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women's HISTORY NETWORK

WOMEN'S HISTORY NETWORK

12th. Annual Conference
King's College, University of Aberdeen, Scotland

13 – 14 September 2003

CONTESTED TERRAINS: Gendered Knowledge, Landscapes and Narratives

Plenary Speakers:

Prof. Joni SEAGER
University of Vermont

Prof. Eileen YEO
University of Strathclyde

(George Washington Wilson Collection, University of Aberdeen)

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For further conference information and a registration form, visit:

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Welcome to the Summer issue of the Women's History Magazine. Remember, we always welcome articles, book reviews, conference information and any other news you would wish to share.

This issue also marks the departure of one of our longstanding (and sometimes long-suffering) editors, Heloise Brown, who was instrumental in converting the Newsletter and Notebooks into this new Magazine. She will not be leaving women's history —look out for her book in the near future —but having given five years of work to WHN as committee member and Newsletter, Notebooks and Magazine editor, she feels it is time to step back a bit. We will miss her regular and witty input, her diligence and her skills. While we hope we won't lose touch, and that she may return someday to Network business, we wanted to mark our respect and appreciation of all the hard work she has put in. So, best to you, Heloise.

In what we hope will become a convention of the Magazine, the June issue contains a collection of papers from the annual conference. It kicks off with Nancy Rosoff's paper 'You are learning, girls, how to handle and carry your bodies' based on instructions to women athletes in the United States at the end of the nineteenth century. She chronicles the increasing number of accounts of women's athletic activity and the instructions and advice which provided information to women to allow them to become not only competent but also confident in these new activities. The importance of these developments cannot be underestimated for the liberation and demystification they offered women to enable them to take part in a healthy and active life. In Norwich a generation later, the Juvenile Employment Bureau was more concerned to 'encourage' girls to take up domestic work to eliminate female unemployment. Jenny Zmroczek writes on the kinds of education provided for girls, the jobs available to them and how the choices girls had for schooling influenced their work opportunities. The way girls perceived their choices, of course, were mediated by aspects of their backgrounds. Carol Jenkins takes up the perceptions and domestic training of working-class girls in her examination of a selection of autobiographies at the end of the nineteenth century. Through such training, in formal and informal settings, Jenkins shows how these women perceived domestic training as a route to improvement of their opportunities. Through these three articles, we see the overlay of rules, advice and instruction with women's own aspirations, interests and agency in 'self-improvement.

The September Conference, 'Contested Terrains,' is taking shape. Accepted titles are on the website (www.womenshistorynetwork.org) to give you a flavour of what you can expect. It looks like being a cosmopolitan conference with speakers from 17 different countries, and a range of thoughtful and incisive papers. In order to get cheapest travel and your choice of accommodation, may we encourage you to book your place soon? The enrolment deadline is 22 June. We are pleased to announce the support of the History Department of the University of Aberdeen, the Principal of the University and the journal *Gender and History*. We have arranged for a welcome reception on Friday night and, to give you a taste of local culture, we will have a traditional band playing during and after the conference dinner on Saturday. We hope to welcome you to Aberdeen in September.

Heloise Brown
Elaine Chalus
Debbi Simonton

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Instructions for Women Athletes in America, 1880–1920

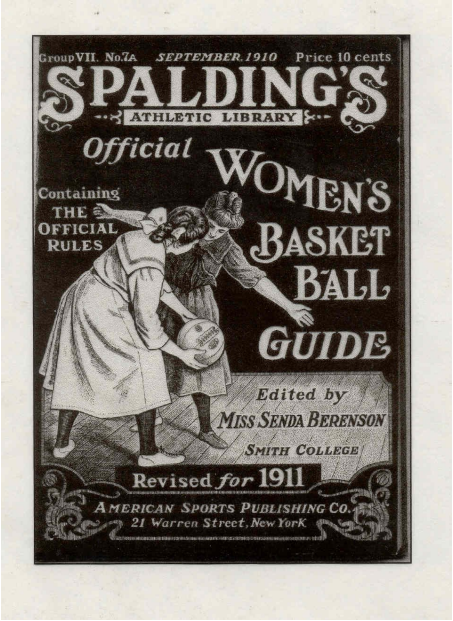
Nancy G. Rosoff

Rutgers University — Camden

Writing in the August 1891 issue of *Ladies' Home Journal*, Annie Ramsey offered readers advice on mountain climbing. She noted the prerequisites for a successful venture: 'Powers of endurance, of quick recuperation, strong lungs and heart, and a keen sense of the beauty of Nature must all be yours, or no amount of preparation can make your walks a delight'. Ramsey advised potential alpine climbers to condition themselves by climbing up and down a hilly road, gradually increasing the distance. She reminded readers that 'training must, however, be continuous: walking one day and resting the next is useless'. Once readers had completed a sufficient amount of preparatory training, they would be ready to take on the mountain. Ramsey recommended a steady pace, and warned her readers 'no matter how tired, *never sit down* to rest'.[1] She reminded them that getting started would be the hardest part, but perseverance would lead to triumph over inertia.

Once underway, Ramsey suggested making few stops until luncheon, after which climbers should rest before beginning their descent. 'Do not drink at every spring — and do not eat the snow', she wrote. 'In the descent, adopt a good swinging gait, the faster the better'. Upon returning to the hotel, readers should bathe and don fresh clothing; in the evening, they should 'have a warm foot-bath in which a tablespoonful of soda is dissolved. Next morning wash your feet well in cold water, and rub in well a small quantity of petroleum jelly', she explained. 'So treated, your feet will give you little trouble, and it is wise to take the best care of these faithful steeds upon whom so much of your pleasure is to depend'.[2] Ramsey's article presented a combination of instruction in the specific training necessary for a particular activity and advice about how to engage in such pursuits without jeopardizing one's health or safety. Through the guidance, encouragement and instruction they provided, Ramsey and other writers offered their readers the means to move toward a more active life.

Between 1880 and 1920, as accounts of women's athletic activity appeared in newspapers in increasing numbers and in more depth, instructions emerged about the techniques of various sports. Potential participants in athletic activity learned how to engage in such pursuits through a variety of popular culture sources. Acquiring information about the skills required for a sport allowed women to develop competence and confidence in new activities, thus not only contributing to, but also shaping, the development of the ideal new athletic women.



The Spalding guide to basketball included not only the official rules, but also coaching suggestions and pictures of teams from around the country

(Abbott, Senda Berenson, (ed.) *Spalding's Official Basket Ball for Women* New York, American Sport Publishing Co., 1911)

Readers of popular periodicals gained familiarity with a wide variety of athletic endeavours and learned proper techniques for several sports. Several issues of *Ladies' Home Journal* featured descriptions of and instructions for athletic activities, as did the pages of the *New York Times* and *Harper's Bazaar*. Often accompanied by illustrations, these articles went beyond those that documented the presence and accomplishments of athletic women to educate readers in the proper skills for specific sports. At the same time, articles aimed at the general reader gave way to manuals and rulebooks written by champion athletes and other specialists, in keeping with the Progressive emphasis on expertise.

Throughout the 1890s, multiple articles penned by Ellen Le Garde appeared in the pages of *Ladies' Home Journal*, the leading monthly periodical for American women. These articles had a general audience as their target and served to familiarize such readers with a variety of athletic activities

from tennis and skating to swimming. Le Garde used her articles to encourage girls and women to engage in athletic activity and provided enough information for her readers to enable them to acquire rudimentary skills in these sports.

Her first article offered readers information about several sports and encouraged them to pursue outdoor activities, including walking, tennis, rowing, badminton and swimming: 'Sports for girls in the open air are not so limited in number as mention of the subject would suggest'. She advised her readers: 'Not alone is bone and muscle made; you are learning, girls, how to handle and carry your bodies'. She explained: 'Every game in which you take part requires skill, dexterity, coolness, and courage with presence of mind. Cultivate and play all the sports you can in the open air, and they will make you a fitter type of perfect womanhood'.[3] Not only would young readers develop the skills of the games they played, argued the author, but they would also acquire essential personal attributes.

Through her articles, Le Garde served as a surrogate coach, describing the techniques needed to pursue various athletic activities and, simultaneously, encouraging young women to become more physically active. She described the benefits of athletic activity for women. 'There is no reason why the athletic games enjoyed in summer by young men, could not — with but one exception, foot-ball — be made a part of the play-time of young women and girls, and the beneficial results, that attend all muscular exercise, be obtained by them also'.[4]

Readers of Le Garde's works learned not only about particular physical skills, but also discovered what personal qualities they would develop as a result of athletic activity. Those who set foot, however timidly at first, into a rowboat would acquire courage and self-confidence, while those venturing onto the badminton court would feel a 'glow of pleasurable excitement' brought on through exerting all the muscles of one's body. Girls and women should not shy away from competition, but rather revel in it. Le Garde advised her readers to '[p]lay tennis for the pleasure in winning and for the good in the use of those parts of the body which the game calls into action'.[5] The pursuit of outdoor sports would give women physical and emotional confidence. Le Garde encouraged her readers to take risks as they simultaneously acquired new skills.

In subsequent articles, Le Garde offered step-by-step directions for taking up new athletic endeavours. In winter, she advised her readers to take up skating, as it offered 'the most appropriate and invigorating winter amusement', and required both grace and courage.[6] As in previous articles, she noted the beneficial and restorative qualities of physical activity. Summertime brought instruction in swimming and rowing. Le Garde couched much of her discussion of swimming in safety terms, explaining, 'that a good swimmer is always prepared for many of those contingencies to which even the most cautious are liable'. She counselled maintaining one's 'presence of mind. With that you are mistress of the situation, and, other things not overwhelmingly against you, can reach land again'. As another author commented, 'When fear is eliminated, good swimming invariably is the result'.[7] Le Garde advised women to select carefully where they swam and advised them that the early morning hours of the summer months offered the best time for a swim. She cautioned readers not to sit overlong in the water, as 'the skin will become pale … The lips are shadowed by a shadowy blue line. Numbness and a feeling of weariness result'.[8] Le Garde suggested prudence, not to frighten her readers, but rather to encourage them to enjoy their chosen activity with care.

Other writers also provided instruction in the pages of *Ladies' Home Journal* and the *New York Times*, as well as in other national periodicals. For example, golf offered women a sport they could enjoy throughout their lifetime. Comparing golf with tennis, John Speed claimed that, 'golf is a suitable game for all men, women, and children who are not actual invalids. Tennis, being both fast and furious, is a game exclusively for young people who are both strong and agile'. He continued: 'To be able to walk and to have free use of the arms is all that golf primarily requires'. Although not exactly sophisticated in his advocacy of the game, Speed made an enthusiastic case for women to take their place on the links. 'With golf links in every neighbourhood there is no reason why the middle-aged woman should fasten herself in a rocking chair and consent to be regarded by the youngsters around her as antiquated at forty-five'. Instead, he explained, 'with firm tread, she can, with her golfing club, follow her ball from link to link, renewing her beauty and her youth by exercise in the open air'. He described the set-up of a golf course and the essential goal of the game, to move through the course with fewer strokes than one's opponent.[9] The illustrations that accompanied this article showed how to deal with specific situations on the golf course, such as the obstacle presented by a stone wall, and the proper position for key strokes. Speed's work served to introduce women to the game and to encourage them to step onto the links as participants. He emphasized an active role for women and encouraged them to engage in healthy outdoor physical activity.

While articles such as these provided general information and instruction, experts began to use the pages of periodicals to provide specific instructions in their sports. At the same time, books offering women instruction in specific sports began to appear, reflecting not only the emergence of experts, but also a

demand for such guidance. Several books focused on individual sports, while others offered a more general compendium of knowledge and instruction. J. Parmly Paret, a champion tennis player, wrote numerous volumes about his sport and frequently addressed other sports for women. In 1901, he published *The Woman's Book of Sports*, noting that there were 'few good books of instruction in sports for women, and the need of them is urgent'.[10] Golfer Mabel S. Hoksins pointed to the special suitability of a woman writing about her sport for other women: 'I feel that, as a woman, I understand a woman's needs better than can any man and can, therefore, be of real assistance to the ever growing number of women golfers in this country'. Hoskins placed her work firmly in the context of those women who 'are thinking for themselves, acting for themselves and writing for themselves'.[11]

Frequently the authors of these books and articles had been champions in their sports and used their own experience and success as the basis for providing advice to women. For example, advice about swimming techniques came from Annette Kellerman, a champion swimmer. She noted that 'women are naturally better suited for swimming than men … On account of their small bones and frames, which are more fully padded with buoyant flesh, they do not sink so readily as most men', she explained, 'and so little of their strength needs to be spent on merely keeping up their bodies'.[12] Kellerman suggested that potential swimmers learn particular strokes before even entering the water by balancing themselves on benches and practising arm and leg strokes.

Molla Bjurstedt, a Norwegian tennis player, who burst onto the American scene in 1915 and won multiple championships, entered the authorial ranks with her own volume on tennis. She advocated the steady baseline game, as opposed to the serve-and-volley style: 'Accuracy and speed from the base line make up the game of tennis for women. It is not a spectacular style, but it wins'. She further explained that the best tennis would be played if one trained steadily in the skills of the game, noting that 'correct tennis is inherent in no one — the correct swing and follow through of tennis is every whit as hard to acquire as the correct swing and follow through in golf'.[13] As an eight-time winner of the national championship tournament, she explained to her readers the techniques of basic and advanced strokes, using examples from her own play and that of other leading players to illustrate her points. Each chapter closed with a summary of its main ideas: for example, the list at the end of the chapter on basic groundstrokes advised women to '[c] oördinate the full weight of your body and the power of your arm at the moment of impact of racquet and ball' and '[m]ake your backhand strokes as confidently as your forehand; never avoid the backhand'.[14]

In golf, as in tennis, expertise carried authority, as Frances Griscomb, national champion in 1901, posed for a series of photographs that appeared in the *Ladies' Home Journal*. In each photograph, Griscomb showed the proper stance or movement for several strokes, and captions offered advice about technique. For the stance for the drive, she advised, 'The essential for a good stance is to be comfortable and stand firmly on both feet, placing the ball seven inches to the left of an imaginary line drawn at a right angle to the line of flight of the ball, and midway between the feet'.[15] The photographs, each framed by a drawing of Scottish thistle in homage to the game's roots, froze the action so that readers could clearly see the technique described by the golf champion.

Basketball, another sport for women that developed and blossomed in the 1890s, afforded them an additional opportunity to develop skills and self-assurance. James Naismith had created the game of basketball at the Springfield, Massachusetts YMCA in 1891 to provide a winter substitute for outdoor play. The game spread quickly to schools and colleges, as well as YMCAs and settlement houses. Women began to play basketball almost immediately; among the first colleges to adopt the game were Mount Holyoke and Smith, both located near Springfield. As women's colleges became hotbeds for the new game, team members gave up candy and desserts, practised frequently, went to bed early and took cold baths each morning. They earned the ecstatic envy of their classmates, whom they represented in the inter-class contests that marked early college competitions.[16] Fanny Garrison, granddaughter of famed abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison, played basketball at Smith College as a member of the class of 1901. She wrote to her family: 'We are now in training. I shall have to confess to find getting to bed by half-past nine rather hard. And, of course, now that sweet things are to be avoided, I have had innumerable chances to enjoy them'.[17]

According to Senda Berenson, the director of the gymnasium and physical culture at Smith, the appeal of basketball stemmed from an 'enthusiasm for games, this natural outlet of the play instinct created a need for a game that should require team work, organization, scientific development — in short, should be a game for women such as football is for men. And out of a clear sky came basket ball'.[18] A significant part of the sport's attraction stemmed from team play and the tactical intrigue of the game. Berenson, however, worried that the rough, physical style of play initially associated with basketball would prove problematic for female players. Consequently, she modified the

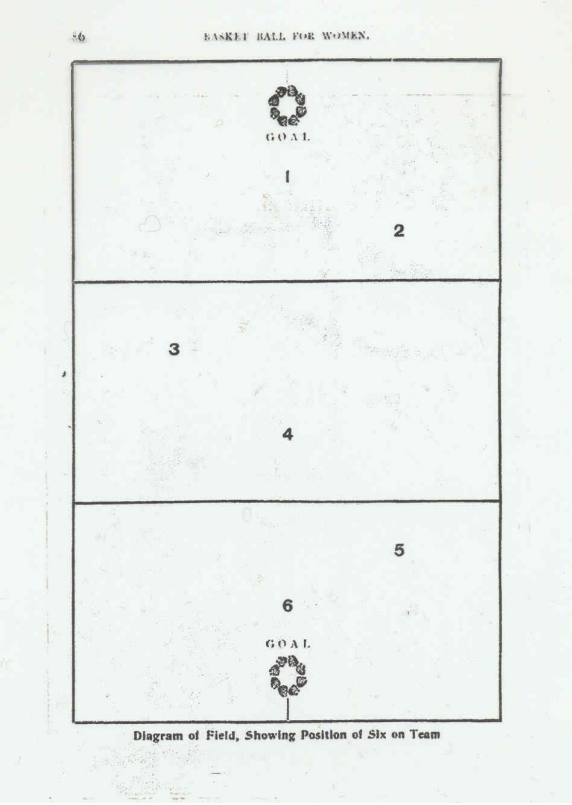
YMCA rules and created zones of play from which players could not stray. Berenson's modifications became the basis of a distinct set of rules for women's play agreed upon at a conference held at Springfield College in 1899 and subsequently published by the Spalding Company.[19] The development of these new rules and their publication established Berenson as a leading authority of the game.

