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As the pages of the popular press throughout the 1880s and particularly the 1890s illustrate, the New Woman—also labeled “Novissima,” the “wild woman,” the “odd woman,” the “revolting daughter,” and numerous other names—ranked among the most controversial phenomena in late-nineteenth-century Britain. Drawing upon, and bringing to fruition, many of the aspirations of their foremothers, this new generation of (mostly middle-class) emancipated women focused their critical look on the double gender standard, fought for women’s right to systematic higher education, worked to penetrate male middle-class professions, and became notorious for their unflinching outspokenness on various intellectual and sexual questions. Many of these women (and their fictional representatives and Punch caricatures) forsook the cumbersome and paralyzing Victorian female fashion, donning more practical clothes instead. They rode bicycles and smoked cigarettes in public, and a number of them refused the traditional marriage scenario, opting for a single lifestyle and professional career instead. Contesting and defamiliarizing the hegemonic Victorian definitions of gender and sexual identities, the New Woman further fueled the anxieties and fears that already circulated among the middle-class British population at the time.

The British fin de siècle—as Elaine Showalter and Judith Walkowitz have illustrated—was a time of much turbulence, agitation, and panic, and the middle class felt that they had much to fear in the waning years of the nineteenth century. The 1880s and 1890s not only witnessed a host of unnerving sexual scandals (e.g., W. T. Stead’s 1885 expose of child prostitution, Jack the Ripper murders in 1888, the Oscar Wilde trials in 1895), but, perhaps more significantly, it was also a time of a profound economic
and social crisis resulting in often violent class clashes (such as the 1886 Trafalgar Square riots, the Bloody Sunday in 1887, and the great dock strike of 1889). The agricultural depression of the 1880s, which generated a massive wave of migration from the countryside into urban areas, was compounded by a profound industrial stagnation of the period 1884–1887, severely afflicting a broad spectrum of Britain’s most traditional industries. Unemployment was rampant, and the adverse conditions of the poor, particularly in the East London, were further exacerbated by a chronic shortage of affordable housing. Generally viewed as brutish, immoral, undeserving, and, increasingly, also as biologically degenerate, the urban poor (particularly the so-called casual poor, also labeled the “residuum,” “roughs,” or “criminal class”) were throughout the century’s waning decades a source of growing fears among the middle-class public and were regarded as a major threat to civilization.

As Britain sought to compensate for economic losses at home by consolidating and expanding its overseas markets, the fin de siècle was also a period of aggressive territorial expansion and systematic imperial promotion. While (as J. A. Hobson’s criticism of imperialism suggests) dissenting voices were not lacking, prominent British economists throughout the nineteenth century, such as David Ricardo, Edward Gibbon Wakefield, John Stuart Mill, W. A. S. Hewins, as well as Karl Marx, followed the lead of Adam Smith in advocating overseas investment and colonial settlement (preferably self-governed to keep the bureaucratic costs minimal) as a way of creating new economic opportunities and warding off economic stagnation at home. Avner Offer summarizes Marx’s assessment of the economic appeal of empire building for Britain as follows: “competition was driving down the rate of profit at home, but this decline of the rate of profit could be postponed by investing overseas, where exploitation was easier and rates of return higher.” Beyond opening access to vast natural resources and to new economic opportunities, the imperial project had further benefits for the British as well, such as establishing (with fatal consequences for the indigenous populations) white settler societies around the world tied to Britain by language, kinship, values, and commerce, promoting Britain’s cultural values as well as its vision of trade, and bolstering its prestige as a Great Power.

Between 1875 and 1914, the British Empire doubled in size. The territorial acquisitions were particularly immense in East, South, and West Africa, gained through both a direct military involvement (most conspicuously in Egypt in 1882) and a series of Anglo-German, French, and Portuguese treaties (the notorious Scramble for Africa) which delineated
European powers’ spheres of influence throughout the African continent. By 1911, British Africa had embraced 2.8 million square miles with an estimated 40 million people. In Southeast Asia, Burma was annexed in 1886, and parts of Borneo became British Protectorates in 1888. And in 1898 Britain gained a ninety-nine-year lease on the strategically located Hong Kong, an entrepot for trade with China, the increasingly important part of Britain’s “informal empire.”

While the new acquisitions added millions of square miles onto the imperial map, economically, as well as militarily, India remained the most significant part of the empire, inspiring Sir Charles Dilke’s remark in his 1890 Problems of Greater Britain that “from the larger British Imperial point of view the loss of India would be a crushing blow to our trade.” Contributing a variety of natural resources (raw silk, indigo, tea), India also provided a major customer for British textiles and was responsible for financing the Indian Army (of both British and mostly Indian troops) regularly deployed in military conflicts throughout the world. Half a century after the 1857 Indian Rebellion, the British rule in India (the Raj) was successfully rehabilitated and fairly stable.

The exaltation that accompanied the consolidation of imperial relations in India and the acquisition of new exotic territories in Africa and the South Seas was, however, periodically pierced by such worrisome events as the disappearance of David Livingstone in Central Africa in the 1870s, the death of General Charles Gordon at Khartoum in 1885, the military defeats in Africa in the 1880s, and the disastrous Boer War of 1899–1902. These and other anxiety-generating occasions fueled the sense of ambivalence with which many British contemplated the imperial project. The empire was a source of much national pride, its existence presumably making the idea of cultural and racial superiority of the British self-evident. But the British “civilizing mission” was also viewed in terms of the “White Man’s burden” and was accompanied by mounting anxieties over the likelihood of racial degeneration of the “imperial race” through its contact with the presumably inferior races overseas (as well as the nation’s “degenerate” classes in its own midst). Tending to compare their own imperial nation to the Roman Empire, nineteenth-century historians and writers warned ominously that the British Empire might follow its Roman predecessor and predicted its ultimate demise.

The renewed alliance between Russia and France in the 1890s and the arrival of new formidable powers on the colonial map (Italy, the United States, and the increasingly aggressive Germany) further compounded Britain’s worries about its imperial future. By the beginning of the twenty-
eth century, Britain was losing its position of commercial supremacy in Latin America—an important part of its “informal empire” throughout the nineteenth century—to the United States. Also alarming (because viewed as potentially threatening British interests in Asia) were Germany’s imperial designs on parts of the Middle East. Between 1895 and 1914, Germany’s conspicuous naval expansion was a source of continuous concern for the British Crown and public. And while the financial costs of running the empire had always been an issue with the public (prominent Victorian economists’ promotion of imperialism notwithstanding), with economic crisis in full swing, they were now viewed by many as particularly worrisome.

Contending that the changing economic and social circumstances, including the much publicized “surplus” of women, signified a need for altering the traditional Victorian ideology toward gender roles, the champions of the New Woman insisted that women’s economic independence and sexual liberation are both a woman’s right and a pressing social necessity. This is how Blanche Alethea Crackanthorpe articulated the argument in her moderate yet uproar-causing article, “The Revolt of Daughters”: “We are now face to face in England with the gravest economic and social changes . . . Who can affirm that fifty years hence the producers will be permitted to consume even their own production, and as for the consumers who produce nothing what is their portion likely to be? When that day arrives who will venture to marry the luxurious daughters of the folded hands?”

The opponents, on the other hand, regarded the demands for the emancipation of women not as a remedy for the current economic and social crisis but as a cause of this social malady. They blamed the New Woman for the spread of socialism and nihilism, castigated her determination to redefine gender roles as undermining the long-term interests of the English nation, and sought to diminish the impact of the new fiction and drama by lambasting them as semipornographic and indecent. Regarding the maintenance of clear distinctions between the masculine-public and the feminine-private spheres as essential for the “health” of the British Empire, the adversaries of the movement also pronounced the goals of fin-de-siècle emancipated women as dangerous to the integrity of the English “imperial race” and to the institution of the British Empire.

The perceived connection between (as she called them) “Wild Women’s” gender transgressions and the state of the British Empire was spelled out particularly unambiguously by Elizabeth Lynn Linton, one of the most ardent advocates of patriarchy at the fin de siècle, in “The Wild
Women as Social Insurgents,” an article published in 1891 in the Nineteenth Century. The author first represents the habits of “Wild Women”—which she satirizes and exaggerates as was the habit among the contemporary adversaries of women’s emancipation—as aesthetically repulsive. She thus seeks to neutralize the threat she perceived emancipated women posed to the status quo by summoning the beauty ideal internalized by many Victorian middle-class women. But Linton not only portrays the New Woman as “absolutely unwomanly”; she also maligns her for presumably introducing “into the cultured classes of certain qualities and practices hitherto confined to the uncultured and—savages.” In the section of her article that targets fin-de-siècle women travelers, Linton reprimands them for discovering “no new field for British spades to till, no new markets for British manufacturers to supply.” And speaking specifically of British women missionaries in India, she accuses them of “trying to make the Hindus as discontented, as restless, as unruly as themselves.” The New Woman emerges from Linton’s vitriolic account as a chief cause of cultural (and racial) degeneration of the English “imperial race,” as a blundering colonialist, and as threatening the fate of the entire empire by presumably disseminating social unrest among the British colonial subjects.

