

FEMINIST REALISM  
AT THE *FIN DE SIÈCLE*

The Influence of the  
Late-Victorian Woman's Press on the  
Development of the Novel

Molly Youngkin



The Ohio State University Press  
Columbus

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Youngkin, Molly, 1970–

Feminist realism at the fin de siècle : the influence of the late-Victorian woman's press on the development of the novel / Molly Youngkin.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN-13: 978-0-8142-1048-2 (cloth : alk. paper)

ISBN-13: 978-0-8142-9128-3 (CD-ROM)

1. Feminism and literature—England—History—19th century.  
2. English fiction—19th century—History and criticism. 3. Feminist fiction, English—History and criticism. 4. Journalism and literature—Great Britain—History—19th century. 5. Women and literature—Great Britain—History—19th century. 6. Feminism in literature.  
7. Women in literature. 8. Realism in literature. 9. Modernism (Literature)—Great Britain. I. Title.

PR878.F45Y68 2007

823.'809352042—dc22

2006026277

Cover design by DesignSmith.

Type set in Adobe Garamond.

Printed by Thomson-Shore, Inc.

The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of the American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials. ANSI Z39.48-1992.

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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# Acknowledgments

Institutional support was key to the completion of this book. California State University, Dominguez Hills provided two course releases, without which I would not have finished this project. Also, the Sally Casanova Memorial/RSCAAP Grant provided financial support for an additional course release and an important trip to the British Library in the summer of 2004. My thanks to Selase Williams for his support of my applications for these grants, and thanks to Garry Hart, Ray Riznyk, and Ed Zoerner for facilitating funds related to the reproduction of images in this book. The Ohio State University provided institutional support during the early stages of this project. The English Department granted me the Edward P. J. Corbett Research Award and the Summer Research Fellowship; the Women's Studies Department provided the Elizabeth D. Gee Grant; and the Graduate School provided the Alumni Grant for Graduate Research and Scholarship, the Summer Research Fellowship, and the Presidential Fellowship. Thanks to Susan Williams and Debra Moddelmog, who served as Director of Graduate Studies in the English Department, for their support of my applications.

I respectfully acknowledge other organizations that supported my work in various forms. Thank you to the librarians who assisted my research at the British Library, the National Library of Ireland, the Cincinnati Public Library, the Special Collections at Arizona State University, The Ohio State University, and UCLA. Thanks also to Robert Langenfeld, William Scheuerle, Kitty Ledbetter, Jennifer Cognard-Black, and Elizabeth MacLeod Walls, all of whom encouraged the publication of my work in other venues. Portions of chapter 1 of this book appeared in "All she knew was, that she wished to live': Late-Victorian Realism, Liberal-Feminist Ideals, and George Gissing's *In the Year of the Jubilee*," *Studies in the Novel*, v. 36, no. 1, Spring 2004. Copyright © 2004 by the University of North Texas. Reprinted by permission of the publisher. Portions of chapter 4 appeared in "George Moore's Quest for Canonization and *Esther Waters* as Female Helpmate," *ELT: English Literature in Transition, 1880–1920* 46.2 (2003): 117–39; "Independent in Thought and Expression, Kindly and Tolerant in Tone': Henrietta Stannard, *Golden Gates*, and Gender Controversies at the *Fin de Siècle*," *Victorian Periodicals Review* 38.3 (2005): 307–26; and "Selected Letters: Henrietta Stannard,

Marie Corelli, and Annesley Kenealy,” *Kindred Hands: Letters on Writing by Women Authors, 1860–1920*, ed. Jennifer Cognard-Black and Elizabeth MacLeod Walls, University of Iowa Press, 2006.

Figures 1 through 5 images were produced by ProQuest Information and Learning Company as part of American Periodical Series Online. Inquiries may be made to: ProQuest Information and Learning Company, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA; telephone 734.761.4700; email [info@il.proquest.com](mailto:info@il.proquest.com); Web site [www.il.proquest.com](http://www.il.proquest.com). Thanks to ProQuest Learning Company for permission to reprint these images. The cover image, Albert Moore’s *A Reader*, was provided by Manchester Art Gallery, Mosley Street, Manchester M2 3JL, telephone 0161 235 8888, Web site [www.manchestergalleries.org.uk](http://www.manchestergalleries.org.uk). I am grateful to Jo-Anne Hogan of ProQuest and Tracey Walker of Manchester Art Gallery for providing excellent assistance during the process of obtaining permission. I also want to acknowledge those at The Ohio State University Press who worked diligently to see this book to publication. A special thanks to Sandy Crooms, who worked with me with great enthusiasm throughout this process, and to Maggie Diehl, who carefully copyedited the manuscript.

In addition to the institutional and organizational support I received, many individuals encouraged my work in different ways. Thanks to Peter Bracher and Barry Milligan, who were the first to spark my interest in nineteenth-century British literature. Also, great appreciation goes to Marlene Longenecker, James Phelan, Clare Simmons, and David Riede, who read portions of this project in its early stages and provided ongoing support in the transition from dissertation to book. A special thanks to Marlene, who suggested the title *Feminist Realism at the Fin de Siècle*. I also want to acknowledge Teresa Mangum, Sally Mitchell, Jennifer Phegley, Talia Schaffer, Beth Sutton-Ramspeck, and the many members of RSVP (The Research Society for Victorian Periodicals) and the VICTORIA listserv, who made suggestions for revision and answered questions that arose while I worked on this project. And I would like to acknowledge my colleagues at Dominguez Hills, some of whom offered advice about publication matters and all of whom offered intellectual camaraderie and friendship during the writing process. Finally, deep gratitude to my parents, Betty and Bill Youngkin. Their belief in my writing ability is longstanding, and they regularly listened to and discussed my flow of ideas as the project progressed. They were involved in the writing of this book on a weekly, and sometimes daily, basis, and I thank them for their belief in me and the project.

## INTRODUCTION

# The Woman's Press at the *Fin de Siècle*

On October 27, 1888, Henrietta Müller—who had already participated in the nineteenth-century women's movement by attending Girton College, organizing women's trade unions, and improving working conditions for women through her position on the London School Board—founded the *Women's Penny Paper* (see figure 1), an eight-page paper with a “progressive policy” and a plan to “speak with honesty and courage” about issues important to women. This paper, which claimed to represent all different types of women and to be “open to all shades of opinion, to the working woman as freely as to the educated lady, to the conservative and the radical, to the Englishwoman and the foreigner” (Anonymous, “Our Policy” 1), would become, in 1891, *The Woman's Herald* (figure 2) and, later, *The Woman's Signal* (figure 3). Throughout its run, which ended in 1899, the paper served as an important outlet for Müller and other activists to express their ideas about the advancement of women.

Four years after the founding of the *Women's Penny Paper*, Margaret Shurmer Sibthorp—a member of the Theosophical Society and later one of the founders of the League of Isis (a group advocating the ideas of Frances Swiney about sexuality and motherhood)—introduced another periodical, *Shafts*, with a similar approach and agenda. Drawing on the image of a woman holding a bow and shooting shafts, or arrows, of wisdom, truth, and justice into the atmosphere (figures 4 and 5), Sibthorp called on women of all classes to help in the fight for emancipation “so that the bow of our strength may not lose power” and “so that all who write and all who read may join in the great work to be done” (“What the Editor” 8). With the goal of women's emancipation in mind, both *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald* adopted a weekly format to pursue this goal and became active voices in the feminist movement throughout the 1890s. Only after a full decade of publishing articles to forward the cause of women would the writers for these two periodicals lay down their pens.

# WOMEN'S PENNY PAPER

The only Paper Conducted, Written, and Published by Women.

EDITED BY  
HELENA B. TEMPLE.

"Seventy years ago a man might rise to high positions in Parliament  
or the State and take no notice whatever of the humbler classes.  
THEY HAD NO VOICES AND COULD BE HARDLY ESTIMATED."  
(W. E. Gladstone, October 26th, 1885.)

OFFICES—86, STRAND, W.C.  
Registered at the G. P. O. for transmission abroad.

No. 88. Vol. II.]

JUNE 28, 1890.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]

## Interview.



MRS. MONA CAIRD.

SO much has been said and written about the famous Mrs. Mona Caird that is misleading, that a true account of her will be of interest. I was fortunate enough to find the popular authoress at home, and willing to be interviewed for the *Women's Penny Paper*, in which she takes a very great interest and warmly wishes it all possible success. Whatever may be Mrs. Mona Caird's views upon marriage, she certainly is a wife who knows how to make home attractive in the matter of decoration, and her drawing-room is not only pretty, but as unlike the majority of London drawing-rooms as it is possible to imagine. The cosy corners by the fireside with the windows over the mantelpiece are delightful resting-places; the room has a sense of repose and quiet content which are very inviting.

Of her early days Mrs. Mona Caird declared she had little to tell. "As a child I rebelled against the current thoughts. It was not natural to me ever to take things as I found them. My life as a girl was very secluded on account of my father's ill-health, and personal influence, therefore, played little part in my development. I had literally to 'scramble up.' All the influences of my immediate surroundings I resisted obstinately. Had I yielded to it, I should have been beloved by the British Matron, and should have been regarded as the chosen adviser of the *Young Person*."

"What made you first take to writing?" I asked. "I always wrote, even as a child; it was an outlet for my thoughts, but I was discouraged in my efforts as soon as these seemed to become absorbing. My literary work was, therefore, done under adverse circumstances, amidst the very greatest difficulties. The usual idea prevailed that a girl's only career was matrimony and a life of domesticity whether it suited her or not."

"But," I answered, "it is just upon this question of the marriage state I would ask your real views? Do you believe that men and women should be allowed to marry and separate as easily as they would meet for a week or so in a country house?"

"My idea of marriage is that it should be a Free Contract entered into by those who perfectly understand what they are doing, and who are aware of all the responsibilities which are entailed. The forced, Society matches, in which the girl is as much bought and sold as any slave, are utterly abhorrent to me. I do not think the world at present is sufficiently educated to understand the idea of the new marriage, which is a far more elevated one than the present bond. When men and women are differently

educated, when women are allowed to meet more freely, when our girls are rendered no longer dependent for their very existence upon men, then it will be possible to realise a better and truer state of things. I do not advocate any startling change at present, for I do not believe any Free Marriage is possible until the proposed contract is free in fact as well as in name; but because my idea may not be practicable at present it does not follow it will always be so; still, it comes to educate men and women to a better and higher view of the estate and its responsibilities."

"But do you not think men would be likely to leave their wives when they became older and less attractive if the marriage bond were easily dissolved?"

"No; I believe, with proper education, chivalry would be far greater than at present; the very fact that the marriage could be dissolved more easily would often lead to greater happiness and constancy in the married state. We are contradictory by nature, and the fact that we cannot undo a thing will make many wish immediately to do so."

"You have been much misrepresented by the world at large," I said. "That is the fate of all who propagate any new ideas. In reality I am as much in favour of *life-long marriages as anyone*, but they should be free and unenforced, and if a man and woman found that they had, after all, made an unfortunate mistake in their union, and that by reason of incompatibility of temper, or other causes, life together was impossible, I certainly believe it would be far better in every way to allow them to dissolve such a mistaken contract, rather than to force them to live on for the rest of their lives a terrible existence in which neither soul nor body could be free. Under the blessing of the Church many a horrible outrage is committed. Girls marry under conditions in which they have no opportunity of gaining any true knowledge of the man they wed; they are rushed into these marriages by Society mothers and ambitious fathers, and then left mercilessly to their fate."

It was impossible to hear Mrs. Mona Caird talk and not be convinced that she earnestly believes what she advocates. If all men and women could attain the high ideal she has formed, the marriage contract might be a very different one, and might perhaps be allowed to rest upon Love and Conscience. At present, as she says, the world is not pure enough. Sensuality and money rule the world, and love, alas! often plays but a small part in our marriage ceremony. I asked Mrs. Mona Caird her views on Women's Suffrage.

"Of course I am ardently in favour of the vote for all women, irrespective of condition and circumstances. I am a Liberal in politics, and I would not shut women out from any profession or career in which it were possible for them to succeed. Men and women should have equal rights in every respect, and the same laws should apply equally to both. What is wrong in the woman is wrong in the man; there should be no fear or favour. Until this be recognised there can be no real progress."

"Were you influenced by women in forming your views?"

"No, not particularly. I knew so few whose intellect I respected. My views were pronounced at an early age. John Stuart Mills, I think, was the first to help me to bring these thoughts and feelings into form by his writings. Shelley, also, had a strong influence over me, and the modern scientific writers, Tyndall, Huxley, Herbert Spencer, and, of course, Darwin. I came in contact with no leading minds, except in their writings, but these were more than sufficient education."

Here the entrance of tea and of Mrs. Caird's husband put a stop to our conversation.

In compliance with my expressed wish she showed me her own special sanctum.

"I have not had the privilege of my own study long," she said, "but I now do all my work here."

The room and furniture were painted in white enamel, a commodious writing desk with numberless drawers revealed the law of order, while the bookcases were well filled with books.

"Here are my own books," said Mrs. Mona Caird, and handed me *One that Wins*, *Whom Nature Leads*, and her latest, *The Wing of Arod*. The latter is published by Trübner and Co., who also published her two Westminster articles. Chapman and Hall are the publishers of the last, *Morality of Marriage*.

Mrs. Mona Caird has undergone the Sun Cure in Aufrès, and her very graphic account of her experiences was published in the *Fall Mill Gazette*.

Mrs. Mona Caird has, since my visit, contributed some very interesting articles to our paper upon the Suffrage for Women, in which she clearly states the position.

Her husband is the son of Sir James Caird. She has one son, a fine,

Figure 1

Front cover, *Women's Penny Paper* (June 28, 1890): 421. Image published with permission of ProQuest Information and Learning Company. Further reproduction is prohibited without permission.





**Sarah Grand :**  
A STUDY.

"SARAH GRAND," as the author of "Ideala" and "The Heavenly Twins," who tries to disguise—somewhat transparently—her personality, is one of the most valuable recruits which the cause of woman has gained in recent years. She has made her mark, and is now free of the camp—a trusted comrade who can be relied on in the highest of high places not to fail or to flinch. But although Sarah Grand has done good and noble service by boldly challenging Society to say why men should not bring to the marriage altar as unspotted a record as they demand from their brides, she is but a neophyte. Her best work is still to come. Hitherto she has studied the world from the outside, in books, in maiden meditation fancy free. The supreme note that will yet make her books powerful and searching as a two-edged sword has still to be sounded. But we shall have it before long, and although it may sadden us it cannot fail to purify our hearts with the pathos of its passionate undertone.

Sarah Grand, as all may see from the accompanying portrait, is still in the bloom of her youth's prime. Married very early, she has travelled much and suffered not a little. But her life work is still to be done. What shape it will take it is difficult at this moment to say. Life is the great shaper of our destinies, and Sarah Grand, even more than most people, needs the Providence that shapes our ends, rough how them as we may. There is a good deal of the dreamy abstraction of "Ideala" about her creator, and there is also a spice of Angelica, minus, unfortunately, the tomboy element which saved Angelica. But the adventurous curiosity which made Angelica put her finger into so many cogwheels, to see how it would feel to test by experiment the force of explosives, of the real nature of which she seems to be as innocent as a baby is of the properties of dynamite, taught that Heavenly Twin some-

thing of the realities of life: and Sarah Grand, like all the rest of us, will graduate in the same school. If a little transfusion of blood could be effected, so as to graft something of Mrs. Josephine Butler's healthy womanhood, saint-like faith, and apostolic fervour upon the

has not too much faith either in God or in Man. It will come, no doubt, as she grows and the sun shines and her inner nature develops; but at present she diets herself upon what Mr. Morley called the "ground-bottle glass" of Positivist lectures, and looks out from a somewhat dreary standpoint upon what seems an orphaned world. The kindling inspiration of a great enthusiasm, that would transform everything, has still to come. But come it will.

Meanwhile, Sarah Grand is working along, and there is great safety and great consolation in work. Her magazine article in *The Humanitarian* upon the Morals of Manners and Appearance is pre-eminently sane and sensible. No one can say how much the cause of women has suffered from the neglect of the art of making the best of yourself, which characterised some of the early pioneers. Some foolish women think it is a kind of homage to advanced principle to wear a decayed hat and a dowdy jacket. To wear a smart frock and to look as nice as you can seems to be bowing in the temple of Rimmon. All that is mischievous nonsense. Reverse the position, and imagine that men were a disfranchised, unrecognised class. What would women think if the advocates of male enfranchisement were to regard the cultivation of physical strength and manly vigour as treason to the cause of man? If the men who pleaded for citizenship were sickly, effeminate, hollow-chested, bandy-legged weaklings, they would never so much as gain a hearing, however much they might demonstrate the indisputable justice of their cause. What strength is to the man beauty is to the woman. Physical strength is a very brutal thing, no doubt; it is certainly much coarser and less refined than the art of beauty. All this and much more of the same sound sense "Sarah Grand" insists upon in her recent article. It is a good sign. When people begin to take pains to mend their fellow-creatures by practise as well as by precept they have set their faces Zionwards, and they are not far from the way of salvation.



"SARAH GRAND."  
From a Photograph by H. S. Meddlinch.

Figure 2

Front cover, *The Woman's Herald* (Aug. 17, 1893): 401. Image published with permission of ProQuest Information and Learning Company. Further reproduction is prohibited without permission.

# THE WOMAN'S SIGNAL

A Weekly Paper for all Women

ABOUT ALL THEIR INTERESTS, IN THE HOME AND IN THE WIDER WORLD.

EDITED BY  
MRS. FENWICK MILLER.

VOL. V., No. 109.

JANUARY 30, 1896.

Registered as a Newspaper. One Penny Weekly.

