, “The Civil War and Reconstruction,” In *Guns, Democracy, and the Insurrectionist Idea* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2009), 124.

135. Leon F. Litwack, “Jim Crow Blues,” *OAH Magazine of History* 18, no. 2 (2004): 7–58, 8.

136. Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 61.

137. Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 111.

138. Martin A. Garrett and Zhenhui Xu, “The Efficiency of Sharecropping: Evidence from the Postbellum South,” *Southern Economic Journal* 69, no. 3 (2003): 578–95.

139. Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 139.

North may have been reconciling, forgiving and forgetting, the South was not. They felt as though they were the victims. To them, Van Lew was a traitor. One of their own who had turned against them. They would not so easily forget the damage that she inflicted upon them. Van Lew stuck to her beliefs even in the face of opposition. She expected the nation follow her in her quest for the equality of blacks after the war. The reality of the situation meant that this endeavor would take much longer than her lifetime, and her inability to adapt to these circumstances led to her declining reputation.

However, this did not explain why Van Lew faced opposition in the North as well. Her politics undoubtedly aligned with the North better than the South. Yet, Van Lew's extreme abolitionist politics were too much even for the North while they attempted to mend the tear between the two halves of the nation. Her abolitionist ideas were not harmonious with the nation that the North was constructing. The North and South additionally disliked Van Lew because of her poor management of her employees as Postmaster. Although, this may have been a cover for their true hatred of her politics. Furthermore, Van Lew adamantly supported women's rights, which, at this time, was not widely accepted within society contributing further to the North's distaste for her.

Boyd, meanwhile, adapted to circumstances very well. During the war, Boyd was irrevocably dedicated to the South. She even claimed that she would rather die than be under the Union.¹⁴⁰ However, her tune quickly changed after the war ended. Even though Boyd's lectures consisted of talking about her experience in the Civil War, *Bangor Daily Whig & Courier* reported that Boyd "does not enter into sectional issues or politics."¹⁴¹ This made her lectures friendly to both the North and the South. Additionally, she often ended her lectures with the phrase, "One God, One Flag, One People Forever."¹⁴² This political sentiment exactly reflected Northern goals of reconciling the nation. It also echoed Southern beliefs as when Boyd shouted this phrase to a clapping audience, she spoke of white unity—not unity between white people and black people. Thus, the entire nation easily accepted her message.

Boyd merely dipped her toe into political waters, unlike Van Lew who dove straight in without testing the waters. Besides her lectures, which were largely devoid of politics, Boyd remained detached from politics. As a result, although

140. Scarborough, *Belle Boyd, Siren of the South*, 74.

141. "Nobody can object to the weather which has been dealt out to September thus far," *Bangor Daily Whig & Courier* [Bangor, ME], 9 September 1892: n.p.

142. Scarborough, *Belle Boyd, Siren of the South*, 181.

her fame may have originated from being a Confederate spy and political pawn, the nature of her fame changed over time. Boyd became reconciliatory. She attempted to survive in a nation with charged political feelings by becoming neutral. The papers had already developed the habit of reporting on Boyd during the war, so it was effortless to continue to do so after the war. Except now, the content of the papers reflected that of a sensational celebrity rather than a controversial political figure. Also, unlike Van Lew, Boyd did not outwardly support women's rights. Rather, she personified what a woman should be during this time—uninvolved in politics and not seeking more power than society allocated to her. Boyd's politics and outward actions resonated well with the status of the nation, and her reputation improved after the war.

Winners, losers, heroes, and villains are common outcomes of wars. At the conclusion of any war, the rules seem simple: the victors punish the defeated. Easier said than done. On paper, the South lost the Civil War. However, Northern winners bowed to Southern demands and appeased them in order to hold a fragmented nation together. The South did not endure the consequences of the war, but African Americans and radical abolitionists did. African Americans did not gain their equal rights or complete enfranchisement. The nation discarded abolitionists' political agenda for the benefit of the South because their politics did not coincide with the nation's goal of reunion. The losers—not the winners—dictated the results of the Civil War. Elizabeth Van Lew got caught in the crosshairs, resulting in her ruinous reputation. Meanwhile, Belle Boyd adapted to the situation to gain her radiant reputation.

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How the Pope Played Politics: The Papal Politics of Pope Pius XI in 1920s and 1930s Italy

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Pope Pius XI and Mussolini: the leaders who created a treaty between the Holy See and Italy, 1929.

Paper

How the Pope Played Politics

The Papal Politics of Pape Pius XI in 1920s and 1930s Italy

Benjamin Passey

SINCE THE CONCLUSION OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR, MOST OF THE debate on the Catholic Church's relationship with Italian fascism has focused on the wartime period and the Vatican's response or lack thereof to the Holocaust. However, in recent years, historians have turned their attention from Pope Pius XII (1939–1958) to his predecessor, Pope Pius XI (1922–1939).

On 11 February 1929, the Papacy, with Pope Pius XI at the head, signed a series of treaties and agreements with Mussolini's Fascist regime. Many contemporary historians have pointed to this moment as the beginning of the Pope's subservience to Il Duce. The willingness of the Pope to engage in an agreement with Mussolini has led to the belief that Pius XI was motivated by a lust for power and evil intent. However, a closer examination of the policies of Pius's pontificate in the 1920s and 1930s paints quite a different picture, of a man better suited to the life of astute diplomat rather than the head of the Holy See.

