SOCIAL ORDER AND WOMEN’S ROLES IN THE UTOPIAN NOVELS OF EDWARD BELLAMY, H.G. WELLS, AND CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN

Stephanee Andraea Ruiz
B.A., California State University, Sacramento, 2009

THESIS

Submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

HISTORY

at

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO

FALL
2009
SOCIAL ORDER AND WOMEN’S ROLES IN THE UTOPIAN NOVELS OF EDWARD BELLAMY, H.G. WELLS, AND CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN

A Thesis

by

Stephanee Andraea Ruiz

Approved by:

____________________________, Committee Chair
Chloe S. Burke

____________________________, Second Reader
Rebecca M. Kluchin

____________________________
Date
Student: Stephanee Andraea Ruiz

I certify that this student has met the requirements for format contained in the University format manual, and that this thesis is suitable for shelving in the Library and credit is to be awarded for the thesis.

__________________________, Graduate Coordinator
Mona L. Siegel

Date

Department of History
Abstract

of

SOCIAL ORDER AND WOMEN’S ROLES IN THE UTOPIAN NOVELS OF EDWARD BELLAMY, H.G. WELLS, AND CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN

by

Stephanee Andraea Ruiz

In Looking Backward, A Modern Utopia, and Moving the Mountain, Edward Bellamy, H.G. Wells, and Charlotte Perkins Gilman, respectively, refashioned conceptions of women’s roles as the basis for their visions of economic and social order. Although each of these authors offered his or her own method for creating new forms of social order, all started from the premise that order will follow from universal access to education, satisfying work, and a high quality of food, clothing and shelter because these provisions will allow women to fulfill their highest duty: they can become mothers to children who are healthier in mind, body, and spirit that they otherwise would be, and so continuously improve the physical, mental, and moral health of humanity.

_______________________
Chloe S. Burke, Committee Chair

_______________________
Date
DEDICATION

For Nellie Bailey Worley,
an extraordinary grandmother
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Some theses come together easily, while others take shape only after many false starts. This is one of the latter. It would never have seen the light of day without the patient effort of faculty mentors who listened to my early ideas and who provided encouragement when one after the other faltered. Chloe Burke, who agreed to be my faculty advisor almost two years ago, provided space to let me sort my ideas, while patiently, and repeatedly, helping me comprehend the aspects I kept missing. In its many stages, this thesis also needed the patient attention of editors. My father, Gordon Wood, read many early drafts, and in the final stages, Patsy Hardin stepped in, helping me understand what I was trying to say, and then making sure I said it. Any errors that remain are mine. Thank you to all of you.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dedication</th>
<th>v</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgments</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTRODUCTION</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. HISTORICAL METHOD AND CONTEXT IN BELLAMY WELLS, AND GILMAN</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <strong>LOOKING BACKWARD</strong>: WOMEN IN THE YEAR 2000</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <strong>A MODERN UTOPIA</strong>: WOMEN IN A UTOPIA-IN-PROGRESS</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. WOMEN CREATE STABILITY IN <strong>MOVING THE MOUNTAIN</strong></td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONCLUSION</strong></td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bibliography</strong></td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

Three utopian novels written between 1888 and 1911 refashioned women’s roles through improved access to education, as well as through redesigned labor and social structures. The author’s goals were to establish social order largely by allowing women to become better mothers to children who are healthy in mind, body, and spirit. The idea of imagining a perfect, or near perfect world, has a long history, with Plato’s Republic standing as an example from antiquity.\(^1\) Sir Thomas More contributed a name for the genre in his work Utopia in the early sixteenth century, with the term derived from Greek and literally meaning “no place” or, when spelled as “eutopia,” meaning “good place.”\(^2\) “Utopia” implies the existence of a community of people who have solved societal problems and created an orderly environment for its members. These presumably ideal communities are perceived as ideal only by those who share the author’s perspectives.\(^3\)

Edward Bellamy, Herbert George Wells, and Charlotte Perkins Gilman, the utopian authors who are the subject of this thesis, consciously or not, utilized conceptions of female and male gender roles, providing a basis for their imagined society, especially in the realms of education, labor, reproduction, and motherhood. Their visions for refashioned women’s roles proposed to establish economic order, with plentiful jobs and meaningful work for everyone, and social order, with an adjusted hierarchical authority structure, out of the chaos they perceived in their contemporary society. Rather than

---

inducing disorganization in social structures and thus a fragmentation of family and society, developing women’s faculties to the full, and allowing them to realize these, recreated social order, albeit in a different form than most in the nineteenth century were accustomed to seeing. In these utopian visions, such changes ended problems with the economy as well as those related to “delinquency, alcoholism, broken families, [and] national minorities.” In these utopias, everyone has a place and a role to follow. Although each of the authors discussed here offered his or her own method for creating a new form of social order, all start from the premise that order will follow from universal access to education, satisfying work, and a high quality of food, clothing, and shelter because these provisions will allow women to fulfill their highest duty: they can become mothers to children who are healthier in mind, body, and spirit than they otherwise would be, and so continuously improve the physical, mental, and moral health of humanity.

While utopian groups formed regularly from the 1780s to the present, the frequency with which utopian novels were published peaked between 1888 and 1900, a time of both social instability arising from industrialization and its attendant urbanization along with increasing literacy. This thesis concisely examines three of the over sixty-

---


five utopian novels published in the United States and Britain between 1888 and 1914:
*Looking Backward* (1888) by Edward Bellamy, *A Modern Utopia* (1905) by H.G. Wells, and *Moving the Mountain* (1911) by Charlotte Perkins Gilman. Each of these works presents a secular view of ideal world communities placed on an Earth readers at the turn of the twentieth century would have found familiar. *Looking Backward* stands as the seminal utopian work of the late nineteenth century. Subsequent utopian authors during the next three decades either expand or refute its premises, depending on their own political and social perspectives. Bellamy’s book also sparked a national political movement, became a “bestseller in the United States,” and was widely “translated into almost every language of the world.” The novel’s message even reached into the 1930s, when Ida M. Tarbell, journalist and author of the muckraking book *The History of the Standard Oil Company* (1904), wrote that no other utopia “has ever been so substantial, so realistic, so seemingly practical [as *Looking Backward*]. A dream—yes—but a dream built upon materials in our hands.”

*A Modern Utopia* and *Moving the Mountain* contribute a comparative British author and a feminist perspective, respectively, on women’s roles in utopia. These two works also represent an additional realm of public discourse on social issues. Both Wells

---


7 Bellamy;Gilman;Shurter, 17;Wells.


and Gilman wrote a combination of fiction and nonfiction during their literary careers, with these utopian novels providing an alternate method of presenting their ideas. When compared with *Looking Backward*, it becomes evident that Wells and Gilman expanded on Bellamy’s views, even as they also reflected changes in eugenic theory and practice.

In order to interpret these literary works fully, it is necessary to begin with an examination of their historical context, including that of eugenics and the centrality of reproduction to these authors’ goals. Chapter 1 begins with a discussion of cultural and literary history as methods for analyzing the works of Bellamy, Wells, and Gilman. The chapter then provides the reader with details of the changes induced in nineteenth century American and British society by industrialization and urbanization, as well as on the fears that these changes evinced and the eugenic solutions that medical professionals and scientists offered. Chapter 2 provides a brief biographical sketch of Bellamy, discusses the impact of *Looking Backward*, and provides a synopsis of the plot. This chapter then analyzes the details of economic and social structures that Bellamy provided in this work to explore the relationship between proposals for women’s roles and economic and social stability in his ideal world. Chapters 3 and 4 examine Wells and Gilman, respectively, to provide a chronological presentation of the novels. They also follow the format of Chapter 2, so that they first introduce the author and his or her life and then balance a discussion of historical context with an analysis of the novels. The Conclusion identifies patterns common to each of these works and emphasizes the attempts of the authors to create an orderly society from the chaos they experienced in their own lives by emphasizing women’s roles as mothers or as potential mothers.
Chapter 1
HISTORICAL METHOD AND CONTEXT IN BELLAMY, WELLS, AND GILMAN

Bellamy, Wells, and Gilman refashioned and reinforced cultural conceptions of women’s roles in respect to education, labor, reproduction, and motherhood to envision worlds wherein vital and vibrant women bore physically and mentally healthy children. To advance this analysis, this thesis draws on literary and cultural historical methods, and presents the real world problems of industrialization and urbanization and the fears these conditions engendered. The solutions the novelists gave drew on their understanding of socialism, gender roles, and eugenics. This chapter first discusses literary history as it relates to these novels, and then establishes the social and cultural context of the turn of the twentieth century, focusing on the societal problems related to industrialization, the fears these challenges induced, as well the solution offered by many medical professionals, political figures, and scientists: eugenics.

LITERARY HISTORY OF UTOPIAN NOVELS

Bellamy, Wells, and Gilman’s utopian novels examined here present detailed accounts of world communities that have adjusted their economic and social structures to reestablish a sense of order and security in their citizens, and in this they meet historian Lewis Mumford’s criteria for utopian novels. First, he stipulated the works must be fiction, which excludes treatises on political science. Second, the utopian work must

---

1 Lewis Mumford, The Story of Utopias (New York: Peter Smith, 1941; reprint, Boni and Liveright, Inc., 1922. Citations are to the Peter Smith edition.), 3.
“describe a particular state or community.”² These states are often recognizable as variants on existing political structures, which means that they avoid crossing the line into the genre of fantasy.³ Third, the theme needs to focus on “the political structure of that fictional state or community.”⁴ Although, as Mumford notes, the authors might use “a touch of romance or adventure” as devices to add interest, the focus must be on the structure of the world.⁵

The authors’ visions for states that had solved societal problems prodded contemporary readers to rethink how they interpreted their world and provided them with skills to navigate times of “social, political, and cultural” discord.⁶ These authors sought to open their readers’ minds to new ways of thinking about women’s roles, and prompted them to conclude that the only way to bring order out of chaos lay in reevaluating commonly held ideas about women and their roles in society.

Because the authors’ referenced their own experiences to invent their utopian societies, it is necessary to emphasize their personal experiences and the cultural milieu in which they lived to understand the content of their utopian novels. This historical approach contrasts with those studies that seek to interpret a work by looking only at its internal structure. English professor Silvia E. Bowman argued for the importance of

² Ibid.
³ Ibid., 4.
⁴ Ibid., 3.
⁵ Ibid., 5.
looking beyond the text to examine Bellamy and *Looking Backward*. She wrote, “Utopian novels can only be fully understood, appreciated, and evaluated when they have been fitted into the pattern of the author’s life and thought and have been viewed in their relationship to the political, social, and economic conditions of their period.”

English professor Chris Ferns further reinforced this idea when he argued that utopian authors remain intrinsically connected to reality; that they incorporated those aspects of social reality that they appreciated while envisioning changes in those aspects they found distasteful.

Historians such as Milton Cantor and Daniel Aaron noted the relationship between authors’ life experiences and their writings. Cantor, for example, effectively showed that Bellamy saw Chicopee Falls, MA, the idyllic town of his youth, give way to the darker side of industrialism as factories sprang up everywhere around town and the population subsequently grew. He attempts to resolve his disillusion with these changes in *Looking Backward* by envisioning a utopia that harkened back to the largely pre-industrial Chicopee Falls. Aaron placed Bellamy’s ideas and work within a proto progressive era, which Aaron thinks began in the early nineteenth century. He defined this version of progressivism as a social philosophy that sought to ameliorate the effects of industrialization rather than as the turn of the century reform movement called

---

8 Ferns, 2.
Progressivism. Aaron also noted that Bellamy was very much a product of his place and time, writing, “He was a Yankee, will all the connotations that go with that word.” This identity included worrying about being considered a “ne’er-do-well,” as people without a definite purpose were often labeled in his day. However, to resolve that nagging fear, Bellamy rationalized his lack of direction by recasting the purpose of living as not just having a single career, but simply living to the fullest degree possible by whatever means that entailed for an individual.

