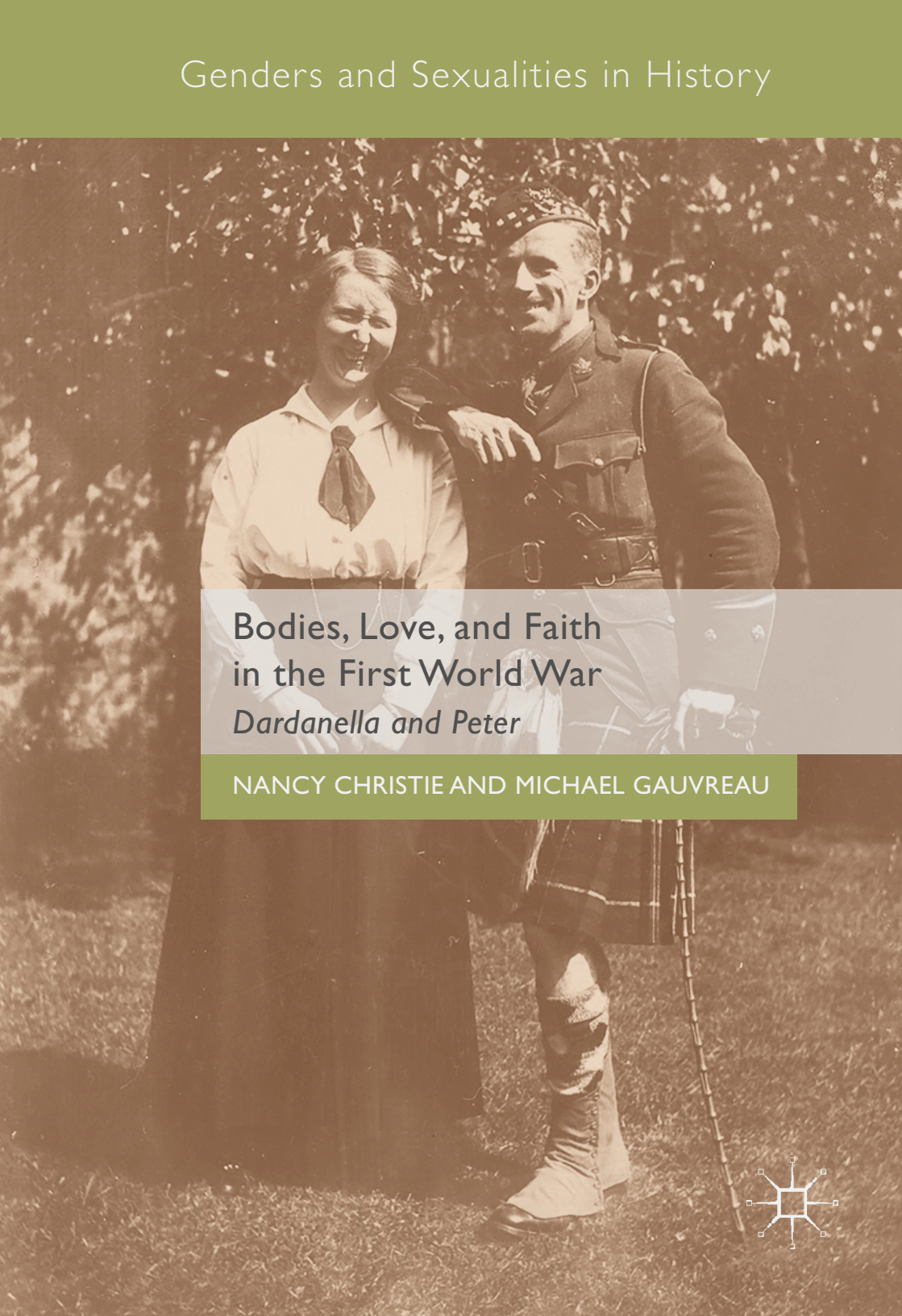


Genders and Sexualities in History



**Bodies, Love, and Faith  
in the First World War**  
*Dardanella and Peter*

NANCY CHRISTIE AND MICHAEL GAUVREAU



# Genders and Sexualities in History

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Nancy Christie • Michael Gauvreau

# Bodies, Love, and Faith in the First World War

Dardanella and Peter

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Cover illustration: Harry and Gwyneth in the garden at Sunnyside just before their marriage in May 1916. Courtesy of Library and Archives Canada

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*For Deryck M. Schreuder*  
*Eminent scholar of Victorianism*

## SERIES EDITOR PREFACE

The history of sexuality and modernity is one of the most dynamic fields in gender studies. Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau's *Bodies, Love, and Faith in the First World War: Dardanella and Peter* is a particularly exciting contribution to this literature because it looks at the 'big questions' of romantic love, carnality, and modernity through the lens of an aspiring clergyman Harry Logan and suffragist Gwyneth Murray. This Edwardian couple struggle to negotiate new mores associated with emotional receptivity, sexual expressiveness, Christian ethics, Freudianism, and parenthood. Separated as a result of the First World War, they explore their sexuality by adopting the personae of Dardanella and Peter, writing as their vagina and penis. Their experiences show how the transition from Victorianism to the modern world was often contested and always incomplete. In common with all the volumes in the Gender and Sexualities in History series, *Bodies, Love, and Faith in the First World War* is a multifaceted and meticulously researched scholarly study. It is an exciting contribution to our understanding of gender and sexuality in the past.

Cambridge, UK  
London, UK  
London, UK

John Arnold  
Joanna Bourke  
Sean Brady

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our research and writing of this transatlantic love story has greatly benefited from the advice and suggestions of colleagues in the wider British world who sought to know more about a treasure-trove of personal experience. Nancy Christie had initially thought to write a short article on the wartime letters of Harry and Gwyneth, and without the perceptive suggestion of Dr. Mark Boda of the Divinity College, McMaster University, who thought that the letters sounded sufficiently intriguing to support a larger project, we may never have thought of writing a book. Dr. Alana Harris of University College, London, has been an enthusiastic supporter from the beginning, offering a number of perceptive insights, as has our series editor, Dr. Sean Brady of Birkbeck College, London, whose searching questions about the Oxford and Cambridge contexts of Harry and Gwyneth's lives prompted us to think more deeply about the terrain of gender and emotion. And we are particularly grateful to the participants in the Religion and Sexualities Conference held at the University of Nottingham in the spring of 2017, where Drs. Harry Cocks, Dominic Janes, Jacqueline DeVries and Sue Morgan provided stimulating commentary and advice. We owe a particular debt to Professor Bill Reddy of Duke University, who offered a number of suggestions of key texts on the history of love, but also contributed greatly to clarifying our thinking on a number of points relating to the history of emotions. We would also like to thank Dr. Rosemary Annable for sharing her research on the Christian student camps at Baslow, and for providing hospitality during several visits to Britain. We are grateful to these wonderful colleagues who have generously provided advice and good counsel.



Every historian knows the degree to which their work benefits from the assistance of knowledgeable archivists and librarians. Hannah Westall, archivist of Girton College Archives, unearthed several vital sources which have allowed us to greatly enrich Gwyneth's experience at Girton, after Harry destroyed her own letters written from Cambridge. Melissa Downing, archivist of Rhodes House, provided access to Harry Logan's extensive biographical file, while Michael Riordan, archivist of St. John's College, Oxford, answered our queries and provided documents related to student life at the College. Candice Bjur, of the University of British Columbia Archives, was invaluable in researching their holdings of the extensive Logan collection. At McMaster University, Kim Pickett of the Interlibrary Loans Department, graciously and promptly handled our incessant requests for Edwardian periodicals and books on the history of sexuality.

Our greatest intellectual debts are, first to our editor, Sean Brady, who from the inception of this project engaged enthusiastically with its aims and is a testament to the truism that a book is only as good as its editor. Our thanks to the entire Palgrave Macmillan team for bringing this book so smoothly and expeditiously to publication. This book would not have been written in as timely a fashion nor with as much joy, but for the constant inspiring presence of Nancy Christie's former supervisor at the University of Sydney, Professor Deryck M. Schreuder, who first introduced her to all things Victorian and not only generously read the entire manuscript, but also provided us with so many perceptive comments. It is very rare to encounter someone who so fully immersed himself in Harry and Gwyneth's world of love, as they made their journey out of the confines of Victorianism. When Deryck was not reading the chapters, he kept us apprised of new work in the field, but most importantly, kept our spirits buoyed up and our attention focused with a steady stream of humorous writings on the vagaries of love and sex. Nancy Christie in particular wishes to honour him for a lifetime of "care and consideration" for helping enrich her scholarship, and it is with heartfelt thanks that we wish to dedicate this book to him.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

G	Gwyneth (Murray) Logan
GCA	Girton College Archives
GF	W.L. Grant Fonds
H	Harry Logan
HTLFP	Harry Tremaine Logan Family Papers
LAC	Library and Archives Canada
LF	Logan Fonds
MMUA	McMaster University Archives
MUA	McGill University Archives
UBCA	University of British Columbia Archives

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## CHAPTER 1

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# Introduction: Making Love Sexual in the Edwardian Age

*“The inner laws of the sex-passion, of love, and of all human relationships—must gradually appear and take the lead, since they alone are the powers which can create and uphold a rational society; and that the outer laws—since they are dead and lifeless things—must inevitably disappear. Real love is only possible in the freedom of society; and freedom is only possible when love is a reality.”*  
Edward Carpenter, *Love’s Coming of Age* (1896)

One of the few things that Gwyneth Murray and Harry Logan were able to agree upon was that a biography of them would be difficult to write. In response to Harry’s observation that biographers would come to grief in trying to reconcile their intimate selves, Gwyneth averred: “Yes our biographer *will* have a very difficult task but what an exceptionally interesting one it will be! Two such wonderful people as you and me to biograph!!”<sup>1</sup> This, however, is not a biography in the conventional sense of narrating an entire life course; rather, it is a biography of a relationship,<sup>2</sup> a microstudy of subjective attitudes to sexual love and their intersection with Edwardian culture.

Like the modernist novel, this book ventures directly into the flow of the relationship of this young couple, and explores letters which recount mundane everyday states of mind which have no fixed beginning and no resolved endings.<sup>3</sup> By exploring the complexities, tensions and gender

conflicts inherent in modern courtship and marriage as told through the story of the romance of Dardanella and Peter, this book offers one of the first sustained treatments of how heterosexual identities were both articulated and contested in early twentieth-century Britain. This book continues a scholarly conversation launched by William Reddy, which interprets attitudes to sexual desire and romantic love as historically contingent, and shows how these two entities, viewed as dichotomous for centuries,<sup>4</sup> were brought into closer proximity as seen through the lived experience of a young married couple. In using the remarkably frank and emotionally charged correspondence of Gwyneth Murray, the youngest daughter of Sir James Murray, the famous editor of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, and her fiancé Harry Logan, an aspiring clergyman from Canada, it seeks to uncover the ways in which the language of love changed between the Victorian era and the Edwardian age. In assessing how the coded language of religion gave way to explicit sex talk, our study contributes to furthering our understanding of how sexual love became culturally central as Britain entered World War I.<sup>5</sup>

This is a book about the courtship and marriage of an Edwardian couple who wrote in the persona of their vagina (Dardanella) and penis (Peter) during World War I. From the first stirrings of sexual lust in 1911, when Peter began to imagine Dardanella's erotic body while advising about weight loss, to the more explicit sex-talk about her vagina, breasts, nipples, pubic hair and marble limbs following their marriage in 1916, this aspiring clergyman and his British fiancée sought to develop a modern language of love and erotic desire which threw off Victorian moral sensibilities in favour of a more open mode of expression that evoked the pleasures of sex. Their correspondence spanned an era bracketed by Virginia Woolf's celebrated aphorism that "human character changed on or about December 1910"<sup>6</sup> and the publication of Lytton Strachey's famous psychological study *Eminent Victorians*. The couple avidly read Strachey because it encapsulated their own journey of reflection and self-discovery and confirmed their personal break with the sexual mores and conventions of their parents' generation. Because their first-person epistolary discussion of their courtship and marriage paralleled those broader cultural developments within the Edwardian temperament, usually encompassed under the term "modern", their personal experience serves as a critical vantage point from which to assess how Edwardian culture was read, appropriated and lived by ordinary men and women of the middle classes.

The idea for writing *Dardanella and Peter* began with the following question: how did the experience of higher education for women affect the gender dynamics of courtship and marriage in the first decades of the twentieth century? The marvellous “archive of feeling”<sup>7</sup> generated by the extensive correspondence of Harry and Gwyneth was discovered by Nancy Christie in the winter of 2014. As a scholar of the Victorian family, her curiosity was piqued when she encountered Harry’s first letter in which he was so obviously erotically fantasizing about Gwyneth’s entire body even as he cautioned her against getting fat. Christie immediately sensed an engagement with love and sex which was distinctly at odds with Victorian sensibilities which enjoined reticence and prudence about love and its relationship to the body. As she was to discover, Harry and Gwyneth first met while he was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford. Harry was a Canadian son of the manse and was himself aspiring to become a Presbyterian clergyman when he met Gwyneth who was a stellar student at Girton College, later achieving a coveted First in the Cambridge Maths Tripos. Like her mother and older sister Hilda, Gwyneth sympathized with the cause of women’s suffrage and believed in the intellectual equality of the sexes. Gwyneth was alive to new cultural stirrings, being drawn to the work of Henri Bergson and other exponents of vitalism, the new psychology and the new theology; as an amateur artist she was drawn to post-impressionism. Like many of her contemporaries at Girton, Gwyneth avidly read and discussed the sexually liberated *Ann Veronica*, the eponymous heroine of H.G. Wells’ novel, and while she accepted the new feminism in which individual freedom for women was linked to greater sexual satisfaction, she rebuffed other symbols of female emancipation, such as shorter skirts and the jettisoning of restrictive corsets. However, she ultimately believed that women’s emancipation could be achieved through love and marriage, hoping that ideally she could combine these with a career.

Although she was known in her family circle for her shyness and reserve, she was always welcomed as a cheerful addition to the family because of her voluble humour and sense of fun. This is perhaps what first drew her to Harry, who was also known as a prankster, but who was more emotionally volatile in contrast to the confident and strong-minded Gwyneth. Harry was loquacious both in personal conversation and in his letter-writing, and as Gwyneth later related, upon his death in 1971, he was “chattering right up to the end”. He was later memorialized as a “prince among men” with a “secret mischievous grin”, usually holding a “cheerful cigar”. Although a Rhodes Scholar, he likely won the award because of his prow-



ess on the track rather than for his academic accomplishments. However, when we first meet him he was puritanical and priggish, especially on issues of intemperance and sexual excess, as one might expect from someone raised in a strict Presbyterian home and ambitious for a clerical career. Harry presented himself in his correspondence as boisterous in personality, but he was also given to much introspection and bouts of depression, caused in part by the great pressure to succeed imposed upon him by his demanding father. The fact that he had a stutter may also have contributed to the lack of confidence and maturity which were self-evident during his courtship with Gwyneth. He was demanding and paternalistic in his attitude towards women, persistently picturing his fiancée as a sympathetic helpmeet, much like his mother, despite Gwyneth's demand that she be treated like a real human being with her own needs.

Gwyneth and Harry may have shared a family background in evangelical Protestantism, which led to an ideal of religious service in missionary work, but in other respects their families were poles apart. Gwyneth was the youngest of eleven children from a prestigious Oxford family and remained emotionally distant not only from her parents but from her siblings, attributing her undemonstrative nature to the English public schools. Indeed, she revelled in her reserve as a sign of her rebellion against the standard image of the hysterical woman. By contrast, Harry was the younger of two brothers, and possessed a particularly intense bond with his indulgent mother. However, he also seemed to enjoy what he termed a "teasing" relationship with his father, whom he both admired and resented because he wished Harry to replicate his own career. Although Harry was raised in a well-known Presbyterian family in Vancouver, he was attracted to marrying into the Murray family for its prospects of upward mobility, but he nevertheless remained painfully conscious of the status differential between them. However, for both Gwyneth and Harry, attending university was a transformative experience, exposing them to an exciting spectrum of new ideas and permitting them to enjoy the comradeship of a youthful peer group that functioned as a counterweight to familial constraints. To an unparalleled degree, Oxford and Cambridge symbolized freedom to choose their friends and ideas, and was remembered by both of them as the most memorable time of their lives.<sup>8</sup>

In 1911, Harry and Gwyneth became secretly engaged but it was a courtship that remained a long-distance one until they married in the spring of 1916, when Harry, an officer in the Canadian Machine Gun Corps, was posted to the Western Front. As a result, their personal archive contains

over 2000 letters written daily between 1911 and 1919, providing an unrivalled account of the psychological and emotional dimension of courtship and marriage in the Edwardian era. In so far as their correspondence involved a remarkably self-conscious engagement with a wide spectrum of emotions, including sexual desire, anxiety, frustration, anger and even shattered nerves, the letters of these two ordinary middle-class youth coming of age in Edwardian Britain are comparable to the vividness and psychological immediacy of those exchanged between Sigmund Freud and Martha Bernays during their own lengthy courtship, a correspondence characterized as among the great love literature of the world.<sup>9</sup> Although the sexually explicit wartime letters are compelling in terms of what they convey about male and female sexuality within marriage, the courtship letters are no less interesting for the ways in which they increase our understanding of gender conflicts over issues of sexual love; perceptions of femininity and masculinity; the value of psychology, interiority and sexuality and their relation to religious faith; concepts of the body; and aspirations about marriage.

In an era when courtship was beginning to be seen as a testing period for mutual self-discovery, personal letters became more explicitly psychological in tenor. These, in turn, had to register a “constant out-pouring” of their hearts so that their relationship might evolve; when her letter was lost on the *Titanic*,<sup>10</sup> panic and insecurity ensued. Additionally, because Harry was a particular devotee of the new psychology, with its emphasis upon emotional introspection, he was particularly censorious of Gwyneth when her letters were “external” and did not address love and relationships as a psychological journey of self-discovery. As a result, he threw out all her letters written from Cambridge between September 1911 and the summer of 1912, dismissing them as merely chatty. Other than this gap, their correspondence is remarkably complete, and is a testament to the intense psychic fragility of young men and women caught between two ages, especially those confronting an unfamiliar landscape of changing sexual mores, gender identities and attitudes to love and marriage.

The central problem confronting this betrothed couple was how to evolve a novel language of love, which could effectively convey their mutual sexual desire and at the same time comport with prevailing codes of respectability. One of the Victorian conventions regarding epistolary etiquette was that the personal letter was often meant as a communal one to be read by friends and family. By contrast, viewing themselves as moderns for whom the private sphere was entirely sacrosanct, Harry and Gwyneth sought to protect their intimate relationship by developing their

own codes and euphemisms for denoting sexual love. Therefore, like them, the modern researcher must cultivate the art of “reading between the lines”.<sup>11</sup> However, during their courtship, the need to obfuscate often led to more friction within an already tempestuous long-distance relationship, especially when they had only met face to face on a handful of occasions prior to their engagement. Thus, when Harry spoke about “religion”, Gwyneth took him at face value. In actual fact, he was using the concept of religious passion to speak of sexual ecstasy. If such misunderstandings plagued two people so intimately enmeshed in their own peculiar linguistic codes, the historian is faced with the often frustrating task of mastering various idioms within the letters that were consciously intended to conceal, both during their extended courtship when they feared parental scrutiny of their correspondence, and during World War I, when the necessity of evading the censor again led to the invention of a secret but playful language to describe sexual longing.

One of the challenges of reading such densely written letters, in which their ideas of love were wrapped in a cloak of private jokes, often obscure literary allusions, and religio-philosophical ruminations, has been to delineate the full register of meanings and to place these in conversation with the wider Edwardian culture. As voracious readers, Gwyneth and Harry were acutely attuned to changing cultural attitudes, and their letters are particularly illuminating for the way in which they demonstrate how personal experience functions in constant dialogue with prevailing cultural scripts. This allows for a precise analysis of how they both unconsciously internalized and consciously deployed these codes as a means of speaking about love and sexual desire in an era rich in evolving new languages of sexual love. Their daily correspondence provides a unique window into how ordinary men and women of the Edwardian middle classes made the transition from Victorian to modern, in which sexuality became the foundation of personal identity and the touchstone for modern marriage, one based on the ideal of gender mutuality and emotional intimacy.

As Gwyneth once wryly commented, she had never seen anyone of their generation “with quite the mania for hoarding letters” as Harry did. One of the reasons the couple preserved the corpus of their letters in almost their full entirety, including the sexually explicit wartime letters, was so that they could reread them in later years as “we sit, soul with soul, in our own bright & cheery drawing-room”, reminding them of “the progress I have made along the journey of life, of how my understanding

and consequent usefulness has increased with all the love of my own darling to deepen and enrich my life's course and with her pure life beside me to make me understand the meaning, the holiness and sacredness of life".<sup>12</sup> Harry's reflection upon letters as an *aide-mémoire* demonstrates the way in which the couple sought to create new emotional protocols, ones that now firmly embraced notions of interiority and more overt emotional expression that were in contradistinction to Victorian notions of emotional and bodily restraint. Their daily correspondence therefore offers an unparalleled portrait of evolving psychological and emotional states and their gendered complexion, thus allowing the historian to document the emotional life of an era in which the religious passions were giving way to a more explicit recognition of sexual emotions. Many historians, most notably Michael Roper, have recently called for the study of first-person documents as an antidote to the overemphasis upon using normative scripts as evidence of subjectivity,<sup>13</sup> which has tended to confine the study of emotions to the periphery of the historical discipline.<sup>14</sup> Roper, in turn, has identified the emergence of the psychological or emotionally intense letter with the trauma of World War I. However, as our work shows, this turn towards interiority was well under way in the decades prior to the experience of the trenches, and equally significantly, this process occurred within the context of conjugal rather than maternal love. As we conclude, World War I in fact repressed this Edwardian psychological turn, for all emotions, including fear and anxiety, were channelled into sexual desire and longing.

In privileging inner thoughts over external events, in placing love at the core of life, and in deifying personal relationships in which the romantic and sexual relations of man and woman were deemed the most important, Gwyneth and Harry stood as typical modern Edwardians who occupied a similar cultural terrain as the more celebrated Bloomsbury circle. However, they never advocated free love nor would they have perceived themselves to be sexual radicals as did this literary and artistic avant-garde, even though they were influenced by similar systems of thought, drawn as they were to the works of H.G. Wells, George Bernard Shaw, Robert Louis Stevenson, Edward Carpenter, Henrik Ibsen, Walt Whitman, E.F. Benson and J.M. Barrie. They drew eclectically from a range of thinkers and writers and their correspondence reveals the influence of journals such as *Common Cause*, *The Freewoman*, *Eugenics Review*, *Punch*, *The Hibbert Review* and *Modern Man*, which exposed them to the ideas of the new sciences of sexology and psychology, although it was

likely that given Harry's facility in reading German that he had already encountered the writing of German psychologists and sexologists, including the work of Sigmund Freud. As was typical of Edwardians, they read these modern thinkers alongside Victorian worthies such as George Eliot, Thomas Carlyle, Charles Kingsley and Matthew Arnold. However, even though Harry had briefly considered a medical career and frequently perused the *British Medical Journal*, the couple's ideas concerning the body, sex and love owed more to the Victorian and Edwardian literary canon and religious writing rather than to the treatises of medical experts.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, popular novels had such an enormous impact upon Harry and Gwyneth that it prompted the disclaimer that they were not merely actors in novels, which expressed a typical anxiety of Edwardians who were all too aware of the emerging idea of multiple or divided personalities. Indeed, much as did the murderess Edith Thompson, studied by Matthew Houlbrook,<sup>16</sup> our couple used imaginative fiction to talk about their own feelings when they experienced difficulties in articulating a new language of love which spoke to the centrality of sexual desire and pleasure. Thus, as inveterate consumers of popular fiction and journalism, their pursuit of self-knowledge reflected a deep immersion in Edwardian cultural currents.

However, it should be stressed that cultural scripts served merely as a resource rather than a template, and were employed merely to help the couple explain the various dilemmas they experienced over issues of gender authority, the meaning of same sex friendships, sexual compatibility, how to define comradeship in marriage, and to resolve the ever-present question as to when they would get married. Thus, the intertwined lives of Harry and Gwyneth are a powerful testament to the priority of personal experience over cultural discourse in the making of modern values, and impels a more nuanced reading of the complex ways in which ordinary people read literature and integrated it into their self-identity, accepting some elements while rejecting or transforming others to suit their own subjective experience.<sup>17</sup>

Lytton Strachey's own vision of modernity as a complete and decisive rupture with the Victorian age has animated much of the subsequent historiography on the emergence of modern sexual values. Such an approach has highlighted the role played by sexual radicals on the political left.<sup>18</sup> The life experience of Gwyneth and Harry demonstrates that new systems of thought could arise out of more conventional quarters and were more often than not accommodated to more traditional moral and religious

frameworks. As their courtship evolved, the couple increasingly rejected the Victorian precepts with which they were raised as children, but in the midst of World War I when, as a married couple, their explicit references to masturbation, oral sex, sexual positions and the adoption of jolly names to personify their genitals indicated a wholesale enjoyment of sexual pleasure, they continued to consider sexual intercourse as a means to achieving a higher spiritual self. While the story of Gwyneth's and Harry's personal lives demonstrates that modern attitudes to sex and love could emerge out of relatively conventional social milieus, their frequently strained courtship also illustrates that the journey from a Victorian to a modern outlook was often more protracted, contested and incomplete than those historians who have relied upon more static and monolithic texts have been prepared to acknowledge.<sup>19</sup> A more rigorous attention to first-person accounts of modern sexuality, which this book undertakes, not only addresses the wide gap in our knowledge concerning "normal" or "conventional" sexuality,<sup>20</sup> but it reverses historical conventions which have posited the trajectory of social change as emanating from the realm of prescriptive discourses, and questions the centrality of these for the construction of personal experience.

By exploring the realm of personal experience and its engagement with the broader culture, this book advances the argument that there is a need to revise interpretations which have seen the publication of Marie Stopes' *Married Love* in 1918 as the progenitor of the idea that sexual pleasure was the key to marital success.<sup>21</sup> As Clare Langhamer has argued, these ideas of romantic love, which became widespread in British culture by the end of the 1940s, involved a new emphasis upon courtship and marriage as a means for self-realization, imbued as modern couples were by an insistence upon introspection and emotional authenticity.<sup>22</sup> These then led to an acceptance of the sexual openness so identified with the Swinging Sixties.<sup>23</sup> When viewed from the perspective of the relationship of Gwyneth Murray and Harry Logan who were a few years younger than the author of *Married Love*, Marie Stopes' book seems more of a synthesis of prevailing ideas rather than a landmark publication. Her supposedly revolutionary ideas about sexual mutuality in marriage would not have been revelatory to Gwyneth or Harry; they would have shared her vision of female sexual pleasure, and like her were familiar with the work of Edward Carpenter, Ellen Key and Havelock Ellis. Given their intense enjoyment of sex, which they believed was fundamental to marital harmony, Harry and Gwyneth's own lived experience was well in advance of Stopes' vision of

liberalized sexuality.<sup>24</sup> As to Stopes' view that sex and romantic love must be combined within a successful marriage, Gwyneth and Harry had quarrelled over this issue and finally resolved it in a marriage full of joyful sexual experiences, the range of which far surpassed anything conceived of by Stopes, and one that in no way accorded with her assessment of British middle-class marriage as being in a deplorable state. Setting aside the question as to when working-class people began to participate in this modern sexual revolution—although Jonathan Rose has shown that working-class men and women began to read Freud and Ellis as well as Marie Stopes during the 1920s<sup>25</sup>—it is clear that modern notions of love and marriage, including the key role played by sexual intercourse, had reached a mass audience by the 1940s. Our evidence clearly shows, however, that this putative emphasis upon introspection and emotional self-examination by couples was already occurring on or about 1910, just as Virginia Woolf herself had assumed.

This then raises the question of periodization when addressing the transition from Victorian to modern values. It has become commonplace to view World War I as the hinge for modernity,<sup>26</sup> so that the 1920s has come to be recognized as a decade in which sexual freedom, the slim figure, the psychologized self and the recognition of the homosexual/heterosexual dichotomy crystallized.<sup>27</sup> Not only does Stephen Kern identify the immediate postwar period as one in which blatant, even crude, descriptions of sexual organs and explicit sexual language entered into the work of D.H. Lawrence, James Joyce and T.S. Eliot, but literary historians have all too readily accepted, as Samuel Hynes contends, Virginia Woolf's abrupt excision of the Edwardians from her concept of high modernity.<sup>28</sup> The image of the 1920s—the jazz age—with its evocation of the slim-hipped flapper with bobbed hair which has become synonymous with cultural modernity has remained largely intact, although more recently, scholars such as Ana Carden-Coyne have shown the way in which the war bequeathed a cultural legacy which combined traditional and modern features.<sup>29</sup> We do not wish to wholly discard the theoretical lens of viewing the emergence of modernity through changing generational sensibilities, but we do dissent from the notion that forms of modernism were merely the creation of the cataclysmic experience of war. After all, Gwyneth unquestioningly deployed the term “generation” prior to World War I. Edwardian England itself was riven by generational tension, and because of this Strachey's classic *Eminent Victorians*, although published during the last months of the war, much like Marie Stopes' *Married Love*, prop-

erly belongs to the cultural ferment of pre-war England, especially when one considers that he began the book between 1910 and 1912. Like Harry and Gwyneth, Strachey's restiveness with Victorian platitudes began while he was a university student at Cambridge, where as a member of the now famous Cambridge Apostles he would have been exposed to novel ideas and heretical discussions, all the while coming to terms with his own sexual preference for men. By contrast with Strachey and the Bloomsbury Circle, whose prurience about actual sex, despite their voluble sex talk, placed them closer to the Victorians,<sup>30</sup> Harry and Gwyneth had advanced further along the path to modernity than these well-known sexual radicals. Indeed, our couple talked the talk and walked the walk, albeit within the safe confines of marriage.

What they did share with the sexual avant-garde was a readiness to view the previous generation and its values as hopelessly obsolete and old-fashioned. In their letters they constantly juxtaposed old and new, as did Vera Brittain when she stated: "Things just at this moment of history are so very new & so very wonderful to us poor slaves of the ages, that a person who is modern at all cannot help but be very modern indeed."<sup>31</sup> What is significant is that in 1913, prior to World War I, she and others of her age group already possessed an explicit consciousness of being moderns. When Gwyneth and Harry finally perused *Eminent Victorians* in 1918, they commended it because it so accurately encapsulated the mental journey they had so recently traversed during their courtship when attempting to throw off the social conventions and prudish morality of their parents' generation. Our conclusions, then, fully concord with those advanced by Jonathan Rose who has defined the Edwardian era as extending from 1895 to 1919.<sup>32</sup> For Harry and Gwyneth, 1919 marked the end of youth, not because of the death of a loved partner in the trenches as Vera Brittain so poignantly evoked in *Testament of Youth*,<sup>33</sup> but because they had assumed the responsibilities of parenthood and Harry gained a stable career. Far from marking a catastrophic punctuation evoking a lost generation, the war and the horror of the Western Front served as a terrain upon which they could inscribe their vision of marital bliss. If anything, the war marked the genesis of the sexual and spiritual harmony that they had long hoped for and it promised a new foundation of mature romantic love. "Isn't it strange", declared Gwyneth, "that it should be in the midst of war and tumult that we have found our rest?"<sup>34</sup>

Nor was World War I the catalyst for loss of religion. The rebuff to the authority structures of the institutional church, though it might have



reached its most overt expression during World War I,<sup>35</sup> had its roots in the pre-war decades, as exemplified by Harry and his friends' consuming interest in personal and emotional religion. This involved a rejection of traditional theology and especially doctrinal conventions regarding moral purity. Both Harry and Gwyneth were interested in a range of spiritual experiences, including spiritualism, and Gwyneth, inspired by lecturers like Maude Royden, sought to open church institutions to women's vocations, and was a staunch critic of patriarchalism in the churches. However, the couple remained churchgoers throughout their lives, and although sex drove them to rethink Victorian moral codes, this did not involve a wholesale rejection of their religious faith. Certainly, it prevented Harry from preaching, but the Christian religion remained a strong element in their lives. Like other Edwardians, religion for them was integrated into new ways of thinking, so that Christian discourses regarding spiritual passion continued to animate their feelings of sexual desire so that sex was defined by them to be a sacrament, a sentiment shared by people as diverse as Maude Royden, Edward Carpenter and Havelock Ellis. Here, again, there were distinct gender differences. For Gwyneth, sexual intercourse was a revelation, and ironically it was she, the partner who during their courtship was so adamantly fixated on the opposition between sex and religious faith, who ultimately almost entirely jettisoned the concept of spiritualized sex. On the other hand, whereas Harry had from the first espoused a highly erotic view of their relationship, in the midst of war, he held more firmly to a more romanticized language regarding marriage as the melding of two souls joined in sexual communion. The interaction between religious faith and sexual love in their relationship indicates that, contrary to both orthodox and revisionist exponents of the secularization thesis,<sup>36</sup> twentieth-century British culture was not traversed by a linear and monolithic progression from moral puritanism to sexual liberalization.<sup>37</sup>

In the years between 1910 and World War I, Edwardian men and women lived through a time of interrogation and flux with regard to gender identities. This uncertainty loomed large in the correspondence of Harry and Gwyneth. As a result, gender conflict formed a consistent thread throughout their relationship. As John Tosh has recently observed, much of the scholarship on gender has discounted subjective experience in favour of analysis of representations and public discourse.<sup>38</sup> The letters of Harry and Gwyneth permit a close-up view of how men and women lived, thought about, and refined their gender identities in the midst of an evolving personal relationship, which was often heated and combative because

they were respectively an anti-suffragist and suffragist. Although the couple closely followed prevailing discussions about the theme of “sex antagonism” which was a fundamental preoccupation of Edwardians, one commented upon prolifically by men and women and a wide range of social constituencies, each, in their own way, developed unique perspectives on these issues and increasingly throughout their relationship sought to challenge dominant definitions of sex roles.<sup>39</sup> They selectively drew from new ideas in psychology, the feminist movement, eugenics and imaginative literature to rethink gender relations, but more importantly, the challenge of refining their relationship provided the greatest impetus for reformulating the ways in which they perceived gender roles within marriage. The value of exploring subjective experience is that it provides a more nuanced reading of gender, as an ongoing process of self-definition, in which supposedly competing gender ideals often were not viewed by the individual as mutually exclusive. This raises larger questions about whether gender can ever be considered a fixed identity, especially when in terms of lived experience, it is full of contradictions, many of which remain unconscious. However, Harry and Gwyneth had a profound impact on one another: Gwyneth compelled Harry to rethink his patriarchal ideas in articulating a more egalitarian vision of marriage, while Harry exhorted her to abandon the Victorian view that women had less intense sexual urges than men. Within this broad framework, there were a series of micro-adjustments that took place around these questions, that allowed a distinct refashioning of gender power within the relationship which related to issues of fatherhood, career choices for women, emotional expression, parenting and what qualities constituted male and female.

The arc of the narrative begins with Harry as the central figure in the relationship; however, he was progressively pushed into the background by Gwyneth’s increasingly dominant sexual subjectivity which became most overt during World War I. More broadly the ongoing debate about it that lay at the core of their correspondence demonstrates that they saw gender in culturalist terms, viewing it as both fluid and malleable, a perspective which also informed their sense of the blurred boundaries between “heterosexual” and “homosocial” friendships.<sup>40</sup> This, however, was one dimension of their gender debate which changed quite drastically between their courtship and marriage, in which same-sex friendships became increasingly proscribed, particularly by Gwyneth. This was not because she had taken on board the ideas of sexologists, but because in terms of her own personal experience she had come to see marriage as a form of comradeship that was

distinct from other friendships, considering it more intimate and exclusive because of the act of sexual intercourse.

Hitherto the modernist temper has been framed in terms of a set of attitudes and preoccupations articulated in literature, philosophy and medicine. However, in order to expand and deepen our understanding of the transition from Victorian to modern which highlights the fractured, contested and incomplete character of this process, it is imperative, as the journey made by our epistolary lovers shows, to study how new moralities and ways of being were achieved through the subjective experience. The correspondence of Harry and Gwyneth stands at the intersection of a variety of modernist currents, beyond the most obvious, namely greater sexual freedom and the positive valuation placed upon sexual pleasure within marriage. The priority upon sexual love as constitutive of personal and marital happiness intersected with a spectrum of other modernities, in particular the overwhelming value placed upon interiority; the emancipation of women; and the privileging of everyday experience, and in particular personal relationships as the ultimate standard of values, a process by which the private sphere was utterly abstracted from the public gaze. Despite their sympathies with major currents of social reform, our couple's rendering of modernity spoke to a particularly individualistic strand of advanced thinking which saw the elevation of self through intimate relationships as a supreme good, which elevated harmony in love, sex and marriage to be the most significant markers of social progress. Within this new trinity, however, sex was the measure of all things.

## NOTES

1. LAC, Logan Fonds, 7:1, G to H, 20 Nov. 1912; *ibid.*, 1:6, H to G, n.d. Nov. 1912.
2. We owe this excellent concept to our editor Sean Brady.
3. Kern, *The Modernist Novel*, 2–3.
4. Reddy, *The Making of Romantic Love*.
5. For an excellent discussion of the current state of the field in Britain, see Jones and Harris, "Introduction: Historicizing 'Modern' Love and Romance", 1–19.
6. Stansky, "*On or About December 1910*", 2.
7. Cook, "Victorian Sexualities", 175.
8. LAC, LF, 11:6, H to father, 11 Nov. 1912; *ibid.*, 18:6, Rosfrith to Mrs Logan, 6 Dec. 1910, 16 Jan. 1916; *ibid.*, 1:12, H to G, 5 Dec. 1914; *ibid.*, 9:2, G to H, 10 Feb. 1918; Rhodes House Archives, Harry Logan

- Biographical File, Gwyneth to Dr. Williams, 16 Mar. 1971; *ibid.*, Stuart Keate, "Harry: The Gentle Professor", clipping, n.d.
9. Whitebook, *Freud*, 129.
  10. LAC LF, 1:6, H to G, 2 Nov. 1912, 21 Apr. 1912.
  11. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 17 Sep. 1911.
  12. LAC, LF, 2:10, H to G, 8 Apr. 1917; *ibid.*, 7:10, G to H, 27 Aug. 1916.
  13. Roper, "Between Manliness and Masculinity", 345.
  14. Bourke, "Fear and Anxiety", 112, which critiques a developing trajectory in the historical study of emotions which has relied heavily on prescriptive literature. For explicit statements about the need to examine the way in which individuals negotiate emotional protocols, see Reddy, "Historical Research on the Self and Emotions", 302–15; Roper, *The Secret Battle*, 1–43. The foundational statement for the history of emotions is Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling*. See also, Plamper, *The History of Emotions*; Frevert, *Emotional Lexicons*. For Britain, see Francis, "Tears, Trantrums, and Bared Teeth", 354–87; Cook, "From Controlling Emotions to Expressing Feelings", 627–46. Our work revises the periodization of the division between emotional self-control and expression.
  15. See, for example, Weeks, *Sex, Politics and Society*; Porter and Hall, *The Facts of Life*; Hall, *Hidden Anxieties*; Bland and Doan, eds., *Sexology Uncensored*; Crozier, "The Medical Construction of Homosexuality and its Relation to the Law in Nineteenth-Century England", 61–82; Fausto-Sterling, *Sexing the Body*. The influence of medical knowledge upon sexual identities has now begun to be questioned. See Brady, *Masculinity and Male Homosexuality in Britain*, 19, 23; Cocks, "Approaches to the History of Sexuality Since 1750", 38–54.
  16. Houlbrook, "A Pin to See the Peepshow", 215–49.
  17. Here we are critical of the conclusions of Light, *Forever England*, who uncritically assumes that fiction directly reflects prevailing attitudes, without recognizing that some of the writers she studies came of age in the Edwardian period.
  18. Stansky, "On or About December 1910"; Brooke, *Sexual Politics*; Lutz, *Pleasure Bound*; Stansell, *American Moderns*; Delap, *The Feminist Avant-Garde*; Fernihough, *Freewomen and Supermen*; Snitow, Stansell, Thompson, eds., *Powers of Desire*; MacLaren, "Sex Radicalism in the Canadian Northwest, 1890–1920", 527–46; Rowbotham and Weeks, *Socialism and the New Life*. For scholarship which emphasizes more conservative roots of modernism, see Thomson, *Psychological Subjects*; Kent, *Sex and Suffrage*; Richardson, *Love and Eugenics in the Late Nineteenth Century*; Stone, *Breeding Superman*; Greenslade, *Degeneration*; Dobb, "The Way of All Flesh", 589–603; Morgan, "A 'Feminist Conspiracy'", 777–800; Owen, "Occultism and the 'Modern' Self in *Fin-de-Siècle* Britain", 81–96.

19. Kern, *The Modernist Novel*; Levenson, *Modernism and the Fate of Individuality*.
20. Houlbrook, "Cities", 148–9, 133–56; Doan and Bland, eds., *Cultural Sexology*, 3; Doan, "'A peculiarly obscure subject'", 87–108, on how heterosexual and homosexual have not been trans-historical categories; Carden-Coyne and Doan, "Gender and Sexuality", 91–114.
21. The work of Stopes is often the starting point for much of the scholarship on twentieth-century British sexuality. See, for example, Hall, *Hidden Anxieties*; Burke, "In Pursuit of an Erogamic Life"; Hall, *Dear Dr. Stopes*; McKibbin, "Introduction", vii–liii.
22. Langhamer, *The English in Love*; Langhamer, "Love, Selfhood and Authenticity in Post-War Britain", 277–97; Francis, *The Flyer*, 63–84; Szreter and Fisher, *Sex Before the Sexual Revolution*; Fisher, "'Lay Back, Enjoy It and Shout Happy England'", 318–60; Fisher, "Marriage and Companionate Ideals Since 1750", 328–48.
23. Cook, *The Long Sexual Revolution*; Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain*; Brown, "Gender, Christianity, and the Rise of No Religion", 39–59. For the sexual revolution as a media construct, see Brewitt-Taylor, "Christianity and the Invention of the Sexual Revolution in Britain", 519–46.
24. On this point, see McKibbin, "Introduction", xxiii.
25. Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes*, 219–20.
26. There is now a vast literature on World War I as the crucible of literary, artistic and psychological modernity. See, for example, Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*; Leed, *No Man's Land*; Eksteins, *Rites of Spring*.
27. Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Managing the Body*; Bingham, *Gender, Modernity and the Popular Press in Interwar Britain*; Doan, *Fashioning Sapphism*; Goldhill, *A Very Queer Family Indeed*, who identifies the explicit naming of homosexuality with the 1920s, 169–86.
28. Kern, *The Culture of Love*, 347–9; Hynes, *A War Imagined*, 399–401.
29. Carden-Coyne, *Reconstructing the Body*. See also Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*.
30. Taddeo, *Lytton Strachey and the Search for Modern Sexual Identity*.
31. MMUA, Vera Brittain Papers, Box 50, Diary, 21 Oct. 1913.
32. Rose, *The Edwardian Temperament*, xiii.
33. Brittain, *Testament of Youth*.
34. LAC, LF, 8:10, G to H, 29 Sep. 1917.
35. Brown, *Religion and Society in Twentieth-Century Britain*, 88–115.
36. For historians positing a more gradual linear decline of religion, in which the Edwardian era marks a key moment in which the canons of moral puritanism were increasingly assailed by the forces of liberalization, see McLeod, *Religion and Society in England, 1850–1914*; Green, *The Passing of Protestant England*. For revisionists who see a sudden rupture in the

1960s between religion and the imperatives of secularization, Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain*.