Historian David Kertzer has led the charge with his recent book, *The Pope and Mussolini*, stirring up scrutiny into the life of Pope Pius XI and his

contribution to the rise of fascism in Italy.¹ Kertzer asserts that not only did the church tolerate fascism in an attempt to isolate itself against potential reprisals, but also that fascist ideology—including authoritarianism, the intolerance of political opposition, and the suspicion of Jews—was inspired by Catholic tradition.² In his book, *Controversial Concordats: The Vatican's Relations with Napoleon, Mussolini, and Hitler*, Frank Coppa also examines the events leading up to the signing of the Lateran Treaty.³ Using his vast knowledge of Italian politics and the social climate in the 1920s, Coppa provides an alternative explanation for the willingness of the Vatican to reach terms on the Roman Question, an explanation far less sinister than that offered by Kertzer. Coppa argues that the church led by Pope Pius XI was motivated by a righteous desire to mend the relationship between church and state and protect Italians from the dangers posed by authoritarianism. In his book, *The Vatican and Italian Fascism, 1929–1932*, John Pollard takes an alternative approach to that of both Kertzer and Coppa, tracing what he refers to as “the logical and organic relationship” which formed between the church and state.⁴ He concludes that the relationship between Pope and Duce were far less cordial than Kertzer claims, attributing tensions between the two individuals in the years following 1929 to inaccurate expectations for the implications of the *conciliazione*. Because these books represent the majority of English-language scholarship on this topic, this paper will build upon the work of all three historians, examining the calculated and decisive political decisions of Pope Pius XI, which allowed him to consolidate power while establishing himself as one of the most powerful forces against fascism in Italy.

The willingness of the Vatican headed by Pope Pius XI to cooperate with Mussolini's totalitarian regime does not demonstrate weakness or lust for power on the part of the pontiff, but rather a keen eye for political maneuvering and the opportunity to further papal objectives. Specifically under Pius XI, the Vatican consolidated control of territory and historic sites and solidified the

1. David Kertzer, *The Pope and Mussolini: The Secret History of Pius XI. and the Rise of Fascism in Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

2. Frank J. Coppa, *Controversial Concordats: The Vatican's Relations with Napoleon, Mussolini, and Hitler* (Catholic University of America Press, 2012), 193.

3. Coppa, *Controversial Concordats*, 95.

4. John Pollard, *The Vatican and Italian Fascism, 1929–1932: A Study in Conflict* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

position of the Catholic Church in Italy, all while maintaining the ability to speak and act freely of the repressive totalitarian regime.

Early Relations between Church and State

In order to understand how the Vatican was able to make such significant strides toward greater autonomy and political control in Italy, it is important to examine the period of Italian unification. During the *Risorgimento*, or unification of Italy, the papal states were seized from the church and annexed into the new nation, with Rome, home of the Vatican, as the capital. In the following six decades, the relationship between the church and state did not improve.⁵ Pope Pius IX (1846–1878) declared himself a “prisoner” in the Vatican, setting the precedent for the political attitude of the next three popes towards the Italian state.⁶ From their “incarceration” in the Vatican, the popes denounced the growing separation between the church and state, lamenting not only the loss of the papal states, but also the secularization of the new nation. Some of the popes were so disenchanted with the Italian government that they discouraged devout Catholics from participating in the politics of the nation that had robbed them of their territory and had forsaken its Catholic origins. The turn of the century marked the climax in hostility between church and state, but in the coming decades, that relationship would gradually transform from one of resentment and distrust to one of partnership and mutual benefit.

Despite the legacy of discord and resentment that marked the decades after unification, hope of improved relations arose from the devastation of global war. The First World War and the postwar years lessened the tension and improved the relations between the Vatican and Rome, as both parties decried the unfair treatment of Italy at the Treaty of Versailles. With the relationship between Rome and the Vatican slowly improving, the liberal democratic government, most notably under Prime Minister Orlando, attempted to end the Roman

5. Italian unification, or the *Risorgimento* (“the Resurgence”), was the political and social movement that consolidated the independent states of the Italian peninsula into a single state in the 19th century. The process began in 1815 with the Congress of Vienna and culminated in 1871, when Rome became the capital of the Kingdom of Italy.

6. David Kertzer, *Prisoner of the Vatican: The Popes’ Secret Plot to Capture Rome from the New Italian State* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2005), 45.

Question by offering to renegotiate the Law of Guarantees, a law passed in 1871 in an attempt to reconcile with the Vatican after the Risorgimento.⁷ Despite the best attempts of Orlando and countless Prime Ministers before him, the Vatican refused to recognize, let alone reach an agreement on, the Law of Guarantees. With issues about the church and its relations remaining hostile, it is no surprise that drastic measures would be required to improve the conditions.

A Relationship of Mutual Benefit

The year 1922 marked an important turning point in both the course of the church and state, with the ascent of Pope Pius XI to the papacy in February, and the rise of Mussolini eight months later, in October. Almost immediately after assuming the position of prime minister, Mussolini began to vocalize his desire to reach a settlement with the Vatican, recognizing that a treaty with the Vatican would offer immense legitimacy to his regime. Equally interested, the Pope saw in Mussolini an opportunity that had not been presented to his predecessors: the prospect of negotiating not with a liberal democratic government, but with an aspiring authoritarian dictator who desired the appearance of a papal endorsement. Pius's chance presented itself after the assassination of Giacomo Matteotti in 1924 and the subsequent Aventine Succession. While many political parties and organizations in Italy condemned Mussolini and the fascist party for the removal of political opposition, Pius expressed his conviction that only Mussolini could "steer the ship [Italian State] into calmer water, providing the strong hand needed."⁸ However, with a deeper understanding of Pius's own agenda and motivation to improve the Vatican's situation, it is clear that this expression was one of temporary necessity rather than earnest conviction.