Another example of contextual analysis of utopian fiction is Bowman’s 1958 biography of Bellamy, where she showed that he held the idea that “woman,” in her role as child bearer, was something beyond human, but that “women,” in their role as individuals, were flawed. Bowman argued that this disparity derived largely from Bellamy’s perception that existing expectations for women’s behavior prevented them from developing intellectual acuity and from attaining economic independence. These conditions, as Bellamy saw them, left women clinging to superstitions and holding back humanity’s progress. In Looking Backward, Bellamy envisions a world that had corrected these inequities and which, as a result, had, in just a few generations, expanded women’s roles, allowing them to become the “woman” he thought they had the potential to attain. One corollary to this change was that women bore and raised physically,

---

11 Ibid., 96.
12 Ibid., 97.
13 Bowman, Year 2000, 269-297.
mentally, and morally healthy children, which then nearly eliminated criminality, with its attendant challenges to authority and order.14

Historical and literary scholar Sylvia Strauss also noted that Bellamy’s work discussed women’s roles at the same time that “scientists, philosophers, essayists, novelists, and politicians” were in conflict over women’s roles within society. Social reformers, she noted, argued in favor of an expansion of women’s activities, even as others worked to “keep women in their traditional domestic sphere, fervently believing that the preservation of civilization depended on it.”15 At the same time, middle-class women formed associations to support their aims, whether these were for or against issues such as suffrage and “free love.”16 Other groups emphasized “women’s moral influence as a force for progress,” and worked for the creation of parks and schools and for other improvements to alleviate the poor conditions of the working class.17

English professor John R. Reed and professor of social policy Jane Lewis also looked at historical and psychological contexts in their discussions of H.G. Wells and his literary endeavors. Their works enriched readers’ understanding of how an author’s experiences shape his or her beliefs about life and society and how these find expression

---

14 Bellamy, 97-98.
16 The term “free love” had several connotations. The most prominent comes from Victoria Woodhull and her campaign for the presidency in 1872. She associated free love with women’s ability to freely choose a marriage mate based on love rather than on economic necessity.
in literature. For example, Reed drew on Wells’s autobiography to demonstrate the link between his adolescent imaginings and his description of women in the Samurai, or ruling class, in *A Modern Utopia*.\(^{18}\) In the article "Intimate Relations between Men and Women: The Case of H. G. Wells and Amber Pember Reeves," Lewis discussed Wells’s comparatively liberal views on sexuality, as seen in his affair with Reeves and in his later relationships with other women. Lewis then shows how Wells’s integrated these views into works such as *In the Days of the Comet* (1906), a novel about abrupt, yet temporary, changes in society brought on by a comet passing near Earth, and in *Ann Veronica* (1909), a book about the life of a New Woman, a college-educated, confident woman who happily “initiates a sexual relationship with an older man.”\(^{19}\)

Gilman’s life also provides evidence of the connection between lived experience and literary content, again reinforcing the idea that the content of her novel can only be fully interpreted when placed in its historical context. Historian Dolores Hayden pointed out that Gilman’s father had abandoned her mother and that, consequently, Gilman, her mother, and her brother lived with various relatives during her childhood, moving “nineteen times in…eighteen years.”\(^ {20}\) Hayden also noted Gilman’s later interaction with Bellamy’s Nationalists, Socialists, and other philosophers of the day, including Sociologist Lester Ward, and who argued that humanity could only progress when

---

\(^{19}\) See Jane Lewis, "Intimate Relations between Men and Women: The Case of H. G. Wells and Amber Pember Reeves," *History Workshop* 37 (1994): 76-78.

women gained their freedom from society’s economic shackles. Hayden’s exploration of Gilman’s life allowed Hayden to connect Gilman’s experience to the development of her political beliefs as expressed in her writings. Gilman’s proposal for communal housing to help mothers care for their children, for example, takes on a greater depth of meaning in light of knowing that Gilman’s own mother struggled to provide for her children after being abandoned by her husband.21

HISTORICAL CONTEXT: PROBLEMS OF INDUSTRIALIZATION

In the late eighteenth century, industrialization arose in England as mechanical inventions made it possible to harness steam and water power to mass produce textiles and other goods, including improved agricultural implements. In America, industrialization began about one hundred years later, in the 1790s. In these two countries, as well as in other nations across Europe that also began to develop their industrial capacity, the rise of mechanical manufacture resulted in the development of factory towns. Continual innovation in mass production meant that material goods people had formerly made on their own, or purchased from their local artisans, could now be obtained for less money than before. This was a boon for consumers, but at the same time made many artisans’ work obsolete.22

Another factor in industrialization was the expansion of railway and steam ship transportation, which made shipping food over long distances profitable. One result was

21 Ibid., 183-189.
that Russia, Canada, and the United States sold their excess foodstuff to middle European countries for less money than it could be grown for in those states. This event displaced agricultural workers, who subsequently sought employment in the cities, especially in America.23

The rapid conglomeration of migrants to cities, either from the countryside or from other nations, changed the residential landscape so that rich and poor often rubbed elbows. As historian Daniel T. Rogers explains, “handsome shopping thoroughfares for the bourgeoisie [stood] by acres of pawn shops, push carts, and secondhand stores for the masses.”24 It also pointed to the need for a uniform method of supplying services to urban inhabitants. Up to this time, the middle and upper classes had contracted with private parties to provide water and to haul away their waste products.25 The poorly paid worker could not afford these services and so large areas of the city were without clean water supplies and sanitation services.

The shift to wage based labor also undermined community based support systems. In an agricultural or small town setting, people falling into economic distress likely had family or community to help them survive until their circumstances improved. In the city, no such support system existed, so that accidents or capricious factory owners and landlords could instantly deny workers shelter and wages. This unpredictability led to

23 Ibid., 49.
24 Ibid., 48.
25 Ibid.
“bread riots, urban mobbing, and peasant uprising.” Although these were not new developments, the fact that they took place in cities where the upper and lower classes mingled made them seem especially problematic.

As noted above, displaced agricultural workers migrated to cities. In late nineteenth century United States, the influx of immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe shifted population demographics in major cities from a largely homogenous to a heterogeneous grouping. The entrance of these immigrants introduced new religious customs and languages, and shifted the locus of authority from the middle or upper-class white male to figures that better represented each minority group. Britain also dealt with immigration issues, but on a smaller scale, with the Irish providing the most noticeable immigrant group during the middle portion of the nineteenth century. In the utopian novels discussed in this thesis, Bellamy and Wells made immigration little more than a footnote, assuming that problems with immigrants would diminish once their utopian economic and social policies were in place. Only Gilman directly addressed solutions to the heterogeneity of immigrants in America.

Problems deriving from industrialization fostered fears of societal chaos among social commentators and sociologists as they perceived increasing incidents of crime and

---

26 Ibid., 51.
27 Ibid.
challenges to authority by workers, youth, and women. The commentators and sociologists in Europe, England, and America framed these problems in different ways, depending on their particular concerns. In the United States and England, what many in Europe called the “Social Question” became more precisely identified as “social problems,” “social pathology,” or “social disorganization,” which denoted problems such as “delinquency, alcoholism, broken families, [and] national minorities.”\textsuperscript{30} Whether perceived or real, the foregoing problems indicated a breakdown in authority, whether from direct challenges to authority or from the absence of an authority figure in the home.

Social commentators, sociologists, and alienists, as psychiatrists were then called, also worried about death, which can be interpreted in a few ways. One of these involved physical death through suicide. In the United States, England, and Europe, many alienists attributed the increase in suicide to problems stemming from nineteenth century civilization, which for them was synonymous with industrialization and urbanization, or as they called it, modernity. Implying that industrialization broke down establish community authority, French alienist Etienne Esquirol, writing in 1820, argued that without an established, and presumably, male authority in their lives, many men’s “passions” were left ungoverned and undirected. This state of being left them susceptible to suicide when faced with life’s difficulties because they might find themselves “defenseless against the sufferings of life’s predicaments, against internal anguish, against the vicissitudes of fortune” and subject to perceiving suicide as their only

\textsuperscript{30} Fischer: 65-66.
option. Although any increase in suicide was likely more perceived than real, the commonly-held perception that incidents of suicide were more numerous led alienists in the United States, England, and Europe to translate each other’s works and to debate the issue in professional journals. The question of suicide also found its way into the popular press.

For many, the antidote to this effect of industrialization lay in a return to traditional rural hierarchical patterns where women remained focused on home and hearth and thus dependent upon men, with commentators and alienists agreeing that “familial roles [provided] the primary defense against the forces of social disintegration.” Indeed, common belief among alienists and the general populace held that women committed suicide only when they transgressed social conventions and entered into the public realm. These alienists assumed that women had a “natural” affinity for family and an inferior intellect, which supposedly made them better able than men to withstand the vicissitudes of life and so less likely than men to commit suicide as long as they remained in the private domain of home and hearth.

However, at the same time that many in the professional alienist community and in the popular press were arguing for the importance of preserving traditional hierarchical order to avoid suicides, expanding, if still limited, economic and educational

---


34 Ibid.: 470.
opportunities for women were making it easier for them to live outside of the authority of father or husband.35 Additionally, the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw the development of the “New Woman,” a term used to describe women who challenged nineteenth century middle class American and English expectations of female behavior. These women cut their hair short, “demand[ed]…access to higher education, the vote and the right to earn a decent living…[and] challeng[ed]…views of femininity and female sexuality.”36 Part of the reason these challenges to authority were such a point of contention is explained by the idea of gender, a term that is often used as a synonym for “women,” but which in its deeper context questions how a society in any given time and place define both the relationship between men and women and what it means to be a man or woman in that time and place. Studies of gender have shown that ideas about men and women and about how they should relate to each other have changed over time; that they are based on cultural needs and values rather than on innate physiological differences.37 Thus, any time women move into what men have constructed as their realm of influence, this creates a challenge to male authority and undermines their feeling of control, thus leading to perceptions of chaos.

Other challenges to the existing patriarchal authority structure came from calls for an expansion of sexual freedom for women, so that women would be in control of their


sexuality and free either to decline their husband’s sexual advances or to freely engage in unmarried sexual activity without censure from society.\textsuperscript{38} The prospect of women becoming financially independent and able to determine the course of their sexual lives not only promised to further undermine patriarchal authority, but in the interpretations of suicide which held that women committed suicide in greater numbers when they entered the male sphere, also threatened to increase the number of deaths among women who might otherwise meet ideal middle-class standards for wives and mothers.

Another fear related to death revolved around what became known as “race suicide.”\textsuperscript{39} Under this rubric, many white elites in the United States and England feared the demise of the white middle class as a source of cultural authority because they perceived a wide differential in birth rates, which seemed to follow from women abandoning white middle class values of home and hearth. These elites concluded that part of the problem came from women bearing fewer children, because they were more interested in demanding greater freedom of activity for themselves in the public sphere. As the elites interpreted the situation, the choices these women made reduced the birth rate of families in their own group was falling while the birth rate among non-elites occurred at a prodigious rate. They extrapolated that a continuance of this trend would mean the eventually end of the white elite class. The non-elites included members of the working class, as well as immigrants, especially in America because many of the latter


retained their own habits, beliefs, and mores, which introduced competing value systems in American society. Because physicians and sanitarium superintendents, among others, asserted that immigrants and working class whites were responsible for a majority of crime, and because nineteenth and early twentieth century scientific thought held that criminal tendencies were inheritable traits, many of these authority figures turned to medicine for answers.

Beginning in the 1820s, some American physicians became interested in heredity as a transmitter of criminal tendencies. In 1849, one of these, Gideon Lincecum, advocated for sterilization through castration to prevent men who committed crimes from fathering children who would presumably grow up to become criminals like themselves. Although Texas politicians did not enact his proposals, other “judges, juries, medical authorities, and vigilantes” in Texas, as well as authorities in other states forcibly sterilized numerous black men as well as “prison inmates and mental health patients” without the benefit of legal sanction in the 1860s, 1870s, and 1880s. In 1888, Orpheus Everts, superintendent at the Cincinnati Sanitarium, advocated for the castration of criminals who might otherwise transmit their criminal behavior to future generations.

---


42 Ibid., 11-12.

43 Ibid., 12.

44 Ibid., 12-13.
Additional calls for the asexualization of men and women by removing testes in men and ovaries in women became more numerous in the 1890s. Although many advocates were worried about the connection between crime and heredity, others focused on women who practiced masturbation and on those who engaged in intimate relationships with other women. In all of these situations, the individuals challenged white middle-class male authority, either by depriving the latter of their material property or their perceived property in women.

In the midst of these calls for castration to end societal chaos caused by criminals and women who challenged male authority by taking control of their own sexuality in the United States, a separate advocate for the importance of heredity came from Sir Francis Galton, a British scientific aristocrat. He also adapted ideas of heredity into a new branch of study he called “eugenics.” The term, coined in the early 1880s while Galton was writing the book *Inquiries into Human Faculty and Development* (1883), literally translates to “well born.” His works and those that followed proposed that heredity determined physical health and behavior patterns, including things like intractable poverty, criminality, and immorality. The conclusion that many scientists and others interested in heredity drew was two-fold: first, those with desirable traits, or those they labeled as “fit,” should be encouraged to reproduce; and second, those with undesirable

---

physical and behavioral traits, or those labeled “unfit,” should be prevented from reproducing. The terms that historians have used to identify these two aims are “positive” and “negative” eugenics, respectively.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many who were interested in improving humanity through reproduction also held the Lamarckian idea of inheritance, which stated that children inherited the traits that their parents acquired during their lifetime. This meant that a child born to a parent who had been maimed by an injury might pass on that characteristic to his or her children. This view continued to be popular among scientists, physicians, and the lay public in spite of the fact that biologist August Wisemann had ably refuted this belief in the 1890s.

