

Concordia University

**“Gendering Journalism (History):
The Emergence of the Woman Journalist, Toronto, 1880-1895”**

Sandra Gabriele

**Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada**

April 2004

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ABSTRACT**Gendering Journalism (History): The Emergence of the Woman
Journalist, Toronto, 1880-1895**

Sandra Gabriele, Ph.D.
Concordia University, 2004

This dissertation asks how the nineteenth century woman journalist emerged as a meaningful cultural and professional identity. As a cultural history it begins by considering the partisan newspaper as a cultural formation that, given its changing relations of production, came to position itself as independent and partisan simultaneously. Rearticulated as a paper of the people, its readership was revised as a family. The weekend edition became the location of new representational practices that were both entertaining and enlightening that materially effected this change in its identity and mission. As the public sphere was feminized by a multitude of reform initiatives and the private sphere was publicized and regimented through new domestic technologies and practices, the woman's page emerged as a space within the newspaper that helped to make sense of these changing relations, even as it altered them, while situating the newspaper within domestic relations. Within this cultural formation, the woman journalist emerged as a product of these conditions, even as she re-produced them. Using the journalism of two women journalists, Kit Coleman and Faith Fenton, as case studies, it argues that the format of the woman's page was a crucial site where these conditions coalesced, creating the conditions within which they could forge for themselves a professional identity. The woman's

page spoke especially to the family's moral head of household in a highly personal voice that articulated the shifting relations between the public and private sphere. By constructing a knowing and authoritative voice through a series of gendered practices the woman journalist developed a highly intimate and personalized relationship with her readers that turned the woman's page into a domesticated space within the larger newspaper. This space was transformed, however, through her travels and social explorations which helped to broaden her journalistic authority using sensational techniques from the new journalism that were carefully negotiated within regimes of gender that were produced in part by the woman's page itself. These women had to negotiate continually the shifting intersections of journalism and gender, producing a journalistic practice that was historically contingent and was both the product of and produced a new gendered identity for women at the close of the century.

Acknowledgements

This thesis, like all my work, could not have been possible without the tireless love and support of my mother and father, Irma and Valentino.

It is dedicated to them. *Senza famiglia, niente è possibile.*

For his patience and love through all those impossible moments and cranky days, I want to thank Michael especially. Because of this thesis, we met; in spite of it, we have survived. The birth of my niece Isabella changed my life by reminding me how much bigger and better it could be. Nengh Mensah never failed to offer advice, encouragement and laughter. Jonathon Brickman lent his sharp eyes and gentle reassurances while editing those unruly early drafts. Kim Sawchuk, my advisor, has been everything: my cheerleader, my defender and above all, my friend. Through all the years, she has helped me to see how much I am capable of accomplishing. My committee members, Line Grenier and Bill Buxton, have taught me how to think and have been instrumental in the formation of this project. And, to all the countless people who have advised and supported me along the way, helped me to track down references or navigate through dusty archives, thank you.

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Introduction

Laying out the Groundwork

The first absolute necessity of a newspaper woman is to be thoroughly human, with a sufficient number of what are called faults to keep her in touch with the masses.¹

Transforming itself into a corporation in the latter half of the nineteenth century, funded by advertising and circulation revenues, the partisan newspaper of Toronto found itself in a bit of a quandary. Having built their reputation and readership on a political agenda set by their party, the partisan newspapers of Toronto faced the problem of attracting a readership based on ideals other than their affiliation with a particular political party. As it became increasingly less feasible to rely on patronage, newspapers, in their bid to secure a new audience base for their advertisers, awoke to a number of other changes that were happening around them.² These would be key to forging a new identity for itself: women were increasingly occupying more public space as reformers and as workers; a shifting lifestyle for urban dwellers with more access to leisure time meant significant changes were taking place that were altering relations between the private and public sphere.³ Though partisan newspapers still held their political interventions at the forefront of their mission, they faced a critical point of assessment: if speaking on behalf and in support of the party would no longer be their sole purpose or identity, then how would that identity be augmented?

Following the independent evening papers, the morning papers began to shed their strictly political identities and re-fashioned themselves as participants in the

community, connected to “the people” by being their advocate, by addressing their popular pleasures and political concerns. Though newspapers did not discard entirely their affiliation with the political party – economically, politically or symbolically – the last two decades of the nineteenth century saw the beginning of a radical refashioning of the purpose and role of the newspaper. In order to reach the kind of mass status necessary to be profitable, it was forced to become popular. Partisan newspapers would no longer be for an elite class of enfranchised citizens. They would aim to reach all classes, even those without the franchise, such as women and children.⁴ Thus emerged an ideological and industrial fissure in the partisan newspaper formation that allowed for the entry of women as journalists who would participate in the construction of the Woman Journalist.⁵ That is, historical subjects became the subjects of an articulation of ideologies and discourses relating to gender and journalism which were represented through the journalistic practices they developed. Yet at the time of the emergence of Woman Journalist who she would be, what her voice would sound like and how she would speak were far from evident. She began writing sporadically in Toronto papers, a column during the week sometimes, but most times in the weekend edition. Eventually, she, and her woman’s page,⁶ would come to take on a starring role in an expanded weekend edition that included innovations designed to entice the family to spend time with their paper, learning, being informed and now, being entertained.

But how did this process of popularization occur? What role did these women play in this process?⁷ This dissertation begins with the assertion that the

woman's page, along with other important new features⁸, was essential for grounding the paper in the home front and things of a personal nature. Increasingly a sense of the everyday lives and pleasures of its readers appeared in the newspaper. By the turn of the century, newspapers no longer served the nation through the political party, but rearticulated service to the nation and service for the people to a new site: the family. To serve the nation was to serve the people, who were now identified not solely as enfranchised citizens, but as a family unit – including mother, father and child. The family would grow in importance by the turn of the century as a site of consumption and moral guidance in nation building. Newspapers, thus, increasingly assured readers that their pages – and advertising – were suitable for consumption in the home.

This dissertation contributes to our understanding of that complex cultural relationship and process that makes up the newspaper, its content and its readers on two levels. First, it examines the changes that two partisan newspapers in Toronto, Ontario underwent in the final two decades of the nineteenth century. These papers were *The Empire* and *The Mail*. More specifically, in order to better understand how these newspapers fashioned themselves into a different kind of newspaper –that is, as an entertaining object *as well as* an edifying one– it examines the weekend edition.⁹ Thus, this analysis is structured by my interest in the processes of popularization, in what Stuart Hall has called “transformations:” “...the active work on existing traditions and activities, their active re-working, so that they come out a different way: they appear to ‘persist’ – yet, from one period to another, they come to stand in a

different relation to the ways working people live and the ways they define their relations to each other, to the 'others' and to their conditions of life."¹⁰ How the newspaper shifted its relation to its readers is critical to understanding how women's journalism emerged in this time and place.

The second level of analysis considers the woman's page as a form and the writings of two women editors who turned them into some of the most read features of the paper. These women were Kathleen Blake Coleman ("Kit") of *The Daily Mail* and Alice Freeman ("Faith Fenton") of *The Empire*, who wrote between the years of 1888-1895. In order to better understand the "double movement of containment and resistance" of the conventions of gender upon journalistic practice (and vice versa), I examine the journalism of these women who worked for different partisan papers as case studies of their interventions within the context of a changing newspaper industry and its limitations.¹¹ These two women were chosen because they were among the first in Toronto to work full time editing a weekly women's page. They were columnists, reporters, editors and moderators, producing a weekly column of interest, editing clippings from other papers and the correspondence sent to them.¹² Alice Freeman was a full-time schoolteacher and journalist. She edited the woman's page, "Woman's Empire," for *The Empire*,¹³ a rather short lived paper, from 1888 to 1895. Kathleen Blake Coleman, known as Kit by her *Mail* readers, was born in Ireland and emigrated to Canada in 1884, where she had two children¹⁴ After the two papers merged in 1895 to become *The Mail and Empire*, Freeman lost her job to Coleman, who continued to edit/write the Woman's Kingdom until a salary dispute

led her to leave the paper in 1911 to write a syndicated column instead.¹⁵ Freeman used the extensive connections she established while editor of the *Woman's Empire* to do some magazine work for a time, before becoming famous for her trek to the Yukon with the Victorian Order of Nurses as a correspondent for *The Globe* in 1898.

I began my research with the question of how women entered the profession of journalism and how they came to be a Woman journalist. In what forms did she write herself into existence? And how did she make herself meaningful within the wider journalistic discourse? In considering these questions, I have opted to use Woman journalist in order to address her ideological constitution. At moments, however, lady journalist is used in its place to highlight the particular ways in which questions of class became part of this cultural formation. Mobilizing particular ideas about the Home, alongside those of appropriate gendered behaviour, she was more specifically a Lady of the paper. In other words, I did not begin my analysis assuming that the appearance of these women in the pages of a newspaper could explain *a priori* the kind of work she would do. Nor did I assume what women's journalism would mean, the forms it would take, or the practices and strategies would be used. An examination of the conditions of her emergence reveal a central paradox: the woman journalist displayed a consistent and careful negotiation of appropriate displays of womanly femininity and journalistic duty. Indeed the woman journalist is born out of this paradox, as were many other professionals of her time.¹⁶ She was always and already circumscribed within a paradigm of femininity like that of no other journalist. Yet, the conventions of a domestic femininity invested in women's moral authority at

home were severely challenged by any kind of journalistic work outside of the narrow confines of social gossip, edited fashion columns and other “chit chat.” Though these ladies under examination here did produce this kind of journalism, they also did much more.

I have been concerned also with understanding the relationship between the construction of a professional and cultural identity for the woman journalist on the one hand, and with the function that the woman’s page played on the other. I do not mean to suggest that the two were separate. Given the limited opportunities for the Canadian woman journalist, one cannot understand the woman journalist without understanding also what the woman’s page meant to her work, and what role it served within the larger newspaper of which it was a part. Thus, the two orders of analysis are intimately connected.

By examining all the pages produced in this time frame in terms of the forms, practices and roles created, borrowed and revised, I argue that the emergence of the women’s page and the woman journalist appeared in the partisan press at a crucial stage in its existence, one that was marked by a blurring of the very distinctions of partisan and independent press, as well as a shifting relation between public and private.¹⁷ By establishing an intimate, highly personal relationship with its readers,¹⁸ the woman’s page created a tight circle of readers – an imagined community – with processes and rules around inclusion and exclusion.¹⁹ Using techniques of direct address, discussion of personal experiences, and other expressions of gendered address, the woman’s page formed a highly complex relationship between readers and

the woman journalist, who was, in turn, symbolically linked to the newspaper. The result was a uniquely urban²⁰ form of journalism that was intimately connected to the personal lives of its readers, and that strove to make connections with the rest of the newspaper, and with the entire family.

Though the political allegiances that marked the partisan newspapers' legacies were never left behind,²¹ they adopted a populist approach—not in their editorials as was the case with the independent papers like *The Star* (in both Montreal and Toronto) or *The World*, but in their content. Women were key to achieving this. Assuming that there is nothing self evident about this, I undertake to investigate the processes by which the woman journalist forged a meaningful identity for herself and her work within this network of expanding relations between newspaper and reader. The reader, “the people” in the common discourse of the time, took on a starring discursive role, both in terms of the philosophical motivation and in the rhetorical constitution of the newspaper. Putting the reader at the center of its mission – rather than, or alongside, the political party – they stimulated interest in and desire for their product by highlighting features of their daily lives. As Vanessa Schwartz has succinctly argued of the French *fin de siècle* press: “By taking everyday life and transforming it into sensation, the press guaranteed a constantly renewable ‘news’ source.”²² Never taking on the radical populist position of the independent papers, the use of “the people,” meant something different for the formerly partisan papers.²³ Though mobilized in different ways and to varying ends, all newspapers by the turn

of the century addressed their content to the more specific subset of “the people” the family.

The adaptation of the new journalism within Canadian newspapers was central to the process of popularization and part of the conditions necessary for the emergence of the woman journalist. Adopted for the particularity of Toronto’s markets²⁴ which were dominated by a discourse of morality and propriety, the techniques, content and forms of the new journalism – for instance, sensational detail, melodrama, local news, features, white space and headlines – became a force in Canadian journalism in the late 1880s.

In turn, these complex processes – popularization, progress, and service to the community/nation—came to center around the family, especially its moral leader, woman. Though politics had never stood entirely outside the realm of morality²⁵, at the close of the nineteenth century an expanded moral discourse emerged that increasingly linked the progress of the nation with its moral character.²⁶ Nowhere was that more important than in the pages of the newspaper as it sought to become part of a broader community. In turn, it needed to develop a relationship with the family, the localized site for the promotion and progress of the nation. The family, consequently, became a site for the consumption of the newspaper product—already a new orientation as the industry continued to become increasingly more self sustaining and regulating within a capitalist, revenue based system—as well as a site of production, an active barometer of how well a paper was achieving its calling and contributing to the progress of the nation.

The Public Sphere and the Liberal Conception of Journalism

Trying to make the case for placing the late nineteenth century newspaper within a history of popular culture is one that requires some explanation. Other Canadian journalism histories have tended to understand journalism as serving a liberal ideal of mass participatory democracy. None have understood journalism as part of or having implications for popular culture. Paul Rutherford, for instance, adopts the classic Laswellian model of communication by organizing his study around answering the famous “who said what, in what channel, to whom, and with what effect.”²⁷ He argues that the rise of daily features transformed the newspaper into a mass communication media that served the interests of mass democracy and an emergent consumer culture: “...the emerging society demanded a citizenry with sufficient knowledge to make reasonable decisions about how to vote, what to buy, where to invest, how to find jobs, even what to believe.”²⁸ Adopting a functionalist approach, Rutherford presents society as a disembodied totality, capable of having shared and clearly articulated needs which, in turn, leads to particular kinds of journalistic content.

While Rutherford argues that the corporate press came to occupy a role of providing information to a growing commodity culture, Minko Sotiron, in his work *From Politics to Profit*, shifts this argument in a critical direction that tracks the demise of news as information within the partisan press to news as commodity within the commercial press, and along with it, its more honourable functions within society.²⁹

Sotiron argues the corporatization of news production brought on by the application of new business practices forced the decline and importance of political commentary, as “readership, rather than partisanship, [became] progressively more important.”³⁰ This focus on readership brought with it popular features, like women’s pages and local news, which, for Sotiron, seem to be uniformly bad for the readership/citizenry. Without sufficiently proving that editorship under partisan political rule provided better content,³¹ Sotiron argues that the changes within the organizational structure of the newspaper as it became a profit-oriented business led to crass mass market content while never really accounting for why these changes were so popular, nor that the newspapers were worse off because of this popularization.³² Instead, readers come off in Sotiron’s account as naively duped by clever capitalists or complicit in their own ruin.

Between the approaches of Sotiron and Rutherford lies the work of Thomas Walkom in his insightful and meticulously researched economic history of the Toronto and Ottawa newspaper markets.³³ The key, Walkom argues, to understanding the economic conditions internal to the newspaper industry was overhead costs. Ottawa, largely buffered by strong partisan support throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century and influenced by other demographic and economic factors, did not pursue expansion into new markets by increasing their overhead costs; while, in Toronto, a massive expansion in overhead costs (new plants, new presses, expanded work forces, linotype machines, etc) intensified the need to expand markets because of the excessively crowded and competitive nature

of that market. Adopting a similarly functionalist approach, Walkom furthermore argues that the ensuing changes in content did not eradicate partisanship nor did they divide papers along “class” (serious political news) and “mass” (sensational) lines. Rather, although each paper had its traditions (independent or partisan) and differing ideological images of the world,³⁴ all were invested in maintaining the stability and dynamism necessary to allow the social relations of capitalism to reproduce.³⁵

Less focused on the economic history of newspapers, though equally liberal, is W.H. Kesterton’s seminal work, *A History of Journalism in Canada*.³⁶ Comprehensive and impressive in its detailed histories of the rise and fall of Canada’s varied newspapers, it pays particular attention to the establishment of freedom of the press with the development of publishing libel laws.³⁷ Kesterton organizes what is ostensibly newspaper histories, not journalism histories, around a plant metaphor that tracks its “transplantation” from Britain to its “Thickening Growth,” in the period of 1807 to 1858. Although Kesterton never fully explains his rationale for his periodization, he argues that the transformation of the newspaper into a private enterprise began much earlier than the commercialization period after 1880. This argument suggests that there was a relative rise in the level of control and influence political parties came to hold over the newspaper after the debates over Responsible Government, *even as* commercialization was beginning. Though Kesterton may have overstated the case of financial independence, what his argument suggests is that the key to this history lies in gradual patterns of ebbs and flows of political control, rather than a definitive break that marked a distinctively new period.³⁸ It also lends support

to the notion that a new kind of partisanship came into play around the 1880's, one that drew from its partisan past in order to promote its commercial future, which I take up in the next chapter.

Set firmly within a liberal democratic tradition, these histories understand the press' function to be one of education through the provision of information necessary to keep a citizenry informed of issues of concern within the public sphere. Issues of bias which interfere with the transmission of a transparent reality thus preoccupy liberal theorists, whether they be journalistic or editorial bias, organizational structures and values, or the corrupting influence of market forces.³⁹ Yet, as Paul Lazarsfeld and Robert Merton observed almost sixty years ago, such an approach confuses information with civic participation.⁴⁰

This approach also assumes that the change in the newspaper from focusing on "politics" to "readers" implies certain forms, techniques, concerns and content. While one can make general assertions about popularization, my intervention in this literature asserts that it is a process taken up within certain contexts, conditions and contingencies which are always in flux. Further, this thesis challenges the narrowly informational function of the press that assumes "information" (that is, content) passes uniformly in a direct line of influence from paper to reader. Rather, it understands the communication process as being complex, contextual and open to contestation. Thus, communication is not measured in terms of success, failure, or influence, but rather, is understood as the circulation of meanings, ideas, and power that are dependent on cultural contexts. Thus, journalism, as a cultural practice, is as

much constituted by its social, political and cultural contexts, as it is by its economic structure. This study posits a different approach to understanding how newspapers communicated with their audiences by paying close attention to how the words they were writing were articulated with existent trends, discourses, and ideas in order to create new forms and practices; and, how those words were implicated in the industrial changes that were occurring at the same time. By bringing to bear the ways in which the social and the cultural were part of what constituted the industrial and economic, I hope we can better understand the force of historical change, particularly as it was felt by the historical actors of the time.

Habermas and the Public Sphere

The notion of a general decline of the press from an idealized sphere of debate central to the construction of consensus at the heart of democracy has been most forcefully theorized and historicized by Jürgen Habermas in his influential *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*.⁴¹ As others have argued, although Habermas' treatment of the bourgeois public sphere may have been overly idealized (leaving him with nowhere to go, argues Peter Dahlgren⁴²), his overall treatment of this historical period, particularly his analysis of the social conditions that made possible a historically distinct sphere where bourgeois citizens engaged in public discourse about their "common interest," was remarkably prescient. Significantly, his examination of the public sphere made distinct that realm of public discourse (and its social conditions) from the state and economy (which are also public, but analytically

separate).⁴³ The decline of this bourgeois space occurred as the structures that made the public sphere possible were transformed, namely the introduction of private interests in the public sphere and the intrusion of the state into private affairs.⁴⁴ For Habermas—displaying his roots within the Frankfurt school—the press came to interfere with the idealized functioning of the public sphere, as rational-critical debate was reduced to the consumption of culture. Private and public realms blurred, social inequalities were no longer “bracketed,” but became the ground from which discourse and action occurred, and the generation of public opinion occurred not by rational critical debate, but through public relations, advertising and entertainment.⁴⁵

Despite the obvious contributions Habermas has made to developing a concept that theorizes that space between the state and economy where a participatory democracy can flourish, his idealization of the public sphere and his treatment of its decline has had its critics. Perhaps the most cogent critique of Habermas from a feminist perspective was launched by Nancy Fraser. As she points out, public deliberation need not be solely reliant on already established notions of common good, particularly as Habermas’ account fails to adequately consider the gendered and class-based nature of those deliberations and the realm in which they take place.⁴⁶ Others have pointed out that he problematically insists that actors in the public sphere entered with identities which were fully formed in the private sphere.⁴⁷ This over-emphasis on the distinction between public and private leads identity in the public sphere to necessarily be abstracted from the private, leaving little room for difference⁴⁸ or for a more nuanced approach to the role the commercialized press

could play in the construction of subjectivities and identities.⁴⁹ Thus, to idealize this sphere is also to normalize the exclusions upon which it depended, and, in turn, to leave unexamined the power relations which hold the public sphere in place.⁵⁰

In addition, as Geoff Eley has persuasively argued, Habermas' account of *one* public sphere is "needlessly restrictive," not only by denying the existence of other competing public spheres that always existed (not only in the latter nineteenth century), but also by ignoring the extent to which the public sphere was marked by conflict: "the public sphere makes more sense as the structured setting where cultural and ideological contest or negotiation among a variety of publics takes place, rather than as the spontaneous and class-specific achievement of the bourgeoisie."⁵¹ Similarly, Mary Ryan examines other congruent spheres, ones where women circulated publicly and used different communicational practices (some of which borrowed from rational-critical debate, some of which were quite different as with their engagement with consumer culture).⁵² As Peter Dahlgren and others have suggested, the high level of rational debate that Habermas idealizes is a further historical distortion.⁵³ James Curran and Michael Schudson, for instance, point to the development of "entertainment" features in the press and outside it (traveling orators, crowds, etc.) that problematizes the role of rational critical debate.⁵⁴ In short, given his idealization of the rational bourgeois public sphere, he fails to account for the "less than altogether rational-critical branches of the press" that also existed.⁵⁵

This final point underscores the problems liberal perspectives on the press have with the development of popular features more generally.⁵⁶ As the definition of common good has been predicated on a sharp delineation of the private from the public, the popularization of the press—particularly as it pertains to the inclusion, development and reliance on a personal perspective within the press⁵⁷—is implicitly problematic since it fails to adhere to the rules of rational critical debate as the means to securing the common good.⁵⁸ Anything outside of what is officially termed “public” is problematic, while discussion of a predetermined “common interest” that does not follow the rules of rational-critical debate is degenerative. These are the assumptions of most understandings of the press’ function within Canadian journalism history.⁵⁹ Though this certainly remains one way in which the press imagines its function even today, it leaves the media historian with a serious problem. If the weekend edition expanded primarily through the inclusion of features designed to attract readers, how do we understand the importance and place of these popular features? How do we understand a kind of journalism that was already and always predicated on a special, private interest, like the kind that was produced on the woman’s page? Or, its not always rational—even irrational—narratives? It becomes clear quite quickly that this model is simply not sufficient for an understanding of the newspaper and its popular development at the end of the nineteenth century, for it forces its inclusion to be necessarily negative, its editors tainted by market interests and its readers ideological fools. It is not by accident, I would argue, that women’s journalism and its readers fall within this dismissed realm. If one is not willing to

follow Rutherford's assessment of it—"Woman's columns...seemed designed in the 1890's to satisfy curiosity, to serve and entertain but little more"⁶⁰—it would seem that we need another frame from which to consider the emergence and popularity of women's journalism, along with other popular features.

Journalism within and as Popular Culture

Clearly, Habermas' understanding of the public sphere remains problematic for understanding women's journalism at the end of the nineteenth century. I suggest understanding journalism as not solely a forum for critical rational-debate, but also as a means by which meanings, identities and ideas are constructed, mobilized and circulated.⁶¹ That is, journalism is here understood as a cultural process that exists within specific cultural formations. While other journalism histories have focused on how well journalism came to fulfill its call to being an advocate for the people, they miss a fundamental starting point: to advocate for the people, they had first to speak to the people. They had to represent to the people an image of themselves that was connected to their daily lives. It was at this moment that journalism attempted to do its most profound representational work: to get inside the lives of its readers.

This orientation calls attention to the various rhetorical strategies and structures – such as narrative, the discursive writing positions, (ie., personas or roles) from which these women journalists spoke – that attempted to articulate an understanding of the lives of readers. Further, by focusing on the personal perspective mobilized in these pages (particularly in the experientially based writings

of women journalists), this approach calls attention to the ways in which the conventions of gender and journalism intersected, clashed and diverged in order to construct a kind of writing that would be meaningful to assumptions made about readers. Given the emergent focus on readers,⁶² as well as some of the forms developed by the women editors (i.e., discussion forums and letters), the active sense-making practices of readers is foregrounded, thus further problematizing the rationalist, linear line of communication often assumed by liberal press theories.

Understanding the newspaper as part of popular culture, thus, allows me to take seriously women's journalistic output and the pleasures derived by its readers, as evidenced by its popularity. Yet, understanding it as part of popular culture is not simply convenient for me; it is suggested by the very content of the pages that seriously engaged issues of concern to women's everyday private and public lives. In its use of popular forms, like travel writing, emotional appeals using sympathy, sentimentality,⁶³ melodrama,⁶⁴ personal experience – all the modes that were believed to be foundational to femininity— women's writing used these supposedly non-rational modes of address in order to express a common set of experiences, to mobilize and construct common meanings about what it meant to be a woman in a rapidly changing world and to constitute a readership as community. In turn, the woman's page was intimately implicated in the construction of a kind of common sense about women, their lives and their shifting public/private identities. Centered around the reader, it also provided space for letters and engaged debates about issues

of concern. As suggested above, this process cannot be captured in a linear construction of communication, which is another tenet of cultural studies.⁶⁵

To raise the issue of meaning-making and representation, however, is to raise the issue of power. There is no question that the visions of Womanhood and Home these women produced was hegemonic and provided limited visions for change in women's lives. Additionally, although journalism was opening itself to having women within and about its pages, the opening was small indeed. The very idea of the "lady journalist," especially the stunt girl in the United States, was overflowing in meaning, particularly in its association with the New Woman. There is evidence in their columns that Coleman and Fenton were constantly straining to straddle those meanings and a conventional notion of gender that was understandable and recognizable to their readers. While they flirted with stunts and sensationalism, this was never developed into a strong tradition, as it was with their American and British cousins.⁶⁶

Considering journalism as a popular form, however, does not mean it fails to have implications for the public sphere. Nor do I wish to suggest a reductive argument, that "journalism is nothing but popular culture,"⁶⁷ for it surely was far from this at the end of the nineteenth century.⁶⁸ Indeed what the example of the woman's pages suggests most powerfully are the ways in which popular forms were used to engage women within a public forum that did not always subscribe to the dictums of rational-critical debate. The woman's page was simultaneously responsible for placing public issues of concern within the private domain of

women's domesticity, while also pushing women's concerns, experiences and perspectives as public issues. Rooted in the everyday lives of its presumed women readers, it sketched out the beginnings of what would become a civic role for women. Constructing a civil sphere for themselves as a community of citizens engaged in discussion of issues of public concern, their "separate sphere" became part of not just the newspaper, but also the larger public sphere.

By using popular forms, personal modes of address and perspectives, and rooting its concerns and indeed its very foundation in the everyday lives of women, the woman's page (alongside other features) of the late nineteenth century weekend edition made the newspaper part of popular culture. Both Fenton and Coleman made self-conscious efforts at diversifying their pages for the city woman, the working girl, the mother, the farm woman. What united these was the centrality of the idea of Home – a place where women ruled, managed and nurtured. And the *Woman's Empire* and *Woman's Kingdom* aimed to be part of that home. As a columnist asserted in *Frank Leslie's Weekly* while taking note of Coleman's column, the successful woman's page should not be used in the parlour room, but should be "indispensable in the working girl's attic."⁶⁹ Using metaphors of the home, the woman's page sought to be more than simply an information conduit or a place of rational debate – though it was also these things. Formally excluded from the public sphere, it mimicked women's domestic sphere, particularly in its use of a familiar and direct mode of address to its readers, yet as part of the newspaper, it also participated in this other officially public world.

Through these discursive processes, a conflicted notion of the woman reader as public citizen operating from the Home emerged. Drawing women into the public world of newspapers – particularly as it was in a period of transition – meant they were now participating in a kind of activity – newspaper reading – that was loaded with cultural meanings about public duty and citizenship. But this was a kind of discourse that was already circulating in an era of reform. Maternal feminism rearticulated the familiar role of Mother from the private sphere to the public world of reform.⁷⁰ It did this by drawing a parallel between women's child rearing duties and rearing the nation by advocating a stronger presence for women within the public sphere, and in the process created a particular kind of Mother who was white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant and very middle class.⁷¹ What this thesis argues is that through the specific forms and practices used by these women editors, a public role and identity for women emerged that re-articulated their private identities. This was accomplished by linking newspaper reading, shifting newspaper forms and practices and women: drawing women to the newspaper involved them in its world and involved newspapers in the world of women. Both women's private and public identities shifted in response. Furthermore, it contributed to the feminization of the public sphere that was already underway by bringing to its readers – that is, bringing greater publicity to – civic and moral reform work that was now given private meaning.⁷²

By placing these women's pages at the center of analysis, the connections between the newspaper, the reform movement, and the reorientation of the newspaper toward the family can be highlighted. Women's journalism and the

women's pages in particular, though denigrated as having little journalistic value, were crucial sites for the transformation of this notion of readership, citizenship, and the very role and purpose of the newspaper. It must also be recognized that as an institution that made sense of and circulated meanings and representations, the newspaper functioned as an important intermediary of a discourse of public morality, though this was perhaps a more or less accidental *de facto* role it took on. Broadening the scope of what were considered newsworthy topics, as well as the purview of what could be called the newspaper's symbolic realm, meant that the paper would necessarily face criticism that evaluated, not simply the legitimacy of its editorial position, but the moral authority with which it could speak at all.⁷³

Although it is clear that the newspaper never fully entered popular culture as an object of leisure, the weekend paper did participate in an emerging leisure culture. Responding to a changing urban population and shifting work routines, the newspaper increasingly featured ways, and became a way, in which one could pass his or her leisure time. From shopping, to the theatre, music, travel, golf for girls, or sports more generally,⁷⁴ there was a growing sensibility that stressed finding ways to relax—and, to spend money. This forms the final link in the cultural formation that was the late nineteenth century newspaper. It points to the role the press had, as an early mass media, in constructing desire for consumer goods and linking it to the pleasures of leisure time. Thus, this thesis also examines the role the women's pages had in this intersection between consumption practices (of goods and the newspaper), an emerging consumer culture and industry (advertisers), leisure time and

the newspaper as part of popular culture – and, of course, as a nation builder. The attention to the family, then, must be seen not only in light of shifting relations between the public and private spheres and morality, but also as an emerging consumer culture, which was already significantly linked to leisure and pleasure.⁷⁵

The Dissertation

In the pages that follow, I will elaborate further on these arguments. Chapter two, “A Call to the People: The Rise of Independent Journalism, 1880-1905,” helps to situate the historical conditions for this shift by examining the ways in which the partisan newspaper, in particular, attempted to reorient its own role as an active citizen, invested in the needs and desires of the “people,” rather than political party. It does this by examining how the partisan paper adopted forms of the independent paper in its bid to gain a measure of popularity, including women’s pages. Dis-articulating themselves from their partisan past and re-articulating a position that was “independent within party lines” was tricky business indeed, for although the political party had become something of a liability for the newspaper, independence held its own dangers, namely a questionable moral authority. It is here that we begin to see how the family would step in as an arbiter of morality to allow the partisan-cum-independent newspaper to assert greater and greater editorial freedom.

Chapter three, “New Voices, New Publics” grounds my observations of the newspaper within a larger context of women’s history. Examining the burgeoning role women were occupying as suffragettes, professionals, reformers and as managers

of the home, it places women firmly within the traditional public sphere. However, what this chapter further establishes was that the division between public and private spheres was in flux across a number of locations. Although there existed an accepted division between a feminized, domestic sphere and a public, masculinized sphere, women's entry into the public sphere relied on their traditional roles as mothers and moral leaders. This domestication of the public sphere allowed women to extend their domestic influence to the public world of policy, politics and power. This was the same strategy that women journalists used in constructing a public identity and role for themselves, and makes the newspaper's attention to the family as a site of consumption and production all the more meaningful. Furthermore, however, we also see with the rise of domestic education that the Home was increasingly subject to public inspection and rationalizations, further contextualizing the interventions women journalists were making in the lives of their readers through their public pages.

Chapter Four begins the first of two chapters that deal directly with the journalism these two women produced between the years 1889-1895. Taken as a whole, they establish the contours for women's intervention into the newspaper and its project of re-definition. Approached thematically, it considers the ways in which the woman journalist was able to construct her authority and expertise as journalist on the one hand, and Woman on the other. That is to say, that at all times to be both lady and journalist required constant negotiation and mediation of the roles of each. Further, these chapters taken as a whole consider how that professional and cultural

identity was mediated by the forms within which that identity could be expressed. As I argue, for the Canadian woman journalist, the woman's page format was integral to what her professional mission was and how she could accomplish it.

In turn, Chapter Four, "Leaders and Readers: Women Journalists make their Space" considers the relationship the editor of the woman's page constructed with her readers. Engaging a community of readers, the woman's page was a space that was lively, contestable and constantly changing, allowing the woman journalist freedoms and limitations to her work. As a moderator of these exchanges between readers, the woman journalist could become both sympathetic friend and mother to her "paper children," while establishing a negotiated leadership role for herself. Furthermore, it was in these "readerly spaces," as I have termed it, that the woman journalist formed a personalized relationship that was integral to the domesticated feel of the page. At the same time, the chapter considers the leader form as a means by which the woman journalist could explore the terrain of women's lives. Always mediating both public and private spheres, these leading columns, along with the readerly spaces, established the woman journalist's persona. As the chapter demonstrates, given the limited opportunities for women journalists in Canada, the woman's page was one of the only means by which women could seek regular employment as journalists.

Chapter Five, "Stunts, Social Explorations, Travels: The Lady Journalist on the Move," examines how exploring city spaces and travel allowed the woman journalist to expand her role as reporter. Through the traditions of stunt journalism

and social exploration literature, I argue that the Canadian woman journalist was more firmly rooted in the tradition of social exploration than stunt journalism. Examining several series of night walks that took these women to the darkest slums of various cities, I argue this sub-genre of writing cannot be understood outside of the larger rhetoric of the woman's page. Thus, although they helped to extend her journalistic repertoire as being in touch with the conditions of the city—an important and new function for the nineteenth century newspaper—it simultaneously, and at times, contradictorily, also extended her role as sympathetic womanly advisor. The chapter also explores travel more generally as a way of further expanding her professional identity by addressing a presumed middle class accessibility to certain leisure activities.

Chapter Six, “Re-Constructing the Woman Journalist” takes on the whole of that cultural formation I have termed throughout the thesis, the Woman journalist. Extending my analysis to include journalism manuals, novels, short stories and other discourses, I reconstruct what the Woman journalist meant within the popular imaginary. That is, I reconstruct the ideological formation that all women journalists, as historical subjects, helped to write, even as they wrote against some of its manifestations. I argue that the Woman journalist, through the multitude of discourses surrounding womanhood made possible by the shifting relations between public and private spheres, was an articulation of conflicting ideologies that placed her simultaneously both inside and outside the ideologies of journalism and Woman.

In turn, the Woman journalist in becoming journalist could become any Woman to all women.

Through a valuation of the contributions women made to a Canadian journalistic tradition, I not only challenge notions relevant to contemporary news forms today, such as hard and soft news divisions, I place journalism as being relevant to and influenced by the private sphere as much as it is the public sphere. Paying attention to women's journalism brings into focus the identity of the whole newspaper—including its weekend edition—and the process of domestication it underwent, not just the editorial policies of its editors, or the work of any one individual journalist. It puts into focus the ways in which citizenship and public duty are historical constructs that have changed and the role that cultural institutions like journalism play in their formation. Equally, it points to an emerging leisure time for Victorian Canadians, of which the newspaper was eager to claim a part. Lastly, it points to a different historical context through which to understand the ethnographic research currently conducted on women journalists that indicates they share many of the same values as their nineteenth century predecessors. Strikingly, though they practiced in different contexts and in different times, many contemporary women journalists, like their nineteenth century predecessors did, strive for a kind of journalism that is issue oriented not event oriented, and one that is sensitive to audience needs by attempting to 'make a difference.'⁷⁶ The Epilogue takes a methodological look back at these issues by considering the insights to be gained from considering journalism as part of popular culture, alongside its role within the

public sphere, and the implications for considering the intersections of gender within journalistic forms.

NOTES

¹ “Newspaper women,” *Frank Leslie’s Weekly*, n.d., scrapbook on K.B.C.’s career (unbound 20 folders). N.d., 1895-1906, p. 15, Kathleen Blake Coleman fonds, vol. 3, National Archives of Canada.

² This is not to suggest that the newspaper was not aware of the social, cultural and economic changes that were taking place in the city of Toronto as it approached the turn of the century. Indeed the newspaper was familiar with such changes, as it reported on such occurrences on a daily basis. Rather, what I am suggesting here is that these changes took on new importance as its partisan foundation corroded. What this thesis is concerned with, then, is how the newspaper made sense of these changes, how they were then “translated” into new forms that sought to reach a new newspaper reading public.

³ There were, of course, other notable developments, not the least of which included a rapid increase in Canada’s population, particularly in Toronto and the West; the rising rate of literacy; the wider developments of industrialization, including the development of consumer capitalism; transportation developments like canals, the completion of a national railway system in November 1885 and so on. Paul Rutherford discusses these changes within a discussion of mass communication: the “setting,” referring to the rise of large urban centers; the “means,” changes in literacy and reading; and finally, he discusses the community of readers by examining changes in the class composition of Canada’s population. These were the prerequisites to the rise of mass communication, which Rutherford asserts, developed in response to new social needs wrought by modernity. See his “Prerequisites of Mass Communication,” in *A Victorian Authority: the Daily Press in Late Nineteenth-Century Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 9-35.

⁴ Thomas Walkom, “The Daily Newspaper Industry in Ontario’s Developing Capitalistic Economy: Toronto and Ottawa, 1871-1911” (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1983). See chapter 4 for his analysis of newspaper readership vis-à-vis advertisements placed in them (120-189). Using an innovative, though somewhat problematic, methodology Walkom analyses the personal advertisements placed for employment opportunities. Using census data, Walkom then extrapolates the readership for each paper advertised. Problematically, however, he equates these advertisements with readers. One cannot state unequivocally for this period that the appearance of an ad targeted at a particular class indicates evidence of that class reading the paper, without further corroborating evidence that the newspapers had some kind of market research, however crude, indicating as much. Indeed, research conducted by Russell Johnston on the emergence of the advertising industry in Canada indicates that market research did not emerge until the 1910s in Canada, as the advertising industry becoming increasingly professionalized and new techniques emerged (Russell Johnston, *Selling Themselves: The Emergence of Canadian Advertising* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001], 180-227). Nonetheless Walkom’s research indicates a broader appeal to a larger class of readers – or, what Kevin Barnhurst and John Nerone refer to as the “represented” relationship between reader and paper – than most journalism historians have assumed for the morning partisan papers (Kevin Barnhurst and John Nerone, *The Form of News, A History* [New York: Guildford Press, 2001], 3-4). These have been assumed to have been primarily upper and middle class readers.

⁵ Thus, the subject of this journalism was ideological and is designated with the term Woman journalist or, later, figure of the woman journalist.

⁶ Throughout this thesis, I use the term “woman’s page” rather than “women’s page”. I have opted for this term because it was the contemporary one used to describe it, but also to call attention to the productive nature of this page that was continually invested in (re)constituting Woman, both as journalist and reader.

⁷ I am using the term popular here to describe the changing partisan newspaper in that “intermediate sense” delineated by Raymond Williams: “a skilful and vigorous combination of generalised political attitudes with the established popular reading-material of crimes, scandal, romance and sport” (Raymond Williams, “The Press and Popular Culture,” in *Newspaper History from the seventeenth century to the present day*, eds George Boyce, James Curran and Pauline Wingate [London: Constable, 1978], 49). *The Empire*, the most steadfast partisan paper of this time, retained a primarily partisan editorial position. Despite this, it did adopt some features of the popular papers, including illustrations, columnists and, of course, a vibrant woman’s page.

⁸ Another important new feature was the addition of children’s columns. Additionally, the papers were more open to a wider scope of news, especially local city/municipal news. This was, of course, in part the influence of the new journalism movement that was much more widely practiced in Britain and the United States, but was still felt in Canada. On the Canadian scene, see: Paul Rutherford, “The People’s Press: The Emergence of the New Journalism in Canada, 1869-99,” *Canadian Historical Review* 56:2 (1975): 169-91; Britain: Joel Weiner, ed. *Papers for the Millions: The New Journalism in Britain, 1850s to 1914* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988); the U.S.: Frank Mott, *American Journalism: A History, 1690-1960*. 3rd ed. (New York: MacMillan, 1962).

⁹ As elaborated below, this problematic differs from the traditional Canadian journalism historiography. See Barbara Freeman, *Kit’s Kingdom: The Journalism of Kathleen Blake Coleman*, (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1989); W. H. Kesterton, *A History of Journalism in Canada*, 1967 (Toronto: Macmillan, 1978); Marjory Lang, *Women who made the News: Female Journalists in Canada, 1880-1945* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1999); Paul Rutherford, *A Victorian Authority*; Paul Rutherford, “The People’s Press;” Minko Sotiron, *>From Politics to Profit: The Commercialization of Canadian Daily Newspapers, 1890-1920* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1997). Indeed, while I do not so much as challenge their understandings of this period, I do ask different questions, informed by feminist, gender and cultural historians, that lead me to different places. On gender and feminist history, see Joy Parr, “Gender History and Historical Practice,” in *Gender and History in Canada*, ed, J. Parr & M. Rosenfeld (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1996), 8-27; Denise Riley, “Does a sex have a history?” in *Feminism and History*. Ed, J.W. Scott (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 17-33; Joan W. Scott, “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis,” *Feminism and History*, Ed, J.W. Scott. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 152-180; Joan W. Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988).

For instance, while I nod to traditional political economy explanations of the shift from a partisan paper to an independent paper, funded primarily by circulation and advertising, I also ask how a notion of “independence” came to be meaningful. That is to say, that although the technological changes that brought in new presses and thus new pressures for revenue were important; and although the declining financial support from the political parties was also important in providing an economic impetus to broaden readership; and although a larger potential readership existed brought on by industrialization and urbanization, none of these can

account for the particular content changes that took place. This is a question of culture. Consequently, in understanding how the woman journalist/editor emerged as a meaningful and popular part of the newspaper – that is to ask, how she came to be – is to look further abroad. That is not to say that the political or economic have no place within this history. Indeed as Stuart Hall has so convincingly argued, hegemonic discourses achieve their dominance most effectively through the political and economic. Thus, while discourse renders these factors meaningful, it is the job of the cultural critic to disarticulate them in order to uncover their machinations. See Stuart Hall, “The toad in the garden: Thatcherism among the Theorists,” in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. Eds, C. Nelson and L. Grossberg. (Urbana & Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 35-73; “On Postmodernism and Articulation: An Interview with Stuart Hall,” ed, L. Grossberg in *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, ed, D. Morley and K-H. Chen (London: Routledge, 1996), 131-150.

Here, in mapping where else to look in order to explicate the meanings of these pages, I rely on insights from cultural historians (Geoff Eley, “What is Cultural History?” *New German Critique* 65 [1995]: 19-36; Michael Pickering, *History, experience and Cultural Studies* [New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997]; Hayden White, *Figural Realism: Studies in the Mimesis Effect*. [Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1999]; Raymond Williams, *The Long Revolution* [New York: Columbia University Press, 1961]). As Raymond Williams so insightfully argued, to understand newspaper history one must concentrate on the Sunday paper, not the daily paper (“The Press and Popular Culture,” 41). He further explicates by writing, “...to understand the Sunday paper as a cultural form, with its specific and influential selection of content, it is necessary to understand certain general features of urban popular culture as a whole” (41). For Williams, these features of urban popular culture included, literacy, popular publishing, theatre, and the lecture (42).

¹⁰ Stuart Hall, “Notes on Deconstructing the Popular,” *People’s History and Socialist Theory*. Ed, Raphael Samuel. (London: Routledge, 1981), 228.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Thus, the earlier work of Sara Jeannette Duncan, for instance, is excluded as an explicit object of analysis, though is often referred to in the thesis. As a daily newspaper writer, her column “Woman’s World” (which appeared with some regularity on alternate days of the week between 1886 and 1887), was quite different than that of Freeman and Coleman. Furthermore, Coleman’s work after 1895 is also mentioned occasionally, as well as other journalism being produced by women in the newspapers. Thus, although the focus is on these two women, the object of analysis is also the woman’s page.

¹³ This paper was founded by the then ruling Conservative party after *The Mail* – the other paper under examination here – strayed from its support of the Conservative party.

¹⁴ Coleman, who was married several times, had two children in Canada. After the death of her second husband in 1889 in Winnipeg, Manitoba, she returned with her two children to Toronto where she began her journalism career shortly thereafter (Barbara Freeman, *Kit’s Kingdom*, 4, 19-24). Having benefited from an extensive and excellent education at the hands of her uncle, she was fluent in French and Spanish and was well traveled. Fenton, on the hand, though lacking the cosmopolitan flair of Coleman, traveled extensively in Canada and eventually settled in Dawson City, Yukon Territory, where she met and married her husband. Interestingly, both women, for

much of their journalistic careers remained single. Coleman's two children did not live with her for much of this time. Fenton remained childless, though she did take in her brother's daughter. After her death, her niece and widower husband married (see Jill Downie, *A Passionate Pen: The Life and Times of Faith Fenton* [Toronto: HarperCollins, 1996]).

¹⁵ Lang, *Women who made the News*, 52.

¹⁶ See Ruby Heap and Ellen Scheinberg, "They're just one of the gang: Women at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering, 1939-1950," (paper presented at Symposium on Learning to Practice, Halifax, N.S.), 28 May 2003; R.D. Gidney, "Madame How' and 'Lady Why: Learning to Practise in Historical Perspective," (paper presented at Symposium on Learning to Practice, Halifax, N.S.), 28 May 2003.

¹⁷ Methodological note: All the women's pages published in *The Mail* and *The Empire* between Feb 1888 to Feb 1895 were examined in close detail. These numbered over 640 pages. By looking for discursive regularities, I was able to examine the kinds of spaces these pages created through their particular journalistic practices. The epilogue considers methodology in greater detail.

In particular, I was interested in the rhetorical positions mobilized (such as detached observer, advisor, personalization, "experience") and other kinds of practices that were used in establishing authority and expertise and how they changed over time. I examined these practices in relationship to the roles these women took on, and thus the forms they produced (advisor columnist, travel writer and social explorer). I found that these women's pages created a veritable separate sphere, with rules and codes of behaviour, closely governed by conventional ideas about gender which was circumscribed by women's role as Mother. This separate sphere, however, was not isolated entirely given its placement in the weekend edition and its active re-articulation of forms and practices which appeared in other parts of the paper. Much like the shifting relations between the public and private spheres in the larger cultural context, the newspaper and woman's page were tied to one another, making each part meaningful through its connected, though separate relationship. Judging by the number of male readers these pages had, there is little doubt that the woman's page leaked into other domains of the newspaper and vice versa.

¹⁸ Coleman was much more successful at this, with her correspondence, Pot-Pourri and Letter Club sections taking up a large proportion of her space. Freeman, on the other hand, generally maintained greater distance from her readers, though used many of the same rhetorical techniques, such as direct address, personalization. This was most emphatically captured in her "stunt" in a poor house for women in 1895, which focused on her experiences while incognito as a poor woman. The article closed, however, with a series of recommendations on improvements or reforms to the policies of the house in order to "truly help the ladies". Coleman's 1892 sojourn to "Dickens' London," informed as it was by the "slumming" tradition of some branches of reform work, flirted with sensationalized effect (exploring the city by night, though with a detective) and revelled in personalized accounts, but rarely made concrete reformative suggestions.

¹⁹ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (London and New York: Verso, 1991).

²⁰ I am following the lead of David Paul Nord in his "The Public Community: The Urbanization of Journalism in Chicago," in *Communities of Journalism: A History of American Newspapers and their*

Readers (Urbana & Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 108-133. In it he argues that the newspaper achieved both a sense of community and a truly urban sensibility through its investment in the municipal reform activities of the time.

²¹ This raises the difficult issue of finding an appropriate term of reference to describe these papers. For the purpose of simplicity I sometimes simply continue to refer to them as the partisan papers; at other times, I'm somewhat more specific in calling them "the formerly partisan." As I discuss in chapter two, the best description that I've found was one used by M.O. Hammond in his unpublished history of *The Globe*. In it he describes this transformation, undertaken by *The Globe* specifically, as "independence within party lines" to describe its quasi-partisan, quasi-independent state. See "Ninety Years of The Globe," File: Unpublished Manuscripts. M.O. Hammond fonds. F1075. Box MU 1290. Archives of Ontario.

²² Vanessa Schwartz, *Spectacular Realities: Early Mass Culture in Fin-de-Siècle Paris* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 40.

²³ Raymond Williams, "The Press and Popular Culture," 49-50. Colin Sparks, "Popular Journalism: Theories and Practice," in *Journalism and Popular Culture*, Ed, Peter Dahlgren and Colin Sparks (London: Sage Publications, 1992), 25-44.

²⁴ Recent research by Laurel Brake expounds a similar thesis in relation to W.T. Stead's use of the American new journalism in London, England, suggesting that there are different kinds of new journalism. "Globalization and the Nineteenth Century Press: The 'New Journalism' of W.T. Stead," (paper presented at Concordia University. Montreal, Quebec. 12 Sep. 2003).

²⁵ See for instance Mary Ryan's work on women in the public. *Women in Public: Between Banners and Ballots, 1825-1880*, (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1990); Glenna Matthews, *The Rise of Public Woman: Woman's Power and Place in the United States, 1630-1970*, (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

²⁶ See Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap and Water Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1991); also, Carol Bacchi's examination of how the suffragettes were able to capitalize on a maternal feminism that sought to purify politics through women's moral influence (*Liberation Differed? The Ideas of the English-Canadian Suffragists, 1977-1918* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983]). The precursors to this strategy were the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) who successfully managed to articulate alcohol consumption with morality. See Graeme Decarie, "The Prohibition Movement in Ontario, 1894-1916" (Ph.D. diss., Queen's University, 1972).

²⁷ Rutherford, *A Victorian Authority*, 12.

²⁸ Rutherford, 232.

²⁹ Minko Sotiron, *From Politics to Profit: The Commercialization of Canadian Daily Newspapers, 1890-1920*, (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997).

³⁰ Sotiron, 18.

³¹ As I explore in the following chapter, the grave dissatisfaction expressed by partisan editors, such as Edward Farrer and J.S. Willison (among others), who began to question the rule of partisan politics within the newspaper, surely should carry some weight as to the unsustainable and undesirable nature of these relations.

³² William Buxton and Catherine McKercher, "Newspapers, Magazines and Journalism in Canada: Towards a Critical Historiography," *Acadiensis*, 28:1 (1998): 123.

³³ Thomas Walkom, "The Daily Newspaper Industry."

³⁴ For example, *The Globe* consistently promoted a vision of the Empire and Canada within it (see chapter 5, especially p. 244-5), while *The News* and *The World* focused on opposition to corruption and the United States (Walkom, 250).

³⁵ Walkom, 257.

³⁶ W.H. Kesterton, *A History of Journalism in Canada*.

³⁷ See his section on the development of press freedom in W.H. Kesterton, "A History of Canadian Journalism, 1752-1958. Repr. *Canada Year Book 1957-8 and 1959* (Ottawa: Dominion Bureau of Statistics, 1960), 15-18.

³⁸ This is similar to the conclusion reached by Brian Beaven ("Partisanship, Patronage, and the Press in Ontario, 1880-1914: Myths and Realities," *Canadian Historical Review*, 64:3 [1983]: 317-351). Beaven argues that the claim that any paper in Ontario after 1880 was the outright organ of a party is a "gross oversimplification of a complex institutional relationship between party and press" (318). Rather, he points out that "the initial impression left by contemporary editorial offerings after 1880 is one of diversity, dissent, and often idiosyncrasy" (344). In short, Beaven asserts that neither the characterization of independent or party organ captured very well the press' identity towards the end of the century.

³⁹ Although this research has focused on modern forms of journalism, the same theoretical underpinnings are assumed in relationship to journalism's primary function within the public sphere. These have mostly arisen from sociological studies of news production. Generally speaking they can be grouped around studies examining how news is made and those examining the final product of this production (Peter Dahlgren, introduction to *Journalism and Popular Culture*, ed. Peter Dahlgren and Colin Sparks [London: Sage, 1992], 1-23; Barbie Zelizer, "Has Communication Explained Journalism?" in *Social Meanings of News: A Text-Reader*, ed. Dan Berkowitz [Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1997], 23-30). Political economic approaches, for example, have examined the role that ownership plays in the construction of news. Both the sociology of production and political economy tend to assume that there is an objective reality that journalists "gather." The focus of the research then is identifying which factors distort "the truth." Some research examining sources, and other agenda setting factors, also share this perspective. The second major cluster of studies that examine the sociology of news production are focused on news organizations, drawing on organizational or bureaucratic theory (David Hogarth, "Agency and Structure in cultural production: a case study of news work at Canada's CBC Newsworld")

[Ph.D. diss., Concordia University, 1992]). The majority of this research shares a social constructionist view of news. Whether examining the use of sources, the role of news values, professional ideologies, norms, routines, rituals (Gaye Tuchman, "Making News by doing work: Routinizing the unexpected," *American Journal of Sociology*, 79:1 [1973]: 110-131), rituals and myth, (S. Elizabeth Bird & Robert W. Dardenne, "Myth, Chronicle and Story: Exploring the narrative qualities of news," in *Media, Myths and Narratives: Television and the Press*, ed. James Carey [Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1988], 67-86), irony (Theodore Glasser and James Ettema, "When the Facts don't speak for themselves: A study of the use of irony in daily journalism," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 10 [1993], 322-338), journalism as performance, ritual or interpretive communities of journalists (Barbie Zelizer, "Achieving Journalistic Authority through Narrative," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 7 [1990], 366-376; "Journalists as Interpretive Communities," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 10 [1993], 219-237), these studies presuppose the social construction of reality. As Michael Schudson notes, many studies combine a focus on relations between people and actors (sociological) with considerations of how they interact with ideas and symbols (cultural) – as this thesis does ("The Sociology of News Production," in *Social Meanings of News: A Text-Reader* ed. Dan Berkowitz [Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1997], 17). Cultural studies has focused attention not only on the production of news products, but further it has focused attention on contexts of reception. Challenging the division between production and consumption (which sociology of news approaches often assume), it has asked questions around meaning-making and audiences. S. Elizabeth Bird, "Audience demands in a murderous market: Tabloidization in U.S. television news," in *Tabloid Tales*, ed., C. Sparks and J. Tulloch (New York: Rowan & Littlefield, 2000), 213-228; "Facing the Distracted Audience," *Journalism*, 1:1 (2002), 29-33, among a host of others. A further discussion of some of the main tenets of approaches to journalism indebted to cultural studies will follow. For a useful overview of current research questions, see John Hartley, *Popular Reality: Journalism, Modernity and Popular Culture* (New York: Arnold, 1996), 13; and, Barbie Zelizer, et al. "Symposium. What is Journalism Studies?" *Journalism* 1:1 (April 2000): 9-60.

⁴⁰ Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Robert K. Merton, "Mass communication, popular taste and organized social action," 1948, Reprinted in *Media Studies: A Reader*, ed. Paul Marris and Sue Thornham (New York: New York University Press, 2000): 23.

⁴¹ Jurgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, 1962, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1991). Interestingly, despite its relevance to his conceptualization, Minko Sotiron does not reference Habermas.

⁴² Peter Dahlgren, introduction to *Communication and Citizenship: Journalism and the Public Sphere in the New Media Age*, ed. P. Dahlgren and C. Sparks. (London: Routledge, 1991), 4

⁴³ Nancy Fraser goes on to critique the excessively public nature of this sphere, arguing that it inaccurately and inappropriately delimits the relevance of so-called "private" issues to the public common good (Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy," in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, Ed, Craig Calhoun [Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1992], 128-132).

⁴⁴ Craig Calhoun, "Introduction: Habermas and the Public Sphere," in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. Craig Calhoun (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1992), 21.

⁴⁵ See especially, Habermas, *Structural Transformation*, 159-179.

⁴⁶ Fraser, 125.

⁴⁷ Geoff Eley, "Nations, Publics, and Political Cultures: Placing Habermas in the Nineteenth Century," in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. Craig Calhoun (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1992), 289-339; Mary Ryan, "Gender and Public Access: Women's Politics in Nineteenth-Century America," in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. Craig Calhoun (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1992), 259-288.

⁴⁸ Fraser, 127; Calhoun, 35.

⁴⁹ James Curran, "Rethinking the Media as a public sphere," in *Communication and Citizenship: Journalism and the Public Sphere in the New Media Age*, ed. P. Dahlgren & C. Sparks, (London: Routledge, 1991), 27-57; Dahlgren, *Communication and Citizenship*; 6-7.

⁵⁰ Fraser, 113; Calhoun, 35; Eley, 306; Ryan, 263-5.

⁵¹ Eley, 306. Indeed Eley's research shows how the public sphere and the attendant civil culture which fed it were deeply implicated in bourgeois class formation. Habermas has since recognized that there was probably more than one public sphere (see his Jürgen Habermas, "Further Reflections on the Public Sphere," in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, Ed, Craig Calhoun (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1992): 421-461.

⁵² Mary Ryan, *Women in Public*, 68-94.

⁵³ Dahlgren, introduction to *Communication and Citizenship*, 5

⁵⁴ Curran, 32. Michael Schudson, "Was there ever a Public Sphere? If so, When? Reflections on the American Case," in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, Ed, Craig Calhoun (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1992), 143-163.

⁵⁵ Calhoun, 33.

⁵⁶ Curran, 33.

⁵⁷ Colin Sparks, "Popular Journalism", 31, 34.

⁵⁸ As Fraser has pointed out, however, the distinction between private and public fails to account for how deliberation is, at times, constitutive of a common good and at times merely about the clarification of interests. Thus, not only is it impossible to bracket social inequality, it is further impossible, and undesirable, to maintain a firm division between private and public interests ("Rethinking the Public Sphere," 132).

⁵⁹ Although it is outside the parameters of this thesis, it remains dubious if Habermas' model is applicable to Canada's press history. As Kesterton notes, after the press differentiated itself from the government proper, it did engage in an increasingly critical debate about the state affairs (*A History of Journalism*, 12-14). This debate took place, however, from the perspective of other party

positions. That is, a critique of Conservative policies were made from the purview of the Liberal party. It seems difficult to see how this can be characterized as a distinct sphere separate from the state. Further, the terms of the debate were hardly describable as rational-critical debate, since the opinions expressed were not private ones, but rather official party lines that were not necessarily vested in a common good. Additionally, these debates were rarely disinterested or rational but frequently became textual shouting matches with vitriolic attacks which were frequently directed at individuals. See Richard Kaplan's discussion of the partisan newspaper as part of a power-bloc (*Politics and the American Press: The Rise of Objectivity, 1865-1920*, [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002], 22-54).

⁶⁰ Rutherford, *A Victorian Authority*, 132.

⁶¹ Peter Dahlgren, introduction to *Communication and Citizenship*, 16-17; introduction to *Journalism and Popular Culture*, 17-19; John Hartley, *Popular Reality*, 13.

⁶² For instance, a general order of features was maintained week after week (the woman's pages usually appeared on page 5), suggesting there was a sense of the habitualness of not only organizing a newspaper, but also its consumption. Of course, this was not a new phenomenon, but it does mark a difference from later practices that moved material around more liberally according to space requirements.

⁶³ See Cecilia Morgan, "Better than Diamonds: Sentimental Strategies and Middle-Class Culture in Canada West," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 32:4 (1998), 125-148.

⁶⁴ Jostein Gripsrud, "The Aesthetics and Politics of Melodrama," in *Journalism and Popular Culture*, eds, P. Dahlgren and C. Sparks, (London: Sage, 1992), 84-95.

⁶⁵ For one of the first comprehensive positions on this see, for example, Stuart Hall, "Encoding/Decoding" in *Culture, Media, Language*, Eds, S. Hall et al, (London: Hutchinson, 1980), 128-138.

⁶⁶ In short, making a case for a Canadian stunt girl is not easy, nor, I've finally come to decide worth it. What is more interesting to consider is why there was no Canadian stunt girl tradition. My response to this question arising from the research that has been done on the Canadian suffrage movement and the women involved in the reform movements in Canada is that these two women journalists, at least, were very much a part of an Anglo Saxon middle class which understood women's public role to be an extension of her private role as mother to become Mother of the race of Canadian citizens. This did not mean that they never performed stunts – in fact they did a few. But even the quality of those stunts was much less sensational in terms of the promotion they were given by the editors of the newspaper, or the extent to which stunting and other elements of yellow journalism were part of the emerging identity of the newspaper. While the understanding and rhetoric of the American stunt girl was set within a discourse of the New Woman, the Canadian case was not. The two women I examined here were always careful to remain within a frame of womanly, domestic conventions that rendered them always understandable and recognizable to their readers. When the American stunt girl pointed out injustices and systemic failings she, like her Canadian cousin, remained within what were increasingly acceptable locations from which women could speak. On the level of the interaction

between woman journalist and her newspaper, however, there was a totally different relationship. While the editors of typically “yellow” papers were eager to promote her exploits, the Canadian woman received very little sensationalized hype. To this end, Lang is correct in asserting that women journalists were virtually ignored by their editors (Lang, *Women who made the News*, 142), although this did change later once the popularity of both these women had been established (Both women received front page promotion from their newspapers in 1898 – Coleman for her coverage of the Spanish-American war, Freeman for her trek to the Yukon.) Remaining within the symbolic resonance of the woman’s page, these women were restricted by the conventions that dominated the page, particularly surrounding the notion of the lady editor. Coleman, however, immediately began her career with attempts at creating a mythologized history for herself. Barbara Freeman and Marjory Lang have made this observation of Kit’s successful efforts at self-promotion. Freeman, *Kit’s Kingdom*, especially Chapter 1, 17-48. Lang, 58-60.

⁶⁷ Dahlgren, introduction to *Journalism and Popular Culture*, 4.

⁶⁸ Furthermore, such an argument slides quickly into the same normative terrain as the classic liberal function of the press. See for instance, Neil Postman, *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business* (New York: Penguin Book, 1985); or, Knowlton Nash’s *Trivia Pursuit: How showbiz values are corrupting the News* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1998).

⁶⁹ “Newspaper women,” p.15.