## Character Sketch.

### JOHN STRANGE WINTER.

Most of us can remember when a clever little story, totally unlike anything that had before been done, and entitled "Boodie's Baby," burst upon the world, and created an immediate reputation for its writer. It was not, however, the first work that its author had published under the same pen name. The first book that had appeared bearing the signature of "John Strange Winter," was called "Cavalry Life." It was not opposed for one moment by any of the readers or critics of either of these stories of army life, that the author was a woman. It is quite amusing to read the criticisms upon these early works, filled as they are with compliments, not only on the author's stories and literary art, but also to "his accurate descriptions of army life, and the manliness of "his" mind. Here, for instance, is what the *Morning Post* says:—"The author elects to call his books 'light.' They are no doubt invariably entertaining and humorous, but he can also be pathetic in no ordinary degree. His intimate knowledge of the inner life of barrack soldiers and their ways accurate, whilst they are without exception bright and amusing."

"Boodie's Baby" appeared first in *The Graphic* in 1885. It was an immediate success there, and a yet greater one when it appeared in a shilling volume on the bookstalls. But there are two interesting facts to be told about that apparently sudden and easy success. The author who to the public eye thus leaped to fame at a bound, had in fact been working obscurely, but with untiring industry, for exactly ten years before. Her first work was published in 1874, and in the intervening period, before her success was scored, this energetic and resolute writer had produced no fewer than forty-two stories, several of them of three-volume length. All were published in various periodicals, but without making any particular mark; yet she had

taken untiring pains, and spent unstinted toil upon their production. The "staying power" thus shown should be a lesson to aspiring young authors, who imagine that they are to succeed at once, and if they do not do so are discouraged and depressed. Furthermore, not only was John Strange Winter's first success thus the

enabled the author to go on steadily, maintaining her position by a succession of works, not promising on the fame she had gained to cease exercising the qualities by which she gained it.

One of the first questions that interviewers always ask the author is, how she came to adopt the name under which she publishes? The explanation is simple. It is the name of one of the characters in "Cavalry Life," and was placed upon the title-page as the name of the author, because the publishers insisted that there was no chance of success for a military book known to be written by a woman; in which view they were probably quite right.

How did she come to know enough about this exclusively masculine life to be able to write books about it that military men themselves at once received as accurate and vividly representative? The answer is found in her early life and training. Her father, the Rev. J. Palmer, was for some time an officer in the Royal Artillery, his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather having all been in the Service also. Mr. Palmer, however, left the army and took orders; but "once a soldier always a soldier," in a way; and John Strange Winter's youth was passed in the almost exclusively military society that gathered round her father's home while he was Vicar of St. Margaret's, York.

She is one of those sensible women who make no secret of their age. She was born exactly forty years ago on the 12th of this January. She was married in 1871 to Mr. Arthur Stannard, a civil engineer, who was for some time associated in work with General Gordon. Mrs. Stannard's marriage is quite one of the successes of her career. Never was there a more fortunate match. Mr. Stannard is an excellent man of business and manages all his wife's financial affairs. He is also of the most gracious manners and urbane disposition, and aids her to attach and keep the troops of friends whom her bright intelligence and unaffected good-nature, no less than her literary celebrity, gather around them.



MRS. ARTHUR STANNARD.

(From photo by Alfred Hill, 26, Upper Bechoe Street, W.)

reward of a long and arduous apprenticeship, but even with regard to "Boodie's Baby" itself, courage and hope were necessary. This little tale, which was to prove one of the most distinct literary successes of our time, was rejected by no fewer than six editors before it was taken by Mr. Arthur Locker for *The Graphic*. It is this same "staying power" that has

Figure 3

Front cover, *The Woman's Signal* (Jan. 30, 1896): 109. Image published with permission of ProQuest Information and Learning Company. Further reproduction is prohibited without permission.

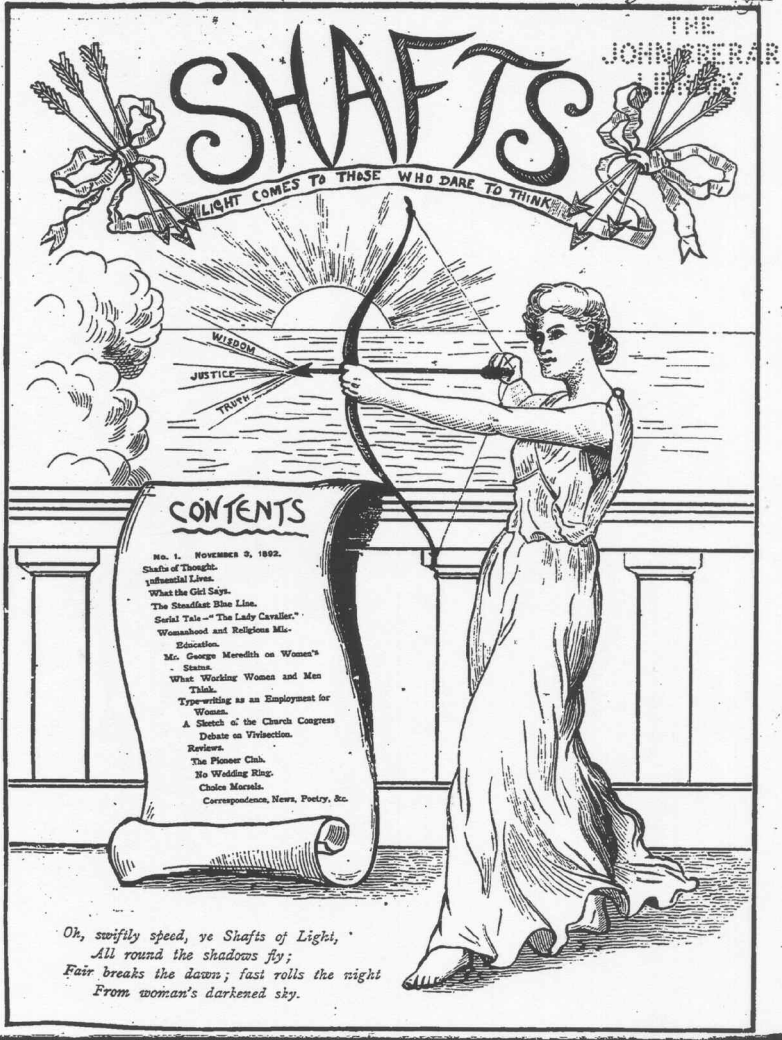


Figure 4

Front cover, *Shafts* (Nov. 3, 1892): 1. Image published with permission of ProQuest Information and Learning Company. Further reproduction is prohibited without permission.

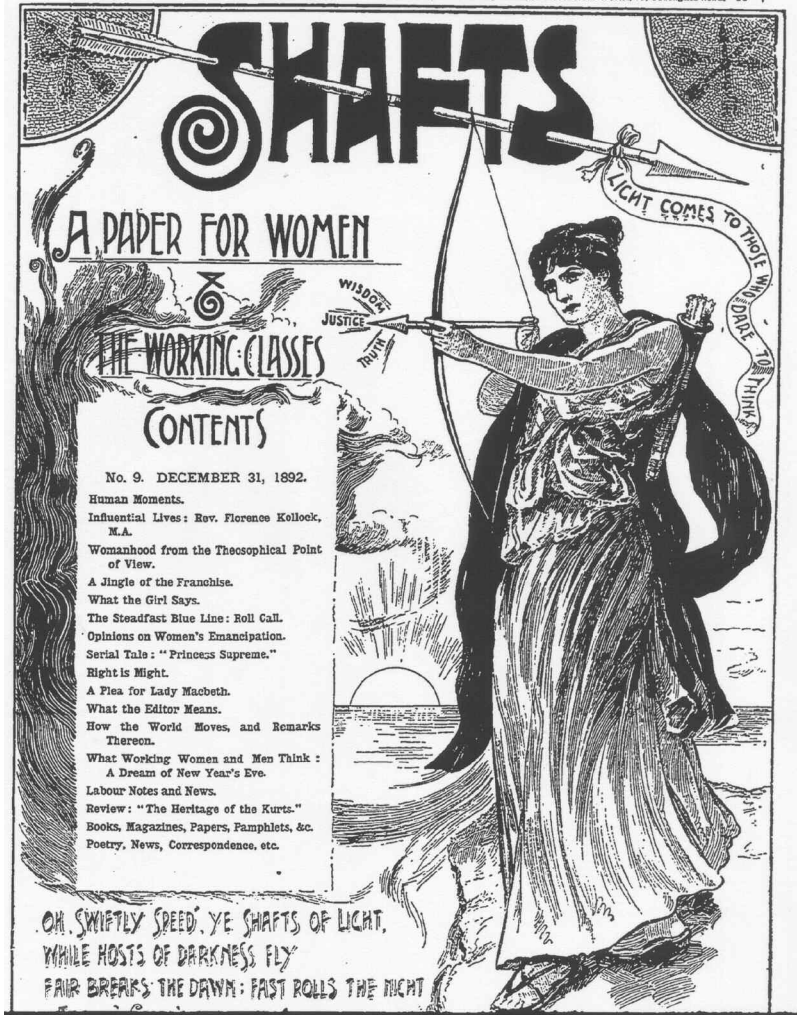


Figure 5

Front cover, *Shafts* (Dec. 31, 1892): 129. Image published with permission of ProQuest Information and Learning Company. Further reproduction is prohibited without permission.

This book centers on the feminist agenda of the late-Victorian woman's press and argues that *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald* in particular focused on literary representation as a method to advance the cause of women. Along with articles about local politics, key figures within the movement, and nonliterary events and issues, these two periodicals reviewed the works of both women writers and male authors, and they articulated a consistent "feminist realist" aesthetic that not only advanced a cause but also helped transform the novel from Victorian to modern. Influenced by John Stuart Mill's writings on individual liberty and the difficulty women had in achieving such liberty due to cultural conditions, *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald* insisted on realistic representation of "woman's agency" because woman's agency was a key concept in the development of individual liberty. They also encouraged representations that balanced the difficult conditions women faced with the triumphs of some women over these conditions. To triumph over these conditions, fictional women needed to assert agency in the same manner real-life women did: they needed to experience a transformation of *consciousness* to realize their condition, articulate their condition through *spoken word*, and use *concrete action* to change their condition. In fact, both periodicals had mottos emphasizing one or more of these methods: *Shafts* declared, "Light comes to those who dare to think" on its front cover, and *The Woman's Herald* ran the banner, "Speak unto the people that they go forward."

As Teresa Mangum has shown in her discussion of "middlebrow" feminism in *Married, Middlebrow, and Militant: Sarah Grand and the New Woman* (1998), feminism is both a political and an aesthetic category, and writers such as Grand practiced what Mangum calls "literary feminism," which sprung from "a commitment to an aesthetics based on education, ethics, and activism" (7). *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald* articulated a similar commitment and developed a systematic reviewing apparatus that placed strong emphasis on both the connection between literary representation and social change and the connection between content and form within literary representation. According to the book reviews published in *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald*, which were written by a range of women and men committed to the cause, literary representations of woman's agency employed three distinct narrative strategies roughly corresponding to the three methods of assertion: *internal perspective* to indicate transformations of consciousness, highly developed *dialogue* to illustrate women's use of spoken word, and *descriptions of characters' actions* to show how women acted as well as thought and spoke. Successful representations of woman's agency balanced all of these narrative strategies, and, when authors managed to combine all three, the result was a decidedly feminist heroine. In articulating this "feminist realist" approach, as I like to refer to

the literary aesthetic found in these periodicals, reviewers for *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald* broadened the ongoing discussion about realism, a discussion that spanned much of the century and set a particular standard for authors to meet. Not only did authors need to consider the principles of mid-century high realism (as seen in the work of Dickens and Trollope) and late-century variations of realism (such as French naturalism and Jamesian psychological realism), but they had to negotiate this emerging school of feminist realism.<sup>1</sup>

This book surveys the work of eight important male and female authors of the *fin de siècle*—Thomas Hardy, “Sarah Grand” (Frances Bellenden-Clarke McFall), George Gissing, Mona Caird, George Meredith, Méné Dowie, George Moore, and Henrietta Stannard (“John Strange Winter”)—most of whom had direct knowledge of the aesthetic articulated by these periodicals. It illustrates how these authors incorporated feminist realism into their novels: each of the first three chapters focuses on a different aspect of expressing agency and includes representative examples from selected authors. The final chapter shows how effectively combining all three aspects and presenting successful representations of women shaped literary reputations during the 1890s and beyond. By incorporating feminist realism into their novels, these authors helped push the development of the novel from Victorian to modern, since this new aesthetic placed stronger emphasis on consciousness and subjective experience than previous realist aesthetics had. While feminist periodicals valued representations of women presenting the fullest expression of agency possible, they also articulated a causal relationship between consciousness and the other two methods; that is, feminist consciousness often led to expressions of agency through spoken word and action. By incorporating a literary aesthetic that privileged consciousness over spoken word and action, these authors anticipated the centrality of subjective experience in the modernist novel.



Influencing my argument are certain assumptions about the woman's press and the two periodicals that provide the evidence for my argument. First, I identify these periodicals, and the philosophy they espouse, as specifically *liberal* feminist rather than more generally “feminist” because underlying their analyses of women's issues and literary representations of women is the equality doctrine, the belief that the best route to emancipation for women is the achievement of equal political and legal rights. This form of feminism is perhaps best understood in contrast to difference-based forms, such as conservative feminism and radical feminism. In the mid-

nineteenth century, difference-based feminism was most evident in conservative feminism, which was informed by the evangelical movement and in which woman's biological difference was celebrated and constituted a justification for the separate spheres doctrine. This form of "feminism" was best represented by Queen Victoria herself and was then furthered by women such as Sarah Stickney Ellis, author of *The Women of England* (1839) and other guides for women's conduct emphasizing domestic duties, and Eliza Lynn Linton, most famous for her attack on the New Woman in a series of articles titled "Wild Women," published in *The Nineteenth Century*. Whether or not a conservative approach to women's issues should be considered "feminist" is debatable, but as literary historians have come to understand the complexity of the burgeoning women's rights movement, this form of "feminism" has gained credibility. The important point here is that liberal feminism differs significantly from conservative feminism, since the equality doctrine demands that the separate spheres philosophy no longer apply.

In the late nineteenth century, there was another form of difference feminism from which liberal feminism differed. This form cannot be called radical feminism because it lacked the strong analysis of cultural difference defining twentieth-century radical feminism. Still, as it was sometimes found in tandem with liberal feminism in some late-nineteenth-century periodicals, it anticipated radical feminism of the twentieth century, in which woman's difference, especially her ability to live separately from and independently of men, was celebrated. Moreover, some recent literary critics have relied on this form of feminism to justify an alternative literary canon, in which the work of women writers is central. For example, in *Subversive Discourse: The Cultural Production of Late Victorian Feminist Novels* (1995), Rita Kranidis relies on the "feminist" criticism of Adeline Sergeant, Fabian Society member and author of *Esther Denison* (1889), to show the way in which difference feminism was developing out of "the left" as well as "the right" in the late nineteenth century. In "George Meredith's Views of Women by a Woman" (1889), which appeared in *The Temple Bar*, Sergeant argues that while Meredith's female characters are preferable to those drawn by most male authors, his ideas about the role of women in the future are less than liberating. According to Sergeant, while Meredith believes that women should strive to become "equal" to men, this goal echoes men's standards, where women end up only the "rib of Adam" (Sergeant 210–11). Sergeant believes that a better approach is to recognize woman's differences—physical, intellectual, and temperamental—since the "sooner women grant that there are moral and mental as well as physical differences between the sexes, the sooner will their freedom be achieved—the free-

dom to live their own lives, and satisfy the individual needs of their several natures" (213). This approach to the advancement of women has none of the traditional moral judgments of conservative feminism, but it does have an emphasis on biological difference that separates it from liberal feminism of the late nineteenth century.

In describing the liberal feminist agenda of *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald*, then, I use the term "liberal feminist" to denote a type of feminism that focuses on the political and legal rights of women without necessarily adopting the stance on sexual morality advocated by conservative feminists or the separatist vision espoused by predecessors of twentieth-century radical feminism. Here forward, I will use the term "liberal feminist" sparingly; instead, I will refer to these periodicals, and the philosophy they promote, as "feminist," with the assumption I am referring to a liberal-feminist perspective.

My second assumption concerns the term "woman's agency." This term needs some explanation because two major issues could be raised about it. First, the *woman* in "woman's agency" suggests that there is some type of action, an expression of independence and selfhood one might say, that is unique to women and that all women share. I do not advocate the essentialist stance suggested by this statement; I do believe, however, that given the historical context in which the novels I examine were written, a discussion of the *concept* of woman's agency is appropriate. The novels I examine were written during a time in which few people understood that gender is socially constructed, and, even as the Victorian notion of separate spheres was breaking down, the notion of the Victorian woman as pure, motherly, and submissive to her husband was replaced with other essentialist concepts, for example, the single woman asserting new-found sexual independence, which was based to some degree on the notion of woman's innate passion. Here and throughout this book, I am looking at the essentialist concept of woman's agency from a non-essentialist point of view. I use quotation marks when referring to woman's agency specifically as a term, but I drop the quotation marks elsewhere, with the understanding that I am not advocating essentialism.