By the late 1890s, the development of the vasectomy made it possible for physicians to render male criminals and others they declared “unfit” sterile without interfering with sexual function. Because physicians noted that castration induced depression and prevented men from fully enjoying life, the availability of the vasectomy allowed proponents of eugenic aims to present this option as a humane answer to castration and as a deterrent to reproduction. Some doctors held that “unfit” women, spontaneously developed conditions such as endometriosis and inflammation of the fallopian tubes, and so were less able to become pregnant. The potential success of

\[48\text{ Ibid., 18-19.}\]
\[49\text{ Kevles, 66.}\]
\[50\text{ Ibid., 30.}\]
\[51\text{ Largent, 28-30.}\]
these proposals promised to end societal chaos.

Bellamy, Wells, and Gilman held a combined view of genetics and environment as determiners of heredity, although they differed in the emphasis they placed on each. Bellamy, writing in 1888 before Wisemann’s refutation of Lamarckian inheritance, placed an emphasis on environment, with people making wise reproductive choices because their environment had improved. Although Wells and Gilman also envisioned ideal living and working conditions for individuals in their utopian communities, the state regulated selective reproduction in their utopias. The diversity of these authors’ approaches to establishing beneficial reproduction represents the diversity of eugenic solutions to social problems that was advocated at the turn of the twentieth century.
Chapter 2

LOOKING BACKWARD: WOMEN IN THE YEAR 2000

Reviewing Edward Bellamy’s early life, shows how his experiences shaped his writings, including his approach to economics. Born in Chicopee Falls, MA in 1850, Bellamy came from a family of Calvinist ministers. As a young adult, he spent a year in college in the United States, and then attended a university in Germany. When traveling in Europe, he observed urban living conditions, which made him acutely aware of the inequalities between classes. Upon his return to the United States, he took up the study of law, but became a “journalist and fiction writer” rather than a lawyer. Bellamy married in 1872. After becoming father to two children, he became more thoughtful about the world his children were living in, and began to apply himself to working out possible solutions to the social and economic problems that he had noted earlier in his life. According to historian Daniel Aaron, Bellamy’s journals and other writings describe a man in search of himself, a man desiring “to become a ‘success’ in the transcendental sense: that is, to enlarge his mind, develop the chords of sympathy, and to pulsate with ‘the rhythm of infinity.’” This concerted endeavor led Bellamy to write his

---

52 Madison: 444-445.
53 Ibid.: 445-446.
55 Aaron, 96.
56 Bellamy, "How I Wrote," 222.
57 Aaron, 97.
utopian work *Looking Backward* (1888), in which a young man of 1887 awakens in the year 2000 and discovers how the world has solved its problems.

The book sold briskly, with roughly 370,000 copies purchased between 1888 and 1891. Its popularity also spread beyond America’s national borders, with translations appearing in numerous languages including “French, German, Italian, and Spanish.” This work also moved beyond the realm of leisure reading, as it provided a catalyst for the formation of the Nationalists, a grass-roots political party that promoted the novel’s economic and social ideas. In addition to inspiring people to political action, *Looking Backward* also had the distinction of setting the shape for utopian novels for the next three decades in the United States and Britain, with some reinforcing Bellamy’s ideas and others challenging them. One of the latter was William Morris’ *News From Nowhere* (1890), which sought to discredit the vision of gradual and peaceful change Bellamy’s novel offered. Though both authors used socialism as a starting point, Morris held that revolution would be the only way to change society. Whether through gradual change

---

58 Shurter, 138. Shurter here reprints numbers provided by Houghton Mifflin, publishers of *Looking Backward*, in their advertisements for the book. He lists 175,000 in November 1889, with numbers increasing to 371,000 in January 1891. However, he fails to specify if the publisher was listing sales or published copies of the work.


61 Sargent, "Themes in Utopian Fiction," 279.


or revolution, the basis of socialism promised to give women more power. An in depth
examination of *Looking Backward* shows that Bellamy’s proposals for women’s roles in
education, labor, and motherhood make women’s reproduction central to his goal of
eliminating societal chaos.\(^6^4\)

*Looking Backward*, set initially in Boston in 1887, relates the experiences of the
fictional Julian West, a self-described rich, idle, and educated man, who attempts to build
a house so that he and his fiancée, Edith, can be married. Unfortunately for West, a
“series of strikes” that “had been nearly incessant ever since the great business crisis of
1873” prevents the laborers from completing the home, and delays the marriage.\(^6^5\)
Bellamy catapults his protagonist to the year 2000 by making West an insomniac who
had a subterranean sleeping room built into the family mansion that completely cut off
sound from the outside world. In addition to being encased in concrete, the room is
hermetically sealed and lined with asbestos, presumably to facilitate West’s survival.
Having consulted a hypnotist to help him sleep, West expects to be awakened by his
servant the following morning. For whatever reason, the manservant never appears, and
the protagonist sleeps through the next 113 years until new construction on the site of his
home awakens him.\(^6^6\)

Now in the year 2000, West meets Dr. Leete and his family, who are descendants
of his fiancée Edith. Throughout the rest of the novel, Dr. Leete, and to a lesser extent his

---

\(^{64}\) Bellamy, *Looking Backward*, 130; Gilman, 75, 77, 82, 86-87; Wells, 180.


\(^{66}\) Ibid., 3-4, 9-12.
daughter, who is also coincidentally named Edith, discuss with West the state of the world before and after the implementation of societal changes that created this utopia. What follows is an extensive description of an ideal world in which all the corporations and other business ventures have consolidated into “a single syndicate representing the people” and their common interests. While Bellamy does not eliminate all unpleasant work, he describes a system whereby the more arduous and unpleasant tasks require the fewest hours of labor each day, with more desirable work requiring more hours of labor. In this utopian state, the single syndicate replaced private enterprise and now supplies material everyone’s needs. The new framework ended individual profit and this, in conjunction with universally available necessities of life, dispensed with corruption and improved the overall behavior of the population. All individuals, men and women, are now employees of the one great employer, and view work as one would military service, as a duty to the state. After being educated to the age of twenty-one, men and women begin their service to the state. The first three years are spent learning “habits of obedience, subordination, and devotion to duty.” People work until the age of forty-five, at which point they retire. Machinery and an efficient use of resources virtually eliminated the need for housework, and thus also freed women to be employed by the

---

67 Ibid., 27.
68 Ibid., 32-33.
69 Ibid., 29.
70 Ibid., 59.
state, rather than tied to their individual homes and families.\textsuperscript{71} In the end, West remains in the year 2000 and looks forward to marrying Edith, thus finally getting the marriage he hoped for at the beginning of the novel.

One of the social problems Bellamy eliminated in his vision of utopia was unequal access to education. In the latter portion of the nineteenth century, the level of schooling a person received in the United States depended on the combination of state requirements and the individual’s race, class, and gender. White society often provided inadequate facilities and equipment for black children. Immigrants and working-class whites often had to send their children to work instead of to school once they were beyond the age of compulsory education, which in 1888 meant that a person might spend just five to eight years in school with most states setting school terms lengths at twelve to twenty weeks.\textsuperscript{72}

Another problem that Bellamy eliminated was lack of ready access to education for women of the middle classes. Although this class of had increasing access to colleges from the middle of the nineteenth century, they still faced difficulties.\textsuperscript{73} They could attend either all female colleges or those that matriculated men and women, although only about half the colleges that existed in 1879 were coeducational institutions. However, the equal opportunity to enter these latter colleges did not automatically grant

\textsuperscript{71} Ibid., 124.
equality of educational content. Because many school authorities assumed that men would use their skills in the public area while women would use theirs in the home, they created two separate courses of study for men and women. For example, women at the University of Wisconsin in the 1870s could only gain access to regular college curriculum if men had not already taken all the seats in the classes. They also only had access to the library on certain days so that men and women were not present in the building simultaneously.  

Part of the reason for gender-based curriculum as well as for resistance to granting women an education equal to men lay in lingering medical and scientific views of the female physiognomy. These enduring perspectives had followed from “scientific” comparisons of the “weight of the brain, the strength of the muscles, the depth of the respiration, the powers of digestion, [and] the richness of the blood, [which] established that the typical woman, wherever she appears, must be an inferior animal to the typical man, wherever he may be found.” Besides concluding that women were substandard beings, many physicians and scientists held that the development of women’s reproductive organs precluded an extensive education, as the body could only develop one aspect: the body or the mind. Because they held that women’s true purpose in life was to produce children, and not just any children, but intelligent and healthy offspring who could contribute to white civilization’s continuing survival, they argued that women


should focus on developing healthy bodies rather than educated minds.\textsuperscript{76}

To help prove this point, physicians and scientists in the latter portion of the nineteenth century created surveys designed to highlight correlations between education and reproductive dysfunctions.\textsuperscript{77} These questionnaires asked women about the duration of their education, about their occupation, and most importantly, about their experiences with menstruation, including the age of menarche and any discomfort during menstruation. Dr. Mary Putnam Jacobi, one of the roughly 400 women licensed to practice medicine in the United States in the latter portion of the nineteenth century, correlated the data and demonstrated that education had not affected these women’s health negatively.\textsuperscript{78} While some men, such as Harvard professor Edward Clarke, argued that responses to such surveys proved that college education caused “dysmenorrhea, chronic and acute overitis, prolapsus uteri, hysteria, neuralgia and the like,” others disagreed.\textsuperscript{79} In 1877, Jacobi published the book, \textit{The Question of Rest for Women During Menstruation}, in which she also used women’s responses to one of these surveys to refute the medical idea that women become unfit for work in body and mind during menstruation and so should be forced to rest at that time.

In \textit{Looking Backward}, Bellamy redresses the existing inequities in education and

\textsuperscript{76} Evans, 139.


\textsuperscript{78} Jacobi M.D., 26-63.

implicitly rejects the idea that a college education would harm women’s reproductive potential. He envisions a utopian society that educates all men and women through the age of twenty-one. His goal, as outlined in the novel, is to prepare men and women to be pleasant company for fellow citizens and to be ready for their careers in service to the nation. As Dr. Leete explains, everyone receives the “education of a gentleman” because everyone wants to “have for neighbors intelligent, companionable persons.”80 In accordance with contemporary proposals to mitigate mental strain by balancing it with physical strength training, education in Bellamy’s utopia combines mental and physical exercise in children from the age of six to twenty-one.81 The result is an improvement in people’s health. West notes that the students he saw at the university were “stalwart young men and fresh, vigorous maidens” and that this represents an improvement over what he had observed before his extended sleep.82 Unfortunately for readers, none of the characters in the novel completely explain how balancing mental and physical education creates a healthier population. Instead Dr. Leete links these improvements more to the fact that no one in utopia is either underworked, as the aristocrats had been in the past, or overworked, as the working class had been before the advent of utopia.83 However, in spite of the lack of explanation, the fact that women became healthier through the new educational model, even though their training lasted until the age of twenty-one, shows

82 Bellamy, Looking Backward, 108.
83 Ibid., 108-109.
that Bellamy’s utopian world swept away any lingering notions that women should receive only truncated educations.

While Bellamy provided women with equality in education in *Looking Backward*, his view of labor proves to be more complex, as he standardizes and minimizes working hours while limiting the scope of work available to women because he assumes that women physiology is weaker than men’s and so requires special accommodations. Whether women worked for wages or did unpaid work at home, work consumed much of their time and energies. Working-class and middle-class women who applied to enter the paid workforce were routinely offered low skilled positions and paid lower wages than were men, with women of color paid less than white women. Even the immigrant and middle-class women who entered the teaching field received only minimal wages for their efforts.84

Even though the middle-class ideal assumed that men should be able to earn a wage sufficient to care for the family and so held that a married woman should leave the workforce, the reality was that economic necessity drove numerous women to work for wages. The 1870 United States Census indicated that roughly sixteen percent of the female population over ten years of age worked for wages.85 For a majority of working-class women, marriage meant a life of wage work and domestic industry.86 Because wages were low and work sporadic, the money earned by a woman’s husband often

---

84 Clinton, 123,127.
85 Jacobi M.D., 19.
86 Jacobi: 68.
proved to be insufficient to provide for the family’s needs and so she had to either remain in the workforce or return to it periodically. Women in the middle class substituted wage work with domestic work, which often took as much time and energy as the former. Only women of the highest classes in America were freed from all work, as their families’ financial resources released them from wage work and provided funds sufficient to hire domestic workers to care for their homes.

