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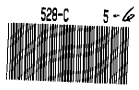
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**THE UNLOCKED HOME:
NEW WOMEN, NEW NOVELS, NEW SPACES**

A Senior Honors Thesis

by

ERIN ELISE FLEMING

Submitted to the Office of Honors Programs
& Academic Scholarships
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the

UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATE
RESEARCH FELLOWS

April 2002

Group: Art & Literature 2

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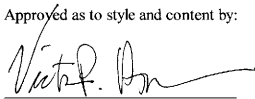
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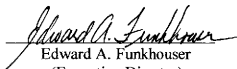
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ABSTRACT

The Unlocked Home:

New Women, New Novels, New Spaces. (April 2002)

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The Victorian ideology of separate spheres made an evident separation according to gender. The principle not only affected the interaction between men and women but also the spaces that they occupied. While men had access to universities and a range of professions, social advancement for women was through a favorable marriage and the accomplishments of her husband and children. Indeed, wives were venerated as “angels of the home,” and their familial duties were thought to be sacred.

However, during the *fin de siècle*, a resistance to this traditional separation of gender emerged in British society and literature. In March 1894, the term “New Woman” was first used in Sarah Grand’s essay, “The New Aspect of the Woman Question.” The concept of the New Woman was that she rejected the traditional gender roles and demanded the emancipation of women. Scores of women began writing novels and short stories, known as New Woman fiction, in addition to articles and essays demanding emancipation for women in the suffrage movement, the enfranchisement of marriage, and the double standard of sexuality between men and women.

Most scholarly research regards the New Woman as a transitional figure that transcends the boundary between what is private and what is public. Critics focus on the move of emancipated women from the domestic realm into the public sphere of education or the professions. I, however, am examining the depiction of the private life of the New Woman figure in turn-of-the-century literature. I wish to find out what impact, if any, the New Woman ideals had on domesticity and the portrayal of domestic life in literature. I plan to argue that the New Woman novels try to put what is locked in and what is locked out together and that the New Woman figure attempts to alter space in order to take apart and transcend the system of separate spheres to find a room of her own.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Just over a century ago, middle-class women lived lives that we can hardly relate to today. During the Victorian Age in England, women were idealized as “angels of the house,” holy vessels who would purify their husbands who had to work in the sordid outside world. Victorians had a distinct division between what was public and what was private, with a particular reverence for the sanctified privacy of the home. In Victorian society, what was called the doctrine of separate spheres stipulated that people of different social divisions remained within their defined faction or “sphere” both in their interactions with people as well as the physical space they occupied. Among other divisions, separate spheres made an evident separation according to gender. As Carolyn Nelson explains, “according to Victorian ideology, men and women were meant to occupy separate spheres that were determined for them from birth according to their biological sex. The woman’s sphere was the home [and] the man’s sphere was the rest of the world” (ix). While men had access to universities and a range of professions, social advancement for women was through a favorable marriage and the accomplishments of her husband and male children. Men were free to go anywhere in public, but women only had very circumscribed movements outside the home and even then needed an escort.

However, near the end of the nineteenth century, Victorian society was beset by all kinds of social questions that threatened to undermine the traditional roles of gender

and class, such as the Woman Question, decadents and the aesthetic movement, the rise of trade unionism and socialism, fears of colonial rebellion, and urban poverty, just to name a few. Instability was a repeated theme in the cultural politics at the turn of the century, and gender was possibly the most destabilized social category. In the tension between conservative social roles and a turbulent political climate, the New Woman was born.

In March 1894, the term "New Woman" was first used in Sarah Grand's essay, "The New Aspect of the Woman Question." The New Woman rejected traditional gender roles and demanded the emancipation of women. These newly named feminists fought for suffrage and women's acceptance into higher education and the professions. They also pursued the idea that women could have fulfilling lives outside of marriage and motherhood. The idea of the New Woman quickly produced a strong response both in support of and opposition to the newly developed ideas about women's role in society.

The New Woman generated intense hostility and fear because she challenged male supremacy in the public sphere of the professions and the private sphere of the home. The New Woman became a sensation and attracted vehement criticism from her opponents. The press and popular culture ridiculed the New Woman in articles, short stories, and cartoons. She was usually characterized as being educated at Girton College, Cambridge, one of the first colleges to accept women, riding a bicycle and smoking in public, all of which were unconventional behaviors for women. The New Woman was also satirized as having no figure whatsoever and being a humorless bore. Cartoon representations of physically masculine New Women had correspondingly

effeminate men, indicating a fear of emasculation among men. If the New Woman was not represented as physically masculine, she was depicted as dangerously hypersexual, even though most New Women advocated sexual purity. Moreover, medicine and science, using evolutionary logic, warned that the New Woman would breed a generation of weak and degenerate sons or worse, not bear children at all. Doctors maintained that the New Woman was sterile because her “obsession with developing her brain starved her uterus” (Ledger¹ 8). Most often, critics of the New Woman maintained that the woman’s place was in the home and argued that women’s emancipation would cause the degeneration of family life.

Many women took part in the written debates over the New Woman, writing articles and essays that demanded suffrage and derided the enslavement of marriage and the double standard of sexuality between men and women. At the same time, scores of women began writing novels and short stories that portrayed the New Woman as a literary figure. Between 1882 and 1900, over one hundred novels were written about the New Woman (Harman 1). These novels and short stories became known as New Woman fiction and became important to popular culture at the turn of the twentieth century. These writers made the sensation of the New Woman into a literary figure gave her definition.

Just as the New Woman challenged the stability of the traditional Victorian family life, the New Woman novel challenged the hegemony of the Victorian novel. The emergence of the New Woman novel helped to induce the disappearance of the

¹ This thesis follows the style and format of the most current edition of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*.

Victorian three-volume novel, or triple-decker. Elaine Showalter points out that, “as the stories in the novels were designed for family readership, the three-volume novels physically represented the nuclear family—father, mother, and child. The three-part structure dictated a vision of human experience as linear, with a definite beginning, middle, and end, and the triple decker almost always ended in marriage or death” (18). Many novelists delighted in the downfall of the three-volume novel, which they felt had restrained them artistically. New Woman fiction along with other non-traditional novels that appeared after the demise of the triple-decker was the beginnings of the modern novel.

Most scholarly research surrounding New Woman literature regards the New Woman as a transitional figure who transcends the boundary between what is private and what is public. Critics largely focus on the move of emancipated women characters from the domestic realm into the public sphere of education or the professions. This is definitely valid because the New Woman had a major influence on the movement of women from the home to the outside world. However, life at home was still the main option for women at the turn of the century, so it is important to focus on changes in the home as well. Therefore, I examine New Woman novels’ depictions of the home to discern the New Woman’s impact on the representation domestic life in literature. My research focuses on novels written during the height of the New Woman’s popularity, the years between 1890-1910; however, I also include works from second-generation New Woman novelists, such as Virginia Woolf and Vita Sackville-West. The question that drives my research is, “how does the home change in the New Woman novel?” I

am also asking how the New Woman destabilizes the doctrine of separate spheres as well as how the changes in the home affect the family and women in general.

While typical Victorian novels depict women as desiring a stable, settled domestic life, New Woman novels show women who are unhappy in their position within the home. These New Women figures are the antithesis of the model Victorian wife, who is content to stay at home, managing the house and children, and serving as a social vehicle for her husband's career. In New Woman novels, if the characters do submit to the prescriptive domestic duties of wife and mother, it is often at great personal cost. At other times, the New Woman characters rebel against traditional women's roles but are then rejected by society. Within New Woman novels, New Woman characters that struggle with accepting traditional domesticity are usually treated as if there is something wrong with them, but the novels in their entirety point to the shortcomings of Victorian domesticity. New Woman novels challenge Victorian society by presenting the characters' dissatisfaction with domestic life.

Instead of idealizing the home, New Woman fiction demonstrates the problems with the Victorian domestic ideal. New Woman novels disrupt the traditional Victorian reverence for the sanctity of the home because they portray the emotional turmoil women experience in the domestic sphere. New Woman novels often present the home as a prison that entraps women into the social duties of marriage and motherhood. In showing the discontent women have within the home, the New Woman novel shatters the idea of the home as sacred and destabilizes the doctrine of separate spheres. The New Woman rebelled against the ideas of separate spheres, through which women are

kept inside the home and outside of many places in the public realm. The New Woman struggles with being locked in the domestic sphere, but even if she is able to go beyond the home, she was locked out of most areas in the public sphere.

Throughout this paper I use the terms “locked in” and “locked out,” to describe women’s domestic confinement and exclusion from the outside world, respectively. I take these terms from Virginia Woolf’s *A Room of One’s Own*. In the beginning of *A Room of One’s Own*, the narrator is walking in Oxbridge and tries to go into a library. However she is stopped and informed that ladies are only admitted if accompanied by a Fellow of the College or with a letter of introduction. Later, she recalls the incident and remarks, “I thought how unpleasant it is to be locked out; and I thought how it is worse perhaps to be locked in” (24). Accordingly, my thesis is organized around being locked in and locked out. The first section discusses women that are locked in the home. I look at female characters who feel trapped inside the home and the effect this has on the character development. The next section focuses on women that are locked out. The characters in this section break free from the home but find themselves unaccepted in professions or worse, rejected by society at large. The final section argues that New Woman novels attempt to create a kind of home that does not relegate women to their archetypal domestic roles. Continuing the established terminology, I call this the unlocked home, and I argue that with the unlocked home, the New Woman figure attempts to alter the home in order to take apart and transcend the system of separate spheres.

CHAPTER II

LOCKED IN

Confinement exists on several different levels. People can be confined physically by restricting their movements, mentally by limiting their education and conditioning them to believe in their inferiority, and spiritually by denying their importance as individuals and generalizing them as part of a larger social body. Separate spheres kept women in the domestic sphere by physical, mental, and spiritual confinements. The Victorian domestic idyll of the “angel in the house” confined women by conforming them to an archetype, a generalized identity that imposed physical, mental, and spiritual restrictions. Rejecting these social constructs, New Woman fiction utilized imagery of women being locked within the home, often evoking the idea of the domestic environment entrapping or imprisoning the female characters in the novel.

While I focus on the New Woman novel, I must first acknowledge discourse of being locked in the home was not only evoked in fiction but in the non-fiction debates that surrounded the New Woman in essays and articles. Journalists during the 1880s and 1890s, both feminist and anti-feminist, explored many of the ideas about the New Woman and also alluded to entrapment within domestic space. Two important essays that focus on domestic confinement are “The Revolt of the Daughters” by Blanche Alethea Crackanhorpe and “Does Marriage Hinder a Woman’s Self-Development?” by Mona Caird, both of which caused an uproar and generated thousands of reply articles and

letters to the editor. In January 1894, *Nineteenth Century* published B. A. Crackanthorpe's "The Revolt of the Daughters" which discusses the rebellion of daughters against their mothers. Crackanthorpe's argument is that an unmarried girl had a right to be considered "as an individual as well as a daughter" (25). Crackanthorpe points out that young women want to utilize the tools of their education and should be free to make their own choices like young men and argues that young women should be able to travel freely, visit music halls and enjoy better education. She attacks mothers for whom "the marriage 'ring' is the governing authority" (29), those are only intent on seeing their daughters marry and are subsequently overprotective their daughters' activities and acquaintances. Young women feel trapped within the home even before marriage and attempt to fight against it. Essentially, "The Revolt of the Daughters" is the battle of the New Woman against the Old Woman, the conventional wife and mother.

If Crackanthorpe's essay exposed women as trapped before marriage, Mona Caird shows the effects of being locked in after marriage. In 1899, *The Ladies Realm* asked several well-known women to write on the set topic: does marriage hinder a woman's self-development. Mona Caird's response in "Does Marriage Hinder a Woman's Self-Development?" challenges the assignation of women to the sphere of the home and men to the sphere of public life. She cleverly switches men and women's familial roles to show "how a man would fare in the position, say, of his own wife" and narrates a hypothetical family life. John, the "wife" of the essay, lives a quiet but frustrated existence. The narrator asserts that "it is all rather discouraging for the hero of this petty, yet gigantic tussle, for he works, so to speak, in a hostile camp, with no sympathy from

his entirely unconscious spouse, whom popular sentiment nevertheless regards as the gallant protector of his manly weakness.” Moreover, with the burden of household and especially childhood cares, “he feels that those parts of his nature which are said to distinguish the human from the animal kingdom, are getting rather effaced.” Caird presents perhaps the most important imbalances of the system of separate spheres: women are so burdened with being wives, mothers, and homemakers that they have no time to develop their individuality.

