AWE (A Woman’s Experience)

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AWE

a woman’s experience
Dear Reader,

I am pleased to present to you Volume 4 of AWE: A Woman’s Experience. It has been wonderful to work with such amazing authors, editors, artists, and designers. This volume of AWE was a group effort that brought a lot more scholarship and writing to the field of women's studies.

I find it a touch ironic to be writing the editor’s note. Here I am, a cisgender male, and I am the editor-in-chief of an undergraduate journal that is named “a woman's experience.” I’ve never experienced anything close to a woman's experience, but I’m the person who ensured that this volume came together. The irony is not lost on me.

This irony was brought specifically to my attention in a conversation with a friend. During the early days of being editor-in-chief, I was speaking to a friend who is also a feminist. He couldn't understand why a man was running the undergraduate women's studies journal. He felt like I, as a feminist, should have given this opportunity up to a woman. He felt that feminism required my giving up my position. He was very adamant about that, and, luckily, we let the conversation drop or else things would've gotten more heated.

Since that conversation, as I’ve been working on this journal, I’ve pondered upon this experience. Should I have given up my position to a woman? It would have helped that woman gain more experience, and a woman at the helm of a woman's experience would make more sense. Was I less of a feminist because I didn't do this? Did I not support women's equality and parity in the workplace because I accepted the offer to be editor-in-chief?

I’ve come to understand that, while my friend's thoughts were good and healthy, they didn't represent the feminism that I believe in. I believe in equality of the sexes. I believe that being the editor-in-chief of AWE has helped my feminism grow. I have learned so much from the women and scholarship that I’ve worked with on this journal that I wouldn't change it for anything. I’ve become more of a feminist because of it, and I can use that greater feminism to be a larger force for good and equality.

As I leave this volume for you to peruse and learn from, I hope you ponder on your own feminism. How are you gaining more knowledge to help grow your feminism? What experiences are you taking part in to exercise your feminism? I was able to be the editor-in-chief of this volume of AWE, which is an experience I will never forget and which will always contribute to my growing feminist sensibilities. I hope I continue to have great experiences like this with great people surrounding me. I’d like to express thanks to everyone who was published in this volume and everyone who helped put this volume together. It couldn't have happened without you.

Happy reading,

Adam McLain
Editor-in-Chief
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Abstract
With the release of singer-song writer Beyoncé Knowles's self-titled album in 2013 and her subsequent branding of herself as a feminist, many feminist critics questioned the validity of Beyoncé's sex positive feminism in the context of the longstanding sexualization and objectification of black women. This article seeks to reconcile Beyoncé's brand of sex positive feminism with black feminist theorists and re-appropriating the erotic for black women. Analyzing the 2013 album Beyoncé and examining the history of black female entertainment, this article argues that Beyoncé's brand of sex positive feminism is a necessary step in reclaiming and redefining black women's expression of erotic subjectivity in the music industry.
Redefining Representations of Black Female Subjectivity through the Erotic

Sylvia Cutler

On August 24, 2014, the word *feminist* glared across the television screens of millions of unsuspecting Americans. At the helm of the battle cry: Beyoncé. The previous year, without any prior promotion or announcement, singer-songwriter Beyoncé Knowles released her fifth studio album, *Beyoncé*—an album exploring sex positivity, motherhood, and, yes, feminism. Indeed, in her song “***Flawless,” Beyoncé quotes Nigerian novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s 2012 TEDxEuston speech, “We Should All Be Feminists,” branding herself, her album, and her message as feminist.

As defined by Adichie’s speech, a feminist is “a person who believes in the social, political, and economic equality of the sexes.”¹ Beyoncé’s branding of herself as a feminist sent shockwaves through the feminist community with reactions spanning from those of full-fledged support to deep concern about a highly sexualized, body-commoditized message becoming tied to the concept of feminism. Though Beyoncé certainly has the same right as any other individual to advocate for feminism on her own terms, such feminist advocacy becomes complicated when attached to her commoditized identity as an artist. Beyoncé’s association of her sexually explicit album with Adichie’s talk ushers in an important question for conversations about black feminist thought: Does Beyoncé’s brand of sex positive feminism create a space that promotes black female subjectivity, or is her message one that becomes flawed or non-committal by its association with her own identity as a black female artist in a capitalist music industry?

To understand many theorist’s problematic perception of Beyoncé’s sex positive approach to feminism, her artwork, and by extension the perpetuation of the image of the sexually wanton black woman, we must begin by identifying and understanding the historical representations of black women as female sex objects and how such representations have

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¹ Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, “We Should All Be Feminists” (presentation at TEDxEuston, London, December 1, 2012).
evolved over time. Acknowledging the history of black female objectification and sexuality from slavery to colonialism to the present day, my greater project is to use Beyoncé’s artwork as a case study demonstrating the evolution of black female subjectivity against this complicated historical backdrop. I will particularly use her 2013 album to argue that her work endorses contemporary feminist advocacy through a framework defined by Adichie and other black feminist theorists. It is in this light that Beyoncé demonstrates an evolving awareness of black sexual subjectivity, indeed a subjectivity that both defies and subverts a history of black female sexualization.

A brief examination of the history of black female sexuality is necessary to determine how Beyoncé both subverts and, at times, skirts the delicate line between black female sexual liberation and the problematic history of black women’s sexual exploitation. In her book *Black Sexual Politics*, Patricia Collins suggests that institutionalized rape during slavery created an image of black female subjects as “wanton black women” or “Jezebels.” She writes:

> This representation redefined Black women’s bodies as sites of wild, unrestrained sexuality that could be tamed but never completely subdued. The image of the breeder woman emerged to defend the reproductive policies of slavery that encouraged enslaved Black women to have many children. Sexuality and fertility were neither designed for Black women’s pleasure nor subject to their control. The system was designed to stamp out agency and annex Black women’s bodies to a system for profit.²

Given the history as described by Collins above, questions like agency become important when addressing the evolution of representations of black female sexuality over time. Furthermore, what does the question of sexual autonomy in the context of such a corrupt system and history mean for black female entertainers who experience their sexuality within a system that inherently exploits their bodies for profit?

An early example of the sexual history of black female entertainment occurred during England’s colonial period. Images of black women as the Hottentot—a derogatory term for Khoisans—or Black Venus became popular forms of entertainment for the masses. One example of a black female entertainer from the early nineteenth century is Sarah Baartman, a South African Khoi woman who was exhibited in Paris and London as feral and caged. Because of her large buttocks, spectators were encouraged to poke and prod her body, and critics like Yvette Abrahams argue that

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after the exhibition of Sarah Baartman, sexual analyses of black people increased, and “ideas about the essentially deviant sexual nature of the Khoisan spread to include all Africans.” In *American Anatomies: Theorizing Race and Gender*, Robyn Wiegman suggests that the Hottentot also stood as an object of examination in questions regarding the interspecies sexuality between African and ape. He explains that in Edward Long’s *History of Jamaica*, Long “affirmed the sexual primitivity of the Hottentot, linking such physical features as the eyes, lips, and nipples to low intelligence, immorality, and laziness.” Wiegman also suggests that Long’s unscientific comparisons succeeded in establishing the “bestial” nature of black women, “the ideological means for defining the African as the intermediary creature between man and beast.” To make matters worse, Europeans took scientifically unfounded beliefs presented by Long about the Hottentot’s speculated “interspecies sexuality” one step further. In an attempt to cover up their own responsibility for interracial sexual exploitation of African women, Long’s analysis allowed them to place the blame on black woman’s “degenerate desires” for their perceived “wanton sexuality.”

General perceptions of black women that spring from a history of animalization and figures such as the Hottentot Venus or wanton Jezebel contribute to a hyper-sexualized representation of black women today, one which continues to play off as exploitation and commodification rather than an empowering representation of sexual agency, subjectivity, or autonomy. According to Collins,

> Seemingly unaware of this history, or perhaps exploiting it, some African American artists capitalize on a situation in which everyone knows on some level what gives ideas about Black sexuality their meaning but no one is ultimately responsible. It’s one thing if Jennifer Lopez and Beyoncé Knowles from Destiny’s Child profit from their own images and present themselves in performances as “bootylicious.” It’s entirely another if adolescent girls tap into this message of female power and head off to their eighth grade classrooms decked in the same “bootylicious” apparel. . . .

The theme here is not censorship of Black girls, but rather to question

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5 Ibid.
6 Ibid.
whether they can “handle it” if they are woefully uninformed about the legacy of Sarah Bartmann.\(^7\)

Though all women, regardless of race, experience the threat of sexual objectification on some level, expressions of sexuality are much more fraught for black women, given, of course, the historical context behind the violent exploitation of their bodies. When Collins offers a critique such as the one above, it is perhaps difficult to see how any black female artist might achieve a more positive and autonomous representation of their own individual sexuality. There is also a looming threat that black young women might interpret overt expressions of sexuality in harmful ways, regardless of the sexual autonomy of the black woman representing the erotic in her artwork. This is perhaps why feminists find representations of Beyoncé’s sexual liberation and proclaimed feminism problematic. For example, critic Sika Dagbovie-Mullins points out in “Pigtails, Ponytails, and Getting Tail: The Infantilization and Hyper-Sexualization of African American Females in Popular Culture” that representations of black womanhood in the media place young women at risk of blame when it comes to sexuality, perpetuating the notion that black young women are somehow more sexually responsible or sexually avaricious. She writes:

> Representations of black girlhood in the media and popular culture suggest that black girls face a different set of rules when it comes to sex, innocence, and blame. . . . The explanation for the sexual exploitation of black girls is always, already at hand: that they are “whores” who want it, repeating a familiar—from slavery times to the present—damaging narrative in the American consciousness.\(^8\)

Dagbovie-Mullins points out a valid concern among feminist scholars about the downside of sex positive feminism, particularly when embraced by artists and role models, such as Beyoncé, to young women. How might young black women read sexuality as presented by black female artists? And does the capitalist and patriarchal gaze really discriminate between sexual autonomy versus sexual objectification in representations of the erotic? Questions like these are never easily answered, but in the crux of arguments surrounding the objectification and sexualization of women, one paradoxical question seems to stand out quite clearly:

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\(^7\) Collins, *Black Sexual Politics*, 50.

Should black female entertainers like Beyoncé forego the expression of sexual subjectivity altogether simply because of objectification and the existence of this perilous history of black female sexuality? It could also be said that to forego the expression of the erotic altogether because of the presence of a violent history of the black female body and the continued presence of the male gaze is in many ways equally oppressive to black women.

In this context, Beyoncé’s evolution as an artist serves as a compelling example and even possible antidote to negative perceptions of black female sexuality and the disempowerment of black women through negative sexual stereotypes. Although Beyoncé herself has played off of negative representations of the black female body and perhaps perpetuated a lack of sexual autonomy in her earlier albums, her recent 2013 album *Beyoncé* and her activism in the Black Lives Matter movement suggest an evolution that arises from her own formation in embracing the empowering aspects of erotic expression.

Beyoncé’s album may seem non-committal when it comes down to a more general definition of feminism posited by Adichie—one that aims to promote the universal social, political, and economic equality of the sexes—and her evolution as an artist has exhibited a dependency on harmful representations of the fraught sexual past and present situation of black women. However, it could be argued that the album has the potential to be used as a tool to redefine socially prescribed representations of black femininity and female sexual autonomy. Beyoncé is sometimes perceived as a problematic figure for black and white feminists alike because her earlier work in many ways *did* exploit her sexuality in ways that were more reflective of this lack of sexual autonomy.

Beyoncé’s earlier work with Destiny’s Child exhibits this exploitative attitude toward sexuality. In their 2004 hit “Cater 2 U,” Beyoncé, Kelly Rowland, and Michelle Williams are featured in a naked, submissive huddle at the onset of the song’s music video, and the lyrics are no less problematic in terms of female sexual autonomy and sexual subjectivity. The artists sing of catering to their men, lyrics including refrains such as, “My life would be purposeless without you,” and “What do you want to eat, boo? Let me feed you. Let me run your bathwater.” In this early expression of Beyoncé’s sexual experience, her autonomy seems to be usurped by a cultural imperative to serve the needs of her man,

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whether by giving him his dessert, his slippers, or “so much more.”\(^{10}\) The camera pans back and forth between the exposed bodies of Beyoncé, Rowland, and Williams to three fully clothed men sitting and watching with pleasure; it is clear their performance of the erotic is catered to these men. One of the most troubling lyrics, however, relates their recognition of what will happen if they cannot live up to the sexual expectations of their men: “I know whatever I’m not fulfilling / Another woman is willing / . . . When you come home late / Tap me on my shoulder, I’ll roll over.”\(^{11}\) It appears that there is a desire to express sexuality and to be desired erotically in this video. Although this may not seem inherently wrong or shameful, the work becomes problematic because it appears to lack sexual autonomy: Beyoncé and her fellow singers are not expressing the erotic for their own delight but rather to fulfill the expectations of the male gaze and the capitalist music industry.

And yet it is important to account for a concept regarding female sexuality that Adichie addresses in “We Should All Be Feminists,” which suggests that one of the issues women face in the battle of sexual equality is a lack of recognition of the so-called “appropriateness” of their own sexual experiences. Adichie says:

> We teach girls that they cannot be sexual beings in the way boys are. . . . We teach girls shame. Close your legs. Cover yourself. We make them feel as though by being born female, they are already guilty of something. And so girls grow up to be women who cannot say they have desire. Who silence themselves. Who cannot say what they truly think.\(^{12}\)

The concept behind Adichie’s speech is to challenge ideas about gender that are taught in order to further equality, and often what is taught is fear and policing of the sexual self. Adichie says that women are admonished to police their own bodies, and perhaps Beyoncé’s response seeks to challenge the monitoring of female sexual experience with erotic dance moves performed in her famous leg-bearing leotards. Adichie also says girls grow up to be women who are objects of desire but cannot have desire, and thus, must self silence in order to be accepted by society. In a promotional video for the music videos produced in conjunction with the 2013 album Beyoncé, Beyoncé admitted her reservations about being so open about her sexual experiences in her album, saying that originally she would have been “too afraid of what people thought,” yet with

\(^{10}\) Ibid.
\(^{11}\) Ibid.
\(^{12}\) Adichie, “We Should All Be Feminists.”
pride concludes, “I . . . dropped that fourth wall, and I did it.” In this context, Beyoncé’s evolution as an artist to the production of her 2013 album _Beyoncé_—a representation of the erotic that glorifies her sexual autonomy and experiences as a woman—works in its own right to teach women to accept their sexual desires through a sex positive feminist message, a message of female empowerment that cannot go unnoticed.

It could easily be argued that an artist’s exploration of sexuality in a visual album like Beyoncé’s is degrading or shameful, shame being a concept that Adichie says society uses to teach that women are inherently guilty of something by virtue of being female. Beyoncé’s display of sexuality is also complicated because she bears more scrutiny than the average woman as an icon of popular culture. She is thus inevitably more subject to the male gaze as a black female artist in the music industry, undeniably putting her at risk of becoming a sexual object in the eyes of the public. In “Representations of Black Female Sexuality in the Cultural Marketplace,” black feminist theorist and social activist bell hooks addresses problematic representations of black women in popular culture, suggesting that such representations usually do little work to critique images of a black female sexuality that made up the cultural framework of nineteenth-century racism—an image that said black females were animalistic or promiscuous. Arguing that the black female body has served as an icon for black sexuality in general, hooks calls for new representations of black female sexuality that posit sexual autonomy and personal recognition of erotic desire and beauty. Citing the example of a film produced by the British black film collective entitled _Passion of Remembrance_, hooks praises the film’s ability to produce a representation of black females “exulting in their black female bodies.”

They shake to a song that repeats the refrain “let’s get loose” without conjuring images of a rotgut colonized sexuality on display for the racist/sexist imagination. Their pleasure, the film suggests, emerges in a decolonized erotic context rooted in commitments to feminist and anti-racist


15 Ibid., 131.
politics. When they look in the mirror . . . the gaze is one of recognition. We see their pleasure and delight in themselves.”

Here hooks posits an image of black female subjectivity and sexual experience that refuses to conjure what she says are images that have emerged from a colonized subversion of black female sexuality. In relation to Beyoncé’s own representations of sexuality in her music, music videos, and public performances, it could be argued that such sexual representations are iterations of what a capitalist music industry would use to objectify black female bodies, similar to the way a “rotgut colonized sexuality” would sexually objectify black women, as hooks argues.

Yet how Beyoncé is redefining representations of her sexual experiences under the spotlight and pressure of artist commodification in a capitalist music industry is worth noting—especially in comparison with some of her contemporary female artists. The fact that Beyoncé defines herself as a feminist alone suggests that her erotic recognition might stem from feminist and anti-racist politics, as noted by hooks. Though perhaps Beyoncé’s past albums have not always appeared as committing to black female sexual autonomy, the very battle cry of the 2013 album is in large part an exploration of the individuality of her sexual experience and growth as an artist, indeed an autonomy that she defines in terms that are often nonexistent in the work of contemporary black female artists such as Rihanna or Nicki Minaj. Comparing Beyoncé’s 2013 hit “Rocket,” for example, to the commoditized and arguably objectified sexuality displayed in Minaj’s 2014 hit “Anaconda” is indicative of Beyoncé’s redefinition of identity. Though Minaj and Beyoncé are undoubtedly both aware of their inherent subjection to the male gaze as female artists, “Anaconda” seems to embrace female objectification, whereas “Rocket” subverts it.

A large portion of the lyrics in “Anaconda” express awareness of the gaze quite clearly. The lyric “Oh my gosh, look at her butt”—a lyric sampling from Sir Mix-a-Lot’s highly objectifying song, “Baby Got Back”—is repeated eighteen times, along with the famous line, “My anaconda don’t want none unless you got buns, hun.”17 The music video features rapper Drake sitting in a chair, looking at and touching Minaj’s body at whim, almost in boredom, even as she goes to great lengths to get his attention. In a telling MTV article, Minaj says that after the video shoot Drake told

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16 Ibid.
her, “Yo, do you understand like I’m the man after this video come out?” therein cementing that a black female artist’s performance and representation of her sexual experience is to play to the machismo of the man, not her own sexual empowerment.

Beyoncé’s album hit “Rocket,” however, offers a different image of black female sexuality altogether—one that is much more closely related to a self-defined and actualized female sexuality as posited by hooks. Lyrically, “Rocket” depicts a scene of sexual intercourse taking place between Beyoncé and her husband, rapper Jay-Z. Yet it is not Beyoncé who is the sexual object in this scene. On the contrary, Beyoncé is a sexual subject in control of her own self, demanding to be looked at and touched. It is worth noting that the majority of the lyrics are written in the form of commands, like “Let me show you how I feel,” and “You can touch me.” Beyoncé’s use of the command form rejects the male gaze in that she is the one instructing her man what she wants. She is talking about her body, yes, and her audience is given their own objective description of her body, yet here she establishes the terms. Instead of being an object defined, she is a subject and the definer.

The music video for “Rocket” also serves to redefine sexual autonomy in a unique way: the song becomes a means for taking back the gaze. Though subjection to the gaze is inevitable for Beyoncé as a black female entertainer, she does not permit it to either delimit or denigrate her expression of sexual autonomy and female desire. Although lyrics for “Rocket” might describe a scene in which two sexual partners are present, the music video is near void of the presence of anyone but Beyoncé. In the privacy of her own home, Beyoncé undresses herself, skims her fingers erotically across her own skin, and glorifies her body on her own terms. She turns lyrics that suggest reliance on her male sexual partner to a video in which she, in her solitude, looks back at the camera with confidence and resolve. She is ultimately alone in this experience, creating a message that a woman does not need to be defined sexually by the gaze of another. In this way Beyoncé creates the image of a black female artist who does not let the dictates of a capitalist music industry define her sexual image. Like the women in the film bell hooks describes, when

Beyoncé looks at or touches her body, her gaze is also “one of recognition,” one in which she pleasures and delights in herself.20

Looking at Beyoncé’s sexual empowerment of women and subversion of the male gaze through the framework of black feminist theory shows that her reclamation of voice and autonomy are in fact committed to feminist ideals and do not complicate them. In “Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power,” black feminist theorist Audre Lorde argues that the healthy recognition of the erotic as an integral part of experience forces women to scrutinize the meaning of existence in empowering ways. This contrasts well with statements made by Beyoncé on the topic of sexuality. In her promotional video for the music videos accompanying the album Beyoncé, she reflects this view of her female experience, saying, “I don’t . . . have any shame about being sexual, and I’m not embarrassed about it and I don’t feel like I have to protect that side of me because I do believe that sexuality is a power that we all have.”21 Beyoncé’s refusal to feel shame about being sexual in large part reflects what Adichie posits is necessary for women to combat gender inequality. That Beyoncé would declare this unapologetically about her videos also reveals that her relationship to the erotic is personally valuable to her sense of identity. Her ownership of this essential part of her subjectivity shows that her interpretation of the erotic comes from a place of self-actualization and empowerment rather than a need to conform to simply “selling sex” for the music industry.

Lorde also argues that such sexual empowerment and erotic identity provides black women with both meaning and purpose to commit to social change. She writes that “recognizing the power of the erotic within our lives can give us the energy to pursue genuine change within our world, rather than merely settling for a shift of characters in the same weary drama. For not only do we touch our most profoundly creative source, but we do that which is female and self-affirming in the face of a racist, patriarchal, and anti-erotic society.”22 This self-affirmation encompassed in the creative power of the erotic is critical to breaking down barriers formed by socially inflicted stereotypes of gender and race. Whether or not a woman is an artist or pop culture icon becomes

irrelevant; instead, a woman’s choice to be erotic for self-actualization and empowerment should not bear censorship and relentless scrutiny but rather be valued for its ability to allow women to transcend cultural barriers.

In her promotional video for the album, Beyoncé says she shares her own experiences with the erotic in part to enable women to recognize the energy and self-definition of sensuality within themselves, as well as the power that comes from reclaiming one’s own body. For example, when sharing her personal experience with working to feel comfortable in her body again after having her baby, she says, “I know finding my sensuality, getting back into my body, being proud of growing up was important. It was important to me that I expressed that in this music because I know that there are so many women that feel the same thing after they give birth.”