Wage differentials in the United States contributed to the challenges working-class and middle-class women faced in the workforce. Factory owners and managers routinely hired women for positions that required little skill, and then justified paying them lower wages than men because their work needed no special abilities to complete. Cultural values also degraded women’s work, and resulted in lower wages as the middle and upper class norms that called for women to leave the workforce upon marriage began to be applied to working-class women even though economic realities made this an impossible goal for the majority of them. The application of this ideal meant that hiring managers could claim that women were only temporary workers and so did not deserve higher wages. Even where men and women did the same work, women usually earned only half the amount paid to men.

---

88 Jacobi: 68.
90 Dubofsky, 23.
An additional difficulty for women revolved around the idea that a woman’s wage belonged to her father or her husband, rather to herself, so that unless specifically prohibited by law, men could legally appropriate their wives’ and daughters’ wages. While the reality was that many women did exercise control over their own wages, as for example in the state of Illinois, where they were granted that right in 1869, women in states without this protection were at the mercy of men’s monetary largesse.\textsuperscript{91} American law as adopted from English common law justified the denial of a married woman’s right to ownership of her wages under the principle of \textit{feme covert}, a term that implied that a woman’s legal identity was “covered” by her husband upon marriage. Thus, her earnings were hers only as far as her husband allowed or as regional statutes decreed.\textsuperscript{92}

In \textit{Looking Backward}, Bellamy rejected the middle-class notion that married women should work exclusively in the domestic sphere rather than working for wages. While his vision of utopia eliminated economic classes, it can be said that he proposed to “balance” the workload across the classes, so that there would no longer be a class-based disparity in working hours. This meant that working-class women would work fewer hours, while middle and upper-class women would work more hours. However, he also eliminated unpaid domestic work for all women by assuming that mechanization and centralization of cooking and dining as well as of laundry and clothing repair would nearly eliminate the need for housework, although none of the characters in the book

\textsuperscript{91} Clinton, 139.

\textsuperscript{92} David Stewart, "Married Women Traders," \textit{The American Law Register (1852-1891)} 33, no. 6 (1885): 353-363.
explain who does the little work that remains. Bellamy shifts the load for food service from women to men at the beginning of their industrial careers.93

In the year 2000, all people living in utopia earn equal economic remuneration. This means that everyone, men, women, the infirm, and immigrants, receive the same amount of credit annually to care for their needs and wants. To accomplish this, the governing syndicate apportions the gross national product equally among the population by providing everyone with a credit card at the beginning of the year.94 The card holder then presents the card as payment for purchases, and a clerk marks off on the card the value of the goods or services procured. People may spend their allotment as they wish, so long as they do so responsibly.95 Dr. Leete explains that any who cannot manage their annual allotment might be paid in smaller installments, or “not be permitted to handle it all,” but offers no specific examples, implying that only the rarest of individuals would need financial supervision.96

Equal remuneration also repudiated the legal concept of feme covert, making women independent legal entities, fully entitled to control over their earnings and to payment made specifically to them while they were engaged in industrial work, as well as during times of pregnancy and child rearing. This new custom of paying women directly

93 Bellamy, Looking Backward, 56,57-58,59,63,65,70,76.
94 Note that Bellamy does not include an explanation for how the syndicate handles children, so there is no internal indication about whether infants also receive an annual allotment or, in not, how parents apportion childrearing expenses.
95 Bellamy, Looking Backward, 42.
96 Ibid., 43.
demonstrates that this utopian society values women and their reproductive abilities, which contrasts sharply with existing conditions nineteenth-century America. At that time women either needed to marry men who could provide for them and their children, or had to continue working as long as possible during pregnancy so as to minimize the loss of wages.

While Bellamy’s vision of utopia offers equal education and remuneration for work, it also reinforces nineteenth century views of women’s “weaker” biology and the related arguments that they were only suited for certain fields of economic endeavor. One example of these ideas can be found in the field of jurisprudence. In the late nineteenth century, some women were able to complete schooling to practice law, but were denied a license to practice because the men who granted admittance to the bar thought women’s constitutions were not made for handling criminal cases. One example is the 1872 case of *Bradwell v. Illinois*, wherein the United States Supreme Court upheld the Illinois state’s denial of Myra Bradwell’s admittance to the bar to practice law because she was a woman. Justice Bradley’s comments provide insight into one strand of thought about women’s fitness for certain kinds of labor. He wrote, “civil law, as well as nature herself, has always recognized a wide difference in the respective spheres and destinies of man and woman. Man is, or should be, woman’s protector and defender. The natural and proper timidity and delicacy which belongs to the female sex evidently unfits it for many of the occupations of civil life.”  

---

97 Bradwell v. Illinois, 83 U.S. 130 (1873).
state statutes to allow women to practice law in 1872 in spite of the Supreme Court ruling, discrimination against women in the field continued into the twentieth century.98

Bellamy’s utopia incorporated the idea that women’s physiology determined the type and duration of work most suitable for them. In *Looking Backward*, Dr. Leete explains that women make up a separate force within the industrial workforce, calling them “an allied force rather than an integral part of the army of men.”99 He also says they are “under an entirely different discipline” than men and justifies this organizational structure by calling on cultural ideas that many of Bellamy’s readers would have readily accepted. Dr. Leete explains:

Women being inferior in strength to men, and further disqualified industrially in special ways, the kinds of occupation reserved for them, and the conditions under which they pursue them, have reference to these facts. The heavier sorts of work are everywhere reserved for men, the lighter occupations for women. Under no circumstances is a woman permitted to follow any employment not perfectly adapted, both as to kind and degree of labor, to her sex. Moreover, the hours of women’s work are considerably shorter than those of men’s, more frequent vacations are granted, and the most careful provision is made for rest when needed.100

Although Bellamy failed to include details about the fields unsuitable for women as well as who would specify these types of work, he demonstrated an interest common among his contemporaries about women’s health and work because as Dr. Leete tells West, women are the “wardens of the world to come, to whose keeping the keys of the

---

98 Clinton, 139.
future are confided.”¹⁰¹ He says that they fulfill their obligations to humanity by choosing their husbands and thus, the fathers of their children, as if these were sacred duties. This means that women avoid marrying men “who have failed to acquit themselves creditably in the work of life.”¹⁰² Indeed, only the woman “with a very evil sort of courage…[would] defy the opinion of her generation” and marry a man who has failed to contribute generously to society through his work. Instead, the most sought after men are “those who have risen above their fellows by the solidity or brilliance of their services to humanity.”¹⁰³

The goal of these societal expectations for women and men is to allow the law of natural selection to operate unhindered, so that “for the first time in human history the principle of sexual selection, with its tendency to preserve and transmit the better types of the race, and let the inferior types drop out, has unhindered operation.”¹⁰⁴ This idea of improving humanity through careful reproduction also had a corollary in Bellamy’s nineteenth century America. Beyond physician Gideon Lincecum and Superintendent of the Cincinnati Sanitarium, Orpheus Everts’s promotion, of castration to prevent criminals from reproducing, researchers in the 1870s began collecting “family studies,” which seemed to indicate that traits such as “pauperism, prostitution, insanity, and crime” were

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 131.
¹⁰² Ibid., 128-129,130,131.
¹⁰³ Ibid., 130, 131.
¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 129. For Bellamy, inferiority derived from a failure to cultivate middle-class characteristics. He does not directly link physical inferiority with reproductive inferiority in the novel. See p. 130.
inherited characteristics.\textsuperscript{105} One of the most famous reports that came from these family pedigrees was the case of the Juke family. Presented to the New York legislature in 1874, the researcher, Richard L. Dugdale, concluded that criminality was inherited, but in accord with Lamarckian genetics, argued that most cases could be prevented through changes in people’s physical environment. In the few remaining cases that did not respond to improvements in living conditions, he argued that individuals should be prevented from reproducing.\textsuperscript{106}

In \textit{Looking Backward}, Bellamy appears to agree with this view, as he has Dr. Leete explain that changing the environment to provide abundant resources to everyone has virtually eliminated criminality. People now consider any crime committed to be a manifestation of an inherited trait, and so the person exhibiting such behavior is subject to medical treatment.\textsuperscript{107} However, the inclusion of the idea of sexual selection in \textit{Looking Backward} incorporates the other common argument that humanity could only improve through careful reproduction.

Bellamy imagined a fictional world with universal education and equal annual income to improve the quality of neighbors and children, but reified beliefs about physical inequalities between men and women so that this ideal society still honored some aspects of perceived innate differentiation between men and women. However, he

\textsuperscript{106} Paul, 42-44.  
\textsuperscript{107} Bellamy, \textit{Looking Backward}, 97-98.}
expanded on women’s roles as reproducers, instilling value in that role. He linked reproduction to education, labor, and motherhood. Bellamy promoted the idea that attaining a university level education is not harmful to women’s reproduction, and that when mental and physical training are balanced, the result is a vibrantly healthy female. He promoted the idea that reduced workloads combined with “appropriate” career fields protected women’s health while contributing to their value as mothers, which in turn contributed to the public wheal by raising physically and morally healthy children. This was so important to Bellamy that he continued to pay women their annual allotment even when they withdrew from the workforce to raise their children. This custom, along with improvements in living conditions and an end to material want contributed to a restoration of social order. Bellamy thus clearly expressed Lamarkian ideas. Bellamy’s work suggests the application of these ideas in society produces social order. Children born in this new environment are no longer impelled by genetic defect to commit crime, so society is not threatened by delinquency. When these “improved” children reach the age of twenty-one, they begin their industrial careers with a three-year course of instruction in obedience and work habits, which they appear to respond to favorably.

In the twentieth century, H.G. Wells and Charlotte Perkins Gilman articulated their own visions of utopia, with Gilman having started her public speaking career in one of Bellamy’s Nationalist clubs. While both Wells and Gilman diverged from Bellamy’s vision of utopia in his conception of economics, they agreed with Bellamy on

108 Hayden, 184.
points of providing expanded opportunities for women. Their goal, like Bellamy’s was to make it possible for society to advance through selective reproduction. Unlike Bellamy, *A Modern Utopia* and *Moving the Mountain* reflect the coercive reproductive views that were increasingly popular after the turn of the century in America, as both Wells and Gilman incorporated specific tenets of this social and scientific ideology.
Chapter 3

A MODERN UTOPIA: WOMEN IN A UTOPIA-IN-PROGRESS

In 1905, seventeen years after Edward Bellamy published Looking Backward, H.G. Wells presented his ideal world in A Modern Utopia. This work expanded on his ideas about the shape of the future that he first presented in 1902 in Anticipations of the Reaction of Mechanical and Scientific Progress upon Human Life and Thought and in 1903 in Mankind in the Making.¹ Where Wells purposely eschewed a fictional format in favor of providing a contemplation of the future in light of the “scientific method” in Anticipations, he presented his expanded ideas through fiction in A Modern Utopia. He used the literary format to explore his ideas from the perspectives of various characters in his work.² A contextual examination of Wells’s ideas regarding education, labor, motherhood, and reproduction expressed in A Modern Utopia in light of Anticipations and Mankind in the Making, shows that Wells, like Bellamy, both refashioned and reinforced women’s roles to formulate his vision of an orderly society.

In his own life, Wells found it difficult to achieve the education that many men from wealthier backgrounds took for granted. He was born in 1866 in Bromley, Kent to a family of the “lowest level of the middle class.”³ His mother was a housewife when Wells was born, but soon after his father fell and broke his leg. This injury made it

² See Wells, Anticipations. See also Wells, Modern Utopia, xxx,xxix.
difficult for him to support the family, and so Wells’s mother, Sarah, eventually returned to work as a ladies’ maid. She found a position working for the same woman she had served before marrying Wells’s father.4

When Wells broke his leg at the age of seven and spent several weeks in bed recovering, his father obtained two books from the library to help keep his mind occupied, which, his biographer noted, greatly influenced the course of his life. One of the works was the English natural history writer John George Wood’s *The Illustrated Natural History*; the other was a book on astronomy. The former book made him yearn to learn more, but because of his family’s financial status, he had to be creative in pursuing the education he desired.