⁷⁰ This term has been used by historians to describe a wide range of public reform activities middle class women were engaged in, usually directed at working class and immigrant women. They varied from suffragism to municipal reform to moral reform. The list of historians who have argued compellingly about these various groups are many. Most of them agree that ultimately the maternal feminist approach had an overwhelmingly conservative influence on these initiatives by limiting the ideological role of women to Mother and mothering, even as they were fighting to open new doors for women professionally and legally. Only a few examples, include: Carol Lee Bacchi. *Liberation Deferred? The Ideas of the English-Canadian Suffragists, 1877-1918*. (University of Toronto Press, 1983); Linda Kealey, ed., *A Not Unreasonable Claim: Women and Reform in Canada, 1880s-1920s* (Toronto: The Women’s Press, 1979); Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1991).

⁷¹ Carol Bacchi, for instance, notes that for the suffrage movement the maternal feminist approach made sense in terms of the initial goals and foundation of the movement which was deeply connected to the various reform movements of the time. Therefore, its adoption of a logic that was rooted in extending the influence of women as mothers of the race by giving them the vote can be seen less as a betrayal of the more justice oriented appeals made by its founders, than remaining perfectly in line with the original goals to attain moral, labour and urban reform for the working classes of the middle class women who co-opted the movement. Ultimately, this was the strategy that led to the granting of the vote to women federally in 1918. See Bacchi, *Liberation Differed?*, especially chapter 9 and Conclusion. For a complete overview of the history of the vote in Canada, see Chief Electoral Officer of Canada. *The History of the Vote in Canada*. Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 1997.

⁷² Fenton, herself, was quite involved in the work of the reformists, particularly the National Council of Women. For more on this see Downie, *A Passionate Pen*.

⁷³ Richard Kaplan makes this argument more generally, without reference to morality (*Politics and the American Press*). As I develop in the thesis, given the high circulation of discourses of morality in and around Toronto, this was an especial concern for Canadian papers, which also helps to explain the more staid rhetorical characters of these papers. Furthermore, unlike Kaplan, however, I do not approach the public sphere as being related only to the realm of the political or party politics, though he does make a vague reference to other “insurgent” groups (Kaplan, 97-98) – groups which, as indicated above, Geoff Eley and James Curran both see as being important in complicating the concept of the public sphere. In fact, following feminist critiques of the public sphere model, as developed by such people as Nancy Fraser, Tanni Haas and Linda Steiner, I argue for a reevaluation of the private sphere and its relationship to the public. (Nancy Fraser, “Rethinking the Public Sphere;” Tanni Haas and Linda Steiner, “Public journalism as a journalism of publics: Implications of the Habermas-Fraser debate for public journalism.” *Journalism*, 2:2 [2001], 123-148). This is to insist on an examination of the ways in which the private sphere feminized the public sphere. The arguments presented above by Mary Ryan, Geoff Eley, as well as by Joan Landes suggest similar cases. Joan Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the age of the French Revolution*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988).

Here is where one must be very careful, however. Substantive changes within the various mechanisms of power of the public sphere – the legal framework, access to income and resources – were very slow to occur. Though women came into the public sphere in significant ways, doors were not readily opened to or for them. Furthermore, not everyone was happy about the changes that the newspaper were experiencing, nor were all editors supporting all the various reform initiatives. Yellow journalism, crime news, stunt girl and sob sister journalism all had their critics. Certainly the editors of the women’s pages had little or no structural authority, though it has been widely recognized that they had relatively unhampered editorial freedom. Lang comments on this ironic arrangement, whereby women were given little power within the organization, but were allowed editorial freedom (Lang, *Women who made the News*, 150-56). She does, however, relate this freedom to the relatively low status given to the woman’s page, inferring that it was not of great concern to editors. While it may not have been considered important journalistically, given the relative importance of the woman’s page to advertisers, and consequently to editors, it certainly held value. Freeman notes, on the other hand, that Coleman had pretty free rein when it came to travelling probably because of the widespread popularity and acclaim her travel writings received. This was the situation, at least, until the paper merged with *The Empire*, at which time her abilities to do travel writing were severely curtailed (Freeman, *Kit’s Kingdom*, 92). Thus, while this feminist project is somewhat revisionist, it is also cautiously so.

⁷⁴ Kesterton notes that sports were included in even the earliest papers. He also points out that the inclusion of features such as “notes divers,” for instance, indicates that the newspaper was more than simply an economic or political sheet, but also served some social functions (*A History of Journalism*, 142-3).

⁷⁵ See Russell Johnston’s history of advertising in Canada, *Selling Themselves*; see also, Jennifer Gruber Garvey, *The Adman in the Parlor: Magazines and the Gendering of Consumer Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); Lori Ann Loeb, *Consuming angels : advertising and Victorian women*

(New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); Jennifer Scanlon, *Inarticulate Longings: The Ladies' Home Journal, Gender and the Promises of Consumer Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1995). On Leisure, see Gary Cross, *A Social History of Leisure since 1600* (State College, PA: Venture Publishing, 1990); Carole Gerson, *A Purer Taste: The writing and reading of fiction in English nineteenth century Canada*, (Toronto : University of Toronto Press, 1989); Lynn Marks, *Revivals and roller rinks: Religion, Leisure and identity in late nineteenth century small town Ontario*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996).

⁷⁶ S. Elizabeth Bird, "Audience Demands in a Murderous Market; Erika Engstrom & Anthony J. Ferri, ">From Barriers to Challenges: Career Perceptions of Women TV News Anchors," *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* 75:4 (Winter 1998): 762-775; Lang, *Women who made the News*; Gertrude Robinson and Armande Saint-Jean, "Canadian Women Journalists: The 'Other Half of the Equation,'" in *The Global Journalist: News People Around the World*, ed. David H. Weaver (Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press Inc., 1998), 351-372; Karen Ross, "Women at Work: Journalism as an En-Gendered Practice," *Journalism Studies* 2:4 (2001): 531-544; Linda Steiner, "Newsroom Accounts of Power at Work," in *News, Gender and Power*, ed. Cynthia Carter, Gil Branston and Stuart Allan (London: Routledge, 1998), 145-159; Liesbet Van Zoonen, "A Professional, Unreliable, Heroic Marionette (M/F): Structure, Agency and Subjectivity in Contemporary Journalisms" *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 1:1 (Jan 1998): 123-143; Liesbet Van Zoonen, "One of the Girls? The Changing Gender of Journalism," in *News, Gender and Power*, ed. Cynthia Carter, Gil Branston and Stuart Allan (London: Routledge, 1998), 33-46; David Weaver, "Women as Journalists" in *Women, Media and Power*, ed. Pippa Norris (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 21-40.

Chapter 2

A Call to the People: The Rise of Independent Journalism, 1880-1905

Hugh Graham, publisher of the Montreal *Star*, to P.D. Ross, as a new reporter:

“What I want to see in the Montreal *Star* is the sort of news, or item, or story, or article which if you saw it in some newspaper or book you would be tempted to read aloud to the person next to you.”¹

[The newspaper] supervises and records the doings in every department of this ‘living age.’ No question is too weighty or too insignificant to escape its criticism, and almost invariably impartially, the sole exception being when the editor unfortunately scans his subject through ‘party spectacles.’²

It was necessary to keep the correspondent interested and impressed with the fact that the news lies around his door. Country life was full of untold tales...³

The nineteenth century marked a profound time in Canada’s history. The country was founded, expanded, united by a railway (then scandalized by that railway) and went to war in the span of some forty years. Canada’s newspapers were there chronicling and vigorously debating each development as it occurred. The industry itself underwent perhaps some of its most profound changes in an even shorter period of time. Within the course of some twenty years, it had changed the majority of its business practices, including how it generated revenues and thought of competition, the content of its pages and the role and purpose it would serve for its readers. Given these profound developments and the relative importance accorded to the media, it is surprising to discover that there have been scarcely a handful of

scholarly considerations of Canada's journalism history, leaving the field relatively underdeveloped. Unlike the American discipline, with its wide range of academic associations and electronic list-serves,⁴ the Canadian scene suffers from a lack of historiographic debate about how journalism history should be written.⁵ Journalism history in the United States is considered a part of American history more generally, especially because of the ties the press had and the mythologies intimately linking it to the struggle for independence and eventual foundation of the country.⁶ Although some have argued that Canada's newspapers also played a seminal role in Canada's foundation,⁷ Canadian historians have not given the press and journalism as much attention.

This chapter will consider the discursive shifts that led to the decline of partisanship as the primary identity and purpose of the newspaper. As indicated in the preceding chapter, to treat seriously the popularization process the partisan newspaper underwent in the late 1880s, as well as the journalism women were producing, necessitates a new approach to the study of journalism, one that sees its cultural contexts as constitutive of its practices.⁸ It is an interesting coincidence that as women journalists gained their popularity in the late 1880s and 1890s, the newspaper struggled most profoundly with its partisan ties and sought to revision itself as an instrument of the community. The partisan newspaper would look quite different by the turn of the century by bringing to bear new meanings on familiar terms, adopting new language to describe their activities and taking on new practices to achieve these goals.

I argue that this was accomplished through the disarticulation of the partisan newspaper from its partisan past. This disarticulation did not involve renouncing its party connections; as historians of Canadian journalism and many contemporaries⁹ of the time have noted, political stripes were not easily shed. Rather partisanism was transformed from a political identity and relationship to a party, to one that straddled a “middle ground:” not quite partisan, not fully independent. This chapter re-maps how this re-articulation occurred by examining changing editorial positions, editors’ and journalists’ reflections on the state of journalism and the liabilities implicit in what “partisan” and “independent” meant at the time. I argue that the economic and industrial changes were given ideological shape as the partisan newspaper re-oriented its representational practices of itself and its mission, and in turn, constituted a new vision of its readers. As Richard Kaplan has argued about the Detroit press, economic changes created the “motive and preconditions” for the press’ slow disarticulation from the political party, yet they were not sufficient to fully sever the newspaper’s partisan identities.¹⁰ Kaplan does not, however, consider the inconsistencies in maintaining a partisan identity while also introducing distinctly “independent” content that mobilized different practices and techniques for representing the world, including the introduction of a woman’s vision of it. Kaplan does not address the issue of how partisan readers were encouraged or persuaded to accept this wholly un-political content – in fact, content that was frivolous, even apolitical at times – in an otherwise politically-oriented paper. If, as Brian Beaven argues, partisan identities remained a market strategy, how was this identity reconciled

with populist content?¹¹ This chapter addresses this issue by paying attention to the discursive shifts that managed to smooth over this contradiction, allowing the newspaper to reinvent itself as “independent-within-party-lines.” I argue that this negotiated identity was the necessary condition that allowed the new content that was introduced (as a means of increasing the newspapers profitability) to be understood within a different ethic of newspaper publishing. No longer a mouthpiece for the political party only, the newspaper would speak to and for the people. As Elizabeth Bird has argued, journalism is contextually driven; it is a practice that makes claims about knowing its audience.¹² What marks this period, then, are the ways in which the constitution of that audience and the newspaper itself shifted, marking a new articulation of its previous identity and practices with new ones that were attached to a “people” who later became a family. In turn, the means through which the newspaper came to serve its country were accomplished through the family as a key to the growth and progress of the nation.

The Work of the Partisan Newspaper and its Decline

It has been observed that before Confederation there was little in the way of communication between the colonies that came to be known as Canada. As Frank Underhill describes it, “the lines of communication of each colony ran towards the center of the Empire in London, not towards the other colonies.”¹³ The peoples of what came to be Canada, thus, had little sense of each other. Rather, argues Underhill, the founding of Canada was based on the work of several elite colonial

politicians and was, in form, a product of the British Imperial Parliament, both of which worked outside of their people. That is, confederation had no popular grounding; it was accomplished outside of the popular imaginary and will. As Underhill is suggesting in this description of Canada's foundation, although Canada was created formally, bringing the nation to life would require some selling. This selling was accomplished through the creation of a technological nationalism that helped to solidify the nation through the discourses of technological progress.¹⁴

In light of this discourse of technological progress, the work of the newspapers was not just about establishing lines of communication between peoples, but about constituting a vision of a nation as well. Of course, early newspapers had little hope of this, given the limitations of distribution and the limitations of partisanship. Systems of clipping, which reprinted news from other newspapers, were one means by which news of other places, although a little dated, would travel from place to place, systemizing and extending the informal oral networks of news that existed on a local level. On a grander scale, once a centralized government was formed, however contentious it may have been at the time, the work of the newspapers became to foment popular opinion. That these papers were funded and supported by the political parties ensured a lively discourse about all things "Canadian" by working to invent a sense of what that identity might mean. Of course, on the level of the people, religion, culture and language were never so easily erased. But for the papers of the Toronto market, the construction and promotion of a vision of Canada was accomplished vis-à-vis the party position. Above all else,

the newspapers were a system of communication; a means by which words, symbols, and ideas could be shared in an attempt to make meaningful what had already been constituted by an act of law. That, as Underhill has noted, the conferences leading to Confederation between 1864-7 were divided not along racial lines, but along lines of party, Conservative and Reform, makes the mutually constituting relationship between the newspaper and the political party all the less surprising.¹⁵ Indeed newspapers created the political party by promoting and defining the party position, which in turn also gave the newspaper its identity.¹⁶ As each party vied for political domination, the means for distributing and popularizing their ideas, while excluding as much as possible the ideas of their political foes, became crucial.

As the years leading to the eventual cracking of the partisan front would show, building a vision of what Canada was and could become took place within a discourse of contestation. Toronto's newspapers were seminal in this pursuit. Divided along party lines, they were most preoccupied with the promotion of one view over another, which they accomplished variously by publishing full tracts of speeches made by party members, to the exclusion of opposing voices, and with virulent attacks against the other parties and their papers. Given the back and forth, almost conversational, nature of these attacks, opposing voices were never silenced, only controlled and often ridiculed. The extent to which these dialogues in fact prompted readers to read accounts of both sides, if only to better understand the kind of code language that proliferated within this group of interested political observers, remains an interesting question. That newspapers were thought to hold the power and

“privilege to develop public opinion,”¹⁷ to convince the party faithful of the necessity of pursuing one line and defeating another, meant, by necessity, that they were speaking to a relatively small group of enfranchised men. In the wake of the changes that would take place by the end of the nineteenth century, the press would represent a different kind of public space. Though far from being “inclusive” in the broadest sense, it became a space where women could speak, where children were addressed, and where readers could write back, objecting, contesting and supporting their favoured columnists.



Glorified in a 1934 poster commemorating the ninetieth anniversary of *The Globe* is a solemn George Brown shaking hands with a weary-looking Sir John A. Macdonald, agreeing to put aside political differences for the sake of confederation.¹⁸ Similarly, *The Mail*, with funding from Macdonald and the Conservatives, declared in its founding edition in 1872 (some five years after this key moment portrayed in the poster) that it would operate by the following dictum: “Not local purposes, not local prejudices should be the guide, but the general good.”¹⁹ Of course, neither *The Globe* nor *The Mail* or most of the other Toronto papers were very successful at keeping their partisan loyalties out of their papers, which led to some bitter asperity between them for many years. But what *The Mail* promised to do that was consistent with every paper of the time was to “do justice to new ideas and to the irresistible force of

progress...The soundest policy that will promote the building up of the new and great Dominion of Canada...will be advocated..."²⁰

Thus was born the stuff of legends that linked the enterprise of newspaper publishing with the political and progressive business of nation building. As this commemorative poster implies with its heading, "Marching Through Canadian History with *The Globe*," *The Globe* considered itself to be not only a witness to Canada's history – as an instrument of record – but also an historical *actor* in the very construction of Canada. That this was done as a party organ for the Liberal (Reform) party was, of course, not so much forgotten as it was dismissed. Certainly by the time of publication in 1934 this unseemly partisan past came to be seen as a bit of an embarrassment that, naturally, undermined the independence that was associated with ideals like objectivity and the fourth estate.

But throughout most of the nineteenth century, readers were well aware of each paper's political leanings and read them accordingly.²¹ A.H.U. Colquhoun portrayed the world of journalism in 1887 rather succinctly when he described how fully implicated the party press was with the progress of the nation. He wrote: "If your opinions, on any important questions, municipal or other, were fluid, you were a potential danger to the state."²² That the situation would become perfectly reversed with the assertion of independence proves to be one of the more interesting discursive plays of this history. As this chapter will display, service to the nation was eventually disarticulated from partisan loyalty and rearticulated as independence to speak freely on all party issues.

Although the process of separation was a gradual one, by 1887, following the scathing criticisms of Sir John A. Macdonald's government handling of the 1885 Riel rebellion by Edward Farrer and Christopher Bunting in *The Mail*, a definitive break between the government and the newspaper had occurred, leading Macdonald to launch a second Conservative morning paper, *The Empire*. Though a short-lived paper,²³ its founding indicates that though party leaders were experiencing increasing difficulty keeping their papers in line with party policies, partisanship was far from over.²⁴ In spite of this, newspapers were beginning to lay claim to some measure of independence from party control as early as 1880.²⁵ Following George Brown's rather sudden death by gunshot from a disgruntled employee, Gordon Brown took over editorship of *The Globe*. The prospectus inaugurating the new editorship and the new approach that began, for the first time, to take seriously the idea of independence, included the following words: "*The Globe* will be an independent journal, advocating the principles of the Reform party, Freedom of Trade, Economy and Honesty in the Public Expenditure, a Land Policy in the Northwest based on Actual Settlement, construction of the Pacific Railway without undue haste or burdensome delay, and British Connection will be the chief planks of the platform."²⁶ However, this proclamation fails to indicate precisely how *The Globe* would assert its independence while still aligning itself with the Reform Party. Certainly, these were a contradiction in terms. Why would a paper such as *The Globe*, which emerged from a strong partisan tradition, even want to make such an assertion? Of course, one possibility is that Gordon Brown was simply escalating sentiments already expressed

by his father some years earlier: “To be debarred by fear of injuring the party from saying that ---- is unfit to sit in Parliament and that ---- is very stupid, makes journalism very small business. Party leadership and the conduct of a great journal do not harmonize.”²⁷ In fact, George Brown had recognized, as early as 1867, that promoting a party while trying to monitor it compromised the newspaper’s ability to do service to the nation. Incidents like the Pacific Scandal of 1873 made clear that politicians could not always live up to their professed principles and by the latter half of the nineteenth century, an emergent discourse insisted that politics be cleaned up. As the next chapter will explore further, women’s suffrage and temperance groups, for instance, began to assert that men couldn’t be counted on to do the right thing by families and the nation. And in the middle of all this less than moral behaviour were the partisan papers, at times forced to defend utterly untenable party positions that compromised editorial positions. As a contemporary plainly set out the costs of “blindly following” the party:

You can do this, but if you are energetic, critical, interested in your country first and your party next, as every *Canadian* editor ought to be, you will most assuredly be astonished and disgusted some day to find the daily edition of your political confession of faith gravely and elaborately setting out to demonstrate that a glaring piece of political rascality and chicanery is a noteworthy and gratifying exhibition of Christian and enlightened statesmanship, while you can with the naked eye, as a result of the sense of vision alone and without any exercise of conscience, detect the total corruptness and unworthiness of the whole move...Deciding wisely you will decline to fall down and worship false gods. You will raise your voice in criticism, if you believe criticism is deserved, and while on general principles you still support the party platform, you will let it be seen clearly that to entitle it to your absolute support in all things, your party must be clean in all things.²⁸

Meanwhile, critics like the influential intellectual Goldwin Smith were growing increasingly impatient with the willingness of party papers to remain in the midst of such passions. Speaking of *The Globe*, he asserted in the early 1880s, “No journal ever did more to poison the heart of society...The most virulent of party papers, the most scandalous of society papers, would not have wrought practically so much harm.”²⁹

With the rise of insolent editors like Edward Farrer of *The Daily Mail* and J. S. Willison of *The Globe*, a mood emerged that slowly began to erode the confidence and security of the partisan press. For Willison, the break would occur later in November 1902, when he left *The Globe* to take over *The News*, an evening “independent” paper newly acquired by J.W. Flavelle. These editors were attempting to assert a space and right to criticize party members or policies when they failed to live up to principles that often underwrote their very parties. What began in the 1880s as a response to changing commercial conditions and the emergence of evening “independent” newspapers (such as *The World* [1880], *The Evening Telegram* [1876] and *The News* [1881]³⁰) would, by the turn of the century, make the categories of “independent” and “partisan” less definitive, as each kind of paper came to take on qualities of the other. As the newspapers continually clarified and re-defined precisely who or what they were serving, how that could be accomplished shifted alongside it. Attempts to assert independence within editorial declarations that continued obvious ties to the party system, however, were not terribly convincing. However, rather than representing a failure on the part of contemporary editors, the lack of conviction reveals that there

was a real sense of struggle involved in the emergent discourse that would separate partisan newspapers from the political party and align them to the public.

In an 1896 personal letter to Willison while he was still editor of the Liberal supporting *Globe*, A.H.U. Colquhoun makes the situation from the readers' perspective rather explicit and hints at how this discursive shift could be achieved.

He writes:

Take a case. Supposing political issues to be practically unchanged – that is each party adhering to its present policy leaders – six months hence and you accepted the managership of the Mail-Empire [a conservative paper], would I not feel somewhat confused and startled, unless you explained to me personally that your views had undergone a revolution? And how could the general public know that the change was honest conviction? The cases of Livingstone, Farrer, Thomson, etc. have done much to shake people's faith in the sincerity of the profession.³¹

At stake then, if the newspaper remained fully within the confines of partisanship, was not only the personal freedom of the journalist, but also the very authority of the newspaper. Furthermore, Colquhoun implies a need to clarify what independence meant. That this letter was written as late as 1896 indicates that the claims to independence already made in official declarations were perhaps not as convincing as they needed to be.

An additional problem lay in the realization that as long as an editor remained the mouthpiece of a political party, he remained unable to criticize it. When Farrer and Thomson broke with their respective papers, their insurrection lay in challenging the authority of the party, thereby undermining their very *raison d'être* as partisan papers – to serve the people *through* the political party. That the roots of their

criticisms lay in the betrayal of the party politician to act according to their own professed duties to advocate for the interests of the people left the perfect ideological opening for a realignment of purpose. Of course, the historical irony of Colquhoun's comments above was that soon Willison would be faced with precisely this dilemma and soon after would begin to openly criticize the Liberal government.³² As far as Willison was concerned, his experience with "party journalism meant... simply a succession of quarrels" as he began to speak out about issues of political corruption, leading him finally to wonder if "it [is] not possible that there may be such a thing as public duty? ... The discouraging thing that meets one everyday is the irrational partisanship which makes it impossible for men to think straight when their own party leaders are affected."³³

The case presented by Colquhoun seems to have been well grounded in popular sentiment. As far as readers were concerned, the issue was not solely one of corruption of political ideals; it was also a question of how their papers were behaving in response – a situation that editors themselves were well aware was problematic. The Canadian Press Association was founded in 1859 by editors eager to try and overcome the intense and ugly antagonisms that led them to become preoccupied with "determin[ing] whether or not [Francis] Hincks was a traitor, George Brown a bigot, or John A. Macdonald a thoroughly used up character."³⁴ This acerbic behaviour, despite the efforts of the Association, continued, leading its 1886 Retiring President J.A. Davidson to admit that, "Too often editors seem to forget their position, and instead of discussing the great political questions of the day

from a statesmanlike standpoint, seem to take greater delight in crushing their opponents than in answering their articles.”³⁵ By 1890, Roy Somerville of the Dundas *Banner* asserted in a talk on “The Relation of Newspapers to Political Parties,” that from a position of independence a paper could “enforce political cleanliness and good order”³⁶ – a demand that would become increasingly important for the newspaper as the decade progressed and as a discourse of morality came to be associated with the business of newspaper publishing. As will be discussed in the following section, to try and forge something of an adequately independent position meant contending with what increased commercialism would bring to the pages of the newspaper: sensationalism, increased local news and women’s pages.

Joe T. Clark, writing a vicious attack on “The Daily Newspaper” for *Canadian Magazine*, offered the following criticisms, which confirm every one of Colquhoun’s fears. He wrote:

There are prominent editorial writers in Canada who have progressed from paper to paper, changing their points of view with every change of employer – championing the National Policy in one paper, tearing it to shreds in another; leading a crusade in one paper against the influence of French Catholicism in politics, rounding upon fellow-crusaders, a month later, in another paper. While editors continue to be hired and discharged like ordinary laborers, and approach their duties without conviction, the possibilities of the press must remain undeveloped.³⁷

As Clark intimates, what was in jeopardy was the very support of the people to whom and for whom newspapers were purporting to speak. But even more profoundly, as Clark suggests, the trustworthiness of the newspaper was compromised. When “the same set of facts will be twisted, in rival newspapers, to support contentions

diametrically opposed to each other;” and when “each paper is continuously engaged in bending facts to fit a political theory to which it is enslaved,” it is not difficult to see how this distrust emerged.³⁸ Despite efforts by editors to begin separating editorial comment from news, or to attempt to report affairs of all parties more equitably, editorial independence was far from secure, leaving a rather muddled state of affairs for readers.³⁹ Furthermore, part of the changes taking place within the pages of the newspaper included the appearance of authored reports and a promotion of the correspondent, who as a named, authoritative speaker implicitly compromised the legitimacy given to the newspaper by the political party. However, Clark cynically asserts that, “The reasoning reader is not deceived. He realizes that the newspaper is not an arbitrator, but an interested partizan [sic], an intemperate wrangler in the tumult of contrary opinions.”⁴⁰ This was certainly the situation described by the Managing Director of *The Belleville Sun* in 1896 when, writing after the recent Laurier win, he described the following political “conversion:” “Hundreds of Conservatives in Midland, Ontario have been reading *The Globe* since *The Mail* flopped back into line... ‘*The Empire*’ is what it is called for short, and the general idea seems to be it is just as weak and partisan as the defunct ‘organ’ ever was.”⁴¹ By this time, as these comments imply, being a partisan paper suggested a kind of predictability in positioning that failed to accomplish the goals of leading the nation to further progress but followed a predetermined line. As the 1889 president of Canadian Press Association had asserted years earlier: “if a paper has such an intimate concern with a party that it can be known beforehand what position it will take on all questions in

party politics, this must greatly lessen the influence it will exert informing the opinions of the people.”⁴² In short, for these editors blind following of a political party represented a potential liability. Yet even as the papers were attempting to assert independence in response to this liability, they nonetheless remained tied to party foundations, as much through tradition and some financial support as through other liabilities that were associated with breaking all ties to party. As will be discussed in the next section, if editors were going to try to move away from their partisan pasts in order to be more independent, this independence needed to be further qualified, for it had attached to it already a host of other meanings.

Though the increasing importance of advertising and circulation suggested the commercial viability of making this change, it would seem that increasing disillusionment with the affect of partisanism, particularly in the face of unethical behaviour, provided the motivation to begin more forcefully clarifying the position in the final years of the nineteenth century. It was not until the economic conditions solidified that the ideological break became apparent and necessary. As the newspapers became increasingly willing and able to further the widening gap between them and their parties, the political party grew increasingly eager to reel them back in, with varying success.⁴³ This was, however, in the words of a journalist, “a mutual dependency.”⁴⁴

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the original assertions to independence which emerged in the 1880s had established a window through which differing practices could emerge. The grip of the party was loosening, but it was not

over; nor, would it be until another set of practices could be established that would guarantee a sense of legitimacy to speak authoritatively on public affairs. The position of “independence qualified” gave the partisan newspaper an opportunity to revise and reassert itself.

Independence Qualified

If some vestiges of partisanism remained a strategic necessity or an operational requirement, then how can the rising call to independence be characterized? Were the cases cited earlier only isolated examples of rogue editors? First of all, what these editors all shared was a position on a partisan paper. It was on the grounds, and in the pages, of these papers that the battle was waged. As Professor Adam Shortt convincingly asserts, struggling to find a balance between partisanship and independence was a necessity for the partisan papers because their “unqualified laudation of one party and detraction of the other began to ring with a hollow note.”⁴⁵ Furthermore, however, it was necessary as a way of hanging on to their readers. He writes, “independence beyond the party limits without independence within them is as vain as a voice without a responding ear; for it is, after all, to those within the parties that the appeal of the neutral independent is directed.”⁴⁶

But this is not sufficient to explain why readers would be suspicious of a paper venturing to break new ground through such high-minded ideals as exposing corruption, or the promotion of mass democracy through a mass newspaper.

Couldn't legitimacy be gained from the advocacy of the cause alone? A part of the explanation may lie outside the partisan papers in the market and culture of independent newspapers that were created from their very inception to be solely commercial enterprises. The existence of these independent papers – *The Evening Telegram* (1877), *The World*, *The News* (*The Mail's* evening, though independent, counterpart) and later, *The Star* (1892) – meant that any claim to an “independent” position the partisan papers could make was already influenced by perceptions of independence created in this other market.

Independent papers influenced perceptions of independence in several ways. First, as morning papers, the partisan papers had traditionally been the leaders in setting the news agenda through their editorial positions and their coverage of news events. All of the independent papers were evening papers and, after sufficiently scalping other news from the morning papers, made their mark on the local scene. From the time it began in 1877, *The Telegram* placed local news on the front page, though throughout the 1870's it remained very similar in story type and layout to the morning papers. The morning papers then responded by reorganizing their own pages, and so the race to be popular commenced.⁴⁷ The local market would be further disaggregated along class lines throughout the 1880s, leading to all papers to try and appeal to a wider range of readers by the 1890s.⁴⁸

The form of the independent press was designed to be popular and populist. By the mid-1890s *The World*, for instance, carried cartoons on the front page. Increased use of white space was accompanied by shorter sentences, and simplified

prose was promoted by both *The Montreal Star* and *The Telegram*. Most crucially, the focus taken away from the editorial was placed on local news.⁴⁹ *The Telegram* made it official policy, for instance, that “no article must exceed three-quarters of a column in length.” A culture of innovation pervaded these reporters, with official policy stating: “All reporters are expected to ‘pick up’ news, and when done, call the attention of the City Editor to the fact that it is a ‘pick up’ and exclusive. The fact will be noted by the City Editor.” The purview of local news for *The Telegram* was huge, covering virtually all aspects of city affairs by reporters. The remaining news outside of Toronto, “which appears in the morning papers,” was scalped. Dispatches from the wires were re-written.⁵⁰ The independents also began to pay attention to the aesthetics of newspaper design as well: headlines appeared in larger font, more white space was mobilized to break up long columns of tight type, illustrations and photographs became technologically possible and widely used in the 1890s, news became separated from editorial content and departmentalized.⁵¹

For all newspapers, these attempts at “going mass” forced them to identify their audiences and their local market in a rather literal and increasingly specific ways. As James Brierley, the Managing Editor of the Montréal *Herald* put it in an 1896 letter describing difficulties the paper was facing, “...our [circulation] is limited to the business men of Montréal – and the advertiser does not want them.”⁵² Who the advertiser wanted was the family. The solution for *The Herald* seemed to be to make “our paper intensely local,”⁵³ according to J.E. Atkinson. Although they had few options at the time, the decision to go “intensely local” put them squarely in

competition with *The Star*. It had already built a strong connection to the local community through a series of campaigns, including the 1885 small pox campaign, the 1887 Fresh Air Fund, and the 1888 Pick and Shovel Brigade, where hundreds of men, armed with picks, shovels and cartage sleighs removed the winter debris that the city was unable to handle.⁵⁴ The local campaign was a common strategy the independent papers used to develop an intimate relationship with their readers. Typically, these papers saw themselves as invested citizens in the community, which encouraged them to launch crusades against malfeasance, corruption or ineptitude at the local level. Critically, their frequent calls to action contrasted starkly with the eloquent reasoned pleas characterized by the partisan papers.⁵⁵

This idea of focusing on local news was very much a part of the practice of new journalism begun in Britain and popularized in the United States. This new form of journalism was populist, and in order to achieve its oft-quoted goals of “instructing and entertaining,” new journalism began to focus on the everyday, while also chronicling the more spectacular elements of life outside of the immediate world of its readers with frequent accounts from abroad or fantastic tales of disguise and infiltration into the unknown world of different places and spaces. These developments would be key for women’s entry into the profession of journalism.

In addition to these differences, morning and evening papers were also priced differently, a fact that led to popular conceptions that their readers were divided along class lines and influenced ideas about the relationship between popularity and quality. Despite their popularity and their claim to being popular educators, the

evening papers were seen as unpredictable, nearly apolitical and, at times, immoral. The critical question of trustworthiness remained at the centre of the criticisms that were launched against them. In contrast, the potential risks faced by the partisan press if they were to attempt to go independent are nicely introduced here by a journalist's notes to himself in his journal:

Above all things a paper must not be stupid. It may be sound and excellent in every way but if it is stupid it will be popularly damned. A rival newspaper may have no principles, or may advocate vicious principles, it may be habitually untruthful and even blackguard by character, but if it is lively, the public will not only forgive its moral worthlessness, but will reward it with their pennies. It will have circulation but not influence...

The deserving newspaper is praised; the credit is due to the newspaper men. Remember too that when a newspaper forfeits the confidence it held, it is because the cause or the readers have been betrayed or abused by [an] unworthy newspaper.⁵⁶

While it was easy to be popular, it was not so easy to be clever, yet remain true to conviction. This is precisely the difficult ground the independents were forced to tread carefully. In an 1897 letter from Montreal, Joseph Atkinson makes the terms explicit as he compares *The Globe* and *The Montreal Star*. In his opinion, while *The Globe* was a purveyor of "intelligence and the agency by means of which questions may be studied out and elucidated and prepared for the anvil of practical politics and public opinions," *The Star*, as a "great purveyor of news," on the other hand was too rash in its commentary to be taken seriously: "The Star here is...a great financial success but its success is not well founded until it has other basis than that same sort of feeling which people have for a *clever principle-less gossip*. The Globe is an 'institution' and a kind of popular political and socialistic university or something of

the sort.”⁵⁷ Interestingly, Atkinson appropriates the language of the independent press – being popular and of the people – in order to assert *The Globe’s* popularity, without abandoning its stability, as suggested by the term institution. For Atkinson, as for many other contemporaries, to be popular ran the risk of undermining one’s ability also to be an institution and thus speak authoritatively. For although there was a way to be “popular” and “socialistic,” it meant being careful with content and especially with its treatment. As a fascinating editorial written in the most traditionally partisan paper of the time suggests, the validity of an independent position was dubious because of its lack of solid foundation in party roots, or at least, principles:

The *Week*, for instance, undertakes to read *The Empire* a lesson; but can anybody tell us whom or what its opinions are to-day, and will anybody guarantee that they will be the same a month hence? . . . Instead of being guided by principle they are moved by whims, and the last occupant of the editorial seat may repudiate the policy of his predecessor, and in turn find the ‘independent’ views of the paper of to-day kicked overboard by his successor of tomorrow.⁵⁸

Thus, while unqualified devotion to partisanism was treated with increasing suspicion, *The Empire* here asserts the pitfalls of independence. As we will see in the following section, resolving this conflict would center on the ways in which the formerly partisan papers would come to speak to and for the people.

Joe Clark takes the criticisms even further by making a pointed reference to questionable practices and principles brought on by the desire to attract advertisers and readers. Comparing independents to the scandalous papers of the United States, clearly making an allusion to the popularity of new journalism there, Clark states,

“The news of this paper is unclean and its view purchasable...It keys its news to the tone of the vulgarian who delights to read of lust and murder, and its views are determined by bargains made and cheques received in little rooms at the rear of saloons.” Part of these questionable practices for Clark lay in the independents’ quest to lay matters open to public scrutiny, leaving “nothing too sacred for attack, nothing too secret for exposure.”⁵⁹ This thinly veiled criticism of the stunting practices and interviewing techniques that were introduced with the new journalism and were often used by the ladies of the press, further associates the independent press with the scandalous and questionable.

The critiques launched against the new journalism, with its focus on realism and use of sensationalist techniques, often centered on precisely their authority and moral responsibility to represent certain kinds of “reality.” As Warren Francke has noted, the key to the sensationalism was precisely in its practices of reporting – using methods of documentary, observation and interview – used to vividly picture a scene through the inclusion of sensory details which meant to place readers at the scene.⁶⁰ The construction of such “word-pictures” is most effectively conveyed in the recollections of a conversation between editor J.A. MacDonald and Parliamentary correspondent M.O. Hammond in Hammond’s diary, wherein MacDonald advised that Hammond’s reports should reflect a “photographic style of reporting rather than a phonographic style.”⁶¹ Becoming increasingly more interested in a succinct “snapshot” of what events took place, the longer conversational style of reporting was on the wane by the early years of the twentieth century. But it did not disappear

entirely. In fact, it was separated and taken up most effectively in sketches and feature articles that borrowed narrative conventions from other literary genres.⁶² Furthermore, this conversational style was re-invigorated within women's journalism that relied on a constructed relationship between woman journalist and reader as a legitimating force. For those who critiqued the new journalism on moral grounds, the widespread distribution of disreputable, vividly described, content was especially problematic – the cheaper the paper, the wider the distribution, the more potentially dangerous it became.⁶³ The trade publication *Printer and Publisher* put the concern succinctly in an 1895 editorial: “As is the tone of the Canadian press, so will be the tone of the moral and social life of the Canadian people.”⁶⁴

The strong moral tone that runs through these comments strikes at the heart of the divide that separated the less popular “partisan-cum-independent papers” and the independent evening papers: not only was content determined by a questionable motivation of profit, it was collected and often disseminated using methods that served this motivation to sell more and more papers. Clark's insistence that both partisan and independent papers were subject to similar pressures hints at the lack of freedom papers had to move within these categories and the increasing market pressures they faced to provide more interesting and sensational reports. Despite his rather one-sided understanding of the Canadian press towards the end of the nineteenth century, Clark was right in identifying this conflict, as the discursive battles continued to attempt to redefine partisanism and independence: “the tendency of the time is downward, for while the daily press, conscious of its unworthiness, puts on a

pretense [sic] of increased righteousness, its practices are constantly growing more indefensible and its influence more baneful.”⁶⁵ To resolve this conflict meant to take on what advocacy for the people meant, and this is precisely the strategy papers would employ in the increasingly competitive market where everyone was making not entirely convincing claims to independence.



The previous discussion makes clear that, in reformulating how the partisan papers would come to serve their readers, they would have to contend with not only the existent meanings of independence, but with the force of their partisan traditions as well. These struggles occurred in response to the crack in partisanship that appeared toward the end of the nineteenth century and were the result of the intensified competition of a crowded market, especially after *The Empire* entered the morning field to challenge *The Mail* and *The Globe*.

The already independent press, meanwhile, also felt the pressures of competition, particularly after the “partisan” papers intensified their popularization campaign by adding so many new features and increasingly claimed the same ideological ground of the people. Their abilities to expand their circulation beyond the confines of the city were also constrained, resulting in increased pressures to compete amongst themselves for the same pool of worker-readers.⁶⁶ Borrowing from the element of the partisan papers that remained and sustained their legitimacy as they made their transformations, it is not surprising that both *The Telegram* and *The*

News, while continuing their focus on the local, would begin paying further attention to Canada as a nation, particularly within the empire and in relationship to the United States.⁶⁷

Throughout all of these struggles, service to the nation – the original idealized purpose of the partisan press that characterized its interventions within the public sphere – remained the goal that sought to join reader to newspaper in a common purpose. As criticisms continued, and it became clear “independence” for the partisan papers needed to be clarified, the idea of speaking to “the people” borrowed from the independent papers was brought together with the tradition of the partisan press, service to the nation. To truly achieve mass status, the newspaper needed to speak for the people as well as to the people. The newspaper necessarily needed to stand between the state and the people. For journalists, there was “no mission in the world worth filling except as the articulate voice of the plain, unorganized and unsubsidized people,”⁶⁸ with “serene confidence that good will come out of free discussion.”⁶⁹ As an “agitator,” its true function should always remain “to better social and material conditions” and therefore could never advocate a position to the government that was ahead of popular opinion.⁷⁰ Thus an image emerged that advocated for the people with “self-discipline,” with the “self-restraint of a prude and responsible statesman.”⁷¹ Borrowing from the ideals of the politician – to uphold the public interest – the partisan paper continued to serve progress and thus did justice to its original foundational ethic to build the nation. It could thus act as an institution

that attempted to direct and cultivate public opinion, rather than being subjected to its whims.

In turn, for the partisan press, to assert independence necessarily meant explaining it in relationship to partisanship, to an accounting for the traditions of its past. This position was not populist, though it was popular, and it was not necessarily against the party either. Like the independent press, it could claim to be “superior to politics.” But to avoid also being cast as “However and Nevertheless sheets,” it maintained its previous legitimacy in a newly articulated form.⁷² In a 1905 editorial, Rev. Macdonald advocated the following position, which accomplished this repositioning for *The Globe*. Declaring that it no longer felt an obligation “to support or defend whatever may be done by Liberal leaders,” it went even further by insisting that to do so would be not only “unjust to those leaders,” but more profoundly, was “*offensive to every self-respecting newspaperman.*” It could now almost re-write its partisan past within this new ideal:

The Globe today, true to its traditions of its past, seeks first the public good and gives its support to those men and those measures that seem in the long run to serve most fully the largest public interest...Those who are responsible for its management and service today hold their responsibility not as a private opportunity but as a public trust...Its loyalty is to those best ideals of its own past which put party above the politician, the country above the party and right and truth above all.⁷³

Referring to the position known as “Independence within Party Lines,” this editorial carefully alludes to the corrupt practice of politicians using their influence as “private opportunity,” without making too strong a statement that would place the paper in

conflict with the Liberal party. “Independence within party lines” was clearly meant as a compromise, and to have done anything less for *The Globe* would have meant “to admit real defeat.” Instead, this position was one of “two channels of escape.”⁷⁴ After all, “[*The Globe*’s] alliance with Liberalism and the Liberal party is a matter of history and of deliberate choice, not of convenience or of obligation.”⁷⁵ This does, however, make clear its priorities in the final line to a hierarchy of allegiance that never conflicted with the interests of advocating on behalf of the people to the betterment of the country.

Even *The Empire*, which was the least successful partisan paper to effect this change of claiming an independent position, was able to adopt some claim to speaking on behalf of the people. Speaking at a time when it spoke for the governing party, it asserted: “For after all, it is the *duty and privilege* of the press supporting the government *to speak the sentiments of the people*. Who has a right to say that the views of the majority of the people on a political question, or on all questions, should not be represented in the press?”⁷⁶ Although the position remained open to the criticisms of partisanship cited earlier, and could be easily effected while the Conservative party happened to make up the government, it is fascinating to see how the paper was able to take up the language of speaking for the people in advocating a position that sought to defend a foundation in party principles. The question of authority and credibility was addressed through an articulation of foundational principles rooted in party as a means of speaking for the people, not simply to the people as a party voice.

A similar strategy was necessary for *The News*, when the sometimes-partisan, sometimes-independent Willison took over as editor. In a pamphlet published in late 1903 or early 1904 entitled “The News. Progress Under New Management,” there is no room for misunderstanding as it asserts in a bold subheading, “Independent journalism in Canada: about independence of Canada.”⁷⁷ As Willison struck out as fully independent with a new journal, he nonetheless had his own past to deal with. Recalling Colquhoun’s and Clark’s earlier comments, it is clear why Willison should think it necessary to go to such lengths to explain the principles that would govern his editorship in light of his past work:

[The News] hopes to follow an independent course in politics but recognizes that there are many independent journals in the country and that in this respect it sets no fashion in Canadian journalism. It begins with no profession of contempt for political parties but rather inclines to the view that the party system is the best that has been devised for the government of free communities. It believes that the mass of Canadian politics are sincerely and patriotically devoted to the public interest...But parties exist for the country, and not the country for the parties and the cultivation of wholesome sound independent thinking among the people is good alike for the parties and for the country. In this field *The News* hopes to labour with its contemporaries not for the destruction of the party system, but for the good government of the people and the promotion of all earnest effort for the public betterment.⁷⁸

Indeed, for Willison this was a serious conviction, for he had fought a hard battle, suffering in health along the way, to be able to freely criticize the actions of a politician. And it was a conviction he argued most vigorously and described in uncharacteristically hostile terms:

That [a politician may regard a journalist as a friend, not a ‘servant’] is all that the politician may demand of the public journalist and if he yields more he circumscribes his personal freedom and abridges his

power to give the last measure of service to the nation. ~~A press which is the champion of official rascality, the apologist for public abuses, the watchdog in leash to a corporation, the docile oracle of a party is a poor and sordid thing, but infinite in its capacity for mischief and dangerous to the liberty of the people.~~⁷⁹

Clearly Willison had second thoughts about some of his more pointed comments, as the strikethrough would suggest. He would run *The News* in a fashion that many considered partisan nonetheless, but given his background, it was not so much in conflict with an understanding of independence that would always judge the actions of public figures against ideals as lofty as serving the nation and advocating for the people. Willison's correspondence files held at the National Archives of Canada hold many examples of how readers and some politicians would continue to question and challenge him on his positions—a consequence of free discussion and an expanded public sphere that, by the end of his career, began to wear on him.

Conclusion

What the preceding history demonstrates most profoundly is that no radical revolution suddenly took place, forever changing the journalistic landscape. The transition can be best described as a struggle that involved an absorption and recapitulation of past traditions, while pressing forward alternative visions. It must be understood as a series of discursive re-adjustments that took place over time, over changing industrial conditions, and certainly through and in response to changing political, symbolic and cultural conditions that were outside of the domains of the newspaper proper. To these shifting relations, particularly between the public and

private sphere, we turn in the following chapter. The result of this discursive struggle was a re-alignment of the role and purpose of the newspaper.

But to understand the full import of this shift is to examine precisely the period of the entry of women into the profession of journalism, for they were very much a part of the strategies that newspapers were employing to reach “the people.” At the time it became “for the people,” struggling to reach a kind of omnibus status, with something for nearly everyone, the newspaper entered its truly mass phase and arguably became an instrument of modernity. But this was not achieved solely through the articulation of a clarified partisan-yet-independent position. Market conditions exerted increasing pressures on newspapers to continue to offer enticing and relevant news to the people. As was noted in the previous section, to speak for and to the people meant attempting to better understand who the people were. In addition, all newspapers, regardless of partisan or independent stripe, needed to attract and keep advertisers who wanted to be reassured that their ads would reach a wide mass of people.

The weekend edition emerged as the location where this change could be most safely exercised. This edition could put aside troubling partisan loyalties. Without ever compromising this political mission, it could use a different model of newsworthiness as personal perspectives could be brought to bear on the political. With the introduction of features like the woman’s page and other columns that appeared regularly the newspaper sought to become part of the readers’ regular habits on the weekend. Taking on current events, trends and ideas the weekend edition

could speak to the personal lives and concerns of the people, even as it defined and articulated them. As will be discussed in the following chapter, shifting relations between the public and the private which were being taking up in a number of different popular movements set the terms for these popular concerns within a discourse of morality. To be popular meant confronting this moral discourse as the very terms of the “popular” were negotiated in a number of locations, and most assuredly, on the pages of the newspaper. The weekend edition became the place that moulded the moral contours of the popular, while being moulded by them at the same time.

Additionally, the “commercial houses,” as Willison described his advertisers, would be key to an expanding weekend edition by providing the additional revenue required to attract new readers with exciting new columnists, illustrations and even photographs. Advertisers were not interested, however, in “the people” but in those people who would buy their goods.⁸⁰ The people, in turn, were redefined as The Family, as newspapers began to self consciously market themselves as “family papers.” The newspaper, thus, has relevance for the history of the family as a means by which the concept of “family” was defined by specific class meanings and its implications for a growing consumer market.

The weekend edition and its association with the family were further circumscribed, however, by a moral discourse that assured the desirability of developing a middle class identity. Cynthia Comacchio, a family historian, has argued that in the nineteenth century the idea of a middle class family had associated with it

very clear roles for each member: women were the moral protectors and supporters of the family, while fathering was identified with providing an income, and childhood and adolescence were defined by schooling and prolonged familial dependence. This model of the middle class family became the “benchmark of respectability and national success.”⁸¹ Women, with their primary responsibilities for child rearing, were the moral leaders of the nations. Thus, to speak to women – already a growing constituency of interest for advertisers – newspapers increasingly were wary of claims of sensationalistic content compromising their moral authoritativeness. The chapter that follows begins to detail the ways in which a moralizing discourse served reformers of all kinds, particularly as women began to forge for themselves a public identity. Furthermore, as Chapter five will detail accusations that papers were compromising their respectability in their bid to be popular was serious business indeed, particularly for a market like Toronto which was consumed by moral(izing) discourses. Claiming to be a family paper then also meant making a claim to being moral and “clean.”

Consider, for instance, testimonials the *News* included in a promotional brochure that associated the paper with home and morality: “I note every night the people reading it going home on the street cars;”⁸² “I take it home every night;”⁸³ “The News is having a fine moral effect. I look on The News as a first-class evening journal – ...I am particularly glad to see it sweep its columns clean, driving out the objectionable class of advertisements that are now accepted by the majority of our papers and making them in many cases undesirable to the home.”⁸⁴ *The Mail and*

Empire offered a similar strategy in one of its brochures: “The sensational, untrustworthy stories, too often given as news, are excluded from its columns, and, as becomes the leading commercial and family paper in Canada, the latest, best, and most reliable news only is published.”⁸⁵

By the close of the century, the family became the site upon which a call to being popular, independent and for the people could be effected within the appropriate limits of morality. More than this, newspapers saw themselves as actively working with families to ensure the moral and industrial growth of the nation. As *Printer and Publisher* pointedly asked its editor-readers: “The daily newspaper comes regularly to the breakfast table in thousands of homes. Take a glance at yours this morning. Are narrations there which tell you of virtue, of elevated thought, of refining influences, of Christian methods, of honorable dealings?”⁸⁶ As J.S. Willison put it perhaps most plainly: “In the whole field of public morals we are fellow workers.”⁸⁷

With editors already re-thinking the content of their newspapers as they looked to different sources of revenue, they were also aware that the faces of their constituencies were changing. As city spaces continued to grow and change, as the movement of people and goods through time and space continued to improve with the finishing of the national railway project, and talk began to widely circulate around a public role for women (through such movements as temperance, suffragism, and other general philanthropic missions) newspapers were necessarily adapting to these conditions with innovations in content. The overlaying and mostly obscured history

of women's journalism sheds important light on some of the practices that fed into and off of this changing notion of independence.

NOTES

The following abbreviations have been used in the notes for archival sources and depositories:

	Depository:
AO	Archives of Ontario
NAC	National Archives of Canada
	Manuscript Collections:
CACJ	C.A.C. Jennings fonds, F 1190
CPA	Canadian Press Association fonds, MG28 I6
CHJS	C.H.J. Snider fonds, F 1194
JW	John Willison fonds, F 1083
JSW	John Stephen Willison fonds, MG30 D29
MOH	M.O. Hammond fonds, F 1075

¹ P.D. Ross, *Retrospects of a Newspaper Person*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1931), 2.

² George Tye, President's Address, 7 Aug. 1883, Montreal, p. 16, Minute Book 1882-1910, Annual and Executive Committee Meetings, CPA, Vol. 1, NAC.

³ Newspaper clipping, "Went after the 'Deadheads,'" unknown publication, no date, p. 218, Misc. clippings, Minute Book, 1882-1910, Annual and Executive Committee Meetings, CPA, Vol. 1, NAC.

⁴ There are several academic associations that consider the history of journalism and the press, including the History Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication and the American Journalism Historians Association. There is also an electronic list serve devoted to journalism history, Jhistory (part of the H-Net group, hosted by Michigan State University). Although the list serve is not made up of American scholars and practitioners alone, it is largely American in the content of its discussion and its perspective. In Canada, the Canadian Historical Association, the Association for Canadian Studies and the Canadian Communications Association are all open to hearing historical treatments of the press and journalism, though none are specifically devoted to them.

⁵ William Buxton & Catherine McKercher, "Newspapers, Magazines and Journalism in Canada: Towards a Critical Historiography," *Acadiensis*, 28:1 (1998): 124

⁶ For example, Judge Robert Hughes, in a lecture delivered before the Virginia Press Association on 22 June 1897, described the political and social conditions of the union within colonial America, arguing that by nature of its public pages it had a role to play in facilitating dialogue: "the newspaper found itself under the necessity of discussing daily the questions which were agitating all minds, and the editor necessarily became a controversialist, a debater in print, a journalist." [Robert W. Hughes, "Editors of the Past, Lecture delivered before the Virginia Press Association, at their Annual Meeting at Charlottesville, VA on 22 June 1897" (Richmond, VA: Wm. Ellis Jones, 1897), 4, PAMPH

1897 #72, AO.] Hazel Dicken-Garcia also argues that the civil war played a pivotal role in changing journalistic forms. See Hazel Dicken-Garcia, *Journalistic Standards in Nineteenth-Century America*. (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1989).

⁷ See Peter B. Waite, *The Life and times of Confederation, 1864-1867: Politics, Newspapers and the Union of British North America*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962).

⁸ As S. Elizabeth Bird argues, journalism is produced with specific audiences in mind, making the context of news consumption part of the very process of news production. That is, news judgments are rooted in time and place. S. Elizabeth Bird, "Facing the Distracted Audience: Journalism and Cultural Context," *Journalism* 1:1 (2002): 29-33. This is, of course, part of the intervention that Stuart Hall and Paul duGay et al. have made in their respective schemas of encoding/decoding and circuits of culture for understanding the intertwined and interdependent processes of cultural production and consumption. See Stuart Hall, "Encoding/Decoding," in *Culture, Media, Language*, edited by Stuart Hall et al, (London: Hutchinson, 1980): 128-138. Paul duGay, et al., *Doing Cultural Studies: The Story of the Sony Walkman* (London: Sage, 1997), 3. Stuart Hall later reconceptualized this process of encoding/decoding with the theory of articulation, drawn from Louis Althusser, which understands cultural formations as a complex of previously structured practices which have no necessary correspondence between them but, rather, are held together through hegemonic power. The concept of hegemony allows Hall to understand any formation as being structured in dominance, and thus historically contingent. Stuart Hall, "Signification, Representation, Ideology: Althusser and the Post-structuralist debates," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 2 (1985): 91-114. The theory is useful for understanding how practices and ideas become linked together to form subject positions, cultural formations and identities. However, as Hall insists, "It is a linkage which is not necessary, determined, absolute and essential for all time" (Stuart Hall, "On Postmodernism and articulation: an interview with Stuart Hall," ed. Lawrence Grossberg, in *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, ed. David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen (London: Routledge, 1996), 141. Thus, under the right historical conditions articulations may be broken, or disarticulated, and re-formed, or re-articulated, into new formations.

⁹ For instance, John W. Dafoe, editor of the *Winnipeg Free Press* observed of the time that one was born of a political party and died of that party, taking along with them the newspaper of appropriate political stripe. John W. Dafoe, "Sixty Years in Journalism." *Winnipeg*: 16 Oct. 1943, PAMPH 1943 #27, AO.

¹⁰ Richard Kaplan, *Politics and the American Press: The Rise of Objectivity, 1865-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 129. Kaplan argues that partisan identities did not disappear finally until a change had been effected in the public sphere upon which the papers relied upon for their legitimacy as authorities on public affairs. This occurred with the "crucial election" of 1894-6. After 1896, newspapers could finally shed their partisan identities and adopt the disinterested journalistic practice of objectivity, while shifting their role to one of mediator between the public and politics (147-175).

¹¹ Brian Beaven, "Partisanship, Patronage, and the Press in Ontario, 1880-1914: Myths and Realities," *Canadian Historical Review* 64:3 (1983): 350.

¹² This context is larger than just the political, as Kaplan's argument tends to suggest at times, turning the public sphere into a primarily political one. It is not surprising then that his only attention to women's journalism should come in his chapter on the commercialization of the press. It is the contention of this thesis, as the subsequent chapter will argue, that the public sphere was shifting on a number of fronts that made these changes necessary. I do not, therefore, quarrel with the linking of the press with the public sphere, rather, as suggested in the introduction, disagree with how that public sphere should be characterized. As the nineteenth century progressed, that sphere had to contend with new sets of relations, particularly as the private sphere changed. This, I argue, exerted pressures on the public sphere that Kaplan's account fails to give due consideration. Although he recognizes that the public sphere fell short of its ideal (190), his own analysis duplicates the exclusions of the public sphere by failing to recognize how popular content in partisan papers shifted its makeup.

¹³ Frank Underhill, *The Image of Confederation* (Toronto: Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 1964), 3.

¹⁴ Maurice Charland argues that a rhetoric of technological nationalism imbues the ways in which Canada has imagined itself. This rhetoric of technological nationalism promotes technology as a means towards nation-building by enhancing communication. In speaking to itself through this rhetoric, mobilized most powerfully through the national railroad, the state can legitimate itself. Charland furthermore argues that this rhetoric is insidious since it links Canadian identity, not to its people, but their technological mediation. Maurice Charland, "Technological Nationalism," *Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory*. 10:1 (1986): 197-8.

¹⁵ Underhill, 10.

¹⁶ Beaven, 319.

¹⁷ J.S. Willison, Willison, untitled draft MS fragment, n.d. p. 38082. File 5. Manuscript, Notes and Speeches, JSW, Vol. 53, NAC. Note: this page does not follow the National Archives' numerical sequence for the remainder of the MS fragment, which runs 39682-39715. It does, however, follow the original pagination recorded at the top of the page. It would appear that this page was used by Willison in another MS (located in Volume 52, File 1, "Journalism, Misc. 38001-3822), perhaps accounting for the discrepancy in pagination.

¹⁸ [poster], "Our 90th Anniversary", [1934], MOH, container G238, item 11, AO.

¹⁹ *The Daily Mail*, 30 Mar. 1872.

²⁰ *The Daily Mail*, 30 Mar. 1872.

²¹ A.H.U. Colquhoun, "Canadian Universities and the Press," in *How can Canadian Universities best Benefit the Profession of Journalism, as a Means of Moulding and Elevating Public Opinion?: A Collection of Essays*, Ed, Queen's Quarterly (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1903), 23.

²² A.H.U. Colquhoun, "The Journalistic Field of 1887: Memories of the background from which *Saturday Night* sprang," *Saturday Night*, 10 Dec. 1927: n.p., File "Scrapbook, Prince of Wales' Visit in 1860, Misc. letters, addresses, articles, etc, 1900-1916," Scrapbook of Newspaper Clippings, 1860, 1927-1935, JSW, Box MU 3145, AO.

²³ The paper was absorbed by its rival, *The Mail*, in 1895. Interestingly, *The Mail and Empire*, in its Anniversary Edition published in 1922, carefully consigned the brief history of *The Empire* to the perils of the newspaper business and an over-crowded newspaper scene. While this explanation certainly seems likely to contemporary newspaper readers, the lack of attention to the bitterness that led to the formation of *The Empire* is curious. It is possible that the partisan bitterness came to be seen as a source of embarrassment to the writers of this pamphlet by 1922. Or, that *The Empire* was not considered noteworthy given its explicitly partisan basis. Nonetheless the history of *The Mail and Empire* offered in this publication is certainly written through the purview of *The Mail* with no mention of *The Empire's* editorial policies, of the conditions that led to the union with *The Mail* in 1895, thus casting the merger not in the light of a mutually advantageous joining, but rather as a takeover, an absorption of one paper by the other. It is interesting to note that despite whatever insignificance to which *The Mail and Empire* Anniversary Edition may consign the paper, *The Empire* had a thriving women's department run by Alice Freeman, known by her journalistic colleagues and readers as "Faith Fenton." See *The Daily Mail and Empire*, "Half Century Number of *The Daily Mail and Empire*. 1872-1922," Toronto, PAMPH 1922 #53, AO.

²⁴ Both Beaven and Sotiron document in extensive detail how vestiges of patronage from party remained, particularly through the awarding of printing and advertising contracts. See Beaven, 325-330; Minko Sotiron, *>From Politics to Profit: The Commercialization of Canadian Daily Newspapers, 1890-1920* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997), 107-14. Norman Ward in his influential 1963 article identifies the differing forms that patronage could take, particularly when in power. These include: expenditure of secret service money, assistance from the Post Office, direct payments to journalists, places and pensions for journalists, purchase of subscriptions, government advertising, and official intelligence [what Sotiron calls "information patronage" (111)]. Of those identified as most important by all three historians are the latter three. Norman Ward, "The Press and the Patrongae: An Exploratory Operation," in *The Political Process in Canada: Essays in Honour of R. MacGregor Dawson*, ed. J.H. Aitchison (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963), 5-10.

Both Beaven and Sotiron assert that independence – particularly defined as financial independence, as Sotiron does (115) – was not fully effected until the early years of the twentieth century (Beaven 341; Sotiron 115). I do not necessarily dispute this finding, but rather am interested in how the shift was accomplished which never required a full break from party. Rather the papers laboured to overcome the seemingly contradictory position of establishing the necessary authority and right to criticize their parties as they saw necessary (particularly in the face of scandals), while still claiming to stand for the principles of the

party. The nation – rearticulated from the party to the people – became a crucial pivotal point that allowed for continuity and resolution of this contradiction, while establishing a means by which to forge a new identity and authority.

²⁵ This follows Beaven's periodization as well. He argues that party control was never really very effective, essentially because patronage was never consistent or significant enough (345). Thus, he argues, business practices were important to the partisan papers as early as 1880. This coincides with the appearance of women on the journalistic scene as well.

²⁶ M.O. Hammond, Unpublished Manuscript, "Ninety Years of The Globe," [ca. 1934], p. 131, Unpublished Manuscripts, MOH, MU 1290, AO.

²⁷ Hammond, 91.

²⁸ Roy V. Somerville, Address, "The Relation of Newspapers to Political Parties," File: Canada Press Association, Minute Book 1882-1910, Annual and Executive Committee Meetings," p. 96, CPA, vol. 1. NAC.

²⁹ Hammond, "Ninety Years," 111. Of course it has to be noted that Smith, a promoter of the annexation of Canada to the United States, was not a favourite of *The Globe*, which defended retaining British Imperial union.

³⁰ For more on these papers and their relation to the partisan press, see Paul Rutherford's "The People's Press: The Emergence of the New Journalism in Canada, 1869-99," *Canadian Historical Review* 56:2 (June 1975): 169-91.

³¹ Letter, Colquhoun to Willison, Jun. 4 1896, File 74, 6087-6307, Correspondence, JSW, Vol. 9, NAC. Colquhoun is likely responding to the article written by Joe T. Clark for *Canadian Magazine* referred to below. In other parts of the letter Colquhoun asserts that despite the continued ties to partisanship *The Globe* still held, it was widely recognized by readers that it showed "a reserve in its comments, a treatment of news as news." The cases of Livingstone, Farrer and Thomson led him to agree with Clark that newspaper men carried on their work with, in the words of Colquhoun, "less sense of responsibility than the situation demands."