Beyoncé recognizes the problems many women face in discovering subjectivity, in feeling whole in relation to being in bodies that often bear scrutiny from a societal demand for female perfection. In Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment, Patricia Collins insists on the collective need for black women’s self-definition to reject institutionalized oppression and racism: “When Black women define ourselves, we clearly reject the assumption that those in positions granting them the authority to interpret our reality are entitled to do so. . . . The act of insisting on Black female self-definition validates Black women’s power as human subjects.”

This is perhaps why the act of self-definition through embracing the personal nature of the erotic for the experience of subjectivity is crucial, and Beyoncé’s brand of sex positive feminism offers a perfect example of this action. Beyoncé shows that when she defines her sexual experience (e.g., in her subversion of the male gaze in the music video “Rocket”), she is demonstrating her own rejection of institutionalized racism and societal prescription of black femininity. In owning her body in an industry that some could argue owns her, she is validating a greater need and recognition of black woman’s power gained through self-definition to become human subjects.

The most striking moment in Beyoncé’s evolution as an artist aware of her sexual autonomy and empowered identity is reflected in her controversial Half Time performance at the 2016 Super Bowl. So much larger

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than the bold, bright letters spelling out “Feminist” in her 2014 performance at the VMAs, “Formation” became her new battle cry. It was in her performance of “Formation” and the release of the music video the night before that Beyoncé used her empowered, influential presence as an artist to commit to social change. There is no overt expression of the erotic in this music video, but it could be argued that her commitment to celebrate black identity and speak out against police brutality for the Black Lives Matter movement in “Formation” ultimately evolves from what Lorde and Collins argue the power of the erotic enables: the creation of a necessary, female self-affirmation in “the face of a racist, patriarchal . . . society.”

In conclusion, though Beyoncé’s position as a female artist in a capitalist music industry does threaten to distort the interpretation of her use of the erotic in her artwork, her self-actualized sense of female subjectivity in relation to her sexual experience ultimately works to enable her to redefine rather than to be defined. Beyoncé shows through sex positivity that there is female empowerment that comes through embracing the sexual self, and, perhaps, her unapologetic willingness to share her personal experiences with this erotic self in the album Beyoncé gives her the power to create and celebrate this identity, even under the watchful eye of a capitalist music industry. She blends political advocacy and art to further her cause and to reject the violent and objectified representations of black womanhood that arise from a fraught history of violence toward the black female body. Just as Adichie posits that we should all be feminists, Beyoncé’s own brand of feminism shows how vital it is to understand that empowerment is a personal matter, and it is ultimately in this recognition of unfettered autonomy and difference within feminist perspectives and experiences that women and men will come together to break the bonds of institutionalized sexism.

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Glam

Tara Neuffer

I thought this photo represented my friend well, while still honoring her photoshoot wishes: that she be striking a sassy pose and never have her pearly-whites showing—not because they weren’t straight and beautiful but because it just wasn’t her style. However, she can’t hide the slight smile of her lips, reminding us how much she loves how she looks and feels taking glam shots.
Black Woman

Noémia de Sousa (1926–2002), Mozambique

Strangers with their eyes filled with other worlds
have sought to sing your charms
or them only of deep mysteries,
of ecstasies and witchcraft . . .
Your profound charms of Africa.

But they couldn't
In their formal and ornamented songs,
devoid of emotion and sincerity,
you remained distant, unattainable,
virgin to more penetrating contacts.
And they masqueraded you as a sphinx of ebony, a sensual lover,
Etruscan vase, tropical exoticism,
delirium, attraction, cruelty,
animalism, magic . . .
and we don't know how many other florid and empty words.

In their formal, ornamented songs
you were everything, black woman . . .
except yourself.

And thank goodness.
Thank goodness they left it to us,
of the same blood, same nerves, flesh, soul,
suffering,
the unique and heartfelt glory to sing your praises
with truthful and radical emotion,
the thrilling glory to sing your praises, all kneaded,
molded, poured out in these immense and luminous syllables: MOTHER.

Originally published in Poets of Mozambique (2006); translated from Portuguese into English by Frederick G. Williams

Author Bio
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Abstract
This paper addresses the question of why Mormon (LDS) women in Utah were so involved in the women’s suffrage movement of the late nineteenth century. This paper explores how two factors in particular—the LDS doctrine concerning Eve and the practice of polygamy—gave those of the LDS community a perspective on women’s role in society that empowered women rather than suppressed them. This empowering perspective on the role of women in society both diverted from the widely-followed protestant traditions of the time and closely paralleled the beliefs and ideologies of the women’s suffragists. With a perspective on women’s role in society that corresponded with suffragist ideals, it is then no surprise that LDS women were both encouraged and eager to join the national suffrage movement in the United States.
“Woman, Awake!”: How LDS Doctrine on the Fall and the Practice of Polygamy Created a Suffragist Culture in Nineteenth-Century Mormonism

Sarah Dunn

Utah women were first enfranchised in 1870, preceded only by the women of Wyoming. In 1887, the Edmunds-Tucker Act revoked Utah women’s right to vote, initiating the rise of a strong and persistent suffrage movement in the state. After several years of dedicated service to the cause of suffrage, Utah suffragists succeeded in 1895 in convincing state legislators to include women’s enfranchisement in the new state constitution, once more empowering the women of Utah with the right to participate in the process of government—twenty-five years before the nineteenth amendment permitted women’s suffrage on a national level. Many western territories and states moved to enfranchise women earlier than the eastern states; however, the case of Utah is unique. Utah was settled and is still largely populated by members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (commonly referred to as Mormons) who, at the time, controversially and openly practiced polygamy. Though this practice was widely criticized as being oppressive and demeaning towards women, the way that the suffrage movement flourished in Utah during the late nineteenth century seems to complicate the idea that early LDS women were tyrannized by their husbands, and begs the question: why were these women suffragists?

I explore how differences in LDS beliefs and practices led both Mormon women and Mormon church leaders to embrace the American women’s suffrage movement. Diverging from traditional Protestant beliefs and practices, specifically concerning the Christian doctrine of the Fall and the actual practice, though not necessarily the doctrine, of polygamy freed LDS women from the traditional Protestant ideologies of the curse of Eve and the expected role of women as a

1 In this paper, I refer to members of the church, along with the church itself, as Mormons or with the acronym LDS.
clinging vine, or as emotional, financial, and social dependents on their husbands. Because Mormons saw Eve in a positive light and found themselves having to adapt to a marital situation that required more self-reliance of wives, LDS women came to perceive themselves differently than women traditionally perceived themselves in the nineteenth century. LDS doctrine and marital practices caused LDS women, and LDS men, to change their conception of women’s functional role in society and to see women as able and necessary contributors to concerns that lay outside of the domestic sphere. This change in the LDS conception of women created a parallel between the doctrine of the LDS faith and beliefs propagated by prominent women’s suffrage leaders (like Elizabeth Cady Stanton), leading women of the LDS church to become involved in the national suffrage movement.

One of the tools that church and state have used over the centuries to restrict women’s role in society has been the Christian Bible. For the stalwart Protestant believer, “the Bible is the unchallengeable source of Christian faith and the font of all sacred wisdom”—a source of unquestionable authority. General Protestant belief teaches that Eve was overcome by pride and ambition, and when given the choice between following her own will or submitting to God, she chose the first and partook of the forbidden fruit. As a result, the aspect of equality and partnership that existed between man and woman prior to this event was dissolved; Eve, held responsible for succumbing to Satan’s luring and for causing Adam to sin, was commanded by God to be thereafter subject to her husband, concurrently cursing her female posterity to the same fate. These fundamental Biblical interpretations created an ideology that was perpetuated for centuries and deeply integrated into society until female submission and inferiority became an indisputable fact and an expected part of female nature.

Awakened to sexist interpretations of the Bible, early feminist writers readily recognized how the biblical story of the Fall of Adam and Eve in particular was used as an omnipotent authority to support the idea that women were destined to be subject to men. Suffrage leader Elizabeth Cady Stanton recognized a need to rewrite this narrative that had suppressed women for so long. In her ambitious project of creating

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The Woman's Bible, Stanton’s reading of the Fall took a completely different stance from the traditional Protestant interpretation. Instead of seeing Eve as subject to blame, Stanton sees her as “the heroine of an historical occurrence.”

Stanton claimed that Eve should be praised and admired for her pursuit of knowledge, as the pursuit of knowledge is generally acknowledged as noble. She saw the curse that was pronounced on Eve as an addition to the original text and therefore not authoritative. Additionally, she rejected the notion that Eve was the one to bring evil into the world, insisting that evil existed in Satan before the Fall and that the devil is to blame, not a woman.

Stanton’s interpretation challenged centuries of authoritative indoctrination; her view offered an allegorical interpretation that would empower women instead of lowering them into submission.

Stanton’s suffragist understanding of Eve as powerful and wise parallels early LDS doctrine concerning the Fall. Arising within a predominantly Protestant culture, the LDS church distinguished itself in many ways, one of which being its unique doctrine concerning the Fall. Rather than view the Fall negatively as most other Christian denominations did, the LDS church saw the Fall as necessary. Early church leaders commonly taught that were it not for the Fall, humanity would never have been able to pass “through this school of experience which this life affords us.” In LDS scripture, Adam and Eve both individually rejoice in their fallen state; Eve explicitly says, “Were it not for our transgression we never should have had seed, and never should have known good and evil, and the joy of our redemption, and the eternal life which God giveth unto all the obedient,” again emphasizing the positive effects of the Fall, categorizing it as a step towards something better. Brigham Young, the second president and prophet of the church, saw the influence of Eve on Adam as being “excellent” and as something necessary for the good

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5 Ibid.
7 Ibid., 28.
8 Pearl of Great Price (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2013): Moses 5:1.
of humanity. Early LDS teachings provided a more positive and less vengeance-provoking narrative than traditional Protestant teachings, providing church members—especially women members—with a different narrative for the foundation of female gender roles. This new narrative relieved LDS women from some of the theological pressure that had suppressed most Christian women for centuries. With the blame for condemning the whole human race to mortality lifted, LDS women could explore new opportunities in their Zion society.

The similarities between the suffragist and the LDS view on the biblical story of the Fall are plentiful. Both groups, under the impression that Protestantism had encouraged a false interpretation, came up with their own revisions of biblical passages: the LDS church with new scripture gained from a living prophet, and the suffrage movement with Stanton’s commentary on the Bible. Though Stanton’s interpretation of the Fall does not go so far as to claim that the bringing of mortality and suffering into the world was a good thing, she does reinterpret the scriptural passages in Genesis to shed a new light on the amount of blame that can be placed on women. By claiming the Fall of man into mortality as a necessary step for humanity, LDS doctrine goes even further; rather than just place equal blame on the woman and the man, LDS doctrine glorifies and praises Eve for her intelligence and wisdom in forwarding the divine plan for humanity. LDS teaching gives Eve responsibility for the Fall, but instead of resentment, this new perspective encourages feelings of reverence and gratitude towards Eve. Eve desired wisdom and knowledge, and both LDS doctrine and suffragist interpretations see this as something positive and ennobling. Such new interpretations of the biblical account had the power to inspire women to shake off the myth of gender inferiority. Since for centuries, “every man has had his own idea of his own superiority bred into him by this story [of the Fall], and every woman has had the idea of her own inferiority ground into her by this same legend,” changing the oppressive interpretation of this legend would change the ideas that men and women held on to concerning female inferiority.

Religious narratives and doctrines were not the only channels by which women were made inferior. The ideologies that accompanied

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the institution of marriage in nineteenth-century America preached the same narrative of female submission as the biblical narrative of the Fall and perpetuated practices that consistently limited women’s role in society. Caroline Gilman, a nineteenth-century writer of women’s advice books, counseled young brides to “watch well the first moments when your will conflicts with his to whom God and society have given the control. Reverence his wishes even when you do not his opinions,” encouraging wives to gracefully submit to their husbands’ will. In addition to being meek and submissive, women were also expected to be extremely dependent on their husbands. Elizabeth and John Sanford, also writers of nineteenth-century advice books, encouraged dependency, claiming that it made women attractive to men and additionally claiming that a woman being “conscious of her inferiority . . . [should be] therefore grateful for support,” which she finds in her husband. A woman needed the support of her husband not only because of her relative physical weakness but also because of her intellectual inferiority as “her head [was] almost too small for intellect but just big enough for love.” In general society, women were seen as unintelligent, weak, and necessarily submissive. These assumed characteristics of women meant that the only proper place for such a fragile figure was within the protective walls of the home. As the home was her designated sphere, why should women seek education or involvement in larger social issues? Women were to leave such things to those whom it concerned: their husbands. These ideologies were so entwined with the nineteenth-century understanding of marriage that even if common biblical interpretations had not supported women’s submission, nineteenth-century beliefs concerning marriage would have been sufficient to do so.

In the late eighteenth century and mid-nineteenth century, voices began to speak out against the rigidity of the female domestic sphere and the relationship between husband and wife in marriage. Women such as Mary Wollstonecraft and Margaret Fuller were convinced that women were rational beings with just as much intellectual capacity as

 Fuller saw an ideal marriage involving spiritual and intellectual equals, refuting the traditional model of male dominance and female submission. The suffragist leaders of the late nineteenth century recognized that for women to get the vote, they were going to need to redefine how women and men saw each other in marriage and redefine the distribution of power and authority within that relationship. Elizabeth Cady Stanton argued, “If civilly and politically man must stand supreme, let us at least be equals in our nearest and most sacred relations,” indicating that she felt equality in marriage was fundamental in the cause for women’s rights. Before she could convince men to see their wives as equal in the civil and political spheres, she needed them to see their wives as equal in the domestic sphere. Without first giving women basic rights in their marriage, how could women move forward in gaining political and civil rights? In her “Address to the Legislature of New York,” Stanton indicated the many ways in which women were treated unjustly by the law in marriage: they were deprived of their earnings, unprotected against domestic abuse, and unprotected against destitution should they be widowed. Stanton and others could recognize that there was something fundamentally wrong with the lack of authority and power women were given in the marriage relationship. How could women ever convince men to see them as equals civilly if they could not see them as equals in the most basic social unit? Suffragists recognized that if they could convince men to see women as equal partners in marriage, they might be able to get men to see women as equal citizens in the state.

On the surface, marital practices of the LDS church seemed to favor the patriarchal supremacy in marriage that was so criticized by suffragists as a source of female oppression. The LDS church infamously

15 Ibid., 115.
practiced plural marriage openly from the early 1840s until 1890 when then-church president Wilford Woodruff issued a statement suspending the practice of polygamy by church members. Those outside of the LDS church saw the practice of polygamy as being foreign, repulsive, and unchaste. The women of Utah were seen as oppressed, “operated upon by the tyrants that control them . . . [and] slaves to a system worse than death.”\(^\text{18}\) LDS philosophy and doctrine on marriage seemed to somewhat match the criticisms of its practice. The founder of Mormonism, Joseph Smith, taught concerning marriage that “it is the place of the man, to stand at the head of his family, and be lord of his own house, not to rule over his wife as tyrant, neither as one who is fearful or jealous that his wife will get out of her place, and prevent him from exercising his authority.”\(^\text{19}\) Similar to common social standards of the time, the husband was the ultimate source of authority in the family; even though he is to be a kind ruler, he is still a ruler over his wife. Smith taught that the duty of the wife was “to be in subjection to her husband at all times, not as a servant, neither as one who fears a tyrant, or a master, but as one, who, in meekness, and the love of God, regards the laws and institutions of Heaven, looks up to her husband for instruction, edification and comfort.”\(^\text{20}\) This image of an ideal wife seems similar to the nineteenth-century metaphor of women as “clinging vines,” who look to their husbands for all care and support. Apparently, the only real difference between LDS marriage practice and the status-quo marriage practice of the nineteenth century was that, in LDS culture, a single “sturdy oak” could be laden with multiple “clinging vines”—one man could marry multiple wives, and they could live the practice of marriage as a group.

However, though in theory early LDS views on marriage seemed to keep women in subjection, the practice of polygamy actually made it necessary for LDS women to become more independent and self-reliant. Polygamy paralleled in practice the suffragist view of marital equality that it countered in theory. Having multiple women depend on one man for temporal, spiritual, and emotional needs as they would in a monogamous relationship simply was not feasible; one man with multiple wives

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\(^{19}\) Joseph Smith, Jr., *Encyclopedia of Joseph Smith’s Teachings*, edited by Donald Q. Cannon and Larry E. Dahl (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book Company, 2000).

\(^{20}\) Ibid., 411.
could not provide the same amount of support to each of his dependents as could a man with only one wife to provide for. Helping to provide their own needs, LDS women had more opportunity to be involved in opportunities outside of the home, and they were usually very involved.

A telling example of a self-reliant woman living in a polygamous society is the story of Patty Bartlett Sessions. Sessions first entered into a polygamous relationship in 1845 when her first husband, David, married a second wife. This relationship later failed, but David took on another wife when the couple immigrated to Salt Lake City. In her later marriage to John Parry, Sessions soon found herself in yet another polygamous marriage. In many ways, her story is a sad one; Sessions always found herself the older wife in her polygamous marriages. Often (likely because the children were with the younger wife), her husband would end up spending more of his time with the younger wife than with her. Sessions found this situation lonely, and she clearly missed the emotional and temporal support of her husband. In her diary, Sessions complained frequently of how hard it was to cut her own wood, and when she married John Parry, she wrote “I was married to John Parry and I feel to thank the Lord that I have some one [sic] to cut my wood for me.” Later on, after Parry took on a second wife, Sessions wrote frequently of how different men that she had hired brought her loads of wood, her husband being occupied elsewhere.

Finding herself unable to lean heavily on either of her husbands for support throughout her life, Sessions, in order to support herself, became a more independent woman. Early on in her adult life, before she ever entered a polygamous relationship, Sessions made a living as a midwife. After her first husband died, Sessions continued to help support her husband’s second wife with her income from this occupation.

Sessions was also involved in the LDS organization for women, the Relief Society. Through this organization, she found fulfillment in charitable causes and leadership opportunities. Living in polygamy was not easy for many women, especially when their expectations for marriage

24 Ibid., 241.
came from having observed only a monogamous relationship; however, women could find a way to make such a relationship work by learning, like Patty, to rely more on themselves rather than try to futilely depend on their husbands.

Being ennobled by a new narrative of Eve and learning independence from their polygamist marriages, LDS women voiced their opinions on women's roles and rights in society. In the Woman's Exponent, a news publication created specifically for the women of the LDS church, LDS women wrote about their views on various issues, including women's enfranchisement, education, and advancement. The Woman's Exponent, from its beginning in 1872 until it stopped printing in 1914, served as a voice and platform for LDS women, a place where women could share their faith and opinions. Importantly, the Woman's Exponent served as the LDS voice for the Utah suffrage movement, especially after Utah women were disenfranchised in 1887 with the passing of the Edmunds-Tucker Act. These women understood the opposition they faced in seeking equality, recognizing that many still saw women as second class. One article declares, “the day has not yet scarcely dawned when the name woman is not a synonym of ignorance and weakness. We are gathered from the midst of all nations, and in every one of these nations, the education of woman was almost ignored.”25 These LDS women recognized that much of the world opposed women receiving more education than was needed to perform domestic tasks. In response to what they saw as the oppressive influences of culture toward women, writers of the Woman's Exponent encouraged women to “attend lectures, concerts, galleries and whatever means is within her reach to inform her mind, relax her nerves, and quicken her relish of life,” insisting that education was necessary and valuable.26 These LDS women recognized the same story of women that Atlantic coast feminists did: for centuries, women had been undermined by men, and they needed to fight for equality. Just as suffrage leaders from the East Coast were exposed to social movements, like abolitionism, that led them to consider the unjust situation of women, LDS women were led by new doctrine on Eve and self-reliance learned from plural marriage to consider the disadvantages that women faced.

25 Louisa Lula Greene Richards, “A Talk with the Sisters,” Woman's Exponent (Salt Lake City, UT), March 1, 1874: 191.
26 Ibid.
The story of Emmeline B. Wells shows how this combination of a positive doctrine concerning Eve and the independence required of women in the practice of plural marriage could create a suffragist. Wells converted to Mormonism when she was fourteen. She became a plural wife when she was seventeen after her first husband and young child died, and she, along with other saints, moved west. Her second husband passed away in 1850, and she married again in 1852, becoming the seventh wife of Daniel H. Wells. Not unlike Patty Bartlett Sessions, Wells found herself suffering emotionally in her polygamist marriage. She wanted the “shelter and protection of a strong arm” from her husband, but she was often disappointed, as he continually was unable to provide that emotional support and companionship she desired. She soon became economically and emotionally independent of him within the marriage. Learning from her own suffering and experiences, she stated, “I am determined to train my girls to habits of independence so that they never need to trust blindly but understand for themselves and have sufficient energy of purpose to carry out plans for their own welfare and happiness.”

Her circumstances taught her that women in an LDS polygamist world needed to be capable of self-reliance and independence in order to find a full life.

Wells’s understanding of Eve’s behavior in the Fall shows how she valued characteristics of strong will and self-reliance in women. In a Relief Society lesson published while Wells was general president of the Relief Society, Eve was described and praised as having “that kind of courage which is compounded of daring and recklessness: she dared to disobey, when her husband, more cautious and more alive to the dangers of disobedience, refused to break the first great law.” The lesson goes on to discuss how Eve was aware of the greater blessings that would come after the Fall, such as wisdom and the ability to have children. The liberty that Wells takes to expand on the teachings of LDS church leaders by praising Eve for daring to disobey and for implicitly having more courage than Adam is evidence of her intellectual liberation. She is willing to go beyond teaching verbatim the words of her patriarchal leaders and add her own understanding to the interpretation of the doctrine.

28 Ibid.
30 Ibid.

With both her economic and her intellectual self-reliance, it is not surprising that Wells went on to become very involved, not only in her church organization as the president of the Relief Society from 1910 to 1921 but also significantly as a delegate to the National Woman Suffrage Association for Utah. Both her belief in her faith and her practice of her faith through the adoption of polygamy made her an independent and powerful woman. Her understanding of women and of what women were capable of, which she gleaned from her church doctrine and from her experience as a woman, made suffrage a natural cause for her.

LDS doctrine on Eve and the practice of polygamy made women like Wells predisposed to involvement in women’s suffrage. However, the picture of LDS women’s involvement in suffrage cannot be fully understood without taking into account the role that LDS men played in propelling women’s participation in the movement. In a patriarchal society where men held every position of government in the church (aside from the Relief Society organization), why would these men have any reason to want to include women in government?