Pius's praise of Mussolini as a leader continued, although ulterior motives grew more transparent as time progressed. After a failed assassination attempt on Mussolini's life, the Pope went so far as to say that divine intervention had spared Mussolini's life. Whatever the Vatican's assessment of the morality of Mussolini, a self-proclaimed *mangiaprete*, or priest-eater, it clearly determined

7. Thomas B. Morgan, *A Reporter at the Papal Court: A Narrative of the Reign of Pope Pius XI* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1939), 166.

8. Antonio Pellicani, *Il Papa di tutti, La Chiesa Cattolica, il fascismo, e il razzismo, 1929–1945* (Milan: Sugar Editore, 1964), 10.

that there was divine intervention for him to live since, unlike so many Italian leaders before him, he could finally resolve the Roman Question; his yearning for papal backing put him in a position to make concessions that other leaders would not make.⁹ Pius ensured Mussolini's retention of power by weakening the *Partito Popolare Italiano* (Italian Peoples Party [PPI]) in 1922 with the forced resignation of adamant anti-fascist and the party's priest-leader, Father Don Sturzo. Without a powerful leader, the PPI was in no position to form a coalition government with Matteotti's socialist party, allowing Mussolini to ascend to the position of dictator in 1925 uncontested.¹⁰

Finalizing the Agreement

With Mussolini formally installed as Il Duce, secret talks began between representatives of the Pope and Mussolini in 1926. These covert exchanges continued periodically until formal negotiations began in 1928. On 11 February 1929, Pius announced that the Vatican had concluded a formal settlement with Italy, ending the Roman Question and laying to rest a quarrel that had burdened the papacy for more than half a century. With the negotiations complete and the treaty signed, many heralded the reconciliation of the church and state as well as the end of the Roman Question as the "biggest story of 1929" and Mussolini's most important political maneuver of the decade.¹¹ Nonetheless, contrary to this popular belief, Pope Pius XI was the true victor of the negotiation.

The Lateran Treaty included three accords: a conciliation treaty that terminated the Roman Question and declared Vatican City to be a neutral and inviolable territory; a concordat which regulated church-state affairs in Italy, and a financial convention that provided financial compensation for papal territory annexed during the unification.¹²

The structure of the agreement demonstrates the political cunning of the Pope. With one treaty, he effectively resolved the three most pressing issues facing the Vatican. Article three of the Lateran Treaty put an end to the Roman Question, granting the church "full ownership, exclusive dominion, and

9. Kertzer, *The Pope and Mussolini*, 52.

10. D. A. Binchy, *Church and State in fascist Italy* (Oxford University Press, 1970), 157–58.

11. Morgan, *A Reporter at the Papal Court*, 166.

12. Coppa, *Controversial Concordats*, 95.

sovereign authority and jurisdiction of the Holy See over the Vatican.”¹³ Article one of the treaty codified Catholicism as the “only State religion.”¹⁴ Ordinarily, a provision of this nature would have been addressed only in a concordat rather than a treaty. However, its presence and position in the Lateran Treaty reflect Pius’s determination to have the privileged position of the church bound by international law. By agreeing to this article, Mussolini effectively agreed to allow a foreign power to play a role in Italian internal affairs. This concession on the part of Mussolini and his Fascist government contradicts the assertion that Mussolini, rather than the Pope, most benefited from the accord because Mussolini simultaneously weakened his totalitarian control politically and socially.¹⁵

Article forty-five of the Concordat, which accompanied the Treaty, detailed the powers and privileges afforded to the church as the sole state religion. These included compulsory religious instruction in primary and secondary schools, the official adoption by the totalitarian state of the church’s position on marriage and divorce, and the reformation of public policy and state legislation to harmonize with church teachings.¹⁶ Located at the end of the Concordat, Article forty-three provided for the immunity of Catholic Action groups from coercion or control by the fascist government on the condition that the groups refrain from all political activities.¹⁷ The inclusion of this seemingly insignificant article would become one of the most important parts of the entire Concordat in the coming years, allowing the Pope to openly oppose Mussolini at the height of Il Duce’s power.

The final part of the three-part accord was an agreement on financial compensation for the loss of the papal states during unification. Although this is the least discussed portion of the agreement, it is one of the most important, given the serious financial difficulties that faced the Holy See in the 1920s. For this reason, Pius negotiated relentlessly on the amount of compensation, pushing Mussolini to the limit on the matter.¹⁸ Whereas the Lateran Treaty and the

13. Article 3, Lateran Agreement, Treaty between the Kingdom of Italy and the Holy See, 11 February 1929.

14. Article 1, Lateran Agreement, Treaty between the Kingdom of Italy and the Holy See, 11 February 1929.

15. Coppa, *Controversial Concordats*, 96.

16. Claudia Carlen, *Papal Pronouncements. A Guide: 1740–1978*, 2 (Pierian Press, 1990), 99.

17. E.R. Tannenbaum, *Fascism in Italy: Society and Culture 1922–1945* (London: Allen Lane, 1974), 190.

18. Pollard, *The Vatican and Italian Fascism*, 43.

Concordat took only four months to negotiate, the financial component of the agreement took nearly two years.¹⁹ Ultimately, the parties agreed on an immediate payment to the Vatican of 750,000,000 Italian lire and the issue of a bearer bond with a 5 percent yield and a coupon value of 1,000,000,000 Italian lire.²⁰ This large infusion of capital drastically improved the financial situation of the Vatican, which was so near bankruptcy in 1922 that it had to borrow \$100,000 to cover the funeral expenses of Pope Benedict XV (1914–1922).²¹ Without Pope Pius XI's insistence on the addition of this crucial component of the Lateran Treaty, it is quite possible that the Vatican would have gone bankrupt, significantly diminishing their historical role over the next decade.