³² This, of course, leads one to speculate that perhaps Colquhoun was already "in the know" about some of the strained relations Willison was having with Laurier. See Colquhoun's book on Willison for more details about the relationship between Willison and Laurier. A.H.U. Colquhoun, *Press, Politics and People: The life and letters of Sir John Willison, Journalist and Correspondent of The Times* (Toronto: Macmillan Co. of Canada, 1935).

³³ Letter, Willison to E.S. Caswell, 2 Feb. 1904, p. 5047, File 70, 4998-5074, Correspondence, JSW, Vol. 7, NAC. Willison cites the following as the source of his troubles with party:
When, as editor of *The Globe*, I denounced the corruption of Mercier and his crowd in Quebec I had a bitter quarrel with Liberal politicians and my dismissal... was demanded. When I knew of my absolute knowledge that the Conservative candidate

was elected in West Huron, I said in *The Globe* that Holmes, for whom the seat was stolen, should resign, and again I had a bitter quarrel. When it was attempted to count Mr. Thornton out of his seat for East Durham, I tried to have some regard for Liberal teaching and protested, and the usual quarrel was the result. When it was endeavored to make *The Globe* advocate Remedial legislation for Manitoba, I resisted and which in the end was strongly approved (p. 5046-7).

³⁴ A.H.U. Colquhoun, "The Canadian Press Association," in *A History of Canadian Journalism in the Several Portions of the Dominion, with a Sketch of the Canadian Press Association, 1859-1908*. Eds, Committee of the Association, (Toronto: Canadian Press Association, 1908), 4-5. For further details on the situation that led up to the foundation of the Association, see specifically, "A period of Turmoil," 1-5.

³⁵ J.A. Davidson, Annual Address of Retiring President, Aug. 5, 1886, Toronto, p. 19, Canadian Press Association, Minute Book 1882-1910, Annual and Executive Committee Meetings, CPA, Vol. 1, NAC.

³⁶ Roy Somerville, "The Relation of Newspaper to Political Parties," Winter Session, 1890, p. 42, Canadian Press Association, Minute Book 1882-1910, Annual and Executive Committee Meetings, CPA, Vol. 1, NAC.

³⁷ Joe T. Clark, "The Daily Newspaper," *Canadian Magazine*, 7:2 (1896): 104

³⁸ Clark, 104.

³⁹ See Walkom's chapter 5, "The Ideological Structure of the Newspaper" (Thomas Walkom, *The Daily Newspaper Industry in Ontario's Developing Capitalistic Economy: Toronto and Ottawa, 1871-1911*, Ph.D. diss [University of Toronto, 1983], 190-273). He argues, similarly, that with a loss of clarity of party position, the reader would be given other secondary clues on how to read the political significance of a news item, such as placement, headline size and graphic representation (see for example his discussion of the 1890s, 231-249). While I do not take issue with Walkom's reading of these "clarifications," I am asserting here that though partisan positions were becoming more fluid, independence was hardly secure enough to make readers of a paper like *The Globe* be unaware of their partisan traditions. Certainly, the Liberal party believed that Willison had launched a successful campaign in support of Laurier that contributed to his 1896 victory.

⁴⁰ Clark, 104.

⁴¹ Letter. Cameron Brown to Willison. 27 June 1896, File 38, Correspondence, 3180-3343, p. 3270, Correspondence, JSW, Vol. 5, NAC. As noted earlier, *The Mail* and *The Empire* merged in 1895 to become *The Mail and Empire*.

⁴² E. Hartley Dewart, President's Address, 18 July 1889, File "Minute Book, 1882-1920, Annual and Executive Council meetings," Canadian Press Association fonds, MG28 I6, Vol. 1, National Archives of Canada.

⁴³ For further details on specific examples see Minko Sotiron's chapter, "Partisanship and Independence," 106–124 and Brian Beaven, especially p. 335.

⁴⁴ Colquhoun, "Journalistic Field," n.p. Beaven also concedes this same point (318).

⁴⁵ Adam Shortt, "A Personality in Journalism," *Canadian Magazine* 29:6 (1907): 522.

⁴⁶ Shortt, 523.

⁴⁷ Thomas Walkom, "The Daily Newspaper Industry," 214.

⁴⁸ Walkom, 231-260.

⁴⁹ Paul Rutherford, "The People's Press," 174-176.

⁵⁰ "Memoranda regarding the Staff," 1 Jan. 1902, The Evening Telegram, Folder 14, Evening Telegram, 1891-1908, CHJS, AO. Areas covered by *Telegram* staff included: "the police court, taking note of all names on the roster, "except drunks;" Osgood [sic] hall; county courts; division court; county council; ambulance and inquests; General hospital; Children's hospital; fire halls; police stations and paragraphs incidental to these; the school board and its committees; church offices and organizations; church and religious meetings; hotels, small conventions; real estate news; return of sales; sporting news: lacrosse, hockey, football; railway stations; waterfront wharves and steamers; east end news; labour unions; cemetery returns. Politics on the other hand were organized oddly with the Provincial Legislative reporter covering it and "funerals, marriages and deaths. Each month there ought to be a comparison with the same month of the year before, as to weather statistics."

⁵¹ See Kevin Barnhurst and John Nerone, *The Form of News: A History* (New York: Guildford Press, 2001), especially chapter 3, pp. 68-106.

⁵² Letter, James Brierly to Willison, 17 Dec. 1896, p. 3146, File 37, Correspondence, JSW, Vol. 5, NAC.

⁵³ Letter, J.E. Atkinson to Willison, 17 Dec. 1896, p. 649, File 13, Correspondence, JSW, Vol. 2, NAC.

⁵⁴ Montreal *Daily Star-Family Herald* and *Weekly Star*, "Fifty Years, 1869 to 1919. Half Century Souvenir of The Montreal Daily Star-Family Herald and Weekly Star," Montreal. n.d.

⁵⁵ Rutherford, "The People's Press," 184.

⁵⁶ C.A.C. Jennings, diary entry, Unknown date, File: Diaries, 1896-1930, CACJ, MU 1542, AO.

⁵⁷ Letter, Atkinson to Willison, 17 May 1897, p. 655, File 13, Correspondence, pp. 636-693, Correspondence series, JSW, Vol. 2, NAC; emphasis in original.

⁵⁸ "Concerning 'Independent' Criticism," *The Empire*, 9 Jan. 1888: 4.

⁵⁹ Clark, "The Daily Newspaper," 101.

⁶⁰ Warren Francke, "Sensationalism and the Development of 19th-Century Reporting: The Broom Sweeps Sensory Details," *Journalism History*, 12:3-4 (1985): 81.

⁶¹ Diary entry, 5 Sept. 1903, Diary: July 1 to September 30, 1903, Diaries, 1890-1910, Diaries 1890-1934, MOH, MU1292, AO. Interestingly, a similar choice of words was used by a Reverend O.P. Gifford in a sermon reported on in *The Globe* in 1897. The Rev. Gifford not only valorized Toronto for its committed Sabbatarianism compared with New York, his lament for the unmoral ways of this latter city further connected the new journalism with a general demise in the moral standards of its citizens. As *The Globe* reports, "He condemned the New York publications, the new journalism and its methods, the *sensation bill-board pictures*, the gambling dens, the social evil and the unwillingness of the police to move against them" ("A Buffalo View of Toronto's Sunday," *The Globe*, 24 Mar. 1897: 8; emphasis mine).

⁶² The separation of news, with its own distinctive style, from features is another characteristic of the nineteenth century. Kevin Barnhurst & John Nerone, *The Form of News, A History* (New York: Guildford, 2001), 99-105. See also Donald Matheson's discussion of changes to news style between 1880-1930 in British newspapers. Matheson argues that this period witnessed an emergent economy of a news story whereby the news story and its authoritative take on the world of events took on a "self sufficiency" within itself that no longer relied on external sources to authorize its legitimacy. Donald Matheson, "The birth of news discourse: changes in news language in British newspapers, 1880-1930," *Media, Culture & Society*, 22 (2000): 570.

⁶³ Clark, 102. Interestingly, Clark makes this connection to morality explicit. He notes the newspaper, precisely because of its huge circulation, had more potential influence than a priest preaching to a limited congregation. With the publication of such vulgar and sordid elements of society, it abdicated the traditional role of the priest in setting the moral compass.

⁶⁴ Joe Howard, [editorial note], *The Fourth Estate*, 3 Jan. 1895, n.p.; quoted in *Printer and Publisher* 4:1 (1895): 3.

⁶⁵ Clark, 101.

⁶⁶ Walkom, 249.

⁶⁷ Walkom, 234-239.

⁶⁸ J.S. Willison, "Journalism. An Address Before the Political Science Club of Toronto University, 23 Nov. 1899," (Toronto: n.p., 1899): 14, PAMPH 1899 #54, AO.

⁶⁹ Willison, 16.

⁷⁰ Willison, 15.

⁷¹ Willison, 8.

⁷² Dafoe, "Sixty Years in Journalism," 6.

⁷³ All quotes taken from M.O. Hammond's Unpublished Manuscript, "Ninety Years of The Globe," 246; emphasis mine.

⁷⁴ Adam Shortt, "A Personality in Journalism," 522-3. The other channel of escape is represented as abandonment of "all party connection, and adopting a neutral attitude, appeals to public opinion on general principles." Shortt goes on to point out, however, that this position in the end did not advance the cause very far (523).

⁷⁵ Qtd. in Hammond, 246.

⁷⁶ "Concerning 'Independent' Criticism, *The Empire*, 9 Jan 1887; emphasis mine. It is interesting to note, as well, how *The Empire* felt compelled to respond to these criticisms within its pages. This defense speaks to how unusual—almost anachronistic—an overtly partisan organ seemed even by the end of the 1880s.

⁷⁷ "The News. Progress Under New Management," Toronto: The News, PAMPH n.d. N#11, AO. The pamphlet makes reference to it being just over a year since new management had taken over, making its publication likely 1903 or early 1904.

⁷⁸ J.S. Willison, "The News Announcement," n.d., 38137-38144, Journalism, Misc., 38001-38223, Manuscript, Notes and Speeches, JSW, Vol. 52, NA. This announcement was more than likely written in 1902 since it opens, "The News today is being published under new management."

⁷⁹ J.S. Willison, Untitled draft MS fragment, n.d., p. 39696, File 5, Manuscript, Notes and Speeches, JSW, Vol. 53, NAC. Why Willison decided not to make such a pronounced statement (portions indicated by strikethrough) will remain a mystery, particularly without being able to determine the date of its authorship definitively. Although this section was never intended for public consumption, it is certainly a clear indication of Willison's state of mind regarding the issue.

⁸⁰ By the term Willison meant the large retailers who took up a large amount of advertising in the papers and thus benefited from cheaper rates. As he described their importance to papers:

“This advertising is generally trustworthy and often attractive and pungent. In many publications there is nothing of better quality. The pages of newspaper devoted to store advertising are as interesting as the news pages. Failure to secure this patronage is equivalent to sentence of death to many daily journals...One recalls that a newspaper expressed sympathy with striking employes (sic) of a departmental store and for many months was removed from its advertising schedule. The fine was not less than \$8,000 or \$10,000.”

Willison, incomplete MS, no date, p. 38041-38043, File 1, Journalism-Misc., 38001-38223, JSW, Vol. 52, NAC.

⁸¹ Cynthia Comacchio, *The Infinite Bonds of Family: Domesticity in Canada, 1850-1940* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 47.

⁸² “The News,” 7.

⁸³ “The News,” 10.

⁸⁴ “The News,” 24.

⁸⁵ Pamphlet, *Mail and Empire*, “Mail and Empire, Toronto, Canada” (Toronto: n.p., [1898?]).

⁸⁶ Joe Howard, [editorial note], *The Fourth Estate*, 3 Jan. 1895, n.p.; quoted in *Printer and Publisher* 4:1 (1895): 3.

⁸⁷ Speech, [Pulpit and Press], p. 39008, File 2, “Willison Speeches, 38911-39083,” JSW, Vol. 53, NAC.

Chapter 3

New Voices, New Publics

‘The family’ is not only the main location of biologically and legally defined relationships between men and women, adults and children, but also where private and public sphere intersect...Families replicate values and belief systems, forging the links between personal identity and social role, individuals and society, home and nation.¹

Becoming a voice of the people through an attachment to the family was hardly an arbitrary decision for the formerly-partisan newspaper. Indeed, what the independent-within-party lines newspaper could scarcely afford to do was to ignore what was happening around it as it ventured to speak for and to the people. But why would the family occupy such an important ideological territory for the newspaper? Although the necessity of attracting greater numbers of readers was certainly one explanation, it doesn't account for the particular constitution of the family, not only as an idealized site, but also as a sign that said something about the newspaper itself. From where did these ideas emerge? On the one hand, this chapter argues relations between the public and private sphere were changing the very terms of the public sphere itself, making the “family” a readership ideal, particularly as the newspaper strove to broaden its mandate. At the center of these tensions surrounding the shifting relations between the public and private was the family and Home. On the other hand, however, once constituted as an idealized means to effect nation-building, the family could serve the purpose of making the newspaper intelligible as a public institution that supported these changed relations. Shifting the representational force of its mission from party interests to the people brought with it

a kind of journalism that was context driven. The weekend edition as a place where popular features could be highlighted became the site where these changing relations could be made sense of, transformed and given a popular voice. The woman's page, in particular, became the preeminent location for this.

For a fuller explanation on why the family, and women, should occupy such an important place for the newspaper one needs to look beyond the newspaper to the cultural environment from which it shaped its new existence. What follows is not merely an explication of the "context" of reform movements – a separate world "outside" the newspaper – that explain the particular attention to the family. Rather, these movements were constitutive of the shape the newspaper would take and gave the call to the family by the end of the century its ideological weight. As Jennifer Daryl Slack has argued, "the context is not something *out there, within which practices occur or which influence the development of practices*. Rather, *identities, practices and effects generally, constitute the very context within which they are practices, identities or effects.*"² Thus to understand the newspaper is to understand the ways in which it is constituted in and part of its context. To understand the popularization process – the means by which audiences came to give consent to a new vision of what their newspapers would look like – necessitates an examination of "the experiences, the codes, etc., of the popular masses."³

This chapter will explore the ways in which a feminized citizenship was being formed in ways that had implications for them as newspaper readers: on the public front in a variety of ways and in the private spaces of the home. These changes,

brought on by the suffragist, moral and urban reform, and domestic science movements, altered relations between the public and private and simultaneously expanded and limited women's roles in society. As a mediator between the public and private, the newspaper became another site where these tensions were negotiated. As will be explored in the succeeding chapters, the Woman's pages, by adding women's voices to the newspaper and by acculturating women to the act of newspaper reading, helped to construct the contours of a specifically feminized kind of citizenship.

Termed variously as "public housekeeping"⁴ and the "domestication of the urban environment,"⁵ reform movements, coupled with suffragism, developed a sophisticated metaphor for the public sphere that equated it with a kind of large home, thus assuring women's role within that home. However, as this chapter reveals, this kind of home was not a simple replica of an ideal. Articulating cultural norms about gender roles within other discourses about public concerns for safety, corruption and health constituted a different kind of Home, one that warranted protection at the same time as it was under revision. As will be discussed later in this chapter, this particular form of public involvement created certain kinds of opportunities for some women, while limiting opportunities for others.

These movements centered around a general push towards reform that began in the late nineteenth century in response to the conditions largely arising from the shift to industrial capitalism. By the end of the nineteenth century the shifts in economic production, with its concomitant shifts in labour organization centering

around factory production, led to burgeoning city spaces as increasing numbers of peoples from abroad and from the rural parts of Canada moved to the cities looking for work. The results were large scale overcrowding in poorer districts, a lack of adequate municipal services, poor quality of life and nutrition resulting in high infant mortality rates and diseases, crime, and, in turn, what was perceived as the general decline of the moral character of its citizens. As Gilbert Stelter and Alan Artibise note, activities directed towards reforming and reclaiming urban society were directed toward four inter-connected, though discrete concerns: social welfare, with specific concern for morality, poverty, and vice; the restructuring of municipal government; more adequate planning of city spaces; and the public ownership or regulation of municipal utilities.⁶

Whether directed at government, the poor, or the individual souls of citizens, the social reform movements sought literally to sweep away vice and corruption, leaving in its place a clean, that is moral, social order that would form the basis of the nation's progress. As Mariana Valverde has noted in her study of the social purity movement, for social reformers virtually every issue was understood as having moral consequences.⁷ A correlation was thus established between political purity, personal hygiene and nation-building: "physical and sexual hygiene – which were to a large extent in women's sphere – were the microcosmic foundation of the larger project of building a 'clean nation.'"⁸ Most often the solution lay in the reformation or regeneration of the individuals. For others concerned with the larger social order, which included, though was not solely focused on, morality, government intervention

and the introduction of new social institutions were the key. What all the various reform groups of the late nineteenth century shared was a fear that the social fabric was disintegrating,⁹ particularly that which secured Anglo Saxon, middle class, Protestant hegemony. While there were a number of important reform groups working in diverse areas, this chapter will seek to paint a broad picture of these movements, focusing on ways in which they resulted in a shifting dynamic in the dialectic of private and public spheres, particularly in relationship to the family.

In terms of gender, the common idea of “separate, but complementary, spheres”¹⁰ was maintained, though reordered to include an increasingly public role for and visibility of women. Although men were still believed to rule public affairs through rationality, while women’s nurturing and compassion made them ideal for the domestic realm, these two categories were not viewed as mutually exclusive. Since men and women’s roles were understood as being a consequence of their essential virtues, these roles could well be adjusted as the civil sphere itself changed.¹¹ As Mrs. Dr. Parker puts it in her essay on “Woman in Nation-building,” “...not by man’s work alone may a nation be built, but by the united work of man and woman, each with their several and distinctive qualities, as halves of a whole or separate sides of a sphere; both necessary to the completeness of work.” Further educating women meant they could bring their natural holiness to bear on the public world: “the educated womanhood of Canada is henceforth, in the Providence of God, to be a power and a force in the nation-building.”¹² A domesticated public sphere meant men, by advocating for house and home, could occupy a more feminized position,

while women could make public interventions.¹³ Thus men who drank and failed to adequately provide for their families could be branded an “enemy of the home”¹⁴ and undeserving of their franchise, while women, who naturally worked for the betterment of their homes, could use their public roles responsibly, never defying their primary and rightful duties to the home. Believing women would apply these same virtuous traits to the public domain, they held great potential to further Christianize the social world:

The domestic function of woman, as a housekeeper, wife and mother, does not exhaust her powers. Woman’s functions, like charity, begins at home; then, like charity, goes everywhere. To make one half of the human race consume all their energies in the functions of housekeeper, wife and mother, is a monstrous waste of the most precious material that God ever made.¹⁵

Although it is argued there were important shifts to the dynamic between private and public that allowed women greater public visibility, material changes that permitted women greater access to the various power structures that held considerable power over their lives were slow to come. Suffrage, for example, despite its auspicious and important beginnings, had to rely on a maternal discourse to gain acceptance and lose its troublesome connection with British and American agitators who were considered decidedly unfeminine. By 1883, unmarried, propertied women and widows in Ontario could vote in the municipal elections and were eligible to be elected to the Board of Trustees of the Toronto Public School Board.¹⁶ Women were finally allowed admission to the University of Toronto by 1884, though access was significantly limited.¹⁷ And, as the scope and availability of work outside the

home grew for women, some women began to experience a newfound freedom from the confines of the home and family previously unimagined. For middle-class married women, work outside the home often meant some kind of involvement in church committees (usually on ladies' auxiliaries) and their affiliated philanthropic organizations. Though these were significant inroads for women, given the particular climate of the time, they represented only small gains in terms of establishing material equality with men and shifted, rather than significantly changed, the day to day lives of many women particularly. As Cynthia Commachio describes it, the changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution had varying consequences, particularly in terms of class:

Despite its cataclysmic implications, the 'Industrial Revolution' that was making itself felt by the closing quarter of the nineteenth century is best conceived as an ongoing, uneven historical process entailing both dramatic change and significant continuities in life and work, private and public institutions...If it is not a straightforward 'before and after' affair, there is no doubt that the factory whistle reordered the relationships within families, and among families, society and state.¹⁸

Outside of the middle class, for many other women, access to low paying factory jobs was a mixed blessing. Though it provided an additional source of revenue for some families, the wages were often barely enough to cover the additional expense of sending children to a crèche. Instead, women and children would supplement their family income by taking in boarders, sewing, or selling any additional food grown. Traditional family economics still played a substantial role in helping working class families to survive.¹⁹ Around the turn of the century, between 35 and 40 percent of all Canadian families were touched by infant, child or maternal

mortality, orphanhood or early widowhood.²⁰ For young women, wages and work conditions were so low and poor that they often barely made enough to cover food and board. In consequence, as the home was presented increasingly as an ideal at the end of the nineteenth century, the material dimensions of life within that home varied greatly despite the efforts of often well-intentioned reformers who insisted on a middle class ideal for all.

I. Moral and Urban Reform

The target for reform most powerfully centered on the morality and social purity of the city's citizens. As historian Mariana Valverde observes, these reform initiatives sought to reach the very souls of their intended targets. The family, the primary location for the individual's formation, consequently, was also subjected to scrutiny. Mobilizing this domestic metaphor, one which Valverde has captured as the age of light, soap and water, allowed women a privileged location from which to engage in these reforming and regulating projects. Resting on the established gender order, women's role in these reform movements reinforced and further entrenched their domestic functions, even as some stepped outside of their traditional roles by becoming leaders and experts. Those who were forced to step into the public domain of work were the targets of increased surveillance; those who lived certain kinds of private lives also became the targets of watchful eyes and regulatory practices. As virtually every historian who has concentrated on this period of activity has noted, for every gain made for some women in terms of increased public activity

and visibility, still other women, usually ethnic and/or poor, were subjected to a project of reformation. Although some working class women greatly benefited from the social services provided by philanthropic organizations like the YWCA, the Fred Victor Mission and other Methodist and Salvation Army groups, overall these projects were rooted in a regulatory regime that sought to aid the working poor through a process of enculturation to the rightfulness of middle class values and culture. As Valverde has cogently argued: “Moral reform, like moral regulation generally, seeks to construct and organize both social relations and individual consciousness in such a way as to legitimize certain institutions and discourses – the patriarchal nuclear family, racist immigration policies – from the point of view of morality.”²¹

Thus, moral reform work was firstly involved in a project of identifying and locating subjects in need of reform. This work was deeply implicated in the social construction of gender, class, and race, along specifically nationalistic lines. Moral reform workers, by targeting specifically the “character,” indeed the very soul, of their subjects, were involved in the reformation of the individual in order to produce an appropriately useful and productive, suitably modest and moral citizen of the state. In this way, the moral reform workers were interested in building up the country – quite literally in terms of its economic and moral development – citizen by citizen. The identification of those in need was usually targeted at the urban poor, dividing them into a classification of respectable working and non-respectable poor, otherwise known as the fallen or degenerates.

The project of moral reform was thus closely tied to that of the urban reform, which took on greater momentum in the 1890s. As Valverde notes in her study, those at the heart of moral reform work, especially in Toronto, were the early predecessors of the founding of disciplines such as social work, sociology, urban planning and urban sociology.²² Indeed the first project of the reformers, some of whom took on a steadily increasing scientific discourse, was to get to know the subjects of their reform intentions, thereby creating in the process the very sociological entities they would then reform.²³ Implicit in this discourse was a conception of citizenship that demanded productivity and moral purity. From such a position, citizens who were well adjusted to their roles within their family structures could then adopt a similarly appropriate role in their communities. In this way, being modeled on home structures ensured the social order of the community, and thus its efficient and orderly functioning. Individual by individual, family by family, neighbourhood by neighbourhood, the nation would be swept clean of vice, and progress would be assured.

The availability of household products and servants meant a certain class of women were freed from some domestic duties and could pursue other interests. For upper and middle class women, this often meant making a contribution to the larger community in some way through philanthropic work. For the working class, these opportunities were limited, as women had to concentrate on their domestic duties of maintaining house and rearing children. Either way, all classes shared the idea that home constituted the foundation of the nation. Reform work was thus motivated to

reach all classes of women for the sake of the race of Canadians and progress of the nation.²⁴ This link between good citizenship and productivity were often repeated in the columns of Kit Coleman and Faith Fenton, leading both to assert such measures also made women more righteous. Though work opportunities for married working class women were severely limited, the ability to work out of the home could allow these women and their daughters to earn additional income.²⁵

For young women workers who were separated from the stabilizing and moralizing influence of the home, the association between productivity and purity was complicated, frequently leaving them in danger of being labeled “fallen women.”²⁶ The influx of women into paid work in the cities also brought with it what was termed a “domestic service crisis.” This crisis, a response to the economic power women found with work outside the house, meant a perpetual shortage in domestic servants for middle and upper-class homes. It was believed that working girls were wooed away from the protective confines of domestic work by the new found freedoms –and inherent dangers – to be one’s own mistress and the pleasures of leisure time that came with factory work, further fuelling the need for organizations as described above. Indeed the domestic servant “crisis” was rooted in the class tensions that emerged with this freedom as women finally experienced work that – although grueling and often dangerous – had a clearly defined work day, tasks and pay. Women who employed domestics complained that with the rise of factory and retail work for women, they were perpetually in fear of losing whatever servants they could employ. As a source in one of Faith Fenton’s columns describes it:

“[domestics] become first inattentive, then indifferent, and finally seize the simplest pretext to give warning, after which they return again to factory life, wherein, as they phrase it, they are their own mistresses after six o’clock, and as good as anyone else.”²⁷ This latter notion of social standing spoke to the limited opportunities for personal growth or social or class mobility within domestic service. This became a growing concern for young, semi-skilled women, who, as proud Canadian girls, believed in the imperative towards progress, and thus should “seiz[e] every opportunity for advancement in life, both socially and commercially.”²⁸ The domestic service crisis suggested that the problem was one that was larger than a labour question. Indeed, as many contemporaries argued, the very concept of the home, and women’s rightful place within it, was under assault. The lack of a reliable labour supply as women opted to be out of the home consequently became an issue of nation-building as it was believed its bedrock was crumbling. The domestic service crisis was precisely a crisis because it not only challenged conventional class relations, it spoke to a larger cultural anxiety about shifting gendered public and private relations.

Yet this concern with the potentially damaging influence of the freedoms brought by leisure time on women’s respectability was wider than this crisis. The “bloomer scandal” of 1895 in Toronto centered around the morality of women teachers who rode to school on their bicycles wearing bloomers. The adoption of male attire for the purposes of bicycle riding further inflamed already growing concerns regarding the increased freedoms brought about by the availability of the

bicycle, whether for the purposes of transportation for work or for leisurely rides about town. It also fed into a growing debate about women's dress reform more generally which was increasingly framed within a discourse of increased surveillance over women's growing freedoms. This was precisely the case with the bloomer scandal when Public School Board Trustee David R. Bell introduced a motion in 1895, "that the Inspectors be instructed to report at the next meeting the names of all female teachers who have been riding bicycles in male attire, commonly called 'bloomers.'"²⁹ His motion was defeated 13-6 and he was thereafter known as "Bloomer Bell," particularly after a fellow Trustee jokingly moved that any woman teacher who "wore spike-toed shoes, coloured stockings or had corns should be dismissed."³⁰ In a *Globe* letter to the editor Bell defended his actions by saying that it had a demoralizing effect on the students of these teachers because the dress was "too suggestive and the cause of many lewd remarks." He went further, however, by arguing that "if these disregards of decency are allowed to pass unnoticed from time to time it will not be long until the mothers of recent date will be as scarce as a...diamond in a worked-out diamond field."³¹ The concern over the damaging effects of bloomers, thus, was not unrelated to other anxieties over the ways in which women's work and leisure were changing the purifying influence the home was expected to exert, particularly in relationship to women's role as Mother and as moral leader of the nation.

The Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) emerged in response to anxieties about young women entering cities alone, thus further changing traditional

patterns of home and employment. Implied in the practices and services offered by the YWCA from its beginning in Toronto in 1874 was an evangelical mission to save the cities for Christ. Believing that women entering the cities alone to work were under particular danger, the YWCA sought to protect and redeem young women between the ages of 17 and 25.³² Increased attention came to the young single wage-earning woman as government agencies and reformers came to investigate the interconnected issues of urbanization and industrialization. Termed the “girl problem,” the reports they produced and evidence gathered constructed the young woman as vulnerable, thus potentially morally irresponsible, in the city.³³ The “problem” was of course much larger, as reformers sought to self consciously produce an image of “Toronto the Good.”³⁴ Nonetheless, the associations between women and work were deeply connected to the contested use of women’s leisure time and their involvement in commercial amusements.³⁵ Working girls were vigorously patrolled by a host of city agencies, like the city’s policewomen and other social and moral purity agencies, while enjoying the city’s amusements, leaving them open to delinquency charges when found to be unescorted.³⁶

Hoping to provide protection by simultaneously serving as a Christian home base for women, the YWCA combined protection and guidance with an attempt to constitute young women as the future of a city built around Christian principles.³⁷

As Diana Pederson has effectively demonstrated:

Deeply committed to an evangelical variant of bourgeois domesticity that attributed redemptive powers to women and family life, the YWCA sought to place the concerns of women on the agenda of Canadian moral reformers by constructing the ‘girl problem’ as an

essential component of the larger 'problem of the city.' Drawing upon their own experiences of middle-class family life and religious women's networks, and their critique of urban public space as male space within which women were vulnerable and victimized, they envisioned a female sanctuary in the form of a public institution embodying the values of the Christian family home.³⁸

The foundation that the public spaces of the city were unsafe for women and could easily lead vulnerable women into prostitution, was apparently shared by other middle class reformers who questioned the use of public funds on women who were in the city for purely selfish reasons—that is, for making pocket money for their own use, rather than in support of the domestic household. Questioning the worth these women brought to the labour force, the YWCA was continually called on in its first two decades to defend its position. As Carolyn Strange comments, "Women who preferred factory, office or sales work to domestic service lingered in the murky light of sexual suspicion."³⁹ Forced to confront the untenable position of turning away women who were most in need – a wholly unchristian act – while insisting on helping only 'respectable' hard working women who sought only to better themselves, by the 1890's the YWCA underwent a transformation and came to focus solely on bettering the welfare of young women living independently.⁴⁰ The change came with new buildings that combined its classes in domestic science and commercial education, labour bureaus, rooms for board, bible study classes, physical activity facilities, summer camps and fresh air services.⁴¹ Like a proper functioning ideal home, the YWCA sought to meet the needs of young women intellectually, physically, socially and spiritually. In doing so, it attempted to simultaneously help women to better

negotiate city spaces, while seeking to change them through moral instruction and a Christian vision.

Offering both an appropriate location for leisure activities as well as providing training and housing for young girls, other organizations like the Girls' Friendly Society and the Dominion Order of King's Daughters sought to ensure that these young girls would continue to develop their spiritual lives as they were faced with the specific pressures of the city. Seeking to form, not to reform, these measures hoped to intervene and shelter young girls before the city could corrupt or unduly tempt them, and to provide adequate resources for the mother forced to work.⁴² Offering services such as labour bureaus for the newly arrived girl, fresh air camps and recreation centers, these services treated the city as immoral, impersonal and dangerous – in short, the opposite of the safe space of the home. Consequently, these organizations, particularly the Dominion Order of King's Daughters and Girls' Friendly Society, sought to recreate a surrogate home life that was vaguely reminiscent of pre-urban days.

II. Suffrage

Though not the view of all reformers, many believed the most effective means to achieving the kind of reforms necessary to bring about social and moral purity was to extend the vote to women. As we will see, many social and moral reformers who were active in social purity and urban reform joined the campaign for suffrage, thereby blurring their individual agendas into a broader one that sought to achieve a

public role for woman based on her natural maternal capacities. As Carol Bacchi notes in her study of the ideas behind the suffrage movement, the Canadian movement did not experience a distinctly “feminist first wave” to be replaced by a social reform wave. Rather, argues Bacchi, the two movements grew with each other, acquiring a dual feminist/social reform character.⁴³ Suffrage, in turn, gained the necessary wider acceptance and structure it lacked through its association with better organized social reform groups. In the process, however, the subject of women voting became another means by which reforms could be achieved. Since it was assumed that women would impart their uniform moralizing influence over the world of politics because they were neither as materialist nor as partisan as their male counterparts, reformers argued that the franchise should be extended to them. Never challenging women’s domestic role, the movement, argues Carol Bacchi, further entrenched women’s traditional role as mother – widened to include the entire race and nation – and strengthened the role of the family as the foundation for the regeneration and future of the country. The purpose of granting women the vote, consequently, was on behalf of domestic virtues and was useful in order to reinforce and assure a Puritan morality, the place of Christianity, and the rule of the professional expert in building a vision for the future, which would be accomplished most successfully through the family.⁴⁴ The woman who wanted the vote was no longer an aggressive, ugly radical, as British and American suffragists were often characterized. Transformed into Mother, she could be seen as a citizen because of

her particular vested interest in making her community and nation better for the sake of Home.

As early as 1876, a suffrage association existed in Toronto. Within a decade after Confederation, suffrage associations could be found in almost all the provinces, except Quebec. Although propertied women had exercised their right to vote in Lower Canada as early as 1809, by the time Upper and Lower Canada united, the cultural politics of language and race came to a head around the issue of women voting.⁴⁵ With voting privileges entrenched within provincial jurisdiction at the time of Confederation, women's enfranchisement would be slowly eroded. This was especially the case in Quebec where, as suffrage at the federal and provincial levels was being advocated, women were deemed legally 'incapable' in the terms of the Civil Code, meaning they were no longer able to hold property, inherit an estate or even vote in a municipal election. Women's rights advocates concentrated their efforts on regaining basic legal recognition and rights to education, leaving the movement for suffrage undeveloped until the 1930's in Quebec.⁴⁶

Operating under the guise of a literary society, the "Toronto Women's Literary Society" began its campaigns for better attention to women's issues in a number of areas, especially in relationship to women's and children's labour. It was instrumental in establishing better sanitary facilities in factories and stores, in challenging conditions found in sweat shops and factories, and in insisting women working in department stores and other retail outlets be provided with seats to rest their legs occasionally during their typically ten to twelve hour work days.⁴⁷ Individual

reform campaigns proved challenging, eventually leading to the decision that the most effective means to advocate for change on behalf of women was to agitate for the vote. In March 1883 a new group was formed. The “Toronto Women’s Suffrage Club” included men and was overtly committed to the suffrage.⁴⁸ The social makeup of the group was uncharacteristic of the larger population. Made up largely of professionals and exceedingly well educated men and women, its early concern with gaining women’s access to higher education and the professions reflected the social and class make up of this group.⁴⁹ Carol Bacchi notes that just over a third of the suffrage advocates also belonged to a branch of reform that was less interested in individual transformation than in the structures that made up (or should make up) society, such as schools, municipal government, welfare leagues, city improvement and planning leagues, laws protecting citizens by ensuring safe foods at reasonable costs, etc.⁵⁰ The lasting legacy brought by the “secular reformers,” as Bacchi labels them, was a fundamental goal to create a healthy and homogenous population managed by efficient and effective social agencies in order that a conflict-free social order might prevail.⁵¹ Adopting a utilitarian view of humanity, these reformers asserted that the happier and healthier the population could be, the more prosperous the nation could become. Initiatives suggested stressed strong character formation, physical vigour and health, and mental stability. Additionally, secular suffragists advocated for the public ownership of municipal and provincial utilities,⁵² and for urban planning in order to ensure adequate spaces for recreation of both children and women.⁵³

Whether concerned with external social systems, the health of citizens or their morality, women's involvement in these reforms was advocated on behalf of home life. Giving women the vote, it was argued, would ensure that politicians and administrators would be forced to legislate and govern with the interest and promotion of the home in mind. To achieve this, a discourse of maternalism was utilized that constituted women's public presence through her presumed higher moral character and unique capacity to nurture and rear. Ultimately woman's public position as invested citizen in the community was rendered meaningful through her private domestic role as mother and moral agent. In this sense, secular and religious distinctions disappeared in much the same manner that the private and public roles for women were uniting.⁵⁴

Believing that many of the reforms implemented by the various denominational groups across the country, and especially in large urban cities like Montreal and Toronto, were needlessly repetitious and sectarian, the formation of the National Council of Women (NCW) as a specifically national group was intended to remove these distinctions. Allowing for the autonomy of individual groups while insisting on a non-partisan and secular official policy, the NCW sought to create a national presence for women.⁵⁵ According to its 1894 constitution, the NCW was founded on principles of the common good for the betterment of the nation. That is, as a women's organization it sought to create woman as citizen. As Veronica Strong-Boag suggests, by building on what was already set up by individual groups, the new coalition adopted a nationalist discourse that rendered the family as being central to

the state and even saw part of its function to be to promote national pride.⁵⁶ In this regard, the NCW promoted a patriotic womanhood. Consider these words found in its constitution: “We, Women of Canada, sincerely believing that the best good of our homes and nation will be advanced by our own greater unity of thought, sympathy and purpose, and that an organized movement of women will best conserve the greatest good of the Family and the State, do hereby band ourselves together...”⁵⁷ Unity was secured through the application of a common good which was understood as a coupling of Family and State, home and nation, and it was women who were in the unique position to effect this particular articulation.

Maternal, or first wave, feminism was predicated on the notion that the private effect of women within the home was lacking in the public sphere, and thus it rearticulated the private function of motherhood to a public role as conscience to the nation. In turn, the proper functioning of a family was grafted onto the nation itself and with it the traditional sex roles of the family. Without a space from which to exert women’s unique moral and purifying influence, the nation would suffer greatly. The particular kind of family, Mother and nation that was promoted ultimately made up the racist and conservative elements of this movement.

Whether considered as a feminist failing or brilliant rhetorical strategy, the coalition between the secular reform movements, moral reformers, religious groups, and urban reformers effected a simultaneous politicization of women and feminization of politics—by bringing women directly into the realm of all three levels of politics, women’s issues and approaches were brought to political movements also.

In fact, as Maurice Charland and Michael Dorland argue, the suffrage movement, while remaining within a conservative civil discourse, nonetheless managed to achieve a radical reconfiguration of woman as public subject. They write:

In other words, ...suffrage, as a means to moral reform, refigured woman into a public subject, addressing the public sphere, even if on what were traditionally considered woman's concerns. That is to say, even when suffrage was not advanced as a principle, it nevertheless advanced new principles, and this at times with patriarchy's unwitting approval.⁵⁸

The importance of this constitution as public subject cannot be stressed enough since it points to the foundational nature of the maternal feminism. The rightful place for women to advocate a role within other reforms could not have been asserted as powerfully or as effectively without this means by which to address the public sphere. The same could be said for her place within the pages of the newspaper. Finally, it points to the utter collapse of the categories of private and public into an articulated privately constituted public civic position.

III. Publicizing the Home: Domestic Science

On the flip side of a privately constituted public discourse was an insertion of a public minded discourse into the private sphere. Nowhere is the publicity attached to the private home more visible than in the push to establish domestic science programs within all levels of education. By publicity I mean two things: first, domestic science programs effected regulation through visibility that was achieved through surveillance and normalization which determined how and why a home *should* be run;⁵⁹ and second, it brought to the private world of individual homes a

form of civic duty to continue to fulfill certain social functions. These programs can be read as the corollary of the campaigns to assert the public role for women within the individual private worlds of women's homes by ensuring they contributed to the progress of the nation and race.

As the turn of the century approached, there was a new found scientific interest and formality applied to the household, which led to the addition of domestic science courses to the public school curriculum and the founding of departments in places like the Hamilton Normal School, and by the turn of the century at the University of Toronto and the Ontario Agricultural College in Guelph, Ontario. Indeed the end of the nineteenth century saw a host of changes within the management of the domestic realm that led to a rearrangement of traditional relations within women's lives.

Social, moral and urban reform workers all saw the home as one important site for the regeneration and revitalization of society. Even when campaigns were directed at the individual, what was becoming increasingly obvious to many of these reform workers was that all social institutions were connected.⁶⁰ Domestic education, in particular, became one method by which the threatened home, exemplified by the domestic servant crisis discussed above, could be addressed. Not coincidentally, women like Adelaide Hoodless, who brought domestic science education to many Ontario women, were also involved in the National Council of Women, the National YWCA and had strong contacts with high-ranking officials in the Ministry of Education.⁶¹ Increasingly the home became a location for the inscription of a set of

values that sought to meld new industrial capitalist values while attempting to preserve and, in some cases, extend traditional structures.⁶²

Through the scientific regulation of the home, the domestic science movement combined with the reform projects in bringing the home under closer surveillance, producing new ideas about it in the process. Additionally, it also produced specific ideas about women's roles within that home, also subjecting them to a kind of surveillance and regimentation. As Carol Bacchi notes, the outcome of these combined secular reform movements, including suffragism, was the creation of a "professional motherhood," whereby the mother of home became a metaphor for the mother of the race and nation.⁶³

Introduced formally into the public school curriculum in 1897, domestic science entered higher educational facilities in Ontario in the early years of the twentieth century. As early as 1893 at the first meeting of the National Council of Women (NCW), support was expressed for the development of industrial training to be integrated into the public school system, with an eye towards addressing the domestic service crisis, reflecting the middle class make-up of the NCW.⁶⁴ Lillian Massey Treble, a wealthy and prominent Methodist philanthropist, took advantage of her father's connections in founding the Fred Victor Mission in honour of his dead son, in order to begin offering a domestic science class to the poor in 1896. Building on the classes already offered to children and working class mothers, Massey expanded by offering a class to "ladies," eventually opening what would be known as the Lillian Massey School of Household Science.⁶⁵

Known as the Faculty of Household Science by 1906, Lillian Massey's school became the first program offered at the university level as a part of the University of Toronto in 1903.⁶⁶ Shortly thereafter, the Macdonald Institute opened in Guelph, Ontario in 1904. Founded by Adelaide Hoodless, who had originally brought domestic science to the public schools and to the Hamilton Normal School, and financially backed by a substantial grant from Sir William C. Macdonald, the Macdonald Institute opened under the auspices of the Ontario Agricultural College. While both institutions focused on the training of women to become teachers of domestic science, the Institute, given its affiliations with the OAC and the Ministry of Agriculture, concentrated on bringing the lessons of science to the women of rural Ontario. For its part, the Lillian Massey School's Household Art courses and Housekeepers course offered training to middle class women who aspired to have some kind of university level education, while also training women to enter domestic service.⁶⁷

Long before the Macdonald Institute had opened, the Chief Superintendent of Schools for Upper Canada had already advocated a place for the educational system within a new regime of the family that was understood as an institution itself with a predictable structure made up of parents and children. Combined, the two formed a set of institutions that would provide guidance and proper instruction to the nation's children.⁶⁸ Domestic science was but one example of the ways in which this regime was gendered. As James Snell has noted, this reform aimed at the state by altering the public policy agenda in order to have access to government funds and make use of

such a powerful state agency as the school.⁶⁹ Predictably, domestic science in the public schools was promoted as the means by which education could “best fit [students] to fulfil the ordinary duties of the life to which they are most likely to be called.” Since it was “generally conceded,” argued Hoodless in a 1899 pamphlet, “that the duty most likely to devolve upon the great majority of girls in attendance in the schools would be some form of domestic life,” the educational system had a responsibility to provide the appropriate education.⁷⁰ The introduction of a program to teach future teachers of domestic science ensured its survival at the public school level, making the domestic science system self sustaining.⁷¹

The introduction of domestic science into the university curriculum, however, focused not on the necessary education girls required, but rather on the spread and application of *scientific methods* to the creation of a household science. It must be recognized, however, that the programs were also designed to train teachers, thus sustaining a connection to the education of girls as well. While public school curriculums focused on the development of skills, these courses sought to stress *why* the home should be maintained in the manner promoted, thereby professionalizing women’s work.⁷² Indeed this insistence on the methodology of creating a house was central to maintaining its academic rigour.

That the hegemonic racial, class and gender order were maintained by domestic science programs is obvious. However, these programs did more than simply entrench an existing order or work to entice women back into the home by reifying women’s work within it. Domestic science programs helped to constitute

Home and woman's role within it. This was a very specific *type* of home that was being created and thus a very specific type of manager was required for its efficient running. She was a rationalized manager, aware of the best practices in maintaining healthy environments, who sought to make the most out of her leftover foods and who aspired to the very best in middle class ideals. In the words of a student promoting the program: "The aim is to help girls '*make a home*' rather than '*keep a house*' – to establish at an early age respect for and an intelligent idea of the *home as the most important factor of civilization*."⁷³ Making the crucial distinction between a house and home, domestic science furthermore sought to stress the connections between home and society, particularly its relationship to the promotion of the nation.

It is also telling that the programs offered at the Macdonald Institute, part of the Ontario Agricultural College, sought a specifically rural clientele. Offering a number of different types of programs, some of which specifically targeted farmers' daughters to the exclusion of city girls, it was believed that rural women who were isolated from other educational institutions were in special need of this particular kind of education. As the Institute became more closely associated with the Women's Institutes, their mandate to serve the rural communities grew in importance. Outreach programs consisting of the short (several months) courses were offered in the local schools or Women's Institutes. The implicit class and urban assumptions that underwrote the design and practice of domestic science were made evident. Taken from its urban setting, which had the latest amenities, including running water, electricity, refrigerators, and washing machines, teaching domestic

science to these rural clients required some adjustment. In response to this, administrators at the Institute constructed portable machines for rural instructors to take with them: trestle tables, boxes of utensils, kerosene lamps for cooking.⁷⁴

But the programs did more than simply insist that the latest domestic technologies were part of “making a home.” In addition to promoting middle class urban ideals, the Institute also insisted on a regime of order. Rationalized and subjected to the rigours and tests of science, these methods were the best and only ways of making that home. Although the programs were promoted as necessary since mothers were no longer passing along the right kinds of knowledge to their daughters, there was also an implicit challenge to the very system itself which promoted these scientific methods as far superior to any of those Mother could have passed along anyway. In fact, some young women reported domestic discord when they returned home and sought to reorganize their homes according to these new scientific principles.⁷⁵ As Kerrie Kennedy also notes, there were concerns as to whether cookery classes should be geared toward social class, drawing from available foods and utensils, or if students should be taught the “proper” way of doing things, thereby avoiding the perpetuation of a system that was clearly problematic.⁷⁶ This was built on an ideal of a progressive Protestant work ethic that insisted that providing the lower classes with access to the right kind of knowledge, coupled with their hard work and perseverance, would allow them to achieve respectable living.

In the promotion of certain class ideals, replete with the necessary domestic technologies, and in the rationalization its methods placed on women’s work within

the home, domestic science participated in the modernization of Canada's home, ensuring its vitality not only to the gender and social structure, but to the capitalist economic structure wrought by industrialism as well. The regimented home that was "made" through domestic science programs, not only brought Canada into modernity, it did so within specifically gendered terms. In the words of a student describing the purpose of domestic science: "The aim is...to teach respect for and pride in the performance of duties in the home; to *secure greater co-operation between the home and school*; to secure better food and sanitary conditions; to *understand the principles of economics* as applied to household management and *in the relation of the home to the state...*"⁷⁷ The home and women's role within it were brought into direct contact with the functions of the state and provided a legitimate civil role for women as citizens within it.

Part of this was a result of the scientific nature of the training and the ways in which it blurred notions of home and industry. As women's training became more scientific, their jobs in the home came to resemble jobs in the outside industrial world. In domestic science courses, particularly at the university level, there was a strong focus on why particular methods should be utilized, drawing on the scientific rationalization behind such activities as curing meats and the chemistry behind the rising of dough. The women themselves thus took on micro positions of the larger industrial world: from bookkeeper to public health nurse to municipal sanitation worker, it is clear how women within the home were expected to understand their relationship and responsibility to the larger urban community.

Turning each home into a tiny unit of discrete consumption, the programs implicitly tied these homes into the larger system of which they were a part. Courses in household economics, sanitary science and chemistry of foods sought to stress the social values implied in these functions that were transformed into subjects of study. Examining the language used on some of the exams at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Household Science is particularly instructive in demonstrating the ways in which a certain kind of Woman must also be made in order to run the modern home. For instance, the 1907 Second Year Household Economics exam asked: "What points are important in the selection of a sick room? How should it be prepared for a) a contagious case, b) a chronic invalid?" This exam also stressed the rationalization of a household along economic lines that turned the home into an efficient bureaucracy: "Discuss the value of keeping accounts. What is said to be the ideal division of the income? How does this division vary with the amount of income?" and "Enumerate the ways in which one should practice economy in housekeeping. Suggest ways in which waste in regard to food materials may be avoided."⁷⁸ The Fourth Year Sanitary Science exam continued this way of thinking even further. Consisting of only four questions, the role of the domestic manager in this exam clearly takes on its most obvious social responsibilities here:

1. What forces of nature are depended on for ventilation? How can ventilation be carried on by the use of them?
2. How may well water be chemically polluted and bacterially infected say with Typhoid Fever bacilli? How can this be prevented?
3. In case Small-pox breaks out in a house, how would you protect the other inmates and what means should be taken to protect the Public?

4. Compare “Rapid sand filters” and “Slow sand filters as to their use in the filtration of municipal waters, on what principle is the “Slow sand filter” constructed and how does it functionate?⁷⁹

The “angel of the house” here becomes a hybrid municipal sanitation/public health worker, armed with knowledge enough to ensure the safety of drinking water, while also understanding the principles of how such a feat was achieved. Placed within the context of the training of a fresh supply of domestic servants, however, these courses also exhibit a potentially interesting tactic for public administration. Aligned with other official government agencies, the Institute became part of a machine regulating and ordering an otherwise chaotic city space. Training potential domestic servants in such duties further extended an otherwise limited municipal and provincial system and further ensured the safety of their middle class employers.

Complicating the Idealized Home

Cynthia Comacchio argues in her overview of the history of the family in Canada that industrialization, though unevenly felt for many families, was largely responsible for the trend toward urbanization that so radically changed the economic and social standing of the family. Even those families who did not leave rural areas were not untouched by urbanization, as young children left the farm in increasing numbers to find work in the cities. For city dwellers, the change to an urban, industrial lifestyle meant that women were slowly deprived of their previously central role in domestic production as the relations between and roles of family members changed. Father emerged as the central breadwinner, working outside the home.

With the introduction of truancy laws, the expectations of what childhood would entail became organized around schooling. The income of adolescents usually proved to be too valuable for the family to do without, forcing young adults to remain with their families longer. This, in turn, prolonged the interval before the next expected phase of life could begin, marriage. By the end of the nineteenth century, this middle class, nuclear family model with father as the breadwinner, mother at home, and dependent children in school, became, in Comacchio's words, "the benchmark of respectability and national success."⁸⁰ In fact, in response to the continued truancy violations of newsboys, the Toronto School Board set up a separate class for them with flexible hours that permitted them to continue to sell their papers.⁸¹

Of course, for most working class families this ideal was never within reach. Often reliant on wages from a number of household members, the family and the home took on vastly different meanings for this class of society. The home, far from being a haven of domesticity and tranquility, was often transformed into a sweatshop for the clothing industry.⁸² Home-work for women meant they could often perform the classic double duties of augmenting the family's income while still performing domestic functions. For those women who could leave the home – often those with older children – taking extra work home was an attractive option, particularly when they could enlist the assistance of other family members, most often children. The additional income that could be earned, however, demanded a fast pace and long hours as it was often done on piece-rates.⁸³ The work of children in these families

where stark poverty was a constant threat was incredibly important. John Bullen describes the paradox of this cycle effectively. He writes:

In one sense, the image of parents and children working together invites a comparison to the shared family responsibilities characteristic of rural society...Clothing contracts violated the privacy of working-class families and subjected adults and children to strenuous conditions over which they had little influence. Long hours of tedious labour brought a minimal return. Workers danced to the demands of a consumer market while competing contractors systematically drove wages down. Middlemen turned the sweat shop system into a chain of command that featured lower wages and harder working conditions with each successive downward link...Yet it is apparent from the evidence collected by [Government Inspectors, Alexander Whyte] Wright and [Mackenzie] King,⁸⁴ that child workers proved to be the decisive factor in the economic feasibility of many contracts. This observation exposes the cruel paradox of child workers in a competitive labour market: the more the sweating system exploited the free or cheap labour of children, the less of a chance adults faced of ever receiving a fair wage for their own work.⁸⁵

As this extract indicates, for working class women and children, the home and the workplace were often one and the same—despite ideals and despite truancy and labour laws that attempted to regulate the number of hours they worked and spent in school.⁸⁶ The Ontario Factories Act of 1884 and the Shops Act of 1888 set maximum work hours and addressed conditions of labour, but it expressly excluded family work from these same regulatory measures.⁸⁷

While it was more common for women to engage in this kind of home-work in Toronto than elsewhere, it was not common for married women to work outside the home for a wage.⁸⁸ Women's work, including the work of mothers and daughters, within the workforce was not characterized by stable full time employment, but was erratic and irregular, depending as it did on the particular circumstances of the family

and the availability of work.⁸⁹ Furthermore, there was a common perception that factories were immoral and dangerous places to work. In terms of factory work being an immoral activity for girls, there was little evidence, other than middle class perception, to support this notion.⁹⁰ The most important factor, however, in deciding if a mother or daughter should stay home was the need for her to remain able to perform her domestic duties as well. For example, in addition to maintaining their homes, women would often run boarding houses, take in laundry, sell meals to “mealers” who would come to a boarding house for a workday meal only, or for very enterprising families, send their children out to sell lunches to the workingmen of their neighbourhoods.⁹¹

As the above examples show, the ideals constructed by domestic science programs and reform initiatives were often disconnected from the realities of working class families. The ideal of the nuclear family which emerged most forcefully in Canada’s century determined that the family’s responsibility to society was defined within terms that maintained many of the basic ideas about gender, class and race – even as various practices shifted the ways in which these ideas were mobilized. For some women, their role was further extended to involve new practices of citizenship as they increasingly participated in various social and moral reform movements. For working class women, though excluded from participating in this same manner due to the rigours of survival, their ‘work’ as wives and mothers was increasingly politicized and brought to bear on the public sphere, with increased pressures to do what they could to protect and provide for their children. Guided by those reforms instituted

by their middle class counterparts, they also participated in building the nation, child by child. Transforming their domestic responsibilities from the banal exercise of survival to a sanctified and privileged work for morality and the nation was a crucial way of getting all classes of women to subscribe to this ideal of home life, even as it remained elusive for many women.

The Newspaper, the Reformed Family and the Woman's Pages

Although these transformations in society affected middle class women and working class women differently, they were brought together in their shared pleasures and their shared consumption of the women's pages. Uniting these groups in a shared sense of womanhood, an intimate relationship built around the home, the newspaper and an understanding of the roles women could occupy in their communities, forged an idealized community of readers. The following chapters will explore in more depth how these communities were formed through the various practices and rhetorical strategies Faith Fenton and Kit Coleman used to build an identity for their woman's pages.

The popularization of newspapers was an intimate part of the shifting dialectic that has been described in this chapter between public and private worlds – as much a chronicler, and thus influenced by these shifts, the newspaper was also active in them, rendering them differently expressed and understood through the process of representation. Given journalism's express mandate to advocate for the people, to be

a vital actor in civic affairs, its civic and political functions were preserved, even as they were extended to include a personal voice that connected with and entertained the people. This could occur precisely because of the reform movements that were already changing the ways the relationship between the public and private could be understood. Given the reform movements' focus on the family as the site not only for important reform, but also for the hopeful – if misguided – faith that the progress of the nation could be found within the strength of the family as a social institution, the focus on the family would have made sense for the newspaper. Building off the same register of ideas that promoted maternal feminism, the newspaper used the family as an arbiter of its own behaviour. Labeling itself as a “family newspaper” thus was more than simply a marketing technique, but was intended to stand as a measure of its morality, a way of indicating to an understanding readership the ways in which the newspaper had reeled in its yellow tendencies.

For *The Mail* and *The Empire*, this was most effectively achieved through the woman's page which sought to speak to the moral leader of the household. Through the regularity of their appearance and the familiar and intimate address of their woman editor, the newspaper could become intimately involved in the home, in the reading practices and habits of its readers. Yet, this was not self-evident for the stunt variety of women's journalism was most closely associated with the sensational, not the maternal. Rather, I argue in the following chapter that the woman's pages for this Toronto market were continually negotiating the dictates of popularization and morality. As a practice regulated by and within the dictates of a woman's page,

women's journalism in Canada would develop in a very different manner than in the United States or in Britain. In much the same way that the partisan newspaper was forced to find a middle ground between partisanship and independence, the woman journalist would have to negotiate a similar, though distinctively gendered, set of concerns.

NOTES

¹ Cynthia R. Comacchio, *The Infinite Bonds of Family: Domesticity in Canada, 1850-1940* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 10.

² Jennifer Daryl Slack, "The theory and method of articulation in cultural studies," in *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, ed. David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen (London: Routledge, 1996), 125.

³ Stuart Hall, "On Postmodernism and articulation: an interview with Stuart Hall," ed. Lawrence Grossberg, in *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, ed. David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen (London: Routledge, 1996), 141.

⁴ Carol Lee Bacchi, *Liberation Deferred? The Ideas of the English-Canadian Suffragists, 1877-1918*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983). Also used by Bacchi is "nation's housekeeper." For the ways in which American women journalists participated in and helped to develop a municipal housekeeping movement, see also Agnes Hooper Gottlieb, *Women Journalists and the Municipal Housekeeping Movement, 1868-1914* (Lewiston, NY: E. Mellen Press, 2001). Interestingly, Gottlieb explains the newspaper's attention to women readers as a function of advertiser pressures to attract the elusive woman consumer, and not as a consequence of the importance of these movements that helped to constitute for women a public identity (21-22).

⁵ Marlene Stein Wortman, "Domesticating the Nineteenth-century American city," *Prospects* 3 (1977): 531-572.

⁶ Gilbert A. Stelter and Alan F.J. Artibise, "Urban Reform and Municipal Government," in *The Canadian City: Essays in Urban and Social History*, eds. G.A. Stetler and A.F.J. Artibise, Rev. ed. (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1984), 431-434.

⁷ Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1991), 167.

⁸ Valverde, 28.

⁹ Bacchi, 9.

¹⁰ Consider James Hughes' use of this notion in promoting women's suffrage: "God made man and woman different in characteristics, but He made the one the complement of the other. Perfect unity is wrought out of different but harmonious elements. Legislation will be essentially one-sided until man's ideals are balanced by woman's. Woman's individuality does differ from man's, and her individuality is necessary to perfect justice and harmony in the Senate as well as in the home" (James Hughes, "Equal Suffrage" [Toronto: William Briggs, 1895], 24). He goes further yet by asserting "The unity of manhood and womanhood in the State is as important as their unity in the home. God made each the *necessary complement* of the other" (46; emphasis mine).

¹¹ Michael Dorland and Maurice Charland, *Law, Rhetoric and Irony in the formation of a Canadian Civil Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983), 201. Dorland & Charland make the point that these spheres were not categorically distinct; women were not denied a public presence. They do not make the link to the idea of separate but complementary spheres, which, in my opinion, allowed for the rhetorical and ideological fissure that resulted in these categories blending into each other.

¹² Mrs. Dr. Parker, "Woman in Nation-Building," in *Woman; Her Character, Culture and Calling*, ed. Rev. Austin (Brantford, Ont: Book and Bible House, 1890): 459.

¹³ Dorland & Charland, 201. Cecilia Morgan points out that the mobilization of the concept of a Christian soldier was built in express contradistinction to the savage, out of control native, and American soldiers, thus allowing these soldiers to become the protectors of home, in much the same way that temperance women were figured. *Public Men and Virtuous Women: The Gendered Languages of Religion and Politics in Upper Canada, 1791-1850*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 37. Interestingly, Valverde points out that the domestication of social purity involved transforming it into an active, aggressive process of self-mastery and control that was likened to a military campaign (Valverde, *Age of Light*, 31).

¹⁴ Hughes, "Equal Suffrage," 5. James Hughes, Public School Inspector for Toronto, argues in the "Preface" to his 1895 pamphlet on suffrage, "Every male enemy of the home may vote. Mothers see saloon-keepers and profligates, who aim to destroy their sons and daughters, helping to make the laws, while they are unable to do so. Ignorant foreigners, uneducated men of native birth, weak young men without experience or training, are allowed to vote in all elections because they are males; but the most cultured and intelligent women are refused this right because they are women."

¹⁵ Theodore Parker, "A Sermon of the Public Function of Woman, Preached at the Music-Hall, Boston. March 27, 1853," *Woman's Rights Tracts, No. 2* (Boston, 1853), 1, PAMPH 1851 #27, AO.

¹⁶ Linda Kealey, "Introduction," in *A Not Unreasonable Claim: Women and Reform in Canada, 1880s-1920s*, ed. Linda Kealey (Toronto: The Women's Press), 10.

¹⁷ Martin Friedland, *The University of Toronto: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 85-95. For instance, women were not admitted to university residences, denied access to sport facilities and not allowed to join the various university-affiliated clubs. Women also experienced hostilities in the classroom as men were forced to accept and tolerate their presence within a space that had been exclusively male.

¹⁸ Comacchio, *The Infinite Bonds of Family*, 26.

¹⁹ Comacchio, 32-39.

²⁰ Comacchio, 29.

²¹ Valverde, 167.

²² Valverde, 23.

²³ Valverde, 21, 44-46.

²⁴ Bacchi makes a similar point, 95.

²⁵ See Bettina Bradbury's important essay, "Gender at Work at Home: Family Decisions, the Labour Market, and Girls' Contributions to the Family Economy" in *Canadian Family History: Selected Reading*, ed. Bettina Bradbury (Toronto: Irwin, 2000). In it she points out that the decisions to send a daughter out to work depended on a complex interaction between family-wage economy, family dynamics and the broader labour market. Often, given the great disparity between young women's and young men's wages, it would not make sense to send a daughter out to work, particularly when the family was still made up of young children that required rearing. In neighbourhoods where in-house work, such as sewing, could be performed, girls and even mothers could work, either separately or by sharing the work, and thus contribute to the household income while maintaining the gendered division of labour. Nonetheless, boys were more likely than girls to be the auxiliary wage earners. The consequence of these findings implies a rethinking for feminist understandings about the gendered workforce and home. As Bradbury concludes:

Neither empirically, nor theoretically, can the workings of patriarchy, or of capitalism be neatly separated from each other. The nature of the interaction between the two and the weight of one over the other will vary historically and geographically... Patriarchal ideas within the working class, elements of male pride and self-interest, economic pragmatism and the daily needs of mothers and housewives thus interacted, creating a situation in which most girls served an apprenticeship in domestic labour prior to, or in conjunction with, entering the workforce. In cities and towns where the labour market was completely different, where whole families or women were explicitly sought by employers, this division of labour, indeed, the very institutions of marriage and the family would be modified (192).