In another much cited, ardently antifeminist article “Tommyrotics” (published in Blackwood’s in 1895), Hugh Stutfield—taking his cue from Max Nordau’s Degeneration—lambastes the new fiction and drama as products of mentally disturbed minds and warns that the British women’s fascination with the New Woman production will have broader deleterious consequences for the mental health of the entire nation. With the increased colonial competition and with the omnipresent post-Darwinian (pseudo)scientific theories predicting a possible degeneration of the English as a nation, these hostile charges—recurrent in the contemporary criticism of the New Woman—were not to be taken lightly.

Their adversaries tended to generalize in their ominous pronouncements of the New Woman’s negative impact on the nation and the empire. But as present-day feminist scholars have begun to acknowledge, many British fin-de-siècle women were actually deeply invested in the maintenance of the British Empire, and their work was often steeped in their imperial culture’s racial bias.

The colonial angle was not a primary interest of the earliest pioneers in the New Woman scholarship—Elaine Showalter and Ann Ardis—whose chief project (in which they more than succeeded) was to bring the fin-de-siècle women writers back on the literary map. But taking their cue from Edward Said’s now classic assessment of the various roles...
nineteenth-century European fiction played in the history of imperialism (in Orientalism and Culture and Imperialism), the authors of more recent anthologies on New Woman writers—Lyn Pykett, Sally Ledger, as well as Angelique Richardson and Chris Willis—have turned attention to the influence of the colonial narrative on New Woman writings. These post-colonial examinations of New Woman fiction have been informed by other feminist scholars’ (e.g., Vron Ware, Margaret Strobel, Anne McClintock, Rita Felski) broader investigation of the roles played by actual European women in the imperialist contest. McClintock, for instance, has contended that “[although] women and men did not experience imperialism in the same way... white women were not the hapless onlookers of empire but were ambiguously complicit both as colonizers and colonized, privileged and restricted, acted upon and acting.” And noting that the organized British feminism’s rise in the 1870s and 1880s coincided with the height of popular imperialism, Ware has argued that “feminist ideology and practice were shaped by the social, economic, and political forces of imperialism to a greater extent than has been acknowledged.”

It is as a contribution to this larger project currently underway within late-Victorian studies—a project aimed at problematizing earlier, exclusively gender-centered examinations of fin-de-siècle British women’s texts and set upon examining the roles played by colonialism in the development of the New Woman movement—that this present book should be viewed. As my study demonstrates, it would be a mistake to generalize in the other direction and conclude that all New Woman writers took the interests of the empire and of the “imperial race” unequivocally for their own. I agree with Ware’s conclusion that fin-de-siècle feminism lacked “a vision of politics which would connect the struggle against patriarchy with the struggle against racist domination.” Indeed, we would not find an expression of unequivocal and organized opposition to imperialism on the pages written by the women studied in this book. But while I underscore the various ways in which the work of the examined authors supported British imperialist ideology and colonial practices, I also highlight various subtle discursive strategies some of these women devised to either express contempt for the colonial conquest or represent the idea of the colonial master and colonial appropriation as pathological.

Offering an in-depth analysis of the work of four culturally, socially, and nationally disparate New Woman writers—Sarah Grand, George Egerton, Elizabeth Robins, and Amy Levy—this book underscores essential differences in these women’s negotiations of the Victorian colonial narrative and significant distinctions among them in respect to their implica-
tion in the late-Victorian discourse of “scientific racism.” I explore the question of what in the background/ideology/location of these women (two Anglo-Irish, one Anglo-American, and one Anglo-Jewish) contributed to their adopting or resisting racial biases then prevalent in the British colonial superpower.

Compared to the New Woman scholarly books mentioned above, this project’s cross-genre scope (fiction, poetry, drama, acting) approximates that of the anthology edited by Richardson and Willis while perhaps offering a more coherent narrative than their collection of essays does. In this way this work is intended to be more comparable to the book-length studies by Pykett and Ledger, although in its consistent focus on the examined women’s engagement with the imperialist discourse it is modeled more after McClintock’s post-colonial inquiry into Olive Schreiner’s work.

Following Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak’s challenging of the established feminist readings of Jane Eyre from a post-colonial perspective, McClintock has similarly problematized the earlier feminist interpretations of Schreiner’s 1883 novel The Story of an African Farm. This New Woman novel had been typically (and justifiably) celebrated by feminist scholars for its conscious critique of the double sexual standard and its search for alternatives to the choices traditionally available to Victorian women. McClintock examined Schreiner’s writing through a more complex lens—beyond earlier critics’ exclusive attention to gender—enabling her to bring the marginalized racial and imperial issues into focus.

Drawing on McClintock’s analysis of race, gender, class, and sexuality in Victorian imperialist discourse, my goal is to investigate the intersections among these categories in the work of Grand, Egerton, Robins, and Levy. This study is directed toward ascertaining how these individual authors located and constructed the New Woman project in relation to the late-Victorian colonial contest. Did they tend to link the women’s movement for emancipation with anti-imperialist currents, as was feared by their conservative detractors, or did they observe the interests of the empire first and try to fit their feminist agenda within these limits? How is the answer to this question determined by these women’s personal investment in the colonial status quo? How does their location within the relations of colonial power surface in their work, and how does it affect the direction of their critical challenges to the prescribed Victorian women’s roles in the family and the empire?

In exploring these issues, I have found useful Michel Foucault’s and Ann Stoler’s arguments concerning Victorian strategies of disciplining women’s bodies and the deployment of these strategies for the purposes of
the British Empire's management. According to Foucault, since the clas-
clical age (and particularly in the nineteenth century with the aggressive
advancement of the bourgeoisie), new power mechanisms have been ger-
minating in Europe, gradually taking over the older strategies of power,
appropriating and transforming them. The ancient mechanisms of
power—based on the sovereign's right to kill and represented by the law—
have been supplemented by “biopower”: the modern technologies of disci-
plining, normalizing power, which deploy sexuality (and particularly
women's sexuality) to control individuals and regulate populations.33 The
technologies of “biopower”—strategically situated and exercised directly at
the level of individual bodies as well as at the level of the species (rather
than merely within the legal system)—consist of producing and control-
ling knowledge about human bodies and human species. This knowledge
is simultaneously deployed—in the form of the hegemonic scientific
discourse—to discipline the bodies and sexualities of individuals and to
regulate the life processes of entire populations.34 The two main poles
around which the bio-political nomenclature is deployed (the discipline of
the individual and the regulation of the larger populace) are joined
together by sex as a means of access to both the life of the individual and
the life of the entire species.35

Taking up where Foucault left off, Ann Stoler's contribution lies in sit-
uating the technologies of “biopower” back on the imperial (rather than
just European) landscape where they emerged in the first place. Stoler has
spelled out significant implications of Foucault's comments on “biopower”
for Victorian racial relationships and underscored the interconnections
that these technologies of power brought to the categories of race, sexual-
ity, gender, and class. As she has articulated it, one important implication
of the development of the bio-political nomenclature was that the earlier
type of popular racism became supplemented in the second half of the
nineteenth century by a new biologizing form of state racism. This new
“scientific racism” was distinguished from the older forms by being directly
linked to technologies of power.36 It was intertwined with official forms
and structures of knowledge by means of the scientific discourse.
Nineteenth-century psychologists, physicians, anthropologists, and sociol-
gists deployed Darwin's evolutionary observations to rationalize and
legitimate the already existing popular racial prejudices, and their
(pseudo)scientific theories were then utilized for the bourgeois state's exer-
cise of its power. Victorian science was invoked to distinguish between
“those who must live and those who must die” within the nation—between
those who presumably did not and those who did pose a threat to the
“quality” of the nation’s population—as well as to justify the colonial project and control the behavior of the colonizer toward the colonized overseas.37

Theories of evolutionary progress and worries about degeneration—which constituted the main discourses of “biopower” in Britain—thus conjoined issues of gender and sexuality with those of race and class and were frequently deployed (although dissenting voices were not entirely absent) to rationalize and justify the existing gender-, class-, racial, and imperial status quo. Francis Galton’s eugenics demonstrates how the cause of the empire came to be seen as resting on the sexual prudence of every British individual and couple. If procreation were restricted to physically and mentally fit couples, the argument of eugenics ran, laws of heredity would ensure that the “unfit” would be gradually eliminated and Britain would become a nation of healthy bodies, physically and mentally capable of continuing its domination of the world. Thus everyone came to be seen as able and as having the duty to ensure the success of the imperial nation by means of exercising appropriate personal politics at the level of his/her body and sexuality.