One motivation for LDS church leaders to enfranchise women might have been an effort to preserve the practice of polygamy. Women in the Utah territory were initially given the vote in 1870. The bill was at first supported by those outside of Utah as a way to end polygamy in the territory and “to undermine the power of the Mormon church in Utah.” However, this was not the case: Mormon women supported their faith and polygamy, despite obtaining suffrage. In response to anti-polygamists, Harriet Youn g Cook declared she wanted “the world to know that the women of Utah prefer virtue to vice, and the home of an honorable wife to the gilded pageantry of fashionable temples of sin.” While living in a polygamous family had its challenges, many LDS women still supported and defended plural marriage vehemently, believing the benefits to society outweighed the costs. When Utah women were threatened with disenfranchisement by the Edmunds-Tucker Act, Church leaders would have wanted to support the cause of women’s suffrage in order to protect their way of life.

Though national suffragists were opposed to the practice of polygamy, they were “unwilling to relinquish this important suffrage stronghold and

attempted to separate the issues of polygamy and suffrage in proposed congressional legislation.” Church leaders saw this support as an opportunity to gain an ally for their cause and sent two women, Wells and Zina Young Williams, as representatives to Washington D.C. in order to seek the support of the president, Rutherford B. Hayes, and to make contact with and establish a relationship with national suffrage leaders. Wells and Williams were selected purposefully by church leaders to go to the nation's capital. The fact that church leaders encouraged involvement in the national women's suffrage movement shortly before the passing of the Edmunds-Tucker Act might imply an additional motive to LDS church leaders' encouragement and support of LDS women's involvement in women's suffrage, specifically to preserve polygamy.

Looking beyond the motive of trying to preserve the practice of polygamy, part of the reason why LDS church leaders supported LDS women's involvement in the suffrage movement may have been simply because they agreed that women should have, if not the same responsibilities as men, at least equal rights with men in government. For years, LDS women had participated in casting their vote to support church leaders. LDS men, along with their female counterparts, taught that Eve should be praised and blessed for her wisdom. Undoubtedly, LDS church leaders understood that women were just as essential to their society as men were, as they sent women to the East to attend medical school in order to provide their community with more physicians and nurses. Women were also requested to help with printing and with developing a silk industry, small businesses, and grain storage, among other duties. With all that their leaders, in particular President Brigham Young, asked of LDS women, one could only assume that these patriarchal men saw women's influence in their community extending beyond their service within the walls of their homes. Understanding the role of women in their community, perhaps it seemed only natural and

36 Ibid., 79–80.
just to LDS men for LDS women to participate in the process of voting. In a speech given in 1883, apostle Erastus Snow claimed that it was the Lord who inspired church leaders and legislatures to extend “the elective franchise to women as well as men, and to recognize the freedom and liberty, which belongs to the fairer sex as well as the sterner.”\(^{37}\) Just as LDS women’s conceptions on female identity and marriage were influenced by LDS doctrine and the practice of polygamy, so were LDS men’s conceptions of women and the responsibilities they could fulfill. The beliefs and practices of the LDS faith formed a culture that was able to transform the minds of almost all members of the society towards women, aligning the beliefs of both LDS men and LDS women with the ideologies of women’s suffrage.

With the LDS doctrine on Eve, the women’s development of self-reliance in the practice of polygamy, and the support of male counterparts all working to encourage Mormon women’s involvement in the women’s suffrage movement, as stated by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, “the fact can not be controverted that the sentiment of the majority of the people of Utah always has been in favor of equal suffrage.”\(^{38}\) Though there was still a belief in the LDS culture that supported traditional gender roles, women were encouraged to seek personal improvement and to take a more active role in their community, including running for legislature. Dr. Martha Hughes Cannon ran in the same election as her husband and won, making Utah the first state in the United States to elect a woman to the state legislature. More women in Utah were later elected into the House of Representatives. In positions of influence and power, these women became agents for social change. Stanton recounted, “All the bills introduced or championed by Dr. Cannon became laws.”\(^{39}\) By being able to participate in a legislature, women had more of a voice and influence in Utah than ever before. By granting women the opportunity to vote and electing them to legislative positions, Utah led the United States in women’s rights at the end of the nineteenth century.

Utah’s leading example in the women’s suffrage movement leaves an inspirational legacy for women, especially women of the LDS faith. It was the perception that early LDS women had of themselves that empowered them to rise above the social barriers that had hedged them in for so long

\(^{39}\) Ibid., 955.
and to find that they had a voice capable of real influence. For a church that still follows a patriarchal structure of leadership, embracing a history where women were celebrated for their accomplishments outside of the home and encouraged to participate in larger social movements could change the way LDS women see and identify themselves. Emmeline B. Wells penned these beautiful words:

Woman, awake! as mother, daughter, friend,
Thine energies and earnest efforts lend,
To help thy country in her hour of need—
Prove thine integrity by word and deed!
For woman’s star is lighting up the dawn,
And rosy gleams presage the coming morn.⁴⁰

Wells saw, after a long night of oppression, a dawning opportunity for women to “help [their] country in her hour of need,” to take equal part in improving their society. Embracing this heritage, contemporary LDS women ought to feel empowered to see themselves as active effectors of change and leaders and lights to the world. ♦

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Old World

Madeline Rupard
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Author Bio
Kristen Evans is an English major at BYU, minoring in Spanish and editing. Attending high school in southern Arizona and later completing a study abroad exchange program in Mexico have given Kristen a deep love for Latin American literature and culture. Kristen’s short stories and essays have been published in The Arizona Daily Star, Leading Edge, and Inscape. She is also a two-time winner of BYU’s Mayhew Award. When not writing, Kristen is voraciously reading every book she can get her hands on or singing show tunes loudly and off-key.
¿Quieres que te diga un cuento? Okay. I’ll tell you a story. But you have to promise to be quiet, ¿okay, mija?

There once was a beautiful woman named María. She was the most beautiful woman in the world. Todos los hombres querían casarse con ella, but she told all the men who came to her door that she was waiting for a man whose beauty could match her own.

Cuando era niña, I lived in a house of concrete with a thatched roof of palma that my father made with his own hands. Cuando era niña, the flamboyanes rained red petals, and we scurried up trees in bare feet and swayed higher than the world in shaking branches while the wind settled.

Cuando era niña, I spent whole days trailing the shape of the shore, running down rocky trails with los otros niños, our hands sticky with sweat and with ice cream. At night the skies were dark and in the tiny home Mamá and I shared, only the jícara gourds hanging from our ceiling filled with candles gave us light. I would listen to the wind howl outside around the corners of the world and swing gently in my hammock and think: estaré aquí para siempre.

It was a good thought. There was nowhere else I would have rather been.

Un día, un ranchero guapo vino del norte al pueblo de María. María, who was washing clothes by the river, heard the sound of his horse approaching, and looked up to see a well-dressed man coming her way. María and the ranchero laid eyes on each other. He thought she was beautiful. She thought he was handsome. He was well-off and rich, and she was young and clever. They married, and soon two children blessed their home.

I was eight or nine when the trouble started. Or maybe it had been going on for a long time, but I was too much of a child to notice. That is how children are: frightened by stories but untroubled by what’s real. My greatest fear was that Mamá would find out I had lied to her about playing on the shore of the river by myself. But then men with pistolas
came to our pueblo, and at night the wind didn’t just howl; it bit like ghosts and like lies. I trembled in the dark and worried about fantasmas and death and hauntings. We huddled in our home and listened to the explosions outside and Mamá told me stories, and held me close, and cried. If Mamá had asked, I’d have said we were living a story, and we were the good guys who would win in the end. But Mamá didn’t ask. We ran.

*El ranchero grew more and more prosperous as time passed, y tenía que viajar a menudo. María hated how often he was gone from their home, and she hated that every time he came home, he only came to see their children. But he no longer loved María.*

*Y así fue.*

I was younger than you are, mija, when I left my home forever, and Mamá and I paid all that we had into greedy hands, and clever men with glinting eyes and secret paths led us through the jungles. As we ran through the night, I tripped and cried. The men threatened with their guns, and I went silent. Not just my voice, though I stopped wailing. Not just my tears, though I stopped crying. The coyotes scared me so that everything inside me went still and cold, my panic frozen, mi alma vacío. I didn’t know what I was afraid of, and Mamá didn’t tell me. But some part of me knew La Llorona would come, with a shriek and a sigh, or a chupacabra would drain my blood.

I shouldn’t have worried—those are all stories and lies. I learned what to fear as we fled in a hurry: coyotes with claws of steel.

*Superada por sus celos, María told her two young children that they would be going for a walk por el río. The children were excited for the trip. They didn’t know what was rotting in their mother’s heart.*

For days we cramped into jostling trucks and hid in secret places: a tree house, a tented camp at the edges of a river, a trapdoor in a basement. Mamá, me, and an old couple (¿qué les pasó?), whose faces have never faded in my mind: furrows so deep I could have planted seeds in the weary skin above their eyes; dry, husky skin like maíz and rapid, hissing whispers about money and fear and fear.

(Always fear.)

*She drowned her children. Threw them into the river and watched as they sank below the waves. There was satisfaction, first. Then regret. She*
knew she had done something terribly wrong, and horrified, she threw herself into the water, joining her children.

Sí, es la verdad. They leave you if you don’t pay. They charge more sometimes. Other things too.
No, yo no. Mi mamá had heard so many stories—of course she took the pill.
No, I didn’t understand.

About a week after María and her children died, el ranchero discovered their bodies on the banks of the river. He held his dead children and cried.

And of course as we waited para el próximo paso de la jornada, los coyotes tipped back their beers and laughed and planned and lied. It must have been days that we walked but it felt like eternity, like time was stretched and flattened into forever. Through the desert we crossed the border with held breaths and hopes sprawling like skies. Mamá and I clutched each other and thought, we’re here, we’re here.

Even now, the spirit of María—now known as La Llorona, the weeping woman—wanders the banks of the great rivers, snatching up children for the ones she lost, wearing a white robe and wailing, wailing, wailing. Y por eso, debes cuidarte; be careful, stay away from the danger and the dark.

Es cierto. It’s not perfect.
I miss that small house and the sound of my cousins laughing just outside. I miss a childhood spent eating mango and maracuyá, sucking the best bits off the tips of my fingers under a sweltering, humid sun. I miss the days when no one would ever think of accusing me of stealing a dream, when my wishes were my own and the stars were lights that hung only a little higher than me, so close I could grasp them in my fists.
Te lo juro, mija, this country—different than home, sometimes better, but sometimes much worse.
I’m not a child anymore, and though I am often scared my fears have stretched and changed. These days I’m no longer afraid of La Llorona, with her shrieks in the night for children she lost, or her stringy wet hair, hands clawing before her, and a soaking dress of off-white lace.
I’m no longer afraid, mija, because I have taken her place, and I am quiet, quiet, quiet.
Author Bio
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Abstract
This paper explores the historical impact of religion in creating gender paucity within the fields of economics and physics that is still present today. Starting in the Enlightenment, practical applications of physics and economics began to improve the human condition in such dramatic ways that each promised salvation through practical or scientific means. In essence, they became secular alternatives to Christianity. Acting as religions themselves, each developed doctrines and dogmas that would lead to a secular salvation. However, inherent in these doctrines was a gendered hierarchy where the rational and mathematical, gendered as masculine, was equated with the divine while the emotional, gendered as feminine, was equated with the terrestrial or mundane. In addition to gendered theologies, each science developed a relevant priesthood that holds the keys to this salvation. Mimicking the male-only priesthood of the church, physics and economics were exclusively practiced by men and subsequently developed priestly cultures exalting intellectuals as prophetic. Even as women were given official admittance to the disciplines, they have remained underrepresented in economics and physics because of the gendered theologies and priestly cultures that have endured over time.
Economic Religion and Religious Physics: A Comparison in Religiosity’s Impact on Women in the Sciences

Summer Perez

In 2014, prestigious London-based news magazine *The Economist* published a list of the top twenty-five most influential economists. Among those chosen were Nobel Laureates, John Bates Clark medal winners, and *TIME Magazine* persons of the year, but, perhaps unsurprisingly, not one woman appeared on the list.¹ Even after the authors were criticized for their rankings and the magazine published a new list with improved methodologies, still no women made the cut.² The gender divide within the economics discipline is pervasive, extending to imparity among central-bank governors, full-time and associate professors, PhD candidates, and undergraduate enrollment. However, this trend of gender inequality within academia is not exclusive to economics. Other technical disciplines, such as engineering, math, and the physical sciences, also exhibit a lack of female participation. In order to better explain this gender impparity in the sciences, physicist and scholar Margaret Wertheim surveys the intersection of science, religion, and gender across Western history in her book *Pythagoras’ Trousers: God, Physics, and the Gender Wars*. She specifically tracks the interconnectivity between religion and physics across time to demonstrate the influence religion has had upon science and, subsequently, upon gender. Although religion and science are currently portrayed as rivals, science found its origins in religion and religious undercurrents can still be seen in contemporary physics. According to Wertheim, it is precisely these lingering religious elements of physics, such as gendered ideologies that subordinate women and the perpetuation of a secular, male-oriented priesthood, which has excluded female participation. By applying her arguments about the influence religion has had in physics to economics, parallels can be discerned between the two

sciences. Although economics never received scholarly patronage from formal religion, the social sciences—born out of the Enlightenment—became an alternative to religious dogma and, in essence, a religion itself. Thus, like physics, religious undercurrents in economics have also created gendered ideologies and a secular economic priesthood which have hindered the participation of women both historically and currently.

In her book, Wertheim gives a broad historical survey of religion, physics, and gender, demonstrating the interconnectivity between religion and science to support or undermine each other. Beginning with the ancient figure Pythagoras, Wertheim explains that the quest for truth was driven by religious or spiritual fervor. Mathematics and physical science were pursued in an attempt to interpret the natural world, and, in turn, to interpret the true nature of God. Later, formalized religion began to sponsor scientific scholarship as a means to support and prove religious dogma. Many scientists of the Christian era, such as Nicolas Copernicus, Johannes Kepler, and Isaac Newton, saw their scientific quest for knowledge as divinely inspired, each hoping to uncover the mysteries of God. However, as early as the seventeenth century, tension began to rise as science challenged religion’s spiritual core—the idea that the one true path to salvation was through Christ. Newton’s quest at the turn of the eighteenth century was to restore “true” Christianity through the restitution of the “true” scientific knowledge of the world; however, this was later appropriated by champions of science as a secular scientific theology in and of itself.

New technological advancements following the Enlightenment gave rise to the idea that science, not religion, would prove to be the true savior of humanity. For the first time in history, scientists began to feel that science and religion were incompatible and that religion was indeed irrelevant to science. New advances in the fields of thermodynamics, electromagnetic theory, and telecommunications dispersed power and wealth to the masses, demonstrating the concrete ways in which physics could improve the human condition. Hence, independent of any religious or Christian framework, science would provide salvation; science itself would be the new religion.

As the Enlightenment altered the psychic framework of the Western world, science was not the only discipline to experience the replacement of religion with secular theology. Economics, likewise, received a spiritual

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4 Ibid., 160.
awakening during the eighteenth century which venerated the science as secular theology. Many historians and economists have commented on this transition, including Austro-Hungarian historian and philosopher Karl Polanyi who claimed that “economic liberalism,” as born out of the Enlightenment, “turned into a secular religion”; it evolved from “a mere penchant for non-bureaucratic methods” into a “veritable faith in man’s secular salvation through a self-regulating market.”

To properly understand this psychological shift, it is necessary to contextualize the event in the broader history of economics as a discipline. The study of economics can be traced back to the Bible, ancient Greek philosophy, and Christian medieval thought. Thinkers like Plato and Aristotle philosophized about oikonomia—the problem of organizing the oikos, or household, the community of those who cooperate under one roof. During the Middle Ages, religious philosophers carried this torch while discussing issues like markets, private property, and interest; however, economic thought did not entertain the same ties with religion as physical science did. Moreover, economics and religion were never thought to complement or exclude the other. Still, the Enlightenment transformed religious thought as religion was supplanted with the belief that humans alone could improve their condition. With the Enlightenment and the Scientific Revolution as sparked by Newton, knowledge began to be disseminated to the masses. Suddenly, the mysteries of God were being unfolded in scientific and social spheres. Within this period of discovery and excitement, modern political economy was born with Adam Smith’s 1776 seminal work “An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations.” Not only did this mark a departure of economics from philosophy, it also offered an alternate secular theology to religion. Influential theologian Paul Tillich remarked on the vision of Adam Smith: the “idea of Providence is secularized in the Enlightenment . . . [as] expressed by Adam Smith . . . in his idea of harmony as yield by the workings of the natural forces of self-interest in society.”

This harmony was found not through God or technological advances but in the invisible hand of markets, an economic phenomenon which yielded an efficient


division of labor without any conscious intent or plan. No god was needed to reach an efficient outcome of resources or economic harmony within society; rather, man could depend on a sound understanding of the inner mechanisms of markets. Therefore, with the birth of modern economics came the advent of economics as a secular theology and a means of restoring harmony and finding salvation. Now there was no need for a god to intervene; the exploration and application of correct economic principles to a market system alone would lead humanity toward salvation.

The rise in a secular theology within eighteenth-century physics parallels the same phenomenon occurring within the field of economics. As mathematics and technical skills advanced, each discipline found a rebirth in the wake of the Enlightenment. Although the origins of each science differ greatly, as the history of physics is intertwined with formal religion, economics and physics supplanted religion by providing secular theologies which touted an alternate path to salvation—one of concrete social and technical advances rather than of faith and good works. This parallel is significant because during this period, both economics and physics became, in essence, new religions. While thoroughly rejecting Christianity as the means of salvation, each discipline began to take on the qualities of a religion itself: theologies proven to bring about salvation and a priesthood of inspired men who discover and interpret said theologies. It is precisely these elements which justified the exclusion and discrimination of women within each field. Just as women were subordinate within Christian theologies, gendered ideologies in physics and economics inherently implied that women were inferior. Likewise, the exclusive monastic priesthood of Christianity carried over into physics and economics in the form of a secular priestly culture which both directly and indirectly inhibited the participation of women in those disciplines.

Wertheim addresses many of the nuanced theologies within physics through what she terms Mathematical Man. She describes him as the personification of physics itself, a representation of the desires and ideologies of the science. Wertheim describes Mathematical Man as male because, until very recently, physics was strictly a male discipline. As first embodied by the Pythagorean quest, Mathematical Man was in search of finding universal harmony through mathematics and science. Pythagoras was the first in a long line of mathematicians that tilted his gaze ever more heavenward to understand nature and the divine. While exploring the heavenly and numerical realms, Pythagoras inherited the dualism of the Greeks in which maleness was associated with the heavenly
and immortality while femaleness was associated with the earthly and material.\textsuperscript{8} The masculine was equated with the divine and the spirit, while the feminine was linked with the terrestrial and the corporeal. Just as the heavens reign over the earth, the masculine was believed superior to the feminine. Pythagoras applied this heaven-earth, male-female dichotomy to a mathematical context in which a hierarchy emerged even in the numbers themselves: males construed as odd numbers associated with good, while women embodied even numbers which were believed to be evil.\textsuperscript{9} Mathematical Man personified this dualism as he continued his quest to understand the cosmos and the divine. Sadly, Pythagoras’s scientific successors would retain his mathematical doctrines but reject his social ones in which he gave women equal status in his school, going against contemporary custom.\textsuperscript{10} Indeed, he had many female disciples, even among his exclusive and secretive group of \textit{mathematikoi}, philosopher-mathematicians who lived inside Pythagoras’s community. Mathematical Woman and Mathematical Man worked side by side; however, the Pythagorean concept of Mathematical Man was to be Pythagoras’s legacy, as Mathematical Woman was later overshadowed and subdued. With the rise of Mathematical Man and suppression of Mathematical Woman, the collective conscious of the science was imbued with a gendered hierarchy that placed men above women. This directly influenced the direction the science would take, the topics that would be studied, and the culture that the science would create. Throughout his quest, Mathematical Man remained strictly in control, with little female company in a male-dominated culture. After a long absence, Mathematical Woman now begins to reemerge as a key player within physics.

Just as Mathematical Man dominated the scientific realm for thousands of years, modern economic historians have tracked the existence of another preeminent figure—Economic Man. Much like Mathematical Man, Economic Man goes to the root of economic theologies. Serving as the basis for economic models since the emergence of political economy in the Enlightenment, and as perpetuated by neo-classicist thought, is Economic Man—a self-interested, rational creature only concerned with maximizing personal utility or happiness. His rational nature has become the underlying assumption in nearly every economic model; it

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{8} Wertheim, \textit{Pythagoras’ Trousers}, 29.
\item \textsuperscript{9} Ibid., 25.
\end{itemize}
is assumed that he will act not on emotion but reason, acting on self-interest rather than altruism to maximize his utility. This embodiment of Economic Man serves as a metaphor for how economists view the world and humankind. Economics bases its logic on agents “imagined to be thoroughly—masculinely—rational and individual, detached from all social connection, and living in a tough, dog-eat-dog world of competition for scarce resources.”¹¹ Thus, Economic Man is rightly a man and not a woman, as his person embodies characteristics which have been historically gendered as masculine. Masculine rationality is placed in opposition to feminine passion or emotion; male self-interestedness is put in contrast to feminine caring or maternal love. Economic Man's surroundings are also depicted as a ruthless environment of scarce resources where he must struggle to survive, a metaphor lending itself to the paternal figure who must leave the comfort of the home to brave the harsh world and provide for his family. At the root of economic theology and belief is the personification of a rational, self-interested man; Economic Woman has been left out of the equation. Only in recent years has research in areas such as behavioral economics, which fuses economics and psychology, put the rationality and self-interestedness of Economic Man into question. Only as economists take more empirical approaches to their science and challenge centuries-old assumptions about human nature has Economic Woman started to have to find a place within the study of economics.

The absence of Mathematical Woman and Economic Woman in the consciousness of physics and economics has had serious implications for these sciences. Their theologies, which have been informed by social and cultural norms, have perpetuated implicit beliefs about the inferiority of women by placing Mathematical Man and Economic Man in the spotlight. It is precisely the veneration of the male and the subordination of the female that directly influenced and shaped their respective scientific cultures. Consistent with the analogy of economics and physics as religions themselves, each formed a secular priesthood wherein physicists and economists were cast as divine and devout priests, constantly searching for the theorems which would redeem humanity and bring about salvation. Within this exclusive priestly culture, Mathematical Man and Economic Man transcended ideology

to embody the ideals of the physicist and the economist themselves. Therefore, woman was no longer just implicitly subordinated but also explicitly excluded from participating in the priestly culture of physics and economics.