Diagrams of the basketball court and photographs of teams, both posed and in action, accompanied the guides to basketball edited by Berenson. A series of diagrams showed how players should be deployed among the divisions on the court for teams of from five to ten players. Several photographs showed players engaged in fouls and froze the action of the game, so that potential players and instructors could see how the game should be properly played.[20] These illustrations helped to clarify the printed rules, as they provided a clear representation of the skills involved in the game.

In her introduction to the rules, Berenson explained why particular rules had been established. She claimed that running up and down the gymnasium floor, unchecked by division lines, placed to great a strain on the heart: 'The lines prevent the players from running all over the gymnasium, thus doing away with unnecessary running, and also giving the heart moments of rest'. Yet she wrote, ' the lines do not keep the players almost stationary, as some believe. A player has the right to run anywhere she may please in her own third of the gymnasium'. Berenson also argued that the roughness intrinsic to the game required making some modifications in the original YMCA rules to prevent 'snatching or batting the ball from another person's hand'.[21] The rules indicated thirteen fouls. These included kicking or striking the ball; bouncing the ball more than three times, or lower than the knee; tackling, holding, or pushing opponents; and guarding over an opponent's person. Six fouls could result in disqualification.[22] The publication of the rules for women's basketball codified the variations in play advocated by Berenson and many of her peers. They provided clear direction for anyone who wished to learn the game. Ironically, these new rules simultaneously limited women's exertion by imposing such strictures as the restraining lines at the same time that they encouraged increased athletic activity.

Another team sport for women received attention just after the turn of the century. In 1901, Constance M. K. Applebee came to the United States from England to teach the game of field hockey to students at several of the women's colleges. Applebee, who became Director of Athletics at Bryn Mawr College and who is still renowned as the founding mother of field hockey in the United States, informed her readers: 'Hockey is a complex and very scientific game, and a complete understanding of the rules and plays can come only after much experience in playing the game oneself and a thorough study of the theory of the game'.[23] She introduced players to the game, and became a tireless ambassador for the sport. She described the various positions and their responsibilities, explaining that the forwards, supported by the halfbacks drove toward the goal, while the fullbacks and goalkeeper anchored the defence.

All this in theory sounds a simple matter, but on the field, with eleven players working in skilful combination against eleven others, many are the checks and counterchecks, the passing and repassing, before the ball can be worked through the enemy's forwards and halves into the circle, and even then, when a quick shot at the goal makes the victory seem almost certain, that indefatigable goalkeeper stops the ball with her foot, and before the forward can rush up for a second hit out of the circle it spins, perhaps to be returned by a watchful half, but just as likely to be captured and borne triumphantly down the field by the opposing forwards. In fact, the great charm of hockey lies



This diagram shows the division of the basketball court into three zones, and how players would be assigned to a particular section.

(Abbott, Senda Berenson, (ed.) *Basket Ball for Women*, New York, American Sports Publishing Co., 1903)

in the endless variety and never ending amount there is to learn about it.[24]

Each position required particular skills, which players should strive to develop. For example, the wings 'must be masters of the art of dribbling, strong and accurate in their passes … Halfbacks must be sound of wind and limb, for, what with attack and defense, they are hard worked from beginning to end'.[25] Applebee emphasized the need for teamwork, noting that 'the eleven must work as one man, each on the alert to do her own work to the full, and equally clever to see when her neighbor's chance is better than hers'. Moreover, players should learn and respect the rules of the game, which would result in 'a scientific game in which skill meets skill in open, courteous play'. Applebee argued that, from playing hockey, participants would acquire 'vigor, mental alertness, pluck, and unselfishness, those determining factors in a happy successful life'.[26] By studying the science of field hockey and playing the game, women would learn skills and strategies that would benefit them not only on the playing field but would also extend to the conduct of their lives.

Whether they took the form of rulebooks, magazine or newspaper articles, or instruction manuals, publications that detailed the techniques of particular sports would have proved immensely useful to a woman who participated in athletic activities at the turn of the century. They informed her about how to play various games and often suggested strategies that would bring success. Moreover, they emphasized the importance of consistent practice, which would lead to the development and refinement of the skills that marked the new athletic woman. Instruction manuals, periodical articles and rulebooks helped the new athletic woman to establish a new model of more physically active womanhood. They enabled her to know how to participate in athletic activity by providing descriptions of the necessary skills and proper attire for such undertakings. As women became more and more familiar with sports through these vehicles of popular culture, they became increasingly able to take steps toward a healthy active life.

Participation in athletic activities and the skills acquired through such pursuits allowed women to take advantage of any opportunity they chose to pursue. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the health and physical and mental well-being attained through athletic activity became an important plank in the construction of ideals for women. Athletic activity resulted in good health, which became part of the ideal for women. As opportunities for women grew, the good health that would result from athletic activity would enable women to take advantage of them.

Endnotes

1 Annie R. Ramsey, 'Hints on Mountain Climbing', *Ladies' Home Journal* (hereafter *LHJ*) (Aug. 1891), 2.
2 *Ibid.*
3 Ellen Le Garde, 'Out-Door Sports for Girls', *LHJ* (June 1890), 3. See Helen Damon-Moore, *Magazines for the Millions: Gender and Commerce in the Ladies' Home Journal and the Saturday Evening Post, 1880–1910* (Albany, 1994), for a discussion of the importance of the *Ladies' Home Journal* in American popular culture of this period.
4 *Ibid*.
5 *Ibid*.
6 Ellen Le Garde, 'Skating for Girls', *LHJ* (Jan. 1891), 4.
7 'Women in the Water: They Love to Flounder But Few Have Become Good Swimmers', *New York Times* (7 July 1895), 21.
8 Ellen Le Garde, 'Swimming for Girls', *LHJ* (Aug. 1891), 4.
9 John Gilmer Speed, 'The Game of Golf for Women', *LHJ* (June 1894), 9. In 1891, the *New York Times* informed its readers about the new game beginning to spread through the country: 'The links are prepared by placing in the ground from 200 to 400 yards apart a number of tin basins called goals'. See 'Golf is Growing in Favor', *New York Times* (4 Oct. 1891), 20. See also Albion, 'Golf for Women, *Outing* (Dec. 1890), 229–31; Mary C. Crawford, 'Winter Sports for Women', *Sandow's Magazine* (Jan. 1903), 46–8.
10 J. Parmly Paret, *The Woman's Book of Sports: A Practical Guide to Physical Development and Outdoor Recreation* (New York, 1901), 2.
11 A Woman Golfer [Mabel S. Hoskins], *Golf for Women* (New York, 1916), x–xi.
12 Annette Kellerman, 'The Girl Who Wants to Swim', *LHJ* (July 1915), 10. Other advice about swimming came from Edwyn Sandys in 'Swimming', in Lucille Eaton Hill (ed.) *Athletics and Out-Door Sports for Women*, (New York, 1903), 91–108; Paret, *Woman's Book of Outdoor Sports*, 58–75.
13 Molla Bjurstedt and Samuel Crowther, *Tennis for Women* (Garden City, 1916), 6, 25.
14 *Ibid*., 47–8.
15 'How Miss Griscomb Plays Golf', *LHJ* (Apr. 1901), 9; Arthur Pottow, 'Miss Griscomb's Game of Golf', *Harper's Bazaar* (6 Oct. 1900), 1437–41.
16 'Basket Ball at Smith College: Exciting Contest Between the Sophomores and the Freshmen', *New York Times* (23 Mar. 1896), 3; 'Girls Play Basket Ball: How It Looks to One Seeing It for the First Time', *New York Times* (24 May 1896), 27; Alice Katharine Fallows, 'College Girls and Basket-Ball', *Harper's Weekly* (22 Feb. 1902), 234–5; a 'Basket Ball and Its Success: A Game That Has Become Popular in Girls' Colleges — How It Is Played', *New York Times* (12 Nov. 1893), 10.
17 Smith College Archives, Northampton, MA, Class of 1901 Letters: Fanny Garrison to her family, 24 Feb. 1899. After graduating from Smith in 1901, Garrison attended the Boston Normal School of Gymnastics, from which she graduated in 1905. She then taught in the Hygiene and Physical Education department of Wellesley College

until 1944. For her obituary, see 'Fanny Garrison '01', *Smith Alumnae Quarterly*, 64 (Aug. 1975), 79.

18 'Basket Ball for Women', 1st Draft [transcript]: http://clio.fivecolleges.edu/ smith/berenson/bball_women_d1/trans/index.shtml?page=2 (11 Feb. 2000), 2.

19 Senda Berenson (ed.), *Basket Ball for Women* (New York, 1903): http://clio.fivecolleges.edu/smith/berenson/5pubs/bball_ women (11 Feb. 2000). See also Senda Berenson Abbott (ed.), *Spalding's Official Basket Ball Guide for Women* (New York, 1915): http://clio.fivecolleges.edu/smith/berenson/5pubs/spaldings/?page=1 (11 Feb. 2000), 1.

20 See Berenson, *Basket Ball for Women*, 2, 86–9, 91–4.

21 Senda Berenson, 'The Significance of Basket Ball for Women', in Berenson (ed.), *Basket Ball for Women*, 41.

22 'Official Rules', *ibid.*, 84–5.

23 Constance M.K. Applebee (ed.), *Spalding's Field Hockey Guide* (New York, 1921), 5.

24 M.K. Applebee, 'Field Hockey', in Lucille Eaton Hill (ed.), *Athletics and Out-Door Sports for Women* (New York, 1903), 216–17.

25 *Ibid*., 225.

26 *Ibid*., 223, 220, 226. An even more detailed discussion of the skills, strategies and tactics of field hockey appeared in an English publication that may well have been available to American hockey enthusiasts: Edith Thompson, *Hockey as a Game for Women* (London, 1904).

Visit our website to keep up to date with what's going on in the Women's History Network. Full details of Conference 2003, including a list of accepted speakers and a registration form, are available on:

www.womenshistorynetwork.org

REMEMBER, REGISTRATION FORMS FOR CONFERENCE MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE CONFERENCE ADMINISTRATOR BY 22 JUNE 2003.

REGISTRATION REQUESTS RECEIVED AFTER THAT DATE WILL ONLY BE PROCESSED IF ACCOMMODATION IS STILL AVAILABLE

'If girls would take more kindly to domestic work': Norwich, 1900–39

Jenny Zmroczek

University of East Anglia

In 1928 the annual report of the Juvenile Employment Bureau in Norwich stated 'if girls would take more kindly to domestic work there need be practically no unemployment amongst girls in Norwich'.[1] In 1932, when there were '160 girls on the register', only one applied to take part in a government training scheme for domestic servants although it offered free board, lodging and travel and 2s 6d a week pocket money.[2] In fact domestic work had been unpopular among girls brought up in Norwich for some time. There were fewer servants in Norwich than in the rest of the country and advertisements in the local press often asked for strong country girls.[3] At the beginning of World War I it was already feared that unemployed girls might be coerced into taking domestic work against their will,[4] so it is hardly surprising that girls in the 1930s did not want to accept domestic work, however limited their opportunities might be.

In 1900, the labour market in England was strictly segregated by gender, with only a very limited range of jobs open to women. Although some of these restrictions became less onerous with, for instance, more women employed in shops and offices, another type of segregation existed and may have been even harder to overcome. In 1892, Clara Collet suggested that social class determined the type of job a girl could expect to do with 'poor' girls taking up low-grade factory work, sweet-, box-, brush- and cigar-making, or becoming 'less-skilled tailoresses'. Contrary to general understanding today, domestic servants were seldom recruited from among the poorest members of society, as respectability was an important attribute for this type of work. The daughters of well-to-do artisans were able to work as domestic servants, tailoresses, dressmakers, milliners, shop assistants, barmaids, clerks and elementary teachers. Some of these jobs — for instance, that of a shop assistant in a superior establishment — were also suitable for lower-middle-class girls who were prepared to 'accept wages which would not be enough to support them if they had not friends to help'.[5]

The 1902 Education Act was, however, intended to provide a ladder of opportunity for working-class children, and subsequent legislation increased the availability of free or assisted places at secondary schools. The introduction of central and technical schools, the creation of senior departments in elementary schools and the raising of the school-leaving age to fourteen improved standards of education for most children.[6] But while boys were educated to earn their own livings and 'to be useful citizens', girls also had to learn how to be wives and mothers.[7] Although some domestic subjects became compulsory for secondary-school girls, this type of

training was considered most necessary for girls 'of lower social status and lower intellectual ability'.[8] But the 'divided aims' of girls' education had to be considered by every type of school in order to promote social skills and attitudes which would appeal to parents. As Felicity Hunt has shown, secondary schools strove to show that a liberal education which prepared boys for the professions could also help girls to be 'cultured and sensible wives and mothers', and enhance the employment prospects of girls who did not marry.[9] Considerations of both class and gender therefore influenced not only the education given to girls but also the messages they might receive about the place of women in the home and in the labour market.

This article will examine the jobs available for women and girls and the education provided by schools in Norwich between 1900 and 1939. It draws upon a range of sources, including school records and magazines, memoirs, a published oral history project and some initial interviews carried out as part of an larger oral history project on this subject. It will consider the messages about femininity, domesticity and employment which were passed on to pupils, how practical the education given was in terms of the local job market and to what extent attendance at a particular school was likely to affect a girl's future career. The records of girls at different types of school will be compared to assess the choices which girls may have perceived as available to them in view of their education, class, gender and financial situation. A detailed case study of Norwich, an isolated city where many women worked but where there was no dominant industry until the 1930s, does not provide a typical example of education and employment in England, however, it does, through the variety of work undertaken by women, enable a close examination of the extent to which education could affect the range of opportunities available, operating with or against other aspects of a girl's background. The article will argue that, while attending a school with a good reputation might enhance career prospects, social class and useful business contacts were equally influential in Norwich where job prospects were limited and where there was a tendency for girls to be prepared for a domestic future rather than a career.