37. There is now an emerging literature which presents a more variegated picture of the relationship between religion and sexuality which does not simply cast Christianity as a morally repressive force. See, for example, Mason, *The Making of Victorian Sexuality*; Gibson and Begiato, *Sex and the Church in the Long Eighteenth Century*; Cocks, "Religion and Spirituality", 157–79. On sex and religion in Canada, see Christie, "Sacred Sex: The United Church and the Privatization of the Family in Post-War Canada", 348–76.
38. Tosh, "The History of Masculinity", 25, 17–34.
39. Tosh, "What Should Historians Do with Masculinity?", 193, 196, 179–202; Showalter, *Sexual Anarchy*.
40. Our analysis of their attitudes to homosociality has been influenced by Queer Theory and we have therefore purposely left aside the question as to whether Gwyneth or Harry gave physical expression to their same-sex intimacies. Despite their acquaintance with the new sexology, they did not accept the taxonomy of homosexuality and heterosexuality posited by early twentieth-century sexologists. See, for example, Brady, *Masculinity and Male Homosexuality*, 12, 18; Janes, *Visions of Queer Martyrdom*, 5; Houlbrook, *Queer London*; Goldhill, *A Very Queer Family Indeed*, 160–207; Carden-Coyne and Doan, "Gender and Sexuality", 91–114.



## CHAPTER 2

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# The Emotional Body: Religion and Male Friendship at Oxford

*“Like many Oxonians he cultivates his emotions at the expense of his intellect, which may account for his attractiveness.”*  
*“Some Types”, The Isis (14 May 1910), 321*

Describing the various male types found in early twentieth-century Oxford, the anonymous author alluded to a friend named Leonard whom he deemed “too emotional”, especially in his relationships with both men and women. This young man also exhibited a pronounced dandyism characterized by overly punctilious attention to his sartorial self-presentation. As the author suggested, while he wished to valorize emotional expression in both homosocial and heterosocial friendship, he nonetheless implicitly warned against the excesses of sentiment which might subvert masculinity by overvaluing emotion at the expense of both intellectual achievement and athletic prowess. For historians, these latter characteristics form the two central pillars of manliness both in universities and within the wider culture.<sup>1</sup> In his influential study of Oxbridge, Paul Deslandes advanced four types of masculinity which dominated the universities between 1850 and 1920: the athletic, the aesthetic, the reading man or intellectual, and the aristocratic sporting man.<sup>2</sup> Several scholars have emphasized the public image that these two ancient universities proclaimed, stressing how their institutions ideally saw themselves as elite schools for the training of states-

men which, by the turn of the twentieth century, forcefully articulated a concept of male citizenship grounded in competitive intellectual prowess, active service and militarism.<sup>3</sup> These imperatives fused together the cultivation of mind, body and spirit, and were encapsulated particularly in the honour code of the Rhodes Scholarships.

When Harry Tremaine Logan, a native of Vancouver British Columbia, arrived in Oxford from McGill University in the autumn of 1908, these ideals had reached their full flowering. When asked to reflect upon his experiences as a Rhodes Scholar studying the *Literae Humaniores* or Greats over a three-year period, it is clear that Oxford had failed to instil this young man with the essential masculine attribute of decisiveness, for he confessed that he was unable “to make up my mind as to what I really do think of the old place”. Speaking before his audience of young male students at McGill University, he declared that the experience had been a transformative one, and recapitulated the official version of Oxford, stating that it was the “nurse of statesmen and of the makers of human history”. Relying upon the dominant philosophical idealism that he had imbibed from his tutors, Harry sought to compare Oxford to Plato’s ideal republic as a site where the “human soul” was like a “pure spotless consecrated heifer, browsing at will in the bright sunshine in a beautiful field of the richest pasture”. However, Harry’s encomium to the delights of Oxford belied a deeper ambivalence about the efficacy of the undergraduate experience in fashioning adolescent boys into men, for he went on to describe it as a nest of temptations, ranging from the ubiquitous frivolity of freshmen initiations and drinking binges, to the constant distraction of collegiate sports and clubs, all of which subverted the broader ideal of intellectual competition and professionalism which had emerged as the public ethos of the Oxbridge culture in the early twentieth century.

By contrast with his English contemporaries, most of whom had attended public schools, Harry’s educational experience at McGill University, with its fraternities, intense group identifications by year, and the close social and intellectual oversight of professors, ill prepared him for an environment at Oxford where one is “[T]hrown more on [one’s] own resources”. As the son of a prominent Presbyterian clergyman from Vancouver, and himself aspiring to the ministry and a lectureship at a theological college in Canada, Harry was remarkably critical of the religious orthodoxy and the structured morning chapel services. While he advanced the conventional view that the beauty of Oxford acted as a stimulus to



religious feeling, he condemned the undergraduate culture as tending to irreligion, so that the student had to once again fall back upon his own personal initiative in order to develop a meaningful spiritual life.<sup>4</sup> As was often said, in Oxford “individuality is sacred” and the primary goal of the undergraduate experience was to work out one’s “own salvation”. This meant “securing that self-possession to command” other men by gaining self-control in athletics and developing an “intellectual independence” through conversation and discussion with tutors and like-minded men.<sup>5</sup>

While at one level Harry Logan paid lip service to these ideals, his own undergraduate career was marked by a more troubled negotiation of these ideals of masculine success. Indeed, by the time of his McGill address, Harry had failed both as an athlete and an intellect: he missed out on a much-coveted Blue in track and field and his performance at the Schools in 1911 was lamentable, graduating as he did with a barely achieved Third. During his time in Oxford, however, Harry had forged his own measure of masculinity, one firmly anchored in a quest for personal spirituality, which he sought through the intense emotional bonds with a coterie of fellow Rhodes Scholars. In establishing an ideal of manhood defined by an intense commitment to self-discovery through the exploration of interior emotions and psychological states, Harry and his cohort of religious friends established a counter-culture or sub-republic within Oxford, one which envisioned the transition to adult manhood as a process of cultivating the personality, which held that “[I]n man: personal life [is] real” and the “standard of all reality”.<sup>6</sup> This perspective closely mirrored the modernist ideals of friendship articulated by the Cambridge Apostles such as G.E. Moore and E.M. Forster, who extolled friendship as a form of the higher good.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, the experience of Harry and his circle opens a window on a less studied strain of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century imperial manhood which sought to construct a notion of independence not in terms of military prowess or aggressive dominance of subject people, but one which drew upon mainstream authors, notably one of Harry’s idols, Rudyard Kipling, to develop a concept of male adulthood which put its trust in personal feelings, particularly those developed through the cultivation of male comradeship. Far from constituting a flight from the family or a journey towards homoeroticism, the close and egalitarian bonds forged between fellow students prepared men for maturity, enabling them to both resist parental restraints and develop a sense of self that enabled the transition to heterosexual love and marriage.

As Harry Logan departed from McGill University in Montreal in the fall of 1908, he perceived himself to be a “man in every sense of that term”, by which he meant that he had earned the admiration of his male contemporaries, after having been awarded a coveted Rhodes Scholarship. Harry also considered that he had left the world of boyhood because he had reached the age of majority and, as he proudly informed his mother, he had become “a man—such a thought makes me stick my chest out and throw my head back—in fact that is the posture I have been assuming all day so that my friends hardly know me”. This sense of “getting old”<sup>8</sup> was reaffirmed by the Principal of McGill, Sir William Peterson who, when commending him for his scholarly achievements, advised him that he was sufficiently intellectually “mature” that he could easily handle the preeminent Oxford discipline of the Greats in just two years.<sup>9</sup> Harry’s academic standing at McGill was at best mediocre, having garnered a mere second in Greek and Latin. However, his presidency of the Historical Club, his work as a reporter for the *McGill Outlook*, his active participation in the Literary and Debating Society of McGill, his membership in the Epsilon Phi fraternity, and his role as a significant leader within the Bible classes held under the auspices both of the McGill and Montreal City YMCAs, confirmed for the Rhodes Trust that he could conform to the higher ideals of citizenship demanded of Rhodes’ plan of using his scholarship scheme as a means to promote “the extension of Imperial thought”. His reputation as one of “our best runners” in the Harrier club would certainly have fulfilled Rhodes’ aim that “the last thing I want is a book worm”, while his unmarried status was further proof of his capacity for “higher thought”, untrammelled with the enervating effects of the “domestic agenda”.<sup>10</sup>

Harry’s sense of standing above the common herd was further confirmed by the fact that his father “is in the college now”, having recently secured a Chair of Pastoral Theology at Westminster College, Vancouver. This, together with his Rhodes Scholarship, gave Harry automatic access to the friendship of other university men, such as the Yale man he met on the Canadian Pacific Railway, with whom he could converse as an equal, perceiving that he was among men of superior morality, intellect and physique, the triad which also informed the Rhodes and Oxford ideals. While Rhodes personally conceived of his trust as a means of training active men to rule the British Empire, Harry interpreted strenuous virility in uniquely Canadian and Christian terms. He touted colonial students as having a superior sense of moral patriotism which placed them above their metropolitan counterparts, a major tenet of colonial nationalism in the settler

colonies.<sup>11</sup> In addressing the group of young men who toasted his departure from McGill, Harry emphasized “the necessity of ever striving towards the attainment of Christian ideals. ... I also expressed the hope that we as Rhodes scholars would not depart from our established and professed standard of living but would show the English Undergraduates of Oxford that there was a high type of Christian Canadian citizenship, that we as Christian Canadians had certain definite concepts of sin and righteousness and that as such we must adhere to them.”<sup>12</sup> His own personal goal at Oxford, as he blithely informed his parents, was to get a First in Greats, a Blue in athletics, and to “enthuse as large a body of men as possible in the study of Christ’s life”.<sup>13</sup> Despite his bravado of having attained the highest form of manhood, Harry clearly recognized that the opportunity presented him at Oxford for future service would demand a three-year period of strenuous intellectual, physical and moral testing, which would involve much “heart-searching and meditation”. This implied a certain trepidation about the firmness and resolve of his actual fitness for leading men and his self-perception that he remained a “semi-man”.<sup>14</sup>

As was typical of the ever-sociable Harry Logan, when he crossed the Atlantic Ocean, he immediately latched onto a fellow Rhodes Scholar named Fraser from the University of Toronto, who in their many “talks and walks” introduced him to a new intellectual vista of the cultural disputes then ongoing in Britain between modernist and anti-modernist literary and artistic figures, which would continue to inform Harry’s experience of Oxford. Although a great devotee of Kipling, he was now exposed to G.K. Chesterton’s searing indictment of that writer’s imperial militarism and voluble attacks upon the moral relativism of Bernard Shaw and H.G. Wells, whose writings were popular among students at McGill. As a relief from this heady intellectual brew, Logan regaled his parents with accounts of his many flirtations with pretty girls aboard the ship, a pastime recommended to him by a professor’s wife as a prophylactic against sea sickness to which he was prone. She was also perhaps anxious about Harry’s proclivity for seeking out the companionship of male chums.<sup>15</sup>

When he disembarked from the *Virginian* in Liverpool, arm in arm with his new amour, Nora Fleet, a further symbol of his growing maturity, England presented a jarring contrast to any previous experience he had known. Harry had lived for two years in the largest and most industrialized Canadian city, Montreal, and during his transcontinental railway journey had witnessed “the mass of humanity all jumping and

scrambling” and that “soulless” greed for money that epitomized the competitive spirit of large American cities like Chicago.<sup>16</sup> But nothing prepared him for the “condition of the poor in England”, whose cities, including genteel Oxford itself, were marked by unemployment and poverty and teemed with street sellers, beggars and promoters of socialism.<sup>17</sup> He railed against the backwardness of urban spaces still reliant on outmoded horse-drawn omnibuses which he contrasted unfavourably with Canadian modern electrification, and was dumbstruck that even an old and wealthy college like St. John’s, where he resided, was still lit by candles. During his weekly visits to London to attend the theatre as well as celebrated pulpits, his puritanical Presbyterian upbringing offered little preparation for “the crowds seething with disreputable women and girls”. As he informed his parents, never before had he witnessed “more human sinning in that way than he could have imagined as existing at all”, a spectacle that prompted an earnest conversation with his compatriot C.B. Sissons, later professor of history at the University of Toronto, about the necessity “for early training of young men so as to avoid temptations from friends and from the bonds of society”. As a young man constantly threatened by sexual temptations, Harry was acutely grateful “to the full value of a sturdy, reasonable Christian upbringing to the young man who is suddenly face to face with the world at its worst”.<sup>18</sup>

Harry’s twice-weekly letters to his parents reveal an excessively priggish and cloistered young man, in which he frequently inveighed against the ubiquitous undergraduate habits of smoking, drinking and roistering, which he tended to attribute negatively to English cultural mores, concluding rather condescendingly that “most Rhodes men are tee totallers”. Because he believed that every time a man resisted the temptation to drink or smoke it “strengthens him for resisting sterner moral temptations”,<sup>19</sup> the temperance of Rhodesmen served to advertise their sexual purity. In Harry’s lexicon, their “noble and good and Christ-like” qualities meant that they were real men.<sup>20</sup> A later Rhodes Scholar, Graham Spry, a renowned rower from Winnipeg, perhaps because of a self-confidence won by virtue of age and experience in World War I, expressed his first response to Oxford thus: “There is something intangible and sublime about the whole work of the university that nothing can explain why it is all that it is. ... I would say that the life was perfect ... I revel in it.”<sup>21</sup> It is true that Harry could wax eloquent about Oxford, describing how “[its] spirit ... is coming over me. It is a charming spot and its charm is different from anything else I have ever known—it has the fresh attractiveness of an

in exhaustible mine or of a bottomless intellect.”<sup>22</sup> But it was the intellectual superiority of the place that he found so disturbing, because as he related to his father: “It’s a hard thing to say of such a beautiful place, but there have been times when I felt its ungodliness simply overwhelming.”<sup>23</sup>

Not surprisingly, the various cultural malapropisms fostered by Harry’s sense of Canadian superiority over all things English tended to isolate him from native-born students. Although frankness was conventionally touted as a masculine attribute, this did not serve at Oxford, for as he informed his parents, Rhodes Scholars were apt to “get into bad odour through using their tongues unwisely” especially being “too frank about the British way of doing things”.<sup>24</sup> The result was that Harry had to check himself and learn the mode of self-presentation typical of an Oxford undergraduate, which privileged humility and courage over pride and boastfulness.<sup>25</sup> To this end, Harry actively set about to reimagine himself as an Oxford man: he learned the fashionable student slang, calling Oxford the “clear quill”, used “bucked” for tickled, called his college room his “bedder”, referred to being “tubbed” or rowed on the Isis, described the daily exercise period between 1 and 4:30 p.m. as the “eeber”, noted regulations against “greasing” or plugging during that time, described the tradition of having “brekker”, and related eating with male friends before lectures and coming to “rollers” or roll-call to avoid chapel, still compulsory for churchmen.<sup>26</sup> Not only did Harry don the requisite clothing, including bags and a sturdy Harris tweed Norfolk coat, but he began to mouth the language of class superiority typical of Oxford men. While he might joke to his brother Willie, a manager in the Royal Bank of Canada, about having imbibed the culture of the English aesthete who sported a monocle, talked with a soft “R”, wore skin-tight clothing and carried a cane, he was nevertheless fully alive to the fact that Oxford had conferred the prestige of gentlemanly status upon him.<sup>27</sup> His increasing association with the social elite of Oxford, including Lady Aitchison, Lady Trevelyan, Mrs. Haldane, and most importantly, the Murray family, headed by the recently-knighted Sir James Augustus Murray, editor of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, amplified his sense of social ascendancy. After attending one of Lady Trevelyan’s dances at the Masonic Buildings in Oxford, he quipped to his brother: “All among the *bloods* Bill, all among the *bloods*.” He concluded only somewhat ironically, that “B.C. will be too small to contain yrs. truly when he gets home next year”. Even though his own family had been forced to emigrate from Ireland because of their extreme Orangeism and had been modest

farmers in Nova Scotia, he now adopted the sentiments of the aristocratic “bloods” whom he often lampooned,<sup>28</sup> inveighing against the movement to have working-class young men admitted to Oxford on athletic scholarships. Far from raising up the lower classes, such a move, in Harry’s estimation, would lead to a promiscuous “mixing of the classes”.<sup>29</sup>

Initially Harry was, as he informed his parents, satisfied that “Oxford is the clear quill and I’m jolly well bucked over the prospect of three years here.” He was impressed with his senior tutor, the ethical philosopher Sidney Ball, affectionately known to his devoted students as “the Pillar”, whom he came to revere over fireside seminars where the exchanges between tutors and students were, as Harry deduced, “free and easy”.<sup>30</sup> Over a decade after he had left Oxford, Harry still esteemed Ball as “the greats Philosophy don par excellence”, and particularly commended him for his close personal attention to each student in his tutorials.<sup>31</sup> Ball earnestly subscribed to the quest for knowledge preached by Walter Pater. Pater, a leading Hellenist interpreter whose works Ball assigned his students to read, described the goal of a Greats education “to burn always with this hard gem-like flame, to maintain this ecstasy his success in life”, an allusion to the overlap of intellectual seeking, and pleasurable experiences of all kinds, including sexual desire between men. Echoing these injunctions, Harry described Ball as “a gem of a man”. He also used the language of male love and beauty to portray his fellow Rhodes Scholar Norman Macdonnell as “a gem” and W.L. Grant, a fellow Canadian Presbyterian and the Beit Lecturer in Colonial History, a “jewel, very entertaining and very boyish”.<sup>32</sup>

However, Harry was clearly overwhelmed with the long reading list of Greek and Roman historians and philosophers he was assigned to master, not to mention the vast terrain of “Theory of Knowledge”, metaphysics, higher logic, moral and mental philosophy, which forced students to draw connections between the ancient and modern worlds, requiring “steady and persistent application for it to sink in”. His growing disquiet over the intellectual rigors of Oxford was already forcing Harry to redefine Oxford as a community of personal relationships with men, for he commented upon meeting his tutor Mr. Stocks, in his “bedder” dressed only in a shirt, “[t]his association with the tutors I look to as eagerly as my actual work.”<sup>33</sup> Despite his fears, he threw himself into his studies, but like other Oxford undergraduates he was an active participant in athletics, playing lacrosse—a requisite rite of passage for a Canadian—rowing, and later qualifying for the University track and field team. As was also typical of the majority of

undergraduates at Oxford, he joined the “ugger” or Oxford Union, a venue where young men could participate in the competitive cut and thrust of debate on burning social and political questions and develop their skills at witty repartee. The normally parsimonious Harry enthusiastically paid his annual dues to the Union of £1 10s., which provided free stamps, access to a splendid library and reading room, but, “best of all to attend the debates, held every Thursday night.” An active debater while at McGill, Harry energetically seized the opportunity to watch the display of virile strenuousness at his first Union debate on the German Kaiser’s friendship for England. This was a topic which diverged from the themes of the McGill debates, which were largely concerned with issues of government control of railways, the differences between the aristocracy of the old world versus the plutocracy of the new, and oriental immigration.<sup>34</sup> He wrote glowingly to his parents about the bust of his hero William Gladstone which occupied a prominent position in the foyer of the Union Hall, alluded to the pre-debate custom of pelting the officers with “ridiculous questions” and revelled in the opportunity to assert his opinions. “It was an excellent debate, full of vigour”, and he commended it as a contrast to the previous evening’s debate in his own college, where the issue of women’s suffrage was discussed, “a burning question here at present”, which forcibly challenged his and his mother’s intense anti-suffrage position.<sup>35</sup> However, his intervention fell flat and the St. John’s Debating Society minutes laconically record: “Mr. Logan had a point to make, and no doubt made it.”<sup>36</sup> There is no further record of his having participated in either the University or his college debates. The forced exclusion from this sphere for measuring oneself against other men to earn their approbation, most likely contributed to a further diminishing of his sense of intellectual manhood. Indeed, Harry seems to have defined his masculine vigour largely in terms of his intellect rather than his athleticism. His very status as an Oxford undergraduate, studying the master-discipline of the Greats, convinced him of his maturity, defined by a growing sense of professional competence, as he proudly recorded the visit of one of his father’s friends, Dr. Gordon, Professor of Old Testament at Presbyterian College, Montreal, who “made very much of an equal of me”. Their wide-ranging talk about the church “very much surprised me at first but gradually brought me to a fuller realization of the fact of my growing maturity of body and mind”.<sup>37</sup> As he informed his parents: “I would ten times rather have encouraging words from my tutor than from all the Athletic people in the University much as I like many kinds of athletics.”<sup>38</sup>

Although by Harry's own admission, by the end of his first term in Oxford, he was beginning to integrate himself into student life, finally meeting some "English chaps" whom he thought were "very companionable fellows" after having them to his rooms for lunch,<sup>39</sup> it is likewise clear, that in addition to the four major masculine Oxbridge types outlined by Paul Deslandes, there were further sub-groups fashioned around national origin, one's colonial status and religion. We gain some sense of the cultural conflicts which fractured along colonial and metropolitan lines from the observations of another Canadian Rhodes scholar, Graham Spry, who likewise was shunned in the exclusivist English cultural terrain of the Union. As he remarked: "We Canadians are hybrids. We are given an education modeled after, or producing a type like that, produced by, American schools. ... The weakness does not lie in being like Americans, but in not being as good as they are or as the English or colonials are. We are neither one culture nor the other, sharing qualities of both, but being rather half as successful than twice as good." Because of Canada's unique position between Britain and the United States, Spry concluded that as a nation it was more imitative than creative.<sup>40</sup>

Historians writing from the perspective of British attitudes to the late-nineteenth-century empire have highlighted the central role played by militarism and a particularly aggressive form of masculinity directed to the conquest and domination of subject peoples, a type of manliness that vehemently disparaged the emotions. In 1912, an article in *The English Review* gave voice to this conventional wisdom in characterizing the Oxford man as "in a half-baked transition between schoolboy and man. He is still a boy whose strength and animal spirits have simply increased, who expresses his exuberant emotions without shame or restraint."<sup>41</sup> In both public schools and universities on both sides of the Atlantic, educators, psychologists and medical professionals advocated a cult of games and athleticism directed at adolescent boys in order to accentuate an ideal of virility grounded upon courage, self-reliance and perseverance.<sup>42</sup> A plethora of adventure stories and boys' magazines narrated their stories of the triumph of muscular masculinity in order to assert the interconnectedness between bodily strength and the fitness of men to rule an empire, but because these were told against a backdrop of colonial frontier settings, they likewise articulated how this vigorous masculinity served to combat the effete-ness of over-civilization. As is now well known, the failure of the British military during the Boer War both excited and accelerated fears of national physical degeneration. These eugenicist dystopian themes informed the immensely popu-



lar *Efficiency and Empire* by Arnold White, published in 1901, in the midst of an incompetent military campaign to bring the Boers to heel: "The first element of efficiency", he wrote, "is health." White attributed the weakness of empire to urban decay, the disaggregation of the family, the decline of agriculture and the nefarious effects of a dandified aristocracy upon the society as a whole.<sup>43</sup> Harry certainly admired exemplars of this masculinized and militarized empire, including Rudyard Kipling, whom he proudly escorted around McGill,<sup>44</sup> and Teddy Roosevelt,<sup>45</sup> the great American champion of robust manhood, who celebrated the moral character of athletic male bodies. The idea that one's personal health and fitness was directly connected to the vitality of state and empire was further reinforced by reading Karl Pearson's *National Life from the Standpoint of Science*, a volume recommended to him by Sidney Ball.<sup>46</sup>

Despite the influence of eugenics on Harry, there were more personal reasons for his strenuous pursuit of physical fitness which lay beyond the parameters of empire building. As he informed his parents, who were perennially anxious about his ability to achieve a First: "My physique is muscular and requires a great deal of pampering by way of exercise &c and I simply can't stand too applied and continuous study." This comment seems to express the conventional view of this period which wished to exalt the muscular male body as a means to express a range of values regarding purity of character, perseverance and respect for authority. This philosophy saw exercise as a prophylactic against the debilitating stresses of modern life which were thought to bring on nervous conditions such as neurasthenia or depression, and foster vices such as masturbation, both of which tormented Harry. Indeed, Harry expressed the view, then gaining greater cultural currency, that too much intellectualism was subversive of masculinity, for he went on to say that "I feel I must have time to fashion some consistent system *in experience*, not merely from books."<sup>47</sup> This meditation on life, largely derived from reading Walter Pater at Oxford, sought out active manhood. However, what Harry meant by this was not that he should be merely athletic but that he should be involved in social service or missionary work which would lead him to the pursuit of the higher spiritual life. The idea that narrow intellectualism would lead to both priggishness and a sterile masculinity abounded in the culture of the day and the proscription against the idle "bookworm", which had its roots in eighteenth-century discourse, became a template for Rhodes' vision of masculine scholarship.<sup>48</sup> In addition, the kind of updated Idealist philosophy which Sidney Ball attempted to inculcate in his students employed

Plato to convey the idea that the “citizen soldier” demanded the “careful education of mind as well as physique”. This revision of the Cartesian mind–body dichotomy was intended to undergird a modern ideal of the state and military patriotism, both of which rested upon the cultivation of a virile moral individualism.<sup>49</sup>

In some respects Harry’s view of the conjunction between mind and body placed him on a longstanding continuum of thought, derived both from Darwinian premises and medical and religious tenets, but which sat uncomfortably with the stereotypical ethos of what historians have termed “muscular Christianity”, which placed a clear priority on the development of physique as a channel for the attainment of a higher spirituality, as was attributed by many to its greatest Victorian exponent, Rev. Charles Kingsley.<sup>50</sup> In point of fact, Harry leaned to the view propounded by Charles Kingsley himself, namely that “[M]ind makes the man, not body.”<sup>51</sup> He was persuaded to this view in part through hearing a sermon in Montreal by Dr. Johnstone, a virulent opponent of the infiltration of American-style sport into Canadian universities, who declared: “The essential part of our make up is not the physical body which is like the other animals, but the spiritual part which is made in the image of God. Man nowadays tended to exalt the physical body more than was well and to forget their spiritual values and allow them to die.” As Harry remarked, this expressed his sentiments entirely.<sup>52</sup> Paradoxically, however, Harry immersed himself fully in a wide range of exercise both at McGill University and Oxford, even though the continual priority he placed upon muscular strength shows that he was never immune to other discourses or influences, namely those of the famous body builder Eugene Sandow, whose commercialized physical fitness regimes were a regular feature in popular magazines on both sides of the Atlantic.<sup>53</sup> A frequent refrain in his letters home was that “[M]y muscles are coming up finely, and I am feeling in perfect health”.<sup>54</sup> This constant preoccupation about his weight and fitness reflected a near obsession with the state of his corporeal self, part of which related to his concern for maintaining a lean and lithe body suited for long-distance running and out of his fear about nervous breakdowns or depressions to which he was prone when engaged in intensive study.<sup>55</sup> The latter concern explains the following observation: “I am not going to neglect exercise ... It is the thing which I for one cannot get along without”, written in the midst of his application for a Rhodes Scholarship.<sup>56</sup>

In an article entitled “Where Men Foregather—The Athletic Club” in the magazine *Modern Man*, the author dwelt upon the usual verities,

namely that exercise prevented masturbation and thus ensured purity of both mind and body. However, the underlying message was that “genuine sportsmanship” galvanized friendships and good feeling among men across the social spectrum.<sup>57</sup> Even cross-country running, usually viewed as a solitary sport, was promoted in *Modern Man* as a form of exercise conducive to forming enduring and egalitarian friendships because it fostered kindness, unselfishness and “good comradeship”, values at odds with the aggressive masculinity long associated with college athletics in the English public schools.<sup>58</sup> Indeed, Harry quickly abandoned rowing, a sport dominated by English aristocratic “bloods”, in favour of lacrosse, a sport indisputably identified with Canada. The popular magazine *Modern Man* frequently touted the benefits of lacrosse which it extolled as requiring “the best qualities of athletic manhood”, which included speed, collective play and unselfishness.<sup>59</sup> For his part, Harry chose athletics as another venue for forging his scholarly, spiritual and personal ties to fellow Rhodesmen, and, more suggestively, saw it as a forum for engaging in the intimate homoeroticism offered by sport, with its cultivation of the beauty of the male physique, a perspective reinforced by the Hellenistic male aesthetic which envisioned the male body as a work of art.<sup>60</sup> As we learn from a later letter written in response to his wife’s concerns about same-sex love in the midst of their courtship, Harry sadly noted the death of some of his friends from Oxford in the trenches. In a surprisingly frank letter, he recounted how, while at an Inter-Varsity track and field meet in Dublin, where he ran the half mile, while in the locker room with his friend, G.R. Anderson, a hurdler from Trinity College Oxford, nicknamed “Twiggie”, he attentively “rubbed at his body”, a remarkably sensual act which, by the time he was writing, evoked the intimacy and emotion of touch that was so common between soldiers at the front.<sup>61</sup> The purity and beauty of male touch was in turn juxtaposed by Harry with the illicit nature of heterosexual desire in which the two most successful athletes preyed upon hapless working-class Irish women; after losing in one realm of male competition, Harry, himself regularly tormented with the temptations of sexual desire, trumpeted his own moral superiority—what he termed “social *reserve*”,<sup>62</sup> which he considered the essence of true culture, a direct borrowing from the Hellenism of the Victorian Walter Pater<sup>63</sup>—which conferred a moral tenor on the equality of male friendship. But here as elsewhere, the interest in a fit body through athletics was not a source of character development for Harry but was seen as another manifestation of the spiritual engagement of these men in the Oxford Bible movement.

He would, therefore, have enthusiastically subscribed to the view enunciated by Dr. Percy Dearmer, an English Anglican priest popular among Oxford undergraduates, an adamant exponent of the need to collapse the mind–body dualism as well as the old Christian opposition between spirit and flesh. In 1909 Dearmer declared emphatically: “Man ... is not a body possessing a soul, but a soul possessing a body”. He did draw an analogy between the body and the empire but in a manner which did not exalt physical force, but which saw the power of British overseas expansion as flowing directly from the cultivation of the mind. Out of his overriding concern to bring religious teaching into line with modern psychological sciences, he in turn argued that the human intellect was itself governed by the Christian spirit founded upon both conscious and unconscious impulses.<sup>64</sup>

Harry was not immune to the discursive power of the new imperialism, for soon after arriving in Oxford he enthusiastically enlisted in the King’s Colonial Cavalry, a Territorial regiment consisting, as he proudly proclaimed to his parents, “of Rhodes scholars from South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Newfoundland”, requiring four years’ service, military drill and a two-week summer camp. However, it is apparent that he was far less interested in either the militarist ethos or the contribution he might make to imperial unity, for he was more drawn to the fact that he would be paid 5 shillings a day, that it might eventually provide him with an officer’s rank in the Canadian militia, and that it afforded him a chance to tour England. Best of all, it proved a means to affirm “how we colonials seem to have a sort of affinity in a social way”. Another compelling motive was that uniforms were attractive to young women,<sup>65</sup> but Harry also chose to become a recruiter for the regiment, largely because it represented for him the spirit of male comradeship. This non-military aspect of the Territorials was brought home in an article called “The Lonely Chap” published in *Modern Man*, which vaunted “the companionship of keen men of every class” over the national purposes of military drill.<sup>66</sup> Harry’s own sense of elation on finding a group of like-minded colonial men was communicated to his parents when he met a young Boer rugby player and Rhodes Scholar, the nephew of the celebrated Boer commander Piet Cronjé, whom he described as a “big fellow with a sort of a bashful smiles and an awful winning way about him. We talked freely of the war.”<sup>67</sup> Having made a group of new friends among the colonial Rhodes Scholars, Harry’s enthusiasm for military life waned, so that less than a year later he could report that he hoped for a day when militarism would be eradicated even though this might not occur in his lifetime: “so I

do not mind having an opportunity of learning to defend myself if necessary". Once his military service began to conflict with his Bible classes, he summarily dropped out and began to view militarism as inimical to civilization, inveighing against Germany as antithetical to notions of rationality, humanity and his image of an empire bound together by sentiment and religious ideals,<sup>68</sup> in which strength and heroism were seen to be compatible with sympathetic men shedding tears.<sup>69</sup> His final jettisoning of the synthesis of imperialism and aggressive masculinity came during a college dinner where he admired the Canadian Prime Minister Sir Wilfrid Laurier who symbolized the modern notion of the personality of influence by which men led by affability and attractiveness. These qualities he contrasted favourably with what he saw as an outmoded notion of masculine character defined by courage and aggression, which he now equated with effete-ness and homosexuality personified by Lord Kitchener, the hero of the Boer War, who shrivelled under the gaze of the women present. As he told his father: "There were a number of ladies at the head of the stairs and through them the hero of Khartoum picked his way as if he were afraid of catching contagion from some fell disease. He is as you know a relentless misogynist."<sup>70</sup>

This peculiar combination of militarism and anti-militarism which characterized Harry's thought was typical of Canadian nationalists of the pre-World War I period, including his friend W.L. Grant, with whom he had many discussions about Imperial Federation.<sup>71</sup> Far from viewing the empire, as did Cecil Rhodes, in terms of racial domination and the putative unity of the Anglo-Saxon race which served as a pretext for colonial conquest,<sup>72</sup> Harry and Sir George Parkin, the Canadian Rhodes propagandist, perceived the Rhodes Scholarship scheme as a means of sustaining the development of colonial nationalism in the settler colonies.<sup>73</sup> Feeling repelled by the patriotic "wave of military ardour" exhibited in the play "An Englishman's Home", Harry could without any sense of contradiction proclaim that England was

strengthening ... my love for Canada, the land of the maples ... I suppose I shall live and die an Imperialist but it will not be an Imperialist of the servile crouching type, but an Imperialist that believes in the destiny of his country and who will not tie up his prospects for future independence by any forced relations with Downing street. Imperial Federation is one of the burning questions here and now and one which demands the attention and commands the interest of every Canadian in Oxford, as in England. The question was debated in the Union the other day and resulted in a remarkable display

of ignorance of the main points at issue on both sides. The sooner people in England wake up to the importance of the situation the better. ... I am glad to see the firm stand that Sir Wilfrid Laurier is taking on the issue.<sup>74</sup>

In declaring the superiority of Canadians as moral exemplars at Oxford, Harry was typical of a whole range of Canadian imperial thinkers who rejected the idea that Canada was simply a pallid transcript of English society. Imperial Federation, from their point of view, was the confirmation of colonial nationalism and an invitation to the settler colonies to take a larger role in the management of world affairs. Where metropolitan English statesmen may have promoted an empire of military preparedness and tariff machinery, Canadians evoked the sentimental and cultural bonds, what Harry's McGill mentor, the political economist Stephen Leacock called the "emotion of imperialism".<sup>75</sup> Harry articulated his own gendered version of empire which was a stark contrast to the typical martial masculinity of Rhodes and Kitchener. Far from provoking a flight from the domestic sphere, Harry saw empire as part of his "gospel of the home" for, as he wrote his mother, "the home has civilized England and her empire was won by her mothers".<sup>76</sup> This idea that familial emigration, and not solitary masculine achievement, had established the settlement colonies was reaffirmed by another Rhodes Scholar, R.M. Rive who, when writing to Harry, imagined the empire as a literal extension of the conjugal relationship, symbolized by the increased tendency of Canadian Rhodes scholars, including Harry, to marry English women. This "matrimonial" alliance, he believed, would transform the Empire into a true world community based on affection, what he defined as a large scale "entente cordiale between Canada and England", which would overcome the old-style Imperialism of the "ultra-loyal party", such that domesticity became the foundation of a new liberal empire.<sup>77</sup>

Harry's sense of alienation from the mainstream culture of Oxford was not only driven by the fact that he was some four years older than the other "freshers", but it was compounded by the fact that most of the college men were English and therefore "steeped in tradition slow at making friendships".<sup>78</sup> His cohort of Rhodesmen became his closest male intimates, meeting regularly as the Oxford Colonial Club at the Japanese Café in the high street of Oxford, where they discussed "virile" issues such as the establishment of the Society for the Promotion of Child Emigration to the Colonies, a scheme advanced by the Rhodesian Kingsley Fairbridge, and for less serious entertainments which involved smoking and singing.<sup>79</sup> Another

mark of differentiation was Harry's strong identification with Christian evangelical endeavour. Given that the central purpose of the Oxford Student Christian Movement was to help students facing difficulties with college life, it is not surprising that Harry spearheaded the movement at St. John's College to form a Bible Circle, dubbed the "Erasmics", similar to those he had led in Montreal under the auspices of the YMCA. His earliest and most enthusiastic recruits, he reported to his mother, were first-year Rhodesmen who "took to it like a flash".<sup>80</sup> Although similar to Bible study work he had undertaken at McGill which, though anti-theological in tenor was perceived, as was the broader Student Christian Movement, to promote missions overseas and inspire the institutional churches. While at McGill, Harry had conceived of private prayer and study as preparatory to the sermon of the minister, and saw it as closely tied to the imperatives of the institutional church.<sup>81</sup> However, the unique nature of his personal experience at Oxford, conditioned both by his lack of male friends with whom he could have heart to heart talks about emotional and spiritual matters, together with the challenges to his faith offered by the Greats, transformed the Bible Class in the direction of a distinctly individualistic ethos, which, under the impact of modern psychology, concentrated on self-discovery through introspection and the cultivation of personal relationships. As one of its members later noted, the aim of this group was "to find myself" in the highly competitive and atomistic atmosphere of Oxford.<sup>82</sup>

Although Oxford Hellenism used Plato's search for "a reality in something higher than the material things" to suggest a close affinity between the Ancient Greeks and modern Christianity,<sup>83</sup> it was the broader study of the philosophical moderns, including David Hume, William Berkeley, John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, together with "secular" socialists, like George Bernard Shaw, Bernard Bosanquet, and Albert Shaeffle, the German author of *The Quintessence of Socialism* (1875), that directly challenged Harry's pious upbringing in dogmatic Presbyterianism. Harry appreciated the ethical theories of Hume and the Idealist T.H. Green, but maintained that their notions of morality, social duty and self-sacrifice lacked the sense of a Christian obligation to God.<sup>84</sup> His own Christian convictions became an impediment for his ability to fully embrace and comprehend the links between ancient and modern knowledge required by the Greats. Despite his animus against certain aspects of modern thought, he did embrace Sidney Ball's insistence on the primacy of the individual soul as the foundation of social organization. As Ball saw it, society "must be construed, not as an organism, but as a psychological

organization”, a clear departure from the New Liberal synthesis of philosophical idealism and sociology.<sup>85</sup> Progress, according to Ball, occurred as a result of contact between individuals and not through the operation of impersonal social laws, and as a result he was a great exponent of the study of psychology, through which one could apprehend the continuum between the mind and spirit, in which the soul and intelligence combined to form a “self-conscious being”. Morality, he taught his students, was more than a mere psychological process or species of instinct, but emerged from what another author termed “soul weighing”, namely the process of self-examination of one’s innermost feelings.<sup>86</sup>

Ball’s presentation of selfhood did not rehearse Victorian verities concerning the elision between character and society,<sup>87</sup> for while he spoke of the development of moral intelligence through the influence of example, his concept of the soul as a “psychological fact” discovered as a result of the contact between individuals fit perfectly into the concept of personal religion propounded by John R. Mott. Mott was the pioneer of the American Student Volunteer Movement, whose visit to Oxford in 1909 did so much to inspire the formation of the Oxford Intercollegiate Christian Union of which Harry’s St. John’s Bible Class formed a part. It was Mott’s initial dynamism that made the Student Christian Movement, in the words of Nathaniel Micklem, Harry’s close friend and a celebrated Congregationalist theologian, “a power in Oxford”.<sup>88</sup> His meetings were attended by over 1000 students at Oxford and 1200 at Cambridge and such was his impact that over sixty men in Harry’s college alone immediately declared for Christ.<sup>89</sup> Writers for the Oxford student paper *The Isis*, alert to the intense debates then occurring over the “historical Jesus”, worried whether Christ and religion were being “emasculated”, that is, disconnected from history, reason and modern scientific developments. This was a generation of educated believers caught between *Ecce Homo*, the immensely popular biography of Christ written by J.R. Seeley, which was perceived to extoll an overly-Hellenized Christ, and Albert Schweitzer’s *The Quest for the Historical Jesus* (1906), which severed the historical roots of Christian theology. For these Oxford men, Mott was to be commended for avoiding “the sentimental excitement of the revivalist” and his “down-right and direct” manner,<sup>90</sup> attributes which accorded well with mainstream cultural attitudes which valorized frankness and individual authenticity in men.