Speaking more specifically of women, the evolutionary discourse enlisted the Victorian ideal of ascetic, self-disciplined femininity for the purposes of the English bourgeois nation and the British Empire. Science was manipulated by those who wished to keep middle-class women out of the professional world and to restrain their sexuality to conjugal beds (and thus to their socially and racially complementary partners) so that they would not be distracted from successfully reproducing the British “imperial race.” Henry Maudsley’s evolutionary psychology—with its extension of Darwin’s observations about “natural” differences between the sexes to the sphere of mentalities—was one of the Victorian disciplines which made sure that it would be primarily women’s sexualities and bodies that would come to feel the impact of the technologies of the bio-political nomenclature. Although as both Showalter and Patricia Murphy have pointed out, late-Victorian profeminist scientists, such as the physician Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, dissented from Maudsley’s conclusions,38 the sway of his claims among the general public persisted throughout the 1880s and 1890. Declaring that “there is sex in mind and there should be sex in education,” Maudsley insisted that a proper schooling for women must consider their “foreordained work as mothers and nurses of children” and that women “cannot be relieved from the performance of those offices so long as it is thought necessary that mankind should continue on earth.”39 Chained to motherhood as their “essential” function by Mauds-
ley's prescriptive theories of mental degeneration as inevitably following any attempt at defying their “feminine nature,” Victorian middle-class women were considered nothing more and nothing less than the reproductive site of the species.

It was theories like these that permeated the writings of the New Woman detractors such as Elizabeth Lynn Linton or Hugh Stutfield, and it was in relation to these theories that the fin-de-siècle emancipated women—including Grand, Egerton, Robins, and Levy—articulated their feminist discourses. Grand’s “imperialist feminism”—inspired by her personal investment in the imperial status quo—endeavored to stress and capitalize on the connection between British upper-middle-class women's presumed bodily self-discipline and the state’s imperial power in order to seize some measure of social influence for (certain select) women. Locating her writing solidly within the evolutionary narrative, Grand, however, inherited its racial determinism and created feminism preoccupied with purity, centered on issues and interests of white English middle- and upper-class women, and disavowing the experience of women of other classes and races.

Egerton's very different experience with the reality of colonialism, her precarious social location, and her immersion in Nietzsche—as a philosopher who deliberately resisted the strategies of state control over individuals and populations—placed her in a unique position in relation to the evolutionary narrative, although this position was not outside but rather still in relation to “evolutionism.” As a result, at least in her early collections of short stories Keynotes (1893) and Discords (1894), Egerton was quite successful at avoiding an assertion of racial discrimination, although she did not always escape the perils associated with her essentializing concept of womanhood.

Robins' contribution—being personally affected by the Darwinian medical science more than Grand or Egerton—lies in her passionate indictment of the biological determinism of Victorian science as far as it applied to women, and in her search for ways of asserting women's self-determination against the system of state control. Still, she seemed less conscious than Grand of the interconnections between British imperialist practices and the technologies deployed to control women's bodies—of the interfusion of the state control over bourgeois women's sexuality with state racism. Challenging the misogyny of these bio-political technologies, she, as I will argue, often accepted their racism.

My last chapter deals with the poet, essayist, and novelist Amy Levy. It needs to be noted here that temporally Levy's career preceded those of the
other three New Woman authors discussed in this book. With Levy committing suicide in 1889, her life was already over before the other women’s careers took off. In 1889, Grand’s *Heavenly Twins* and Egerton’s *Keynotes* were yet to be written (although Schreiner’s *The Story of an African Farm*, considered a text that launched the New Woman fiction genre, had been published in 1883). And Robins had just arrived in London a year earlier (in 1888) and was still an obscure actress struggling to find her place on the London stage. The placement of the Levy chapter at the end of my book reflects (1) the still relative novelty of this author in the New Woman scholarship (although thanks to Melvyn New’s collection of Levy’s writings and Linda Hunt Beckman’s biography, this has begun to rapidly change); and (2) my desire to explore these materials in relation to the authors’ respective apparent variance from hegemonic views concerning racial politics. Viewing them through the lens of race, I consider Levy’s writings the most complex of those of the four women analyzed in this study.

My examination of Levy’s work focuses on the strengths and the limitations of the author’s use of irony to trivialize both the colonial narrative and the authority of the evolutionary discourse, which targeted her doubly—as a woman and as a Jew. Levy not only brings a Jewish dimension and the dimension of a poet to the present study of the New Woman. I also use her life and work to ask questions concerning the limits that membership in a subaltern community—such as the Anglo-Jewish community in fin-de-siècle London—places on women determined to expose and criticize the patriarchal aspects of that community.
As this study suggests, many British emancipated women at the fin de siècle supported—in various, often quite manifest and conscious, ways—the discursive and institutional structures of British imperialism. While themselves still disfranchised, in their roles as colonial wives, travelers and travel writers, and even specifically as advocates of women’s emancipation, British New Woman writers often gained a semblance of power and the ear of the late-Victorian public by manipulating and cohering the public consent for overseas expansion and by accepting and propugulating the validity of the contemporary racial and class hierarchies.

In this way these women and their narratives were significantly products of their times, conditioned by the racially biased structures of knowledge available to them, just as we today participate in, and are to a great extent products of, a cultural discourse, even if now the discourse is more attuned to issues of race, gender, and class. As Edward Said has suggested, while ignoring nineteenth-century writers’ participation in the imperialist discourse leads to an incomplete understanding of their work and its relationship with its times, condemning these writers for being part of what was generally an accepted and uncontested imperialist reality will not take us far either. Rather, as I see it, the point of studying the work of women such as Grand, Egerton, Robins, and Levy through the “post-colonial” lens is (1) to understand the discursive strategies available to late-Victorian women’s efforts to forge space for themselves in public discourse, (2) to confront the fact that the success (from which we today benefit) of these strategies was often predicated on marginalizing others, (3) to study the reasons behind these authors’ readiness to participate in such
marginalization, and (4) to understand the limitations these kinds of strategies actually placed on their feminist agenda.

Without blaming early feminist authors such as Grand and Robins for not questioning more persistently the norms of colonial and racial discourse, how they represented the relationship between the imperial metropolis and periphery—particularly the relationship between colonial and subaltern women—is certainly worth studying, particularly considering that fin de siècle was a time when modern feminism was being forged. As the work of these women suggests, the feminism we have inherited was at least partially built on careful splitting of those women who managed to represent themselves as deserving of emancipation from those other women (working-class, prostitutes, colonized women) presumably not worth the imperial nation’s consideration. Narratives such as The Heavenly Twins aligned feminism with the imperialist project and worked to gain legitimacy for British upper-middle-class women’s emancipation at home by jingoistically “supporting the troops” overseas.

And yet many of the texts examined in this book also attest to the same ambivalence about Britain’s overseas project among the New Woman writers that scholars such as Said, Homi Bhabha, and John Kucich have also observed in the work of the late Victorian empire’s male authors. Even some of the writings by Grand, the most unequivocal cultural imperialist examined in this study, have inscribed into them a certain level of uneasiness about the limited contacts between colonial and subaltern women prescribed by the empire’s script. And in the work of Egerton and Levy, the ambivalence about imperialism, while far from being inspired by any revolutionary ideas about the native-colonial relationship and far from producing a consciously political resistance, becomes particularly pronounced, allowing for these texts’ interpretation along anti-imperialist lines.

That in some of the women’s narratives the ambivalence about the empire produced more pronounced slippages than it did in the work of others has to do at least to some extent with the specific author’s social location as well as the specific literary and philosophical narratives that she chose to engage in her work. As I discuss throughout this book, because of the late-nineteenth-century hegemonic position of biological determinism and the contemporary preoccupation with racial and ethnic categories, the specific author’s location in relation to these categories had major consequences for her social standing and for her view of both herself and other women. Robins’ work illustrates particularly well not only how motivated some fin-de-siècle women were to elude the debilitating biological deter-
minism of late-Victorian scientific discourse, but also how profoundly difficult it was for many to do so. Similarly, the capacity in which these women traveled, what colonies they visited, what kinds of contact they established with the native population, all had an impact on how they viewed the empire and how implicated they were in British imperial discourse and practices. This might help us to at least partially understand why an author like Egerton—with her transient location on the empire’s margins, her Irish and Welsh background (both considered lesser through the Anglo lens), and her antibourgeois sentiment—was more inclined (at least at times) to resist the call of the flag and the nation than was Elizabeth Robins, so personally invested in upholding the Anglo white supremacy. And Levy’s schizophrenically hyphenated Anglo-Jewish feminist poet’s position seems to have predisposed her writing particularly well to speak in a forked tongue (to borrow Homi Bhabha’s words), in the process both reinscribing the authority of colonial discourse and also destabilizing it and defamiliarizing its tropes.