Although Wells was able to attend a few private schools, these did not fulfill his educational ambitions, so he cajoled his parents until they revoked his apprenticeship to a draper so that he could attend Midhurst Grammar School both as a student and as an assistant teacher to pay for his classes. He went on to attend the Normal School of Science at South Kensington at eighteen years old, where he studied the physical and biological sciences and then took a teaching job. The effects of another injury suffered at school convinced physicians he had tuberculosis, and as he was convalescing, he decided to make a living from writing, although he continued teaching for a time.5 Wells eventually wrote both fiction and nonfiction, including such works as *The Time Machine*

---

4 Ibid., 4-5.

(1895) and *An Outline of History* (1921), and like many of his English contemporaries, favored socialism as a valuable form of government. His works were generally well received in the United States and Britain. *A Modern Utopia* was reviewed in *The New York Times* and also scholarly journals, such as *The Journal of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Methods*, and *The International Journal of Ethics.*

Wells also openly engaged in numerous intimate affairs with women, several of whom, in the fashion of the “New Woman,” pursued him even though he was already married. From these relationships came three children from three different women. Wells married twice, first to a cousin named Isabel, whom he divorced after they had grown apart intellectually, and second to Amy Catherine Robbins, whom he called Jane, a student he had met at the Correspondence College where he worked. Then, between 1908 and 1910, while still married to Jane, Wells began an intimate relationship with Amber Pember Reeves, a young woman in the Fabian Socialist group, who by all accounts openly pursued a relationship with Wells. He had a child by her, and after she accepted another man’s marriage proposal, to hide the fact that she had become pregnant...
out of wedlock, she and Wells continued to see each other for a short time. Even though Wells and his wife remained married, he had additional affairs. That he was vocal about his belief in sexual equality for women is made clear by historian Jane Lewis as well as by one of his biographers, historian David C. Smith.10 Lewis explained that Wells expressed his views about sexuality in a lecture for the Fabian Society in 1906, and made them clear that same year in the novel *In the Days of the Comet*. At least one journalist responded with criticism in a *Times Literary Supplement* and Wells’s proposals became an issue in British politics the next year. Undeterred, Wells wrote about his affair with Reeves in 1908 in the novel *Ann Veronica.¹¹*

His life course and his fiction illustrated one aspect of gender relations in Victorian London. Even though Wells advocated a more open sexuality for men and women than middle-class society overtly allowed, he largely remained true to social mores. As Lewis explained in her article about Wells’s affair with Reeves, for all his protestations of challenging sexual standards, Wells “effectively follow[ed] the Victorian pattern he sought to reject: keeping a chaste wife and [a] passionate mistress, the only difference being his willingness to admit the existence of the latter.”¹² Wells’s incorporated his visions of a freer sexuality into *A Modern Utopia* when he presented a utopia were women could form sexual relationships outside of marriage without violating cultural mores as part of his improved social structure, although eugenic goals triumphed

---

10 See Lewis and Smith.
11 Lewis: 77.
12 Ibid.: 76-83,85,89.
over sexual freedom for married women, because the latter were to become the mothers to future generations and had to bear children only to the man to whom they are legally bound.\textsuperscript{13}

As a vehicle for the expression of his ideas in \textit{A Modern Utopia}, Wells created the characters of a narrator and his botanist friend, who, while traveling through Switzerland, suddenly find themselves transported to a parallel Earth. The narrator spends the remainder of the work alternating between a discussion of conditions on the original and parallel Earth and relating events of their travels in the other world. Wells’s develops the work topically and chronologically, using his narrator to discuss the state of society in the new world in the first chapter. Then, in subsequent chapters, Wells chooses a topic and uses his characters as vehicles for expressing his ideas. His chapters address such details as individual freedoms, utopian economics, nature, failure, women, government, and race. Each of these topics receives attention as the companions travel through this utopian Europe and Britain. In the end, the narrator and his friend find themselves back on the original Earth.\textsuperscript{14}

In this novel, people in the parallel utopian world are physically the same as on the original Earth, but with different “traditions, ideals, ideas, and purposes.”\textsuperscript{15} The narrator assumes that the inhabitants are people “with infirmities like our own,” subject to

\textsuperscript{13} Wells, \textit{Modern Utopia}, 194-195.

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., 366. Note that each of the topics listed is contained within a chapter in the novel.

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., 16,23-24.
vagaries of nature, “antagonistic diseases, and inimical beasts and vermin.”\textsuperscript{16} What Wells changes in his individuals, fully admitting to following in the footsteps of earlier utopian authors, including Bellamy, is the ability for people to have a new set of assumptions about cultural, social, and political structures.\textsuperscript{17}

Wells, like Bellamy, promoted universal education, with his proposals challenging existing Victorian English standards.\textsuperscript{18} These approaches to education helped to explain the difficulty Wells had in obtaining the extensive education he desired, and sheds light on his educational proposals. In England, the school system was stratified, so the level of education a child received depended upon his or her class, with children of poor parents receiving only a minimal education from church-run institutions. Evidently girls of the working-class received some education once the government made attendance mandatory, as for example, the 1876 reform law which stipulated that minors had to attend school until the age of twelve unless they could prove that they had attained a minimum level of knowledge. As the government only partially funded these schools, parents had to pay for their children’s education until 1891, when the government rescinded the fees. One consistent problem, at least according to Wells, was that the goal of education was to provide only enough knowledge for members of the working-class to succeed at tasks specific to their social standing. Authorities wanted to avoid providing an education that could help the poor to escape their place in the social hierarchy. Even

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., 7,30.

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., 9.

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., 50,60,70,149,151.
after the turn of the twentieth century, the 1902 Balfour Act, which promised additional educational reforms, continued to reinforce class boundaries.\textsuperscript{19}

In \textit{Anticipations}, Wells challenges contemporary views of education when he writes that the goal of education should be “the preparation for the life of mental activity in which the citizen of the coming state will live.”\textsuperscript{20} This included creating an educational system that would facilitate open discussion and debate over “general question[s] of real and practical interest and complicated reference.”\textsuperscript{21} In Wells’s experiences, access to education would have allowed him to learn all he wanted without needing to start his working life as a draper’s apprentice, which he hated.

The economic and social structure Wells envisions in \textit{A Modern Utopia} also contributes to social order. In this alternate world, the government provides a living wage for even the most menial workers, ensuring everyone at least a minimum standard of living as well as a measure of dignity and respect. This is far different from what most workers experienced in the early twentieth century in Britain, especially those without specific trades. As in the United States, these unskilled workers dealt with low wages and intermittent employment, leaving them close to poverty.\textsuperscript{22} In contrast, Wells establishes a living minimum wage for workers in his utopia, which creates a standard of living that


\textsuperscript{20} Wells, \textit{Anticipations}, 292.

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., n295.

\textsuperscript{22} David Kinley, \textit{British Labor Conditions and Legislation during the War} (New York: Oxford University Press, 1919), 4.
allows even the meanest of workers, men and women alike, to live “in comfort and
decency…[and with enough to] pay his small insurance premium against disease, death,
disablement, or ripening years, and have a margin for clothing and other personal
expenses.”23 Although he notes that his work refers to the masculine pronoun, he assures
his readers that he really means men and women. He writes, “‘He’ indeed is to be read as
‘He and She’ in all that goes before.”24

In *A Modern Utopia*, Wells envisions an alternate route to economic security for
married women. Because mothers stay at home with their children, the state provides
them with a stipend at the point of the birth of their first child, even paying them a higher
stipend for when “the child…rises markedly above certain minimum qualifications,
physical or mental.”25 The payment demonstrates the value Wells places on motherhood
because it “in fact, does its best to make thoroughly efficient motherhood a profession
worth following.”26 As in Bellamy’s utopia, this represents a significant revision of
existing customs and an acknowledgment of the value of women’s reproductive labor.
Had the British government made these provisions, Wells’s own mother would have been
able to avoid returning to domestic service after his father became disabled. However,
Wells allows that some women would not want to take on child rearing duties full time,

---

24 Ibid., 186.
25 Ibid., 188.
26 Ibid.
so if mothers in this utopia can afford a suitable alternative, presumably a wet nurse and governess, he allows them to return to work.

Working conditions in Wells’s utopia are also generally better than what most people experienced in reality. Rather than long hours living and working in the midst of the industrial city, Wells envisions the physically dirtier and less desirable industries being located apart from living areas. Thus, in the “regions of mining and smelting, black with smoke of furnaces and gashed and desolated by mines….men will come thither and work for a spell and return to civilization again, washing and changing their attire in the swift gliding train.”27 This working structure protects the children by separating the industrial world from the living world. Indeed, he proposes to a dual taxation system that remits taxes for parents who locate their children in idyllic settings.28

Outside of heavy industry, he provides an example of comfortable working conditions. When the narrator and his friend apply for work at the local Public Office, the government worker sends them to a small manufactory where they finish woodcarvings. Machines do the rough work, and then the laborers complete the efforts. They work just a half-day and, since it is summer in the novel, the “shed lies open at either end,” presumably to allow for airflow and to provide some measure of comfort for the workers.29 The employer, too, provides a friendly environment as he takes a personal interest in the workers and the product, rather than seeing the employees as an

27 Ibid., 49.
28 Ibid.
29 Ibid., 221-222.
anonymous means to his financial ends. Wells writes, “[Our employer] walks about the workshop, stopping to laugh at this production or praise that, [and] one is reminded inevitably of an art school. Every now and then he carves a little himself or makes a sketch or departs to the machinery to order some change in the rough shapes it is turning out.”

Even though the manager sets a standard for the number of items the worker needs to complete each day, Wells gives workers the ability negotiate a number either greater or lower than the expected level.

Wells did not provide a corresponding example for women’s labor in his utopia, so even though he was advocating changes for women, his focus in labor remained on men. When he chose to use the masculine pronoun, he made women largely invisible throughout the book. In spite of this seeming lack of presence, however, Wells made provisions for women to be part of the leadership of his utopian world. He envisions the creation of a select group of especially intellectually minded men and women who can also meet additional restrictive personal standards of behavior. He calls this group the Samurai and the governors of utopia come from members in this body. This idea that women could rule was, like the idea of paying women for their reproductive work, a radical idea.

Wells provides more details about women in matters of sexuality and reproduction than he did in aspects of education and labor. People of his utopia directly

30 Ibid.
31 Ibid., 221.
incorporate eugenic principles into their lives. The majority will never meet minimum financial and physical standards sufficient to permit them to marry and reproduce. Disqualifying characteristics include people who are “idiots and lunatics…perverse and incompetent persons…people of weak character who become drunkards, drug takers, and the like…[as well as] persons tainted with certain foul and transmissible diseases.”

Although he lists these types of people as “unfit,” he fails to define his interpretation of these words, implying that the concept was so familiar to his readers that they did not require any detailed explanation.

Wells assumes that the government would identify such persons, without specifying exactly what kind of person would do this work. He does, however, indirectly criticize eugenicists of his own day when he notes individuals would not be hastily deemed unfit “by a number of zealous half-educated people in a state of panic at a quite imaginary ‘Rapid Multiplication of the Unfit.’”