The term "woman's agency" also raises an issue about the relationship between "artistic representation" and "historical reality." In particular, one might ask whether it is possible for a fictional character to "assert agency" and also whether, when I discuss a fictional moment when a female character asserts agency, I am referring to a woman's resistance to cultural norms that support the subordination of women or her resistance to specific narrative strategies. These two questions point out the fact that, while language is not the only site for expression of agency, a woman's resistance often happens through language, and language is the very basis of repre-



sentation. The following model may be of help in understanding the space in which I wish to work, a space in which the interdependence between representation and the cultural status of real-life women can be emphasized rather than placed into rigid spheres. I work under the assumption that two "worlds" exist: the "historical world," in which real-life Victorian women sometimes resisted certain cultural norms, and the "story world," where we find the representation of such acts of resistance. As readers, we are aware of the difference between these two worlds and understand that it is not possible for a fictional character to assert agency in the historical world, but it is possible for her to do so within the story world. Further, while the story world is not the same as the historical world, the conditions of the historical world can be represented by the author in the story world. Thus, when a fictional character performs an act of resistance within the story world, she resists cultural norms that support the subordination of women rather than specific narrative strategies.<sup>2</sup>

My last assumption involves the three methods of asserting agency (consciousness, spoken word, and concrete action) and their corresponding narrative strategies. These methods and strategies are worth glossing briefly, so readers understand how I am using these terms and how they often appear in literary works. *Consciousness* is best represented by the narrative strategy of internal perspective (or "focalization," as narratologists call it), which involves tracking shifts in vision within narratorial discourse, especially shifts from the narrator's vision to characters' visions but also shifts from one character's vision to another character's.<sup>3</sup> A narrator's or character's vision can simply reflect what he or she sees, but the feelings of the narrator or character also often appear, indicating the narrator's or character's thought processes, or "consciousness." Still, it is important to acknowledge that consciousness alone does not necessarily result in assertion of agency according to the aesthetic articulated by *Shafis* and *The Woman's Herald*. In fact, it is *increased* consciousness, especially the awareness that one's personal life is connected to the political sphere, that is necessary for feminist assertion of agency. Typical scenes in which increased consciousness is represented through internal perspective are "awakening" or "epiphany" scenes, when a female character experiences new awareness about her cultural status; it is often after this awakening that she decides to speak out or take action.

The second method through which characters assert agency—*spoken word*—is best represented by the narrative strategy of dialogue, especially moments in dialogue in which characters engage competing ideologies about the cultural role of women. My methodology is influenced by the work of Mikhail Bakhtin, whose "Discourse in the Novel" suggests that assertion of agency is most likely to occur at "heteroglossic" moments in

the novel. Assertion of woman's agency often occurs in moments when the female protagonist, desirous of speaking up about the difficult conditions of her life, is able to mount resistance to language that attempts to categorize and vilify her. In late-Victorian novels, these conversations often occur when a woman is accused of a sexual "fall" or when a woman is negotiating with her family about her role in the home and the community.

Finally, the third method of expressing agency—*concrete action*—is best represented by the narrative strategy of description of characters' actions. According to both the feminist ideal of the 1890s as well as current feminist ideals, the way for women to change their subordinate position is through action. From the anti-crinoline campaign waged in the 1890s to the arrests of suffragettes in the early 1900s to pro-choice marches in the 1980s, concrete action has often provided the foundation for feminist resistance. When female characters in literary works resist cultural norms that support their subordination through action, they participate in this feminist tradition. Most often, women in late-Victorian novels take action related to their position within the family: unhappy wives leave their husbands despite the social stigma; single daughters leave their parents to work in the city rather than wait at home for a marriage proposal; and, occasionally, women even leave home for positions in organized movements.

These narrative strategies, while representing a traditional way of analyzing character, become more transgressive when considered in light of recent discussions of woman's agency, especially poststructuralist perspectives on this issue. The difficulty of finding a way to "do feminist criticism" in the poststructuralist world is expressed well by Judith Butler in "Contingent Foundations: Feminism and the Question of 'Postmodernism'" (1992), in which she argues that, while it is assumed that all political criticism must uphold the existence of the subject, it is possible to do political criticism by questioning such assumptions (1–2, 8). Poststructuralist feminist criticism, then, involves an understanding of subjectivity as the-subject-who-acts-is-already-acted-upon; no subject's actions can be independent of actions that have come before, and, therefore, intentionality is displaced (10). That said, to see the subject as such does not mean that one cannot discuss agency—only that one must think about it in different terms: when subjects feel "excluded," as women often do, it is because they are a part of a system of "domination" rather than because they lack individualized power (13–14).

Butler offers a new way to approach feminism, but even she recognizes a potential problem with her analysis: it locates any possible expression of agency wholly within the deployment of language. In her closing example about the ways in which masculinist language about rape is used to

overdetermine the actions possible for women, Butler refutes other critics' charges that she ignores the conditions, especially "material violence," under which women live, but her refutation of these charges acknowledges her dependence on language as the site for assertion of agency (17–18). For Butler, language itself acts: "The very terms by which the violation is explained enact the violation, and concede that the violation was under way before it takes place as a criminal act" (19). While Butler gestures at the connections between language and action, and while her discussion in this closing example seems to suggest that she understands the importance of the subject's consciousness in carving out a space for agency in the post-structuralist world, she does not adequately address the connection between thought, language, and action.<sup>4</sup>

Likewise, Amanda Anderson, in *Tainted Souls and Painted Faces: The Rhetoric of Fallenness in Victorian Culture* (1993), has shown how difficult it is to reconcile feminist criticism's need for the self-determined subject with poststructuralist perspectives accepting the death of the subject. After presenting her argument that representations of fallen women in Victorian literature are markers of the Victorian middle-class's need for models of selfhood that place too much emphasis on self-determination, Anderson turns, in her afterword, to a discussion of poststructuralist theories about subjectivity. While Anderson finds poststructuralist critiques of the self-determined subject to be useful (201–2), she believes that such criticism "can itself end up reifying subjectivity in its more extreme constructionist formulations" (203), and she clearly differentiates her own perspective on subjectivity from other poststructuralist approaches, including Butler's (205–6). Anderson draws on the work of people interested in "lived experience" or autobiography, and she argues that we need models of selfhood that acknowledge both social construction and the subject's participation in such constructions. Writes Anderson, "[W]e need to elaborate conceptions of subjectivity and social interaction that remain constant with the normative principles that guide practices of interrogation and transformation" (203).

Anderson's alternative, a revised version of Habermas's theory of communicative action, offers yet another way to begin reconciling the constructed aspects of subjectivity and the space in which the subject takes part in this construction, since in this model the subject (which in fiction would be the characters in the story, especially the female protagonist) participates in social constructions of the self by way of "mutual understanding," an element already present in language. Just as systems of domination work to "undermine, distort, or even foreclose" the opportunity for dialogue, according to Anderson, language also contains the potential for dialogue that creates change through "recognition and respect" (207). In

offering this alternative, Anderson gives us a way to continue to discuss agency, but, like Butler's model, her model relies heavily on only one possible site for expressing agency: language. Still, Anderson's model does offer more recognition of the relationship between language and thought, since Habermas's theory of communicative action focuses on "mutual understanding," a concept that extends beyond the realm of language to that of thought. In fact, Anderson claims,

Habermas's account of the relationship of reciprocity and recognition that are presupposed in any action oriented toward reaching understanding disallows the radical rupture between ethics and epistemology . . . [His] discourse ethics insists that the higher level of argumentation required in any self-reflexive democratic process is an extension of the more primary mode of action that is oriented toward reaching understanding. (222)

By historicizing traditional feminist assumptions about subjectivity and methods of asserting agency, I embrace poststructuralists' critiques of traditional approaches to identity issues, but I also show how poststructuralist theory must more thoroughly explicate its own assumptions about the postmodern subject, especially the assumption that language is the primary site for expression of agency.



With these assumptions in mind, we can turn to the two specific aims of this study: to analyze previously ignored evidence about the debate over realism and to reconsider the transition from the Victorian novel to the modernist novel in light of this evidence. In bringing forward the evidence found in *Shafis* and *The Woman's Herald*, my aim is to complicate readers' understandings of the term "realism," which previously has been defined too narrowly and with insufficient acknowledgment of a feminist influence. Recent studies of nineteenth-century British realism have worked to show how realism is *not* the narrow genre we often assume: a highly detailed, external description of society that does not engage the inner life of the mind.<sup>5</sup> Still, these studies have not investigated late-century forms of realism, especially feminist realism, as fully as they might. In the latter part of the century, authors engaged a wide range of variations on mid-century realism, including French naturalism and psychological realism, and discussion of Gissing's and Henry James's work in particular has shown how engagement with these variations on realism opened up the definition to some degree. Yet even in its late-century variations, realism

often appears as a genre that does not account adequately for women's experiences in the world. Some forms, especially naturalism, may lead to even further objectification of women and their bodies. As Naomi Schor states in *Breaking the Chain: Women, Theory, and French Realist Fiction* (1985), the "classic" naturalist text works to "contain female libido" to the degree that Schor is "led to conclude that the binding of female energy is one of (if not) the enabling conditions of the forward movement of the 'classic text.' Realism [naturalism] is that paradoxical moment in Western literature when representation can neither accommodate the Otherness of Woman nor exist without it" (xi).

Nevertheless, the 1890s New Realists, led by Hardy, sought to redefine the term in such a way that at least some controversial subject matter might be more directly addressed in literature. As I will discuss in further detail in chapter 1, Hardy's comment about the need to explore "the relations of the sexes" in "Candour in English Fiction" (1890) helps set the tone for questioning traditional assumptions about realism in the late century. Yet, as Rita Kranidis shows in *Subversive Discourse*, the New Realists may have been more interested in using the New Woman to comment on wider societal issues than they were driven by feminist principles (108–9), and Kranidis highlights some important ways in which feminist discourse was appropriated by the New Realists.

While I admire Kranidis's work, especially her discussion of the way discourse influences the cultural production of novels, she seems to split the New Realists and the New Woman novelists into two separate and distinct groups, and my aim in this study is to show how more fully intertwined they were. Jane Elridge Miller's *Rebel Women: Feminism, Modernism and the Edwardian Novel* (1997) is helpful here because Miller explains that the generally male-dominated New Realists and the generally female-dominated New Woman novelists gravitated toward each other because both shared an interest in the realistic portrayal of human life through frank discussion of sexuality, but she also recognizes that anxiety about the role of feminism in literature made some New Realists distance themselves from the New Woman novelists (12). Still, the New Realists had an interest in retaining the feminine audience that had ensured the success of the mid-Victorian novel, and they recognized that New Woman writers appealed to this audience, which was itself being transformed by the changes in society regarding the status of women (18). Likewise, the New Woman novelists recognized that the New Realists employed narrative strategies that held authority with critics who had denigrated the work of women writers. As a result, the New Woman novelists appropriated the formal conventions of the New Realists (14, 17), and the New Realists incorporated the content of New Woman novels into their work (22, 33).

Ultimately, the two groups came to share as many similarities as they did differences, and these similarities help clarify the degree to which both male and female authors contributed to the debate over realism, as well as the transition from Victorianism to modernism.

In thinking about how we might view realism in a more complex manner, I also find the work of George Levine, author of *The Realistic Imagination: English Fiction from Frankenstein to Lady Chatterley* (1981), to be useful, since Levine argues that the term “realism” needs radical redefinition. Levine—whose concern is not feminist influence on the term but the misinterpretation of the term by poststructuralists (who have unfairly characterized realists as upholding a view of the world overly concerned with “truth”)—sees an intriguing interplay between realism and antirealism (or “the monstrous”) in much nineteenth-century literature. From Levine’s perspective, realism is not an effort to avoid the indeterminacy of human experience (and hence a form of literature antithetical to modernism) but an attempt to engage this indeterminacy (and hence a precursor of the emphasis on subjective experience seen in modernist literature). Nineteenth-century realists engage indeterminacy by trying to reconcile the monstrous with the more “civilized” lives nineteenth-century society dictated they should live, and of nineteenth-century realism Levine writes:

It was not a solidly self-satisfied vision based in a misguided objectivity and faith in representation, but a highly self-conscious attempt to explore or create a new reality. . . . In the integrity of its explorations, realism increasingly imagined the limits of its power to reform, the monstrous possibility of the unnameable, the likelihood that the monstrous lurked in its very desire to see and to make the world good. (19–20, 22)

This acknowledgment that there might be a more complicated relationship between realism and antirealism points us toward a more flexible definition of realism and encourages us to consider feminist influence over the term.

By developing a more flexible definition of realism, we can reconsider our assumptions about the development of the novel, especially the transition from Victorianism to modernism. This transition is often assumed to rest on the development of antirealist narrative strategies, and some critics argue that it is the antirealist strategies used by women writers that should be credited with transforming the novel at the turn of the century. For example, Sally Ledger, in *The New Woman: Fiction and Feminism at the Fin de Siècle* (1997), argues that modernism is a form of “women’s writing” because of its nonlinear qualities, and the protomodernist narra-

tive strategies used by some late-Victorian women writers contributed to the transition from Victorianism and modernism. Ledger focuses on the work of "George Egerton" (Mary Chavelita Dunne Bright), whose short stories put special emphasis on the interior thoughts of women, using a technique that anticipates modernist stream-of-consciousness. Contrasting Egerton's "Wedlock" with Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*, Ledger argues that the technique employed by Egerton allows her to represent the experiences of women in ways Hardy and other New Realists could not, since they were using conventional narrative techniques. In drawing attention to Egerton's technique, Ledger clearly lays out the transition from Victorianism to modernism, but she concludes that modernist narrative technique is more feminist than late-Victorian realist technique. While Ledger acknowledges that Egerton's work might be better classified as "feminine" than "feminist" (192), in the end her suggestion that literature has the potential to become fully feminist only in the modernist period sets aside the achievements of the realist work of the 1890s, by both women and men, and its contribution to feminism.

Talia Schaffer, too, has emphasized the differences between male authors and women writers of the *fin de siècle* and has argued that women writers, particularly the female aesthetes, had a stronger hand in the transition from Victorianism to modernism than other groups of writers. In *The Forgotten Female Aesthetes: Literary Culture in Late-Victorian England* (2000), Schaffer focuses on female aesthetes such as "Ouida" (Marie Louise de la Ramée), Alice Meynell, and "Lucas Malet" (Mary St Leger Kingsley Harrison), as opposed to the New Woman writers, because their interest in aestheticism rather than realism put them in a better position to move literature in a new direction (35–37). Aestheticism, Schaffer reasons, is inherently antirealist (49, 70), and she shows how aestheticist narrative strategies such as the epigram, fragmented prose, and avant-garde discourse were used first by women writers rather than the male authors who typically receive credit for them (244). For example, the epigram was invented by Ouida and appropriated by Meredith and Oscar Wilde (138, 151), and Malet's *Wages of Sin* (1890) was appropriated and rewritten by Hardy in *Jude* (217). Ultimately, Schaffer sees the female aesthetes as underappreciated but responsible for much of the transition from Victorianism to modernism. While Schaffer points out the important innovations made by women writers, who certainly have been marginalized by twentieth-century configurations of the canon, her argument does not address the vital role of realist narrative techniques that emphasize consciousness in modernism. Further, her argument rests on a narrow definition of modernism—that it was "a rebellion against Victorian strictures" (247)—but modernism should also be defined according to its prominent

narrative strategies, especially attention to the representation of consciousness via innovative narration.

Lyn Pykett offers what seems to be a better articulation of the complexity of the transition from Victorianism to modernism, especially in terms of the role of both male and female authors and their use of realist narrative strategies. In "The Cause of Women and the Course of Fiction" (1995), she discusses Mona Caird's position as a marginalized woman writer whose novels were "self-conscious aesthetic artifacts" and influential in the development of modernism (140). While Pykett accurately criticizes the masculinist underpinnings of the modernist aesthetic and the role of this aesthetic in the marginalization of women writers, she does not set Caird against late-Victorian male authors in order to prove her place in the literary canon. Further, she emphasizes that it is the *realist* narrative strategy of internal perspective, used to show increased consciousness, that is key to the development of the modernist novel. As Pykett explains, Caird's *Daughters of Danaus* and New Woman novels from the 1890s are different from the 1860s sensation novel because they emphasize the *psychological* conditions of woman's entrapment rather than simply the mechanics of the entrapment (134), and this focus on the psychological, which is shown through the realist narrative strategy of internal perspective, makes the New Woman novel key in the transition from Victorianism to modernism.

While Pykett confines her discussion to Caird's work in "The Cause of Women," she lays out similar issues on a much broader scale in *Engendering Fictions: The English Novel in the Early Twentieth Century* (1995). Here, she encourages readers to "rethink modernism" and move away from the notion that modernism requires a "complete break with the past, and particularly with the nineteenth century" (3). Instead, Pykett sees the beginning of modernism as difficult to pinpoint, in part because it was determined by a critical process extending well into the twentieth century (10) but also because it grew out of late-Victorian debates about gender in which the shifting cultural status of women (exemplified by the New Woman) became a symbol of both regeneration and renewal (53). In terms of literary technique, this period produced writing that was innovative yet still rooted in techniques of the past. Writes Pykett:

Like its modernist successors, much New Woman fiction broke with or modified the representational conventions of realism. Instead of re-presenting a normative view of a prior reality, the New Woman fiction either offered a different view (that of the woman-as-outsider), or constructed a new version of reality shaped to a woman's desires. . . . The New Woman writing also broke with con-



ventions of narration. In place of the wise and witty sayings, and the moral and social guidance of the omniscient narrator, we find a decentered narrative, and (particularly in marriage-problem novels) a polyphonic form in which the multiplicity of voices and views on current issues are juxtaposed. (57)

Not only does Pykett recognize how the content of the New Woman novel contributed to the development of modernism, but she links content and form to show how New Woman novelists pushed the boundaries of realism as part of this transition at the *fin de siècle*.