John Mott, dubbed by Teddy Roosevelt as “the greatest living American”,<sup>91</sup> has been conventionally linked to the broader movement for



“muscular Christianity”. Roosevelt’s robust celebration of the evangelist as a promoter of the masculine and “aggressive forces of Christianity”<sup>92</sup> may have contributed to this perception. It is true that Mott’s insistence that “religion [is] primarily a matter of the will”<sup>93</sup> sustained older canons of male decisiveness, self-reliance and self-restraint, but this outlook also heralded a new perspective, one that intersected with the popularization of the thought of Friedrich Nietzsche in the Edwardian era. A range of thinkers on both sides of the Atlantic, including William James, Walt Whitman, H.G. Wells and, most notably, George Bernard Shaw, author of *Man and Superman*, reinterpreted Nietzsche using new psychological concepts of the inner self and the necessity for inner exploration of multiple levels of consciousness, to argue that the management of the will aided self-development towards a higher self, the creation of which would be deployed to form an elite which would rule the world.<sup>94</sup> Mott also embraced these concepts which he fit into his own concepts of mission which sought to evangelize the world for Christ along modern lines. Like Sidney Ball’s modern psychological interpretation of society, Mott’s Bible movement sought to elevate the concept of “Personality”, brought about by a process of personal prayer with small groups of like-minded men,<sup>95</sup> all of which was intended to inject into the religious experience a new level of vital personal relationships to combat the effects of a sterile theology which had merely produced a “religion of authority”. A corporate gospel was thereby to be replaced by a direct encounter with the “living personality” of Jesus incarnated in the friendships of men, whose emotional intimacy flowed directly from a common pursuit of psychological introspection while holding their Bibles.<sup>96</sup> Despite the fact that historians have often interpreted Oxford as a bastion of traditionalism in the service of elite education, both the curriculum and student life provided many opportunities for contact with modern thought. Both the common psychological emphasis in the Greats and his religious experience as a student—sites conventionally associated with customary attitudes—impelled Harry towards a clearly modern understanding of the “personality” in terms of personal influence, and to elevate personal relationships as the means to achieve the higher good defined by authenticity and sincerity. In thus perceiving the ultimate goal of society in terms of interpersonal relations, Harry and his circle came to the same conclusions as did the Cambridge ethicist G.E. Moore and the novelist E.M. Forster whose 1910 novel *Howards End* enunciated that quintessentially modern injunction: “only connect”.<sup>97</sup> Indeed, like Forster, Harry likened “the pourings out of the

spirit” through religion to the pursuit both of male and female sexual desire and love.<sup>98</sup>

There was, in Harry’s Protestant religious formation, a current, extending as far back as the Reformation, that legitimated emotional expression as the key to religious faith. His immediate background was, of course, that of a North American evangelical, where the culture of revivalism was characterized by emotional impulses that were always more pronounced than in its British analogues. Here, faith was less a matter of doctrine or correct ritual than an emotional encounter with the divine, a view that enlisted both “respectable” urban evangelicals and devotees of the camp meeting, that classic locus of emotional religion. In contrast to a historiographical trajectory that has postulated the decline of the emotions within evangelicalism, and particularly in religious messages addressed to men, recent work has effectively demonstrated the continued vitality of emotional religion, even in the more “masculinist” tropes of muscular Christianity.<sup>99</sup> In Britain, after the 1850s, particularly with the publication of J.R. Seeley’s immensely popular *Ecce Homo* (1865), one of Harry’s much-loved texts, it became increasingly possible within Christian communities to combine masculinity with public emotional displays as a sign of one’s resemblance to Christ, who was portrayed as a tender and almost feminine figure. Particularly within Presbyterianism, given the strong imprint of Common Sense philosophy, there was a greater affinity between the intellect and the emotions, and a long-standing concern with introspection, even within the more conservative elements of the denomination. Theories of the affections and emotions were therefore very important within Presbyterianism, and in Canada, the Rev. William Lyall, a Free Church Presbyterian and an important figure in Nova Scotia, where Harry’s father trained as a minister, stated “[w]hat is our higher spiritual being concerned with, but the emotions”,<sup>100</sup> signalling the degree to which the sentiments were critical to achieving the activation of the soul. The introduction of the new psychology in both its physiological and philosophical manifestations only served to accentuate the significance of the emotions in the interpretation of religion. Even in Canada, where Harry received his early training, the works of G. Stanley Hall, William James and George Coe frequently appeared on college curricula.

Not only had there not been a decisive shift away from “the earnest expressive manliness of the Evangelicals”, as posited by John Tosh,<sup>101</sup> but there were other “modern” developments that stood at variance with the cult of the stiff upper lip. As Thomas Dixon has recently observed in

*Weeping Britannia*, the emphasis among historians upon military masculinity has led to an “incompleteness of our idea of the repressed British male in this period”.<sup>102</sup> Oxford may well have been characterized by the conventional synthesis between public school and military masculinities, but there were competing ideas of manhood that were being offered, not only through the Student Christian Movement that Harry was involved in, but also through the culture of Hellenism. Both Jane Ellen Harrison and Gilbert Murray, the latter the most outstanding lecturer in classics at Oxford, were exponents of the new psychology, and had accepted notions of the unconscious, revising Victorian notions of Greek religion as dominated by rationality and the intellect, towards a more ecstatic, mystical view of religion which highlighted subconscious emotional states. They drew this idea from Sigmund Freud, one which they believed lay at the core of all religious systems. As Gilbert Murray observed in his *History of Ancient Greek Literature* (1897): “Reason is great, but it is not everything. There are in the world things not of reason, but both below and above it; causes of emotion, which we cannot express, which we tend to worship, which we feel, perhaps, to be the precious elements in life.”<sup>103</sup> Sidney Ball, Harry’s senior tutor, was a great devotee of the work of both J.S. Mill, whose philosophy centred on the cultivation of the feelings, and William James, who directly addressed the question of emotions in religion in such a way that blurred the mind–body dualism.<sup>104</sup> Further, building on a broader psychology of the unconscious, James outlined a psychology of religion in which religious emotions were brought into closer affinity with everyday emotions. In viewing emotions as a critical element in the direct apprehension of the divine, he disavowed the importance of both theology and religious institutions, a point of view that was critically important in Harry’s own intellectual development. For James, religious truth was decidedly not intellectual, but flowed from emotions and feelings, first in the subconscious and then rising to the level of consciousness through conversion. In his work, James, himself a Presbyterian, foregrounded the concept of a living religion which revolved around the individual’s own personal experience.<sup>105</sup> Even within the emerging discipline of the psychology of sex, pioneered by men like Havelock Ellis and Edward Carpenter, but also subscribed to by classicists such as Jane Ellen Harrison, sexual and religious emotions were in close proximity to one another, so that Harrison could describe sexual desire in both men and women as “sacramental sexuality”.<sup>106</sup>

The strong connection which Harry drew between religion and sexuality would have been amplified through his own experiences at the Christian Union summer camps, where young men and women who lived in separate but adjacent sites were encouraged to mix and mingle, so that religion became a primary bond of conjugal love. To this end, transcendental and Anglo-Catholic religious thought, as Harry Cocks has argued, became a channel for the wider circulation of new ideas about sexuality.<sup>107</sup> Even evangelical religion which, in this case, often leaned towards fundamentalism and Pentecostalism,<sup>108</sup> broadly known as anti-modernist religious movements,<sup>109</sup> perhaps because of the priority given to emotional expressions of conversion, could likewise serve as vehicles for “radical”<sup>110</sup> and modernist notions of the body and self which fragmented concepts and undermined the dualism of mind and body. Typically, these camps brought into close proximity for several days hundreds of young men and women. For example, at Baslow in 1910, the camp Harry attended, the women lodged in the village while the men camped in tents on the Duke of Devonshire’s estate at Chatsworth.<sup>111</sup> Dora Pym, a student at Girton, who knew Gwyneth Murray, Harry’s future fiancée, and like her aspired to missionary work, recounted how in 1914, while attending the camp at Swanwick, which Harry had attended three years previously, she had been handed a copy of Edward Carpenter by a “striking looking Scotsman” in kilt and red stockings.<sup>112</sup> The book in question was most likely Carpenter’s *Love’s Coming of Age* which, when first published in 1895, was viewed as a scandalous publication and removed from circulation. However, some ten years later, in 1906, a new edition appeared, renamed *The Intermediate Sex*. Despite his earlier associations with radical socialists and his unconventional life style, Carpenter’s ideas had, by 1910, become sufficiently accepted by a broad spectrum of Edwardian society that his modern views on sexuality could be openly discussed within fairly ‘conservative’ or mainstream religious settings like the Student Christian Movement. Carpenter was the first author in England to use the term “homosexual” as a general description of sex between men, which he exalted as a purer, less carnal form of sexual desire and intimacy than heterosexuality. Carpenter’s views on same-sex love would have commended themselves to Oxbridge students familiar with Hellenist Greek notions of sensuality, thus opening them up to a more radical priority Carpenter placed on sexual desire. A key aspect of understanding one’s psychological and emotional self, and the pursuit of a higher spirituality, encapsulated in his belief that “sex still goes first, and hands mouth eyes brain follow [*sic*]; from the midst of belly

and thighs radiate the knowledge of self, religion, and immortality".<sup>113</sup> In viewing all sexual desire as a manifestation of the spirit, Carpenter encouraged his readers to reject older Christian canons centred on the sinfulness of Adam and Eve, in which sexual relations were associated with the lower appetites of animals. In outlining the varieties of love, observing how "one passion is predominantly physical, and another predominantly emotional, and another contemplative or spiritual, or practical, or sentimental",<sup>114</sup> Carpenter deftly presented a radical revision of marital relations, one which normalized sexuality as a species of "honourable affection", all of which made his message palatable to religious leaders and would have been eagerly assimilated by young men and women coming of age.

The fact that Harry's conversion experience occurred at the ecumenical Student Christian Camp at Baslow in Derbyshire in the summer of 1910, through "soul communion, communion of soul with soul in Christ, and not in Church", was a direct provocation to his father, who was invested in the intellectualism of theological tradition. As his contemporary and McGill friend, Murray Brooks, declared: "As for theological riddles, I was content to leave them to the 'theologs' (towards whom I had a rather superior attitude in those days) and their Profs."<sup>115</sup> The strongly emotional tenor of his Bible camp experience would have antagonized Harry's father's Presbyterian piety, which was more intellectual and restrained. More significantly, the fact that this mark of spiritual maturity took place at the instigation of his peers, most notably while he was in the midst of spiritual communion with Maurice Richmond, would have subverted conventions of spiritual maturation which customarily worked from within the family circle, where they were given final articulation in the institutional church, before the clergyman.<sup>116</sup> This was a particular affront to a father who envisioned his parental role in terms of his identity as religious patriarch of the family.<sup>117</sup> As Harry related to his father, Maurice, with whom he was "in love", after sharing his tent, "has done the most for his spiritual life". Male comradeship itself was the moving force behind his spiritual awakening: "Men of every shade of religious & secular opinion could be seen at any time walking about arm in arm discussing matters which under any other circumstance would be impossible for them." In short, it was this special friend who had taught him that religion was a series of "psychological states" by which he meant the assurance that "there was a *Force* behind our outward life which we might appropriate because by constant contact with him [Maurice] I could not deny its presence

in his life; and he also showed me the secret of it all—heart-searching and unceasing intercession”.<sup>118</sup>

Not only was this spiritual communion with his male peer group troubling to his father, but Harry’s psychological interpretation of religion in which unity was brought about through a common sharing of personal emotions was a direct attack on the movement then occurring in Canada among Presbyterians and Methodists to unite the machinery of the institutional church in the name of social reform and building a Christian nation.<sup>119</sup> Harry’s almost complete rejection of his father’s model of Christianity, including his plans that Harry study theology and follow in his footsteps as a clergyman and professor, produced increasing conflicts with his parents. To compound matters, the fact that he was on the executive of the “booming” Bible study work not only in St. John’s College but throughout Oxford, along with his plan to accept the Secretaryship of the Student Christian Movement for all of England only served to increase his parents’ anxieties about how this would subvert his intellectual progress. Following his emotional conversion, Harry was compelled to report that his interests were so divided that “my schools work *has* suffered appreciably by it” and that although it was one of the few arenas where he excelled, he confessed “[T]his thing is shattering my nerves and my work!”<sup>120</sup>

Like his colleague, Murray Brooks, Harry had long disparaged professors as being out of touch with real life, as their “natural sluggishness of brain” made them unprepared for business or executive life.<sup>121</sup> At McGill, he had greatly esteemed his professors, calling the noted political economist Stephen Leacock by the affectionate nickname, “Leaky Steamcock”, although he was less admiring of the renowned Darwinian, E.W. MacBride, widely considered a “heretic, perverter of youth and servant of the devil”.<sup>122</sup> At Oxford, despite his unalloyed admiration for Sidney Ball, whose influence upon him was immense, this anti-intellectualism was driven by his inability to deal adequately with the mental rigours of the *Litterae Humaniores* curriculum which demanded not simply skills at translation, which he had in abundance,<sup>123</sup> but a broad approach to theories of knowledge, both historical and philosophical. By 1911, as the exams in the Greats loomed, Harry’s intellectual deficiencies, which he had tried to communicate to his parents while at McGill, became more apparent, prompting him to admit that while he had learned how to present an external simulacrum of learned discourse, he nevertheless realized that he was “both ignorant in the presence of true scholars and wanting in experience in the presence of older and more practical-minded men”,<sup>124</sup> thus

presenting an oppositional dynamic of youth and age which increasingly framed his narrative of self-exculpation in his letters to his parents. Despite the fact that the Rhodes Scholarships and the Oxford ethos stressed the creation of the well-rounded man, his parents, and in his particular his father, measured adult manliness in terms of the acquisition of professional knowledge. Following his life-altering conversion at Baslow, Harry tried to reverse this narrative, claiming in a pointed letter to his father that his own sense of maturation was determined by his increasing spiritual self-realization, which he contrasted with the “unproductive intellectual atmosphere” which he rated a hindrance to his ability for “getting into touch with my fellow men”. In a pathetic plea to his father at the beginning of his final term at Oxford, Harry, after several years of disingenuously retailing his love for reading Plato and Aristotle, was forced to drop this pretence which he had used to screen himself from parental interference, stating: “It *is* hard to be natural, free bright unreservedly frank [in seminar] when one has come fresh from getting up a difficult passage of Aristotle Plato or even T.H. Green.”<sup>125</sup> Just one week later, he was even more unreserved in a letter to his less judgmental brother: “I am in an exceedingly bad way about my finals—don’t know anything about my work. Can’t make out what I’ve been doing over here for the past two years. I seem to have spent all my time thinking about little nothings, at any rate I haven’t gotten on very far with ‘Greats’.” Candidly admitting that, because of his lack of systematic study, he anticipated that the exams would be “a frightful ordeal” yielding at best a Second; worse still, he was discouraged about even getting his athletic Blue.<sup>126</sup>

His sense of abject failure was palpable, but was employed by Harry to yet again make an attempt to bypass his parents’ vision of a narrow career path to becoming a professor of New Testament theology. Falling back on the posture of adolescence, Harry defended his reluctance to pursue theological training either at McGill or the University of Edinburgh, immediately following Oxford, arguing that his very immaturity “might in the end work more harm than good”, that a professor’s task of guiding ministers “at the very centre of their faith sounds to an exceedingly large and uncanny order”, finally conceding his utter lack of fitness for “dispensing sacred food” in a leadership role.<sup>127</sup> The growing conflict between Harry and his father flowed out of Harry’s own life experience, but his feelings of animosity may have been amplified by reading articles, such as that by R.B. Hunter, the author of “The Parson’s Son”, who, in 1909, asserted the normality of youthful rebellion, stating that sons “naturally shrink

from following in their fathers' footsteps, and resolve to strike out a line for themselves in the opposite directions".<sup>128</sup>

Harry's relationship to his parents was a complex one and refines the existing scholarship which has posited either a long continuum of child-rearing practices and ideals of parents grounded on the imperative of obedience that held sway between early modern times and 1914, or a sudden rupture in the late nineteenth century marked by a less deferential attitude to fathers, resulting in a flight from domesticity.<sup>129</sup> Like those epigones of modernism, the men and women of the Bloomsbury group who, now famously, quipped that "on or about December 1910 human character changed",<sup>130</sup> the author of "The Father's Part", writing in *Modern Man* in March 1909, saw this as a pivotal moment in familial relations, where the "awe-inspiring" patriarch of old had been replaced by the father as "chum", with whom the son had frank conversations.<sup>131</sup> Harry's letters home from Oxford display a remarkable frankness and desire for emotional closeness with *both* his mother and father, and his missives expressed a desire for "some one to talk to in heart to heart fashion" in which one told "all one's secrets and talking over prospects and work and home affairs",<sup>132</sup> although it is evident that he had a particular affinity to his mother, for whom he penned eulogistic poetry, and to whom he confided, "I miss the little evening pre-study chats we used to have last winter." This was not unusual, for Lady Ada Murray, his future mother-in-law, defined her own relationship to her oldest son as one of "companionship & confidence", defined around the ideal of being "close friends",<sup>133</sup> a view which paralleled notions of companionate marriage. While he looked to both of his parents for advice and guidance as he made the fraught transition from adolescence to manhood, and he enjoyed making puns and witticisms in his letters to them, he especially relished "conversations of the lighter vein [more] like those I have with mother." Indeed, he often regaled his mother with stories of his flirtations with women, his socializing, and interesting pieces of gossip, recounting in one memorable letter how he had witnessed the Liberal cabinet minister, Winston Churchill, playing cards aboard a cross-channel steamer while Mrs. Churchill looked bored "sizing up the dresses of the ladies on board".<sup>134</sup>

Harry's ideal of family life included a strongly involved father figure and he was exceedingly disparaging of his future father-in-law, Sir James Murray, who, although a jovial raconteur when he joined the family circle, frequently made excuses for absenting himself and retiring to the Scriptorium—



colloquially called “the Scrippy”—and he upbraided his own father for his lack of letter writing, even though he saw him as a stern disciplinarian.<sup>135</sup> Good parenting, according to Harry, involved a combination of frivolity, emotional frankness, and a healthy dose of firmness and moral regulation.<sup>136</sup> It is clear that Harry craved the constant advice of his parents, seeing the intense emotional bonding elicited through the candid quality of their letters, as a means of social discipline for a young man prone to temptations of the body, including smoking, drinking, and illicit sexual desire.<sup>137</sup> For as he wrote from his digs in Oxford, there was nothing so reassuring amidst “all the temptations here as the dear home letters”.<sup>138</sup> He also desired their actual physical presence both at McGill and Oxford, where they visited for long periods of time, as long as six months at Oxford, thereby fulfilling Harry’s desperate need for their approbation of his friends, teachers and other mentors, all of whom they met, including the family of Sir James Murray. While off on a reading party in St. Brieuc, in Brittany, having a gay time socializing with his male friends and engaging in sexual dalliances with various French girls, he wrote appreciatively to his parents who had been in England for an extended visit that they had been “the happiest six months of my life”, concluding rather sentimentally that “I really don’t believe that there is any pleasure in life greater than that being received back into the ‘family circle’ after a prolonged absence from it.”<sup>139</sup>

His semi-weekly letters home, which suffered as did his essays from “the fault of verbosity, lack of compression”,<sup>140</sup> were in many ways a performance of filial duty in which he accounted for his work habits and related how often he attended church services.<sup>141</sup> However, they likewise manifested a growing assertiveness of his sense of independence which he sought to disguise within the language of obedience. Thus, in a letter which on first reading appeared to articulate his conformity to the strict moral sanctions of his parents against smoking, drinking and playing cards, Harry used the figure of a visiting female, the wife of a Canadian acquaintance, to ventriloquize the views of his parents, while at the same time informing them that such rigorous moral strictures had made some of his Oxford pals “uncomfortable” and that it was under the force of peer pressure that he had now revised his “total abstinence” philosophy.<sup>142</sup> So long as Harry believed that his loquacious epistles that detailed his diverse intellectual, athletic and spiritual activities were stimulating the proper level of approbation from his parents, he was more than willing to play the dependent son; however he strongly resented the charge made by his father at the beginning of his second term who accused him of “slacking”, petulantly asking “why they were

always on this tack”, and later, after admitting to mere “busy idleness”, he pivoted, claiming the mantle of adult maturity by stating how he had internalized the precept of self-discipline which was stimulated by his constant “imaginary pressure of work”, which, he warned his anxious parents, might ruin his health, a constant refrain of his correspondence.<sup>143</sup> Harry’s attitudes manifested both an intense yearning for the domestic circle, and the “flight from the family” that, according to Martin Francis, characterized the attitudes of many of his early-twentieth-century contemporaries.<sup>144</sup>

There were deep-seated tensions between his parents’ plan for his vocation, namely becoming a professor of theology at his father’s college in Vancouver and Harry’s desire to choose his own path in life. From his earlier days at McGill, Harry filled his letters with his own choices for work: he recommended working for wealthy families in Muskoka as a tutor or working in the canneries of British Columbia during his summers, and this strategy continued at Oxford, where he continually sought to parlay his Bible Study work into a job as a travelling secretary for the Student Christian Movement in Britain,<sup>145</sup> as well as proposing mission work, theological study in London, remaining at Oxford to study New Testament theology, and excursions to German universities to improve his language skills.<sup>146</sup> All of this was to no avail, as his father, who continued to hold the purse strings, adamantly insisted upon his return to Canada to engage in theological study at Presbyterian College Montreal. The consistent note in all of Harry’s career alternatives was the assertion of the priority of Christian experience over “pure intellectual exercise—which is not a matter of *life* but of theory”, here channeling the priority in both Hellenism and Mott’s new personal spirituality upon spontaneity and the constant search for new experiences. Thus when he was reading aloud from Matthew Arnold to Elsie and Rosfrith Murray, during one of his many delightful visits to Sunnyside, their house on the Banbury Road, Oxford, having a laugh at this stern Victorian’s puritan voice, he was really sending up his own father, who like Arnold himself evoked the stern moralism of a bygone era.<sup>147</sup> Harry did not have to read Edmund Gosse’s *Father and Son* published in 1907, or Samuel Butler’s *The Way of All Flesh*, republished to great acclaim in 1903, to understand the psychological pressures brought to bear by fathers, especially those who, as Butler narrated, compelled their sons to pursue clerical careers.<sup>148</sup> Just before his final exams, he relented, and agreed that “his work lies in the Church at home”, and in this capitulation to his father’s plans, he stated that he was sorry for acting like less of a man, “a fickle person” and regretted “this display of indeci-

sion".<sup>149</sup> Fearing his father's disapproval, he wrote "work, work, work,—to save me from a fourth", but wishing to once again assert himself, stated "there are some things in the world which are better than First of whatsoever kind", and that even if he must return home "with my mental tail between my legs—but have I not my spiritual and physical ones also". His final humiliation arrived with the announcement of an undistinguished Third when Harry had to demean himself and admit "I have shown amazing ignorance." However, he continued to expound the view so antagonistic to his parents, that the final consolation was that he had "learned to *live* in Oxford and after all that is the main thing in one's attainments, in whatever direction they may lie".<sup>150</sup>

As Samuel Butler had recommended, Harry sought an alternate sphere by which to discover his inner self, which, he contended, was of greater importance in becoming a man of maturity. Writing to his parents in 1910, Harry outlined how the discovery of "a great many secrets of friendships since coming over here", had enriched him far more than McGill with all her societies and fraternities." Here he presented his own vision of duty, one which was considerably at variance with a conventional notion of moral and social responsibility in that it highlighted the centrality of friendships as a means of living "up to the light", in which he imagined the family as merely the extension of peer group personal relations based around personality rather than moral character, by which he meant personal influence rather than ties of hierarchical obligations in society. Rejecting an older idea of the nuclear family as the sole haven for emotional enrichment, Harry now posited a new ideal in which the conjugal unit and the wider family flowed seamlessly together with networks of close friends, whose bonds were grounded in an idea of companionship founded on equality. Thus, Harry was extremely disconcerted to find that the Murray girls had no friends apart from their cousins and other kin.<sup>151</sup> His close friend at Oxford, Norman Macdonnell, a fellow Rhodes Scholar from Queen's University and like Harry a Presbyterian son of the manse, articulated a similarly modern interpretation of society as the larger manifestation of the values incarnated in friendship. Missing his Oxford circle while teaching at the exclusive private school, Upper Canada College, in Toronto, Macdonnell mused on life: "I don't care a damn for anything or anybody but yet I can't live without friends! Society, in the broad sense, alone makes life worth while—society high and low, male and female."<sup>152</sup>

In large part the "pleasure" he gained from being active in doing the "personal work" of the Christian Union at St John's College, besides the

sense of competence he derived from bringing some fifty men to Christ, was the personal happiness he gained from intimate conversations with male friends. So that when he waxed eloquent about the beneficent influence of Oxford, and told his parents about “the new force coming into my life and taking possession of it”, he was alluding to the way in which Bible study had become the primary channel for fostering his emotions and sense of a powerful inner self, all achieved through intimate relations with male youth.<sup>153</sup> It is certainly true that an important element of these friendships was the usual conviviality among undergraduate men at Oxford. Far from replicating home, Harry’s college rooms became like a “gentleman’s club”<sup>154</sup> for as his friend John Thomson announced: “Our digs are good stuff. We have got a ripping piano upstairs in the big room which H and Ernest have. Its bigness is notorious in our immediate circle, they call it the Skating Rink.” Like other Oxford men, they most likely decorated their walls with erotic images of women, as had his older friend and fellow Presbyterian, W.L. Grant, who, missing female companionship in the all-male environment of college life, hung Frederick Leighton’s famous “Psyche’s Bath”, a longstanding favourite of undergraduates,<sup>155</sup> whose marble white limbs were shown in nude profile. In Harry’s rooms a convivial group of English and Canadian young men gathered to sing around the piano—Harry always taking the tenor parts—, played cards and, after having acquired a complete set of *Punch* magazine, laughed uproariously at the “jokes, jokes, jokes from morning till night” about the suffrage movement and ogled the girls in body-hugging bathing suits.<sup>156</sup> The portrait of the pleasures of Oxford Harry furnished for his parents’ edification closely mirrored that which featured in Max Beerbohm’s immensely popular novel, *Zuleika Dobson* (1911), avidly read by undergraduates, including Harry and his future wife, Gwyneth Murray. The sociability of fellow students certainly contributed in no small way to Harry’s growing happiness and self-confidence when he successfully attracted “quite a number” of Englishmen to his rooms where he regaled them with his McGill repertoire of songs including “My Nellie’s Blue Eyes”, but it was in fact the influence of a few select friends which “has meant ...everything to him” and which encouraged him to take “a new lease of life—physical—mental—and spiritual”. The cultivation of these close friendships fed Harry’s “spiritual nature” and he justified spending enormous amounts of time in individual conversation with friends because, as he informed his parents, through male bonding “I have found a greater clearness coming into my thinking of late which makes my work simply

hum when I'm at it."<sup>157</sup> When, during an Easter reading party at St. Briec in France, he declared that "My pleasure has already begun in Plato", his sense of well-being actually flowed from his many "earnest discussions" with Norman Macdonnell, an aspiring clergyman. This was an extension of the intellectually competitive culture of preparing for the Greats: "We never argue except at top pressure, and when it is all over we always laugh at ourselves for our earnestness, and at the way we called each other down for inconsistent argument." Besides the shouting and gesticulations typical of aggressive masculinity, in which intellectual debate mimicked mock battles, a great deal of their time was actually spent taking photos and in having "heart to heart" talks in which he and Norman reached "a goodly number of understandings" on religion and women, a highly emotional process of self-exploration.<sup>158</sup>

Ideally the platonic friendships of men were supposed to produce emotions of caring, trust, and sincerity remote from the dirty, tawdry sexual desire identified with the love for women. Paraphrasing the mystical ideal of Edward Carpenter, C. Wolff, the author of "Male Emotions—Friendship", characterized male friendships as a "sacred possession" because they remained pure. Indeed, it was their avoidance of the corporeal that made them as enduring as "hooks of steel". "Friendship between man and man is a warming, comforting, often inspiring thing", wrote Wolff. "It is a peculiar emotion, owning no sex magnetism, dependent upon mutual liking, and, above all, upon mutual trust. I like to reflect that it is possible for two people to be deeply attached to each other quite apart from any influence of sex."<sup>159</sup> Platonic male comradeship was of higher spiritual quality than the passing sexual attraction aroused by flirtatious women. This was the theme of "A Man's Desire", which appeared alongside an etching of two men deep in conversation, whose masculine fortitude was suggested both by the fact that they sat in front of a painting of two boxers and because they had the resolution to resist the siren call of illicit sex.<sup>160</sup> As Sarah Cole has argued, by the early twentieth century there was "an increased prominence accorded to male love and desire at many levels—cultural, discursive, medical, aesthetic, and personal; followed by and/or conjoined with an increasingly stifling and punitive atmosphere".<sup>161</sup> The increasing awareness in the cultural realm of the vexing questions of eroticism and sexual desire between men was manifest in a series of articles published in *Modern Man*, which sought to foster a desexualized camaraderie among men, as a prophylactic against modern anomie symbolized by the stereotypical bachelor, the middle-class office clerk, who

retired to his lonely bed-sitter in the evening. These writings displayed an acute sensitivity to the fine line that lay between the admiration of male bodies as a form of male bonding and the effeminate “beauty men” who might elicit the kind of unwonted sexual desire which led to the notorious Oscar Wilde case.<sup>162</sup> There was, therefore, a constant attempt to carefully delineate between “inordinate attention” to one’s attire and daily toilet, the mark of an effeminate fop or dandy connected to club land,<sup>163</sup> the haven of aristocratic degenerates, and the kind of masculine good looks in which male beauty, particularly a becoming countenance, testified to a deeper moral character, evocative of the modern introspective man of deep feeling.<sup>164</sup>

The positive equation between character and beauty, much of it influenced by Hellenism, seemed to have animated Harry’s response to a number of young men at Oxford. In 1908, during his first term at Oxford, he described having “brekker” with a “young fresher named Nottidge, a sweet boy about 19, a beautiful face and apparently just as beautiful a character”, a frank admission to his parents, narrated in juxtaposition to the immorality of other freshers getting drunk on Guy Fawkes Day which repelled him.<sup>165</sup> On other occasions he told his parents of how he walked “arm in arm” with Maurice Richmond who helped convert him, had slept with another student named Munro stating without guile “we have grown to be extremely fond of one another”, and commented about a fellow athlete, Harry Watson, that he was in love with him, “[H]e is a dear. We had a number of solid talks together.”<sup>166</sup> The fact that Harry recorded both his admiration for male bodies and his intimate connections with men in letters to his parents demonstrates that he envisioned male friendships as leading to a higher spiritual selfhood, functioning as a counterbalance to what he saw as the extreme “egoism” of his family correspondence. This evocation of male comradeship as both morally pure and intellectual was best illustrated by his portrait of his future brother-in-law Jowett Murray: “He has”, he told his parents, “one of the finest faces of any man I know. He is also one of the cleverest men leaving Oxford this year.”<sup>167</sup>

In so describing Jowett Murray, Harry was invoking the memory of Benjamin Jowett, a close friend of Sir James Murray and a colleague of John Addington Symonds, who campaigned to suppress the erotic and sensual undertones within Hellenism, in favour of a chaste ideal which became the template for masculine comradeship in modern society, in keeping with Victorian management of all manifestations of sexual desire.<sup>168</sup> There were, however, other models of male friendship which

stridently celebrated both the corporeality and potential homoeroticism of male intimacies, most notably the poetry of Walt Whitman. There was no mistaking the intensely phallic tenor of his imagery. In *Leaves of Grass*, he enjoined men not to be afraid of their bodies, for he celebrated “Bathing myself, bathing my—sex” and spoke of his “Lusty, phallic, with the potent original loins, perfectly sweet”. Whitman extolled male friendships not simply of emotion, but of touch, desire, and the rejoicing in “vigor, calmness and beauty of person”, and of the sex act itself, which formed his metaphysics of comradesly love.<sup>169</sup> Although Whitman spoke alternately of both homoerotic and heterosexual love, it was well known at Oxford that when he wrote about “the dear love of man for his comrades—the attraction of friend for friend”, far from elucidating a platonic ideal, he was extolling the virtues of the physical satisfaction of lust and desire. This was the way in which Whitman’s poetry would have been understood at Oxford when, in 1912, a riot broke out in the quadrangle of Balliol College—ironically where Jowett had once been Master—when a group of undergraduates assaulted two young men who were discussing Walt Whitman, and the fact that one of them was sent down for three terms implied that he was suspected of homosexuality.<sup>170</sup> At Balliol, where ancient Greek attitudes to sensuality, particularly between men, were so long decried, when the issue of Walt Whitman’s explicitly sexual poetry was debated by the Arnold Society in 1895, it “raised a storm of mingled rage and applause”, with many vilifying it as “rather obscene eroticism”,<sup>171</sup> not least because it often alluded to the love between men. Although Oxford carefully cultivated its image as a place of chaste homosocial relations, in 1911 a St. John’s College man was rusticated and had his name removed from the University rolls after being caught having “immoral relations” with a younger boy in college.<sup>172</sup> The implications of this incident would have been apparent to Harry and his friends, which made it all the more remarkable that one month later, his close friend John Thomson, as Harry recounted “rushed into my rooms while I was dressing this morning with a book from Sunnyside—Walt Whitman’s poems”, which they later read aloud to one another for several nights in their rooms.<sup>173</sup> The fact that the book was accompanied by a letter from Gwyneth Murray, his love interest, may suggest that they focussed on Whitman’s concept that the “comrade’s long-dwelling kiss” in turn became “the new husband’s kiss”,<sup>174</sup> but they would not have mistaken the fact that the poems were overtly sensual, phallic, and trumpeted the pleasures of all forms of sexual congress, including masturbation. There were, however, possible

alternate readings of Whitman's poetry, which sanctified physical passion in women.<sup>175</sup> We know little about the proximity of their bodies, whether they masturbated while reading aloud, talked about women's bodies, or whether they simply experienced a kind of vicarious voyeurism, as two virginal young men seeking new knowledge concerning the conjunction between spiritual and sexual awakening.

John Thomson became Harry's closest friend at St. John's College. Just days after remarking that he and John were "growing attached to each other", Harry wrote to his parents: "Young Thomson is a very fine specimen. We will probably be the greatest of chums before I leave Oxford, if our present tendencies to friendliness continue."<sup>176</sup> It was not surprising that they should have bonded so quickly, as this young Presbyterian and Scotsman, the son of a leading Edinburgh paediatrician and aspiring clergyman, was, like Harry, engaged in conflicts with his father who wanted him to enter the Indian Civil Service.<sup>177</sup> Harry seems to have befriended John because he believed he was floundering in his freshman year and later feared that John "was lacking in some of the fundamental qualities of manliness". According to Harry, male comradeship was not a remedy against the anomie of modern life, but was meant as a prophylactic against an over-feminized family life. With no sense of irony, Harry outlined his ideal of manhood in which "in the school of experience with men" they learn "to defer to his fellows, to respect other's opinions and to sympathize with men of every walk in life", an egalitarian vision which he juxtaposed against "the man who has grown to have an intellect of a man but the self-seeking thoughtless mind of a badly trained child". Harry's explanation for John's deficient manhood was that his father, a busy doctor, had been largely absent from the home, leaving John to be brought up by his mother and pampered by his sisters. Setting aside the probability that this may have been a description of his own fears about his close affinity to his mother, Harry well articulated the conventional sentiments of the period where too much contact with women was viewed as emasculating. The keynote Harry struck about the critical role played by male friendships in the construction of masculinity echoed the sentiments of John Addington Symonds, a major exponent of Hellenism at Oxford who stated: "I am more masculine than many men I know who admire women."<sup>178</sup> Harry was happy to report, however, that since befriending him, John "has improved a great deal since coming up to Oxford", where he now lived in an exclusive world of men.<sup>179</sup> Harry's strictures about John almost exactly parroted the article "The Ladies' Man", which appeared a year earlier in



*Modern Man*, castigating over-indulgence in feminine society which “breeds femininity of manner”. Where the admiration of women led to self-conceit, intimate friendships with men fostered emotions which in turn inspired the attainment of a higher self.<sup>180</sup>

Over the course of their friendship, John referred to Harry as “dearly beloved Brethren”, “my dearest Henrietta”, “dearest Popsy-Wopsy” and in more serious moments as “pulse of my heart”, my “True Balm” and “his asylum” and often signed himself as “your loving little Johnyyyyyyyyyy”, suggesting that they had become what Sarah Cole has termed “a pseudo-couple”.<sup>181</sup> Despite their closeness, it was a relationship in which each pushed the other to intellectual excellence by recording the accomplishment of other men and one characterized by disputes over the nature of religion and of friendship itself. John thereby became Harry’s greatest ally in his quest to attain a more modern vision of manhood, one defined by self-knowledge, introspection and new understandings of the body. Despite his younger age, John was the dominant figure in the relationship. A few months after they met, John outlined his personal credo: “I consider that I have gained in Oxford the rudiments of an individuality, which is the only thing worth getting and which I could have got nowhere else. ... I have learned how to be entirely independent from convention and how not to be misled by delusions and idols.... I have got myself under my own control.... What I have gone to Oxford for was to find myself, and I consider that I have done so.”<sup>182</sup> Eventually Harry adopted exactly John’s anti-intellectual ethos and his focus upon self-discovery as the epitome of manhood, but John remained highly censorious of what he called Harry’s “market value of friendship”, which subordinated the democratic idea of friendship based on “rational common interest” to a form of “navel contemplation” or a merely egoistic psychologism of peeling off layers of oneself “as if it was a sort of onion”, a process in which friends existed merely to influence Harry and guide him towards self-knowledge. For John, echoing the words of G.E. Moore, the “good of friendship to me is itself. It is a symptom of character with what sort of people one is friends, but it is putting the cart before the horse to say one’s choice of friends influences one’s character.”<sup>183</sup> If Harry condemned John for his lack of manhood, in John’s eyes Harry was also less than a man because he failed the test of sincerity because he lacked self-knowledge, disparaging him as “too falsetto and artificial”. He also accused Harry of being too wrapped up in the modern cult of personality, which celebrated personal attractiveness and superficial externalities merely to win influence in a conventional manner

rather than developing his own personal outlook founded upon a clear sense of his inner self. Labelling Harry as one of the “lost sheep”, men who were not captains of their souls, “a poor hermaphrodite sort of creature”, as discussed in H. Lambourne’s “Finding Yourself”,<sup>184</sup> John accused Harry of superficiality, seeking to be a “mere personality” who valued wealth over character. After Harry sent him his photo, he chided him for his concern with his good looks: “Your happy Christian smile, you know, it made me scream with contagious inward merriment...redolent of the milk of human kindness and Colgate’s dental paste”. Harry, he remonstrated, would become an effeminate ecclesiastical functionary, a flabby and conventional man only interested in the plaudits of matinee maidens at church mothers’ meetings. In John’s view, Harry’s career was directed merely to making money for the institutional church through the superficiality of singing the sentimental revival hymns of Moody and Sankey, which epitomized the vacuousness of modern mass culture given over to a banal therapeutic search for a form of gratification defined by a self-absorption with outward success.<sup>185</sup> As an inner-directed Christian who valued sincerity above pleasing external manners, John was impatient with all “bosh and flashdoodle”, and was therefore particularly condescending towards men like Ethelbert Murray, Gwyneth’s older brother, who was a wealthy businessman who owned a splendid motor car, whom John vilified “as slightly artificial and a wee bit society-insincere”.<sup>186</sup>

In short, through friendly rivalry and highly charged debate, John was instrumental in leading Harry towards a new definition of his own manhood, one which decisively broke with the conventional Victorian notion of self-restraint in which the manly man deployed the resources of his will to smother his emotions. John soundly jettisoned the opposition of the rational and unconscious selves, of the will and emotions: “My position”, he advised his friend, “is the precise contrary of smothering emotions, namely systematise them in order to get the unanimous gratification out of them.” Only in this way could a modern man find his identity upon “a self constructive principle as distinct from being a sort of weather cock swayed about with every wind of doctrine”,<sup>187</sup> referring to Harry’s propensity of falling into line with the opinions of the last person he had consulted. As a result of his deep reading in modern psychology, John advanced a conception of personality which eschewed older doctrines of character which depended upon adherence to external moral codes. Frank discussion among men was, for John and others, an antidote to feminization, but more important still, acquiring the psychological ability to live

according to your own ideals, was the primary path to manhood. Personality emerged from a process of inner contemplation prompted by the interaction of emotionally engaged friends, who were willing to participate in a dialectic of stimulus and response by which to achieve a higher and self-directed individuality, thereby overcoming the urge to harbour resentment like a woman.<sup>188</sup> John's marrying of modern notions of personality, meaning personal magnetism, with older notions of the virtue of possessing a stable and moral character, closely resembled the perspective outlined by J. Spiers in *Modern Man* who celebrated the modern concept of male friendship whereby the physical and mental vitality of the strong leader uplifts the feelings of others, but which at the same time cautioned against mindlessly following and becoming a "toady" of men of stronger personality. True manhood, in the final analysis, still rested upon having a well-defined inner moral compass. Writing in a similar vein, David Cooper, author of "The Strength of a Man: A Study of Masculine Character", who eschewed the conventional ideal of physical masculinity or emotional restraint, nevertheless argued that having strength of personality which merely involved securing the approval of other men, was insufficient, and to be a true man, one still needed to have moral uprightness characteristic of the "man of honour."<sup>189</sup>

In John's lexicon, emotions, like friendship, were a positive good, a concept later internalized by Harry who in 1910 inveighed against "striving to be like other people, instead of just *realizing themselves*".<sup>190</sup> The concept of true friendship arrived at by Harry and his circle was one which depended upon a "natural" openness of emotional expression, a view encapsulated by John when he wrote: "But Maurice was just lovely to me and I got a real chance to spread myself before him, without feeling forced to talk in an unnatural way, as I often have felt. I think we realized and appreciated each other a lot more. The differences between our positions came out quite naturally and I was glad to find we didn't stand back as if he had nourished a viper, but seemed quite ready to give me the right hand of fellowship."<sup>191</sup> This valorization of open emotional expression among men broke with conventional prescriptions that manliness was equated with emotional repression and restraint, and demonstrates that there was not a straightforward continuum of emotional regimes for men between the late nineteenth century and the 1950s in Britain, as historians have maintained.<sup>192</sup> It is true that some writers, like the author of "Mr. Potter's Inner Self", while clearly familiar with current psychological theories of the conscious and unconscious selves, continued to abjure the

“purely emotional”,<sup>193</sup> because, like a flashy personality, excessive public displays of feeling might be mere strategies to cloak one’s inner egoism. However, the modernist insistence upon a more complex individuality meant that friendships, particularly those between men, had to necessarily become more emotionally intimate, so that the participants in these relationships could better uncover the multiple layers of one’s personality. By contrast with the Victorian view that individuals possessed a single unified character, in which the outer self corresponded to the inner, in the Edwardian period character was viewed as more protean and the recognition that there existed a greater “complexity of human nature”,<sup>194</sup> also meant that one’s character could be changed under the influence of friends—the charge John levelled at Harry. Writing with Oxford students in mind, an author in *Modern Man* warned that because one’s exterior facial expression was no longer deemed a reliable guide to one’s inner self, the challenge of friendship now involved the “need to look beneath the surface”. The development of “diverse emotions” needed to be activated in order to properly ascertain whether a potential chum was “wear[ing] masks”.<sup>195</sup>

Critical of Victorian moral regulatory regimes which they believed were imposed through the drive to create a uniform patriotism which all too often resulted in a loss of individuality, modern commentators now maintained that those outmoded technologies of the body merely produced “stereotyped” men. John had likewise accused Harry of being “subservient to convention” and living his life as if it was a novel, and much like the author of “Let Yourself Go”, he recommended that one had to learn to live, to “laugh, be merry, let yourself go, so long as you are not a wicked man”.<sup>196</sup> The correct activation of emotions was critical therefore both to the development of an autonomous individuality and to physical well-being. As Oliver Stokes observed, “constant repression of natural emotion will not only hurt you morally and mentally by eventually drying up your heart and brain”, but it would “injure you physically”. Directly critical of military manhood and its ostensible defence of the stiff upper lip, pointing to the way in which the celebrations on Mafeking Night elicited strong emotions in its male celebrants, Stokes characterized the proponents of emotional repression as mere hypocrites. According to him, “the real living man” was the emotional one, given to kissing his mother or sweetheart in public.<sup>197</sup> Excoriating the “icy exterior” of men like Lord Kitchener, Stokes was an advocate of a sentimental or emotional manhood, a type ideal for male bonding within friendship.<sup>198</sup>

Not only was this new ideal of soft or sentimental manhood critical for both homosocial and heterosexual relationships, but as John Gervaise made clear, a man's tears and the emotions which gave rise to them were in fact linked not to negative experiences like fear, but were associated with positive feelings such as pleasure, and therefore, if your emotions were not stirred, a man was not living a full life.<sup>199</sup> Emotions were assigned such a positive value in the formation of mature masculinity in the years immediately prior to World War I that *Modern Man* published a whole series of articles entitled "Male Emotions" which minutely dissected the personal and social value of feelings, from envy, despair, fear, sympathy, jealousy and love,<sup>200</sup> thus according a clear priority to a new masculine emotional economy which downplayed physical fortitude as a key component of manhood. The quintessential modern man could still be a self-reliant man of physical activity, but to be a "man's man" one had to understand how to properly deploy one's emotions and at the same time "not be a slave to sensuality". Most of all, the manly man had to be selfless and sympathetic in order to be "committed to friendship"<sup>201</sup> where he had the potential to discover that "a man's self is his soul".<sup>202</sup>

When setting out for Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar in 1908, Harry had foreseen that the next three years would be a testing time. Unable to navigate the traditional trajectory of male maturity through vigorous intellectual and athletic competition, Harry compensated for his lack of achieving the mark of conventional masculine success in the Schools or on the playing fields of Oxford by carving out a terrain of Bible study, based on personal reflection and personal contact with other young men. This new culture of male emotional exploration accessed through psychological introspection marked the first stage on his journey from a priggish Victorianism to an incremental engagement with modern attitudes. The transformative effect of Oxford upon the self experienced by Harry was not in the intellectual realm, as his parents had desired, but occurred through the cultivation of a series of intense male comradeships founded upon notions of equality in which the spiritual became a conduit for the sensual. These male friendships in turn formed the template for the establishment of his heterosexual self, which had to be painfully constructed as a result of his precipitate engagement to Gwyneth Murray in the aftermath of his abject failure at Oxford.