New Woman novels reflect in literature the actual journalistic debates that surround the New Woman. While these essays argue briefly against domestic confinement, New Woman novels are able to explore more thoroughly what it means for a woman to be locked in the home. This section delineates several examples of New Woman characters that feel locked within the home and discusses how domestic confinement changes their personas. The New Woman novel depicts the restricted space occupied by women and commonly portrays women feeling trapped within their domestic environment. I will begin with what was perhaps the most famous New Woman novel at the time—Sarah Grand’s best-selling novel, *The Heavenly Twins*. *The Heavenly Twins* made Sarah Grand an overnight success and pushed her to the forefront of the women’s movement. Though Grand championed sexual purity and ultimately considered marriage the best option for men and women, she was seen as a radical for openly presenting issues about sexuality, like venereal disease and the sexual double standard between men and women. *The Heavenly Twins* is the parallel stories of Evadne Frayling, Edith Beale, and Angelica Hamilton-Wells. Evadne has the potential to be a New Woman figure but her

stifling domestic life retards her development as a feminist and eventually causes mental illness. On her wedding day, Evadne discovers her new husband's promiscuous sexual past and refuses to consummate their marriage. With much pressure from her parents, she finally agrees to live with him to keep up appearances. Edith Beale, Evadne's opposite character, also marries a rake, and dies after contracting syphilis from her husband and bearing a syphilitic child.

At first, Evadne enjoys life with her "husband," Colonel Colquhoun, because she has not had to suffer the trials she believes are common to newly married women in a sexual relationship with their husbands. Colonel Colquhoun is stationed in Malta, and there Evadne becomes exposed to new kinds of people, many of whom share her views about women's emancipation. Evadne begins to have a reputation for her feminist beliefs and moral standings, and Colonel Colquhoun asks her to promise that she will not become involved publicly in the Woman Question. Evadne agrees, but this promise is much more binding than Evadne realizes at first, and entraps her within the domestic sphere. When Colonel Colquhoun is transferred from Malta to England, they are separated for a few months, and upon his return,

Evadne was glad to see [Colonel Colquhoun] again. She had missed him, and had waited anxiously for his return. She had no one to care for in his absence, no one, that is to say, who was specially her charge, to be attended to and made comfortable. He had narrowed her sphere of usefulness down to that by the promise he had exacted, and in his absence

she had what to her was a useless, purposeless existence, wandering about from place to place (351).

After her promise to Colquhoun, Evadne has no outlet for her mental and physical faculties. Though Evadne had shown strong intellectual and feminist potential, she has been reduced to the domestic realm, and as a result her only energy outlet is in being a caretaker. Indeed, after this point in the novel, the only time the narrator describes Evadne as healthy and happy is when she volunteers as a nurse during a smallpox outbreak. By being restrained to the home, Evadne loses her own identity and becomes, for the first time in the novel, subordinate to and dependent upon her husband.

Eventually, Evadne becomes mentally unstable from because of her confining lifestyle. Dr. Galbraith, the local psychiatrist, befriends Evadne and notices that something is wrong with her health. She tries to explain her position, but cannot tell him of the true nature of her marriage or of her promise. However, Dr. Galbraith observes that “she was unconsciously telling me the history of her married life, showing me a lonely woman gradually losing her mental health for want of active occupation and a wholesome share of the work of the world to take her out of herself” (626). Although Galbraith at first is able to comprehend that Evadne needs to have action and make a contribution to society, his actions in treating Evadne are inconsistent with his understanding of her. Galbraith immediately diagnoses her with hysteria.

Known as the “female malady,” hysteria was relatively well-known and common mental disease that supposedly occurred in women only. In her essay on Sarah Grand and medical discourse on hysteria, Ann Heilmann argues that *The Heavenly Twins* is a

counter-narrative against contemporary thoughts about hysteria, that hysteria was a result of a lack of action rather than sexual frustration or abnormality. She also points out that Grand shows the extent of the change in Evadne's character by introducing the unreliable first person narrator of Dr. Galbraith and presenting Evadne as his case. Heilmann makes an excellent argument, but I would expand it to say that it is being locked in the domestic sphere that produces inaction and eventually, hysteria. Indeed, Evadne actually takes pleasure when she is physically ill because it provides a distraction from her normal life. Since she is no longer free to explore any of her interests, she feels trapped inside her marriage. As her condition becomes worse, Evadne says to him, "But then, you see, my hands are tied, so that all I can do is think, think, think" (636). Clearly, Evadne associates her domestic life to that of imprisonment since her hands are "tied." Since hands are usually associated with productive or creative action, it is important that Evadne only mentions her hands being tied, meaning that she cannot do anything useful.

It is precisely the constant thought without action that drives Evadne mad. To remove herself from her dull lifestyle, Evadne turns to daydreaming, but eventually, the daydreams take over her mind:

I began to be intoxicated. My imagination ran away with me. Instead of indulging in a daydream now and then, when I liked, all my life became absorbed in delicious imaginings, whether I would or not...I lived in a world apart. If people spoke to me, I awoke and answered them; but real life was a dull thing to offer, and the daylight very dim, compared with the movement and brightness of the land I lived in—while I was master of my

dreams...By degrees they mastered me; and now I am their puppet, and they are demons that torment me. (626-27)

Evadne's active mind cannot succumb to the passivity of the domestic sphere. While at first, her daydreams were healthy as an alternative to mundane domesticity and as a way for her to subvert her anger at her husband. Eventually, however, these daydreams take over her mind and at the forefront of these daydreams is the fantasy of killing her husband, which she communicates to Dr. Galbraith. While these illusions horrify Evadne, they are actually a mark of a healthy mind seeking freedom. Evadne is locked within the home, which means she is also locked within her mind with no outlet for communication, exertion, or productivity. If she is imprisoned within the home, then her husband represents her jailer, the person who bars her freedom and the justifiable recipient of Evadne's anger.

After Colonel Colquhoun's death from a heart attack, Dr. Galbraith marries Evadne and devotes himself to curing her, but is unable to entirely restore her peace of mind. Though Galbraith has the best intentions of curing Evadne, this relationship is unsettling because it blurs the distinction between doctor and patient, husband and wife and because Galbraith does not seem capable of objectively treating Evadne. Evadne is somewhat forced into this marriage because her father does not acknowledge her and her first husband dies in debt, leaving Evadne on the edge of poverty. Moreover, her second marriage appears to entrap Evadne even more within the domestic sphere. Dr. Galbraith prescribes physical exercise, but otherwise, he uses the traditional rest cure for her. The rest cure locks in Evadne even more definitely, not allowing her even the slightest mental

exertion. Evadne still suffers from hysteria and even attempts suicide shortly before the birth of their first child, which would bind her permanently to the home and to patriarchal authority. After becoming a mother, Evadne has grown so attached to her shadow existence that she no longer desires freedom but instead wants to “live on the surface of life, as most women do” (672). Evadne’s fury at her domestic imprisonment has been oppressed into submission and she has been transformed into the feminine child-bride deemed proper by society.

Angelica Hamilton-Wells, one of the twins of the title, grows up on equal terms with her twin brother Diavolo. Both twins are intelligent, energetic, mischievous, and possess many radical ideas, the most emphasized being gender roles in society. Although Angelica has a very unconventional marriage, (she proposed to her husband in the agreement that she would be free to do as she pleased), but marriage still has a very constraining effect upon her. Angelica is bored at home because she has no outlet for her energy and cannot stand the triviality of women’s domestic duties. Her only excitement is in disguising herself as a boy and befriending a single man, the Tenor, who eventually discovers that she is a girl. In explaining her motives for deceiving the Tenor she tells him:

I had the ability to be something more than a young lady, fiddling away her time on useless trifles, but I was not allowed to apply it systematically, and ability is like steam—a great power when properly applied, a great danger otherwise....I was bored. I was always bored; and I resented the serene unconcern of my friends...To be bored seems a slight thing, but a

world of suffering is contained in the experience...I think it is dangerous to leave an energetic woman without a single strong interest or object in life (450; 453).

Angelica posits that it is dangerous for women, especially women like her, to be locked in the home. Appropriately, Angelica's disguise has just been discovered. She has proven her statement by her actions, showing that women will use subversive means to escape the stifling confines of the home. Indeed, Angelica is dangerous to the Tenor because she is partially responsible for his death.

After her break with the Tenor, Grand gives a description of Angelica's daily activities in her own home: "she finished dressing, had a long interview with her housekeeper, went round the premises as was her daily habit, to see that all was in order, and then retired to her morning room, and set to work methodically to write orders, see to accounts, and answer letters" (467). The daily domestic routine is completely antipathetic to Angelica, whose attitude searches for "something—anything for an occupation; that was the state to which she was reduced" (469). While her husband is at home she goes about trying to irritate him just to have her own way, but when he leaves she is left without anything to amuse herself. Her boredom is frustrating, almost maddening for her since she no longer has the outlet of the Tenor, and on one occasion she visits Dr. Galbraith for medicine for her nerves because "she was conscious of some change in herself, conscious of a racking spirit of discontent which tormented her, and of the fact that, in spite of her superabundant vitality, she had lost all zest for anything" (478). Though Angelica does not have to battle the same level mental illness like Evadne,

Angelica becomes hysterical directly because of the constraint she experiences at home. The redundancy of domestic duties numbs even Angelica's vivacious spirit. Like the earlier comparison she makes of women's energy and steam, Angelica's energy has become dangerous for her. Because she has no real energy outlet, she, too, suffers from hysteria and even briefly considers suicide.

While in *The Heavenly Twins* Evadne and Angelica feel entrapped by domestic responsibilities after their marriages, it is the arrival of children that prompts Evadne's attempted suicide. The idea that motherhood is what permanently confines women to the home is the main tenet of the next novel, Mona Caird's *The Daughters of Danaus*. The year after the publication and subsequent success of *The Heavenly Twins*, Mona Caird published her fifth novel, *The Daughters of Danaus*, which also provoked a vehement response. I have already mentioned Caird's article "Does Marriage Hinder the Self-Development of Women?" which describes women's domestic confinements and connects women's oppression to bearing children. To contemporary audiences, Caird was already known for writing the essay entitled "Marriage" for *Nineteenth Century* in 1888, in which she attacked marriage as an institution. The response to the article was so strong that the paper began a new column, "Is Marriage a Failure?" for months afterwards and received over 27,000 letters and submissions. *The Daughters of Danaus* received enthusiasm from the feminist press but anger and contempt from other leading papers. Caird's critics felt that her novel would fuel the revolt of women and that she had gone too far in her cause by rejecting women's maternal role.

The title of the novel refers to a Greek myth in which the fifty daughters of Danaus are married en masse, and forty-nine of them murder their husbands on their wedding night in order to free themselves. Their punishment is eternally to draw water in sieves from fathomless wells. The novel makes a clear parallel to the myth. Its heroine, Hadria Fullerton is a radical feminist and modern artist whose mother emotionally pressures her two daughters to lead conventional lives. Mrs. Fullerton, is constructed in the text as an embittered woman who has sacrificed her life to her family and now wants her daughters to do the same. Not equipped to deal with this psychological warfare, Hadria enters into an unhappy marriage, and after producing two sons, attempts a series of escapes. She goes to Paris to become a pianist and composer, and just as success seems near, her mother's critical illness forces her to return home and reinsert herself into domestic life. Thus, like the myth, after Hadria attains freedom she is punished by having to endure tedious, pointless domestic duties.