Although the sponsorship of physics by the Catholic church historically called for a scientific culture embedded in the religious priesthood, Wertheim argues that even after physics formally split from religion, a secular scientific priesthood remained. Because of the long association between physics and religion, many cultural aspects of Christianity carried over to the new scientific religion. Wertheim specifically states that the gendered theologies which physics purports have been a “cultural inertia behind the male-only Catholic priesthood” which in turn gives credence to the idea of a “male-only scientific priesthood.”

This culture has been perpetuated as many physicists have alluded to the scientific quest as a profoundly religious quest. Because physicists see their work as central to the salvation of humanity, their vigor is imbued with religious fervor and the affirmation that they are secular saviors. Consequently, many physicists devote their careers to finding a Theory of Everything—one equation which will unite all cosmic and earthly forces. Nobel Laureate Leon Lederman used deliberating religious language in his 1993 book *The God Particle* when he likened “particle accelerators to cathedrals” and hinted that “the deity lurks at the end of a proton beam.” This metaphor paints physicists as profoundly religious people attempting to unlock the mysteries of God through science and reaching ever closer to the equation that will bring salvation. Mathematical Man evolved from an abstract representation into a priest persona: equal parts physicist and priest. However, in this priestly culture, there was no room for women or priestesses. With the idolization of Mathematical Man, Mathematical Woman was left out in the cold. Here, Wertheim draws a parallel between the clergy and secular priestly culture: the struggle women faced to gain entry into science mirrors the struggle they faced to gain entry into the clergy. The historical exclusion of women within the religious community is then akin to the official and unofficial exclusion of women within physics as well. Although science separated from religion hundreds of years ago, traces of religion are found within physics, especially in its perpetuation of a secular priesthood.

13 Ibid., 14.
14 Ibid., 9.
This priestly culture within Christianity translated to a secular priestly culture within physics, and subsequently meant the continued exclusion of women from participating in the science.

Even without the inertia of a long association with formal religion, economics has created a priestly culture which venerates Economic Man. Just as many religions rely on inspired leaders to receive revelation and interpret holy writ, economics likewise has cultivated a priestly community of economists whose work is often viewed as revelatory and redemptive. If salvation can indeed be achieved by correctly allocating scarce resources, then “professional economists are the relevant priesthood, that group which through its knowledge of secrets of economic growth now holds the keys to salvation.”15 Essentially, economists become secular saviors through whom salvation will be achieved. If restoring earth from its fallen state only requires the knowledge of markets to resolve economic inequalities, then, truly, economists hold the keys to this salvation. Modern economists in essence serve as shamans, surrounding presidents and prime ministers and advising them with prophetic statements about what the future economy holds in store. The salvation of a certain nation is then placed in the hands of economists. Frank Knight, a founder of the Chicago School of Economics who took up economics as he abandoned formal religion, recognized that the modern role of the economist was that of the priesthood of old: to “dispense social legitimacy and serve as advisors to heads of government, as other priesthoods once served in these capacities for previous rulers.”16 Knight explains that the academic economist is not only held in high esteem, but society, at large, also recognizes the prophetic nature of the economist as political advisor. However, this priesthood is not exclusive to political positions; it also extends to academic settings in which economics professors and scholars are venerated as inspired seers. In his 1988 memoirs, George Stigler, a pupil of Knight and another key leader in the Chicago School of Economics, captioned one of the pictures included in the book as “Prophet Frank Knight and three of his disciples,” depicting himself as one of the disciples. A university community, Stigler suggested elsewhere, bears many similarities to a “medieval monastery,” where male economists filled with faith embark on a journey under the tutelage of proclaimed prophets to discover the secrets of salvation

16 Wertheim, Pythagoras’ Trousers, 230.
What Knight and Stigler fail to mention is the inherent gendered nature of their analogies. Implicit in their metaphors of a secular economic priesthood is the absence and exclusion of women to participate in economics. As Economic Man has been professionalized and institutionalized in governments and universities, Economic Woman has faced significant obstacles in just gaining access to this selective priesthood of economists, much less becoming priestesses themselves. Bolstered by hierarchical gendered theologies, these secular priesthods have remained steadfastly male even as women have been granted official admittance to academia and political institutions.

Although economics and physics attempted to supplant religion with their own secular theologies, they carried over ideological and cultural traits from formal religion which are still apparent today. Both physics and economics developed secular priesthods after the monastic orders of Christianity in which the members of each group paint themselves as secular high priests doing the work of salvation. Ironically, by denouncing religion and proclaiming themselves as secular theologies, physics and economics still perpetuate cultural practices which find their roots in the very institution they reprove. These cultures proved exclusive to many groups but especially to women. Just as the religious priesthods have been reluctant to admit women into their clergy, so have these secular scientific priesthods been slow in allowing for the contributions of women.

This paper compares the theoretical relationships of religion’s influence on physics and economics; however, the gendered ideologies and priestly cultures apparent in these sciences have real world implications. While the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have seen a burgeoning influence of women across every discipline, physics and economics have largely remained male-dominated while respective physical and social sciences have reached or neared gender parity. Hence, it becomes necessary to examine the history of physics and economics more deeply to understand why there persists a low participation of women in these fields. By exploring the religious origins of physics and the pseudo


18 United States; U.S. Department of Education; National Center for Education Statistics; Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS); Bachelor’s, master’s, and doctor’s degrees conferred by postsecondary institutions, by sex of student and discipline division: 2011–12; US Dept. of Education, July 2013; table 318.30.
religious beginnings of economics during the Enlightenment, parallels begin to emerge as physics and economics resemble religions themselves, complete with theological truths believed to bring about salvation and the formation of a scientific priesthood. By retaining these cultural elements of religion, physics and economics also retained the gendered archetypes and exclusive priesthood which have directly and indirectly barred women’s participation. The ideologies of Mathematical Man and Economic Man and their exclusion of Mathematical Woman and Economic Woman, be it active or acquiescent, over time has contributed to the formation and perpetuation of a priestly culture in the science. Even though modern-day physics and economics actively disassociate with religion, they are subject to the same faux pas as their theological brethren: namely, the lack of female participation. Thus arises the great irony: these disciplines claim to hold the keys to salvation but are hesitant in sharing those keys with women and dispersing that saving knowledge. If salvation is ever to be brought about through physics, economics, or any other means, it must be done with women and men alongside each other. As Mathematical Woman and Economic Woman are encouraged to participate, they too will become key players alongside Mathematical Man and Economic Man to improve the future of physics, economics, and the world. ♠


United States; U.S. Department of Education; National Center for Education Statistics; Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS); Bachelor’s, master’s, and doctor’s degrees conferred by postsecondary institutions, by sex of student and discipline division: 2011-12; US Dept. of Education, July 2013; table 318.30.

Canterbury Cathedral

Madeline Rupard
Mother of Mankind & of the World

Kardo Bestilo (1976–), Angola

Oh! Woman!
Excellence of life, you are the queen of society Generator of life!
But! Muscle-bound Microbes dare to insult you!

It’s you I see when I think of
My Mother - Woman,
My Sister - Woman,
My Wife - Woman,
My Daughter - Woman,
My Grandmother - Woman!

Woman is everything and is within everything!

Without woman there is no life,
Without woman or mother there is no education,
Without woman or wife there is no social stability,
Without woman or sister there is no woman friend,
Without woman or daughter there is no jealousy of conscience,
Without woman or grandmother there is no pampering in childhood!

Nevertheless we make them suffer,
Nevertheless we succeed in betraying them,
Nevertheless we succeed in Beating them, Assaulting them, Violating them . . .

What manner of beings are we? Muscle-bound Microbes!
Women are the basis of society,
When fragile: fragile society the influences and destruction.

Oh! Woman, you are the reason for our existence and the world turns!
Nevertheless because you abound with your sweet curves
Muscle-bound Microbes forget your worth,
Everything we do is for you, your highness, everything to conquer you
Wars happen, cars are purchased, houses are acquired,

Nevertheless Muscle-bound Microbes succeed in abusing you. . .
But your fragility strengthens me,
Your smile brings me Happiness,
Your love makes my world go round,
Your existence makes possible my existence!
To you woman I respect and love!
The imitations of men! Muscle-bound Microbes,
We will educate them in time and I beg your forgiveness, my highness,

You are an incomparable being, nevertheless
Your price is Love, Your label is Understanding,
Your cover Kindness, Your interior My Origin,
No amount of sadness extinguishes this, no amount of money pays for this,
Here I kneel, here I thank you, my highness,
To you woman, Mother of Mankind & of the World!

*Originally published in Poets of Angola (2014); translated from Portuguese into English by Frederick G. Williams*

Ana the Prophetess in the Temple

Adélia Prado (1935–), Brazil

The tedious tasks of widowhood work a new orchard.
Who will condemn me for my light-colored clothing?
The newborn will need swaddling bands.
It is with such love that the ointments are prepared
That divinity will be obliged to concede himself.
Until they grow faint,
I'll keep watch over the sparkling stars.

Originally published in Poets of Brazil (2004); translated from Portuguese into English by Frederick G. Williams


60 | A Woman’s Experience
Golden Contemplation

Abigail Remington
Oil on board. This is based off of Gustav Klimt’s style.
Author Bio

Madison Blonquist is an undergraduate student at Brigham Young University. She is completing coursework for a BA in music, BA in humanities, and an art history minor and is scheduled to graduate in June 2018. While at BYU, Madison has had several opportunities to learn outside of the classroom. In the summer of 2013, she participated in the Pembroke-King’s Programme at Cambridge University in England. Since returning home from an LDS mission in New York City in 2015, Madison has been a recipient of the Reid Nibley Scholarship, the Film and Digital Media Fund, and an ORCA grant. She is currently working as a curatorial assistant at the Brigham Young Museum of Art and hopes to one day be able to secure a position as an art curator.

Abstract

This paper explores the complex relationship between artists and their subjects, particularly with regard to race and gender. Using Niki Saint-Phalle’s definition of “truthful representation,” I consider the issues that race and gender pose to this ideal using the story of Dido Elizabeth Belle, an eighteenth-century aristocratic woman of mixed race. The intriguing life of Dido Elizabeth Belle is especially relevant to today’s evolving definition of intersectional feminism. Her portrait Painting of Dido Elizabeth Belle and her Cousin Lady Elizabeth Murray (1779, formerly attributed to Johann Zoffany) challenges the idea of “truthful representation” because it was presumably painted by a white male. However, in 2014, Amma Asante, a female director of African descent, was inspired by the work and felt compelled to direct a film (Belle) highlighting the significance of Dido’s life and even changing features of the original portrait. This contrast between the male-produced painting and the female-directed film is analyzed and critiqued within a current feminist context. In order to provide additional comparisons to Dido’s representation, two other works are considered: namely Portrait d’une négresse (1800) by Marie-Guillémine Benoist and Hagar (1875) by Edmonia Lewis.
Reclaiming Female and Racial Agency: The Story of Dido Elizabeth Belle via Portrait and Film

Madison Blonquist

In her exploration of Niki Saint-Phalle’s definition of femininity,1 Catherine Dossin wrote, “[Since] Saint-Phalle believed there were heretofore no real images of women, only those created by and for men, she made it her redeeming mission to create artworks for and about women and their real, mostly painful experiences.”2 While at the core of Saint-Phalle’s work is the idea of truthful representation, it is important to remember that her concept of femininity was based on her experience as a white, French woman, whose work flourished during the era of second wave feminism.

The third wave feminist perspective, by contrast, has acknowledged that femininity cannot be defined and generalized by white women alone. The intersectionality posed by gender, sex, race, and background is crucial to a fuller perspective. Today, feminist artists and historians have taken the concept of “truthful representation” further and qualified it by acknowledging that femininity cannot be defined and generalized by white women alone. This third wave feminist perspective acknowledges the intersectionality posed by gender, sex, race, and economic background. This context has invited new conversations about how these facets interact in the art world. The Painting of Dido Elizabeth Belle and her Cousin Lady Elizabeth Murray3 provides an interesting case study for this type of intersectional feminism because it depicts the representation of both women and race.

The portrait was presumably painted by a white male and, as a result, does not align with a feminist ideal. Two other paintings—Marie-Guillaume Benoist’s Portrait d’une nègresse4 (1880) and Edmonia

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1 Niki Saint-Phalle was a feminist artist best known for her feminist work in the 1960s.
3 See Figure 1.
4 See Figure 2.
Lewis’ Hagar—were created within a hundred years of Dido and Elizabeth’s portrait and within reach of representational accuracy. However, it wasn’t until the film Belle was released in 2014 that director Amma Asante was able to reclaim Dido’s story as both a woman and a person of African descent. I hope to demonstrate how both the painting of Dido and the film it inspired enable female and racial agency through their representations of Dido Elizabeth Belle, a black aristocratic woman in eighteenth-century British society.

In order to better understand artistic choices made by artists and directors alike, it is first important to understand their subjects. Dido Elizabeth Belle Lindsay (1761–1804) was the illegitimate daughter of Captain Sir John Lindsay and Maria Bell, an African slave whom he had rescued from a Spanish ship. While we don’t know what happened to her mother, Dido’s father made arrangements in 1765 for her to live with her great-uncle, Lord Mansfield, and to be a companion and playmate to her cousin Elizabeth Murray. At Kenwood Manor, she enjoyed many of the same privileges as her white, upper-class contemporaries. For example, there are records of her receiving expensive medical treatments and sleeping in comfortable quarters. She was even given an allowance of £30 per year and received a thorough education. Despite her mixed-race and illegitimate status, her father’s obituary in 1788 described her as “his natural daughter, a Mulatto . . . whose amiable disposition and accomplishments have gained her the highest respect from all [Lord Mansfield’s] relations and visitants.” Upon his death, Captain Lindsay left Dido £1,000 in his will. This enabled her to be extremely independent, both as a woman and as a person of color living in eighteenth-century England.

While she may have lived in rather fortunate circumstances, there is evidence that Dido faced discrimination throughout her life. There is a notoriously hostile account found in the diary of Thomas Hutchinson, an American loyalist who visited Kenwood. On August 29, 1779 (coincidentally, the same year that the portrait was finished), Hutchinson wrote:

A Black came in after dinner and sat with the ladies and after coffee, walked with the company in the gardens, one of the young ladies having

5 See Figure 3.
her arm within the other. She had a very high cap and her wool was much frizzled in her neck, but not enough to answer the large curls now in fashion. She is neither handsome nor genteel—pert enough. I knew her history before, but My Lord mentioned it again. Sir John Lindsay having taken her mother prisoner in a Spanish vessel, brought her to England where she was delivered of this girl, of which she was then with child, and which was taken care of by Lord M., and has been educated by his family. He calls her Dido, which I suppose is all the name she has. He knows he has been reproached for showing fondness for her—I dare say not criminal.\(^9\)

This excerpt gives us insight into the reality of Dido’s everyday life. Evidently she was often not allowed to dine with her family but took her supper alone and joined them after for coffee. This dilemma of class and race is highlighted throughout the 2014 film adaptation; at one point, Dido asks Lord Mansfield, “How may I be too high in rank to dine with the servants and too low to dine with my family?”\(^10\) Despite her education, aristocratic upbringing, and the obvious endearment of her relatives demonstrated through her inheritance and domestic privileges, she still had to endure daily reminders of the limits her rank and race imposed on her daily life.

Many of these racial tensions are arguably reflected in Painting of Dido Elizabeth Belle and her Cousin Lady Elizabeth Murray (Fig. 1). There is controversial scholarship about the symbolic connotations of the piece and for good reason: the work communicates a contradictory message. At first glance, it seems that there are elements of the painting that suggest equality and exalt the unique, albeit problematic, status of Dido Elizabeth Belle as a mulatto woman. Dido’s form is nearly level with Elizabeth’s, even though she was considered a “poor relation.”\(^11\) Because Dido’s figure is in a state of motion—she’s leaning forward and her blue shawl flows behind her—our eyes are immediately drawn to her angled form, as opposed to Elizabeth’s regal, stationary posture, reminiscent of queens. Some have suggested that Elizabeth’s outstretched arm is indicative of affection and closeness, as though she is drawing Dido near.

Although the implication of Dido’s hand gesture has been heavily debated by scholars, Mario Valdes, a US historian of the African diaspora, has optimistically suggested that instead of simply pointing out her

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\(^9\) Ibid., 5.
\(^10\) Damian Jones and Misan Sagay, Belle, directed by Amma Asante, (2014; Buckinghamshire: Pinewood Pictures, 2014), DVD.
skin color, the pose is an allusion to the Hindu iconography of Krishna, paralleling the relationship between signaling the common humanity of the two girls. “There is a sculpture that shows Krishna in a similar pose and a story that he was once slapped by a female deity for taking on the appearance of her sister and her husband,” Valdes explains. When this sister tried to console him, he smiled, pointed to his bruised cheek, and exclaimed: ‘She has shown that all three of us are one and the same.’ What Dido’s pose apparently proclaims, therefore, is that she and her cousin share the same humanity and innate worthiness.”

Aside from the symbolic connotations of the piece, there are also some interesting things happening in the realm of femininity. Both subjects, as women, confront the viewer directly, taking control of the viewer’s gaze. While their expressions are not burdened with questionable implications, they are nonetheless, striking. Both Dido and Elizabeth smile, as if sharing a joke. Perhaps this is a positive feature, indicative of their close relationship as cousins.

However, some of these same features can also be interpreted inversely. For example, it could be argued that there is almost a sense of restriction in Elizabeth’s arm, as if she is preventing Dido from reaching her destination. The azure shawl that flows between the two women is reminiscent of the Venus scarf motif, which furthers the feeling of limitation and could be seen as a sophisticated means of control. Elizabeth also holds an emblem of her class: a book, symbolic of education and refinement. This, along with her courtly pose, hearkens back to medieval depictions of saintly women poring over their book of hours. Dido, on the other hand, holds a platter of luxurious imported fruits. This iconography carries with it a lot of baggage: the Fall (with its implications of the impurity of women and dark-skinned people becoming a cursed race), British colonization and trade, even the expression “on a silver platter” comes to mind with the implications of women being consumables. It is significant that while Elizabeth is stationary with a book in her hand—playing a passive female role—Dido is actively engaged in a task that would have been associated with servitude.

Another striking and controversial feature is the clothing of the two women. Elizabeth is dressed in what would have been elegant, but

13 This is a motif in art history that references Venus restraining her son, Cupid, by wrapping him in her scarf.
standard, garb for an aristocratic woman: a formal dress with a stiff bodice and full skirts. Dido, on the other hand, appears to be wearing a costume of flowing satin that lacks the bodice boning and full skirts of her cousin. In order to compensate for Dido’s low rank and questionable race, the artist has deliberately decided to exoticize Dido and sell her as a sort of dark beauty. The large pearls, dangling earrings, and turban especially could be seen as a nod to the colonization of India.

This fetish with the desirable foreigner is perpetuated by Dido’s placement. Elizabeth is rooted to a bench and closer to the forest, a representation of the natural world. But Dido, with a mysterious charm, moves beyond her cousin, in the literal background of the frame, into the light of the outside world in a contrastingly unstable position. Could this reflect her need to be tamed or, by extension, chained? Even her eyes communicate a sense of wildness and unpredictability. During the eighteenth century, it was not uncommon for the upper class to keep “body servants,” small children typically from the West Indies who “were regarded and treated as exotic playthings or status symbols by their aristocratic or rich owners.”

Taking all these details into consideration, it is difficult to ignore the social and political undertones that make this more than just a family portrait.

Because of the complexity of this representation of the black female figure, it is helpful to compare it to other similar works. Just as Niki Saint-Phalle believed, it is difficult for the artist to truthfully portray the subject if they are detached from it by gender and race. Painting of Dido Elizabeth Belle and her Cousin Lady Elizabeth Murray was originally, but no longer, attributed to the famous painter Johann Zoffany. Although he is no longer associated with this work, it is fairly safe to assume that this portrait was created by another white male, as men typically dominated the field of painting. This difference in gender and the artist’s perceptions of both women and race would have inevitably influenced his representational choices.

Both figures are idealized—even Dido’s features favor her “better half,” or her father’s side. She has been de-Africanized, her features made to look more European and ultra-feminized with her flowing gown. Elizabeth, too, has been “airbrushed,” and flawlessly embodies the classic eighteenth-century British beauty of pale, perfect skin with cherry-red lips and rosy cheeks. A scathing but important exchange between two young suitors in the film Belle brings this mentality to the forefront.

Oliver Ashford, after meeting Dido, remarks to his brother James, “She is intriguing, is she not?” James seethes, “I find her repulsive.” “Well, I suppose she is . . . if you find a most rare and exotic flower so,” Oliver responds. James snaps, “One does not make a wife of the rare and exotic, Oliver. One samples it on the cotton fields of the Indies . . . Then [finds] a pure English rose to decorate one’s home.” Unfortunately, James’ mindset was one shared by most eighteenth-century upper-class gentlemen. The women were aware of this too. Later in the film, Elizabeth’s character comments to Dido:

 Aren’t you quietly relieved that you shan’t be at the caprice of some silly sir and his fortune? The rest of us haven’t a choice—not a chance of inheritance if we have brothers, and forbidden from any activity that allows us to support ourselves. We are but their property.15

This was the conundrum that faced Dido during her lifetime and an issue that third wave feminism grapples with today. In some respects, Elizabeth was at the mercy of men, just as African slaves were at the mercy of their masters. The fact that this is a male depiction of two women, one black and one white, adds another layer of complexity to this intriguing representation.