He appears, here, to prefer deliberation and indicates a preference for working with individuals before separating them from the general populace on islands. According to Wells’ narrator, the eventual segregation of those who cannot, or who choose not, to meet to this utopia’s standards keeps the general population safe from those who would harm others and small enough to be sure that the

32 Ibid., 141-142.
33 Ibid., 142-143
government could provide the minimum standard of living it promises to everyone. It would also help to assure that children would survive to reach old age.34

In spite of desiring to be more deliberate in actions than many eugenicists of his own day, Wells incorporates the rather extreme notion of euthanasia for any infant born “deformed and monstrous and [any] evilly \textit{sic} diseased births.”35 Again, he fails to specify what conditions he was referring to, but this along with his ideas of segregation for those he deems a danger to the population, clearly establishes the coercive nature of the utopian state. He justifies this policy of euthanasia by calling on economics: the state promises to care for all its citizens and will do so if they become disabled during their lifetime, but will not take on the responsibility of a person born with specific diseases or disorders.36 These state stipulations imply that Wells valued the community over the individual. It is also worthy of note that he denied that this state would ever kill an adult who proved to be unfit, but had no such compunction toward infants. In this, he seems to assume that adults, including the parents of the infant, would agree with this stipulation, or at least would have no objection to having an “unfit” infant killed.37

34 Ibid., 142,152,185-186.
36 Ibid., 143-144
37 Although a detailed examination of this question of infant euthanasia is outside the scope of this thesis, it does raise the question of when Wells thought an infant old enough to be considered a “citizen” to be protected rather than rejected and by what means he would ensure that citizens would agree to the euthanasia of deformed infants.
The cultural values of this utopia assume that men and women are sexual beings, so as long as individuals avoid pregnancy, men and women are free to form any sort and number of relationships they choose, including polyandry and polygamy.\(^{38}\) Although Wells did not directly discuss methods that people would use to prevent conception, he did support the dissemination of information on birth control in his own life, so presumably he meant that citizens of his utopia would actively utilize birth control technology.\(^{39}\) If whatever method of contraception couples use fails and a child results, the government encourages personal responsibility and social order by stipulating that parents must make a “life assurance” payment to the State to provide for their children’s needs.\(^{40}\) Thus, those who fail to meet the standards of fitness and who have children must repay the debt for their child’s care to society. In *The Making of Mankind*, Wells proposes that parents must pay this monetary debt through their work by providing a minimum standard of living for their children, and that parents who cannot or will not do so would find themselves in celibate labor camps until they repaid society for having to provide this care in their stead. He also saw these requirements as a means of restricting continual reproduction by those least capable of securing the economic and emotional welfare of their children, ensuring that parents would find themselves confined in camps where they could not continue to reproduce. Although Wells remained somewhat vague


\(^{39}\) Smith, 365-367.

in his descriptions of these separate communities, he proffered the idea that areas could be set aside where people who fell into this category could live. If a means could be found to keep them from continuing to reproduce, although here again, he failed to specify a method, then men and women could live together in these places. Otherwise he concludes that men and women would need to be segregated. 41

Wells’s proposals for sexual freedom for those who could avoid unsanctioned reproduction ran counter to objections from a number of women, including nineteenth century feminists, who argued that relaxing sexual standards among middle-class women would reduce social pressures on a man to take responsibility for any children he might father. 42 Because women bore the children, and because they were most often financially dependent on men, a child born out of wedlock became the woman’s and her family’s problem. Wells’s own life demonstrated this. He fathered three children outside of marriage, and although he remained in close contact with their mothers, they had to find their own way after their sexual relationship with Wells ended. 43 Had he been a citizen in his utopia, he would have had to provide for his children financially.

While the majority of people in his utopia would not meet the qualifications to reproduce, those who do prove themselves able to earn more than the minimum wage, who have reached a minimum age, who have “a certain minimum of physical

---

41 Wells, Mankind in the Making.
43 Lewis: 79;Smith, 361-367.
development, and are free from any transmissible disease” can apply to for a marriage license. Although Wells wrote that men should be in their late twenties and women at least twenty-one before marriage, he fails to specify his criteria for physical development and transmissible diseases. This again leaves the reader to substitute his or her own meaning of “fitness.”

Another dimension of Wells’s representation of sexuality in *A Modern Utopia* revolves around the arrangement of monogamous marriage. Wells notes that many marriages are unhappy arrangements, so his solution makes marriage a relatively unique rather than nearly universal occurrence. In order to assure that the children a married woman bears are the progeny of the man the state agreed to allow her to marry, marriage rescinds sexual freedom for women. If a married woman enters into a sexual relationship with another man and children result, the State will invariably invalidate the marriage. It also will release the husband from financial responsibility for her children, and will refuse to provide for them from the government treasury. Although this policy would seem to negate Wells’s ideas of state support for all citizens, it appeared that this harsh provision was designed to deter married women from forming extramarital affairs. This idea also demonstrates that Wells failed to consider that a married woman might continue a sexual relationship with her husband as well as a lover. In this he seems to assume that middle to upper class women can only have one sexual partner at a time. Since it seems

---

likely that he understood that prostitutes have multiple sexual partners, and since presumably women must meet the same wage requirements as men to qualify for marriage this means that he melded Victorian middle class morality into marriage.

Upholding the sexual double standard in this case, Wells cements Victorian sexual standards for males. While he requires fidelity from women, he places no such stipulation for faithfulness on the part of the husband. However, he grants women a range of control in her married life by allowing her to divorce a husband who conducts affairs. These provisions mean that a woman who meets utopian standards for marriage and reproduction has more control in the marriage than does the husband because she has the option of divorcing a spouse who cannot demonstrate sexual self-control. She can choose whether to remain with him or to seek another suitable partner. Where it becomes obvious that a woman has failed in her fidelity, the state gives no such control to the husband. The marriage in that case is automatically revoked; the husband has no choice to stay with his wife if he chooses to.

Wells also demonstrates concern for spouses and for the welfare of children who may result from marriage by including provisions for the dissolution of a marriage in cases of infertility or desertion. Although these means of escape from a marriage were not unfamiliar to Wells, he also incorporates eugenics into additional grounds for divorce. In this, he allows that a person can become a poor marriage partner and potential parent
by allowing for divorce on the grounds of “the development of any disqualifying habit, [including] drunkenness, or drug-taking…or any serious crime or acts of violence.”

Part of Wells’s regulations on reproduction seeks to slow population growth, especially among the group he considers “unfit.” In referring to Thomas Malthus’s ideas on the necessity of population control, Wells expresses the idea that the state’s certification process would increase the number of children born to those who exhibit desirable physical traits and economic success while decreasing the number born to those who fail to meet these standards. In this he reflects twentieth century eugenic arguments against the unchecked propagation of people with undesirable qualities and for the increased reproduction among those with desirable qualities.

Wells’s vision of utopia improved women’s daily lives, as it assured that they would earn at least a living wage. It assumed that women were sexual beings, so that those who were not permitted to marry were allowed to form sexual relationships as they saw fit. If women were allowed to marry, the state placed a high value on their role as mothers, paying them to have children, and even increasing the amount when the children excelled physically and mentally. In return, and to promote eugenic aims, this utopia required that married women remain sexually faithful to their husbands. That the focus on women revolved around reproduction and that the utopian community endorsed eugenic

---

48 See Kevles, 88.
aims indicates that Wells placed a high value on women’s reproduction. That Wells incorporated women into the governing structure also shows that his vision of utopia presented women as capable of taking on public duties as well as being mothers.

It also redefined hierarchies so that rather than have distinctions based on anatomical sex, so that any who demonstrated fitness in body and mind could excel in Wells’s society. With these proposals for his utopian society, Wells offered a class based vision of social order. The difference between his own Victorian world and this utopian vision lay in imposing a eugenic reproductive structure on society. His provisions keep the masses content by providing a minimum standard of living along with access to sex for both men and women while assuring that they stop reproducing in prodigious numbers. He then leaves the “fittest” to reproduce and govern, which assures that society is managed by those most capable of making beneficial choices for everyone and thus producing order out of chaos.

Wells’s choice to impose selective reproduction and to have the state segregate adults who continuously violated its reproductive laws and to euthanize infants with physical deformities demonstrates that Wells envisioned a coercive state that favored eugenics. At the same time, his comments and proposals showed that he rejected a reductionist eugenic determinism that called for all people with the slightest manifestation of “unfitness” to be prevented from reproducing. Rather than instantly segregating an adult who violated the utopian state’s laws, he stipulated that the government would attempt to rehabilitate the person first. Wells thus attempted to
moderate his coercive state. He tried to keep the general population pacified by offering them the freedom of sexual intimacy, but in return he set restrictions on reproduction and stipulated that the state had first priority in establishing the “fitness” of infants.

Gilman’s utopia, published six years after *A Modern Utopia*, envisioned a world motivated to change by women who became aware of their potential and who became men’s equals. Her state also has elements of coercion, and like Wells, structures her utopia to have order follow from the implementation of selective reproduction. Like Bellamy and Wells, Gilman’s early life shaped her views of what contributed to and detracted from an orderly and healthy population. Perhaps not surprisingly, her perspectives on society’s constraints on women contributed to a utopian novel that focused on women and which provided them greater opportunities than either Bellamy or Wells envisioned.
Chapter 4

WOMEN CREATE STABILITY IN MOVING THE MOUNTAIN

Charlotte Perkins Gilman, a supporter of socialism, a prolific writer and speaker, a promoter of women’s rights, and a woman who suffered from the nineteenth-century illness known as neurasthenia, wrote numerous works during her lifetime, including her treatise on the subjugation of women through economics in *Women and Economics* (1898).¹ She started her public career as a speaker for Edward Bellamy’s Nationalists, then joined the Fabian Socialists, and embraced sociologist Lester F. Ward’s theories on men and women, which argued that women were more important than men in reproducing inheritable traits.² As part of her literary endeavors, Gilman wrote *Moving the Mountain*, a work that frames an ideal world around women’s expanded consciousness and which, in the realms of education, labor, motherhood, and reproduction, clearly remakes conceptions of women’s roles to create order from chaos.

In *Moving the Mountain*, women move beyond home and hearth and act as the primary actors in the creation and maintenance of social order by assuming public authority.³ According to literary scholar Minna Doskow, this woman-centered view “opened a new chapter in the utopian literary corpus” and introduced a “unique vision to

---


utopian literature and social transformation."\textsuperscript{4} A brief review of Gilman’s early life provides a general contextualization of her perspectives on women as vital contributors to social order.

Gilman was born on July 3, 1860, and early in her life, experienced the difficulties that gender inequities could impose on a family. Her father, grandson to the well-known minister Dr. Lyman Beecher, and brother to Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of the anti-slavery novel \textit{Uncle Tom’s Cabin}, abandoned the family when Gilman was four. Because he failed to provide monetary support for his family, Gilman, along with her mother and brother, moved constantly, living on the charity of family and in near poverty for most of her youth. However, by the age of twenty-one, due in part to the fact that her absent father had provided her with reading material and an unstructured education, if not financial assistance, she was supporting herself by working sixteen-hour days in various avenues of employment, including “painting, teaching, and drawing.”\textsuperscript{5}

As an adult, Gilman felt ambivalent about marriage and motherhood, but, at the age of twenty-four, agreed to marry Charles Walter Stetson after deliberating on his proposal for two years.\textsuperscript{6} Although she wrote in her autobiography that she looked forward to having children after marriage, she fell into a “black helplessness” after the


\textsuperscript{6} Doskow, ed., 9-10.
birth of her daughter Katharine.\textsuperscript{7} Gilman eventually entered a clinic where the renowned physician Silas Weir Mitchell treated women with this condition, which he diagnosed as a nervous disorder. After her release from treatment, she described herself as going nearly insane from following the doctor’s advice to avoid all forms of mental exertion, which for her included writing. She eventually gave up trying to follow Dr. Mitchell’s advice, and wrote the chilling work \textit{The Yellow Wallpaper}, a semi-fictional account of a woman who regresses to childhood and insanity after the woman’s physician-husband imposes “the rest cure” for neurasthenia on her.\textsuperscript{8}

Gilman herself escaped this fate by renouncing society’s expectations of women as selfless wives and mothers, leaving her husband and child. She adopted part of the male version of the treatment for neurasthenia by heading west and doing what she loved; writing and thinking. She eventually married again, and became a well-known author of fiction and non-fiction, including \textit{Moving the Mountain} (1911). Three other works are: \textit{Women and Economics} (1898), a treatise on how the economic subjugation of women prevented humanity from progressing, \textit{Herland} (1915), and \textit{With Her in Ourland} (1916), a pair of utopian works that focused on a community of women cut off from civilization who reproduced asexually.\textsuperscript{9} In this latter novel, three men enter this world of women, and

\textsuperscript{7} The symptoms as she describes them suggest that she possibly suffered from what is now known as post-partum depression. In her day, there was no such term.

\textsuperscript{8} Gilman, \textit{Living Of}, 90,95-96,119-121,154.

the ensuing education they receive about women’s skills and abilities to function effectively without the presence of men demonstrated the absurdities of ideas about women’s inferiority and weaker physiognomy that Gilman encountered in her life. By the time she was penning these novels, publishers were not interested in “social philosophy,” and so she published her works, including *Moving the Mountain*, in *The Forerunner*, a magazine she authored and self-published. Although this literary endeavor only averaged a readership of about 1,500 people, Gilman noted that they were spread far afield, with subscribers in America, Europe, India, and Australia.10

Gilman opens *Moving the Mountain* by introducing John, a man lost to civilization for thirty years after suffering from amnesia while traveling in Tibet. The book’s narrative follows his reintegration into a much changed American social structure through a series of discussions and tours. John’s amnesia isolated him among the local Tibetans, and thus separated him from the industrialized West for thirty years. At the beginning of the novel, his sister, Nellie, finds him. The shock of seeing her again restores him to his senses. Thirty years have passed since he left the American social structure and culture he knew, so there have been some significant changes in America that have created a budding utopian society, but there are still some people holding fast to earlier social conventions and mores that are familiar to John. He acquaints himself with this new world by visiting people he knew from his youth, like Dr. Frank Borderson, a

---

college friend who had fallen into criminal ways before utopia, but who was now reformed. John also sees the contrast between old ways and new when he visits relatives who have isolated themselves from progress in a rural town. In the end, John marries Drusilla, a cousin and one of these relatives, and brings her into the utopian world, which negates the drain upon her person caused by living outside utopia. Adopting the new ideals makes her “[grow] young at a rate that seemed a heavenly miracle.”