²⁶ Both Diana Pederson and Carolyn Strange explore this. Diana Pederson, "Providing a Woman's Conscience: The YWCA, Female Evangelicalism, and the Girl in the City, 1870-1930" in *Canadian Women: A Reader*, eds. Wendy Mitchinson, et al. (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Canada, 1996), 194-210; Carolyn Strange, *Toronto's Girl Problem: The Perils and Pleasures of the City, 1880-1930* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 21-52.

²⁷ Faith Fenton, "The Domestic Question," *The Empire*, 03 Mar 1888: 5.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Clipping from *Women at Work: Ontario, 1850-1930*, ed. Janice Acton, Penny Goldsmith and Bonnie Shepard (Toronto: Canadian Women's Educational Press, 1974), n.p., "Women

teachers” Vertical File , Toronto District School Board, Sesquicentennial Museum and Archives.

³⁰ *The Story of the Women Teachers' Association of Toronto*, vol. 1 Women Teachers' Association (Toronto: Thomas Nelson & Sons, Ltd, n.d.), p. 19, “Women teachers,” Vertical file, Toronto District School Board, Sesquicentennial Museum and Archives.

³¹ David R. Bell, letter to the editor, *The Globe*, 12 Jul. 1895: 8.

³² Pederson, 197.

³³ Strange, 23.

³⁴ Strange, 15.

³⁵ Strange, 10.

³⁶ Strange, 15.

³⁷ Pederson, 196.

³⁸ Pederson, 207.

³⁹ Strange, 52.

⁴⁰ Pederson, 200-2.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Veronica Strong-Boag, “Setting the Stage: National Organization and the Women’s Movement in the Late 19th Century,” in *The Neglected Majority: Essays in Canadian Women’s History*, eds. Susan Mann Trofimenkoff and Alison Prentice (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1977), 93. The Dominion Order of King’s Daughters and the YWCA offered crèches for children of the working poor.

⁴³ Bacchi, *Liberation Deferred?* 25. Much to Bacchi’s dismay, the social reformers were in control of the public agenda.

⁴⁴ Bacchi, 146-149.

⁴⁵ Catherine Cleverdon, *The Women Suffrage Movement in Canada*. 1950. Second Edition. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), 214-215. If property was held between a married couple in the woman’s name, the vote would be given to the woman as the legal holder of property.

⁴⁶ Chief Electoral Officer of Canada, *A History of the Vote in Canada*. (Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 1997), 63-66.

⁴⁷ Hilda Ridley, "A Synopsis of Woman Suffrage in Canada" (No publisher. N.d.), 5, PAMPH n.d. S#19, AO.

⁴⁸ Ridley, 6.

⁴⁹ Bacchi, 5-9. Bacchi finds in her study that of the female executives, almost 60% were professionals. A full 25% of these were journalists and authors. Further, of the 35% of women who were housewives (i.e., those without occupations), the vast majority of them were married to professionals, clerics or businessmen. Most significantly, however, was the educational makeup of the group. Out of the 156 women leaders, just under a third were university educated (33 had MA's or better, 17 had a BA), 13 had graduated from normal schools, 12 from Ladies' Colleges and Collegiate Institutes, and 5 had been educated privately. Less surprisingly, though equally impressive, over 50% of the male leaders had degrees.

⁵⁰ Bacchi, 86. Bacchi estimates that between 30-35% of suffragists were also municipal reformers, teachers and public school inspectors, juvenile court judges, child welfare reformers, settlement workers, members of Human Associations, and Parks and Playgrounds Associations, and Municipal ownership advocates, just to name a few.

⁵¹ Bacchi, 87.

⁵² Flora Denison, along with W. F. MacLean, owner and editor of *The World*, were huge advocates of public ownership of Ontario Hydro (Bacchi, 99). See also MacLean's fonds for an extensive collection of his editorials and public speeches advocating for public ownership held at the National Archives of Canada, (William Findley MacLean fonds, MG28 IIC). Founding member of the original Toronto Suffrage Association, Emily Stowe, along with her daughter Augusta Stowe-Gullen and a third Toronto suffragist Jessie Semple, formed the Women's Citizens' Association in 1895 and organized for a municipally owned aqueduct (Bacchi, 99)

⁵³ Bacchi 93, 100.

⁵⁴ This seems a crucial point that is missed by Bacchi in her continual reiteration of the feminist failings of the suffragists. She argues that social issues, especially those pertaining to city living, were of more concern for secular suffragists than asserting women's desires for activities, particularly work, that didn't revolve around the home. It is uncertain why Bacchi would go even further to label some as feminists while asserting that others were not. The first wave of feminism at the end of the nineteenth century was predicated on the notion of biological differences between men and women. Though reforms could be advocated that sought to broaden life experiences and possibilities for women, the women involved in this movement never sought to change the gender order, merely to rearrange it. It is not surprising, then, that they asserted so forcefully that they were not interested in taking over

men's roles or workplace. To insist that some were not feminists because of their advocacy on women's influence in the home rightly points to the limits of such a strategy, but says little about what was also made possible. Furthermore, it fails to take the first wave of feminist movement on its own terms. As Bacchi herself argues, it was a movement that was led by middle class women who had clear ideas about what kind of home within which women should remain. To have expected them to have spoken from a different position seems unfair and singular in its approach to what feminism means or what its goals should be. That is to say, Bacchi's insistence on pointing out that reforms were "racial, not feminist" (90), or "moralistic rather than feminist" sets up an unnecessary and historically incorrect set of binaries. The first wave movement *was* racialized and rooted in a Protestant morality. As Dorland and Charland have asserted in their analysis of the rhetorical success of this strategy, it accommodated Canada's peculiar conservative progressive civic discourse which asserted a racial and moral perspective, while still achieving a new public position for women. Without this rhetorical achievement, the political change could not have occurred.

⁵⁵ Strong-Boag, "Setting the Stage," 87-103.

⁵⁶ Strong-Boag, 102.

⁵⁷ "Constitution," *Report of the National Council of Women of Canada* (Ottawa, 1894), 22, quoted in Strong-Boag, 101.

⁵⁸ Dorland and Charland, *Law, Rhetoric and Irony*, 195. Despite generally agreeing with the argument laid out by Dorland and Charland regarding the rhetorical formation of a public subject, I must point out that Dorland and Charland fail to locate the rightful beginnings of this public subject involved in the civil sphere. As Bacchi points out, the influence of the National Council of Women, who were largely responsible for the popularization of the suffrage movement, as discussed earlier, was seminal in coupling the notions of nationhood and family and established the powerful image of women as citizens through their maternal positions (86-103).

⁵⁹ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, 1977, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Book, 1995), 195-228.

⁶⁰ David Nord similarly observes that urbanization in Chicago created conditions for its late nineteenth century residents that were deeply paradoxical: "the peculiar terror of modern urban life was that it rewarded individualism while making individualism untenable; it undermined traditional community while making community ever more necessary for survival." (*Communities of Journalism: A History of American Newspapers and their Readers* [Urbana & Chicago: University of Illinois Press], 127). Furthermore, similar to observations made of Canadian reform initiatives, Nord argues that the municipal reform movement at the end of the nineteenth century was fundamentally paradoxical in its unwavering belief in mass politics and democracy, while simultaneously believing in the righteousness of their initiatives which served upper and middle class interests, though relying on lower and working-class support (152-3; 163-7).

⁶¹ Kerrie Kennedy, "Womanly Work: The Introduction of Household Science at the University of Toronto" (Master of Arts thesis, University of Toronto, 1995)11, 23. For more information on Hoodless, see Cheryl MacDonald, *Adelaide Hoodless: Domestic Crusader* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1986). Bacchi also notes that the suffrage movement came to take on its specific character, particularly in relationship to maternal feminism, in large measure because of the influence of members from other reform organizations. See Bacchi, 86-103.

⁶² Historian James Snell characterizes the end of the nineteenth century as "an age of fear and an age of optimism" (*Macdonald Institute: Remembering the Past, Embracing the Future* [Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2003], 17). He argues that despite the fears of an eroding society brought about by capitalism, industrialization, urban expansion, the destruction of the environment and large scale immigration and migration, there was a faith that remained that some elements of industrialization could, in fact, benefit society. The key was seen to be to harness the positive aspects of these changes, which could be accomplished through an elite class of citizens who could provide the appropriate moral leadership (17). Bacchi also notes that the secular reformers involved in the suffrage movement admired the pragmatism, regimentation and utilitarianism of industrialization, at the same time that they worked to rectify its damaging effects (87-89).

⁶³ Bacchi, 89. Valverde also takes up this notion in "'When the Mother of the Race is Free:' Race, Reproduction, and Sexuality in First-Wave Feminism," in *Gender Conflicts: New Essays in Women's History*, ed. F. Iacovetta and M. Valverde (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1992), 3-26.

⁶⁴ Kennedy, 27.

⁶⁵ Kennedy, 36-43.

⁶⁶ The program came into official existence with the passing of a Senate resolution at the University of Toronto on December 12, 1902 (Kennedy 36).

⁶⁷ Kennedy, 36-8. Kennedy goes on to note that not until 1907 would a separate building be formally agreed to be built by Lillian Massey. Though there was probably an informal agreement to this end at the time of its founding, the University of Toronto insisted that Massey also supply the girls with adequate athletic facilities. From Massey's initial offer to Victoria College of \$80,000, the donation grew to a whopping \$100,000. No doubt the insistence that the money be given to the University and include athletic facilities grew out of the growing complaints and criticisms about the lack of such facilities for women since their initial admission to the University in 1884. See also Martin Friedland, *The University of Toronto*, 147.

⁶⁸ Alison Prentice, "Education and the Metaphor of the Family: Upper Canada Example," in *Education and Social Change: Themes From Ontario's Past*, ed. Michael B. Katz and Paul H. Mattingly (New York: New York University Press, 1975), 119.

⁶⁹ Snell, 19.

⁷⁰ Adelaide Hoodless, Report of Mrs. Hoodless on Domestic Science, Including a Recent Visit to the Schools of Philadelphia and Washington (Toronto: Warwick Bros. & Rutter, 1899), 3.

⁷¹ As Snell notes, Macdonald Institute lost its accreditation of its teachers to the University of Toronto in 1915 (52). The University of Toronto's Faculty of Household Science, which fell under control of the Minister of Education, seemed a logical choice. As both Kennedy and Snell note in their respective histories of the University of Toronto and the Macdonald Institute, both programs struggled with the academic requirements of being affiliated with higher education facilities and the practical focus of vocational or skills training (Kennedy, 129-130; Snell, 31-2; 38-40). Kennedy suggests that part of the excessively, and at times suspect, stress on the scientific elements of the program was initiated in response to this pressure to remain academically pertinent (130).

⁷² James Snell argues that despite its maintenance of the dominant class and gender order, "the movement also helped to infuse some women's work with a professionalized status and to give some women a vehicle for upward economic and social mobility" (17).

⁷³ Mary Watson, *The OAC Review*, (April 1907), 349, quoted in James Snell, 43; emphasis mine.

⁷⁴ Snell, 42.

⁷⁵ Snell, 44.

⁷⁶ Kennedy, 37.

⁷⁷ Watson, *Ibid*, quoted in Snell, 44; emphasis mine.

⁷⁸ "Household Economics. Second Year. Annual Examinations. Faculty of Household Science. University of Toronto, 1907. All exams cited here are reproduced in Kennedy's thesis, 148.

⁷⁹ Sanitary Science. Fourth Year. Annual Examination. Faculty of Household Science. University of Toronto, 1907, quoted in Kerrie Kennedy, 150.

⁸⁰ Comacchio, *Infinite Bonds of Family*, 47.

⁸¹ "A Report of the Attendance Department of the Board of Education for the City of Toronto," 1964, p. 2, Vertical File, Toronto Board of Education, Biography—Howe, Hester.

⁸² John Bullen, "Hidden Workers: Child Labour and Family Economy in Late Nineteenth-Century Urban Ontario," in *Canadian Family History: Selected Readings*. 1992. 2nd ed. (Toronto: Irwin, 2000), 203. Bullen cites a federal inquiry which investigated the work conditions of

324 married women. Of that number, 272 women performed much of their work at home, with 255 of them performing work for the clothing industry.

⁸³ Bullen, 203-4.

⁸⁴ Mackenzie King was hired to undertake a study of how clothing contracts for the government itself were carried out, on behalf of the postmaster-general in 1900. Alexander Whyte Wright was commissioned by the federal government to investigate the sweating system in Canada after it received a petition from the Trades and Labour Congress. Wright found that, even in union shops where the hours and conditions of work were better regulated, workers would bring work home to bring in extra money (Bullen, 203-4). Further details on what they discovered can be found in their respective reports: W. L. Mackenzie King, *Report to the Honourable Postmaster General of the Methods adopted in Canada in the Carrying Out of Government Clothing Contracts*. (Ottawa, 1900); Alexander Whyte Wright, *Report upon the Sweating System in Canada*. Sessional Papers, 2, 29, no. 61 (Ottawa: 1896).

⁸⁵ Bullen, 205. This situation continues even into contemporary settings. I remember as a child helping my mother who sewed plush toys at home at piece rates. After finishing sewing ears of future bunnies, elephants or bears, it was my responsibility to turn the pieces right side out. Tedious and boring, yet work that had to be performed carefully to avoid ripping the material, it was time consuming and thus ideal for a child to perform. Not remunerated in the customary contemporary form of an allowance, it was understood that this, the responsibility for the well being of the family, was shared by all members of the family. This example not only points to the specificity of an immigrant Italian cultural setting, it also points to the tenacity of this system of family labour that survives in varied forms, settings and times.

⁸⁶ Bullen, 214.

⁸⁷ Bullen, 204.

⁸⁸ Bettina Bradbury, "The Fragmented Family: Family Strategies in the Face of Death, Illness and Poverty, Montreal, 1860-1885," in *Childhood and Family in Canadian History*, ed. Joy Parr (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982), 109. Bradbury notes that the extent to which married women and young daughters worked was dependent in large measure on the different labour conditions and availability of work not only in different cities, but also from neighbourhood to neighbourhood. See her "Gender at Work at Home: Family Decisions, the Labour Market, and Girls' Contributions to the Family Economy" in *Canadian Family History: Selected Reading*, ed. Bettina Bradbury (Toronto: Irwin, 2000), 177-198.

⁸⁹ See Bradbury, "Gender at Work," 179-183.

⁹⁰ Susan Mann Trofimenkoff, "One Hundred and Two Muffled Voices: Canada's Industrial Women in the 1880's," in *Rethinking Canada: The Promise of Women's History*, ed. Veronica Strong-Boag & A.C. Fellman. (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1986), 82-94. Trofimenkoff's study of the Royal Commission on the Relations between Capital and Labour finds that

there was little to support worries about a compromised morality in the labour force. She does note, however, that these worries were probably more generally related to an anxiety about a compromised family ideal that would have women safely protected within the home (90-92). Bradbury also notes that keeping daughters at home also meant they could avoid the individualism factory work might encourage ("Gender at Work," 187).

⁹¹ Bullen, 205. Bullen includes many other examples of the ways in which children's labour was hidden within the family economy, including street sales, bootblacks and newsboys.

Chapter 4

Leaders and Readers: Women Journalists Make their Space

There is one thing which the women of today, with all their new accomplishments, high aims, and wide opportunities, are utterly and irretrievably losing. That is the repose of manner that our grandmothers possessed in so marked and pleasing a degree. Who does not instantly think of some gracious old lady of her acquaintance whose every movement is full of slow, unconscious dignity...whose face, so unworn by metaphysical lines, and algebraic crow's feet, and the vague unrest of scientific philosophy, it is a pleasure and a rest simply to look into! ...She passed her very early years learning to write a lady-like hand, and to play some half dozen 'pieces' on the piano-forte, and to make her own underwear...She married after a proper season of flowers and compliments and billet-doux at the age of eighteen, after which her whole existence was summed up in the prefix to her husband's name on her visiting cards...She knew nothing of business, and 'politicks' might have been disseminated in Hebrew for all she was enlightened by the method then in vogue. Her interests hung upon the ring of her bunch of keys, were piled up in the linen closet, and bottled up in the storeroom...But her grand-daughters begin the dead languages before they are thoroughly acquainted with their own, and attain a certain altitude in the higher mathematics before she had finished with the multiplication tables. They take a supercilious glance at Kensington stitch and arrasene, and a University course. *They read the newspapers and know the world, which she didn't.*...After graduation from some educational institution, the next thing is a career, a thing, which indulged in by a woman, led, in our grandmothers' opinion, sooner or later, to the gallows. I remember once entertaining, and unguardedly expressing, at the age of nine, a wild desire to write a novel.

'Put it out of your mind, my dear,' nodded a placid old lady of the last century over her knitting. 'Novel-making women always come to some bad end.'

Careers, if possible, and independence anyway, we must all have, as musicians, artists, writers, teachers, lawyers, doctors, ministers, or something. Politics are beginning to fascinate us, and we have concluded that we want to vote.¹

Always the master of contrasts and ironies, Sara Jeannette Duncan's newspaper persona, Garth Grafton, deftly looks back at that "haven," woman's domestic sphere, with some nostalgia and comfort, and not without a tinge of longing – though firmly from some other position outside that haven. In characteristic ambiguity, Grafton straddles a middling position that mocks that progressive New Woman for all her accomplishments yet refuses to be lulled entirely into the sanctity of the past. After all, her assertion that "there are worse places in the world" than

Home is hardly reassuring. Yet at the core of this middle position is that common suspicion that though women may progress along an inevitable path toward full 'womanhood' – a kind of womanhood that is bigger than a ring of keys, stitching and preserves, one that can be viewed in the newspaper – they run the risk of losing a certain "repose of manner." Already written onto and into that class of ladies who need not be overwhelmed with the burdens of everyday survival, this repose of manner is the privilege of the ignorant, Grafton asserts. Progress is literally marked on the faces of those aspiring women as a certain preoccupation with matters of the world that is the inevitable result of the acquisition of knowledge. Knowing, Grafton suggests, is not the same as doing. Yet, careers and independence are posited as vague concepts: *au courant* of the times, though not quite meaningful. And here we confront the central paradox that applied equally to the newspaper woman: predicated on her ability to write as a woman to women, her work invariably compromises that very femininity. Furthermore, as we will see in the following chapter, having written herself as Woman within the woman's pages, she could push journalistic boundaries through her travels and social explorations.

Though this paradox existed, it is also clear from our historical records that women wrote nonetheless, and successfully at that. Indeed far from coming off as unfeminine, unfamiliar, distasteful manly women, Faith Fenton and Kit Coleman were greatly loved and made up an integral part of their readers' weekend reading pleasure. Indeed I argue here that these women worked hard to contain any ideological leakage that might have been suggested by their very public positions.

This was manifest most profoundly in the ways they organized and engaged their journalistic practices that was rooted in firmly establishing a hyper-feminized position, in constituting themselves as Woman.

As the previous two chapters established, the 1880s and 1890s marked a period of great change, one that produced altered conditions within the industry *and* ideological constructions of Woman through changes to the relations between the public and private spheres. At this moment of change within culture and the newspaper industry, these women journalists became an articulation of these strands of political movements, discourse, practices, etc. That is to say, the woman journalist could avoid the state of compromised femininity that so commonly represented the public woman precisely because there were other modes of femininity that were emerging within culture that combined both a public and private role for women. Fenton and Coleman could further explore, expand and entrench these modes, constructing an image of a journalist who was connected to her sphere of readers and their private lives, while still connected to the public world of the newspaper. The concluding chapter, thus, will examine how these ideas, as well as the journalism produced by women like Coleman and Fenton, came together in an articulated form that was the Woman Journalist, as she existed within the popular imaginary.

Nowhere were the shifting relations between Home and public more evident than on one page that appeared each week of the weekend edition, the woman's page. This chapter will explore the core of the cultural formation, the woman's page, by examining how the page itself was constructed. What kind of journalism did these

two newspaper women practice? How did they go about their work? In other words, how did Kit Coleman and Faith Fenton construct their respective spaces, both in a figurative sense and in the literal sense of the page? How were they different from each other? Despite the singularity with which women's journalism was discussed and described, these pages were surprisingly different.

By examining content and form, I do not wish to suggest that there was a linear, or predetermined, nature in their relationships to one another. Rather I am interested in interrogating the interrelationships that existed between forms and practices, particularly as it related to gender. I argue there was a dialectical relationship between forms and practices that informed each other and were made intelligible in relationship to each other. Unlike other kinds of journalism, the woman's page relied on the identity of its editor to provide its authorial voice. If, as Christine Gledhill argues, women's media genres contribute to changing definitions of masculinity and femininity precisely because they take on gendered terms of reference, how was this accomplished in the woman's page?²² Thus, this chapter examines the roles that these women took up in the pages in order to construct a persona. As advisor and columnist, these women advised, made judgments and paper-friends, informed and entertained as they helped to order the world for their readers through their constructed spaces.

From the practices that helped to create these roles, Coleman and Fenton established public personas for their pages. That is, I do not assume that the woman journalist wrote herself into existence in some kind of taken for granted way or

simply at the moment that she took up her pen. As Joan Scott has argued, poststructuralist feminist historians are committed not simply to an exhumation of women's experiences, but more importantly, to the conditions that worked to construct those experiences as meaningful.³ To think about how she became a gendered subject thus calls attention to the constructed nature of the forms and practices she used in the production and reproduction of her gendered and professional identity as Woman journalist.⁴ This is an important assertion since women journalists at the time were expected (by both their editors and readers) to write from their *experience and perspective of being a woman*. Yet, to take this as self-evident is to miss the mediation of those experiences with other discourses and movements that render them meaningful (as Scott asserts) *and* with cultural forms and conventions that typified women's writing in order to produce the Woman journalist and the woman's page.⁵ In this regard, it is not surprising to note that many of the women journalists writing at this time were also fiction writers and/or had literary ambitions,⁶ a domain that was much more safely claimed by women.⁷ Gender is not only constitutive, it is a means by which to articulate and construct power.

Framing my analysis in this way calls attention to the processes by which their public personas mobilized particular gender conventions that helped to turn "Kit" and "Faith" into ideological subjects as Woman journalist.⁸ This process of (trans)formation is similar, though different, to descriptions of the woman journalists' "personality," as explained by other scholars. It was not, as Brooke Kroeger describes

Nellie Bly's "personality," an expression of "her essential self penetrat[ing] the page in spite of whatever she actually had to say."⁹ Rather, this was a constructed voice, fashioned out of expectations about women journalists and the specific mobilization of certain gendered codes in relationship to the performance of this work. This produced a style that typified her pages and came to be associated with each woman. This persona did draw on elements of her personality (in the way Kroeger uses it), but cannot be confused with it. "Style can be defined in rough and ready terms as the choice between functionally equivalent elements of language,"¹⁰ ways of speaking and turns of phrases that are choices made intentionally for effect. The effect of the woman's page was to simultaneously constitute a feminized journalism, as well as gendered readers. Consequently, these personas held the qualities of a personality, yet were constructed with professional aims in mind.

Given the differences between the modes of writing and practices used, as well as the types of content and features produced, these women engaged with the increasingly public nature of the private worlds of their readers in fascinatingly different ways. Yet, it was the work of the woman's page to provide a domesticated space where issues could be discussed publicly and where public issues could be addressed from the private view of the home. Though Coleman and Fenton regarded their readers differently, both women were engaged in a constant dialogue with them that was personalized, built around typified expressions of femininity, and so complete as to form a veritable Woman's Empire or Kingdom, as the titles of their pages suggested.

Working as a Lady of the Pen

Opportunities for women journalists at the end of the nineteenth century were limited, to say the least. Marjorie Lang notes that from the late nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century, in some cities and on some newspapers, the women's pages were the main or only opportunity available to women journalists.¹¹ The two women under consideration in this thesis, Kathleen Blake Coleman (Kit Coleman) and Alice Freeman Brown (Faith Fenton), were fortunate enough to have regular work on a newspaper, editing the paper's weekend women's pages. Many more women wrote on what we might call a "freelance" basis, being paid by the article, or for those more fortunate, writing a column each week on a particular topic. Though there were limits to the kind of work that could be done, as the women's pages grew in popularity, particularly during the seven-year period when Coleman and Fenton were in direct competition with one another, a wide range of topics and experiences were open to these women, including travel. It is precisely the regularity with which these women appeared in the newspaper that makes them interesting and fruitful objects of study, since week after week, on the same page every week, a trustworthiness came to be associated with their pages. While *The Globe* was a pioneer in the woman's page format in Toronto, it failed to maintain the same kind of regularity, with frequent changes in the format (from daily in the late 1880's to weekly by the 1890's) and editors (Garth Grafton, Lally Bernard (Mary Agnes Fitzgibbons), Madge Merton (Elmira Elliot Atkinson), Madge Robertson (Madge Watt). By the turn

of the century, the page had been reduced to a daily society column.¹² Though it has been suggested that women's journalism was relegated to those pages buried within the newspaper, this regularity indicates that they were also a part of the newspaper's identity.¹³ Both women took seriously their responsibilities of getting "copy" to the office, even when traveling or ill.¹⁴

A few women wrote columns that appeared outside the women's pages, in the weekend edition, or wrote material that was not geared specifically toward a female audience. Sara Jeannette Duncan was one example of a woman who wrote for *The Globe* under the heading of "Other People and I" and for *The Week* as "Wanderings." Her serialized letters from her trip around the world in 1888-9, later published in book form, often appeared in the weekend edition of the *Montreal Star*. Mary Agnes Fitzgibbon, who wrote under the pen name "Lally Bernard", also had a regular column, "Driftwood" in *The Globe* that appeared on Tuesdays and Saturdays throughout the 1890's. Though the heading would not suggest it, the column most frequently dealt with the most typical of women's journalism: household hints, news of upcoming women's meetings, reports on their activities, and literature. Laura Durand, who also worked for *The Globe*, edited the children's page and the literary review column.

As Paul Rutherford acknowledges, there was no strong yellow press tradition in Canada, and this further limited women.¹⁵ Although newspapers began shocking their readers with stories about murder, publishing particularly lurid and grotesque headlines when they could for the "impact" they would have, there was a lot of

typical, indeed banal, news of public civic and world affairs.¹⁶ In keeping with this, women's pages were often filled with columns of household hints, recipes, society and fashion news and significantly, indictments of the latest trend in social behaviours, particularly when it concerned relations between men and women. Nonetheless, the lack of relative sensationalism, particularly as compared to the American and, to a lesser degree, the British press, restricted women journalists in their endeavours to widen the scope of their possibilities in the field of journalism.¹⁷ Certainly both Sara Jeannette Duncan and Eve Brodlique felt this was the case, as both women worked south of the border for some time. Garth Grafton, responding to a female "Aspirant" eager to enter journalism, wrote that "nothing, comparatively speaking, has been accomplished by women in journalism, partly because the Canadian newspaper world is so small. . . , partly because it is a very conservative world indeed, and we know what conservatism means in relation to the scope of women's work."¹⁸

As would be expected, many women found the limited scope of writing for the women's pages more than tiring; they found it insulting to be forced to report on society functions and to so severely limit the scope of what could be found in the women's pages. As Mary McOuat described her work as a journalist to fellow journalist, Mary Bouchier Sanford,

I have written fashion articles and editorials, 'chopped copy' and conducted a cooking column, reviewed books and answered questions of correspondents on all sorts of subjects, interviewed people, and reported everything from an afternoon tea to a political meeting. This has all been done for the Women's Page however and as a consequence I am unspeakably weary of everything connected with the sex. The one

thing I most wish is that I had had the good fortune to be born a man for then I would not have been obliged to write about women.¹⁹

Certainly Flora McDonald concurred when she described society reporting as a “prostitution of soul” as it fed the worst of women’s society through pettiness, gossip and, too often, bribed lies.²⁰ Indeed Margaret Bateson, in less graphic terms, described this type of journalism as the disappointing “ante-chamber” to the “palace of journalism.”²¹ Any princess hoping to get inside should not be fooled by the insistence of those who assert she must “spend [her] days in this brain and soul-deadening locality,” that turned perfectly intelligible women into the “pushing salesman” for the advertiser.²² Made by “dull ladies,” these women’s pages were “paste-and-scissor *réchauffés* of stale news.”²³ From the pragmatic accounts of the physical inabilities of women to cover certain kinds of stories, to complaints that she lacked a “news sense,” women’s confinement to those pages devoted to her sex was justified by her physical difference.

Although women may not have found a broad community of fellow craftswomen, male journalists often found themselves at odds with other professionals. All accounts otherwise, journalism was as equally gendered for men, as for women. Elucidating on how the newspaper man is different than the average man, Flora McDonald writes,

Every newspaper man realizes how members of his profession are a class by themselves. They are necessarily so, for a man who works while respectable people sleep, and sleeps while respectable people work, must be something distinct from unqualified respectability, and as lines are drawn in society, if he has any identity with other human beings, it is with those who ‘live after midnight’.²⁴

This identification of the “others” in the world would become key to the identity of the reporter in later generations and became indicative of the ethic of working for the “people.” Despite the still rigid class distinctions that existed at the time, such was the necessary “sacrifice” the journalist would make for the sake of bringing to the pages of the newspaper the “reality” of city living – and, ultimately, this sacrifice heightened the sense of realism that was the trademark of the new journalism.²⁵ Yet, many recognized that the mythology of the rough-edged, jaded journalist had its drawbacks. As a column appearing in an early issue of *The Journalist* indicates, the mythology not only had subtle gender implications for men, it also had the potential to impact their credibility in a way that was suspiciously similar to the dilemma faced by women. “The Reporter” wrote,

One thing I would like to see among my brother reporters is that they would judge themselves more by the rules that govern the rest of the community and not imagine that they are exempt from ordinary laws on account of the peculiar hardships and temptations of the business. I know no reason why a reporter should drink and live uncleanly, any more than any other man. Yet it is a fact that by the common tolerance among us of vices that are not tolerated among other men, we lose a vast amount of the influence we ought to wield. I don't think many newspaper men deny this. It is the practice [sic] effect of such habits of thought on us as a class that is to be deplored. A man's ethics are his own business. His outward conduct is his neighbor's business.²⁶

Complicating the otherwise gentlemanly demeanour of the professional man, this “other” way of life that found journalists working long hours and facing countless “temptations” in their explorations of the unsavoury side of life threatened to compromise the credibility of the entire “class” of journalists. Paul Rutherford suggests that there was a hierarchy at play as well, with such low views going to the

poor pay and low status of the reporter whose news reports were anonymous and not quite up to snuff to join “the journalistic fraternity as full-fledged members.”²⁷ In an era of partisan journalism, gentlemanly behaviour – such as keeping one’s word and playing by the rules established by officials – was essential to gaining access to important information when the opposing party was in government.²⁸ Though some conditions of journalism had changed, expectations around demeanour still held gender implications for men as well.

For women journalists, as will be discussed later, capitalizing on their differences from men, while asserting a commonality among women, would become a key strategy to forging an authoritative position from which to make their observations. For all journalists, however, as they increasingly were “out there” on the streets finding and reporting news, their observations and experiences in life were what set them apart. This led to a developing mythology surrounding the reporter. Unlike the woman journalist, the male journalist was valorized for his knowledge and ability to gather information necessary for the story, and to scoop stories; he was the “the public’s eye, ubiquitous, impartial and loyal to the facts.”²⁹

Despite the mythology surrounding this “news sense,” as it was known, the conventions of newspaper writing and news gathering were learned pursuits for all journalists. As John Cameron wrote to a young J.S. Willison hoping to enter the trade of journalism: “it takes more than ability to write what may be called a smooth composition to make a journalist.”³⁰ As Rutherford notes, journalism was built on a legacy of apprenticeship that saw journalists learning the trade under the guidance of

editors, with the hopes of advancing further with experience.³¹ C.H.J. Snider, City Editor at *The Telegram* for fourteen years, humourously describes his naive impressions when he began in the newspaper business. Imagining that a reporter's job was to collect notes which were then given over to a compositor, who would compose the story, he copiously took notes on his first day of court reporting only to learn how wrong he was: "I got back to the Telegram with an armful of notes. My fundamental error was confusion between reporter, editor and compositor. I innocently inquired 'Which way compositor?'"³² But incidents like these were part of the experience of apprenticeship for any male journalist. Pushed outside the normal spaces of the newspaper office, the woman journalist had to learn such newspaper conventions on her own.

Without any editor willing to teach women—indeed, many of them scarcely believed it was necessary since most women gave up when they married and 'women's journalism' wasn't taken seriously in any case—they were forced to learn by trial and error. Elizabeth Banks describes a hard learned lesson when, after interviewing a famous actress, she was asked not to print any of it for their conversation had taken place in confidence, between two women. When she explained this to her editor, he remarked, "As you are a woman, I will say that you have not the journalistic instinct. You will never be able to do big things in journalism...The fact is, you're all woman and no journalist."³³ In another incident, however, her editor praised her womanliness as precisely what was necessary for getting the story: "You've got diplomacy... shrewdness...and above all, you are absolutely feminine, and you haven't got

‘newspaper woman’ and ‘interviewer’ placarded all over you.’³⁴ For those women who were begrudgingly recognized as being valuable “newspapermen” it was widely recognized that they succeeded in spite of their sex—and, also because of it.

Although their physical inabilities might have prevented editors from taking women on as general reporters, they were hired for the women’s pages *precisely because* of their difference. Women’s pages, nonetheless, often demanded that the woman journalist *act* like a journalist anyway: interviewing, reporting, finding copy. Though they did not conform to typical journalistic styles that marked the news report, they frequently used the sketch as a format to write their extended features.³⁵ As columnists, Coleman and Freeman both began by offering descriptive pieces of philanthropic organizations and institutions, local places, activities and personalities. As Garth Grafton wrote in response to a reader’s question about entering journalism, women’s skills within correspondence and ‘descriptive work’ were two of the elements for which women were believed to be particularly suited and were most in demand by the papers. For in the end, she wrote, “the vast newspaper-devouring public...does not care one jot to be edified, but requires unceasingly to be amused.” Consequently, Grafton counseled women to look around them to “the great heart of the metropolis pumping out its daily and nightly sensation...[which] offers material without end.”³⁶ The leader became a form that allowed women journalists to take up a more conventional reportorial role, which they could re-write within gendered terms.

The “Leader:” The Woman Journalist as Columnist

Following Garth Grafton, Goldwin Smith, journalist, editor, cultural and political critic, characterized the knack for leader writing as rare, requiring of the writer three requisites: “a large amount of information, miscellaneous rather than profound; a great readiness in making use of it; and the power of putting it in striking form, and one which will catch the eye and mind of the cursory reader.”³⁷ The form of the leader, according to Smith, was particularly important, since it was to this form that the reader would be attracted. The leader-writer must be able to combine the ability to find that which is interesting – leading to a definition of newsworthiness – and a “great natural quickness” to pull together these observances in the appropriate form of both composition and content. Smith also recognized that it was in the leader and the “entirely commercial” nature of journalism that sensationalism flourished.³⁸ Of course, not all leaders were sensational. Leaders found on the woman’s page helped to construct the terms of and elucidated the contested terrain of gender relations – a wholly appropriate topic of interest for women wondering how to negotiate shifting boundaries between home and politics. The leader generally explored one topic at some length, varying from a column and a half to as many as three. It was where the woman editor could inform, provoke and delight her readers with sketches drawn from snippets of life – all seen from a woman’s eye, of course.

The leader had its roots in the old form of partisan writing that often mixed opinion with reportage. Indeed the techniques most utilized in the sketch –

personalization, details of the appearance and demeanour of the “characters” encountered, detail of the context and scenery, and other narrative techniques – were the hallmark of the journalistic “dispatch.” Even the common political meeting could be transformed in such a manner to achieve the same end: to intimately implicate the reader in the events transpiring and convey a sense of immediacy, and thus, importance, to the event taking place. In an era of increasingly rationalized space within the newspaper with news reports losing their partisan tone and editorials separated into separate columns,³⁹ the leader was what marked the woman’s page as something other than news. That is, the woman’s page was part of this process of transforming the newspaper into these separate spaces. Yet, the woman’s page, as part of the weekend edition, fit perfectly with the other enlightening and entertaining features that dotted the weekend paper.

Sketches, remade and reworked by the newspaper journalist, sought to be interesting by providing the details of the changing scene before feminine eyes; these were, intentionally, her personal reflections on whatever subject at hand. They were centred, not on the event, per se, but on the experience of the event, the “impressions” made on the lady journalist. Despite the difficulties women faced and the limited opportunities available to them, their difference was a great strength when it came to the women’s pages. From the topics, to the particular styles and conventions she employed (including melodrama, sentimentality and sympathy) she was Woman writ large. Drawing from common assumptions about women’s attention to detail and their “sympathies,” these sketches recast common or familiar

scenes within a new light. Such was the premise for an 1887 “Woman’s World” column which overtly challenged the account offered elsewhere of the annual meeting of a women’s organization: “Doubtless you did assimilate a great deal of valuable information from the three-quarter column report I saw one of the brightest ornaments to THE GLOBE’s local staff industriously preparing at the little table set apart for the gentlemen of the press, but I humbly submit that he didn’t tell you all of it.” What the gentleman reporter missed were precisely the details that made the meeting so meaningful. She saw no less than the very best of Woman represented at the meeting: “All these [details] and many more of the sort that go to make so good and wise, and brave and lovely, as it is the character of Toronto womanhood.”⁴⁰

For instance, only the woman journalist notices that one woman would not open her gloved hand, “so that you may not see the mended seams and the worn finger-ends.” These were all noted not at the meeting itself, the details of which were duly recorded in the gentleman’s report, but rather in the train ride *before* the meeting. Indeed, the attention to the context of news events and the myriad other details that made up its meaning was understood to be the heart of women’s journalism. Yet this was also a material effect of their gender: officially excluded from many domains of “news,” women journalists were forced to “uncover” news elsewhere. As Duncan wrote in a short story describing a young girl’s experience of learning what made saleable “copy”: “Before I say anything I must have something to say.” Finding that the simple sketch she had written about her trip into the countryside had been accepted for publication – unlike the other, more carefully crafted, treatises – she

declared her new “practical” perspective: “Her ride to Lorette, unpretending little event though it was, had been something to say, something quaint, novel, interesting of its sort. It had been something within her power to write about, and she had written about it gaily, with the spur of fresh impressions.”⁴¹ In addition, E.E. Sheppard offered the following advice from an experienced editor to those women who were unprepared to push the boundaries too far in pursuit of their careers:

You need not dash out into the world; you can take a peep into your own heart and write up some of the little corners curtained off there. As a rule they are the great unexplored and unexplorable country. To men, and to each woman as she scans her sister woman, the region to which I refer is a more inaccessible domain than the center of Africa was to Stanley.⁴²

Turning women’s experiences into some unexplorable country—with references to Stanley, no less—made women’s journalistic work important and only accomplishable by women. Yet even Sheppard recognized that such writing required a skilled pen that was able to “dress up old things in new, gay and attractive gowns,” which for the vast majority of women who did not know the “business” – meaning, what would make good copy – resulted in their work being sent to the wastepaper basket by editors who “have no chance to experiment.”⁴³ Nonetheless, it is clear to see why a threatened femininity remained a concern for journalists, editors and commentators alike. In writing difference, what was crucial was the articulation of a conventionally feminine voice and perspective that could be any woman’s voice, making the woman journalist’s performances of gender not only strategic, but willful. This led commentators to remark that women journalists were themselves as much a part of the news they covered.⁴⁴ Sheppard’s metaphor aside, while Woman’s body might

represent foreign ground to the male editor-journalist, understanding and knowing it was fully within the tradition domain of Womanhood, unlike Stanley's explorations.

***Mapping the Woman's Page:
Creating a Separate, Yet Connected, Space***

By writing a kind of journalism that interpellated its readers as women – women of the home, working girls, mothers, women in trouble, etc – this journalism was forged out of an imagined relationship with readers, who were also constituted in the process. Often filled with advice on marrying, beauty and social graces, newspaper offerings for women in the 1880s tended to be filled mostly with clippings from other printed sources, with paragraphs about fashion or society added to insert a bit of local flavour. But by the early 1890's *The Mail* and *The Empire* had transformed the concept of the woman's page by expanding it and adding a distinctive personality to edit it. Although the pages differed in their modes of address, based on differences in the personas of each journalist/editor and the general orientation of their respective papers, they both sought to entertain their readers. How they did so, however, varied.

Coleman for her part, consistently used her talents at sketching life-like characters to full advantage, creating columns and editorials that were full of descriptive lines that sought to build off of experiences of everyday life. In the process, Coleman tried to address a cross section of women and concerns, though her middle class assumptions, invariably slipped in. Topics included: "The Courage of Women," "Women's Tongues," "The Aggressively Neat Woman,"⁴⁵ – and even

“Ideal Men” and “Stay at Home Husbands.”⁴⁶ Although each column would have a variety of vignettes of characters sketched by Coleman’s skilful pen, the value and sanctity of Home (and the requisite assumptions about it) remained the measure of critique. Yet Coleman also cast herself as having great sympathy for the hard-working women who struggled with daily life, who simply needed a few kind words. As *Woman*, she understood: “I am a working woman, and perhaps on that account I have more of that fellow-feeling that makes us so wondrous kind, for any woman, girl, or child...who, like me, whether it be hot or cold, headache or no headache with, so often, ah me! a dreary heartache...have to get just so much work done, starve—or worse!”⁴⁷

Perhaps Coleman herself best described the general feel of her page.

Soliciting responses to the daunting question of “why men don’t marry,” Coleman opens her page to all possible respondents, even as it remained firmly for women:

Now, this department is open to men and women, and I think I always said men were most welcome in our *Woman’s Kingdom*. They lend spice to what otherwise might be flat and tame. Why should *Woman’s Kingdom* be particularly flat and tame? We want to get something to laugh at out of it and there’s not a bit of use filling it with platitudes and stained-glass attitudes and prim narrow ideas just because women only are supposed to read it. We women like a dash of fun, spice – nice spice – not all-spice – as well as the men. Remember
Every woman is at heart a rake.⁴⁸

With this welcoming attitude, Coleman took to heart her role as a sympathetic, experienced woman advisor, but this experienced woman advisor would place limits on how she would advise, choosing not to preach (which she, of course, occasionally did) or take an overly religious or moral view of things, as her reference to “stained-

glass attitudes” implies. Rather, Coleman here establishes herself in contradistinction to such ideas about appropriate women’s reading material and opts for a little fun with men, despite her slightly mocking tone. Given the fleeting nature of journalism, Coleman believed lofty ideals were inappropriate for a woman’s page.⁴⁹

Unlike Coleman who began her career as a columnist in this manner, Fenton mobilized a more formal mode of address, particularly during the first half of her career with *The Empire*, which lent itself toward edification, rather than entertainment. Addressing her readers as ladies involved in her community, Fenton regularly sketched the work of charities, reform movements and notable personalities who worked for their communities. Even for those women who were not directly involved in their communities, as the following chapter explores in greater detail, reading about the “Toronto Home for Incurables,” “A woman’s meeting” or about the work of Mrs. Ballington Booth, wife of the leader of the Salvation Army,⁵⁰ gave women information and could inspire them to do good work within their own worlds, even if just within their own Homes.

Although she clearly believed her page had to be entertaining, she relied on more traditional forms of popular culture, literature and the stage, rather than attempting to create funny little sketches herself. Indeed Fenton had a great love of the stage,⁵¹ as is evidenced in her frequent conversations and mentions of actors and their stage performances. Fenton, who believed that if women “demand[ed] a broader literary pasture, it [would] be granted,” thought the ideal page comprised “chats about books, sketches of authors, tender little poems of humor or sentiment,

character sketches, literary essays, brief talks of women's work and successes, and with all this just a sprinkle of feminine fads and fashions."⁵² Ultimately, she believed that the woman's page should be addressed to "that composite creature – an average woman."⁵³ Fenton, unlike Coleman, did not concern herself to make her page interesting to men, though she was aware men read it and occasionally corresponded with her. As she responded to one such male correspondent: "Of course men chafe; but their lives are larger, their work is not so monotonous or fretting, their nervous system is of stronger fibre... This page is for women, Peter, that is why I write chiefly of them; but we will talk of men's discontent some day if you like – there is plenty of it."⁵⁴ Defending her personalized approach to another reader, however, she made it clear that her work was no less journalistic, even if it used different conventions. Despite her use of the phrase "I think" in a previous article to which this correspondent took exception, Fenton writes, "It is a saving clause in many an utterance, and is as useful to me as the word "alleged" in ordinary newspaper statements." Although, as she conceded, her column strove to be intentionally "gossipy and interesting,"⁵⁵ the woman's page was no less edifying than the rest of the newspaper.

The light and airy feel to the page to which such men "chafed" was intentionally gendered. Striking the ideal balance between such lighter items and more serious ones, however, was a constant struggle for both Coleman and Fenton. "Dear heart! I did not think we were all so profound. For whom is all the frivolity written, I wonder," Fenton exclaimed in exasperation one week in response to

conflicting views on that balance.⁵⁶ Despite this, Fenton's notion of modern Womanhood included space for politics much more overtly than Coleman ever did. While she began her columns describing philanthropic work that addressed the typical middle class woman, by 1892, four years after she began editing *Woman's Empire*, her column became politicized when she described exercising her municipal franchise. Although she was not supposed to talk politics—"I am dipping into matters political, and the editor said I musn't. But, dear heart, I'm afraid that this forbidden fruit is going to prove as great a temptation to this woman as some apples did to another woman in the long, long ago"⁵⁷—she regularly did, even wondering out loud—from inside the Ladies' Gallery, no less—"how much longer women are to be the non-voting sex."⁵⁸ At the Chicago World's Fair, she made a point of reporting on the meetings of the International Women's Congress: "I think it is due our Canadian women—the many women of home-work and home times who need the inspiration that such a gathering gives—that they should have as full an account as possible of this conference."⁵⁹ Coleman, on the other hand, did not even arrive in Chicago until after the Women's Congress was over. Nonetheless, she similarly struggled to find the right balance of material when one correspondent complained about her "twaddle," while another remarked that sobering articles had no place on a woman's page since women's lives were hard enough.⁶⁰ Coleman, mediating between the two, simply responded that it was difficult to find "new and chic topics" every week.⁶¹

After 1893 the formats of both pages became remarkably similar. Each had a leading column of some kind. While it continued to serve as an anchor for the page, the snippets of paragraph that filled the middle space of the page tended not to fall into any kind of organization. For instance, both Fenton and Coleman had features that were periodic, though not weekly. Items under the headings of “Pot Pourri,” and “Here and There” allowed Coleman and Fenton, respectively, for instance, to include any number of shorter paragraphs that were not necessarily united under a common theme, but were on miscellaneous topics of interest such as the stage, gossip, references to other printed matter, and general observations. One of Coleman’s favorite topics for such paragraphs included observations made as she moved through the city, from conversations she overheard to streetcar etiquette and episodes. More regular features like Coleman’s “Household Hints” and Fenton’s “Among our Books,” along with the “Children’s Corner” that each of them would include occasionally, allowed them to make a more specialized appeal; although Fenton and Coleman were clearly well informed and clever women, they understood the lives of all their readers. Both women had correspondence columns where they would each respond directly to readers’ questions, while Coleman further developed a reader forum, known as The Letter Club, which came to make up a lively part of her page. Although Fenton never established a similar feature, she often made reference to correspondence she had received and offered more detailed responses than were permitted in the correspondence section. Interestingly, shortly after Coleman began her Letter Club, a similar feature appeared on *The Globe’s* woman’s page. Organized

as a “5 o’clock tea” Madge Merton, its editor, similarly selected a topic and then interspersed readers’ responses in the form of an ongoing dialogue, typical of conversation over tea.

Coleman and Fenton’s columns differed in other ways as well, including their length. Prior to 1893, Fenton’s page tended to run only three to four columns in total, with the remaining three or four columns devoted to advertising material, indicating the extent to which the woman’s page served as a convenient space in which to advertise goods and services, such as organs and pianos for the Dominion Organ Company and Redpath Sugar. Fenton’s reformatted page corresponded with an expanded weekend edition, which, economically speaking, might explain some of the format changes. It typically included an average of sixteen pages.⁶² During the same time, Coleman’s page had already begun to exceed one page, with correspondence often spilling over on to page eight. Already running from between twelve to sixteen pages, *The Mail’s* weekend edition during these early years was already more developed, with more illustrations used throughout. Interestingly, Coleman’s page typically only ran three quarters of a column of advertising.

The format change in 1893 was also accompanied by a shift in tone as Fenton strove to engage her readers more directly. This was accomplished most significantly by curtailing the number of clipped items she used, opting instead for more of her own writing. And it was in this move that Fenton truly began to develop a distinctive voice. Coleman, on the other hand, had the run of her entire page, with the clipped items disappearing within one year of taking over the page.⁶³ Of course, beyond her

journalistic work, Fenton was also a school teacher and significantly, the change in format also accompanied a change in her teaching load. Indeed, the expansion of these pages was closely followed by Fenton's resignation as a school teacher in February 1894.⁶⁴

Although journalism at this time was becoming increasingly sensitive to a reading public as a consequence of its economic re-ordering, the woman's page, in particular, by targeting a narrower and newer segment of this emergent newspaper public, was especially grounded in readers' concerns. It sought to refashion the intimate relationships women experienced in their everyday lives. Through a consideration of gendered experience – that is, how women moved through different spaces – a typically feminized practice emerged that was responsive to the woman reader. In their need to accomplish this, both Fenton and Coleman established themselves as Woman Journalist, mobilizing gendered positions in order to speak to her readers as Woman. I am suggesting here that in order to accomplish this ideological twist, a unified gendered subject was forged who could be many things at the same time. This was accomplished through her persona that was intimate with her readers—a friend, not an impersonal journalist who proselytized about matters that *should* concern her readers. Rather, these women already fashioned their readers into this image and, in turn, fashioned themselves as well. At once she was advisor, mother, friend, sympathetic stranger, expert and adventuress. Through the construction of these spaces, a rhetorical community was established and a kind of

concomitant feminized public sphere emerged which overlapped with the official public sphere represented by the newspaper.

The Woman Journalist as Advisor and Friend

Coleman began receiving correspondence in the pages of her *Woman's Kingdom* after making an initial invitation to readers "wishing to communicate with [her] on any subject of interest to women, etc." to write her.⁶⁵ The original letters were not published, only answered literally as asked, in the exact order, usually numbered. The large majority of them sought advice on any possible issue: from which lace to put on a dress, to advice on removing facial blemishes or otherwise improving one's appearance, to questions of social etiquette and propriety. Often when she was overwhelmed with such correspondence, Coleman would answer in only the briefest terms, numbering each answer, making the exchange an intensely personal and utterly private one between advisor/expert and correspondent.

Fenton, on the other hand, handled her correspondents differently. Appearing suddenly, with little by way of introduction, this part of Fenton's page never occupied as much of the page as it did in Coleman's *Kingdom*. For the first four years or so, "Woman's Empire" remained preoccupied with Fenton's weekly column, clipped or edited items, and the occasional half column of correspondence. Fenton took the liberty of reproducing questions sent to her, annotating them with the pseudonym given, providing the question, then placing a simple, frank "ANS--" to precede her answer. Most of these early correspondents asked questions of a

factual nature. No doubt Fenton's background and training as a teacher came in handy when asked questions such as: "What state in the Union has the most railways?", "What is the meaning of Hollow Eve?", and when asked to "Kindly state the names of some papers published in the States of Arkansas, Mississippi, Tennessee and South Caroline, and whether [they are] weekly or daily."⁶⁶

The columns were different not only in content, but also in title. Labeled simply as "Answers to Correspondents," this space in Fenton's columns never took on the discursive exclusivity of a club, nor the more personalized status of Coleman's "Correspondence" since the questions were also published. One might speculate that the absence of the concomitant and necessarily intimate relationship between correspondent and woman journalist may explain the relatively unpopular status of this feature within Fenton's page, which dropped off entirely for some time. Of course, it is entirely possible, given the different way Fenton approached the role of columnist, that the relatively insignificant status placed on this correspondence was by Fenton's design—at least initially.

Eventually, however, changes to the format described above brought about a reappearance of the correspondence in Fenton's column. Following the generally more inclusive and "bright" air to the revamped page, correspondence became a regular feature labeled, "Our Letter Bag." Correspondents' voices would often appear within other miscellaneous paragraphs as well. Along with the change in tone and voice (of both journalist and readers), illustrations and a facsimile replication of Faith Fenton's signature at the end of her page also appeared. This change in tone

brought Fenton closer to her readers with more frequent references to her “friends” of the Empire, though rarely so close that Fenton adopted the role of mother, as Coleman did, referring to her readers as “paper children.” Indeed, advice was not one of Fenton’s specialties, even when the pages expanded, making the rare instances when she would provide advice regarding social etiquette noteworthy. As correspondence between and among readers took up more space on both Fenton’s and Coleman’s pages, their role as journalists was transformed into a moderator role. They were increasingly concerned with keeping readers in line, reminding them of the necessity of writing on one side of the page only, challenging their views, sympathizing and providing a space where views on issues of concern to women could be shared. This, in itself, was novel—that women’s concerns, despite their continual dismissal elsewhere as trivial, found a public forum within which to be discussed helped to establish this space as a separate sphere. In these pages, women’s public role as reforming citizen could be combined with her private role as mother, daughter, wife, and most certainly as the person in charge of the maintenance of the household. Through this moderating function that encouraged and managed the correspondence, a host of other sides to the woman journalist could be developed that were important for occupying a strong presence within the pages; she could be also advisor and friend. For Fenton, her role as advisor was more factually grounded, while Coleman was certainly an advisor on home-made remedies, social etiquette and affairs of the heart. Both women, however, swooned with sympathy for their readers

who struggled to work hard and maintain a decent home—in short, in being effective women citizens.

Within six months of the introduction of the correspondence, Coleman expanded the scope of this readerly space by beginning what she termed a “Letter Club.” In this space, a topic of interest would be suggested, often by Coleman herself, and readers would write in expressing their opinions and positions. Writing about the various Ideal Men she swooned over from time to time, Coleman challenged her girls to write in describing theirs. This column was intentionally provocative and sentimental,⁶⁷ drawing on well known ‘types’ from literature, such as Lovelace from Samuel Richardson’s *Clarissa Harlowe* and even Lord Byron’s famously scandalous Don Juan, and promenading them about as creatures to dream about. Knowing she had a winning idea to get women writing, she still had to convince them of the appropriateness of such a discourse. Gossiping with one’s confidantes in the parlour, this was not. This was the newspaper – that sheet of political and public news. And this newspaper also allowed them a kind of freedom they could never have in the traditional way of communicating – a way where all things one said could stick to and with them for a long time. Faced with the inherent dangers of “women’s tongues,” publicity was a thing a nineteenth century woman had to avoid. While men, occupied as they were with business and politics, could “abuse one another in the newspaper, or settle the question with horsewhip or pistols,” women “go poking about in the nasty places” with disastrous consequences. As Coleman described it herself:

it is not the direct lie that does the most harm; it is the little twisting of words, the little facts that are told at second-hand, and that, as they travel from mouth to mouth and from house to house, gathering blackness and force, until from being the little cloud 'no bigger than a man's hand' that first appeared, the whole sky becomes overcast, the social thunderclap bursts, the lightning strikes, and, if it does not kill, it scorches and blackens name and reputation, and no amount of scouring, or whitewashing, or patching can ever make 'Humpty Dumpty as he was before.'⁶⁸

Knowing full well the necessity of keeping her public image clean and pure (as the terms "scouring" and "whitewashing" used above indicate), Coleman had to work assiduously to contain the potential for such dangers, particularly when faced with the prospect of printing potentially scandalous gossip in the very public pages of the newspaper. Deftly, Coleman reminds her readers that this was the era of the mass, anonymous newspaper: "You can write freely, girls, because of course all such correspondence is anonymous. You don't know me, and I don't know you, and the public don't know either of us, so that is a comfortable state of affairs." Convinced of their anonymity, women could write of their most intimate affairs and thoughts, whether in the letter club or in the correspondence section. Furthermore, their interest in the entire exchange would be guaranteed, as Coleman was aware: "[The Letter Club] will make Woman's Kingdom more interesting generally and individually, for each one will have her own little say in the matter and will be interested accordingly."⁶⁹ Simultaneously, however, the woman's page sought to create a 'knowingness' of women's experiences. That is, the constructed intimacies and confidences – all done anonymously – would form the basis of a new kind of

urban communication where women could discuss their affairs, yet remain secluded from the material pressures of public scrutiny. In short, to form a paper community.

Interestingly, as a kind of pact made between moderator and reader, the “public,” seemingly someone or something different than the aforementioned, are excluded from this arrangement of secrecy. However, as the kind of intimate friend that she was, Coleman was not only privy to the secret desires of her readers, they, too, were privileged recipients of her secrets. Though the balance of power between them never quite became equal, Coleman, used phrases like, “shall I confess the truth?”⁷⁰, to sustain a myth of shared confidences. Further still, Coleman made it explicit that this kind of exchange was her favorite part of the page. Confessing to not liking to write the fashion column – a wholly unwomanly kind of confession – she redeemed herself with that other kind of womanly behaviour, gossiping: “I much prefer chatting and laughing with you all to redingotes, empire sashes, confections, and like bagatelles.” In the end, Coleman, remembering her ‘journalistic’ duty to her readers, not her friends, acquiesces: “It would never, do, however, to skip spring fashions, would it?”⁷¹

This myth of shared confidences, however, was more than simply a means by which to gently cajole further confidences out of her readers. No doubt, readers took great pleasure in seeing their letters in print and hearing what others had to say on the matter and this publicly-intimate conversation worked to sustain and foster a personalized relationship not only between Coleman and her readers, but also between the readers themselves—the residents of Coleman’s Kingdom. In this

Kingdom, membership was exclusive, built on a protracted relationship that sought to exclude, while simultaneously constructing, that outside “public.” In this manner, the community of the Kingdom was established – not only by means of inclusion, but more powerfully, through means of exclusion. In this regard, the relationship intensified, readership made more loyal, and Coleman remained safely the gatekeeper of this space, omniscient and perfectly trustworthy.

Built in a self-conscious manner that mimicked women’s personal relationships, a certain affect became undeniable to Coleman. Before her trip to cover the Spanish-American war in 1898, Coleman poignantly revealed her connection with her readers. Announcing that “the ‘queer’ column must go,” she wrote the following words before breaking her regular appearance for the past ten years in the Saturday *Maid*: “Shall we ever meet again, I wonder? It was a closer relationship, showdown-children, this queer one of ours, than I ever knew it was til, in this moment when I must write, with what a lingering and tender pen, God knows—Good-by, and may God bless.”⁷² Although the melodrama served to heighten the anticipation and excitement of a woman covering the war, it is also conceivable given the unprecedented nature of this assignment, Coleman was not affecting melodrama here.

In contrast to Coleman, Fenton, in the short time that she was able to build up a similar community of readers, had a different relationship with her readers, ruling with a firm, if gentler, more polite hand. In a rare instance in which she published a correspondents’ letter, Fenton used her authority as editor to great

discretion, as she reminded readers of her ability to throw away correspondence that did not conform to the rules (“my young correspondent has forgotten to write on one side of the paper only, so the remaining two stanzas must go into the waste basket”), while also publicizing the affection her readers had of her (“My Dear Faith Fenton”). Despite admitting that she was “not sure whether it [was] intended for publication,” Fenton nonetheless published this flattering letter, doing the only proper thing and omitting the “pretty signature.” Given her reluctance to publish her letters, this correspondent’s breathless compliments carry much weight and set exactly the right tone. Publishing this letter clearly served an important function, by constructing a loyal following of friend-readers who not only read with interest, but approved of some of her more contentious actions: “Do you know you seem just like an old friend to me? I have the Woman’s Empire for so long. You can’t imagine how I envy you. I fairly turned green when I read of your visit to the Falls...Did you really vote last winter? It would be the crowing stone of my pinnacle of happiness to go to the poll and vote...” Reining in an otherwise obvious attempt at self-promotion, Fenton graciously assumes a modest position: “That is all the letter save a few sentences of girlish compliment, which I omit, although I thank the lady.”⁷³

Though this instance may have been strategic, Fenton truly seemed appreciative of feedback from her readers. Making a confession of her own, Fenton responds to “Ida Sullivan” from Winnipeg by revealing that an article this correspondent and her husband had especially enjoyed had been “not an easy article to write; and I was just a little proud of it, when it was done, and secretly longed for someone to say ‘well

done.' Nobody did though."⁷⁴ Until then, that is. However, Fenton's own words to another correspondent also reveal that hearing reader feedback was more than simply about hearing words of praise. Responding to the holiday wishes she received over the Christmas season, early in 1893, Fenton wrote the following revealing words about her process and its relationship to her readers while thanking those readers who remembered her over the holiday season:

Writers are only men and women, you know; and they appreciate words of praise just as much—perhaps rather more—than those who do not touch a public pen.

Writers—be they wise or foolish, wise or gay—who all year round send out a record of their thoughts on all manner of things; who read and search, come and go, investigate and note, in order that they may have these thoughts; who rarely lift their pens without seeing by mental concept the clientele of readers that they have made their own, and for whom they have the tender regard of ownership; writers such as these, I say, crave the word of approval and have fairly earned it.⁷⁵

In her typically self-effacing manner, Fenton never names herself in this passage, yet there are hints of personal reflection here.

Indeed, it was a common strategy of hers to speak in a distanced voice, even as she attempted to maintain this “mental concept...of readers.” Asked by a correspondent if she was “anything like [her] writings,” Fenton responds by generalizing the question by putting it in “an impersonal form,” using the masculine pronoun to refer to writers. Despite this, Fenton ends up revealing much about herself as she eventually moves from speaking of “writers of books and the occasional magazine article” to “those who give us week by week a reflection of their moods.” Arguing that when the “writing is imaginative, or the outcome of personal experience,” women will “betray themselves in their writings more readily than

men...being by nature more emotional, less secretive and repressive.” She goes on, “I should think it were impossible to read a writer...and not know something of him, as it would be to enter into private correspondence with an unseen friend and not learn much of his character.” Indeed Fenton argues that those readers who know a writer only through his [sic] writings know him best, “for we gaze direct into the heart of him.”⁷⁶ Although she did not use the same methods as Coleman, Fenton nonetheless, did strive for intimacy with her readers even as she held this in check against ideas of womanly propriety.