Another portrait worth mentioning in comparison was completed just two decades after Elizabeth and Dido’s. Marie-Guillelmine Benoist’s Portrait d’une nègresse (Fig. 2) was finished in 1800, shortly after the emancipation decree of 1794, which temporarily liberated slaves in French colonies and abolished slavery. Even though slavery was reinstated by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802, Benoist’s painting is nevertheless a slightly more heroic and celebratory representation of the black female form. Another aspect that sets this painting apart from the portrait of Dido and Elizabeth is the fact that it was created by a white woman. Still separated by race, but no longer distanced by sex, Benoist was able to represent yet another perspective. There are several generic interpretations of this piece, but one that has been contested by scholar James Smalls in his article “Slavery is a Woman” is that the subject is an allegory for the liberation of women.16 Just as the slaves had been freed from their masters, many women hoped to be freed from the restrictions of the patriarchy. This portrait has all of the makings of an allegorical figure: a female, bare-chested, draped in pure white with accents of blue

15 Jones and Sagay, Belle, DVD.
16 James Smalls, “Slavery is a Woman: Race, Gender, and Visuality in Marie Benoist’s Portrait d’une nègresse (1800),” The Art History Archive.
and red—all of which exude patriotism and nationalistic fervor. She is not fetishized in the same way that other male representations of black women are, but she is still idealized, albeit in an allegorical way. Her pose is commanding and her gaze is heroic. We may never know what Benoist truly meant to convey with her curious Portrait d’une négresse, but she was able to take one step closer to “truthful” representation simply by being a woman herself.

However, of all the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century artists, the most qualified to represent the black female form was Edmonia Lewis. She defied all sorts of racial odds as a half-African, half-Native American, free slave. Her 1875 sculpture of Hagar (Fig. 3) interacts with themes of female and racial agency. This piece is particularly interesting within the context of this discussion because of its Biblical narrative. Hagar is the Egyptian handmaiden (servant or slave) of Sarai, Abram’s wife. Because Sarai is unable to conceive, she offers Hagar to Abram to “obtain children” vicariously. Here we have Sarai, a woman, prescribing to patriarchal expectations of childbearing through Hagar, her slave. Lewis’s sculpture brilliantly represents these three tiers of social subservience: servant to master, woman to man, and man to God. Hagar stands forthrightly, but clasps her hands piously. Her features are idealized and symmetrical, reflecting the concept of inner beauty. Up to this point in history, Edmonia is perhaps the only person who was able to truthfully represent her race and her sisters.

One hundred and thirty years or so after Hagar was created, a bright female director of African descent was approached by a producer about making a film about this fascinating eighteenth-century double portrait. Amma Asante couldn’t resist the opportunity to reconstruct the story of Dido and engage with historical, artistic, and political issues in eighteenth-century England. She said in an interview about the film:

I hope what audiences take away from this film is that we people of color . . . have been many things in history, [that] we were more than servants. I hope that they take away from this what we have the ability to do and create and change when we have love and we show courage.\(^\text{17}\)

Asante, like Niki Saint-Phalle, assumed a redeeming role by seeking to reveal a true representation of this mixed-race aristocratic woman in her 2014 film Belle.

Since the film was, after all, the source of inspiration, the painting itself is its own character in the film. There are a few scenes where Amma Asante portrays Dido confronting the idea of black female representation. The first is when she first sets foot, at a very young age, into the home of her relatives, Lord and Lady Mansfield. The young Dido looks up to see a painting in which a small black body servant stares adoringly up at his white master. This struggle to see herself in an aristocratic context is something that concerns her deeply throughout the film. So much so that when she sees Zoffany, the would-be artist, assembling a canvas in preparation for the portrait that Lord Mansfield has commissioned for Dido and Elizabeth, she is visibly disturbed. She is very nervous about how she might be portrayed; the next scene includes her conversation with Lord Mansfield about her concerns. When she asks where or how she will be portrayed in relation to Elizabeth, Lord Mansfield replies kindly, “By Elizabeth’s side, just as you always are.”

In addition to these two particular instances, there are scenes throughout the film that show her, obviously uncomfortable and nervous, sitting for the artist. However, when she catches a glimpse of the final product through the window, she is overwhelmed as she sees that she is portrayed not only next to Elizabeth but also slightly higher.

Amma Asante seems to have been well aware of the challenges surrounding female and racial representation. By including these scenes, she confronts the issue and pays homage to the work that started it all. At the same time, she acknowledges that some of the features of the painting are problematic in their interpretation. So, in the name of accurate storytelling and considering the feelings of a modern audience, what does Asante decide to do? She changes it; she changes the painting. The overall spirit is preserved: the palette, the positions, and the structure are all the same. However, poignant changes have been made in order to grant Dido her freedom, dignity, and position as a mulatto woman. The turban is gone. Dido’s form is more stable, standing upright rather than leaning. And, most noticeably, she is not pointing to her skin. Amma Asante, as an artist in her own right, has rewritten history and finally depicted Dido Elizabeth Belle’s truthful representation.

18 Jones and Sagay, Belle, DVD.
Illustrations

Figure 1
Painting of Dido Elizabeth Belle and her Cousin
Lady Elizabeth Murray c. 1779, oil

Figure 2
Marie-Guillemine Benoist, Portrait d’une nègresse, 1800, oil, 65 x 81 cm
Figure 3
Edmonia Lewis, *Hagar*, 1875 marble, 52 5/8 x 15 1/4 x 17 1/8 in.
Bibliography


In Arcadia

Madeline Rupard
Looking Towards the Light

Abigail Remington
Oil on Board, Detail of “Looking Towards the Light”
Author Bio
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Abstract
In *The Social Basis of the Woman Question*, Bolshevik feminist Alexandra Kollontai responds to bourgeois feminists’ essentialist calls for female solidarity to resolve the “woman’s question”—the question of women’s status in society—by presenting the woman question as a struggle defined not by gender but by the intersection of class and gender. Kollontai appropriates and extends their essentialist rhetoric, engaging in the classed and gendered essentialism of the particular socioeconomic position of the female worker. I argue that, by placing the essentialized woman worker at the heart of the woman question, Kollontai suggests that the woman question is an economic question rather than a social one and that consequently socialism is the only real remedy. Thus, the bourgeois feminists’ limited class-stratified female equality within the capitalist system pales in comparison to the total emancipation from the economic power structures on which the subjugation of women is built that Kollontai offers through socialism.
“The Scourge of the Bourgeois Feminist”: Alexandra Kollontai’s Strategic Repudiation and Espousing of Female Essentialism in *The Social Basis of the Woman Question*

Hannah Pugh

In November of 1905, a group of Russian female railway workers went on strike as part of the larger Revolution protesting the Tsar. Seeking solidarity, these women workers declared in a statement to a local newspaper, “Shame on all those, particularly women, who . . . go against their comrades.”¹ Their rhetoric is typical of the dominant attitudes among Russian feminists around the turn of the century, as it reflects a belief in a united female fellowship in which women are obligated to support one another by virtue of their common sex. During this era, Russian feminists frequently adopted attitudes of female essentialism, which social scientist Rosalind Barnett characterizes as “a body of belief in women’s ‘otherness’ from men.”² Female essentialism, in other words, is the belief that the breadth of fundamental, inherent differences between women and men not only reach beyond the biological realm, but that those differences significantly shape and unify people. Based on those assumptions, essentialism makes what contemporary feminist philosopher Alison Stone characterizes as “universal claims about all women which actually only apply to some women” as well as “claims that certain experiences, situations or concerns are common to all women.”³ Essentialism builds on women’s otherness from men to assert overarching female commonality in nature and experience that is, in fact, not grounded in the diverse reality of women’s lives and beings. Nevertheless, during the early twentieth century, Russian feminists

tended to utilize an essentialist philosophy in order to advocate for a transcendent female solidarity that united all women in their efforts to remedy the common marginalized female position.

In response to this essentialism, socialist feminist Alexandra Kollontai insisted in her 1909 book, *The Social Basis of the Woman Question*, that class, not gender, was the root of women’s ills and that only by dismantling capitalist structures could women’s place in Russian society be improved. Kollontai strongly denounced the “bourgeois feminist” and her “classless” feminism. Her criticism was that the feminist’s adoption of female essentialism blinded her to the impact of class and that her consequent efforts to unify women in the fight for equality within the existing capitalist systems would not benefit proletarian women. The bourgeois feminist decried by Kollontai has been painted by historians as a member of “the country’s educated elite . . . from the urban-based intelligentsia.” This feminist differed from Kollontai in “ideology, political strategies, and personal rivalries,” however, not in “socioeconomic distinction.” Kollontai, named “the scourge of the bourgeois feminist” by one biographer, was an unlikely candidate to become the voice of Russian socialist feminism; as a child of low-ranking nobility, she grew up in a privileged bourgeois family and received an outstanding education. She appeared to have much more in common with the bourgeois feminist she denounced than the worker she championed.

From an autobiographical perspective, however, it seems clear that Kollontai was enticed by the struggle of proletarian women because of her personal quest for independence and autonomy from “the control of family, husband, and tradition.” Her own determined pursuit of emancipation drew her to working women, who sought those same


things for themselves without the advantages of the bourgeois class. In 1909, Kollontai published *The Social Basis of the Woman Question*, in which she portrays the bourgeois feminist's appeal for all-encompassing female solidarity as false and calls on proletarian women to unite instead with the socialist movement to achieve real freedom and power through class revolution. In thus defining the woman question as a class struggle rather than a gender struggle, Kollontai redefines the concept of “woman” to mean the inhabitant of the doubly-marginalized social position of the female worker. A woman is the woman worker, exploited as a member of the proletariat and as a person who is gendered female. By thus redefining woman, Kollontai employs essentialism that is unique because it takes both a classed and a gendered form.

Kollontai produced *The Social Basis of the Woman Question* in response to discussions of the eponymous “woman question”—the question of how to remedy women’s marginalized position in society—amongst different feminist groups. Before examining Kollontai’s definition of and response to the woman question in detail, it is worth considering the notion of the woman question itself. Alison Stone notes that “the word ‘woman’ is ambiguous between sex and gender”; it refers to biology, “a female human being,” as well as to cultural constructs, “a specific social role” and “specific set of psychological traits.” The word woman, in other words, can refer both to an individual with a female body and to the cultural beliefs about the roles, characteristics, and responsibilities associated with that female body. The very idea of a woman question, therefore, also inhabits a certain amount of ambiguity between sex and gender. If the question interrogates sex, then the answers might in fact be universal for all females, making the essentialism of the bourgeois feminist appropriate. If, however, the question interrogates issues concerning gender, then it is not one question but many, with a broad variation of answers specific to other intersecting factors. In reality, the woman question is a series of questions that are neither entirely about sex or gender, but contain components of both.

The converging elements of sex, gender, and class characterize the woman question with which Kollontai engages. These intersections are prominently evident in the case of the female workers Kollontai champions who find, as sociologist Maria Mies remarks, “the basic conflict between [their] class interests . . . and their interests as an

9 Boxer, “Rethinking the Socialist Construction,” 137.
10 Stone, *Introduction to Feminist Philosophy*, 141.
oppressed sex remained unresolved” despite both the feminist and socialist movements. This demonstrates that the woman question is ultimately far too complex to solve when reduced to a gender or class struggle. Therefore, as I consider Kollontai’s “economic and social” approach to the woman question (as opposed to the bourgeois feminists’ “legal and political” one), I will not examine the effectiveness of her response as policy or political philosophy; I will instead engage in rhetorical analysis for the purpose of understanding how her response represents the concept of woman and the woman question itself. Such analysis reveals that Kollontai engaged in a classed and gendered form of female essentialism, using “woman” to refer exclusively to an individual who inhabits the socioeconomic position of the female worker.

True to her socialist agenda, Kollontai suggests that the woman question is one of economic structures. Her basic thesis in The Social Basis of the Woman Question is that “specific economic factors were behind the subordination of women, natural qualities have been a secondary factor in this process.” Capitalist systems that, first and foremost, benefit the bourgeois man, not sex-based discrimination, are the primary source of the woman question. Even as she rebuffs the bourgeois feminist and the essentialist idea that the solution to the woman question is a rehabilitation of the social value of female qualities, Kollontai engages in a particular kind of essentialism.

This essentialism is evident in her analysis’s acknowledgment that women do not have any “natural qualities.” She does not suggest that these natural qualities differ according to class but instead promotes the idea that they are simply female and inherent to women. By simultaneously recognizing qualities common to all women and rejecting them as the primary source of female subjugation, Kollontai suggests that there is, perhaps, an essential woman at the heart of the woman question, although she does not exist as the bourgeois feminist defines her. The bourgeois feminist might argue that the essential woman for whom she

14 Ibid.
advocates could be any woman in all of Russian society, but by ignoring factors that intersect with gender, such as class, ethnicity, age, political affiliation, etc., the bourgeois feminist ultimately champions an essential woman who looks just like her—a woman whose primary concern is legal, political, and economic gender discrimination because she is relatively privileged in other arenas of her life.

Through rejecting the bourgeois feminists’ essential woman, Kollontai essentializes the woman worker, subordinated first by economic factors and second by her gender. The essential woman at the heart of Kollontai’s argument is concerned simultaneously by the way she is marginalized as a woman and as a member of the proletariat; her concerns cannot be limited exclusively to issues of gender. The essential woman worker is more invested in improving the reality of her day-to-day life than achieving the abstract lofty goals of the bourgeois feminist which, though nice, will not raise the quality of her living conditions. Kollontai thus creates an essentialized woman worker who is defined by her position as doubly-marginalized by her socioeconomic position and her gender. Thus, the woman question is one of emancipating this essentialized woman worker from the economic and gender structures that restrain her, both of which Kollontai advocates accomplishing through “economic independence” for the woman worker. The intersection of class and gender is therefore her basis for understanding the woman question, with woman defined according to the particular socioeconomic position of the essentialized female worker.

It seems hypocritical of Kollontai to simultaneously eviscerate the bourgeois feminist’s essentialism while using the same rhetorical strategy herself. Further consideration of the context of her work, however, makes it clear that the rhetorical move of essentialism gives her the necessary leverage to appeal to the female proletariat. Political scientist Jinee Lokaneeta points out that, despite Kollontai’s insistence that bourgeois feminists would inevitably fail “due to their own internal contradictions,” they “posed a major challenge to the socialists.” Working women were gathering around bourgeois feminist organizations and drawing important sections of the proletariat away from the socialist movement, whose viability was consequently threatened. Kollontai writes The Social Basis of the Woman Question, historian Marilyn Boxer observes,

15 Ibid., 178.
“expressly to undermine potential class collaboration” between women.\(^{17}\) Kollontai demonstrates a particular feeling of responsibility to convince working women to abandon bourgeois feminists and join the socialist movement; without the female proletariat the movement simply is not large enough to succeed.

Additionally, feelings of solidarity between bourgeois and proletarian women threaten the possibility of socialist revolution, which is ultimately to be against all members of the bourgeoisie, not just the men. Kollontai’s intense need to appeal to the woman worker explains her essentialism. As a socioeconomic group, the female proletariat “did not consider it proper for their sex to be involved in politics.”\(^{18}\) In essentializing them as members of a particular gender and class that suffer from particular systematic oppressions, Kollontai provides the woman worker a new identity with which to mask her individuality. She makes it possible for the female proletariat to engage in politics without the fear of impropriety because they engage not as a member of the female sex but as the woman worker. By providing an essentialist category to join and new identity to adopt, Kollontai recreates the solidarity that attracts women workers to the bourgeois feminist, but does so in a way that also bolsters the socialist movement. The woman worker, ultimately, is only willing to join a movement under the guise of an essentialist identity and consequent solidarity, and Kollontai adapts to entice her to socialism.

Essentializing the woman worker also gives Kollontai leverage because it makes her discussion of the woman question more palatable to the Socialist Party. In acknowledging the particular subordination of the woman worker, Kollontai makes what the Party considers the “heretical implication that women carried a special burden–sexism–in addition to the capitalist yoke they shared with men.”\(^{19}\) The idea of a unique female burden is controversial within the Party because it suggests that there are factors beyond class conflict that account for the suffering of the proletariat. By essentializing the woman worker, Kollontai suggests that the woman question is fundamentally part of the bourgeoisie’s exploitation of the proletariat rather than a separate question that transcends class lines. She does not blame the male proletariat, as she suggests the feminists who “see men as the main enemy” do, but instead suggests that the female proletariat “think of men as their comrades” in

\(^{17}\) Boxer, “Rethinking the Socialist Construction,” 137.
\(^{18}\) Clements, Bolshevik Feminist, 45.
\(^{19}\) Ibid., 55.
their struggle as women. Kollontai thus rejects pure female essentialism, adopting instead a unique classed form of female essentialism.

As a general rule, female essentialism, as social scientist Rosalind Barnett writes, emphasizes “the size of the differences between men and women,” and obscures the sizable differences “among women and among men.” Female essentialism divides into groups based on biological differences and examines men and women in comparison to each other without considering the individuals that make up the groups. Kollontai’s essentialism, however, is unique because it does not fall into such a trap. Her essentialism is distinctive because it is based on the intersecting factors of gender and class; consequently, it is more versatile than the essentialism of the bourgeois feminist. Her essentialism, in fact, compares the significant differences among women to the significant similarities between women and men to advocate for solidarity between the sexes. This solidarity, however, goes beyond the class struggle and includes the woman question; the male proletariat is enlisted to come to the aid of the essentialized female worker. Thus, not only does Kollontai’s essentialism draw the woman worker to socialism, it gains her allies within the movement specifically committed to her emancipation both as a member of the proletariat and as a woman.

Placing the essentialized woman worker at the heart of the woman question, Kollontai further interrogates the social implications of the essentialized woman worker’s doubly marginalized position as woman and proletariat. The woman worker, she argues, is uniquely oppressed in the form of “dependence” on others. This dependence is both economic and emotional. Given that the woman worker is doubly exploited on account of her gender and class, hers is a unique economic disempowerment by the capitalist system. Consequently, she is particularly dependent on those whose positions, on account of their gender or their class, are less marginalized.

Economic dependence, however, does not only have economic ramifications; the woman worker’s vulnerable situation of economic dependence on those in more privileged positions also changes the nature of her relationships. As an example, consider the case of a woman economically dependent on her husband. For such a woman, Simone de

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21 Barnett and Rivers, Same Difference, 13.
Beauvoir notes, “the successes and failures of her conjugal life are much more greatly important for her than for her husband.”

De Beauvoir suggests, in other words, that because the woman is dependent economically, she has more at stake in her marriage’s success and is more vulnerable to its failure. Her economic dependence obliges her to please her husband because, as the wielder of power, his dissatisfaction poses a threat to her. Her marriage, then, is no longer a genuine relationship but an unequal partnership. Woman’s economic dependence, therefore, not only further marginalizes her, but pollutes the quality of her relationships by making them, at their core, about money. People on whom she depends economically are reduced, in the words of sociologist Charles Zueblin, to their “economic functions.”

Because economic dependence requires that woman maintains lucrative relationships for survival, regardless of the quality of the relationships, the very concept of a relationship transforms into an economic transaction. This kind of dependence ultimately then results in the corruption of what Kollontai calls the woman worker’s “sphere of social relationships.” By using this term, Kollontai implies that the effects of the woman worker’s decaying relationships due to her economic dependence are not limited to her and her personal life, but include all those in her social sphere. Rhetorically, this has the advantage of making the woman question more critical. The woman question is not only a question for the woman worker, but for all who are in her social sphere. Kollontai invites those who might not identify with the essentialized woman worker personally to consider how her position nevertheless fundamentally affects their society. She consequently invokes a sense of social responsibility and examination. The subject of the woman question is transformed from the burdens carried by the woman worker because of capitalism to the very nature of Russian society based on capitalism.

After defining the woman question as the two-pronged economic and social subjection of the woman worker, Kollontai advocates addressing it as a class movement. When responding to the question, she suggests that women naturally group into divisions based on class as their experiences with the woman question differ according to class lines. The bourgeois feminist, she writes, considers it “a question of rights

and justice” while the woman worker sees it as “a question of a piece of bread.”\textsuperscript{27} Her message is clear: the problem is an economic one, and the disconnect in class experience is an unbridgeable cavern. Having never experienced the double marginalization of the woman worker and the resulting dependence on others, the bourgeois feminist simply cannot see the class issues at the heart of the woman question faced by the woman worker. And while the bourgeois feminist’s concern with political power might, in some way, be beneficial to the woman worker within the existing capitalist system, without dismantling that system it is an insufficient response to the entirety of the problem.

Given these different understandings of the problem, as women enter the political arena, Kollontai writes, they “spontaneously” arrange themselves around different political “banners” on account of “class consciousness.”\textsuperscript{28} Her choice of the word “spontaneous” reflects the idea that women separate themselves by the class with which they identify not as the result of institutional pressures, but because of an intuitive understanding that class joins them together. Class, then, is more than a social construct or a name given to an interpretation of socioeconomic structures—it is a natural force that fundamentally shapes people. Kollontai thus engages in class essentialism, promoting the idea that there is something intrinsic that unifies all members of the proletarian class across all other intersecting identities. This unification cannot be constructed but is instead inherent in their very being. Kollontai labels this intuitive understanding as “class instinct.”\textsuperscript{29} Again, “instinct” connotes something ingrained in the very being. Because she names class instinct in the context of her discussion of the woman question, it is clear that she attributes this class instinct especially to the woman worker. Thus, she further develops the essentialism of the woman worker, who no longer merely inhabits a particular socioeconomic position, but now has a unique awareness of her location in the social strata. Rhetorically, this final furthering in the identity of the essentialized woman worker allows Kollontai to finally invalidate any remaining vestige of the bourgeois feminist’s female essentialism as a call for female solidarity. Having granted and relied on a limited definition of essentialism, Kollontai’s argument remained vulnerable to the bourgeois feminist’s calls for

\textsuperscript{27} Farnsworth, \textit{Alexandra Kollontai}, 31.
\textsuperscript{28} Alexandra Kollontai, \textit{The Social Basis of the Woman Question}, Anachro-Communist Institute, 2014, Kindle version.
\textsuperscript{29} Alexandra Kollontai, “Political Rights,” \textit{Social Basis of the Woman Question}, Kindle.
solidarity on the grounds of any female essentialism. By promoting an equally broad class essentialism, Kollontai is able to counter with a call for proletarian solidarity. Furthermore, by combining expansive class essentialism with her limited female essentialism, Kollontai creates for the female proletariat an essentialist identity that privileges class and thus privileges the socialist movement. Ultimately, then, Kollontai’s efforts to bolster socialism at the expense of feminism are achieved through her construction of the essentialized woman worker.

Kollontai not only undermines the rhetorical basis of the bourgeois feminist’s essentialist appeal for solidarity, she rejects the possibility of female solidarity as a response to the woman question as faced by the woman worker. The “universal ‘women’s question’,” she writes, as defined by a “unity of objectives and aspirations . . . does not and cannot exist.”