Mussolini's Motivation

In return for the concessions Mussolini made in the negotiation of the treaty, he anticipated the full and considerable support of the Vatican. He was not disappointed; not long after the signing of the treaty, a plebiscite was held to replace the Acerbo electoral law, which had allowed the Fascist Party to ascend to power in 1924. The Vatican instructed Catholics to vote in support of Mussolini and the Fascist Party as “eloquent proof of the full support of Italian Catholics for the Government.”²² Upholding the unspoken agreement to support Mussolini was only a secondary motive for the Vatican's instruction to Catholics to vote for the fascists. In reality, their primary motive was to ensure the parliamentary ratification of the Lateran Treaty, guaranteed by Mussolini's retention of power. The appeal to Catholic voters issued on the eve of the election stated, “a vote ‘yes’ will signify a binding mandate to Parliament [controlled by Mussolini] to ratify the Pacts [treaty] and to approve the legislation necessary for the implementation of the Concordat.”²³

19. Pollard, *The Vatican and Italian Fascism*, 44.

20. The Financial Convention Annexed to the Lateran Treaty, 1929, Article 1.

21. Ronald J. Rychlak, *Hitler, the War, and the Pope* (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 2010), 37.

22. A.C.S., S.P.D., C.R. 88W/R, “Tachi-Venturi,” letter to Mussolini of 17 February 1929, in Pollard, *The Vatican and Italian Fascism*, 57.

23. Bollentino Ufficiale, 15 March 1929, “I Cattolici e le Elezioni,” in Pollard, *The Vatican and Italian Fascism*, 57.

Many fascists inside Italy and around the world viewed Mussolini's treaty with the Catholic Church as a betrayal.²⁴ Not long after securing his position as Italian dictator, Mussolini began making statements about the relationship between church and state that were contrary to the Lateran Treaty. In May 1924, only a few months after the signing of the Treaty, Mussolini said, "Within the state, the Church is not sovereign, nor is it even free . . . because it is subordinate . . . to the general law of the state. We have not resurrected the Temporal Power of the Popes, we have buried it."²⁵ Mussolini continued to test the strength of the treaty by resuming his mangiaprete rhetoric. Despite Mussolini's open violations of the treaty, Pius recognized that the accords and concordat offered him a legal basis to oppose the "totalitarian regime." In his December 1929 encyclical, Pius upheld the codified role of the church in Italian education, denouncing Mussolini's attempts to consolidate control of education as "unjust and unlawful."²⁶ Thus, despite Mussolini's outward violations of the treaty, Pius continued to use the treaty as a means of insulating himself and the papacy from Mussolini's reach.

Counterbalancing Mussolini

Notwithstanding his harsh rhetoric directed at the church and papacy, soon after signing the Treaty, Mussolini and his government sought the support of the church to further their expansionist objectives. In November 1929, the Italian government appealed to the Vatican to use its missions to spread fascist propaganda in Ethiopia. This request was met with the curt response, "it was not and never had been the policy of the Catholic Church to permit its missions to be used for nationalistic ends."²⁷ When the government repeated its request in 1930, it was again met with opposition—this time in the form of an even more resounding no! Pope Pius XI stated his and the church's position unequivocally:

24. Derek J. Holmes, *Papacy in the Modern World 1914–1978* (New York: Crossroad, 1981), 58–59.

25. Nicolas Cheetham, *The Keeper of the Keys: A History of Popes from St. Peter to John Paul II* (London: Macdonald, 1986), 280.

26. Claudia Carlen, *The Papal Encyclicals 1903–1939* (Milwaukee: The Pierian Press, 1990), 359.

27. L'Italia, "Le Missioni Cattoliche." 23 November 1929.

“Nationalism has always been a calamity for the missions, indeed it would be no exaggeration to say that it is a curse.”²⁸

As early as 1929, protected by the Concordat from fascist intervention, Pope Pius XI encouraged the growth and participation of Italians in Catholic Action organizations as a counterbalance to fascism. With Mussolini’s growing resentment and rejection of the Catholic Church, Pius relied on Catholic Action groups to affirm, diffuse, and defend Catholic principles in the state and society.²⁹ In an attempt to limit the control of the Vatican through Catholic Action groups, and likely in an effort to punish the church for its refusal to back his expansionist aspirations in Africa, Mussolini embarked on a campaign to dismantle the organizations. Despite his best efforts, the political maneuvering of Pius kept the Catholic Actions groups alive. The signing of the Catholic Action Accords in September 1931 limited the power of the groups but solidified their existence as part of Italian society under the protection of the Pope. The Vatican left the accords, and was heralded throughout the Catholic world as the victor; one magazine charged that the “Man of Providence” had succumbed to the Pope.³⁰

Notwithstanding the limitations of the Catholic Action organizations imposed by the 1931 Accords, Pope Pius XI used the groups with maximum efficiency, conducting an ideological campaign against Fascism through publications and discussion groups that were protected from reprisal by the Pope himself, in order to condemn totalitarian ideology including the anti-Christian doctrines of the regime.³¹ The protection provided by the Pope through the Lateran Agreement allowed Catholic Action groups to grow organically, free from fascist penetration. These organizations spread throughout society, initially drawing the bulk of their memberships from the anti-fascist *Federazione Universitaria Cattolica Italiana* (Italian Catholic Federation of University Students), or FUCI. Pius described these early devotees as “the apple of his eye and the light of the entire Catholic family.”³² Protected from Mussolini and his

28. Discorsi, vol. II, “Ai Religiosi Missionari,” 7 December 1929, 214–15.

29. Coppa, *Controversial Concordats*, III.

30. Marc Agostino, *Le pape Pie XI. et l’opinion: 1922–1939* (Roma: École française de Rome, 1991), 480.

31. Frank Rosengarten, *The Italian Anti-Fascist Press (1919–1945); From the Legal Opposition Press to the Underground Newspapers of World War II*. (Cleveland, OH: Press of Case Western Reserve University, 1984), 58.