## NOTES

1. Tosh, *A Man's Place*, 174–7; Tosh, “Gentlemanly Politeness and Manly Simplicity in Victorian England”, 455–72; Roper and Tosh, eds., *Manful Assertions*, especially Tosh, “Domesticity and Manliness in the Victorian Middle-Class”, 44–73; Tosh, “Masculinities in an Industrializing Society”, 330–42; Putney, *Muscular Christianity*; Vance, *The Sinews of the Spirit*, 188–93.
2. Deslandes, *Oxbridge Men*, 9.
3. Deslandes, *Oxbridge Men*, 2; Weber, *Our Friend 'The Enemy'*, 110–27; Lubenow, *The Cambridge Apostles, 1820–1914*.
4. UBCA, HTLFP, 9:8, Speeches 1911–29, Harry Tremain Logan, “Some Impressions of Oxford”, Presbyterian College, Montreal, Literary Society Meeting, 1911–12.
5. Scholz and Hornbeck, *Oxford and the Rhodes Scholarships*, 9, 33, 48.
6. UBCA, HTLFP, Box, 7:4, “Lecture Notes—Theology”, Lecture XXI “Doctrine of Creation: Pres. Position”, c. 1915.
7. Lubenow, *The Cambridge Apostles*, 78–86; Cole, *Modernism, Male Friendship and the First World War*; Rose, *The Edwardian Temperament*, 3, 18, 42; Rosner, *Modernism and the Architecture of Private Life*, 33.
8. LAC, LF, MG 30 C216, 10:9, H to mother, 5 Mar. 1907.
9. LAC, LF, 10:10, H to parents, 26 Sep. 1908. The concept of manliness in terms of maturity in contrast with boyhood is analysed by Ellis, “Boys, Semi-Men and Bearded Scholars”, 263–82.
10. UBCA, HTLFP, 1:2, Cecil Rhodes to dear Hawksley, n.d. July 1899; *ibid.*, n.d. Rhodes to Hawksley; *ibid.*, Charles Colby, Professor of History, McGill University to the Rhodes Scholarship Committee of British Columbia, n.d. 1908; W. Scott, Professor of Classics, McGill University to Rhodes Scholarship Committee, 24 Feb. 1908; D.S. Tyndale to Rhodes Scholarship Committee, 27 Apr. 1908; Murray G. Brooks, President of Y.M.C.A. McGill University to Rhodes Scholarship Committee, n.d. 1908.
11. Berger, *The Sense of Power*, 218–32. On concepts of colonial nationalism more broadly, see Eddy and Schreuder, eds., *The Rise of Colonial Nationalism*. It is noteworthy, that one of the leading promoters of the Rhodes Trust was a Canadian, Sir George W. Parkin, who wrote *The Rhodes Scholarship*. Harry's tutors, Sidney Ball and Ernest Barker, belonged to Lionel Curtis' Round Table which promoted a more centralized vision of liberal imperialism. See Kendle, *The Round Table Movement and Imperial Union*.
12. LAC, LF, 10:10, H, 28 Sep. 1908.
13. LAC, LF, 11:2, H, 23 Oct. 1910.

14. Ellis, "Maturity and Manliness", 263–82.
15. LAC, LF, 10:10, H to parents, 28 Sep. 1908, 6 Oct. 1908.
16. LAC, LF, 10:10, H to parents, 19 Sep. 1908.
17. LAC, LF, 10:10, H to parents, 11 Oct. 1908, *ibid.*, H to parents, 22 Nov. 1908.
18. LAC, LF, 10:10, H to parents, n.d. 1908.
19. LAC, LF, 10:11, H to parents, 31 Jan. 1909, 6 Nov. 1908; 15 Nov. 1908; *ibid.*, 10:10, Harry to parents, 23 Nov. 1908. On the normative nature of undergraduate frivolity, see "Life at Oxford", *Modern Man*, 16 Jan. 1909; "The Spirits of the Varsity: Glimpses of Undergraduate Life", *Modern Man*, 23 Oct. 1909.
20. LAC, LF, 10:8, H to parents, 15 Sep. 1906.
21. LAC, Graham Spry Fonds, MG 30 D297, 1:6, Graham to mother, 3 Jan. 1923.
22. LAC, LF, 10:11, H to parents, 2 May 1909.
23. LAC, LF, 11:3, H to father, 10 Jan. 1911.
24. LAC, LF, 10:10, H to parents, 18 Oct. 1908.
25. LAC, Spry Fonds, 1:9, Graham to mother, 28 Dec. 1925.
26. LAC, LF, 10:10, H to parents, 18 Oct. 1908, 25 Oct. 1908.
27. LAC, LF, 10:10, H to Willie, 29 Oct. 1908; *ibid.*, H to parents, 12 Dec. 1908. In some quarters, wearing a monocle was a sign of being a fop. See "Are You a Fop?", *Modern Man*, 2 Jan. 1909. See also, "What is a Gentleman?", *Modern Man*, 28 Nov. 1908, which argued that the modern use of the term associated it with the conduct of self-restraint rather than wealth.
28. LAC, LF, 14:7, H to "Bilious" [Willie], 15 Nov. 1910.
29. LAC, LF, 10:11, H to parents, 14 Feb. 1909.
30. LAC, LF, 10:10, H to parents, 25 Oct. 1908, Harry to parents, n.d. 1908.
31. Rhodes House Archives, Oxford, Harry T. Logan biographical file, Harry Logan to F.J. Wylie, 16 Jan. 1925.
32. LAC, LF, 10:10, H to parents, 18 Oct. 1908. For Pater's concept of knowledge, see Turner, *The Greek Heritage in Victorian Britain*, 353–4. On Pater and homoerotic desire, see Dowling, *Hellenism and Homosexuality in Victorian Oxford*; Adams, "Pater's Muscular Aestheticism", 215–38; Dellamora, *Masculine Desire*. On Sidney Ball, see Ball, *Sidney Ball*, 212.
33. LAC, LF, 10:10, H to parents, 18 Oct. 1908.
34. LAC, LF, 10:8, H to mother, 11 Nov. 1906; *ibid.*, 10:9, H to mother, 26 Feb. 1907; *McGill Outlook*, 8 Oct. 1906.
35. LAC, LF, 10:11, H to parents, 2 May 1909, 6 Nov. 1908, 15 Nov. 1908.

36. St. John's College Archives, Oxford, St. John's College Debating Society, Minute Book, 9 Nov. 1908.
37. LAC, LF, 11:1, H to parents, 12 June 1910.
38. LAC, LF, 10:10, H to parents, n.d. 1908.
39. LAC, LF, 10:10, 11 Oct. 1908.
40. LAC, Spry Fonds, 1:6, Graham to mother, 3 Jan. 1923.
41. R.A. Scott-James, "A First Encounter", *The English Review*, Oct. 1912, 445.
42. Vance, *Sinews of the Spirit*, 188–9; Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, 11–18; Mangan, *The Games Ethic and Imperialism*; Crotty, *Making the Australian Male*.
43. White, *Efficiency and Empire*, 71–98; Greenslade, *Degeneration, Culture and the Novel*; Pick, *Faces of Degeneration*; Bourke, *Dismembering the Male*, 171–209.
44. UBCA, HTLFP, 24:1, Pocket Diary, 23 Oct. 1907.
45. LAC, LF, 11:1, H to parents, 6 Mar. 1910.
46. Ball, *Sidney Ball*, 212; LAC, LF, 10:10, H to parents, 19 Sep. 1908.
47. LAC, LF, 11:2, H to parents, 20 Sep. 1910.
48. Similar critiques of intellectualism occurred in even more extreme antisemitic forms in France. See Forth, *The Dreyfus Affair and the Crisis of French Manhood*; Vila, "The *Philosophe's* Stomach", 89–104. On the need to use a fit body to rid the bookworm of a priggish preoccupation with sin, see "Sin", *Modern Man*, 23 Jan. 1909; E.L. Robertson, "How to Put on Flesh", *Modern Man*, 6 Feb. 1909.
49. UBCA, HTLFP, 7:20, "Notebooks St. John's Oxford—Philosophy Essays for Mr. Ball", "Justice" and "Courage a Moral Quality", n.d.
50. Putney, *Muscular Christianity*, 1–4.
51. Quoted in Cohen, *Talk on the Wilde Side*, 40–1.
52. LAC, LF, 10:9, H to mother, 27 Jan. 1907.
53. "Sandow's Health Time-Table", *Modern Man*, 28 Nov. 1908; "Sandow's Spring-Grip Dumbbells", *Modern Man*, 28 Nov. 1908, the latter directed significantly to both men and women.
54. LAC, LF, 14:7, H to Willie, 21 Nov. 1907. The fact that Harry was writing in this vein to his successful banker brother tends to reaffirm the view articulated in Hammond Mills, "The Muscular Millionaire—A Portrait", *Modern Man*, 21 Nov. 1908, which equated muscularity, rather than corpulence, with financial success.
55. On his "total collapse" in 1910, see LAC, LF, 11:1, H to parents, 6 May 1910. For a discussion of the variety of male body types in this period, see Begiato, "Between Poise and Power", 125–47.
56. LAC, LF, 10:9, H to parents, 17 Feb. 1908.



57. Peter Gilchrist, "Where Men Foregather—The Athletic Club", *Modern Man*, 10 Apr. 1909; W.S. Eckford, "How Games Mold Character", *Modern Man*, 21 Aug. 1909.
58. F.R. Lawson, "Cross-Country Running: A Sport for Cold Weather", *Modern Man*, 21 Nov. 1908; Colin McBean, "Imagination and Sport", *Modern Man*, 5 Dec. 1908; "The Quarter Mile", *Modern Man*, 22 May 1909; "For Cross-Country Men", *Modern Man*, 5 Dec. 1908. These articles would have been of particular interest to Harry who ran both the quarter and half mile. For the latter, see UBCA, HTLFP, Box 5, Exeter College Athletics, "Stranger's Race", 11 Mar. 1909.
59. "Lacrosse: A Winter Game that Deserves Greater Popularity", *Modern Man*, 16 Oct. 1909.
60. For Walter Pater's equation between the male body and Greek sculpture, see Adams, "Pater's Muscular Aestheticism", 215–16. Eugene Sandow used a similar trope in his physical fitness movement. See Budd, *The Sculpture Machine*. The goalie for his team was Gustave Lanctot, a Rhodes scholar from Quebec who later became the Dominion Archivist. UBCA, HTLFP, 5 "Lacrosse—Oxford University vs Cambridge University", 3 Mar. 1910.
61. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to Gwyneth Murray, 30 Dec. 1914. For the culture of touch during World War I, see Das, *Touch and Intimacy*; Bourke, *Dismembering the Male*, 124–70.
62. LAC, LF, 11:2, H to parents, 3 July 1910.
63. The concept of "disciplined reserve" was drawn from Pater, *Marius the Epicurean*, a book on Sidney Ball's reading list.
64. Dearmer, *Body and Soul*. For a review of his book, see "Mental Healing", *The Isis*, 22 Jan. 1909.
65. B. Marsden, "Uniform Power", *Modern Man*, 19 Dec. 1908; "The Lady-Killer: A Military Sketch", *Modern Man*, 13 Feb. 1909; "Smartness: Military and Civilian", *Modern Man*, 27 Feb. 1909.
66. "The Lonely Chap", *Modern Man*, 13 Mar. 1909.
67. LAC, LF, 10:10, H to parents, n.d. 1908.
68. LAC, LF, 10:12, H to parents, 6 Aug. 1909; *ibid.*, 11:3, H to father, 9 Apr. 1911. See also LF, 10:11, H to Willie, 23 May 1909; *ibid.*, 10:12, H to Willie, 8 July 1909.
69. These views were enunciated in England by G.K. Chesterton and Walt Whitman whom Harry avidly read. See "Blood and Iron", *The Isis* (28 May 1910), 401.
70. LAC, LF, 11:3, H to father, 28 May 1911. There were competing notions of manhood at work in the army. See "Where Men are Bred—Army Life", *Modern Man*, 18 Sep. 1909; Godfrey Burwood, "Another Oscar

- Wilde Case: A Sensational Exposure”, *Modern Man*, 11 Dec. 1909, which saw the British army as a nest of “degenerates”.
71. LAC, LF, 10:11, H to parents, 7 Feb. 1909. He also drew a corollary between boyhood and Canadian colonial nationalism. However, it should be emphasized that there were differences in perspective between men of each of the settlement colonies about the meaning of imperial federation. See Schreuder, “Empire: Australia and ‘Greater Britain’, 1788–1909”, 511–34.
  72. Schreuder, *The Scramble For Southern Africa, 1877–1895*.
  73. Parkin may have extolled the Rhodesian vision of empire in his public pronouncements, but in fact his concerns lay with colonial nationalism. See Parkin, *The Rhodes Scholarship*, 11–12; LAC, LF, 11:3, H to parents, 29 Jan. 1911.
  74. LAC, LF, 10:11, H to parents, 21 Feb. 1909. Not surprisingly, Harry was a promoter of Irish Home Rule. On this point, see *ibid.*, 11:2, H to parents, 3 July 1910.
  75. Berger, *The Sense of Power*, 46.
  76. LAC, LF, 11:3, H to mother, 27 Mar. 1911.
  77. LAC, LF, 14:1, R.M. Rive to ‘Low Gan’, 7 Dec. 1911. His moniker for Harry was a reference to Harry’s anti-oriental sentiments as a Vancouver native. This was a different trope than that outlined by Davin, “Imperialism and Motherhood”, 9–65.
  78. LAC, LF, 10:10, H to parents, 25 Oct. 1908.
  79. UBCA, HTLFP, 4, “Oxford University Colonial Club”, where Harry occupied the executive; LAC, LF, 11:1, H to parents, 15 May 1910. On teashops as masculine sites, see Peter Gilchrist, “Where Men Foregather—The Teashop”, *Modern Man*, 17 Apr. 1909. There were also more formal annual dinners for the Rhodes Scholarship Trust, some of which, to Harry’s profound dismay, involved “bibulous utterances”. See LAC, LF, 10:12, H to parents, 5 June 1909, commenting on the Rhodes dinner where W.T. Stead, that great critic of Oscar Wilde, was the guest of honour. On Stead, see Richards, “‘Passing the Love of Women’: Manly Love and Victorian Society”, 92–119; McLaren, *The Trials of Masculinity*, 30. Harry later worked on the Fairbridge scheme in British Columbia. See Jeffery and Sherrington, *Fairbridge: Empire and Child Migration*.
  80. LAC, LF, 10:11, H to parents, 28 Feb. 1909.
  81. LAC, LF, 10:8, H to parents, 11 Nov. 1906.
  82. LAC, LF, 16:1, E.A. Spaulding to H, 4 Aug. 1911.
  83. LAC, LF, 10:11, H to parents, 10 Jan. 1909.
  84. LAC, LF, 10:11, H to parents, 14 Feb. 1909.
  85. Collini, *Liberalism and Sociology*.
  86. UBCA, HTLFP, 5, Sidney Ball, “Current Sociology”, *Mind*, n.d., 4–24. For the concept of playing the “soul-card” as an aspect of masculine maturation, see A.M. Kirke, “Soul-Weighing”, *Modern Man*, 19 Dec. 1908.

87. On this point we differ from Stefan Collini, "The Idea of 'Character' in Victorian Political Thought", 29–50, who situates Ball within an older Victorian cluster of ideas, whereas we have stressed his modernism.
88. Micklem, *The Box and the Puppets*, 33.
89. LAC, LF, 10:11, Harry to parents, 31 Jan. 1909. After first hearing Mott speak in the fall of 1908, Harry commented that he "is getting quite a hold on Oxford in the way of Bible Study work and Men's Y endeavor". See *ibid.*, 10:10, H to parents, 22 Nov. 1908.
90. "Isis Idols—Mr. John R. Mott", *The Isis* (14 Nov. 1908), 86; A.H.M.L. "Review of *The Quest for the Historical Jesus*", *The Isis* (11 June 1910), 451–2.
91. MUA, MG 4037, Murray G. Brooks, "My Life at Stanstead and McGill, 1902–1910". Brooks wrote for Harry's Rhodes scholarship and later was a YMCA missionary in Ceylon [Sri Lanka].
92. Quoted in Putney, *Muscular Christianity*, 73.
93. MUA, Brooks, "My Life at Stanstead and McGill".
94. On the importance of Nietzsche in modern views of gender and sexuality in Edwardian England see Delap, *The Feminist Avant-Garde*, 258–65.
95. UBCA, HTLFP, 4:7, R.E. Welsh, *A Call to Young Canada* (Board of Education, Presbyterian Church in Canada, n.d.), 14; John R. Mott, "The Secret Prayer Life (London: British College Christian Union, n.d.), 5–6; *The Social Needs and the Colleges of North America* (International Committee of Young Men's Christian Associations, 1914), 5. For a discussion of the transition from concepts of character to personality, see Susman, "'Personality' and the Making of Twentieth-Century Culture", 212–26. For the spread of popular psychology in England in this period, see Thomson, *Psychological Subjects*.
96. LAC, LF, 11:2, H to parents, 23 Oct. 1910.
97. Rose, *The Edwardian Temperament*, 3. On personal influence, see UBCA, HTLFP, 9:8, Harry Logan, "Personal Influence", 2 Nov. 1911; *ibid.*, "Sincerity—A Christian Virtue", 12 Nov. 1911.
98. LAC, LF, 11:2, Harry to parents, 28 Aug. 1910. He made this comment in relation to Rosfrith Murray with regard to her relationship with George Curtis, an American Rhodes Scholar and later Democratic congressional candidate. On the links between religion, sexuality and male love and their intersection with Hellenism, see Brady, *Masculinity and Male Homosexuality*, 177–8.
99. Corrigan, *Business of the Heart*, 122–3, 128, 139–57. For the emotional strain within Reformation piety, see Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Feeling*. For twentieth-century Canadian Protestantism, see Christie and Gauvreau, *A Full-Orbed Christianity*, Chaps. 1 and 2. For the decline of emotional revivalism, see Rawlyk, *The Canada Fire*; Van Die, "'The Marks of a Genuine Revival'"; Airhart, *Serving the Present Age*.

100. For this psychological turn within Presbyterianism and the privileging of the emotions, see Dixon, *From Passions to Emotions*, 200–1.
101. Tosh, “Manliness and Masculinities”, 31.
102. Dixon, *Weeping Britannia*, 211.
103. Quoted in Ackerman, *The Cambridge Ritualists*, 105.
104. Dixon, *From Passions to Emotions*, 208–28; Dixon, *Weeping Britannia*, 151.
105. Taves, *Fits, Trances and Visions*, 260–88.
106. Rose, *The Edwardian Temperament*, 89.
107. Cocks, “Religion and Spirituality”, 157–79.
108. LAC, LF, 11:4, H to father, 11 July 1911.
109. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*.
110. Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture*; Opp, *The Lord for the Body*.
111. For accounts of the Baslow camp in 1910, see *The Belper News*, 22 July 1910, 6; *The Derby Daily Telegraph*, 11 July 1910, 2.
112. GCA, GCPP Pym, “Memoirs of Dora Pym”, n.d. 1914. His work was also read by the celebrated architect Sir Edward and Lady Emily Lutyens and in Canada was read by young Methodists, such as Alice Chown, the sister of the fiancée of Harry’s friend Murray Brooks. See Wilson, *After the Victorians*, 90. For Canada, see MacLaren, “Sex Radicalism in the Canadian Northwest, 1890–1920”, 527–46.
113. Quoted in Brady, *Masculinity and Male Homosexuality*, 195. Much of our discussion on Carpenter is based on Brady’s analysis, 194–7, 205–7.
114. Carpenter, *Love’s Coming-of-Age*, 105.
115. MUA, Brooks, “My Life at Stanstead and McGill”.
116. Christie, ““Proper Government and Discipline”: Family Religion and Masculine Authority in Nineteenth-Century Canada”, 389–412; Christie, “Young Men and the Creation of Civic Christianity in Urban Methodist Churches, 1880–1914”, 79–105; Dirks, “Reinventing Christian Masculinity and Fatherhood: The Canadian Protestant Experience, 1900–1920”, 290–316.
117. UBCA, HTLFP, 33:1, John Logan, “A Patriarch’s Address to his Family”, n.d.
118. LAC, LF, 11:2, H to parents, 28 July 1910.
119. LAC, LF, 11:2, H to parents, 28 Aug. 1910. On social Christianity, see Christie and Gauvreau, *A Full-Orbed Christianity*; for church union, see Airhart, *A Church with the Soul of a Nation*.
120. LAC, LF, 11:1, H to parents, 23 Apr. 1910, 15 May 1910, 12 June 1910.
121. LAC, LF, 10:8, H to parents, 22 Sep. 1906.
122. MUA, Brooks, “My Life at Stanstead and McGill”.

123. LAC, LF, 101:10, H to parents, 22 Mar. 1908.
124. LAC, LF, 11:3, H to father, 25 June 1911.
125. LAC, LF, 11:3, H to father, 10 Jan. 1911.
126. LAC, LF, 11:3, H to Willie, 19 Jan. 1911.
127. LAC, LF, 11:3, H to father, 10 Jan. 1911.
128. R.B. Hunter, "The Parson's Son", *Modern Man*, 23 Jan. 1909.
129. There is a growing historiography on the issue of fatherhood, but see two splendid syntheses: Fletcher, *Growing Up in England*, 1–22, 368; Tosh, *A Man's Place*, 145–69.
130. Stansky, "On or About December 1910", 2.
131. "The Father's Part", *Modern Man*, 27 Mar. 1909.
132. LAC, LF, 10:10, H to parents, 1 Nov. 1908.
133. LAC, LF, 11:4, Lady Ada Murray to H, 26 Nov. 1911. See, on the emotional closeness between mothers and sons in the early twentieth century, Roper, "Maternal Relations, Moral Manliness and Emotional Survival in Letters Home during the First World War", 295–315.
134. LAC, LF, 11:2, H to mother, 20 Sep. 1910; *ibid.*, 11:3, H to mother, 9 Apr. 1911.
135. LAC, LF, 11:3, H to parents, 5 Mar. 1911; *ibid.*, 10:10, H to father, 20 Nov. 1908. For a reference to physical correction from his father, see *ibid.*, 10:11, H to parents, 5 Apr. 1909.
136. On the importance of exploring the family as a site of social regulation, see Christie and Gauvreau, eds., *Mapping the Margins*.
137. LAC, LF, 10:8, H to mother, 14 Oct. 1906.
138. LAC, LF, 10:10, H to parents, 1 Nov. 1908.
139. LAC, LF, 11:1, H to parents, 7 Apr. 1910.
140. LAC, LF, 10:11, H to parents, 13 Mar. 1909.
141. LAC, LF, 10:11, H to parents, 28 Feb. 1909.
142. LAC, LF, 11:2, H to parents, 27 Nov. 1910.
143. LAC, LF, 10:11, H to parents, 7 Feb. 1909, 28 Feb. 1909.
144. Francis, "The Domestication of the Male?", 637–52.
145. For Harry's persistent attempts to persuade his father to allow him to take the position of Bible Secretary for the British Christian Student Union, see LAC, LF, 11:2, H to parents, 6 Nov. 1910; *ibid.*, 11:2, H to parents, 22 Nov. 1910; *ibid.*, 11:2, H to parents, 27 Nov. 1910; *ibid.*, 11:2, H to father, 7 Dec. 1910; *ibid.*, 11:2, H to parents, 16 Dec. 1910; *ibid.*, 11:3, H to father, 2 Apr. 1911; *ibid.*, 11:3, H to father, 28 Apr. 1911; *ibid.*, 11:3, H to mother, 30 May 1911.
146. See LAC, LF, 10:8, H to mother, 25 Nov. 1907; *ibid.*, 11:1, H to parents, 16 Apr. 1910; *ibid.*, 11:1, 10 June 1910; *ibid.*, 11:3, H to parents, 11 Feb. 1911.
147. LAC, LF, 11:2, H to father, 22 Nov. 1910. For Hellenism and the views of Matthew Arnold, see Collini, ed., *Matthew Arnold*, ix–xxiv.

148. Rose, *The Edwardian Temperament*, 73–4.
149. LAC, LF, 11:4, H to father, 5 June 1911.
150. LAC, LF, 11:3, H to father, 21 May 1911, H to mother, 23 May 1911; *ibid.*, 11:4, H to parents, 14 June 1911.
151. LAC, LF, 11:1, H to parents, 15 May 1910; *ibid.*, 11:2, Harry to parents, 6 Nov. 1910.
152. LAC, LF, 14:5, Macdonnell to H, 12 Mar. 1912.
153. LAC, LF, 11:2, H to parents, 3 Oct. 1910.
154. Scholz and Hornbeck, *Oxford and the Rhodes Scholarships*, 51. On the bachelor's quarters or den within the home, see Breward, *The Hidden Consumer*, 180.
155. LAC, Grant Fonds, 12, Grant to mother, 6 Nov. 1894.
156. LAC, LF, 11:2, John Thomson to Aunt Barbara, 18 Dec. 1910; *ibid.*, 14:7, H to Willie, 10 Oct. 1910; *ibid.*, 11:2, Harry to parents, 27 Nov. 1910. For the focus upon feminine beauty and the constant lampooning of women's suffrage in *Punch*, see Adburgham, *A Punch History of Manners and Modes, 1841–1940*, 248–53. For undergraduate student antics, see Deslandes, *Oxbridge Men*, 154. Pianists did not conform to conventional models of athletic masculinity because, as the author of “The Pianist's Grip” noted, they were “poet-looking chaps”, who were pale, thin and smoked, an image that closely resembled Harry himself, although while pianists were not Sandows, they did have extremely strong hands!, *Modern Man*, 26 Dec. 1908.
157. LAC, LF, 11:3, H to father, 10 Jan. 1911; *ibid.*, 11:2, H to parents, 9 Oct. 1910, 16 Oct. 1910; *ibid.*, 10:11, H to mother, 4 Mar. 1909.
158. LAC, LF, 11:1, H to parents, 14 Mar. 1910, 21 Mar. 1910, 23 Apr. 1910. Harry almost perfectly embodied the kind of masculinity featured in *Modern Man*, including playing the piano, loving his garden, and engaging in new hobbies like photography. See “Selecting a Camera”, *Modern Man*, 16 Oct. 1909; “The Camera Fiend”, *Modern Man*, 6 May 1911.
159. C. Wolff, “Male Emotions—Friendship”, *Modern Man*, 9 Oct. 1909, which formed one of a series of article on male emotions.
160. “A Man's Desire”, *Modern Man*, 18 Dec. 1909.
161. Cole, *Modernism, Male Friendship and the First World War*, 9–10.
162. On this point, see Godfrey Burwood, “Another Wilde Case: A Sensational Exposure”, *Modern Man*, 11 Dec. 1909, which, interestingly, saw the military as a nest of homosexuality, a view which calls into question a simple equation in this period between masculinity and martial virtues.
163. Oliver Stokes, “Dandies”, *Modern Man*, 13 Feb. 1909; H.B. Impy, “The Dandy's Toilet”, *Modern Man*, 28 Nov. 1908. In France, Alfred Dreyfus was castigated not only for his Jewishness but for his effeminacy defined in terms of a close attention to his toilet. See Forth, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 47.

164. F.W. Banks, "Men and Good Looks", *Modern Man*, 8 July 1911.
165. LAC, LF, 10:10, H to parents, 6 Nov. 1908, 15 Nov. 1908.
166. LAC, LF, 11:1, H to parents, 15 May 1910, 20 June 1910; *ibid.*, 10:11, H to parents, 5 Apr. 1909.
167. LAC, LF, 11:3, Harry to parents, 12 Mar. 1911; *ibid.*, 10:10, Harry to parents, 22 Aug. 1909.
168. Brady, *Masculinity and Male Sexuality*, 177–83; Dellamora, *Masculine Desire*, 50, 64–5; Sussman, *Victorian Masculinities*; Alderson, *Mansex Fine*.
169. Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*.
170. Moseley, *Julian Grenfell: His Life and the Times of His Death*, 199–200. Grenfell's brother Billy was the student in question.
171. LAC, GF, 12, Grant to mother, 30 Jan. 1895. On the politics of Hellenism at Balliol, see Brady, *Masculinity and Male Homosexuality*, 177–8, 219.
172. Weber, *Our Friend, 'The Enemy'*, 157.
173. LAC, LF, 11:3, H to parents, 5 Mar. 1911. The book in question was a birthday present from the Murray girls, Elsie and Rosfrith.
174. *Leaves of Grass*.
175. For example, the American feminist Elizabeth Cady Stanton read Whitman, drawing the conclusion that women had as much physical passion as men. See Gay, *The Bourgeois Experience, Vol. 1*, 118–19.
176. LAC, LF, 10:11, H to parents, 7 Mar. 1909, 13 Mar. 1909.
177. LAC, LF, 10:11, H to parents, n.d. 1909.
178. Quoted in Rutherford, *Forever England*, 27.
179. LAC, LF, 11:2, H to parents, 18 Dec. 1910.
180. Edward Hill, "The Ladies' Man", *Modern Man*, 5 Dec. 1908.
181. Cole, *Modernism, Male Friendships and the First World War*, 5.
182. LAC, LF, 14:21, John to H, 22 Apr. 1909.
183. LAC, LF, 14:21 John to H, 22 Apr. 1909, 18 June 1909.
184. H. Lambourne, "Finding Yourself", *Modern Man*, 27 Mar. 1909.
185. LAC, LF, 14:21, John to H, Friday, n.d. John's sermon on the therapeutic worldview closely resembled the critique about the "effeminate features" displayed by men absorbed with superficial beauty who displayed "a silly grin to display a passable set of teeth", like that of a picture postcard actress. See Alan Hamer, "The Man Beautiful: What is the Secret of His Good Looks?", *Modern Man*, 23 Oct. 1909. For a broader exploration of the cult of superficiality and personality, see Lears, *No Place of Grace*. On the link between "beauty men" and flabbiness, see William Souter, "The Expressions that Men Wear", *Modern Man*, 7 Jan. 1911.
186. LAC, LF, 14:21, John to Harry, Sunday, written from Sunnyside, n.d., *ibid.*, John to Harry, 22 Sep. 1909; Oliver Stokes, "Manner—What is It Exactly?", *Modern Man*, 23 Jan. 1909.
187. LAC, LF, 14:21, John to Harry, 18 June 1909.

188. "Taking Offence: The Sensitive Man's Chief Fault", *Modern Man*, 23 Oct. 1909; David Cooper, "Youth", *Modern Man*, 30 Jan. 1909.
189. J. Spiers, "Personal Magnetism", *Modern Man*, 12 Dec. 1908; David Cooper, "The Strength of a Man: A Study of Masculine Character", *Modern Man*, 14 Aug. 1909.
190. LAC, LF, 11:2, H to parents, 7 Aug. 1910. For the resemblance to the ideas of G.E. Moore, see Avery, "'This Intricate Commerce of Souls'", 183–207, 197; Hutchinson, *G.E. Moore's Ethical Theory*, 185.
191. LAC, LF, 14:21, John to H, 28 Oct. 1911.
192. On the concept of the stiff upper lip as epitomizing Edwardian masculinity, see Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, 31; Forth, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 118–23; Francis, "Tears, Tantrums and Bared Teeth", 354–87.
193. "Mr. Potter's Inner Self", *Modern Man*, 30 Jan. 1909.
194. "The Tyranny of Fiction", *The Isis* (11 June 1910), 395–7. This article recommended modern psychological dramas, such as the plays of Henrik Ibsen, which became the model for Harry's and his friend Arthur Yates' own literary efforts. See LAC, LF, 14:21, John to H, 28 Oct. 1911.
195. C. Wolff, *Modern Man*, 13 Feb. 1909, who argued against the physiognomic approach of Karl Pearson. On the instability of character and the use of masks in interpersonal relations, see "Mr. Potter's Inner Self"; untitled article on how "clothes disguise the character of a man, just as they disguise their shape, which is lying", *Modern Man*, 25 Sep. 1909.
196. "Let Yourself Go", *Modern Man*, 17 Apr. 1909. On John's accusation that Harry lived his life according to novels, see LAC, LF, 14:21, John to H, 22 Apr. 1909.
197. Oliver Stokes, "Emotion—Why Should We Hide It?", *Modern Man*, 3 Apr. 1909.
198. Oliver Stokes, "A Man's Reserve: A Defence of the Undemonstrative Chap", *Modern Man*, 16 Oct. 1909.
199. John Gervaise, "A Man's Tears", *Modern Man*, 20 Nov. 1909.
200. These articles were written by C. Woolf, *Modern Man*, 31 July 1909, 7 Aug. 1909, 14 Aug. 1909, 28 Aug. 1909, 11 Sep. 1909.
201. G. Newbury, "What Man Is", *Modern Man*, 13 Mar. 1909.
202. A.G. Storm, "A Man's Soul", *Modern Man*, 24 July 1909.





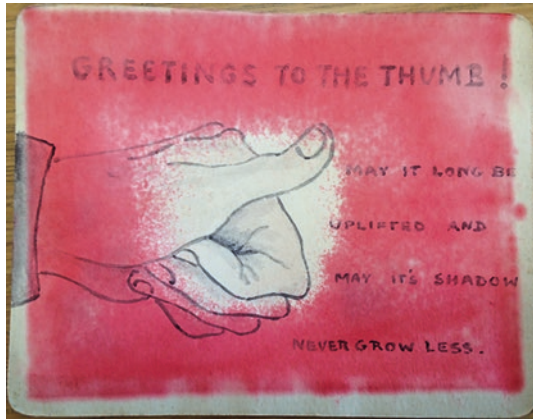
## CHAPTER 3

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# Phallic Thumbs: Conceiving a New Eden

*“Whomever you are, holding me now in hand...  
With the comrade’s long-dwelling kiss or the new husband’s kiss,  
For I am the new husband and I am the comrade.”*  
Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*

To celebrate Harry’s twenty-fourth birthday on 5 March 1911, Elsie and Rosfrith Murray invited him to a party at Sunnyside on the Banbury Road, just north of St. John’s College. Their hand-drawn invitation featured a closed fist with an erect thumb, an appropriate accompaniment to their gift, a copy of Walt Whitman’s *Leaves of Grass*. (Fig. 3.1) Whitman’s image of “phallic thumbs”, which appeared in the poem “Spontaneous Me”, was followed by the evocative phrase “bellies press’d and glued together in love”, a clear reference to penetrative sex. This was not any ordinary birthday card but was, for the Murray sisters, part of an increasingly overt sexual flirtation which they had been carrying on for over a year with Harry, a frequent visitor to the home. While Harry’s study of the Greats introduced him to the sensuality of Hellenism and to the modern study of psychology, and his Bible circle friendships opened a world of emotion and introspection, perhaps his most transformative experience at Oxford occurred within the Murray household. For the first time in his life, Harry was forced to confront a new kind of womanhood as the Murray girls were socially prominent, intellectually gifted, politically active and high-spirited, and more than



**Fig. 3.1** Rosfrith and Elsie Murray's birthday invitation to Harry in March 1911, the perfect accompaniment to their birthday gift, Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*, in which one of the poems refers to "phallic thumbs"—Library and Archives Canada, Harry Logan Fonds, 14:18

willing to challenge his conventional attitudes, particularly on the subject of the relations between men and women. His socializing with the Murray women so disconcerted his received notions of female passivity and subordination that it elicited the wry observation: "I am beginning to believe from experience the Shawian thesis that it is woman who pursues man and not vice versa!" But as he continued to inform his parents, "However, it is a rather pleasant thing to be pursued by amazons of a certain type."<sup>1</sup>

Where Elsie and Rosfrith identified gender in terms of a fixed essence firmly linked to a physiological determinism, which connected gender differentiation to one's sexual anatomy, namely the penis, Gwyneth, their younger sister, who eventually became his fiancée, embraced, as did Harry, a more fluid conception of gender. Harry and Gwyneth shared a belief that gender was shaped far more by culture and psychological states than by physiology. Through a tempestuous long-distance courtship which lasted five long years, Gwyneth and Harry were compelled to fall back on the epistolary medium to progressively come to terms with the conjugal relationship as one founded on the concept of "comradeship". Comradeship expressed their personal orientation to sexual and spiritual compatibility, in which their relationship was established through a process of intensive mutual introspection and emotional exploration. From his own starting point within the intensely psychological framework for homosocial bonding at Oxford, Harry demanded that Gwyneth

assume the place of his male friends, performing the role both of sounding board and catalyst for his ongoing journey of self-exploration. This intensely psychological viewpoint decisively altered his notion of the conjugal unit, a shift away from Victorian legal and social prescriptions which accentuated the public function of the family as the foundation stone of the nation-state, to a more modern and fluid idea of marriage defined primarily around the conjugal couple. Marriage, in turn, emerged as a private site of inner contemplation and psychological exploration which involved an ongoing process of self-creation towards an ideal of higher sexual and spiritual power. The trajectory from Victorian to modern, however, was not a smooth or linear process. Like other cultural moderns, such as E.M. Forster, Virginia Woolf, the neo-pagans at Cambridge and the American novelist Henry James, Harry and Gwyneth believed that the whole meaning of life rested upon what James termed “the great relation of man and woman”,<sup>2</sup> but the achievement of heterosexual communion was neither easy nor obvious for the Edwardians who sought to reinvent the terms of the conjugal union. As the largely epistolary courtship of Harry and Gwyneth so compellingly illustrates, although they self-consciously identified as young moderns and both accepted the centrality of sexual pleasure in the marital bond, their relationship reached a crisis in the fall of 1912, largely because of tensions surrounding the question as to how to balance sexual pleasure with their Christian ideal of spiritual perfection. In viewing love as a fundamentally transformative experience by which individual personalities could, through introspection, attain a higher stage of selfhood, Harry and Gwyneth established, through their own subjective experiences, a concept of sexualized love and marriage which, in the post-World War II era, would form the basis for the cultural scripts created for the masses.<sup>3</sup>

It is certainly true, as Paul Deslandes has maintained, that Oxford was a resolutely homosocial environment, with limited opportunities for sociability with women among its male undergraduates, apart from the annual boat races and frequentation of prostitutes, the latter sternly proscribed.<sup>4</sup> Young men like Harry and fellow Presbyterian W.L. Grant, despite the fact that they were both sons of the manse, were accustomed in Canada to a more progressive attitude to interactions between the sexes. Having spent a summer of love prior to embarking for Oxford, it is small wonder that by the end of his first term, Grant wrote home dejectedly saying “I have been pining for female society and a *real life*.”<sup>5</sup> When Harry attended McGill University in 1906 men had even more numerous opportunities for socializing with women, as all major Canadian universities were co-educational. Mild flirtations with women constituted a suffi-

ciently important part of his undergraduate experience at McGill that he kept an album full of photographs of comely young women locked arm-in-arm with male undergraduates, innumerable full dance cards, invitations to “at homes” held by professors for male and female students, and to skating and dancing parties from the female students of Royal Victoria College. At these venues, he had the opportunity to kiss and fondle numerous young women. As the author of “Cock and Hen Shows” explained, the frisson of sexual excitement was an integral part of all mingling between the sexes, ranging from sitting in church to skating parties, all of which provided young couples the opportunity to have “harmless flirtations ... ripen into a mildly intimate character”,<sup>6</sup> thus validating social mixing which did not necessarily lead to formal courtship or marriage. Such organized leisure activities provided forums in which youth could discover their sexualized selves. In a stunningly frank letter to his mother, Harry recounted this process at work, describing how at a mixed-sex Halloween party, when Miss Smellie and he found themselves wall flowers, that they “took a nice window seat behind a *lace* curtain and carried on quite a flirtation—how gay & giddy I’m getting”.<sup>7</sup> His album from McGill also featured the following advertisement: “Nurses Up! Fifty Trained Nurses will be Required this Evening at the Tea Party Infantum of the Freshlets”, where “60 Peerless Baby Beauties, will Goo, Gurgle, and Dribble: prize awarded to the most beautiful”.<sup>8</sup> This event permitted the assembled crowd of young male undergraduates to ogle a parade of nubile young women.

Despite his constant regime of flirtations with women, Harry’s vision of “true love” as a “delightful thing” was largely derived, as he himself admitted, from the idealized and chivalrous images presented of romantic love in novels. These informed his notion of “peachy girls”, whose “finer feelings”<sup>9</sup> sharply differentiated them from the masculine character, in that they displayed qualities of sensitivity and attention to their outward appearance without resorting to make-up,<sup>10</sup> and a due deference to male opinion, although he admired women who were “bright and sociable”<sup>11</sup> who raised his spirits and sense of physical attractiveness. Both at McGill and Oxford, Harry carried on a running meditation about love and the prospect of marriage with Rae Mowatt, a McGill undergraduate, whose family knew his parents, and who was the daughter of a prominent Presbyterian minister like his father. With parental approval in mind, he conveyed his aspiration to become engaged to a Canadian girl, much as his friend Clarence Christie had done in proposing to Edith Mowatt, Rae’s sister.