Women's work in Norwich, 1900–39

Norwich was described in 1910 as having 'exceptional opportunities for the employment of women'.[10] The exceptional nature of these opportunities lay, however, in their quantity rather than in their quality. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Norwich had a legacy of poverty, surplus labour and low rates of pay. During the nineteenth century, agricultural depression had encouraged migration into the city where the traditional textile industries were in decline. Labour was cheap, as rates of pay in the surrounding countryside were notoriously low.[11] The jobs available for girls and women were predominantly unskilled and poorly paid, fitting well with general assumptions about the type of work 'suitable' for women.[12]

Although domestic service was the largest single employer of girls and women in Norwich before World War I, the combined trades of tailoring, dressmaking, corsetry and millinery employed almost the same number. Female employment was also high in the boot and shoe industry, in paper and printing, and in textiles and laundry work. Another important area of employment was packing for the chemical and food industries: Colman's mustard and starch works, Caley's chocolate factory and the Wincarnis tonic wine factory were among the major businesses in the city. A small but increasing number of girls also worked in shops. Most senior posts were held by men although their position was 'marginalised and diminished' by the encroachment of female staff.[13] The number of women in clerical jobs was very small although some firms were able to see the advantages of employing female staff. When the visiting committee of the National Telephone Company came to Norwich in 1909, for instance, its members noticed that all the clerical staff were male and recommended that at least eleven jobs 'could be performed quite adequately by females at a reduced salary'.[14] Nonetheless, the shortage of female servants was already a subject for discussion in 1901, when a visitor to Colman's Carrow Works commented: 'No wonder that the domestic servant difficulty becomes more and more acute when the would-be mistresses have to face the competition of such attractive conditions of work as surround the female factory worker'.[15]

During World War I women's involvement in all local industries increased, often to the surprise of their male colleagues, for whom female workers were 'objects of curiosity and witticism'.[16] One office worker commented that he would 'almost as soon have thought of seeing a ponderous elephant poised on an office stool' as the women who had joined his department.[17] These attitudes contributed to the widespread post-war 'gender backlash' which attempted to send women back into the home as non-working wives or as domestic servants.[18] Nonetheless, the war brought changes in industry in Norwich which altered the job structure for women. The boot and shoe industry became increasingly important in the city and, by 1931, more women worked in this industry alone than in any other. Women from the declining sewing trades were absorbed into the shoe factories. In 1932, when Caley's chocolate factory was bought by Mackintosh, the company did not move its entire operation to Norwich, partly because there were simply not enough women seeking work to provide the operative staff.[19]

The most obvious and lasting change was the increasing role of women in retail and office work. Although some employers, such as Norwich Union Life Office, continued to employ only male clerical staff until the late 1930s, many Norwich companies were happy to use female staff, who could be paid at a lower rate and might be expected to leave on marriage and therefore not expect promotion.[20] While only 11.16 per cent of clerical workers in Norwich were female in 1901, by 1931 the proportion had risen to 43.67 per cent.[21]

Education in Norwich

At the end of the nineteenth century the education system was class-based, with working-class children attending elementary

schools from which they could progress only to the Higher Grade Schools which had been established in Norwich in 1889. Scholarships which reduced fees to a penny a week were available for 10 per cent of entrants. After the 1902 Education Act these schools became Municipal Secondary Schools and in 1907 the proportion of scholarships was increased to 25 per cent of each year's intake. For many children, however, there was no possibility of progressing beyond an elementary education.

Until 1929 there were many more places for boys than girls in Norwich's secondary schools. Then the Municipal Secondary School for Girls moved to larger premises and places also became available at Notre Dame. There were also many more exhibitions and scholarships for boys because of the way that charitable funds were allocated. Thomas Anguish's Charity, for instance, used its funds to provide scholarships and maintenance grants for boys, but ran a Hospital for girls which trained small numbers of domestic servants. Other charities which had been intended to help with the education of poor children were diverted to provide scholarships which benefited only boys. These differences were 'ironed out' to some degree by the change to 'special places' in 1934. In Norwich all children who passed the scholarship examinations were awarded 'special places' and were, therefore, assessed to see if they were eligible for help with fees and maintenance. Nonetheless, maintenance grants were often very small and were considered to be insufficient to provide a child with the full uniform.[22] For children over school-leaving age, the question of loss of earnings also had to be considered.

For these reasons as well as poverty, lack of parental interest or the attitude of their teachers, many children did not take the exam or failed to take up the places offered. Michael Sanderson has suggested that 'allocation to secondary schools was still strongly influenced by social class' and estimates that only 26.8 per cent of 'highly intelligent children' found their way into secondary schools in 1935.[23] More girls than boys failed to take up scholarships.[24] Parents were likely to consider education more important for a boy than for a girl, as girls were expected to marry within a few years of leaving school so their education might be 'wasted'.[25] Janet Hitchman recalled that she was not allowed to take the exam as she was an orphan and her headmaster did not think the 'over-taxed ratepayer' should have to pay for her to stay at school until she was sixteen, a requirement for children accepting scholarships.[26] Elsie G's mother turned down her place, saying, 'well, if Elsie goes to that school then the others will have to go too and how are we going to afford that?'[27]

Elementary Schools

The majority of girls in Norwich received all their education in Public Elementary Schools, although by the end of the period they were likely to spend the last few years in a senior department. According to the New Code of 1904, elementary education was intended to 'form and strengthen the character' and to 'assist both boys and girls, according to their different needs, to fit themselves practically as well as intellectually for the work of life'.[28] To this end the curriculum at the public elementary schools was intended to provide a basic education with the addition of some handicraft skills for boys and domestic training for girls. School log-books show that teachers had to cope with children of widely differing abilities, as girls for whom scholarships had been rejected had to be taught alongside a large proportion of pupils described as 'backward'. St Augustine's Girls' School overcame this problem by operating the Dalton Plan, which allowed pupils to work on projects at their own speed, thus maintaining the interest and enthusiasm of pupils at all levels.[29]

Girls at the elementary schools were required to take a housewifery course in their last year, the purpose of which was 'to fit the girls to conduct a home'.[30] Girls who had not achieved the academic standard appropriate for the top class were sometimes promoted specifically to enable them to take the domestic course.[31] School-leavers gave up some academic subjects in order to concentrate on cookery and mothercraft classes.[32]

Careers advice was variable. The Juvenile Employment Bureau, which opened in 1924, had a particular interest in finding work for elementary school pupils. Schools were visited by the members of the Bureau, who discussed career prospects with pupils and, in most cases, their parents. In the last few months of their school life, trips to local factories were arranged and, not surprisingly, the majority of girls in the period for which figures are available accepted factory employment. Between 1929 and 1939 between one-third and one-half of girls leaving elementary schools went into the shoe factories alone. Most of the others worked in factories, in large tailoring workshops or in print works.[33] None of these jobs required long periods of training and, while wages were not good, there was no period of unpaid apprenticeship The

Cooking class at Horn's Lane Elementary School, Norwich, 1908 (Mrs. D. Reeve)

influence of the Bureau seems not have been great. Few of the women interviewed had any recollection of its work and Marie R remembered that she felt unable to take the advice given as her father had already arranged a factory job for her.[34]

Between 1923 and 1936 girls who passed the scholarship examination could choose to attend the Stuart Central School. Central schools were part of the elementary school system but were intended to provide 'a balanced combination of a broad general education and a technical, vocational training'.[35] In some parts of the country they were very successful and in London there were concerns that commercial central schools were so popular that they provided 'serious competition for girls' secondary schools'.[36] The Stuart Central School was, however, always poorly housed, staffed and equipped. It existed for only thirteen years.

The curriculum at the Stuart Central School differed from that of the elementary schools mainly in the addition of French and some commercial or technical subjects. Initially there was 'no special bias' until the fourth year, but gradually 'special groups of subjects' began to be introduced in the third year. No external exams were taken so there were no outside influences on the curriculum.[37] In 1926 a report suggested that, as the majority of the pupils intended to take up clerical appointments, bookkeeping should be taught in the fourth year.[38] This was extended in 1929, but fluctuating numbers of pupils and staff changes hindered the development of a commercial course. It was not until 1934 that four second-hand typewriters were bought for use in the school.[39] In spite of the school's supposed commercial bias, the time for these lessons was created by reducing the number of English and mathematics lessons, in contrast to the boys' central school where extra time was given to these subjects which were considered essential for boys seeking a commercial career.[40] The number of needlework and cookery classes were not reduced. They occupied more time than the commercial subjects and almost as much time as English and maths.

Girls who did not take the commercial course merely took even more domestic science lessons. In spite of the bias towards these subjects it is interesting to note that there were no facilities for them on the school premises. Classes were taken at the Technical Institute, but in rooms used for 'civic purposes' which were consequently often unavailable. Oral history also shows that girls who could not afford to pay for ingredients 'sort of had to make do and you just had to stand and watch'.[41] So the school failed to provide real experience in these subjects for just those girls it was apparently seeking to influence.

When the school opened in 1924, each of the first fifty-six pupils was interviewed to find out 'what she proposes to be when she leaves'. More than half the girls intended to do clerical work and about twelve hoped to be teachers.[42] Although it has been suggested that central schools were intended to provide a similar education to the old Higher Grade Schools,[43] the Stuart Central School does not seem to have provided the education required by a girl intending to teach in the 1920s and there is no indication that any of these girls fulfilled their ambition. In the following year, 'the majority of the girls … expressed the wish to follow commercial careers as clerks, typists etc.', a more realistic aim.[44] A survey of former pupils carried out in 1932 showed that 47 per cent were doing clerical work, 27 per cent were shop assistants and the others were doing a variety of jobs, including factory work, dressmaking and millinery.

Secondary Schools

Most girls who passed the scholarship examinations went to the Municipal Secondary School (MSS), later the Blyth, which took over the staff, pupils and premises of the Higher Grade School in 1904. The school was selective and provided an academic education for girls who came mainly from public elementary schools. Miss Hill, the headmistress of the Higher Grade School stayed at the MSS until 1923. She had only elementary teaching qualifications, a 'minimum' staff and a school which was badly sited, cramped and ill-equipped. Nonetheless, she achieved excellent results.

The curriculum at the MSS was academic and girls were trained for excellence. In 1908 the school occupied the premier place in England in the Senior 1st class honours list. In 1911 two pupils, Sybil Hebgin and Margaret Barber, were the best senior and junior female candidates in the Cambridge Locals having obtained the highest marks in the British Empire. Margaret went on to become the best senior girl in 1913.

Initially, most pupils at the MSS became teachers, with 50 per cent of those joining the school in the first three years following this path. This was partly because there was little alternative work for educated girls in Norwich, where very few women were employed in offices before World War I. Teaching was also the only option for many poor girls wishing to continue their education, as government assistance with fees and expenses was available. Frances Widdowson has shown that many working-class girls did not consider university as an option.[45] The opportunity to go to training college was particularly important for Norwich girls as, at this time, there was no funding to help them to go to university (although there were scholarships for Norwich boys, and for boys and girls living in the county of Norfolk).

After the war, however, the majority of girls leaving the school went into office work: 68 per cent of school-leavers took clerical jobs in 1936 and 1937.[46] Some girls went on to university or training college and there were some pioneers such as Dora Livock who, in 1926, became the sixth woman in the country to qualify as a chartered accountant. Girls were given careers lectures and taken on visits to local companies. In 1933 permission was sought to set up a commercial sixth form which would teach shorthand and typing in the afternoon with French, arithmetic and bookkeeping, English with speech training, geography, PT and divinity lessons in the mornings. The Board thought it was 'the first case of its kind' but agreed to its formation as 'the overwhelming majority of the girls come from very poor homes … and the real alternative is between shorthand and typing or nothing at all'.[47]

Notre Dame High School was staffed mainly by nuns who

were poorly qualified and frequently moved on to other schools run by the order. There was no real sixth form until 1938. It was a private school until 1927 when recognition by the Board of education was sought so that grants could be obtained. The nuns at Notre Dame were less interested in academic excellence than in personal development. While academic success was praiseworthy, their stated aim was to 'build a character full of hope and courage and the spirit of perseverance'. They wanted to develop 'people of worth who can be trusted with responsibility'.[48] Teaching standards were not high and pupils were not very successful in external examinations. There was no careers advice and a former pupil recalls that 'we were asked, almost casually, what we planned to do'.[49] A few girls went on to do teacher training but many took up clerical work or merely stayed at home. Advertisements in the school magazine indicate that some at least of the parents could afford to send their daughters to secretarial or nursery nursing training in London.

Norwich High School for Girls was the third school to be set up by the Girls Public Day School Company (later the Girls' Public Day School Trust —GPDST) in 1875. Although the school claimed to operate without any class or religious distinction, the level of fees meant that no working-class girls became pupils until 1924 when the first scholarships were offered.

Girls from Norwich High School achieved mixed success in public examinations, which is not surprising as the school was not genuinely selective. However, girls at the High School worked in small classes, often received personal attention and, as Stephanie Spencer discovered at another GPDST school, gained 'confidence, wider aspirations and a network of support' although 'academic brilliance was the province of the minority'.[50] Pupils were often successful in obtaining open scholarships to Oxbridge universities and some girls went on to have very illustrious careers. Medicine was a popular choice and girls also went on to teach at public schools and universities, to start their own schools, to broadcast for the BBC, to sit in the House of Commons and to work abroad.

Practicality of education for the local job market

While it had never been the intention that elementary or secondary schools should provide training leading directly to particular types of employment, a child's education was expected to be a preparation for adult life. As Felicity Hunt has shown, although the education received by boys led to careers, girls were expected to become wives and mothers and were trained for this role.[51] Contemporary reports suggest that girls in the 1930s felt their elementary school education was irrelevant because it bore little direct relation to the sort of work the girls were expected to do when they left.[52] However, the time spent on sewing might be seen as useful preparation for tailoring, dressmaking and millinery, which provided many jobs for girls early in the century, and for the boot-and-shoe trade which was a major employer throughout the period. It might also be said to improve manual dexterity which would have been beneficial for girls working in factories. Domestic training could also, of course, have led to domestic service, although this was increasingly seen as a last resort.[53] Between 1929 and 1939, only 222 out of 6,869 (3 per cent) elementary school-leavers for whom occupations were recorded went into service.[54] When asked if she had considered domestic service Marie R, who left school in 1935, said, 'Good gracious, no … by the time I went out to work, people weren't doing that kind of thing … I mean service was a gone thing, or fading out anyway'. She did not recall that anyone from her school had gone into service.[55]

Central schools were intended 'to prepare their students, including girls, for immediate employment', whereas secondary schools provided a purely academic education.[56] Girls receiving commercial training at the Stuart Central School were certainly assisted in their aim of obtaining clerical work, although the limited time spent on English and Mathematics would have been a handicap. Girls on the 'technical' course probably received little training that was beneficial in the market place. A report published in London in 1936 suggested that 'technical bias for girls often resolves itself into the preparation of girls for entry into the needle trades at the age of 16 at a wage appropriate to the age of 14'.[57] Records for girls leaving the school are incomplete, but there is no indication that any went into service.

Girls who attended the MSS early in the century received an education which enabled them to become pupil-teachers or, in some cases, provided them with qualifications entitling them to enter training colleges. Teaching was the best job available to a working-class girl at this time and their education must be seen as entirely relevant, particularly as a large proportion of girls took this route. The qualifications obtained also made it possible for girls to take the Civil Service exams, thus opening up another popular area of employment. Although, as the school grew larger, a smaller proportion of the girls took up academic careers, the school maintained an interest in planning for employment. The commercial sixth form clearly provided training which was directly relevant to the labour market and girls on the course often received offers of employment before the end of the course. The headmistress thought that the course would meet the demand for 'more co-ordination between school and commercial life'.[58] Minutes of a meeting in 1935 record that 'the posts which the girls were obtaining were of a kind suitable for the high standard of general education they had received'.[59] It would seem that this was a genuinely useful course offering career prospects to girls who could not afford to continue in higher education.

Careers were not of major interest at Notre Dame and, indeed, more than 30 per cent of the girls are recorded as taking up 'home duties'.[60] As few of the girls went on to higher education, the training they received at school did not have to be directly relevant to the local job market. More High School girls went on to university or training college, but many others seem to have left the district. A number went to work abroad. There was, therefore, little connection between their education and the needs of the local job market.

Messages about femininity, domesticity and future life

Although needlework had been an important part of the curriculum for girls since 1862 and grants for cookery teaching

had first been awarded in 1878, the emphasis on domestic education increased in the early twentieth century. Writers such as Carol Dyhouse and Anna Davin have shown how this was connected to eugenist concerns about the condition of Boer War recruits and the interest of the National Efficiency Movement. The Physical Deterioration Committee blamed the ignorance of working-class mothers for high infant mortality rates.[61] New regulations in 1905 required secondary schools to extend the teaching of domestic subjects but, in effect, few chose to do so. Although this was frequently commented upon by the Inspectorate, little pressure was brought to bear on the schools in this regard. At Norwich High School, for instance, Inspectors said that 'with the class of girls who attend the school this may safely be left for instruction at home'.[62] Notre Dame allocated a room for domestic science in its new school building in 1926 but failed to equip it until 1932. Inspectors complained that only the lowest stream of girls studied the subject, but did little to enforce change.[63] Similarly, the MSS, which was under Local Education Authority control and had to follow the Board's instructions more closely, only provided a 'full course' in domestic science for the least intelligent girls and never entered pupils for external exams in domestic subjects.[64]

The class bias of domestic subjects is clearly demonstrated by the fact that only elementary schools had appropriate equipment and were able to devote time to domestic subjects. It is hardly surprising that girls throughout the education system received the message that domestic work was not genuinely valued and that, consequently, few girls sought careers in this area of employment. Elementary schools supplemented housecraft lessons with extra training in mothercraft, with the result that factory tours for 'leavers' were interspersed with 'practical lessons on how to bath a baby'.[65] Girls can have been in little doubt about the career path they were expected to take. Moreover, teachers at both elementary and central schools encouraged girls to accept middle-class attitudes. Sarah King suggests that, although it was hoped that teachers would 'have knowledge of the world of employment into which children would enter', most central school teachers were middle class and keen to teach 'good manners, culture and ladylike bearing'.[66] Elementary schools were also praised for providing 'valuable training in an atmosphere of refinement' and 'moral training' which resulted in 'habits of neatness, cleanliness and order'.[67]

Each of the secondary schools in Norwich passed on mixed messages to girls about the relative importance of careers and domesticity. As Stephanie Spencer noted in her study of Sutton High School, some schools gave lip-service to the ideal of marriage and motherhood while providing role models among teachers and past pupils of women who had followed a very different path.[68] All three secondary schools placed great emphasis on 'ladylike' behaviour and good manners, and attempted to segregate pupils from the opposite sex. Penny Summerfield has suggested that these aspects of a girl's education were ways of shaping a girl's femininity and transmitting messages about the behaviour expected of a middle-class woman. While this could be seen as preparation for marriage, she argued that they might also be considered as ways of encouraging girls to continue their education and become 'part of the new female professional class'.[69]

Notre Dame was clear in its desire 'to send out into the world good women who would become good mothers'. Despite its lack of interest in careers, there was some confusion regarding domestic subjects. In 1936 the headmistress suggested that 'housewifery, cookery, arts, craft and needlework found as great a place of honour in the curriculum as Latin, mathematics and science'. However, as I have shown above, only girls in the lowest stream took all of these domestic subjects and it had taken six years for the domestic-science room to be equipped. Presumably it was thought that fee-paying parents, whose daughters might be less academically gifted than scholarship winners, would be happy to think that they were being 'fitted … for service in the home and for the nation'.[70] This was also, of course, in accordance with the current Catholic view of the importance of motherhood as a goal for girls.