32. Coppa, *Controversial Concordats*, 118.

quest for ideological hegemony by Pope Pius XI, Catholicism was free to compete for the hearts and minds of Italians both old and young. It began slowly but then picked up momentum, until it was the second largest movement in Italian, second only to Fascism.

Emboldened Opposition

Though much of the Pope's opposition to Mussolini was veiled in diplomatic language or channeled through Catholic Action, his response to Mussolini's adoption of the Aryan Manifesto in July 1938 was different. Pius immediately branded Mussolini's anti-Semitic policy as true apostasy, calling for Catholic Action groups to combat the manifesto with full force. With each address or policy change that Mussolini issued to advocate racism, Pius responded with condemnation, coming as close as he possibly could to publicly denouncing Mussolini. When Mussolini forbade marriage between Aryans and non-Aryans, Pius condemned the policy as a breach of the Concordat. At the time of his death in February, Pope Pius XI was drafting an encyclical to be released to the Catholic world, condemning Mussolini and fascist abuses. When Mussolini learned of the Pope's passing he reportedly yelled, "Finally, that obstinate old man is dead."³³ These were not the words of a man who was mourning the loss of an ally or pawn. Rather, they were the words of an individual relieved to be rid of a cunning, powerful, and protected revival.

Looking Forward

Many historians have pointed to the signing of the Lateran Agreement in 1929 as the moment Mussolini solidified his influence over the Catholic Church and its leader, Pope Pius XI. In reality, the Lateran Agreement allowed the church to consolidate power, setting the tone for its political and social actions over the next two decades as well as demonstrating the diplomatic genius of the Pope. Max Ascoli, an Italian Jewish professor of political philosophy, effectively summarized the advantages the church derived from the agreement. He said,

33. Roger Aubert, *The Church is a Secularized Society: The Christian Centuries* (Paulist Press, 1978) 5:557.

“The Church keeps intact her moral prestige and the hierarchic framework, her legal rights are well guarded; the doors of the spiritual world are wide open.”³⁴ Long after his death, the people of Italy continued to reap the rewards of Pius’s foresight. After the fall of fascism, Catholic Action—the organization that the pope had gone head to head with Il Duce to preserve—stepped in as the most influential movement in Italy, playing a key role in the post-war reconstruction of Italy.³⁵

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34. Max Ascoli, “The Roman Church and Political Action,” *Foreign Affairs*, April 1935.

35. Coppa, *Controversial Concordats*, 119.



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The Allure of the Belle Époque: Giovanni Boldini's Portrait of Cléo de Mérode

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Figure 1. Portrait of Cléo de Mérode by Giovanni Boldini, 1901.

Paper

The Allure of the Belle Époque Giovanni Boldini's Portrait of Cléo de Mérode

Kayla Hofeling

THE CHARM AND ELEGANCE OF PARIS IS UNPARALLELED IN ALL THE world. Much of this sentiment comes from the dazzling characters and artworks that were born from the culture of the Belle Époque, a time of rich splendor and luxury for the upper classes in late nineteenth-century Paris. One such character was the little-known Italian artist Giovanni Boldini, who spent the height of his career painting in the midst of the Belle Époque. His works comprise portraits and genre scenes of upper-class Parisian life; as “the Master of Swish,” his near-Impressionistic tendencies in these paintings perfectly capture the splendor of this period.

The forty-odd years during this “beautiful era” of Parisian life produced unique fashions and painting styles and saw the rise of the courtesan, an independent and often scandalous woman who made her own way in Paris. Boldini's portrait of one such woman, the highly famed dancer Cléo de Mérode (see figure 1), with its fanning brushstrokes and texturized, velvety tones impeccably encapsulates the exuberance and opulence of what it meant to be a Parisian female celebrity in the Belle Époque. Additionally, the unconventional artistic style of Boldini's portrait marks both him and Mérode as exemplary characters of the Belle Époque instead of displaying tendencies as avant-garde figures of the time.

Courtesans of the Belle Époque

The Belle Époque has been painted as a time of glittering luxuriousness amidst the feelings of gloom and doom in the *fin-de-siècle*, or the time at the end of the nineteenth century in which citizens across the western world were apprehensive about what the new century would bring. The sentiments surrounding the *fin-de-siècle* were not unfounded, based on the rapidly evolving technologies from the Industrial Revolution and the impending First World War.

It appears that The Belle Époque, however, stands out as a sort of gleaming bubble within this period. Here, favorable socioeconomic conditions allowed Parisians to enjoy displays of wealth like never before.¹ Artists like Giovanni Boldini flocked to Paris to document the period, and it has been stated that Boldini greatly catered to the tastes in portraiture during this time.² His long, dynamic brushstrokes were the perfect means to capture “a curling tress, a satin flounce, or a dainty gesture,”³ all telling features of the splendor of the era. Boldini immortalized the important figures of the day, from dandies to actresses, from children of wealthy parents to self-made stars.