However, as a prurient young man, Harry was more than a little abashed to find that Clarence and Edith sat up every night together in the parlour “with the light turned out”, clearly spooning and petting, although he sanitized this by saying to his parents they were “laying plans for their future home”. He was equally offended when he, a dedicated sabbatarian, reproved Mrs. Mowatt, the wife of a clergyman, for allowing her daughters to walk out with men on Sunday evenings, to which she retorted “Well, Harry, when you get the right girl you will not be so considerate of the Sabbath day.”<sup>12</sup> His intense moral rectitude about public displays of sexual passion and illicit sex of all kinds was again on display during his journey across Canada to Oxford. While on the train, he commented acridly about a group of what he called “old rakes of English lords”, who solicited two women—“tough ones”—who spent the night in their compartment. “It created quite a scandal on the train”,<sup>13</sup> as Harry observed, a story intended to reassure his parents that his constant chatting to young women would remain morally pure and innocent.

Despite Oxford’s official self-image as a preeminent centre of learning made more elevated by the absence of women, Harry found numerous occasions for female sociability, despite rigorous policing of contacts between the sexes. For example, the rules of St. John’s College enjoined a monastic code which confined undergraduates to college after 8 p.m. with a view to prohibiting attendance at pubs, dancing in private dwellings or restaurants and, during term, stringent rules even proscribed public subscription balls and assemblies.<sup>14</sup> In addition to the iconic mixed sex venue, most notably the “Togger” or annual rowing regatta, where Harry, as was typical, invited various women,<sup>15</sup> he frequented dances on a regular basis. These were organized by prominent socialites such as Lady Trevelyan and Lady Aitchison who hosted balls aimed to deploy the temptations of the female sex to counterbalance the homosocial and perhaps all too homoerotic cloistered atmosphere of college undergraduate life. In December 1910, Harry explained to his parents how he had met “a couple of beautiful grand-daughters” at Lady Trevelyan’s dance, “so there’s dark design on one side or the other!”<sup>16</sup> Dances were recommended by *Modern Man* as a venue where men could meet women “on absolutely equal terms”, but at these events men also competed with other men to display not only their muscular physique but their “free and easy” movements. Fearing that this pastime might be considered too effeminate, the author of “Make the Most of Yourself” recommended that men avoid baggy trousers, flowing ties or soft hats, accoutrements that had come to be identified

with the “too artistic”—a codeword for homosexuality—and to evince good manners but “to be and look manly”.<sup>17</sup> The cross-sex appeal of dancing was confirmed when Harry observed: “I also liked the crowd of girls—and men—which is a big thing at a dance”, and later commented upon his friend Hugh Macdonnell’s dancing form, which he estimated had fallen short of his usual standard.<sup>18</sup> Although Harry did not allude to the eroticism aroused by the physical touching that occurred while engaged in the two-step, waltz, gavotte and Lancers, it was at one of these private dances that Harry experienced his first frisson of sexual appetite for Gwyneth.<sup>19</sup>

Harry’s posture of moral uprightness was a source of constant ribbing from his circle of male Oxford friends, for as Robert Gibson jokingly wrote him in 1910, as they were setting off for a reading vacation in Germany: “I want a real devil of a fellow, a libertine, a rakehelly character who is not for a holiday, like Harry Logan.”<sup>20</sup> But in fact, on each of his vacations, Harry and his friends met a wide range of beauteous young women, including “Miss Coudert, the little French girl of mine”, with whom he had a sufficiently serious dalliance that she later followed him back from St. Briec.<sup>21</sup> Perhaps all too aware of the “uncomfy associations”<sup>22</sup> attached to Greek love and, like his friend Robert Gibson, wary of where the expression of “his feelings”<sup>23</sup> to other men might lead, Harry was wont to wax eloquent in his letters home about affairs with women even though some of these obviously verged on the illicit, including an involvement with a fifteen-year-old girl and her friend whom John and he had lured to an unchaperoned musical session in their rooms: “John and I are getting on, are we not?” As he boasted to his parents, “John is greatly pleased with the situation—building all sorts of castles in the air?!”<sup>24</sup>

As much as Harry and his friends talked about and sought out women, and even though he acknowledged that mixed sex dances were also sites for competition between men, he was adamant that certain venues were strictly off limits to women. One of the most erotically charged homosocial venues was the semi-professional athletic meet, like the one he attended in Dublin in 1910, where he resolutely reprimanded two of his team mates, both of whom had won their events, for further displaying their physical fitness and masculine attractiveness by walking out with working-class Irish girls. In a lengthy discussion of this incident in his semi-weekly letter to his parents, Harry vilified these men for not conforming to his Hellenistic athletic ideal of manliness which included a “sense of beauty or culture”. Echoing the sentiments of Walter Pater about the equipoise

between athleticism and intellect in true masculinity, as outlined in *Marius the Epicurean*, Harry insisted that authentic manliness involved the pursuit of a “social reserve”, almost an exact quotation of what Pater termed a “disciplined reserve” characterized by a “moderate demeanor towards all whom one meets whether male or female”. Appealing to his parents’ image of him as a morally pure young man, Harry concluded: “I may be too punctilious upon this subject but I cannot bring myself to agree with the free way in which many of our best men conduct themselves especially with girls of manifestly inferior station in the social scale—girls I mean of whom they know absolutely nothing and who are only too ready to misinterpret the actions of bright clever attractive students.”<sup>25</sup> Surely such protestations were meant to disguise his own often tawdry dalliances with young, working-class women whom he met on his reading parties in France and Germany, and to mask his enjoyment of a highly sexualized and raunchy masculinity that was frequently on offer at Oxford.

There may have been an entire infrastructure at Oxford dedicated to controlling unauthorized fraternization between men and women, but the absence of women only served to amplify a bawdy sub-culture given to the eroticization of the female form which in turn promoted a more explicitly sexualized image of young women than the chivalrous tenor of Harry’s experience of the female sex at McGill. Students need not have read Walt Whitman to conjure up fantasies about the phallus when they could attend various smoking concerts, in which the pipe became a surrogate for the penis, such that the “Ode to Tobacco” was sung alongside “A Charming Lady” and “Two Little Lovesongs”.<sup>26</sup> Sex and sin were clearly not thought to be mutually exclusive, for this event was held at Mansfield College, the Nonconformist theological college, on 17 February 1909 to celebrate Valentine’s Day. The organizers had clearly read “The Secrets of Smoking”, an article which had appeared but a few months earlier in *Modern Man*, where J.T. Fullerton portrayed pipe smoking as “the wooing of Lady Nicotine”, which he compared to making love to a woman.<sup>27</sup> Outside the purviews of the theological colleges, sexual references became even more ribald, as was evidenced in the St. John’s Variety Entertainment where J.U. Powell sang a ditty from the Moulin Rouge featuring the line “the next horse I ride on, I’m going to be tied on”, an experience which had a palpable impact upon Harry, as he later named his cavalry mount used in the Machine Gun Corps, “Nesta”, after his wife’s middle name.<sup>28</sup> At this same pantomime a figure posing as the Vice President appeared in the nude, imitating the pose of Lord Leighton’s *Psyche in the Bath*, a well-known semi-pornographic print which conventionally hung in

men's dormitory rooms,<sup>29</sup> an obvious lampoon on the androgynous culture of Hellenism.

Oxford also reinforced Harry's ingrained view of women as the inferior sex, conveyed so tellingly in his toast for the annual arts banquet at McGill where he declared so pithily "My Wife shall (not) rule me". This statement followed from his speech about how there were three sexes: "men, women, and clergymen",<sup>30</sup> which already evinced a decided self-consciousness about the increasing fluidity of gender identities and roles occasioned by the campaign for women's rights waged by the women's suffrage movements both in Canada and Britain. Not surprisingly, one of the leading anti-suffragists in Canada, Harry's mentor, Stephen Leacock, professor of political economy at McGill, was the toastmaster at this event. Leacock's misogynist rant against women's equal rights both in the political and economic realms, "The Woman Question", declaimed against women's suffrage, as led by "the Awful Woman with the Spectacles" who preached the doctrine of women's equality. He defined the movement as a negative manifestation of the modern, commercialized age of mass consumption, where the demand by wives for labour saving devices, such as vacuum cleaners, rendered them a burden to their husbands. In his view, this led to the demand for having both the vote and a career. According to Leacock, it was modern woman who had created a spirit of "sex antagonism" and he drew a portrait of modern marriage as loveless because it was based on two careers in which husband and wife "appear as a couple of honourable partners who share a house together". What feminists offered women, Leacock believed, was delusion because ultimately biology determined women's destiny which would remain that of motherhood. His ultimate conclusion was that "*Women need not more freedom but less*" and must remain dependent upon husbands, for should they enter the workforce they would simply depress male wages.<sup>31</sup>

Women's suffrage was one of the major issues broached at the Oxford Union while Harry was a Rhodes Scholar and he kept careful note of the arguments both for and against, and when Mrs. Millicent Garrett Fawcett, the first woman allowed to speak in the hallowed precincts of the Oxford Union, came to defend suffrage in November 1908, Harry was quick to reassure his mother: "I am on your side on the Suffrage question, mother."<sup>32</sup> Undoubtedly Harry subscribed to the host of unflattering images that were presented of the masculinized suffragist. In "Unlovely Women—Types that a Man Detests", published in *Modern Man* in the spring of 1909, the author reviled women political activists as physically



unappealing, with “slatternly dress” and hysterical “by nature and habit”. The anonymous writer went so far as to urge male readers to “thrash a nagging woman” along with those uppity females who sought to invade all-male preserves such as the smoking room and the bar. His strongest opprobrium was levelled against female eugenics advocates, whom he labelled “feminine vivisectors”, for their promotion of birth control which this male writer interpreted as a thorough rejection of motherhood. All suffragists were therefore characterized by him as “married strumpet[s]” who preferred “society to the nursery”, a play on the social purity views of Christabel Pankhurst and others, who condemned men for reducing wives to the status of prostitutes by demanding their marital rights.<sup>33</sup>

The anti-suffragist refrain that “the chief duty of a woman is to be attractive”<sup>34</sup> formed a staple component of the conversations between men in Harry’s circle. Norman Macdonnell, a close friend at Oxford, wrote to Harry from Toronto in 1910, fantasizing about that quintessentially Canadian romantic moment, canoodling in a canoe under a full moon, and mused about his various sexual escapades with women, all the while decrying the almost complete lack of beautiful women in Canada. He advanced the view that it was the very lack of feminine comeliness that had actually created the suffrage movement itself. Although he admired Canadian girls for their intelligence, most of them were of “the *awful* angular, sallow, set—*suffragetism* without knowing it”.<sup>35</sup> A key aspect of their friendship consisted in discussing their love lives and the sexual attributes of women. Macdonnell’s missive about the overriding importance of female beauty was a response to Harry’s consternation over his parents’ view that he marry a woman, in this case Rae Mowatt, who was religious, from a respectable family, educated and also domestically inclined and demure, who would be an admirable wife for an aspiring clergyman. Harry made it amply clear that he wanted a submissive younger wife, who was above all beautiful and sexually attractive. Again, basing his views of marriage on novels, he was willing to concede George Eliot’s point that love was blind and would bring another kind of beauty with it, but he was clearly influenced by the strongly eugenicist tenor of teaching at McGill and in medical journals to firmly reject the idea of marrying Rae. Fearing that their biological mismatch would produce ugly and degenerate offspring, he bluntly noted that she could not “by any stretch of the most passionate lover’s plastic imagination, be called *pretty*”.<sup>36</sup>

Given his strictures against women’s rights, unattractive women, and any hint of intellectual superiority in the opposite sex, what a shock Harry

must have had when he first went to tea at the Murray residence at Sunnyside in the winter of 1909. However, his clear disappointment that “none of the [four] girls will ever be married for their beauty”<sup>37</sup> was quickly expunged by his discovery that this charming and “homelike” family was in fact that of Sir James Murray, editor of the celebrated *Oxford English Dictionary*, who had been recently knighted. The fact that Sir James and Harry’s parents shared a common friendship with the inventor Alexander Graham Bell may have eased Harry’s entrée to Sunnyside. Prior to this, Harry merely found the daughters to be “very agreeable, very staid sensible, sober people”,<sup>38</sup> but their elevated social status within Oxford society clearly had its appeal. “What a splendid asset to be able to talk about ‘my friend Lady Murray’”,<sup>39</sup> he gushed to his parents. Once he discovered that their eldest son was a wealthy businessman who owned a motor car, and that another brother Oswyn was the permanent under-secretary to the Admiralty, knew both King George V and Winston Churchill personally, and had been made a Companion of the Bath at the Coronation Honours in 1911, Harry was all too willing to now consider the Murray girls to be proper marriage material. Writing to his parents, he declared “I may make that one of my calling stations! As I liked them better than any people I have yet met in Oxford.”<sup>40</sup> Keenly self-conscious about issues of class after obtaining his Rhodes Scholarship, Harry was at pains to explain to his brother the crucial role played by “social equality” or class affinity in marriage, and later, with no hint of irony, could declaim against the “colonial attitude” towards “the charmed circle of carpet knights”.<sup>41</sup>

Harry praised the Murrays for having an “ideal house life”, not least because he envisioned Sir James, whom he described as a 70-year-old with white hair and white beard, as exemplifying the stereotypical Victorian paterfamilias, a father who was firm but jovial, and who tended his garden and worked industriously alongside his two daughters Elsie and Rosfrith in the Scriptorium.<sup>42</sup> However much Harry was emboldened by his association with such an esteemed family, what truly attracted him most was that the Murray girls made him an adopted member of the family, thinking him an actual corporeal stand-in for their brother Jowett who had recently gone to teach at a Chinese mission. Where Lady Murray welcomed him both as a potential suitor for her daughters and as a replacement for her absent son of whom Harry quipped, “she never tires talking of”,<sup>43</sup> Harry increasingly visited the Murrays as the pressures of work for the Greats intensified, as a refuge where he could retreat into the world of boyhood

hijinks and frivolity. This attempt to recapture a lost childhood was not untypical of Edwardians. One of the most popular plays of the era, J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan*, whose fantasy of childhood was written as an intentional escape from the social and spiritual problems of the modern age, was evoked by Rosfrith who, in explaining to Mrs. Logan why they still hung stockings at Christmas, stated: "We are great babies to keep up the latter but they are such fun and in some ways we never can grow up."<sup>44</sup>

In the early months of their acquaintance, Harry often visited along with other young men and socialized with the girls alongside their parents, with Sir James playing the raconteur and Lady Murray playing waltzes on the piano, or along with his friend John, they squired the Murray girls to boat races, went to musical evenings, baked cakes together, or had picnics after rowing along the Cher[well]. However, by the spring of 1910, Harry and Elsie and Rosfrith were on a first name basis, which signified a more modern and open attitude to relations between men and women that dispensed with Victorian formalities and also reflected a more intimate turn, as did the several "tête-à-têtes" alone in the parlour late at night.<sup>45</sup> Boyish antics, such as cavorting and scattering flour about the Sunnyside kitchen,<sup>46</sup> soon turned to more adult forms of flirtation. Harry enthusiastically described to his parents how the Murray girls "are so affectionate and lovely in their treatment of me. They are never happy unless they are 'gossiping' away with their arms about me, and move about them in the most brotherly & sisterly fashion." "Do you know", he wrote, "I love those girls like my own sisters", an obvious ploy to assuage parental suspicions when, on many occasions, he was left to dance unchaperoned with Elsie and Rosfrith.<sup>47</sup> That feeling "at home at Sunnyside" meant much more than he was conveying to his parents besides boyish pranks such as putting golliwogs in each other's beds, was manifested in a more forthcoming letter to his brother, in which he conveyed how self-conscious he was that people were talking and that he had to be wary of pushing his romantic advances too far if he wished to remain a "celebist" [*sic*] free of entanglements.<sup>48</sup> Harry deftly played Elsie and Rosfrith off against one another, and often appeared in masquerades and dramas in the female guise, such as when he sang in a falsetto voice the part of Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*, in which romantic love was suggested without his role as male paramour made too evident.<sup>49</sup>

By August 1910, however, Harry began to prepare his mother for the fact that he was romantically interested in Elsie and Ros, so that by November he could explicitly play on his mother's social snobbery to

announce that they had their eye on him. “Would it tickle your pride”, he wrote, “to know you were mother-in-law of a daughter of Sir James Murray?”<sup>50</sup> It is clear that, after extending a Christmas invitation to Harry, Sir James and Lady Murray were wishing to marry off one of their daughters, as Harry later confessed that Lady Murray “seemed to countenance my extreme intimacy with L.C. and Ros!”<sup>51</sup> By granting Harry permission to escort Ros to the Lady’s Musical Club concert, which required full evening dress,<sup>52</sup> the Murrays were in fact giving their tacit approval, which most likely contributed to Ros’ perception that she and Harry had an “understanding”. The fact that by the following March, Elsie and Ros drew suggestive “phallic thumbs” all around the border of his birthday invitation<sup>53</sup> could leave no doubt that they viewed him as a future sexual partner. Given the focus of Harry’s romantic activities—what his friend John caustically termed “Harry’s harem”<sup>54</sup>—it came as a tremendous shock to Sir James and Lady Murray, when, in October of 1911 Harry disclosed that he had been secretly engaged to their youngest daughter Gwyneth, still a student at Girton College Cambridge, since 9 August 1911. “Such a possibility as your falling in love with Gwyneth had never entered my thoughts”, confided the astonished Lady Murray, who remained wholly confused as to how it all came about.<sup>55</sup> The sisters, no less astounded, displayed differing reactions: Elsie warmly congratulated him saying it was “absolutely topping”, but Ros upbraided him for playing with her feelings, thinking they had an “understanding”, for like her mother, she had only thought of Gwyneth as a child.<sup>56</sup>

Why such a precipitous engagement to a woman he barely knew? By the fall of 1910, Harry had concluded that Elsie and Ros were too old and he “too young and freshy” [*sic*] as he frankly confided to his brother.<sup>57</sup> By contrast, Gwyneth, though perhaps less sympathetic to his moods than Elsie, was a mere twenty-one, and perceived by Harry as someone he thought he could dominate: “She is a lovely girl too—has a beautiful character as have the others.” What seems to have turned his head, however, was the fact that after having some “red-hot discussions” with the “well-read” Hilda, their older sister who was a don at Royal Holloway College, Gwyneth’s claim to a Cambridge education placed her ahead of Elsie and Ros. The fact that at the New Year’s masquerade party at the Murrays, Hilda dressed up as Elizabeth Bennett of *Pride and Prejudice*, clearly was meant to relegate the younger daughters to the status of the flibbertigibbets of the celebrated Jane Austen classic.<sup>58</sup> Perhaps for the first time, Harry appreciated intellectual attainment as a key element of woman’s

attractiveness, later telling Gwyneth there needed to be that “commonality of interest between us on the intellectual plan, which one naturally looks for in one’s most intimate friends”.<sup>59</sup> The ideal marriage partner, therefore, was meant to supplant the high-brow conversations he had enjoyed with his Oxford companions. There was also considerable pressure from his friend John who had come to be extremely critical of his playing the field, accusing him of having “cruised around”, and who insisted that he open “his interior” and have a “heart to heart” with all the young Murray women.<sup>60</sup>

What is apparent is that during the summer of 1911, when he learned of his lamentable performance in the Schools, Harry recognized that full manhood could not be attained through professional achievement, and chose to assert his adult status through engagement and marriage. Just as with the protagonist in the story “Young Love” who proclaims his love at a dance saying “God make a man of me!”,<sup>61</sup> Harry considered marriage as a transformative event, launching him in a new life that would expunge his failures elsewhere and at the same time allow him to at last declare “real independence” from his parents.<sup>62</sup> Indeed, the fact that he became secretly engaged to Gwyneth, without parental approval, and chose the one Murray daughter whom they had not met, signified the final sweeping away of a boyish craving for it. However, the transition from the world of intimate but sexually pure male friendships to marriage was fraught with anxiety. Rather than discussing marriage in the first instance with his parents, Harry sought the advice of various friends because they could provide better guidance on the vexed question of how to preserve one’s Christian morality and at the same time pursue sexual love. Norman Macdonnell reassured Harry that it was not unusual to have “an affection for some two or three girls” and not be in love or get married. John also contemplated the question of the desirability of marriage by paraphrasing the article “Marriage yes—or no?” published a few months previously in *Modern Man*. In response to Harry’s anxiety about losing his male friends, John adopted the technique of an Oxford Union debate, weighing the pros and cons between pure homoerotic and heterosexual love, stating that there must be some equilibrium between “the two extremes of the boa constrictor and the not having any”. However, in his view, there could be no hard and fast rational resolution because in the final analysis one’s decision must occur in the realm of “ideals” which flowed from the “sub-conscious”,<sup>63</sup> a code-word for the conflation he saw between sexual love and the achievement of the higher self.

Harry and John were young men beginning to view love from a resolutely modernist standpoint. By contrast with the fictional businessman Henry Wilcox in E.M. Forster's celebrated novel *Howards End* (1910) who stated "I am not a fellow who bothers about my inside", and who resolutely reprobated bodily passion as a foundation for marital bliss, Harry fully endorsed the modern psychology of love for he expressed it as "certain happenings within my interior".<sup>64</sup> Unlike the Victorians, marriage was no longer viewed as a fixed state of legal relationships or religious precepts, but a mutual journey of conscious and unconscious discovery as conveyed in Forster's ideal of "only connect", a perspective that combined both spiritual and sexual love. John, for example, considered the conjugal relationship as a means to satisfy the multiple dimensions of the personality, what he termed Harry's "essential diversity of your Transcendental Egos", but in referring to the psychology of love John subtly alluded to Havelock Ellis' *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, while his evocation of the "unconscious" denoted the instincts, a common reference to the sexual drive.<sup>65</sup> Harry had likewise used the term "psychology" to describe sex in a letter to Gwyneth in the summer of 1911, while he was at the Christian Union Camp at Swanwick, where the students who had been reading about the new ideal of sexual pleasure for both sexes in Edward Carpenter's *Love's Coming of Age* would have well understood that the effigy with the label on its "bosom" "A Chaperone—Girton College—Psychology" was a direct challenge to the Victorian culture of sexual repression, for as he stated: "You may understand the point of the dig."<sup>66</sup> In this environment, sexual attraction between men could only be described in terms of religious emotion and ecstasy,<sup>67</sup> but even when respectable young men sought to talk about heterosexual love, they were similarly constrained when talking about their sexual bodies. By contrast with the Bloomsbury group who frankly talked about "fucking" and masturbation, Harry and John continued to employ coded language to describe erotic desire: when they spoke of sexual intercourse they termed it a "spiritual experience", much as E.M. Forster did when he spoke of the "unity of souls",<sup>68</sup> and when John wished to convey his disdain for the old moral economy of self-restraint he merely signed himself John spendomachiaphaili Thomson, evoking H.G. Wells' encomium to modern sexual mores, *The New Machiavelli*.<sup>69</sup>

It is apparent from his discussions about sex with his friends that Harry chose Gwyneth because he found her sexually attractive. The fact that she physically offered herself to him confirmed to him that their marriage

would serve as a remedy from the torment of sexual temptation which had plagued him throughout his Oxford studies. The knowledge that in marriage he would find an equal in erotic desire persuaded him that their love would be one of harmony and joy. Several weeks after the sexual consummation of their love, Harry explained the role of sexual intercourse: “Oh, my Gwyneth, you can’t think what your love is meaning to me. It simply fills up all those great yearning vacant places in my life which used to be void and meaningless, and made my whole life so. Oh! I have tried to keep straight, God knows, and He too alone knows all the terrible agony of those three years in Oxford...I used to wonder how if God was love He could allow such sickedness in thought & act in those who tried to worship him in sincerity, me in particular.”<sup>70</sup> Sexual thoughts so plagued him that he often spoke at the Student Christian camps on the theme of the “will”, arguing that there were two conflicting wills, one defined by pure ideals and the other by base desires.<sup>71</sup> As was typical of the Edwardian period, Harry drew both upon the new psychology as well as traditional doctrines of the soul to maintain that sexual desire sundered the unity of character founded upon self-restraint into a multiplicity of selves organized around “subjective feelings”.<sup>72</sup> Harry agreed with many psychologists that the subconscious formed the most important substratum of the personality, but by the deeper interior self, Harry referred to the realm of sexual instincts, because his quest for developing an integrated and authentic self involved squaring the sexual impulse with the search for spiritual perfection. While there were many strands of popular psychological thought, for Harry, psychological modernity most emphatically depended on the psychoanalytic approach which took as its focus sex, interiority and the constant exploration of the emotions, including those aroused by romantic love.<sup>73</sup>

The inherent conflict between the lustful desires of the flesh and the higher vocation of the spirit was a particularly thorny issue for an aspiring clergyman like Harry. When broaching the issue of his engagement to his father, Harry at first employed the older Edenic idiom, in which men were enslaved in marriage, the victims of sexual lust, speaking of love in terms of Cupid’s “dark designs”.<sup>74</sup> “One of the things which has caused me most trouble”, confided Harry, “one of the devil’s highest hurdles, is the sex question—the relation between man and woman.” For the older generation “sex” denoted gender, as it did for Harry’s future father-in-law who was, at that time, writing the Q–SH volume of the *Oxford English Dictionary*.<sup>75</sup> Harry, however, used the term in its modern sense to denote

the sex act. In a stark rejection of Christian doctrine regarding the natural sinfulness of woman, Harry now relegated the idea that women served merely to “entertaining desire” in men to the sphere of childish superstition, as he had now come to believe that both men and women of all classes display “in *all* their activities”, including sexual relations, “the ‘Love of Christ which passeth Knowledge’”. In Harry’s calculation, prudery now signified a lack of spirituality, for in his view, because sex was a natural act, it overcame the dichotomy between man’s “brutish”, “base” and “evil” constitution and the higher “divine nature”. Man, Harry stated, was not born of sin,<sup>76</sup> but possessed the divine within him from the moment of birth until death.

This refutation of Victorian morality surrounding sex was confirmed by his friends. Norman Macdonnell, to whom he had written about his inability to control his sexual emotions, responded with the reassurance that “Can one hold that nothing which is purely natural is unholy? “Sex does not bother me much”, he declared, but he also stated that “the chief fault I find in modern life & literature is its continual harping on sex”. Here Macdonnell was criticizing H.G. Wells for his advocacy of adultery and free love. Preferring monogamy, Macdonnell nevertheless expounded a modern view of marriage in which romantic love flowed out of sexual intercourse. The ideal “relationship” developed only when the female partner possessed “a free mind” regarding the discussion of sexual matters and the pursuit of sexual pleasure. However, the problem was that there were “none too many” women with such modern views,<sup>77</sup> as he acidly remarked to his friend. W.L. Grant, an older contemporary of Harry’s at Oxford, had reached a similar conclusion about the positive interrelationship between sexual congress and religious selfhood. In a 1912 article, Grant acclaimed H.G. Wells’ *Ann Veronica* and *The New Machiavelli*, the two books most concerned, as one Oxford wag declared, “about sex with a capital S”.<sup>78</sup> Oxford men also approved of *Ann Veronica*, even though in some quarters it was severely reprobated and barred from circulating libraries, stating that it provided a realistic picture of modern life because in it the “typical modern woman” has “no shame about passion”.<sup>79</sup> Although these books shocked respectable middle-class society, W.L. Grant, the Beit Lecturer in Colonial History at Oxford, disparaged critics who imputed to Wells an obsession with “inky dismal sensuality”, maintaining that both he and Wells were no longer convinced by “the mere negative purity of virginity”. For him, *Ann Veronica* was merely a great romance much like that of Antony and Cleopatra, and therefore



could not be classed as immoral literature. The impact of evolutionary science as expressed in the eugenic movement did much to transform attitudes to sexuality for, as Grant concluded, “the desire of man for woman is to him—and to me—heaven-born, God’s method for perpetuating the race”. Echoing Wells in *The New Machiavelli*, Grant averred that the “problem of sex” for both the individual and society was not one of defective morality, but of a “miserable upbringing” that “kept a girl in seclusion” with no “chart or compass” until compelled to marry a man she did not love. Responding to the older social purity strand of feminism which pictured sex as “inherently nasty”, the product merely of the beast or baser self, Grant envisioned modern marriage as one based on mutual sexual pleasure. He thus recommended freedom to choose one’s partner based on love rather than parental expectations. In his view, sexual education from an early age would result in safeguarding purity, which he did not define as Victorians had as denial and abstinence, but as “the free exercise of the passions” between husband and wife. In a stunning refutation of the church’s teachings which saw the marriage bond as legitimated by external religious authority, Grant argued that to secure their mutual happiness young couples need not “obey” the conventional legalities of the marital rite, but rather must follow their sexual impulses because love and the conjugal relationship were themselves sacramental, “the great unifying force of life”. Although not an advocate of free love, Grant made it amply clear in his response to Norman Macdonnell’s brother James’ condemnation of Wells’ confusion of “love and lust” that in the modern world the “rights of passion” in the love relationship took precedence over the old Victorian legalities of church and state.<sup>80</sup>

Among young moderns of the Edwardian age, the sacrament of marriage was no longer viewed in terms of an external or public legitimation of romantic love; rather its sanctification occurred in the private realm and was defined in terms of the unity of the corporeal and spiritual conjugal “personality” which occurred during sexual intercourse. Working from this perspective, Elsie Clews Parsons, a prominent American anthropologist and feminist, emphatically barred the state from any interference in the private realm of the conjugal family, which must, she argued, be governed by a new “principle of reciprocity between the sexes”. Her promotion of trial marriages rested upon the assumption that this was the only way for modern couples to overcome “the flotsam of a traditional and inept morality” and “to allow the flow [of] the current of a finer and truer spiritual life”.<sup>81</sup> Even those who could not claim feminist credentials, such

as J. Arthur Thomson, the co-author with Sir Patrick Geddes of *The Evolution of Sex* (1890), who adhered to a biologicistic conception of the differences between the sexes, recommended that the state should have no concern in marriage since this was a sacred and intimate sphere. In his 1911 review of the sixth volume of Havelock Ellis' *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, Thomson endorsed the idea that love had its own worth apart from procreation, concluding: "The spiritual as well as the physical structure of the world is in part built on sexual love."<sup>82</sup> Sharing Ellis' concept of the spiritual nature of physical love, Harry's most intimate friend, John, likewise urged Harry to satisfy his sexual feelings with "experience", either with a prostitute or with his new love Gwyneth, believing as he did that this was in keeping with religious traditions.<sup>83</sup>

Like Parsons and Harry's male friends, Maude Royden, the English editor of the suffrage newspaper *Common-Sense* and a vocal exponent of the ordination of women in the Church of England,<sup>84</sup> also viewed both state and society from an intensely individualistic and spiritual perspective, perceiving them as but the cooperation of "highly individualized citizens". As she declared in her article "Modern Love", "The greatness of a society increases in proportion to the number of individuals who are perfectly developed, and who, while receiving value from all, at the same time feel the impulse to give." Prior to the state, society and the family, there existed the "human personality", an entity which emerged from the state of spiritual perfection brought about through the full expression of one's "physical instincts" through sexual intercourse. According to Royden, "[a]ll love between human beings has a physical element in it, and in sex-love the physical and spiritual are more equally balanced than in other loves". Long before self-styled radicals such as Dora Russell coined the term "sex-love",<sup>85</sup> Royden was recommending what she termed "experimental marriages" in which sexual compatibility could become the foundation for that "perfect understanding between married people" that was enshrined in the modern concept of romantic love. Not only would premarital sexual experience help establish a relationship founded on complete sincerity and the worshipping of the body, but it would also help avoid that "expectation of indecency that has made sex an obsession" which so plagued Harry. A better understanding of the sex act created the kind of "threshold" for a nobler conception of marriage that radically departed from Victorian notions of love as a steady state and which at the same time made marriage an ongoing "adventure" where, through the experience of physical love, young men and women continually journeyed towards a higher spiritual

plane of self-consciousness. In advance of Marie Stopes' classic *Married Love* (1918), Royden developed a philosophy of sex-love in which marriage was not a system of obligations set down by traditional church doctrines, but was nevertheless sacramental in nature because it involved "the spontaneous coming together, after wide opportunities for choice, of two individuals that are uniquely adapted the one to the other".<sup>86</sup>

It was surely Gwyneth Murray's sexual attractiveness that explained why events were so "inexplicably sudden" on Harry's part, for as he so aptly put it to his mother, she was not "pretty according to the popular canons", but she was an "exceedingly clever person" and most of all she has "got the goods".<sup>87</sup> Despite Harry's trepidations, amplified by his frequent dipping into the works of George Bernard Shaw, that modern women were wont to pursue men, he gratefully accepted Gwyneth's request to begin corresponding with her in the fall of 1910 and later teased her about the "original Eve theory", that she was the sexual temptress. However, it was at this very juncture in the summer of 1911 that Harry urged her to read Havelock Ellis' edition of *The Prose Writings of Heinrich Heine*. The hero of the piece who was nicknamed Harry, thus advertising Harry's identification with the German romantic poet. Heine had lived out of wedlock with a young Parisian grisette, an arrangement which Parisians viewed as an entirely "legal" marriage, though not one favoured, as Ellis observed, by those epitomes of Victorian conventionality, "parsons and bankers".<sup>88</sup> It is evident that Harry felt emboldened to use Heine's life to suggest a trial marriage, largely because Gwyneth had boldly sent him a copy of *Virginibus Puerisque*, a meditation on marriage by her favourite author, Robert Louis Stevenson. Usually associated with the cult of masculine adventure and the flight from the family,<sup>89</sup> Stevenson became an apologist for a modernist vision of marriage, arguing against several Victorian shibboleths, including the idealization of woman as the angel in the house. The fact that he dedicated this work to his lover William Henley and opened his analysis with the reflection that "[t]he friendships of men are vastly agreeable, but they are insecure", indicates that Gwyneth had been privy to Harry's mental struggles over how to make the transition from the homosocial affections of men to heterosexual love which had so animated his discussions with his intimates at Oxford. Despite Stevenson's own personal proclivities, he strongly endorsed the view that women could become "comrades" in the Whitmanian sense, based on complete emotional sincerity as the key to

marital intimacy. Although fully cognizant of the fact that marriage involved compromise and a dilution of youthful ideals, Gwyneth most emphatically wanted Harry to understand that, like Stevenson, she understood the centrality of the sex instincts to conjugal love. "For love rests upon a physical basis," wrote Stevenson, "each knows more than can be uttered; each lives by faith, and believes by a natural compulsion; and between man and wife the language of the body is largely developed and grown strangely eloquent."<sup>90</sup> Given the centrality of physical love in Stevenson's coda on marriage, it is no surprise therefore that when writing to his mother Harry enthusiastically declared: "There are more home truths in those few pages than I have read in whole books of Aristotle."<sup>91</sup> In thus revealing her interest in the physical joys of marriage with *Virginibus Puerisque*, Gwyneth indicated that she was willing to embark with Harry on a journey that included an arduous transition from homoerotic to heterosexual desire.

After this exchange of books, Harry believed that in Gwyneth Murray he had found a young woman who fully accepted the modern creed of romantic love, in which sexual fulfillment became a register of higher spiritual self-development. Where her sisters merely alluded to the "phallic thumbs" to talk about sex, Gwyneth was obviously familiar with H.G. Wells' *Ann Veronica* and *The New Machiavelli*. These novels were much discussed at Girton College where she was studying Maths Physics.<sup>92</sup> As a result, Gwyneth identified closely with Wells' female characters who actively sought out sexual experiences. Not only did she recommend that Harry read Wells' work, but as a young woman born in 1889, she would have grown up reading the New Woman novels of the late 1890s, in which women were pictured smoking, biking, attending university and experiencing the kindling of sexual love during unchaperoned encounters with young men.<sup>93</sup> The general public may have been outraged by the sexual precociousness of Wells' female heroine, but Gwyneth had clearly imbibed its message of sexual freedom and its exaltation of the modern woman. A younger contemporary of Gwyneth's at Girton, the Fabian economist Margaret Cole, later recounted, perhaps somewhat disingenuously, that she had little knowledge of men, but perhaps this was because as she confessed "her emotions were far more deeply stirred"<sup>94</sup> by female classmates. As was typical of most Girton women, Gwyneth experienced intense emotional ties with other students and like many of them, she participated in mock marriages, proposing to her friend Augusta, where they acted the parts of romantic lovers. Her exact contemporary, Eileen Power, who

became a famous historian of the English Middle Ages had, like Gwyneth attended the Oxford High School for Girls. While at Girton, she was accused by a jilted lover of having sex with other women. This was most likely not the case, however, there was, at Girton, a clear awareness of the erotic nature of these friendships between women, for when writing to her intimate, Margery Garret, Power hastened to add that they had not “made love” but had, she admitted, been particularly “masculine”, a charge commonly levelled against Girton girls. However, there was a sufficiently strong perception in the culture that same-sex friendships, instead of functioning as models for heterosexual love, might just as easily shade into homoeroticism. This explains, in part, Harry’s intense jealousy of Gwyneth’s female friends after their secret betrothal.<sup>95</sup> The idea first mooted when women’s colleges like Girton were established during the latter decades of the nineteenth century, that over-education of women subverted their femininity thus making them unfit for marriage and motherhood, persisted into the early twentieth century. In fact, in the publications of sexologists like Havelock Ellis, highly educated women were automatically identified as transgressive and commonly portrayed as participating in “artificial homosexuality”<sup>96</sup> in all-female colleges, where their masculine traits were manifested by their athleticism, smoking and over-intellectualism. Gwyneth, an avid tennis player and cyclist, who smoked and abjured fashionable female attire in favour of the stereotypical uniform of the Girton girl, consisting of white blouse, tie and simple long skirt, was often accused of being too masculine by Harry, who saw fit to frequently criticize her sartorial comportment, to the extent of admonishing her at an early stage of their acquaintance to dress in a fashion more befitting “modern civilization” than “when last I saw yer”.<sup>97</sup>

Despite such imputations against her sexual orientation, Gwyneth, by contrast with her contemporary Margaret Cole, conceived of her emotional bonds with other women as a prelude to heterosexual passion, as they intensely discussed Wells’ heroines who yearned for sexual freedom. Like the protagonist, Ann Veronica, Gwyneth was the youngest child of a middle-class family, who searched for both intellectual and personal independence from a restrictive family environment. There were other similarities. Gwyneth was conscious of her sexuality, and took to dancing with Harry at Cambridge so that she could “come to feel and think of their bodies”.<sup>98</sup> Gwyneth’s journey to sexual awakening closely paralleled that of Ann Veronica, leading her to take the initiative in sexual intercourse in order to consummate her relationship with Harry. There was, in addition,

not simply the cultural influences of literary heroines, but a strong personal imperative. As the youngest daughter, she feared that she might be relegated, after her university education was complete, to the role of permanent companion to her mother, a galling prospect to one who revelled in the “freedom of action” she had tasted at Cambridge<sup>99</sup> of choosing her own friends and relationships outside the family circle. As was typical of youth her age, she was willing to participate in kissing and petting in the JCR—the “Junior Common Room” or breakfast room at Sunnyside much frequented by the younger Murrays. As Harry described the event, he had “bewaisted you & kissed you and behug your panting bosom waiting for you to make the next move. But you didn’t and that’s why that kiss left a bad taste, you slack old gilt edge.” At another juncture, he had more positive memories of the encounter, which seems also to have involved him feeling up her “unmentionable articles of dress”, describing the sexual elation he felt as “the nearest point I have yet reached on the heavenward path”.<sup>100</sup>

More untypical of the generation who came of age around 1910, they seem to have actually engaged in penetrative sex.<sup>101</sup> They may have experienced “thrills” at Sunnyside but as Harry remarked, they only became “wicked” at Borth, Wales while swimming together, where Gwyneth “made up, or rather began to make up” for her initial reticence.<sup>102</sup> “What good fun it was at Borth”, exclaimed Harry. “Your mother, Gwynner, thinking I didn’t want you to go in bathing with me. Why that was just what I did want—I wanted to splash your dirty unwashed face!”<sup>103</sup> a comment upon the spiritual cleanliness of their sexual experimentation and a send-up of the prudery of their parents’ generation. Having given the slip to their chaperone, Gwyneth’s older sister Hilda, the couple swam out into deeper waters, where he pulled off her bathing skirt and “those awful thumbs which insist upon finding their way into forbidden ground” were deployed to stroke her breasts and clitoris.<sup>104</sup> This then led to full sexual intercourse. Harry had most obviously not imbibed the injunctions of the sexologist M.E. Robinson, who in the spring of 1911 advocated a more open attitude to the body and sexuality as a prophylactic against men flocking to the beach to watch girls and read Walt Whitman.<sup>105</sup> Harry’s and Gwyneth’s experience of their sexual consummation, however, seemed to defy the existing medical wisdom enunciated by Havelock Ellis that men were the natural initiators of sexual intercourse because women, as the more passive beings, took longer to be aroused.<sup>106</sup> The raging sea was often used as a metaphor for male sexual arousal,<sup>107</sup> but in this case such

was the fury of Gwyneth's ardour that Harry described her as a "perilous sea, full of unseen dangers". By contrast, his "ship was weak and shaky and its mariner was *unskilled*".<sup>108</sup> It appears that, because Gwyneth had brothers, she had a greater awareness of male physiology than Harry did of the female, and so it was she who successfully guided his penis to the safe harbour of her vagina. This prompted Harry to somewhat huffily accuse her of greater experience in sexual matters, thus confirming her archetypal role as temptress.<sup>109</sup>

For Harry, however, sex was the revelation of the authentic personality, for he told Gwyneth that now that she had experienced sexual intercourse she could no longer "quite succeed in concealing [her] real self".<sup>110</sup> This achievement of physical and spiritual compatibility—what Harry termed "taking communion together"<sup>111</sup>—was of such cardinal importance to his achievement of full manhood, given his recent failure as a scholar, that the loss of his virginity produced a mixture of elation and relief. He was inspired to write: "we're over it safely now Gwyneth, my darling; God is in His Heaven; all's right with you and me; let the world go hang!"<sup>112</sup> At last, so he believed, he had been rescued from the Victorian imperative of self-restraint, for thereafter, pictures of the thumbs or the flexing of the thumbs in public became a code for sex, including masturbation. (Fig. 3.2) When Harry reminisced about that day at Borth, or even read her letters, where he hoped she would, as he did, make subtle but often mutual inscrutable allusions to their sexual pleasure, he would masturbate largely free of guilt. After writing to her about their adventurers in the "perilous sea" Harry exclaimed: "The thumb! The thumb! Just discovered out of hands. Why didn't you reach and slap it."<sup>113</sup> From their perspective, the pleasure of the sexual act effectively established their betrothal and the beginning of their conjugal relationship, for years later, while visiting Borth once again, Gwyneth identified the fourteenth anniversary of their engagement on 9 August, stating that "I have borrowed a sack of coals and had it sitting on my knees as a little reminder of the past", a clear reference to the heat of sexual passion she experienced on that day. Harry, a timid swimmer, did not simply become a "real man" by overcoming the elements, as recommended by Alan Hamer in the article "The Glory of Bathing",<sup>114</sup> but he had finally achieved full manhood through penetrative sex in the ocean and oral sex in his bedroom later that evening.<sup>115</sup> It is small wonder then, that there were strict rules about mixed bathing and that there was a fear, with the creation of more body-clinging bathing costumes called skin suits in 1904, that bathing would arouse "dangerous

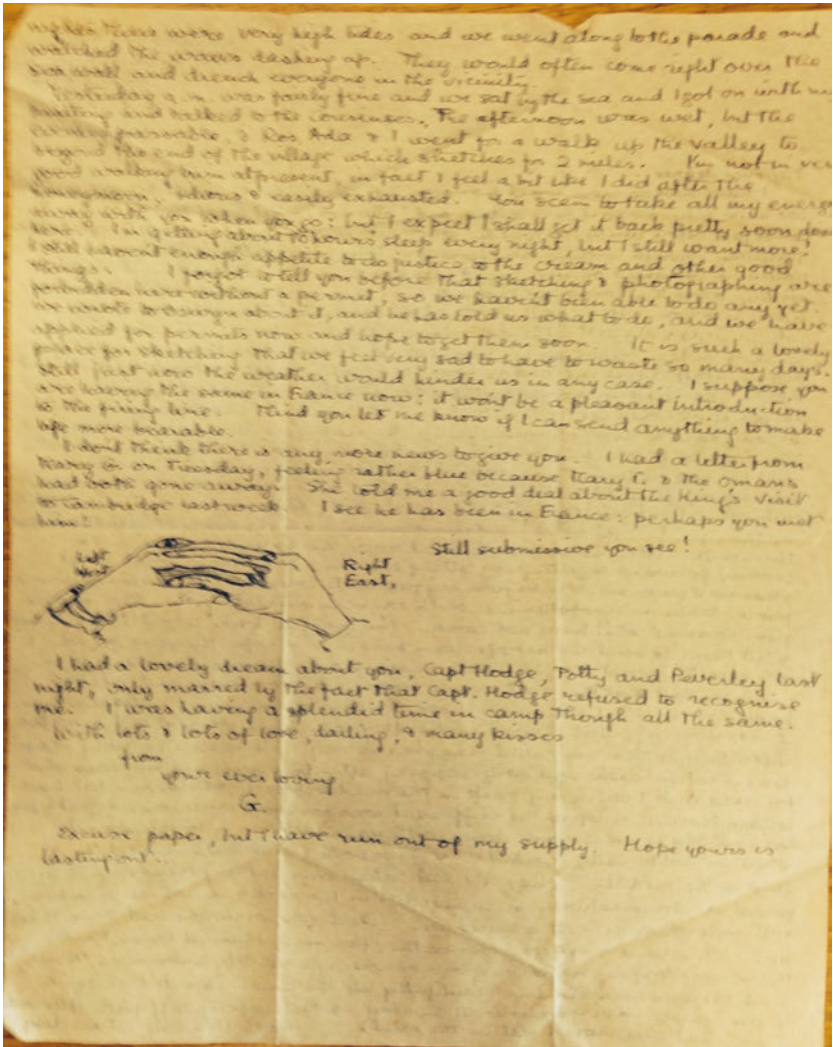


Fig. 3.2 Crossed thumbs denoting which partner was more dominant in the relationship, and also referring to sexual positions and masturbation. Library and Archives Canada, Harry Logan Fonds, 7:10, Gwyneth to Harry, 25 Aug. 1917



passions” in men.<sup>116</sup> Long portrayed in art and writing as a space for the production of self-knowledge and mental wholeness, especially by the nineteenth-century Romantics, because of how it so strongly engaged the senses and emotions, the beach evolved into a template for the expression of modern values in the art of Vanessa Bell, a contemporary of Harry and Gwyneth. Bell and the sexually radical Bloomsbury group evoked the seaside as an extension of maternal domesticity,<sup>117</sup> and Duncan Grant’s 1911 painting *Bathing* celebrated the robust masculinity of the male nude which evoked homoerotic desire, both images playing upon the more conventional use of the trope of the sea as a euphemism for the sexual act by writers from Gerard Manley Hopkins to Walt Whitman. The metaphor of the sea as an erotically charged space was transformed by the experience of Harry and Gwyneth in 1911. Unlike their fellow modernists, they gave a real-life interpretation of the frank display and sensuality of young nubile bodies which was beginning to become commonplace in the modernist literary works of D.H. Lawrence and the post-impressionist art of Paul Gauguin.<sup>118</sup>

Where Gwyneth and Harry saw their engagement in terms of their sexual and psychological self-realization, in which Gwyneth’s love was seen by Harry in terms of “driving me to study myself, to steady myself” and giving him new hopes and ambitions,<sup>119</sup> their families saw their secret engagement in more conventional terms. Her missionary brother Jowett and his wife Mary viewed their impending marriage as an extension of religious engagement, as a means to mutually dedicate themselves to a life of service,<sup>120</sup> while Sir James and Lady Murray sought to reassert the Victorian sense of marriage as part of a wider web of familial and societal obligations. Having deftly circumvented parental interference, Harry nevertheless was compelled to perform the prescribed posture of the dutiful suitor, asking for the approval of Gwyneth’s parents in October 1911.<sup>121</sup> Indeed, in stating to Lady Murray that he intended carrying Gwyneth off to Vancouver, Harry borrowed from modernist cultural scripts, most notably *Ann Veronica*. Where H.G. Wells used the phrase to lampoon Victorian sensibilities, Harry redirected it into a more orthodox channel for his future mother-in-law,<sup>122</sup> by presenting himself as a responsible patriarch who would protect and support their daughter. Once Sir James and Lady Murray learned that Harry and Gwyneth had been secretly betrothed, they asserted their parental authority by seeking to ensure that Gwyneth’s education would not be compromised, instructing them to

keep their betrothal a secret from the Girton authorities, and restricting letter-writing to once weekly.