Beyond biography and personal inclination, Grand’s and Robins’ embracement of the colonial to legitimize the feminist needs to be viewed as a politically motivated, strategic move on the part of authors who hoped to gain the attention of the mainstream public for the idea of women’s emancipation by manipulating the discourse of the status quo from within. Grand seems to have been specifically driven, as Ann Heilmann reminds us, by her objectives to transgress the maligned caricature (disseminated by conservative adversaries) of the emancipated woman as a selfish hedonist and to market the New Woman by representing her as a nation builder and an empire builder, and feminism as the socially responsible alternative. Robins’ similar strategic motivation for embracing the imperialist ethos in her women-centered texts seems to have been compounded by her personal and political desire to bring the United States and Britain closer together (at the time of an increased colonial rivalry between the two powers) by portraying the two cultures and peoples as sharing the same values superior to those of other nations, whether imperial or colonized. Furthermore, the relative transparency (perhaps with the exception of the at the time much-misinterpreted George Mandeville’s Husband) of Robins’ published texts, including the transparency of her narratives’ racial and xenophobic biases, might be viewed as the author’s conscious response to her realization that the more ambiguous a text, the more likely it was to be misread by the late-Victorian male interpretive establishment. That the possibility of misinterpretation was real (as it perhaps always is) is further illustrated by the painful experience with both the Anglo-Jewish and the
gentle critical establishment on the part of that quintessential trickster of the fin de siècle, Amy Levy.

Beyond the question of what predisposed or motivated some late-Victorian feminist authors to embrace the colonial, the racist, and the xenophobic, perhaps a more interesting question has to do with the limitations these kinds of choices placed on their feminism. Among the most obvious of these were the restraining feminization of the New Woman figure (particularly in Grand), as well as the white exclusiveness of this kind of feminism and its lack of determination and ability to forge cross-racial and cross-class alliances. The conspicuousness of Levy’s narrative’s (ironically overblown) invocation of Brontë’s heroine’s persistent xenophobia and lack of concern for the colonial Other reminds us to view the racial exclusiveness underwriting (at least one strand of) the New Woman discourse as participating in a long tradition of racial bias and imperialist xenophobia in Victorian bourgeois women’s narratives. And Robins’ work’s long span, its extension way into the twentieth century, prompts us to see connections between some New Woman writings’ rhetoric of white supremacy and the same rhetoric in more recent (particularly pre-1960s) white feminism. Even in her post-WWI (anonymous) book of feminist essays Ancilla’s Share (1924), in which the women’s movement is presented as a legitimate effort to save civilization from another world war, Robins places her pro-women arguments squarely within the imperialist narrative: “Beyond doubt there are greater deeds than ever to be done by the white races, and greater rewards waiting. . . . We can still instruct, administer and reap reward by divine right of a higher order of intelligence applied through good-will.” While Robins’ main objective in this text is to support (some) women’s movement for political power, her writing is complicit with the prevalent Eurocentric racist assumptions of her time.

Overall, this kind of feminist discourse forged in the work of the New Woman writers hailed by the empire (and also evident in the writings of some later feminists) proved unable to destabilize the late-Victorian symbolic controlled by the evolutionary and replace it with a new symbolic system centered on the recognition of Difference. It is Egerton’s and Levy’s writings’ more insistent exploration of, and openness to, the marginalized and Different that makes their work so compelling in the context of this book’s focus and that casts them as foremothers of that type of present-day feminist discourse interested in exploring the intersections between patriarchy, colonialism, and other types of oppressive narratives.
NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

1. The christening of the New Woman in 1894 has been well documented. Various labels were used for the phenomenon throughout the fin de siècle—derogatory or flattering, depending on the writer’s point of view. The term “New Woman” was introduced and popularized in 1894 in a debate between Sarah Grand and Ouida on the pages of the North American Review. While the phrase “New Woman” was introduced only in 1894, as Ellen Jordan has articulated it, “the birth of the New Woman pre-dated her christening by a good many years.” Olive Schreiner’s novel The Story of an African Farm (1883) is generally recognized as the first literary indication of the fledgling movement. Cf. Ellen Jordan, “The Christening of the New Woman: May 1894,” Victorian Newsletter 63 (Spring 1983): 19–21.


3. For an examination of the New Woman movement in the broader context of nineteenth-century British feminism see Angelique Richardson and Chris Willis, “Introduction,” The New Woman in Fiction and in Fact: Fin-de-siècle Feminisms, ed. Angelique Richardson and Chris Willis (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 1–38.

4. In Lyn Pykett’s words, the New Woman and the homosexual were “the most dramatic examples of the crisis of gender definition and representation at the fin de siècle.” Engendering Fictions: The English Novel in the Early Twentieth Century (London: Edward Arnold, 1995), 16.

5. Elaine Showalter, Sexual Anarchy: Gender and Culture at the Fin de Siècle (New York: Viking, 1990); Judith R. Walkowitz, City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives


9. Offer, 691.


13. Jurgen Osterhammel defines “informal empire” as “a historical situation of some stability and permanence in which overt foreign rule is avoided while economic advantages are secured by ‘unequal’ legal and institutional arrangements, and also by the constant threat of political meddling and military coercion that would be intolerable in relations between fully sovereign states.” “Britain and China, 1842–1914,” *Oxford History of the British Empire,* 148. Nineteenth-century China and Latin America are generally considered by historians in these terms.


15. As Robin Moore has pointed out, “[B]etween 1885 and 1913 India took two fifths of Britain’s total exports of cotton goods.” “Imperial India, 1858–1914,” *Oxford History of the British Empire,* 441.


17. The Census of 1851 indicated that there were 400,000 more women in Britain than men. By 1891 that number had risen to 900,000. Figures adopted from Richardson and Willis (4) and Sally Ledger, *The New Woman: Fiction and Feminism at the Fin de Siècle* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 11.


19. For instance, Hugh Stutfield charges New Women and their novels with importing the influence of “Ibsenite anarchism,” French decadence, and of all those “communists” who “preach the doctrine that all men are equal, when experience proves precisely the opposite.” “Tommyrotics,” *Blackwood’s* (June 1895): 842. William Barry likens the “transgressions” of British *fin-de-siècle* emancipated women to the “excesses”
of the French Revolution and accuses the New Woman of “condemn[ing] law as tyranny” and of “being in complete accord with the anarchist.” “The Strike of a Sex,” Quarterly Review 179 (1894): 293.


22. For some of the best studies of the use of exaggeration and caricature by the New Woman adversaries see Ann Ardis, 10–28; Sally Ledger, 9–34; and Talia Sacherer, “Nothing But Foolscap and Ink: Inventing the New Woman,” The New Woman in Fiction and in Fact, 39–52. For an engaging examination of Punch caricatures of the New Woman, also see Viv Gardner, The New Woman and Her Sisters. Feminism and Theater 1850–1914, eds. Vivien Gardner and Susan Rutherford (New Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), 3–6.


24. Ibid., 603.

25. Ibid.

26. In Sexual Anarchy, Elaine Showalter reads fin-de-siècle texts as embodiments of contemporary anxieties over the loss of unified identity defined and fixed by a coherent gender. While tracing how this anxiety surfaced in the male quest romance and how it was there textually interlocked with the fear of racial pollution, Showalter pays virtually no attention to racial issues in women’s texts. Furthermore, women’s texts written at the fin de siècle are regarded by her as secondary to the texts produced by male writers.

27. Ann Ardis’s project in New Women, New Novels (1990) was to bring onto the literary map New Woman writers who had been excluded (on the grounds of aesthetic values) from the attention of literary critics. Ardis emphasized the ideological self-awareness manifest in New Woman novels, which she located mostly in their problematization of sexual (and class) issues.