Like Pykett, Ann Ardis, in *Modernism and Cultural Conflict, 1880–1922* (2002), argues for a more gradual transition from Victorianism to modernism and recognizes the contribution of New Woman fiction to this transition. In making this argument, Ardis exposes the way in which “the men of 1914”—Joyce, Pound, and Eliot—presented modernism as a literary movement that left behind the subversive elements of the late-nineteenth century, including New Woman fiction, rather than acknowledging them as predecessors. “What *other* aesthetic and political agendas were either erased from cultural memory or thoroughly discredited as the literary avant garde achieved cultural legitimacy . . . ?” asks Ardis. “How are the edges, the margins, and even the limitations of modernism revealed once we start paying attention to the ways this literary movement intersects with, borrows from, and reacts against other cultural enterprises?” (7). Ardis takes up the case of New Woman fiction and how it shaped modernism in chapter 4 of *Modernism*, “Mapping the Middlebrow in Edwardian England”; she shows how Pound in particular set up a binary opposition between Victorian realism and modernism—a binarism in which modernism is all that realism cannot be (115). Still, a writer such as Netta Syrett, who situated herself among the New Woman writers of the 1890s by publishing in the famous “Keynotes” series in the 1890s, “talked back” to Pound by continuing to write feminist fiction in the early-twentieth century (118). Syrett’s fiction, explains Ardis, “undermine[d] the bourgeois ideologies commonly associated with literary realism even as she employe[d] its strategies of narration” (126). Syrett connected Victorian realism and modernism in a way not acknowledged by Pound and his compatriots, in part because of her feminism.

I am indebted to Pykett and Ardis for their ideas about the development of the novel, but my study adds a new layer to our understanding of the transition from Victorianism to modernism by focusing on a different contributor to this transition: the late-Victorian woman’s press. By focusing on this press, this book also draws on the work of other critics interested in Victorian periodicals and the development of a feminist sensibility in these

periodicals. Kate Flint's *The Woman Reader, 1837–1914* (1993) brought attention to feminist periodicals, including *Shafts*, when few others were writing about them. Flint writes that *Shafts* was among those feminist periodicals that constructed a distinctly different model of the woman reader than the mainstream press had, seeing her *not* as a reader who needed to be protected and controlled but as one who should expand her knowledge beyond those topics traditionally assumed appropriate for women (150–51). While this shift in the construction of the woman reader begins in the 1860s, with *The Englishwoman's Review* and *The Victoria Magazine*, Flint notes the lack of attention to (and occasional concern over) fiction reading in these periodicals, and she argues that it was only after the founding of *Shafts* that the woman's press took women's fiction reading seriously. "Not until the appearance of the liberal feminist *Shafts* (1892–9)," writes Flint, "does one find literary criticism which both selects particular books relevant to the interests of forward-thinking women, such as the letters of Geraldine Jewsbury to Jane Welsh Carlyle, or, indeed, *The Heavenly Twins*, and which suggests that women may have different priorities from men in their methods of reading and in the aspects of texts which they stress" (151–52). My study rejects the idea that there were more differences than similarities between women's and men's reading (and writing), but Flint's inclusion of *Shafts* in her study is largely responsible for my introduction to the periodical.

Like Flint, Hilary Fraser, Stephanie Green, and Judith Johnston, in *Gender and the Victorian Periodical* (2003), focus on the development of a feminist sensibility in the periodical press, beginning in the 1860s and extending through the 1890s. They argue that by the late 1880s the feminist sentiment in England was strong enough that the mainstream press had to acknowledge the growing body of women writers and readers (146). Though Fraser, Green, and Johnston concentrate more on the contributions of 1860s periodicals such as *The Englishwoman's Journal* and *The Victoria Magazine* than the contributions of 1890s periodicals to a feminist sensibility, they briefly discuss *The Woman's Herald*, referring to it as a paper that, under the editorship of Florence Fenwick Miller, "embraced women's issues in the broadest sense, including art, technical education, women in religion, notes on bills before parliament, recipes, and poetry" (166). Still, Fraser, Green, and Johnston do not discuss the paper under its earlier editors, when book reviews and articles about specific authors were featured more regularly.

Finally, Jennifer Phegley, in *Educating the Proper Woman Reader: Victorian Family Literary Magazines and the Cultural Health of the Nation* (2004), examines depictions of the woman reader in four mid-century family literary magazines (*Harper's Magazine*, *The Cornhill Magazine*,

*Belgravia*, and *Victoria Magazine*) and argues that each magazine created new roles for the woman reader. While Phegley does not discuss how the influence of these magazines continued into the late century, her discussion of *The Victoria Magazine* indicates how the woman reader was transformed into the woman critic via a literary aesthetic that anticipated the aesthetic articulated by *Shaffs* and *The Woman's Herald*. My study might be seen as a sort of sequel to Phegley's study, since it shows how a feminist realist aesthetic continued into the *fin de siècle*.

I also am indebted to the numerous critical studies about the 1890s New Woman, including Gail Cunningham's *The New Woman and the Victorian Novel* (1978), Ann Ardis's *New Women, New Novels: Feminism and Early Modernism* (1990), and Ann Heilmann's *New Woman Fiction: Women Writing First-Wave Feminism* (2000). Cunningham set the stage for recovery of lesser-known women writers of the 1890s by showing how their writings influenced the work of what Cunningham calls the "major" authors of the period: Hardy, Meredith, and Gissing. While Cunningham's study clearly focuses on the better-known male authors, her attention to writers such as Grand, Caird, and Dowie signaled that critics should take the New Woman novel seriously. Her work was particularly important given the publication of Elaine Showalter's *A Literature of Their Own* in 1977, which discussed many of the same women writers but ultimately labeled them as too intent on a cause and judged them less important than the "female" authors of the early twentieth century, who returned to the "art" of literature and developed a more complex aesthetic than the "feminist" writers of the 1890s had.

With the door open to take the New Woman novel seriously, critics such as Ardis and Heilmann have focused on the ways in which this novel became a site of representing a range of important social issues of the period. Ardis, in *New Women, New Novels*, lays out the cultural context for her argument that the New Woman novel contributed to the rise of modernism. She explains that the New Woman was both an "agent" and a "representative" of "social change," who then became the object of denunciation by those who were anxious about change (10–11). By putting canonical works in conversation with less canonical ones, such as Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891) with Olive Schreiner's *The Story of an African Farm* (1883), she shows how specific novels became "effective cultural agents" (60). Ardis connects her discussion of the New Woman novel to the overall development of the novel, arguing that "the history of the New Woman and the New Woman novel did not end at the end of the nineteenth century" (168). Further, she recognizes the contributions of realist writers of the 1890s to the transition from Victorianism to modernism when she writes that "issues of female identity fueled tremendous experimentation

with narrative form in the 1890s,” even though these writers have not been remembered as fully as those typically credited with “originating” modernism (169–70).

Heilmann, too, emphasizes the cultural impact of the New Woman, explaining that the New Woman “stood at once for the degeneration of society and for that society’s moral regeneration,” and, through the “intense and prolonged critical debate she engendered,” she “shaped central aspects of British literature and culture from the late-Victorian age through the Edwardian period and beyond” (1–2). Like Ardis, Heilmann puts male and female authors in conversation with each other, with more emphasis on the contributions of overlooked women writers than Cunningham was able to provide twenty years earlier. Heilmann departs from Ardis by keeping the emphasis on the social mission of the New Woman novel, claiming that the novel was not as responsible for the transition to modernism (8–9). However, she recognizes that the New Woman novelists’ use of specific narrative strategies in combination with content emphasizing a particular social mission brought a new tone to literature. Not only did these novelists “challenge” readers to “engage in a diversity of perspectives” through their “reflection of multiple female subjectivities,” but also, “by making women characters the focus of the narrative voice, writers first and foremost appealed to the contemporary readers to adopt a (multiplicity of) female viewpoint(s) as opposed to the conventional male vantage point which shapes so much of even oppositional Victorian literature” (9). In highlighting this new tone in literature, Heilmann acknowledges the more gradual transition from Victorianism to modernism I advocate in this book.

Together, the studies by Cunningham, Ardis, and Heilmann enhance our understanding of why canonical male authors wrote as they did in the 1890s, and these studies are responsible for recovering the reputations of at least two of the lesser-known women writers discussed in this book. (Heilmann in particular has continued this effort with the recent publication of *Sex, Social Purity, and Sarah Grand*, four volumes of documents regarding Sarah Grand and her work.) Further, these studies also deserve acknowledgment because they show how the New Woman novel became a site for discussion of gender issues at the *fin de siècle*, and this achievement is especially important because the connection between literary representation and social issues is central to the feminist realist aesthetic I consider in this book. Ultimately, I engage a major literary problem of the turn of the century: how did we get from Victorianism to modernism, and what role did feminist realism play in this development? It played an immensely important role in that it pushed the novel toward new concepts without turning its back on the novel’s roots in realism. To better

understand the role of feminist realism, we should turn to a more detailed discussion of the content of *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald*, especially how the feminist realist aesthetic was articulated by these two periodicals.



Although Henrietta Müller was the founding editor of the *Women's Penny Paper*, editorship changed hands several times over the course of the 1890s. Müller, who took on the editorial pseudonym "Helena B. Temple," saw the paper through its first name change, to *The Woman's Herald*, in 1891. In 1892, however, when Müller decided to travel to India, other women stepped in and served in the position of editor: first Mrs. Frank Morrison and then Christina S. Bremner. In February 1893 the temperance activist Lady Henry Somerset took over the editorship and changed the name of the paper to *The Woman's Signal* in January 1894. Annie E. Holdsworth joined Somerset as co-editor until October 1895, when the suffrage leader Florence Fenwick Miller began editing the paper; she saw the paper through the end of its run in 1899. While some women in the publishing industry saw Somerset's editorial control as a significant change,<sup>6</sup> and while it is true that less attention was given to literary issues once Somerset became the editor, I find enough consistency in the book reviews and literary articles in the paper, especially in terms of the feminist realist aesthetic, to think and write about the *Women's Penny Paper*, *The Woman's Herald*, and *The Woman's Signal* as one entity in this book. I refer to all three papers as *The Woman's Herald* in the main text of this book, except when it seems necessary to distinguish between the three. I do distinguish between the three in the bibliography of this book, so readers have the information needed to trace sources properly.

*Shafts*, on the other hand, existed under only one name and one editor for its entire run, and it seems that the sole editor, Margaret Sibthorp, found her initial inspiration in the pages of *The Woman's Herald*. In 1898, when a dispute about the history of *The Woman's Herald* arose between Sibthorp and Fenwick Miller, then the editor of *The Woman's Signal*, Sibthorp writes passionately about the inspiration Müller's paper provided her:

[I]t was full of power and grand outreaching; it was edited and superintended by a woman of unique force of character; it never aimed at anything short of the emancipation of woman, socially, industrially, educationally, and politically. . . . All women owe a deep debt of gratitude to *The Woman's Herald*. It was a pioneer, it *led the way*, and it left the world of women's hopes and struggles toward freedom, many

paces ahead of the point it had reached when the journal was started. ("Two Women's" 79)

In *Shafts*, one certainly sees the same commitment to the emancipation of women found in Müller's paper. At the top of her first editorial column in *Shafts*, "What the Editor Means," Sibthorp places a quote from Ibsen that highlights the power of women and working men to transform the world: "The revolution in the social condition now preparing in Europe is chiefly concerned with the future of the WORKERS and the WOMEN. In this I place all my hopes and expectations, for this I will work all my life and with all my strength" (8). And in the column itself Sibthorp iterates the paper's commitment to women and the working class and details the various feature columns that will express this goal: "What the Girl Says," a column about girls' thoughts and thoughts that women remember having as girls; "Steadfast Blue Line," which highlights "all that has been done, or is now being done by women"; and "What Working Women and Men Think." She calls on women "specially" to contribute to the paper, so the goals of the paper and the movement will be achieved.

While both periodicals ran a wide range of articles and were not strictly literary magazines, literature was discussed on a regular basis. This commitment to literary criticism sets *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald* apart from some earlier women's magazines, such as *The English Woman's Journal* (later the *The Englishwoman's Review*) which Phegley characterizes as committed to a feminist agenda but not necessarily interested in developing a feminist literary criticism (159–60).<sup>7</sup> Yet *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald* did share a commitment to feminist literary criticism with *The Victoria Magazine*, and Phegley attributes this commitment in *Victoria* to Emily Davies's editorial efforts (175). Davies, who served as acting editor beginning in May 1863, and then as book-review editor beginning in February 1864, used George Eliot's reviews in *The Westminster Review* as her model and "developed a decidedly gendered definition of realism that required not only verisimilitude, complex characters, and a moral purpose (all commonly recognized components of the form), but also female characters who could serve as role models for strong, intelligent women" (176).

Certainly, this model is similar to that used by *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald*, though *Victoria* emphasizes whether female characters are good role models or not, whereas the later periodicals spend more time articulating how strong, intelligent women can assert agency. While there are moments when *Victoria* gestures at the three-step method of consciousness, spoken word, and action by discussing whether a particular character speaks out or not, or by highlighting the actions a woman does or

does not take, there is not the consistent application of the three-step method found in the reviews in *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald*. For example, *Victoria's* review of George Meredith's *Emilia in England* in 1864 focuses on whether or not Meredith's female characters are realistic. The reviewer praises Meredith for his creation of the heroine Emilia, whose character is "beautiful and original in a very high degree," and also Lady Charlotte, who is "powerfully drawn" and "true to the life." However, the reviewer criticizes his creation of the Pole sisters, who are "meant to be typical rather than individual" but who fail as characters because "there is no class of women moving in society whose type of character is fairly represented by the Poles" (Anonymous, "Literature" 184). The reviewer gestures at the issue of women's speech and action by stating, "Girls who stoop to the sort of petty competition for supremacy which the Poles carry on with the Tinleys, would in their private conferences be confabulating over frivolous questions of adornment, or dilating on the gossip and scandal current in their circle" (184), but the reviewer does not systematically cover all three methods of asserting agency as many of the reviewers for the later periodicals do. We undoubtedly see the foundation for a feminist realist aesthetic—that literary representations of women should parallel real-life women and there should be positive role models for women in literature—but not the specifics of how women might create social change by modeling their own assertions of agency after those of literary heroines, as we see in the later periodicals. Further, *Victoria* tends to critique poor representations while *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald* tend to praise good ones, a trend likely reflecting the lack of feminist novels in the 1860s and the more plentiful supply in the 1890s.

Still, *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald* are similar to *Victoria* in that literary representation and social change are intertwined, to the degree that discussion of literature often saturated the papers. A typical issue included at least one substantial book review or article about literature, and in *The Woman's Herald* interviews with women writers dominated the cover stories. An index of cover stories from 1888 to 1892 shows that the periodical ran cover stories about Elizabeth Barrett Browning, George Eliot, Jean Ingelow, Harriett Martineau, George Sand, Beatrice Potter, Harriett Beecher Stowe, Mona Caird, and a number of lesser-known women writers. In addition, both periodicals ran stories on literary topics that often discussed earlier historical periods of literature or specific topics found in literature. For example, *Shafts* published articles on Lady Macbeth and other Shakespearian women, on poets who praised women in their work, on ways to choose books for young women, and on the influence of modern literature on the advancement of women's rights. *The Woman's Herald* ran similar articles, such as "Browning's Women," "George Eliot's

Heroines,” and “Women Writers in ’93,” and it published short stories by contemporary women writers, especially Olive Schreiner and Frances E. Willard. Finally, both papers often indicated how women writers might be seen as the inspiration for real-life work and action. Sometimes an article about a nonliterary topic was infused with literary references, as in Effie Johnson’s two-part essay “Self-Education” which described the history and importance of self-education for women and in which Johnson drew especially on the poetry of Elizabeth Barrett Browning to encourage women to further their knowledge of the world. *Shafts*, too, had many literary references: the paper featured quotations from writers the staff admired, sometimes under the heading “Choice Morsels from Choice Pens,” and these quotations were often used to fill white space. For example, in the December 10, 1892 issue, Ibsen’s statement, “In these days it is you, women, who are the pillars of society,” helped fill the space left at the bottom of a page.

Exact numbers regarding readership of the two periodicals are difficult to determine and are not cited in David Doughan and Denise Sanchez’s very important bibliography of feminist periodicals, *Feminist Periodicals, 1855–1984* (1987), but under Florence Fenwick Miller’s editorship of *The Woman’s Herald*, 500 copies went to suffrage societies (Crawford 414), and it seems likely that women who were members of other women’s societies were readers of the periodicals, since both ran regular columns about the activities of these societies. *Shafts* ran meeting notes from the Pioneer Club, and *The Woman’s Herald* ran notes from a variety of local liberal associations as well as county councils, which may have created a readership base. Circulation to other periodicals also is evident. One finds praise but also criticism of *Shafts* in Henrietta Stannard’s magazine, *Golden Gates*, which she edited from 1891 to 1894. “We have been favoured with the first number of a penny weekly journal entitled *Shafts*. . . . [M]uch of the paper is well written, but then so are scores of other journals which are well established, and which are written to suit the popular tastes. *Shafts* would be a splendid pennyworth for Girton girls, and for the average blue-stocking, but we fear that the British workman will not rush to read it” (Anonymous, “Notes” 449). *The Englishwoman’s Review* also ran notices about the introduction of *Shafts* into the market (Anonymous, “Reviews” 61) and the change in name of *The Woman’s Herald* to *The Woman’s Signal* (Anonymous, “Reviews and Notices” 52).

While distribution to other periodicals and to women’s societies seems to have built a readership base, Sarah Grand believed there was a negative side to the strong connection between the periodicals and some of the women’s societies. She claimed, in a letter to William Blackwood, that one member of a suffrage society had given Margaret Sibthorp £1000 to start



*Shafts* and she too was offered £400 to “write for the cause.” Grand rejected the money because she “felt they would have bound me to be the faithful servant of a party, and my ambition is to be an artist” (Heilmann and Forward, *Letters* 34). Elizabeth Crawford, in *The Women's Suffrage Movement: A Reference Guide 1866–1928* (1999), confirms that these periodicals received money from suffrage societies in exchange for covering their cause. Beginning in 1889, *The Woman's Herald* agreed to print a column from the Central National Society for Women's Suffrage for a price of £52 per year (429). Still, the book reviews in both papers were distinctly literary, and one does not have the sense that these pieces were unduly influenced by specific people or groups.