This womanly propriety led her to assert that some things were simply inappropriate for a newspaper column. While Coleman revelled in retelling stories about her escapades and letting readers into personal experiences, including those with her children, Fenton believed some things were off limits. Despite beginning to mention Boy Blue, her nephew, in 1893, she did not add another ‘starring’ character in the way Coleman did when she made Theodocia an intimate part of many of her lead articles, including reprinting Theodocia’s letters from New York when she visited in 1891. Fenton, conversely, made only vague references to people in her traveling party, even to a best friend once who was a member of the Reform Party, as opposed to Fenton who was clearly Conservative. These individuals are never described, nor are conversations between them reproduced in great detail, though their announced presence is indicative of the necessity of having appropriate accompaniment in some instances. This desire to stay away from matters too

personal extended to some content, which Fenton believed was simply too “subjective.”⁷⁷

This issue of “subjectivity” spoke to an ongoing dialogue about what constituted appropriate subject matter, particularly sensational news of crime and scandal, in all pages of the newspaper. But here, in the club, women could have their say on issues, a kind of concurrent mini-public sphere – constructed around the private sphere of women – within another larger public sphere of the newspaper. The construction of this sphere was made most overt whenever readers failed to respond as vigorously as Coleman would have liked. For instance, proposing to discuss the benefits women’s franchise could have on the future of the nation, Coleman receives only one letter. Set on constructing as open a sphere as possible, Coleman launches her campaign to induce confidence in her girls:

Write, girls, write. Are you afraid of the subject? For pity’s sake be afraid of nothing or nobody when you have views to state. Don’t mind what men say. They talk sometimes as if it were a sin to write, unless the writing be of a superior order....Come, girls! You need the spur. You have each and everyone of you some idea as to woman’s rights. Let us have them. Let every girl, even though she may not be sure of her spelling, have a word to say on a subject of such vital interest to her sex. Our object is to please and interest, whom? Not merely the cultured, the learned, the refined; the homely, the poor, the ignorant, to put it plainly—almost brutally—are welcome to our columns. We want the voice of the people—the great, the powerful *vox populi*. I will keep the column open for two weeks longer...and will expect some good rousing letters on the franchise for women.⁷⁸

There is evidence here of an attempt to build a different kind of sphere than the one built by men, especially in the rest of the newspaper. Alluding to writing of a superior order, newspaper writing, makes it clear that this space, though within the

newspaper, is different. Here, no matter the spelling, no matter the education and class, all were welcome. This space was precisely different because open to all, popular in the sense of being common to all. Nonetheless, she adopts the editorial *We*, keeping her symbolically connected to that other sphere and its mission. Her closing reference to the “voice of the people” further assures this connection to editorial rhetoric that sought to position itself precisely as that voice, making this page an integral part of that very scheme.

Fenton sought to also include a wide variety of women, making occasional reference to the differences country and city women experienced. In a column where she invited readers to respond to a question she asked of them, she makes her audience clear: “You – mothers and daughters, I mean—who are on the farm and in the village; whose reading is confined chiefly to the weekly paper. And, you, busy city woman, who turn the pages of the daily for a chance pleasant paragraph.”⁷⁹ While in Chicago covering the World’s Fair, Fenton also made a point of trying to live there on moderate means, assuming such an approach would be most useful to those readers who might consider attending the Fair.⁸⁰

Despite rarely openly inviting men to join her pages, she did not discourage men from writing, but there was little doubt as to the purposes of the page for Fenton. Responding to “In Confidence,” whose letter criticizing her over-use of “I” Fenton suspiciously lost, she gently informs him or her that the frequent use of the first person pronoun was wholly appropriate precisely because it was so intimate.⁸¹ Deferring initially to a male colleague, Fenton asserts that her usage was “not a large

number, Friend; so the foreman says, and he knows.” But Fenton takes on more confidence as she closes her comments to this writer by revealing the self-conscious and intentional use of the pronoun: “In this fashion I speak to you, through the printed page, as I would talk to you *if we were face to face*; and you reading, say ‘thus and thus is how I feel and think.’ In this way *we are brought nearer together* through the columns of the woman’s page. Do you catch my meaning?”⁸² Constructing her page as a conversation between intimates, in turn, meant Fenton was not simply Woman journalist, but friend to her readers. As such, she could confess to a correspondent as being “‘not very wise,’ as the editors will assure you, if you ask them.”⁸³ Yet, reminding her reader that although she ruled gently in this sphere, in that larger sphere of the newspaper, she was much like any other woman.

Humility was thus a crucial means by which women editors constituted their pages as being both a part of and apart from the broader newspaper. After all, as it was widely believed, “[Readers] want an oracle who will convince them of what they wish to believe...More brains than heart spoils the success of [the woman’s page], for the genius of the work is the combination of the two.”⁸⁴ In turn, Fenton, along with Coleman, mobilized the printed page as a medium through which women’s private relationships with each other could be extended, widened and made public. But as this relationship was mediated by the newspaper, not just the woman’s page, it symbolically extended this relationship to the rest of the newspaper, domesticating it, while simultaneously drawing from the larger function and purpose of the newspaper

itself. In this sense, one can begin to see how Fenton's *Empire* and Coleman's *Kingdom* began to fit into a feminized Canadian empire.

Although Fenton was late in developing a personalized, intimate feel to her page, she was in other ways more open to her readers, establishing a different kind of advisor role to her readers. As a helpful and knowledgeable advisor she would accept manuscripts and stanzas of poetry for the occasional line of comment, unlike Coleman. She also would agree to meet with a correspondent occasionally, as she did with *Prairie Lily*, whose poem she rejected as being too morbid. After providing her with some needed cheering and even some advice as to where to gain some inspiration, ("Now, listen. The summer is coming, and when the prairie blossoms are really are in bloom go out and walk among them"), she turns friend with the invitation, "Certainly you may come and see me, if your trip brings you to Toronto; there is no reason why not."⁸⁵ To another correspondent she offered to publish a sketch of her travels, without pay, of course,⁸⁶ and even apologized for not being able to correspond privately with another for lack of time.⁸⁷ She also published her work hours in "Our Letter Bag" when responding to a correspondent, inviting any correspondent to visit her at the *Empire* offices while she was working her "odd hours."⁸⁸ Again, although Fenton's sincerity as friend and advisor was reinforced by her willingness to meet correspondents, she remains part of the newspaper world—working odd hours in an office otherwise full of men. Coleman, on the other hand, resolutely refused to meet her readers.

Towards the end of her time on *The Empire* Fenton had adopted a comfortable intimate tone with her readers. In a column published shortly before the untimely merger that forced her out of regular newspaper journalism, she drew on their established relationship in proposing to have a “round table talk – an experience meeting, if you please” with her readers. Interested in challenging other journalistic writings on “the characteristics of the woman of to-day,” she makes the crucial distinction, “I do not mean that mythical creature of the syndicate letter or magazine article, who serves well enough as a dummy for needy writers to trick out in feminine apparel. But I refer to the real women – she of steady pulse and modest impulse.” This woman proves to be Faith Fenton herself, as she reveals towards the end of her column, with the simple words, “I speak as a woman to women.” Fenton carefully draws on her authority, not only in her authentic knowledge as a woman, but also as the editor who receives and makes sense out of the letters sent to her. She can securely claim a specialized kind of knowledge of her readers, one that seemingly relies on her claim to knowing as a woman, but that is also rooted in her journalistic practice: “I know, for you have told me, in often unconscious plainings, of your searches, your restless questionings and blind outreachings.”⁸⁹ Thus, she is able to claim a kind of knowledge that even her readers do not have of themselves. Able to see through their unconscious thoughts, she can offer direction to the lost and provide answers for those seeking them. Safely within the proper sphere of femininity and womanly concern, neither reader nor journalist need worry about becoming unwomanly.

Maintaining an appropriate balance of womanliness was more than rhetoric for the Woman journalist: a compromised femininity could prove fatal to her authority and trust in her capacities as Mother and Friend. That is to say, these roles that produced “Kit” and “Faith,” who the readers knew so well, were carefully mediating particular gendered and journalistic identities. As mothers and advisors, they were authoritative and trustworthy; as a friend, they spoke to women, that branch of the “people” who so interested the advertisers. Being all these things meant a constant negotiation for the Woman journalist. While being friend, Mother and advisor was crucial to the domestic feel of the page, remaining in control of it and the relationships it engendered was equally crucial to its function in the newspaper and the Woman journalist’s professionalism.

Questions regarding her “true” nature, for instance, threatened to undermine these relationships by pointing to their constructed nature. For instance, in 1890, Coleman received a particularly scathing indictment of her column from a reader. “Resedas” not only pronounced her column silly, s/he declares s/he had uncovered the truth about “Kit,” who was secretly a man. This “would-be Mrs. Kit” responds in dripping sarcasm, first complimenting “Resedas” for his/her obvious “perspicacity.” Coleman clearly thinks “Resedas” arrogant in assuming s/he, unlike other readers and despite Coleman’s efforts to disguise it, surmised Coleman’s secret: “I think you very talented, but the role you have assumed is rather transparent.” The arrogance is problematic precisely because it usurps Coleman’s “role” as Queen of this Kingdom. But Coleman’s careful retorts, blow by blow using sophisticated and

formal language, also betrays just how threatening these question could be. Consequently, her response was serious indeed: "Please forgive me this time 'Resedas,' and do send me some ideas for lofty subjects. I am very sorry the chapter on moles was too poor a thing for your gigantic brain to stoop to. I think the editorial sheet would suit your superior intellectual powers better than Woman's Kingdom."⁹⁰ Banishment from the Kingdom. This severe punishment indeed seems somehow out of line with the offense. But the question of Coleman's sex threatened to undermine the crucially important confidential relationship with readers, and after banishing "Resedas," she is quick to reassert her rule: "No; don't be frightened, girls, as...your little secrets about powder and paint, frills and fashions" will not be betrayed. Clearly should Coleman be a man, the nature of many of the correspondences would not only become ridiculous, they would be immoderate, immodest and wholly inappropriate.

Coleman works overtime to push "Resedeas" out of the Kingdom, first suggesting "Resedeas" brush up on spelling before writing again and to avoid using French. Yet, Coleman goes further still by pointing out, blow by blow, each spelling error as a way, no doubt, of humiliating this reader and finally banishing the reader to the editorial page and out of the Kingdom. But if this was about remaining careful about the trust of her readers, this was also about the precariousness with which Coleman had authority over the content of and rule over the Kingdom. Coleman's constant reference to improper grammar served to remind "Resedas" and all her readers that despite assurances otherwise, they remained of different classes. All

claims to friendship aside, spelling became a benchmark whereby class lines would be reinscribed and Coleman's ultimate authority as editor reinscribed. Coleman, above all else, considered those "personal remarks and curious corrections, and rearrangement and alteration" of her work sent in by her readers to be a particular affront – "particularly when the Queen's English is murdered, and the spelling is worth showing in a dime museum."⁹¹ Clearly alluding to class differences, Coleman found more than one way of keeping some readers out and assuring her own reign.⁹² Though this was to be a personalized relationship, Coleman's rhetorical distancing points to her reluctance to make it that personal – though, of course, her response would indicate it did become just that. Becoming, in these instances, Lady journalist, not simply Woman journalist, this authoritative voice would become crucial when she ventured outside the small world of women's correspondences and stepped into the slums of the city, as will be discussed in the following chapter.

Interestingly, while these women's journalism was predicated on the very notion of being Woman, the inherent contradictions in the particular kinds of womanliness they lived and how it was always in threat of being undermined by their journalistic work, were simply mended over. This is a case of much more than simply ignoring or even highlighting how different these women were in light of their work. Rather, this took particular discursive strategies to contain these potential contradictions from becoming too unruly. For instance, the earliest years of Coleman's work as a journalist were marked by her live-in relationship with Theodocia, and not her children. Her domestic lifestyle, though unusual for its lack

of presence of either men or children, was nonetheless acceptable with female companionship. Theodocia's unorthodox nature, including her often liberal or inconsistent views, could be stressed again and again precisely because they were *hers* and *not* Coleman's, perhaps freeing Coleman to test out new ideas on her readers.⁹³ Despite this, however, Coleman frequently described more conventional and desired domestic settings and spoke of them intimately. This highlights on the one hand, the predictability and ideological nature of these domestic settings that were so well formulated that one could describe them without living them; on the other hand, however, it also points to the necessity of needing to speak from this position, for her identity as journalist writing as a Woman, demanded this familiarity. To be a woman – more importantly yet, to be a public woman – required an engagement with the personal. But, as demonstrated, the paper that was less invested in the intimate and everyday, did not necessarily require the same level of womanly discourse. Certainly, Faith Fenton used a different voice not only to speak to women, but to also call into being her own journalistic position. Less invested in the intimacies of women's everyday lives, Fenton was liberated somewhat from placing herself within the role of the mother, friend or domestic woman. Interestingly, this liberty meant Fenton could discuss her engagement with the office spaces of the newspaper in a way that Coleman very rarely did. While Coleman would continually stress her work space *at home*, Fenton would describe her encounters with male journalists in the office, or her escorted walks home late into the night, as many “typical” journalists did after a day of writing copy and meeting deadline. Despite these various positions Fenton and

Coleman were equally firmly entrenched within an authoritative role as Woman journalist. The inconsistencies and variety contained within this position points to the “unity in difference” of ideology—a unity which, through hegemony, smooths over these otherwise incompatible roles.⁹⁴

The Woman’s Page and the Weekend Edition

Setting out to discuss “the mother of working-days” in 1892, Kit Coleman made explicit how she saw her page fitting in with the lives of her working girls:

You will doubtless be reading this, dear girls, on Saturday, when the half holiday with the whole holiday of Sunday to back it up are before you, or mayhap on Sunday, when Monday is looming before you, and you will say I am horrid to talk about the dreariest day of the week just when you want to enjoy yourselves; but this first day of the working week is such a nightmare to all of us sometimes that perhaps we can shake it off by talking a little bit about it.

Doing just that, Coleman goes on to sketch the horrors of working days of different classes of workers, including, quite interestingly, her own craftspeople:

Then the newspapers! Oh, the glory of Saturday in a newspaper office, when the managing editor has shut up his desk and files away his awful pile of correspondence on questions political, municipal, and religious...and, after a keen glance over his particular paper, and all the other town papers, goes off cheerfully to get a breath of air on the lake;...when the reporters fall over themselves in their hurry to reach the elevator, and crowd in, happy in the thought that Police Court and Esplanade promenades and accidents are done with for a day and a half;...when the newspaper woman looks at her column and grasps her parasol firmly with intent to lay it across the compositors’ shoulders for all those frightful misprints, but, thinking better of it, straightens her

bonnet, flicks a blot of powder off her nose, and walks away in a dignified manner...and hurries off when she gets out of sight, and jostles her way to the steamboat with hundreds of others, trusting that the generosity of a long-suffering public will, if it reads her stuff at all, forgive her the printers' errors, most of which are her own...⁹⁵

Just like her readers, Coleman—even her stuffy editor and fellow reporters—liked to kick back and relax on their weekends, while, of course, all sharing a glance at their papers. This was precisely what the weekend edition hoped for: to be part of the ways in which their readers would relax and think about other things for a while. Ever self-effacing, Coleman can simultaneously put herself in the world of busy reporters, even if she holds little power within it to ensure her copy is handled correctly, while simultaneously being like “hundreds of others” anxious to bring her own “mother of a working-day” to a close.

As Coleman suggests in the first passage, the woman's page was an important part of the weekend edition,⁹⁶ in attempting to connect with readers within more personalized and intimate terms that would give representational weight to the claim to being of and for the “people.” The feminized space of the woman's page, then, helped to domesticate the rest of the newspaper, even as it was set off as being different from the rest of it. A picture of veritable tranquility, the woman's page represented the domestication of the newspaper – a tiny space of entirely “feminine” appeal permitted within an otherwise dusty, dirty place.⁹⁷ (See Fig. 4-1.) Thus, as this chapter has demonstrated the woman's pages were not isolated and unrelated to the remainder of the newspaper; they did have significance in spite of their popularity.⁹⁸



Fig. 4-1. Lady Editor's Sanctum, "*The Globe. A Modern Newspaper Office*" (Toronto: The Globe, 1896), 12.

If the woman journalist had to mobilize the very femininity that was continually under threat in her work to be meaningful to her readers, her page was constituted in a similar paradox surrounding its difference: founded upon and relying on a claim to being different, the page nonetheless remained connected to the rest of the newspaper through its ideological work in mediating the public and private through the family. Similarly situated to the rest of the paper, the woman's page sought to speak to all women through a womanly voice that could be anything it needed to be: sympathetic, helpful, informative, and chastising. Whether as an

advisor responding to questions of various kinds from readers, or as friend reaching out to lend a helping hand, or moderating topics of conversation between readers, the Woman journalist's persona was developed. Moving from being Woman who can speak to any woman, Fenton and Coleman also became a Lady journalist when needed, thus mobilizing specific modalities of class in constituting these gendered roles.

In this way, the page could help the paper achieve its broader goal of speaking to the people by imagining itself to be a part of them. In this sense, the newspaper, in its idealized relationship with its readers, sought to extend its influence from the political hall and business office to the home, thereby also turning the home into a site of consumption. And at that site, an emergent role for women as citizens appeared as they became enmeshed in public affairs and learned of the new work women were doing. The roles of mother, advisor and friend would be crucial in allowing the woman journalist to expand her journalistic experiences outward, beyond the Home. As the next chapter will explore, as a travel writer and adventuress, the Woman journalist was connected to her fellow journalists in practicing a new and exciting journalism that was connected to the streets, yet be every bit Woman.

NOTES

Unless otherwise indicated all articles taken from *The Daily Mail* appeared on Kit Coleman's page, "Woman's Kingdom."

Unless otherwise indicated all articles taken from *The Empire* appeared on Faith Fenton's page, "Woman's Empire."

¹ "Woman's World," *The Globe*, 12 November 1886: 8.; emphasis mine. Also cited, under the heading "Grandmotherly Repose", in *Sara Jeannette Duncan: Selected Journalism*, ed. Thomas Tausky (Ottawa: The Tecumseh Press, 1978), 32-3.

² Christine Gledhill, "Genre and Gender: The Case of Soap Opera," in *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, ed. Stuart Hall (London: Sage Publications, 1997), 350.

³ Joan W. Scott, "Experience," in *Feminists Theorize the Political*, ed. J. Butler and J.W. Scott (London: Routledge, 1992), 24-5. What counts as experience (particularly as it relates to historical evidence) is a term that must be deconstructed for poststructuralist historians like Scott: "it is always contested, always therefore political" (37). In this article, she argues that experience cannot be viewed as a self-evident, straightforward category but is produced by discursive and ideological systems which render events meaningful—what she refers to as discourse's "productive quality" (34). Although one could argue that this argument takes poststructuralism to its most dangerous ends (see Stuart Hall's comments on this, for instance), it does make the important theoretical point that context is more than simply a set of external conditions within which individuals act. For Stuart Hall's comments on the limits to a postmodern understanding of language, see "On postmodernism and articulation: An interview with Stuart Hall," ed. Larry Grossberg in *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, ed. David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen (London: Routledge, 1996), 141-8. Thus, to understand the woman journalist is to treat her emergence as a historical event that must be accounted for, rather than taken as given. Furthermore, it requires that she be examined in terms of her engagement with other systems of representations.

⁴ Scott, "Gender: A useful category of analysis," in *Feminism and History*, ed. J.W. Scott (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 157.

⁵ Scott writes: "To pursue meaning, we need to deal with the individual subject as well as social organization and to articulate the nature of their interrelationships, for both are crucial to understanding how gender works, where change occurs" ("Gender," 167).

⁶ The connection between women journalists and literary endeavors is deeply engrained. In fact, Faith Fenton was one of the rare women who did not write very much fiction, aside from an occasional short story. Sara Jeannette Duncan, for instance, is better known for her work as a novelist than as a journalist. Indeed, most introductions to her work point to her work as a journalist simply as early evidence that she was motivated to support herself through her pen. I would contend that, in fact, the world of journalism provided her with many of the themes she would later take up in her novels. The struggle to assert authority within the newspaper – one that was both serious and popular – pervades the work of women journalists and was one that Duncan would have encountered in her early work in journalism. See Barbara Freeman for a discussion of Coleman's deflated dreams of fulfilling

her literary ambition. For instance, setting her own work apart as mere “scribbling,” Coleman laments the distance between her work and that of the great women novelists: “...the mediocre success we, alas! Most of us arrive at, is almost more fatal than utter failure... Sometimes one wonders is it the lot of women? But then come the beacon-lights – Eliot, Humphrey Ward, Georges Sand – clarion call, the very names of them are; and we respond, we weaker ones, and shrill feebly that we are coming – we are coming.” (Quoted in Barbara Freeman, *Kit's Kingdom: The Journalism of Kathleen Blake Coleman*, (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1989), 94-5).

⁷ Barbara Godard, “A Portrait with Three Faces: The New Woman in Fiction by Canadian Women, 1880-1920,” *The Literary Criterion* 19:3-4 (1984), 74.

⁸ These are central elements in Scott’s call to treating gender as an “analytic category:” “gender is a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes, and gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power,” while recognizing that power is dispersed in unequal relationships (“Gender,” 167).

⁹ Brooke Kroeger, *Nellie Bly: Daredevil, Reporter, Feminist* (New York: Random House, 1994), 104.

¹⁰ Donald Matheson, “The Birth of News Discourse: changes in news language in British newspapers, 1880-1930,” *Media, Culture and Society*, 22:5 (2000): 560.

¹¹ Lang, *Women who made the News: Female Journalists in Canada, 1880-1945* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1999), 141.

¹² Lang, 144. Strikingly, however, there was some consistency in the pages across newspaper institutions. Most contained a sketch or lead column of some kind signed by the editor, with the remainder a miscellany of clipped items, fashion notes, correspondence and other domestic items. Madge Merton in particular ran a lively correspondence section that mirrored Coleman’s “Letter Club.”

¹³ Lang, “Separate Entrances: The First Generation of Canadian Women Journalists,” in *Re(dis)covering our Foremothers: Nineteenth-Century women writers*, ed. Lorraine McMullen (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1990), 87.

¹⁴ An interesting story is told in M.O. Hammond’s unpublished history of *The Globe* that describes Faith Fenton, acting with great journalistic responsibility as the Yukon correspondent for the paper in 1898, hiring a quick rider to catch up with the postman who had carried away an inaccurate report describing the execution of three men that had not taken place due to a legal technicality. Hammond describes Fenton’s reaction: “She must not ‘let down’ *The Globe*; she could not be guilty of sending false news” (“Ninety Years of *The Globe*,” Unpublished Manuscripts, p. 226, M.O. Hammond fonds, F1075, MU 1290, Archives of Ontario). Interestingly, however, no comment is made about sending a report before the event actually happened, pointing to the way in which the eyewitness account could be circumscribed by the dictates of meeting deadline. Instead she is valorized for her

quick thinking, which was, no doubt, heightened by being on staff in this position for only a little over a year.

¹⁵ Despite this, examples of a yellow tendency can be found if one looks hard enough. Witness the headline, “WOMAN MURDER. DISMEMBERED REMAINS FOUND IN SEVERAL PLACES,” which, no doubt, left readers feeling a little queasy, if not down right shocked at the graphic nature of such details publicly expressed. The headline WOMAN MURDER was entirely capitalized and spanned the column. It is worth noting however that it appeared half way down the fourth column on the page, making its effect perhaps somewhat more subdued (*The Globe*, 11 Oct. 1899, p.8).

¹⁶ Paul Rutherford, *A Victorian Authority*; Paul Rutherford, “The People’s Press;” Minko Sotiron, *From Politics to Profit: The Commercialization of Canadian Daily Newspapers, 1890-1920* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1997), 133. Rutherford quotes Hamilton’s *The Herald*, 6 May 1890, as advocating for a little bit of sensationalism within their pages: “What is a newspaper published for if not to produce sensations – to make an impression upon its readers and the public? The sleepy, old style of journalism which contents itself with printing the stereotyped ‘news’ never created a sensation, but it never accomplished anything worthy of mention” (quoted p. 133). Certainly the impulse toward making an impression and adding a new perspective was common by this time. The idea that life was interesting enough to produce these sensations without need to embellish was a common approach within the Canadian papers – unlike their American counterparts who were known for excessive sensationalism. It is interesting to note, however, that *La Presse*, by the early twentieth century, had stretched the limits of sensationalism so far that they were often accused of making up their stories, with some truthfulness behind the accusations. For more on this see: McKenzie Porter, “The Pulse of French Canada.” *Maclean’s Magazine*, 15 Mar. 1954: 18+.

¹⁷ Lang, *Women who Made the News*, 38-9.

¹⁸ “Bric-a-Bac,” *The Star*, 25 Jan. 1888. Re-published in Tausky, *Sara Jeannette Duncan*, 49.

¹⁹ Mary Elizabeth McOuat to Mary Bouchier Sanford, Dec. 5 [no year], Folder – No Date, Mary Bouchier Sanford fonds, F1104, Box MU 2566, Archives of Ontario. Interestingly, McOuat learned everything she knew from Cynthia Westover Alden, who was her editor at the New York *Tribune*.

²⁰ Flora McDonald, “The Newspaper Woman. One Side of the Question,” *The Journalist*, 26 Jan. 1889: 13.

²¹ Margaret Bateson, *Professional Women upon their Professions* (London: Horace Cox, 1895), 124.

²² Bateson, 125.

²³ Bateson, 124.

²⁴ McDonald, 13.

²⁵ This concept of realism and its complicated relationship to the dramatic elements of new journalism will be further explored later in this chapter. The corollary to realism, experience, and the importance of the woman journalist as witness will also be considered in more depth in the following chapter.

²⁶ "The Reporter Says," *The Journalist*, 5 Apr. 1884, p. 3.

²⁷ Rutherford, *A Victorian Authority*, 81. It is curious that Rutherford makes such a strong distinction to support a divide between "reporters" and "journalists." Rutherford does not offer any further clarification as to what each term meant, or how this hierarchy was established. Barnhurst & Nerone's classifications of "scavenger," referring to the reporter, and "correspondent," who was generally a columnist and had a cultivated personality, perhaps clarify Rutherford's meaning. Kevin Barnhurst and John Nerone, *The Form of News, A History* (New York: Guildford press, 2001), 17.

²⁸ J.E.B. McCready, "The Special Correspondent," *Canadian Magazine*, 29:6 (1907): 550. McCready worked for *The Globe* as a parliamentary correspondent in the early 1880's.

²⁹ Rutherford, 81.

³⁰ John Cameron to J.S. Willison, 31 May 1881, File 6-47: Correspondence, pp. 3868-3905, p. 3868, John Stephen Willison fonds, MG 30 D29, Volume 6, National Archives of Canada.

³¹ Rutherford, 80. It is worth noting that Willison began at *The London Advertiser* by learning the printing trade first. Cameron to Willison, 14 Jun. 1881, File 6-47: Correspondence, pp. 3868-3905, p. 3870, John Stephen Willison fonds, MG 30 D 29, Volume 6, National Archives of Canada.

³² C.H.J. Snider, Autobiographical Memoir, Folder: Biographical and Family, 1896-1976, C.H.J. Snider fonds, F1194, MU 7686, Archives of Ontario.

³³ Elizabeth Banks, *Autobiography of a 'Newspaper Girl'* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1902), 51.

³⁴ Banks, 249.

³⁵ Donald Matheson argues that British Victorian papers did not adopt an authoritative voice that sought to produce knowledge. As he puts it, "...Victorian news seems to have been able only to *represent* information, while the modern news story *was itself* a piece of information" ("The birth," 565). Though outside the parameters of his research, it would be interesting to see how women's journalism fit into his findings. Certainly, my research suggests that Canadian women were most certainly producing authoritative news stories that relied entirely on their observations and gathered evidence, including interviews (something which was not widely practiced in Britain, according to Matheson, with the exception of *The Pall Mall Gazette* [568]).

³⁶ *Montreal Star*, 25 Jan. 1888.

³⁷ Goldwin Smith, "Leader-Writing" in *A History of Canadian Journalism in the Several Portions of the Dominion, with a Sketch of the Canadian Press Association, 1859-1908*. 1908. Edited by a Committee of the Association. 1908. Toronto. (New York: AMS Press Inc., 1976), xiii-xv.

³⁸ Smith, xiv.

³⁹ Nerone and Barnhurst, *The Form of News*, 100-103. Nerone and Barnhurst note that the correspondent's reports were typically segregated from other news and provided "regular voices or personae" (103). Women's pages must therefore be seen as part of this general trend.

⁴⁰ "Woman's World," *The Globe*, 2 Apr. 1887: 5.

⁴¹ "How an American Girl became a Journalist," in Tausky, *Sara Jeannette Duncan*: 9.

⁴² E.E. Sheppard, "Around Town," *Saturday Night*, 6 Sep. 1890: 1.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Lang, *Women who made the News*, 36-7. Of course, Lang is right, but not for the reasons she cites. Rather, her journalism could not be understood outside of her gender and thus was written into every word she printed.

⁴⁵ "The Courage of Women," *The Daily Mail*, 19 Jul. 1890: 5; "Women's Tongues," *The Daily Mail*, 07 Jun. 1890: 5; "The Aggressively Neat Woman," *The Daily Mail*, 31 May 1890: 5.

⁴⁶ "Ideal Men," *The Daily Mail*, 10 May 1890: 5; "Stay-at-Home husbands," *The Daily Mail*, 21 Jun. 1890: 5.

⁴⁷ "An Hour with Working Girls," *The Daily Mail*, 6 Aug. 1892: 5. She similarly cast herself in a column on "Women who work—some pictures from real life," *The Daily Mail*, 12 Apr. 1890: 5.

⁴⁸ "Woman's Kingdom," *The Daily Mail*, 25 Oct. 1890: 5.

⁴⁹ This may have been founded on the pragmatics of keeping up with a column and correspondence week after week. Coleman once responded to a reader by saying: "Sometimes I feel I must sit on Time, and hold him down while I get a few extra strokes of the pen; but he always bobs up serenely and ticks away at the top of my desk in a cruelly triumphant manner." (Response to "Constance," *The Daily Mail*, 6 Aug. 1892, 8).

⁵⁰ "Toronto Home for Incurables," *The Empire*, 05 May 1888: 5; "A Woman's Meeting," *The Empire*, 04 Nov. 1893; "Mrs. Ballington Booth," *The Empire*, 17 May 1890: 5.

⁵¹ See Jill Downie's account of the connections Fenton's family had to the stage (*A Passionate Pen: The Life and Times of Faith Fenton* [Toronto: HarperCollins Publishers, 1996], 16-18). Fenton was, in fact, descendant from a stage actress on her father's side.

⁵² "Here and There," *The Empire*, 20 Jun 1891: 5. Fenton raised the topic in response to a column written in *New York Herald* about women's pages. She asked her correspondents to write her and describe their ideal page.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Response to "Peter Parley," "Our Letter Bag," *The Empire* 07 April 1894: 11.

⁵⁵ Response to "In Confidence," *The Empire*, 02 Dec. 1893: 11.

⁵⁶ "Here and There," *The Empire* 04 July 1891: 5.

⁵⁷ "Woman's Empire," *The Empire*, 14 Apr. 1894:11.

⁵⁸ "From the Gallery," *The Empire*, 02 Jun. 1894: 11.

⁵⁹ "At the Chicago World's Fair," *The Empire*, 20 May 1893, 7.

⁶⁰ See the exchange that took place in *The Daily Mail* between 11 Jan. 1889, p. 5 and 18 Jan. 1889, p. 5.

⁶¹ "Woman's Kingdom," *The Daily Mail*, 11 Jan 1890: 5.

⁶² One exception was the annual Anniversary edition, which usually ran twenty pages and would feature more illustrations and used half-tone photographs.

⁶³ Vanity Fair disappeared May 17 1890.

⁶⁴ Before resigning February 15 1894, Fenton had already missed nine and a half days of teaching, perhaps indicating how untenable an expanded page and her teaching had become. See Inspector's Reports for January and February 1894 in *Minutes of the Proceedings of the Toronto Public School Board, for 1894*, (Toronto: J.S Williams, 1895), p. 36 and 84 respectively. It is also worth noting that in the Inspector's Report no. 5 for May 1893, it is noted that Freeman missed 12 days of work, followed by the annotation "at World's Fair." This throws doubt on Jill Downie's contention that Fenton lived a double identity that no one knew about. Clearly the School Board was aware of her other work, even if her readers were not necessarily. Downie may have overly stressed the double life in order to stress how incredibly different each job was from the other (*A Passionate Pen*).

⁶⁵ "Woman's Kingdom," *The Daily Mail*, 30 Nov. 1889: 5

⁶⁶ “Answers to Correspondents,” *The Empire*, 10 Nov. 1888: 5.

⁶⁷ As Cecilia Morgan notes, sentimentality was used as a rhetorical strategy throughout the nineteenth century, particularly in popular literature and the newspaper. She writes, “Sentimentality itself was a cultural tool that helped provide the middle class with a framework for envisioning and regulating the relations of gender, class and race within the British and American bourgeoisie. This framework helped to divorce the so-called public realm of political life from the private world of affections, masking and obscuring the relations of power and contestation that shaped and linked home, market, nation-state an imperial power” (“Better than Diamonds:’ Sentimental strategies and Middle-class culture in Canada West,” *The Journal of Canadian Studies* 32:4 [1998]: 126).

⁶⁸ “Women’s Tongues,” *The Daily Mail*, 07 June 1890: 5.

⁶⁹ “Ideal Men,” *The Daily Mail*, 10 May 1890: 5.

⁷⁰ “Kit and the Crossing-Sweeper,” *The Daily Mail*, 15 March 1890: 5.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² “Woman’s Kingdom,” *Mail and Empire*, 14 May 1898: 4 (Part 2).

⁷³ “Here and There,” *The Empire*, 04 Mar. 1893: 5.

⁷⁴ “Our Letter Bag,” *The Empire*, 13 Jan. 1894: 11.

⁷⁵ “What my letters tell,” *The Empire*, 14 Jan. 1893: 7.

⁷⁶ “About People and Things,” *The Empire*, 25 Mar. 1893: 7.

⁷⁷ Fenton wrote that she was not certain she would comment on a correspondent’s question about female relationships, even if space allowed, since “it is rather a subjective theme for a newspaper column” (“About People and Things,” *The Empire*, 06 May 1893: 7).

⁷⁸ “Letter Club,” *The Daily Mail*, 05 Jul. 1890: 5.

⁷⁹ “Here and There,” *The Empire* 20 Jun 1891: 5.

⁸⁰ “At the World’s Fair,” *The Empire*, 27 May 1893: 11.

⁸¹ “In Confidence” writes that in Fenton’s columns she uses the personal pronoun approximately 35 times on average, and at times more often. Despite claiming having lost the letter, Fenton appears to have no trouble remembering the figures (Response to “In Confidence,” *The Empire*, 02 Dec. 1893: 11).

⁸² Ibid; emphasis mine.

⁸³ Response to “Admirer, North Bruce,” *The Empire*, 07 Apr. 1894: 11.

⁸⁴ “Newspaper Women,” *Frank Leslie’s Weekly*, n.d., Scrapbook on KBC’s career (unbound, 20 folders), n.d., 1895-1906, p. 15, Kathleen Blake Coleman fonds, vol. 3, National Archives of Canada.

⁸⁵ Response to “Prairie Lily,” *The Empire*, 24 Mar. 1894: 11.

⁸⁶ Response to “Novem, Dusseldorf-on-the-Rhine,” *The Empire*, 03 Mar. 1894: 11. Fenton also offered to read another correspondent’s manuscript (Response to “J.S.M.” *The Empire*, 13 Jan. 1894: 11).

⁸⁷ Response to “A.F.M.” *The Empire* Mar. 03 1894: 11.

⁸⁸ Response to “Unarma,” *The Empire*, 07 Apr. 1894: 11.

⁸⁹ “Woman’s Empire,” *The Empire*, 5 Jan. 1895: 11.

⁹⁰ Response to “Resedas,” *The Daily Mail*, 12 Apr. 1890: 5.

⁹¹ Response to “H.F.” *The Daily Mail*. 8 Nov. 1890: 5.

⁹² On other occasions she would simply edit outright her readers’ letters. Although appropriate when she received a large amount of correspondence, she nonetheless let readers know in a number of different ways that she was in charge of this Kingdom. See for instance, 24 May 1890: 5. She also constantly referred to her editorial prerogative to simply throw out letters that were offensive.

⁹³ I am thankful to Catherine McKercher for this observation. Although Barbara Freeman suggests that Theodocia was not a “real” woman, my interest here is in the rhetorical effect this character had in creating a separation between her more ‘reasonable’ positions and those of the more radical Theodocia (See Freeman, *Kit’s Kingdom*, 31).

⁹⁴ Stuart Hall, “Signification, Representation, Ideology: Althusser and the Post-structuralist debates.” *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 2 (1985): 95.

⁹⁵ “The Mother of Working-Days,” *The Daily Mail*, 30 Jul. 1892: 5.

⁹⁶ It should be noted that Faith Fenton also wrote a bi-weekly column entitled, “As You Like It” throughout her journalistic career at *The Empire*. The column normally appeared on Tuesdays and Thursdays, though it was somewhat sporadic, perhaps due to the demands Fenton’s other full time job as a schoolteacher placed on her. This column carried a miscellany of various editorial items ranging from snippets of interviews made by Fenton with stage actors, literary personalities and, occasionally, political figures as well. This column, in particular, demonstrates the range of connections and acquaintances Fenton

made during the course of her journalistic career. For instance, Fenton includes a short paragraph reporting on a conversation she had on a train with Mr. Sutherland, the Opposition whip, returning from his North-West tour with Sir Wilfrid Laurier. It is clear that the reportorial skills that would serve her so well in her post-Empire career were honed during these years (see, "As You Like It," *The Empire*, 08 Nov. 1894: 4). Surely a consequence of the different orientation of their pages, the more overtly political nature of her page meant that Fenton would have had to cultivate a wider range of sources for her journalistic material. Coleman, on the other hand, invested as she was in the personal, would only occasionally cite "official" sources of whatever nature, be it political, literary or of the stage.

⁹⁷ "The Globe. A Modern Newspaper Office," (Toronto: The Globe, 1896), PAMPH 1896 #38, Archives of Ontario, 12.

⁹⁸ Marjorie Lang writes that the women's pages were "rigorously contained" within the inside pages "lest they emasculate the other 'serious' sections" (Lang, *Women who wrote the News*, 146). Even as early as 1890, only two years after Fenton had begun her page on *The Empire*, the paper, in expanding its reach to the people would publicize Fenton's page on the front cover in a small item "In Today's Empire," usually located in the top left hand corner of the front page, detailing the contents of the paper. Indeed it is my argument that there can be no 'outside' or inside here, as it all made up the cultural terrain newspaper readers encountered. Although there is no way of knowing just how many male or female readers read any or all of the sections of the newspaper, the inclusion of the woman's page meant inclusion in the ideological role and purpose of the newspaper. In this sense, the woman's page was more than relevant, more than triviality, as both Rutherford and Sotiron have argued. Rather, it was crucial to the refashioning of the newspaper.

Chapter 5

Stunts, Social Explorations and Travel: The Lady Journalist on the Move

As the previous chapter examined, Kit Coleman and Faith Fenton mobilized a variety of strategies and practices in order to construct knowable and identifiable public identities as women journalists. This process involved transforming common ideological markers of femininity into personalized modes of address, captured in the subject positions of advisor, Mother and moderator, which achieved the journalistic goal of securing an authoritative voice with which to speak. These identities carefully straddled the dialectic and made compatible the otherwise incompatible subject positions of Woman and Journalist. In addition, through these public identities, Fenton and Coleman blurred notions of public and private by building a readership that was predicated on the kinds of attachments associated with women's private relationships: intimacy, personal revelation, and understood codes of femininity. Through their weekly contributions over time, readers came to know and trust the authority of their lady advisors. These relationships permeated the woman's page and helped to establish its overall logic. In other words, linking femininity with journalistic practice allowed women journalists to speak to their readers within conventional and conservative codes as Woman, constructing regimes of femininity within the woman's page.

But, women's journalism also expanded a public role for women by, what I'm calling, mobile practices. Challenging the notion that women belonged in the private

domain of the home, both Fenton and Coleman were out in the city, in the countryside or abroad, exploring, meeting all kinds of characters, traveling and writing about it all in great detail. This chapter explores these mobile adventures through two sub-genres of writing, travel writing and social explorations. It argues that because this journalism was practiced within already established regimes of femininity and the woman's page (mobilized through the subject positions identified above), its potentially radical and unconventional nature was ideologically contained. Always forced to straddle the dictates of womanhood and the expanding ideas of where and what the new journalism could be and do, this mobile journalism most closely aligned these women with their fellow craftsmen. The risks inherent in expanding their journalistic purview in this way, however, were most clearly evidenced in the case of the stunt journalism which, along with its precursor, social exploration, were contentious journalistic forms that explored the underside of poverty and slums. Containing the risks within the acceptable bounds of femininity, the Canadian woman's page editor who engaged in slumming and stunting was more a "sensationally womanly newspaper lady" than a stunt girl.



One of the biggest proponents of the new journalism was Joseph Pulitzer's *World*, published in New York. Journalism historian Frank Mott describes the reinvigorated *World* after Pulitzer took it over as being built around what he terms a

paradox of selling sound news reports, a strong editorial page that was deeply imbricated in the fabric of New York city life, alongside more trivial, often outrageously sensational news.¹ What came to be described as the new journalism, consequently, was rooted in the experience of living in ever changing, ever moving city spaces about which it purported to speak. The rise of the city news department supported this connection to the city as it grew steadily throughout the latter half of the century when both American and Canadian newspapers increased their local news coverage.² *The Mail*, *The Empire*, and *The Globe* all ran daily columns of local news, alongside news columns from surrounding cities which were either important financially, such as Montreal, or geographically, like Hamilton, where many readers could be found. While this approach – aided by telegraphic technology – filled the pages with local news that sought to construct a geographic audience, it also fulfilled social and symbolic purposes as well. The newspaper form, including its expanded content and layout style, was indicative of the idealized relationships with the newspapers' readers.³ Including news of local communities was one means by which these relationships were forged.⁴

As the importance of news grew (with a concomitant shift in editorial argumentation), getting it out fast and accurately also grew in importance. Before the century would turn, *The Mail and Empire* asserted that its news was free of partisan taint, accurate and rapidly delivered – all accomplished by the aid of the latest technology.⁵ However, this emphasis on news was not confined only to local news, and during this time there was also an increased interest in gathering news from

further afield. As early as 1888, *The Globe* identified its broadened mission to be connected to the world and its movements when it boasted, "...the nations of both hemispheres help to make it entertaining. Its staff feels the pulse beats of the world, and report many times a day the result of the diagnosis."⁶ Relying again on its technological "wonders," *The Globe's* "fast train" was not merely a means by which to deliver their papers to Western parts of the province faster and before other papers, it was no less than "a boon to the country"⁷ (Figure 5-1).

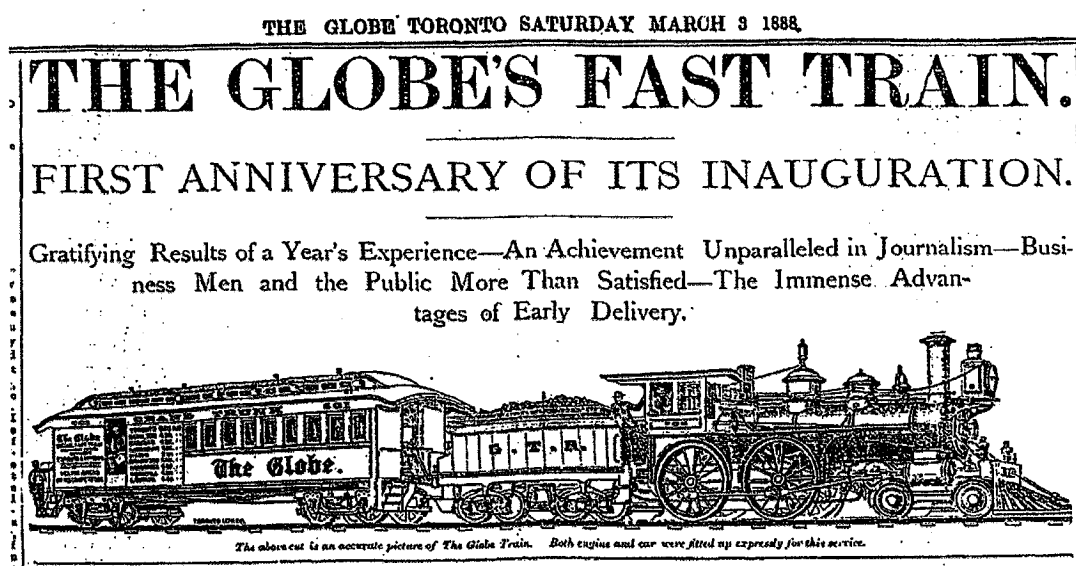


Fig. 5-1. Advertisement promoting *The Globe's* "unparalleled" achievement in journalism, *The Globe's* early edition "fast" train, which brought the paper to parts outside Toronto earlier than other papers. (3 Mar. 1888: 5).

Thus, the final decades of the nineteenth century witnessed the birth of the modern news organization that broadened its view to better capture the local scene, while simultaneously looking further afield. The attempt by women journalists to expand their perspectives beyond home to a broader worldview should be understood within this simultaneous engagement of the local and the (inter)national. As Patricia Jasen has documented in her study of nineteenth century tourism in Ontario, the expansion of the city was central to the tourist experience that answered an innate call to be wild in nature.⁸ The growing acceptance of holidaying made travel writing a popular genre for women journalists.

As cities expanded to become more diverse, especially with immigration, they also became increasingly stratified along class, ethnic and racial lines.⁹ Further, cities became the focus for an expanded discourse on class relations and poverty, especially as urban slums achieved greater attention.¹⁰ For the newspaper, finding ways to be culturally relevant, as well as being politically relevant (the traditional domain of the partisan newspaper), to these widening potential markets meant responding to changing cityscapes. Aside from geographic proximity, newspapers linked their readers together as a community by paying greater attention to the everyday lives of city residents everywhere – what gave the newspaper its popular appeal. Although they reached residents of rural communities and cities of varying size, the perspective was largely urban.

Equally important was the content of the newspaper that could appeal to and helped to construct a social geography of readers. Social geography – the cultural

meanings associated with geographic locales arising from their use by social groups – argues Mary Ryan, is useful for charting the complex ways in which the public and private are given meaning in urban space.¹¹ Thus journalists, as they explored and described various urban locales, were important actors in delimiting a kind of official discourse on social geography. As several commentators have noted, many writers and reformers of the nineteenth century were fascinated with making sense of the growing masses to be found around them, observing them and categorizing them into various “classes.”¹² Take, for instance, the pedestrian efforts of Madge Merton, editor of “Woman’s Work and Ways” in *The Globe*, to discourse on “classes” of “people who come into restaurants.”¹³ All women journalists participated in constructing this social geography for the women of the late nineteenth century, who moved through a variety of public spaces, especially when armed with a social mission, a shopping list or the desire to simply relax.

In what follows, I will explore this dual imperative to expand the geographic and social purview of the newspaper through the genre of travel writing. It covers a diverse range of travel experiences: from jaunts throughout the United States and Europe to the Light Houses of the Great Lakes; from the neighbouring small cities surrounding Toronto, to such foreign territory as the local mission houses, city courts and urban slums. These women journalists seemed to be everywhere. However, regardless of where they were, their travels always looked back Home. Through the construction and exploration of difference, this Home was idealized as a safe sanctum

of domesticity and stability, as well as a specifically Canadian home, one that was closely tied to its physical landscape and different than anywhere else.

I will begin with a brief discussion of their conventional writings while traveling. Although these columns were frequent and diverse, I wish only to discuss them in relationship to leisure.¹⁴ Typically involving excursions into less urban locales – and therefore, more “natural” environments – these columns betray a concern with urban living and the need for leisure. What emerged alongside discussions of the complex city spaces was a discourse that sought to place the countryside as a sort of retreat, a step back away from the march, dirt and grime of progress. They also construct the woman journalist as adventurer and most interestingly, as free spirited and fun loving.

Interest in women travel writers of the nineteenth century has exploded within the last decade of scholarship on Victorian studies. Though neither Kit Coleman, nor especially Faith Fenton, are generally recognized as travel writers *per se*, their travels were extensive enough to warrant limited attention here.¹⁵ Coleman was the more traveled of the two, a consequence no doubt of her extensive travels before she became a journalist and the wider opportunities afforded her at *The Mail*.¹⁶ In turn, she did more international traveling, with several trips to Europe and the United States.¹⁷ Childless and husbandless, Fenton was free to travel as broadly and frequently as her position permitted. Yet, working as a teacher full time for the most part of her employment at *The Empire* meant that she was forced to confine her travels to the summer months; even then, she does not seem to have been afforded

the same opportunities for travel abroad. In turn, Fenton tended to confine her travels to Canada, more specifically to Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes, with several trips to the United States, including a trip in 1891 and again in 1893 when she covered the World's Fair in Chicago.

The longer discussion that follows will consider their more sensational social exploration writing. This kind of travel was less about where they went than about whom they encountered—entrenching, while crossing, and even at times, disrupting, the distances that existed between the classes. While this made up a limited portion of their work, it has been the most discussed and the most controversial of their professional work. As stunt girls and social explorers, Fenton and Coleman entered the foreign terrain of the poor and the morally disreputable, carrying with them a gendered social mission to educate and entertain, and possibly, even reform society.

Continuing on the Move: The Travel Writer

Whether the series will be entertaining or not it will remain for those same kindly readers to decide. But certain it is, the writer will lend herself busily to the careful gathering of material for the same; that eyes and ears, hands and feet, aye, and every inward faculty will be devoted to seeing, listening and traveling, comparing for the dear Canadian women all our big Dominion over, for whose interest and pleasure these columns are written weekly.

In as far as description is possible, will be given the fun, the signs, the incidents, the grandeur and the weariness – for there will be much of the latter – of it all. Every bit shall be told honestly and without exaggeration, so that the readers who have come to know and to measure aright the words of the Woman's Empire, may gather, it may be, some conception of this great Worlds' Fair, as it seems to the eyes of a Canadian woman.¹⁸

With these words of promise and purpose, Faith Fenton embarked on her journey to the Chicago's World's Fair in 1893. Although she acknowledges the fun to

be had, she sacrificially offers her very body and senses to her journalistic duty to merely report it—not enjoy it—assuring her readers there will be much weariness, which, she implies, she will endure for their sake.¹⁹ Fenton promises to give her readers all that was expected of World’s Fairs – the very best of the world, an opportunity to tour it from one marvelous and spectacular location by going to great lengths to extend every part of herself to the duty of giving the women of Canada a report on the Fair and to prepare would-be travelers.

Wrapping herself in this sacrificial journalistic duty, Fenton seems poised to implicitly defend herself against such criticisms as those that appeared from time to time in the British publication *The Nineteenth Century*. Take for instance, E. Lynn Linton’s pointed attack against “the wild women,” that brand of New Woman captured perfectly by the daring lady journalist. Speaking to the explosion of travel writing by women at the end of the nineteenth century, Linton is merciless:

We are becoming a little surfeited with these Wild Women as globe-trotters and travelers. Their adventures, which for the most part are fictions based on a very small substratum of fact, have ceased to impress, partly because we have ceased to believe, and certainly ceased to respect. Who wanted them to run all these risks...? What good have they done by their days of starvation and nights of dread?...They have contributed nothing to our stock of knowledge...They have done nothing but lose their beauty, if they had any; for what went out fresh and comely comes back haggard and weather-beaten. It was quite unnecessary. They have lost, but the world has not gained...²⁰

Almost as if answering Linton’s critiques, Fenton’s purpose is clear. These columns, her toil and work, are for her readers who know that she will report faithfully, as she always has. Explicitly drawing from her trusting relationship with her readers, it is

those other columns, written as motherly advisor, that testify to her reliability. Assuming women would soon be visiting the Fair, she constructs for herself a different role as tour guide and trusted advisor that remains reader-centered and morally grounded.²¹ As she insists in a later column, “Because I am writing for women, and chiefly for women of very moderate means, I have been making it my business to discover the cheapest manner of living here that is consonant with niceness.”²²

Despite her typically self-effacing and sacrificing construction of womanhood, this careful construction of Fenton’s travel to the World’s Fair betrayed another set of assumptions that relied on the dichotomies of cities and nature. Although travel to cities offered all kinds of opportunities for adventure and experience, it was not considered truly relaxing. Caught within the hustle and bustle that makes a city so exciting, the city itself always threatened to further exhaust its explorers. Indeed as Kit Coleman exclaimed at several points during her stay in the White City, she was fed up with the people and the vulgarity of the place,²³ leading her to exclaim: “Dream City indeed! A horrid, sandy, tiresome, tramping ground, filled with fakes and trash and wind...Let’s go home!”²⁴ The city failed to offer peace and relaxation. Excursions into nature and day trips into the suburbs, on the other hand, offered the true kind of respite and recuperation any modern day middle class worker needed in order to remain fully productive. Travels to both the countryside and to the cities were another means by which these women’s pages participated within and helped to shape a discourse that constructed travel within an emerging imperative to leisure.

Additionally, Patricia Jasen has argued that the emerging tourist industry – among which she includes newspapers like *The Globe* – at the end of the nineteenth century relied on the construction of certain kinds of romantic images of the landscape to create sensations, expectations and ideas about places that were central to building the desire to travel to certain places in Canada.²⁵ Consequently, the travel industry was a powerful means by which desires were constructed for the promised satisfaction and experience of material culture – the very hallmark of a commodity culture. As cities continued to grow, retreats “back to nature” took on increased urgency as both a recuperative and preventive measure against the new demands of modern living. While cities provided the means by which progress of the nation could be effected, increasingly the need to reverse cities’ detrimental effects were equally framed within a discourse of nationhood that romanticized images of the countryside. Travel not only provided a wider breadth and perspective to the woman’s page – which was important to a newspaper that was seeking to broaden its view of the world – it also provided a particular kind of perspective that worked to construct a Canadian identity that relied on its differences from others and its roots within the rugged terrain of the land.

According to Jasen, for most of the nineteenth century the tourist industry, particularly resort holidays in areas like the Muskoka region of Northern Ontario, was directed primarily at the middle class.²⁶ It was widely believed that these holidays were necessary to relieve that class of workers who suffered not from physical exhaustion but from what Jasen refers to as “brain-fag.”²⁷ Recreational travel thus

served a recuperative purpose, as the over-civilizing effects of the city were remedied by time spent in the wilderness. Despite a slowly emerging discourse of travel as pleasure, in large measure these were rationalized in terms of the useful purpose it would serve: “time ‘spent’ on leisure had to yield sufficient return in pleasurable experience and other benefits.”²⁸

The working class was also believed to need escape from the dirt and grime of the city. It was largely believed that the fresh air and slower pace of the countryside would prevent them from experiencing the physically deteriorating effects of less than sanitary living conditions and overwork in the factories. This led to fresh air campaigns, and the promotion of day excursions to neighbouring cities like Hamilton, which could be accessed by boat, or to places like Toronto Island and other city parks where activities for the working classes were established. Additionally, it was believed that children experienced stunted growth from stifling city conditions and the necessities of parenting that “worried them with useless fears and fretful reproof:” “...let your children alone. Give them a chance to develop. Take them out under the open sky and give them the beauty of the summer time in sunshine and water and fresh air.”²⁹ By 1900, Thomas Cook and Sons, the British travel “agent,” directed their ads at working class would-be travelers to the 1900 World’s Fair in Paris by offering a convenient “lay away plan” to help defray the costs. Promoting a prepaid three-day excursion from London to Paris, this package was unique for providing the convenience of prepaid travel tickets, hotel and even meals.³⁰ However, all of their readers could not afford to travel, so Fenton and

Coleman often invited readers to join them in their travels by reading their articles, which were written specifically as guides. As Coleman described the “Sunset city” in San Francisco, “...so that you who read, and I who write, may travel together easily and cheerily over it for a few weeks.”³¹ Indeed it was in part the mission of these women to take their readers with them, or put differently, to bring to their readers the wonders of their travels by creating visual images filled with details of the people, the smells, the sights and most especially the sensation of the locales.³² As Maria Frawley reminds us, the periodical press was an important mechanism by which Victorians learned of the broader world around them³³ that, though greatly more accessible with the development and improvement of national and international transportation systems, remained costly to traverse.³⁴

In response to this, day excursions to the neighbouring countryside were increasingly popular. These were usually characterized within two predominant paradigms: fun and frivolity; or, nature and recuperation. The accessibility of this kind of fun or recuperation, it was suggested, was within reach of anyone with even a little bit of time available and the cost of the fare. Fenton, for example, finding herself free of appointments on a warm afternoon in 1891, decided to take a boat ride to Niagara where she passed an hour sitting among the monuments of “so many Canadian heroes,” watching a robin perched on a grave nearby, tall grasses swaying in the breeze and fluttering birds, butterflies and leaves – a picture perfect image of pastoral beauty and tranquility. The benefits were made clear to her readers: “And the next day I had a clear brain, a rested body and a great bunch of sweet wild brier,

whose fragrance floats from the bowl beside me as I write.”³⁵ Coleman, in contrast, was the more likely of the two to recognize the expense involved in travel: “Ah me! holidays are expensive to be sure, but they are mighty pleasant things indeed.”³⁶

According to Coleman, however, vacations served as a necessary antidote to the “busy wheel of life which will not stop for two miserable mortals, but goes on grinding heart and brain alike, until each small unit in turn drops off and is forgotten.”³⁷ Marked by hilarious incidents involving horses, cows and ducks, Coleman’s day excursions throughout the summer of 1890 reminded readers that they did not have to go far to release themselves from the pressures of home life and work.³⁸ Coleman was no less prone to waxing pastoral over the beauty of a sunset on her way home from one such trip. Replete with fairy spirits in the air and a “sweet west wind” which “whisper[s]” past them, this picture is intended to contrast with the realities of the city: “...our pleasant holiday is over, and...again we must take up life’s duties, and waste not our time, if we hope to come one day to the glorious city of Christ.”³⁹ This contrast was a typical method employed by both Fenton and Coleman for closing a column that described a restful and recuperative jaunt. It also gestured towards the reform movements that were actively working to turn dirty cities into cities that were fashioned in the image of Christ. Although these movements were discussed only rarely, the discourses they mobilized linking the physical state of cities with a spiritual state of morality (discussed in chapter three) ran throughout their columns.

However, for both Coleman and Fenton, it is interesting to note that although this contrast between city and country is sustained, country was not always favored. In one column describing a day excursion, for example, Coleman carries on about wishing to live in the country. Theodocia, her companion, utterly dismisses her, “Don’t be a fool Kit, ... You in the country, indeed! You who are always flying about the theatres, and who delights in little suppers and all kinds of city dissipation!”⁴⁰ Although the city was believed to have devastating consequences for the quality of life and health of its residents, it remained, nonetheless, the location of progress and of civility for Coleman and even for the more country-oriented Fenton who insisted that cities should have enough green spaces to provide fresh air to the poorer residents who couldn’t afford to leave the city frequently.⁴¹

The country served not only to revitalize individuals, it was also seen as a place where one could reconnect with nature and the land, particularly the legacies of the land. This relationship between the land and history was a particularly important trope⁴² used to build a uniquely Canadian identity and to nurture the national pride that was “released” spontaneously by traveling throughout the countryside. This history was especially romantic and idealized. Coleman conveyed this feeling to her readers when she and Theodocia came across the Brock monument in Queenston: “‘Canada for ever,’ [Theodocia] shouts... ‘Hurray for the ‘Green Tigers,’ the gallant 49th, and the glorious Mohawks under Norton and Brant. Hurrah for our militia! May their shadows never grow less.’ Boom, boom, boom comes the echo of her voice... while I gazed at her, thinking she had suddenly taken leave of her wits.”⁴³ In

these moments, we find the woman journalist at the crossroads of empire, nation, leisure and journalism. Coleman and Fenton were complicit in constituting these leisure activities within a paradigm of nationhood and pleasure, further contributing to the complex conjunction of newspaper publishing, nation building and commodity culture.

Through travel writing, women journalists, Fenton and Coleman among them, gained “cultural capital,” a way of broadening their professional scope as journalists by participating in a strong tradition that was already circulated within the periodical press.⁴⁴ By broadening the experiential base from which they wrote, women journalists were also able to expand their journalistic expertise, and consequently, their journalistic identities and authority. That women’s travel writings were especially popular during this time further indicates, as both Frawley and Laframboise argue, an openness to capitalize on the unique, if compromised, perspective offered by women traveling.⁴⁵ That is to say, the woman traveler posed a challenge to conventional mores about domestic femininity, which, in the words of Laframboise, positioned them in “opposition to mobility.”⁴⁶ Further, travel writing by women adds further evidence to the growing body of literature exploring the fluidity of private and public spheres.⁴⁷ Her broadened scope as a journalist was especially important for the woman journalist whose work as the woman’s page editor largely

confined her symbolic point of view to the domestic. Travel writing was thus an important addition to the woman journalist's repertoire and professional identity.

This is not to say, however, that through travel writing women were completely removed from the domestic sphere, for as the foregoing discussion has pointed out, these writings rarely traveled so far as to totally leave behind Home. As women traveled, explored and described for their readers the tastes, sights and experiences they had of "other" places, there was always, implicitly and overtly, a gesture homeward – whether by referring to the readers who were still home, by making comparisons to Canada and Canadians, or by invoking the history and beauty of the land in a patriotic gesture that associated travel within the homeland with opportunities for expressing one's national identity. Nonetheless, as Patricia Jasen points out, travel had indelible consequences on ideas about home: "The Victorian understanding of the home as the ideal sanctuary (and the wife and mother as the ministering angel) had been permanently altered; it was now understood, far more vividly than before, that not only the city and the factory but home itself was part of the treadmill existence."⁴⁸ As was discussed in chapter three, as the home became increasingly rationalized and scrutinized within public minded ideals, women's private role as its maker took on public mandates, transforming it into manager. Certainly both Coleman and Fenton had this idea in mind when writing their columns that stressed both the necessity and benefits of taking small holidays.

Although they often cast it as reluctant, these women always stressed their return home, nonetheless. The journey home served as a mechanism whereby they

could reflect on their travels that, while looking back at the adventure and relaxation (captured perfectly by pastoral scenes like those referred to previously), looked forward to the renewed energy with which life could be experienced. Such a trope was important for placing the columns back within the domestic sphere and for reining in the adventurous traveler. Consequently, although travel writing was important for allowing women a larger range of experiences and opportunities from which to write, as part of the women's page, they were never fully outside the confines of that domestic realm, Home. Maria Frawley similarly concludes in her discussion of women travel writers that they did not revise or subvert conventional forms of authority (including literary and gender); rather, they affirmed and accommodated them.⁴⁹ As we will see in the discussion that follows, even when pushing the limits of travel to the seedier parts of the city, their potentially radical and disruptive sensationalized explorations of slums and mission houses were held in check by this same obligation to the domestic.