In other words, female solidarity in the face of the woman question is impossible because there is no common female experience. Class, not gender, determines experience and the consequent objectives and aspirations. Temporary cooperation might occur when the objectives and aspirations of the woman worker and the bourgeois feminist coincide, but, ultimately, a “united women’s movement” to emancipate the woman worker is impossible under capitalist structures.

This impossibility, however, is not derived from the nature of woman, but exists because Russia is “a society based on class antagonisms.” Her argument against female solidarity is grounded in the concrete reality of the classed society in which they live. Kollontai’s critique of essentialist solidarity is not that the very idea itself is flawed, but that it ignores more important realities such as the economic factors that subordinate the woman worker and the social oppression she subsequently faces. Though Kollontai objects to the bourgeois feminist’s call for essentialist solidarity, despite class differences, she does not object to the concept of female solidarity built on female essentialism.

Kollontai’s rejection of the all-women’s movement should not be read as a rejection of the ideal to emancipate all women. In advocating for the emancipation of the woman worker, Kollontai moves for an all-encompassing female emancipation. The essentialized woman worker occupies the position most abused by capitalist economic structures. Her

32 Ibid., “Introduction.”
emancipation, therefore, signifies the total and complete emancipation of all of society from those structures. While the bourgeois feminist wishes to disregard class differences in order to falsely construct gender solidarity, Kollontai aims to use class differences to create the reality of commonality through a revolution that dismantles the structural causes of differences. The question of the woman worker and eliminating the economic and social barriers she faces is ultimately then the woman question, because it is the only way that real solidarity, unobscured by class differences, can come into being.

Kollontai’s emancipation, which aims to liberate women from the economic power structures on which their subjugation is built, is thus much more radical than the emancipation of the bourgeois feminist, which seeks limited class-stratified female equality within the capitalist system. Kollontai’s objective is made clear in her autobiography, where she writes that after considering the bourgeois feminist’s arguments, she concluded that “women’s liberation could take place only as a result of the victory of a new social order and a different economic system.”33 Notably, she does not qualify “women’s liberation” with any descriptor of class; Kollontai perceives the potential for emancipation for all women in socialist revolution. This is further evident in her later writing regarding her adoption of socialism from her bourgeois background, in which she writes that “women’s lot pushed me to socialism.”34 Kollontai suggests, therefore, that for her the draw of socialism was not economic but gendered; she saw in socialism the possibility of emancipation not just for the proletariat—and by extension proletarian women—but for all women regardless of class. Implicitly then, one can conclude that because female emancipation requires socialist revolution, it relies on male participation as well. Solidarity with the proletariat, not female solidarity, finally achieves female emancipation. The woman question, therefore, is not a question merely for women, because women alone cannot resolve it, least of all the woman worker who must urgently needs it addressed. Instead, the woman question is a measure of society—how it treats its most marginalized population, those who suffer the economic and social effects of capitalism most egregiously, and what it will do to improve that treatment.

33 Alexandra Kollontai, Social Basis of the Woman Question, Kindle.
34 Farnsworth, Alexandra Kollontai, 2.
Bibliography


Shoes

Tara Neuffer

She wore out the shoes until she could wear them no more. And then she hung them up in her room as a dream catcher.
Author Bio

Kristin Perkins graduated *magna cum laude* with a BA in theatre arts studies and a minor in women's studies from BYU in April 2017. She completed an honors thesis and has a forthcoming publication in a book contracted with Roman and Littlefield. Kristin has presented at nine different conferences, two of which have been on a national level. Kristin has also acted in numerous plays and films. She has had poetry, short fiction, and creative nonfiction published in seven different literary journals including *Degenerates: Voices for Peace, Peculiar,* and *Inscape.* Her plays, exploring female relationships and mental illness, have been produced at BYU and in the Provo, Utah, community and have won four Mayhew Awards for excellence in playwriting. She will be continuing her education as a graduate student in University of Texas at Austin's Performance as Public Practice program.
Anne had read once that there used to be a type of pigeon so populous that they had blocked the entire sky like a huge dark cloud, covered the sun, left the people below shivering and looking up. She had laughed as she thought about the bird poo, all that bird poo. Then she read that this breed of pigeon had been hunted to extinction, not just hunted but killed in innovative ways. She read that hunters would sew a pigeon’s eyes shut and tie their legs to a string attached to a stake in the ground. Other pigeons would see the blind bird struggling frantically, and they would come down, curious, and get captured and then killed. For months after she had read about the carrier pigeons, whenever she thought about them she would cry.

◆

This is who Anne was:
Every morning, she would use a spoon to slice a banana into her cereal. When she ran out of milk or bananas, she would walk to the corner store on her block in her pajamas and walk back up to her apartment.

The apartments in her building were all overpriced, but she had lived there a long time. She would see her neighbors in the hall. They wore nice clothes—business people, or lawyers, one of them was a doctor. Anne had seen her in scrubs. Most of the other residents used the elevator, but she would trudge up the stairs feeling big and ungainly like a rough, wooden doll. She had seen an actor in a comedy movie once who was playing an unnamed cook in a short scene. The actor’s weight was meant to be the joke as the character shoved cake into her mouth. Anne thought about that cook often. She knew that she wasn’t as big as the cook, that someone could call her “big-boned” and mean it unironically. Still, she felt lumbering.

She would eat her cereal and water her plant. Then she would squeeze herself into her uniform, red velveteen with gold piping. She wore very comfortable black shoes with padded soles and heel inserts. Her back always hurt from standing. She had tried on many different shoes over the years. She had settled on this particular shoe the same day she accepted that no matter what shoe she got, her back was still going to hurt. They had worked pretty well; her back still hurt. She would look in the mirror; her skin sagged more every year and was cobwebbed with
age. Her eyes bulged. Her eyelids looked globular. Her lips looked small and pressed. After menopause, her arms and legs had grown almost hairless, but her upper lip needed to be plucked.

Anne worked as an elevator operator. Every morning, Tuesday through Saturday, she shuffled across the two blocks to the U-Bahn. Every morning, she shuffled through the doors, the doorman nodding at her. Every morning, she shuffled into the elevator of a very fancy apartment building. Every morning, early enough that she was there for all the residents as they came down the elevator to go to work. The building where she lived had doctors and lawyers. This building had billionaires: People who had been born to rich families. People who owned cruise lines, hotel chains, restaurant franchises; people who had people they hired to take care of their money and this was a full-time job. Like with many of the very wealthy, they valued privacy, and Anne was told very little about any of them. She didn’t have a desire to pry. It was enough that they were very wealthy, the apartment building was very nice, and she got paid twenty euros an hour mostly to stand in a small metal room and press glowing buttons.

She knew that at 6:35 a.m. every weekday her little world would start shuddering up to the sixth floor. Mr. Carpagio would enter. He would smile crisply at her and lean against the southeast corner of the elevator, and she would take him down without question to the parking garage under the building. She knew that at some time between 5:20 p.m. and 5:45 p.m., Mr. Carpagio would come back from work, her little world would hurtle down, and without being told to, she would command it back up to the sixth floor. She memorized most of the tenant’s schedules like this.

She knew the residents liked her for this silent service. They didn’t particularly want to talk to her, but she didn’t find them rude. Many of them smiled at her and occasionally commented on the weather or an uncontroversial current event, and she would respond politely but not warmly. Around Christmas, a couple of the families gave her a generous tip, but mostly they let her be a cog in the well-oiled machinery of their lives.

Anne was aware that she performed the function of a house cat. She was walking decor. She moved and shed less, but like the cat, she was meant to add elegance—a well-placed design detail. They would have perhaps preferred someone short, petite, and attractive, with a tight braid—but, other than her size, Anne was excellent at being discreet, and her advanced age added legitimacy to the ritual. This was gentlemanly wealth, not the red sports car of the nouveau-riche.
Rarely, an apartment would change hands. Most recently an older stoic gentleman had replaced the Clarkes on the top floor in apartment twelve. Anne was unsure of his line of work. He never smiled at her. He never seemed to smile. When he entered her little world, he stood in the exact center of the elevator with his legs spread wide as if to brace himself against a roiling ocean. Anne's elevator did shake a bit—it was old—but Anne thought it was a smooth enough ride and resented the new tenant's seaman-stance.

She learned through the maître d' that his name was Dr. Roberts. The maître d', who adored all rich people, was normally prodigiously good at collecting scraps of information about the tenants that she would carefully weave together and fill in to make grand narratives of deceit, victory, and tearful redemption. She would then go searching for an audience, occasionally standing in the elevator with Anne, or by the front door with the doorman. “Did you know,” she would whisper conspiratorially as she relieved Anne for Anne's lunch break, “that Mrs. Muller's father was in the air force and that his legs were blown off in Russia?” The maître d' would shake her head sadly, and say, “No wonder poor Mrs. Muller goes running every morning.”

The maître d's relative silence regarding Dr. Roberts was surprising. Anne wondered if maybe he scared her and if the maître d' had finally found a rich person that wasn't naturally endowed with nobility and goodness. Anne wasn't scared of Dr. Roberts. She was six inches taller than him, bigger than him, and much gentler than him. She didn't think he was scary, and she didn't think Mrs. Muller ran every morning because her father's legs were blown off in Russia. She was the rare kind of person who couldn't be bothered to reduce other people to dime-store narratives.

She worked, shuttling people up and down in her little metal world. In the evenings, Emile, an energetic man bouncing from a day of sleep, would relieve her. She would trudge back to the U-Bahn, trudge onto the train car, trudge off the train car, trudge to her building, trudge up the stairs, trudge into her apartment. She took off her uniform first, always. Then she would prepare dinner—pasta, or baked potatoes, or salad. Occasionally on Sundays or Mondays, which she got off, she would try a new recipe. She had a limited number of recipes, carefully copied down onto index cards that she kept together with a rubber band.

She would sometimes watch the TV, but news made her cry and so did deodorant commercials. More often, she would read something she had gotten from the library. She read Dumas and Goethe, but she would sometimes also check out old issues of women's magazines, which she
read cover to cover with the same studied interest with which she moved through life. Sometimes she would pull down her copy of the complete works of William Shakespeare, and she would try memorizing a sonnet or a soliloquy. The next day at work she would continue to work on the memorization in her head to pass the time. She liked Sonnet 130 the best: about a mistress whose eyes are not like the sun, whose lips are pale, whose hair is like wires, who is ordinary in every way, but who the speaker loves regardless. Sometimes the sonnet made her laugh and sometimes it made her cry. It invariably reminded her of Joe but in a hazy, unspecific way; all that had ended several years ago, and besides, he had liked football and grilled cheese, not Shakespeare.

She went to bed at a reasonable time every night, but sometimes she would lie awake and listen to the sirens and worry about the people who had just had a heart attack, or been mugged and knifed, or accidently set their apartment on fire—and she would worry about the firemen, and the nurses, and the doctors too. On nights like that, she had trouble falling asleep for a long time. She would lie in bed, stare up at the ceiling, and practice the placid face of an elevator operator.

◆

It wasn’t out of the ordinary for tenants to get visitors. Normally, they looked eerily like the people they were going to go visit—clean, attractive, and expensively dressed. What struck Anne about this particular person was how unlike other visitors she was. She was young and looked Latina. She wore ripped black skinny jeans and an oversized hoodie that partially covered up her close-cropped blonde hair. Dark roots. Bright red lipstick. She radiated a rhythmic energy and moved in a clipped way, like she was being followed by a strobe light.

The other strange thing about the entrance of the young woman was that she called the elevator down to the parking garage. They had recently renovated the space to have a sliding door, out of fear that any number of undesirables could hang out in the lighted garage. Ruffians tended to not stray this far north into the neighborhood, but there had been an armed robbery at a building a few blocks away that had people on edge. It was still possible for visitors to park below the building if they were given a code but many had preferred to park outside, across the street. While Anne wondered vaguely at the woman entering from below, it wasn’t really any cause for concern.

Besides, Anne had gotten other strange visitors before; Mrs. Brown’s drug addicted brother, or Mr. Caldwell’s niece, who went to college to become an artist and had dropped out. The niece always wore flowing
dresses and sandals that Anne liked. These people, Anne had observed, had all felt uncomfortable in their surroundings; they were the poor entering the land of the very rich. This young woman was different, she had the air of a prospective buyer, not an intruder. “George Robert’s apartment please.”

Anne briefly considered if she should have the guest sign in at the front desk, a procedure the doorman performed with religious zeal. It was a technical rule, often ignored, and one Anne had always found unnecessarily laborious. Anne decided against it. She hit the button to bring her box up to the seventh floor. The woman slid her backpack fussily onto one shoulder, unzipping a pocket, glancing into it, and zipping it back up. It was about mid-afternoon and Anne knew that Dr. Roberts was out of his apartment. The woman stepped out of the elevator. The doors slid shut. Anne knew the elevator would stall here approximately thirty seconds before heading automatically back to the lobby. She waited for the woman to knock on the apartment door, realize no one was home, and open the elevator doors again. Instead, after thirty seconds the elevator rattled back down its chute to the lobby floor. Anne wondered if the woman was a relative who had been given a key, or perhaps she was going to wait on the couch in the hall for Dr. Roberts to come back home.

Anne was in the middle of reciting a speech from Henry VIII when the elevator began moving upwards, back to the top floor. It had been two hours since Anne had dropped the woman at the top, a slow two hours for Anne, who had only moved her elevator once. (Anne had taken Mrs. Reed, a retired woman with bad knee, and her little dog up to their apartment on the second story after they had overexerted themselves on a walk.) At the top floor, the woman in the black skinny jeans hopped back into the elevator, seeming as jittery as before.

“Back down.” Anne pressed the button to the lobby floor and watched as the young woman fiddled on her cell phone. She didn’t look at Anne and kept tapping feverishly. When the doors opened, the woman glanced out at the marble floor and chandelier, and then shook her head anxiously. “To the garage,” she instructed, and Anne complied.

The next day, the most exciting thing that happened was little Stacy Brown getting home earlier than expected from band practice. As Anne heard her telling her mom, yesterday a tuba player had thrown up on his instrument, and today half the brass section was home with the stomach flu.

The day after the young woman came back around the same time and again through the garage. She wore a short black skirt, and the tights she wore had holes. Her hoodie was pushed back away from her face, and
she had the same bulky backpack. Anne asked, “Seventh floor?” and the woman laughed as if delighted that Anne had remembered her. The old elevator took its time going up and Anne, staring at the elevator buttons she stood by, was surprised when the woman spoke. The woman turned to Anne, her long earrings smacking about her jawline. “Do you like your job?”

Anne hadn’t thought about this question in years. “It’s a fine job.”

“Do you like these people?” The woman gestured vaguely around the elevator at the offending ghosts of the tenants.

“They’re human beings,” Anne said without thinking, realizing too late how unconventional her response was. She added in a shrug and tacked on, “They’re nice enough.”

The elevator stopped and the woman got out, looking back at Anne, confused. Anne felt her body thick around her bones. Under the scrutiny, she felt like what she was sure she was: an awkward giantess in a very small box. She punched the button for the lobby floor even though the elevator would return there automatically. She felt the woman’s eyes on her up until the doors slid shut.

Anne’s back ached, and she thought wistfully of the icepack in her freezer at home. She distracted herself from the pain by thinking of whole winters of discontent pressing against the small of her back. Two hours later, the doors slid open at the top floor, and the woman got back in. She seemed to have prepared something to say. Anne sent the elevator downward. The woman bounced on the balls of her feet as she jangled her words out. “You don’t have to put up with this, you know. You are not worse than all these people just because they’re rich.”

She paused, so Anne nodded calmly, silently. The woman continued, “You know all these people got their money through manipulating a system, right? Through cheating and lying and deceiving?” Anne nodded again—the woman seemed exasperated at this—and said, “You’re allowed to talk, you know. I’m not like them.”

Anne shrugged and stared at the buttons as if the elevator wouldn’t move unless she glared fixedly at the glowing buttons. “I think it’s probably more complicated than that.” Anne’s voice was deep and sure but soft too.

The elevator landed with a small shiver at the parking garage. The woman took a step toward Anne as if to drive her point across, she raised her eyebrows in total sincerity, and said, “Some people are just corrupt.” The door opened, and she left hurriedly.

The woman returned the following day. She entered the elevator and immediately began, “Have you ever read Marx?” Anne had and nodded,
but the woman apparently didn’t see because she launched into an explanation of Marx for the duration of the trip up to the top floor, and then stood in the doorway of the elevator while Anne kept the doors open as she finished her lecture. On the way down, the woman elaborated on her points, trying to explain exactly how Marxism would apply to an elevator attendant without ever invoking the word you. When the doors closed behind the woman, Anne couldn’t help but laugh and yet, the young woman had seemed so intent and so sincere that Anne found she didn’t mind. She had even enjoyed the enthusiasm of the young woman. Anne’s elevator felt smaller that day than it had in a long time. The world felt a little more alive.

Anne came back to work on Tuesday. The young woman was there again, this time accompanied by a man. He was older than her, in his thirties, and wore his hair in a short mohawk. He looked as if he had a permanent scowl, but the woman smiled at Anne when she came in, bursting with even more manic energy than typical. She asked Anne how her day was going, and Anne noticed the man shoot her a significant look. The girl, undeterred, babbled about a weekend punk concert and Anne responded politely. She took them to the top floor without asking.

The two of them stepped out of the elevator together. The man looked around uncomfortably, but the woman headed confidently to the couch in the hall. She slid her backpack off, and the elevator doors closed.

It didn’t take as long as normal before Anne felt the elevator quiver, close its doors, and run upwards to collect the woman and the man. On the way down, the young woman turned to Anne, squaring her body to Anne’s tilted one. “What’s your name?” The woman asked.

“Anne.”

“I’m Flora.” Anne liked how the woman spoke her own name with an accent even though she sounded like a native German speaker. Flora. Anne spoke the word in her head, mentally rolling the “r,” an island in the middle of a bland sentence. She could hear the man shushing Flora quietly.

“Thank you for operating our elevator.”

Anne nodded, in an unaffected voice she muttered, “It’s not a necessity.” The man spoke for the first time with a snort. “Stupid bougie jerks.”

“It’s not necessary,” the woman agreed, “but it’s nice of you.”

Anne looked at Flora. Maybe it was because it seemed like it was what Flora wanted, maybe it was because the difference this woman had inserted into her life made her feel like her blood was made of sunlight, but whatever the reason, Anne broke a rule she had established and smiled. Really smiled, warm and full like new bread. Flora smiled back
at her with a childlike delight. Then, the man tugged at her arm. The elevator doors slid open. The two of them retreated into the depths of the parking garage, and Anne watched until the metal doors glided together.

Anne knew that this was a goodbye, felt the going-away coated onto the final look backwards. The young woman and the old looking as the door slid shut. The next day, she didn’t wait expectantly in her elevator for the woman. She stood there memorizing. Farewell, thou art too dear for my possessing.

The days passed. She ran out of bananas and paid the older man at the corner shop for them without comment. She went to the library and checked out two racing magazines, one Superman comic book, and a novel by Ernst Bloch. She cried at a news story about another refugee crisis and determined to do better at recycling. She considered replacing the pet fish she had flushed down the toilet a month ago and decided it was still too soon. She watered her plants. Of course, she stood in her elevator.

About a month later, that is where Anne was. The door had opened to let Stacy Brown out on her way to school, and Anne saw two dark suited men approach. The suits were a common uniform for this building, but as they stepped in Anne noticed ear pieces. They consulted a sheet of paper before asking her to take them to the top floor. She did and watched out of the corner of her eye, fascinated by the way their arms refused to move when they shifted weight. She let them out, and she saw them heading toward Dr. Robert’s apartment. Around two, when Anne had finished bringing Mr. Simone up to his apartment, she felt the elevator lift instead of going back down to the lobby floor. At the top floor, the suited men were waiting for the elevator but, when the doors opened, they didn’t enter. Instead the one with the blonde hair—hair so blonde and short he looked bald—spoke, “Mrs. Weber?”

“Ms.”

“What?”

“Ms. Weber.” She said a little louder. The darker one checked his notebook and nodded to the other. “Ms. Weber, would you mind coming with us?” Anne glanced around her metal box. “I’m on duty right now.”

“We just have a couple of questions. It won’t take long.”

Anne placed a hand protectively on the wall of her elevator. “I would need special permission to go off duty now.” The blonde one looked to the other, there was a moment of unspoken communication. Anne hit a button to keep the elevator doors open. The blonde opened his wallet showing a badge that was affixed to the inside flap. Anne quickly ran through every movie she could think of that featured the same iconic
movement. She thought she heard the blonde man's voice get a little deeper as he said, “This is an investigation. It will only be a couple of questions.”

The other spoke up for the first time, his voice was colder and tinged with irony. “Then you can get back to your job.”

Anne nodded slowly, she patted the wall of her elevator once and then stepped out. It felt cooler in the hallway. “This way, please.” One of them gestured her toward Dr. Robert's apartment. She was aware as she walked between them that she was taller than both of them.

She had never actually been inside the apartments. Whenever the maître d' asked her to deliver a package, she made a point of peeking inside, but this was the first time she had stepped foot in one.

The door opened into a small hall with a built-in table in the wall where a couple of letters lay. The hall almost immediately opened onto a huge living room, kitchen, and dining room—which felt airy, even with the curtains drawn shut. There were lots of clean white lines and big windows. Dr. Roberts hadn't decorated much—he had clinical looking black leather couches and a large TV. A couple of tasteful abstract paintings provided most of the color in the room, but even they felt muted in the tense gray air. The blonde agent told Anne to sit, and she slid onto the loveseat. The back of the couch was at an uncomfortable angle. As she shifted, the leather protested with a whine, and she stopped. She crossed her legs and immediately uncrossed her legs. She slid her left hand under her left thigh. The blonde one stared at her intently, while the darker one rummaged for a pen in his briefcase.

“What days—” The blonde one started to speak, but the other interrupted him, almost bored. “The recorder.”

“We would like to inform you that this conversation is being recorded with the possibility of it being used in court hearings.”

There was a pause. The blonde one was looking at her, she cleared her throat. “That's . . . fine.”

“What days do you work here?”

“Tuesday through Saturday.”

“All day?”

“All day, but not all night.”

“We are going to show you a picture. You will tell us if you recognize this person.”

The darker one pulled out a photo. It was clearly a mugshot but on absurdly glossy paper. She recognized the man at once. It was the man with the mohawk who had accompanied Flora. She paused for a moment, considering the photo and then she nodded.
“A verbal response, please.”
“Yes.”
“You hesitated. Is there a reason you hesitated?”
“No.”
“Did you ever see this man with someone?”
“Why?”
“We are conducting an investigation.”
“What happened?”