One category in particular of these Belle Époque figures was a fundamental character of the Paris’s beautiful age: the courtesan. Like the newly appearing technologies that had been permeating western culture for several decades, the courtesan emerged from the changing nature of class structures within Paris. The courtesan was a young, beautiful woman—beauty had become an essential element for anyone who wanted to be someone—who often came from a very modest background, though the unsuspecting viewer of such a woman would never guess at this. She was an actress, not necessarily as an occupation, but certainly in her role as a courtesan. She was able to hide her humble past in a sort of “masquerade” in society; she was fashionable and socialized among Paris’s finest.⁴ Perhaps the most impressive part of the courtesan’s charade was that she was able to be a prostitute where only decades before, the common prostitute

1. Barbara Guidi, “Commercial Portrait Artists: Notes on the fin-de-siècle portrait painting market and the strategies of its key players,” in *Portraits of the Belle Époque*, ed. Tomàs Llorens and Boye Llorens (Barcelona, Spain: CaixaForum, 2011), 29.

2. Caroline Igra, “Reviving the Rococo: Enterprising Italian Artists in Second Empire Paris,” *Art History* 28 no. 3, (2005): 353.

3. Raymond J. Steiner, “Giovanni Boldini at The Sterling and Francine Clark Institute,” *Art Times* 26 no. 5, (March/April 2010): 12.

4. Stephen Gundle, “Mapping the Origins of Glamour: Giovanni Boldini, Paris and the Belle Époque,” *European Studies*, xxix, (1999): 275.

would have been cast from respectable society. She achieved this because she patronized only the extremely wealthy and elite members of society. All this made her a glamorous and desirable representation of such a woman.⁵

Additionally, the changing structures in social classes that allowed the courtesan to exist meant that each social class was more aware of the other. The upper class lost its closed-off nature and became a more accessible group of people. Because of this, the courtesan could now rise from her humble past and live among the elite.⁶

She was a New Woman, not in the sense that she was an outright feminist—she did not wear pants or do other “manly” things—but because she aspired to matter in some way, and she often achieved this through her moral freedom and economic independence. Though she did earn money from her suitors, she most often had a career of her own.⁷ The courtesan's occupation could be anything from a dancer or actress to a singer or acrobat. But one thing was always certain: the courtesan made her way into the high ranks of the enticing public sphere of the Belle Époque.⁸

Cléo de Mérode: Dancer and Courtesan

It is in Cléo de Mérode, a dancer with the Paris Opera Ballet, that we find the epitome of the courtesan. Mérode was born in 1875 to a baroness estranged from her husband. As she rose through the ranks of the Ballet, she gained much fame and attention, though it was less for her dancing than for her sensational beauty and her atypical, ear-hiding hairstyle.⁹ (We see this distinctive hairstyle in Boldini's portrait of her.)

She was not a prostitute in the strict sense, but she did lend herself as a nude model to Alexandre Falguière's *La Danseuse* (see figure 2). This statue created quite a controversy because it was a nude marble statue, like the Venuses of Antiquity, but the figure's unnaturally narrow waist indicated that the model

5. Gundle, “Mapping the Origins of Glamour,” 276.

6. Gundle, “Mapping the Origins of Glamour,” 273.

7. Mary Louise Roberts, *Disruptive Acts: The New Woman in Fin-de-Siècle France* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 2002), 21.

8. Michael D. Garval, *Cléo de Mérode and the Rise of Modern Celebrity Culture* (Surrey, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2012), 49.

9. Garval, *Cléo de Mérode and the Rise of Modern Celebrity Culture*, 2.



Figure 2. *La Danseuse*
by Alexandre Falguière,
1896.

had used a corset; therefore, she was a real, contemporary woman. Moreover, the figure's telltale hairstyle was inevitably connected to Mérode, meaning that the model for the statue was not only contemporary, but also a bit of a notoriety.¹⁰ Of course, when directly questioned about it, Mérode defended her virtue by saying that she had only lent her head for the statue—though it is important to note that she was not exactly zealous in her defense, as any publicity was good publicity for a courtesan.¹¹

In fact, there were rumors flying for the duration of the Belle Époque that Mérode was having a licentious affair with King Leopold II of Belgium.¹² Whether or not these rumors were true is unknown, as Mérode had the same reaction to them that she did of the accusations that she had posed nude for the controversial *La Danseuse*. Notably, the scholar Michael Garval points out that in all photographs of Mérode from the period, she has a “strikingly blank expression” without any hint of a smile or the come-hither gaze that was so prevalent among photographs of other Belle Époque courtesans.¹³

Boldini's Portrait of Mérode

The dancing that put Mérode in the spotlight and the beauty that kept her there is flawlessly translated onto canvas in Boldini's portrait. In the work., Mérode is twisted in her seated position, though not unnaturally: her lower back arches, her shoulders press forward, and her head is turned, exposing her elegant neck. Belle Époque art called for a sensual view of the woman being portrayed, and this twisting pose both allows the viewer to see more of her body as well as hints at her pose being “a still version of the dancing body.”¹⁴ This

10. Garval, *Cléo de Mérode and the Rise of Modern Celebrity Culture*, 20.

11. Garval, *Cléo de Mérode and the Rise of Modern Celebrity Culture*, 18.

12. Garval, *Cléo de Mérode and the Rise of Modern Celebrity Culture*, 2.

13. Garval, *Cléo de Mérode and the Rise of Modern Celebrity Culture*, 46.

14. Gundle, “Mapping the Origins of Glamour,” 282.

pose reminded viewers of Mérode's background in ballet, but also markedly heightened her fame by making an understated but definitely visible reference to her role as a courtesan.

Mérode's typical blank expression does not appear in Boldini's portrait. In the painting, Mérode smiles coyly up through her lashes—but she is not looking at the viewer. She is not inviting the viewer to “come hither.” She seems instead to reserve her gaze for an unseen person in the wings.