As much as the young couple had attempted to escape the confines of Victorian strictures surrounding love and romance where marriage was seen to be a public contract, policed and regulated first and foremost by the family, Sir James Murray sought to uphold older patriarchal ideals by demanding an accounting from Harry of his future career plans and prospective income. Harry assured him that once he became a clergyman, he would earn an estimated £700 per annum “enough to keep up a house quite comfortably” through “the careful practice of household economy”.<sup>123</sup> The transition to modernity was uneven and full of paradoxes. As self-conscious moderns, Harry and Gwyneth imagined that once the engagement was made public that they could “retire into ourselves and laugh at the world”.<sup>124</sup> However, they discovered that social convention often took precedence as they were caught up in the web of parental expectations and family obligations and because these demands that they follow prescribed rituals emanated from Gwyneth and her family circle, these both constrained and divided them. Where Gwyneth and Harry had initially viewed coitus as the key rite of passage to marriage, they were increasingly compelled into obtaining public sanctions from parents and the church, symbolized by the formal announcement of their engagement in January 1912—which prompted Harry to declare “I shall feel like a self-respecting gentleman at last”<sup>125</sup>—to his purchase of a diamond ring, paid for in part by Gwyneth, in anticipation of his arrival in England in the fall of 1912, and their eventual nuptials in St. Giles Anglican Church Oxford, where, to the delight of Harry, Gwyneth was forced to promise “to obey”.

Fatefully, Harry promised the Murrays that he would marry Gwyneth in the autumn of 1914, but because he lacked the requisite financial independence that would allow him to marry according to the prescriptions of middle-class ideals, their engagement was a protracted one, which depended for its sustenance upon a lengthy but largely unfulfilling correspondence, in which the euphoria of early sexual intimacy was slowly attenuated and eroded. As much as they revelled in the fact that their “little affair has more of *romance* about it than sentiment”—here romance meant lust as it did for E.M. Forster who like them employed the phrase “unity of souls” to denote sexual intercourse<sup>126</sup>—the prospect of a two-year separation as Harry undertook theological training at McGill and the University of Edinburgh meant that they had to rely upon the imperfect

mode of communication, letters. These, according to Robert Louis Stevenson, were “in vain for the purposes of intimacy”.<sup>127</sup> As a result, Harry demanded openness and frankness and wished Gwyneth to write often so that he would be “always talking to you or of you”,<sup>128</sup> in order to “preserve the attitude of their affections” so that “they may meet on the same terms as they had parted”.<sup>129</sup> Even as Harry sailed away in late August 1911, he well understood the inadequacies of the Edwardian culture for providing a language that could adequately sustain intimacy and love, when love to him involved a “living sign that we love each other”. In the absence of his fiancée’s physical body, Harry had to either rely only on “imagination and memory”,<sup>130</sup> or upon fantasies of physical love. What Harry demanded of Gwyneth was that she rescind her admonition for discretion, as her conscience began to plague her after sealing their engagement by having sexual intercourse.<sup>131</sup> He implored her to employ the language of desire in her letters, along the lines of Walt Whitman in “I Sing the Body Electric”, a poem which elaborated the theme of the sexualized union of body and soul.

However much they believed “in the privacy of correspondence”<sup>132</sup> as a manifestation of the fact that their relationship was a private one entirely severed from the outside world, fears of prying eyes of Victorian parents who saw letters as a shared family commodity induced Gwyneth to resolutely rebuff Harry’s injunctions regarding epistolary sex-talk or “sexting”. Her abhorrence for explicitly eroticized language was not a reflection of prurience about sex, rather, as she later admitted, because she perceived the marriage proposal much as Victorians did, as the final terminus of a romantic journey, she saw little need for constant introspection about the course of love. In fact she regarded this an intrusion and as an emotional burden. More significantly, she had been the prime mover in initiating coitus, viewing the sex act in studiously utilitarian terms, not as a means to assume erotic equality with Harry, but to bind him to a lasting commitment in an era in which courtship was increasingly viewed as a period of experimentation rather than permanent attachment. In this regard, Gwyneth, for all her identification with modern womanhood, both in terms of her support for women’s suffrage and for greater sexual emancipation, was remarkably traditional. Gwyneth’s reaction may also have been a calculated response to the anxieties occasioned by the rapidly changing contours of modern courtship. In an age of increasing female independence, Edwardian young women were more assertive and had greater choices, including the ability to remain single. They were, however, less

patient with incompetent or lackadaisical suitors. Several of Harry's friends had been thrown over by women even after lengthy formal engagements: Ada Chown, related to a prominent Canadian Methodist, had refused a life of mission service in Ceylon with her intended, Murray Brooks, who had led the McGill YMCA with Harry, while his fellow Rhodesman Arthur Yates was pledged to the daughter of a substantial English farmer, who broke off with him because of his lack of career prospects in Canada.<sup>133</sup> The precariousness of modern love haunted Harry, who continually felt socially inferior to the Murrays, but for her part Gwyneth was also all too aware not only of his friend Norman Macdonnell's constant philandering, but had seen up close that a mere "understanding" such as that which her sister Ros assumed had existed with Harry, was, in the modern age, no longer a reliable promise of lasting commitment. In the Edwardian age romantic love had become an indispensable talisman of conjugal harmony as well as an unstable passport to marriage.

Gwyneth's discomfort about writing about their corporeal sexualized selves thus forced Harry into an ever-increasing reliance upon having her "reading between the lines",<sup>134</sup> where sexual desire could only be expressed through the elliptical language of religious ecstasy and psychological notions of emotion and the higher self. This was a strategy which ultimately led to mutual incomprehension and frustration. As Harry sailed across the Atlantic ocean, drawing further away from his beloved's body, he wrote in anguish: "I want you my dearest to press you to me and to hear from your lips those sweet words of love and I want you to rag me and give me a calling down for the curliness of my hair when I should be up and doing and I want to rag you and to tell you you have a wicked smile ... Oh my darling Gwyneth how this separation draws at my heart. ... I wish you would fly to my arms at this moment and shower on me a whole host of sounding smacks—not the listless kind you thought at first to satisfy my parched lips with." Sexual love was to soon become a mixed blessing: however much the actual experience of sex may have served to confirm them in their love, it would become an increasing source of denial and anguish as time and distance divided their corporeal selves. Hence Harry's reflection: "Oh you tantalizing torturer, scorpion, dragon".<sup>135</sup> Their correspondence, therefore, was to be an ongoing journey of mutual psychological and emotional self-exploration as well as the occasion for massive misinterpretation and misunderstanding in the absence of the elixir of sexual touch.

## NOTES

1. LAC, LF, 10:11, H to parents, 23 May 1909.
2. Rose, *The Edwardian Temperament*, 45, 53.
3. For the wider dissemination of these modern values, see Langhamer, "Love, Selfhood and Authenticity in Post-War Britain", 277–97.
4. Deslandes, *Oxbridge Men*, 109, 157–9; Weber, *Our Friend 'the Enemy'*, 146–59.
5. LAC, GF, 12, Grant to mother, 3 Dec. 1894. Italics ours.
6. David Cooper, "Cock and Hen Shows", *Modern Man*, 7 Jan. 1911.
7. LAC, LF, 10:8, H to mother, 21 Oct. 1906.
8. UBCA, HTFLP, 9:18, "Nurses Up!", 27 Feb. 1906.
9. LAC, LF, 10:10, H to parents, 26 Sep. 1908.
10. LAC, LF, 10:10, H to parents, 19 Sep. 1908. He defined "real girls" as those without make-up, with the implication that those who used cosmetics were of loose morals.
11. LAC, LF, 10:10, H to parents, 16 Sep. 1908.
12. LAC, LF, 10:10, H to parents, 26 Sep. 1908.
13. LAC, LF, 10:10, H to parents, 16 Sep. 1908.
14. UBCA, HTLFP, 4, "Memorandum to Undergraduates on Matriculation", Jan. 1908.
15. LAC, LF, 10:11, H to parents, 28 Feb. 1909.
16. LAC, LF, 11:2, H to parents, 22 Nov. 1910.
17. H. Neilson, "Make the Most of Yourself: For Ugly Readers Only", *Modern Man*, 5 Dec. 1908; "Rough Dancing", *Modern Man*, 4 Mar. 1911; "Why I Hate Dancing", *Modern Man*, 28 Nov. 1908; "Where Men Foregather—At the Dance", *Modern Man*, 20 Nov. 1909; F. Wyke-Fairfield, "Why a Man Should Dance", *Modern Man*, 16 Oct. 1909, who recommended it as a form of exercise which did not lead to bulky muscles, particularly appropriate for manly soldiers. For the coded language of homosexual desire, see Cocks, *Classified*, 7–8.
18. LAC, LF, 11:2, H to parents, 6 Dec. 1910; *ibid.*, 11:4, H to parents, 8 June 1911.
19. His friend Norman Macdonnell, a fellow Rhodes Scholar who often attended dances with Harry at Oxford, also danced the more sexually charged Bunny Hug in Canada which he noted was "The Nearest Thing To Hugging in Public that I Have Ever Tried", LF, 14:15, Macdonnell to H, 3 Dec. 1912. It is unclear whether this form of modern dance was common in Oxford. On the Bunny Hug in England, see Nott, "Contesting Popular Dancing and Dance Music in Britain During the 1920s", 439–56.
20. LAC, LF, 15:15, R. Gibson to H, 15 Nov. 1910.

21. LAC, LF, 11:1, H to parents, 6 May 1910.
22. LAC, LF, 1:6, 1 Nov. 1912, H to G.
23. LAC, LF, 1:5, H to G, 12 June 1912. On the use of the term “queer” to denote all erotic or affective relations between men, see Houlbrook, *Queer London*.
24. LAC, LF, 11:1, H to parents, 15 Feb. 1910.
25. LAC, LF, 11:2, H to parents, 3 July 1910.
26. UBCA, HTLFP, 5, “Mansfield College Smoking Concert”, 17 Feb. 1909. Mansfield College was presided over by Principal A.M. Fairbairn, a leading luminary of Nonconformist theology. On theology at Oxford more generally, see Inman, *The Making of Modern English Theology*, 188–201.
27. J.T. Fullerton, “The Secrets of Smoking”, *Modern Man*, 21 Nov. 1908.
28. LAC, LF, 11:12, H to mother, 28 Aug. 1917. Clearly his mother did not understand the earlier sexual allusion.
29. UBCS, HTLFP, 4, “Variety Entertainment, held in the Senior Common Room, St. John’s College”, 5 Nov. 1909. W.L. Grant, Harry’s colleague, had this picture hung over his mantelpiece at Balliol College. See LAC, GF, 12, Grant to mother, 29 Oct. 1894.
30. “Third Annual and Graduating Dinner—Arts 08”, *McGill Outlook*, 30 Apr. 1908. His close friend and fellow Rhodes Scholar, Arthur Yates, manifested a far more positive view of relations between men and women when he declared: “The soul lives where it loves”.
31. Leacock, “The Woman Question”, 52–60. For the way in which these assumptions informed the welfare state, see Christie, *Engendering the State*. For the extreme male denigration of the new woman more generally, see Showalter, *Sexual Anarchy*.
32. LAC, LF, 10:10, H to mother, 20 Dec. 1908; UBCA, HTLFP, 4, “Oxford Union Society”, 20 Nov. 1908.
33. “Unlovely Women—Types that a Man Detests”, *Modern Man*, 15 May 1909. On the social purity movement more generally, see Bland, *Banishing the Beast*; Levine, “So Few Prizes, and So Many Blanks”, 150–74.
34. “Unlovely Women”, *Modern Man*, 15 May 1909.
35. LAC, LF, 14:5, Norman Macdonnell to H, 26 Aug. 1910.
36. LAC, LF, 11:1, H to parents, 16 Apr. 1910. As an admirer of Sir William Osler, the famous Montreal physician and McGill professor, Harry had aspirations to become a doctor. Interestingly, Osler was the family physician of the Murrays, his in-laws.
37. LAC, LF, 10:11, H to parents, 21 Feb. 1909.
38. LAC, LF, 10:12, H to parents, 5 June 1909.
39. LAC, LF, 10:11, H to parents, 7 Feb. 1909.

40. LAC, LF, 10:11, H to parents, 7 Feb. 1909; *ibid.*, 11:3, H to mother, 13 May 1911; *ibid.*, 11:4, H to parents, 24 June 1911.
41. LAC, LF, 10:11, H to parents, 28 Feb. 1909; *ibid.*, 11:1, H to parents, 1 Apr. 1910.
42. LAC, LF, 10:11, H to parents, 21 Feb. 1909; *ibid.*, 10:12, H to parents, 5 June 1909; Gilliver, *The Making of the Oxford English Dictionary*. Rosfrith, who remained unmarried, continued to work on the Dictionary until 1929, marking a fifty-year family involvement with the project. All the Murray children at some stage in their life earned pocket money by working for their father.
43. LAC, LF, 11:1, H to parents, 25 June 1910.
44. LAC, LF, 18:6, Rosfrith to Mrs. Logan, 6 Dec. 1910. For *Peter Pan* in Edwardian culture, see Rose, *The Edwardian Temperament*, 178–89.
45. LAC, LF, 11:1, H to parents, 6 May 1910, 15 May 1910; *ibid.*, 11:2, Harry to parents, 16 Oct. 1910. The Bloomsbury circle certainly used first names to denote their rejection of Victorian mores. See Stansky, *On or About December 1910*, 14.
46. UBCA, HTLFP, Box 1, H to parents, 14 June 1910.
47. LAC, LF, 11:2, H to parents, 3 July 1910.
48. LAC, LF, 14:7, H to Willie, 5 Jan. 1910, 29 May 1910; *ibid.*, 10:11, H to parents, 28 Feb. 1909.
49. LAC, LF, 11:1, H to parents, 25 June 1910.
50. LAC, LF, 11:2, H to parents, 7 Aug. 1910, 17 Aug. 1910, 13 Nov. 1910.
51. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 6 July 1911.
52. LAC, LF, 11:2, H to mother, 11 Nov. 1910.
53. LAC, LF, 11:3, H to parents, 19 Feb. 1911. In relating this event in his letter home Harry suggested that the thumb related to the way his thumbs stuck up when his fist was closed.
54. LAC, LF, 14:21, John to H, 16 Sep. 1911.
55. LAC, LF, 14:20, Ada Murray to H, 10 Oct. 1911.
56. LAC, LF, 14:18, Elsie to Harrykin, 18 Aug. 1911; *ibid.*, Rosfrith to H, 18 Aug. 1911.
57. LAC, LF, 14:7, H to Willie, 10 Oct. 1910.
58. LAC, LF, 11:3, H to parents, 1 Jan. 1911. Hilda went on to be a director of modern languages and eventually vice-mistress of Girton College.
59. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 6 July 1911.
60. LAC, LF, 14:21, John to dearest, Tuesday n.d. 1911.
61. “Young Love”, *Modern Man*, 3 July 1909.
62. “Marriage Yes—Or No”, *Modern Man*, 28 Jan. 1911.
63. LAC, LF, 14:21, John to dearest, Tuesday, n.d. 1911.
64. E.M. Forster, *Howards End*, 150.

65. LAC, LF, 14:21, John to Beloved, n.d. 1911, John to H, 5–6 Aug. 1911. For the conceptual overlap between emotions and sex, see Raitt, “Sex, Love and the Homosexual Body in Early Sexology”, 150–64. For the indirect influence of Freud, see Thomson, “The ‘Consciousness of Modernity’ in Early Twentieth-Century Britain”, 97–118, 97; Caine, “The Stracheys and Psychoanalysis”, 144–69. For the term “psychology” as a surrogate for sexual congress, see Beauman, *E.M. Forster: A Biography*, 124.
66. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to Gwyneth, 12 July 1911.
67. Janes, *Visions of Queer Martyrdom*, 5, 8–9.
68. Stansky, *On or About December 1910*, 132.
69. LAC, LF, 14:21, John to H, 28 Oct. 1911, who wrote “except in this one matter of definite experience of a Person, I do claim to be as fully a Christian as you”.
70. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 9 Sep. 1911.
71. LAC, LF, 19:7, “The Will—Is it Ultimately Stimulus to Action?”, n.d. 1910–11.
72. LAC, LF, 19:8, untitled talk St. Mary’s church, 19 Dec. 1910.
73. Thomson, *Psychological Subjects*, 3–4, 43–4. Harry’s quest upholds Thomson’s larger point that psychology drew its strength from the fact that it was most often integrated into existing religious discourses.
74. LAC, LF, 11:4, H to father, 28 July 1911.
75. On this point, see Bland, *Banishing the Beast*, 275.
76. LAC, LF, 11:3, H to father, 16 Apr. 1911. For a similar refutation of Victorian prudery in which sex and sin were equated, see C. Wolff, “Male Emotions—Desire”, *Modern Man*, 16 Oct. 1909.
77. LAC, LF, 14:5, Norman to H, 2 May 1911, 12 Aug. 1911. Macdonnell was being somewhat disingenuous by self-identifying as “old-fashioned” as he recounted his pursuit of various women, including his “billiard-damsel”, for whom he lusted, and another “beautifully tanned, in white dress & slippers”, who danced with him at a Indian performance staged by the famous Canadian naturalist and anarchist, Ernest Thompson Seton. Interestingly, like Harry, Norman also dressed up in women’s clothes in order to perform Romeo and Juliet. For Seton, see Wadland, *Ernest Thompson Seton*.
78. John Lane, “Review”, *The Isis* (11 Mar. 1911), 269–70.
79. “Review”, *The Isis* (13 Nov. 1909), 96.
80. LAC, GF, 5, Grant to James Macdonnell, n.d. 1912; *ibid.*, Macdonnell to Grant, 28 Feb. 1912; *ibid.*, 23, W.L. Grant, “The Philosophy of Mr. Wells”, *The University Magazine*, Feb. 1912, 104–19.
81. Elsie Clews Parsons, “Marriage and Parenthood—A Distinction”, *International Journal of Ethics*, 25:4 (July 1915), 524–17, 515; Parsons, “When Marriage and Parenthood are Theoretically Distinguished”,



- International Journal of Ethics*, 26:2 (Jan. 1916), 207–16, 2–5–16. She recommended trial marriages in her book *The Family*.
82. J. Arthur Thomson, “Review of *Studies in the Psychology of Sex, Volume VI*”, *International Journal of Ethics*, 21:3 (Apr. 1911), 367–70, 368–9.
  83. LAC, LF, 14:21, John to H, Sunday n.d. 1911. John also recommended a prostitute, *ibid.*, John to “my dearest Henrietta”, Tuesday n.d. 1911; *ibid.*, 14:7, H to Willie, 20 Oct. 1910. For Brooke, see Rutherford, *Forever England*, 46, who also saw sex as a means to rescue him from mental breakdown.
  84. Morgan, Sex and *Common-Sense*, 153–78.
  85. For an analysis of similar views of the centrality of the body and sexual pleasure and the use of the term “sex-love” by a socialist, see Brooke, “The Body and Socialism: Dora Russell in the 1920s”, 147–77, 163.
  86. Maude Royden, “Modern Love”, 15, 23, 25, 38, 41, 45. Gwyneth had heard these lectures when first delivered in 1916.
  87. LAC, LF, 11:4, H to mother, 30 June 1911, 20 July 1911.
  88. Ellis, ed., *The Prose Writings of Heinrich Heine*, 1.
  89. Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities*, 40.
  90. Stevenson, *Virginibus Puerisque*, 17, 22–3, 39, 42, 44, 46–7. On using novels to convey the language of love, see, for example, Houlbrook, “‘A Pin to See the Peep Show’”, 251–49.
  91. LAC, LF, 11:4, H to mother, 20 July 1911. For her part, his mother thought Stevenson had a rather negative view of men. See *ibid.*, 13:5, mother to Harry, 10 Nov. 1911.
  92. Russell, *The Tamarisk Tree*, 40–1.
  93. Bland, *Banishing the Beast*, 144, 164–5, 178. Many of the heroines of these novels were Girton girls.
  94. Cole, *Growing Up into Revolution*, 43–5.
  95. LAC, LF, 7.1, G to H, 13 Nov. 1912. On Eileen Powers, see Berg, *A Woman in History*, 65.
  96. On the charge of lesbianism at Girton, see Waters, “‘A Girton Girl on a Throne’”, 41–60.
  97. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 25 Jan. 1911.
  98. Wells, *Ann Veronica*, introduction by Margaret Drabble, 136, xv, xxv. As Drabble observed, it was not simply the content of the book which so appalled and shocked contemporaries, rather it was the story’s close affinity with the real-life love affair between Wells and Amber Pember Reeves, whom he seduced in her rooms at Newnham College, Cambridge.
  99. LAC, LF, 9:5, G to H, 26 May 1918.
  100. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 22 Aug. 1911, 9 Sep. 1911.
  101. White, *The First Sexual Revolution*, 149; Gillis, *For Better, For Worse*, 27; Rothman, “Sex and Sex-Control”, 409–25.

102. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 22 Aug. 1911, 9 Sep. 1911.
103. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, Sunday n.d. 1911.
104. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 17 Aug. 1911, 11 Sep. 1911.
105. M.E. Robinson, "The Sex Problem", *International Journal of Ethics*, 21:3 (Apr. 1911), 326–39, 331.
106. Hall, *Hidden Anxieties*, 73.
107. For the use of this metaphor by Maude Royden, see Morgan, "Sex and *Common-Sense*", 166.
108. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 6 Sep. 1911.
109. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, n.d. Aug. 1911.
110. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, n.d. Aug. 1911.
111. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, Monday evening, n.d. Aug. 1911 on board the S.S. *Mauritania*.
112. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 6 Sep. 1911.
113. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 6 Sep. 1911.
114. Alan Hamer, "The Glory of Bathing", *Modern Man*, 10 Apr. 1909.
115. LAC, LF, 1:2, Harry to Gwyneth, 17 Aug. 1911.
116. Horwood, "Girls Who Arouse Dangerous Passions", 653–73; Borsay, "A Room with a View", 175–201. The seaside was often a site for pornographic prints. See Hall, "The Victorians", 161–76.
117. Tickner, "Vanessa Bell: Studland Beach, Domesticity and 'Significant Form'", 63–92; Dellamora, *Masculine Desire*, 90.
118. On the use of swimming in modern novels to showcase the intimacy of sexualized bodies, see Kern, *The Culture of Love*, 75–9.
119. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, n.d. Aug. 1911.
120. LAC, LF, 16:3, Mary Robertson to H, 5 Jan. 1912, Jowett to H, 22 Jan. 1912.
121. LAC, LF, 14:8, H to Lady Murray, n.d. Oct. 1911.
122. LAC, LF, 14:8, H to Lady Murray, n.d. Oct. 1911, in which he stated he wished to "one day carry Gwyneth off altogether", whereas Wells had Manning state during his proposal to Ann Veronica that he hoped "to take you up, to make you mine, to carry you off". For Wells' send-up of Victorian styles of proposing, see Kern, *The Culture of Love*, 297.
123. LAC, LF, 14:20, Ada Murray to H, 10 Oct. 1911, 26 Nov. 1911; *ibid.*, 14:11, H to Sir James, 20 May 1912.
124. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 6 Sep. 1911.
125. LAC, LF, 1:3, H to G, 21 Jan. 1912, 21 Apr. 1912. He quickly purchased the ring after they had had a tiff about one of her letters being lost on the *Titanic*.
126. Stansky, *On or About December 1910*, 132.
127. Stevenson, *Viriginibus Puerisque*, 42.
128. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 17 Sep. 1911.

129. Stevenson, *Viriginibus Puerisque*, 42.
130. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 17 Sep. 1911.
131. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, n.d. Aug. 1911.
132. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 26 July 1911.
133. LAC, LF, 1:5, H to G, 12 June 1912; *ibid.*, 11:2, H to parents, 6 Nov. 1910. For the growing instability of courtship throughout this period, see Frost, *Promises Broken*; Lettmaier, *Broken Engagements*. For an excellent analysis of the gendered polarities of marital expectations, see Hammerton, *Cruelty and Companionship*.
134. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 9 Sep. 1911.
135. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 17 Sep. 1911.



## CHAPTER 4

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# The Carnal Brother Body: Emotion, Interiority and the Epistolary “Talking Cure”

*“It was not that they did not love us; ... But what they meant by ‘love’  
and what we meant by ‘love’ were so different.”*  
Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Herland (1906)

Robert Louis Stevenson called the language of love the “language of the body”. But this kind of love was to prove an impossibility for Gwyneth and Harry who were to remain apart for five long years before they could enjoy the constant joys of sexual communion. Finding a language of love fully capturing that perfect conjunction between body, soul and mind that animated modern concepts of romantic ecstasy was, however, a difficulty compounded by the reality that the “material bonds”<sup>1</sup> of their affection were becoming increasingly loosened as the months of separation accumulated. If, as Lesley Hall has remarked, inventing a new language of love that was not pornographic in tone was an obstacle for Edwardian couples in general, this was particularly so in the case of Harry and Gwyneth. During the first flush of passionate love, Harry optimistically announced that “a new day is dawning in our lives” which had given him a “new language, a new vocabulary, new thoughts”.<sup>2</sup> As this chapter will argue,

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For the twin concepts of the carnal brother and the brother body, see LAC, LF, 1.6 H to G, 29 Oct. 1912; *ibid.*, 7.1 G to H, 29 Oct. 1912.

evolving a new language of love progressively led to misunderstandings between the couple when their correspondence revealed that they understood love in very different ways. As Gwyneth noted in the midst of their fraught long-distance relationship, “We can’t get over the fact that our speaking selves are not so much at home with each other as our writing selves.” Harry, in turn, remarked that he tended to “conceal my real self in written expression”.<sup>3</sup> The very opacity of the written word tended, from the outset of their long-distance relationship in September 1911, to play havoc with their desire to “talk” in their letters in order to develop their relationship. For most couples coming of age at the turn of the twentieth century, the default position, as Stephen Kern has observed, was to employ the language of the Victorians, in which powerful feelings were veiled with euphemism and cliché. The resulting refusal to talk about sex meant that it did indeed remain a mysterious and unexplained force. Among Victorians, reticence frequently wholly crippled relationships, but even among self-styled high modernists, like Virginia Woolf, the intensity of corporeal love often so transcended language that even in a culture of increasing interpersonal frankness and striving for authenticity her novels were marked by marriages of mutual incomprehension and silence, due to an inability to express passionate feeling.<sup>4</sup>

A couple like Harry and Gwyneth were influenced by a wide range of psychological ideas that stipulated that one should constantly talk about one’s feelings and desires. The new psychology maintained that even if this introspective process entailed a struggle, it would ultimately be resolved in a coherent spiritualized personality. However, they discovered to their peril that this might only produce anguish and despair when the bodily expression of sexual desire was absent or denied. Ultimately, their increasingly obsessive ruminations about the meaning of love resulted in a further fragmentation of the self, for as Gwyneth observed as the crisis in their relationship moved to a critical stage in the autumn of 1912: “I feel kind of lost as if part of myself had been taken away, and I haven’t been able to put my life together again quite yet.”<sup>5</sup> The new language of psychology, then, conferred ambivalent dividends, and in their correspondence it was consistently joined to an older language of religious emotion and ecstasy. But even here, gendered misunderstandings arose. In struggling to surpass the limitations of Victorian platitudes concerning love, the couple fell into an overreliance upon religious metaphors to express sexual desire, despite a disavowal of the older equation between sin and sex. Because of the firm equation they drew between religious and sexual

feelings, the crisis in their personal relationship ultimately provoked a crisis of religious vocation for Harry. Certainly, by Christmas of 1912, they knew all too well that the word love meant quite different things to men and women.<sup>6</sup>

In Harry's conception of romance, divine and human love stood in close proximity. When speaking of love, the kind of "deep down soul love that grips and holds through thick & thin", he characterized the "union of soul with soul" as "divine and heavenly". However, soul love was defined as both intellectual and "physical", and a stimulus for creating a higher and more perfect self, in both man and woman.<sup>7</sup> In this manner, his conception of marital love closely paralleled that enunciated by Bertrand Russell who described love as "prefiguring of heaven", and looked back to an older platonic interpretation of love as the first step to spiritual enlightenment.<sup>8</sup> Harry's encomium to love was written, however, prior to having full sexual intercourse with Gwyneth, which he eulogized as "the heaven of my dreams", in which the ecstasy produced by sensual acts was likened to a personal communion with God.<sup>9</sup> Where Victorians linked the genitals with the moral opprobrium of dirt, Harry frequently alluded to their having had sex while bathing in the ocean, to elucidate his belief that heterosexual acts were clean and a sign of moral virtue.<sup>10</sup> In a culture where even sexologists like Richard von Krafft-Ebing continued to evoke the moral strictures of self-restraint by arguing that, especially among men, sexual desire had to be channelled into higher ideals of marital love,<sup>11</sup> it is particularly striking that Harry postulated that the need to constrain his subconscious sexual instincts "deep down beneath the surface" produced such "agonies of soul" that they were actually antagonistic to Godly "purity & holiness". Coitus, by contrast, he considered among "the good things we have from God's hand", and proceeded to use the metaphor of prayer, namely his private reading of the 103rd Psalm, to denote masturbation while rehearsing in his mind their dalliance in the ocean as well as that "jolly night at Borth" in their "peekaboo bedders".<sup>12</sup> On another occasion, he resorted to the older metaphor for the penis—the pipe. "My pipe has come out since I got home", related Harry. "I could not resist it when I saw father and Willie sitting back in the evening after dinner lighting up. All my lower instincts were suddenly aroused."<sup>13</sup> He may have been still a student whereas his father and brother were established professional men, but Harry's more potent sexuality placed him, in his own estimation, on a higher pinnacle of manhood. From his perspective, therefore, self-pleasuring was deemed a positive spiritual and physical good,

because it envisioned a relationship with another now that it occupied the status of a well-spring of memory of coitus. The “extraordinary experience of that Tuesday night”, when they arranged a subsequent coupling, was likewise seen by him as a kind of spiritual new birth, evoked by signing himself “Harricus resurrectus”, whereby the literal physical union of their bodies produced a “*consistent* whole” in which her personality reinforced his character, by which they were brought to a new realization of their duty to God.<sup>14</sup> In this regard, Harry’s estimation of sex echoed that of H.G. Wells, one of his favourite authors, who, in a similar vein as George Bernard Shaw in *Man and Superman*, envisioned love and sexual desire as creative forces that would spur the progress of both individual and society.<sup>15</sup>

The modernist revolt against the hypocrisy of Victorian social and sexual mores, most famously epitomized by Lytton Strachey’s *Eminent Victorians* written and published between 1910 and 1918, established a narrative in which increasing sexual freedom was measured by the decline of religious faith. Historians have generally subscribed to the thesis that increasing sexual freedom, especially for women, was a causal antecedent to religious decline, a process particularly observable, as Callum Brown has argued, during the sexual revolution of the 1960s which caused the demographic decline of British Christianity.<sup>16</sup> This tendency to posit an oppositional juxtaposition between sex and religion, in which religion functioned as a barrier to modern values,<sup>17</sup> meant that historians interested in exploring the acquisition of sexual knowledge have looked to the diffusion of medico-psychoanalytic discourses.<sup>18</sup> More recently, a new group of revisionist historians,<sup>19</sup> have collectively reexamined the intersection between sexuality, modernity and religious discourses, providing a necessary corrective to the standard interpretation of institutional religion and moral imperatives within the broader culture, as merely constituting a set of prohibitions against personal choice in terms of love, sex and marriage. There were, as Sue Morgan has demonstrated, more sex manuals made widely accessible to the public written by churchmen in the late Victorian era than by medical writers, treatises which highlighted the sacramental aspects of sex.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, sexual desire has rarely been absent from Western religion, and emerging notions of sexual repression were often more manifest in scientific works than in religious thought itself.<sup>21</sup> Even within the largely conservative social purity movement, references to sexuality abounded, thus contributing to what Sue Morgan has termed a “theology of embodiment”.<sup>22</sup> This emerged alongside and gained greater influence

over discussions of the body, sex and gender than did the medical and scientific literature, which generally remained the preserve of medical professionals.

We know that Harry, who had once aspired to become a doctor, was a devotee of *The British Medical Journal*, available in the Oxford Union reading room, because at the outset of their burgeoning relationship he teasingly sent Gwyneth an advertisement for the “Complete Cure of Corpulence by a Harmless and Pleasant Treatment”, clipped from this publication. This medical advertisement no doubt assisted him in his reveries about her “beauty of face and figure”,<sup>23</sup> but even medical writers like J. Arthur Thomson, the co-author along with Patrick Geddes of *The Evolution of Sex* (1890), recognized that, while young men might read his book as a form of pornography, they more often than not turned to novels, plays and the Scriptures, as did “eroto-maniacs”<sup>24</sup> like Harry who saw sexual passion as the key to his sense of manhood. Indeed, the young W.L. Grant, his colleague at Oxford, regularly used religious texts to think about sexual love. Not only did he read the evangelist Henry Drummond’s *The Greatest Thing in the World*, but he even committed to memory the entire Song of Solomon, with its open eroticism and description of the female body,<sup>25</sup> which later served as a handy *aide mémoire* during his monastic existence at Oxford. Even among sexologists and other modern writers, spiritual ecstasy was rarely severed from the quest for physical pleasure. Havelock Ellis, for example, most emphatically attested to the ambient “haze of religiosity” which surrounded Edwardian ideas of sexuality, stating: “I cannot feel anything at all about physical sexual feeling except as a ‘sacrament’—the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace.”<sup>26</sup> It is unknown whether Ellis sought to highlight the spiritual component of sexuality in order to make his work more palatable to a respectable middle-class audience after his earlier work had been suppressed; however, by so doing he helped to bridge the old morality of the Victorians and the new morality of sexual pleasure promoted by self-consciously modern Edwardians. Even high modernists, like James Joyce, who resolutely broke with decorum by establishing an explicit sexual language, were not immune to notions of sacralized sex. This near contemporary, though somewhat less reticent in his language than Harry and Gwyneth, testified to a similar conjunction of the body and soul, when writing to Nora Barnack in 1909: “Side by side and inside this spiritual love I have for you, there is also a wild beast-like craving for every inch of your body, for every secret and shameful part of it, for every odour and act



of it.”<sup>27</sup> Unlike Joyce and D.H. Lawrence who continued to separate divine and human love, viewing sex as merely semi-spiritual in nature,<sup>28</sup> and thus remaining mired in older conventions of the dichotomy between higher and lower selves, Harry had banished the beast by fully embracing the spiritual purity of sexual love.

For her part, Gwyneth, a supporter of the National Union of Women’s Suffrage Societies, was exposed to a wide range of perspectives on the “sex question”, including the work of Maude Royden, who, like Wells and Shaw, saw “sex-love” as a primary source of personal self-development, and, from the feminist perspective, it permitted middle-class women a means to achieve a fully developed sense of womanhood, one which was not merely dependent upon their role as mothers. As she wrote, “this association of man and woman united by the closest bonds has great power to increase the value of life”, by which she meant spiritual perfection.<sup>29</sup> Although she confessed to being an adherent of spiritualism like her aunt, Gwyneth rejected the idea of “kindred souls” in the afterlife. She did, however, embrace the religious universalism of *The Hibbert Journal*, an organ devoted to the diffusion of psycho-religious ideas. It was largely dedicated to discussing the work of Henri Bergson, whose concept of vitalism accentuated the power of the unconscious, and by focussing on the instincts further enhanced the idea of the conjunction between one’s corporeal and spiritual selves.<sup>30</sup> Margaret Sanger, the American radical progressive and advocate of birth control, showed that she identified with this particular strand of vitalist thought when she wrote that to be “strongly sexed means that the life force can suffuse and radiate through the body and soul”.<sup>31</sup> Bergson’s vitalism, which equated sexual exploration and personal self-realization was discussed at Girton College, where his belief in the balance between intuition and the intellect most likely found a sympathetic audience. Another source of the idealization of the sexual emotions for women at Cambridge were the numerous talks given by Jane Ellen Harrison, the celebrated classicist and fellow of Newnham College. Harrison, who was influenced by the work of Bergson, Freud and Durkheim, exalted the impulses and emotions, and was thus drawn to the more ecstatic forms of religion of the Archaic period in ancient Greece, seeing in such heightened states of feeling sources of an integrated personality.<sup>32</sup> The eclecticism of Harry’s and Gwyneth’s reading choices along with their proclivity of using books to think about and articulate their emotions was typical of the Edwardian era.<sup>33</sup> They directly borrowed from disparate strands of religion, psychology, ethical philosophy, and literature,

both in its high-brow and middle-brow incarnations. As two youths seeking to embrace new attitudes regarding the self, relationships and the body, political identification played a minor role, thus allowing this rather conventional couple to dip freely into the work of Edward Carpenter, Havelock Ellis, Robert Louis Stevenson, Walt Whitman, H.G. Wells, George Bernard Shaw, Max Beerbohm, J.M. Barrie and Sigmund Freud, and read a wide range of publications including *The Hibbert Journal*, *The Freewoman*, *The New Age* and *The Eugenics Review*, from which they drew truths which served their larger purpose of self-discovery through love.