A similar attitude seems to have existed at Norwich High School, which was very keen to draw attention to the academic achievements and careers of past pupils, but was also anxious to temper this by mentioning at the same time that 'High School girls make excellent wives and mothers'.[71] The school aimed 'to help girls to become useful women' with much emphasis on voluntary as well as paid work. Attention was drawn to the academic and career successes of past pupils, but a huge interest was also shown in births and marriages, particularly when the new husband had a title or an impressive job. Teachers tended to be well-qualified career women who would have provided useful role models.

This was also the case at the MSS. The aims of the school during Miss Hill's headship seem fairly clear. Articles in the school magazine extolled the benefits of teaching or the Civil Service as careers. The school recommended 'this exam and this profession as an alternative to … teaching'.[72] An 'old girl' wrote that 'it was the very next best profession to teaching for girls. The hours are short … the salary is good and the work useful. What more could you possibly want?'[73] Little was said about being a wife or a mother. A former pupil recalled that 'study and academic achievement were what mattered most'.[74]

The next head, Mrs Whitaker, while continuing to strive for academic success, seems to have been very unsure about what girls should aim for. In 1927 she commented that 'our girls far too often take up office work which offers little interest and has little scope for advancement'. She arranged a series of lectures on careers and started a branch of the National Savings Association so girls could save for training. However, in 1931 she said, 'I often fear that we have gone too far in our demands for careers for our girls and encourage them to forget that the oldest and most honourable career of all is that of wife and mother'.[75] In 1932 she suggested that girls should 'consider the openings available in various kinds of domestic work', an odd suggestion in an academic school, particularly since there seems to have been little shortage of work for girls in Norwich at this time and domestic work was considered to have a very low status.. The following year she expressed concern that girls might be 'displacing male labour' and wondered if this would lead to 'women in later life forced to remain in industry when they would rather be happy wives and mothers'. She

recommended that girls 'turn to the purely feminine occupations connected with domestic science and nursing'. It is not clear whether these were her personal opinions or if these remarks were prompted by criticisms, widespread at the time, that women were taking jobs which should have been available for unemployed men.[76] The segregation of the job market meant that girls could not take industrial work from men and it was only in the areas of shop and office work that there was any competition between the sexes. Girls would not be allowed to remain in these jobs after marriage and, in Norwich, the majority of married women workers were involved in shoe manufacture which was work generally avoided by girls with a secondary education. Nonetheless at the same time Mrs Whitaker asked the Board of Education for permission to set up the Commercial Sixth Form where girls were trained to compete with men for high status clerical work. Domestic studies took a very minor place in the curriculum. When pupils won university scholarships, however, the whole school was given a holiday, clearly signalling, as Summerfield suggests, that the staff and governing body genuinely approved of this type of achievement.[77]

The influence of schools

Attending a particular school might influence a girl's career choice in a number of ways. Not only would pupils have received messages about what was appropriate for their future, but local employers would also have ideas about the type of girl likely to attend a particular school. They would be aware not only of the educational standards of a particular school but also of the class and family income of pupils.

Contemporary studies showed that social networks of family and friends were often very important in securing a job.[78] Oral history interviewees mentioned the influence of neighbours, friends and relations. Elsie G's father, for instance, had 'a friend who had an important job' at a shoe factory and 'he thought it would be very good for me to work there' so 'he spoke to Mr Everard and I got the job'.[79] The prevalence of this type of arrangement made life difficult for the very poor who might not know anybody with influence.[80] Contemporary accounts also suggest a great deal of type-casting, making it difficult to get a better job than one's family or neighbours. Mrs Whitaker, headmistress of MSS, stated that 'it still remains true that the more desirable commercial posts in the city tend to go (regardless of their school record or capacity) to girls who have a certain amount of influence'.[81]

In the nineteenth century, employers did not 'ask whether [prospective employees] could read, write or cipher for the sake alone of these acquirements but simply as means of understanding whether [they] could be regarded as moral, trustworthy and industrious'.[82] By the twentieth century, most school-leavers were literate, but a child's school record could still provide valuable information. Llewelyn Lewis, who made a study of 'the children of the unskilled' in 1924, describes his subjects as 'profoundly' indifferent 'to changing their mode of living', with a disregard for education, apathy towards progress and hostility to the 'rich and employing class'.[83] Many employers would have sought assurance that prospective employees did not fall into this category. Regular attendance at school might demonstrate that a working-class child had absorbed the correct attitudes as well as receiving an education.

Progress beyond a basic elementary education was evidence of more than intellectual ability. Parents who could afford to commit themselves to keeping children at school until they were sixteen and who could manage the expense of a secondary education, even with a maintenance grant, were unlikely to be among the poorest members of the community. Attendance at a secondary school, and to a lesser extent at the Central School, therefore, demonstrated some degree of academic ability, a respectable family background and suggested that a child had received a good education. An elementary school education raised questions about all these characteristics as it was not clear whether a girl had failed to obtain a better education through lack of intelligence, poverty or want of interest in education on the part of the child or her parents. There was an added cachet for girls who attended Notre Dame and, more particularly Norwich High School, since these schools charged higher fees and received few pupils from elementary schools. The majority of pupils at Norwich High School came from the upper middle classes and the headmistress had the final choice of pupils seeking free places. Girls at Notre Dame were 'rather noticeably well mannered' and 'care [was] taken … to secure distinctness of pronunciation',[84] attributes which would have impressed employers.

It is clear that the choice of jobs was limited by preconceptions about the suitability of certain types of girl for particular jobs. However, the suitability of particular jobs for certain types of girls was also a limiting factor, particularly since a girl did not necessarily choose a job for herself. Girls leaving school at fourteen or sixteen were often considered to be children and their parents were very likely to have some input in the choice of employment or to make the decision for them. Beryl K, who

Women and girls working in a Norwich shoe factory in the 1920s (Mrs. D. Reeve)

left Notre Dame at sixteen, felt the latter was the norm: 'In those days you didn't have choices, you had things chosen for you'.[85] Elsie G's father found her job which was 'alright. I didn't mind it but it really wasn't what I thought I would like for my future'.[86] As Frances Widdowson has shown, even the decision to become a teacher might be made by a girl's mother and headmistress.[87]

The relative respectability of particular jobs was also an important factor. Sidney Webb commented in 1910 that 'the 'gentility' of an occupation' was 'still accepted as part payment'.[88] Carl Chinn has suggested that 'an arduous task necessitated a masculine strength in women and this resulted in the relegation in importance of a woman's femininity'. Clean, light work, on the other hand, was seen as more respectable and wages for this type of job therefore became depressed as it would be the choice of girls who could afford to work for pocket money.[89] Better-off parents were prepared to subsidize their daughters in order to maintain respectability.[90] Ivy H remembers that, when she left school at fourteen in 1926, she found a job for herself working for a milliner; however, her mother thought this was not suitable and found her another job with a tailor.[91] In 1935 the Education Committee refused to allow Kathleen Gilbert to leave the Stuart Central School to work in a hairdresser's shop, but said that they 'might consider an application for withdrawal if a more suitable occupation was found for the girl'.[92] Olive M, who was born in 1910, recalled that a family friend who worked in an office, 'was much respected … people would say she went to business not to work'.[93] This image persisted. In 1929 the Juvenile Employment Bureau commented that girls in Norwich were particularly keen to secure office work, although rates of pay for factory work were higher.[94]

For some parents, wage-earning capacity was the deciding factor. It was usual in working-class families for young people to hand their wage packets to their mothers and to receive pocket money, board and lodging, and sometimes clothing in return.[95] Parents often felt that there was no point in girls continuing with training as they were destined to marry and would not be at work for long.[96] This attitude might prevent a girl from taking up an apprenticeship. Joyce A, for instance, 'passed the apprenticeship exams so I could have been apprenticed to anything in Norwich for free with all my expenses paid but my father got me a job at the Co-op so I had to go to the Co-op'.[97] However, it was not only parents who took a casual attitude to careers for girls. Oral history and contemporary surveys, like those of Pearl Jephcott, indicate that many girls saw their working lives as a temporary interlude before marriage. They accepted jobs casually, without knowing much about them, and frequently moved on to different types of work.[98] Many interviewees changed jobs frequently with little thought: 'You just went and looked for another job and you just took what came along.'[99]

Schools could raise girls' aspirations by widening their horizons and providing role models among teachers and past pupils. Olive M, for instance, had never heard of a degree before she saw MSS teachers in gowns.[100] On the other hand, the overt message given by every girls' school was that to be a good wife and mother was the 'normal' ambition of pupils. Magazines, which acted 'as agents of socialisation', encouraged girls to see marriage as the most appropriate goal.[101] Even the brightest girls sometimes considered their future husband's career to be more important than their own. Olive M, for instance, won a scholarship to the MSS in Norwich in 1921. After taking her Higher School Certificate she turned down a place at training college to become a civil servant, as her future husband was studying at Cambridge and she felt 'it was important that one of us should start earning'.[102] This was probably a realistic assessment, for the average wage for women was little more than half what a man could earn although women teachers, who were paid 75–80 per cent of the salary paid to men, were comparatively well off.[103] Marriage bars and public attitudes meant that most girls expected to give up their usual work on marriage, even if they had to find other ways of helping to support the family later. Careers for women were often seen as an alternative to marriage.[104]

Even when girls wished to choose a career, they were often limited by their financial situations. Jobs which required periods of unpaid, or badly paid, training could only be taken by girls with families able to support them. Apprentices in shops, dressmaking and millinery received little or no pay when starting their training; this was also the case for nurses, who were, in addition, expected to provide their own uniforms.[105] Changes in the arrangements for teacher-training reduced the number of working-class girls who were able to pursue this career. There had been little sacrifice involved for parents when girls could become pupil-teachers as soon as they left elementary school and did not need to go to college unless they wished, or could afford to, since they could obtain lesser qualifications through part-time study. After 1905, however, all pupil-teachers had to be at least sixteen years old and had to have spent the preceding four years in a secondary school. In 1907 the regulations were changed again, with the introduction of bursaries to enable girls intending to be teachers to remain at school for a further one or two years, at the end of which they could go to college. In Norwich, bursars were required to spend a year as student teachers first.[106] This meant that there was a considerable delay before teachers could become self-supporting, which prevented poorer girls from taking this option. Widdowson suggests that families whose income was less than that of a skilled tradesman would not be able to afford to send their daughters to training college.[107]

Conclusion

The labour market for women and girls in Norwich changed between 1900 and 1939 with a large increase in shop and office work, a move from sewing trades to boot and shoe manufacture and a reduction in domestic service. There were also changes in the education system, with many more secondary places available for girls. After the introduction of 'special places' in 1934, every girl who passed the scholarship examination was assessed to judge the need for financial assistance. Nonetheless, poverty prevented many girls from obtaining a secondary education and even those who accepted places were frequently forced to leave before completing the course. Academic excellence was not, in itself, the passport to career success, as funding for higher education was insufficient to make it possible for the majority of girls. In the early 1930s, in

spite of the high level of academic achievement at MSS, only 8 per cent of pupils went on to university or training college, as compared with 10 per cent of High School pupils. A full 8 per cent of girls leaving Notre Dame were able to go to training college, in spite of their much poorer academic record.

While girls were increasingly unlikely to become domestic servants, the emphasis on the teaching of domestic subjects remained. Although every girl was supposed to receive domestic training, the attitude of the Inspectorate made it clear that working-class girls were the real target. As it was usual to conflate ideas of lower class with those of lower ability,[108] it was possible to concentrate on providing a thorough domestic training for girls at elementary and central schools. As this was seen to be the most important part of their education, the resulting reduction in time spent on academic subjects was not perceived as detrimental to educational standards.[109]

Both schools and the labour market were segregated by class and gender. The expansion of shop and office work for women meant that jobs of widely differing status were available. 'Bazaar' assistants were, for instance, inferior to shop assistants who might be apprenticed or have to undergo a long period of training. The first female office employees were well-connected, educated women, who were kept apart from male workers, but girls were increasingly employed in menial clerical work. Elsie G, for instance, worked in a shoe factory collecting and counting 'coupons' relating to piece work which she found 'very boring'.[110] But shop and office work were still perceived to have a higher status than factory employment and were, consequently, the goal of many school-leavers.

It would seem, therefore, that Collet's categorisation of work available for girls of different classes in 1892 was still appropriate in 1939. Although there were ostensibly more opportunities for girls to improve their status by acquiring a secondary education, in reality the poorest girls were unable to do so, regardless of academic ability. Financial restrictions also prevented many girls from going on to higher education or training. While education provided a narrow ladder which allowed a few working-class children to climb up to university, it had not developed into J. A. Hobson's 'broad, easy stair', which would 'entice everybody to rise', and still less into the sieve which Sir Martin Conway hoped would 'sift the millions of children born in this country to discover, to isolate, to bring out, to help in every way, all the finest ability in the country'.[111] The situation was more difficult for girls than for boys as their education was restricted by the time spent on domestic subjects and they were less likely to be allowed to accept scholarships or apprenticeships. While boys could obtain training for work at the Junior Technical School and, once they had left school, at the Technical College, education and instruction for girls continued to concentrate mainly on domestic subjects. Instead of preparing girls for the jobs available in Norwich, schools generally provided a class-based education which was inappropriate for girls who had to earn their own living. Poorer girls, who were the most likely to need to work throughout their lives, concentrated on domestic subjects. The education of secondary school girls became more useful as the School Certificate came to be seen as a 'passport to clerical jobs', rather than merely as a prerequisite for further academic training,[112] and the commercial sixth form at the MSS was truly vocational. Nonetheless all the secondary schools in the city continued to convey confusing mixed messages regarding the goals girls should aim for, perhaps because, as Penny Summerfield has suggested, the 'ambiguity was not resolved within the minds of those running' the schools.[113]

Endnotes

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Learning Domesticity in Late Victorian England

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During the nineteenth century there was a marked increase in literacy among the working classes, and as a result for the first time, we find written primary source material from this section of society. Most notably there are over a hundred known autobiographies from working-class women born in England between 1800 and 1900. Initial analysis of these autobiographies reveals a change over time, from mostly spiritual testimonies at the start of the century through a predominance of more secular recollections of place or events as the century progressed. Emerging from the autobiographies of working-class women born in the last thirty years of the nineteenth century, however, a significant number of texts showed further changes in tone and content. These latter texts include thoughts and feelings, as well as events of personal life, set against a background of contemporary history. Twenty-six of these autobiographies written by women born into the working-class in England between 1870 and 1900 have been published.[1] Their publication not only gives wider access to the writers, but also says something about the interest inherent in the texts. Nevertheless, they have hitherto been largely neglected.