Nevertheless, it is important to recognize the potential biases of particular reviewers and the connections they might have had with the authors whose works they reviewed. Some of the reviews are unsigned and cannot be analyzed for bias, but many are signed. When reading M. E. (Mary Eliza) Haweis's review of Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* in *The Woman's Herald*, for example, we should keep in mind that Haweis and Hardy were acquaintances and shared a common concern about the vivisection of animals. In June 1894, Haweis invited Hardy to one of the many “at homes” she hosted over the years, which usually consisted of a lecture on a particular topic and a meal or tea. He agreed to attend, though he had previously turned down a request from her to give a lecture himself, and Elizabeth Robins confirms Hardy's presence at one of Haweis's “at homes” in 1894 (Hardy, *Collected Letters* 2:36, 2:59, 5:349). Still, Haweis was an established writer, having written books on women's dress and beauty in the 1870s, and she would go on to write *A Flame of Fire* (1897), a book with a feminist angle in that it intended to show how women continued to be subordinated to men via the institution of marriage (Haweis, “Foreword” iv). While Haweis's acquaintance with Hardy may undermine her credibility as reviewer of *Tess*, her experience as a writer and as an active member in the women's community affirms her credibility.

In addition to tracking the relationships between reviewers and authors, it is important to track the regularity with which reviewers wrote for the periodicals, since one can see a consistent aesthetic across the reviews written by regulars. Margaret Sibthorp is the most obvious example (she wrote many of the articles in *Shafts*), but perhaps the more interesting example is Gertrude Kapteyn, who wrote more than one review for *Shafts* and whose reviews are some of the most thorough in terms of the feminist realist aesthetic. Kapteyn remains elusive, and little is known about her outside the pages of *Shafts*, but, in addition to her book reviews of Moore's *Esther Waters* and Meredith's *Diana of the Crossways*, she wrote articles on the Norwegian writer Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson and on the topic

“moral education,” which seems to have led Kapteyn and others to start a series of classes for children to introduce them to ethical issues (Young 370).

Most of the authors whose works are discussed in this book had some knowledge of these periodicals, and there is evidence that some of them read specific reviews of their own work. For example, Gissing read the review of *The Odd Women* that ran in *The Woman's Herald* and was pleased with what he found (*Collected Letters* 120). Stannard and Caird obviously knew about these papers, since both authors were interviewed by *The Woman's Herald* and wrote at least one article for the paper. Caird also wrote articles for *Shafts*, and, as previously noted, Stannard mentions *Shafts* in her magazine, *Golden Gates*. There is little doubt that Grand knew about the periodicals, since she was interviewed by *The Woman's Herald* and was a member of the Pioneer Club (Crawford 127), and Hardy probably knew of the review of *Tess* through his friendship with Haweis. Meredith knew John Stanley Little, who wrote an article for *The Woman's Herald* about Meredith's work, so it is possible he knew of the paper as well (Meredith, *Letters* 1020). It is difficult to know whether Moore and Dowie knew of or read the articles in the two periodicals; I have no specific evidence they did, but they may have, through friends and their general knowledge of the publishing world. The literary community in London in the 1890s was small, so it is likely that all of these writers knew of the periodicals, even if they did not read them regularly.



In order to illustrate more specifically how *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald* articulated a feminist realist aesthetic, we should turn to some of the literary articles and reviews that ran in the two papers. Perhaps the most important of these articles is M. H. (Mary) Krout's "Women in Fiction," which ran in the September 21, 1893 issue of *The Woman's Herald*. In this article Krout sketches out a literary tradition devoted to the accurate representation of women, and she directly states that accurate representation means depicting women who can think, speak, and act for themselves. Before Jane Austen, Krout argues, the typical heroine was "a creature all tears and sensibility," but beginning with Austen the heroine with more than a "rudimentary brain," and even "intelligence," began to develop. Still, the ideal—the woman who "thought and spoke and conducted herself in fiction as a flesh-and-blood creature would have been apt to do in like surroundings and under like circumstances" (485)—did not appear until the middle of the century, with Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*. Of Brontë, Krout writes, "She gives us, for the first time, a heroine wholly

lacking beauty, but abundantly provided with brains, a woman who charms and holds where mere physical attraction would have been powerless" (485). After *Jane Eyre*, Krout explains, some writers have continued to write women who can illustrate only "human idiocy," but others have contributed to the new ideal of the intelligent woman who speaks up and acts on her own behalf. George Eliot, Mary Ward (also known as Mrs. Humphry Ward and the author of the 1894 novel *Marcella*), and George Meredith are among those Krout admires for their representations of women characters. Eliot shows both the "perfection" and "imperfection" of "womanhood," and Ward illustrates that women are "no longer puppets in the hands of exponents of any given school"; still, Meredith is "the greatest of all novelists," since he "comprehend[s] woman in her full mentality and her spirituality" (485). In detailing the way the nineteenth-century heroine developed and the ways in which contemporary authors represented women as thinking, speaking, and acting for themselves, Krout defines well the specifics of the feminist realist aesthetic.<sup>8</sup>

Other articles in *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald* highlight particular methods of expressing agency, and the chapters of this book are arranged around these specific methods. For example, chapter 1 focuses on the representation of increased consciousness in the work of Sarah Grand and Thomas Hardy, using Edith Ward's "Shafts of Thought" which appeared in the inaugural issue of *Shafts* and indicates the feminist belief in the power of thought to change the world. In the article Ward presents a pseudoscientific argument for the idea that thoughts travel between people in the same way microbes, or germs, travel through the atmosphere. Within this context, as I discuss further in chapter 1, we can understand why feminists came to value thought so highly and how consciousness became an important element in the feminist realist aesthetic.

In addition to using articles that consider specific methods of asserting agency, I use reviews of specific novels to illustrate how *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald* assessed works of literature according to their aesthetic and also how these reviews might shape our own twenty-first-century readings of these novels. While *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald* praise authors for partial fulfillment of the feminist aesthetic, they prefer complete fulfillment of this ideal, and, occasionally, reviews reveal that authors had met this goal.

It is worthwhile to examine briefly two of the reviews that discuss successful novels because doing so will help us understand what constitutes complete fulfillment of the ideal. In the first issue of *Shafts*, the writer "Dole" reviews George Meredith's *Diana of the Crossways* as part of an article about Meredith's commitment to the women's movement. In the article, titled "Mr. George Meredith on Women's Status," Dole compares Meredith to J. S. Mill, asserting that Meredith is "a friend of woman's lib-

erty quite as hearty as J. S. Mill" (8). In fact, Dole has enough admiration for him to state, "Since Mill died, no man's heart has felt so strongly, nor man's brain expressed with equal force and wit the disabilities of women" (8). Dole then analyzes Meredith's work, admiring him for his ability to combine artistic style and socially aware content, a central tenet in the feminist aesthetic. Meredith's novels, according to Dole, are books with both "narrative form" and "philosophical treatises on life" (8), and, as the review shows, his novels highlight all three aspects of woman's agency. Meredith "lays great stress on the intellect of women," which suggests that consciousness is key in his representations, and Meredith allows readers to hear women's "internal sentiments," a more general word for internal perspective (8). Further, Dole tells us that Meredith "does not admire" the "Womanly Woman," who "occupies herself merely in picking up the dropped stitches of other people, or in lubricating the wheels of her domestic machinery," suggesting that Meredith values action rather than submission on the part of women. He even suggests women are capable of fighting in war, confirming that physical action is important to him. Finally, Dole indicates that Meredith understands the importance of spoken word for the modern woman, since his "beautiful rebel" Diana "rebukes" those women who are content to cave in to the oppressive conditions of the present (8).

This definition of agency, and its correspondence with particular narrative strategies, can also be found in the reviews written for *Shafis* by Gertrude Kapteyn, including her review of George Moore's *Esther Waters*. Kapteyn's discussion of *Esther Waters* serves as an excellent model of a review that discusses specific narrative strategies in detail. While Kapteyn does not use the analytical language of current literary critics but a more characteristic nineteenth-century style of discussing books, she does make clear the effectiveness of Moore's use of internal perspective, dialogue, and description of characters' actions. Of Moore's use of internal perspective, Kapteyn writes about the "impressiveness" of Esther's "first realization of the terrible consequences of her weakness" after she becomes intimate with her lover (24), a comment suggesting that Moore has effectively captured the consciousness of Esther at a particular moment in the story. Kapteyn also points out Moore's use of dialogue as a strategy for representing assertion of woman's agency: she refers to the resistance Esther puts up to cultural norms that support the subordination of women in a conversation with Fred Parsons, the Brethren lay minister who tries to "save" Esther by marrying her and adopting her child (25). Finally, Kapteyn suggests Moore's skill at describing characters' actions, stating that his relay of specific actions taken by Esther is "perfect in his picturing of [her] unflinching perseverance" (25).

Of course, one charge that might be leveled against the feminist realist

aesthetic employed by *Shafis* and *The Woman's Herald* is that it is too "prescriptive," akin to the "images of women" criticism of second-wave feminism, and this is a valid objection, since the reviewers sometimes seem narrow in their judgments. To understand why feminist criticism can sometimes be prescriptive but also avoid this problem, it is useful to turn to a second-wave feminist statement regarding critical goals and practices. Cheri Register's "American Feminist Literary Criticism: A Bibliographical Introduction," one of six essays in the 1975 anthology *Feminist Literary Criticism: Explorations in Theory*, lays out specific criteria for successfully feminist literature, and these criteria are remarkably similar to those advocated by feminist periodicals of the 1890s. According to Register, the text must first be "authentic," not necessarily "politically orthodox" but certainly a "realistic representation of 'female experience,' 'feminine consciousness,' or 'female reality'" (12). Further, the text must be judged credible by the "female reader, who is herself familiar with 'female reality'" (13). While Register recognizes that this particular judgment test is "dangerously narrow," since there is no one reality all women experience, she believes that this form of criticism starts with readerly identification and then moves to more productive analysis, such as analyzing the importance of a woman's reality in a particular text even if it is not similar to the reader's own experience (13). Having set out these criteria for prescriptive feminist criticism, Register then identifies five specific objectives of feminist criticism. It should "serve as a forum for women," especially by providing perspectives not usually seen through works written by men; "help achieve cultural androgyny" by cultivating social values not normally recognized by mainstream culture; "provide role-models" by representing women who do not emulate only traditional feminine roles; "promote sisterhood" by encouraging women to support each other in their endeavors to change oppressive societal norms; and "augment consciousness-raising" by illustrating the connection between literary representation and real-life issues without being overly didactic (19–23).

What is striking about the similarities between feminist criticism of the 1970s and feminist realism of the 1890s is the emphasis on realistic representation and the balance between the critical and utopian aspects of this aesthetic. Just as second-wave feminist critics wanted to see both an exposure of cultural conditions that supported the subordination of women *and* the dismantling of these conditions through alternative representations of women, so did feminist critics of the 1890s, who were aware of the need for a twofold approach to creating change for women. Further, it is striking that while Register is quite specific about the goals of feminist criticism, she explicitly states that successful works of literature need not be "politically orthodox" and should not be overly didactic. The same appears

to be true for the aesthetic employed by *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald*. While the reviewers certainly make judgments about literature based on specific principles, especially *how* agency should be asserted, their reception of works attempting to represent this agency was highly flexible. Primarily, they wanted to see authors *attempt* to use the feminist realist aesthetic; even if their success was limited, reviewers were eager to give authors credit for their attempts.

I do not advocate “prescriptive” criticism, but, like Register, I believe a feminist criticism that evaluates the representation of women without becoming didactic and inflexible is beneficial to literary criticism as a whole. Most forms of so-called political criticism run the risk of becoming too prescriptive; as long as the practitioners remain flexible, such pitfalls can be avoided. Further, as a reader who believes in feminist ideals, I acknowledge my own tendency to read according to similar criteria, especially readerly identification. At times my analysis of particular texts overlaps with that of 1890s feminist critics; for example, when discussing Moore's *Esther Waters*, my analysis is both strengthened and informed by that of Gertrude Kaptelyn. Throughout this study I adopt the stance of a critic using the feminist realist aesthetic and distinguish works that fulfill the feminist realist ideal from those that do not. Rather than suppress my own feminist ideals in my analysis of texts, I have let them remain apparent, with the hope that doing so will show the connections between feminisms of different historical periods.

Chapter 1 of this book shows how *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald* highlighted consciousness in their discussions of woman's agency; it focuses on Thomas Hardy and Sarah Grand, perhaps the most recognized male and female writer of the 1890s respectively, and their attempts to incorporate feminist consciousness into their novels. It examines their best-known works—Grand's *The Heavenly Twins* (1893) and *The Beth Book* (1898) and Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891) and *Jude the Obscure* (1895)—and shows how they incorporated consciousness by focusing on the internal perspectives of female characters. While Grand's novels more often centered on female characters and their thoughts from the outset and were praised by *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald* for doing so, Hardy also received praise for his commitment to representing woman's agency in part because feminist periodicals hoped to gain his support for their cause.

Chapter 2 makes it clear that expression of agency through spoken word was as important as consciousness for *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald*, and it details how, for some authors negotiating feminist realism, spoken word served as the dominant method. This chapter examines George Gissing's *The Odd Women* (1893), which directly engaged feminist discourse through the intentionally single Rhoda Nunn and which was

praised by feminist periodicals for its use of spoken word. It also examines Mona Caird's *Daughters of Danaus* (1894), which featured extensive philosophical debates about the rights of women and which was admired for its attention to the speech of female characters. While Gissing does meet the feminist ideal regarding spoken word, Caird achieves a better balance of increased consciousness and spoken word in *Daughters of Danaus*, and *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald* recognized Caird as the more successful author.

Chapter 3 highlights the sentiment of the feminist periodicals that expressions of woman's agency could not be complete without action. It examines articles focusing on this method, and it discusses the work of George Meredith, author of *Diana of the Crossways* (1885) and *The Amazing Marriage* (1895), and Ménie Dowie, author of *A Girl in the Karpathians* (1891), *Women Adventurers* (1893), and *Gallia* (1895). Both authors concentrate closely on feminist actions, but Meredith received more attention from *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald* than Dowie did, in part because Dowie was seen as holding extreme views on gender issues, which put feminists in an uneasy position. While Dowie was mostly ignored (and occasionally ridiculed) by the woman's press, Meredith was held up as a model for other authors, both male and female, to emulate.

Chapter 4 indicates that, ultimately, both *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald* looked for novels incorporating all three methods of asserting agency, and authors who fulfilled this ideal had the opportunity to capitalize on their success and improve their literary reputations. When George Moore's *Esther Waters* (1894) was praised for fulfilling the ideal, Moore took specific steps to ensure that readers would remember his novel and its author beyond his own lifetime. On the other hand, Henrietta Stannard, who wrote under the pseudonyms "Violet Whyte" and "John Strange Winter," might have improved her literary reputation by more thoroughly engaging the feminist realist aesthetic in her novel *A Blameless Woman* (1894), which had many of the markings of a New Woman novel but ultimately was not remembered as one. I examine why one author was successful in improving his literary reputation via feminist realism while another was not successful in improving hers.

Throughout these chapters I argue for the inclusivity of the feminist realist aesthetic as articulated by *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald*. While the aesthetic was discerning, feminist periodicals needed writers, both female and male, to support their cause; as long as a writer attempted to incorporate one or more of the three methods of expressing agency, the periodicals drew attention to the strengths of the writer's work rather than focusing on its weaknesses. This inclusivity, I believe, contributes to the way in which the transition from the Victorian to the modernist novel occurred. In the

afterword I argue that the aesthetic articulated in *Shafis* and *The Woman's Herald* contributed significantly to the debate over realism at the end of the nineteenth century, since it advocated serious consideration of the representation of woman's agency and, by focusing on woman's consciousness, anticipated the thought-oriented aesthetic of modernist writing. The feminist realist standard, which praised authors for incorporating any of the three methods but saw expression through spoken word and action as springing from increased consciousness, acknowledged consciousness more fully than previous realist aesthetics and thus helped transform the novel from Victorian to modernist at the *fin de siècle*.



## AFTERWORD

# Engaging and Shaping Modernism

The feminist realist aesthetic incorporated, in varying degrees, by the authors in this study contributed significantly to the debate over realism at the *fin de siècle* by advocating serious consideration of the representation of woman's agency. By laying out specific principles for Hardy's idea in "Candour in English Fiction" (1890)—the idea that "the relations of the sexes" should be represented in literature—feminist periodicals created a progressive yet flexible standard for late-Victorian authors to emulate. This standard praised authors for incorporating any of the three methods—consciousness, spoken word, and action—but saw the latter two as springing from the first. This new aesthetic acknowledged consciousness and the narrative strategy of internal perspective more fully than previous realist aesthetics had. In fact, in an article titled "Is the Present Increase in Women Authors a Gain to Literature?," which appeared in *Shafis* in 1894, the author of the article identified the ability to write about the "inner life" rather than outward detail as the "modern tone in literature" (240).

The emphasis on inner life, especially the inner lives of women, helped push the development of the novel toward a modernist aesthetic at the *fin de siècle*. Once woman's consciousness was represented in the novel, it was a quick step to the thought-oriented aesthetic of the modernist novel. While the transition from Victorianism to modernism has typically been attributed to the use of antirealist narrative strategies by late-Victorian authors, antirealist strategies should not receive sole credit, since the transition is more fluid than such a theory suggests. Rather, this transition should be attributed equally to the impulse by late-Victorian authors not only to work within the realist tradition but also to transform it, as authors who adopted the feminist realist aesthetic did. By acknowledging the influence of feminist realism in the development of the novel, we enhance our understanding of the multiple sources for the modernist novel. It is not only the antirealists who encouraged the transition from Victorianism to

modernism but also those authors who engaged and incorporated feminist realism at the *fin de siècle*.