Throughout the novel, Caird repeatedly indicates the inevitability of Hadria's position and her ultimate fate as a woman. In a long discussion about women's emancipation, Hadria's friend Valeria argues:

A woman cannot afford to despise the dictates of Nature... There is no escape. The centuries are behind one, with all their weight of heredity and habit; the order of society adds its pressure—one's own emotional needs. Ah, no! it does not answer to pit oneself against one's race, to bid defiance to the fundamental laws of life. (71)

Indeed, Hadria is pressured from all sides to follow her feminine duties. The main force of this pressure comes from the two female role models in Hadria's life: her mother and her mentor, Valeria Du Prel. Hadria's mother passes on her resentment to the next generation, and demonstrates how the mother/daughter relationship can perpetuate the oppression of women. Mrs. Fullerton is unaware of the psychological problems in their relationship, but Hadria strongly senses it. Hadria laments: "If only mother had only not sacrificed herself for us...What sympathy there might have been between us all! If she had but given herself a chance, how she might have helped us, and what a friend she might have been to us and we to her!" (326-27). Caird shows that maternal sacrifice for children is ultimately purposeless because it burdens the children and forces them into the same position, as exemplified in Hadria's useless sacrifice of her career to care for her ill mother and sons. Hadria's friend Valeria again comments at the end of the novel, "I suppose we are all inheriting the curse that has been laid upon our mothers through so many ages" (450). Though in Caird's novel it is ultimately patriarchal society that oppresses women, this oppression is inherited through mothers, who continue to enclose women within the domestic sphere by raising their daughters to have the same deprived lives as themselves. This quote alludes to Eve's curse, indicating that women's oppression has too much of a history from which to break free. Eve, the mother of all human life, was cursed by God to live under man's authority and as a result women have been perpetuating their own subjugation.

Hadria adopts a daughter in an attempt to prove her belief that a motherhood without biological, and thus patriarchal ties, is not only possible but also that it is the only

motherhood worth the name (342), which was actually one of the New Woman's social experiments. Hadria wants motherhood based upon freedom of choice instead of marital duty. Accordingly, she shows little interest or affection for her biological sons, but shortly after adopting Martha, she feels a maternal connection:

Hadria had begun to feel a more personal interest in her charge. She had taken it under her care of her own choice, without the pressure of any social law or sentiment, and in these circumstances of freedom, its helplessness appealed to her protective instincts. She felt the relationship to be a true one, in contradiction to the more usual form of protectorate of woman to child. (240)

Hadria's sons reinforce her domestic entrapment as symbols of marital duty and the continuation of patriarchal control; however, a daughter, a member of her own sex, and especially an adopted daughter with no connection to her marriage, gives her a hope for freedom. Hadria hopes that adopting Martha will exemplify a new kind of motherhood in which women are free from marital, and thus patriarchal, constraints in raising children and will end the continual inheritance of oppression. Ultimately, however, Hadria fails to successfully carry out her ideals of maternity because her wish for Martha to develop into a free woman is motivated primarily by revenge for Hadria's failure to do so. Thus, Martha, even as an infant, becomes a pawn for Hadria to vindicate her own unfulfilled existence, showing that even a chosen motherhood has destructive effects. While Hadria does not duplicate her mother's perverse attitude for her children to suffer as she did, Hadria objectifies her adopted daughter by planning to live vicariously through her.

Through Martha, Hadria is perpetuating, instead of breaking, the inherited chain of resentment and oppression. The reader can predict that when Martha comes of age, she will feel many of the same pressures as Hadria has in the novel.

Mirroring Hadria's treatment of Martha is the relationship with her older friend and mentor, Hadria's own chosen mother, Valeria Du Prel. Valeria is an acclaimed novelist and independent woman, everything to which Hadria aspires. Indeed, Valeria's novel features a heroine who leaves her unhappy marriage, which parallels Hadria's abandonment of her family. Despite Valeria's feminist credentials, she is characterized throughout the novel as a lonely, isolated woman who resents her lack of a husband and family. As a result, instead of supporting Hadria's wish for independence, and achievement of her musical aspirations, Valeria, along with Mrs. Fullerton, pressures Hadria into marriage and domestic life. Valeria's vision of Hadria as fulfillment of her past regrets and as literary inspiration are startlingly inconsistent, though Hadria never realizes the inconsistency. Thus, Hadria is betrayed by her own chosen mother. Ann Heilmann argues that for Mona Caird, motherhood is presented as "a central site of female oppression" (144). Indeed, it Hadria's network of female influences that engineer her confinement more so than the male characters. I would also argue that both kinds of chosen motherhood in the novel fail because they are too closely connected with the patriarchal system. In every attempt for autonomy, Hadria is unable to achieve her ideals because she is forced to stay in the domestic sphere by everything around her.

As Sally Ledger argues, Hadria's vision of feminist politics changes over the course of the novel from revolutionary to evolutionary (31). However, Hadria only makes

this transformation after she has failed in all of her revolutionary attempts and realizes the intensity of the assignation of gender roles in her society. After finally resigning herself to a life of domestic duty, Hadria recalls:

a strange and grotesque vision, or waking dream, that she had dreamt a few nights before: of a vast abyss, black and silent, which had to be filled with the bodies of women, hurled down to the depths of the pit of darkness, in order that the survivors might, at last, walk over in safety. (451)

This passage represents the transformation of Hadria's hope for women. At the beginning of the novel, she believes women's emancipation is on the verge of happening, but by the end all she has is a grim hope that someday women's sacrifices will enable future generations of women to be liberated. This is interesting, considering that Hadria's mother's sacrifice is what binds her to the domestic sphere. By using imagery of an inferno, this passage evokes the ultimate experience of being locked-in: condemnation to Hell. Thus, Hadria's vision indicates that women are presently forced to endure a hellish existence, but eventually, all women's sacrifices will free future generations of women instead of subjecting them perpetuate their own subjugation.

While not happy to be condemned to this "abyss," Hadria eventually accepts this as her fate and must hope for liberation in the future. Indeed, Hadria has in her scope women who are independent, like her sister, Alghitha, who works as a philanthropist in London's East End. While Hadria could not break free from domestic restraints, her sister could. Hadria endures heroic failure of her attempts at independence and resigns

herself to being locked within the domestic sphere, sharing the same fate as the daughters of Danaus.

The previous characters have all espoused New Woman beliefs but were unable to break free from being locked in the home. Eventually, each of these New Women submits to being locked-in, even though it is at great personal cost. The next character, however, does not agree with New Woman ideals but rebels against the confines of marriage much more overtly. George Gissing shows the effect independence before marriage has on women in his novel, *The Odd Women*. In George Gissing's *The Odd Women*, the one married woman of the novel presents a radical contrast in a woman's freedom before and after marriage. Monica Madden works as a shopgirl in London. While she works most of the time, Monica is free to move about town on her days off, and Gissing portrays her with a good knowledge of London, moving about freely and confidently. Indeed, on one of her days out, Monica meets Edmund Widdowson, an aging but wealthy bachelor, and her freedom of movement immediately becomes constrained. Both are aware that their meeting is improper because they were not introduced by mutual friends or acquaintances. After meeting her future husband, Monica's freedom of movement and sexual reputation are immediately compromised. Widdowson disapproves of Monica's mobility in London, and even during their first meeting becomes paranoid about Monica's physical freedom in the city. Widdowson begins following her and watching her movements, which is exacerbated during their marriage when he ultimately hires a professional spy to follow his own wife. Widdowson tries to convince himself that Monica is "no representative shopgirl" (238),

his fear is motivated in part that any woman moving unaccompanied in public will turn out to be a “public woman.” Sally Ledger argues that the character of Monica Madden, the shopgirl figure, challenges the male domination of the city more dramatically than the New Woman figures of the novel (163). I would expand on this to say that not only does Monica challenge the male public space but as a result, she is even more constrained by domestic space after her marriage.

The heart of Monica’s problem with her husband lies in her immense freedom before marriage working as a shopgirl and marrying a man who not only wants to completely subjugate his wife to his own will but also wants to continually be at home. She detests having to stay at home all the time and the work seems almost beneath her. She comments that it only takes her an hour or two and then she is bored the rest of the day. Monica, against her will, is usually at home all day. “During the whole of the morning she was to be absorbed in household cares. In the afternoon he would take her to walk or drive, and in the evening he wished her to spend either in the drawing room or library, occupied with a book. Monica soon found that his idea of wedded happiness was that they should always be together” (224). Monica really yearns for excitement, to get away from her domestic environment. On the other hand, she hated the long hours of standing on her feet at the shop and wanted to leave that atmosphere, which is precisely why she marries Widdowson.

As much as Monica discredits her experience with Rhoda Nunn and Mary Barfoot, the two New Woman figures in the novel, she obtains from them the reasoning skills she uses in arguing with her husband. She says, “I don’t think...there’s much real

difference between men and women. That is, there wouldn't be if women had fair treatment" (241). Widdowson's views of marriage and of women in general are totally opposed to giving Monica any freedoms: "Never had it occurred to Widdowson that a wife remains an individual, with rights and obligations independent of her wifely condition. Everything he said presupposed his own supremacy; he took for granted that it was his to direct, hers to be guided" (225). However, "the bitterness of his situation lay in the fact that he had wedded a woman who irresistibly proved to him her claims as a human being" (290). Monica refuses to accept her limited sphere of activity and rebels against her husband's authority. Although Widdowson is a tyrant, "a husband's misdirected jealousy excites in the wife derision and a sense of superiority; more often than not, it fosters an unsuspected attachment, prompts to a perverse pleasure in misleading" (299). Monica obtains some freedom by continuously upholding her position and going against Widdowson's wishes, making her marriage even more miserable. Rhoda even remarks at one point that Monica has a lot of freedom for a married woman. As a result of forcing some freedoms for her self, she continues to want more freedom and ultimately wants to be free from her husband.

Monica's immense freedom before marriage makes it harder for her to accept being locked within the domestic space after marriage. Her independence before marriage is a result of financial necessity. Monica works as a shopgirl because she and her sisters have been orphaned and must work in order to survive. Monica hates working because she has a middle class background and was brought up knowing that she should not have to work. Her class puts her at odds against the other shopgirls, who are all working-

class, so that she despises her working environment. Edmund Widdowson fulfills her economic needs and her idea of middle-class life, but she has been so exposed to other ways of living and depending upon herself that she is unable to reconcile her experience with appropriate behavior for a middle-class wife.

Monica's internal crisis culminates in her pregnancy, which encloses her permanently to her husband, with no means of escape. Becoming pregnant further accentuates Monica's entrapment within the domestic sphere because she has to endure "confinement," being shut away from public during the last months of pregnancy, something endured by every Victorian mother. While every other character I've mentioned, Evadne, Angelica, and Hadria, contemplates suicide, each one lives. Monica, never contemplates suicide, but dies from childbirth at the end of the novel. I would argue that it is confinement rather than childbirth that really causes Monica's death. As soon as she enters confinement, months before birth, Monica is sure that she will die, and as a result becomes increasingly weaker, and she dies after giving birth. She survives only to bring her child into the world, and appropriately, she has a daughter who is adopted by Monica's sisters and Rhoda Nunn, the New Woman of the novel. The ending scene of the novel indicates that this child will be raised by New Women and will be able to be successful with independence. Thus, even though the other heroines fought for independence and freedom from domestic tyranny, they are better constituted to survive. Monica, however, cannot survive domestic entrapment because she knows another kind of life, and ultimately being locked in kills her through her domestic duty of bearing her husband's child.

For a woman during the fin de siècle, marriage means giving up her individuality and absorbing herself in the prescribed role of a wife. Married women lose their names and leave their families to bear their husbands' children. Moreover, upon marriage, women must suppress their own goals and aspirations to support their husbands' career and household. By envisioning wives as "angels of the house" the Victorian idyll prescribed that women should be pure and holy vessels that worship their patriarchal authority figure. Angels have no individuality and neither do archetypal Victorian wives. In being compared to angels, women were idealized according to group characteristics that ultimately centered on the reflection of masculinity and the continuance of the patriarchal line.

Marriage usually leads to motherhood, and motherhood intensifies and makes permanent the social identity a woman joins upon marriage. A new mother must obey general guidelines to be a "good" parent and raise functional, obedient children. Children's very survival depends upon their mothers, which is a great responsibility. In nurturing their children, women sacrifice themselves as individuals and conform to the broader social identity of motherhood. As mothers, women focus upon their children rather than themselves. Fathers do not lose their individuality upon becoming a parent—his children make him a patriarch and show the continuation of the family line. In becoming mothers, women are used as vessels for their husbands' patriarchal line.

Motherhood is not only a social construct, but also a biological and physical reality. In the Victorian era, maternity literally entrapped women within the domestic sphere during their period of confinement, when women could not leave the house or

receive visitors outside of family and close friends. Bearing children was still very dangerous for women at the turn of the century, and a large percentage of women died during childbirth or as a result of complications. Women depended upon physicians to live through childbirth. Women assumed a social identity as mothers after children were born, but during pregnancy they also ascribed to the collective identity of a patient.