In H.G. Wells' novel *Marriage*, a volume read by Gwyneth and Harry, the male protagonist Trafford, who was remarkably like Harry in that he was devoted to his mother and suffered from moodiness, remarked that once passionate love had diminished, erotic desire remained just "a rich treasure-house of memories".<sup>34</sup> This increasingly became the case for Harry between 1911 and 1912, as he slaved at the intricacies of theological study, first at Presbyterian College Montreal, and then at the University of Edinburgh. As the months wore on he found himself increasingly unable to accurately bring to mind the sensation of sexual ecstasy, what he called that "aesthetic-religion feeling", which had so compellingly defined the early months of their relationship in England.<sup>35</sup> Once he was confronted by the reality that sexual frisson could subside even among devoted couples, Harry's mental state began to oscillate wildly between periods of elation and dark times of doubt and despondency. In the winter of 1912, he chastised Gwyneth for merely writing chirpy letters containing "Girton news", admonishing her: "I want you in your letters Gwyneth—I want love, love, LOVE. I am absolutely dried up and withering and shriveling for want of love."<sup>36</sup> At other times he petulantly blamed her for his depression, which he attributed to the fact that "this brother body [his sexual self] isn't just now as flourishing as I would like him".<sup>37</sup> Tortured for so many months with having to practise self-restraint, he declared: "I have had so bad a day to-day that I feel some remedy must be attempted, even though it bear the outward works of mechanism." Where previously, just after he had sexual congress with Gwyneth to seal their secret engagement, he had viewed masturbation in positive terms, as a furthering of the spirit, but now that his memory of that day had faded, he caustically declared: "Mechanism kills love" and is "inconsistent with love". As a result, he proposed that they reserve a set hour of each day for "sacred intercourse", where they each "prayed" and thought of each other, presumably while mutually masturbating.<sup>38</sup> In his more optimistic moments, he felt able to

tell her more explicitly about his sexual feelings. Borrowing Edward Carpenter's phrase "the welding process", he went on to inform Gwyneth "I love you; passionately, I love you", but as had become a common refrain, he followed this with his doubts about loving. "Is it a real love?" he plaintively asked. "Am I really in love?"<sup>39</sup> However, as he continued to reflect and felt more confident that Gwyneth could satisfy him sexually, because she had in one of her letters referred, albeit obliquely to sex, he wrote elatedly about how "the glorious day of our union" was dawning. He was now all too willing to satisfy her own wishes for loving letters, ending this missive: "My sweetest, my dearest, you could devour me? Nay, I should have you consumed before ever your greedy palate should have tasted of me! Oh, my G, how wonderful it all is. But hush I must be *discreet*." This latter comment a not so veiled jibe at her wish for the euphemistic and metaphorical Victorian language of love contained in the poetry of Elizabeth Barrett Browning in her *Sonnets from the Portuguese*.<sup>40</sup>

As he began his studies in Edinburgh in the autumn of 1912, Harry was more willing to write as "a lover", and between self-flagellation in which he regularly castigated himself for being a "miserable creature" and "a poor specimen of humanity" for his lack of sympathy for her perspective, he nevertheless thought that this combination of self-criticism and the articulation of explicit desire would prompt Gwyneth to reveal her sexual emotions. In one letter he waxed eloquent, telling her "I love you with my whole heart." "I have loved you for a long, long time with all the love of my being: only just now, as you know I have been seized with apprehension about the real nature of love itself", because he was striving so hard "to keep fast hold of my ideal of true heart love".<sup>41</sup> By this he meant a strong romantic attachment driven at its core by bodily erotic desire. All of this intense episode of mental anguish was prompted by his frustration that, after a tedious year of work in Montreal, waiting impatiently for the moment of their next encounter, when he would receive a physical token of Gwyneth's love, the hopes he invested in their meeting at Sunnyside were dashed by the presence of a cacophony of visiting relatives, which baulked him in his pursuit of what Wells' protagonist Trafford euphemistically called "the secrecies of individuality".<sup>42</sup> Gwyneth was demonstrably less sexually frisky than she had been as the young ingénue during the previous summer. Harry upbraided her for failing to act like "a woman at her best", because she had apparently failed to measure up to what he presumed was a promise on her part made before they parted in 1911 that she would express her love to him "unreservedly", by which he meant that she

should have filled her letters with constant allusions to sexual desire.<sup>43</sup> It was through the constant deployment of sex-talk, however oblique, that Harry believed that Gwyneth—his “angel”—would “be the means under God of making a man out of this poor miserable skeleton of a soul of mine”.<sup>44</sup> Her refusal to write about sex-love in her letters, preferring to prattle on about her stimulating life at Cambridge folded within a sympathetic circle of female friends, drew him to the conclusion that she had broken faith with him. Indeed, he began to suspect that she had calculatingly had sex with him for the sole purpose of eliciting a proposal of marriage. Certainly, by contrast with Harry, who as many moderns did, envisioned courtship and marriage as an ongoing process of discovery of “my inner self”, Gwyneth did indeed envision the relationship in more finite terms, more in line with Victorian notions of marriage as an endpoint.

As was typical, Harry used his reflections about religion and the institutional church to signify his concerns about their personal relationship, fearing that Gwyneth viewed it as merely a system of conventions. Lampooning her attitudes he expostulated in anger “Get a Church and a wife and all is said” in the winter of 1912, a month after Gwyneth’s refusal to write about sex with the “virility and directness and real-ness” of Whitman’s hymn to the body in “I sing the Body Electric”.<sup>45</sup> In fact, he was so disgusted with the superficial and emotionally disengaged tone of her letters during this period, that he threw them out, an unusual but pointed gesture for this obsessive packrat. As her ability to share in his desire for sex-talk diminished, so too did his commitment to preaching the life of the spirit in organized religion as a professional vocation. In an obvious slap at Gwyneth, he criticized the suffrage movement in Canada, railed about the lack of “cheering companionship”, the coldness of the church, and its lack of sincerity, to articulate his disappointment in their personal relationship. He thus indirectly blamed her for his growing disquietude over the sterility of church doctrines which merely focused upon the “newspaper talk” of evolution and scientific philosophy, at the expense of a saving gospel, which could provide men, as well as men and women together, with a spiritual knowledge which would offer a compass for the journey of love. His condemnation of a church given merely to “misshapen gospel words, words, words, till one is sick with it”<sup>46</sup> mirrored his increasing sense of dissatisfaction over being compelled into depending upon the oblique, vague and transcendental language of religious feeling to convey his erotically charged desire for Gwyneth.

Thus in the months leading up to their abrupt break-up, he accused Gwyneth of not being “spiritual” enough, a coded message that she was not spontaneous enough or sexual enough for him. He reached this conclusion after reading the biography of Mark Rutherford, who broke with his fiancée after he had struggled with his faith, only to emerge into “the free air of pure spiritual Christianity”.<sup>47</sup> His outburst was a response to an earlier letter from Gwyneth who, in her inimitable fashion, confidently asserted her own views. As much as she agreed with Harry that “I want our souls to have perfect union and perfect communion” and that she desired them “to possess one body and soul”, she disagreed as to the place sex should occupy in their conjugal relationship. She firmly declared that in no uncertain terms: “I *refuse to be overcome with things carnal*.”<sup>48</sup> This was her final protest after almost a full year of being chivvied by Harry into writing sex-talk in her correspondence which began with his request that she write in the style of Walt Whitman. As a woman she eschewed the “virile directness” of explicit references to bodily desires and body parts, and because of her resistance, combined with the complicating factor of a long-distance courtship, despite the modernity of their attitudes to sexual pleasure, they were trapped in a Victorian vortex, condemned to a reliance upon “reading between the lines” to attain that “complete union of heart and soul”<sup>49</sup> rather than the sensual experience of bodily contact.

Rankled by her supposed indifference to his outpourings of love, he summarily informed her that if their love was not true and real then he would never be able to preach.<sup>50</sup> That Harry could draw so direct a connection between conjugal love, divine love and the broader sense of Christian service in the world was directly related to his central conviction that the private realm of sexuality, accompanied by a regime of intense self-examination of emotions and instincts, was the well-spring of the Christian vocation. In an age that placed an overweening emphasis upon individualism, inner exploration and love as the foundation of wider political and social transformation, it was not altogether unusual that Harry and Gwyneth shared the view that conjugal love formed the basis for Christian service in the wider world. “Won’t our home be our little house of prayer, our Holy of Holies,” asked Gwyneth, “where God will be most near, and whence we shall derive the strength and love and inspiration which we shall need for our work in the world? Mustn’t home be the starting point for all our loving service?”<sup>51</sup> This sense of duty was not of a conventional kind, however, because, much like the Victorian concept of character, it

was no longer dependent upon external or public sanctions for its verisimilitude; rather, it rested almost completely upon a set of ideals which were established through a process of inner psychological struggle and self-examination which alone ensured the creation of an integrated personality defined by the concept of a higher self. Thus, the kind of domestic ideal that Gwyneth was delineating was one not defined by external preparations, namely buying a house or establishing a family, but was imagined as a “secret nook”, an inviolable private space occupied by the conjugal couple whose love was grounded in those inner duties of mutual emotional introspection.<sup>52</sup> Here Gwyneth was not imagining the traditional domesticated family, rather she envisioned it as a sphere distinctly separated from worldly demands and animated by the union of body and soul in a loving conjugal relationship. The domestic space she imagined was one of embodiment and comradeship, which decidedly broke with the Victorian hierarchical family characterized by rigid gender roles. Having grown up in the same cultural world as Virginia Woolf and the Bloomsbury group, Gwyneth conceived her world as one of personal relationships in which the authenticity of emotional states stood in opposition to an external or public world of action.<sup>53</sup>

Harry echoed her sentiments, referencing both the “Holy of Holies”<sup>54</sup> and also George Bernard Shaw’s notion of the superman, when he spoke of how their love was not “of the common or garden variety” but that it was of a higher and more selfless order because mutual sexual passion had led them to strive for their higher selves, thus becoming exceptional human beings beyond the common herd.<sup>55</sup> “We *are*”, wrote Harry, “vastly superior to the ordinary run of mortals!”<sup>56</sup> He believed that they would acquire a greater sense of the work of God through their mutual efforts to come to know one another rather than through the conventional struggle to overcome sin. Breaking with older doctrines of a direct relationship between the individual soul and the redeeming power of Christ, Harry now positioned the conjugal relationship as the central mediator of divine love, such that Gwyneth, the object of his affections and desires, would bestow, “under the guiding of Almighty God ... that quickening of mind and spirit, that confidence in my own mission, that enriching of life and present experience that will drive me to make of myself what God has intended me to be”. This consciousness of a higher life was to be brought about through a rigorous process of mutual psychological examination in which the inner self was exposed in “a steady flow of thought expressed streaming in from your mind and heart”, an evocation of William James’

concept of a stream of consciousness as a revelation of the inner soul.<sup>57</sup> Despite the fact that Harry acknowledged that this journey of self-discovery might involve “terrible ill-understood experiences of our souls in the internal”, he nevertheless enthusiastically declared: “But how wonderful the thought of seeing and feeling our love for each other, of standing off and examining it together, of testing it, comparing it, tracing its growth, you seeking to understand my heart, my way of looking upon life, and I seeking to understand your points of view in all the problems of life.”<sup>58</sup> Ideally this intense introspection should have led to an appreciation of the mystic service of Christ, but in reality the process of uncovering “the sacred secret chamber of our love”<sup>59</sup> more often than not produced misunderstandings and conflicts. As young Edwardians, they were fully cognizant of modern evolutionary theories which saw upward progress as contingent upon a dialectic of struggle and resolution.<sup>60</sup> They therefore believed that the attainment of harmony and peace must naturally follow a period of conflict.

However, Gwyneth in particular chafed under the new exacting demands of this novel concept of introspective love. She carped to Harry that he expected too much of her, because, much like Cecil Vyse in E.M. Forster’s *A Room With a View*, she thought that he perceived her simply in terms of an ideal, rather than as a real woman.<sup>61</sup> A more profound source of discord, however, related to their conflicting interpretation of how to attain that state of Godly and earthly happiness. Gwyneth was not entirely averse to sexual love, and certainly subscribed to the ideal of marriage as “our spiritual union”<sup>62</sup> founded upon the “weld[ing]”<sup>63</sup> of their respective natures, pledging to Harry that she aspired to be “your comrade and helper and comforter”. However, she nevertheless continued to perceive a disjuncture between human and divine love, so that when she spoke of their “complete union of spirit” she did not necessarily include the corporeal in that equation. Where Harry believed that human sexual love led to self-development, which in turn brought them to knowledge of God, Gwyneth positioned God as an external creative force providing the impulse for human love. Evoking an older Christian concept of the role of divine love as a model for marital harmony, Gwyneth declared: “I pray that He may guide us ever and help us to live closer to Him so that we may come soon to live close to one another in a bond of perfect love and perfect union of spirit.”<sup>64</sup> Speaking of their love, she told Harry: “If it were nothing but a sensual passion, a worldly desire, I don’t think I could do it.”<sup>65</sup> Indeed, unlike Harry, she still subscribed to the traditional

Christian anthropology that the body held, despite its spiritual possibilities, the potential for sin. "The agony we suffer", she reminded him, "is brought about by our own sinful natures".<sup>66</sup> However, at other junctures she concurred with Harry in the view that should their love vanish, so too would their faith in God.<sup>67</sup> In recounting to Harry a sermon by Dr. Selbie, a professor at Mansfield College, Oxford, warning against the tendency in this age of materialism to emphasize the body at the expense of the soul,<sup>68</sup> she was declaring her view that when severed from a higher purpose, namely love of God, "sensual passion" became a mere worldly desire and might overpower the spiritual element in their relationship. Her conviction that the spiritual should not be engulfed by the sensual reflected the views of other feminists, such as Lucy Re-Bartlett, who, writing in *The Coming Order* (1911), identified passion as a spiritual force and not mere sensuality, and insisted that the physical must be in balance with the spiritual in order to provide the correct "conducting channel" for married love.<sup>69</sup> Gwyneth's contemporary Vera Brittain, strongly influenced by Olive Schreiner's feminist novel *The Story of an African Farm*, likewise insisted on the importance of physical attraction, but emphatically regarded it as symbolizing spiritual union, "one of the laws of God".<sup>70</sup>

Gwyneth's objections to making sex a key component of marital harmony should not be read to mean that she clung to the older Victorian feminist sensibilities which reprobated sexual desire when not joined to reproduction. Many of the advocates of the new morality, such as Dora Marsden, editor of *The Freewoman*, as well as Havelock Ellis, tied sexual pleasure to achieving a higher spiritual life and the liberation of human creative power,<sup>71</sup> just as did Gwyneth herself. However, these writers were adamant that women were very different from men, and that their access to the "super-world" would flow less from the physical experience of sex than from cultivation of their "intuitive faculty".<sup>72</sup> Human intimacy, in their estimation, was not simply a matter of fulfilling sexual intercourse, but was, in the final analysis, founded upon a deeper "psychic union", or spiritual connection, between man and woman, a view which warned against simply equating passion with physical sexual intercourse, thus making it "the servant of the body, interpreting itself in terms of the body".<sup>73</sup> However, her inability to consistently bind the soul to the body, led Harry to accuse her not only of being a puritan, but of being "transcendental" in her attitude to love.<sup>74</sup> Of equal significance, Harry's exacting demands for constant introspective self-examination proved a source of worry and creeping doubt to her, leading her to ask plaintively, "[a]re



our natures incompatible?” While consoling herself that, at the core of their beings, they shared the same objects and aims in life, she upbraided him for not understanding “my quiet, reserved, suppressed nature”.<sup>75</sup> Though a modernist in the sense that she demonstrated a clear familiarity with the psychoanalytic view that the suppression of sexual instincts was the source of psychic maladjustment,<sup>76</sup> she often fell back on conventional shibboleths regarding self-sacrifice, wrestling with sin, and the need to develop a sense of sympathy when speaking of the signs of having a Christian outlook.<sup>77</sup> For Harry’s part, he identified self-sacrifice with the kind of “brother-love” he shared with his mother.<sup>78</sup>

In continuing to posit a distinction between the lower and higher instincts, Gwyneth had not fully made the transition from Victorian to Edwardian modernity, as she did not fully appreciate how exploring one’s interior self, including one’s sexual subjectivity, could be a positive force for self-development rather than an obsessive concentration on personal sin.<sup>79</sup> Gwyneth literally saw the vital force as a narrowly spiritual one, while Harry repeatedly hastened to remind her that a “through and through spiritual life” depended for its realization upon the recognition that “our spirits have fleshly ‘digs’”. In an effort to meet Gwyneth half way, Harry sometimes articulated a more perfect balance between the psychological strivings of the soul and the urging of the body,<sup>80</sup> assuring her that so long as the demands of the body were accompanied by a complementary spiritual awareness of divine love, only then would human love surpass the “low carnal level”.<sup>81</sup>

In arguing that marriage formed the foundation of higher ideals and duties, they were not merely evoking an older trope of the reproductive function of the family as a restorative for the race or nation—as was the convention of conservative eugenicists such as Jane Ellen Harrison who was a great champion of the priceless gift of altruistic mother-love, despite her self-proclaimed celibacy.<sup>82</sup> Rather, in conceiving of a state of grace as flowing outward from the private communion of body and soul realized in conjugal love, Harry and Gwyneth, despite their differences, were endeavouring to enunciate a very novel conception of the Edwardian conundrum of the relationship between individual and society, one which in the words of Ellen Key, rested upon a “new erotic ethics” of uplift.<sup>83</sup> Other commentators, including clergymen, impugned the older morality, claiming that it represented a “sham morality” and “shallow Puritanism”, because it merely stressed sin and “repression”. The authors of “Self Assertion in Nietzsche and Self-Surrender in Boehme” exalted

the autonomous individual, arguing that modern society was but a machine “repressing individual” initiative. Reversing Victorian verities concerning the role of the will in restraining sinful urges, W.A. Ross and the Rev. G.W. Allen urged Edwardian youth to not be consumed with issues of sin or evil, but to seek excellence in order to become supermen: “The more intense each passion and desire, and the more intense the ‘will-to-power’, the more intense must be the feelings of duty and discipline.”<sup>84</sup> This location of the wellsprings of reform within the sexual impulse diverged significantly from the prevalent Idealist conceptions of society which enriched New Liberal and Fabian thought. While sharing with the advocates of the new morality of sexual pleasure a view that the individual stood prior to society, Idealist philosophy continued to privilege character over personality, in which morality was determined by public criteria and a notion of the integrated self,<sup>85</sup> whereas moderns like Gwyneth and Harry embraced the concept of the vast importance of the realm of the unconscious, in which drives and instincts shaped the outer world. As Ellen Key, a Swedish feminist, widely read on both sides of the English-speaking Atlantic aptly argued, a love marriage was more fundamental than ever, because “the erotic experience between man and woman becomes the deepest life determining factor”.<sup>86</sup>

From Harry’s point of view, if love was to lead to a strengthened and integrated personality, it must evolve through a constant process of self-scrutiny of their mutual psychological—read sexual—states. It should be said, however, that while still in the first flush of post-coital ecstasy, Harry happily asserted that “love at its best” was mysterious, comparing it with art whose effect would be spoiled by too close an examination of its technique. However, as his sexual yearnings drove him to question his love for Gwyneth, his references to “finding ourselves”<sup>87</sup> through frank self-examination grew apace. By early 1912 his ideas increasingly bore a close affinity with those of the American feminist Elsie Clews Parsons who wrote: “Life is change and any love personal relation is a changing relation. In so far as marriage to-day hypothecates an unchanging relationship, it is an impersonal relationship, a relationship of status, not a relationship between personalities.”<sup>88</sup> In a similar vein, Harry explained to Gwyneth that their courtship was modern because it was a “relationship”, a newly coined idea of the Edwardian period, as Dora Pym, another Girton girl, noted. In earlier generations this term had referred narrowly to kin, but was never applied to the objects of heterosexual love.<sup>89</sup> Prior to his dressing down of her after meeting Gwyneth for the first time in over a

year, Gwyneth admitted that she saw marriage as Victorian women had, as merely the realization of her ideals,<sup>90</sup> having embraced the view denigrated so vehemently by Parsons that conjugal love was a fixed entity rather than an evolving and sexual relationship between two individuals.<sup>91</sup> When writing to Gwyneth, just before his departure for England, Harry explained how this psychological self-cultivation would result in a revelation of their true sexual selves: “Still I am doing a good deal of retrospection these days,” meaning thinking of their sexual communion at Borth, “and a good deal of self-examination, and it may be that the grand total of the present experiences will be the tempering of my real self, the sharpening of the sword, which nature has given me to lead my way through life!”, the latter a veiled reference to masturbation. At its root, Harry’s concept of courtship was a process by which they “will be able to sound, in some measure at least, the depths of our relation to one another, that we will discover just what each of us means to the other, that we shall adjust ourselves to one another”. This entailed “fitting ourselves into our spheres”, prior to marriage, which meant a fine tuning of their sexual compatibility. Thus he thought he would become his “real self again”, after their face-to-face meeting in which they could touch and pet one another. He therefore wrote of their visit: “We may be selfish for a time—that will be only until we discover who *we* really *are*.”<sup>92</sup> Given that Harry viewed introspection as a code word for the sexual drives, it is little wonder that he disparaged Thomas Carlyle’s dictum that self-reflection was a disease.<sup>93</sup> Carlyle, that quintessential Victorian public moralist whose avowed celibacy was, by the early twentieth century, no longer celebrated as a manifestation of masculine self-restraint but was now castigated as advocating an unhealthy impotence subversive of gender hierarchy.<sup>94</sup>

In assessing how Britons came to view themselves in psychological terms, Mathew Thomson has rightly observed that the concept of “psychological modernity” cannot be limited either to high academic discourse or to the permeation of psychoanalytic ideas, particularly those of Sigmund Freud. It is certainly true, as he argues, that there was a massive terrain of popular psychology which was invested in the notion of self-development, but the nexus of ideas which influenced Harry and Gwyneth does not sustain Thomson’s larger conclusion that there was a clear distinction between the popular psychology of self-help and the realm of psychological discussion which focussed upon the emotions, introspection and sexual relationships.<sup>95</sup> Although there is some suggestion that they did indeed read Freud, Harry and Gwyneth largely derived their notions of the

importance of introspection, emotional self-analysis and the subconscious self with its instinctual drives from an immersion in the massive volume of books on the psychology of religion. Of particular interest to them was their shared interest in the work of George Steiner, author of *The Psychology of the Christian Soul* (1911). Agreeing with Bergson, that the surest knowledge is that of our own personality,<sup>96</sup> Steiner, who was familiar with the work of William James, F.W.H. Myers and the Oxford psychologist, William McDougall, a champion of Freud,<sup>97</sup> argued that instincts which lay deeper in the unconscious than either the feelings or the will, were the prime movers of all human activity. These included the sexual instincts, which Steiner believed should be directed into positive channels, but should not simply be the subject of moral restraint. While he continued to assign priority to religion as the principal means of creating the “unity of self” necessary for full manhood, he nevertheless fully recognized the presence of multiple and often conflicting selves within the human personality which explained why people acted differently before varying audiences.<sup>98</sup> This especially appealed to shy Gwyneth, who often referred to her more superficial self, which she juxtaposed with her true inner psychological being. The Presbyterian divine Rev. R.J. Campbell, a favourite of Harry’s, reaffirmed Steiner’s conceptual bridging of character and personality, but was more concerned to accentuate the “subliminal consciousness” because it was the wellspring of the godly higher self.<sup>99</sup> What Steiner, Campbell and the Rev. Alexander Brown shared in common, besides eschewing the centrality of sin, was their emphasis upon the importance of struggle and pain in the creation of the evolution of “personality and character”.<sup>100</sup> The overall purpose of the personal interaction between humans was to bring the instinctive sub-conscious elements to the conscious realm, through a process of mutual introspection which was most readily fathomed through “the intimacies of self-hood”,<sup>101</sup> namely the realm of the sensual.

As these clergymen and Harry were at pains to instil, frankness about sex within a loving relationship should not be thought of as prurient or impure, but as an imperative for mutual understanding. It was therefore a constant refrain of his letters that Gwyneth should “open her heart to him and tell him even the smallest perplexity”,<sup>102</sup> that she view love as a “process of self-realisation”,<sup>103</sup> or talk of books by which they might “find our feelings in this way, study characters together, discovering our likes and dislikes, attuning our ideas and all the while undergoing an elevation of soul in some sort”.<sup>104</sup> What soon became clear, however, is that Harry

perceived that this process of “finding ourselves, all unconsciously, through each other”,<sup>105</sup> was, as it had been with his male intimates, a somewhat parasitic one, for as he said “I want to talk about myself!”<sup>106</sup> It turns out that his vision of their “*constant* exchange of opinion” which would bring about the gradual grafting of their souls together so that they eventually became “your other self”, was really an excuse for Harry to “flaunt my egoism”.<sup>107</sup> In this regard, he saw Gwyneth, much as the Victorians would have viewed the domesticated wife, as his “Recording Angel”,<sup>108</sup> whose primary function was to help him knit his character together,<sup>109</sup> and to patiently tend his soul during his “constantly recurring despondency”.<sup>110</sup> It was no exaggeration to claim that Harry was an overly exacting man, for he demanded that Gwyneth be perpetually upbeat and positive, but when she wrote as a “giddy lighthearted College girl”, he accused her of being so absorbed with her own friends and studies “that she couldn’t listen long at a time to the plaintive wail of a far-off lover whose love she was perfectly confident she possessed, and in any case didn’t care very much whether she possess it or not!”<sup>111</sup> However, when she later confessed her sense of despondency, produced in part, because, after graduating with a First in Mathematics from Cambridge, she was relegated to a cloistered domestic existence, forced into taking cooking classes and playing hostess at her mother’s weekly at homes, expressing herself became a pretext for Harry’s breaking the engagement.<sup>112</sup>

When she did try to help him with his “self-strengthening”<sup>113</sup> by exposing her own concerns about when they would marry, he interpreted this as a personal attack, accusing her of becoming a “Socratico-Xanthippe being”, a shrewish bluestocking intent on subverting his “kingly prerogative”. The ideal wife, as he peevishly informed her, was to be “a person who shares my life” and “to be a sharer of my thoughts ... she is to help me share the mental burdens of life; she is to stimulate my life, not by contrast but by genuine contribution to my intellectual interests and by serving not as a contradiction but as a bulwark of my faith”.<sup>114</sup> The priority he placed on his prospective wife as a helpmeet might sound incongruous to a man invested in modernist notions of reciprocal sexual passion, but it was not unusual among his contemporaries. Harry’s fellow-Presbyterian W.L. Grant, who had, in 1912, written in praise of H.G. Wells’ ideas of sexual freedom, penned an engagement proposal in 1910 to Maude Parkin in strikingly similar terms, presenting their union as an opportunity enabling him to fulfil his planned life of work: “[W]ith you beside me I know that we can do ten times as much for Canada, can ten times as well

fulfil whatever purpose it may be for which we came into the world as I could if alone.” However, Grant was more self-aware than Harry, confessing to his beloved, “[t]his is a wretched way to put it, for it sounds as if I valued you mainly as a stimulus to my work”, and insisted that he was truly in love: “whenever I think of you, when I speak your name the pulses in my neck quiver and tighten, and all my blood seems to be in my throat”.<sup>115</sup> To Harry’s charge that Gwyneth’s letters to him in Montreal were “cold, unresponsive, unsympathetic, dull, stupid!!!”, and that she had been all too willing to “direct your inquiring microscope upon my failings”,<sup>116</sup> she demanded that perhaps he could “write brightly and sympathetically”.<sup>117</sup> To further drive home her point, she used the model of female love, drawn from her “attachment to Gladys”, whom she portrayed as sweet, sympathetic and patient, meditating as she said “on the different degrees and kinds of love”.<sup>118</sup> Here she was demanding that Harry be more feminine, or at least more understanding of her perspective and needs.

On the whole, Gwyneth shared the new psychological injunction that one needed to strip away multiple layers of superficiality and self-satisfaction before uncovering “the genuine article”, and accepted that this process of self-development might also involve suffering, quoting Robert Louis Stevenson that one must receive a “piercing pain” in order to awaken the spirit.<sup>119</sup> However, she was less confident than Harry that constant scrutiny of their inner selves would bring assurance to their relationship,<sup>120</sup> and in fact she thought that excessive interiority was unmanly, represented weakness and was a manifestation of shattered nerves. Chastened by her reproaches, he promised: “I shall pull myself together a bit, if I can, and try to present to you a more tangible, less Protean being.”<sup>121</sup> However, he was quick to parry her imputation of unmanliness, stating: “what am I but a mere man, and subject to the changing passions of men, while you with your stern rugged unimpassioned script betray not the slightest tones of the vagaries of passion and feeling. And it occurs to me, hurried thought, why, praps after all I’m the woman, and you’re the man; the traditional order of things been reversed and at this distance sometimes one might almost think so.”<sup>122</sup> This unseemly gender inversion which left him feeling like a hen-pecked husband, would, as he made clear, be remedied once they met in the fall of 1912 on his way to study in Edinburgh, and renewed their sexual intimacy. In the final analysis, the vexing issue of gender roles was to be resolved in having sex, because only then would their “ourselves” become “our-self”, as Gwyneth’s personality became (sub)merged in his. Just as Wells’ male protagonist in *Marriage*, Harry believed that the

conjugal “we two” would enhance his own individuality, but it clearly diminished women’s sense of an independent personality.

In thus assuming Harry’s male persona through their physical union, he expected that Gwyneth’s sex drive would hypertrophy, inducing her to expunge her feminine reticence about explicit sex-talk and become “more spontaneous”<sup>123</sup> in her correspondence. Where the classicist Jane Ellen Harrison and the English sexologist Havelock Ellis believed that the sex instinct would prop up biological gender differences because they reckoned male sexual desire as more pronounced, Harry thought that the sexual relation would produce equality and a sense of “comradeship” because it would bring his and Gwyneth’s attitudes to sexuality into closer proximity.<sup>124</sup> His hope was that they could write twice a day, so that she might truly salve his growing sense of inner fragmentation of being by writing more explicitly about their mutual erotic desires. Only then could their letters be truly transformed into the kind of “welding medium”<sup>125</sup>—Carpenter’s phrase for sex—he had long imagined. After demanding more spontaneous letters, she accused him of “dogging of [her] footsteps” and of meddling in her affairs. In order to reassert the gender hierarchy, he not only insisted that she arrange his 500 photographs, but that they make a further “adjustment of our relationship”, so that her conversation (“soft converse!”<sup>126</sup>)—be more specifically directed to purifying his motives and helping him to better define his purposes in life. “And possibly”, he added, “I may be of some little service too in the same way.” Ominously, he concluded this disquisition with the question: “Would you be insubordinate if I asserted my imperial authority? In the matter?”<sup>127</sup>

The final dénouement of the crisis in their relationship, which had been simmering since January 1912, occurred after Harry re-crossed the Atlantic in September to begin his theological degree at the University of Edinburgh. The impending climax of their conflicting expectations of love was recorded in excruciating and painstaking detail in their twice-daily letters, in which they often feverishly wrote of their worries and longings, a correspondence which regularly occupied them for four to six hours per day. In anticipation of embracing his amour after a year’s absence, Harry obsessively imagined her body and wrote extensively about his expectation that she should provide a sure physical demonstration of her love. However, all of his fervid preoccupation with recapturing the intense sexual frisson of the previous summer came crashing down to earth when he met a more mature, self-possessed but less worshipful Gwyneth who, by this time, had earned her exceptional First in Mathematics, the

most prestigious subject at Cambridge. Whether Gwyneth was in reality less physically demonstrative towards him—although she did confess to having scruples about publicly kissing him at the Oxford railway station—what was apparent was that, abashed at her high intellectual achievements, Harry now imagined her to be more masculine, and less womanly or sexually attractive.

His extremely negative reaction to her and his growing tendency to act the part of the domestic tyrant must be considered in the context of his intellectual failure to come to grips with Hebrew and New Testament Greek, prerequisites for a theology degree. Even as early as the autumn of 1911 Harry had been “despondent” about Hebrew, describing the language as inscrutable, filled with “such strange and crawly and meaningless-looking creatures” that he was reduced to memorizing words phonetically, a pathetic confession from one who prided himself on his linguistic prowess.<sup>128</sup> More significantly, his efforts to preach a less puritanical morality from the pulpit were firmly squelched. One practice sermon, “Personal Influence”, inveighed against “Mrs. Grundy” and the hypocrisy of separating conscience and conduct. His advisor acidly but firmly told him: “*Never* refer to Mrs. Grundy in the pulpit!”<sup>129</sup> On top of feeling at sea in terms of biblical languages, he found his personal religious scruples to be in complete contradistinction to the intellectual rigours of historical theology and form criticism. Writing to Gwyneth in February 1912, he informed her that he had decided to give up New Testament criticism, because, as he put it, he felt that he was “forcing” his faith, and “weakening the foundation to attempt to occupy the definite theological positions required of one upon whom is cast the avowed responsibility of leading men’s thoughts on religious things”.<sup>130</sup>

In other words, the prolonged absence from Gwyneth and his intellectual failure as a theologian were rapidly eroding confidence in his sense of vocation, and he now voiced the desire simply to teach classical languages. His sense of emasculation was further amplified by the fact that, in the absence of scholarship money, he was now entirely reliant upon his father and his brother for financial support, which brought in its train a new level of parental supervision under which he severely chafed. For example, when his father denied him permission to visit Oxford at the Christmas break, he petulantly expostulated: “I feel like a little spanked baby now, as if I had been an awful fool in conceiving such a project.”<sup>131</sup> By the new year, his inability to settle down to his work and the knowledge that he could not satisfy Gwyneth’s desire for a shorter engagement



resulted in yet another episode of shattered nerves. Writing to his mother, he related how he had “never been so oppressed with feelings of my own utter incapacity”.<sup>132</sup> It was not unnatural, therefore, that as he had to face the fact of “the absolute unsatisfactoriness of current ambitions” and began “to suffer from excesses of brightness and despondency”,<sup>133</sup> that these coincided with obsessive thoughts that once he and Gwyneth renewed their physical relationship, that all his doubts would be vanquished: “I still believe the only thing in the world is love—I long for love; it’s the only thing in this world or the next.”<sup>134</sup> In the midst of their tangled discussions about sex and spirituality, in a compelling confession to his father, Harry admitted a complete lack of understanding of the profession he had chosen and a strong sense of alienation from the false heartiness of other men: “I *am* peevis. I don’t understand myself nor anyone else—I’m hopelessly at sea—Adrift at 25.”<sup>135</sup>

By the time he arrived in Oxford, he reassured his parents that the despondency of last winter had been dispelled by his happiness with Gwyneth, but the fact that he chose to read *Tom Sawyer* with Gwyneth while picnicking at Iffley,<sup>136</sup> a novel about puerile young men escaping the clutches of moralizing women, did not bode well, especially given his later remarks that he did not understand either Gwyneth or the mysteries of love. It was therefore, somewhat ironic that he vilified the Oxford dons he played bridge with for being “babes and not men at all”.<sup>137</sup> Then, there was the recurrence of Harry’s intellectual troubles. It would appear that, soon after term started at New College Edinburgh, he was already “in a most fearful funk about my work and my intellectual and moral condition relative to you and to the future”.<sup>138</sup> Indeed, it would appear that the only part of the work that he enjoyed was extracurricular work at the Settlement, where visits with the Edinburgh poor required little intellectual aptitude, and played to Harry’s desire for sociable conversation.<sup>139</sup> A truer picture of what transpired at Sunnyside was brought out in Edinburgh, after a tête-à-tête with his friend John’s aunt Marcia whose friendly solicitations as to the state of his engagement crystallized his doubts. Writing in distress to his mother he conveyed his intense disappointment in his new sexually reserved fiancée: “the Gwyneth of the flesh, of close intercourse is not the Gwyneth as I thought I knew her in August last ...but am I in love?”<sup>140</sup> At the end of October, Harry attended a “topical evening” at Principal Whyte’s held to meet women—many of whom were sexually salacious—and though he castigated one of his partners as “a carnally minded hypocrite”,<sup>141</sup> the fact that these young women were included as part of a

leading clergyman's social circle was a clear indicator of a growing sexual frankness across a broad segment of Edwardian society. The very fact that other young women seemed more available and intellectually interesting induced Harry to question his commitment to Gwyneth. Soon after, he warned his mother that he might break off their engagement, blaming the barrier that had arisen between them upon Gwyneth's lack of "emotional depth"—which he attributed to being raised in a family "of brains rather than of feelings"—her inability to offer "stimulation" or act in a "spontaneous" manner that would ensure "a sort of welding process, fitting nature to nature",<sup>142</sup> admitting all the while that if he was "a MAN" he would know his own mind.<sup>143</sup> His obvious sexual attraction to this bevy of Scottish lasses let loose a torrent of letters to his male friends, including Norman Macdonnell, who not only played the field but prioritized physical beauty over all other feminine attributes. As a result, Harry continued his catalogue of faults, stating that Gwyneth was not of the "Burne-Jones" type with ravishing dark hair and eyes, and curvy luscious lips. She was but an insipid blonde, and was of too masculine a type, being strong, sturdy and only a pound lighter than Harry.<sup>144</sup>

On 23 November, he cancelled his engagement to Gwyneth because of their "incompatibility of temperament".<sup>145</sup> However, this decision was, for Harry, the culmination of a more profound discontent stretching back to the winter of 1911–12, one arising from Gwyneth's persistent desire to winkle a precise date for their marriage out of him, a move which he considered an attempt on her part to assert control of their relationship and thus subvert his masculine prerogatives. Responding to her in January 1912, Harry put her off, altering their original plan of marrying in the autumn of 1914, by declaring that he could not do justice to his theology work in two years, and that "our nuptials will have to be postponed another 12 mos. in consequence".<sup>146</sup> To soften the impact and gain her approval, he frequently resorted to platitudinous clichés, averring that they would have to be "philosophic" and patiently endure "the eternal conflict of love and prudence".<sup>147</sup> It is evident that her demands were insistent enough to force him to modify his usual tack of positioning spiritual happiness as the outcome of harmonious physical intimacy, confiding that he was undergoing a spiritual crisis, which had induced him to distrust the nature of religious emotion: "What I need more than anything else is time to be quiet; and experience in Christian work—and so it would seem to be absolutely necessary for our future happiness that we proceed more slowly than we had planned."<sup>148</sup> In other words, when it came to

Harry's doubts about marriage, the spiritual now took precedence over the sexual. What underlay this verbal rhodomontade appears to be Harry's worst apprehension: that she was "taking the rains [*sic*] over",<sup>149</sup> and acting the part of those Shavian heroines mercilessly satirized by the playwright as deploying sexual attractiveness to compel hesitant men into marriage. Their encounter at Sunnyside in the fall of 1912 seems to have offered an occasion for Gwyneth to apply more pressure. Just prior to his final break-up, Gwyneth had written to him urging more concentration on his work, self-confidence and faith in the future: "get a little back-bone into you and do your best", she exhorted.<sup>150</sup> It appears that she was forcing him to advance the date of the marriage, asserting her readiness to have him "take my hand at once, to start out on the journey", to which Harry plaintively responded, "But I am afraid of everyone!"<sup>151</sup> His fall-back position when he felt anxious and depressed was to think of sex, concluding this fraught admission with the comment: "I want to take you in my arms and 'press you to a jelly', albeit I *am* unworthy."<sup>152</sup> In a wholesale reversal of the Victorian moral economy of self-restraint, where sexual energies were to be ideally transformed into a work ethic,<sup>153</sup> Harry saw sexual desire as a stimulus for his intellect and as a diversion from anxieties about the future. However, the image of pressing his beloved to jelly conveyed darker intimations of sex as a channel for male dominance.