As I laid out in the introduction to this study, recent discussions of nineteenth-century British realism have tried to expand our understanding of the term beyond the traditional definition of highly detailed, external description of society, a definition that ignores the inner workings of the mind as well as the experiences of women. Still, as this study has also shown, the traditional definition of realism, which shaped the assumptions of much of the literary criticism produced in the nineteenth century, collided with competing definitions of the term, especially in the latter part of the century. Authors encountered new variations of realism, such as French naturalism and psychological realism, and as part of their encounters with these variations, they developed their own form, “New Realism,” of which Hardy was the main proponent. The New Realists, which tended to be male-dominated and included Meredith and Moore, distanced themselves from the naturalists, especially Zola, by placing less emphasis on a strongly animalistic approach to representation of people and their actions. However, they shared with the naturalists an interest in “the relations of the sexes” as a way to capture the reality of human experience. Likewise, they shared similarities with psychological realists, such as Henry James, who emphasized woman’s consciousness as a legitimate subject for fiction in novels such as *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881). Still, they were not disciples of James, since they did not focus as intently on representing the interior thoughts of characters as he did.

At the same time as male authors were developing the New Realism, women writers were constructing their own form of “new” realism—the New Woman novel, which illustrated contemporary cultural conditions for gender relations and advocated alternative roles for women. Ultimately, a dialogue—sometimes friendly, sometimes combative—emerged between the New Realists and the New Woman novelists, and both male and female authors engaged feminist realism through this dialogue. As I have already discussed, some recent critics want to emphasize the differences between male and female authors of the 1890s in order to make the point that the transition from Victorianism to modernism depended primarily on women writers because they supposedly could depict women’s experiences better than male authors could and because they were responsible for certain late-century literary innovations usually attributed to male authors. However, pitting male and female authors against each other creates a history of the novel that does not fully account

for the way in which the feminist realist aesthetic and the woman's press actually shaped modernism. The woman's press was inclusive of male authors but also emphasized the contributions of women writers to create its own mini-canon of authors who would go on to shape modernism, even if they did not become as well known as the typically recognized modernists, such as Joyce and Woolf.

In writing about the works of successful authors, regardless of gender, the woman's press of the 1890s made a significant contribution to the development of modernism: a specific literary aesthetic that allowed authors to stretch the boundaries of realism in ways even other late-century variations on realism did not. By engaging the feminist realist aesthetic, Sarah Grand highlighted the role of consciousness in assertions of agency by female characters who faced difficult marriages and unfulfilling lives because they were restricted to the domestic sphere, while Thomas Hardy depicted women who had increased awareness of their cultural conditions but could not translate that awareness into feminist speech or action. George Gissing and Mona Caird successfully employed dialogue to show women using spoken word to resist the traditional expectations for romantic relationships between men and women. George Meredith illustrated the wide variety of actions possible for women in difficult situations, and M<sup>é</sup>nie Dowie pushed the possibilities for action and marked the limits of the feminist aesthetic. Finally, George Moore and Henrietta Stannard took different approaches to the issue of literary reputation and, as a result, engaged the feminist realist aesthetic with varying degrees of success.

Further, through its commitment to reviewing novels that successfully depicted woman's agency, the woman's press gave male authors a venue for feedback on their work not provided by the mainstream press. It is clear that many male authors wanted a better understanding of women readers, since some of them commented on women who were reading their novels, and the woman's press provided this opportunity. For women writers the woman's press provided a venue for recognition of their work, especially when they felt misunderstood or were ignored by the mainstream press. Many women writers were aware of the bias against them in the literary community, and the woman's press provided a space for them to hear positive messages about working literary women. Finally, the woman's press worked to combat misconceptions about the modern woman. If readers of the period had looked only at the mainstream press's representation of the modern woman, who was usually presented as a caricature (the opinionated, bicycle-riding, smoking New Woman), they might very well have had a negative impression of this figure. But, as presented in the pages of *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald*, this figure is not the flat caricature suggested by the mainstream press. She is a well-rounded person with admirable profes-

sional goals and dedication to the cause of changing the cultural conditions for women.

These important contributions of the woman's press remain significant today, possibly more so than in the past, because knowledge of the woman's press can shape our own views of literary history. Few bibliographies of authors' works produced in the twentieth century include reviews written by the woman's press, and our judgment of the reception of male authors has been skewed, just as the judgments of late-nineteenth-century readers were skewed by the mainstream press of the day. Even recent work on women writers, which does account for reviews found in the woman's press, does not acknowledge as fully as it might the consistent literary aesthetic found in this press. Highlighting the role of this aesthetic should change our views about the development of the novel, which has been distorted because too much emphasis has been placed on other late-century literary movements and not enough attention has been paid to feminist realism.

Ultimately, both male and female authors of the 1890s broke with tradition while still relying on previous narrative techniques, and, as this study has shown, both put increased emphasis on woman's consciousness, the key element in terms of the transition from Victorianism to modernism. After their engagement with the feminist realist aesthetic in the 1890s, many of these authors engaged modernism in works which they produced after those discussed in this study were written. Still, as they engaged modernism, it always was with some awareness of the realist tradition that had come before. Hardy, for example, turned away from the novel and wrote poetry, a genre that seemed to allow for the more subjective, personal experience that had emerged through the feminist realist aesthetic and was moving to a new level in the modernist period. In poems such as "The Darkling Thrush" (1900), Hardy's fascination with the bleakness of human existence and the effect on the psyche is evident in the "I" narrator, who recognizes the passing of the old century and the "fervourless" state of himself and "every spirit upon earth" (Hardy, *Complete Poems* 150). While there is new hope as the century turns, as exemplified by the singing thrush, the narrator remains untouched by this hope: "Some blessed Hope, whereof he knew / . . . I was unaware" (150). In highlighting this skepticism, Hardy anticipates what would become the modernist mentality, especially after World War I. Yet even after World War I the tension between hope and hopelessness remains, and, in "I Looked Up from My Writing" (1917), Hardy highlights this tension by focusing on an encounter between the "I" narrator, who wants to write a book, and the moon, which questions how the narrator can write "In a world of such a kind," where men are killed in battle (551).

Sarah Grand, too, engaged modernism in *Adnam's Orchard* (1912) and *The Winged Victory* (1916), the first two parts of her unfinished trilogy about social problems, including eugenics, at the turn of the century. According to Teresa Mangum, these two novels touch on the “psychic” and “spiritual” aspects of modern life (193), and *The Winged Victory* is particularly modernist. Writes Mangum: “The darkness and futility of *The Winged Victory* are unprecedented in Grand’s earlier work, and, if the texture and tone of the novel are Victorian, the ambience is Modernist” (211). Certainly, the events of the novel are bleak: the climax of the story features the main character, Ella Banks, murdering one of the men who have pursued her romantically. Further, Ella learns that the love of her life, Lord Melton, actually is her brother, and the man who has been providing for her financially and caring for her emotionally is her father.

In addition to exploring these bleak events, Grand continues the focus on consciousness, the quality that made her work from the 1890s proto-modernist. In fact, the novel begins with a quotation emphasizing consciousness from Edward Carpenter’s *A Visit to Guani*: “When the noise of the workshop is over and mallet and plane laid aside, the faint sounds come through the window . . . intuitions, perceptions, which though partaking in some degree of the character and thought, spring from ultimately different conditions, and are the forerunners of a changed consciousness” (vi). The story soon turns to the increased consciousness of Ella, a lacemaker who spends much of her time working but also has ample time to reflect on her condition and the condition of other lacemakers. Ella recognizes that her own position is more privileged than that of other lacemakers (a Duke and Duchess support her), but it also is a lonely existence, since she is housed in London and cannot see the many she loves. Still, Ella is determined to improve her situation, so she reasons, “She decided to be grateful, but without being compliant. . . . It was understood, of course, that she should do her duty by the commercial part of the [lacemaking] enterprise; but, apart from that she had her own object and would make for it direct . . . to make the most of her many advantages” (32).

This reflection illustrates the attention given to Ella’s internal perspective in the novel, primarily through realist narrative techniques, but Grand also pushes the boundaries of realist narration by following this reflection with one which is more thoroughly modernist, since the flow of words more closely resembles stream-of-consciousness. “Following upon this determination [to make the most of her advantages], her spirits rose to the height from which it is a joy to look. She opened the window and leant out. With the opening of the window she let in a muffled roar, like the roar of the sea in a shell. It was as if she held London to her ear and listened—London, the city joyous of her dreams!” (32). Already the narrative con-

tains a stream-of-consciousness quality—in the repetitive phrase “muffled roar, like the roar of the sea in a shell”—but it becomes increasingly modernist as Ella’s thoughts continue:

A band passed in the distance playing a rollicking march, and her heart, throbbing to the throbbing of the drum, swelled high with hope. Then there were the feet—pattering feet coming, coming, coming from every direction; and going, going, going again, in every direction. The feet were most strange and exciting to her unaccustomed ear—footfalls of such numbers of people as it was hard to believe existed, each pursuing an object, and what object? Perhaps that great glow in the sky was the glory to which they were hurrying, to bathe in it, and from which they were returning all radiant and fresh. Joy was the predominant note to Ella’s ear. Only the fulness of life appealed to her at the moment, with an ecstatic sense of well-being. Those feet! those feet! messenger feet! *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings.* . . . They were coming into her life, those feet, bringing her joy! (32)

Though the narrative soon returns to a more realist vein, there are forays into modernist technique throughout the novel, as when Ella reflects on the power that lacemaking has to change the world in the chapter titled “Ella’s Retrospect” and when mystical descriptions of nature dominate in the chapter titled “Ella’s Intellect Wars Against Spiritual Influences.” Finally, we see the modernist effect when Ella, having left England after killing Brastaby, returns “an altered woman,” and her thoughts run on about what she has done: “She was torn by the horror of bloodshed, torn by that suggestion of the Duke’s that she had been in no danger, which made the deed unjustifiable—though she knew better! She knew better! . . . It was awful to have taken a man’s life, but the wretch, the wretch—Oh, she wanted to kill him over and over and over again!—Yet she did not want him to be dead” (511). Ultimately, Grand remains within the realist tradition, but her interest in woman’s consciousness helps her push the narrative technique into the realm of modernism.

Like Grand, Mona Caird explores the psychic and the spiritual in the works she published in the late 1890s and after the turn of the century: *The Pathway of the Gods* (1898), *The Stones of Sacrifice* (1916), and *The Great Wave* (1931), which John Sutherland believes is “exalted and visionary, a full blown expression of the mysticism latent in all Caird’s writing” (100). Through this mysticism, Caird explores the connection between past, present, and future, a connection which gives her work a protomodernist quality, since the “great” modernists also incorporated nonlinear

approaches to time. For example, in *The Pathway of the Gods*, Caird emphasizes the past by highlighting how images from the Golden Age of Italy pervade the thoughts of the main character, an artist named Julian, but she connects these images from the past to the present and the future by having Julian use them as a way to process what is happening in his life at the moment and what he expects to happen in the future. Still focused on the place of the New Woman in society, Caird develops the connection between past, present, and future primarily through Julian's relationship with a woman named Anna, a love from Julian's past whom he believes is much like him, since they both are "waifs and strays . . . more or less out of touch with their own people" (19).

Eventually, Anna and Julian are reunited in Italy, but Julian, who represents *fin-de-siècle* aestheticism, doubts whether Anna, who represents the New Woman, can be a true companion to him, since he is not sure whether she shares his "worship of the eternal Spirit of Beauty" (211). While the novel ends with a vision of Anna as one of the Christians sacrificed in Rome, an image which has served as inspiration for Julian throughout the novel and which suggests that Anna does have the commitment Julian seeks, the novel also ends with Anna's female competitor, Clutha, overseeing the sacrifice. Ann Heilmann, in *New Woman Strategies: Sarah Grand, Olive Schreiner, Mona Caird* (2004), has pointed out that Julian's vision of Anna throughout the novel is highly mythologized and that his glorification of Clutha over Anna at the end of the story suggests he cannot accept the New Woman. In fact, writes Heilmann, any "straight-forward reading of the ending as an invocation of a new dawn in human relations becomes destabilised" (177). Ultimately, Caird uses mythology, particularly the movement between past, present, and future, to critique the return of patriarchy in *fin-de-siècle* ideologies, especially aestheticism, but she also anticipates modernism via her experimentation with time.

Caird's use of mysticism to experiment with time yet critique patriarchy also is present in *The Stones of Sacrifice*, where several of the main characters congregate at the Standing Stones, Stonehenge-like configurations in Scotland, and discuss the connections between human sacrifices in the past and present-day philosophies about sacrifice, including the sacrifice of women and animals. Like *Pathway of the Gods*, this novel critiques patriarchy by making the protagonist, Alpin Dalrymple, a New Man and his love interest, Claudia, a New Woman. The two marry but maintain an "individualistic marriage" in which each is free to do as he or she pleases (383). Further, they establish a group called the "Alternatives," which advocates replacing the "negative idea of sacrifice" with the "positive living substitute of sympathy," which functions in turn as a "glorious substitute for crucifixion" (384). At the end of the novel, Alpin, Claudia, and friends

return to the Standing Stones, where Alpin, who has become especially devoted to preventing the sacrifice of animals, realizes he must continue working toward a harmonious world, where the norm is “love and pity for *all* not merely for a favoured handful” (455). The most upbeat of the three novels that Caird wrote as the century turned, *Stones of Sacrifice* suggests there can be positive change. As Heilmann explains, the novel indicates how the progressive “sexual politics of the Alternatives yield immediate positive results,” and the novel ends with a “vision of a society in which human, animal and natural worlds are at peace” (198).

In *The Great Wave*, Caird’s last novel and the one most thoroughly influenced by the historical events of the modernist period, the author’s interest in mysticism plays itself out by focusing on Grierson Elliott, a young man who rejects his family’s penchant for war and becomes an experimenter, drawing inspiration from a fourteenth-century alchemist who worked in the same attic-laboratory he inhabits. The novel focuses on Grierson’s increasing consciousness about the world and his place in it, and Grierson’s interest in the past comes into contact with real issues of the present, especially the possible onset of war between the British and the Germans. Grierson’s strong opposition to war shapes the decisions he makes about his experiments and even causes him to abandon them at one point, when it becomes clear that his scientific knowledge may end up in the hands of those who want to go to war. Still, Grierson eventually returns to his work believing that he can do something to improve the lives of humans while they struggle against inevitable defeat.

In keeping with Caird’s interest in the place of the New Woman in society, Grierson’s female partner, Nora Geddon, a New Woman because she is Grierson’s intellectual equal, plays an important role in the novel’s storyline. Claiming that “the only man she could bring herself to marry would be one who had a rooted objection to matrimony” (297), Nora befriends Grierson, falls in love with him, and becomes part of his intimate circle of advisors who help him decide how to use his scientific innovations and help him protect his innovations from those who might use them to destroy humanity. In fact, without Nora, Grierson’s innovations would have fallen into the hands of his war-hungry antagonist, Waldheim. Via Nora, Caird continues to explore feminist issues even as she is engaging other issues central to turn-of-the-century culture, confirming Heilmann’s opinion that Caird’s novels “consistently drew attention to the close interrelationship between sex/gender discourses and the prevailing ideological structures of the system” (199). Although Caird’s literary technique in these novels is not as protomodernist as Grand’s technique is in the work she produced after the turn of the century, her experimentation with time does have a protomodernist effect. Further, her critique of mod-



ern life and her construction of a different kind of world based on specific gender politics indicate that Caird did engage the important issues of early-twentieth-century culture.

Finally, George Moore engaged new literary styles in the work he produced in the late 1890s and after the turn of the century and, in doing so, helped to shape modernism. Influenced by William Butler Yeats, whom Moore admired for his involvement in the Irish revival movement, he constructed plots revolving around religious women in *Evelyn Innes* (1898) and *Sister Teresa* (1901) to move from the realist style that characterized *Esther Waters* to a more symbolist literary style. In *Evelyn Innes*, for example, a musically inclined young woman struggles to reconcile the traditional religious values taught to her by her parents with the agnostic values of her lover, Owen Asher. Not only does Evelyn become a symbol for this struggle between religion and agnosticism, but also the discourse of music becomes a method for discussing love and sexuality, which is a key element in Evelyn's spiritual struggle. Like Caird's, Moore's narrative technique is not as protomodernist as Grand's, but his use of symbolism creates a protomodernist effect.

*Evelyn Innes* creates a strong link to the works Moore produced after the turn of the century, since Evelyn seems to symbolize Moore's own struggle with traditional Catholicism and agnosticism. Moore returned to Ireland in 1901, in part because he sensed that Ireland was about to become artistically exciting and he wanted to participate in Yeats's revival movement (Frazier 273–75), but he struggled with the continuing influence of Catholicism in his home country. In works such as *The Untilled Field* (1903) and *The Lake* (1905), both of which take Ireland as their subject matter, Moore's symbolist technique emerges once again. "In the Clay," one of the stories included in *The Untilled Field*, explores the same tension between religion and agnosticism Moore explores in *Evelyn Innes* via the story of the sculptor, Rodney, whose freedom from the repressive religious atmosphere in Ireland is ensured only by the production of religious iconography because it will provide the funds needed to leave Ireland. The story focuses on Rodney's production of a statue of the Virgin Mary and Child, which is destroyed by two boys who overhear a priest bemoaning the fact that the artist used a nude model to create the statue, and the symbolism of all the women in the story, not just the Virgin Mary, is strong. Rodney's charwoman is larger than life—she functions as the bearer of the bad news about the statue—and Lucy, the young woman who models for Rodney and wants to travel to Paris with him after his misfortune, serves as a symbol for the choice between Rodney's freedom and the responsibility that would come from taking her with him. Finally, the statue itself acts as the strongest symbolist element in the story, since it symbolizes the irony

of Rodney's situation in Ireland and his struggle to come to terms with the fact that in order to leave Ireland and its repressive atmosphere, he must participate in the system he despises. Ultimately, he believes "there can be no renaissance" in Ireland in terms of art unless there is "religious revolt" (27), and this attitude seems to reflect Moore's own paradoxes about life in Ireland.