Victorian medical discourse viewed women as natural patients by depicting many aspects of femininity as a disease. One of the most significant disorders Victorian doctors ascribed to women was hysteria. Often referred to the “feminine malady,” hysteria was thought to be a product of the emotional natures of women. The prescribed treatment for hysteria was called the “rest cure,” in which the patient was to rest in bed and not do anything physical. The rest cure was essentially an extreme version of being locked in. I would argue that what Victorian medical discourse calls hysteria is really a reaction to domestic confinement. Instead of a mental disorder, then, hysteria would be a healthy mind trying to escape, as seen with Evadne. Hysteria was essentially a medicalization of emotion. Physicians relegated these women who displayed individuality through their emotions to the even more general social identity of the patient. A woman defined as a hysteric depended upon a male physician’s treatment and, ultimately, his pronouncement that she was sane again.

The characters discussed in this section ultimately submit to being locked within the domestic sphere, and by the end of the novels, have lost their original characterization. Being locked within the home seems to drain each of them of their individuality. The issues I have raised in this section—marriage, motherhood and illness,

(specifically hysteria)—all involve joining a social group with a collective identity. Marriage, motherhood, and hysteria are all prescribed social roles, with prearranged positions and functions for the individuals taking on these roles. To attain status as a wife, a mother, or a hysteric requires completing certain codified steps. Fitting any of these categories also involves submitting to authority, specifically to a male authority figure and generally to social mores. Conforming to a social identity requires de-individualization, changing an individual into a general, prescribed, and archetypal figure, which is what ultimately locks women in the home. If a woman does not conform, however, she is consequently locked out of the world and denied any kind of home, which is the focus of the next section.

Locked Out

I have discussed characters in New Woman fiction who are unable to break free from their domestic confines. Now I will focus on women who escape being locked in the home and find that they are locked out of the rest of the world. Realistically, middle-class women had only very circumscribed movements outside the home and usually needed an escort. At the time of the New Woman, there were many places that denied access to women, including clubs, professional institutions, and much of higher education. Heroines in New Woman novels try to challenge this by going outside the home but struggle with the sacrifices they are forced to make as a result.

Many New Woman novels depict characters with artistic talents who aspire to careers as artists. To accomplish this, they try to move beyond the domestic sphere, thinking that if they can move beyond the door of the home, they will be able to pursue their interests. Two characters discussed previously as being locked in their domestic environment, Angelica Hamilton-Wells in *The Heavenly Twins* and Hadria Fullerton in *The Daughters of Danaus* are prevented from developing their artistic talents. They are locked out of the artistic world and are eventually relegated to the domestic sphere.

Although Angelica enters marriage on the condition that she can do as she pleases, the one thing her husband forbids is playing the violin publicly. Angelica is a musical prodigy on the violin, but is prevented first by her father and then by her husband from becoming a professional musician. Much of Angelica's artistic frustration originates in the equality she has with her twin brother, Diavolo, as a child. While

Diavolo is encouraged to use his talents and sent to school, Angelica's education is ended upon her "coming out" and her musical talents are discouraged. Her father cancels a performance she and Diavolo have planned, whereupon Angelica proposes marriage to Mr. Kilroy to obtain more freedom. However, her husband pays her to ensure that she will not resort to playing music in public, and "this threat to make money with her violin had kept her purse full ever since her marriage" (471). Her husband essentially bribes her to remain in her sphere of the home. Angelica's husband knows that she would achieve success were she ever to launch on a musical career, which would hurt his rising career in Parliament. Women had been allowed to perform on stage for a long time, but if Angelica embarked on a musical career, she would be known in public, marking her as a public woman. This kind of notoriety would damage Mr. Kilroy's political career. Though Mr. Kilroy allows Angelica to do whatever she wants, he locks her out of expressing her artistic talents.

Angelica slightly subverts her husband's authority and plays her violin for another man, the tenor in the church choir and therefore a fellow musician. To do this, she disguises herself as a boy so that she can leave her house at night and meet the Tenor. Since she cannot pursue a music career, Angelica tries to live vicariously through the Tenor by making connections for him so that he can become famous. However, the Tenor dies suddenly, and Angelica feels responsible for his death. In her guilt, she accepts feminine role, which is submission to the masculine authority of her husband. Angelica discards her musical aspirations and instead uses her intelligence to write political speeches for her husband. After the tragic results of Angelica's

mischievous subversion of her husband's requests, she wants to be protected within the domestic sphere against which she formerly revolted.

In *The Daughters of Danaus*, Hadria Fullerton makes a more definite attempt to engage in a musical career. Hadria is ultimately locked within the home at the end of the novel, but in her attempt to live independently as a composer and pianist in Paris, she finds herself locked out of the artistic world. At several points, the narrator describes Hadria's difficulties in becoming recognized but also presents her determination, as "stubbornly, Hadria sent her packets to the publishers; the publishers as firmly returned them" (325). The artistic establishment is resolute in rejecting Hadria's artistic creations, even though she is described as having talent and originality. Though she has freed herself from her domestic responsibilities and temporarily escaped domestic entrapment, she is locked out of the artistic world to her immense disappointment and frustration.

Since she cannot get payment for her work, Hadria begins to run out of money. She moves to a smaller room but even then is unsure of how long she can afford to stay. Shelter is the biggest worry for Hadria when away from her own home. She is reinserted into the domestic sphere because of a family crisis, not because she gives up on her artistic aspirations; however, it is unclear whether or not she would have succeeded in Paris. Certainly, she further develops her individuality and her identity as an artist, but the reader is unsure if Hadria would have been accepted as an artist in her own right. While Hadria does not achieve artistic success, her best friend, Valeria, has enormous success as a novelist. Valeria has never been married, and is bitter about the fact,

whereas Hadria is married with two sons and an adopted daughter. *The Daughters of Danaus* suggests that women can only achieve artistic freedom if they are totally unattached from domesticity, indicating that they must choose between a home and an artistic career.

While Hadria has left her husband and two small sons behind in England, she brings her adopted daughter, Martha, with her in Paris. Hadria does not want her legitimate sons with her during her artistic endeavors because they represent to her patriarchal authority and her neglect of her domestic duties as a wife and mother. Hadria's daughter, who is not part of her husband's line of heredity, is the child Hadria can raise in her image alone. Martha is an inspiration to Hadria in her artistic endeavors, and in her temporary freedom from domestic entrapment, Hadria can raise Martha to be an independent woman.

Both Angelica Hamilton-Wells in *The Heavenly Twins* and Hadria Fullerton in *The Daughters of Danaus* desire to become artists; however, both of these characters are married and thus connected to the domestic sphere. In her novel *Red Pottage*, Mary Cholmondeley presents an unmarried woman who is denied artistic achievement by a patriarchal authority figure. *Red Pottage* is the story of two friends, Hester Gresley and Rachel West. Rachel is poverty stricken upon the deaths of her parents but inherits a fortune after years of living in the East End of London. Hester desires to become a writer and has her first inspiration while visiting Rachel: "She saw, as in a dream, terrible, beautiful, inaccessible, but distinct, where her power lay, of which restless bewildering hints had so often mocked her. She had but to touch the houses and they would fall

down" (37-38). This vision presents the image of Hester destroying houses with her artistic power, suggesting that with her writing she can free women from the boundaries of separate spheres that lock women in the home and away from the outside world.

Hester's inspiration also comes from the neighborhood around her, a place where she, as a middle-class woman, should not be. This is the first time Hester has taken notice of the London poor. After this inspiration, Hester writes a novel about Rachel that receives great success, a stark contrast to her next artistic endeavor.

Upon her aunt's death, Hester must live with her dogmatic clergyman brother and his family. As a result of the stifling environment of her brother's home, Hester experiences trouble in writing a second novel, a project to which she gives most of her spare time and the better part of her health. When she finally completes the novel, her brother reads it without her knowledge and burns it because he finds it "wicked and profane" (276). Mr. Gresley abhors the manuscript's content and destroys it to protect Hester's reputation and the "innocent minds which might be perverted by it" (276). Mr. Gresley immediately employs a rhetoric of disease and contagion when confessing to Hester. He is frightened that her book will have too much influence and will draw people away from the religious fundamentalism that he espouses. Mr. Gresley aims for spiritual purity in the world, and he is convinced her book will contaminate its readers spiritually as a disease contaminates a body physically.

Mr. Gresley's destruction of Hester's book is also his reaction to artistic competition. Mr. Gresley himself is a writer of religious treatises, and earlier in the novel asks Hester to read over a draft of an article he has written. When reading

Hester's work, he says that it is her ideas that offend him, but I would argue that he is also frightened by artistic competition from his sister, a dependent female who should not challenge him. He proceeds to use his self-imposed authority over his unmarried sister to eliminate her as competition.

To Hester, destroying her novel is equivalent to killing one of her own children. When Mr. Gresley tells Hester what he has done, she confronts him, saying, "When Regie [her nephew] was ill,...I did what I could. I did not let your child die..Why have you killed mine?" (276). Both Ann Ardis and Ann Heilmann discuss Cholmondeley's connection between artistic creation and maternity, saying that this connection was made in much of New Woman fiction. I would argue that this is a fundamental weakness of new Woman fiction. Although New Woman novels champion the idea of women as artists, making the connection to maternity prevents the characters from moving beyond their femininity to their identities as artists. Moreover, these characters represent in part reflections of the author's identity as an artist. The author conflates her own identity with that of the character in her novel, and the character's feelings about her artistic endeavors reflect the author's about her novel. The parallels between maternity and artistic creation is why none of these characters ultimately succeed as artists—the authors, in making this connection, are themselves obstructing the door to artistic freedom.

The maternal connection Hester has with her book causes her to have a nervous breakdown when it is destroyed. In her delusions, Hester imagines that she actually has killed her nephew Regie in taking revenge on her brother. After she recovers, Hester

decides to move away from her brother and goes to live independently in Australia. Before she leaves the country, she describes to Rachel and another friend her feelings about the loss of her book:

I loved [my book] for itself, not for anything it was to bring me. My one prayer was that I might be worthy to write it, that it might not suffer by contact with me. I spent myself upon it...I knew what I was doing. I joyfully spent my health, my eyesight, my very life upon it.

(335)

As Ardis points out, Hester “spends” herself on her book in the “Elizabethan sense of the word” (128), and her book is compared to both a lover and a child, conflating production with reproduction (129). Hester’s writing is her substitute for marriage and a family; however, when her own family member asserts his patriarchal authority, Hester stops writing and leaves England, presumably to obtain a lover and possibly her own children.

The novels I have discussed so far depict women who are thwarted in their attempts to become artists. For each of these situations, the home represents a protective, though constraining force. In the novels I will focus on next, Thomas Hardy’s *Jude the Obscure* and Grant Allen’s *The Woman Who Did*, the characters are denied some basic protections of society because of the radical feminist beliefs they espouse. The protections that the public withholds are the basic components of a home—shelter, family, and community. The denial of a home to the protagonists of *Jude the Obscure* and *The Woman Who Did* dramatically expresses society’s rejection of these characters and their feminist ideals. While the New Women in *The Heavenly*

Twins, *The Daughters of Danaus*, and *Red Pottage* are locked out of the artistic world and then locked within the domestic realm, the New Women in *Jude the Obscure* and *The Woman Who Did* carry out their radical ideals but as a result are locked out of the domestic sphere.

The name in the title *Jude the Obscure* refers to the protagonist Jude Fawley, who longs to attain a university education but instead must work as a stonemason. Although he is legally married, Jude falls in love with Sue Bridehead, who marries Jude's former teacher, Mr. Phillotson. However, Sue, who was never attracted to Phillotson, soon shows her revulsion towards him and objects to her position as a wife. At the same time, Sue's feelings for Jude continue to grow. Jude and Sue divorce their spouses and live together in a romantic but nonsexual arrangement at Sue's insistence. Sue disagrees with the legal constraints of marriage and has a strong aversion to sexual intimacy. She imposes her opinions upon Jude and persuades him rather easily to agree to her conditions of their relationship.

Throughout the novel Sue is often without shelter. When Jude firsts gets to know Sue, she relates to him that she lived for some time with a man without having a sexual relationship with him. Sue tells Jude that after his death she "lived in London by [her]self for some time, and then [she] returned to Christminster, as [her] father—who was also in London...wouldn't have [her] back" (153). Sue establishes at the outset of her intimacy with Jude that she has been ostracized by her family, which is why she is delighted to meet him, since they are cousins. She longs for family, even if it is a family member she has never known. Sue is alone in the world after being shunned by her

father, and Jude is a connection for her. Through Jude, Sue is able to meet their aunt and also to find out different aspects of their common family history. Though Sue's immediate family rejects her, in her relationship with Jude she feels like she belongs—she has a home.