31. Ware, 119.

32. Ibid, 163.


34. Ibid., 139.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 1

35. Ibid., 146.
36. In Foucault’s words, the modern form of “scientific racism” is “tied to a State that is compelled to use race, the elimination of races, and the purification of the race to exercise its sovereign power.” Foucault quoted in Ann Laura Stoler, Race and Education of Desire: Foucault’s History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things (London: Duke University Press, 1995), 86.
37. Stoler, 68, 85.
41. “Evolutionism” is Foucault’s term: “Basically, evolutionism understood in the broad sense, that is not so much Darwin’s theory itself but the ensemble of [its] notions, has become . . . in the nineteenth century, not only a way of transcribing political discourse in biological terms, . . . of hiding political discourse in scientific dress, but a way of thinking the relations of colonization, the necessity of war, criminality, the phenomena of madness and mental illness. . . .” Quoted in Stoler, 85.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 1

1. Teresa Mangum, for instance, quotes Shaw’s complimentary comments on Grand from Our Theatres in the Nineties: “A terrible, gifted person, a woman speaking for women, Madame Sarah Grand to wit, has arisen to insist that if the morality of her sex can do without safety-valves, so can the morality of the ‘stronger sex,’ and to demand that the man shall come to the woman exactly as he insists that she shall come to him.” Quoted in Mangum, Married, Middlebrow, and Militant: Sarah Grand and the New Woman Novel (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1998), 89.
2. The relation between the “social purity campaign” in the 1890s, of which Grand was a part, and the Anti-Contagious-Diseases Acts campaigns in the 1870s is spelled out succinctly by Sally Ledger: “If the Contagious Diseases Acts of the 1860s were predicated on the assumption that it was the female body which was responsible for polluting the larger social body, then the social purity movement which grew out of the Anti-Contagious-Diseases Acts campaigns turned this predicate on its head. It was male sexuality, according to the social purity movement, which most needed controlling, it was the male body which was responsible for social degeneration.” The New Woman: Fiction and Feminism at the Fin de Siècle (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 112.
3. “The Strike of a Sex,” Quarterly Review 175 (1894): 289–318. Although Grand was convinced that the author of the article was Mrs. Humphrey Ward, whose Marcella is described in the article as a “genuine work of art,” The Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals, 1824–1900 attributes “The Strike of a Sex” to William Barry. I am grateful to Mary Jean Corbett for bringing this to my attention.
4. *The Heavenly Twins* was published for the first time in 1893. Six editions of the novel were issued and 36,000 copies sold by Heinemann in one year.

5. Gillian Kersley, Grand’s biographer, notes that Grand became familiar with Josephine Butler’s campaign against the Contagious Diseases Acts when she was only fifteen. (The first Contagious Diseases Act was passed in 1864, when Grand was ten.) A club that fifteen-year-old Frances formed to “perpetuate the principles of Josephine Butler, the social reformer,” appears to have earned her an expulsion from school. *Darling Madame: Sarah Grand and Devoted Friend* (London: Virago, 1983), 28.


7. Ledger points out that in 1859, for every thousand men in the army, there were 422 reported cases of venereal disease (111).

8. According to her biographer, Grand used her marriage to McFall to increase her medical knowledge, learning medical facts that she would later use in her writing. Kersley, 35.

9. Mangum, 111.


11. Kersley, 37. The quote is from Gladys Singers-Bigger’s diary.

12. Ibid., 31.


16. Darwin quoted in Sarah Grand, *The Heavenly Twins* (New York: Cassell, 1893), 1. All subsequent references to *The Heavenly Twins* will refer to this edition and will be cited parenthetically in the text.

17. Grand, *The Beth Book: Being a Study of the Life of Elizabeth Caldwell Maclure, a Woman of Genius* (London: Virago, 1980), 213. All subsequent references to this novel will refer to this edition and will be cited parenthetically in the text.


19. Mangum points out that although the Contagious Diseases Acts were repealed
in 1888, a series of articles debating the reinstitution of the acts in India and England appeared as late as 1897 (167).


24. Ibid., 17.

25. Showalter, 111.

26. For instance, Rita Felski has observed that an inquiry into the texts of numerous women committed to social change at the *fin de siècle* reveals that their commitment was intertwined with what now seem anachronistic or racist, Darwinian and Malthusian, beliefs. *The Gender of Modernity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 33. In her study of New Woman fiction through the prism of eugenics, Angelique Richardson has termed this kind of feminism—inform and directed by the eugenic discourse rewritten from women's point of view—“eugenic feminism.” *Love and Eugenics in the Late Nineteenth Century: Rational Reproduction and the New Woman* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 9.

27. The full quote as cited by Grand: “The great leading idea is quite new to me, viz., that during late ages the mind will have been modified more than the body; yet I had not got so far as to see with you, that the struggle between the races of man depended entirely on intellectual and moral qualities.” Darwin’s letter to A. R. Wallace, quoted in *The Heavenly Twins*, 171; Grand’s italics.

28. Grand’s central thesis, expressed in her essays, novels and speeches, was that the future of the English race is in the hands of upper-class women, as the morally and spiritually superior part of the nation. For instance, one of Grand’s characters, Ideala, says: “The future of the race has come to be a question of morality and a question of health . . . And it all rests with us women . . . ours will be the joy of success or the shame of failure.” *Ideala* (New York: Optimus, n.d.), 185. All subsequent references to this novel will refer to this edition and will be cited parenthetically in the text.


33. Colquhoun is Irish by his mother’s side and Scotch by his father’s, but, as the narrator emphasizes, “much more Irish than Scotch by predilection.” *The Heavenly Twins*, 54.

34. Showalter, 125.


36. “She had owed her force of character to her incessant intellectual activity, which had kept her mind pure, and her body in excellent condition. Had she not found an outlet for her superfluous vitality as a girl in the cultivation of her mind, she must have become morbid or hysterical, as is the case with both sexes when they remain in the unnatural state of celibacy with mental energy unapplied.” *Heavenly Twins*, 350.

37. Following Lévi-Strauss’s conclusions about patriarchal societies as being based on the exchange of words and women (in which women do not interfere), and drawing upon Freud’s arguments about the pre-oedipal stage in child development as being dominated by the mother-figure and the oedipal stage as issuing in the “Law of the Father,” Lacan describes a distinction between the real, the imaginary, and the symbolic within human experience. He argues that in order to become a subject, a child needs to enter the symbolic order (language), access to which is preconditioned by the child’s rejection of the mother-figure and by acceptance of the “Law of the Father.” When entering the symbolic system, when learning to speak verbal language, the subject becomes simultaneously limited and spoken by it. According to this reasoning, it is impossible to express a shattering rejection of the symbolic patriarchal order while using the symbolic language since the language is controlled and encoded by the symbolic system. According to this reasoning, women cannot gain access to the symbolic order, and even if they do, they cannot disable it because they become spoken by it. Furthermore, according to Lacan, even the imaginary (the domain of women) is not free of the symbolic law and is instead already under its control. In Lacan’s narrative, in order to be recognized, the hysterical symptoms need to be translated into symbolic speech, which is managed by the “Law of the Father.” The language of hysterical symptoms is, in Lacan’s discourse, controlled by the symbolic system. Cf. Claude Lévi-Strauss, “Structural Analysis in Linguistics and Anthropology,” *Structural Anthropology*, trans. Claire Jacobson and Brooke Grundfest Schoepf (New York: Basic Books, 1963), 31–54; and Jacques Lacan, *Écrits: A Selection*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Norton, 1977).


39. Kaja Silverman accepts the Lacanian prioritization of the symbolic over the imaginary but replaces Lacan’s notion of the oedipal father with her concept of a powerful oedipal mother who is a speaking subject and who is part of, and an agent in, the symbolic order. Silverman points out that it is the mother (her voice and image) who introduces the child into the symbolic order and who is only later replaced by the paternal figure. *The Acoustic Mirror: The Female Voice in Psychoanalysis and Cinema* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 125.
40. Showalter, 106.
41. In her examination of Evadne’s hysteria in *The Heavenly Twins*, Ann Heil-mann has reached a similar conclusion, arguing that Grand “suggested that, while hys-teria dramatized the clash between patriarchal law and female experience, thus marking the transition from internalized conflict to externalized anger, its liberating potential was lost unless this externalization did in fact take place.” “Narrating the Hys-teric: Fin-de-Siècle Medical Discourse and Sarah Grand’s *The Heavenly Twins* (1893),” *The New Woman in Fiction and Fact: Fin-de-siècle Feminisms*, ed. Angelique Richardson and Chris Willis (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 123.
42. Grand’s overall derogatory and conventional representation of prostitutes as “polluted” (all characters of prostitutes in Grand’s writing are portrayed with an appar-ent purpose of providing a foil for the morally upright heroines) distinguishes her from Josephine Butler’s more sympathetic approach.
43. McClintock, 184.
44. Supporting this chapter’s arguments about Grand’s preoccupation with purity, heredity, and “blood lineage,” Kersley (relying on the correspondence of Grand’s step-son Haldane) notes the following anecdote concerning the genealogy of the mother’s side of Grand’s family: “Sarah’s Sherwood grandparents united in an unhappy marriage to prove and perpetuate an ancient curse to the effect that ‘the blood of the Bees put in the same vessel with the blood of the Ravens would never mingle.’ . . . This mingling of the ‘bees’ and ‘ravens’ led them into the unhappiness predicted by the curse, accord-ing to Sarah Grand.” Kersley further suggests that “some belief in the continuation of this curse could explain, for Sarah, the miserable life of her mother, her own problems and those of her son who ended the line (as far as we know).” Kersley, 18.
The “aristocratic” interest in her own family’s genealogy transformed in Grand’s writ-ing into her characters’ preoccupation with heredity nicely illustrates Michel Foucault’s point that “many of the themes characteristic of the caste manners of the nobility reappeared in the nineteenth-century bourgeoisie, but in the guise of biological, medical, or eugenic precepts,” and that “the concern with genealogy became a preoccupations with heredity.” *The History of Sexuality. Volume 1: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 124.
45. Young, 2.
47. Writing on the role played by late-nineteenth-century privileged European women in the colonies, Margaret Strobel and Vron Ware have observed that the empire provided Western women with a space in which unconventional meanings of feminin-ity could be explored. Strobel, xi; Vron Ware, *Beyond the Pale: White Women, Racism and History* (London: Verson, 1992), 120.
48. Young, 2.
49. This choice of setting might also have had biographical significance. Accord-ing to Kersley, it was in Malta (where the McFalls were probably posted for a short period on their way home from the East) that Frances became first disillusioned with her husband. Kersley, 41.
50. Unlike in the colonies of “white settlement” (Canadian provinces, Australia,
New Zealand, and South Africa), whose citizens were throughout the nineteenth century claiming and successfully gaining self-government, in Crown colonies (for the most part acquired by Britain through military conquests) executive powers remained in the hands of Imperial administrators of the British Crown. Self-government within the empire was thus reserved for the “superior” race. Andrew Porter, Introduction, *The Oxford History of the British Empire: The Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 4–5.