The Autobiographies

These autobiographies are important documents for the study of working-class women's lives, as during these years there were various political and social changes which affected them.[2] In particular, the Education Act of 1870 for the first time legislated for public funding of compulsory elementary schooling, from which most, although not all, of the autobiographers benefited. The autobiographies in question are a disparate group of texts, written by women from various occupations, from different strata of working-class society and from diverse parts of England, both rural and urban. Their commonality is that they all presented themselves as coming from working-class families, that is, their parents were all working-class and they shared a culture of working-class ideology and experience.[3]

These diversities and similarities are an argument for their texts representing the kinds of experiences shared by less articulate, unpublished women born into the working-class and growing up during the late Victorian and early Edwardian period. It is the uniformity of their experiences and the themes which emerge from them which are most useful in providing us with vital points of access to their lives and those of others like them. Of particular interest to this article, the women describe their experiences of learning domestic skills, both informally at home and formally in school. It is an historical commonplace that domesticity has been portrayed as a narrow and confining ideology of gendered and classed social control.[4] These autobiographies suggest, however, that the formal and informal acquisition of domestic skills was rather a welcome and accepted part of many women's lives and was largely seen as a positive goal by these women. The good management of the home and family, and the achievement of domestic harmony, could be aspirational, as could the attainment of 'good' position in domestic service.

Learning Domesticity

The autobiographers describe a variety of early training in domesticity: informally at home and formally in school. They all began to learn domestic skills as children, within the home, where they were expected to help with chores and in some cases the care of younger children. The idea of domesticity therefore became an integral and accepted part of their girlhood, and most of the cohort gave great prominence to domestic details and the acquisition of domestic skills as part of their descriptions of family life.

Inside the family, relationships between parents and the organization of domestic life constituted the first lessons in the sexual division of labour. Reflecting their acceptance of the feminine domestic role, their recollections of play portray the gendered nature of domestic behaviour. Mildred Edwards born in Carlisle in 1889, played with groups of children, but recalled that games played by boys and girls were very different. Girls' games were more sociable, and less aggressively competitive: 'we had our dolls. I loved mine and kept them until I was quite a big girl, and very reluctantly gave them away. The lads had their games too, marbles, whip and top, peggy, football, cricket, also rugby, but Mothers thought it all a bit too rough, as there were many black eyes and bloody noses'.[5] Alice Foley, who grew up in industrial Bolton in the 1890s, also recognized that boys and girls played in a different way. She described how she and her friends imitated the sorts of occupations followed by their parents:

> Our childhood playgrounds were the streets, and for a short time, the ruins of near-by Chamber Hall … before the site was re-occupied we neighbouring kids spent gleeful hours among the ruins and rubble. Whilst the boys built castles and viaducts out of larger boulders, we smaller girls played in the sand-pits. With a good "knocker" we powdered stones into imaginary pepper, sugar, salt and snuff; buttons were used for money and with the aid of a pair of toy scales we became a group of busy little housewives, buying and selling groceries to our mutual satisfaction.[6]

Almost all of the women recalled helping in the home with domestic chores when they were girls. The prominence they gave to domestic details and the acquisition of domestic skills is indicative of their importance in the women's lives. Girls were expected to help with younger siblings and were kept away from school when required to help their mothers. In some cases they were also taught to help with paid work performed at home. Winifred Griffiths, born in 1895, was the second of four children of a Hampshire paper-mill worker and his wife, who had been a seamstress until her marriage. Winifred was taught to help her three aunts, who were sewing outworkers, well before she reached school age: 'I learned to help my aunts by carefully cutting the cottons between long rows of collars or sleeves or pockets which had gone through the machines'.[7] Winifred also recalled looking after her baby brother, again when she was too young for school, while her mother was busy with washday chores. When she was six, a second baby brother was born:

> I now had to help mother with her work. Dusting was an easy job, but I also had to learn to clean the baby's pram, to clean steel knives on a board, and to polish forks and spoons. We kept chickens in a house and run which my father had built at the bottom of the garden and I was required to sweep up grit from the gutters outside on the road and bring it in a bucket to be given to the hens to harden the eggshells. Again when horses obligingly left manure on the road I must shovel it up for the garden. Another job was to break up small brushwood for starting the fire. This wood came in small bundles called "faggots", four or five feet in length. The thicker sticks in the middle had to be left for my

father to chop.[8]

Winifred was happy to accept her domestic role in the family. Others went further and expressed a longing to be part of such a family. Emma Smith, who had been born illegitimate in Redruth, Cornwall, in 1894 had been taken in by her grandparents, but then sold by her mother to an itinerant organ grinder when she was five. She travelled round the fairgrounds of Devon and Cornwall. This unhappy situation may have triggered her strong desire for a home life. Her feelings were crystallized one cold winter's night when she was begging by singing from door to door at Sennen Cove in Cornwall. She recalled: 'The lamplit cottages looked Homely and inviting. I imagined families gathered around firesides, laughing, chattering, and a longing would sweep over me to be one of a real family, happy and carefree, decently clothed and clean'.[9] Perhaps this glimpse of what life could be like in a domestic setting made Emma more amenable to the homely chores she was expected to perform later when, after a harrowing few years with the travelling hurdy -gurdy man, she was taken in to a Salvation Army Home. She recalled that she undertook the learning of domestic skills chores with a degree of enjoyment:

> Saturday evening was mending time. I was taught to darn my stockings; at least an attempt was made to teach me. Everyone was given mending to do. Then clean linen would be given round for the following day.
>
> The Home had a steam laundry, and we children on Saturdays or in holidays usually went over for an hour or two just to rub collars or some such light duty. I don't think it did us any harm.
>
> We had certain duties to fulfil on Saturday morning, such as rubbing up the wooden handled forks, and wasn't the officer in charge of these things particular! Woe betide you if a bit of brickdust was left between the prongs! Another child would be given a tin of paste to clean the lavatory and bathroom taps. With what pride we made them shine![10]

Alice Foley also expressed her pride in undertaking duties in the home when she was young. In great detail she remembered the 'deep pleasure' it gave her to be allocated one particular domestic chore, the care of the family's aspidistra:

> Each Friday morning the ritual was observed, first to place the giant plant-pot overhead in water in the kitchen sink. Even today I can hear the eager bubbling and gurgling of those thirsty roots sucking in the refreshing draught. Then the single leaves were carefully sponged with a wash-leather, cracked portions and faded tips nipped off to make room for younger shoots, and all finally polished with a spot off milk. Under these ministrations our aspidistra flourished prodigiously, … for me, in those formative decades, it was a much-loved oasis in a flower-less home.[11]

However, there were those who were not so content to learn domestic chores. Hannah Mitchell, born in 1871 into a poor farming family in the remote Derbyshire Peak District, recalled how hard the work was, especially for the girls: 'my mother was a harder taskmaster than my father. She never seemed to realize how small and weak we were. She made us sweep and scrub, turn the heavy mangle on washing days and the still heavier churn on butter-making days. Stone floors had to be whitened, brasses and steel fire-irons polished every week'.[12] Hannah received only two weeks of formal schooling. She resented having to work so hard and noted the preferential treatment given to her brothers, who had been allowed the two years of schooling denied to her:

> At eight years old my weekly task was to darn all the stockings for the household, and I think my first reaction to feminism began at this time when I was forced to darn my brothers' stockings while they read or played cards or dominoes.
>
> Sometimes the boys helped with rugmaking, or in cutting up wool or picking feathers for beds and pillows, but for them it was voluntary work; for the girls it was compulsory, and the fact that the boys could read if they wished filled my cup of bitterness to the brim.[13]

Hannah complained to her mother about this preferential treatment: 'when I boldly demanded the same, she said it was different for boys; girls must keep their place'.[14] She was determined to overcome her lack of schooling: an uncle taught her to read and she did extra chores for her brothers in exchange for their bringing school-books home for her to study.[15]

Hannah was not the only woman in the cohort to recall being helped by family members. In this informal way the women acquired not only domestic skills, but also more academic forms of knowledge. Often a parent or someone within the family, such as an older sister or brother, or an aunt or uncle, would have some degree of literacy. Having someone close involved in or at least encouraging educational self-

improvement was obviously important for many of the women. Nellie Scott, a factory worker in Stockport in the 1900s, identified this informal method of learning and listed some of the books she had been familiar with as a child: *The Wide, Wide World*; *Queechy*; *The Lamplighter*; *The Door Without a Knocker*; *Chambers' Miscellany*; and *Chambers Journals*. She had been able to use the library attached to the Sunday School and she also described the encouragement she and her sister had from her family, especially from an uncle who 'lived just across the road'. He was a great reader, who 'used to read aloud so that we knew and loved the characters in Dickens' works'.[16]

For the majority of girls from working-class homes, formal schooling often came second to the economic strictures of the family budget; Similarly, the education of girls was generally secondary to that of boys. Help in the home could not be afforded, so girls were expected to fill the deficit. Absence from school because of domestic duties was a fairly common occurrence for working-class girls. Older girls were expected to help with younger children in the family, even if this did mean missing school. This meant that learning domestic skills of childcare and mothercraft skills took place informally and with a great deal of practical application. Mildred Edwards appeared to have been both accepting and proud of the help she gave her mother:

> One day I remember well I was kept at home to mind the babies, while mother did the family washing. The little baby had to be nursed a lot, as she was delicate, and I was rocking her on my knee and had got her to sleep, when my little brother Billy, toddled up and lisped "put that one in the cradle Milly and nurse me". What could I do, so I took him up as well and he too went to sleep ... Mother had gone out to put the clothes to dry, so I had to sit until they had their nap. I think I was about nine at the time. However I was healthy and happy.[17]

Autobiographers Annie Barnes, Ada Neild Chew, Louise Jermy and Rose Gibbs, as well as Mildred Edwards, all saw this kind of informal learning positively, although they did list it as the reason for their far from regular attendance at school. As Carol Dyhouse has highlighted elsewhere, the difference in training and expectations of girls and boys in families where there were children of both sexes could have far-reaching implications, leaving the girls 'to perceive differences in treatment … expectations … and ambitions'.[18] The one exception from among the cohort was Mary Gawthorpe. Born in 1881 in Leeds, Mary was the daughter of a leather-worker. Although she does not record if the boys in her family helped with domestic chores, there does not appear to be anygender differentiation in the informal academic education they received at home. Mary claimed that her mother gave a good start in reading to all five children: 'Four girls and one boy, were taught to know their letters and to read before they went to the Infant's School at St Michael's when five years old. Mamma had taught them from the big illustrated blue book full of rhymes'.[19] Books were certainly part of Mary's childhood: she described the bookcase in the sitting room of their home as 'our most distinguished furnishing'. However, Mary recalled that this equality of treatment changed with formal education. Once she left the infant school, the girls and boys were separated. She recollected that St Michael's Day School in Leeds consisted of: 'three departments, Infants, Girls, Boys, with separate playgrounds for girls and boys, infants excepted'.[20]

Differentiation in the treatment of girls and boys, which was found in most cases within the families, extended to school where education was not only gendered but also ordered according to class. Working-class girls therefore had to contend with the double constraints of both class and gender. Nevertheless, during the last quarter of the nineteenth century educational standards in society were changing fast and a high level of female illiteracy was no longer as acceptable as it had been even fifty years before.[21]

The State Education Act of 1870, put through Parliament by Robert Forster, had made a state system of elementary schooling possible.[22] Forster's Act would 'fill in the gaps': a survey of schools in England and Wales was ordered and local School Boards were to be established in areas not covered by the philanthropically financed National Society or the British Schools.[24] The Boards had the authority to require all children under their jurisdiction to meet minimum standards of school attendance: all children were to attend school until ten years of age. Before this, children in most working-class families were expected to take up paid employment at an early age in order to contribute to the family budget. However, there was still no guarantee that children would attend school. Moreover, the minimum charge of 'school pence', which did not begin to disappear until 1891, also precluded some of the poorest from attending. School attendance to age eleven was not made compulsory until 1893, and to twelve until 1899. After this the school-leaving age and its enforcement made sure children did not enter the factories or other paid employment until they had attained at least the compulsory age. It also became increasingly difficult for parents and children to violate the

laws against truancy as the sustained efforts of school attendance officers became increasingly effective.[25] The changes in educational provision and compulsory attendance requirements were welcomed by many of the working-class who were ambitious and aspiring to respectability. Yet it must also be acknowledged, as Anna Davin has argued, that compulsory education of children had the effect of making them dependant on the family breadwinner, usually the father.[26] The social function of educating working-class girls in school was to carry this ethos further: education was to teach these girls to be good wives to working men and good mothers to the next generation of the workforce.

The Education Act of 1902, implementing the recommendations of the Bryce Commission, set up Local Education Authorities to replace School Boards. Part of the brief of the LEAs was to provide secondary schools. However, most working-class children continued to receive only elementary-school education. Secondary schools were not free until 1907, when a system of free places — 'the ladder of opportunity' — was introduced, offering education up to the age of sixteen.[26] Elementary education was thus associated with the working class and was clearly segregated by both class and gender from the forms of secondary schooling offered to middle-class children. Irrespective of who provided the education for working-class children, it was seen as inferior in quality and status to that provided for middle-class children. As June Purvis has claimed, the education that working-class children received taught them about gender as well as class: 'that they were of the "lower" social orders. Working-class girls … also learnt that masculinity was the dominant gender form. Working-class parents were likely to give more priority to the schooling of their sons than of their daughters'.[27] The notion that it was more important to educate the male members of a family reflected the male domination of nineteenth-century life and the idea that the serious education of girls, of all classes, was unnecessary. It was assumed that they would soon marry and become their husbands' responsibility, so they had no need for education. However, the autobiographers surmounted most of these problems and gained educations despite the vagaries of the system.

Examples of this inequality, both gender- and class-based, and the continued emphasis on home-based occupations for working-class girls, can be traced within the autobiographies. Pictures of the role models they were expected to aspire to were even provided in some classrooms. Winifred Griffiths, who had hoped to become a teacher and wanted 'fame and glory', described them disparagingly: 'But alas, we were expected to set our sights somewhat lower. If one was clean and industrious one might hope to become a housemaid or a laundry maid like those pictured on our classroom wall'.[28]

The message disseminated by the school system showed that society promulgated very different images of success for working-class girls from that which Winifred envisioned for herself. Class and gender hegemony prevailed in schools with the result that working-class women were permitted to become good domestic servants, factory-workers, shop girls, laundresses or seamstresses. According to such directives, they were taught their place in society and could aspire only to this kind of work. Hard work and cleanliness were encouraged, but not ambition for, or still less achievement of, academic honours.

Among the cohort there were several others who recorded their awareness of the gender differentiation in provision of lessons. Margaret Bondfield, born in 1873, one of eleven children of a Somerset lace-maker, attended Chard Board School, which was segregated by gender. Margaret described the difference between the lessons taught in male and female classes, underlining the narrow curriculum available to girls: 'In the girls' school we were taught reading, writing and arithmetic, and needlework — no geography, no history except the dates of kings'.[29] Similarly, Mildred Edwards recalled the headmistress of her secondary school in Harraby, Cumbria, taking a class of eighty girls for sewing, and recalled the Mission Hall in the corner of the playground, 'which was where we older girls went for cookery lessons'.[30] Isabella Cooke, who attended school in Cliburn, recalled that it was the schoolmistress who taught the infant classes, who also took the girls for needlework: 'There was only one master and one mistress. She taught the infants 1 to 2 standard, and used to teach the girls two afternoons a week to sew and knit, and the master taught the rest in his room'.[31] It was therefore the boys had the benefit of the more prestigious 'master'. Ellen Wilkinson, growing up in Manchester in the 1890s, was also resentful of the state system of education which did nothing to encourage bright children like herself, who were often rebellious because they were bored. She recalled that 'boy rebels had a better time' of it:

> I was just a little sausage in the vast educational sausage factory in the eyes of the makers of the state scheme. That I, and others like me, were keen, intelligent, could mop up facts like blotting paper, wanted to stretch our minds in every direction, was merely a nuisance. We must fit into a mould, or be pressed into it. The boy rebels

> had a better time. The masters would often give extra time, lend books and so on to a bright lad. I never remember such encouragement. I was only a girl anyway.[32]

Girls, it seemed, were not worth the master's help.