The darker one stepped in. He didn’t bother to look up from his notebook as he said, “This man is leading an anarchist-communist group. He seems to have stolen sensitive documents from the government. We don’t think he was operating alone.”

“Someone with a computer, anyone like that?” The blonde one looked almost eager, losing his cool demeanor as his eyes grew big watching her.

Anne looked at the two men. They were both leaning forward now, the photo still perched on a knee. All three of them, the two agents and the man with the mohawk, stared at her. “This is a very politically tense situation, so any help you can give us will serve your country.” The darker one spread his fingers out on his knee like a fan, tapped his knee with his open palm.

Anne approached politics in her own careful way. She was a moderate and observed more than she offered opinions. She had forgotten to vote in the last major election despite being informed on all the issues. In that moment though, she wasn’t thinking about politics, she was thinking about pigeons.

She imagined one tied-up and blinded, struggling against its ropes while other birds fluttered close to try and help. She thought about them getting tracked, and hunted, and killed. Then, she thought of Flora, who had so eagerly and incompetently tried to recruit her. She thought of the flickering movements and the lecture on Marx. She pictured Dr. Roberts standing still in the exact center of the elevator, and the way he allowed other people to flow around him. She thought about cages. She thought about locks. She thought about pigeons. She looked at the two men sitting across from her, one stone-faced, the other eager, both expectant.

“I don’t think so.”
“You didn’t see anyone?”
“I don’t pay that much attention to the people who come into the elevator.”
“You remembered this man.” The brunette pointed to the mugshot on his partner’s knee.
“Yes, but I don’t remember everyone who rides the elevator.”
“Well, do you remember someone that week, maybe not with this man, but someone unusual?”

“He would have probably had a bulky computer.” The first agent said.

“Or she,” the other one pitched in.

“He or she would have probably had a bulky computer, maybe in a backpack.”

Anne shrugged. Her fingernails curled underneath her left thigh, and she felt like she could feel her heart pulsing near her jaw. “Doesn’t ring a bell,” she said. The darker one, set down his pen and notebook and leaned forward resting his elbows on his knees. He stared at her intently. “Are you sure?” He asked. Anne felt big again, bulky; and she somehow also felt like too much, too much, too much in that moment to do anything other than blink once, very slowly and say, “Can I go back to my elevator now?” The blonde snorted derisively, but the brunette leaned back and looked at his notebook, “fine.”

The blonde man walked her back to the front door of the apartment, shutting it with a snap behind her. She walked the rest of the way back to the elevator. It had gone down to the lobby. As she waited for it, she practiced the placid face of an elevator operator. She stepped into her elevator and felt much too big for her little metal box. She liked the feeling. She smiled.
Magyar Woman

Madeline Rupard
gold star

Sarah Linford

A commentary on the underappreciated and unrecognized social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women throughout history—from Harriet Chalmers Adams to President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.
Author Bio
Allison Foster is an undergraduate student at Brigham Young University majoring in art history and curatorial studies, and double-minoring in history and women's studies. Allison is currently employed as a research assistant for BYU's Hyrum Smith Papers project. She serves in the leadership of the BYU Art History Association. She plans to be a mother, university professor, and lifelong supporter of equal rights.

Abstract
This paper provides a brief background on the accolades of Dame Zaha Hadid, architect, and expresses the significance of her international acclaim in light of being a woman architect. Hadid’s experiences developing into a successful, professional architect, despite existing gender and cultural minority biases working against her, are compared to the city of Guangzhou’s economic success, despite a history of foreign occupation. Hadid’s personal experiences of working and living in areas with strong multicultural influences relate to Guangzhou’s multicultural population, as it exists as a hub for immigration and trade into mainland China. Hadid’s personal style, as inspired by her visit to her homeland’s ancient beginnings in Sumer, Iraq, focuses on connecting a building to its geographical location and its people and culture. Because of the aforementioned connections to the city, Hadid was uniquely qualified to design the Guangzhou Opera House. Because of her exemplary status, the architectural society lacks sound judgment when undermining or discouraging minority architects purely because of their minority status.
Dame Zaha Hadid, Architect: 
Her history, style, and how they uniquely qualified her to design the Guangzhou Opera House

Dame Zaha Hadid (1950–2016) was awarded the title Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire for services to architecture by Queen Elizabeth II of England on June 18, 2012. She is the first female recipient of the Pritzker Prize (sometimes referred to as the Nobel of Architecture) and winner of many other international awards and competitions. Hadid is best known for sweeping building designs that seem to defy gravity, bringing to light a new understanding of the conventional use of geometry in architecture. Only three years after completing graduate school at the Architectural Association School of Architecture, Hadid began her own firm. Hadid’s work was often admired but always rejected as being too avant-garde. The continued rejection earned her the title of a “paper architect” among her peers, which is to say she was a designer who could not get her concepts off the paper and into actual construction. Now known as the “Queen of Curve,” Hadid and her buildings have achieved international acclaim. Some of her best known works include the MAXXI National Museum of the Twenty-first Century Arts in Rome, Italy; the 2012 Olympic Games Aquatics Center in London, England; and the Guangzhou Opera House in Guangzhou, China. Hadid tragically passed away of a heart attack on March 31, 2016, in Miami, Florida, before her designs for buildings in her native Iraq were fully constructed. Even though she was never able to see completed structures from her designs for buildings in her homeland, Hadid had the opportunity to draw upon her life and cultural experiences to create architectural wonders in foreign lands. Her ability to work abroad so successfully is significant because architecture, when intended to represent a city and its culture, requires an architect who is familiar with the location or, just as well, can personally relate to the history of it. In the case of Hadid and the Guangzhou Opera House, the latter qualification applied.

Hadid’s life experiences reflect the history of Guangzhou, China, to a point where she became singularly prepared to design a building as culturally significant as the opera house. Today, the Guangzhou Opera
House stands as not only a reflection of the city and culture of Guangzhou but also of Hadid’s own unique viewpoint. It was Hadid’s multi-cultural perspective, experiences navigating and overcoming the hostile male-oriented world of architecture, and personal design style that uniquely qualified her to design the Guangzhou Opera House.

Important to understanding the professional journey of Hadid and her preparation for designing the Guagzhou Opera House is a brief background on the development of modern female architects in England, where Hadid’s firm is based. In the West, women’s involvement in any stereotypically male professional field has been slow; where architecture deviates from the norm is the extreme lateness of professional recognition of women in the field. The modern profession of architect began in Elizabethan England in 1563 when John Shute wrote *The First and Chief Groundes of Architecture* and gave himself the title: architect.¹ It took an astonishing 335 years since the birth of the modern architect for women to become involved professionally in England. Ethel Charles was the first female accepted to the Royal Institute of British Architects, sixty years after its founding in 1898. The Architectural Association School of Architecture, also located in England and Hadid’s alma mater, was founded a few years after the Royal Institute and did not allow women in their ranks until the turn of the century in 1900.²

Throughout the twentieth century, women attempting to practice the art and profession of architecture faced many challenges. Paramount among them were the contemporary policies in place which relegated women to work strictly in the arena of domestic architecture,³ which involved more interior design and furniture arrangement than they did building creation and large-scale problem-solving. As the long tradition of architecture has been to harken to the past so too, it seems, the profession was reluctant to allow their women to truly move beyond the 1800s cult of domesticity. Even when women were allowed to work in the field, many contemporary architects backed by powerful firms believed that domestic architecture was no more than glorified decorating and should not qualify as true practice of architecture at all. As stated by the popular twentieth-century architect Bruce Goff, “Women are as imaginative

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as men; they just have the wrong kind of imagination for architecture.”\(^4\) Thus, Goff suggests, what work they did produce must not qualify as true architecture. As the number of female students and graduates grew, so did the number of women in architecture firms being dissolved into back corners and forgotten projects. It seemed the only way for women to design public spaces was to be joined in a husband-wife duo and accept that the man would receive recognition and awards, while the woman appeared to simply be his ornament.\(^5\)

In 1955’s *Should You Be an Architect?*, Pietro Belluschi counseled: “I cannot in whole conscience recommend architecture as a profession for girls. It takes an exceptional girl to make a go of it. If she insisted on becoming an architect, I would try to dissuade her. If then she was still determined to . . . she would be that exceptional one.”\(^6\) The “exceptional one” mentioned by Belluschi is the woman who would break free of her designated restrictive spaces and begin her own practice without a male counterpart. A little under two decades after Belluschi gave his opinion on the matter, Zaha Hadid began her studies at the Architectural Association, and there developed skills and connections to become not only the “exceptional one” and an inspiration to women but also an example to racial minority architects all over the world.

Dealing with issues of sexism common to successful women in various professional fields, Hadid has been heralded as “frightening,”\(^7\) “a diva,”\(^8\) and has had her personal clothing, makeup, and hair style decisions discussed more than her work.\(^9\) In spite of her many international awards and success in competitions, she was listed in reports of museum shows merely as “Zaha Hadid (the only woman)”\(^10\) and so suggesting her sex was the only topic of interest, whereas male architects were described

\(^4\) Ibid.
\(^5\) Ibid., 292.
\(^6\) Ibid.
\(^9\) Ibid.
in terms of their sources of inspiration. In light of these struggles, she says of her undeniable success, “I’ve broken beyond the barrier, but it’s been a very long struggle. It’s made me tougher, more precise—and maybe this is reflected in my architecture. I still experience resistance but I think this keeps you on the go. As a woman in architecture, you need confidence.”

Hadid’s success in spite of oppression is relatable to Guangzhou’s history. Just as Hadid’s uphill battle was fought to develop herself as an architect while facing sexist biases within the profession, Guangzhou people have fought to maintain their identity through many periods of foreign occupation.

Another important facet of Hadid’s history preparing her for work on the Guangzhou Opera House is her multicultural awareness, which was mainly developed through her educational opportunities. Born in 1950 to wealthy parents in Baghdad, Iraq, Zaha Hadid grew up as the youngest child of an artistic mother and a progressive, businessman father involved in westernizing politics. Growing up, she attended religiously diverse primary schools run by French-speaking Catholic nuns in Baghdad and later in Switzerland, as well as an English boarding school in London. After studying mathematics at the American University in Beirut, Lebanon, Hadid moved permanently to London, England, at the age of twenty-two. She was accepted at the Architecture Association and began her studies to become an architect, and later attained British citizenship. These experiences provided multicultural opportunities to interact with different cities and individuals, thereby giving Hadid’s architecture a greater breadth of the world to draw upon for inspiration. This preparation was necessary for understanding how to represent Guangzhou accurately as it is a major center for immigration into China.

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and therefore a hub of interaction between people of many cultures. This theme of interaction between different peoples is expertly displayed in the building design of the Guangzhou Opera House, which could not have been achieved without Hadid’s unique life experiences.

Also significant to Hadid’s work on the opera house is the story of Hadid’s initial draw to architecture and the development of her personal inspiration and style. She recalls feeling her first inclination to building design at the young age of six when she saw the building model for and some drawings of her aunt’s new home. The architect on the project was a friend of her father’s and would bring the designs when visiting the Hadid home. Seeing the plans and the model in the living room, Hadid said something was “triggered” in her, initiating a desire to learn more about architecture.¹⁸ This desire lead to a childhood of reading books and examining inspiring pictures of the remains of the ancient Mesopotamian city of Sumer, taken by the explorer Wilfred Thesiger (a personal friend of her father). Hadid was able to explore this site as a teenager when her family took a trip to the area. While exploring these sites of early architecture, Hadid’s appetite for architectural design was truly whetted. The ancient cities provided long lasting inspiration for her which allowed her to relate the sense of tradition felt in this birthplace of civilization to a similarly important site in ancient Chinese civilization: Guangzhou, China.

In Guangzhou, Hadid created the Opera House in her signature style of melding her structures with the landscapes and people to create a flow of interaction between the architecture and its physical and metaphysical surroundings.¹⁹ Hadid describes the experience of creating this flow as finding the “geometry of the context” so that all of the lines and shifts of the building both expose and are continuations of the locations natural and manmade landscape.²⁰ Because of her unique ability to capture a location and expose it in architecture, she has even been called a “great cinematographer” by the esteemed architecture critic Aaron Betsky:

She sees like a camera. She perceives the city in slow motion, in pans, swoops and close-ups, in jump-cuts and narrative rhythms. As she draws the world around her, she draws out its unconscious spaces . . . she subjects her environment to the surgical explosion of architecture

¹⁹ Glancey, “I Don’t Do Nice,” The Guardian.
as a form of representation. She builds the explosion of a tenth of a second.\textsuperscript{21}

It is this cubist-like style of presenting different angles of a distinct image, gleaned from her training in western art, paired with her personal history, that made Hadid so uniquely qualified to design the Guangzhou Opera House.

Opera houses have always been created for a greater purpose than the functionality of putting on a good show. They serve to ennoble a city and show off a propagated, lofty, high class image. Historically this has been done by copying imagery of European, particularly Parisian, opera houses.\textsuperscript{22} Hadid both accepts and rejects this purpose. In the avant-garde design of the Guangzhou Opera House we see that she did more than create a space with acoustics and seating arrangements that allow for a quality performance. She designed a space that met those requirements in a visually pleasing way, thus fulfilling a standard for opera house construction. Instead of visually harkening back to a culture that is not local to the users and owners of the architectural space (i.e., Parisian aesthetics), Hadid used her unique experiences and style to design this opera house to specifically represent its contextual geometry and geography, which is the movement and culture of Guangzhou.

Made of steel beams and glass, covered in areas by locally quarried granite, the structure of the opera house reflects both modern industry as well as ancient connections to the land in a manner only one of Zaha Hadid’s unique background could create. Reminiscent of a symphony, no part in the design is arbitrary. Hadid takes the concept of the opera house reflecting the location’s culture to such a point that it can be argued as microcosm of the city of Guangzhou. The glass walls and ceilings are beautiful and create a synthesis between the interior and exterior design.\textsuperscript{23} This reflects the city’s separation from and unity with the rest of China. Guangzhou natives, though part of the mainland, generally speak Cantonese rather than the typically spoken Mandarin. Hadid related to this incorporated-yet-other scenario as

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{23} Hadid and Jodidio, \textit{Hadid Complete Works}, 285.
\end{thebibliography}
a woman architect surrounded by men. The complex and interactive design of the opera house was accomplished using highly advanced computer-aided design technology, which shows an up-to-date or even futuristic mentality that China prides itself in, and that Hadid incorporated into her designs. The layout of the opera house’s surrounding grounds provide multiple entrances and exits on different levels which creates a non-planimetric orientation, meaning there is no definitive front, back, or main floor to the building. This design represents the city’s multiple ports of entry. Via air, land, underground rail systems, or sea, there are major arteries providing incoming and outgoing flows of people in Guangzhou daily. Importantly, the city performs as an anchor or hub of interaction between cultures, as it is the economic center of one of China’s leading commercial regions and so draws traders and immigrants alike.

Likewise, the opera house was placed in the cultural development area of the city where it will draw people to and through it. Like Guangzhou, the opera house is not an exclusive place. Rather, it is a location that brings people together. The interior continues the theme of connectivity. Practice rooms for performers are carefully incorporated and planned into the overall design of the building which connects them to their audience and performing structure. Public spaces around the main performance hall are open, creating the sense that the audience is now on a stage connecting them to the performers. Periphery spaces contain shops and businesses which unifies the visitors with the theater goers. This element of unity is a hallmark of Hadid’s architecture, perhaps derived from synthesizing design with surrounding context and having experienced the feeling of closed doors and unattainable spaces derived from sexist encounters in the business of architecture. Now the spaces she creates are open and attainable.

Hadid’s design for the opera house not only personifies the Guangzhou of today and the future but also represents its heritage. Guangzhou was once a major port of trade along the maritime Silk Road. People from around the world came to trade for silk, porcelain, and other fine oriental goods. Now, the acoustics of the opera house are so precisely designed that they beckon world-class performers to come and

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25 Ibid., 218.
partake of its sound. As mentioned above, the local granite material used unifies the building with the land. It also furthers the design plan of two river-worn boulders or pebbles pulled from the Pearl River, on the banks of which the structure resides. The stone theme connotes durability and permanency, along with the erosion of time and flow of people through the city. Just as the force of the water makes stones polished and beautiful, so too the force of people and culture on the city makes it unique and beautiful. As noted earlier, this is a concept that Hadid had been surrounded by from a young age, and she developed an appreciation and awareness of learning from multicultural environments as a consequence. Additionally, she felt the effects of others’ opinions and sometimes forceful abrasiveness throughout her life, which worked to polish her and her work into the products they are today.

As a woman in a patriarchal world who rejected stereotypes and insisted on the avant-garde, and as an ethnic minority in her field of work, Hadid must have related to Guangzhou’s mixed cultures and resilience. Instead of recycling motifs of traditional opera houses that represented other cities, histories, and societies, Hadid used her ability to create a visual narrative of the geographical and social context of the area around the building to form the design of the Guangzhou Opera House. This design ability and emotional empathy from Hadid’s history allows the Opera House to propagate not a foreign high class or culture, but rather the distinctively unique class and culture of Guangzhou, China. The example that Hadid has set in personalizing architecture in such a successful manner is inspirational in its own right; but even more, her example can embolden women because of her success despite her near failure at the hands of gender biases within the profession. Despite continuing discrimination within the field of architecture, Dame Zaha Hadid’s successful career empowers women and minorities by setting a new precedent that discourages underestimating and underutilizing architects because of their minority status.

28 Ibid., 17.
Bibliography


Silent Emergency
To the Children of Africa

Vera Duarte (1952–), Cape Verde

In Africa
There’s an emergency
Which
   Silently
   Tragically
Destroys us
In Africa
There’s an emergency
Which
   Irreparably
   Inexorably
Defeats us
In Africa
There’s an emergency
Which is repeated
   Humiliating us
   And annihilating us
They are children
tender dispossessed
They are children
orphans sans defense
They are children
sweets abused possessed
Bought
   Sold
   Defiled
   Reviled
   Exploited
   Abused
   Used
They don’t play
   they’re not allowed to
They don't laugh
    they don't know how
They don't live
    they can't
They work
    and they're exploited
They fight
    and they're defiled
They flee
    and they are beaten

In Africa
There's an emergency
By the hundreds by the thousands
One by one
    Children
    Sold
    Bought
    Beaten
    Mutilated
    Violated

And this humiliation that endures
This impotence
This defeat

But the children my God!
Why do you cause them such pain
Why do they suffer so?

In Africa there's an emergency
Of humiliation pain and revulsion
For the destroyed hope
In the sad eyes of a child

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A Woman’s Experience | 115
Sunlight seeped onto the horizon slowly that morning, inviting local fishermen back to their boats and families back to their local bathtub called Lake Malawi. It was about 5:00 a.m. and as I looked around me I realized that, had I not gotten up, I would have been one of a few in the whole country still asleep, still veiled. I saw small girl, around the age of eleven perhaps, come out of the lake with a large green pail filled to the brim, ready to wash laundry. However, she had a different routine in mind; she began with a sun salutation. Then I watched her punch an invisible speedbag, do push ups on her fists, dance the foxtrot with mosquitos, blow kisses to onlooking mermaids and sprinkle the dry sand crystals around her toes with holy laundry water. Under her care, she turned quotidian chores into sacramental symphonies and spectators like me into devoted believers.
Baby Guru

Tara Neuffer

This six-month-old girl’s impossibly chubby cheeks and forever unamused expression left everyone vying for her love and attention. However, she never surrendered her position in the town council as the composed guru.
Author Bio
Madeline Duffy (from Yakima, Washington) is a senior studying interdisciplinary humanities emphasizing in history and minoring in Spanish. She currently works at the BYU Museum of Art as a student educator. Her research interests focus on the way art informs the study of history, and she is currently working on an analysis of Maya poetic structure as used in *El Título de Totonicapán*, a sixteenth-century K’iche’ legal document.

Abstract
The painting of Robert, Calvin, Martha, and William Scott, and Mila (known as *The Children of Reverend William Anderson Scott*) is not just a family heirloom or a portrayal of Reverend William Scott’s four children and their caretaker, Mila. On the contrary, nearly two hundred years after it was painted, *The Children of Reverend Scott* functions today as a historical document in that analysis of it records the contemporary roles and status of children, parents, and slaves in nineteenth-century Southern life. This paper explores the personal convictions of Reverend Scott as recorded in the portrait—namely his roles as a father, minister, and southern slave-owner—using his personal papers and historical records local to New Orleans and San Francisco for further context and evidence.
The painting of Robert, Calvin, Martha, and William Scott, and Mila—known as The Children of Reverend William Anderson Scott—is not just a family heirloom or a portrayal of Reverend William Scott’s four children and their caretaker, Mila. On the contrary, nearly two hundred years after it was painted, The Children of Reverend Scott functions today as a historical document which tells the viewer much about the Reverend Scott and his values. The painting, by an anonymous artist,
preserves the contemporary gender- and race-based social structure of the United States of America in the heart of the nineteenth century in the way its commissioner—slave owner and Presbyterian reverend, William Anderson Scott—dictated that it should be painted.

Should the viewer look closely at *The Children of Reverend Scott*, she would be able to make out a spire on the skyline of the scene. This is the spire of New Orleans’ First Presbyterian Church where Reverend Scott was pastor when *The Children of Reverend Scott* was painted, which church, under Scott’s ministration, became the largest and wealthiest in the American South. There are two other identifiable buildings in the composition. The first is the New Orleans’ St. Charles Hotel—a center of pre-war New Orleanian society. The second appears to be a slave cottage, representative of a third, more sinister, element of Southern culture that was essential to the Scott family way of life. The First Presbyterian Church and the St. Charles Hotel were built about three miles away from each other and would not have been visible together from such a vantage point as pictured in *The Children of Reverend Scott*. Thereby, the viewer may assume that the Reverend wished to highlight these buildings as part of a statement about his family and himself.