A comparison of this piece with the photograph of Carolina “La Belle” Otero, a scandalous Belle Époque dancer and courtesan known for having numerous high-profile lovers,¹⁵ will reveal that Mérode and Otero are in strikingly similar positions, though

Otero gazes straight out at the viewer (see figure 3). Mérode's redirection of her sensually inviting glance seems to be reflective of the way she answered the media's questions concerning her alleged affairs—she does not look directly at the viewer and was not open about her lovers in the way that many other courtesans were. But in the way that she does still have a flirtatious gaze, she did not boldly deny the rumors. This artistic tactic shows that Boldini certainly understood the mastery of portraiture to convey the innermost thoughts and personality of the sitter.



Figure 3. Photograph of *La Belle Otero* by Léopold-Émile Reutlinger, circa 1900.

Image of a Courtesan

From this work, we can see the great emphasis that courtesans such as Mérode placed on projecting their desired image. This glamorous and beautiful image was key to maintaining their status in society. It was a constant display of pretense designed to hide the courtesan's background—both her lowly past and her role as prostitute—and masquerade as always having been a part of high society.

15. Charles Castle, *La Belle Otero: The Last Great Courtesan* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1981): back cover.

(This was particularly applicable to Mérode: as a dancer, she spent her career in the theater, “a world of artifice.”¹⁶)

Here again we see how Boldini was the perfect match as a portraitist of the courtesan. It has been suggested that the care and detail he took to render the figure’s face emphasizes the fact that the swishing brushstrokes in the rest of the work are only “surface effect”—that the entire painting is just as much an artificial display as was the life of the subject in the painting.¹⁷ By contrasting these two very different types of brushstrokes in his portrait of Mérode, he hinted at the display she put on for the public. This certainly would not have been seen as a jab at the dancer, as it was common knowledge that her fame was built partly on rumors that she herself helped to fan by being so vague in her descriptions of the scandals. Rather, it was simply a nod to her life and position as a famed courtesan. Employing these techniques in his portrait of Mérode undoubtedly exemplifies the expectations of the elite in the Belle Époque and the ways that Boldini rose to meet such expectancies.

Boldini’s Niche

This was only one facet of Boldini’s talent as a Belle Époque artist. It has been argued many times that Boldini’s assimilation into the Belle Époque’s art world was done by conforming to the standards of the era in a type of commodification.¹⁸ He did this by capturing the essence of the culture—his vigorous, sweeping brushstrokes and rich tones were perfect for depicting the lush fabrics worn by Parisians in a time when fashion was becoming ever more important in society.¹⁹ It was especially important for high-society Parisians to commission portraits from the best Belle Époque artists, as photography was becoming increasingly commonplace. In order for these elite to set themselves apart, they commissioned portraits not in the hopes that they would be portrayed as refined and dignified, as had been done in the past, but instead to verify and enhance their style and fame.²⁰

16. Roberts, *Disruptive Acts*, 20.

17. Gundle, “Mapping the Origins of Glamour,” 281.

18. Igra, “Reviving the Rococo,” 353.

19. Gundle, “Mapping the Origins of Glamour,” 277–80.

20. Gundle, “Mapping the Origins of Glamour,” 277–78.

Therefore, an artist such as Boldini, who could beautify their features and enrich their expensive textiles, was the perfect choice for courtesans. This is immediately apparent in his portrait of Cléo de Mérode: her smooth, ivory skin contrasts with the texture of what seems to be a sort of shiny taffeta shawl and a matte black dress. Additionally, her hair, which earned her even more fame because of its distinctive style, is given special textural attention. Indeed, all these elements made Mérode famous—and Boldini's masterful depiction of them made him renowned.

As previously expressed, many scholars have seen Boldini's style of painting as a form of cheapening and commercializing his work. His tendency to accept mainly portraiture commissions and his style of painting glamorous women as elongated, smoothed-out, and altogether beautified is sometimes seen as conforming too much to the standards of high-society Paris instead of staying true to his own artistic talents and techniques.

It could be argued that just as Boldini turned to commodification of painting by catering to the Belle Époque culture, Mérode, too, was a sort of commercialization in herself. Her ear-hiding hairstyle greatly increased her publicity as the public speculated wildly about what exactly she was concealing.²¹ She did not exactly encourage rumors about her affairs or her modeling for a nude statue, but did little to quell them.²² And these elements of her fame are alluded to, whether directly or indirectly, by Boldini in her portrait.

This commercialization of Boldini's work has been described as extremely negative—that he “compromised [his] style and began to produce characterless work.”²³ From one perspective, this is true: he did paint in the way that people wanted him to instead of fitting a more avant-garde style that we have come to expect in modernist art.²⁴ However, I would like to propose that the way Boldini tailored his works to fit the desires of the Belle Époque elite was not a commodification, but that he was simply an artist with the right talents in the right place at the right time. After all, Mérode did not monetize her image simply for the money: she was also “in the right place at the right time, to play a pivotal role in the rise of modern celebrity culture.”²⁵ Both these figures were

21. Garval, *Cléo de Mérode and the Rise of Modern Celebrity Culture*, 9–37.

22. Garval, *Cléo de Mérode and the Rise of Modern Celebrity Culture*, 18.

23. Igra, “Reviving the Rococo,” 353.

24. “Boldini, Giovanni or Jean,” *Benezit Dictionary of Artists*, Oxford Art Online, 31 October 2011.

25. Garval, *Cléo de Mérode and the Rise of Modern Celebrity Culture*, 5.

purely products of their time, and it is this quality that makes them complementary to each other as well as what makes them both such rich examples of the Belle Époque culture and lifestyle.