Cultivating a Taste for the Sensational

Having established sensationalism as a characteristic of late nineteenth century papers, it is important now to examine the process by which it emerged. As Jean de Bonville has convincingly argued, the process of change from partisan to informational newspaper in French-language newspapers in Quebec was gradual, with one type of newspaper growing up around another, gradually borrowing, cultivating and co-opting features of the partisan press in order to formulate the emergent

format for the independent press.⁵⁰ Similarly, Hazel Dicken-Garcia argues that the changes experienced by the American papers during the American Civil War – including the use of sensationalism – brought about a number of changes that coalesced with trends already in process, consolidating these changes into emergent, though not totally new, news gathering techniques and news forms.⁵¹ Dicken-Garcia argues that the use of drama – which marked what was most generally called sensationalism – appeared in the Civil War, where the character of the war itself supplied thrilling and enticing news on a daily basis. As she writes, “Sensational’ postwar stories about corruption and reforms provided a way to continue to thrill...But considering news drama of the late nineteenth century as part of journalists’ efforts to package news for marketing, we can understand it better than simply excoriating it as sensationalism. It was journalistic conduct dictated by press role.”⁵² While the Toronto newspaper industry increasingly followed a business model, the market, given its conservative nature, was not necessarily inclined to accept sensationalism American style. Thus, while it is important to recognize the changing industrial conditions within which the newspaper was produced, to take for granted what kind of content those conditions would produce and could sustain is to make an ahistorical leap. In order to historicize the commercialization of Canada’s press, the processes by which more sensational content was made acceptable to contemporary audiences must be examined through a different lens. Looking through the lens of gender is particularly instructive since the women’s pages and the

cultural figure of the woman journalist was always and already ensconced in questions of morality and sensationalism.

For Toronto audiences, sensationalism posed a unique problem, for as the partisan papers sought to establish independent positions, the accusation of sensationalism hovered constantly and threateningly. It not only brought them dangerously close to the too-popular evening papers which were not tied to partisan legacies, but it also undermined the very idea of what a newspaper should be. The newspaper was an advocate for the people, a de facto citizen involved and *interested* in the outcome of public affairs and the well being of the people.⁵³ Yet, the newspaper was also now a commercial undertaking, and thus, something of the novel, the slightly sensational, was also good for business. Too much sensationalism, however, ran counter to the prevailing moral order of a city like Toronto that was strictly Sabbatarian and sought to regulate morality in a number of ways and at a number of different sites, including on the woman's body. The newspaper was also one of those sites, the woman's page included. While the partisan newspaper might regulate the behaviours of men in public office, the partisan-cum-independent newspaper's scope was much broader, and it spoke to a wider cross-section of the people, setting what would be the new limits of acceptable publicity.

Toronto's self conception as a moral city was constructed in a number of ways. For example, tracts such as C.S. Clark's *Of Toronto the Good* were published to further edify, extend and entrench Toronto's campaign to promote its moral and social standing at the Social Purity Congress (Baltimore) and the World's Convention

of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (Toronto) in 1897.⁵⁴ Even earlier than this, Rev. Wilbur Crafts published proof of just how "good" Toronto was with his *The Sabbath for Man*. Communicating with over 200 travellers, religious laymen and clergymen, Crafts declares Toronto to be the most observant of the Sabbath.⁵⁵ Indeed Canadian society in general, sandwiched between its colonial roots within the British empire and the forwardness of the New World, particularly given its proximity to the United States, led to some interesting tensions surrounding moral decay, especially as it related to progress and increased freedoms.⁵⁶ To fuel these tensions, frequent articles appeared in the newspapers extolling the moral vacuousness of the American landscape. For instance, an article appearing in *The Globe* commented explicitly on the crass commercialism, especially the lewd pubs and taverns, lack of Sabbath observance, and the publication of Sunday newspapers in the city of Cincinnati.⁵⁷

The issue of Sunday publication was especially difficult for the newspaper industry, as one correspondent's letter to *The Empire* describing the New York scene implies: "There is no Sabbath in the daily newspaper world. Remember that."⁵⁸ The gravity of his warning was, no doubt, clearly understood by his readers. The concern with preserving the moral fibre of the country was again reiterated in the debates surrounding MP John Charlton's bill prohibiting the sale of Sunday newspapers in 1898. Making an impassioned, if long-winded, case for it, Mr. Chalmers, a participant in the debate, mobilizes this familiar discourse surrounding the protection of morality, progress of the nation, and the problems of newspaper publishing:

...but when we come to the discussion of a measure which involves the deepest of all moral influences, a measure which has to do with the future of this country, a measure which may...to a large extent, shape the destinies of this country, not for the present alone, but for future generations, that measure...is [one] which has heretofore received scanty consideration at the hands of the Canadian House of Commons. We are building in this country a nation. We have vast resources...a vigorous people; we have a good constitution and good laws, and it certainly is a matter of great importance, what shape shall be given to the future of this young country which promises to be inhabited by a great people. It is in that view of the case that I present this matter to-night. I present it asking: what the foundations of the future of this country shall be, asking whether we shall consider it worth our while to make provisions that shall secure the highest interests of the state; that shall give to us such a promise, as we alone can derive from respect of moral obligations and the better foundations of human life.⁵⁹

Imbricated in a discourse of morality – and its foe, sensationalism, which corrupted the moral fibre of readers—the newspaper must also be seen as one of those sites where morality was debated, defended, regulated. Far from being fixed, these standards were constantly shifting and nowhere is this more prevalent than in the debates about what constituted sensationalism and its consequences. For example, even in a much more metropolitan city like Montreal, too much sensationalism, like the outrageous stunts pulled by *La Presse* at the end of the nineteenth (and even more so into the twentieth) century, drew harsh criticisms. Henri Bourassa, editor of the rival *Le Devoir*, declared *La Presse* to be “*la putain de la Rue St. Jacques*,” indicating how easily sensationalism slipped into the terrain of questionable morality – tellingly, one that had gendered consequences.⁶⁰

Indeed the persistent concern of the Victorian moralists that unprotected women were constantly in danger of being lured into prostitution makes for an

enlightening analogy – an analogy that was not confined to the Montreal market. Witness E.E. Sheppard’s comments in his *Saturday Night* regarding *The Mail’s* coverage of a sensational murder trial. Insisting the newspaper had revealed itself to be “the scarlet woman of journalism,” Sheppard goes on to assert that to publish “unclean and demoralizing things” is for the newspaper to have the same “contempt for its calling [as] the woman of the street has for herself as she solicits the passer-by.”⁶¹ To be labeled as sensational was to be labeled as immoral – a position any good citizen had to avoid. We see here also that the affiliation of the newspaper with the feminized identity of the harlot disguises a complex process of stratification and differentiation of gender and class.⁶² It is significant that both Bourassa and Sheppard used the prostitute as metaphor for the scandal-ridden newspaper, for she represented not just woman, but dangerous woman; this same woman threatened to contaminate those with whom she came in contact, just as the sensational newspaper, sold by the yelling, boisterous, unruly newsboy who assaulted passersby with his verbal weaponry of scandalous headlines threatened the peace of the public; meanwhile, the content of their pages threatened to corrupt citizens with too many details of crimes, provoking them to turn to a life of crime. Sensational papers were problematic precisely because they “incited” unwholesome feelings that were bad for the citizenry, in much the same way that “good women” and “honorable men” might be lured into enjoying the pleasures of prostitution.⁶³

Of course, this call to moral integrity was taken up by Coleman and Fenton as well, in, among other places, their recommendations for reading. Coleman cautioned

her readers not to develop a liking for “spicy reading,”⁶⁴ while Fenton regularly directed her readers to appropriate reading matter for the entire family in her “Book Chats.” As Carole Gerson has noted, the domesticated woman was believed to influence the moral and cultural progress of the nation through her work at home. Her participation in literary associations and libraries was therefore encouraged, as a means of further refining the public reading taste.⁶⁵ Within this light, women’s journalism took on a whole new imperative, allowing newspapers to contribute to that general refinement and progress of the nation through the indirect influence of women on the social and cultural order within the home. It also meant that in order to be recognizable to women readers – that is, to interpellate women readers – this moral ideal had to be acknowledged, even if it wasn’t always upheld. By ensuring good clean copy – news of the day, alongside other features of interest to entertain and enlighten readers – newspapers became part of the popular culture in establishing modes of what would become appropriate reading material for the home, both in terms of content and in terms of method. With the turn of the century, newspapers would stress not only how quickly and accurately their stories were delivered, but also how clean their copy was. How stories were told mattered equally with what stories were told. In turn, Fenton and Coleman, actively working to avoid charges of becoming sensationalized harlots, brought the wholesome influence of woman to bear on the entire newspaper. While accusations of gossiping could be forgiven as typically feminine behaviour, gender transgressions of other kinds had to be carefully managed. Even as the newspaper came to set these new standards, the newspaper

itself was judged by “the public’s” standards, making this process more dialectal than regulatory in any one direction, and much more contingent.

As Stuart Hall has persuasively argued, it is at the level of popular culture that social and moral values are decided. In this sense, the “popular” has been misunderstood to mean only resistance of the people, yet Hall makes a convincing argument for the ways in which establishing literature as high culture, for instance, has relevance for the popular.⁶⁶ The re-designed partisan newspaper that sought to mobilize popular elements of storytelling, use the personal, speak to the everyday lives of its readers and provide news of the public affairs of the day most actively engages this level of culture. It accomplishes this particularly in the ways in which it attempts to straddle both public and private spheres, being both of the people and of the state. Serialized fictional stories, for instance, were carefully chosen to be “appropriate” for their intended audiences⁶⁷ and women journalists, in particular, were expected to uphold such standards since they were speaking to the moral heads of households. Coleman, for example, experienced the consequences of this first hand when she was challenged by religious readers who did not appreciate her irreverent manners.

Most often the complaints Coleman received were directed at two important issues: her gender and what was an appropriate moral position from which to speak; and her public presence that demanded a responsibility to promote a moral and good way of life – especially to other women. For instance, consider part of her answer to a correspondent, H.F., who wrote correcting her about some unknown fact, and

cautioning her about the language she used: "...I cannot resist saying that I think you are a little prim and Puritanical in your objection to a word so innocently used. I am getting accustomed to the very religious sentiments of Toronto people, however, to the psalm-singing and preaching, and I trust I may soon be quite converted. A lady asks me this week if I know Jesus. Well, I think I do quite as well as most of those who ask me such ill-bred personal question."⁶⁸ Fenton, on the other hand, escaped such exchanges by avoiding exceedingly personalized editorials rooted in personal opinion for a long period. Focusing on the public affairs of women, delineating a conventional, though more active role for women outside the home than Coleman ever did, she left little for her readers to disagree with, though some did object to her inclusion of so much news about the suffragists. Not until the format change occurred in 1893 did more personalized editorials appear on Fenton's page. It was then that Fenton began to receive some of that correspondence as well, suggesting that the cultivation of a personalized relationship lent itself for contemporary audiences to assessments of moral character, as the behaviours of such public figures as newspaper editors and journalists came to be judged by the same standards used with intimates.

However, determining what was sensational was not always a self evident affair. Certainly Coleman was never quite sure what would shock her readers. Of course, sensationalism had much to do with established mores of the time and what was considered appropriate for public discussion. The inherently problematic element of the woman's page, then, rested on making women's interests explicit and

public, the very doing of which was implicitly potentially unwomanly. Criticisms ranged from accusations of the page being trivial and unworthy of publication in the newspaper to being too provocative and potentially dangerous to a woman's safety and her femininity for her to undertake. Thus these critiques, similar to those charges made against all sensational literature, grew from assumptions about 'appropriate' reading subjects rooted in class and gender values.

Sensational subjects treated with a gentle philanthropic or "womanly" voice succeeded in carefully adhering to these two sets of values, while gently pushing at their limits. Certainly, the familiarity and deeply personalized relationship established with readers was one way in which this possible contradiction was smoothed over. Indeed, what these women's pages most successfully managed to recreate was the familiarity of those very personal conversations between intimates, making their public discussion seem utterly natural. As Faith Fenton remarked to one of her readers: "I am glad you are interested in the Woman's Empire. Of course you prefer it to the other departments, little lady; if it were not so my work would be a failure."⁶⁹ More than that, armed with a new public role for women to extend their domestic and moral duty, the leaders that explored the "other side" of life in the cities were neatly armed with other ideological armour: a journalistic duty to inform and serve a public. Warren Francke has observed of sensational news reporting in the United States: "Editors must confess that this news will startle, shock and dismay readers. Editors, however, will seldom admit that such news was *intended* to merely titillate, entertain or satisfy morbid curiosity. In fact, editors commonly profess that they

would shun such unpleasanties, if not for their grave duty to tell the truth, no matter how terrible... Thus their reports are products of both their duties and their techniques.”⁷⁰ Faith Fenton does just this when she admits that the description of a mission house in Toronto “was almost indescribable in its forlornness.” “Yet,” she continues, “because it will interest the many gentle readers of *Woman’s Empire* to learn something of the misery... I will try to portray it.”⁷¹ Made to bear the brunt of the sights and smells of this misery – “We walked slowly, that the breeze might blow about our wraps and carry away the stale odors” – Fenton mediates the reality of this other way of life in order that her readers may better serve their own womanly duties to make better the worlds around them.⁷² Though rarely excessively sensational, Fenton flirts with both the content and techniques of sensationalism.

It must be noted, however, that this notion of journalistic duty excusing such sensationalism as stunt journalism was often contested. *Punch*, the London magazine, satirized this precise idea in a vignette entitled “The Irrepressible She.”⁷³ In it, a typical upper class lady is fooled in four separate incidents by three enterprising lady journalists. Challenging their unethical behaviour each time each journalist in turn asserts, in her own way, that “duty *is* duty, and I must perform mine, in the interests of the public and the paper I represent!”⁷⁴ Yet the schemes were so outrageous, the journalists so shocking in their brazen and brash behaviour and the lady so utterly gullible that “journalistic duty” is rendered meaningless, at least for the woman journalist who closes the story by insisting she was “Man’s superior,” even if she failed to resemble a journalist at all. Given the ferocity of the satire, Fenton’s careful

techniques that emulate sensationalism, without ever being outright sensationalist, are all the more impressive. Yet the *Punch* satire was precisely so important for the ways in which it engaged a discussion about the ethical limits to journalistic behaviour. By questioning where the lines of “acceptable” behaviour fell, concepts like sensationalism were important in establishing the hegemony of journalistic practice and ideology.⁷⁵

Despite the sometimes shifting criteria by which stories were labeled sensational, there were identifiable elements that were meant to produce sensational feelings in their readers. Warren Francke, for instance, cites “sensory detail” as the “core of sensational news.”⁷⁶ Frank Mott and Donald Shaw and John Slater describe sensationalism both in terms of subject and treatment that is intended to stir the emotions of readers.⁷⁷ The stimulation of unwholesome emotional responses was considered gravely dangerous, particularly when provided in the pages of the seemingly harmless daily newspaper, potentially read by any member of the family. Furthermore, this overstimulation of the senses, leading to an uncontrollable emotional state, was a particular susceptibility for women who were thought to be ruled by their emotions and not their rational minds. A newspaper seeking to speak to a family would consequently need to be particularly wary of such inflammatory possibilities. The use of sensory detail, which expanded the personal observations of the correspondent to include all the senses, was particularly effective. Francke, in his study, identified reports which, in making graphic descriptions of ghoulish crime scenes, utilized touch, sound and smell in order to describe the scene and heighten

the sensation. Further the narrative viewpoint would often take on a “tour-guide” approach, allowing the reader to, at times, follow literally in the steps of the journalist as each step is described.⁷⁸ I will take up this concept of “tour-guide” journalism in the later discussion on slumming.

Sensationalism, however, as Mott also describes, could apply not only to the content of news or to the manner in which it was delivered, but also to the method of ascertaining the information as well. For instance, interviews and stunts – two techniques used by women journalists of the day – were particularly illustrative of sensational news.⁷⁹ Both methods often involved elements of deceitfulness and were considered particularly intrusive. British audiences, for instance, were shocked by the intrusive nature of Elizabeth Banks’ stunt in posing as a servant in several upper class homes, charging that the stunts betrayed that sacred trust placed in servants who were privy to the most intimate affairs of the upper classes.⁸⁰ An 1877 *Puck* illustration satirizing the role of the reporter gone crazy on the hunt for information perfectly depicts this concern with the excessively intrusive nature of the new journalism, which was deeply rooted in gaining access to the lived experience of the event.⁸¹ The intrusiveness, however, also applied to the very appearance of these materials in the homes of the readers, as critics often complained that they upset the peaceful family order.



Fig. 5-2. "The Great American Interviewer," *Puck*, March 1877. Reprinted in Frank Mott, *American Journalism*, 434.

Other methods that were commonly used to great sensationalist ends included observation and the use of documentary evidence to heighten the amount of detail and sensation.⁸² Reports such as those issued by Royal Commissions or other institutions provided great detail, which, in turn, could be used in news or feature reports. Yet, the most provocative form of sensational reporting came in the technique of personal observation, which, through a first-hand account of the scene, most intensified readers' responses. The inclusion of detail made the report seem more convincing, genuine and shocking as it brought the readers into seeming "direct" contact with not just the news event, but with the *experience*. The personal account was so suggestive precisely because it relied on the bodily experience of the event or place, as much as it did on the intellectual capacity of the reporter. Lending authenticity to the report because of this heightened realism, it was the element most used by the women under consideration here who, in turn, took center stage in many of their columns. The technique also perfectly played into ideas about women's heightened emotional capacity, making its use all the more appropriate for women journalists – even if they were not the only ones using it. With the focus now turned to the reporter, her eyes, ears, and touch became a synecdoche for the newspaper acting on behalf of the entire reading public.⁸³

Tracing the Roots of the Stunt:

The Social Explorer as Authentic Eye Witness

The realism of the reporter "on the scene" was used in all kinds of journalistic forms, from news reports to features writing. Stunt journalism, for instance,

involved a journalist pulling off some kind of stunt or staged event, often in disguise, in order to get the “inside” perspective on a story. A sub-genre of this kind of journalistic writing emerged that built on the reporter’s presence and specialized knowledge of city spaces to produce various kinds of city explorations. Known as slumming (or otherwise as “social exploration” or “down-and-out” writing),⁸⁴ this kind of writing was more specific than the stunt, though not exclusively a journalistic form.⁸⁵ Slumming was a contemporary term given to those journalists and reformers who would investigate tenements, slums and various other living conditions of the poor by venturing into these areas, at times even associating with the poor by “living” amongst them, whether as a reformer, missionary-type worker, or in disguise as a fellow inhabitant, in order to gather information about this ‘way of life.’ Often these stories promised authenticity as they alone could offer the “true” glimpse “inside.” A particularly popular form of this practice was a “lurid genre of urban exposé” known as a “gaslight” tour, which involved the journalist traveling through the “lights and shadows” of the urban slums.⁸⁶ These involve the witness-reporter not just relating the experiences of the exploration, but attempting to engage the reader directly in the very experience of them, acting as a tour guide, even narrating the appropriate emotional responses.⁸⁷ The tour guide role turned those various spaces explored – from women’s shelters to tenements to other contentious city spaces – into “dens of inquiry” as literally peering eyes and questioning interviewers gathered information, leading to charges that “slumming” had turned into a kind of tourist leisure pursuit. Mark Pittenger has noted of this genre of writing: “Recurrent assertions that the

'embers of social hatred' had for years been 'smoldering in the vagrant class' (as one student of tramps had put it) fed...middle-class insecurities, even as they fed the same constituency's curiosity about the unknown world of the poor. Armchair explorers found that world graphically represented, in a burgeoning variety of formats, for their private consumption."⁸⁸ As suggested, these armchair explorers participated in mapping the social geography of cities according to reassuring categories that fed into growing fears that the poor were reaching a critical, threatening mass. The history and use of this genre adds another interesting element to the rise of travelogue literature that was feeding an increasingly growing reading public's fascination with all things foreign – including turning potentially familiar city spaces by day into foreign and mysterious locales by night. The women's pages were key for feeding this fascination as it gave these women journalists ample opportunity to write about their adventures, while capitalizing on and further contributing to an already existent market for such writings.

The practice of slumming can trace its roots back to England where, in 1866, James Greenwood's serialized account of "A Night in the Workhouse" was originally published in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. This account set the journalistic precedent for exploring the underside of the city in disguise. Significantly, this earliest of stunts was performed by a man, yet the stunt tradition would reach its infamy with its practice performed by the "stunt girl," as will be discussed later. As with the many other similarly sensational explorations performed thereafter, Greenwood's series began with a detailed description of a "mysterious figure" cast in a "ragged coat" and

topped by “a battered billy-cock hat, with a dissolute drooping brim.” He goes on to reveal that this figure was indeed “the present writer:”

He was bound for Lambeth workhouse, there to learn by actual experience how casual paupers are lodged and fed, and what the ‘casual’ is like, and what the porter who admits him, and the master who rules him; and how the night passes with the outcasts whom we have all seen crowding about workhouse doors on cold and rainy evening. Much has been said on the subject...; but nothing by any one who, with no motive but to learn and make known the truth, had ventured the experiment of passing a night in a workhouse, and trying what it actually is to be a ‘casual.’⁸⁹

This element of transformation and disguise was central to the slumming literature, suggesting that not only was the account more trustworthy for its authenticity, it promised insights otherwise unattainable. The disguise also stressed the social distances that were crossed, another important motif in the slumming literature.

Building on the appetite for travel writing discussed earlier, time and again, the literature of the social explorers employed a particular narrative discourse to describe the work of exploration and its objects of study. The poor and the neighbourhoods in which they lived, such as the East End of London, were typically described as a foreign realm, a separate world that was paradoxically close, yet so far.⁹⁰ The social explorer literature treats these as subcultures, a particular consequence of the new industrial and urban way of life.⁹¹ Faith Fenton, for instance, in a column on “The Other Half” details the work of missionaries attending to the needs of those who live within “disreputable poverty,” invoking some of the categories that were part of the “social mapping” project of the explorers’ literature.⁹² Though describing an “under-

world” which is “so deeply divided from [her readers’] own safe home living,” Fenton reveals it is closer than they imagine: “Within ten minutes’ walk of the corner of King and Yonge streets” – in the heart of downtown Toronto.⁹³ This literature, thus, must be seen as part of the historical process that transformed concerns about the problems of the cities into concerns about social, racial and moral degeneration.⁹⁴

The term slumming also implied the turning point from personal experience to sociological analysis as the purpose of the exploration shifted from journalistic inquiry or class interest to sociological classification and reform initiatives driven by knowledge of the poor that categorized, hierarchized, quantified, and ultimately reformed. Peter Keating notes that this change also heralded “a characteristically modern social explorer,” of which journalists would play an important, though by no means exclusive, part.⁹⁵ The publication of Charles Booth’s first volume of *Life and Labour of the People of London* in 1889 can be seen as an important turning point from exploration to formalized study, as Booth believed the importance of his categorization of the poor lay in the methods he was developing rather than in any reforms suggested by his research.⁹⁶

Although most journalism historians associate stunt journalism with Joseph Pulitzer’s *New York World* newspaper in the mid-1880’s, it was a form that had been used before Pulitzer and Nellie Bly, his star reporter, popularized it for the North American audience.⁹⁷ Stunt journalism capitalized on crime, scandal or shocking circumstances, told with a crusading spirit.⁹⁸ John Dafoe, for instance, described how his first journalistic assignment – which was an undercover stunt – for *The Montreal*

Star in 1883 capitalized on his “green” naïveté in a manner that is reminiscent of the same exploitation of “the image of vulnerable womanhood-at-risk” others have observed of the stunt girls.⁹⁹

Frank Mott further notes that the stunt was associated with crusades, another popular technique for the New York papers. Both techniques held an air of public-spirited reform, enterprise, community spirit and most certainly one of publicity. As Dafoe argued, his undercover stunt story had not only saved Hugh Graham, the *Star*'s editor, from a libel suit, it “expose[d] a nest of swindlers who robbed the poor and unwary.”¹⁰⁰ This element of publicity – headlines that screamed exposure – was part of what made stunt journalism seem a bit crass. Yet, articulated with the same discourses used to describe reform work – shining a bright light on corruption and evil in order that they might be cleansed – recuperated publicity as serving a greater public good and justified itself as the work of a benevolent servant for the people.

However, this is not to say, of course, that the practice of slumming was without controversy, for many believed that the public goal of reformation could not hide the fact that the slumming fueled a self-serving middle class voyeuristic interest in the lives of the poor. This brand of social knowledge was often formed with the best of intentions to aid the poor through the publicizing of their conditions, yet it also implicitly capitalized on the experiences of the poor in ways that were clearly exploitative. The charges that slumming had turned into a kind of leisure activity for the uncommitted who were not interested in genuine reformation was directed at precisely this issue. Writing in 1888 in an unpublished manuscript, T. Phillips

Thompson cites the publication and resulting widespread publicity of Andrew Mearns' penny pamphlet, *The Bitter Cry of Outcast London. An Inquiry into the Conditions of the Abject Poor* in 1883 as creating a great sensation.¹⁰¹ He writes that the book

gave rise to a mania for 'slumming' among the wealthy – their curiosity being soon satisfied it died...leaving no practical results...The Whitechapel murders created further sensation among the masses for knowing the conditions of living of the poor... Newspapers and magazines are flooded with contributions dealing with pauperism, crime, life in the slums propounding usual quack remedies but the core of the problem not touched.¹⁰²

A member of *The News* staff since 1883, Thompson's comments on the proliferation of feature stories detailing slumming experiences in the press clearly indicate the limits of the benefits publicity alone could bring to the issues of the poor. Furthermore, Thompson points to the power differential implicit in such activities being undertaken by the wealthy. Yet, Thompson seems not to take issue with the wealthy themselves, but with their ineffectual means for helping the poor, and he exposes the common Victorian value system that exhorted the duty of the wealthy to aid the 'deserving poor.'

Though couched within a morally grounded ideology to advocate for and protect the people, it remained clear to contemporaries that a profit motive lurked somewhere in the practice of slumming and stunt reporting. In some instances, that motive was obvious, as in the wild stunts pulled by *La Presse* early in the twentieth century; and it is in these instances that the loudest and most pronounced associations of sensationalism with a corrupt and shattered morality were made. Taken over by Sir Adolphe Chapleau in 1889, *La Presse* adopted many of the new

journalism techniques and soon rivaled the best yellow rags in the United States.¹⁰³ In 1901, for instance, it staged a race around the world – another allusion to Nellie Bly’s infamous trip – and bought a boat¹⁰⁴ in order to prove the St. Lawrence River was navigable in the winter. Perhaps most outrageous, however, were the heights to which star reporter Septime Laferrière was willing to go. Discovering a corpse in an alley on his way to work, he dragged it into the news office, searched it for identification, broke the story in the paper, and then called the police to remove the body. He also stole a bloodstained axe from a crime scene in order to photograph it.¹⁰⁵ Interestingly, these scoops were rewarded by the paper, which, much like the *Toronto Telegram*, believed it was the job of the city reporter to be out there *seeking* the news, not simply reporting it. Interestingly, despite these outrageous examples of the stunt boy, the stunt girl remains the more infamous in journalism history for her sensationalist ends.

As these examples suggest, despite the stunt having investigative, moral and public interest aspects, it always had associated with it the sense of “a ‘gimmick’ or device for attracting attention.”¹⁰⁶ The Oxford English Dictionary further reminds us that a stunt is understood as an “...‘event’; a feat undertaken as a defiance in response to a challenge.”¹⁰⁷ Armed with this meaning and with the reminder that Nellie Bly’s first stunt at Blackwell’s Island Asylum was indeed performed in response to Managing Editor John Cockerill’s dare to Bly to show him if she was capable of being a reporter for the *New York World*, it is evident that despite the numerous examples of stunt journalism that could be paraded, it remains those performed by

women that have garnered the most historical attention.¹⁰⁸ For a woman writing at the end of the nineteenth century for a newspaper, traces of that dare were written into her very journalistic identity as soon as she left her confined world of society news and women's private affairs.

Clearly, risks associated with the stunt differed for men and women. While both articulated a sense of physical danger or at least fear of possibly coming into danger, the associated risks to authority and reputation were vastly different. For men, risk overcome was understood within a hyper-masculinized concept of bravery. The social explorers, for example, in their immersion into this subculture with detailed, dramatic description of the intimacies of this way of life, seemed never to walk into or arrive at a slum. They "penetrated" it, glorifying and underscoring the special qualities of the explorer. Given that these explorers were largely male, the stress within their works of the risks encountered and overcome – contact with crime, danger and hardship – are inflected and contained neatly within a taken-for-granted sense of masculinity that came to be associated with a larger journalistic ideology. James Greenwood's *courage* for his one night in a workhouse, for instance, was heralded by the editor of the *Morning Post*, who proclaimed that his "act of *bravery*...ought to entitle him to the VC."¹⁰⁹

On the other hand, for women the physical dangers of stunting or slumming were heightened, the consequences more grave, the intensity more dramatic and the journalistic exploit the more pronounced for having been accomplished by a lady journalist. Nevertheless, risk is contained within a sense of appropriate womanhood

that seeks not simply to “understand” a phenomenon or to gather evidences or knowledge, but to empathize and invoke change. The woman journalist in this case, stands in a precarious place, connected with her fellow women in their sympathies, yet separated in her affiliation with “them,” of the other world; connected to her fellow journalists in her uncovering of injustice and promoting understanding, yet never fully “one of the boys.”

In turn, the dominant narratives of women’s social explorations would either frame them as institutional investigations, as Faith Fenton attempts to assert with her Toronto night walks series, or as part of the general “wanderings” of a woman traveler, in which case they sought to promote understandings about distant tribes and far away places – as all the poor and their environments were cast. To have claimed to have gone on a night walk into a slum, or to have visited a night shelter for knowledge’s sake alone, would have severely undermined a woman journalist’s femininity. Even when conducted as a reform worker or as social scientist, the pursuit of knowledge was confined within a discourse of woman’s work.¹¹⁰ Though perhaps only a rhetorical slight of hand, the assertion that these explorations served a journalistic mission rooted in the reader and provided vital information for the refinement of women’s sensibilities, released these women journalists from this constraint. As we will see, arming themselves with a mission rooted in the reader and using techniques like compassion, moral judgment, romanticism and a general deference to philanthropy that confirmed the requisite feminine subjectivity, these

women journalists could travel to places that could otherwise be accessed only by the very righteous or the damned.

Neither Faith Fenton nor Kit Coleman was immune from the criticism of both slumming and stunting, yet Coleman pursued it most actively. At times she joined the critics, expressing her disgust with the “lady slummers” who “will pry and poke and talk of what they have seen, but never one of them has laid a tender finger on one bleeding heart.”¹¹¹ Turning poverty into a “sacred” way of being, Coleman’s criticisms take on a class resonance: “They [“lady slummers”] pick their way under escort with curiosity as to habits of the poor—which the poor resent. And why not? Because one is poor and unfortunate, must one’s miserable Lares and Penates be set on a shelf for the wealthy to view? Ah no.” Thus, arguing that the wealthy undertake such explorations with a morbid curiosity neither born of genuine sympathy nor intended to truly ease their suffering, Coleman implicates her readers in this process and also tries to restore dignity to the poor: “The sorrows of the poor are their own. God knows they have little else which they can say truly belongs to them. Let them be.”¹¹²

Interestingly enough, however, Kit incriminated herself as well when, in 1892 on an escorted walk through London, she readily admitted to a reader: “Indeed I had some queer and pleasant walks down Fleet street at 3 o’clock (or thereabouts) in the morning in company of a first-class detective who was engaged to take me to all sorts of queer places, thieves’ kitchens, tramps’ shelters, midnight market, Jew’s corners, and other savory spots. I spent over a week night-walking in that wonderful town.”¹¹³

Coleman's accompaniment by a detective accomplished a dual, yet paradoxical goal. It communicated the potential danger of her exploits, yet contained that risk within conventional Victorian mores that prevented her from traveling alone, particularly to such unseemly locales. As the language of this passage suggests, Coleman clearly capitalized on the salacious aspects of her midnight prowls. Yet, her behaviour remained clearly outside of the criticisms she made *after* her time in London. Either Coleman experienced a change of heart, or somehow the motivation and goals behind her slumming differed, exempting her behaviour from her own criticisms. It seems unlikely she had experienced that severe a change of heart, since Coleman did not publish her Night Walks series as letters while she was in London in 1892, but in the winter following her return. Indeed her comments were published the week before the final installment of her London Sketches appeared in April 1893. So, if journalistic duty to expose and document the conditions of the poor and fashionable interest in the way the "other half" lives remained questionable motivations behind slumming, then what appropriate combination of viewpoint and motivation would shield this activity from these criticisms? To answer this, we will now turn to a more detailed consideration of the urban explorations of the lady journalist.

Experiencing the City as Lady, Journalist

By the final decade of the nineteenth century, the American "story" standard was comprised of event, individual perspective and the use of drama. These elements were so significantly blurred into one another that pulling them apart into individual

components is scarcely possible or fruitful. While an article might form a dramatic story, with plot and character development, this would generally be built around the event itself using narrative technique for emphasis.¹¹⁴ This journalistic form perfectly suited typical conventions for the woman journalist, required as she was to always write “as a woman,” to write within ideology, even as her profession insisted she be outside it. Though the woman journalist rarely simply “reported” in the conventional journalistic sense, her “gossips” allowed her to mobilize a different sense of newsworthiness – one that centered on perceptions of what might be of interest to the lady readers. In turn, the general “fascination with life” that filled the pages of the late Victorian Canadian newspaper could be rendered from a feminine perspective.¹¹⁵ But if the newspaper was influenced by this feminine inflection, the women’s page itself capitalized on the methods of the new journalism, placing it firmly within the confines of journalistic methods. Although the notion of a newspaper woman was predicated on being woman first and foremost, these leaders were opportunities for the women editors to place themselves within the realm of the newspaper through the use of the common techniques of the new journalism.

This made life in the cities for women a particular topic of interest. From busy women shopping in the market-place to the close proximity of neighbours, these women drew from the everyday experiences of city living and the peculiar mix of public and private an expanding city brought with it. As Coleman plainly puts it: “It is astonishing what an intimate knowledge of you and your ways your neighbours possess.”¹¹⁶ But the continual change of the city itself was of interest to the woman

journalist who could recognize the ways in which the city intersected with gender issues in complicated and complex ways. The possibilities the city offered a young journalist are perfectly captured in a two-part leader Fenton wrote early in 1889. The sketch depicts a typical urban scene in the late evening hours as Fenton and an unnamed companion roam the main thoroughfare in Toronto, Yonge Street. Writing from a typically feminine perspective – the experience of shopping in the midst of throes of people intent on attaining the same items – she observes how gender intersects with the market economy as she shrewdly comments that shoppers would have increased bargaining power if they made purchases any time other “than the last hurried hours of the last day of the week.”¹¹⁷

Fenton’s perspective in this sketch is intended to be one of a typically detached, slightly amused observer. This female flâneur walks along the streets, blending in with the masses of people, observing the life-scenes of a mass-populated urban street, while enjoying the anonymity the crowd offers her – as she puts it, she and her companion are just “two additional drops in the great human stream.” Fenton is intentional in this perspective, which differs from the more forward kind of editorializing that her other leaders offer. Though told through Fenton’s voice, its narrative perspective is intended to be closer to that of the male observer, the omniscient narrator that is anonymously part of the crowd, though not invested in its actions. Fenton stresses the movement of the crowd as she tries to capture “this ever busy, ever moving, ever changing mass of humanity, now revealed in electric

brilliance, now hidden in electric shadow,” though she modestly admits, it was one “that no artist brush can portray, no writer’s pen delineate.”

This column then is a snapshot of a moment in time, intended to capture only its surface textures, with the nuance and complexity of the entangled movements of surface-current and undercurrent left un-described, and indeed indescribable. However, this is precisely the task she sets out to do. Lest readers forget her all-seeing status or doubt her capacity to see all, Fenton points to more than just the surface in the closing lines of her column, which for emphasis she repeats three weeks later when she returns to the other side of Saturday night promenades: “We have walked between the lights of a Yonge street Saturday night and left unmarked the shadows that creep about the corners—not that they have been unseen, but that their spectre arms stretch out and grasp certain dreary problems of working womanhood that require special future discussion.”¹¹⁸

Disrupting the anonymity of the mass crowd, Fenton interjects a serious social analysis of the problems of the city for its working girls. The anonymous flâneur disappears as Fenton takes up the question of women’s safety at night on the streets of Toronto. In an unusually impassioned and liberal way, Fenton ignores the insistence of city officials that women should stay at home and argues that in order to keep women safe and allow them to enjoy their leisure time, they should have better wages and shorter hours. From disassociated observer to keen reporter seeking information from city officials and analyzing the situation from a feminine

perspective, women journalists were able to take up the typical reporter role that speaks from within the pulse of the city.

On occasion, however, both Fenton and Coleman stepped outside of the more everyday examination of the city to explore its seedier, less lady-like side in the slumming or stunt tradition discussed earlier. The more sensational of their explorations included Coleman's trips to London and San Francisco in 1892 and 1894, respectively and Fenton's examination of Toronto by night in 1894.¹¹⁹ Both women explored these spaces, in disguise at times, often in the company of male protective figures. The journalistic forebearers of these writings can be traced not only to the stunt journalism of the United States and Britain, but more powerfully, to the social explorers, particularly the "shadow and light" genre described previously. Indeed Mark Pittenger argues that the stunt girl must be seen as the "exact predecessor" of the genre of Progressive era American writings that were built on a "down-and-out" experience.¹²⁰ As mentioned previously, it is difficult to completely separate and classify writing as either stunt or social exploration, and the work of both of these women certainly contains elements of each.

What Fenton and Coleman shared in their work, and what is of central importance to women journalists' utility, was the fact that personal experience was at the center of their writing, lending credibility and authority to the veracity of the first person account. Even as the personal descriptions and personal role of the journalist him/herself would slowly disappear, journalism, as an institution, came to rely utterly on the role of the reporter as witness for its credibility. As Joan Scott reminds us,

however, experience cannot be seen as a naive straightforward account of events which takes meaning as being transparent because this reproduces, rather than contests, given ideological systems: "...the project of making experience visible precludes critical examination of the workings of the ideological system itself, its categories of representation (homosexual/heterosexual, man/woman, black/white as fixed immutable identities), its premises about what these categories mean and how they operate, its notions of subjects, origin, and cause."¹²¹ Rather, Scott insists that to historicize experience is to "understand the operations of the complex and changing discursive processes by which identities are ascribed, resisted, or embraced and which processes themselves are unremarked, indeed achieve their effect because they aren't noticed."¹²² To achieve this, the very emergence of concepts and identities need to be treated as historical events in need of explanation: "it is to refuse a separation between 'experience' and language and to insist instead on the productive quality of discourse."¹²³ Teresa de Lauretis further clarifies this point when she writes that experience is "produced not by external ideas, values or material causes, but by one's personal, subjective, engagement in the practices, discourses, and institutions that lend significance (value, meaning, effect) to the events of the world."¹²⁴ Authenticity of experience, then, is the discursive effect of this process and it is one that is supported, in this case, by a larger ideology of femininity. For the woman journalist, experience is not only "personal, subjective, engagement," and highly gendered, it is further mediated by the institutions of which they are a part -- journalism and the newspaper industry -- rendering it not only institutionalized, but

also highly marketable. Highlighting experience, particularly its gendered inflections, permitted a larger journalistic repertoire for the woman journalist who was already expected to write as a lady-cum-journalist. But as Barbara Onslow has argued, the woman journalist most in danger of trespassing her femininity, the stunt girl, exposed the contradictory demands made on her as both journalist and modern woman.¹²⁵ While authority may be lent to her as a journalist, certain experiences threatened her authority as feminine subject, which, for the woman journalist, was equally vital to her credibility and viability. Despite the difficulty, Coleman and Fenton managed this paradox in unique and interesting ways.

The Sensationally Womanly Newspaper Lady

To begin with, I will examine Coleman and her writings about London in 1892, which were separated into two rhetorically distinct renderings. As letters, Coleman explored what she termed “Tramps with the Genius of London,” a reference to the multitude of city spaces characterized in Charles Dickens’ novels and to those distinctive characters that haunted those locales. The first series, published in 1892 as travel letters, were of the travel variety Coleman was accustomed to producing whenever she visited another city: largely descriptive, with information buried within sketches of lively and entertaining characters. In the second set of leaders, a numbered series entitled “London Sketches” published in 1893, Coleman, referring to her “voluminous note-book,” takes her readers back to London, exploring it this time by night’s dim light.¹²⁶ Though she suggested further

describing “a few more of those queer black and white outlines seen en silhouette in a great city—a restless, beautiful, terrible city that never lays its weary head down to sleep,” Coleman never fulfilled her promise to finish her Night Walks sketches in the spring of 1893, ending them with only four installments.¹²⁷

Becoming utterly in tune with the city, Coleman joins it by being part of its restless unsleeping population, even if she did not explore it disguised as one of its poor.¹²⁸ Coleman asserts that London by night is “not a very different place to London by day” – except for that bewitching hour before the dawn breaks, when “there is a subtle difference which is *felt more than seen*,” establishing an eerie mood that pervades all her night walks.¹²⁹ The mood of these walks is expectant, promising all kinds of dark tales, intentionally emphasizing the pathetic fallacy of the misery and grime in which the inhabitants of the city by night lived their lives. Safely protected by an assortment of male companions, Coleman is certain “these people won’t mind me,” as she reassures one of them on a visit to a “famous tramp’s lodging house in Holloway, North London.”¹³⁰ By way of explanation, Coleman offers: “Girls, do you know that I think honestly it’s just because I’m a bit of a ‘vagabond’ myself—I mean a homeless, wandering sort of a creature, and because I *understand* and *know* and *like* them.”¹³¹ Aligning herself with the “poor and wretched” Coleman goes beyond a call to journalistic duty to write something “interesting, instructive and delightful.”¹³² Her journalistic wanderings have given her the necessary knowledge to understand and know these “tramps” and “vagabonds,” turning her into a kind of expert and allowing her to guide us, her readers, even as she herself is guided. Though a

“clergyman” accompanies her, she need not fear these people, for being like them, she breaks class barriers and goes further yet by asserting she likes them. Knowing that she would have likely shocked her readers, she appeases them by appealing to their “womanliness:” “Please don’t draw away your skirts from me and look shocked and prim. You won’t be the dear, sympathetic womanly women I take you to be if you do. Well, let me tell you about it, in a homely fashion, you know, because I cannot write in a grand way, and there’s no use pretending to be great and grand when one isn’t, is there?”¹³³ Further drawing on her expertise as a Moderator, she cajoles her readers to occupy a sympathetic and “womanly” position like her own. Coleman, then, can stand on a higher moral ground (though without moralizing, as her comments about not pretending to be “great and grand” accomplish), simultaneously identifying with both the poor and her woman readers. It is this complexly articulated subject position that is duplicitous with both a correct gender order and journalistic duty that allows the woman journalist to explore these strange city spaces.

That their experiences were carried out under the auspices of their journalistic duty is carefully expressed throughout these city explorations by both Coleman and Fenton. Through these explorations, these women created for themselves a powerful profile as intrepid reporters, willing to see, smell and experience the underworld. Take for instance, Fenton’s series of night walks. Though cast within an analysis of the institutions providing shelter and aid, she nonetheless emphasizes the squalor and scandal of what she sees. Visiting the police court and jails, Fenton becomes

embarrassed by her enthusiasm to encounter criminals when she learns that the jails held only three inmates the night of her visit.¹³⁴ Momentarily forgetting her womanly timidity, she ventures, “But I believe I should have liked to have seen ‘a full house.’” Recovering herself, she writes, “And then I was ashamed of myself, and we all laughed,” reassuring her readers that they, along with her laughing male companions, should not take seriously this momentary slip out of “lady” and into “journalist.” Indeed her likeness to her imagined woman reader is secured even before she begins her night journey: “Oh, we do not know—you and I, who walk the city streets in safety and fill our parts as inoffensive private citizens—what strange things are brought to light down in that old building, nor what fascinating tales of venture and crime might be spun from the archives shut away within locked drawers, or hidden quite as securely in the memory of the officials.” Aligning herself with the law abiding, private ladies of Toronto, Fenton intentionally sets up her own stories to be suggestive of those “tales of venture and crime” – tales so shocking they must be locked and kept hidden.¹³⁵ She becomes privy to some of these tales nonetheless, tingeing her deliberate explorations of the city at night with a seditious, voyeuristic quality that betrays her femininity and undermines her womanly, yet journalistic duty, to “[deepen] public interest.”¹³⁶ Indeed after the Inspector shares some of those stories with her, replete with graphic depictions contained in the “Rogues’ Gallery,” she must do her part to secure them safely away. Betraying further her keen voyeuristic interest in this seedy way of life, she nonetheless retreats to that familiar womanly position, but not before confessing: “I had been intensely interested; but I

was glad when the leaves were folded and the bad faces, with their sorry records, were again shut away. It was like locking up a skeleton, or shaking off a nightmare. Our bounden duty was to forget that so uncanny a thing existed.” To whose duty exactly Fenton refers is left unclear, but her use of the plural suggests the secret was to remain amongst her and the officials, including her EMPIRE man, thereby aligning herself with the editorial ‘We.’¹³⁷ Keeping her questionable interest in check, however, Fenton is sure to maintain her authority as womanly advisor by praising the “kindliness and courtesy of every officer,” commenting on the “oppressive, impure air and limited accommodation which moves one to entreat Architect Lennox to make all speed with the big new Courthouse in the Square,” and insisting that “It is not good for any woman to breathe such air constantly” – all of which brings her back into the rightful domain of the lady editor.¹³⁸

Coleman, taking after Dickens, who “taught us to look around and see the misery and distress lying at our doors,” capitalize on the power to observe, the most important skill for a reporter to develop.¹³⁹ Further, she also captures his skill at social criticism: “[he taught us] to be less selfish and brutal and cowardly; to be braver and better and more healthy in mind and soul than we were before.”¹⁴⁰ Despite the self-effacing attitude she took at the onset of the series on London, she commands full control of the page, knowing that her powers of description will captivate her readers. Armed with the insight this compassion will bring—the new perspective promised by Dickens’ method—she suggests her uniqueness in this when she signs the journal of the notorious Tramps’ Shelter, informing her readers that she was “the

first woman journalist who had ever done such a thing.”¹⁴¹ This interest in the poor, this likeness to the poor, is what made her work special. It is perhaps this perspective, along with her thoughts on those other lady slummers, that leads her to tone down the sensationalism when describing what she sees inside the shelter. Inside there were pitiful creatures, fallen by temptation, but who retained vestiges of their former dignity. Outside she paints horrid pictures of bawdy women who had lost all hope of reformation.

That the night was dangerous and required male accompaniment is the unspoken assumption in these columns, and though Fenton and Coleman often do not describe their escorts, when they do, it is invariably to emphasize their masculine qualities. Fenton, for example, in her series of night excursions does not name her companion, choosing instead to allow the weight and authority of her newspaper institution to stand in for his identity with her continual references to “THE EMPIRE man.”¹⁴² In the only description offered of him, we learn he is the crime reporter, alluding to the particular knowledge of the city and its misdeeds from which Fenton may benefit. Furthermore, however, as a man he possesses those other characteristics that are important: “tall, strong, fine looking.”¹⁴³ Coleman also makes her official companions carry the weight of an institution of justice, the police. Consider how she compares the police chief and detective who accompany her around San Francisco’s Chinatown: “Chief Crowley, tall, dignified, looking grander than ever by contrast with the stooping, small, yellow-faced people about him, and Detective Glennon, with his massive shoulders and quick eye, a man of immense activity and

strength, stepped with us...”¹⁴⁴ Though these male characters appear on occasion in scenes described, they do not take on a manly role, starring opposite our female protagonists. Instead, as background or good foundation, they are intended to remind readers that although these women may be in places where they ought not to be, at hours “when most of the quiet people...were thinking of retiring,”¹⁴⁵ they were nonetheless not brazen enough to break with the most important Victorian convention of women not traveling alone at night. Indeed to have published these night walks, without the reassuring symbols of protected femininity, would have suggested work of a different nature altogether – an association the newspaper could scarcely afford to suggest, as discussed earlier.¹⁴⁶

In turn, containing the possible threats that these spaces might offer, it made for exciting copy nonetheless to stress how *different*, utterly foreign, these spaces were within an otherwise known city. Intrepid reporters that they were, Fenton and Coleman brought to their readers a city that was populated by the common evils believed by the Victorians to lead one astray: drink, misery, despair. By night it was a city alive with malicious intent: “...the terrible city, whose giant heart is never at rest; whose giant hand crushes in its grasp so many lives; whose giant feet stamp down into the gutter, effacing, every vestige of goodness and humanity.”¹⁴⁷ Such constructions, common within the social explorer literature, literally brought to life the dangers of prowling city streets at night – a kind of warning that once within its grasp, one’s fate was sealed.

One of the most common dangers cited was the utter destruction of social order and propriety wrought by drink. Given the prominence and vigorous work of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, references to the organization were sure to strike a chord with her readers; yet, it was the figure of the drunk woman who was consistently the most scandalous of all the underworld creatures constructed in these columns. Coleman, for instance, described the shocking and repulsive scene of a drunken mother trying to give her baby a drink of beer. As if this scene were not shocking enough, the noble efforts of the humble "pretty pale faced" temperance worker are rebuked by this doomed drunk with a "coarse laugh:" "Drat the brat!" she cried, laying the pewter down with a bump that made the glasses on the counter ring, 'e knows better than to drink stout when 'e smells gin. You jest try 'im with a drop, miss!" The scene is so outrageous that upon finally seeing "the astonished face of my friend peering in at the door," Coleman writes, she was left with "a mean feeling that I had been caught in some dreadfully doubtful position."¹⁴⁸ Despite this, Coleman continues to describe in great detail how "dreadful it is, how it makes you shrink," these old women taken by the drink. Providing enough gruesome detail to make these women become grotesque figures so far outside the realm of respectable ladydom, Coleman suggests that repulsion is the only appropriate response. The entire scene is set within "those mysterious London by-streets, suggestive of Jack-the-Ripper and all sorts of vague and terrible things," further reminding her women readers of the dangers that can come to women in such places – whether by their own hand by succumbing to the drink or by the hand of male predators.¹⁴⁹ In fact,

Fenton often reminds her readers that women suffer the most from the temptations of alcohol, but ironically, the illustrations of women's fashions that dot the woman's page, symbolically reassure readers of their safe distance from such scenes.¹⁵⁰

Although readers were a safe distance from these scenes (or perhaps *because* they were), they nonetheless must have been shocked by what was described in vivid detail. Seeking to make readers squirm, while simultaneously eliciting sympathy and understanding for the less fortunate, Coleman and Fenton often described foul smells and stale, impure air; sights, like those described above of drunken women that seem almost too ghastly to print; shouts and shrieks that they heard; and the slimy, dirty surfaces that were everywhere. As a tour-guide, Coleman creates spectacularly vivid pictures. Amid her brilliantly sensational leader, for example, she slips from her first person recollection to second person, placing the reader there on the banks of the London River – on the scene, experiencing each breathtaking step:

The river is black enough to-night, and is horribly suggestive of crawling, slimy things. The wind comes with a shriek and moan through the arch; the water laps up greedily against the lowest step, almost against your feet, as you stand and bend over the black river. It is very cold...The tread of feet and roll of vehicles go on over the bridge above, but an awful sense of loneliness comes upon you the utter and absolute loneliness of a stranger in the heart of a great city...London bridge at midnight! Thoughts crowd on each other thickly...Gather your skirts together and flee up the steps quickly. It is an evil place, and evil faces are peering at you from the niches as you pass. A lonely cry going out upon the night sets every nerve tingling.¹⁵¹

Amidst the gruesome, ugly details of a city of pitiful creatures, however, vestiges of class order remain as the lady journalist seeks ultimately not to utterly

repel her readers, but to incite pity, if not sympathy, in them. Fenton and Coleman both commented on the civility of the vagrants and poor at times with surprise and with particular attention to the further benefits effected by the presence of ladies like themselves.¹⁵² This other source of their authority made them different than the other journalists who ventured into similar spaces and was an essential perspective to maintain in order that their slumming not turn into the sheer spectacle of a woman in danger. Extending her motherly role, and seeing as only a woman could, Fenton assesses the shelters and even the jail for their accommodations, cleanliness and maintenance, and their authorities for their respectful treatment of their clients. In one column in which she visits two women's night shelters, it is "Miss McIntyre's Home" on Agnes Street that best meets her criteria. Set within a quaint neighbourhood, this shelter is more a home than an institution: "Like thousands of other nice little Toronto homes," this place has "the word 'home'...written in every part of it." Yet, reasserting herself as a journalist in these same columns, she is sure to point out that her visits are intentionally made at night in order to view them while in use.¹⁵³

But implicit within the social mapping Fenton draws of the safe places where vagrants can seek shelter, she asserts time and again that even with only a few pennies in one's pocket, and often without any at all, one need not wander the streets at all. Intended to reassure its good citizens that the city has accommodated its poor sufficiently, this assertion also implies that those who wander at night do so by their own design. This, in turn, further entrenched the social classification of the poor into

the deserving and undeserving, reputable and disreputable, savable and unsavable.¹⁵⁴

As the closing words to her series indicate, as a public service, it was hoped to shed light on the plight of the downtrodden, but it was also written with the express purpose of helping her readers to make sense of that messy underworld:

No woman need walk Toronto night streets for lack of shelter; no sympathetic mistress of any Toronto home need hesitate concerning the woman mendicant who comes to her door. There is shelter and food for the verieat [sic] tramp in that little white cottage on Albert Street; there is a little sensible Scotch woman at 115 Agnes street.

Surely such work it is ours to aid. Let us give of our interest and our money. Let no woman in Toronto's thousand cosy homes forget these places where the night light burns and self-denying women watch for the good that they may do to those who err or are distressed.¹⁵⁵

It is important to note the careful construction of contrasting womanhood here. Mistresses of the home, to whom Fenton addresses and identifies with her use of the pronoun "ours," naturally want to help, but they, as goodly ladies, should help only the deserving poor. "Interest" here means sympathy and compassion, which will do when money can't be spared. Surely any woman seen wandering the streets of Toronto does so because she has succumbed to the worst possible evil for women, prostitution. It was this kind of fall into disrepute that was of a more serious nature than Fenton's discreet description of "those who err or are distressed." Saving such women required the specialized work of the "self-denying women," who were different than the domesticated women to whom Fenton speaks. Mapping complex social relations in this manner was the ultimate purpose of such columns, as they were intended to help the late Victorian reader make sense of the increasingly heterogeneous city spaces, replete with prostitutes, saving angels and well intending

mistresses rubbing shoulder to shoulder.¹⁵⁶ It was clear that the presence of righteous women could provide a purifying influence over the fallen, as evidenced particularly in the final shelter Fenton visited, described in part above. At the home of Miss McIntyre there were: “many a story of a woman’s wrongs righted, of young girls protected, of daughters restored, of white woman souls drawn back from the perilous blackness into which they were leaping... [I]n saving a woman they shield her name also; thus helping her back to honorable womanhood again.”¹⁵⁷

In addition, the woman’s page also helped map the social geography in another way by warning women of the dangers that could befall them in a city full of temptation, particularly for the naïve.¹⁵⁸ Thus, these columns served as Victorian morality plays that reinforced dominant social and racial classifications, as was suggested by Fenton’s clarification that it was white women’s souls that were being and could be saved. As the reassuring words offered by one missionary woman insisted: “Girls so often get into evil without really intending it...I believe that very few young girls go deliberately into evil. They drift into it from idleness, love of excitement and evil associates. If we can only get them before they drift too far we can nearly always start them upon a fair and honorable road again.”¹⁵⁹

Though Coleman was expert at trying to step out of this position mobilized by Fenton, it is clear that she could never step too far outside it, particularly if she was to maintain her privileged status as an employed, authoritative public speaker. Nonetheless, Coleman asserted repeatedly: “I suppose I shouldn’t talk this way, dear girls, but indeed, if you were here, and wandering as I am here and there from great

West End to the filthy squalid dens of the very poor, your hearts would feel sore—sore.”¹⁶⁰ This sympathetic position, buffered by the weight of her institutional and official contacts, allowed Coleman to assert an appropriately womanly perspective that capitalized on the sensationalism of her experiences, yet never threatened to undermine the entire gender and class order. Though of the night, of the poor and miserable, she remains of her readers, as well. Though able to experience and explore sights that were inappropriate for women, her transgressions remained permissible. Like Fenton does, Coleman constructs a sympathy that rests on an assumed class position in which her readers share her social and moral vision, and if they could see what she saw, they would surely share her sore heart. Further extending her community by assuming shared values about gender and its intersection with class, her own unique claim to authentic knowledge of these poor is dependent on this slight of class-bending. Though she attempts to straddle the two worlds, ultimately her ability to write in a public manner remains utterly dependent on her gendered middle class position. In the end, despite Coleman’s rhetorical claims, her familiar middle class Anglo Saxon perspective is safe.

Coleman’s insistence on being considered one of them must be read as a symbolic effort to bridge social distance in a manner that she believed was necessary to her own credibility. Within the logic of the social explorers, authority to speak and authenticity of that speech was rooted in the connections established with the subjects of investigation, brandished with sensory details that profited from the lack of social distance gained through contact with the subjects. In this regard, Coleman,

who thought of herself as a conduit into this other world, served the purpose of exposing and exploring mankind and its multitude of conditions, while Fenton never made claims to being “of the people,” drawing her journalistic authority instead from her womanly call to aid and service. Unlike other women social explorers, these women did justify their work “in a language of authenticity.”¹⁶¹ Coleman accomplished this by temporarily and contingently becoming one of them; Fenton combined a desire to serve her community of readers with her capacity to publicize as a mediator of that other world. Although Coleman consistently displayed a willingness to talk to all kinds of people, she was also willing, when necessary, however, to reinsert class distinctions when readers would “overstep” the requisite boundaries between her and the mass public.

As a mediator of events, Fenton maintained a greater rhetorical distance from this same public, both in terms of the less intimate journalistic voice she produced for much of her career, and in terms of the official and institutional view she took of her explorations of the city. Fenton never pleaded for pity, but did assert the propriety of a womanhood invested in a moral duty to aid. Extending that duty to herself, she slipped into this middle space between readers and the world out there, some of which readers experienced, some of which they did not. In contrast, Coleman attempted to assert more direct forms of “contact,” though this often failed her as well. For instance, she recounts an encounter with a “lost” man with enough pity and melodrama to assuage the sexual suggestiveness of it, but in the process betrays the fiction of being “one of them” by stepping into the role of “lady.”

He was gone beyond tracts and things, he muttered, but thank God he knew what a lady was, and might have been married to one if he had taken care of himself. It was dreadful to see him handle the texture of my cloak and smooth my dress with his trembling hand, and to see the look of what he once had been flit across his face; dreadful to hear him cuss – in a frenzy – his mistress, drink; dreadful to hear him cry that he knew it was killing him but that he loved it better than his God, or any hope of Heaven; dreadful to see him grow maudlin with self-pity, and weep weak tears over his wasted life...¹⁶²

Coleman is not overtly threatened by the unintended and ultimately impossible sexuality in this exchange, for as a lady, she is implicitly without a sexuality.¹⁶³ To be a sexual being in this underworld was to be a prostitute. Because she is of a different class, she can then afford to pity this pathetic character. And here again we see the careful negotiation between a journalistic and gendered identity that varied and took on different affects depending on the specificity of the moment

The Not-So Spectacular, Sensational Canadian Stunt Girl

Interestingly, despite Fenton's seeming unwillingness to step too close to the people, it was she who pulled off the class-bending exercise of a full fledged stunt by spending a night in a woman's shelter. This was the only clear stunt performed by either of these women in the period of examination, 1888-1895. Indeed, there is little evidence that the stunt tradition flourished in Toronto, or in the rest of Canada during the time of its heyday in the United States and Britain. Marjorie Lang, for instance, in her comprehensive study of women journalists across Canada, names only Fenton's stunt in the women's shelter and Madge Merton's (Elmira Elliott) exploration of poverty disguised as an old woman and as a servant for the wealthy.¹⁶⁴

Skillfully built on a series of class distinctions and contrasts, Fenton's stunt of spending the night as an "amateur casual" seems to be written with the same intent as her night walk series: to provide publicity to the plight of the "down and out." Predicated on difference – the other world that was so close, yet largely symbolically and socially absent from the "normal" lives of "everyday citizens" – the column opens with a pitiful portrait of woman "shabbily attired," trudging through the snow and wind¹⁶⁵ who sees all around her signs of contrasting wealth: she passes the Athletic Club as "a dreamy waltz in sweet orchestral notes floated down from the upper windows," cabs drive past her "depositing dainty fares beneath the lamps" of the club while she struggled "almost buried in snow," while the "delicate gowns and white arms beneath soft fur" remind her of her own shabby worn ulster.¹⁶⁶ There is no indication at the beginning of this column that the woman described was Fenton herself dressed up; the narrative is told in third person, describing a woman known as Mary Smith. Spending a fearful night disgusted by the bed bugs, terrified by the rats in the hallway and fearful of the occupants in the other room, Mary Smith's night is characterized by the horrific sounds of the night creatures. Other sensory details are given which build the terror and panic: "Would that black-haired casual never stop her heavy breathings, or that other one her tossings? And, oh? There was the sly clink of the glass and that vile whiskey odour again; while outside the door she could hear the scamper of rats upon the stairway. Had she closed the door tightly? Could they possibly come in by crack or hole?"¹⁶⁷

Indeed, by this point the reader is already aware that though “Mary Smith” may be poor, she was not like the others in the shelter. This Mary Smith, at best, was of the “respectable poor” as her astonishment at the culture amongst these women makes clear. Once again, Fenton maintains moral superiority. Overhearing conversations about “the last time I was in jail,” and “the advantages of the jail as winter quarters,” Fenton writes the following:

They spoke of these things as naturally as refined women talk of their At Homes, or men of their clubs. There was not the slightest sense of disgrace associated with them.

It was a revelation to the woman who listened, to discover the utter absence of ambition, or desire for permanent work, the indifference and apathy of these habitual casuals.