Reverend Scott clearly used this portrait to communicate what was most important to him and to what he was most dedicated: first, the running of a proper Southern aristocratic household (which determined the principles that guided the way he raised his children and to whom he entrusted their care), then the Presbytery, and lastly his civic responsibilities. *The Children of Reverend William Anderson Scott* features the family’s domestic slave, Mila, who is painted in a more palatable manner than slaves in most other works from this time period. Mila does not look grotesque or cartoonized, as in this illustration from the January 1, 1876, edition of Harper’s Weekly. Nor does Mila seem emaciated or unhappy, characteristics that abolitionist artists emphasized in their works. Indeed, Mila looks content, with gentle expression and relaxed, lively posture. Perhaps she was; but, it is also likely that her master wanted for

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his records a portrait that would paint a rosy picture of slavery,\textsuperscript{5} thereby helping to legitimize it. Scott would have wanted to project this image of slavery, as he was a committed defender of states’ rights amid widespread scrutiny of slavery by citizens in the northern and western regions of the United States—a position he would risk his life to maintain.\textsuperscript{6}

\textbf{Figure 2}

*The Children of Reverend William Anderson Scott* depicts four of the nine children of Scott and his wife, Ann Nicholson, occupied in play. Even baby William, seated on the Mila’s lap, holds a toy. Though seeing children at play is perhaps of little surprise to a twenty-first century audience, from a historical perspective this portrayal is evidence of Scott’s desire to figuratively paint himself as a model father per the standards of the mid-eighteen-hundreds, which emphasized children’s innocence, the importance of play, and affectionate, attentive parenting.

Reverend Scott inherited from the previous century Lockean philosophies about childrearing. On top of that, the nineteenth century ushered in the influence of Romantic thought—epitomized by the popular work of Jean Jacques Rousseau. In his 1762 novel, *Emile, Or, Treatise*

\textsuperscript{5} John B Astles, “Rev. Dr. W. A. Scott, a Southern Sympathizer,” *California Historical Society Quarterly* 27, no. 2 (1948): 149.

\textsuperscript{6} “Robert, Calvin, Martha and William Scott and Mila,” Google Arts & Culture.
Rousseau famously argued that children are not victims of original sin but, rather, are unspoiled fountains of virtue that mirror the spontaneous, inherent godliness of nature. “This attitude,” as it was adopted by American parents, “generated a new tolerance for play and toys as inherent to the special qualities of childhood” says Howard Chudacoff, professor of American history at Brown University. In the wake of Rousseau's work, “some parents now accepted a view that children had an innocent wholesomeness and should therefore delay their assimilation into adulthood so that they could complete a sheltered [edenic] training.”

Advice on parenting contemporary to *The Children of Reverend William Anderson Scott* evidences the pervasive effect of Rousseau’s work on day-to-day, turn-of-the-century parenting practices. Samuel G. Goodrich (who wrote under the pen name Peter Parley and was one of the most successful children's authors of the nineteenth century) urged parents:

> If God places our offspring in Eden, let us not cause less or carelessly take them out of it. It is certainly a mistake to consider childhood and youth—the first twenty years of life—as only a period of constraint and discipline. This is one-third part of existence—to a majority, it is more than the half of life. It is the only portion which seems made for unalloyed enjoyment.

Because of these changes, children were actively encouraged by parents and caregivers to play; in this period, a separate children's culture of games and toys (some that American children still enjoy today, like “Blindman's Bluff “and marbles) began to form as children were given free time to associate with one another, often out-of-doors. Robert, Calvin, Martha, and William reflect this new children's culture, being pictured playing with a hoop, hobby horse, and jump rope.

Reasoning for this transition in American parenting style extends beyond philosophy. At the turn of the century the average number of children per family fell from six or more to three or four at the time Scott commissioned his children's portrait. This change in average birthrates

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9 Ibid., 46.
10 Ibid., 40.
11 Ibid., 43.
meant, among other things, that parents had (on the whole) more time to spend with each of their children individually. An increase of individual time allowed for a more nurturing style of parenting than was possible for wealthier families during this period of American history. Falling mortality rates also ensured that age gaps between surviving children were smaller than they had been before, which created a more distinct generational difference between adults and children—whereas, in former eras older children often operated as adults caring for their infantile siblings as well as helping to earn wages for the family.\(^{12}\)

Economically, the rise of industrialization in the United States meant that the home was no longer the center of the means of production.\(^{13}\) Children (especially those in rural areas and those of means, like the children of Reverend Scott) were freed by the industrial revolution from some of the at-home work responsibilities that characterized the childhoods of their parents. Freed from the labors of previous generations, the prevailing instructions to children in the mid-nineteenth-century were to play, as exemplified by this 1803 poem for children:

Be just and true, and kind to all,
Play with a top, a bat, and ball,
He who does what good he can,
May gain the love of God and man.
And he who does no hurt all day,
May go some other time to play.\(^{14}\)

The aforementioned changes affected not only the lives of nineteenth-century children but also the lives of their mothers. As women in the growing middle-class (such as Mrs. Scott, who is conspicuously absent in this portrait) were freed from many of their labors by the industrial revolution, a part of women’s roles became the domestication of children. Mothers (and women in general) were now more than ever before expected to occupy themselves with protecting the innocence of America’s children, “not only by educating them in the ‘moral arts’ but also by sheltering them from death, crudeness, and sexuality.”\(^{15}\) Reverend Scott is adamant in his writings about the role of mothers, especially their

\(^{12}\) *A Midwife’s Tale*, TV Episode, directed by Richard P. Rogers (January 19, 1998, PBS, 1998), VHS.

\(^{13}\) Rebecca De Schweinitz, “Women and Slavery” (lecture, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT, September 19, 2016).

\(^{14}\) Chudacoff, Children at Play, 45.

\(^{15}\) Ibid., 42.
role as caretakers: “It is the *mother* that molds the destiny of the child.”\(^\text{16}\) Mrs. Scott, though, is not featured in *The Children of Reverend William Anderson Scott*. Rather, the domestic slave Mila is shown caring for the Reverend’s young children.

The most benevolent masters in this period viewed slaves (male and female) as perpetually childlike beings who, like animals, were by nature wild yet could be domesticated and trained to occupy a supervised position in civilized society. In *The Children of Reverend William Anderson Scott* the slave Mila appears bright, attractive, and youthful. This portrayal is by all accounts an idealized representation of the domestic slave.\(^\text{17}\)

The circumstances of slavery for African American men and women until the turn of the century were fairly homogenous. Female slaves worked alongside their male counterparts in hard, agricultural labor until shifts in the prescribed roles of white American women began to color opinions about the roles of women of all races. Indeed, in colonial America, slave women were rarely domestics and were not seen by white masters as *women* in any sense other than their ability to bear children.\(^\text{18}\)

As white men departed from the home to work in industrial settings, white women were regarded more than ever before as caretakers of home, family, and virtue. In response to greater demand, slave owners moved increasing numbers of female slaves (usually the better-looking ones) indoors to help the mistress maintain the home. Within a generation there occurred a shift in the

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\(^{16}\) Scott, William Anderson, “William A. Scott Papers,” *Online Archive of California*, 1997. In the original manuscript Scott has double underlined the word “mother” and written it in comparably large writing. I have bolded and underlined the text to communicate this original emphatic intent.

\(^{17}\) De Schweinitz, “Women and Slavery.”

\(^{18}\) De Schweinitz, “Women and Slavery.”
role of slave women that relegated them to domesticity and the care of home and children. Mila’s role as caretaker to the children of Reverend Scott is in and of itself evidence mid-century changes in regard to slavery.\(^9\) However, the representation of Mila fails to follow the more conventional stereotypes of slave women in several crucial ways.

Portrayals of nineteenth-century domestic slaves were most often the well-known “mammy” caricatures of then-popular culture (see illustration from the 1888 edition of Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* as well as appendix A and B).\(^20\) According to Harris, of the Journal of Reformation Life, the warm and motherly “mammy” caricature was meant to differentiate the domestic slave from white mistresses. “Mammy” was “the opposite of idealized white womanhood . . . dark-skinned, usually smiling, and covered from neck to ankle with clothing. She wore a bandana and apron, both of which signified that she was a worker doing cleaning, laundry, or cooking.”\(^21\) While Mila clearly embodies some elements of “mammy” iconography (dark-skinned, even for a slave, smiling, and modestly dressed), she departs from the female slave stereotype in notable ways. Rather than deferentially avoiding the gaze of the viewer, as was typical for slave subjects in nineteenth-century painting, Mila “confronts the viewer with a direct, confident gaze . . . Furthermore, she is not wearing the head wrap often found in depictions of African American nursemaids of the period, but rather wears her hair in two elegant plaits, each encircled with a gold band”\(^22\) that mark her not as a “mammy” character but, as Reverend Scott’s personal papers denote, a valued member of the Scott family.\(^23\) Her clothing, plain, but clean, modest, and well-pressed, identifies Mila as below the children in station but also as well taken care of and dignified.

Mila’s position in the composition is further evidence of Reverend Scott’s desire to defend Mila’s relative station. In the antebellum period slave owners often commissioned portraits of domestic slaves with members of the family. However, they typically manifest the servitude of these individuals in very clear ways—as in this photograph of an unidentified mid-nineteenth century New Orleanian mother, her three children, and

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19 De Schweinitz, “Women and Slavery.”
22 Ibid., 122.
23 Scott, “William A. Scott Papers.,” *Online Archive of California*.
their slave nursemaid, whose face is nearly entirely covered by the head of the infant she holds. Mila, in contrast, is fully visible from the waist up and shown in a relaxed and open pose; although, she does occupy the far edge of the frame, Reverend Scott clearly did not intend for her to be hidden from view.

Why was the Reverend so interested in portraying Mila in this way and featuring her deliberately in the portrait of his children? It may simply be that Mila was regarded as part of the family. Indeed, his records suggest as much. Though Scott was a slave owner, Professor Harris argues that he was almost indisputably one of the oft-cited “benevolent masters” of the period.

Yet, Scott’s support of slavery in general and the brusque, racially derogatory commentary in his personal journals hint at a conviction that extends beyond his valuation of Mila and remains a blight on his personal history. Reverend Scott commissioned this portrait in the mid-1840s, when Civil War tensions were just beginning to brew. The persecution he faced at the height of the American Civil War therefore serves as the best evidence of why he may have purposefully attempted to project a positive image of slavery at this time.

In 1854 (circa fifteen years after The Children of Reverend William Anderson Scott was painted), despite the Reverend’s great success in the southern United States, the Scott family moved from Louisiana to the milder California climate at the recommendation of Scott’s doctors.

26 Scott, “William A. Scott Papers,” Online Archive of California.
27 Delilah L. Beasley, “Slavery in California,” The Journal of Negro History 3, no. 1 (1918): 33–44. It is unknown whether Mila accompanied the Scott family to California for certain; but I would say it is doubtful that she came, given that slavery had been illegal in California since Mexico banned it in 1823.
While in California, Reverend Scott was to serve as the Pastor of the Calvary Presbyterian Church, San Francisco. Scott, a gifted speaker and elsewhere beloved public figure, faced significant persecution while in California. Antagonism toward Reverend Scott in San Francisco climaxed after an 1861 meeting of Presbyterian leaders in California during which local ecclesiastical authorities discussed whether the church should speak out against slavery. Acker summarized Scott’s position at the meeting as follows:

Scott did not believe the Presbyterian Church should condemn slavery. Consistent with the position taken by the Old School branch of Presbyterianism, Scott argued that the issue of slavery was political, rather than ecclesiastical, in nature, and was therefore outside the purview of the church. In an article he published in the July 1859 issue of the Pacific Expositor entitled ‘Mission of the Church,’ Scott . . . [argued] that ‘synods and councils are to handle or conclude nothing, but that which is ecclesiastical; and are not to intermeddle with civil affairs.’

Soon details of this meeting were public and on Sunday, September 22, two thousand union-loyal civilians gathered in front of Calvary Presbyterian, angered that Reverend Scott would defend slavery to any degree and in any regard. When morning broke, authorities found that the rowdy throngs had posted Union flags in the streets outside of the church as well as an effigy, hung by the neck, labeled “Dr. Scott, the reverend traitor.” After Reverend Scott delivered that day’s sermon he was escorted home by local police because a violent mob waited for him outside. After Scott was escorted from the scene, this same mob attacked Scott’s by-then seventeen-year-old son William (the infant pictured in The Children of Reverend William Anderson Scott). William was forced to defend himself from the angry throngs with a gun—evidence of the amount of hostility San Francisco Union loyalists held for the Scott family because of Scott’s refusal to condemn the institution of slavery.

Rumors circulated around San Francisco about bodies of men who had sworn to kill Reverend Scott should he remain in California; so Scott sold his house that very same day and began preparations to sail with

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28 Curry, History of the San Francisco Theological Seminary, 45–50.
29 “Two Untold Stories”, Leben, 1. Italics added for emphasis.
30 Astles, “Rev. Dr. W. A. Scott, a Southern Sympathizer,” 151.
31 This was not Scott’s first symbolic hanging. A similar likeness of Reverend Scott had been used in a previous San Francisco demonstration. See Ibid., 151.
32 Ibid., 152.
33 Ibid., 152.
his family to Europe. He then sent in his resignation, unable to remain with the seminary he (to his death) considered his greatest achievement because of his indefatigable and unabashed support of the Confederate cause. The shift of popular opinion prior to the outbreak of the Civil War certainly had an effect on Reverend Scott’s life, and evidence in his own records as well as other sources show that he certainly had an interest in defending the American South’s right to practice slavery in whatever ways he could—in word or in paint.34

Reverend Scott, like many other fathers before and after him, wished to preserve what he saw as his most important legacies. This he did through his portrait of his children and their slave caretaker, Mila. *The Children of Reverend William Anderson Scott* as a text manifests the philosophies regarding gender and race that prevailed in the mid-nineteenth century—especially relating to Romantic-era childrearing, Civil War-period domesticity, and slavery. No less so, *The Children of Reverend William Anderson Scott* is also a deliberate testimony of Reverend Scott’s unwavering dedication to his roles as a father, minister, and southerner.◆

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34 Curry, *History of the San Francisco Theological Seminary.*

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Illustrations

Figure 1: Unidentified artist, Robert, Calvin, Martha and William Scott and Mila, ca. 1843–45 painting, 1193.8 x 990.6 in. De Young Museum, New Orleans.

Figure 2: Sol Eytinge, “No Small Breed Fer Yer Uncle Abe Dis Christmas! Ain’t He a Cherub?” 1876 engraving for Harper’s Weekly, dimensions unknown.


Figure 4: Unidentified artist, photograph of a New Orleans mother, three children and slave nursemaid, ca. 1850, dimensions unknown.

Figure 5: Ellsworth Woodward, Black Woman in Tignon, 1910 etching, 9.5 x 7.5 inches, Louisiana.

Figure 6. J.M. Tarbell, Christmas Morning in the Sunny South, 1897 photographic print on card, dimensions unknown. Library of Congress.
Bibliography


Curry, James. History of the San Francisco Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church in the USA and its alumni. 1907.


Silver Lining

Abigail Remington
Oil on board.
Staff Bios

Cynthia Chan • Editor
Cynthia is a senior at BYU, Cynthia will graduate in August 2017 with a B.A. in English and a minor in editing. She calls the mountains of British Columbia, Canada, home and loves musical theater, traveling, and good food. She hopes to pursue a career in writing and editing after graduation.

Madeline Duffy • Editor
Madeline (from Yakima, Washington) is a senior in the interdisciplinary humanities major emphasizing in history and minoring in Spanish. She currently works on campus at the BYU Museum of Art as a student educator. Her research interests focus on the way art informs the study of history. She is currently working on an analysis of Maya poetic structure as used in El Título de Totonicapán, a 16th-century K’iche’ legal document.

Addie Hulme • Editor
Addie is a psychology major and women’s studies minor at BYU. She has worked in an adolescent girl’s residential treatment center and with music therapy programs with young girls. She aspires to create programs to empower women to follow their dreams and be leaders in society. She is passionate about making sure that women’s experiences are heard and believes that these stories can inspire and change the world.

Adam McLain • Editor
Adam is a senior studying English literature, communications, editing, and women’s studies. He has worked as an editor for BYU Human Resource Development, Monte L. Bean Life Science Museum, BYU College of Life Sciences Alumni Magazine, Mormon Insights, Stowaway Magazine, Familius Publishing, Leading Edge Magazine, and, most recently, the Joseph Smith Papers and the Church Historian’s Press. He plans on applying to PhD programs in literature and creative writing this fall in order to pursue his dream of being a professor.

Rilley Kaye McKenna-Vasquez • Editor
Rilley is a senior studying English with minors in Spanish and women’s studies. Passionate about both books and community involvement, she plans to pursue a master’s degree in library science with an emphasis in community outreach. She loves the poetry of Natasha Trethewey, the fiction of Donna Tartt, and the humor of Amy Poehler. Rilley is involved with Project Read (a non-profit focused on improving adult literacy)
and volunteers with victims of domestic violence at the Center for Women and Children in Crisis. Born and raised in Salt Lake City, Utah, Rilley is particularly attuned to the intersectionality of Mormonism and feminism, which is one reason she is so excited to be working on *A Woman's Experience*. As the next editor-in-chief, she hopes to encourage scholarship and creativity in gender studies and women’s studies at Brigham Young University.

**Tara Neuffer • Photographer**
Tara is a senior majoring public health and minoring in international development and women’s studies. She is from Chicago, loves animals and biking, and is an appreciator of the arts. She has a profound interest in women’s issues—particularly women’s health issues. Her desire to dedicate her life towards improving the state of women was solidified two years ago when she started working at the local women and children’s shelter for families fleeing domestic violence. Her interest in international women’s health issues brought her last summer to Malawi where she conducted ethnographic research on the diet and customs of pregnant women. Next year she will graduate from BYU and pursue a master’s degree in public health.

**Bethany Patterson • Editor**
Bethany is a junior studying communications (emphasis in public relations) with minors in editing and political science. She absolutely loves copyediting for on-campus journals and has especially enjoyed working on *AWE*. She grew up in the suburbs of Washington, DC, where she developed a love for politics and public policy. She’s worked as an intern reporter for a Northern Virginia newspaper, where she was able to write on political and local events. Currently, she is an intern at the American Enterprise Institute. In her free time, she loves keeping up with current events and politics, reading any book she can get her hands on, or tinkering on InDesign and Illustrator.

**Kristin Perkins • Editor**
Kristin Perkins graduated *magna cum laude* with a BA in theatre arts studies and a minor in women’s studies from BYU in April 2017. She completed an honors thesis and has a forthcoming publication in a book contracted with Roman and Littlefield. Kristin has presented at nine different conferences, two of which have been on a national level. Kristin has also acted in numerous plays and films. She has had poetry, short fiction, and creative nonfiction published in seven different literary journals including *Degenerates: Voices for Peace, Peculiar, and Inscape*. 
Her plays, exploring female relationships and mental illness, have been produced at BYU and in the Provo, Utah, community and have won four Mayhew Awards for excellence in playwriting. She will be continuing her education as a graduate student in University of Texas at Austin's Performance as Public Practice program.

Mary Peterson • Editor
Mary is a senior majoring in English language with a minor in editing. She is currently finishing up an internship with Workfront as a technical writer. She has previously served as the editor-in-chief for the linguistics journal Schwa, and as an editorial assistant for Elsevier’s Environmental Modelling and Software. She has also previously interned with Future House Publishing. She just finished serving as the president of BYU’s Linguistics and English Language Society. Mary enjoys nerding out over Star Wars, Harry Potter, J.R.R. Tolkien, Anne of Green Gables, and many other wonderful stories. Her preferred method of stress relief is baking, hiking, and napping, though not all at the same time. She is an avid BYU fan and enjoys going to sporting events and yelling a lot.

Abigail Remington • Artist
For as long as Abigail has known, art has been in her life. Her father is an artist, and her mother graduated with a major in art history. One could say that paint is in her blood. She has always been fascinated with the intricacies of the human face and the emotions displayed there. It can be one of the hardest things to paint, but she finds joy in the challenge and looks forward to mastering portraiture as well as painting in general as she continues throughout her career.

Madeline Rupard • Artist
Madeline is an MFA candidate at Pratt Institute and received her BFA in studio art at BYU. She grew up in suburban Washington, D.C.; Georgia; Utah; and spent a few years in western and eastern Europe. Influenced by her varying surroundings, her work is preoccupied with space, setting, and narrative. In her paintings and drawings, she is aggressively exploring the concept of “objective correlative”—that objects can evoke specific but not pre-determined emotions in the viewer. She selects images and overlays them, curious as to the results the combination may produce. Through the slow, meticulous build-up of a world, she is looking for potential connections between the violent and peaceful, the old world and the new, the miraculous and the mundane. You can find more of her work at madelinerupard.com.
Sarah Shields • Graphic Designer
Sarah is a junior at Brigham Young University, majoring in English and minoring in design. Her favorite novel is *The Great Gatsby*, and she loves Shakespeare, who she is currently studying at the BYU London Centre. Sarah loves long walks and deep conversations, almost as much as she likes donuts. She has a major crush on Harry Styles, and is working to improve her sign language dexterity. She plans to pursue a career as a graphic designer for a chic magazine.

Mackenzie Sinclair • Editor
Mackenzie is a second-year student studying political science and editing. She is from the great state of Indiana and served a mission in San Jose, California, speaking Spanish. She loves to run, read, watch movies, play in the sun, and talk! She loves thinking and talking about women's lives and experiences, which makes AWE a great place for her.

Charlotte Stanford • Faculty Advisor
Professor Stanford has taught at BYU since 2003. She has been interested in the arts since the age of three, when her parents took her on a family sabbatical to Europe. After completing an undergraduate degree in humanities at BYU, a master's in medieval studies at the University of Connecticut, and a doctorate in art history at the Pennsylvania State University, she has made regular research trips to Europe to study medieval buildings, notably cathedrals, parish churches and hospitals. Dr. Stanford has participated in two NEH summer programs in England (in York, 2007 and London, 2012) and is an avid photographer of medieval sites and landscapes. She has published two books: *Commemorating the Dead in Late Medieval Strasbourg* (Ashgate, 2011) and *The Building Accounts of the Savoy Hospital, 1512–1521* (Boydell, 2015). She lives in Provo, Utah.

Lauren Stoner • Graphic Designer
Lauren is a junior at Brigham Young University, pursuing a BA in graphic design with a minor in Digital Humanities. She grew up in Knoxville, Tennessee and loves the South. Her hobbies include watercolor painting, making paninis, and exploring outside. Lauren loves the outdoors, and her friends defined her style as “camping casual” because she always wears Chacos and uses an outdoorsy backpack for school. After graduation (which will happen at some point), she plans to seek a career in digital design that combines her love for art and technology.