However, even though Sue has reconnected with family upon meeting Jude, she still finds herself without shelter in other instances. While Sue is being trained as a teacher, she sneaks out of the school late at night and must stay with Jude. Again, Sue places herself in a sexually compromising situation and must suffer the consequences. She is expelled from school for this incident, and must hastily marry Phillotson for financial support and for the obvious reason that she has no place to live. Upon Sue's entrance into the plot of *Jude the Obscure*, Hardy establishes her as an uprooted character, a drifter who belongs nowhere. In becoming involved with Sue, Jude often finds himself homeless as well.

After Jude and Sue begin cohabitating, they attempt to get married after the arrival of Little Time, Jude's son from his first marriage. They cannot go through with the ceremony, but they begin to have a sexual relationship and to think of themselves as married. However, the townspeople soon realize the unorthodox relationship Jude and Sue share, and the "unnoticed lives that the pair had hitherto led began, from the day of the suspended wedding onwards, to be observed" (313). After discovering Jude and Sue's past, the townspeople begin a systematic exile of the couple. When Jude receives work inlaying gold in church decorations, he and Sue are seen working together at the church, which becomes a subject of gossip. Jude's employer interrupts their work and

tells Jude, "I am afraid I must ask you and her to leave off, and let somebody else finish this. It is best, to avoid all unpleasantness" (319). Additionally, Jude holds a position in a committee of tradesmen, but after he is dismissed from work, he attends a committee meeting and realizes that his relationship with Sue is being discussed upon his arrival: "Nothing further was said in Jude's presence, but he knew what this meant; and turning to the table wrote a not resigning his office there and then" (320). The narrator concludes these examples of the town's ostracism of Jude and Sue by saying, "Thus the supersensitive couple were more and more impelled to go away" (320). In calling them "supersensitive," Hardy implies that Jude and Sue themselves are not very confident with their lifestyle and so cannot withstand gossip and criticism. This implied weakness in Jude and Sue foreshadows the end of their relationship when their ideals are severely tested.

After being rejected by this town, they are concerned about settling down anywhere for fear that they will again be forced to leave. As a result, "they had taken advantage of his adaptive craftsmanship to enter on a shifting, almost nomadic life, which was not without its pleasantness for a time" (325). In this description, Hardy presents Jude and Sue as reduced to a exiled lifestyle because they do not have a permanent home. During this time Jude and Sue have several children together. Though they are content with each other, the happiness they receive from this lifestyle is due to the fact that they do not have to make themselves assimilate into a community. Society's rejection of them has reduced them to primitive nomads, which is not something they, especially Jude, are fit to endure. As a result, Jude decides that he

wants to return to Christminster to settle permanently. However, reentering a community-based lifestyle proves impossible for Jude, Sue, and their children. Their family has been locked out of a residential environment, and in reentering they are not only denied community but even temporary shelter.

Upon their arrival in Christminster, they begin to look for temporary lodgings but are rejected by many before a lady takes pity on them. She allows Sue and the children to stay if Jude will find lodgings elsewhere. This scene is an allusion to the birth of Christ, where there was no room for Joseph, Mary, and the baby Jesus in the inn. Appropriately, the city where Jude and Sue cannot find lodgings is Christminster. Like the Virgin Mary, Sue is pregnant at this time and tries to hide her condition to help them get a room for the night. Interestingly, it seems that every lodger is suspicious of this family, communicating that there is something amiss if a family is homeless.

Though a woman lodger has compassion for the dependents of Jude and Sue's family, Sue discovers they are longer welcome once she explains her family's situation. The landlady discerns rather quickly that this family is somehow illegitimate, and Sue cannot refrain from being honest about her relationship with Jude. The landlady immediately excuses herself to talk to her husband about the lodgers, which results in an altercation. She returns to Sue only to tell her:

'I am sorry to tell you, ma'am,' she said, 'that I can't let you have the room for the week after all. My husband objects; and there fore I must ask you to go. I don't mind your staying over tonight, as it is getting late in the afternoon; but I shall be glad if you can leave early in the morning.'

(349-50)

The woman's husband refuses to have this family in his home. His reasons for objecting were that he did not want "a woman like" (349) Sue, an unmarried mother and therefore fallen woman under his roof. Beginning to harbor renters like Sue would give his lodgings a bad reputation and would subsequently not attract the middle-class, economically sound customers that he wants. He also wants no children to take lodgings because he assumes that they will ruin the newly renovated rooms.

After losing their lodgings for the week, Sue and the oldest child, Little Time, go to look for lodgings for the next day. The narrator describes the heartbreaking scene as they go from inn to inn:

In the company of the boy she wandered into this street and into that; but though she tried a dozen different houses she fared far worse alone than she had fared in Jude's company, and could get nobody to promise her a room for the following day. Every householder looked askance at such a woman and child inquiring for accommodation in the gloom.

(350)

Hardy communicates through this poignant scene that if a woman is not locked in the home, then she is locked out of any other means of shelter. Sue and Little Time have no success in securing rooms a day in advance and were only taken in by pity as a complete family. Jude, however, has no trouble in finding lodgings on his own, away from his lover and children. Indeed, the only times Jude ever has problems in finding a place to live is when he is with Sue. A man by himself has no problem finding shelter. Since

men earn money, they are an assured payment, and thus lodgers encourage keeping single men. A family is a more difficult circumstance, with more people to house and mouths to feed. A woman by herself has the most difficult time of all in finding shelter, but they are excluded for more than economic reasons. Women who need lodgings do not have a home of their own, which poses a problem. Because they are not sheltered by a male figure, they are outside the boundaries ascribed to women and are mistrusted as outsiders.

Women and children are supposed to be sheltered by their husbands and fathers. Indeed, it is impossible for women and children to find means of shelter of their own, rendering them incapable of independent survival. Hardy shows this symbolically in the tragic deaths of Jude and Sue's children. Little Time believes that they are denied shelter because there are too many of them. He tells Sue "it would have been better to have never been born" (350) and she is too depressed to contradict him. In the morning, Jude and Sue discover that Little Time has hanged himself and the two younger children while Sue was getting breakfast for them. They find a note from Little Time that reads, "Done because we were too meny" (358). Sue, who is pregnant, goes into shock and miscarries. Sue is overcome by guilt and leaves Jude to remarry Phillotson because she feels that she is being punished for leaving a legitimate marriage. Thus, in Christminster, the community demonstrates Jude and Sue's ostracism in an extreme fashion by denying them the basic necessity of shelter, resulting in the deaths of their children and the end of their relationship. If they are given no place to live, the result

will be the departure of the unwelcome family. Society refuses to accept Jude and Sue because of the fear that the unorthodox couple will infiltrate and disrupt domestic life.

In *The Woman Who Did*, Grant Allen also explores what happens to women and children who search for find shelter without a male provider. *The Woman Who Did* tells the story of Herminia Barton, a college-educated New Woman who opposes the institution of marriage and chooses instead to live in a free union with her lover, Alan Merrick. Herminia becomes pregnant and travels to Italy for her confinement, where Alan catches typhus and dies suddenly, without making provisions for Herminia or their child. Herminia must then raise and provide for their daughter, Dolly, on her own. In her grief over Alan's death and her feelings of failure in her feminist mission, Herminia comforts herself by envisioning Dolly as the savior of womankind, the first free woman of England. Ironically, Dolly grows up to be entirely conventional and rejects her mother's feminist ideas. Finally, when she stands in the way of Dolly's chances for marriage, Herminia commits suicide to ensure her daughter's future happiness.

When Alan tells his father that he is leaving the country for Herminia's confinement, his father says that he must never see his family again, explaining, "I must guard your mother and sisters at least...from the contamination of this woman's opinions" (72). New Woman ideas are compared to disease because both spread from one person to the next. Contagious diseases, like ideas, must come into contact with someone else to continue. In *The Woman Who Did*, the events surrounding Alan and Herminia's relationship and Alan's death suggest that Alan in effect "caught" Herminia's ideas, which kill him. The cure for disease is quarantine, isolation and

separation from a community. An ill person is locked out of a community until death or healing occurs. Allen suggests that the cure for radical ideas is ostracism from the community. Alan's father fears that Herminia's New Woman ideas will spread, which implies that other women will also want her lifestyle. Alan's father worries that Herminia's ideas will disrupt conventional domesticity if they are allowed to infiltrate to other families. In Alan's father's view, Herminia's opinions could disrupt the patriarchy because, if they caught on, women would not be dependent upon men and men would lose control over their descendents.

Reminiscent of *Jude the Obscure*, Herminia also has difficulty finding a place to live after her return and must wander around London in search of lodgings. She eventually learns that to obtain shelter she must introduce herself as Mrs. Barton to give the impression that she is a widow. The narrator gives a direct address at this point, saying, "Woe unto you, scribes and hypocrites; in all Christian London, *Miss Barton* and her baby could never have found a 'respectable' room in which to lay their heads" (93). This quote makes a biblical allusion to the "Seven Woes" spoken by Jesus to the Pharisees in the Gospel of Matthew. The rest of the verse states, "You shut the kingdom of heaven in men's faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to" (23:14 *NIV*). Allen attacks the English society, comparing the citizens of London to the Pharisees of Israel. He suggests that, as the Pharisees are shutting people out of heaven, English society locks Herminia out of achieving her attempted emancipation by forcing her to lie to survive. As the narrator highlights, she never would have found shelter for herself and her child unless she lived with the lower

classes. As in *Jude the Obscure*, lodgers fear letting a New Woman, a woman without a home, rent in their lodgings. New Women are locked out of the domestic world because they do not follow the lifestyle prescribed by the domestic sphere. Both Sue Bridehead and Herminia Barton are “fallen women” because they have borne children out of wedlock. If they repent, society accepts them enough to let them live their lives in peace, which happens at the end of *Jude the Obscure*. Also, the families of fallen but penitent women can aid them financially if they choose. However, their exile from society is because they were not seduced but actually chose to have a sexual relationship outside the legal bonds of marriage.

Herminia is successful in finding a job as a journalist, and joins the Fabian Society, but she is not accepted even in the Bohemian society in which she surrounds herself:

To be sure, they didn't ask the free woman to their homes, not invite her to meet their own women: even an enlightened journalist must draw the line somewhere in the matter of society; but they understood and appreciated the sincerity of her motives, and did what they could to find employment and salary for her.

(94)

Herminia is accepted in the public sphere of her workplace but still locked out of the private sphere, even by those who support her. The Bohemians only include her professionally and economically but deny her a sense of community, a real home environment. While Herminia at least is supported professionally, Dolly is not exposed

to this support and feels locked out from all angles, which presumably affects the way she reacts to her mother's opinions on women's emancipation.

Herminia's relations with her own family demonstrate how completely she is ostracized from the world in which she was brought up. In describing her family, the narrator states, "She saw nothing of her family. Relations had long been strained between them; now they were ruptured. To the rest of the Bartons, she was even as one dead; the sister and daughter's name was never pronounced among them" (99). Herminia's family acts as if she does not exist, not helping her in her poverty stricken state. Herminia rejected the ideas she was raised to uphold so she is dead to those close to her who espouse and tried to instill those beliefs in her. For Herminia's family, even to acknowledge her existence is to support the idea that what Herminia is doing is possible for women.

On one occasion, Herminia tries to see her father, and for a moment, he almost succumbs to his love for his daughter, but stands firm in rejecting her. Herminia's father indicates the one way she can again be accepted into society—repentance. As a penitent fallen woman, her family can forgive her and act charitably towards Herminia and her daughter, though there would still be some public distance between them. It is her New Woman ideas that separate her from her family more than bearing a child out of wedlock. Herminia's father tells her to "keep far away from me and your untainted sisters" (100) until she repents. Again, there is the connection between New Woman ideas and disease. Herminia's pure sisters might become contaminated if she comes near them. Herminia must live in isolation, locked out of familial love. In *Jude the*

Obscure, Sue does repent after the deaths of her children and is given shelter and allowed to rejoin society, though she is a broken woman. A penitent person admits to sinning and agrees to accept and abide by moral standards. If Herminia repented, she would no longer be locked out of a home and family but would be locked in the domestic sphere. This kind of locking-in would result in an abandonment of the cause of her personal identity for Herminia. Not only would she be confined to the social identity of a mother, but she would also become the archetypal repentant sinner instead of a person labeled by her vice or her individual ideas.