That they were of the lowest type was evident. Yet through all their talk ran a restraint of decency. There was not one immodest word or act; while even the profanity of the night was held in check.¹⁶⁸

Typically Victorian in perspective and similar to observations made by other “down and outers,” her comments about the utter depravity of this “lowest type,” are mixed with elements of redemption. This potentially contradictory mix of both biology and culture – what Pittenger refers to as social heredity¹⁶⁹ – become more comprehensible when the reader is told that these casuals were not allowed to go to prayers, nor given any kind of moral instruction. Betraying the belief that morality was the foundation for a progressive work ethic, Fenton, after donning her official journalistic voice again, makes this last recommendation in her “Comments of an Amateur Casual”: “‘there ain’t no call to the unconverted in the casual ward,’ is worth consideration in a city where Christians are jostling each other in search of religious work.”¹⁷⁰ Fenton further betrays this efficient work ethic in her scathing criticisms of a shelter that bars

women from leaving in the morning, whether they have work to attend or not:

“Under present conditions, a woman loses her chance of a day’s employment...acting under regulations, the caretaker was compelled to keep her; while three morning hours were wasted in idle waiting... That no casual who refuses to work and wishes to leave, should be detained by force is equally clear. Locked doors are for criminals, not for those whose only wrongdoing is their poverty.” Her position on the requirement to work for a night’s shelter was starkly in contrast with the observations of a *Globe* correspondent who had visited the House of Industry some four years earlier. In it, he¹⁷¹ noted that “the regime of morning’s work for his lodging and breakfast has a wholesome effect upon the tramp. It prevents him becoming a pauper in the most offensive sense of the term.”¹⁷²

Returning to her “normal” state, Fenton returns the following day to do a proper examination of the shelter and sees the same women she had left just a short time before: “She wanted to greet those tough casuals with a familiar sympathy; but only pulled her furs about her—and smiled a good-night in their face.” That she could pull off the stunt so convincingly betrayed the assertion that the poor were a different race of people that were inherently other to the middle class. Yet in closing her column with her confident recommendations, she entrenches her social distance from the casuals beyond the ‘protection’ of her furs to her practice as journalist, thereby re re-establishing her authoritative expertise based on experience. Again, she is able to be among them, but never like them.¹⁷³

Lacking the first person perspective, we never learn what the experience of passing was like for Fenton personally, which could have turned the column into a potentially powerful edict about the separate worlds in which these classes lived. Despite having spent a night in quarters that were clearly problematic, the expected sympathy for her fellow shelter-mates is surprisingly absent. This is most evident in another of her recommendations that is shocking for its lack of womanly sympathy: "...considering the subject as a whole, there is no doubt that the woman's casual ward of the House of Industry affords all that can be expected in the way of shelter, food and treatment, to the class of inmates who frequent it. The majority of Toronto's women casuals are of the incorrigible type, and probably have experienced nothing better and much that is worse in their lives." Though they are not criminals and have been forgotten by the religious, they clearly can't expect too much out of life either.

Fenton's distance from this event is achieved not only on a class level, but also on the very journalistic level upon which she sought entry into this other world. Fenton's use of the third person narrative differed from other stunts performed by women during this time period and narratively distances Fenton's body from the experiences of being in the night shelter. Taking great care to describe "A Casual's Costume," Fenton finally appears in the first person as she calls attention to the process of transformation, an important motif characterizing all the social explorer and stunt literature. Describing this process at the very end of the column, the shift in perspective suggests that Fenton literally became another person, thereby containing

the possible danger that she might become too much like a casual.¹⁷⁴ Indeed her description of her transformation indicates that while the physical transformation may have been achieved relatively easily by donning old and tattered clothing and tousling her fashionable hairstyle, there remained a doubt as to whether her transformation was absolute. As her house mistress comments, two obvious signs of her class remained: “try and roughen both voice and speech if you want to avoid questions;” “your face isn’t quite right; you haven’t got the—the—expression.”

This reference to expression recalls Nellie Bly’s exaggerated attention to learning the “role” of a lunatic. As she described it, “Between times, practicing before the mirror and picturing my future as a lunatic, I read snatches of improbable and impossible ghost stories, so that when the dawn came...I felt that I was in a fit mood for my mission”¹⁷⁵

In contrast, both Bly and Elizabeth Banks, the American in London, told their stunts in first person, using their own observations as a means of building their authorial position as expert on the given social issue. Indeed what made these articles so thrilling to read were the ways in which the reporter herself was intimately implicated in her tale. Lacking that perspective in her stunt, Fenton’s story was about Mary Smith’s experiences, not her own, and in this choice, Fenton took out one of the more spectacular elements to the stunt: the publicity of the reporter herself. Though she may have borrowed some of the sensationalist techniques for writing a provocative and engaging story, Fenton contained the threat of her journalistic and class bending risk by refusing to make the article a spectacular splash. Rather than

build her authority by relying on the spectacular, Fenton used her already-established position as a lady editor to give the series its moral and journalistic motivation. In contrast, Elizabeth Banks performed and wrote all her stunts while in London working freelance. Nellie Bly's stories, which were not written for the woman's page, appeared on the front page of *The World's* Sunday edition. The predominance of the woman's page as an avenue of work for Canadian women meant that all their journalistic work – which appeared on this page – must be read within this discursive space that was rhetorically different than other pages in the newspaper. Indeed travel and social explorations represented an important mechanism by which to leap out of the domestic space of personal relations to a different realm for women, thereby allowing a broadening of the potential identities for the woman journalist. Nonetheless, it would always be circumscribed by the woman's page, much of which was reliant on relationships with readers.

Yet, it must be stated that there were limits to what the stunt girl could do. One of the more audacious of the time, Elizabeth Banks, encountered resistance when, desperate for more work, she and an editor devised a scheme to become a Salvation Army Lassie. Interestingly this scheme was hatched after Banks had determined to leave behind stunt work but was dissuaded by all the editors she met: "The editors were...firm in expressing their opinion that it was foolish for me to think of doing 'ordinary' things in journalism, when I had proved myself so capable of doing the 'extraordinary' things."¹⁷⁶ Visiting with an editor who had always been kindly toward her, Banks informs him of her latest scheme: to describe the work of

the Salvation Army “from the inside,” at four times the usual rate of pay.¹⁷⁷ His reaction was not what Banks was expecting. He exclaimed: “No! No! You must never do that! It would be a terrible thing! Promise me you will give up that scheme. It is not nice. It is not dignified, and it will create a prejudice against you which you will never be able to live down.”¹⁷⁸ Listening to him exclaim that she would be “ruined, ruined, ruined,” Banks continues, “I began to get as thoroughly frightened as though I had been about to commit a crime; and, as I listened to all the dire consequences which he prophesied would follow in the wake of my proposed undertaking, my hair almost stood on end and my eyes fairly popped out of my head.”¹⁷⁹ Though emphasizing the premature death of her journalism career, by constructing a link between her undignified actions, the threat of being “ruined,” and committing a crime, Banks is clearly alluding to becoming a *ruined woman*, forever marked as having prostituted herself in the name of her career. By crossing a religious and moral boundary, Banks’ scheme threatened her very stature as a nice and dignified woman.

Interestingly, and perhaps coincidentally if reports are to be believed,¹⁸⁰ this stunt was one of Fenton’s last columns before she lost her job to Kit Coleman when their papers merged. As a mediator that could provide the kind of experiences that readers could not necessarily experience, the woman journalist as explorer of city conditions and spaces served a vital social purpose that fell within the limits of respectable femininity, even if the behaviour itself pushed its limits. In this manner, Coleman and Fenton drew from a discourse already established by women reformers

who, as the earliest social workers, explored tenements, poverty and other so-called unsavoury locales in order to classify, organize and reform. The women's pages that also explored these spaces gave them a sympathetic meaning through the telling of stories that relied on typical conventions to create heroes, sympathetic characters and certainly a few villains. The use of drama and narrative technique, then, was not simply for sensational means, giving these explorations an aura of stunt, but also served to create empathy and connection with a wider range of social groups.¹⁸¹ It also fit most conveniently within prevailing gender norms that inflected these women journalists' work with the purpose of philanthropy through the notion of community service. This rhetorical strategy complemented both the traditional domain of women's service and that of journalistic mission. Often inflected with a sense that the duty at hand was unsavoury and discomfiting for the ladies, the 'sacrifice' was made in the name of readers, in the name of "needing to know"¹⁸² in order to help or to know how to properly respond when aid was requested. These social explorations were ideal conditions for an expansion of the woman's journalist's professional ideology, made possible, however, through an already circulating expanded notion of the terrain of journalism. That is to say, that the ideals and practices of the new journalism were easily manipulated to suit the gendered imperatives of women's journalism. In turn, their usage of these techniques helped to further popularize and feminize the profession of journalism.

While constructing a journalistic purpose for themselves, they also made social interventions. Repeatedly both Coleman and Fenton asserted that although one

might not socialize with these unsavouries, one can come into contact with them, or even become one. Despite the sympathetic portrait offered at times, social power remained rather safely intact, as both Coleman and Fenton were able to extrapolate a position that always kept them at a rhetorical arm's length, and in turn, maintained their journalistic distance as experts. This was not uncommon of the social explorers, whose disguises were largely external, functional in that they gained them access to this life and performatory in that they performed a class and a concomitant morality (or lack thereof) for them.¹⁸³ Mapping social geographies as well as physical ones, these columns left social strata in tact, even as they claimed to bridge them. Constituted as travel to foreign locales, even when in their own cities, these columns further constructed the idea of home as a moral and idealized sphere, precisely through the exploration of difference. In this context, they must be seen as a subset of the travel genre they popularized in their columns. As travels outside the limited domestic realm, the slums and shelters of the underworld provided the setting to engage in riskier journalistic practices, while never entirely challenging the reign or rightfulness of Home.

The Canadian version of the stunt girl, then, remains a specific articulation of both journalistic conventions and womanly virtues made visible through the journalistic risks she took: risks, though, that were carefully consigned by the proprieties of her female readers, her own gender, and her professional status. In turn, she rests both inside and outside of journalism: sometimes a member of the press, yet always and already different than those others. She participated in the

emergence of a specific set of practices that are recognizable today in the sensationalism of the news, its penchant for crime reporting, and its ideological positioning of “public watchdog” captured in its investigative journalism. Her work remains a fascinating historical archive of the development of a profession that contains its difficult negotiations of gender both within its representations of itself and its workers through a set of discourses that attempts to remain neutral, yet still manifests itself as gendered specifically masculine. As the stunt girl tradition attests, this struggle for neutrality and containment, however, is never fully successful.

Resting somewhere between the spectacular and the vulnerable, the stunt girl remains something of a perpetually shifting paradox, resilient, and by necessity, always on the move.

In sum, the leaders described in this and the previous chapter articulated a role for Canadian women, both within the home and outside it. More importantly, these articles, along with the reader forums, displayed that the contours of an ideal womanhood were far from being secure, even as the ideological force of these ideas continued to exert power over their lives. Ideas about the home and women’s role within it—the most hegemonic concepts within nineteenth century femininity—were subject to contestation, revision and debate, as economic, political and social conditions changed. Yet, we can see that within these pages, the woman journalist is brought to life vis-à-vis an articulation of elements of a recognizable womanhood with a sense of adventure and exploration that was characteristic of this era of new journalism. The accepted use of the first person personal pronoun, the conception of

the “man on the street” scouting out “news” indicate that, while there were discernable notions of “newsworthiness,” how it connected to readers’ lives became increasingly more important. These trends within journalism were exploited by these women, who articulated them within a specifically feminized manner by their sustained relationships with their readers and their self-conscious efforts to name the importance of their articles for women and their lives. In the process, they revamped common journalistic practices and further expanded the scope of possibility for a woman’s page editor.

NOTES

The following abbreviations have been used in the notes for archival sources and depositories:

	Depository:
AO	Archives of Ontario
NAC	National Archives of Canada
	Manuscript Collections:
KBC	Kathleen Blake Coleman, MG29 D112
NMT	Newton McTavish, F 4308
CHJS	C.H.J. Snider, F 1194
WJT	William J. Thomson, C 336
TPT	T. Phillips Thompson, F1082
JSW	John Stephen Willison, MG30 D29

Unless otherwise indicated all articles taken from *The Daily Mail* appeared on Kit Coleman's page, "Woman's Kingdom."

Unless otherwise indicated all articles taken from *The Empire* appeared on Faith Fenton's page, "Woman's Empire."

¹ Frank Mott, *American Journalism: A History, 1690-1960*, 3rd ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1962), 441.

² Mott, 436; Paul Rutherford, "The People's Press: The emergence of the new journalism in Canada, 1869-99," *Canadian Historical Review*, 56:2 (1975): 181-182; Rutherford, *A Victorian Authority: The daily press in late nineteenth-century Canada*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 135-136; See also *The Globe Assignment Book, 1902* (Item #1, *The Globe Assignment Book, 1901*, NMT, MU 691, AO) and "Memoranda regarding the Staff" 1 Jan. 1902, *The Evening Telegram*, for details on how each paper assigned reporter to cover various local news sites ("Memoranda regarding the Staff, 1 Jan. 1902, *The Evening Telegram*, Folder 14, *Evening Telegram, 1891-1908*, CHJS, MU 7686, AO).

³ Kevin Barnhurst and John Nerone, *The Form of News, A History* (New York: Guildford Press, 2001), 5-13; See also their latest published article which makes a similar argument in a more abbreviated form, "US newspaper types, the newsroom and the division of labour, 1750-2000, *Journalism Studies*, 4:4 (2003): 435-449.

⁴ Barnhurst and Nerone's argument stresses the "idealized relationship" which provides clues about the empirical audience and about social and news values, but the historical audience cannot be assumed to be self evident in these representations. While we might be able to determine through the form of the newspaper the cultural and social interpolations that worked to construct an imagined audience, this audience was not necessarily the same as those historical actors who, on any given day, might have read part, or all, of any number of available newspapers. Certainly we know that newspaper reading was widespread and its

lowered price made it more affordable to many more citizens than previously. It must also be recognized, however, that the emergence of a shared public resource like the opening of the Toronto Public Library in 1894, or the Free Library, its predecessor, meant that with the issuance of a “readers ticket,” almost anyone could read a newspaper, without necessarily buying one. Illustrations in *The Globe*, for instance, showed men and women reading in their respective newspaper reading rooms at the Free Library in 1890 which not only provides empirical evidence of changing reader patterns (from the parlour to the reading room), it also suggests the complexities associated with circulation numbers. See William J. Thomson’s collection of newspaper illustrations held at the Archives of Ontario. “In the Newspaper Section,” [illustration] 29 Mar. 1890, WJT, container D151, print 810, AO; and, “The Ladies Department,” [illustration] 29 March 1890, WJT, container D151, print 1220, AO. See also the Toronto Public Library’s website for further information on its history: Toronto Public Library, “History of TPL,” Toronto Public Library, http://www.tpl.toronto.on.ca/abo_his_index.jsp, 06 Dec. 2004.

⁵ This assertion was accompanied by a graphic illustration of a ticker tape. Mail and Empire, “Mail and Empire, Toronto, Canada” (Toronto: n.pub., [1898?]).

⁶ “A Year and a Day,” *The Globe*, 3 Mar. 1888: 5.

⁷ The copy accompanying the ad featured below extrapolates further on the service it offered the nation: “Along the route in the rural parts, and at the stations, too, the people rise before the sun to set their chronometers by “The Globe regulator,” and in the summer season to read on the broad disc on the side of The Globe car the earliest predictions concerning the weather obtainable anywhere in the district traversed” (Ibid). Connecting regions together visually – through the train – and symbolically through the production of news from a host of locales, *The Globe*’s train united communities as literally as the national rail line was intended to. The emphasis on its technological progress and that of the nation is further emphasized in its description of the newspaper office as the place where the telegraph, post office, the cable, the telephone and the railways converged. Given the importance of the nation’s progress to the symbolic importance of the newspaper, the newspaper office became an important locale for the construction of history, as well as the news.

Interestingly, Madge Merton, *The Globe*’s woman’s page editor, would many years later write a breathless column describing a trip on the train which took up the same discourse of technological wonder and transformed it into a specifically feminized experience. Describing the excessively early departure hour of 3:55 a.m., a member of her party comments, “I feel as if I was eloping,” (“The Globe Train,” *The Globe*, 23 May 1891: 11.

⁸ Patricia Jasen also argues that although infrastructures facilitated travel, the tourist experience at the end of the nineteenth century cannot be understood outside of “new cultural priorities [which] spurred the demand for fresh sights and experiences” (Patricia Jasen, *Wild Things: Nature, Culture and Tourism in Ontario, 1790-1914* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995], 7). She furthermore asserts that “being a tourist means being in a state of mind in which the imagination plays a key role” (4). Central to the tourist experience then

is a “romantic sensibility” that defines the experience of traveling through what was understood to be different, authentic and emotionally stimulating. As will be discussed in the following section, these women used these qualities to their advantage in their frequent letters from abroad.

⁹ See for instance, Mariana Valverde’s discussion of “Canadian feminism and the question of racial degeneration” in her “‘When the Mother of the Race is Free’: Race, Reproduction, and Sexuality in First-Wave Feminism” in *Gender Conflicts: New Essays in Women’s History*. Eds, Franca Iacovetta and Mariana Valverde (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 3-26.

¹⁰ Mark Pittenger, “A World of Difference,” *American Quarterly*, http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/american_quarterly/v049/49.1pittenger.html, 17 Jun. 2002, 4.

¹¹ Mary Ryan, *Women in Public: Between banners and ballots, 1825-1880* (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 1990), 60-2.

¹² Pittenger, 4; Ryan, 64; Mariana Valverde, *In the age of light, soap and water: Moral reform in English-Canada, 1825-1925* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1991), 29.

¹³ Madge Merton, “Here and There,” *The Globe*, 18 Apr. 1891: 12. As the title of this portion of the page suggests, the column meanders through a host of different social topics by exploring various locales throughout the city. Merton, like Fenton and Coleman, used small paragraphs of these kinds of observations as “gossip” about town. This paragraph of classes of restaurant-goers is written from the perspective of Merton sitting in a restaurant watching people come and go. It is written in the present tense and indicts the reader directly to observe with her, the ‘classes’ of people she constructs. Though often banal and seemingly trivial, these paragraphs were important for asserting a kind of connectedness to the city and to the various social circles about town. As this chapter will argue, these were important in constructing social maps to help navigate through increasingly complex urban terrain.

¹⁴ Although this decision is somewhat arbitrary, it serves the heuristic purpose of delimiting the topic at hand. As mentioned, travel writing formed a considerable part of these two women journalists’ production over the years. As such, I felt it warranted attention in this dissertation. It does, however, threaten to diffuse the focus of the dissertation. Travel writing has received increased critical attention of late and this topic alone could warrant book length treatment – as it has. Indeed the scholarship on women’s travel writing in the nineteenth century has exploded recently. Studies of women’s travel writing have examined it as a means to broaden women writers’ professional identities. Maria Frawley, *A Wider Range: Travel writing by women in Victorian England* (London: Associated University Presses, 1994); Lisa LaFramboise, “Travellers in skirts: Women and English-language travel writing in Canada, 1820-1926” (Ph.D. diss., University of Alberta, 1997); from the perspective of colonialism, imperialism, postcolonialism, orientalism, and transculturation. On post/colonialism: Sara Mills, *Discourses on difference: An analysis of women’s travel writing and colonialism* (London: Routledge, 1991); Gordon Moyles and Doug Owram, *Imperial Dreams and Colonial Realities: British views of Canada, 1880-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988). On imperialism: Eva-Marie Kröller, *Canadian travellers in Europe, 1851-1900*

(Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1987); Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel writing and transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992); Alison Blunt, *Travel, gender and imperialism: Mary Kingsley and West Africa* (New York: Guildford Press, 1994). On orientalism and exoticism: Lisa Lowe, *Critical terrains: French and British orientalisms* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991). As this brief and wholly incomplete listing of literature indicates, the field is a dynamic one with a multitude of approaches and insights.

In keeping with my interests in the role of the newspaper in a rising commodity culture and in constructing nationalist discourses, I have chosen to limit my discussion to these areas, focusing on the construction of the city/country dualism and the association of the Canadian countryside with history and nation. The notion of traveling to the countryside for pleasure and relaxation was an important development in the tourist industry in Canada (see Patricia Jasen, *Wild things: Nature, culture and tourism in Ontario, 1790-1914* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995]). The newspaper, through its various discourses on such travel, was an important location for the promotion of this perspective, as were the countless other periodicals that published travel writing (Frawley, 28). Within this spirit of inquiry, I am interested in understanding women journalist's participation in this emerging discourse of travel as leisure as it related to the construction of rationalized and moralized activities to fill leisure time. This rationalized discourse tells us something about how progress of the nation was understood to be secured.

¹⁵ The exception is Eva-Marie Kröller who does examine the writings of Coleman in Europe (74, 78-82, 86).

¹⁶ Barbara Freeman, *Kit's Kingdom: The Journalism of Kathleen Blake Coleman* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1989), 88.

¹⁷ She traveled through Europe in 1892 and again for the Queen's Jubilee in 1897. She traveled throughout the United States, including California (1894), Chicago (1893), New Mexico (1894) and St. Lois, (1903); Barbados (1894); and, throughout Canada: British Columbia, Maritimes and Quebec City (1894-5), as well as the occasional trip to Ottawa and Montreal. Her most well known trip, however, was to cover the Spanish-American war of 1898 in Cuba.

¹⁸ "About People and Things," *The Empire*, May 13 1893: 11.

¹⁹ Coleman similarly painted a pitiful picture of a lonely woman traveling by boat to Chicago, enduring the discomforts of a cramped press bed. "By boat to Chicago," *The Daily Mail*, 22 Jul. 1893: 5.

²⁰ E. Lynn Linton, "The Wild Women as Social Insurgents," *The Nineteenth Century*, 30 (1891), 602-603.

²¹ Coleman also sought to help her readers with her reports from Chicago. Response to "Esperance," *The Daily Mail*, 23 Sept. 1893: 5.

²² "At the World's Fair City," *The Empire*, 27 May 1893: 7.

²³ “At the World’s Fair” *The Daily Mail*, 30 Sept. 1893: 5.

²⁴ Pot Pourri, *The Daily Mail*, 19 Aug. 1893: 5.

²⁵ Jasen, *Wild Things*, 12.

²⁶ Jasen, 112-115.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ “Our Young People,” *The Empire*, 21 Jul 1894: 5.

³⁰ Jean O’Grady, ed., *Diary of a European Tour*, by Margaret Addison (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1999), 5. For more on Thomas Cook see Piers Brendon *Thomas Cook: 150 Years of Popular Tourism*. (London: Secker and Warburg, 1991.)

³¹ “At the Sunset City,” *The Daily Mail*, 31 Mar. 1894: 12. Of the many more examples that could be provided, see also Fenton’s comments, “But for this first week or two – you shall go about with me on the Chicago trolleys” (“At The World’s Fair,” *The Empire*, 20 May 1893: 5); “You and I have traveled along the Niagara river bank before...” (“All Along the River,” *The Empire*, 23 Jun. 1894: 11).

³² In one column, for instance, Fenton provides moment by moment details of the route and sites passed as she travels by new electric car to Niagara Falls. As she passes by the gorge, she heightens the excitement by describing the force of the white frothy, violent water, making mention of the sweet wild rose scent in the air. If one could imagine this passage being read aloud, as family members often did with each other, the details and sensations of the ride were most certainly provocatively effective (“All Along the River,” *The Empire*, 23 Jun. 1894: 11).

³³ Frawley, *A Wider Range*, 28. Percy Adams also notes that through the genre of travel writing, readers were also exposed to a range of writers from other countries – a further testament to the huge market for these kinds of travel (Percy Adams, *Travel Literature and the evolution of the novel*, [Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1983], ix).

³⁴ Lisa LaFramboise notes, however, that for the middle class traveler, like Lady Macdonald and Ellen Elizabeth Spragge, the wild North-West was opened by the completion of the railway, turning formerly rough and untamed land into accessible and leisurely travel. For these women, suggests Laframboise, the expansion of travel infrastructure not only affected the kind of travel they experienced, it changed their form of travel writing as well. See chapter three, “Writing the Rails: Women, the West and the Canadian Pacific Railway,” “Travelers in Skirts,” 92-123.

³⁵ “Here and There,” *The Empire*, 04 Jul. 1891: 5. Several years later, Fenton would comment on how much more accessible the trip to Niagara was with improved travel infrastructure which increased convenience (“Here and There,” *The Empire*, 23 Jun. 1894: 11).

³⁶ “A Trip to Niagara-on-the-lake,” *The Daily Mail*, 26 Jul. 1890: 5.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*; “Women at Home,” *The Daily Mail*, 30 Aug. 1890: 5. See also the hilarious trip to St. Catharines, *The Daily Mail*, Aug. 23 1890: 5. Fenton made similar comments. See for instance, her trip to Niagara Falls, “Here and There,” *The Empire*, 23 Jun. 1894: 11.

³⁹ “Holiday making,” *The Daily Mail*, 05 July 1890: 5.

⁴⁰ “A Trip to Niagara-on-the-Lake,” *The Daily Mail*, 26 Jul 1890: 5.

⁴¹ In an interesting column, Fenton mocks the “wise assemblage” of “our city fathers” who banned music on Sundays in Queen’s Park. Advocating for the families who lack the means by which to enjoy fresh air in parts outside the city, she makes her intention clear: “as the enjoyment of many citizens of both sexes is involved therein, we, of the Woman’s Empire, have a right to discuss the question a little, and perhaps plead that the proposal may be reconsidered.” “Queen’s Park Sunday Music,” *The Empire*, 08 Jun 1889: 5.

⁴² See Frawley, *A Wider Range*, 13-42; and particularly Percy Adams’ instructive genealogy of the travel genre. Carefully tracing the development of the genre, particularly as it borrowed techniques and conventions from the novel, he notes that prior to 1800 the genre was predominantly written in third person and was largely biographical, chiefly of important historical actors. After this time, sentimentality, landscape description and more subjectivity – that is personal reflection on experiences and sensations—were prevalent. History, thus, served as a useful organizing principle throughout these texts, particularly as they conveniently provided the requisite heroes and villains necessary for any good story (*Travel Literature*, 162-165).

⁴³ “A Trip to Niagara-on-the-Lake,” *The Daily Mail*, 26 Jul 1890, p. 5. This monument commemorates the gallantry of Major-General Sir Isaac Brock who lost his life in the 1812 war. See also Fenton’s summer series, “Among the Lighthouses,” which ran from July 13 1889 to Sep. 14 1889.

⁴⁴ Frawley, 28.

⁴⁵ Frawley, 28; Laframboise, 2.

⁴⁶ Laframboise, 1. See also Frawley, 24-6.

⁴⁷ Frawley, 25; Ryan, *Women in Public*, 12-14.

⁴⁸ Jasen, 116.

⁴⁹ Frawley, 34.

⁵⁰ Jean deBonville, *La Presse Québécoise de 1884-1914: Genèse de'un media de masse* ([Québec]: Les Presses de l'Université de Laval, 1988), 220-244.

⁵¹ Hazel Dicken-Garcia, *Journalistic standards in nineteenth-century America*, (Madison, Wis: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), 52.

⁵² Dicken-Garcia, 90.

⁵³ The use of crusades and stunts can also be understood as an invaluable method for turning the newspaper into an active citizen, a mediator between the official public sphere and those citizens who were encouraged to participate in order to alleviate some kind of injustice. These methods, which were used most effectively by the popular papers, were commensurate with less partisan news coverage and strongly written editorials. Campaigns ensured readers knew that newspapers, as advocates for the people, held a stake in the public sphere. Further it marked one of the few ways in which the popular papers that openly disavowed party connections could assert a political identity of some kind. The relative disuse of these tactics in the formerly partisan papers could possibly be explained by their partisan legacies that continued to assert a political identity, even as these legacies and affiliations were being re-articulated to mean something new.

⁵⁴ C.S. Clark, *Of Toronto the Good* (Toronto: The Mail Publishing Company, 1898). Incidentally, Clark himself was a journalist.

⁵⁵ Wilbur F. Crafts, *The Sabbath for man: a study of the origin, obligation, history, advantages and present state of Sabbath observance, with special references to the rights of working men, based on Scripture, literature, and especially on a symposium of correspondence with persons of all nations and denominations*, (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1885).

⁵⁶ See George Grant, *Technology and Empire: Perspectives on North America* (Toronto: House of Anansi, 1969).

⁵⁷ n.a., "Sunday. How the Lord's Day is Spent in Cincinnati," *The Globe*, 9 May 1885: 5.

⁵⁸ n.a., "A very hard life is that of a New York reporter," *The Empire*, 25 Nov. 1893: 13.

⁵⁹ "House of Commons, Debate on Mr. Charlton's Bill Prohibiting the sale of Sunday Newspaper. March 16, 17, 23, 24, 1898," Ottawa, p. 2, PAMPH 1898 #19, AO. The bill was eventually defeated because the protection of the Sabbath was within the provincial jurisdiction. The debates, however, provided a valuable window on commonplace ideas about this relationship between the preservation and promotion of morality, progress of the nation and newspaper publishing. More often than not, the United States was used a case to

prove why the prohibition of such publications should be affected, particularly with the repetition of the phrase, “the Sunday newspaper curse.” As one Member of Parliament put it, “...the Sunday newspaper is the foe of all religious restraint...a violation of God’s law, an impious defiance of God’s law; and a newspaper with such an inspiration, must necessarily, and does, denounce and defame everything that has a divine nature or a divine sanction (4). Interestingly, it was also noted by MP Maclean that the scandalous newspapers published in the US on Sundays still found their way into Canada on the trains nonetheless (7).

⁶⁰ Quoted in McKenzie Porter, “The Pulse of French Canada,” *Maclean’s Magazine*, 15 Mar. 1954, p. 19.

⁶¹ Quoted in Clark, *Of Toronto the Good*, 33. Sheppard’s comments are not confined to *The Mail* alone. He also attacked *The Telegram* and *The Globe* for capitalizing on their scandalously thorough coverage of crime news.

⁶² Mary Ryan makes this point in her examination of public space in mid-nineteenth century New York, San Francisco and New Orleans. Making the distinction between in-danger women and dangerous women, Ryan argues the “gender geography” of these urban settings was reflected in the ways in which public parks, amusements and shopping centers were used and designed (*Women in Public*, 68-76, 93-4).

⁶³ Quoted in Clark, 33.

⁶⁴ “Pot Pourri,” *The Daily Mail*, 11 Jan. 1889: 5. Coleman defended the newspaper against criticisms of sensationalism from a reader who insisted that news of murder and crime should not be published in the newspaper. Coleman countered that as the bible should not be censored, nor should the newspaper, since it did not make up the news, but merely report it.

⁶⁵ Carole Gerson, *A Purer Taste: The Writing and Reading of Fiction in English in Nineteenth-Century Canada* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1989), 5.

⁶⁶ Stuart Hall, “Notes on deconstructing ‘the popular,’” in *People’s history and socialist theory*, ed. R. Samuel, (London: Routledge, 1981), 228. Hall argues we understand struggle and resistance better than “reform and transformation.” Paying attention to reform, keeps traditional forms in view and provides a context for the resistance that occurs in processes of reform and transformation (227-8).

⁶⁷ Evidence of this can be found in a letter written to J.S. Willison from a representative of the Publisher’s Association. In it the publisher acknowledges that Willison had rejected a story for serialization in *The News* because it was “not suitable for [his] purposes.” W.G. Chapman to Willison, 21 March 1904, p. 525, File 1-11, pp. 446-551, Correspondence series, JSW, Vol. 1, NAC.

⁶⁸ Response to H.F., *The Daily Mail* 8 Nov. 1890: 5.

⁶⁹ Response to “Sunshine, Stayner,” *The Empire*, 07 Apr. 1894: 11.

⁷⁰ Warren Francke, “Sensationalism and the Development of 19th-Century Reporting: The Broom sweeps Sensory Details,” *Journalism History* 12:3-4 (1985): 80.

⁷¹ “The Other Half,” *The Empire*, 25 Jan 1890: 5.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ “The Irrepressible She. (A Drama of the Day after To-morrow.)” *Punch, or the London Charivari*. 3 Feb. 1894: 52.

⁷⁴ Ibid. This unethical behaviour was quite outrageous. The upper class fool was deceived by women journalists each pretending to be a hypnotist, a governess and a suitor for her son. With each turn of discovery, the rich woman was appalled, particularly as the assurances made to her to protect her identity were less than convincing.

⁷⁵ See also Barbara Onslow’s discussion of the ethical questions women’s stunt journalism asked of the new journalism. Barbara Onslow, “New world, new woman, new journalism: Elizabeth Banks, transatlantic stuntwoman in London,” *Media History* 7:1 (2001): 7-15. Karin Becker furthermore comments that it was the techniques of representation in photojournalism that made it sensational from its very earliest use in newspapers. She comments that the ethical limits of representation were confronted by this new technology: “it was not the subject matter, in other words, but the ways the photographs reproduced it which appealed to the emotions and thereby created the sensation” (Karin E Becker, “Photojournalism and the Tabloid Press” in *Journalism and Popular Culture*, ed. P. Dahlgren and C. Sparks [London: Sage, 1992], 133).

⁷⁶ Francke, “Sensationalism,” 81.

⁷⁷ Mott, *American Journalism*, 442; Donald L. Shaw and John W. Slater, “In the Eye of the Beholder? Sensationalism in American press news, 1820-1860,” *Journalism History* 12:3-4 (1985), 87.

⁷⁸ Francke, 84.

⁷⁹ Mott, 442.

⁸⁰ Onslow, 10. Onslow also comments that British audiences were particularly offended at the “impertinence of transatlantic interference” by an American.

⁸¹ Reproduced in Mott, 434. From the March 1877 edition of *Puck*.

⁸² Francke, 81.

⁸³ Dicken-Garcia makes a similar point about newspapers stressing their capacity as the public's eyes and ears (*Practices of American Journalism*, 45).

⁸⁴ These writings were not necessarily journalistic, although they were often written by journalists and published in periodicals. On social exploration: John Keating, introduction to *Into Unknown England, 1866-1913. Selections from the Social Explorers*. John Keating, ed. 1976. (London: Fontana/Collins, 1981); on down-and-out: Mark Pittenger, "A World of Difference."

⁸⁵ Generally, stunt journalism is much broader in its subject matter than slumming which was specific to the exploration of city slums. As this section delineates, the terms certainly shared a history of development and an ideological foundation. Stunt journalism, however, was not always socially or reform driven. Furthermore, Coleman and Fenton did not perform stunt journalism, *à la* Nellie Bly tradition, but confined their work to the sub-genre of slumming. Thus, at times, the terms are used somewhat interchangeably in this chapter since the journalism under consideration could be considered both stunts and slumming.

⁸⁶ Pittenger, 4. For more on the American tradition of "light and shadows" literature, see John Kasson, *Rudeness and Civility: Manners in Nineteenth-Century Urban America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1990), 77-80; Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age*. (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), 125-127.

⁸⁷ Francke, 84.

⁸⁸ Pittenger, 4.

⁸⁹ James Greenwood, "A Night in the Workhouse," 1866, in *Into Unknown England, 1866-1913. Selections from the Social Explorers*, ed. John Keating, 1976 (London: Fontana/Collins, 1981), 34.

⁹⁰ Keating, 18.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Mary Ryan, *Women in Public*, 61-2.

⁹³ "The Other Half," *The Empire* 25 Jan. 1890: 5.

⁹⁴ Valverde notes that reformers believed that cramped and unhygienic living conditions in the slums of the cities led to moral and racial degeneration (*In the Age of Light*, 130).

⁹⁵ Keating, 10. John Keating, "Preface" to *Into Unknown England, 1866-1913. Selections from the Social Explorers*, ed. John Keating, 1976 (London: Fontana/Collins, 1981), 9-10.

⁹⁶ Keating, 113.

⁹⁷ Mott, *American Journalism*, 440.

⁹⁸ Brooke Kroeger, *Nellie Bly: Daredevil, Reporter, Feminist* (New York: Times Books, 1994), 87.

⁹⁹ Lang, *Women who made the News: Female Journalists in Canada, 1880-1945* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 36-7. Dafoe recounts this story in a speech at the Winnipeg Press Club "to mark the completion of sixty continuous years of newspaper work in Canada." Ordered to put on an "air of rusticity" as a new arrival to the city from the country, Dafoe's assignment was to secure the necessary evidence needed by the police to shut down a clothing store that was substituting suits made of cheap material for the more expensive ones customers thought they had purchased. See his "Sixty Years in Journalism," Winnipeg: 16 Oct. 1943: 2, PAMPH 1943 #27, AO.

¹⁰⁰ Dafoe, 10.

¹⁰¹ The pamphlet was originally published anonymously, though the probable author has since come to light. Andrew Mearns was the Secretary of the London Congregational Union and this pamphlet has been largely credited as a great influence in the establishment of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes in 1884. It was also given wide publicity in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, which published Greenwood's series (Keating, 91).

¹⁰² T.P. Thompson, "Thoughts and Suggestions on The Social Problem and Things in General," n.p., File 3, "Thoughts and Suggestions, 1888 MS," TPT, MU 2983, AO.

¹⁰³ McKenzie Porter, "The pulse of French Canada," 64.

¹⁰⁴ This boat was remained *La Presse*, another example of how the stunt could be used for the purposes of attention grabbing, the more crass association of publicity (Porter, 46).

¹⁰⁵ Porter, 66.

¹⁰⁶ *Oxford English Dictionary*, online, 2nd ed. s.v. "stunt," <http://dictionary.oed.com>, 05 Jul. 2002.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Maureen Corrigan, in the film "Around the World in 72 days," describes this important meeting between Bly and Cockerill as such: "And so when she met with Pulitzer's managing editor and almost insisted on getting a job as a reporter for the *New York World*, he had this idea in the back of his mind which was something of a dare – if you really want to be a reporter, let's see what you've got." *Around the World in 72 days*, "The American Experience," broadcast by Public Broadcasting Service, Directed and written by Christine Lesiak, 1997. Program Transcript available online: www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/world/filmmore/transcript. 11 Jun. 2002.

Brooke Kroeger writes that Cockerill reportedly said to Bly: "You can try, but if you can do it, it's more than anyone would believe" (Brooke Kroeger, *Nellie Bly: Daredevil*,

Reporter, Feminist [New York: Times Books, 1994], 86). Though Kroeger does not frame this meeting within the context of a dare per se, she does situate it as taking place immediately after Bly had gone undercover to write about why male editors would not hire women reporters, citing Cockerill himself as saying “A man is of far greater service.” (82-3). Further she stresses that both Bly and Cockerill were aware of the great risks Bly would face in undertaking this stunt (86).

¹⁰⁹ J. W. Robertson Scott, *The Story of the Pall Mall Gazette* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1950), 168. Quoted in Keating, p. 15; emphasis mine.

¹¹⁰ Valverde notes that the newly recognized social workers and other reform workers were given access and authority to wander in parts of town they would otherwise never visit as proper ladies. Ironically, their freedom was often at the cost of the freedom and dignity of the women they studied. (Valverde, *In the Age of Light*, 30).

¹¹¹ “Sympathy,” *The Daily Mail*, 15 Apr. 1893: 5.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Response to “Rosalind.” “Correspondence,” *The Daily Mail*, 11 Jun. 1892: 5.

¹¹⁴ Dicken-Garcia, *Journalistic Standards*, 89.

¹¹⁵ Rutherford, *A Victorian Authority*, 126.

¹¹⁶ “Our Neighbours,” *The Daily Mail*, 02 Aug. 1890: 5.

¹¹⁷ “Yonge Street—Saturday Night,” *The Empire*, 13 Apr. 1889: 5

¹¹⁸ “Saturday Night Shadows,” *The Empire*, 04 May 1889: 5.

¹¹⁹ Fenton’s articles on the underside or the shadowed “undercurrents” of Toronto’s streets date back as early as 1889 and will be considered here as well. Less a social exploration of the city slums, Fenton instead insists that to consider the shadows that lurk along Yonge Street is to “grasp certain dreary problems of working womanhood” (“Yonge Street-Saturday Night,” *The Empire*, 13 Apr. 1889: 5).

¹²⁰ Pittenger, “A world of difference,” 4.

¹²¹ Joan W. Scott, “Experience,” in *Feminists Theorize the Political*, ed. J. Butler and J.W. Scott (London: Routledge, 1992), 25.

¹²² Scott, 33.

¹²³ Scott, 34.

¹²⁴ Teresa de Lauretis, *Alice Doesn't: Feminism, Semiotics, Cinema* (London: Macmillan, 1984), 159.

¹²⁵ Barbara Onslow, "New world, new woman," 12.

¹²⁶ "London Sketches I. My Old Lady," *Toronto Mail*, 25 Feb. 1893: 5. Coleman suggests that people in Toronto were more interested in news from the "Old Land" than that from the United States. She offers the series as a "change for a week or two from the usual gossip we have in the Kingdom." She takes up a self effacing posture as she continues, "Perhaps they will. Perhaps not. They must take their chance."

¹²⁷ Kit. "London Sketches IV. Night Walks," *Toronto Mail*, 29 Apr. 1893: 5. There are several possibilities for this. In this final column, Kit suggests continuing to describe the other "night shadows" that were "jotted down in skirt-dancing hieroglyphics in [her] notebook," only "if you are not tired of them." It is possible that her readers or her editors put an end to the series. In either case, the leaders that follow in the three months' time before leaving for Chicago and the World's Fair returned to the usual personal editorial style that is described in the previous section. It is also possible that, intending to make a small break from the series, Coleman became distracted by preparations for her next long travel adventure to Chicago.

¹²⁸ Coleman describes the clock solemnly sounding its bell three times, indicating the early morning hour (*ibid*).

¹²⁹ *Ibid*; emphasis mine.

¹³⁰ "Pot-Pourri," *The Daily Mail*, 16 Apr. 1892: 6

¹³¹ "Woman's Kingdom," *Daily Mail*, 16 Apr. 1892: 6.

¹³² *The Daily Mail*, 29 Jul. 1893: 5

¹³³ "Pot Pourri," *The Daily Mail*, 16 Apr. 1892: 6.

¹³⁴ "Night in a Police Station," *The Empire*, 20 Jan. 1894: 11.

¹³⁵ *Ibid*.

¹³⁶ "Prison Gates—Mercer Reformatory," *The Empire*, 24 Nov. 1888: 5. Although of a different series, this was a common explanation offered by Fenton and speaks to the ways in which she conceived of her role as a public journalist. This role, as was discussed in the previous chapter, extended to the political realm, as she believed that developing interest in the communities around you, including its institutions, one became a better citizen – a new and potentially special role for women, according to Fenton – and thus a better Canadian.

¹³⁷ "Night in a Police Station," *The Empire*, 20 Jan. 1894: 11.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ “Tramps with the Genius of London,” *The Daily Mail*, 16 April 1892: 5.

¹⁴⁰ Also quoted in Mabel Burkholder, “‘Kit,’ Kathleen Blake Coleman. Pioneer Canadian Newspaperwoman. An Appreciation from The Hamilton Branch of the Canadian Women’s Press Club,” (Hamilton: Hamilton Women’s Press Club, 1930), 8, File 34, KBC, Vol. 2, NAC.

¹⁴¹ “London Sketches—II, Night Shelters for Tramps,” *The Daily Mail*, 11 Mar. 1893: 5.

¹⁴² “Night in a Police Station,” *The Empire*, 20 Jan. 1894, p.11; “The Underworld Asleep,” 27 Jan. 1894: 11.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ “In Chinatown,” *The Daily Mail*, 14 Apr. 1894: 5.

¹⁴⁵ “London Sketches IV. Night Walk,” *The Daily Mail*, 29 Apr. 1893: 5.

¹⁴⁶ It should be noted, however, that there was an occasional reference to the press that reminded readers of her affiliation – even if women were not wholly members, as these walks seem to suggest all the more powerfully given the importance of writing them within appropriate codes of femininity. Coleman, for instance, writes, “Far from my grim but lovely London, far from old Fleet Street, where well on in the night... and only my friend the newspaper offices blink their sleepless eyes, I love to stroll where pressmen, tired, yawning, with rolls of paper under their arms, and hats crushed... make their way home, tired, but always observant.” (“London Sketch IV. Night Walks,” *Daily Mail*, 29 Apr. 1893: 5). Though Coleman writes as if from a respectful distance from this group, rather than from within, she is nonetheless out, late at night, observing, just as they are. As will be discussed later, such is the strange position in which the woman journalist ends up: within, yet from the outside, of journalism.

¹⁴⁷ Kit Coleman, “London Sketches II. Night Shelter for Tramps,” *The Daily Mail*, 11 Mar. 1893: 5.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Only one of Coleman’s articles was illustrated with scenes described in the column (19 Mar. 1892: 5). The majority of both Fenton’s and Coleman’s night walk columns were illustrated by images of white middle class women clad in the most sophisticated and contemporary fashions. Although I would argue the overall rhetoric of the page would be to reassure women readers as to the appropriately feminine construction of the page, as

suggested above, the polysemy of the text is not necessarily so easily contained. Read with an ironic eye, the frivolous excesses of an ideology of womanhood that covets such fine clothing serves to underscore the depravity of the scenes described by the journalists through its shocking contrast. Read in light of Coleman's comments regarding lady slummers, the reader is implicitly placed within the comfortable, if compromised, role of armchair explorer.

¹⁵¹ "Tramps with the Genius of London II," *Daily Mail*, 19 Mar. 1892: 5.

¹⁵² Faith Fenton, "The Other Half," *The Empire*, 25 Jan. 1890: 5; "Woman's Night Shelter," *The Empire*, 10 Mar. 1894: 11. Kit Coleman, "London Sketches II," *Daily Mail*, 16 Apr. 1892: 6; "Night Shelters for Tramps," *Daily Mail*, 11 Mar. 1893: 5. Valverde notes this was a common assumption amid the social and moral reformers who worked and lived in the tenements, hoping to bring to them a civilizing effect. She notes, however, that in such cases, they lived in nice middle class houses, intended to provide a "prototype of future social order" (Valverde, *In the age of light*, 140).

¹⁵³ *The Empire*, 27 Jan. 1894: 11; 10 Mar. 1894: 11.

¹⁵⁴ See also *The Empire*, 27 Jan. 1894: 11. In this, the second of the series, Fenton recounts a conversation that takes place between herself, the *Empire* reporter accompanying her, and a detective. Here a hierarchy of shelters is established, further extending the judgments mentioned to the shelters themselves. Insisting that within the smaller, privately run shelters, "mischief is hatched," the reporter and detective explain to the ignorant and naive lady journalist that without a willingness to aid the police to "search out a crime," "the keepers often aid the offenders." Further, these shelters – the truly dangerous ones – are never visited by Fenton, allowing the official assessments of the detective and reporter to stand as the final word on the subject.

¹⁵⁵ "Woman's Underworld," *The Empire*, 10 Mar. 1894: 11.

¹⁵⁶ Ryan, *Women in Public*, 76-92. Fenton's column then can be seen as one more means by which the power inherent in such mapping could be achieved.

¹⁵⁷ "Woman's Night Shelter," *The Empire*, 10 Mar 1894: 11.

¹⁵⁸ For an example, see Fenton, "Saturday Night Shadows," 08 May 1889: 5.

¹⁵⁹ "Woman's Underworld," *The Empire*, 10 Mar. 1894: 11.

¹⁶⁰ "Potpourri," *The Daily Mail*, 9 Apr. 1892: 6.

¹⁶¹ Pittenger argues, "Women down-and-outers were less liable to describe or justify their experiences in the language of a discourse of authenticity, which typically posited a male subject struggling to reconstitute his subjectivity as autonomous, rugged American actor. While some female investigators did allude to issues of authenticity and personal identity,

usually entwining those themes with expressions of desire to be of use or to improve the lot of their working-class sister, others adopted the more neutral idiom of a professionalizing social science that sought only to cast light on a hitherto little-studied realm...Issues of personal, gender, and professional identity were thus inextricably intertwined ("A world of difference," 7-8). It is clear that these women mobilized the complex articulation of identity described by Pittenger, yet this articulation was predicated on a concept of experience that authenticated their right to speak intelligibly and authoritatively both about the subjects at hand, but also to the reading public at large. In this case, gender trumps itself. Despite being women, they learned of the underclass, but because of women and because they themselves were women they experienced the underclass.

¹⁶² "Night Shelters for Tramps," *The Daily Mail*, 11 Mar. 1893: 11.

¹⁶³ See Lisa LaFramboise on the asexual nature of a lady writer, particularly when she is traveling ("Travellers in skirts," 206-8).

¹⁶⁴ Lang, *Women who made the news*, 37. The *Ladies' Pictorial Weekly* ran a feature on "Madge Merton" in 1892 wherein her stunts were recorded. Interestingly these were also done for the other partisan paper in the market that was struggling to go independent, *The Globe*. See "Prominent Women no. 17: Madge Merton," *Ladies Pictorial Weekly*, July 1892:1.

¹⁶⁵ This was a common motif that was found in many social explorer writings, as if to suggest that even Nature laughs cruelly at these pathetic creatures.

¹⁶⁶ "A Night in a Woman's Shelter," *The Empire*, 26 Jan. 1895: 11.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ See his discussion of the interesting mixing of the biological ontology of the poor with observations of how their environments also contributed to their conditions (Pittenger, "A World of Difference," 14-16).

¹⁷⁰ "A Night in a Woman's Shelter," *The Empire*, 26 Jan. 1895: 11.

¹⁷¹ While it would be safe to assume that this unsigned feature was written by a man, it is further evidenced by the illustration of the correspondent interviewing the casuals. Again, as a point of comparison, whereas Fenton sketched the characters she encountered in the shelter, this correspondent "questioned fully a score of sturdy tramps, men of all ages from 25 and up to the verge of three score and ten" to confer his journalistic authority. For the woman "slummer" her bodily experience of the event is what is offered to authenticate her account. Yet, as discussed below, this experience is very carefully navigated in order to sustain her womanly virtue. See "In 'Darkest Toronto,'" *The Globe*, 24 Jan. 1891, Illustrated Supplement, 1.

¹⁷² It should be noted here that the author found the system to be rather ingenious. Casuals were expected to chop a pile of wood for their night's stay, completion of which could take anywhere from a number of hours to the whole day, depending on the individual. In this way, between 500 and 600 cords of wood would be cut each season. The proprietors who supply the wood, pay the institution for the cutting, which is then, in turn, sold on the open market as cut firewood. How this system contributed to the misfortunes of the casual were apparently not evident to the *Globe* writer. See also *The Daily Mail's* treatment of the House of Industry as well. This article takes a somewhat more lenient approach to the misfortunes of the poor, noting that the "labour test" had been added to deal with the "tramp nuisance" that hit Toronto after the city expanded its boundaries and population. Interestingly, this *Mail* reporter also passed a night in the shelter, returning several days later to photograph. "...none of the officials recognized him." Interestingly, despite the reporter's passing the night in the shelter as a casual, this article focuses exclusively on the information gathered after he returned to interview the officials in charge. Clearly meant to distinguish it from that genre of writing that was either slumming or stunt journalism, this article presents a much more factually grounded approach. Stripped free of all the sympathies that characterized both Coleman and Fenton's work, this reporter recounts one interesting moment when, while taking pictures, he is approached by a rough looking fellow and asked if he is taking pictures for the police. When assured that he was not, the fellow then asked the reporter if he was "ridiculing them." The reporter neglects to share with the readers his answer and writes instead, "He was a tough-looking customer, and one would be safe in wagering that the police of somewhere have his picture." William W. Fox, "The Casual's Retreat," *The Daily Mail*, 12 Jan. 1895, Illustrated Supplement, p.3.

¹⁷³ This trick of passing was continually stressed in the writings of Elizabeth Banks as well who managed to pull off both exercises of passing across a variety of "work" settings – as a laundress, cross sweeper, flower-girl, housemaid -- as well as "social settings" – as in her stunts challenging the English system of class and social standing by birth by buying a pedigree and chaperone. See both her *Campaigns of Curiosity: Journalistic adventures of an American girl in London* (Chicago & New York: F. Tennyson Neely, 1894) and *The Autobiography of a Newspaper Girl* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1902).

¹⁷⁴ See Pittenger's comments on the strategies used by other "down and outers" to resist "going native," p. 10.

¹⁷⁵ Nellie Bly [Elizabeth Cochrane]. *Ten Days in a Mad-House; or, Nellie Bly's experience on Blackwell's Island. Feigning insanity in order to reveal asylum horrors...* 2nd ed.[1887] (New York: J.W. Lovell, 1899), 9.

¹⁷⁶ Banks, *Autobiography*, 108.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 111.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 112.

¹⁸⁰ Though it would be tempting to think that knowing the end was drawing near, Fenton took her greatest journalistic risk with little to lose, it has been suggested that such was not the case. In the first issue after the merger between *The Toronto Mail* and *The Empire*, *Printer and Publisher* commented that the staff of *The Empire* were “turned on the street at a moment’s notice with the pittance of one week’s salary” (“The Empire Staff,” *Printer and Publisher*, March 1895: 7).

¹⁸¹ This issue is further detailed in S. Elizabeth Bird & Robert W. Dardenne, “Myth, Chronicle and Story: Exploring the narrative qualities of news,” in *Media, Myths and Narratives: Television and the Press*, ed. James Carey (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1988), 67-86.

¹⁸² I use this term cautiously, and do not suggest it bears the same meaning as current usages of the term. Although there is a historical resonance to the term, current usages of the phrase are articulated with the differing understanding of the fourth estate that is connected to the practice of objectivity. James Ettema & Theodore L. Glasser note that this particular articulation – advocacy for the people and objectivity – is the central paradox governing modern journalistic practice (James S. Ettema and Theodore L. Glasser, *Custodians of Conscience: Investigative Journalism and Public Virtue* [New York: Columbia University Press, 1998], 7). At the end of the nineteenth century, the concept of the public’s “right to know” was not framed within a discourse of rights. As suggested in an earlier chapter, the emergence of advocating for the people was an ideological necessity predicated by changing industrial conditions that no longer supported old partisan practices. Thus, the people’s right to know was merely an offshoot of this shift. As an advocate for the people, newspapers and the journalists that served them, had an obligation to provide a meaningful picture of the world to their readers. Current mobilizations of this term are more directly connected to the muckraker tradition that constructed a sense of urgency and necessity to journalistic work in light of corruption, the growing power of corporate capital, public dishonesty and betrayal of the public good.

¹⁸³ Keating, *Into Unknown England*, 17.

Chapter 6

Conclusion: Re-Constructing the Woman Journalist

Talk about the new woman! She is pale and uninteresting compared with the new journalism!¹

A newspaper, like a woman, must not only be honest, but must seem to be honest; acts of levity, loose unbecoming expressions or behaviour – though never so innocent – tending in the one and in the other to lower reputation and discredit character. During my career I have proceeded under a confident belief in this principle of *newspaper ethics* and an unfailing recognition of its mandates. I truly believe that next after business integrity in newspaper management comes disinterestedness in the public service, and next after disinterestedness come moderation and intelligence, cleanliness and good feeling in dealing with affairs and its readers.²

The average woman, when reading [the papers of thirty years ago], felt almost as much an outsider as a young girl does who finds herself at table with a party of old gentlemen. They were permeated, those good old papers, with an intolerable atmosphere of fogey-dom, and consequently were eschewed, I venture to think, by all women whose minds were not of the most ‘nobly planned’ order. The editor of to-day, fulfilling the primary duty of enlarging his paper’s circulation, takes care not to forget women. Indeed, if he be clever, he will more readily forget men.³

That women could be associated with something so public as newspapers, particularly as a point of comparison, was an unlikely phenomenon before the latter half of the nineteenth century. Publicity defied Victorian conventions of femininity, which valorized women’s private domestic function. Newspapers, on the other hand, were serious affairs – of the realm of politics—and it was not coincidental that the

newspaper forever changed its public role by broadening its conception of “public affairs” just as women entered journalism. As this thesis has demonstrated, the association between woman and the newspaper, however, was not exactly an easy combination. But the shifting relations between public and private on the one hand, and a changing mission and identity on the other created enough of an ideological fissure to allow the woman journalist to take up her pen. As the previous chapters have argued, in order for her to be meaningful to her readers, the woman journalist constituted her journalistic practice through gendered terms of reference. As the second quote above intimates, both women and newspapers needed to guard against all that was implied in “loose unbecoming expressions or behaviour:” dishonesty, immorality and, significantly, the mere appearance of impropriety. The newspaper of the new journalism, with its garish headlines, flippant responses to deep and complicated political questions, its illustrations and its lady correspondents were symptomatic of these concerns. Alongside the horror of the sensational new journalism was the daring and equally garish, fast-talking New Woman. Within this cultural figure, who was also frequently depicted as a suffragette, was represented the gendered implications of these economic, social and cultural changes. While she represented freedom and progressive change for some, for others she threatened the moral order of society, precisely because she disrupted its gendered order. By the end of the nineteenth century, as the newspaper and Woman were taking on new identities, both had to guard against stepping too far outside these threatened, though changing, moral lines. As the previous chapter argued, however, the newspaper must

be seen as one means by which changing ideas about morality were given meaning, precisely because *and* at the same time it was subject to judgments about its moral character.

As the nineteenth century drew to a close, women's public presence was valued for its domesticating influence, protecting and extending the moral domain that was cultivated in the domestic sphere, which she could bring to the public worlds she inhabited. As was discussed in chapter three, middle and upper class women activists mobilized images of a purified motherhood as a strategy to advocate for more active public roles. Ironically, while motherhood was used to argue for increased access to public affairs, including the vote, it also narrowly defined femininity within an increasingly rationalized domestic sphere. As was argued in chapter four, constructing the roles of Mother, advisor and friend gave Fenton and Coleman recognizable public personas which were essential in establishing a gendered form of journalism. This became crucial for reining in their more adventurous journalism as travel writers and social explorers. Thus their public identities as authoritative and credible journalists and editors combined, resisted and revised, in varying proportions and to varying ends, elements from already circulating representations of femininity at the time. But as this chapter will show their journalism was also set against—as much as it helped to construct—a larger field of women's journalism which was represented by that recognizable figure of the Woman journalist. This figure was an articulation of those roles used by Fenton and Coleman, but also evoked associations with the New Woman and the reformer. Although

Fenton and Coleman actively worked to limit their associations with these images, as part of a popular imaginary about the Woman journalist, these other notions of womanhood still resonated within their journalism as absent figures.

This chapter, then, reconstructs this articulation of all these strands known as the woman journalist. Exploring first the New Woman and her association with the Woman journalist in popular fiction, it then demonstrates how the ideas associated with the new woman as a progressive, educated and forthright figure was written into all of women's journalism, including Fenton and Coleman's. Pulling together the strands of womanhood that were embodied in the figure of the woman journalist, it then considers how these ideas of womanhood were continually challenged and undermined – even as they were absolutely essential – to the practice of a new journalism. Thus, in reconstructing the Woman journalist, this chapter concludes that to be a journalist she must be always and already Woman – even at the same time that she must not be Woman to be a journalist. As a product and process of her gender, her journalism drew from a range of discourses surrounding the newly public-private Woman that allowed her to straddle and contain these ideological contradictions.

The terms “figure of the woman journalist” and “Woman journalist” are considered ideological abstractions of real life women journalists that were connected to the real women who entered the profession of journalism in greater numbers at the end of the nineteenth century, but are not reducible to these women. Rather these terms are used to denote the cultural meanings and ideas associated with women's entry into and their practice of journalism within the context of changing nineteenth

century journalistic practices and shifting understandings of masculinity and femininity and their interrelations. Thus the material explored in this chapter, in part, set the conditions for the continued entry of women into the field of journalism. But, they are also the product of women's emergence as they came to take up a place in the popular imaginary, solidified in a figure of the woman journalist. That is, as women journalists grew in popularity the conditions of their existence continued to change in response to their interventions. In turn, I read the manuals, novels and periodicals that constructed this figure as a way of reconstructing the contours of this figure of the woman journalist – they are both the product of her work at the same time as they produced her.⁴

She was a figure that was represented in popular culture, in books and stories (and later in films); she was written about in abstract, general terms by other journalists and cultural thinkers of the time; and she was discursively and materially connected to a host of other discourses and conditions that were informed by industrialization, urbanization, the new journalism and a changing newspaper industry that, together, came to constitute her. These discourses and social conditions came together not simply as a context into which the woman journalist, fully formed and identifiable, stepped; but rather, they worked to give the category of “Woman journalist” a cultural life within the popular imaginary. These women “spoke” the Woman journalist and thus were ideological subjects, as well as historical subjects. The fact that Coleman and Fenton never fully embraced the New Woman – only traces of her – speaks not only to the agency of historical subjects within ideology, but

also to the contextual nature of journalism itself since the Toronto market would have hardly tolerated too much of her. Yet even if she was never fully embraced, she was at times present anyway—moments when readers questioned their gendered identities (as was the case for Coleman) or in writing *against* her (as was the case with Fenton), traces of the New Woman remain.

As will be demonstrated in the discussion that follows, the literature that describes the woman journalist—in training and vocational guides, novels, or in the discourses that circulated within the world of journalism—often centered around concerns with the potential for compromising women’s moral standing through the appearance of unfeminine or inappropriate behaviour. In everything they did, women journalists were forced to contend with the exigencies of proper gender behaviour while constructing a journalistic space for themselves that would challenge the common banalities of women’s journalism. Indeed, as Flora McDonald, in an 1889 editorial in the American trade publication, *The Journalist*, points out:

The newspaper woman is not born, she grows. The process of erection is gradual and – shades of departed martyrs! – is painful. It is death by slow torture and a slow Phoenix like rising from the dead body’s ashes. She comes into the world, like many other women, with a grain or two more brain than the average possibly, but with the same inherent self-distrust, the same, keen, ragged-edged sensibilities, and when she has been built over, behold her! one part nerve and two parts Indian rubber....The girl who has it in her to survive for newspaper work will cry the first time a man swears at her, grate her teeth the second time, and swear back the third time.⁵

This quote is telling for the ways it humorously, though graphically, even grotesquely, points to the very serious negotiations of bodies, practices, and ideas, not to mention an entire profession and industry necessary in this process of formation.