This fictional world, like that in *A Modern Utopia*, represents a work in progress.

Gilman begins from the premise that a sudden change in people’s minds made social change possible. In the novel, Nellie explains to John that “that the world has come alive” because people chose to run the world “in a pleasant, practical way, all the things which we could have done, at any time before—only we never thought so. The real change is this: we have changed our minds.” Gilman’s method to reach utopia is, however, only pleasant for those society deemed “fit” or at least redeemable, because, like Wells’s utopian community, this society put into place a policy of euthanasia. This difference is that Gilman’s utopians made the decision to establish their utopia by eliminating adults who could not meet society’s new standards. Nellie tells John that those “hopeless degenerates” who could not be “cured” were either rendered sterile or “promptly and mercifully removed.”

In a later conversation, Dr. Borderson, a reformed degenerate himself, restates this process more pointedly. He tells John, “We killed many

---

12 Ibid., 53.
13 Ibid., 86,98
hopeless degenerates, insane, idiots, and real perverts, after trying our best powers to
cure.”14 Where Gilman declined to call this process eugenics, instead opting for
“humaniculture,” her aims openly embrace eugenic proposals and demonstrate that she
was willing to go even farther than Wells in utilizing state power to eliminate the “unfit”
and allow the “fit” to flourish.15

It is notable that Gilman does not identify the people who decided which portion
of the population would be killed. However, because women provided the impetus for
change in society, and because they actively contribute to the creation and maintenance
of this utopia, it is likely that she imagined that women would support this process of
euthanizing the “unfit.” In this, Gilman created a much darker side to utopia and took
women farther from Victorian ideals of white middle-class womanhood than did either
Bellamy or Wells.16

Beyond supporting sterilization and euthanasia for eugenic purposes, women in
Gilman’s utopia also direct children’s education by choosing the content of the training.
Although the only comment she made in this regard was that the adults in charge of
children identify their interest and aptitudes and adapt their education accordingly.
Beyond this note, she failed to elaborate on exactly how women determine what children

14 Ibid., 136
15 Ibid., 58,85
16 This aspect of Gilman’s proposals could arguably make this utopia a dystopia for those targeted for
elimination. Note that this thesis does not debate the ethics of these utopian societies, but seeks instead to
examine how the author’s used women’s roles to create stability.
will learn. Women also shape cultural mores in that their consumer choices and expectations for moral behavior necessitate changes in men’s actions. For example, women no longer purchase goods made from animals and simultaneously teach children that hunting animals demonstrates “primitive cruelty,” thus eliminating a market for animal products while minimizing the likelihood that children would want to grow up and become hunters.

Gilman addresses the nexus of immigration, education, women’s roles, and social order in this novel when John and Nellie end their journey from Tibet at the Long Island harbor. Nellie explains to John that in their utopia, socializing centers on the East and West coasts of America assimilate immigrants to American standards before allowing them to enter the country. Additionally, she notes that immigrants and their belongings must be “antiseptically clean” before boarding the ships that bring them to the United States. At these centers, the immigrants learn English and must pass physical examinations, including “microscopic” and “chemical” tests.

In the contemporary world in which Gilman wrote, cleanliness and efficiency had become hallmarks of the ideal American home. Historian Suellen Hoy effectively showed that cultural ideas about illness and disease pushed ideas about personal and home cleanliness to the forefront of middle-class consciousness. Numerous middle and upper-class women foisted these ideas onto immigrant women and children, working to teach

---

17 Ibid., 118-122
18 Gilman, "Moving the Mountain," 93.
19 Ibid., 56-57.
the newly arrived immigrants the importance of adopting the former’s existing standards
to bathing and cleaning. Hoy explained that numerous Americans at the turn of the
century believed that being clean protected them from illness, and feared that a lack of
sanitary habits among Eastern European immigrants would spread disease to the native
population. She also showed that the efforts to spread the cleanliness ethos represented
more than the fear of illness; it also involved fear of cultural differences. To alleviate
their fears of illness and the real or imagined potential for chaos represented by the
cultural diversity that Eastern European immigrants brought with them, “social workers,
educators, and employers attempted to help immigrants adjust to their new surroundings
by teaching them American ways.”

These included lessons on bathing, brushing teeth, cleaning fingernails, and airing bedding. Hoy explained that immigrants often complied
with these directions to best of their abilities in order to retain their health and in hopes of
gaining the acceptance of white America. In Gilman’s utopia, the method she uses for
assimilating immigrants into American culture eliminates their threat to white middle
class society as it made them acceptable to white America before they ever entered the
general population. Cleanliness would not only have washed the dirt from the agricultural
worker and made him pure and clean, but maybe also, made him physically whiter. An
additional important result, was that these environmental changes potentially made these
immigrants “fit” for reproduction.

---
21 Ibid., 89.
In Gilman’s utopia, these standards of cleanliness and cultural education make the assimilation of immigrants more efficient by requiring them to adopt behaviors necessary to become acceptable citizens before they enter the general population. Her proposals rationalize the assimilation process and represent a significant departure of the early twentieth century immigration policy, in which educating immigrants in American middle-class habits began only after Public Health physicians declared them healthy and released them from immigration quarantine. In Gilman’s utopia there was no need for an army of volunteers and public health nurses to visit numerous homes and to set up English classes in various locations, as immigrants were trained in how to become ideal Americans in central locations. Gilman’s utopian solution to the immigrant problem emphasizes speedy assimilation of newcomers, thus increasing homogeneity and presumably, social regularity, in the United States and reducing cultural conflict between established residents and the newly arrived immigrants. Beyond establishing that this assimilation process occurs at specific segregated centers, Gilman fails to explain the language adoption process, how long expected this process to take, and what happens to people who are not able to adopt English.

Gilman made universal education central to her ideal world, but she proposes an individualized approach to learning. She starts with the idea that children ought to grow up in a combination of their parents’ homes and in group homes designed specifically to


23 Gilman, "Moving the Mountain," 57.
allow children to master their spatial and physical skills through play in a safe environment. These buildings have, for example, mattresses on floors and “shallow pools” of water, so that children can freely tumble and learn to swim with fear of injury.\textsuperscript{24} Additionally, adults in her utopia “universally respect” children, treating them as “persons, not subordinates and dependents, but Equals [sic].”\textsuperscript{25} Gilman envisions a world of children who learn more by activity than through books, with only those physically and mentally healthy spending a great deal of time reading so as not to overtax the minds of those more naturally suited to non-intellectual pursuits. As children mature, parents and others who look after them note where their interests lie and adjust their environments accordingly.\textsuperscript{26} In Gilman’s mind, this new perspective of children and the new educational structure results in the formation of “happy children,” without “discontented, careworn, anxious, repressed, or rebellious faces.”\textsuperscript{27} It also results in men and women who are qualified to work in fields they find interesting and personally fulfilling.\textsuperscript{28}

Gilman provided women with the freedom to choose any field of endeavor, not just those that society deems acceptable for them.\textsuperscript{29} They earn a living from their work rather than through motherhood, but Gilman made it possible for women to combine

\textsuperscript{24} Ibid., 114-115,118-120.  
\textsuperscript{25} Ibid., 115.  
\textsuperscript{26} Ibid., 121-122.  
\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., 114.  
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., 59,67.  
\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., 40,45,59,67,97.
motherhood and career through state provision for child gardens. She describes women who work a two-hour shift, then walk next door to the child garden to nurse their infants before returning to work for another two hours.\textsuperscript{30} In this regard, Gilman introduced a revolutionary concept in her utopia that clearly challenged contemporary expectations for mothers, but which simultaneously ordered society. Not only were women given complete and equal access to education, but in the new culture, people expected that women would utilize their knowledge in careers that they found interesting and become mothers to healthy, “happy” children. In this ideal world, women contribute to social order by utilizing their education in their careers and, if they choose, by having children. In this utopia, unlike that by Bellamy and Wells, Gilman desires that women bear the healthiest children possible, but does not stipulate that a woman must have children to reach the pinnacle of her existence. However, in comparison to Bellamy and Wells, Gilman places mothers in an even more privileged position, because she provides them with the ability to have a career and a family without undue effort.

The theme of freedom and happiness through education and work is emphasized throughout \textit{Moving the Mountain}. Although everyone works in this utopia, Gilman envisions an environment that prevents overexertion and allows people to “choose the work they like best.”\textsuperscript{31} Like Bellamy and Wells, Gilman envisions short work days. The new economic structure requires only two to four hours of work each day, although

\textsuperscript{30} Ib\textit{id.}, 117.

\textsuperscript{31} Ib\textit{id.}, 67.
many, she writes, choose to work more hours per day because they enjoy their fields of endeavor. She then leaves the balance of the day for personal endeavors. Even though people in this world earn varied wages, everyone has at least enough to care for their physical needs. In Gilman’s utopia, people work according to their preferences, working hours are minimized and everyone has the means to acquire quality food, clothing, and shelter.

In discussing women’s careers with his sister, John is amazed by the professional fields available for women. Nellie, for example, attended college in the United States and abroad, then became a physician, and at the time of the novel, holds a position as President of a coeducational college. Other women in this utopia own and manage large stores. Some work in and outside America as home decorators, and still others are civil engineers. The variety of their professions and their recognition in other countries provides another means for women to spread this utopia throughout the world. All of this contributes to a social environment of content individuals by creating, as John concludes, “a world that was not tired, not driven…[a world] of people who only had to work two hours—and worked four [instead]!” Women could attend colleges, but as noted in Chapter 1, career opportunities were limited so that even where women could attain an education, they could not always utilize those degrees.

---

32 Ibid.
33 Ibid., 40, 45, 54, 59, 97.
34 Ibid., 60.
In the realm of reproduction, Gilman’s proposals encourage women to have careers and simultaneously marry and become mothers. She facilitates this in part through the short working hours, but also through the “child gardens,” the homes where children grow up, and through minimizing housework. 35 Most women who wish to become mothers are allowed to have children, but if they desire to raise their children personally, they must take training and be accepted in that role “by the other women—the Department of Child Culture, the Government.” 36 Here Gilman drops in this idea without developing it in depth. While Gilman allows most women in this utopia to reproduce, she also establishes that those who fail to meet certain behavioral and moral standards must not have children. 37 Although Gilman does not provide a list of unacceptable behaviors, but one of the characters John meets notes that she used to be a drunkard and is not qualified to have children. 38

Thus, only women deemed suitable for motherhood take charge of their children. Restrictions on child-bearing and child-rearing create “happier” children and parents, along with a more domestically peaceful and orderly society, as it prevents women who would be frustrated or neglectful as fulltime mothers from making their children unhappy. Indeed, Gilman describes women who wish to center their lives around home and hearth as reactionary and out of step with the majority of the population. One woman

35 Ibid., 95.
36 Ibid., 76.
37 Ibid., 138.
38 Gilman, "Moving the Mountain." 136.
John meets tells him that she “took the child-culture course” in order to have her children
at home with her, but that “they won’t stay much,” preferring to spend time in the child
gardens. This example implies that Gilman valued placed more value on the woman
who contributed to society by working for wages, and allowing professional child care
workers to raise her children. The housewife who centers her life on home and hearth as
middle class nineteenth century values expected becomes devalued in this model because
the only way she to contributes to society is through child birth and child rearing. Gilman
thus reverses the Victorian construction of women’s gender roles.