The sad irony of *The Woman Who Did* is Herminia's continued sacrifices for her daughter, who ultimately rejects Herminia's ideas and way of life. While Herminia has fought to free herself from being locked in, Dolly resents being locked out. Dolly is entirely conventional and cares more for material means than philosophical ideas. What upsets Dolly the most is society's rejection of herself and her mother. The narrator describes her confusion over her family connections, saying, "She couldn't understand, then, why she and her mother should live precariously in a very small attic; should never be visited by her mother's brothers...and should be totally ignored by her mother's sister" (119). Dolly blames her mother for her social disadvantages and rejects the very ideas with which Herminia has raised her, asking, "Why should mamma hold ideas of her own which shut her daughter out from the worldly advantages enjoyed to the full by the rest of her kindred?" (119). Discovering her illegitimacy results in Dolly's outright rejection of her mother, culminating in Herminia's suicide, her final sacrifice for her daughter. Reminiscent of the futile maternal sacrifices in *The Daughters of Danaus*,

Herminia's struggle to give her daughter emancipation ends in failure, with Dolly's rejection of her mother and a throwback to traditional ways. In sacrificing herself for her daughter, Herminia makes plans for her daughter and lives vicariously through her, without ever communicating her hopes and dreams to Dolly. Alan Merrick was easily won by Herminia's advanced opinions, but Herminia does not persuade Dolly and the mother and daughter never fully understand each other. Although Herminia attempts to emancipate womankind by having a daughter, her sacrifices result in perpetuating women's oppression.

These New Women all face different kinds of denial: denial of creativity, of respect, of shelter, of family, of affection. Society locks out New Woman characters, whether by refusing to accept them as artists or denying them basic social protections from the outside world. In those novels where women attempt to become artists, they are eventually relegated back to and locked within the domestic sphere. They submit to their domestic duties as women and stop pursuing their artistic dreams. Once these characters have left the domestic sphere behind, it is difficult for them to find any living space at all. The space that locks in women is also able to lock out dissident women. Domestic space confines women and entraps them into following their prescribed social identities. However, if women successfully free themselves from the confinement of the domestic sphere, they are shut out of every aspect of domestic life, including the basic necessity of shelter.

Each of the New Woman characters in these novels is denied her very livelihood by being locked out of the world. The New Woman artists lose their identity as artists

and their individuality as women when they give up their artistic endeavors and submit to domestic duties. Moreover, each of their decisions is prompted by a crisis in their lives. Angelica Hamilton-Wells accepts her duties as a wife and submits to her husband's authority when she feels partially responsible in causing her friend's death. Hadria Fullerton permanently encloses herself within the domestic sphere when she must leave Paris and her possible music career upon learning that her mother and her two sons are very ill. Hester Gresley stops writing and moves to Australia after her brother burns her second novel, which prompts her nervous breakdown. Hester's main concern is that she has hurt her nephew in her rage over the destruction of her book. Each New Woman character stays within the domestic sphere as a result of a loss or fear of losing someone close to them. What precipitates each character's submission to the domestic sphere is a feeling of guilt over neglecting their family and their domestic responsibilities.

In *The Heavenly Twins*, *The Daughters of Danaus*, and *Red Pottage*, the New Women choose their family over their artistic aspirations but in *Jude the Obscure* and *The Woman Who Did*, the lifestyles of the New Women separate them from their families and eventually result in familial tragedies. Being locked out of society in *Jude the Obscure* and *The Woman Who Did* results in tragic deaths in both of the novels. The New Woman reenters the domestic sphere after being rejected by the outside world. Hardy communicates through this poignant scene that if a woman is not locked in the home, then she is locked out of any other means of shelter. She chooses, in effect, to lock herself in after being locked out by society.

CHAPTER IV

THE UNLOCKED HOME

In the previous sections, I have discussed characters in New Woman novels who are locked in the home and characters who, upon rejecting a typical domestic life, are locked out of society. New Woman novels portray women's dual exclusions as a result of the doctrine of separate spheres. Being locked in and locked out leaves women no place to be themselves. Accordingly, many New Woman novels conclude with the protagonist at an impasse or submitting to a socially accepted role. The doctrine of separate spheres determined the particular spaces that women could enter and also specified the kind of home that women should have. According to Margaret Higonnet, "A circumscribed woman's sphere was theorized in order to distinguish the roles of women and men and to explain their different statuses" (4). In previous sections, the female characters unhappy with their home were operating in the prescribed contexts of separate spheres. They revolted against a home that drained them of their individuality, but did not think outside the separations of space defined by separate spheres. In this section, I will discuss New Woman characters whom, I argue, try to think beyond the precepts of separate spheres and to create a completely new kind of home.

The New Woman novel tries to find an alternative to separate spheres in a domestic setting that fits women's personal needs. In these novels, the New Woman

attempts to alter domestic space in order to transcend the system of separate spheres. New Women characters seek a home life that supports them as individuals instead of relegating them to the archetypal role of the mistress of the home or the Angel in the House. I call this kind of domestic space the unlocked home because it frees women from the constraints of being locked in or locked out. The image unlocked home evokes a sense of danger because a home without a lock can be exploited easily. The unlocked homes of the New Woman are somewhat dangerous for the characters, but are very exciting at the same time.

New Woman novels vary in the unlocked homes they imagine. Many of the novels present the unlocked home as an actual, physical space that a woman inhabits intentionally to create a place for herself. In other novels, the unlocked home is intangible, and the author uses the idea of space as a metaphor for the mind and body of the woman. In the metaphorical examples, the character is not fully aware of the unlocked home she creates and is still somewhat a victim of the doctrine of separate spheres. I will begin this section by discussing the metaphorical examples of individual domestic space, then move to the physical examples of individual examples, and conclude by considering the individual domestic spaces portrayed in the second generation of New Women novelists.

I will begin with the already familiar character of Monica Madden whom I discussed in the first section as a character locked into her domestic environment by marriage. Monica desperately desires freedom from her husband, Widdowson, who wants to move away from the city and into the country to exert greater control over her. When a young man, Bevis, takes interest in her, she agrees to run away with him to

France. Monica delivers a letter to Bevis that contains detailed plans for their escape, but upon entering Bevis' flat building, Monica hears someone walking on the floor above her, which is the floor she needs. Monica fears anyone seeing her going to Bevis' flat alone because it was totally improper for a married woman to visit a bachelor. It would be assumed that the woman was committing adultery with the unmarried man. This social convention was constructed to reduce the risk of infidelity and illegitimate children that would taint the patriarchal line. It also has to do with the so-called nature of femininity that should remain within the sphere of the home. Monica oversteps her boundaries and invades the masculine territory of the bachelor pad.

Monica is paranoid because not only is she outside her circumscribed movements, but she is also there for the very reason she should stay away—she intends to leave her husband and to take Bevis as her lover. This fear paralyzes Monica, and she does the only thing that comes to mind: “She was afraid either to advance or retreat, and in equal dread of standing without purpose. She stepped up to the nearest door, and gave a summons with the knocker” (361). Monica pretends to be a disappointed caller and waits for the person to leave the building. This door happens to belong to another bachelor character in the novel, so Monica compromises herself anyway.

However, at this point Monica cannot go through with delivering Bevis' letter: “Agitation had exhausted her, and a dazzling of her eyes threatened a recurrence of yesterday's faintness. She found a shop where refreshments were sold, and sat for half an hour over a cup of tea, trying to amuse herself with illustrated papers” (362). Totally overcome with anxiety, Monica worries that she will faint. If she fainted in that building,

she would more than likely be caught there. She drinks a cup of tea and tries to regain the nerve to go to Bevis' door. Monica is fatigued because of her fear of being seen in that situation. She is very aware that she is violating the boundaries of separate spheres, and in doing so, risks her reputation. After refreshing herself, Monica finally manages to go to Bevis' flat and drop the letter in his mailbox. Monica, however, has not noticed that she has been watched the entire time by a spy hired by her husband. Upon her arrival home, Monica's husband accuses her of adultery. Monica protests the accusation and then flees to her sister's lodgings. Widdowson has based his accusation solely on Monica's transgression of space, though he never mentions this. Monica has gone beyond her circumscribed movements outside the home, which gives him leverage to question her fidelity.

Because she can no longer live with her husband but is not a fallen woman, Monica finds herself in a place that separate spheres does not define. She can no longer live with her husband, which frees her from being locked in. However, she is still his legal wife and has done nothing to alienate herself from society, so she is not locked out either. Moreover, after going to her sister's, Monica realizes she is pregnant, a condition that binds her permanently to her husband. Becoming pregnant should tie Monica to the domestic sphere, but the rift with her husband is too great for them to live together. Monica senses that her case is an anomaly, and that there is no assigned space for a woman in her position. Indeed, immediately after leaving her husband, there is an immense change in Monica's character. She isolates herself, refusing to see anyone except for her sister, with whom she constantly quarrels. In short, she cannot resolve her

anomaly and sequesters herself from the world. Also, Monica becomes very morose and depressed, and dies in childbirth at the end of the novel. Monica is neither locked in or locked out, but in an uninhabited zone within the doctrine of separate spheres, a virtual no man's land.

Monica is in this "no man's land" undefined by separate spheres because she has lost her connection to a romantic male attachment. Typically, women's stories of this period focus on love and marriage. As Virginia Woolf says in *A Room of One's Own*, "love was the only possible interpreter" (84) for writing about women because "married against their will, kept in one room, and to one occupation, how could a dramatist give a full or interesting or truthful account of them?" (83-84). The New Woman novel attempts to show other possibilities for women outside of romantic attachments to men, and New Women characters often reject the prospects of romance in their stories. Monica, however, is not a New Woman figure. She is a conventional character who has had the unconventional experiences of working as a shop girl and going to a professional school taught by two strong New Women. When Monica, who has no feminist ideals to support her, finds herself without a husband or a lover, she metaphorically has no space in which to exist. Nancy K. Miller points out that in much of women's fiction, "a world outside love proves to be out of the world altogether" (45). Without romantic male attachments, Monica's character has no place to be—she is not confined by the home nor is she exiled from society. In this "no" space, Monica cannot live, and she lies in wait for her impending death, the ultimate undefined space.

Monica Madden unintentionally finds a living space beyond the dictates of separate spheres, and when she does, she cannot reconcile herself to this kind of existence. Her predicament contrasts with the next two characters, the already familiar Angelica Hamilton-Wells of *The Heavenly Twins* and Irene Adler of the Sherlock Holmes story, "A Scandal in Bohemia." These female characters knowingly act against their prescribed roles. Both characters utilize cross-dressing to metaphorically find an individual space for themselves. Also, both characters have stable domestic lives but disguise themselves as men to further their ends.

In *The Heavenly Twins*, an entire volume of the novel focuses on Angelica Hamilton-Wells' unusual relationship with the tenor of the church choir, called the Tenor. Angelica dresses up like a boy, calls herself Diavolo and visits the Tenor at night. The Tenor is in love with Angelica as a woman and the Boy, as he calls Angelica in disguise, becomes his best friend as well, though he has no idea they are the same person. However, eventually the Tenor discovers that "this was not the Boy but the Tenor's own lady, his ideal of purity, his goddess of truth, his angel of pity, as in his foolishly fond way idealizing, he had been accustomed to consider her. It was Angelica herself!" (446). Angelica dresses as a boy because she so strongly desires an equal relationship with a man, reminiscent of the equal relationship she enjoyed with her twin brother. However, after Angelica's marriage, her brother distances himself from her and begins to ignore her in favor of his college buddies. He treats Angelica as a married woman instead of as his twin. Angelica feels abandoned by her best friend. She desperately needs an equal relationship with a man and the only way she can do this is to become a man herself. As a

boy, Angelica is able to attain the relationship she needs with the Tenor. However, when the Tenor discovers her true gender, Angelica realizes that she “would never again meet the tolerant loving glance he had had for the Boy, nor note the tender reverence of his face when her own name was mentioned” (447). In defending herself to the Tenor, Angelica says:

As a woman, I could not expect to be treated by men with as much respect as they show to each other. I know the value of men’s cant about protecting the ‘weaker’ sex! Because I was a woman I knew I should be insulted, or at all events hindered, however inoffensive my conduct; and so I prepared this disguise... You cannot bear to see me decently dressed as a boy, but you would think nothing of it if you saw me half undressed for a ball, as I often am... I have enjoyed the benefit of free intercourse with your masculine mind undiluted by your masculine prejudices and proclivities with regard to my sex... There is no room to move on a pedestal. Now, with you alone of all men, not excepting Diavolo, I almost think I have been on an equal footing; and it has been to me like the free use of his limbs to a prisoner after long confinement with chains (451; 454; 458).