52. As Dobie points out, what was initially represented by the British as a voluntary decision without any obligations for the future became enforced later when the Maltese finally organized their calls for independence. Only in 1964, when the island became strategically less important, was independence finally achieved. *Malta’s Road to Independence*, vii.


55. This consequence of European colonial wives’ narratives is analyzed in Strobel, 27.

56. While China never became a British crown colony, following its military defeats in the Anglo-Chinese wars of 1840–42 (the Opium War) and 1856–60, its sovereignty became impaired through a series of treaties unfavorable to China. Large coastal parts of China, Jurgen Osterhammel points out, were turned into “uncolonized extension of Empire.” The British-Chinese treaties “guaranteed rights of access to and of residence in a number of major Chinese cities (transformed into ‘treaty ports’), personal security from the alleged ‘barbarity’ of Chinese justice, a uniformly low tariff and a privileged treatment of foreign goods . . . They also opened up China’s rivers and coastal waters to the unchecked activities of foreign shipping companies.” “Britain and China, 1842–1914,” *Oxford History of the British Empire*, 146.

57. Ideala’s travels in China would be an exception to this rule, although her journey is merely mentioned in the book rather than being depicted in more detail.


59. Ibid., 224.

60. According to McClintock, where skin color as a sign of otherness could not be easily invoked (as in the case of the Irish and other “white negroes”), the iconography of “domestic degeneracy” was often invoked by English nineteenth-century writers to mark off these groups’ presumed cultural inferiority. McClintock, 52.

61. This seems a characteristic feature in Grand’s texts. Not only are Beth’s father and Evangeline’s husband (in “The Yellow Leaf”) orientalized, but Evadne’s first husband Colquhoun has an Irish ancestry on his mother’s side. This model of bonding, wherein the woman’s location on the imaginary evolutionary ladder is higher than her partner’s, is (quite conventionally) repeatedly rejected in Grand’s writing as inadvisable and corruptive both to the women characters and to English culture in general.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 2


63. Grand’s emphasis on Beth’s delicate features might be perhaps also read (along the lines of Heilmann’s argument) in terms of Grand’s effort to market her New Woman by representing her as feminine and distancing her from the masculinized and unattractive caricature publicized by New Woman opponents.

64. Grand, “The Yellow Leaf,” Our Manifold Nature, 98. All subsequent references to this short story will refer to this edition and will be cited parenthetically in the text.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 2

1. “George Egerton” was born Mary Chavelita Dunne. She married George Egerton Clairmonte and later Reginald Golding Bright. According to her biographer, Margaret Diane Stetz, Egerton chose the pseudonym out of a compliment to her mother (Isabel George) and her first husband. Margaret Diane Stetz, “George Egerton: Woman and Writer of the Eighteen-Nineties,” diss., Harvard University, 1982, 29. Stetz’s dissertation serves as my primary source for biographical information about Egerton, along with a collection of Egerton’s correspondence, A Leaf from The Yellow Book: The Correspondence of George Egerton, ed. Terence De Vere White (London: The Richards Press, 1958).


3. Keynotes was published by John Lane and Elkin Mathews in 1893. The cover design by Aubrey Beardsley and the marketing strategies used by Lane were to a great extent responsible for its becoming associated with the English fin-de-siècle decadence. For many readers the book became synonymous with decadence, the author’s own ambiguous attitude toward decadence notwithstanding. Keynotes sold 6,000 copies in its first year and launched Lane’s successful “Keynote Series” of novels and collections of short stories by contemporary authors. Egerton’s second book, Discords, published by Lane in 1894 as the sixth volume of the series, was also a success. For an analysis of Lane’s advertising strategies see Rosie Miles, “George Egerton, Bitextuality and Cultural (Re)Production in the 1890s,” Women’s Writing 3:3 (1996): 243–59.

4. George Egerton, “A Cross Line,” Keynotes & Discords (London: Virago, 1983), 11. All subsequent references to Egerton’s stories in Keynotes and Discords will refer to this edition and will be given parenthetically in the text.

5. After her mother’s death when Egerton was sixteen (but also prior to it), her father, Captain Dunne, became the major influence on her life and, as many scholars have commented, the model for her first two partners. Captain Dunne was proud of his ancient Irish ancestry and in the 1870s became directly involved with Butt’s Home Rule campaign. Stetz, 3.


7. Egerton portrays her life with Higginson in “Under Northern Sky” (Keynotes)
and in *The Wheel of God* (1898).

8. The income earned from her writing seems to have never been sufficient to provide regular support for all of the people financially dependent on Egerton: her family and later her first husband.

9. The U.S. consul in Buenos Aires said in the 1890s about Latin America: “The English are in everything, except politics, as intimately as though it were a British colony.” Quoted in Roy Miller, *Britain and Latin America in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (London: Longman, 1993), 5. Chile and Brazil had, in the eyes of British investors, a privileged position among Latin American countries because of their relative political stability.

10. According to Holbrook Jackson, Egerton’s was the first reference to Nietzsche in English literature. *The Eighteen Nineties: A Review of Art and Ideas at the Close of the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Knopf, 1923), 129.

11. Egerton translated Knut Hamsun’s *Hunger* from Norwegian and Ola Hansson’s *Young Ofeg’s Ditties* from Swedish.


13. Ibid., 62.


16. “Man is something that shall be overcome. What have you done to overcome him? All beings so far have created something beyond themselves; and do you want to be the ebb of this great flood and even go back to the beast rather than overcome man? What is the ape to man? A laughing-stock or a painful embarrassment. And man shall be just that for the overman.” Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra, The Portable Nietzsche*, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufman (New York: Penguin, 1968), 124.


18. Nietzsche’s endorsement for the recovery of instinct is emphatically expressed in *The Twilight of the Idols*: “To have to fight the instincts—that is the formula of decadence: as long as life is ascending, happiness equals instinct.” *The Portable Nietzsche*, 479; Nietzsche’s italics.


20. Carol Diethe has pointed out that Nietzsche “was virulently opposed to the education of women because he felt that his system . . . depended on the fact that women would stay in the home (as in Ancient Greece) and rear the new generation.” “Nietzsche and the New Woman,” *German Life and Letters* 48:4 (October 1995): 433.


22. Nietzsche here rejects categorically the principle of the “taming” of human bodies through morality. While his objections to the concept of breeding are expressed
less vigorously, thereby exposing his fascination with the notion of regulation of human populations, his rejection of the intrusions of the state and church power upon individuals implies that the ideal regulation of populations, as conceived by him, would be executed on a personal level; it would rely on the discretion of individual couples. *The Twilight of the Idols*, 505.

23. This was the last story in Egerton’s *Discords*.

24. Egerton dedicated *Keynotes* “To Knut Hamsun. In memory of a day when the west wind and the rainbow met, 1892–1893” (vi). Her relationship with Hamsun is rendered in “Now Spring Has Come” (*Keynotes*).