In Gilman’s utopia housework is rationalized; professionals take over what little
domestic work remains and earn salaries for doing so. Many people live in hotel-like
facilities, which provide meals and housekeeping services for less annual cost than stand-
alone homes. People are welcome to eat in their own dining rooms if they choose, and
clean up consists of placing dishes in a case to be carried away for cleaning by the
professionally paid staff. In this utopia, professionals do this work, rather than menial
laborers. These arrangements free women from unpaid housework by providing
professionals to care for these matters. Although she does not specify the sex of the
worker, her example uses the female pronoun. As Nellie explains to her brother, “the
women who liked that kind of work are doing it now, as a profession, for reasonable
hours and excellent salaries; and women who did not like it are now free to do the work

39 Ibid., 95.
they are fitted for and enjoy.”40 In matters of food, people can call in an order for what meals they would like to have. This leaves women time to pursue their own endeavors and to spend time with any children they may have. These provisions prevent women from becoming overworked and exhausted by home chores and allow them time to join men in the public sphere and to become their equals.41 One of John’s friends explains that before the utopia, married women were “generally…tired, nervous, overworked creature[s]….Now, women are intelligent, experienced, well-trained citizens, fully our equals in any line of work they take up, and with us everywhere. It’s made our world over!”42

Although women were free in Gilman’s utopia to choose their career paths in accordance with their talents and desires, she assumed that desire played no role in women’s sexuality. Indeed, women in this utopian world are nearly passionless beings who linked sexuality with reproduction. However, she does assume that even those who do not qualify to reproduce might desire marriage, and so she includes a provision of marriage without children for those not qualified to reproduce.43 What she did not make clear is how these couples would avoid parenthood. By the time Gilman wrote Moving the Mountain, surgical sterilization was possible, as were barrier methods of birth control

40 Ibid., 96-97.
41 Ibid., 66,68-72,81,96-99.
42 Ibid., 81.
in Europe.\footnote{W. A. Chapple, \textit{The Fertility of the Unfit} (Whitcombe & Tombs, 1903, accessed January 2 2009); available from http://infomotions.com/etexts/gutenberg/dirs/1/6/2/5/16254/16254.htm.; Hera Cook, \textit{The Long Sexual Revolution: English Women, Sex, and Contraception, 1800-1975} (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).} In the United States, barrier methods were available only to enterprising couples who could find their way around the Comstock Laws that made it illegal to distribute birth control information or devices.\footnote{Gordon, \textit{Moral Property}, 111-113.} Historian Mary A. Hill notes that a few years after Gilman wrote \textit{Moving the Mountain}, she began to support Margaret Sanger’s calls for birth control to prevent reproduction among unqualified couples. This implies that Gilman may have assumed that couples would utilize these methods.\footnote{Stetsen, 38-39,43-44; Gordon, \textit{Moral Property}, 32-37,61; Mary A. Hill, "Charlotte Perkins Gilman: A Feminist's Struggle with Womanhood " \textit{The Massachusetts Review} 21, no. 3 (1980): 517-517n31.}

Gilman’s common representation of sexuality assumes that women who are overly sexual were ill and subject to medical treatment for their condition. In the novel, Nellie’s husband Owen explains that women like this still exist thirty years into utopia, but that “the whole thing is now recognized as pathological—cases for medical treatment, or perhaps surgical [treatment].”\footnote{Gilman, "Moving the Mountain," 78-79.} In her utopia, then, Gilman saw sexuality as a secondary issue; women, and presumably, men as well, would come to see sex as useful for reproduction, but not as an end in itself. Gilman argued in \textit{Women and Economics} that a more rational view of sex would allow men and women to work together more equally than they could in a world where sexual differentiation ruled the day and made people more interested in impressing each other than in working. She writes, “We are the only
animal species in which the female depends on the male for food, the only animal species in which the sex-relation is also an economic relation.” 48 This economic relationship meant that for women “sex-distinction…[becomes] a means of getting her livelihood.” 49 Reducing “sex-distinction” by making women economically independent would return interest in the sexual act to its function in the animal kingdom, that of reproduction, and create “a better world, by the easy right of birth and by the calm, slow, friendly forces of social evolution.” 50 In other words, Gilman reduces men and sexuality to that of animals, assuming that if all other physical, mental, and emotional needs are met, people will be less driven by their sexual impulses.

Gilman thus turned American Edwardian society’s expectations for women 180 degrees. She made women the equals of men in intellect and in labor, but devalued women who sought to focus on domesticity entirely. She also assumed that men and women were only interested in sexual intimacy necessary for reproduction. She incorporated eugenic ideas in establishing that some people were not “fit” for reproduction and in assimilating immigrants before they “contaminate” American society with their physical and mental impurities. The changes to immigrants along with selective reproduction produce physically, mentally, and morally healthy children, which in turn contributes to order in society.

---

48 Stetsen, 5.
49 Ibid., 38.
50 Ibid., 35-39,340.
In her view, women realized their potential and acted on it. When freed from traditional roles and expectations that kept them bound to the family, they were able to exert their influence through their public actions and to regulate society, first in America and then gradually to spread their ideas to the rest of the world. They moved beyond the boundaries of home and hearth and accomplished what men on their own could not. They made sure that education was not only universal, but activity-based and focused on children’s interests. Women also created an environment that honored children as individuals, raising them in a combination of child gardens and in their parents’ homes, assuring that all who reached adulthood have the greatest likelihood of being “happy,” confident people. Once children reached maturity, Gilman’s utopian economic and labor structure assured that adults remained content and able to contribute as much to society as their skills allowed them. Men and women could work in career fields they chose, with no restrictions based on their anatomical sex. Beyond imagining new customs that facilitated economic and social order, Gilman restricted reproduction to those who met American middle-class standards and by making sure that immigrants learned all they needed about how to adopt those middle-class standards before they joined the general population. In total, Gilman’s utopia, formulated an ideal world that reversed gender role ideology to create social order out of chaos.
CONCLUSION

When Bellamy, Wells, and Gilman sought to put on paper their visions of ideal worlds, of the structures that could solve social ills and bring order to society, they were engaging in a realm of public discourse on social issues. Wells and Gilman especially had written works of non-fiction before they wrote the novels considered in this thesis, and they used these works to build on their other ideas. Their ideas also reflect Bellamy’s in that they advanced education and careers for women.

However, while *Looking Backward* influenced their works, Wells and Gilman diverged from Bellamy’s ideas in labor and reproduction. Gilman provided the most opportunity for her women to simultaneously enjoy career and family and personal life, while Wells provided the most sexual freedom to unmarried women. Both Wells and Gilman envisioned coercive states, as both established government structures identify the “unfit” and remove them from the general population, where Bellamy had done the opposite, assuming that the state would not need to euthanize the recalcitrant.

Many scholars who examine utopian novels focus on the political and economic structure that the authors imagined, including their political, economic, and social proposals, but neglect to look at how these works engaged public debates, including that of eugenics. They also often miss the ways the authors’ views of women’s roles shaped the larger landscape of these ideal worlds. The utopian novels by Edward Bellamy, H. G. Wells, and Charlotte Perkins Gilman examined here provide examples of just how extensively ideas about women’s roles shaped their social structures.
In these utopian works, the authors refashioned expectations for women’s behavior in their visions of education, labor, motherhood, and reproduction. Whether they were challenging or reinforcing nineteenth expectations of women, their visions of these roles contributed to their versions of unchaotic societies. Each of the authors proposed that education be universal and extensive in spite of the nineteenth and early twentieth century laws and class structure that made it difficult for most men and women to obtain anything beyond a basic education. In challenging constructions of gender roles that prevented a majority of women, as well as men from the lower classes, from gaining advanced education, Bellamy, Wells, and Gilman proposed that an educated populace would create more pleasant neighbors, would make for more interesting interactions with others, and would allow individuals to work in their chosen fields in their careers. These changes in education and labor, would make it easier for women to bear physically healthy children. Taken together, these authors’ proposed changes promised to allow all citizens to productively contribute to the social wheal. A universal education would also create a more homogenous population, and thus lessen societal and class tensions, as everyone would have similar cultural frames of reference to facilitate communication. Each of these aspects of education had the potential to regulate society.

In the realm of labor, Bellamy, Wells, and Gilman largely envisioned drastic changes to the existing social order, and here again, the authors’ conception of women’s roles contributed to economic and social order in their utopias. Each of these authors proposed that their citizens use their education in the labor force, challenging nineteenth
century beliefs that middle-class women should remain within the home rather than earning wages from the economy. For Bellamy, Wells, and Gilman, granting women economic independence prevented them from marrying for economic security, which improved the quality of their children and future citizens. It also created a healthier population, as women were no longer used up physically in burdensome household work. Instead, they could utilize their energies to create a stronger and more financially stable society.

However, only Gilman advanced the idea even further in asserting that women be wives, mothers, and workers simultaneously and that they work in any career in which they are qualified. To accommodate women’s careers, Gilman proposed that society create children’s crèches where they could be raised by specially trained individuals while also spending quality time with their parents. Gilman saw this provision as benefiting and regulating society because children could grow up surrounded by people who knew how to provide for their physical, emotional, and mental needs rather by stressed parents who might end up neglecting their children by being overworked. The assumption is that children who are well cared for make for healthy, well-adjusted adults, who in turn contribute to an orderly social structure.

In contrast to Gilman, Bellamy stopped short of total economic choice for women. He saw fundamental differences between men and women, including female frailties that would restrict them to work suited to their feminine physiology. Even in these restrictions, it becomes evident that Bellamy used conceptions of women’s roles to
regulate society. His proposals to retain inequities presupposed that nineteenth century beliefs about women’s nature were fundamental truths that could not be contravened without inducing chaos, disorder, and death in the body politic.

Wells did not believe that women and men could ever attain pay equity, so he made a provision in his utopia to remunerate eligible women for bearing exceptional children. This idea emphasized the importance of reproduction and motherhood, and elevated the status of mothers in society. He also placed control over women’s sexuality with women, so that unmarried women could engage in sexual relationships as they chose without societal censure so long as children did not result. Even though Wells placed eugenic needs of assuring that married women bore her husband’s children ahead of freedom to take lovers, he did provide married women with an extraordinary amount of choice, as women had the legal right to divorce a husband who proved unfaithful. Order came out of chaos as men and women who failed to meet Wells’s “fitness” requirements stopped reproducing prodigiously and as motherhood for those who were “fit” became a valued profession. These latter women would presumably raise mentally, physically, and morally healthy children who would in turn become valuable citizens.

Bellamy, Wells, and Gilman all chose to order their societies by regulating reproduction. Their utopian worlds used various means to choose who were eligible to reproduce, but all incorporated some version of social conceptions of the ideal male and female and eugenics into the criteria they used. They all drew on the principle of natural selection as applied to humanity, basing their standards on American and English middle-
class values. Bellamy made women responsible for future generations by assuming that they would choose their husbands carefully, basing their decisions on a man’s ability to meet utopian society’s expectations of behavior. Wells and Gilman also stipulated that individuals meet certain minimum standards of behavior and physical health before receiving sanction from the state to reproduce. For each of these authors, regulating reproduction would not only prevent unchecked population growth, but increase the population of the middle class while decreasing the number of those of the lower classes, thus creating what these middle-class authors would interpret as an orderly society. One major difference between Bellamy and the others, however, is that in *Looking Backward*, Bellamy privileged Lamarckian views as the vital means to achieve good heredity, whereas in the other works, Wells and Gilman place a higher importance on a reductionist eugenic view, holding that improved society followed from the implementation of eugenic policies to control reproduction of the unfit.

Thus, examining *Looking Backward, A Modern Utopia,* and *Moving the Mountain* demonstrates the extent to which women’s roles proved to be an essential factor in these utopian visions of orderly societies. These works provide a lens to focus on the relationship between women’s roles and economic and social order, as well as on the diversity of ideas about heredity and social order. They also shed light on way individuals formulated ideal behaviors to shape economic and social structures. These novels also allow readers to understand how Bellamy, Wells, and Gilman refashioned existing constructions of women’s gender roles to envision worlds that countered the chaos these
authors saw that industrialization, urbanization, and immigration created. The recasting of women’s roles to facilitate change suggests that for these authors, providing a perception of social order would contribute a vital key to changing those aspects of society that they found distasteful. Their conceptions of women’s roles also suggest that they assumed that a gradual, bloodless revolution would result largely from reforming society’s expectations for women. Taken together, these works show that Bellamy, Wells, and Gilman refashioned women’s roles because they saw women as vital to the creation of an orderly economic and social utopian community.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

"Bradwell V. Illinois." ed. Supreme Court of the United States, 80, 1873.


________. "A Neglected Factor in Race Suicide " *Political Science Quarterly* 25, no. 4 (1910): 638-655.


Laipson, Peter. ""Kiss without Shame, for She Desires It": Sexual Foreplay in American Marital Advice Literature, 1900-1925." *Journal of Social History* 29, no. 3 (1996): 207-525.


Van Wienen, Mark W. "A Rose by Any Other Name: Charlotte Perkins Stetson (Gilman) and the Case for American Reform Socialism." *American Quarterly* 55, no. 4 (2003): 603-634.


Williamson, Jeffrey G. Coping with City Growth During the British Industrial Revolution. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1935.

Willis, Jessica L. Sexual Subjectivity: A Semiotic Analysis of Girlhood, Sex, and Sexuality in the Film Juno Sexuality & Culture, 2008.