Angelica dresses like a man to escape the confinements of feminine propriety. For one thing, it enables her to go out after dark without an escort. She can go where she wants, when she wants, by herself. Angelica is able to cultivate the friendship of a man, is able to see what male companionship is like, and is looked at as an equal by another man.

Angelica still wants to be seen as the same individual by the Tenor, but her misconstrued gender immediately separates him from her. He cannot see her as an individual, as his friend, but only as a woman who he idealizes. Though his ideal immediately crashes upon discovering the Boy's disguise, he cannot see her as the Boy either, even though she continues to have the same personality. In Angelica's interaction with the Tenor, Grand shows that women are not readily seen as individuals but as part of a larger group. Through Angelica's cross-dressing activities, Grand contrasts the freedom of male identity with the constraints of femininity.

The image of women cross-dressing is echoed in the Sherlock Holmes story "A Scandal in Bohemia." In this story, the character Irene Adler outsmarts Holmes as he tries to obtain a photograph from her that she could use against the King of Bohemia. Like Angelica Hamilton-Wells in *The Heavenly Twins*, Irene Adler disguises herself as a man, and her disguise plays a major role in the resolution of the story. She is described to Holmes and the audience as having "soul of steel...the face of the most beautiful of women, and the mind of the most resolute of men" (14). Irene has been able to prevent the King from finding her photograph several times and to discern Sherlock Holmes in disguise. Because of her abilities, she is to Sherlock Holmes "*the woman*" (5), the ultimate ideal of a woman for him.

Irene does some detective work of her own by following Holmes and Watson to Baker Street dressed as a man. She tells Holmes in a letter after fleeing the country, "Male costume is nothing new to me. I often take advantage of the freedom which it gives" (28). In order to have the freedom to walk around London by herself, Irene Adler

cross-dresses so that she may go anywhere unaccompanied. Watson concludes “A Scandal in Bohemia” by saying, “the best plans of Mr. Sherlock Holmes were beaten by a woman’s wit. He used to make merry over the cleverness of women, but I have not heard him do it of late” (29). Through Irene Adler, Holmes and Watson realize that women can exhibit the same intelligence and reasoning skills as a man and acknowledge her mental capacities as being equal or above their own. The one woman who is able to captivate Sherlock Holmes is able to disguise herself so well as a man when he himself uses disguise so often. Indeed, Irene is able to “unsex” herself at will and obtain the freedom to walk in public unaccompanied without compromising herself. At the same time, though, Doyle presents Irene as being remarkable for her beauty. Thus, while she can become a man, she does not fit the typical satirical portrayal of the New Woman. She is able to maintain a balance—but only because she is good with disguise as a result of her stage career.

Irene essentially wants to be a *flaneur*, the well-known 1890s figure of the urban stroller. However, this is impossible for Irene because she is a woman. To attain her desire, Irene engages in a kind of voyeurism in that she observes the world of men without their knowledge. Through cross-dressing, Irene can be a *flaneur* and she can also be a spy, as she proves in following Holmes. The streets of London are Irene’s desired personal space. She feels at home walking the streets at night, but she can inhabit this space only by changing her gender.

Angelica Hamilton-Wells and Irene Adler are able to transgress the system of separate spheres; however, their methods to circumvent the constraints of femininity only

apply to their individual desires. They move outside the defined spaces of separate spheres but without public knowledge. Instead of overtly challenging the system of separate spheres, Angelica and Irene subvert it. Although they find a way to undermine separate spheres, their methods are only for themselves, not for all women.

Monica Madden in *The Odd Women*, Angelica Hamilton-Wells in *The Heavenly Twins*, and Irene Adler in “A Scandal in Bohemia” all find alternate spaces in a metaphorical sense. Since Monica is neither accepted by society nor exiled from it, and has neither husband nor lover, she is figuratively no place. Angelica and Irene do not have a defined physical space where they find their individual domesticity. In fact, they each have a conventionally feminine domestic life but they expand it through changing their bodies to have their individual domestic space. Margaret Higonnet writes, “representations of individual identity and of presence in society often coincide with the body” (5). Angelica and Irene change their identities by changing what their bodies look like. In doing so, they alter the spaces they can inhabit.

In other instances, New Woman novels also depict actual physical spaces beyond the impositions of the doctrine of separate spheres. George Gissing’s novel, *The Odd Women*, bridges the metaphorical and the physical in portraying the New Woman creating individual domestic space. Contrasted with Monica Madden in George Gissing’s *The Odd Women*, the other main characters of the novel are Rhoda Nunn and Mary Barfoot, two unmarried women who live together and run a school teaching young women professional skills to make them independent. Part of their instruction also includes education about women’s emancipation. Rhoda Nunn and Mary Barfoot in *The Odd*

Women live and work together as friends and partners. Though supported by Mary's wealth, Rhoda and Mary act as equal companions. While they are obviously connected by their commitment to the cause of women's emancipation, their companionship as roommates binds them more tightly together. They are able to live together as friends and equals without one playing "husband" and the other playing "wife," a typical characterization of New Woman friendships. Rhoda and Mary Barfoot work together during the weekdays and are home together only home in the evenings and on weekends. While at home, they are described having discussions, receiving visitors and reading in the library. Though they live and work together, it is evident that Rhoda and Mary have separate and independent lives, even from one another. Gissing doesn't often depict them managing the household, and he never describes them as confined by their domestic life.

The domesticity that Rhoda and Mary have developed together nearly collapses when they have a strong disagreement. After brooding over their quarrel, Rhoda declares to Mary, "I have been thinking it over. It isn't right for me to remain here. Such an arrangement was only possible whilst we were on terms of perfect understanding" (194). Though they have lived together contentedly for years, this statement shows the fragility of their domestic arrangement. Rhoda feels that they cannot agree domestically if they disagree idealistically. Rhoda's immediate threatens to move out upon quarreling with Mary. These New Women are not confined to their domestic space by marriage or motherhood, but have a free understanding. Because of this freedom, however, they can easily lose their home together unlike marriage, in which women were basically trapped

for life at this time. The unlocked home gives freedom to women, but at the price of some stability.

Unlike Rhoda, Mary is grieved rather than angry and does not wish to act impulsively. After arguing about the situation, Mary implores Rhoda, "Let us do nothing hastily...We have more to think about than our own feelings" (196). What they "have more to think about" is their business relationship and losing their students over a personal quarrel. Mary implies that it is their duty to keep their domestic environment in order to continue teaching. Though Rhoda and Mary never reach an agreement, they overcome their personal feelings and apologize. Mary emphatically urges Rhoda and herself: "No, no; we *will not* quarrel. Your companionship is far too precious to me, and I dare to think that mine is not without value for you" (197). Both Rhoda and Mary sense that their relationship would suffer if they lived apart. Mary tells Rhoda that she is leaving for the weekend and asks her to "think quietly over it all" (196) while she is gone. In essence, Mary is telling Rhoda to contemplate living apart while she is actually away from their home. Accordingly, upon Mary's return, Rhoda apologizes and they "make up" (202). For Rhoda and Mary, preserving their domestic companionship takes precedent over the personal feelings that have come between them.

Another threat to Rhoda and Mary's home is the romantic attentions of Everard Barfoot toward Rhoda. Everard begins his "courtship" of Rhoda as a sort of game to see if he can induce her to abandon her feminist beliefs. Their entire relationship begins in his wish to overpower Rhoda's principles of women's emancipation. Although he applauds Rhoda and Mary's work and the fact that they are intelligent, rational women, Everard is

willing to undermine what he admires in them for the personal triumph he would feel if he succeeded in seducing Rhoda. Conversely, Rhoda senses Everard's attraction for her and uses it to test her integrity to her principles. In essence, Rhoda and Everard's relationship is a power struggle over her New Woman ideals. Rhoda and Everard consider a free union, a life-long, monogamous sexual relationship without the legal and religious institutes of marriage. In a free union, Rhoda would be excluded from all society except from those who agree with her choice. She would not necessarily live with Everard, so she could presumably remain in an unlocked home and continue her service to women.

However, at the last instant, Rhoda changes her mind and opts for a legal marriage because, as she later admits, she "never felt entire confidence in him" (422). After they agree to legal marriage, "neither [is] content" (390). Rhoda and Everard both have misgivings in part because they have did not agree equally. Also, they are unsure of this decision because it would require a radical change in their lifestyles. Rhoda would have to stop teaching, move out of Mary's home, and live with Everard. She tells Everard immediately after their engagement, "you have spoilt my life, you know. Such a grand life it might have been" (389). In marrying Everard, Rhoda would have to become the archetypal wife. She would have to move from an unlocked home that she helped create to a locked-in home that belonged to her husband. In the end, Rhoda rejects Everard and remains single while he marries an eligible heiress. Rhoda is confident with her decision and happier with her life than ever before. She tells a friend, "Miss Barfoot was never in such health and spirits—nor I myself. The world is moving!" (479). Rhoda

continues to live with Mary, and the two friends enlarge their school and maintain their unlocked home.

Though the unlocked home in *The Odd Women* does not allow for marriage, the ending of the novel suggests a way for the unlocked home to reproduce itself. Monica Madden has died in childbirth, and though her husband acknowledges their daughter, he plays no part in raising her, leaving the infant to Monica's sister. The final scene shows Rhoda holding the baby "still nursing...and as the baby sank into sleep, Rhoda's vision grew dim; a sigh made her lips quiver" (479). This very maternal scene implies that this child will be raised in part by Rhoda and Mary and be influenced by their teachings. Without men, Rhoda and Mary can still be parents for this child, a woman who will be raised by New Women. The unlocked home presented in *The Odd Women* forsakes possibilities for marriage but creates a way to reproduce itself, giving this kind of home possible longevity and a sense of family.

Like *The Odd Women*, *Howards End* shows an unlocked home in which marriage fails but there are still possibilities for a second-generation unlocked home. Like Rhoda and Mary in *The Odd Women*, the characters of Margaret and Helen Schlegel in E. M. Forster's *Howards End*, have created an unlocked home in their London flat that suits their personal lifestyles. The novel opens with Helen's elated description of Howards End, where she is visiting their friends, the Wilcoxes. Mrs. Wilcox cultivates a friendship with Margaret Schlegel just before she dies. After the funeral, the Wilcoxes receive a note written by Mrs. Wilcox before her death, asking that Howards End go to Margaret. The

Wilcoxes are appalled that the late Mrs. Wilcox would have broken the traditions of heredity:

To them Howards End was a house: they could not know that to her it had been a spirit, for which she sought a spiritual heir. And—pushing one step farther in these mists—may they not have decided even better than they supposed? Is it credible that the possessions of the spirit can be bequeathed at all? Has the soul offspring? (79)

Mrs. Wilcox disrupts traditional heredity in her dying wish; however, she mentions to Margaret before her death that Howards End belongs to her independently. Since Howards End is hers to give, her family is in fact ignoring her property rights as well as her dying wish. For Mrs. Wilcox, Howards End is an unlocked home; for her family, it is a conventional, traditional house with valuable property. In her friendship with Margaret, Mrs. Wilcox learns that the Schlegels' lease on their flat is up, and she becomes very upset by the idea of Margaret losing her unlocked home. Mrs. Wilcox wants Margaret to have Howards End because she recognizes that Margaret has cultivated an unlocked home and would continue her spirit at Howards End. After Mrs. Wilcox's death, Howards End becomes a destiny for Margaret, who is continually changing residences until she arrives at Howards End.