25. Compare this passage with Zarathustra’s speech: “It was the sick and decaying who despised body and earth and invented the heavenly realm. . . . I know these godlike men all too well: they want one to have faith in them, and doubt to be sin. . . . Listen rather, my brothers, to the voice of the healthy body.” *Thus Spoke Zarathustra, The Portable Nietzsche*, 146. Also, compare Nietzsche’s comments on “bad conscience” (called by him a deep-seated malady resulting from interiorization of instincts), on sin (“the priestly version of bad conscience” utilized for the purposes of organized religion), and asceticism (“an ascetic life is really a contradiction in terms”) in *The Genealogy of Morals*.


27. In her autobiographical comments, “A Keynote to *Keynotes,*” Egerton spoke thus about her creative goals: “There was only one small plot left for [woman] to tell: the *terra incognita* of herself, as she knew herself to be, not as man liked to imagine her.” “A Keynote to *Keynotes,*” *Ten Contemporaries: Notes toward Their Definite Bibliography*, ed. John Gawsworth (London: Folcroft, 1972), 57–60; Egerton’s italics.

28. Compare also Egerton in “A Keynote to *Keynotes*” on this issue: “I recognized that in the main, woman was the ever-untamed, unchanging, adapting herself as far as it suited her ends to male expectations; even if repression was altering her subtly. I would use situations or conflicts as I saw them, with a total disregard of man’s opinions. I would unlock a closed door with a key of my own fashioning” (58).

29. Chrisman has insightfully pointed out the “linkage of European femininity with an (implicitly racialized) ideology of savage primitivism” in this passage (46).


32. Stutfield, 838.

33. Ardis, 100.


35. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 178.

36. At the time of writing “The Spell of the White Elf,” Egerton still believed (was told by doctors) that, like the character of the English woman writer in the story, she could not have children. Her later pregnancy at age thirty-six came as a surprise.
37. Anne McClintock has examined this plot in Schreiner’s *Man to Man* (1926), where the character of a white mistress, Rebekah, adopts her husband’s illegitimate daughter of mixed race while the black mother (a servant) is represented as uncaring and unfit to take care of her child. *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 273.

38. “She-Notes. By Borgia Smudgiton,” *Punch* 62 (March 17, 1894): 129. Owen Seaman was the author of this anonymously published article.


41. “She has gathered her cream-colored mittens about her wrists; the contrast at once strikes him; in the subdued evening light he can see that her hands are unwashed.” “She-Notes. By Borgia Smudgiton,” *Punch* 61 (March 10, 1894): 109.

42. Stoler, 123.

43. Ibid., 105.


45. In fact, when Clairmonte’s illegitimate child was born in 1898, an outcome of Clairmonte’s brief stay in England, it was Egerton who, although destitute herself, offered what money and help she could to the child’s poor mother, while Clairmonte denied paternity. Egerton divorced Clairmonte in 1900. Stetz, 82.

46. Stetz, 90.

47. While David Fitzpatrick notes that Ireland’s place within the British imperial system differed both from white settler colonies (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa) and from Crown colonies, he acknowledges “Britain’s enduring disposition to govern Ireland like a Crown Colony.” “Ireland and the Empire,” *Oxford History of the British Empire*, 500.


50. According to Stetz, Egerton considered William Butler Yeats “a fraud” (97).

51. As their response to the Anglo-Saxonist stereotypical portrait of the Irish as culturally and racially inferior (perhaps best exemplified by *Punch* cartoons of Paddy with his pig), Synge and Yeats created idealized pictures of the Irish peasant as the repository of Irish virtues and spirituality. Synge, in his portrayal of peasants from the Aran Islands, idealized the Celtic “wildness” and vitality, dying (according to him) in more “civilized” cultures. Thus he celebrated those presumably innate Irish attributes that the English had ridiculed (Watson, 41 and 71). Yeats, in his attempt to dodge the (for him) unpalatable aspect of the peasants’ Catholicism, created idealized peasant Ireland of pre-Christian folk and fairy.

52. Watson, 28.

53. As Stetz notes, Captain Dunn (1837–1901) “traced his ancestry back to the O’Donns of Leinster, one of the noblest Irish families” (1).

54. Egerton’s biographer describes her religious convictions in the 1890s as a
“peculiar” mixture of deism, spiritualism, and pantheism. Interestingly, Egerton’s son was baptized, although, as Stetz notes, Egerton took no interest in the ceremony (76).

55. Isaac Butt was the founder of Home Rule (1870). Although he himself belonged to the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy and initially was a unionist, Butt gradually lost confidence in the Union, developed into a conservative Irish nationalist, and worked to reconcile Irish Catholics and Anglo-Irish Protestants. His plan was to establish an Irish government that would have jurisdiction over local resources while Westminster would retain authority over colonial affairs, foreign policy, and imperial defense. By 1876, Irish nationalists had lost their patience with Butt’s conservative tactics, and they gave their support to the more radical Parnell (McCaffrey, 75–92).

In 1873, Captain Dunne backed a bill for 800 pounds for Butt who was his friend. When the bill was not met, Dunne was sent to the Marshalsea prison, leaving his five children and pregnant wife in Dublin (Stetz, 3).


57. The various plots in the story are not integrated, and most of its characters are merely incomplete sketches. Stetz uses the following accurate metaphor to describe “Oony”: “‘Oony’ was like a badly packed trunk hauled down from the store-room of the author’s memory: fascinating bits of jumble, with no relation to each other, were always spilling out of it” (94).

58. Egerton, “Oony,” Symphonies (London: The Bodley Head, 1897), 118. All subsequent references to “Oony” will refer to this edition and will be cited parenthetically in the text.

59. Curtis, 2.

60. If Egerton’s feelings toward Ireland were ambivalent, her distrust of the English was relatively persistent. Since Irish Americans supported financially the Irish Home Rule cause, they provided Egerton with an acceptable social group (certainly more acceptable to Egerton than the English) for censuring the Irish peasant lifestyle.

61. “The word degenerate, when applied to a people, means . . . that the people has no longer the same intrinsic value as it had before, because it has no longer the same blood in its veins, continual adulterations having gradually affected the quality of that blood. . . . He, and his civilization with him, will certainly die on the day when the primordial race-unit is so broken up and swamped by the influx of foreign elements, that its effective qualities have no longer sufficient freedom of action.” Arthur de Gobineau, The Inequality of Human Races, trans. Adrian Collins (New York: Howard Fertig, 1967), 25.

62. Gobineau, 212.


64. Cf. Hankins, 144.


66. Egerton, The Wheel of God (London: Grant Richards, 1898), 226. All subsequent references to the novel will refer to this edition and will be given parenthetically in the text.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 3

1. Robins was born in 1862 in Louisville, Kentucky, and raised (mostly by her paternal grandmother) in Zanesville, Ohio. Her mother’s mental health seriously deteriorated when Elizabeth was still a young girl, possibly aggravated by marital difficulties and frequent births. In 1881, against her father’s wishes, Elizabeth went on stage, traveling across the United States with O’Neill’s touring company and later acting with the Boston Museum Theater. In 1888, Robins arrived in London, where she became one of the most successful Ibsen actresses. Although she frequently visited the United States afterwards, she spent most of the remainder of her life in Britain, where she died in 1952. Cf. Joanne E. Gates, *Elizabeth Robins, 1862–1952: Actress, Novelist, Feminist* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1994); and Angela V. John, *Elizabeth Robins: Staging a Life. 1862–1952* (London: Routledge, 1995).


4. Tracy C. Davis has pointed out that when in the late nineteenth century, actresses became oversupplied, middle-class women were better prepared to survive the surplus; working-class actresses could not compete with their educated language and drawing-room manners demanded by the bourgeois audiences. *Actresses as Working Women: Their Social Identity in Victorian Culture* (London: Routledge, 1991), 13.


7. Elizabeth Robins, *Both Sides of the Curtain* (London: Heinemann, 1940), 169; Robins’ italics. All subsequent references to this book will refer to this edition and will be given parenthetically in the text.

8. Robins, *Under the Southern Cross* (New York: Frederick Stokes, 1907), 216. All subsequent references to this work will refer to this edition and will be given parenthetically in the text.

9. Robins met George Parks while working with the Boston Museum Theater. Although she did not want to marry him and was supported in this decision by her grandmother, they did marry in 1885. Parks, who was evidently jealous of Elizabeth’s career and her literary ambitions, committed suicide in 1887. Gates, 16–21.


11. Although the name was coined in 1911, the symptoms of schizophrenia were well known to Victorian physicians.


13. Robins, *The Open Question: A Tale of Two Temperaments* (London: Harper Publishers, 1899), 336. All subsequent references to the novel will be to this edition and will be given parenthetically in the text.