In *The Lake*, Moore again employs a symbolist approach to comment on Irish life, especially the stifling effect of religious Ireland and the freedom associated with leaving Ireland and living abroad. In the novel Father Oliver, a somewhat open-minded priest, becomes entranced by a parishioner, Rose Leicester, who leaves Ireland for England and then Italy after she is shunned by Oliver himself for her "fallen" status. Over time, Oliver realizes he is not seeking Rose so much as he is seeking "life," and at the end of the novel he swims across the lake near his parish, with the plan of making his parishioners think that he has drowned when in fact he has gone to New York to start a new life. Both Rose and the lake function as strong symbolic elements, and Moore's tendency to idealize women—a habit I discussed in chapter 4—is evident. While Moore's narrative technique is not as radical as modernist stream-of-consciousness, his technique is strongly subjective, since the novel is built upon the very personal letters Oliver writes to Rose. Further, both Rose and Oliver explore the wanderings of their minds in these letters, and such exploration suggests that Moore's novel anticipates the subjective narratives of the better-known modernists. As Robert Welch, in "Moore's Way Back: *The Untilled Field* and *The Lake*" (1982), says of Moore's work in *The Lake*: "[I]n opening fiction up to the shifting uncertainties of consciousness, he was attempting something new in literary narrative" (43).

Ultimately, many of the authors in this study engaged modernism at the turn of the century, but the feminist aesthetic they employed in the 1890s had already facilitated their own engagement and the engagement of others with this emerging style. Still, we cannot claim that the move from Victorianism to modernism necessarily results in more fully feminist representations in the modernist period. In fact, modernism often produces *less*-feminist representations because modernist writers focus so thoroughly on consciousness that the three-step process of asserting agency seen in the feminist realist ideal is left behind. A brief look at James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922) and Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) can help us see why modernist texts did not necessarily result in successful representations according to the feminist realist aesthetic. This exercise more importantly helps us see that late-Victorian authors who incorporated this aesthetic did anticipate the move to more emphasis on consciousness in modernist texts.

While critics disagree about whether Molly Bloom is liberated at the close of Joyce's *Ulysses*, Joyce puts strong emphasis on Molly's heightened consciousness and accords her the narrative space needed to explore this consciousness by ending the novel with her monologue. Within the monologue, her account of her daily life, which has sometimes been seen as the "drudgery" of the traditional housewife (Unkeless 151), gives readers access to a point of view not highlighted in Bloom's narrative, and Molly's final exclamations of "yes," sometimes read as sexual liberation (Pearce 56–57), suggest a liberation also of thought and feeling. Still, the emphasis on consciousness limits what Joyce can do with the two other methods of asserting agency. Even if Molly were intent on changing the conditions of her marriage, as the "yes" exclamations might suggest, there is no room for assertion of agency through speech or action at the end of the novel.

The same is true in *Mrs. Dalloway*, where the emphasis again is on consciousness rather than speech or action. As Clarissa journeys through a day of party planning for her upper-class family and friends, her internal perspective acquaints readers with her early life as a more carefree woman, with her and others' struggles to survive World War I, and with the ways in which the demands of her present life as the wife of a government figure seem to have contributed to her physical illness and emotional fragility. While there is some room for assessing Clarissa's resistance to cultural conditions, since toward the end of her party she must decide whether to remain in her own inner world or return to her party, the outcome—her return to the party—does not bode well when placed next to the feminist realist aesthetic, since it seems as if Clarissa has done little to change the cultural expectations for women.

Still, this is not to say that Clarissa Dalloway and Molly Bloom are wholly negative representations of the modern woman. The emphasis on internal perspective allows for development of highly complex interior lives of female characters, and this development allows for exposure of the cultural conditions that prevent characters such as Clarissa and Molly from asserting agency. In Clarissa's case, the overwhelming emphasis on class status among her circle of friends, and the way in which notions of "respectability" dictate how individuals can express emotions, limit Clarissa. In Molly's case, the conventional values of Bloom make it difficult for Molly to be liberated outside her own mind. The modernist emphasis on consciousness illustrates the complexity of women's emotional lives, even if literature of the period does not meet the feminist realist ideal.

Ultimately, this study advocates a more open view of realism and a more complex view of the relationship between Victorianism and modernism. A return to George Levine's call for a more open understanding of realism

(which I discussed at the beginning of this book) is appropriate, since as Levine reminds us, our thinking about the function of realism tends to be unnecessarily narrow. As Levine argues, realism is not an effort to avoid the indeterminacy of human experience (and, hence, a form of literature antithetical to modernism) but a method of actively engaging the issue of indeterminacy by struggling to reconcile “the monstrous” with the more “civilized” lives nineteenth-century people thought they should be living. Although Levine does not discuss the male and female authors in this study, with the exception of Hardy, it seems to me that for male and female writers of the 1890s, the monstrous is embodied in the debate over representation of “the relations of the sexes,” since gender relations, especially the changes in these relations at the *fin de siècle*, were certainly perceived as monstrous by more traditional Victorians. The “truth” about the relations of the sexes—that they cannot be adequately represented by realism of the mid-century but only once realism is redefined, as it was by the New Realists, the New Woman novelists, and the late-Victorian woman’s press—shows the limits of the genre when defined too narrowly. In engaging the relations of the sexes, even through the realist tradition, male and female novelists of the 1890s highlight “the monstrous” and make it central to the representation of human experience, and the late-Victorian woman’s press recognized this. It is, then, the very act of working within the mainstream tradition, and transforming it into something new, that makes the efforts of authors who engaged the feminist realist aesthetic so effective. As much as antirealist narrative strategies may have contributed to the development of modernism, variations of realism, especially feminist realism, were equally important in this significant shift in literary style.

# Notes

## Notes to Introduction

1. John Kucich, in “Curious Dualities: *The Heavenly Twins* (1983) and Sarah Grand’s Belated Modernist Aesthetics” (1996), uses the term “feminist realism” to describe a literary style common among the New Woman novelists, who demanded feminist “truth” and exhibited a certain amount of contempt for art because of their interest in feminist principles. Clearly, my use of the term is different—and more along the lines of Jennifer Phegley’s use of it in *Educating the Proper Woman Reader: Victorian Family Literary Magazines and the Cultural Health of the Nation* (2004). Both Phegley and I are more confident about the accomplishments of feminist realism, though Phegley’s focus is on its presence in 1860s rather than 1890s feminist periodicals. As a result, our definitions of the term differ somewhat, since the feminist literary aesthetic changes during this thirty-year gap, but we both use the term “feminist realism” in a positive sense.

2. Thanks to James Phelan for his help in working through this model to shed light on the assertion of agency by fictional characters.

3. For more on internal perspective, see Gérard Genette’s *Narrative Discourse* (1980), especially chapter 4 in which Genette introduces the concept of focalization, and James Phelan’s *Living to Tell about It* (2005), especially chapter 3 which includes discussion of Genette’s concept and the various responses to this concept by other narratologists.

4. More recently, Butler has articulated a more nuanced model of the subject and has addressed the issue of consciousness more directly in *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories of Subjection* (1997). Here, she seems to embrace a model that acknowledges opportunities for assertion of agency (i.e., Hegel’s bondsman recognizing the objects of his labor as his own) but also recognizes the limitations on such agency (i.e., the bondsman also recognizes his own work in the signature of his lord upon his work) (36–37). Further, she more fully addresses the issue of conscience, one specific aspect of consciousness, via her analysis of the ideas of Nietzsche, Freud, Foucault, and Althusser. While she still emphasizes speech over thought, and her basic belief that the subject is already acted upon remains, she more thoroughly engages the role of consciousness in subject formation.

5. Michiel Heyns’s *Expulsion and the Nineteenth-Century Novel: The Scapegoat in English Realist Fiction* (1994), for example, focuses on authors of the “Great Tradition” (Austen, Dickens, Eliot, Conrad, and James) and shows how works by these authors “support the status quo” but also shows how these works contain the means to “escape appropriation to the status quo” (49). Likewise, Katherine Kearns’s *Nineteenth-Century Literary Realism* (1996) shows the contradictory aspects of realism; she argues that while realism is “an essentially pragmatic mode whose predication of character as something enacted, partially but inevitably, within the environmental restrictions is

designed to reveal an imperiled ecological system of soul and society,” it also has “an alternative energy, perhaps in direct consequence of its shouldering of ethical and social responsibility, that is sufficient to destabilize the reformist agenda at hand” (1). In other words, while realism appears to uphold the dominant nineteenth-century perspective that reform could happen through a practical, material approach, it also engages a more mysterious side of life. Finally, Tom Lloyd’s *Crises of Realism: Representing Experience in the British Novel, 1816–1910* (1997) follows Heyns and Kearns, arguing that novelists from Austen to E. M. Forster carved out a “realistic middle space,” which both “unsettles and reassures its readers, for the reality it replicates inevitably is domesticated in the act of retelling” (9).

6. Fenwick Miller, for example, thought Somerset’s purchase of the paper from Henrietta Müller in 1893 had been an attempt to prevent competition in the woman’s press, and she states this in a letter to the *Daily Chronicle*. However, Sibthorp thought Fenwick Miller had mistaken Somerset’s motives, and she defends the “excellence” of the paper through its various editorial changes. But even she recognized that *The Woman’s Herald* was a different paper under Somerset than it had been under Müller. In an article in the April 1898 *Shafts*, “Two Women’s Papers,” Sibthorp writes: “[I]t then became a Liberal organ, and so ceased to be absolutely a woman’s paper” (78).

7. It is precisely for this reason that I have not included *The Englishwoman’s Review* in this study. The periodical ran until 1910 and did review literature in the 1890s, including Sarah Grand’s *The Heavenly Twins*, but it did not review most of the major novels of the decade, including those discussed in this book. Instead, it tended to review nonfiction on a wide range of topics (from the care of babies to how to paint to the qualities of proper English); reprints of works by earlier women writers (such as Mary Wollstonecraft’s *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*); and other periodicals and short pamphlets. There simply are not enough reviews of prose fiction to discern a consistent literary aesthetic. Even the review of *The Heavenly Twins* is so short that it cannot cover the same range of issues raised in the periodicals I have included in this study.

8. It should be noted that Krout also was an admirer of George Gissing, though she did not write about him for *The Woman’s Herald*. In December 1896, Krout sent Gissing a clipping of an article that she had written and that had appeared in a Chicago paper, *The Daily Inter Ocean*. Titled “Women’s Kingdom: ‘The Odd Women’ and Its Influence in England,” the article emphasizes the novel’s popularity in England and details how Gissing realistically portrays the sufferings of single women with no income and little training to find work for themselves. While Krout does not address the issue of woman’s agency or Gissing’s representation of it directly in this article, she does draw attention to the connection between the lives of literary characters and lives of real-life women in England, as she devotes the latter part of the article to the real-life conditions of women in England and argues there is “no parallel situation” in the United States (16).

## Notes to Chapter 1

1. Among those mainstream reviewers who criticized Hardy: Margaret Oliphant, whose criticism of *Jude* in *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine* enraged

Hardy; Mowbray Morris, whose comments about *Tess* in *The Quarterly Review* Hardy assessed as an example of the stagnant state of the reviewing apparatus; and, of course, the anonymous reviewer whose “attack” on *Tess* in *The Saturday Review* led Hardy to consider resigning his membership at the Savile Club, since he feared encountering the reviewer there (*Collected Letters* 2:105, 1:264–65, 2:252). Interestingly, all of these reviews have in common an emphasis on the “unnatural” story lines found in Hardy’s work and his inability, as the reviewers saw it, to represent accurately characters as they would act in civilized society. This trend has relevance to the gender issues raised by Hardy in “Candour in English Fiction” because reviewers most often touched on the lack of natural actions of the central female characters, Tess Durbeyfield and Sue Bridehead. What these reviewers hoped for, it seems, were more traditional female characters rather than characters who reflected the changing times.

2. The controversy over Grand’s depiction of syphilis is well documented, but what is less documented are the ways in which mainstream reviews marginalized Grand by characterizing her work as falling short of the realist ideal of the period and presenting degenerate characters instead of characters who would uphold respectable society. These reviews suggest that novels highlighting the relations of the sexes were outside the norm. For example, the review of *The Heavenly Twins* in *The Pall Mall Gazette*, which was so negative it sparked a heated discussion in more than one journal over the definition of realism being used by the critical establishment, states that while the “degenerate modern reader” may enjoy the book, the central character of the story, Evadne, is “the feminine conscience of modernity made flesh; too, too, solid flesh altogether” (Anonymous, “New Novels: According” 432).

Likewise, the reviewer for *The Critic* characterizes Grand as taking a Zolaesque approach to drawing characters and objects to the delineation of Angelica’s character, claiming that it is a “mental strain” to “believe that a young married woman, the granddaughter of an English Duke, is in the habit of paying long visits at night, wearing her brother’s clothes and passing for a boy” (Anonymous, “Heavenly” 437). This reviewer also argues that it is inappropriate for sexual standards to be the “central motive” for a novel “meant for general readers of both sexes” (437). Finally, in “The Strike of the Sex,” William Barry takes a sarcastic tone, naming all the reasons people might like the novel (style, sentiment, tragedy) and refuting each one. Then Barry contrasts the novel to Ward’s *Marcella*, which he believes is more “successful” because it does not close at a “psychological moment,” follows the plot out to its logical end, and generally includes “a type closer to life than the grotesques and caricatures of ‘The Heavenly Twins’” (452). This type of criticism, which masks dislike for the subject matter in discussion about literary style, is not unlike that used against Hardy to marginalize those writers who were taking on controversial subject matter.

3. While Lord Dawne disapproves of some of Ideala’s actions, it cannot be said that he is unsympathetic to feminist principles. To Ideala, he argues that no person can “stand alone,” separate from the rest of society, indicating that he may be supportive of a woman’s movement that emphasizes collective action as well as individual transformation. “[W]e are all part of this great system,” he tells Ideala. “[I]ndividuals must suffer, must even be sacrificed, for the good of the rest. When the sacrifice is voluntary, we call it noble” (165). Dawne uses this argument to try

to convince Ideala that it would be wrong to run away with Lorrimer. His argument might be seen as patriarchal rather than feminist, as Dawne does seem to have some romantic interest in Ideala, but Dawne never articulates (or acts on) his attraction to Ideala. So it is possible to read Dawne's perspective as feminist rather than patriarchal.

4. Mangum, for instance, argues that the shift from third-person narration to Galbraith's first-person narration toward the end of the novel "signals the dangers of unquestioningly accepting the authoritative male account of female experience" (118), and Ann Heilmann, in "Narrating the Hysteric: *Fin-de-Siècle* Medical Discourse and Sarah Grand's *The Heavenly Twins* (1893)" (2001), states that the "most disturbing reflection of her [Evadne's] disintegration is the fact that her voice and perspective are filtered through a male consciousness" (126).

5. For example, in "Writing against the 'Husband-Fiend': Syphilis and Male Sexual Vice in the New Woman Novel" (2000), Emma Liggins finds the ending to be too traditional, a "conventional happy ending" in which the "New Woman's radical potential is sapped by the pressures of conforming to conservative plot-lines, as Evadne achieves her womanly ideal of house, children, and husband of her own" (187). While I agree that the open-ended nature of the ending leaves one wondering whether Evadne ever will be able to act independently (and become less dependent on Galbraith), Evadne's marriage to Galbraith seems less conventional than Liggins suggests, and her reading does not recognize the positive role some men might have in a woman's transformation.

6. For more on the problems that mainstream critics had with *The Beth Book*, see the anonymous reviews in *The Athenaeum* (Anonymous, "New Novels"), *The Spectator* (Anonymous, "Some New Novels"), and the *Review of Reviews* (Anonymous, "Some Books of the Month").

7. "Focalizer" is the term used by narratologists to refer to characters whose internal perspective is dominant in the narrative at a particular time. As shifts in vision from one character to another occur in the narration, the character identified as the focalizer also shifts.

8. On January 15, 1894, Hardy writes to Florence Henniker, "I am creeping on a little with the long story, and am beginning to get interested in my heroine as she takes shape and reality: though she is very nebulous at present" (2:47). Then, on August 12, 1895, he writes and says, "I am more interested in this Sue story than in any I have written" (2:84).

9. For more on the language of sympathy, see Audrey Jaffe, *Scenes of Sympathy: Identity and Representation in Victorian Fiction* (2000).

10. Oliphant's "conservatism" is complex, as evidenced by the fact that she also discusses Grand's *Ideala* in the same article and reviews it fairly favorably. Ann Heilmann, in "Mrs. Grundy's Rebellion: Margaret Oliphant between Orthodoxy and the New Woman" (1999), explains Oliphant's conservatism well by pointing out that she would not accept depictions of sex outside of marriage. This is how she could criticize Hardy's *Jude* but accept Grand's *Ideala*, since Ideala was tempted in her marriage but did not act on that temptation. Still, I recognize that Oliphant's position on women's rights is ambiguous, especially when one traces her own statements on the issue across her career. For more on this, see Heilmann as well as Merryn Williams's "Feminist or Antifeminist? Oliphant and the Woman Question" (1995). My characterization of Oliphant as "conservative" applies to



her reviews for *Blackwood's*, which, Heilmann emphasizes, was a periodical with Tory associations and edited by a conservative editor (218).

11. See, for example, Black's "The Need of Trade Unions for Working Women," which ran in the May 21, 1892 issue of *The Woman's Herald* and in which Black argues that working women would be better off if they belonged to trade unions as they would be able to exert enough pressure on employers to raise wages and make enough money to provide for themselves in old age. See also "The Servant Question," in which Black was interviewed by Sarah Tooley about the differences between the lives of factory girls and servant girls, and "Questions of the Day," in which Frances E. Willard interviewed Black about a variety of questions, including her opinion about modern fiction. Of the "sex novel," Black states, "I am glad to see women speaking out in this kind of novel, even when the ideas expressed are erroneous. It is well to bring to light even the false point of view on such questions, and I think women should undoubtedly say what they think. I feel it is to the general good that a woman should put into a novel her own thoughts" (Willard 130).