The Wilcoxes continue their acquaintance with the Schlegels, never mentioning the late Mrs. Wilcox's wish for Howards End. After some time, Mr. Wilcox proposes to Margaret and they marry. While Margaret is happy in marriage, Helen is deeply troubled by it. Helen does not adjust to Margaret's marriage at all. After all, at the same time she

loses the unlocked home she created with Margaret and is losing her family and closest companion to a man she does not like. Helen has been uprooted and is left adrift, separated from her home and her family. After the loss of the Schlegel's unlocked home, Margaret tries to create a traditional home, but Helen is unable to find a home for herself. She intensifies her homelessness when she mysteriously disappears for nearly a year, only sending occasional postcards to her sister. The two sisters go in opposite directions after losing their unlocked home: Margaret locks herself in while Helen locks herself out.

During Helen's absence, Margaret and Mr. Wilcox are making preparations to build their own home, but they are interrupted by Helen's return. Margaret meets Helen at Howards End, and discovers the reason for her long absence—she is pregnant out of wedlock. The Wilcoxes try to lock Helen out. When Margaret arrives at Howards End to meet Helen, she is the first to notice her condition. Margaret literally jumps out of the car while it is slowing down, unlocks the door to the house and pushes Howards End into Howards End before anyone else can see her condition. After hearing of Helen's pregnancy, Mr. Wilcox will not allow Helen to stay at Howards End and in the ensuing argument, Margaret nearly leaves their marriage to care for her sister. During the argument, Margaret asks her husband if "Helen's condition will depreciate the property" (243). Margaret and Helen stay at Howards End anyway, and remain there. The Schlegels have overtaken the Wilcoxes and create an unlocked home in Howards End. Margaret stays married to Mr. Wilcox, but the marriage is largely a failure. Mr. Wilcox becomes emasculated after his eldest son goes to prison for accidentally killing the father of Helen's baby, what he believes is his duty as a gentleman. In the last scene of the

novel, Mr. Wilcox discussing his dependents' inheritance as though he is near death. After going over general finances, he states that he will leave Howards End but will leave her no money. In response, Mr. Wilcox's daughter-in-law exclaims, "It does seem curious that Mrs. Wilcox should have left Margaret Howards End, and yet she get it, after all" (270). Margaret later asks her husband what that meant and he explains his first wife's intent that Howards End should belong to Margaret. After hearing this, "Margaret was silent. Something shook her life in its inmost recesses, and she shivered" (271). Margaret is indeed the spiritual heir to Howards End, continuing the unlocked home there created by Mrs. Wilcox.

The last scene of the novel describes Helen carrying her baby boy from the fields towards Howards End. As an unmarried mother, there are not many places Helen would be accepted. However, Margaret and Helen have recreated their unlocked home at Howards End, which enables Helen to have a home and a family again. The gender of the baby is significant because, as a boy, he solidifies the heredity of Howards End, indicating that it will continue to belong to the Schlegels.

While in New Woman novels attempt to find companionship and reproduction in the unlocked home, the second generation of New Women writers do not have these concerns. Not as tied to the doctrine of separate spheres, writers like Virginia Woolf and Vita Sackville-West can envision more radical spaces for women to inhabit. The protagonists their novels are more cognizant of their attempts at creating a personal domesticity. Also, the second generation of New Women characters are often more isolated, spending much of their time alone.

In Virginia Woolf's novel, *Night and Day*, Mary Datchet is the dominant New Woman. Mary is originally from the country but has lived in London for several years. She works in the Suffrage Office and lives alone in a flat. Mary always seems to be working, even when she is at home. Indeed, her opening description describes her making preparations at her home for a meeting:

About nine o'clock at night, on every alternate Wednesday, Miss Mary Datchet made the same resolve, that she would never again lend her rooms for any purposes whatsoever...At the end of a fairly hard day's work it was certainly something of an effort to clear one's room, to pull the mattress off one's bed, and lay it on the floor, to fill a pitcher with cold coffee, and to sweep a long table clear for plates and cups and saucers, with pyramids of little pink biscuits between them; but when these alterations were effected, Mary felt a lightness of spirit come to her, as if she had put off the stout stuff of her working hours and slipped over her entire being some vesture of thin, bright silk. (48)

Mary is obsessed with work, continuing her work even after she is home. Though she enjoys working, she is not passionate about her work while she is at the office, but at home she works on things that really hold her interest. Mary's domestic space is the place she can truly be herself, even if she continues to work.

Mary struggles with her love for her friend Ralph. He proposes to her, but she refuses him because she realizes he is really in love with someone else. After Mary's refusal of Ralph, she becomes more consumed with her professional pursuits. Every time

someone pays her a visit, they interrupt her working either by herself or with her new employer. She increasingly distances herself from her friends and works at her apartment through the night. Though Mary surrounds herself with work, the other characters in the novel rely on her and need her in times of crisis or illumination. Characters seeking her guidance always go to her apartment; she never goes into anyone else's domestic space. Mary has created an individual domestic space that the other characters in the novel long for but never attain, which is why they look to her for guidance.

At the end of the novel, Ralph walks by Mary's flat and decides to tell her that he and Katharine are engaged. Katharine waits for him to visit Mary, but when he returns, he admits, "I didn't go in—I couldn't bring myself" (506). The narrator continues to state, "He had stood outside Mary's door unable to bring himself to knock; if she had come out she would have found him there, the tears running down his cheeks, unable to speak" (506). Though the other characters admire Mary, by the end of the novel she has shut other people out and they can no longer reach her. Thus, Ralph feels like an invader if he interrupts Mary at home. In so successfully creating her individual domestic space, Mary has also isolated herself. Mary's apartment has gone from crowded with people, as it is at Mary's introduction, to being visited occasionally by individuals, to finally shutting out other people altogether. The narrator continues with the final description of Mary Datchet:

They stood for some moments, looking at the illuminated blinds, an expression to them both of something impersonal and serene in the spirit

of the woman within, working out her plans far into the night—her plans for the good of a world that none of them were ever to know. (506)

Though Mary has found her individual domestic space, it seems that it is at the price of companionship. Her personal space is independent from the rest of the world, and she distances herself from the personal relationships that would intrude on her domestic space.

While Mary Datchet in *Night and Day* eventually becomes isolated, the protagonist Vita Sackville-West's novel, *All Passion Spent*, consciously separates herself from her family to live out her life alone. *All Passion Spent* is entirely focused on a woman creating her own personal space. According to Victoria Glendenning, there is a strong connection between *All Passion Spent* and two non-fiction works *A Room of One's Own* and *Three Guineas* by Virginia Woolf, who Vita Sackville-West was a close friend of. The protagonist of the novel is the very elderly Lady Slane, who upon her husband's death declares to her children, "I am going to live by myself" (63). She continues to surprise her children by saying that she wants to be alone, free from her family and society. She tells them, "I am going to be completely self-indulgent. I am going to wallow in old age" (67). Lady Slane finds her new house in Hampstead on her own, which gives her delight:

She walked slowly but happily, and without anxiety, as in a friendly retreat, no longer thinking of Henry's opinion of his children, or indeed of anything but the necessity of finding the house, *her* house, which thirty

years ago had been one of just such a red-brick row, with its garden behind it" (87).

She takes pride in updating the house before she moves in and during this time befriends the owner and caretaker. The narrator states, "Lady Slane had never taken so much pleasure in anybody's company. She had never been so happy as with her two old gentlemen" (129). The protagonist does have companionship, but she is largely alone, according to her desires. She is described as "sitting there in the sun at Hampstead, in the late summer, under the south wall and the ripened peaches, doing nothing with her hands...she had plenty of leisure now, day in, day out, to survey her life" (141). She reviews her life, dwelling most on her youthful aspiration to be a painter, a desire she gave up upon getting married. Lady Slane's independence has very unexpected effects for her. One day her great-granddaughter comes to "sit at her knee and thank her with directness and simplicity for what she had done" (281). In liberating herself, Lady Slane inspires her namesake, Deborah, to leave home and become a musician. Deborah is not only Lady Slane's namesake but her double as well. Indeed, when Deborah takes her leave of Lady Slane, "being careful not to slam the door behind her, the chords of her imagination died away" (292). Lady Slane dies as her descendent and double goes to live the life she had always dreamed of.

As Lady Slane passes away, a New Woman is born in her great-granddaughter. The end of *All Passion Spent* suggests that the young Deborah will succeed in choosing a life for herself, whether or not she becomes a famous artist. Deborah is a second-generation New Woman who does not have the same social constraints faced by women

during the fin de siècle. For her, an unlocked home is much more attainable, but it is still difficult for women to have aspirations outside of marriage, as Deborah shows by running away from home. Previously, marriage locked women within the home, but without marriage, women are locked out of the society and denied any kind of home. Some of the characters I have discussed resolve this conundrum by finding secret freedom outside their marriages, acting out a kind of metaphorical unlocked home. Angelica and Irene both have fairly successful marriages but subvert the ideology of separate spheres to fulfill their psychological needs. While they fulfill their domestic duties, they are simultaneously living secret lives with different identities to satisfy their personal needs. They separately maintain both their marriages and their unlocked homes. When the unlocked home is a real place, however, it seems to be incompatible with marriage. Rhoda and Mary reject marriage proposals, remaining in their homes, and Margaret's marriage, though in fact, is a failure. Lady Slane is a widow who only lives in an unlocked home once she is free from marriage. Since marriage locks women into the home, it appears impossible to reconcile an unlocked home with the same institution.

These novels fittingly have no traditional motherhood. Indeed, how could their be legitimate motherhood without marriage? The only two children in these novels are Monica's daughter, who will be raised by Rhoda, Mary, and her aunts and Helen's son, who is illegitimate but an heir. Lady Slane has children as well, but they are all elderly. Moreover, she refuses to live with them, preferring to live on her own. Both examples of children are in the two first-generation New Woman novels that present physical unlocked spaces. These novels are concerned with continuing the unlocked home so that

it does not become obsolete. The novels also play with the possibility of having a family without a father, which they imply is possible.

I have argued that marriage and motherhood forced women to conform to the archetypal figure of wife and mother, and, in doing so, women lost their identity as a particular individual. In the unlocked home, women maintain a sense of individuality but give up a claim to marriage or motherhood as traditionally defined. The women in these novels are aware of and take pride in their identities and their unlocked homes intensify their distinctiveness. The ties between the individual and the unlocked home are strongest in the second-generation New Women novels, in which the characters forego relationships with other people to stay at home and focus on themselves.

Because of the influence of the New Woman, the home changes drastically in literature from the Victorian to the modern period. For the women that are locked in, the home means something entirely different from what it means for women living in unlocked homes. The locked-in homes show the problems with the Victorian domestic idyll, but do not break out of its ideology. These traditional homes, archetypes in themselves, support Victorian social constructs. In these novels, there is no sense that the home could support individuality. The women yearn to get outside the home but never think to change the home itself. While the Victorian home restrains women's individuality, the unlocked home supports women's distinct identities. Each unlocked home is distinct because it is created to fit the personal needs of its inhabitants. Accordingly it is only in the unlocked homes that New Women are content. The New Woman changes the home from a space that confines them to a archetypal role to a place

that reinforces their sense of individuality. But, one might ask, why would the New Woman have wanted to interact with home when it has been such a confining force? Virginia Woolf answers this in *A Room of One's Own* when she says, "For women have sat indoors all these millions of years, so that by this time the very walls are permeated by their creative force, which has, indeed, so overcharged the capacity of bricks and mortar that it must needs harness itself to pens and brushes and business and politics" (87). Women's creativity changes the home first, then spreads outside the home and into the public sphere.

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I am a third year student who is double majoring in English and History, and I plan to graduate with honors. This year I was named one of the top five English students at Texas A&M and often make the Dean's List. My academic experience includes working in the University Research Opportunity Program as a research assistant to Dr. Douglas Brooks of the Department of English. Also, I spent last summer studying Shakespearean literature at Oxford University. Most recently, I participated in the University Undergraduate Research Fellows guidance of Dr. Victoria Rosner of the Department of English.

I strongly support the arts and have been highly involved in several organizations that promote arts awareness in the community. I was the director of the Shakespeare Festival, a week-long program devoted to William Shakespeare that included scholarly lectures, theatrical and musical performances, and films. This year, I served as Executive Director of the Arts & Entertainment Program Council. My responsibility was to chair the approval body for all campus-wide programs involving the arts.

I have been the fortunate recipient of several different scholarships based on academic achievement, including a National Merit Scholarship, a President's Endowed Scholarship, and a Director's Excellence Award. I have also had the honor of being named a University Scholar at Texas A&M, a scholarship and distinguished award given to a small number of freshman honors students.

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