Similar assumptions are reflected in many of the autobiographers descriptions of their education. They had been in place for some decades. It was advocated by the National Society as early as 1861:

> It is be hoped that no desire to make girls little Newtons, little Captain Cooks, little Livingstones, Little Mozarts and Handels and little Joshua Reynoldses will ever take us too low for keeping in sight the object of teaching them to make and mend shirts, to make and mend pinafores, and darn stockings and socks. If it does, then from that day the Society will go back.[33]

At school, working-class girls were therefore channelled into domestic subjects and taught sewing, knitting, child-care and cookery, reinforcing and continuing the early training for domesticity begun at home. Still, in most cases the autobiographers recorded their enjoyment of lessons. Furthermore, a female school board member, Alice Westlake, when making a report claimed that 'the cookery lessons were very popular'.[34] Older girls were in many cases able to take housewifery classes and the numbers of girls voluntarily attending these suggests that many working-class girls valued their attainment of domestic skills. The housewifery classes run by local School Boards proved so popular that they often had to be repeated in the evenings. Underlining this, in 1878, Domestic Economy was made a compulsory subject specific for girls.

The women revealed their knowledge of some of the educational reforms which enabled even the poorest of working-class girls to gain some kind of education in domestic skills. Maria Hull, who had attended Board school in Derbyshire between 1884–93, wrote: 'After the 1891 Education Act we were supplied, besides copybooks, with materials for needlework and lined paper for patterns'.[35] The women often recalled their domestic classes in complex detail when writing their autobiographies many years after their schooldays. Maria, writing her autobiography in 1968 at the age of eighty-seven, recalled her sewing classes. At age nine 'we girls made calico underwear and did much knitting as well'.[36] At the age of ten, in 1891, she transferred to the girl's department of the local Board School, where the sewing lessons left a vivid memory of fabrics, colours and stitches:

> In "scientific" needlework lessons, we cut out paper patterns of undergarments — drawers, chemise and nightgowns — to our individual measurements. I kept the patterns for a long time and found them useful. We were taught how to patch on both calico and flannel, how to gather and make buttonholes and a gusset. I made a maroon-coloured flannel petticoat, feather-stitched in golden silk on the hem. In knitting we made our own woollen stockings, with either "Dutch" or "French" heels, and woollen gloves.[37]

Similarly, Winifred Griffiths attended National School in Overton, Hampshire, and at the age of seven went up to the 'Big School' which was separated into a boys' school and girls' school. Although these were in the same block, the rooms were quite separate. Winifred, like Maria, particularly recalls sewing lessons in the girls' school: 'The girls' school had about 120 pupils and usually three teachers beside the headmistress. I remember very little about lessons in standard 1 & 2, except that I knitted a red woollen scarf and learned to stitch on pieces of calico and afterwards hemmed real handkerchiefs and dusters'.[38]

The women therefore recalled in detail, and with varied degrees of pleasure, the gender-specific sewing, knitting and cooking lessons which played a prominent part in their upbringing. This does not negate the existence of a social control agenda: working-class girls' education did have a purposefully domestic orientation. This was intensified during the early years of the twentieth century due to renewed fears about the quality of the working-class British soldiers recruited for the Boer War (1899–1901), when a high percentage of such recruits were found unfit for service. Teachers were reminded that girls needed a thorough training in domestic duties and that they must 'be taught "to set a high value on the housewife's position", on the grounds that national efficiency must inevitably depend upon a strong tradition of home life'.[39]

The autobiographers, therefore, were not alone in their positive appraisal of the benefits of domestic skills. Moreover, the subjects gained an academic standing in the Edwardian era.[40] For example, a three-year course in 'home and social science' began in 1908 as a university subject at King's College London, with a female graduate of Somerville College, Oxford, Margaret McKillop (1864–1929), as a lecturer in domestic science.[41] The progress of 'domestic science' as a

subject was further given impetus and status by the Edwardian interest in the reform of home as a social institution and by the increased demand for women teachers, school and factory inspectors and health visitors. Consequently, both performing domestic tasks in girlhood and gendered schooling, in line with the dominant ideology of the period, generally obtained in England during the years that these women were growing up. Although the domestic emphasis was sometimes resented, especially in terms of gender differences between siblings, the situation was tolerated and even welcomed, by many of the women.

As school-leavers, or shortly afterwards, three of the cohort were required to take over domestic duties on a full-time basis because of the ill-health of their mothers. Agnes Cowper and Mildred Edwards both left school and stayed at home to nurse their invalid mothers. Annie Barnes, born in Stepney, East London in 1887, the eldest daughter in her family, began training as a pupil-teacher. However, when her mother fell ill in 1911 and was unable to care for the home and family, Annie 'gave up work to nurse mother and look after the younger children'. Despite this, she also took over her mother's duties in the fruit shop which her father managed. Annie therefore nursed her mother, looked after her younger siblings, kept house for the family and helped in the shop![42]

For others women, domestic skills learned both at home and school transferred readily to paid work, as Sally Alexander has pointed out in her discussion of women's employment in London in the nineteenth century.[43] All of the autobiographers in the cohort worked in paid employment at some time in their lives. They started employment in domestic service, in the textile factories or in domestic-related jobs such as waitressing, dressmaking and nursing. The occupations of the twenty-six women autobiographers reflected broadly the occupations of working-class women in general during the 1890s and 1900s — indeed, until the Second World War — in that the highest numbers of women were those in domestic service or related occupations.[44] Indicating the demand for such skills, local registers were set up throughout this period to help employers find suitably trained domestic staff.[45] In addition to the three autobiographers who stayed at home to keep house for their families, eleven of the other autobiographers were employed in domestic-related occupations after leaving school. Rose Gibbs, Bessie Harvey, Mrs Hills, Maria Hull, Emma Smith and Susan Sylvester were employed as domestic servants, as was Isabella Cooke, although, as her position was on a farm, a condition of her employment was that she also learned to milk. Hannah Mitchell and Louise Jermy were employed as dressmakers, and Grace Foakes as a waitress, both occupations under the umbrella of domestic skills.

Girls entering paid domestic service had the chance of bettering themselves if they were ambitious and worked hard. Employment in a small establishment with only one or two domestic staff could be arduous and lonely, especially for a young girl straight from school. But employment in a large household such as East Oakely House in Hampshire, and described by Winifred Griffiths, was different. Households keeping a good number of domestic staff could offer the chance of learning a recognized job with good prospects, under a skilled expert, in a hierarchical community in which it was possible to rise through the ranks. Although she had been employed in the local Burberry's factory on leaving school, after a year Winifred sought a 'better position' and more spending money for herself. She began work as a housemaid in East Oakley House, a large country house in Hampshire, in 1911. Despite her schoolgirl dreams of 'fame and fortune' she now valued the independence she had attained. For her, it was a milestone in her life. She recorded her contentment:

> I grew accustomed to the routine of the house and to the family and staff, and so entered on what was to be a very happy period of my life. It was in the spring of 1911 that I took up my new post. I was nearly 16 years of age and from now on I was self-supporting, earning my keep and a little beside. Although I visited home regularly and spent short holidays there, I was never more to live at home. I had become independent, I had passed a decisive milestone on life's journey.[46]

Winifred was to stay at East Oakley House for four years. In this time she progressed from housemaid to parlourmaid and the luxury of a room of her own. She regretted her lack of formal education, but when writing her autobiography in the early 1970s, acknowledged the benefits she had gained from employment: 'Lack of opportunity and my parent's lack of means had denied me more formal education, but the four years I was about to spend at East Oakley House afforded me a large measure of compensation and in some respects broadened my horizons in a way further schooling may not have done'.[47]

Among the autobiographers, others gained upward mobility through domestic service. Rose Gibbs worked her way up from 'tweeny' to housekeeper;[48] Doris Hill, after working on the family farm, left home and eventually owned a guesthouse and farm servant and Isabella Cooke moved from a small farm to a larger one where, she proudly claimed: 'Working in a gentleman's house had spoiled me'. Isabella moved further upwards in the servant hierarchy by then becoming a cook for a city banking family.[49]

Many working-class women gave up paid employment when they were married. This was an increasingly attainable goal between 1900 and 1914 as male wages improved. Furthermore, as Joanna Bourke has argued, financial constraints were eased with changes in the structure of wages at the end of the nineteenth century and when total household earnings reached a certain level, the value of a wife and mother at home outstripped the value of her wage.[50] The 1851 census had revealed that three-quarters of wives undertook paid employment. By 1911, when Annie Barnes left her job to take her mother's place at home, only one-tenth of married women were recorded as in paid employment. However, examples of women like Winifred Griffith's aunts, who worked for money at home in sweated industries, point to a huge 'hidden workforce' of women who used domestic skills to contribute to the household budget, yet do not appear in any census for occupations.[51]

Bleak working conditions in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries enhanced the appeal of full-time domesticity. If a married woman did not need to work for financial reasons, domesticity was also an alternative way to increase their control over their own lives and that of their family. Social studies from the early twentieth century show that women expressed pride in their domestic skills and saw as a sign of respectability the fact that their husbands were bread-winners, able to support non-wage-earning wives and mothers.[52] The notion of respectability was pivotal to societal values during this period and was centred in morality, home and family. In an earlier period respectability had been perceived as entwined with middle-class mores, but by the nineteenth century it had been firmly adopted by the aspiring working class.

Within the autobiographies, respectability tends to be defined as adopting a Christian way of life that encompasses ideals of domesticity: cleanliness, godliness, the importance of family and 'keeping up appearances'. Emma Smith typified this notion. After she had married and attained the home and family she had earlier dreamed about, Emma's three daughters began to attend the same school that she had. She recorded her pride as she compared 'their neat appearance in white blouses, navy tunics and neat trimmed hair, to my own unkempt condition while at school'.[53] She placed herself at the centre of respectable family life, happily complying with the female ideal figure of the angel of the house that historians see as embodying the model of separate spheres.

Skills learned at home and at school were good training for respectable married life, as many economies needed to be practised to held stretch the family budget. Hannah Mitchell, who later achieved fame as a suffragette and socialist, was one who looked forward to her marriage and a home shared with her fiancé: 'we were both tired of living in lodgings, and felt that our own hearth, however humble, would be more comfortable'.[54] Hannah, despite her girlhood resentment of domestic duties, had trained as a dressmaker, so was skilful at sewing. She used this to good effect in the early days of her marriage, expressing pride in her home and giving great importance in her autobiography to descriptions of her homemaking:

> We had rented a cottage — living room, scullery, two bedrooms and an attic — for five shillings a week. A washstand, dressing-table and bed filled the front bedroom; the back room housed an old iron bedstead which had belonged to my husband's mother. I made hearthrugs of cloth cuttings, such as my mother had taught me to make, window curtains of spotted muslin and patchwork cushions which looked gay and comfortable. My parents sent some bedding, blankets and patchwork quilts, and great sacks of wool, which enabled me to fix up a second bed.
>
> I was very proud of this. I hunted the fent shop for gay prints. I draped two large boxes with these to serve as dressing-table and washstand in my little guest room.[55]

While she was obviously very proud of her success in creating a comfortable home and claimed that the three years spent at home with her small son to be 'among the happiest years of my life', she also described the 'tyranny' of domesticity:

> Home life was in those days, indeed still is, for the wife and mother a constant round of wash days, cleaning days, cooking and serving meals. "The tyranny of meals" is the worse snag in a housewife's lot. Her life is bounded on the north by breakfast, south by dinner, east by tea, and on the west by supper, and the most sympathetic man can never be made to understand that meals do not come up through the tablecloth, but have to be planned, bought and cooked.[56]

For Hannah, therefore, there was a dichotomy. She was the traditional ideal woman: she had longed for a home of her own; it was one of her ambitions and one of the reasons for marrying. Yet, at the same time, she expected some acknowledgement from her husband for the hard work she put into their home. The fact that he appears to have thought that

meals 'just came up through the tablecloth' highlights the tensions and frustrations she felt. This was further highlighted in her autobiography when she recalled her pregnancy with their first (and only) child. Hannah decided to work harder at her dressmaking, let the housework go for a few months and try to save a little money 'for this emergency'. Hannah was both proud of her ability to manage on a small budget and concerned that the burden of budgeting for the baby was all hers. Her husband was already earning as much money as he could, so would not be able to help with this added cost, as she explained to future readers of her autobiography:

> 'If any modern girl reading this wonders why I did not expect my husband to provide for this emergency, I can only say that it would have been useless. His wages were fixed and he could not earn anymore by overtime. At first I tried to get him to reckon up the cost-of-living with me and keep a sort of weekly budget. But he refused, just handing his wages over and leaving all the worry to me.
>
> I realized later that I ought to have insisted on his sharing the domestic responsibilities, because I found that he never really valued my contribution to the housekeeping which was often just as much as his own. Most of my sewing was done while he was at work and I did not say much about it. I was proud of being able to help in this way.[57]

Hannah was both accepting and resentful of her husband's limitations. She managed the home on what he gave her, by frugality and by supplementing it with her own skills. Despite her trying to involve him in the budgeting, her husband, 'Like most men', just expected her to manage on what he gave her and did not want to know how she did it. Hannah's words suggest that this situation was not uncommon. It underlines the notion that women who earned money at home, as well as those in paid employment, were well able to control, with whatever constraints were imposed by poverty, the family budget.

Many of the married women among the autobiographers seem to have been delighted to stay at home. Domestic work performed in the home was unpaid, at least directly, but many recalled ways in which they used their domestic skills to contribute to the family economy even if they were not in paid employment. Good, careful housewifery and other domestic work, such as sewing, could make a substantial difference to the family expenditure. Ellen Wilkinson whose father was a mill-worker, wrote of her mother, who 'kept the house going by dressmaking': 'She made every stitch that she and her four children wore, even some of father's suits, until my sister grew old enough to help her. We should have had precious little to wear otherwise'.[58] Grace Foakes evolved ways and means of surviving on her husband's small wage after her marriage. She stretched an often tight budget and took pride in doing so. She made and sold plum jam and, when the plum season was over, took in washing for the men in Dagenham who worked at Fords, the car manufacturers. The work was hard: 'I was tired, my back ached and my fingers were sore. I collected and delivered the washing, pushing it around in Kathleen's pram. I am not pitying myself; rather I glory in the fact that I held my head high, asking nothing of anyone, satisfied I had made an effort to help myself'.[59]

The descriptions of family income and its management from the autobiographers show that even women who did not go out to work also took on, or retained, the ownership of the family finances. Although their work, both inside and outside the home was assumed to be subordinate to that of their male partner, there was a tradition of what Ellen Ross calls an 'internal wage system' operating in most working-class households.[60] This situation, reported by autobiographers Alice Foley, Grace Foakes and Hannah Mitchell, among others, is underlined and further illustrated by Maud Pember-Reeves in her social study of working-class families in London, from 1908 to 1913.[61] Pember-Reeves found that most husbands handed over to their wives the largest part of their weekly earnings, retaining 'pocket money' for themselves.[62] With their pocket money the men bought beer and tobacco, paid for some kind of insurance and any cost of travelling to work. As Hannah Mitchell illustrated, husbands usually expected their wives to manage all of the household expenses out of their own, or their joint, weekly earnings, the men taking no further interest in what the money was spent on as long as their meals were supplied on time. This hold on the financial reins of the family budget therefore provided a further strand to the complex position of working-class women's domestic lives and highlights a further skill they were expected to acquire.

Conclusion

Early training in domestic skills, described by the autobiographers, was not initially a matter of choice. Working-class women had little alternative to performing their own domestic chores and looking after their own children, at least until elder children were old enough to help. At school, social control and class hegemony may have motivated nineteenth-century educational policy-makers. Certainly, the ideologies of gender and class were inextricably inherent in these women's formal and informal educations. One or two of the autobiographers, such as Hannah Mitchell and Ellen

Wilkinson, both of whom were involved in politics during adult life, recorded their resentment at preferential treatment shown to boys both at home and at school. However, domesticity was not always seen by working-class girls as a constraint. Many of the women in the cohort presented the learning and practice of domestic skills as a choice which they made willingly, indeed, as something they strove towards. The attainment of practical domestic skills enabled some of them to seek better positions when they entered the workplace. It gave them an opening into domestic service, an area in which the highest percentage of working-class women earned their living and in which women could achieve some degree of upward mobility. For those women who centred their lives in the home, at least for part of their lives, a clean and neat house, well-cared for and well-behaved children, and thrifty economic management were all signs of respectability. Domestic skills learnt during childhood at home and at school were valued by aspiring working-class women at home and, although housework performed in the home was unpaid, good careful housewifery and other domestic skills could make a substantial contribution to family economics. Women's domestic skills may therefore be seen not merely as conforming to middle-class domestic ideology, which gave domesticity a higher status both academically and socially during the period, but as a vital part of feminine working-class culture. The attainment and practice of domestic skills, both formally at school and informally within the family, was a pathway by which working-class women to were enabled to achieve better lives, not only by the standards they set themselves, but also by the standards and mores set by society.