Boldini and Mérode: Complementary Figures

To begin with, both figures were highly successful in the era. Boldini's works were the "sensation of the Paris salon;"²⁶ he did not paint anything in a style resembling the avant-garde tendencies of the time. This fact is what makes him a relatively unstudied artist today, as the artists we tend to remember from the early modernism period were ones who continually broke the rules and pushed the boundaries of painting—from the Impressionists to the Realists and from the Cubists to the Futurists. But it is also precisely this fact—that his style did not break the rules and was perfectly evocative of the elegance and charm that accompanied the Belle Époque—that allowed him to fit in so well and become the "sensation" that Parisians considered him to be.

Likewise, the same can be said of Cléo de Mérode. She was a courtesan, a relatively new development from the changing Parisian class structures, but she played the part of a modest Belle Époque courtesan perfectly. She caused just enough scandal to keep her name relevant. She also earned her own way instead of relying on a husband, but she was not a feminist New Woman who broke apart the accepted canon of what it meant to be a woman. It was this charade of playing the media to earn and maintain fame that made Mérode and others like her such a fundamental aspect of the Belle Époque.

By combining these two figures and their traits that set them firmly within the bounds of the Belle Époque instead of avant-garde characters, we see how each complemented the other. In Boldini's portrait, his vivacious strokes that highlight her sumptuous outfit and hair is exactly what made him so beloved among the upper class at the time. The way he captured her gleaming dress, hair, and jewelry and contrasted these with her minutely defined facial features, which conveyed her artificial lifestyle, was exactly the style of portrait that helped to elevate her status in society. Boldini understood Mérode's abilities to be exactly what the culture loved. In return for his success with this portrait and others, his name was traded among the elite society and he became an eminent

26. Philip Rylands, "Giovanni Boldini," *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 147 no. 1226 (May 2005): 348.

Belle Époque painter who gained more fame with each commission. Looking at it from this perspective, both Boldini and Mérode did not commodify their talents—they were in it for the glory, and that is precisely what the Belle Époque was all about.

A Rejection of Modernity

Another essential facet of the Belle Époque was a certain hesitancy to look forward to the future. This is evident in the sort of vacuum in which the courtesans and painters of the Belle Époque lived—their rejection of the malaise that accompanied the *fin-de-siècle* in the rest of the western world seems to say that they wanted to exist in the immediate present, not looking to the oncoming century, while preserving the splendor that had made Paris the center of the art world for centuries.

It has been stated by studiers of Boldini that his stylistic tendencies of loose, bold brushwork have a bit of Impressionism and Post-Impressionism to them.²⁷ Despite this, Boldini's rejection of the avant-garde is evident in the way that he never surrendered color to form in the way that these past movements of painters—modernist artists themselves *because* of their neglect of form—did.²⁸ Additionally, his vibrant colors never strayed from what the eye would see in real life; this is in complete opposition to other modernist portraits of the time, such as Matisse's well-known 1905 work *Woman with a Hat* (see figure 4). Boldini's way of looking to the art of the past instead of the future and firmly avoiding the avant-garde is representative of an entire generation of Belle Époque artists who desired to capture the elegance of the past and preserve the traditional painted portrait instead of surrendering to the modern “mundaneness of photographic reproduction.”²⁹



Figure 4. Woman with a Hat by Henri Matisse, 1905.

27. Guidi, “Commercial Portrait Artists,” 36.

28. Steiner, “Giovanni Boldini at The Sterling and Francine Clark Institute,” 12.

29. Guidi, “Commercial Portrait Artists,” 36.



Figure 5. Cléo de Mérode by an unknown photographer, circa 1903.

We see this impeccably exemplified in Boldini's portrait of Mérode: the fact that he painted her with the coy smile reserved for an unseen viewer instead of portraying her with the blank expression we see in photographs of Mérode (for example, see figure 5) shows that Boldini *knew* Mérode: he knew how to capture her essence, and he knew how to play up her sensuous side just enough to raise her popularity without compromising her integrity. This was something that, to Belle Époque artists like Boldini, photography could never accomplish. This fact implies that Boldini's so-called assimilation to the culture and subsequent monetization of his talents was not this at all, but instead was a conscious decision to maintain the lavishness that was so characteristic of the Belle Époque.

Conclusion

Giovanni Boldini's portrait of the dancer and courtesan Cléo de Mérode is a wonderful example of the dazzling splendor that was typical of the Belle Époque. Mérode's life as a courtesan meant that she enjoyed being in the spotlight, both on and off the stage, and her commissioning of a portrait done by Boldini was another way to reaffirm her elite status in society and her fine taste in fashion. Her choice of Boldini to paint this portrait was a perfect match: he knew exactly how to beautify her already lovely form, and he also knew exactly how to convey those parts of her personality that made her famous. Boldini's artistic style is an impeccable example of precisely the tastes in art and beauty that existed in the Belle Époque.

Unfortunately, the way that his style conforms exactly to the penchants of the era has been seen as a cheapening and commodification of his artistic abilities. However, a close examination of his talents and the personalities of his subjects—specifically through the lens of Boldini's portrait of Cléo de Mérode—reveals that Boldini intentionally belonged to an albeit small group of Belle Époque artists who consciously rejected the avant-garde techniques of other contemporary artists. This small group of artists instead desired to preserve the exquisiteness that made Paris the artistic center of Europe, and they

did this by looking to the past instead of the future. Boldini's style was not a way to monetize his paintings; it was simply a way to maintain the splendidous bubble in which the Belle Époque existed in the larger realm of the disheartening *fin-de-siècle*.

Boldini was not an avant-garde artist, and for this reason, he is not well-remembered by art historians today. But this does not mean that he cheapened his art in any way. In fact, Boldini's true talent lies in the way he looked to the past—this paved the way for his ability to communicate the glittering allure of his subjects and of the Belle Époque itself.

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