Macdonald's newspaper woman was forged out of the same expectations, hopes and criticisms that the women under examination in this thesis experienced. Yet this newspaper woman was quite different. Attempting to sustain the tension between being both in and outside the ideologies of journalism and gender, however, I follow the discussion of the figure of the woman journalist with a consideration of the ways in which this figure made herself felt in the material relations within which women worked. Although these were material relations, they were nonetheless ideological effects.⁶

***(Re)constructing the Woman Journalist: The New Journalism,
the New Woman, the Newspaper Woman***

The New Journalism

Writing in 1887, Matthew Arnold, one of the loudest critics of a new form of journalism that was being popularized in newspapers across England and North America beginning in the middle of the nineteenth century, proclaimed "We have had the opportunities of observing a new journalism...its one great fault is that it is *feather-brained*."⁷ As a defender of the "old journalism," which, like partisan journalism, aspired to the much loftier ideals of truth and enlightened reflection and criticism akin to literature,⁸ Arnold's rather vitriolic reaction to the popularization of journalism as a mass form confirms that a struggle was taking place within journalistic circles over a public voice of authority. As the newspaper attempted to disguise its partisan colours, the techniques of the new journalism was precisely the means by which the papers could speak to, while simultaneously constituting, a mass audience

with the much less ambitious goals of “instructing and entertaining.” Forms that were designed to explicitly engage readers were introduced and features were increasingly accompanied by bylines, with regular columns penned by familiar personalities. From reader forums to considerations of popular literature and the theatre, the centralized authority of the editorial “We” formerly identified with a partisan position was increasingly dispersed with the adoption of a multitude of voices, positions—and increasingly, genders.⁹ Not only did news gathering practices change during this period, but the very profile and identity of the correspondent also changed which was an important development for the entry of women who were promoted and known by their pen names as distinct personalities associated with their papers.¹⁰ As the previous two chapters demonstrated all these currents coalesced perfectly in the woman’s page.

What is not as obvious in Arnold’s comments is another much more insidious assumption about the gender of these new journalism practitioners. Perhaps it is not by coincidence that Arnold deploys the term “feather-brained” to describe these practices, a term often linked to women’s supposed limited mental capacities. Further, this new journalism saw the valuation of women’s experiences and perspectives as they were, for the first time, given expression within the women’s pages. “Acts of levity,” after all, were not only unbecoming of newspapers and women, they pointed to a questionable foundation of proper morality and ethics, as Henry Watterson asserts in the excerpt above. The association of new journalism with low culture was equally an association with low moral standing – a position that

undermined utterly the necessary authoritativeness with which a newspaper was expected to be governed. Thus, the guarded adoption of new journalism techniques within the partisan paper, unlike their independent counterparts, speaks to these other associations.

If there was a figure within the popular imaginary which exemplified this lightness and circumspect morality it was the New Woman, who, as *The Globe* editorial brief above indicates, was not unconnected to the new journalism—if only in terms of infamy. Of course, the new journalism—with its wider social and cultural scope and interest in the everyday lives of its readers—afforded new opportunities for women to enter the profession, particularly in covering that nefarious domain known as the “woman’s sphere.” More significantly, however, as was argued in chapter five, the new journalism allowed women, alongside their feature-writing male counterparts, to explore all facets of modern society – a new freedom and intellectual pursuit for these enterprising women that associated them with the figure of the constantly moving New Woman. The overtly public nature of journalism made its female practitioners open to associations with “New Woman-ism,” even though by the end of the century, the New Woman was as much a “parodic figure,”¹¹ fashioned out of the historical social movements that advocated for women’s increased access to the public domain.¹² Further, many fictional representations of the New Woman featured women journalists pursuing all kinds of adventures. Although not all women journalists supported greater women’s rights, most of them were educated and by necessity were required to be “out there,” often unchaperoned, in the name of

their chosen professions. However, because being labelled a new woman could be detrimental to a woman's career, Coleman and Fenton often consciously and consistently made reference to their chaperones in order to safeguard their femininity. As Mona Caird put it in her response to the vitriolic attacks on the "Wild Women" – as the New women were called – there was a middle ground between the most traditional and most radical ideas about women's role in society that was scarcely represented:

The logic is stern: either a woman is a 'modest, violet, blooming unseen,' unquestioning, uncomplaining, a patient producer of children regardless of all costs to herself; suffering 'everyone's opinion to influence her mind,' and 'all venerable laws hallowed by time...to control her action'—either this, or a rude masculine creature, stamping over moors with a gun that she may ape the less noble propensities of man; an adventuress who exposes herself to the dangers of travel simply that she may advertise herself in a book on her return; a virago who desires nothing better than to destroy in others the liberty that she so loudly demands for herself.¹³

As discussed in chapter four, Fenton and Coleman attempted to represent precisely this middle ground and thus draw from elements of both Mother, friend and New Woman at the same time. Although readers sometimes challenged this as being inconsistent, this middle position allowed both women to draw from the full range of representations that made up the *Woman* journalist.

The New Woman

It has been argued that the new woman, bred from mass culture products like the periodical papers which discussed her in editorials, short stories, columns and in fiction, was more fiction than fact.¹⁴ Although popular cultural representations often

aimed to either dismiss or valorize her, thereby distancing her from the historical woman she was supposed to represent, she was popular enough to have taken on a life of her own that warrants attention here.¹⁵ She was often depicted within these literatures as a cultural worker of some kind – as journalist, travel-writer, artist, etc. Often referred to as the “new fiction,” these writings were curiously similar to many of the techniques of the new journalism.¹⁶ As Misao Dean describes the new fiction, a debate surrounding the nature and function of fiction and its way of representing the world culminated in works that shocked readers with discussions of such immoral acts as prostitution, murder, alcoholism and illegitimacy.¹⁷ Also set within the realm of the sensational, it hoped to “shock” conventional middle-class Victorian social mores by challenging their authority.¹⁸ If the new journalism embodied concerns about the deflating moral platitudes to which many within Victorian society were tenaciously clinging, the call towards change and challenge to authority was being taken up in a number of cultural locations.

Chris Willis notes in his work on New woman fiction that using a female protagonist who was young, attractive, educated, sassy and daring spelled commercial success for many late-nineteenth century novelists, indicating how commonplace ideas about the New Woman had become.¹⁹ This “new variety of woman,”²⁰ as Lily Dougall describes her New Woman protagonist, Polly, had “just enough of what was well-bred in accent and aspect” to excuse the uncommon attention she drew to herself –not the least of which was her willingness to “take interest in every one [sic] about her.”²¹ Polly, typical of the new woman, was a journalist travelling around the

world with her colleague and less vivacious companion (another convention of New Woman fiction). As a young woman, Polly was well spoken and radiated happiness and energy. As a journalist, she was “as alert and alive to what was going on around her as a chicken when its wings are all fluffy with excitement.”²² Yet, despite her attractive, plump figure, there was an air of typical restlessness—a common feature of the Woman journalist that quickly eroded her lovely feminine charms into hardness. As was discussed in the previous chapters, this hardness was commonly associated with the lower classes, and thus, represented a significant problem for the Woman journalist who was also expected to be a Lady. These subtle class distinctions were thus written into and onto everything the Woman journalist did and was—including, her very body.

A similar sentiment is expressed in Harrison Robertson’s 1894 short story published in *Scribner’s Magazine* when Mr. Tunstall, city editor of the *Tripod*, writes unfavourably of the work done by their hopeful would be woman journalist:

Miss Lorrie Petrie as a reporter, or a reporter *in posse*, is a charming failure. She is quick, bright, versatile, observant; she can put her impressions on paper in better English than most of my boys. But there is no such thing as reducing her to order, and she can’t look at things from a news point of view. She is minus that sixth sense without which all the other senses are worse than useless in the local room of a newspaper. But I can’t say I am sorry she will never make a reporter; for it would be a pity to spoil so fine a girl to make even the best of reporters.²³

Indeed Petrie’s “fine” femininity remains so safely intact that, despite failing as a reporter, she succeeds royally as a woman when she not only purchases the *Tripod* with her father’s money, she marries the same Mr. Remington. Her failed venture as

a newspaper reporter is recuperated in the final lines of the story when she joyfully asserts to fiancé Remington, “So you see, sir, I was determined to get into journalism, if not in one way, then in another.”²⁴

Barbara Godard has noted that, in the novels of Canadian New Women, there is a recapitulation that seeks to undermine the adventurous and rebellious nature of the New Woman, forcing her back into the conventional role of wife.²⁵ As Chris Willis put it, “In commercial New Woman fiction, a heroine who is ‘political or highly educated’ is almost sure to come to a bad end unless she abandons her socio-political and intellectual activities in favour of a conventional wifely role.”²⁶ This is certainly the case in Sara Jeannette Duncan’s novel, *A Daughter of Today*, wherein the adventurous Elfrida Bell commits suicide after receiving word that a publisher rejected one of her outrageous journalistic schemes.²⁷ After failing as an artist, Elfrida, desperate to support herself, had taken up journalism and flourished by performing various “undercover” journalistic stunts. Her final stunt—going undercover as a vaudeville dancer—pushed all boundaries of decency for a lady of her stature, causing her to lose respectability within her social circle. With the final blow of having the account of her experiences rejected by a publisher, and having lost the respect of the one man she admired most, Elfrida commits suicide.

The figure of the New Woman loomed large enough that it resonated within the popular imaginary, alongside other cultural constructs about professional and ballot-seeking women. Historical movements such as the entry of women into the professions, education, into the public realm through suffrage and other reform

movements became tightly enmeshed around the figure of the New Woman, further giving her meaning and historical grounding. In turn, the figure of the New Woman followed around these professional women, whether they considered themselves new women or not, for she came to lay claim to all things “progressive.”

Carroll Smith-Rosenberg describes the New Woman as “a revolutionary demographic and political phenomenon,” who repudiated the cult of True Womanhood of her bourgeois mother and challenged existing gender relations and their related distribution of power.²⁸ Part of an affluent new bourgeoisie, the historical New Woman in the United States and in Canada were among the first women to receive university education. From this background, she sought to rebel against the conventional “uselessness” of the Victorian maiden, kept prettily within the salon. Educated only enough to attract a husband, this “old” woman accepted conventional notions of a gentle femininity designed to attract a husband. By contrast, the new woman professed disinterest in marriage – if only for a short time. In the meanwhile she flirted and entertained the company of young men unaccompanied by an elder. Garth Grafton (Sara Jeannette Duncan) puts it succinctly in the opening lines of a column, “In this golden age for girls, full of new interests and new opportunities, we all ...want *to do something*, something more difficult than embroidered sachets, and more important than hand-painted tambourines. The sachets and the tambourines are very charming in their way, but as the chief *industrial* end of life we have begun to find them unsatisfying.”²⁹ Indeed in such times it was really up to women to make their lives better. If they desired that men should engage them in worthwhile conversation,

“they must deepen and broaden their sympathies, brighten their intellectual activities, energize themselves by occasionally bathing in the great tide of human affairs.”³⁰

Incidentally, these were precisely the benefits women believed came of journalistic work, as will be discussed below. Coleman, Fenton and Duncan were all unusual in the amount of education each had received as a young woman.³¹ Like most young women of their time who entered journalism, their unusual education allowed them to support themselves in ways that was unheard of before the same reforms to the public sphere that gave the New Woman a historical grounding were established.³²

Yet, as was already suggested earlier, the New Woman was eventually reconstituted as the matronly and saintly Mother of the nation as she morphed into a social and moral reformer. There were some women who certainly held the belief that journalistic work could elevate the position of women, not necessarily through radical reform, but through the promotion of “simplicity, good taste, good sense, moderation and duty.”³³ For instance, Frances Low in her practical textbook for young women interested in entering journalism, writes in the classic tone of a matronly new/old Woman:

women’s journalism is capable of fulfilling a great modern mission – nothing less than that of giving the vast majority of middle-class women all the education they receive after leaving school...It is impossible to overrate the force of this influence, or to measure the effect on national ideals if instead of the present gospel of extravagance, snobbery, the mad pursuit of dress, the craze for excitement, spending, and materialistic pleasures, there was substituted in the Women’s Press one of Simplicity, Light and Sweetness.³⁴

As this quote reveals there were expectations about what women's journalism could accomplish that endowed it with a sense of mission for women's reforms that were uncharacteristic of other kinds of journalistic writing, even as it attempted to achieve the newspaper's national building function.³⁵ Yet, the representation and discussion of women's rights as a political movement was riddled with images of unfeminine and anti-male rhetoric, always making the conventional, younger New Woman image somewhat dangerous for a middle-class mass market. Low interestingly mixes up a variety of typical women's journalisms with different images of femininity: the silly, extravagant, excessively feminine girl is addressed in the genre of writing that constitutes woman's superficial existence: fashion, gossip and society; on the other hand, there are traces of the New Woman who wants adventure, culture and stimulation above all else. In turn, Low advocates a new era of women's journalism, one utterly informed by the principles of the womanly matron: "Simplicity, Light and Sweetness." Whether the Woman journalist identified herself as a New Woman or not, the New Woman, who stood for change, was never too far away. As Garth Grafton cleverly put it in an 1885 column, women's journalism could take up both positions:

Cannot the higher mathematics co-exist with frills? Can't we be professional and dress for dinner? Is there a natural law forbidding the assimilation of puddings and politics...Indeed, it seems to me that the wiser we grow the more we shall appreciate the fact that in these very amusements and occupation and conventionalities of ours lies a force that we cannot afford to dispense with. ³⁶

Challenging the reactionary position that increasingly forced women into choosing one or the other, Grafton, in the closing words of this extract, continued to recognize

that change would not only come slowly, conventional femininity would continue to hold power. Indeed change would come in a disguised form that would intentionally mix politics and pudding, fine clothing and the pursuits of the mind.

The Newspaper Woman

That the Woman journalist was someone who piqued the curiosity of her readers was obvious in their varied and constant questions regarding her life, pointing to the ideological slippage that occurred that turned historical women into ideological subjects. From questions about her physical appearance, her manner of dress, to questions of her family and private life, there was a sense in these queries that her femininity could be ascertained, more fully secured, by knowing these attributes.³⁷ For instance, Lally Bernard (Mary Agnes Fitzgibbon) pointed to some of the conflicting sentiments embodied in the life of a woman journalist, trained to be modest and avoid publicity, yet declaring her position on countless issues every day:

My correspondent asks me to make known my personal identity, what my daily life is...to give more to the world...the personal note which they believe to be the strong point of feminine writing. This I believe to be wrong. The whole education of woman from the time she can speak is mainly that of reticence and restraint as far as her personal likes or dislikes are concerned, or her personal joys or sorrows. Those letters and autobiographies from the pens of women which have so harmed the world were usually published long after the writers were dead.³⁸

As the final line of the above citation suggests, to step too far outside the boundaries of those lessons all women learned and knew was to undermine her very sense of gendered self and propriety. Only once she was dead could the Woman journalist fully afford to throw off the restraints of an authentic private self. But as Bernard

attempts to draw the line between “feminine writing” and being “Woman,” it is also evident that each was the effect of the other. In this moment, notions of class circumscribed the Woman journalist. This lady journalist would be restrained, giving a public face to her work, though reserved enough to preserve her womanly qualifications. Yet one cannot help but understand this distinction as performative, as a reassertion of a well known set of gender codes. Even as she refuses to give her readers further access to her private affairs, she gives them what they really wanted – the *lady* who helped to make the Woman journalist meaningful.

The constant tension to hold together the varying strands of the Woman journalist became even more evident shortly after Coleman began writing. Being womanly, yet “virile,”³⁹ led to charges that she was, in fact, a man by some readers. Tensions between her motherly posture and outspoken style (unlike Bernard) fuelled further curiosity into what she looked like by others. This dialogue about who and what “Kit” was led to a fascinating illustration that played with the myriad possibilities proffered by her readers (See Fig. 6-1). Fuelled by Coleman’s teasing nature, the debate over her gender carried on for years.⁴⁰ In this case, we can see how Coleman’s own journalistic practice fed into—precisely as it butted up against—ideas about Woman journalist who was paradoxically always Mother and New Woman.



Fig. 6-1. "Which is Kit?" graced the pages of *Woman's Kingdom* on 2 Aug. 1890: 5.

For Coleman, however, there was, of course, an element of self-promotion in this guessing game, which highlights yet another way in which the Woman journalist had to carefully play both the game of journalism and circulation, while remaining characteristically coy about her self-promotion. Describing a conversation on the street she overheard, Coleman leaves her readers with the impression that she is the talk of the town, though she, herself, does not take part in such lower class gossip:

Suddenly the group near me commenced to murmur, "That's Theodocia, I know," "And is that Kit of THE MAIL? Pshaw! No. Why, Kit's an old woman." "Well, if that's Kit she's real handsome; and, Fanny, do you think she's painted? Ain't her colour just lovely. And my! what a love of a bonnet!" "Oh! Its sure to be Kit because she writes the fashions, you know, and is always dressed in the height of them. Look at her dress!..." "Say, I think Theodocia's nicer than Kit. Just you watch. Say, ain't she laughing a lot over something." "Yes, come along, let's get nearer... Is she married?" "Who, Kit?" "Oh, yes to an awful pudgy little man, I heard. I believe it's he does the work and she gets the credit for it." "Well, never mind, let's get over to McConkey's, I want some caramels..."⁴¹

Recounting the story several months after the "Which is Kit?" illustrations were published, Coleman was clearly poking fun at, while participating in, the ongoing speculation about her physical appearance. Old to handsome to well coloured to fashionably dressed, Coleman comes off pretty well in the description. Yet the final line—"never mind"—seems to flip the entire event on its head as unimportant and not nearly as deliciously enticing as caramels. Given the prescriptions laid out by Lally Bernard, the possibility of misunderstanding Coleman's humour is avoided in the self-effacing, though still promotional, gesture.

While clearly playful and entertaining, the "Which is Kit?" illustration and protracted discussion that sustained such speculations pointed to the tensions that

threatened to continually expose this articulation of the Woman journalist which drew from competing discourses about womanhood. As each occasion demanded, she made claims to being Lady, New woman, and Mother. Yet, as will be discussed below to be a Woman journalist *also* meant she had to efface her same gendered difference that otherwise gave her meaning. Within the world of journalism, only so much femininity would be tolerated. The lines of exactly how much were continually shifting, however, as relations between public and private continued to alter.

In turn, Coleman would grow tired of the endless critiques of her writing and the personal questions from her readers.⁴² As recognized earlier, such differences of opinion easily slipped into questions of authority of the Woman journalist that ultimately undermined her very right to speak. Margaret Bateson notes that journalism was “the most chameleon-like amongst the forms of human activity,” being all things to all people – “vulgar to the vulgar, sordid to the sordid, ... entertaining to the humorous... Hence it is that two persons can no more agree upon a description of journalism than they could upon the appearance of the Emperor’s New Clothes.”⁴³ This uncertain state of affairs was yet another example of a changing world which left many Victorians feeling rather unsettled:⁴⁴ journalism was becoming everything to all persons, just as the Woman journalist could be every Woman, and just as women were increasingly influencing the previously male domain of the newspaper. Indeed as Bateson continues to argue in her 1895 manual on journalism as a profession for women, this new newspaper with its different representational techniques was infinitely limitless in its scope, for “there will remain

something for the writer to feel and say that other men are feeling and longing to hear” – the very scope of life marks what the woman journalist should be seeking for this is what *all* her readers want to read. Relying in the end on the universality of this sort of appeal, irrespective of class (and one surmises gender), in typically biting commentary she observes, “the public, like journalism, is what we choose to make it. Journalists talk of catering...[to] third-class travellers when they sandwich paragraphs about the number of unhangd murderers between free coupons for coffins and wedding rings. And doubtless, they *have* catered for those folks after a fashion...But this does not prevent...the servant from reading ‘Jane Eyre,’ nor the excursionist from relishing Stevenson.”⁴⁵ Perfectly in keeping with the spirit of new journalism, Bateson in one swoop tears apart feeble ideas about the scope of women’s journalism, opting instead to align herself with the freedoms to move beyond convention, as captured in the new journalism. As these comments indicate, Bateson’s brand of journalism, informed as it was by differing ideas about gender, was quite different than that offered by Frances Low as described earlier. Though the woman journalist was a figure within the popular imaginary, there was conflict regarding her precise contours.

The already rather nervous, and at times, heated dialogue about the state of the new journalism was thus further complicated and challenged by the presence of women within the pages of the newspaper and, especially, its offices. Consider, for instance, Pauline Pry’s comments after an apparently unpleasant encounter with a male editor in 1890: “when I left the man said he never wanted another d-----d

woman around...I'm under oath to myself henceforth to be less woman and more damned, in an ever increasing ratio toward the perfect abstraction of woman." Set within a particular historical understanding of femininity and womanhood, the newspaper woman of the late nineteenth century is seemingly not a natural creature but one that requires some crafty reconstructive surgery to form something that is not quite woman, not quite journalist. Rather she is an abstraction, an idea that sits, uneasily, somewhere in between these two categories. A newspaper woman was something that was rather awkwardly formed, and her sudden presence on the pages of the newspaper, within newspaper offices, and within the public sphere forced a certain self-reflection about where the profession was heading.⁴⁶ While journalists have always understood themselves as being outside of the mainstream, different than "respectable folk,"⁴⁷ women operating on the journalistic scene posed even further conflation and deflation of the boundaries of normality: though her natural role was to gossip, doing so on the public pages seemed somehow crass, of a lower class than was acceptable for and expected of a public woman; though the expectations of her work could extend into the public world of philanthropy, running around town snuffing out stories on behalf of her women readers was indiscreet and jeopardized her femininity. As Flora McDonald further clarifies, though journalists are different than regular citizens, gender further complicated this for women: "Now, as lines are drawn by the same yard rule society, the newspaper woman finds she is a class by herself – a cheerful community of one...any well-balanced woman who works among newspaper men, one thousand and one causes make hers the miserable experience of

a freak – the ‘only and original one of its kind on earth.’”⁴⁸ While the Woman journalist laboured to be understood within the pages of her newspaper by her readers, she also needed to fit within those ideas that circulated about the profession itself. To reach the “people,” therefore, also meant being recognizable as a journalist as well as a woman. Indeed the varying contours of femininity that straddled the public and private already discussed, helped the Woman journalist to achieve this. At the same time, working in the profession of journalism also broadened ideas about women’s roles.

Certainly E.A. Bennett, who generally supported the idea of women journalists, believed there were some issues still to be resolved which were made perfectly clear in a chapter of his 1898 “practical guide” to *Journalism for Women* rather plainly titled, “Imperfections of the Existing Woman-Journalist.” Bennett insists rather arduously that the imperfections of the woman journalist, which include principally “an imperfect development of the sense of order, ...a certain lack of self control,” are a consequence of lack of early training, not sex.⁴⁹ Her lack of self control manifested itself in bad grammar and an inability to respect deadlines, leading Bennett to conclude that “women journalists are unreliable as a class.”⁵⁰ Bennett suggests that these women, lacking “restraint,” would surely benefit from a rigorous routine of “suitable moral and intellectual callisthenics.”⁵¹ Bennett’s language perhaps betrays his ultimate reservations about women journalists in the particular affiliation forged between grammatical restraint and moral aptitude. Further, this aptitude could be improved by a steady regime of exercise, which no doubt was

necessary in leading other women into equally suitable pursuits. There is also the suggestion here that the lack of order and restraint implied in something as simple as grammar betrayed a far greater threat in its implications for her life as a journalist. Commonly believed to be of a too delicate moral character to spend much time out of her home or, especially, in the company of men in a newspaper office, the symptom of grammatical fallibility in women spoke to a potentially much larger and dangerous ailment.

Florence Finch Kelly faced these beliefs when she began looking for newspaper work in Boston in the early 1880s:

I was told...that a woman was practically useless in journalism anyway because there was so little she could do. If I asked for specifications of some of the things she couldn't do I always received the same reply, that you couldn't send a woman to a fire, that she would be quite useless if sent on such an assignment and, since there were times when a city editor had to concentrate all his staff on such an event a woman would just be in the way.

Another stone wall against which I was forever butting my head was the conviction universally held that a woman did not have the physical strength to withstand the steady, hard pull of newspaper work; that she would be made ill by it so much of the time that she would be of little use to the paper.⁵²

It is perhaps out of an awareness of such ideas about women journalists that Cynthia Westover Alden warns women that they must be prepared to sacrifice some of the common "privileges" of the weaker sex. In her advice to women looking to support themselves, she warns that you must not assume "that you should be treated differently because you are a woman. In the great factory of the economic system, sex ought not to enter at all."⁵³ Furthermore, Alden adds, a woman must "submit her

work to the same standard by which a man's is judged."⁵⁴ Alden anticipates the common difficulties women encounter when they enter in the world of work—from being prepared to give up social engagements, to putting her work before she eats,⁵⁵ to being able to “subordinate personal desires and eliminate the ‘ego.’”⁵⁶ Advice about work generally stressed conditions that were believed to ruin a woman's delicate nature.

Alden herself experienced long hours of work and toil as a reporter and editor of the women's pages of the *New York Tribune*. Recognizing the unattractive nature of the work of a reporter at times, she prepares the would-be woman journalist, “The hours of a reporter are irregular. A reporter has no time that can be called her own. She must be out in all sorts of weather, and must meet all sorts of people.”⁵⁷ “If getting a story makes work after midnight necessary, she must work after midnight without murmuring.”⁵⁸ Her willingness to subject herself to uncomfortable and difficult working conditions is succinctly summarized by Mrs. Ida Husted Harper: “the woman who wishes to be a newspaper reporter should ask herself if she is able to toil from eight to fifteen hours a day, seven days in the week; for this may be required of her. Is she willing to take whatever assignment may be given; to go wherever she is sent, to accomplish what she is delegated to do, at whatever risk, or rebuff or inconvenience...[?]”⁵⁹ Though there was truth to these descriptions for both men and women, they would surely make even the most determined woman think twice about such work. Even men, who were free of the responsibilities of the home, were often counselled nonetheless, to avoid working late into the night.⁶⁰ Coleman,

for one, often acknowledged the hard work, and how, at times, it conflicted greatly with the comforts of other possible ways of living. She once described her life as “...a restless, comfortless, homeless life –full of hard work, with never a home circle—never a place but a desolate room in some business block to go to...and scanty means.”⁶¹

Aside from the physical toils of journalistic work, there remained the more problematic notion of breaching social conventions in the course of work. The “necessities” of journalistic work that forced a woman to tolerate “unfeminine behaviour” defied even the most liberal notions of the acceptable limits for women’s broadening public existence. While the new woman might be riding her bicycle to and fro, quickly out of the direct gaze of those regulating her behaviour, the demands of newspaper work pushed traditional conventions about women’s public mobility even further. As Alden acknowledges, a woman journalist must not only be prepared to go wherever a story demanded her to go, she must do it alone, unchaperoned and unprotected – a state normally associated only with those other breed of night walkers. The particular challenges of gender that insisted she avoid even the sense of impropriety, to harken back to Henry Watterson’s words, seemed not to trouble Alden much: “If she behaves herself she is in no more danger than is her brother.”⁶² Mrs. Isabel Worrell Ball perhaps best describes the contradictions for the Woman journalist:

...above all things, [a newspaper woman] must learn to forget that she is a woman, when she has to work among men at men’s work. I do not mean that she must be unwomanly. Nothing would do more harm than that. But if a man wants to smoke in her presence when

she is at work, or keep his hat on, or take his coat off, or put his feet on the desk, or do any of the things which she would order him out of her parlor for doing, she must remember that it all goes with the place she is in. When she meets that man at a reception, they both can put on their cast-iron society manner with their evening dress. She must not ape mannish actions, or she will make herself thoroughly disliked (169)

Trapped within conventions that insisted simultaneously that she be womanly at all times while performing otherwise unwomanly activities, expectations for women were contradictory to say the least.

The consequence of this seemingly unnatural mix of “constitution” with everyday work practices led to great concerns about a compromised womanhood. Such was the resounding conclusion of the journalists and editors polled in an informal survey by *Ladies' Home Journal* editor, Edward Bok. Journalist Edward Bok raises this very issue in his 1901 article, “Is the Newspaper Office the Place for a Girl?” Bok and his respondents certainly supported the idea that newspaper offices, and journalistic work more generally, had serious, potentially dangerous, consequences for women. These offices were places where women were turned into unfeminine creatures -- as one respondent described her, “too independent, too free, too broad...She may not become unwomanly, but less womanly she does grow.” Or, as one male editor wrote, “Young womanhood is too sweet and sacred a thing to couple with the life of careless manner, hasty talk, and unconventional action that seems inevitable in a newspaper office.” But, as a woman respondent argues, it was not just the newspaper office that threatened the woman journalist, but the very profession of journalism itself. “With practically no definite hours,” she writes, “and

a stipulation only that ‘copy’ shall be in in time...there comes a dreadful sense of freedom which unconsciously deteriorates into all sorts of license of language and behavior, the combination that makes the world believe all newspaper women to be ‘Bohemians.’”⁶³ Though a certain “Bohemianism” might have been “piquant to the casual observer,” the editor of *The Journalist* asserts, she quickly “develops into a decided nuisance to those who are called up to endure it.” Only when she gives up being a “hybrid creature claiming a man’s rights and her own as well” and throws off “her womanhood [to] become ‘one of the boys,’” a feat only a few were able to accomplish, could she avoid such affiliations. Naturally, for the editor of *The Journalist*, all would be better served if she would simply stay within her bounds as a woman, and accordingly, leave men’s work to the boys who would gladly continue affording her her rightful privileges in return.⁶⁴

But, as Alden warns, these gender struggles went beyond simple propriety or “turf.” A certain state of womanliness was required for her to do her work. A very qualification for a woman to be a journalist demanded “the manners of a woman of good society...Coarseness is unpardonable in a woman who is going out every day to talk with womanly women in the necessary collection of news.”⁶⁵ After all, in the words of Garth Grafton, “The loss of the least womanly grace means a loss of power.”⁶⁶ A confusing paradox, to say the least, for the young woman considering entering newspaper work.

But the paradox did not end there, for that which was intended to provide satisfaction and reward for her industry – “a perpetual broadening of the intellectual

and spiritual horizon of the worker” – was precisely what threatened her femininity.⁶⁷ As one of Bok’s women respondents declares, “No, no! a young girl gets too close to the Tree of Knowledge in our business.” Another “successful newspaper woman, herself married,” further clarifies, “Naturally, where all subjects are published, they are to a great degree discussed, and a woman must hear things that no amount of chivalry from her masculine co-workers can prevent.” Stripped of all masculine protection, the woman is overly exposed, causing her to lose that “intangible something,” hardening her by lessening her “illusions about gentleness.” It was precisely the “quickenings of the pulses...an awakening of the brain...a sense of being carried along upon the rushing torrent of human life” which these respondents feared.⁶⁸ For all the rhetoric Bok was careful to construct, the correspondents did assert a position that bore consideration. The life of journalism, especially that of daily reporting, was in fact extremely difficult for both male and female journalists. John Stephen Willison, editor of *The Globe*, became quite ill in 1898 and 1899 because of exhaustion and stress, as did Coleman in the 1890s. Not surprisingly, virtually every manual cited in this chapter counseled women to take care of their health, to take their meals as frequently as they could and to be prepared to toil long and arduous hours.⁶⁹

The discourses described above taken from novels and manuals, amongst other places, worked to construct a gendered regime of journalism, within which the woman journalist as figure was constituted. The representational effects of this regime set the conditions, rules and conventions for material women to practice journalism and within which she would continually strive to write and rewrite herself.

Thus, the figure of the woman journalist was held together by a series of tensions. Forced to be a woman in order to write and be recognizable to her readers, she was continually compelled to move beyond this difference. To do so, threatened her very conditions of existence and thus, the woman journalist relied on competing definitions of womanhood in order to remain recognizable, while still achieving the newspaper's larger mission to speak to the people. Writing within these conditions as they themselves continued to write them, Coleman and Fenton were simultaneously Lady, adventurer, Mother, friend, advisor and editor willing to cast out unruly inhabitants within their domain. "Kit" and "Faith" were all things to all women. Each was a Woman journalist. The contradictions implicit within this regime meant that her position as authoritative speaker was never fully secure, but needed to be continually re-represented, further establishing new conditions for her representational practices.

Conclusion

As the newspapers struggled to reconcile their partisan pasts with an emerging, though far from reliable position of independence, the weekend edition emerged as a means by which to circumvent the entire troublesome issue. Indeed, the weekend edition became a place where politics could be put easily aside. The Saturday paper could establish an entirely new identity for the newspaper; true to the best of the new journalism, it could inform and “educate the masses,” while giving them more and more pages of interesting matter to consume, including advertising and woman’s pages. As the purview of the newspapers expanded to promote nation-building in new ways, more matter could be furnished from further abroad. The weekend edition could most easily accomplish this and it was the consistency with which the woman’s pages appeared which helped to secure its significance within the newspaper. Women’s journalism, thus, was crucial to establishing a family identity for a paper that sought to make every member of the family its reader. Although *The Empire* did not survive, despite its vibrant woman’s page, it is clear that its weekend edition was the slowest in the Toronto market to develop, indicating how essential the weekend edition was to increased revenues and to establishing a new vision for the newspaper.

This thesis has treated both the newspaper as a cultural formation that constructed and responded to its cultural landscape through its representational practices. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, these practices shifted drastically as a new formation emerged within it that brought a gendered view to the world that, though new, was yet familiar. The Woman journalist has been understood

in this thesis as an articulation of changing journalistic practices that lent themselves to conventional feminine modes of expression allowing her to be advisor, mother and adventuress in one page, week after week. Ironically, precisely because of the effects of her gender, which produced an authoritative voice as expert, mother, and advisor, she was called upon to “overcome” her gender in being a journalist. To be a Woman journalist, then, meant to be a Woman and not-Woman at the same time that it meant to be a not-journalist and Journalist. Her writing functioned as a technology of gender—at once the product and process of her gendered experiences, which were themselves constituted within complex and, at times, contradictory discourses.⁷⁰ Always and already discursively positioned as different, her journalistic practices interrogated the regimes of gendered (self) representation, at the same time that they reinscribed their power.

Yet it is clear that this thesis has struggled to fully understand the implications of and processes by which women journalists, as historical subjects, became “woman journalist,” as ideological subject. The woman’s page performed its most profound ideological work in precisely this slippage: at the moment when “Kit” and “Faith” were transformed into Woman, when their experiences spoke to all women’s experiences. There was most certainly something emblematic and productive in the ways these pages were written. Yet, they were different from each other and to not recognize their differences would be to overlook this ideological slippage. The vagaries and stresses of writing a weekly page, however, guaranteed that although always within the conflicting ideologies of gender and journalism, the effects of this

would be different, contradictory even, over time. Even if this tension is not fully explored or realized throughout this thesis, it remains the crucial question that feminist media scholars interested in gendered representational practices must face. As long as we remain within patriarchal structures that continue to constitute gendered difference, as long there remains a political necessity for a feminist politics (whatever forms these may take, as necessary), this question remains one worth taking on, particularly as journalism schools today are bursting at the seams with women interested in taking up and on the profession of journalism.

Although much has changed since Kit Coleman and Faith Fenton began building their weekly *Kingdom and Empire*, their work helps to bring these conditions to the forefront. At times didactic, moralizing and even prescriptive, the nineteenth century woman's page nonetheless represented a distinct voice within the newspaper. Into the twentieth century women journalists had grown in numbers and were determined to bring greater respectability to their work; in the wake of this work and the emergence of professional ideals like objectivity, its distinctiveness would be lost and the effects of gender became submerged within those of journalism. As a discourse emerges that continually erodes the place of objectivity, the work of Fenton and Coleman reminds us how we got here and where we're going. Although this thesis provides few answers, it does provide insight into a similarly situated moment in history when the profession struggled to make sense of its commercial imperatives and representational ethics.

NOTES

Unless otherwise indicated all articles taken from *The Daily Mail* appeared on Kit Coleman's page, "Woman's Kingdom."

Unless otherwise indicated all articles taken from *The Empire* appeared on Faith Fenton's page, "Woman's Empire."

¹ Editorial brief, *The Globe*, 23 Apr. 1896: 6.

² Henry Watterson, "Marse Henry." *An Autobiography* (New York: G.H. Doran, 1919), quoted in A.H.U. Colquhoun, *Press, Politics and People: The life and letters of Sir John Willison, Journalist and Correspondent of The Times* (Toronto: Macmillan Co. of Canada, 1935), 108.

³ Margaret Bateson, *Professional Women Upon Their Professions* (London: Horace Cox, 1895), 123.

⁴ I am clearly indebted to Teresa deLauretis here who insists that gender is product and process of representation (Teresa deLauretis, "The Technology of Gender," in *Technologies of Gender*, [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987], 6-11). For me, representation is best understood within the framework of articulation, which is similar, though uses different terms than deLauretis' conception.

⁵ Flora McDonald, "The Newspaper Woman. One Side of the Question," *The Journalist*, 26 Jan. 1889: 13.

⁶ Once again, I am indebted to the re-reading of Althusser's ideological subject by both Teresa deLauretis and Stuart Hall here (deLauretis, 6-11; Stuart Hall, "Signification, Representation, Ideology: Althusser and the Post-Structuralist Debates," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 2:2 (1985): 101-106).

⁷ Matthew Arnold, "Up to Easter," *Nineteenth Century* 22 (1887): 638, quoted in Joel H. Weiner, "How new was the new journalism?" in *Papers for the millions: The new journalism in Britain, 1850's to 1914*, ed. J.H. Weiner (New York: Guildford Press, 1988), 48.

⁸ Laurel Brake, *Subjugated Knowledges: Journalism, gender and literature in the nineteenth century* (New York: New York University Press, 1994).

⁹ Brake notes the influence of the novel on issues of authority and cultural legitimacy in relationship to the British *Nineteenth Century* and its predecessor *Contemporary Review*, particularly how its introduction relates to women readers and writers (Brake, 55-60). In her groundbreaking chapter on the "new" journalism, Brake furthermore notes that the adoption of bylines disrupted what she calls the "fictional 'unity'" of a periodical (Brake, 86).

¹⁰ See Laurel Brake's discussion of "star" reporters (Brake, 54-6).

¹¹ Talia Schaffer, “‘Nothing but Foolscap and Ink:’ Inventing the New Woman” in *The New Woman in Fiction and in Fact: Fin-de-Siècle Feminisms*, ed. Angelique Richardson and Chris Willis (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 40.

¹² See also Ann Ardis’ insightful discussion of the shifts from historical social movement to literary construction in the introduction to her *New Women, New novels: feminism and early modernism*, (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers, 1990).

¹³ Mrs. Mona Caird, “A Defence of the So-Called ‘Wild Women,’” *The Nineteenth Century*, May 1892, 812.

¹⁴ See Angelique Richardson and Chris Willis, eds, *The New Woman*.

¹⁵ Thus, I am less interested in the gap between her representations and the historical women of the time. Nonetheless, pointing to differences between the media constructions and what we know about the historical conditions can reveal insights into these processes of representation.

¹⁶ For more on the new fiction, see Pamela Boumelha, “Women and the New Fiction,” in *Thomas Hardy and Women: Sexual Ideology and Narrative Form* (New Jersey: Barnes & Nobles Books, 1982), 63-97.

¹⁷ Misao Dean, introduction to *A Daughter of Today*, by Sara Jeannette Duncan (Ottawa: Tecumseh Press, 1988): vii-viii.

¹⁸ Dean, ix. Germaine Warkentin, Introduction to *Set in Authority* by Sara Jeannette Duncan. Ed. Germaine Warkentin (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 1996), 10. Both Warkentin and Dean note these were prevalent themes taken up in Duncan’s novels, especially the two under examination in their books [*Set in Authority* (1906) and *A Daughter of Today* (1895)]. In fact, Warkentin posits that Duncan was intensely preoccupied with the problem of authority, constantly presenting “her readers with a near-irreconcilable disjunction between what they saw, and what society permitted them to say about it” (13). Both Warkentin and Dean note Duncan’s prior journalistic career, though neither really explore the extent to which these themes and preoccupations were precisely those Duncan would have faced in her professional existence as a journalist, especially as one of Canada’s earliest women to do so. Indeed, as I argue, the question of authority is a central preoccupation for the woman journalist that constantly threatens to unravel her position within the newspaper. The necessity of reasserting authorial control pervades women’s journalism throughout, particularly as they sought to branch their pages further out into other areas of investigation beyond the conventional realms of gossip and fashion. Although often disparaged, it is important to note that even these “lighter” elements served a crucial purpose in establishing this authorial voice necessary to cultivating the desired relationship between columnist and reader. That is to say, that without these elements, the possibility of branching further out into more traditional journalistic terrain (but uncharacteristic feminine terrain) would have been utterly impossible. Without these features

presumed to be firmly within the domain of the feminine, a communal relationship between readers and woman journalist could never have been established.

¹⁹ Chris Willis, “‘Heaven defend me from political or highly educated women!’ Packaging the New Woman for Mass Consumption,” in *The New Woman in Fiction and in Fact: Fin-de-Siècle Feminisms*, ed. Angelique Richardson and Chris Willis (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 53.

²⁰ Lily Dougall, *The Madonna of a Day*, (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1895), 6.

²¹ Dougall, 3.

²² Dougall, 3.

²³ Harrison Robertson, “She and Journalism,” *Scribner’s Magazine*, 56:2 (Aug 1894): 253. Many thanks go to Dr. Charles Acland for bringing this story to my attention.

²⁴ Robertson, 261.

²⁵ Godard, “A Portrait with Three Faces: The New Woman in Fiction by Canadian Women, 1880-1920,” *The Literary Criterion*, 19:3-4 (1984): 88-90.

²⁶ Willis, 53.

²⁷ Sara Jeannette Duncan, *A Daughter of Today* (London: Chatto & Windus, Piccadilly, 1895; reprint, Ottawa: Tecumseh Press, 1988). In a final twist of sad irony, the manuscript titled “An Adventure in Stageland,” was posthumously published six months after her death by another publisher.

²⁸ Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, “The New Woman as Androgyne: Social Disorder and Gender Crisis, 1870-1936,” *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 245.

²⁹ Cited in Sara Jeannette Duncan, “How an American Girl became a Journalist,” in *Sara Jeannette Duncan: Selected Journalism*, ed. Thomas Tausky (Ottawa: Tecumseh Press, 1978), 6; emphasis mine.

³⁰ “Woman’s World,” *The Globe*, 8 Jul. 1886: 6.

³¹ Both Duncan and Fenton were trained as school teachers, a rigorous training that was not easily attained in the nineteenth century. Coleman worked as a private tutor in Europe before moving to Canada and was schooled in several languages, including French and Spanish. See Marjory Lang for further details on the broader context of journalists’ education at the time, *Women who made the News: Female Journalists in Canada, 1880-1945* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1999), 87-8.

³² Linda Steiner, "Gender at work: early accounts by women journalists," *Journalism History*, (Spring 1997), 8.

³³ Frances Low, *Press Work for Women: A Text Book for the Young Woman Journalist* (London: L. Upcott Gill; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1904), 92.

³⁴Low, 92.

³⁵ While columns of this nature certainly can be described as a mission-oriented, general reportage of the news did not promote the advancement of man in quite the same way. Although one can argue that journalism is always gendered, in this case, it is gendered in a specific manner that was in keeping with the historical times, particularly within a context of a rising discourse about women's rights.

³⁶ "Other People and I," *The Globe*, 17 Jun. 1885: 3. It is worth noting that in the above cited "Woman's World" column, she also discusses the unfortunate circumstance that Susan B. Anthony was not a more handsome woman, for then "the enemy would have been deprived of one of his more effective weapons." (ibid). This odd mix of feminist sentiment was perfectly in keeping with Duncan's middle class upbringing that refused to relinquish its feminine charms to the supposed "harder" edges of the New Woman. In this regard, she was very similar to the first generation of women doctors described by Smith-Rosenberg, who challenged the pervading male opinion that too much education would disrupt the natural physiological order of the female body ("New Woman as Androgyne," 258).

³⁷ Although this thesis has focused on the woman journalist as woman's page editor, it is important to note that in the United States the term woman journalist would also include women reporters. In Canada, however, the woman reporter was a rare bird indeed as women were frequently confined to journalistic work that was specifically designed to attract a female readership. This distinction, thus, draws our attention back to the ways in which the woman journalist as a professional identity was circumscribed by commercial imperatives that affected the kind of work she could do. My thanks to Catherine McKercher for her insightful comments on this point.

³⁸ "Driftwood," *The Globe*, 04 Apr. 1903: 18. Of course, many women did write their autobiographies or memoirs before they died. Bernard's strong reaction may be explained by the fact that the correspondent knew her home address, a fact she makes explicit at the beginning of her column. Though she sympathizes with the correspondent to a certain degree, it is clear she is attempting to protect the distance between public persona and private woman. Furthermore, she challenges the notion that the personal tone associated with women's writing necessarily implied more truthfulness or sincerity. Rather she flips the argument on its head and asserts that distance from the strictly personal allows a writer to more fully engage a topic, and consequently, write with more of themselves. She writes, "I do not try to be impersonal or personal, and I have no definite system or idea regarding the column. Possibly, when one writes one is always more or less influenced by the sub-conscious knowledge that one is writing, not for one's intimate friends or any little clique, but for a possible audience of some thousands of people of all sorts and conditions. If this is

the case, one writes surely in an impersonal strain, but I am inclined to believe that the 'impersonal strain,' is in truth the most apt to make one write what they themselves are. Once one becomes personal there is a sort of self-consciousness which prevents the mind adjusting itself with ease in regard to the subject under discussion." By all accounts, Bernard skillfully gives to her readers what they sought, while reserving the necessary distance from them at the same time.

³⁹ Freeman, *Kit's Kingdom*, 29.

⁴⁰ Barbara Freeman notes that Kit teased readers of both genders, and would "throw in red herrings to keep the guessing game going" (29).

⁴¹ "Woman's Kingdom," *The Daily Mail*, 1 Nov. 1890: 5.

⁴² See, for instance, her response to "Jew," *Daily Mail*, 25 May 1890: 8.

⁴³ Margaret Bateson, "Journalism," *Professional Women upon their Professions. Conversations* (London: Horace Cox, 1895): 121. It should be noted here that Bateson and others cited in this chapter understood women's journalism to be larger than the woman's page work described in this dissertation. However, as I noted in the previous chapter, although always circumscribed by the dictates of the woman's page, both Coleman and Fenton often utilized common reportorial skills of the kind described by Bateson and the others cited below. Fenton, in particular, was adept at this work which was helpful especially when she became the Yukon correspondent for *The Globe* in 1898.

⁴⁴ Smith-Rosenberg argues the discourse of a distorted sexuality that sought to medicalize the New Woman shared a common purpose with other anxious discourses at the end of the nineteenth century: "the reassertion of order in a conflicting and changing world" ("New Woman as Androgyne," 267).

⁴⁵ Bateson, 123.

⁴⁶ Barbara Onslow makes a similar argument in relationship to the stunt girl practices of Elizabeth Banks. See Barbara Onslow, "New World, New Woman, New Journalism: Elizabeth Banks, transatlantic stuntwoman in London," *Media History*, 7:1 (2001): 7-15.

⁴⁷ Flora McDonald, "The Newspaper Woman," 13.

⁴⁸ McDonald, 13.

⁴⁹ E.A. Bennett, *Journalism for women. A practical guide* (London & New York: John Lane, 1898), 11.

⁵⁰ Bennett, 12.

⁵¹ Bennett, 20.

⁵² Florence Finch Kelly, *Flowing Stream: The Story of fifty-six years in American newspaper life* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co. 1939), 158.

⁵³ Cynthia Westover Alden, *Women's Ways of Earning Money* (New York: A. S. Barnes & Company, 1904): p. 20-1. Alden's book was popular. A second edition was issued in 1910. Interestingly, Alden had connections to women journalists in Canada as well. Widely admired for her journalistic work, Alden was invited to the first national convention of the Canadian Women's Press Club, held in Winnipeg in 1906 (Lang, *Women who made the News*, 75).

⁵⁴ Alden, 171-2.

⁵⁵ Alden, 176.

⁵⁶ Alden, 171

⁵⁷ Alden, 167.

⁵⁸ Alden, 176.

⁵⁹ Alden, 171.

⁶⁰ See Rev. W.F. Clarke's comments in *Printer and Publisher* who credits his long success in journalism to working during the morning hours, though he recognized that not all reporters had the luxury of such choices (March 1895: 16).

⁶¹ "Driftings," *The Daily Mail*, 9 Dec. 1893: 5.

⁶² Alden, 176.

⁶³ Edward Bok, "Is the Newspaper Office the Place for a Girl?" *The Ladies Home Journal*, (1901), 18.

⁶⁴ "Women in Journalism," *The Journalist*, 28 May 1887, p. 8.

⁶⁵ Alden, 174.

⁶⁶ "Other People and I," *The Globe*, 17 June 1888: 3.

⁶⁷ Alden 174.

⁶⁸ Bateson, 129.

⁶⁹ For instance, Low, after counseling women to "dress well, and always look nice," (84) which required a certain portion of her salary, recognizes that despite the strain it might

cause, she must try to avoid skipping her mid-day meal: "I found it possible to avoid the terrible breakdown of nerves and health generally which makes the life of the mature journalist a misery, by pocketing my pride, and getting a wholesome meal – I will not say a *dainty* one...at one of the work-people's restaurants. It isn't pleasant to eat one's chop and potatoes, or steak, or mutton and barley, amidst unfastidious diners, in surrounding that offend one's delicacy and taste; but far better suffer this drawback and get a nourishing meal, than wreck one's physique on tea and buns or tea and buttered scones" (85).

⁷⁰ Teresa deLauretis, "The Technology of Gender," 5.

Epilogue Some Methodological Comments

This thesis has posited that journalism is always a highly complex, contextual practice that cannot be understood outside of its cultural, political, and industrial contexts. As this thesis has demonstrated, the production and meanings of journalistic texts, from their forms and practices to changing ideas of newsworthiness, can only be fully appreciated as a cultural conjuncture. This period, in particular, became increasingly sensitive to its cultural and social contexts precisely because it was forced to in order to remain competitive and cultivate new readerships. Tracing that context over one hundred years later has not been easy; it has been fraught with questions of whether this context or that had more relevance, more force, more effect. This revisionist history has been produced through the purview of women's perspectives – even as it attempted to challenge *a priori* assumptions about what those perspectives were – making the contexts drawn a function of this vision. Shifting this perspective, then, would likely bring new contexts into focus, while others receded. It has treated the columns and pages produced over the time period as both subjects and objects of research; that is, the columns provided historical information and clues on how to redraw these contexts, at the same time that the very forms and processes of production were interrogated. This has been complicated by the relatively scarce archival information that exists about the production of journalism.

Journalists' published memoirs of their own careers or that of their colleagues have been insightful, particularly as they helped to establish the main players on the contemporary scene.¹ Written in the traditions of the time, however, most favoured funny or politically significant anecdotes, rather than revealing the routine processes by which their journalism was produced. As Norman Denzin has argued, autobiographical and biographical narratives are structured around both starting and turning points which makes only that which is remarkable, marked by "significant" changes, worthy of record.² Catherine Covert sees this tradition as being masculinist, preoccupied with the Whig tradition which eschews continuity for change.³ As this epilogue argues, the day to day processes of journalistic practice are lost.

Newspaper pamphlets uncovered in archives, libraries and those reproduced by the Canadian Historical Institute for Microreproduction have been most useful for critically examining the ways in which newspapers were invested in representing themselves. As promotional materials, intended in some cases for readers, but most often for potential advertisers, these pamphlets were carefully written in the interest of promoting certain characteristics valorized as constituting a powerful newspaper. They, therefore, provide important clues about what values were considered as ideals, what content was most sought after by readers (and advertisers), and the characteristics contemporaries believed were necessary and foundational in making up a successful newspaper. They have been useful, then, for gaining an institutional and industry-wide perspective.

Nonetheless, shifting ideas about practices and ideals are hard to trace. One might hope to gain better insights into these concerns by using papers of journalists and editors themselves collected in archives. Despite the rich material I did find, I was surprised that I did not find more from journalists themselves about their practice. Based on several conversations I have had with archivists at various repositories, several observations are relevant here.⁴ Journalists themselves tended not to keep their notebooks, or detailed records of their daily work, preferring instead to quickly turn notes into published work and keep these instead. Exceptions to this were the Edward Farrer fonds held at the National Archives of Canada and *The Globe*. Though a quite small collection, it contains interesting details about Farrer's own research into archival documents about Canada's history that provide a fascinating and quite illuminating glimpse into how his editorials were put together. M.O. Hammond's diaries (Archives of Ontario) were rich in details and insights into how a newspaper office worked and how a (male) journalist could build his career over time.

This bias towards keeping published material, however, is supported by the idea that journalism is a self-evident practice and that what is of value is the published report. In turn, journalism is frequently treated as a valuable source of historical evidence, without the same consideration given to how it was produced in the first instance. All of the archivists I spoke with recognized that this was a common assumption within the archival world. Yet as Elizabeth Meese has pointed out, "It is wise to consider the institutional politics underlying the development of archival collections."⁵ For the National Archives, these politics have been formed, in part, in

response to shrinking budgets. Sadly, as a result of these cuts, the National Archives has virtually ceased the ongoing acquisition of journalists' papers. As "The Private Sector Acquisition Orientation" for 2000-2005 indicates, "Schools of journalism within universities are homes for records of news media personalities, as such records give insights into the craft of the profession. Acquisition of these records will generally be left to universities."⁶ Clearly, universities have their own acquisitions prerogatives and priorities, which may or not result in the acquisition of a journalists' papers on the sole basis that they were graduates of the university. Furthermore, formalized journalism education is a very recent phenomenon in this country, dating back only as far as the late 1940s.⁷ Although by the turn of the twentieth century, many journalists were university-educated (compared to the general population), this was far from an industry standard. Rather, journalism remained, until the establishment and acceptance of journalism education, a profession that was acquired on the streets through apprenticeship.⁸

Furthermore, however, Elizabeth Meese continues on by pointing out, "Archivists are primarily interested in collecting documents of an obvious historical and literary value. This attitude results in collections that, in organization and content, mirror traditional academic attitudes toward significant figures and important events."⁹ Given the relatively small interest in journalism history in Canada, the lack of attention to journalists' fonds is more understandable. In a time of increasingly fewer public funds and ever rationalized acquisition practices, without a vibrant interest in journalism history, these papers – and what is collected and how

it is organized – will continue to reflect these values. Yet, without rich documentary sources, revitalizing the field will prove even more difficult.

These issues are further complicated when examining women's history. Many families did not keep women's papers, thinking them irrelevant or too personal. Like most researchers trying to find details of women author's lives, finding traces of Coleman and Fenton has proven excessively difficult. As Carole Gerson has observed, "researching women writers in Canadian archives and institutions is a hit-and-miss affair, especially with regard to authors active before 1940."¹⁰ Like many women of her time, Kathleen Blake Coleman destroyed most of her personal papers, believing it better to keep some things out of the public eye. Her papers held at the National Archives, consequently, contain very few glimpses into her personal life, or her struggles as a journalist. There are no papers for Alice Freeman. Jill Downie provided me with copies of some letters she was given by Freeman's family when she was researching her book.¹¹ Consequently, the best place to observe the development of women's journalism has remained the journalism itself. This has formed the foundation of my corpus.

Collecting articles from microfilm copies of the newspapers produced this corpus. In order to create sense out of the over six hundred and forty woman's pages I had collected, I made an index of the journalism from February 1888, when Fenton began writing for *The Empire*, to February 1895, when the two papers merged. This allowed me to compare the topics and issues covered by each woman from week to week. Creating such an index facilitated a kind of "bird's eye view" that allowed me

to identify themes that repeated themselves, “regularities,” – like the varying constructions of Home and Woman – as well as the changes in format of the page itself over time. This, following the important work of Michel Foucault, seeks to historicize these discursive complexes by insisting that journalistic forms and practices are historically contingent.¹²

This approach allowed me to trace the development of each page, as well as the journalists’ personas. It is important to state that the forms and roles, that is, the practices used by Coleman and Fenton, varied not only from journalist to journalist but also from week to week. The categories I created, like advisor, mother, moderator, were, therefore, contingent, heuristic and a little messy. They continually bled into, and built off of, one another and constantly threatened to undermine their categorization. As I have argued, as a trusted advisor and friendly moderator, Coleman and Fenton could lend authority and authenticity to the more provocative sketches making their practices acceptable and their personas trustworthy. Although analytically it was important to try and separate them, as part of the discursive and ideological makeup of the articulation “Woman journalist,” they remained powerfully (in)fused with one another. These roles were thus constructed in relationship to one another, within contested and dialectical terms, as readers continually challenged, encouraged and discussed the words offered by these ladies. Taken from the perspective of a readership that followed these pages week after week, the pages and roles gave meaning to each other over time.

Aside from these roles, however, I have struggled most profoundly throughout the thesis with the very categories of public and private. As analytical mechanisms—that is, as means through which to think—the categories of public and private were thoroughly intertwined. Despite making the analysis somewhat messy, hanging on to the categories of public and private helps to explain the processes behind *why* the woman’s page took on some of the forms it did. As Chapter three explored, women were bleeding the categories of public and private into each other in a host of reform movements that slowly changed the perception of what women could and should do within the public sphere. Far from being “outside” the newspaper, as simply the backdrop to what these women journalists were doing in their pages (another set of categories that cannot be sustained), these reform movements gave a kind of rationale to this approach that would have been expected by nineteenth century women readers. Perhaps a quote from Fenton herself best describes the kind of circulation of ideas that this thesis attempts to describe from a variety of positions. Describing how the meetings of the National Council of Women “charged the Ottawa air with the dynamite of the New Crusade,” she writes: “It was women’s power, and woman’s place, women’s ways and woman’s work, woman’s provokingness [sic] and woman’s wilfulness. Dear heart, how they did keep at it. The discussions of the Council sessions floated out into the street, climbed the pulpits, crept into dinner parties and dances, even stole past the stalwart doorkeepers and policemen in the Commons chamber.”¹³ The floating, creeping and climbing of these discourses indicates how, when it comes to ideas, ideologies and discourses, the

categories of public and private fail to adequately capture their import or influence, yet constitute the very ground upon which analysis must begin, particularly when one's goal is to re-map and understand these very domains.

Given the short time frame and limited amount of women's journalism considered, generalities about all of women's journalism across Canada are impossible. Smaller publications printed for those smaller communities in the countryside would certainly have produced a different kind of women's journalism. As such, the conclusions reached here are limited only to the Toronto market. Although further consideration of pages like Madge Merton's "Women's Work and Ways" in *The Globe* might produce other results, preliminary investigation into the format and content of her page, which included features like her "Five O'Clock Tea," finds that they were quite similar to the formats discussed in this work. Given the intense growing concentration and competition of the market, these similarities are less surprising. The independent papers would prove a fruitful way of further broadening this research to consider how the woman's page functioned within terms of populism. Would the woman's page be less concerned with prescriptive engagements of questions of femininity? Would there be more stunts? My preliminary research pursuing these questions leads me to believe the answer is no.

In sum, relying on the journalism produced, however, has been both a pleasure and a concern. Being engrossed in so many delightful, funny and provocative columns, I did gain a sense of life in the nineteenth century, even if it was an official vision. But relying on the published journalism does not allow us to

see what was not published, how many more women tried and never succeeded, what was considered “bad” journalism, let alone providing data about how women negotiated their day to day lives as women (for Coleman as a mother; for Fenton as a schoolteacher) and as professionals. Despite the relatively limited focus of this project, it has argued that the interventions of these women were important in reorienting this market in particular directions that were guided by more general concerns with morality and the family. The turn of the century brought greater consolidation to the market and soon the entire country would be involved in a war that would further alter journalistic conditions. Much more research and perhaps new techniques are needed to study where the Woman Journalist and her page went after this.

NOTES

¹ Floyd S. Chalmers, *A Gentleman of the Press*, (New York: Doubleday Canada, Ltd., 1969); Hector Charlesworth, *Candid Chronicles: Leaves from the Note book of a Canadian Journalist* (Toronto: Macmillan Company, 1925); A.H.U. Colquhoun, *Press, Politics and People: The life and letters of Sir John Willison, Journalist and Correspondent of The Times* (Toronto: Macmillan Co. of Canada, 1935); Ron Poulton, *The Paper Tyrant: John Ross Robertson of the Toronto Telegram* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin, 1971); J.S. Willison, *Reminiscences, Political and Personal* (Toronto: McLelland & Stewart, 1919).

² Norman K. Denzin, *Interpretive Biography* (Newbury Park: Sage, 1989), 53.

³ Catherine Covert, "Journalism History and Women's Experience: A Problem in Conceptual Change," *Journalism History* 8:1 (1981): 2. See also Susan Henry's insightful essay: "Changing Media History Through Women's History," in *Women in Mass Communication: Challenging Gender Values*, ed. P.J. Creedon (Newbury Park: Sage, 1989), 34-57.

⁴ I had conversations with two archivists at the National Archives of Canada, two at the Archives of Ontario and one university archivist between 2001-2004. In the interest of maintaining their anonymity, I am refraining from identifying these individuals.

⁵ Elizabeth A. Meese, "Archival Materials: The Problem of Literary Reputation," *Opportunities for Women's Studies Research in Language and Literatures*, Vol. 1 of *Women in Print*. Ed. Joan E. Hartman and Ellen Messer-Davidow (New York: MLA, 1982), 42-3, quoted in Carole Gerson, "Locating Female Subjects in the Archives," in *Working in Women's Archives: Researching Women's Private Literature and Archival Documents*, ed. Helen M. Buss and Marlene Kadar (Waterloo, Ont: Wilfrid Laurier Press, 2001), 7.

⁶ National Archives of Canada, "Private Sector Acquisition: Orientation 2000-2005," 31 March 2000, 14.

⁷ See Eugene Tate, Andrew Osler, Gregory Fouts and Arthur Siegel, "The Beginnings of Communication Studies in Canada: Remembering and Narrating the Past," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 25 (2000): 61-103, especially 82-91.

⁸ In recent years, a debate rages on whether journalism education should take a more academic orientation or remain within a vocation model. This debate is usually played out on two levels: hiring of faculty (professional journalists versus academically trained professionals) and curriculum priorities that posit a division between doing (skills-based) and knowing (theory-based).

⁹ Meese, 42-3, quoted in Gerson, 7.

¹⁰ Gerson, 10.

¹¹ Jill Downie, *A Passionate Pen: The Life and Times of Faith Fenton*. Toronto: HarperCollins, 1996. I especially want to thank Jill Downie who generously shared her resources and time

with me in the early phases of this project. As she informed me, her family sold many of Freeman's papers off, particularly those pertaining to her time in the Yukon, which have some value to Yukon enthusiasts and collectors (personal communication, 21 Nov. 2001).

¹² Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, 1969, trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), especially 21-71; and "The Discourse on Language," 1971, trans. Ruper Swyer, appendix to *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, 1969, trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), 215-237; *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, 1977, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Book, 1995), 23-31.

¹³ "A Night in the House," *The Empire*, 21 Apr. 1894: 11.

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