Endnotes

1 Annie Barnes, *Tough Annie: From Suffragette to Stepney Councillor*, ed. Kate Harding and Caroline Gibbs (London, 1980); Margaret Grace Bondfield, *A Life's Work* (London, 1949); Ada Nield Chew, *The Life and Writings of a Working Woman* ed. Doris Chew (London, 1982); Isabella Cooke, *A Hired Lass in Westmorland: The Story of a Country Girl at the Turn of the Century* (Penrith, 1982); Agnes Cowper, *A Backward Glance at Merseyside* (Birkenhead, 1948); Mildred Edwards, *Our City, Our People 1889–1978: Memories* (Carlisle, 1978); Grace Foakes, *Between High Walls*, *My Life With Reuben* and *My Part of the River* (London, 1972, 1974, 1974); Alice Foley, *A Bolton Childhood* (Manchester, 1973); Mary Gawthorpe, *Up Hill to Holloway* (Penobscott, 1962); Rose Gibbs, *In service: Rose Gibbs Remembers* (Orwell, Cambs, 1981); Winifred Griffiths, *One Woman's Story* (Rhondda, 1979); Mrs Hills, ' Reminiscences of Mrs. Hills' in *Memories of Life in the Village of Leighton Bromswold* (Huntingdon, Cambs, 1977); Miss Daisy Hills, *Old Frimley* (Frimley, Surrey, 1978); Bessie Harvey 'Youthful Memories of My Life in a Sussex Village' in *East Anglian Reminiscences* ed. E.A. Goodwin and J.C. Baxter (Ipswich, 1976); Maria Hull, 'A Derbyshire Schooling: 1884–1893', in *Hist. Workshop Jl*, no. 25 (Spring 1985), 167; Louise Jermy, *The Memoirs of a Working Woman* (Norwich, 1934); Annie Kenney, *Memories of a Militant* (London, 1924); Mary Luty, *A Penniless Globetrotter* (Accrington, 1937); Betty May, *Tiger Woman: My Story* (London, 1929); Hannah Mitchell, *The Hard Way Up: The Autobiography of Hannah Mitchell, Suffragette and Rebel* ed. Geoffrey Mitchell (London, 1968); Mrs. Nellie Scott, 'A Felt Hat Worker' in *Life As We Have Known It, by Co-operative Working Women*, ed. Margaret Llewelyn Davies, (London, 1931, 1977), 81–101; Susan Silvester, *In a World That Has Gone* (Loughborough, 1968); Emma Smith, *A Cornish Waif's Story: An Autobiography* (London, 1954); Ellen Wilkinson, untitled, in *Myself When Young by Famous Women of Today*, ed. Margot Asquith Countess of Oxford (London, 1938), 399–416; Kathleen Woodward, *Jipping Street: Childhood in a London Slum* (London, 1928, 1983); Mrs Yearn 'A Public Spirited Rebel', in *Life As We have Known It*, ed. Davies, 102–8.

2 Seminal to the greater personal freedoms of women born in this period, as well as a series of Education Acts, were for example, legislations encompassed by the Married Women's Act (1870), the consolidation of factory reforms in the Factory Act of 1878, the Franchise Reform of 1885 giving universal suffrage to men and the Public Health Acts of 1872, 1874 and 1875.

3 The term 'working class' is used in this paper in broadly the way in which it is defined in E.P.Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London, 1991), 8–9. Judged by this standard, therefore, the twenty-six women of the cohort can be said to be working-class. They present themselves as working class and were born into environments where the common experience was of families supported by one or two wage earners. However, many of the women in the cohort improved their standard of living over the course of their lives and rose socially, within, and in some cases between, classes.

4 See, for example, June Purvis, *Hard Lessons: The Lives and Education of Working-Class Women in Nineteenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 1989); Carol Dyhouse, *Girls growing up in Late Victorian and Edwardian England* (London, 1981); Betty Friedan,

5 Edwards, *Our City…Our People*, 12.
6 Foley, *Bolton Childhood*, 28.
7 Griffiths, *One Woman's Story*, 10.
8 *Ibid.*, 13–14.
9 Smith, *A Cornish Waif's Story*, 107.
10 *Ibid.*, 65–7.
11 Foley, *Bolton Childhood*, 24.
12 Mitchell, *Hard Way Up*, 43.
13 *Ibid.*, 43.
14 *Ibid.*, 114.
15 Hannah Mitchell did overcome her lack of schooling. She became an apprentice dressmaker, worked in domestic service and as a shop assistant. She married in 1895 and used her domestic skills, expressing her pride in the home she created for herself, husband and only son, Geoffrey. However domestic life palled after a while and in 1903 she began paid work for the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU). She became a member of the Labour Party, was secretary of Ashton Labour Church, elected to the Board of Guardians in 1904, became a Manchester City Councillor in 1925 and a Magistrate in 1926. She also wrote for various periodicals, including *The Northern Voice*.
16 Scott, 'A Felt Hat Worker', 84.
17 Edwards, *Our City…Our People*, 10.
18 Dyhouse, *Girls Growing Up in Late Victorian and Edwardian England*, 3–4.
19 Gawthorpe, *Up Hill to Holloway*, 19.
20 *Ibid.*, 20.
21 For discussion on the literacy of working-class women, see, for example, W. B. Stephens, *Education, Literacy and Society, 1880–1870:The Geography of Diversity in Provincial England* (Manchester, 1987); David Vincent, *Literacy and Popular Culture: England, 1750-1914* (Cambridge, 1989).
22 For the details surrounding the passing of the 1870 Act see, for example, Mary Sturt, *Education of the People: A History of Primary Education in England and Wales in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1967), ch. 14.
23 John Hurt, *Elementary Schooling and the Working Classes, 1860–1918* (London, 1963), 4.
24 David E Mitch, *The Rise of Popular Literacy in Victorian England: The Influence of Private Choice and Public Policy* (Philadelphia, 1992), 182.
25 *Ibid.*, 375.
26 Anna Davin, 'Mind that You do as You are Told: Reading Books for Board-School Girls, 1870–1902', *Feminist Rev.*, iii (1979), 89.
27 June Purvis, 'The Double Burden of Class and Gender in the Schooling of Working-Class Girls in Nineteenth-Century England', in L. Barton and S. Walker (eds.), *Schools, Teachers and Teaching* (Lewes, 1981), 90.
28 Griffiths, *One Woman's Story*, 28.
29 Bondfield, *A Life's Work*, 21.
30 Edwards, *Our City…Our People*, 41.
31 Cooke, *Hired Lass in Westmorland*, 1.
32 Wilkinson, *Myself When Young*, 404.
33 The National Society Annual Report of 1861, as quoted in Johnson, *Education of Girls in Derby and Derbyshire* (MA diss., Oxford), 77.
34 Special Report compiled for the Education Department in 1896–7, cited by Jane Martin in 'The Only Place for Women was Home: Gender and Class in the Elementary School Curriculum, 1870–1904', *Jl of the Association of Open University Graduates* (1993–4), 15.
35 Hull, 'A Derbyshire Schooling, 1884–1893', 170.
36 *Ibid.*, 168.
37 *Ibid.*, 170.
38 Griffiths, *One Woman's Story*, 27.
39 Cited in Penny Tinkler, 'Girlhood and Growing Up', in Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska (ed.), *Women in Twentieth-Century Britain* (London, 2001), 37.
40 See, for example, Mark Pottle, 'McKillop, Margaret S. (1864–1929), lecturer in home economics', *DNB*, Oxford, forthcoming 2004).
41 *Ibid.,* 2.
42 See Barnes, *Tough Annie*.
43 Sally Alexander, 'Women's Work in Nineteenth-Century London: A Study of the Years 1820–1850', in *The Rights and Wrongs of Women* ed. Juliet Mitchell and Ann Oakley (Harmondsworth, 1976), 73.
44 Deirdre Beddoe, *Discovering Women's History* (London, 1993), 112.
45 Cited in Elizabeth Roberts, *Women's Work, 1840–1940* (London, 1988), 31.
46 Griffiths, *One Woman's Story*, 45.
47 *Ibid.*, 46.
48 The 'tweeny' or between maid, combined the duties of under-housemaid with those of kitchenmaid, helping both the cook and the housemaid. She was often the lowest paid and least prestigious of indoor servants. Her duties included rising by 5.30 every morning to clean and light the kitchen range before any of the other servants were up. See, for example, Pamela Horn, *The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Servant* (Stroud, 1990), 151, 197.
49 Cooke, *Hired Lass in Westmorland*, 15.
50 Joanna Bourke, *Working-Class Cultures in Britain, 1890–1960: Gender, Class and Ethnicity* (London, 1994), 120.
51 See, for example, Ellen F. Mappen (ed.), *Married Women's Work* (London: 1983), originally ed. Clementina Black (London, 1915); Purvis, *Hard Lessons*; Roberts, *Women's Work*, 18–20.
52 Maud Pember-Reeves, *Round About A Pound A Week* (London, 1913, 1980).
53 Smith, *Cornish Waif's Story*, 205.
54 Mitchell, *Hard Way Up*, 88.
55 *Ibid.*, 95.
56 *Ibid.*, 113–14.
57 *Ibid.*, 100–01.
58 Wilkinson, *Myself When Young*, 400.
59 Foakes, *My Life With Reuben*, 45.
60 Ellen Ross, 'Survival Networks: Women's Neighbourhood Sharing in London Before World War I', *Hist. Workshop Jl*, no. 25 (Spring 1983), 7.
61 Pember-Reeves, *Round About A Pound A Week*, 11.
62 This custom has been found to be widespread throughout England and Wales, although the portion given by the male earner varied according to region, neighbourhood and even individual couple: Laura Oren, 'The Welfare of Women in Labouring Families: England, 1860–1950', *Feminist Studies*, i (Spring 1993), 107, 112–13; Elizabeth Roberts, 'Working Women in the North-West', *Oral Hist.*, v (Autumn 1977), 7–30.

BOOK REVIEWS

Marie Sandeford, *Tales of Tudor Women* Great Glen, Leic.: Joroby Books, 2003. £5.95. 120 pp, ISBN 0 9534584 1 5.

Review by Amanda Capern, University of Hull

This little anecdotal book has been published by Joroby Books to mark the 400th anniversary of the death of Elizabeth I. It follows in the wake of Marie Sandeford's *The Second Sister: A Royal Tudor Romance* (1999), a biography of Catherine Grey (the sister of Jane Grey) that charts her doomed marriage with Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford and brother of Jane Seymour.

Tales of Tudor Women has little structure. It begins with John Knox's *First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*, presumably as a way of introducing the reign of Elizabeth I, and ends with a chapter on the execution of Mary Queen of Scots and a final line about Elizabeth regretting the execution until her own death. It is clear from the first chapter that Sandeford has a commitment to making the lives of some Elizabethan women 'visible' and, in this way, *Tales of Tudor Women* has a serious purpose as women's history. However, readers should be warned that between Knox and Mary Queen of Scots there is truly a hotchpotch — the only themes that seem to stand out are melodramatic romance (including the romance of Catherine Grey and Edward Seymour summarised from her first book) and martyrdom (Protestant and Catholic).

For the most part these are *not* 'tales' about the average Elizabethan woman. For example, there is a chapter on Dorothy Vernon who was co-heiress of Haddon Hall in Derbyshire and who eloped with John Manners, son of the duke of Rutland. The rich and/or the sensational women get into this book — if they are not women of the extended court of Elizabeth, then they are martyrs like Margaret Clitheroe, crushed to death in just a cotton shift under rocks, or thieves like Moll Cutpurse. Even a chapter on ministers' wives begins with the improbably named Agnes Worship. However, some flavour of the lives of ordinary women can be found. Chapter 6 focuses on women's needlework and Chapter 8 tells of Grace Sharington [Mildmay] and her book of 'phisick'. Some chapters are better than others. Chapter 5 is less than two pages long and consists solely of an anecdote about Elizabeth I and the production of silk stockings. Chapter 9 on 'Women in the World of Books' should have been omitted; the author's knowledge of Elizabethan women writers is too small for it to be viable. By contrast the chapters that end the book on the Marian martyrs and Margaret Clithroe are quite well-informed, quite well-written and readable.

Sandeford has had much fun with this book and her readers will have fun too. However, it needs to be pointed out that it is a bit cobbled together and source-driven, though without using systematically obvious books. The textbooks by Anne Laurence [1994] and Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford [1998] seem not to have been consulted at all. A chapter on

'Moll Cutpurse' relies on Gamini Salgado's *The Elizabethan Underworld* [1977], but ignores the recent edition on Mary Frith by Janet Todd and Elizabeth Spearing. In the end, this is a small, general-interest publication that enjoys tales of romance and boasts florid language like 'the royal anger' and the occasional reference to the modern romantic martyr, Princess Diana. Schoolchildren should love it, undergraduates should have fun with it and historians of early-modern women will find within it small jewels of information, though they will find its lack of referencing frustrating.

Carmel Quinlan, *Genteel Revolutionaries: Anna and Thomas Haslam and the Irish Women's Movement* Cork: Cork University Press, 2002. £45.09/€57.25. Pp. xiii + 265, ISBN 1-85918-328

Review by Lesley A. Hall, Wellcome Library for the History and Understanding of Medicine, London

This very fine study demonstrates (as other recent studies have done) how far from single-issue were the interests of nineteenth -century feminists. They were fighting on a range of fronts and we should not assume that simply because an individual may be best known for one particular campaign that they saw that as the most important and significant, rather than at a particular point in time absorbing most of their energies. Anna Haslam's career additionally leads us to interrogate the received wisdom that the campaign against the Contagious Diseases Acts drew women into wider political activity and the suffrage movement: Haslam found that the 'time consuming extent of her repeal activities' interfered with her pre-existing work for the suffrage (p. 105).

Quinlan addresses the fascinating topic of feminist couples and the Victorian male feminist. Anna Haslam's husband Thomas was devoted to the same causes as she was. The story of their 'idyllic' marriage raises a number of fascinating questions: doubtless unanswerable, though occasionally it would have been nice if Quinlan had speculated a little more. Thomas's 'health broke down in 1866', necessitating Anna becoming the family breadwinner (she was already running a 'stationery and toy warehouse' to supplement their income, and by 1870 was the proprietor of a 'Stationer and Fancy Repository' in Dublin) (p. 14). The exact nature of his illness is not clear. It did not prevent him from producing several publications, including *The Marriage Problem* (1868) which advocated the use of the 'safe period' for contraceptive purposes (though, as in most nineteenth-century texts, got it completely wrong). The couple did not have any children, by mutual agreement ('too poor... and unsuitable to be parents', p. 15). In his later tract, *Duties of Parents* (1872), Thomas advocated sexual abstinence for family limitation, and according to Anna, in a letter written in old age to Marie Stopes, daughter of family friend Charlotte Stopes, they had practised abstinence from a very early stage in the marriage, although they 'slept together for over 50 years – and were a most loving couple' (p. 15). While it is true, as Quinlan argues, that a husband already committed to feminist causes was unlikely to force unwelcome attentions on a wife (and cites a number of other cases of similar celibate unions, p. 17), it is possible to wonder to what extent men had internalised inhibitingly negative ideas about male sexuality ('lustfulness'). Thomas can also be located in the attempt to re-envision masculinity as embodied in control and self-restraint, which became so significant in the social purity movement. There is also a possibility that his 'delicate constitution' (Quinlan detects 'a hint of hypochondria') (p. 18) meant that his own sexual drive was fairly low (and medical authorities of the day considered sexual activity to be potentially debilitating even for healthy men).

Quinlan recuperates a period of intense and essential activity by nineteenth-century feminists which is often, if not overlooked, treated in a somewhat condescending fashion as an overture to the more militant campaigns of the early twentieth century. She points out that their 'patient and decorous methods... had achieved reforms central to the basic cause of equality' (p. 145). Her oxymoronic title *Genteel Revolutionaries* serves to remind us of the truly revolutionary struggle being waged by nineteenth century campaigners who retained the outward signs of respectability, indeed, the latter were often essential weapons. Quinlan also clearly situates the Haslams within their Irish context, while emphasising the ways in which they saw themselves as engaged in wider national concerns. In spite of their Quaker background (Thomas repudiated the Society of Friends and Anna was expelled for marrying him, but they remained very much associated with Quakerism) and their Unionist political sympathies, they forged alliances and retained strong connections with a later generation of Catholic Nationalists. In particular younger Irish suffragists paid tribute to Anna's groundwork.