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161:975 (Jan. 1897): 110.
18. Ibsen’s wife Suzanna as well as her influential step-mother, the writer Magdalene Thøresen—both of them described by Meyer as the first “new women” that the playwright ever met (Meyer, 126)—were among the most enthusiastic followers of Kierkegaard. It was through their (one would expect pro-women) interpretation that Ibsen knew the philosopher’s work.
20. William Archer summed up the English critics’ assessments of Ibsen’s characters as mentally deteriorated in several articles, for example, in “Ghosts and Gibberings,” Pall Mall Gazette (8 April 1891): 3; or in “The Mausoleum of Ibsen,” Fortnightly Review (July 1893): 77–91.
24. Clement Scott is an example of a critic who, although hostile to the ideology presented by Ibsen’s plays, frequently expressed his surprised fascination with their productions. In his (unsigned) review of the 1891 production of Rosmersholm, he confesses: “Say what we will about Ibsen, he unquestionably possesses a great power of fascination. Those who most detest his theories, his doctrines, his very methods of art, confess to a strange and absorbing interest.” Daily Telegraph (24 Feb. 1891): 3; reprinted in Ibsen: The Critical Heritage, 167. In his later (unsigned) comment on Robins’ production of The Master Builder, Scott similarly wrote: “There is, indeed, something almost intoxicating in the very vagueness of the playwright’s utterances—in the feeling that each spectator can be his own interpreter.” Daily Telegraph (21 Feb. 1893): 3; reprinted in Ibsen: The Critical Heritage, 270.
27. Cima, 40.
28. Cf. Michel Foucault’s comments on the commonly accepted perception today that truth/confession is freedom and his arguments that the obligation to confess is rather the “effect of a power that constrains us” and that the production of truth is
NOTES TO CHAPTER 4


30. Ibid., 29.
32. Cf., for instance, Robins’ objections to interpretations of her Hedda by male critics such as Clement Scott. Ibsen and the Actress (London: Hogarth, 1928), 16, 32.
34. Quoted in Gates, 1.
All subsequent references to this essay will refer to this edition and will be given parenthetically in the text.
36. Robins’ experience with the London theatrical establishment controlled by actor-managers, known for being easily intimidated by strong roles for women, might have been responsible for her decision to keep her most seditious character from being presented on the stage.
37. Robins, “The Silver Lotus,” quoted from the manuscript in the Fales Library, New York University, II:38–39. All subsequent references to this play will refer to this manuscript and will be given parenthetically in the text.
41. I am grateful to Margaret Stetz for bringing this analogy to my attention.
42. Robins, The Convert (New York: Macmillan, 1913), 59. All subsequent references to the novel will refer to this edition and will be given parenthetically in the text.
43. In the second half of the nineteenth century, in Ohio, where Robins was raised and went to a private seminary, public schools were bilingual: English and German. Victor Villanueva, Jr., Bootstraps: From an American Academic of Color (Urbana, IL: NCTE, 1993), 46.
45. Ibid., 138.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 4

1. Amy Levy was born in Stockwell (not Clapham). I am grateful to Levy’s grand-niece, Katharine Solomon, for this clarification.
3. In 1879 Levy became the second Jewish woman to enter Cambridge (Beckman, 35), attending Newham College until 1881. Interestingly, none of Levy’s four brothers (all her juniors) received a college education, possibly because of the economic downturn the family experienced in the 1880s.


8. Katharine Tynan and Harry Quilter, quoted in Beckman (3).


20. Scheinberg, 177.


22. Scheinberg, 192.

23. Twelve copies of the poem were printed for private circulation. New, 554.

24. Levy, “A Ballad of Religion and Marriage,” *The Complete Novels*, 404. All subsequent references to this poem will refer to this edition and will be cited parenthetically in the text.


26. Beckman, 141.
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29. Levy, “Xantippe: A Fragment,” _The Complete Novels_, 358. All subsequent references to this poem will refer to this edition and will be cited parenthetically in the text.
31. Levy, “Griselda,” _The Complete Novels_, 461. All subsequent references to this short story will refer to this edition and will be cited parenthetically in the text.
32. Levy, _The Romance of a Shop_, _The Complete Novels_, 190. All subsequent references to this novel will refer to this edition and will be cited parenthetically in the text.
33. Levy, _Miss Meredith_, _The Complete Novels_, 351. All subsequent references to this novel will refer to this edition and will be cited parenthetically in the text.
34. Beckman, 154.
35. As her own comments concerning _The Romance_ suggest, to shock middle-class readers was not Levy’s purpose here. She wrote in a letter that the novel “aims at the young person” and that “I have purposely held in my hand.” Quoted in Beckman, 155.
38. Speaking of the novel’s conformity to the conventions of nineteenth-century realism, Beckman has similarly observed that Levy engages these conventions in such an exaggerated way that they appear comical (157).
40. Hutcheon, 2.
41. Ibid., 37.
42. Irony “can be used either to undercut or to reinforce both conservative and radical positions.” Ibid., 27.
43. Ibid., 31.
45. Ibid., 82.
46. Beckman, 185.
48. Ibid., 40.
49. Ibid., 115.
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50. Ibid., 39.
51. Ibid., 82.
52. I am grateful to Linda Hunt Beckman for this insight.
54. “Bertie, as Gwendolen Harleth said of Grandcourt, was not disgusting.” Levy, Reuben Sachs, 282.
55. Beckman reminds us that Levy’s novel’s rebuke of the Jewish community’s materialism needs to be viewed in the broader context of the Victorian novel’s critical treatment of the materialistic values within the whole British middle class (170).
58. Quoted in Rochelson, 315.
59. Gilman, 76.
60. Ibid., 12.
61. I agree with Beckman’s perceptive assessment of Levy’s narrator as shifting and erratic, sometimes reliable, other times unreliable: “Although narrated in the third person, Reuben Sachs lacks an omniscient point of view. The story is told either by one narrator whose perspective keeps shifting and who is a kind of ventriloquist (able to speak in several social dialects) or by divergent voices that are not explicitly differentiated from one another.” Beckman, Amy Levy, 165.
63. Beckman, Amy Levy, 162. Bryan Cheyette’s similarly favorable approach to Reuben Sachs is also illuminating. Reading it as a text that pioneered a new genre of the Anglo-Jewish novel of “revolt,” he considers Levy’s exaggerated use of stereotypes as being driven by her refusal to “engage in literary apologetics on behalf of Anglo-Jewry’s version of morality” (260) and idealize her portrayal of the Anglo-Jewish community. The Anglo-Jewish novel of “revolt” refused to continue the tradition of the post-emancipationist novel (applauded and encouraged by the Jewish Chronicle), whose major objective was to “present Jews sympathetically as ideal ‘good citizens’” (Cheyette, 254).
64. Beckman argues that “the relationship between the narrator and the narrative is slippery because Levy wants the reader to understand that it is impossible to establish the truth about the Jews” (Amy Levy, 163).
Scheinberg observes that “in general, it is almost impossible to determine whether the narrator [in Reuben Sachs] is Jewish or not” and argues that Levy in her novel “attempted to construct a ‘neutral’ narrator.” She continues: “Such a persona would be unreadable in Christian culture which functions under the assumptions of essential Jewish identity: one either is, or is not, a Jew” (181).
65. The narrative uses terms such as “spurious” (276) and “veneer” (281) when speaking of Lee-Harrison’s Judaism. Also see the statement on page 236: “Needless to
say [Bertie] was completely out of touch with these people whose faith his search for the true religion had led him, for the time being, to embrace.”

68. George Eliot, Daniel Deronda (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987), 270. All subsequent references to this novel will refer to this edition and will be cited parenthetically in the text.
70. Levy, “Middle-Class Jewish Women of To-Day,” The Complete Novels, 525.
72. Rochelson, 319.
73. Ragussis, 38.
75. Ibid., 124.
77. Quoted in Cesarani, 86–87.
78. Palestine was a province within the Ottoman Empire until 1918 when it officially entered “Britain’s sphere of influence.” Edward Said, The Question of Palestine (New York: Times Books, 1979), 19.
79. Ibid., 88.
80. Ibid., 68–69.
81. Ibid., 65.
82. Mordecai speaks of Palestine as a land that needs to be “redeemed” by the Jews from its “debauched and paupered conquerors,” and he makes stereotypical references to “the despotism of the East” (595). Cf. Said’s analysis of Mordecai’s speech (64).
84. Cheyette, Between “Race” and Culture, 253.
85. Levy, “Cohen of Trinity,” The Complete Novels, 478. All subsequent references to this short story will refer to this edition and will be cited parenthetically in the text.
86. Gilman, 154. In 1888, Jean Martin Charcot, for instance, stressed “that nervous illnesses of all types are innumerable more frequent among Jews than among other groups.” Quoted in Gilman, 155.
87. “It is a most effective bit of narrow and close photography,” the (non-Jewish) reader for Macmillan stated about the novel. Quoted in Beckman, Amy Levy, 168.
88. Hutcheon, 11.
89. Beckman, Amy Levy, 6, 208.
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