## Notes to Chapter 2

1. See for example, *The Speaker's* "Fiction," which characterizes the novel as more of an "essay in social ethics" than a novel (Anonymous, "Fiction" 417). Some of the reviews, including the one in *The Speaker*, do praise Gissing's efforts at tackling an important social issue, and the review in *The Pall Mall Gazette* even touches on Gissing's use of dialogue, saying that it distinguishes "good from bad realism" (Anonymous, "Reviews: *Odd*" 220). However, this review also seeks to separate *The Odd Women* from those New Woman novels in which the characters simply talk about social issues instead of living them (219).

2. Selig, in "A Sad Heart at the Late-Victorian Culture Market: George Gissing's *In the Year of the Jubilee*" (1969), argues that it is Gissing's negative view of popular culture that prevents Nancy from being the sustained focal point of the novel, as Gissing's preference for high culture over low leads him to condemn Nancy for her obsession with low culture and to praise Tarrant for his commitment to high culture. This turn, Selig believes, works against the sympathies of Gissing's readers, who expect Nancy to remain the central character in the novel. "Gissing spoils it," writes Selig, "by shifting the point of view from Nancy's perceptiveness to Tarrant's moral obtuseness. In the last sentence of Part 5, Chapter 5, we are told that Tarrant ' . . . went home to a night of misery.' . . . Yet our interest is not in him, the lesser character, but in Nancy. What did she go home to? It is in Nancy that the human values of *Jubilee* reside" (719).

Sloan, in "The 'Worthy' Seducer: A Motif under Stress in George Gissing's *In the Year of the Jubilee*" (1985), and Harman, in "Going Public: Female Emancipation in George Gissing's *In the Year of the Jubilee*" (1992), also focus on Nancy's loss of power to Tarrant. Sloan does this by discussing Nancy in the role of the fallen woman: he argues that while the setting in middle-class Camberwell suggests that Nancy might experience freedom not afforded members of the working class, Nancy is portrayed as a "wanton" woman who should be judged for her displays of independence (357). Harman argues that while Nancy has the opportunity to gain freedom through the free union, the material conditions of her life prevent her from fully embracing this alternative to marriage. The free union,

Harman asserts, keeps intact individual freedom without forcing individuals into a position of isolation, and by proposing such an alternative Gissing suggests that Nancy has some degree of agency because her acquiescence to Tarrant's "free union" idea might be read as an act of self-control rather than submission (365). However, Harman believes that the actual conditions of Nancy's life in this alternative marriage do not match up with the theoretical ideal, making Nancy much less liberated than Rhoda Nunn of *The Odd Women*, who is able to achieve a psychological freedom through her more theoretical understanding of the free union (370).

In contrast to these critics, Constance Harsh, in "Gissing's *In the Year of the Jubilee* and the Epistemology of Resistance" (1994), reads the novel as a more successful representation of woman's agency. Correctly characterizing most criticism of Gissing's work as obsessively occupied with establishing a "stable authorial point of view" for Gissing through biographical information identifying him with his male characters, Harsh argues that in *Jubilee* we see how lack of narrative control actually functions to create space for the expression of agency by Nancy (854–55). Harsh identifies three ways in which Gissing makes Nancy the central character in the book, as central as Lionel Tarrant: (1) he thematically associates Nancy with modernity through her attendance at the Jubilee celebration, which suggests that she is capable of feminist revolt; (2) he builds her character through "free indirect discourse," which results in an "epistemology of resistance" on the part of Nancy; and (3) he depicts Nancy as essentially female, aware of "woman's biological destiny," which becomes a way for her to resist Lionel Tarrant's masculinist perspective. While I agree with Harsh that Nancy *initially* is more empowered than Selig, Sloan, and Harman believe, I disagree with the notion that Nancy's understanding of "woman's biological destiny" allows her to resist Tarrant toward the end of the novel. It seems to me that she accepts the idea of "biological destiny," and this prevents her from taking concrete action to change the material conditions of her life.

3. Florence Boos, in "A History of Their Own: Mona Caird, Frances Swiney, and *Fin de Siècle* Feminist Family History" (1998), examines the historicist and social constructionist views expressed by Caird in *The Morality of Marriage* (1897), and Ann Heilmann, in "Mona Caird (1854–1931): Wild Woman, New Woman, and Early Radical Feminist Critic of Marriage and Motherhood" (1996), discusses Caird's critique of motherhood in both her nonfiction essays and in *Daughters of Danaus*. Finally, Patricia Murphy, in "Controlling Women's Time: Regulatory Days and Historical Determinism in *The Daughters of Danaus*" (2001), considers Caird's critique of the Victorian expectation that women would spend their time fulfilling social duties and the frustration Hadria Fullerton feels when forced to do so. All three articles are helpful in terms of understanding the specific views expressed by characters in *The Daughters of Danaus*, who spend significant time debating issues surrounding women's individual liberty and, therefore, the opportunities to assert agency.

4. For more on this debate see Harry's Quilter's *Is Marriage a Failure?* (1888, rpt. 1984), a collection of some of the letters written by readers with commentary by Quilter, who was *The Daily Telegraph's* theatre critic at the time. It is important to note that Quilter disagreed with much of what Caird believed about marriage, and one weakness of the collection is that he does not reprint her original article

but summarizes it in such a way that his bias against her is evident. In addition, Quilter included other resources on the matter, such as Eliza Lynn Linton's "The Philosophy of Marriage," in the collection, and his selection of sources also reveals his bias against Caird. He saw Linton's essay as a more "practical" view of the issues surrounding marriage and believed that her "brilliant" view balanced out Caird's more "vague and high falutin'" perspective (13–14).

5. Both of these organizations were founded by Elizabeth Wolstenholme Elmy, one of the more prominent figures in the suffrage movement. The latter was founded in response to a disagreement between Elmy and Florence Fenwick Miller, who also was prominent in the Women's Franchise League, over the fact Elmy had a paid position within the organization. Loyal to Elmy, Caird followed her to the Women's Emancipation Union (Crawford 90, 413, 713–20).

6. For accounts of specific debates held at the club, see the numerous anonymously authored articles in *Shafts* and *The Woman's Herald*, but especially Anonymous, "Pioneer Meetings," which describes debates about "The Nationalisation of the Land" and "Rational Dress," and Anonymous, "Debate at the Pioneer Club," which describes a debate over women's suffrage. Also see "The Pioneer Club," which highlights the fact women were learning something from attending the debates, especially how to "separate personal friendships from matters of principle" (Anonymous, "The Pioneer Club" Dec. 1893, 183). This suggests that the Pioneer Club, like Pearson's Men and Women's Club discussed below, valued "objective" debate.

7. The commitment to "objective" debate became a point of contention in the club; some of the women members were perceived by the male members as responding from an emotional perspective rather than an objective one. Henrietta Müller, founder of *The Woman's Herald*, for example, was perceived as departing from the scientific approach Pearson had set at the first club meeting (Bland 14). Another point of contention was the differing motives of the men and the women in the club. While many of the women cited a commitment to the women's movement as their reason for joining the club, some of the men, especially Pearson, had formed the club because they wanted to understand better the way women think, and this made some of the women feel as though they were objects of scrutiny (6–7).

8. Caird also cites Pearson's *Sex-Relations in Germany* in "Marriage" (190).

### Notes to Chapter 3

1. The former is confirmed by the regular column, Anonymous, "What Liberal Women Are Doing," which features details of the everyday work done by women in the Women's Liberal Federation, and the latter is confirmed by other articles about women's unions, such as "Women Trade Unionists," which emphasizes that working-class women "are also awakening to the knowledge that they ought not to accept less [pay for the same work] than a man" (Anonymous, "Women Trade" 3).

2. Though neither *Shafts* nor *The Woman's Herald* reviewed *The Amazing Marriage*, Frances E. Ashwell wrote a six-part series, "George Meredith's Heroines," for the periodical *Great Thoughts* in 1896 and 1897. In her article

about Carinthia, which was the last in the series, Ashwell argues that while the women in Meredith's later novels are not as powerful as Diana or Rhoda Fleming, Carinthia is the strongest of the heroines Meredith created in the three novels he wrote in the 1890s (407). Ashwell also seems to have been a reader of *The Woman's Herald*; in August 1894 a Frances E. Ashwell wrote a letter to *The Woman's Herald* concerning "The Influence of the Feminine Novel." In this letter, Ashwell defends Meredith and Ibsen from the charge that they "write of an abnormal class who are unnatural, in so far as they repress the angel in the animal" (124) and argues, to the contrary, that these two writers exhibit the "healthy-body-healthy-mind view of human well-being," in which the angel is made to "illumine" and "purge" the animal, since "real progress" is dependent on the two types working in unison (124).

3. For more on caricatures of the New Woman, see Angeliqie Richardson and Chris Willis's "Introduction" to *The New Woman in Fiction and in Fact: Fin-de-Siècle Feminisms* (2001).

4. Here I depart from Richardson, who in *Love and Eugenics in the Late Nineteenth Century: Rational Reproduction and the New Woman* (2003), as well as in the articles "'People Talk a Lot of Nonsense about Heredity': Mona Caird and Anti-Eugenic Feminism" (2001) and "The Eugenization of Love: Sarah Grand and the Morality of Genealogy" (2000), argues that Grand was writing from a eugenicist point of view in *The Heavenly Twins*. I generally agree with Richardson's assessment of Grand, but her argument about eugenics in Grand's work relies too heavily on Grand's post-1900 nonfiction to suggest that her earlier fictional work, especially *The Heavenly Twins*, contained eugenicist ideas.

5. That seems to be the light in which *The Woman's Herald* and *Shafts* interpreted Grand's *The Heavenly Twins*. In *The Woman's Herald's* review of the novel, the reviewer discusses the "double standard" for sexual relations Grand was trying to dismantle. For the first time, says the reviewer, women have the chance to control their own futures, particularly when it comes to marriage, by asking questions such as, "Is any kind of a man good enough to be my husband?" and "Is any kind of man—provided he be respectable and well-to-do—good enough to be the father of my children?" Not necessarily, the reviewer suggests and goes on to say: "Either men must become as moral as women, or women will become as immoral as men" (Anonymous, "Marriage" 123). Certainly, this statement advocates social purity, but the reviewer never pushes these ideas to the point of eugenicism, since the key idea seems to be changing the morals of men rather than breeding a particular "race." In *Shafts*, Mary Fordham also articulates a social-purity view when discussing Grand's novel in an article titled "Knowledge Is Power," claiming, "We want one and the same moral code for men and women; not one for one sex and one for the other. We want to see equality between men and women, and this can only be secured by the elevation of the man, not by the degradation of the woman. Men, no less than women, must lead pure lives before marriage, and afterwards remain true to one wife" (137). Again, the emphasis is on changing the moral behavior of men rather than encouraging women to engage what would come to be called "race motherhood."

6. In addition to the articles by Smith and Courtney, articles about Meredith's female characters appeared in the periodicals *Woman* and *Great Thoughts*, neither

of which was explicitly feminist but both of which hired feminist writers to write about Meredith. Clementina Black authored “Women Under Victoria: Women in the Literature of the Reign,” which ran in *Woman* in May 1897, and Frances E. Ashwell authored the six-part series “George Meredith’s Heroines” in *Great Thoughts* in 1896 and 1897.

7. The essays in *The Lady* were part of the magazine’s weekly literary competitions and were written by “average” people under pseudonyms such as “Amaryllis,” “Broad Arrow,” “Mustard Seed,” and “Rotha.” The competitors were given specific topics each week, in this case, “Write an analytical essay on the women in George Meredith’s ‘Diana of the Crossways.’” Interestingly, the winners “Rotha” and “Mustard Seed,” as well as the judge of these essays, “Hypatia,” comment on Diana’s actions. Hypatia wonders whether Diana’s actions can be forgiven, writing, “It is impossible not to love Diana—perhaps we love her most when we feel most inclined to blame her, save only when she performed the only deliberately dishonourable action of her life, and sold the secret Dacier confided in her” (Anonymous, “Lady Literary” 172). Rotha addresses the issue less directly but seems to indicate she would have a hard time forgiving Diana for selling Dacier’s secret. While she claims that Meredith helps readers sympathize with Diana at this point in the novel, she also emphasizes Diana’s faults and ends her essay with the statement, “Through the women of his book Meredith conveys the teaching that lack of feeling is not a virtue, that the truly good woman is not she who does not know, but she who stoutly resists temptation” (172). Mustard Seed, on the other hand, seems thoroughly capable of forgiving Diana: “‘True, she errs, but in her own grand way,’ and she errs in exactly the way in which a woman of Diana’s warm heart and vivid imagination would do. . . . She has nothing of the coquette in her, albeit she once verges terribly near it, but that is when she is striving to keep Redworth’s love at bay” (172).

8. Bedford draws special attention to Diana’s beauty not only in his individual portrait of her but also in the introduction of the book, when he writes that “of all the Meredith heroines, [Diana] is the only one possessed of beauty on strictly classical lines” (18). While attention to Diana’s beauty and clothing, and the decision to paint portraits of Meredith’s heroines in the first place, might be seen as tempering Meredith’s feminist tendencies, a closer examination of the book shows that Bedford wants to play up, rather than diminish, the connection between Meredith and feminism. Bedford’s introduction, divided into sections with specific headings, begins with the section “George Meredith’s Allegiance to Feminism,” and many, though not all, of the other headings pick up on themes evident in feminist criticism of the 1890s. There is a section “Their Gift of Brains,” which includes Diana’s wit as one of its examples of Meredith’s commitment to portraying women as intelligent (22), and a section “Friendship between his Women,” which includes reference to Diana and Emma’s friendship, characterized by Bedford as the “most outstanding” of Meredith’s female friendships (29).

## Notes to Chapter 4

1. Moore also used the image of Parnassus in “Cheap Tripping to Parnassus” (1886), which exposes the corruption of achieving success via the story of Julien, owner of the studio Moore attended while living in Paris, and in “The Decline of

the Drama" (1921), in which Moore writes about the frustration of theatre critics upon seeing the work of playwrights who seem not to have lived up to the expectations set by drama of the 1890s, when it seemed as though "Ibsen had hit upon a dramatic road that would lead every body to Parnassus who cared to go there" (1). In both of these cases, Moore uses the image in a somewhat derogatory manner, yet he discusses his own association with Parnassus in strictly positive terms.

2. Among those critics who have revised Watt are John Richetti (*Popular Fiction Before Richardson: Narrative Patterns 1700–1739*, 1969, rep. 1992), Nancy K. Miller (*The Heroine's Text: Readings in the French and English Novel, 1722–1782*, 1980), Michael McKeon (*The Origins of the English Novel, 1600–1740*, 1987), Nancy Armstrong (*Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel*, 1987), Margaret Anne Doody (*The True Story of the Novel*, 1996), and Josephine Donovan (*Women and the Rise of the Novel, 1405–1726*, 1999). While Richetti and McKeon have done much to question Watt's omission of a discussion of the romance in his account, most useful to my work here are the studies by Miller, Armstrong, Doody, and Donovan. Their studies address directly the masculinist assumptions of a traditional history of the novel (Miller and Armstrong) and the overlooked contributions of early women novelists (Doody and Donovan). These revisions to the history of the novel make clear the strong investment nineteenth-century male authors had in building and sustaining a masculinist tradition.

3. Moore's hatred for Hardy is well known, with his most negative comment appearing in his 1917 revision of *Confessions of a Young Man* (1888), where he writes, "I read Mr. Hardy despite his name. It prejudiced me against him from the first; a name so trivial as Thomas Hardy cannot, I said, foreshadow a great talent; and 'Far from the Madding Crowd' discovered the fact to me that Mr. Hardy was but one of George Eliot's miscarriages" (211). Moore iterated his poor opinion of Hardy in *Conversations in Ebury Street* (1924), where he again contrasts Hardy to Eliot by stating that Eliot would explore the various motives of Angel Clare in the confession scene in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, hearing Tess's confession, whereas Hardy avoids such exploration, a result of his "lack of invention," or "brain paralysis" (122). Hardy returned the favor on his deathbed in 1928, when he composed a scathing epitaph for Moore: "No mortal man beneath the sky / Can write such English as can I / They say it holds no thought my own / What then, such beauty (perfection) is not known.' / Heap dustbins on him: / They'll not meet / The apex of his self conceit" (Hardy, *Complete Poems* 954).

4. Of the process, Moore states that after deciding on Alice's profession, the writing of sentimental stories, he "passed in review all the women I know who took part in the world's work; I remembered some five or six who collectively were a realization of the character which, in vague and fragmentary outline, I had already conceived. I thought of these women long and anxiously[;] I recalled looks, words, and gestures; I raked together every half-forgotten memory; I considered the main structure of each temperament; and I took note of special peculiarities; over and over again I pulled these women to pieces like toys, and strove to build something of my own out of the pile of virtues and vices that lay before me" (279–80).

5. To make the book even more "English" than it already was, Moore added the subtitle "An English Story" to Heinemann's regular third edition, and he

added a dedication to his friend T. W. Rolleston, which replaced the original dedication to Moore's brother, Maurice (Gilcher 46). In this new dedication, Moore emphasized that Rolleston was an Irishman who could "always love Ireland without hating England" and that he respected Rolleston for this, a statement that confirms Moore's interest in appearing friendly to the English. These "English" revisions are included in the fine edition of 1920, as well as in the 1932 edition with the woman-centered preface I discuss later in this chapter.

6. This issue also was taken up in the Society of Authors' periodical *The Author*, which Stannard received as part of her membership in the Society. In 1890 *The Author* highlighted "A Hard Case," in which a young woman had been ripped off by a publisher, who convinced her to pay for lessons in writing and the publication of her book, which did not sell a single copy (Anonymous, "Hard Case" 8).

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