Quinlan's study is a triumph over her initial discovery that the Haslam papers alleged to be in the National Library of Ireland did not in fact exist. There are perforce a number of lacunae in the story, in particular the earlier years of Thomas and Anna's adult lives. By middle and later life they were well-documented public figures, and in spite of the paucity of material on their private lives, Quinlan has provided a sensitive reconstruction of the individuals behind the campaigns and the publications. While clearly of significant interest to historians of Ireland, *Genteel Revolutionaries* can also be recommended to all students of 'first-wave' feminism.

Paula Bartley, *Emmeline Pankhurst* London: Routledge, 2002. £9.99. Pp. xii + 284, ISBN 0 415 20651 0

Review by Susan Johnson, University College Worcester

Even when not being carried off by burly policemen Emmeline Pankhurst's feet never seemed to touch the ground. Her amazing vitality energises every page of this well-written book. She was a tenacious activist and as Bartley states, her life was more than the sum of suffrage. This text offers a timely scholarly historical biography of her whole life with an emphasis on the political activities rather than a detailed analysis of her personal relationships. It considers and illustrates the complexities that made up this compelling and often repelling figure. She was middle class yet wanted social

justice for the less fortunate; she moved along the political spectrum with seeming alacrity from radical to liberal to socialist to militant feminist to conservative. Her methods were autocratic yet she fought for democracy; she headed the relatively wealthy and solvent WSPU yet was financially unstable herself. Behind the sweet femininity lurked an iron will and determination to ensure that women were recognised as responsible citizens. It is not hard to imagine the impact this sweet, frail looking lady must have had on the audience at Carnegie Hall, New York when in 1909 she walked onto the stage dressed in a purple velvet dress with green lining and white bodice, bedecked with amethysts, emeralds and pearls wearing a corsage of violets, white gardenias and green foliage and announced, 'I am what they a call a hooligan.' To say her public appearances were persuasive is an understatement. She always made an impact, one way or another, on the public domain.

Bartley's aims are clearly set out in the Introduction and she adheres to them throughout the book. Therefore a fully comprehensive account of Emmeline Pankhurst's political life emerges; the pre -suffrage work and the post -suffrage work especially in Canada. These are areas many will not be familiar with but are essential factors in any assessment of Pankhurst's life and work. The foundations of her beliefs and character were formed in her early years and developed throughout her marriage. Chapter 3 is particularly interesting as a picture emerges of this indomitable character who worked to improve the lot of paupers, children, the elderly and the feeble minded. Even prior to her suffrage battles she was imperturbable when faced with dangerous crowds. In 1895 whilst driving home alone in a pony and trap after offering support to the subsequently defeated ILP candidate for Chorlton, Tom Mann, she was surrounded by a crowd of drunken, stone-throwing working-class male Tory supporters. She carried on with her journey and with her public political activites, nothing could shake her. The skills she learned in this phase of her life were invaluable in her suffrage work.

This tenacity and determination to remain unbowed is there throughout her suffrage campaign and helps her through the nightmare of early 20th century prison life. Chapter 7 describes the 'cat and mouse ' existence she led at the height of the militant campaign. The police were constantly trying to arrest her, she was hauled from trains and boats, she was guarded by martial arts trained women, constantly smuggled out of and into houses and was often in very poor health – but still she persisted in the campaign to gain the vote for women. The exploits are reminiscent of an exciting adventure story. Bartley's style of writing ensures that points are made succinctly and with clarity. As with her book on prostitution this is a very useful and accessible text for both student and teacher. Each chapter has a conclusion which draws together the main points, a useful device for students. Her research is thorough and far reaching and leaves few unanswered questions about Emmeline Pankhurst. The point is constantly reinforced that people fighting for a cause are different to the rest of us; the cause comes first. That does not mean family is not important, it is just not top of the list of priorities. Bartley is not asking us to like Pankhurst but to try to understand why she lived her life as she did.

CALLS FOR PAPERS AND NATIONAL CONFERENCES

West of England & South Wales Women's History Network

Women and Country: Rural life, landscape and nation
Saturday, 28 June 2003
University of Exeter, Postgraduate Centre, Clydesdale House

Further information from: Mitzi Auchterlonie, Department of Lifelong Learning, University of Exeter, St Luke's Campus, Heavitree Road, Exeter, EX 1 2LU. M.M.Auchterlonie@exeter.ac.uk Sarah Toulalan, Department of History, Amory Building, University of Exeter, EX4 4RJ. S.D.Toulalan@exeter.ac.uk

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Gendering Criminals and Victims: the Twentieth Century
Friday 24 October 2003
Leeds Metropolitan University

This seminar day aims to examine the historical relationships between class, 'race', social exclusion, gender and criminal behaviour. How far has criminality been considered a masculine trait? How have women's relationships to family and to employment helped shape the profile of female criminality? How have victims of crime been gendered as different? Where do factors other than gender seem more prominent in constructions of either offender or victim? How have perceptions of gender affected the responses of the criminal justice system and welfare agencies?

We welcome papers from historians, sociologists, social workers, voluntary workers, police officers and others working in the field. Abstracts should be sent (to arrive not later than 31st August 2003) to Dr Louise Jackson, School of Cultural Studies, Leeds Metropolitan University, City Campus, Leeds, LS1 3HE or by e-mail to L.Jackson@lmu.ac.uk
Further information is also available on our web-site: http://solon.ntu.ac.uk/FCRN/index.htm or from Louise Jackson.

Women's History Network (Southern Region) and the University of Portsmouth

The Suffragette And Women's History

One day Conference to celebrate and assess the centenary foundation of the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) by Emmeline Pankhurst on 10 October 1903

CALL FOR PAPERS

Emmeline Pankhurst founded the WSPU to campaign for the parliamentary vote for women on the same terms as it is, or shall be, granted to men. For the next eleven years, suffragettes (as WSPU members became known) grabbed the headlines as they engaged in a fierce struggle with the government for women's right to citizenship in Edwardian Britain. A Conference to celebrate and assess the part played by the WSPU in women's history will take place on **11th October 2003** at the University of Portsmouth, United Kingdom. The Conference organisers invite proposals for relevant papers that may fall within the following themes:

historiographical debates: the nineteenth-century campaigns: ideas and discourses: campaigns, pageantry and marketing: the WSPU and the history of feminism: suffrage biography: suffrage autobiography: suffrage drama and fiction: women's culture and the WSPU: outside London: suffragettes and suffragists: suffrage press: the Antis: other suffrage organisations: nationalism and women's suffrage: 'race' and women's suffrage: the international context: after 1918.

The Conference organisers welcome proposals for panels and individual papers. The deadline for submissions is **1st July 2003**. Proposals should include a short abstract of up to 100 words of the paper and a brief curriculum vitae for each contributor. A Special Issue of **Women's History Review**, to be edited by June Purvis and Sandra Stanley Holton will appear from a selection of the papers.

The University of Portsmouth is close to Portsmouth and Southsea railway station which is one and a half hours by rail from Waterloo, London.

Please address all proposals to **June Purvis, School of Social, Historical and Literary Studies, University of Portsmouth, Milldam Site, Burnaby Road, Portsmouth PO1 3AS, United Kingdom (june.purvis@port.ac.uk)**

Funded by the ESRC. Organised by the Feminist Crime Research Network. Recognising that historical research on gender and criminality in the twentieth century is very limited, the Feminist Crime Research Network was set up in 2000 to encourage debate both across academic disciplines and between academics and practitioners. .

Sexuality after Foucault

University of Manchester, Centre for the Study of Sexuality and Culture, November 28-30, 2003

In 2003 the University of Manchester will launch an interdisciplinary, multi-disciplinary, and cross-faculty Centre for the Study of Sexuality and Culture, with a particular focus on the relationships between sexuality, culture and history. To mark the establishment of the Centre at Manchester, and to foster a stimulating intellectual exchange between UK researchers and scholars elsewhere, we propose an international conference on *Sexuality After Foucault.*

Next year also marks the 25th anniversary of the translation into English of Michel Foucault's *History of Sexuality*, vol. 1. Sexuality and gender studies have been dominated by the claims and assumptions of Foucault, though of late some scholars have suggested that the time is long overdue to explore new paradigms and approaches. The purpose of this conference is to debate the continuing relevance of Foucault's work in a changing historical context, to assess its strengths and limitations, and to develop new theoretical approaches to the study of sexuality.

Confirmed speakers include: Carolyn Dinshaw (New York University), David Halperin (University of Michigan, Ann Arbor), Don Kulick (New York University), Cindy Patton (Simon Fraser University), Valerie Traub (University of Michigan), and Jeffrey Weeks (South Bank University).

Contact: Dr Laura Doan, Women's Studies Centre, Roscoe Building, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL (laura.doan@man.ac.uk) or Dr David Alderson, Dept of English and American Studies, Arts Faculty, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL (david.alderson@man.ac.uk).

CALL FOR PAPERS AND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Grandmothers and Grandmothering
The Association for Research on Mothering (ARM)

May 1, 2004, York University, Toronto, Canada

The Association for Research on Mothering (ARM) invites submissions for a one day conference in honour of Mother's Day. This conference will explore, from a variety of perspectives and disciplines, the experiences, perspectives and representations of grandmothers, grandmothering and grandmotherhood. It will also examine the role and impact of older women as grandmother figures in communities and social movements, regardless of their family status. We are seeking submissions from students, activists, scholars, practitioners and artists. Cross-cultural, historical and comparative work is encouraged. We welcome a variety of submission types including academic papers, workshops, and creative submissions. The conference will open with a keynote address by Hope Edelmen, author of *Motherless Daughters* and *Mother of my Mother*.

Topics can include, but are not limited to: the impact of grandmothering on mothering; the impact of mothering on grandmothering; mothering across generations; grandmothers as primary caregivers; intergenerational maternal experiences; changing family relationships; the subjectivity of becoming a grandmother; stereotypes of grandmothers; representations of grandmothers: artistic, popular culture, media; changing views of self and by others upon becoming a grandmother; generational conflict and mothering styles; grandmothering and public policy; grandmother deities and goddesses; the crone; grandmothering and spirituality; grandmothering and sexuality; lesbian/bisexual/queer/trans grandmothers.

We welcome submissions from a variety of disciplines. If you are interested in being considered as a speaker, please send a 250 word abstract and a 50 word bio by **September 1, 2003** to: Association for Research on Mothering, 726 Atkinson College York University, 4700 Keele Street, Toronto, ON, Canada, M3J 1P3. You can call us at (416) 736-2100 x. 60366 or email us at arm@yorku.ca

For more information about ARM please visit our website at www.yorku.ca/crm One must be a member of ARM for 2003 in order to submit an abstract. Membership must be received with your submission.

COMMITTEE NEWS

THE Committee has set up an email discussion list which offers you an opportunity to network with others interested in women's history. This could include topics of research interest and 'looking for assistance'; issues about women's history in the academy, schools or the public consciousness; or simply discussions about how we approach women's history, gender history, etc. You sign up for this list on the website www.womenshistorynetwork.org

This list has about 60 members currently and has attracted some discussion, but clearly we would like to see it grow and become a useful way for all with an interest in women's history to have a discussion and networking space

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The next Steering Group Meeting is on 14 June at the Institute of Historical Research, 11.30 for 12.00. If members wish to attend, please let Fiona Reid or Jane Potter know by
emailing :committee@womenshistorynetwork.org

This will help us to ensure that we have space, since our rooms are often quite small.

THE STEERING COMMITTEE NEEDS YOU!!!

Volunteers are needed to replace members of the Steering Committee who are stepping down at the Annual Conference in September.

Term of office: two years, renewable for a further two.

If you would like your name to go forward for the ballot, please send brief details to the Convenors, Jane Potter and Fiona Reid, as soon as possible: Email: jpotter@oup.co.uk Fiona.Reid@uwe.ac.uk

NOTIFICATION TO MEMBERS OF A CHANGE OF FEE STRUCTURE FROM 01 SEPTEMBER 2003

Following discussion at last year's AGM it has been decided to raise the student/unwaged subscription rate to the WHN from £5 per annum to £10. The hike is to cover production costs of 3 copies of the new Magazine per year. It has also been decided (following comments and letters from several members) to raise the low income threshold from £10,000 to £16,000 per annum. The figure decided upon is intended to reflect the starting salary of any member in a full-time job. Institutional rates will remain the same. The new fee structure for individual members from 1 September 2003 will therefore be:

Student/unwaged	**£10**
Low income (under £16,000)	**£15**
High income	**£30**

WOMEN'S HISTORY NETWORK - FULL STEERING COMMITTEE [2002-3]

Anne ANDERSON, Yvonne BROWN, Amanda CAPERN, Krista COWMAN, Megan DOOLITTLE, Janet FINK, Anne HUGHES, Karen HUNT, Sue JOHNSON, Claire JONES, Elisabeth KLAAR, Carmen MANGION, Maureen MEIKLE, Jane POTTER, June PURVIS, Fiona REID, Debbi SIMONTON, Stephanie SPENCER, Tessa STONE.

SUBMISSION DEADLINES FOR ARTICLES FOR INCLUSION IN WHN MAGAZINE

Deadlines as follows:

Autumn 2003: 1 August
Spring 2004: 1 November
Summer 2004: 1 April

Submissions by e-mail please to the addresses below.

Our Publicity Officers

The following people should be contacted on matters relating to publicity:

Claire Jones, who concentrates on academic groups and peer reviewed material. She can be contacted by email: claire@jones5.com or at 16 Manor Farm Close, Mickle Trafford, Chester CH2 4EZ. Tel: 01244 300550; Fax: 08700 524592.

Lissy Klaar, who concentrates on the amateur and local historical groups and journals. Her contact is elisabethklaar@yahoo.co.uk

WHN Regional Organisers can request copies of this magazine to sell at conferences on a sale or return basis. Please contact Joyce Walker by e-mail (j.a.walker@abdn.ac.uk)
or c/o History Dept., University of Aberdeen, Meston Walk, Old Aberdeen AB24 3FX.

WHN CONTACTS

To submit articles or news for the WHN magazine, please contact any of the editors at the addresses below:

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Deborah Simonton, KEY Learning Opportunities, University of Aberdeen, King's College, Aberdeen AB24 3FX. Email: d.l.simonton@abdn.ac.uk

Niki Pullin, Email: Nicola.Pullin@rhul.ac.uk

For book reviews, please contact **Dr Jane Potter,** Wolfson College, Oxford, OX2 6UD. Email: jpotter@oup.co.uk

To update contact details, or for any membership inquiries including subscriptions, please contact Amanda Capern, at the following address: History Department, University of Hull, Hull, HU6 7RX Email A.L.Capern@hull.ac.uk

What is the Women's History Network?

The WHN was founded in July 1991. It is a national association concerned with promoting women's history and encouraging women interested in history. WHN business is carried out by the National Steering Committee, which is elected by the membership and meets regularly several times each year. It organises the annual conference, manages the finance and membership, and co-ordinates activities in pursuit of the aims of the WHN.

Aims of the WHN

1. To encourage contact between all people interested in women's history—in education, the media or in private research
2. To collect and publish information relating to women's history
3. To identify and comment upon all issues relating to women's history
4. To promote research into all areas of women's history
5. To establish a database of the research, teaching and study-interests of the members and other related organisations and individuals

What does the WHN do?

Annual Conference

Each year the WHN holds a national conference for WHN members and other. The conference provides everyone interested in women's history with a chance to meet and an exciting forum where new research can be aired and recent developments in the field can be shared. The Annual General Meeting of the Network takes place at the conference. The AGM discusses issues of policy and elects the National Steering Committee.

WHN Publications

WHN members receive three copies per year of the *Magazine*, which contains: articles discussing research, sources and applications of women's history; reviews of books, conferences, meetings and exhibitions; and information on calls for papers, prizes and competitions, and publication opportunities.

Joining the WHN

Annual Membership Rates (*revised cost from Sept. 2003)

Student/unwaged	£5 (*£10)	Overseas minimum	£30
Low income (*under £16,000 pa)	£15	UK Institutions	£35
High income	£30	Institutions overseas	£40

Membership Application

I would like to join / renew* my subscription to the Women's History Network. I enclose a cheque payable to Women's History Network for £ _____. (* delete as applicable)

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

Email: _____ Tel (work): _____

Tick this box if you DO NOT want your name available to publishers/conference organisers for publicity: ☐

Detach and return this form with your cheque to **Amanda Capern, at the following address: History Department, University of Hull, Hull, HU6 7RX, UK.**