Gwyneth's achievement of a First in the Mathematics Tripos at Cambridge posed a fundamental challenge to Harry's sense of masculine authority, triggering fears that her mind "will develop out of proportion" to his,<sup>154</sup> forcing their love to dwindle. When Harry broached the subject of her intellectual superiority, it is significant that he followed these observations about the dominance of mind over body, not only with cutting reminders of his "kingly prerogatives"—only partly in jest—and with a clear reference to eroticism, telling her that she needed some physical labour and cold baths to "take the berries out of your blood".<sup>155</sup> Here, sex was proffered by Harry to offset the "cool, calculating reflective remarks"<sup>156</sup> of a fiancée he now found to be too masculine. Learning of her spectacular scholarly achievement while still in Canada raised painful memories and compelled him to again painfully scrutinize why he got a miserable Third in Greats at Oxford. Not only did he now denounce the Rhodes ideal of the "all-round man", but he now blamed Oxford as presenting a feast of "pure eclecticism" along with Bible Study which "brought me into contact with more men than was wholesome for anyone to meet who wished to make any study whatsoever of his mind up there; and so I wobbled

through my three years, drawn this way and that, torn in pieces between Imperialist and Churchman, Little Englander and Little Colonial, scholastic ambitions and exacting ties of friendship".<sup>157</sup> It is at this juncture that he began to intimate to Gwyneth, using references to "soul-locked love" between male clergy, to maintain that "real love" rested upon a demonstrable, physical "outward sign & symbol of it".<sup>158</sup> He also demanded that she write "a right wifely steamer letter" to him in order to excite his passions, a form of epistolary foreplay, prior to their face-to-face meeting when their joy would be consummated.<sup>159</sup> As he forthrightly declared, "my picture of you was knocked into little pieces" because she had "suddenly froze up" in his presence at her family home. "I was absolutely shocked", he told her, "to find you so languid a person, so lacking in strong womanly confidence." Somewhat aware of her frustrations of domestic confinement at Sunnyside after the excitement of Cambridge, he advised her to develop some "intellectual" pursuits, meaning taking a music course, doing some Sunday school teaching, or teaching children, work which was, in his view, intended, not to foster greater financial independence, but to enable her to find some "absorbing *womanly* interest[s]", so that she would once again become a "womanly sort", attractive, loving, graceful and active, so that he would no longer feel "more like a brother than a lover".<sup>160</sup> After this severe dressing-down about her lack of womanliness, Gwyneth responded by talking about her passion for him, saying if she was with him that night she would "just devour you to my heart's content" and, in a remarkable reversal of the primordial Edenic metaphor for sex and sin, the serpent, Gwyneth expressed her passionate longing for him, declaring that like the boa constrictor he had "so entwined yourself ...round and round my innermost self that I can't get along without you now".<sup>161</sup>

For the first time, she became relatively explicit about her sexual feeling for Harry, largely, as she said in order to "be what you would have me be".<sup>162</sup> In order to alleviate Harry's deepening depression, Gwyneth wrote to him, saying "you can't *arouse* my compassion any more my darling because it is aroused all the time for you whenever you want it, just waiting for you to take it whenever you are feeling unhappy, just waiting to comfort and soothe and caress you whenever you are feeling lonely or discouraged or disappointed ... how I am longing for you, how I am needing you, and let my love just creep into your heart and fill it and drive out all the uneasiness and unhappiness". However, the letter had a sting, for she voiced her disagreement with the priority he gave to sex, writing: "Surely

we don't *need* outward symbols, don't need them in the sense that they are essential, things we can't possibly do without. They are only extras, just to satisfy another body, and to keep him quiet and contented. He wants them badly, can't get along without a lot of demonstration, actual touching and feeling and embracing, but our spirits are beyond that; they have a union which is so perfect that it needs no definite external expression." To soften this severing of sex and spiritual union, she concluded reassuringly that "my brother body is very insistent, very greedy, and he just longs to fly straight to you and hurl his ten stone 1 ½ on your frail knees and half strangle you with his embraces". "I want", she wrote, "to hug and kiss you all to pieces", especially during 10 to 10:15 each evening, when they had communal "prayer", mutually masturbating.<sup>163</sup>

Having so overtly broken with her sense of reserve regarding sex-talk in her correspondence in order to placate Harry's insatiable desire to know that she continued to be sexually attracted to him, Harry was once again cast into gloom about whether intellectual women could be sexually responsive to their husbands. These fears were reignited after reading both Jane Welsh Carlyle's letters to her husband which, he said, had no "religious feeling" in them and works by "men of the Shavian School", including Shaw's play *Getting Married*. After James Anthony Froude's various biographical studies of the Carlyles, it was publicly known that their marriage was a "mésalliance", bereft of all sexual intimacy, in which Jane remained merely Thomas' "intellectual companion". Indeed, prior to their marriage, she had written to him stating that she was not in love with him, having only a "sincere affection", but one which was "not a passion which overclouds my judgement". For his part, Thomas Carlyle, both a stern Victorian moralist who envisioned platonic love in which celibacy was equated with a higher moral consciousness and an imperious head of household, forced her to comply with his need to eschew sex so that he could devote all his energies to intellectual work.<sup>164</sup> Worried about his own failing studies, Harry took on the persona of Thomas Carlyle, another man who intensely disliked children and was irascible, fearing that his uncontrolled sexual urges explained his inability to concentrate. Added to this, Shaw's condemnation of conventional sex relations, including his puritanical critique of men's excessive lust for their wives, decried "this perverse metaphysic of sensuous pleasure", believing that it was an illusion, which, when it declined, led to loveless marriages. In recommending that marriage be founded on higher ideals and his view that men knew nothing of the female "sex psychology",<sup>165</sup> Shaw's prescriptions for

modern marriage exactly replicated those of Gwyneth, who severely admonished Harry for having no real understanding of women.<sup>166</sup> In order to please Gwyneth and to demonstrate that he did in fact understand female psychology, he fully acknowledged that he had not been “*manly*” when misunderstanding the power of “the mother-instinct” in female attitudes to love. In fact he took no real responsibility for his suffocating criticism of her perspective on love, attributing his obsession with all things sexual to “the influence of ‘stag’ discussions upon the subject [with his fellow theological students] and that horrid beast of a man Bernard Shaw”,<sup>167</sup> charging the playwright for enunciating a vision of physical love severed from spiritual perfection. This inspired Harry to once again state that Gwyneth was “divine” and declaim against religious conventions, arguing that their erotic desires for one another were “*not sacrilege*” but a gift from God.<sup>168</sup> The intense feelings aroused by sexual intercourse, were, according to Harry, “like the religious experience; it is there; it is real; it is one’s own; but it often baffles description and eludes when you most need it”.<sup>169</sup>

He also tried to please Gwyneth by keeping the “carnal brother” under control, meaning he had stanchied “the rushing living flow of inarticulate feelings”, meaning his sexual desires. However, in describing these efforts at sexual self-restraint, he also confided to her that these had prompted a complete mental collapse in which his efforts to pray for strength resulted in a “real good spell of weeping”.<sup>170</sup> One of Harry’s greatest anxieties was that these breakdowns, which had begun during his years at Oxford, were becoming more frequent, and he suspected that his trouble might be hereditary. In a revealing letter to Gwyneth written in the winter of 1912, he told her of the plot of a play written by his friend Arthur Yates, about a Rhodes scholar named “Harold”, a carbon-copy of Harry, also in love with the daughter of an Oxford professor,<sup>171</sup> who had inherited his family’s propensity for nervous breakdowns. His claim that the unnatural suppression of his bodily cravings was causing a religious and mental crisis reversed the Victorian equation between sexual excess and neurasthenia in men. As with many other educated men of his generation, Harry’s breakdown flowed in part from a deep-seated desire to reject the influence of his father, including his version of moral manliness.<sup>172</sup> Because of Gwyneth’s reluctance to write about her sexual feelings, he blamed her for reducing masturbation to a purely animalistic release, rather than having it serve a more exalted function as a surrogate for sexual communion between two loving souls. In thus subverting his natural sexual drives, she was in fact undermining his sense of manhood which was confirmed by sexual

experience: “If I prove myself a man, we shall be supremely happy, my darling.”<sup>173</sup> His spirits lifted precipitously when Gwyneth did write to him as a “real live, genuinely serpentine woman”, joking in his letter to her that this made her into “a quite common modern type” or a “worldly, mathematically minded heathen”.<sup>174</sup>

However, she did not respond with even more salacious talk of sex, but rather confided her own unhappiness to him of her difficulties at Sunnyside where she lacked the “room of one’s own” as she had at Cambridge to which she could withdraw to escape enforced family sociability, thus occasioning increasingly acrimonious conflicts with her parents. As if to perfectly illustrate Jane Ellen Harrison’s dictum that modern women must demand a study to have the space to develop their minds, she wrote to Harry of the bitter scene in which her reluctance to help entertain at Lady Ada’s “at homes” brought down the wrath of Sir James who publicly castigated her for her selfishness in front of her mother and sisters.<sup>175</sup> She had provoked a similar reaction from Harry a few weeks earlier, when she was slow to accede to his demand that she read the books he was studying, notably J.R. Seeley’s *Ecce Homo*, prompting him to explode in anger: “Every words cuts; every word threatens; every word seems to condemn me”, he wrote, protesting feebly that everyone is selfish. “I want you to think about me, and write to me constantly! ... I must have your constantly expressed help and interest; not of the over-awed nor yet of the bold type—but of the co-equal loving sort: sharing my feelings and interests.” By not talking expressly of love, Harry’s faith that they could “be moulded and fashioned into one” was yet again shaken, with the result that his work was “smashed up” and that he was no longer “keeping right with my other self”,<sup>176</sup> namely his sexual self who was now craving relief. Admitting that his prescriptions regarding sex had taken her life out of “its own channels”—a reference to Edward Carpenter’s concept that love was a hunger that “pervaded all channels”<sup>177</sup>—he pondered whether “our natures [are] compatible at all” and asked Gwyneth “[c]ant you be happy to live for God and me?”<sup>178</sup> For several more days, Harry bombarded Gwyneth with letters that criticized her aspiration to be his comrade which he interpreted to mean a sterile non-sexual marriage and for failing to recognize the “bundle of feelings and passions and emotions”<sup>179</sup> that often overwhelmed him. Her apparent inability to view the love of a man for a woman as a measure of divine love prompted him to caustically conclude that they did not “hit it off yet a bit as man and woman”, a condition he attributed to the unwomanly college life of Girton, where she was taught to be too analytical, to wear mannish clothing that was neither

neat, fashionable or attractive. As a corrective, he exhorted her to add qualities that were “more distinctively womanly”.<sup>180</sup>

Gwyneth promised to no longer “hide my newly-awakened womanhood from you and your newly-awakened manhood”. Here she was paraphrasing Alfred Orage, editor of the modernist journal *The New Age*, who stated that “men would become more manly as women became more womanly.”<sup>181</sup> Her persistent enunciation of the Victorian shibboleth that sexual restraint—namely the keeping of “your passions in the right channels and under right control”<sup>182</sup>—would ensure better work habits, continued to gall Harry. He had sought to use their correspondence to formulate a modernist sexual subjectivity based on the unrestrained and frank articulation of sexual emotions within an evolving relationship. He therefore suspected that Gwyneth’s motive in urging him to work harder was simply to hasten their marriage. When she sought to chivy him to complete his theology degree, he was reminded of George Bernard Shaw’s dictum that women tended to pursue men. As a result, he felt diminished into a “shame-faced blundering aesthete” and likened her to a “prim old blue-stocking Girtonian Puritan Cromwellian Stonewall Jacksonian”, because of her reluctance to engage in sex-talk. Accordingly, he sought to reassert masculine control by not so jokingly suggesting that if she once again presumed to propose to him that she would be “stowed away safely in bed with a spanking”<sup>183</sup>

Given these conflicts, it is not surprising that Harry broke off the engagement in a letter written on 23 November 1912, citing “a gulf between us on the emotional side”.<sup>184</sup> Given that in the social circles the Murrays lived, where breaking off an engagement was deemed a cardinal sin as well as an illegal act, it was not surprising that Harry was unceremoniously summoned to Sir James Murray’s office on the Oxford High Street, so that he might explain himself and Sir James “get to know him”. We can gain no insight as to what kind of interrogation Harry endured, apart from Sir James’ letter to him in which he concurred with Gwyneth’s own view that “love is not an experiment but a certainty”, roundly condemning her betrothed’s notions of modern manhood. Recapitulating Victorian verities regarding gender hierarchies and the consequent responsibilities of manhood, Sir James Murray stated that a real man “ought thoroughly to know his own mind”, and before engaging the affections of an innocent, vulnerable young woman, he must make every sacrifice for her. In Victorian parlance, the ideal husband, according to Sir James, was a person who protected his wife by keeping his feelings to himself. Even though Sir James Murray would, as an



evangelical, have been familiar with a regime of rigorous moral self-analysis, the fact that Harry had so unrestrainedly lost, albeit momentarily, all semblance of control over his emotions was a further signification of his complete loss of manliness.<sup>185</sup>

It was wholly typical of Victorian medical specialists to attribute male mental collapse to overwork. In an obvious critique of his parents, Harry wrote informing them that Dr. Thomson, his friend John's father, recommended a complete rest cure after years of excessive study.<sup>186</sup> However, it is noteworthy that both the Murrays and the Logans looked upon the proclivity for looking inward as a failure of will, a contrast to Harry's view of it as "a refining process"; they therefore saw it as a form of morbid introspection which must be avoided at all costs if any semblance of mental normalcy was to be restored.<sup>187</sup> Ironically, this young couple, who had so assiduously tried to forge a modernist relationship severed from familial scrutiny, were now ordered to limit their correspondence to one weekly letter and to desist from all self-probing.<sup>188</sup> Even Gwyneth fully reengaged with all things Victorian: in a riff on the Victorian sentiment that the devil finds work for idle hands, she informed Harry that there would be no need for "morbid self-analysis" if he was fully employing all his faculties in steady work. At this moment of crisis, Harry embraced older ideas of character addressed in the works of manly Victorian worthies, like Charles Kingsley, while Gwyneth once again resorted to the opaque Victorian language of love symbolized by the *Sonnets from the Portuguese* written by Elizabeth Barrett Browning.<sup>189</sup>

Paralleling the celebrated Victorian "crisis of faith",<sup>190</sup> their tumultuous courtship brought about Harry's final abandonment of the clergyman's profession: "It is impossible to see life and steadily see it whole and in fact within the Christian view."<sup>191</sup> A few months later, he recounted his abandonment of faith in doctrinal Christianity in favour of a vague religious naturalism: "every day I am tempted to doubt the whole Christian scheme of Salvation, Redemption, forgiveness of sins, atonement", and confessed that most of his previous life had been spent "in a vain pursuit of the Christ".<sup>192</sup> However, Harry's rejection of the central tenets of Christianity should not be taken at face value, but should be read as an attempt to convince both himself, and Gwyneth, who strongly desired the opportunities for Christian service available to the wife of a minister or missionary, that he could no longer work towards a religious vocation. Indeed, Harry's was not a journey from orthodox Christian belief to a vague "diffusive Christianity",<sup>193</sup> as during the years of their courtship and even under the

stresses of war he remained a Christian believer and a churchgoer. By 1913, however, Harry was working from the premise that the struggles of everyday living, including those within interpersonal relationships, including heterosexual love and marriage, constituted the pathways to a higher spiritual state, and he concluded that by magnifying the priority of sex and sin in their Pauline theology to the neglect of other considerations the institutional churches had become narrow. Unable in the final analysis to reconcile preaching formal religion with religious living, Harry chose the latter, all too aware that if he could not preach healthy sexual mores to young people as a clergyman, he must relinquish his vocation as a minister. In this, Harry was responding to the fact that the early twentieth-century Canadian Protestant churches were not conduits for currents of moral and psychological modernity, as their modernist commitment was to infuse tenets of sociology into Canadian national life while maintaining a stern code of personal morality.<sup>194</sup>

Indeed, it was the quest to reconcile belief and life, religion and sexuality, that had given rise to the agonies of Harry and Gwyneth's courtship, with Harry representing the axis of modernity and Gwyneth that of Victorian pieties. In terms of his formal religious faith, their highly-sexualized love did bring about a "Copernican revolution" of sorts<sup>195</sup>: it transformed him from a doctrinaire Presbyterian into a "spiritually-minded humanist",<sup>196</sup> but it did not immediately effect a transformation of gender power or roles, for even where sex was concerned, he idealized Gwyneth as a helpmeet. After having had sex at Cambridge, where Gwyneth was newly employed as mathematics mistress at the Perse School for Girls, Harry confided: "I enjoyed our passage of arms very much yesterday afternoon: we got nearer to grips and on a higher plane than ever before....? If you'd just give me your real self in that way always I feel I could never have any complaint to make."<sup>197</sup> Continuing to ruminate on the curative powers of satisfying sex, Harry paraphrased Robert Louis Stevenson, by declaring that Gwyneth had "stabbed my mind broad awake" and asked her to continue to diagnose his case and prescribed similar remedies to his "piecemeal person".<sup>198</sup> The ecstatic elixir of love as the tonic of his manhood, was, however, always tempered by a deeper apprehension that he could not fulfill his expected masculine role as breadwinner with respect to his "perpetual *guardianship*" of Gwyneth, constantly fearing that he lacked the requisite strength of character for exerting "judicial leadership" in marriage.<sup>199</sup> Now that the question of the phallic thumbs had been put to rest,

for the next three years, prior to their marriage in the spring of 1916, the central tension in their relationship revolved around the issue of gender, or whose thumb was to be on top. In the meantime, all he could do was to envision nursing his “brother body” in his Vancouver garden,<sup>200</sup> a garden unlike the Garden of Eden, where sex was free from the taint of sin.

## NOTES

1. LAC, LF, 1:3, H to G, 17 Apr. 1912.
2. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, n.d. Aug 1911; *ibid.*, 1:5, H to G, 25 July 1912.
3. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 1 Nov. 1912, LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, n.d. Aug. 1911. Hall, “The Victorians”, 161–76.
4. Kern, *The Culture of Love*, 118, 126.
5. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 9 Oct. 1912.
6. Bourke, “Fear and Anxiety”, 111–33, 113.
7. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 17 July 1911.
8. Rose, *The Edwardian Temperament*, 48. For the platonic idea, see Reddy, *The Making of Romantic Love*, 351.
9. LAC, LF, 1:2, Harry to Gwyneth, 22 Aug. 1911.
10. LAC, LF, 1:2, Harry to Gwyneth, 17 Aug. 1911.
11. Downing, “Eros and Thanatos in European and American Sexology”, 201–20, 208.
12. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 17 Aug. 1911.
13. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 29 Aug. 1911. Harry was breaking with conventions regarding masturbation which generally remained oriented to self-restraint. See Laqueur, *Solitary Sex*; Hall, “Forbidden by God, Despised by Men”, 365–87.
14. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 26 July 1911, 17 Aug. 1911.
15. Robb, “The Way of All Flesh”, 589–603, 514; Delap, “The Superwoman”, 101–26.
16. Brown, “Gender, Christianity, and the Rise of No Religion”, 39–59. For an alternate periodization see Harris, *Faith in the Family*, 1–56. Hugh McLeod, *The Religious Crisis of the 1960s* places much less emphasis upon the corollary between changes in sexual mores and broader transformations within the church.
17. See Simmons, *Making Marriage Modern*, 74. On the secularization of love in the twentieth century, see Kern, *The Culture of Love*, 259–61. See Marcus Collins, *Modern Love* for the persistence of Christian notions. Often it is merely assumed that sexual modernity emerges naturally from the political left. See Brooke, *Sexual Politics*, 40, 58.

18. See, most notably, Hall and Porter, *The Facts of Life*.
19. Morgan, "Writing the Male Body", 179–93; Dixon, "Sexology and the Occult", 409–39; Janes, *Queer Martyrdom*; Cocks, "Religion and Spirituality", 157–79; Owen, "The Sorcerer and His Apprentice", 99–133.
20. Morgan, "Sex and *Common-Sense*", 158–78, 164.
21. Maynard, *Victorian Discourses on Sexuality*, 5; Mason, *The Making of Victorian Sexual Attitudes*, 31.
22. Morgan, "Writing the Male Body", 179–93, 190.
23. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 9 Apr. 1911. The advertisement appeared in the 8 Apr. 1911 issue of *The British Medical Journal*.
24. J. Arthur Thomson, "Review of *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*", *International Journal of Ethics*, 21:3 (Apr. 1911), 368–9.
25. LAC, GF, 12, Grant to mother, 1 Sep. 1894.
26. Quoted in Rose, *The Edwardian Temperament*, 89, 45.
27. Quoted in Kern, *The Modernist Novel*, 36.
28. For Lawrence, see Maynard, *Victorian Discourses on Sexuality and Religion*, 137.
29. A. Maude Royden, "Modern Love", 14, 18. On the links between the suffrage movement, feminism and sexuality, see Kent, *Sex and Suffrage in Britain, 1860–1914*; Delap, *The Feminist Avant-Garde*; Bland, *Banishing the Beast*.
30. G. Tyrrell, "Reviews—*L'Evolution Créatrice par Henri Bergson*", *The Hibbert Journal*, 6:3 (1909), 435–42. On the *Hibbert Journal* and vitalism more generally, see Rose, *The Edwardian Temperament*, 8–9, 78–81. For a similar approach to the convergence of the spiritual and physical derived from Bergson's thought, see E.M. White, "The Woman Soul", *International Journal of Ethics*, 22:3 (Apr. 1912), 321–4.
31. Simmons, "Modern Sexuality and the Myth of Victorian Repression", 157–77, 161.
32. Gwyneth often heard Harrison's talks. See LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 9 Oct. 1912; *ibid.*, 7:4, G to H, 23 Jan. 1914. For Bergson at Girton, see *Girton Review* (May 1911), 10. For Harrison's thought, see Mills, *Virginia Woolf, Jane Ellen Harrison and the Spirit of Modernist Classicism*, 25.
33. On this score and many more they perfectly exemplify Rose's characterization of Edwardian England, *The Edwardian Temperament*, 62. While heading east from Winnipeg by rail, Harry, on spying a young married couple, wrote thus to Gwyneth: "a new world of feeling and emotions opened up to one, that we had only read of in books". See LAC, LF, 1:5, H to G, 2 May 1912.

34. Wells, *Marriage*, 273.
35. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 7 Nov. 1912.
36. LAC, LF, 1:5, H to G, 25 Feb. 1912.
37. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 29 Oct. 1912.
38. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 29 Oct. 1912.
39. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 23 Oct. 1912.
40. LAC, LF, 7.2, G to H, 2 Dec. 1912. "I love you like that and more, more old treasure of my heart." For elliptical descriptions of the corporeal in Victorian poetry, see Kern, *The Culture of Love*, 91–2.
41. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 9 Oct. 1912.
42. Wells, *Marriage*, 381.
43. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 1 Sep. 1911, n.d. Aug. 1911.
44. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, n.d. Aug. 1911.
45. LAC, LF, 1:4, H to G, 4 Jan. 1912, 25 Feb. 1912.
46. LAC, LF, 1:4, H to G, 25 Feb. 1912.
47. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 7 Nov. 1912.
48. LAC, LF, 7.1, G to H, 4 Nov. 1912. The Canadian-born sex radical Stella Browne, a frequent contributor to the feminist journal, *The Freewoman*, was all too aware of the lack of a language of sex for respectable Edwardian women. On this point, see Bland, "The Shock of the Freewoman Journal", 75–89, 81.
49. LAC, LF, 1.4, H to G, 4 Jan. 1912.
50. LAC, LF, 1.9, H to G, 16 Mar. 1913.
51. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 12 Nov. 1912.
52. LAC, LF, 7.1, G to H, 12 Nov. 1912.
53. Rosner, *Modernity and the Architecture of Private Life*, 11, 17, 62; Padgug, "Sexual Matters: On Conceptualizing Sexuality in History", 3–23, 18.
54. This phrase was borrowed from George Bernard Shaw's play *Getting Married* (1908), which satirized the longstanding view of the English home as a man's refuge and a site for purity, motherhood and innocent childhood, thus forming the foundation for national life. On this point, see Chesterton, *George Bernard Shaw*, 381–2.
55. One of the signs of superior status, as noted in *The Freewoman*, was an aversion to modern mass culture, notably the cinema. Gwyneth frequently inveighed against the tawdriness of the modern picture show. See LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 15 Nov. 1912 for the lack of good taste at the cinematographs. On this point, see Fernihough, *Freewoman and Supermen*, 61.
56. LAC, LF, 1.5, H to G, 25 July 1912. On another occasion he contrasted their "serious conversation" with that of the "vulgar mass of men". *Ibid.*, H to G, 16 May 1912. For a discussion of Shaw and Wells and their con-

- cept of an intellectual aristocracy, see Stone, *Breeding Superman*, 6, 76. Like many Edwardians, Harry, though an advocate of the concept of the autonomous individual, adhered to notions of racial uplift, especially as regards the Chinese labour problem in Vancouver. For these links, see Peppis, *Literature, Politics, and the English Avant-Garde*.
57. James, *The Principles of Psychology*, Vol. I, 229–43. Harry wrote an essay for Sidney Ball at Oxford on the thought of William James, a close personal friend of his tutor. For the strain of practical psychology that envisioned self-transformation by harnessing the unconscious mind, see Thomson, “The Popular, the Practical and the Professional”, 115–32, 121.
  58. LAC, LF, 1:5, H to G, 7 July 1912.
  59. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 16 Nov. 1912.
  60. For the importance of struggle in evolutionary thought, see Christie, “Prophecy and the Principles of Social Life”.
  61. LAC, LF, 7.1, G to H, 2 Nov. 1912. On this point, see Rose, *The Edwardian Temperament*, 107. One of the meanings of aesthete referred to men who did not want to know the actual woman. See Ledger, *The New Woman*, 110.
  62. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 5 Nov. 1912.
  63. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 27 Oct. 1912. For the phrase, by which Carpenter meant sex as a means to produce a new personality, see Carpenter, *The Drama of Love and Death*, 45.
  64. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 5 Nov. 1912.
  65. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 27 Oct. 1912.
  66. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 5 Nov. 1912.
  67. LAC, LF, 7.1, G to H, 27 Oct. 1912.
  68. LAC, LF, 7.1, G to H, 27 Oct. 1912.
  69. Re-Bartlett, *The Coming Order*, 33, 53.
  70. MMUA, Vera Brittain Papers, Box 50, Diary, 9 Apr. 1915.
  71. A New Subscriber, “Clearing the Ground”, *TF*, 22 Feb. 1912; “Review of Havelock Ellis, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, Vol. VI: *Sex in Relation to Society*”, *Eugenics Review*, 2:2 (July 1910), 149.
  72. “The New Morality”, *The Freewoman*, 4:1 (14 Dec. 1911), 62.
  73. “A Plea for Psychology”, *The Freewoman*, 1:10 (25 Jan. 1912), 182; A Would-Be Freewoman, “The Individualism and the ‘Normal’ Woman”, *The Freewoman*, 21 Mar. 1912; “Interpretations of Sex”, *The Freewoman*, 1:24 (2 May 1912), 462; “Interpretations of Sex, IV”, *The Freewoman*, 2:27 (23 May 1912), 2; “The New Morality—II”, *The Freewoman*, 1:6 (28 Dec. 1911); “The New Morality”, 62; Arthur Hewson, “The Serpent”, *The Freewoman*, 2:1 (23 May 1912), 18.

74. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 2 Nov. 1912.
75. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 5 Nov. 1912.
76. Eagleton, "Self-Undoing Subjects", 242–69. Havelock Ellis communicated Freud's views on the need to eschew repression to a British audience. See Crozier ed., *Sexual Inversion*, 25–7, 71.
77. LAC, LF, 7.1, G to H, 5 Nov. 1912. For the renunciation of self as signifying an older view of marriage, see Caine, "Love and Romance in Interwar British Women's Autobiography", 20–40, 27.
78. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 29 Aug. 1911.
79. Nelson, *Boys Will Be Girls*, 25.
80. LAC, LF, 1:4, H to G, 4 Jan. 1912, in which he exhorted her not to develop the soul at the expense of the body.
81. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 28 Oct. 1912.
82. Harrison, *Alpha and Omega*, 11, 19.
83. Key, *The Morality of Woman and Other Essays*, 10. By contrast, New Women literature had presented women in terms of their psychological development rather than their maternal instincts. See Gagnier, *Individualism, Decadence and Globalization*, 71.
84. W.A. Ross and the Rev. G.W. Allen, "Self-Assertion in Nietzsche and Self-Surrender in Boehme: A Contrast and an Identity", *The Hibbert Journal*, 8 (1909–10), 411–27, 415. This more strident individualism formed a part of the political thought of Ernest Barker, who was a tutor of Harry's at Oxford. See Stapleton, *Englishness and the Study of Politics*, 24.
85. Collini, "The Idea of 'Character' in Victorian Political Thought", 29–50. For an argument that sees a more decisive break with Victorian notions of character among Edwardians, see Levenson, *Modernism and the Fate of Individuality*, 6, 10–12.
86. Key, *The Morality of Woman*, 10. For Key's influence on English feminism, see Delap, *The Feminist Avant-Garde*, 37–8. Key's concept of the "burning coals of sex and love" was repeated later by Gwyneth, when marking the anniversary of their sexual coupling at Borth.
87. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, n.d. Aug. 1911.
88. Elsie Clews Parsons, "Feminism and Sex Ethics", *International Journal of Ethics* (1916), 462–5, 464. For this strand of feminist thinking in England, see Gorham, "Liberty and Love?", 247–72, 250.
89. GCA, GCPP, "Memoirs of Dora Pym", Michaelmas Term, 1911. On Harry's use of the term, see LAC, LF, 1:5, H to G, 7 July 1912, 1 Sep. 1912. In seeing it as a process of continual adaptation, Harry's modernist construction of their courtship closely resembled the attitudes to love expounded by sexologists like Richard von Krafft-Ebing, who also identified sex as the most important engine of psychological and emotional development. On this point, see Oosterhuis, *Stepchildren of Nature*,

63. Krafft-Ebing also believed that physical pleasure and spiritual fulfillment went hand in hand.
90. LAC, LF, 7:1, Gwyneth to Harry, 8 Oct. 1912.
91. She adhered to such views even though she would have been exposed to alternate models in the books she had read. For example, E.M. Forster made it clear in *A Room With a View* that Lucy Honeychurch saw passion as central to a loving and growing relationship. See Beauman, *E.M. Forster*, 146.
92. LAC, LF, 1:5, H to G, 25 July 1912. Havelock Ellis similarly believed that he should marry only after acquiring a full understanding of how the relationship would develop. See Brandon, *The New Women and the Old Men*, 101.
93. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 25 Jan. 1912.
94. Broughton, *Men of Letters, Writing Lives*, 136.
95. Thomson, *Psychological Subjects*, 1–5.
96. A. Barrat Brown, “Intuition”, *International Journal of Ethics*, 24:3 (Apr. 1914), 290–1.
97. Thomson, *Psychological Subjects*, 61.
98. Steven, *The Psychology of the Christian Soul*, 6–7, 14, 31, 51.
99. Campbell, *The New Theology*, 30–2.
100. Rev. Alexander Brown, “The Over-Emphasis of Sin”, *The Hibbert Journal*, 8 (1909–10), 192. Another favourite author of Harry’s was the Cambridge classicist T.R. Glover, who had earlier taught at the Presbyterian college, Queen’s University, Kingston, Ontario. Glover served as a model for Harry and likewise emphasized the role of the subliminal consciousness in the development of the higher human being. See *The Nature and Purpose of Christian Society*, 76.
101. Wilson D. Wallis, “The Problem of Personality”, *International Journal of Ethics*, 24:2 (Jan. 1914), 201–15, 201; Charles W. Saper, “Ethics as a Science”, *International Journal of Ethics*, 24:3 (Apr. 1914), 265–81, 273.
102. LAC, LF, 1:5, H to G, 10 July 1912.
103. LAC, LF, 1:5, H to G, 7 May 1912.
104. LAC, LF, 1:5, H to G, 7 Sep. 1912.
105. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, n.d. Sep. 1911.
106. LAC, LF, 1:5, H to G, 7 Sep. 1912. There was only one occasion where Harry expressed doubts about introspection, writing in the winter of 1912 that it made him feel like “a sort of in-growing army officer”. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 4 Feb. 1912.
107. LAC, LF, 1:5, H to G, 30 May 1912.
108. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 21 Aug. 1911.
109. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 7 Nov. 1912.
110. LAC, LF, 1:4, H to G, 11 Feb. 1912.



111. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 10 Nov. 1912.
112. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to "My Own Darling Harry", 12 Oct. 1912. The original iteration of the feminist trope of a "room of one's own" was enunciated over a decade before Virginia Woolf's celebrated lecture at Cambridge by Jane Ellen Harrison in her plea that wives needed a private space beyond the drawing room to pursue their own intellectual development. This was conveyed in her 1913 talk to the London Sociological Society, "Scientiae Sacra Fames". See Mills, *Virginia Woolf, Jane Ellen Harrison*, 117.
113. LAC, LF, 1:5, H to G, 30 May 1912.
114. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 25 Oct. 1912.
115. LAC, Grant Papers, Vol. 5, Grant to Maude, 3 Aug. 1910.
116. LAC, LF, 1:5, H to G, 8 July 1912.
117. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 6 Nov. 1912.
118. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 12 Oct. 1912. This peroration about her relationship with Gladys only served to further enflame Harry's jealousy.
119. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 8 Oct. 1912.
120. LAC, LF, 1:5, H to G, 7 July 1912.
121. LAC, LF, 1:6, Harry to Gwyneth, 6 Nov. 1912.
122. LAC, LF, 1:5, Harry to Gwyneth, 28 Aug. 1912.
123. LAC, LF, 1:5, H to G, 28 Aug. 1912.
124. See Harrison, "Unanimism and Conversion", in Harrison, *Alpha and Omega*, 73, 83, 99, 101. For Havelock Ellis, see Oram, "Sex is an Accident: Feminism, Science and the Radical Sexual Theory of Urania, 1915-40", 214-30, 223.
125. LAC, LF, 1:5, H to G, 16 May 1912.
126. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 17 Aug. 1911. This latter discussion refers back to his conclusion, a year earlier, that bodily contact would make their letters more understandable.
127. LAC, LF, 1:5, H to G, 1 Sep. 1912. In this regard, Harry's attitudes closely mirrored those of the Greenwich village male sex radicals who, despite their language of equality, assailed their female partners for undermining their egos. See Trimberger, "Feminism, Men and Modern Love: Greenwich Village, 1900-1925", 169-89, 172, 180-1.
128. LAC, LF, 11:4, H to father, 10 Oct. 1911, 13 Nov. 1911.
129. UBCA, HTLFP, Box 9, file 14, "Personal Influence, 2 Nov. 1911".
130. LAC, LF, 1:3, H to Gwyneth, 23 Feb. 1912. For the difficulties occasioned by the new "form criticism" of the New Testament, see Gauvreau, *The Evangelical Century*, 230-3.
131. LAC, LF, 11:4, H to father, 22 Nov. 1911.
132. LAC, LF, 11:5, H to mother, 18 Jan. 1912.
133. LAC, LF, 11:5, H to mother, 12 Feb. 1912.

134. LAC, LF, 11:5, H to mother, 6 Mar. 1912.
135. LAC, LF, 11:5, H to father, 19 Mar. 1912, 11 Apr. 1912.
136. LAC, LF, 11:6, H to parents, 24 Sep. 1912; *ibid.*, H to mother, 27 Sep. 1912.
137. LAC, LF, 11:6, H to mother, 4 Oct. 1912.
138. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to Gwyneth, 16 Nov. 1912.
139. LAC, LF, 11:6, H to mother, 3 Nov. 1912.
140. LAC, LF, 11:6, H to mother, 13 Oct. 1912.
141. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to Gwyneth, 1 Nov. 1912. For her part, Gwyneth seems to have been troubled by his recounting of the “topical evening” and especially by his long conversation with Eliza MacEwen, a friend of hers from Oxford. It is unknown if this was the “carnally-minded hypocrite” Harry castigated in his letter.
142. LAC, LF, 11:6, H to mother, 13 Oct. 1912, 9 Nov. 1912, 17 Nov. 1912; *ibid.*, H to father, 11 Nov. 1912.
143. LAC, LF, 11:6, H to mother, 13 Oct. 1912.
144. LAC, LF, 11:6, H to mother, 17 Nov. 1912.
145. LAC, LF, 11:6, H to mother, 23 Nov. 1912. An engagement was no longer viewed as a secure pathway to marriage and several of his friends, including Murray Brooks, experienced broken engagements. See LAC, LF, 11:2, H to parents, 6 Nov. 1910. Like Harry, a large number of the Cambridge Apostles suffered intense mental strain during courtship. See Lubenow, *The Cambridge Apostles*.
146. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 20 Feb. 1912.
147. LAC, LF, 1:5, H to G, 27 June 1912.
148. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 7 Jan. 1912.
149. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 28 Jan. 1912.
150. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 17 Nov. 1912.
151. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 16 Nov. 1912.
152. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 16 Nov. 1912.
153. Sussmann, *Victorian Masculinities*, 4.
154. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 27 Oct. 1912; *ibid.*, 1:6, H to G, 25 Oct. 1912, in which he also speaks of his kingly prerogative.
155. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 25 Oct. 1912.
156. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 16 Oct. 1912.
157. LAC, LF, 1:5, H to G, 10 July 1912.
158. LAC, LF, 1:5, H to G, 14 July 1912.
159. LAC, LF, 1:5, H to G, n.d Sep. 1912, 7 Sep. 1912.
160. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 16 Oct. 1912.
161. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 19 Oct. 1912, 22 Oct. 1912, 24 Oct. 1912.
162. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 17 Oct. 1912.
163. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 29 Oct. 1912.

164. Froude, *Thomas Carlyle*, 296, 359, 363. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 31 Oct. 1912.
165. McCabe, *George Bernard Shaw*, 25, 82, 92–9. See also, George Bernard Shaw, *Getting Married* (1908). An exponent of female emancipation, he castigated modern marriage as a continuation of sex slavery, thus reflecting women’s suffrage propaganda from the 1890s.
166. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 4 Nov. 1912.
167. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 11 Nov. 1912.
168. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 1 Nov. 1912.
169. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 31 Oct. 1912.
170. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 29 Oct. 1912.
171. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 28 Jan. 1912.
172. Oppenheim, “*Shattered Nerves*”, 163; Micale, *Hysterical Men*, 212–13.
173. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 1 Nov. 1912.
174. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, n.d. Nov. 1912. He also joked about her fat hands and her big feet. George Bernard Shaw linked large feet with Amazons, see McCabe, *George Bernard Shaw*, 112.
175. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 21 Nov. 1912.
176. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 4 Nov. 1912.
177. Carpenter, *The Drama of Love and Death*.
178. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 4 Nov. 1912.
179. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 8 Nov. 1912.
180. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 7 Nov. 1912.
181. Quoted in Delap, “The Superman”, 125. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 13 Nov. 1912.
182. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 10 Nov. 1912.
183. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 17 Nov. 1912.
184. LAC, LF, 1:7, H to G, 23 Nov. 1912; *ibid.*, 7:1, G to H, 25 Nov. 1912, 26 Nov. 1912.
185. Oppenheim, “*Shattered Nerves*”, 141–80.
186. LAC, LF, 11:6, H to parents, 8 Dec. 1912.
187. LAC, LF, 13:6, mother to H, 14 Jan. 1912, father to H, 2 Apr. 1912; *ibid.*, 14:20, Lady Murray to H, 24 Nov. 1912.
188. LAC, LF, 1:9, H to Gwyneth, 4 Dec. 1912.
189. LAC, LF, 1:9, H to Gwyneth, 14 Mar. 1913; *ibid.*, 7:2, Gwyneth to Harry, 2 Dec. 1912.
190. For the classic statement, see Chadwick, *The Secularization of the European Mind in the Nineteenth Century*.
191. LAC, LF, 1:9, H to G, 15 Feb. 1913.
192. LAC, LF, H to G, 1:10, 24 July 1913.

193. For the concept of “diffusive Christianity”, see Cox, *English Churches in a Secular Society*; and for its broader application as the common religion of soldiers on the Western Front, see Snape, *God and the British Soldier*, 29–97.
194. For the blending of evangelism and sociology, see Christie and Gauvreau, *A Full-Orbed Christianity*.
195. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 16 Nov. 1912.
196. LAC, LF, 1:3, H to G, 15 Jan. 1912.
197. LAC, LF, 1:9, H to G, 25 Mar. 1913.
198. LAC, LF, 1:9, H to G, 30 Mar. 1913.
199. LAC, LF, 1:9, H to G, 4 Mar. 1913.
200. LAC, LF, 1:9, H to G, 15 Feb. 1913.



## CHAPTER 5

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# The Gendered Body: Marriage and “A Home of My Own”

*“Why, praps after all I’m the woman, and you’re the man; the traditional order of things has been reversed ... Oh woe to us, woe, woe to me; a picture of a hen-pecked husband.”*  
Harry to Gwyneth, 28 August 1912

*“It’s a woman’s business to get married as soon as possible and a man’s to remain unmarried as long as he can.”*  
George Bernard Shaw, quoted in Maud Churton Braby, *Modern Marriage and How to Bear It* (1908)

(LAC, LF, 1:5, H to G, 28 Aug. 1912; Braby, *Modern Marriage and How to Bear It*, 26)

It was with a mixture of elation and frustration that Gwyneth Murray pedalled the streets of Cambridge upon returning from teaching at the Perse School for Girls where she had accepted the post of mathematics mistress in January 1913. As she informed her fiancé, Harry Logan, “I’m ever so much more satisfied with my life here than I was at home.”<sup>1</sup> The advocacy of work for educated young women prior to marriage had become commonplace in Edwardian Britain and was recommended for a variety of reasons. Olive Schreiner endorsed the idea of “independent remunerative toil” for the “modern woman of the dominant class”, not as a way of radically changing the ideals of marriage, as R.A Fisher and

C.S. Stock warned,<sup>2</sup> but as a prophylactic against “sex-parasitism” because it allowed women on the cusp of marriage to financially contribute to the partnership. By arguing in *Women and Labour* (1912) for employment for women prior to marriage,<sup>3</sup> Schreiner, while proffering no fundamentally radical claims for women, was responding to Cicely Hamilton’s charge in her well-known book *Marriage as a Trade* (1909) that women’s inferiority stemmed from society’s insistence that marriage was the “sole pursuit and sphere” of women’s ambitions, and because of the lack of well remunerated employment for women, they were forced to marry in order to be supported.<sup>4</sup> Schreiner hoped that valorizing work for single women would enhance their status within marriage. This view was echoed by Edith A. Browne in the pages of *The Freewoman*. She highlighted the fact that there were various forms of domestic tyranny, and thus recommended that youth, both male and female, seek to earn a living so that they could in the first instance evade the baneful demands of “paternal despotism”. Browne was particularly exercised, as was Gwyneth herself, that fathers should not “provoke their children to wrath” by treating them like infants. She concluded, therefore, that in “all grades of the middle-classes, it has become quite the respectable thing nowadays for girls to take up some form of paying employment when they leave school”. However, she also maintained that the ideal of the family as a “sacred institution” could only be brought to fruition by permitting married women to continue to work throughout their marriage. Through the wages of wives, couples could effectively employ a good housekeeper, and once the household was thus rendered a comfortable and congenial haven, men would abandon the homosocial environment of their club and seek the intellectual and moral companionship of their wives. With well-paid employment such as teaching, the vacuous “dolly” kind of wife would become a thing of the past and bright young women would no longer have to suffer the ignominy of marrying men their intellectual inferiors. Thus by seeking employment both prior to and during marriage, the modern woman could accomplish “a revolution in family life” by no longer tolerating a husband who tried to “play the despot”.<sup>5</sup>

Gwyneth’s decision to apply for a teaching post without dutifully consulting her parents had contributed to a new sense of self-confidence, while her obvious ability to inspire her young charges brought a clear feeling of satisfaction and maturity both because it allowed her to use her mind and a new-found sense of usefulness which greatly

relieved her previous bouts of depression. As she exulted, "Oh this is a great old world Harry, and 'to be young is very heaven.'"<sup>6</sup> However, her sense of work as a panacea was quickly tempered, not only by her discovery that some of her students were frivolous young "flappers",<sup>7</sup> but because the teaching staff did not provide that kind of intimate female companionship as was customary at Cambridge, largely because, as she informed Harry, they were mostly "real old fossils—40 or thereabouts"—with whom she felt compelled to perform rather than reveal her "true self".<sup>8</sup> What began as a protest against the confined life of her parents' home in Oxford where she claimed she was treated by her father like a four-year-old,<sup>9</sup> soon began to pall when boredom quickly set in. Although the *Perse* drew from all social classes, a mixture of town and gown, Gwyneth discovered that not only were her students often unruly and difficult, but that Miss Kennett, the headmistress, was demanding and closely monitored the behaviour of her teachers, imposing a set of quasi-parental constraints upon her new employee. In the final analysis her remuneration of £40 per term did not, in Gwyneth's estimation, make up for the oppressive and paternalistic attitude of her headmistress and the expectation that she defer to older teachers. She certainly did not view the school as a hospitable environment for the cultivation of the modern or "new-fashioned"<sup>10</sup> ideas of youthful self-expression, for, as Gwyneth pointedly remarked, "age does make a difference".<sup>11</sup>

Not only did the *Perse* fail to live up to Gwyneth's memories of good fellowship at Girton College, but she quickly realized that teaching was merely a temporary way-station on the way to marriage. After the first flush of enthusiasm, ennui rapidly set in, and she was soon weary of "cramming maths into people's heads" and, despite earning "money of my own" for the first time, after a particularly onerous day of teaching, followed by the tedium of housekeeping for women with whom she felt little affinity, she begged Harry to stop "hanging about" and make a home for her.<sup>12</sup> Here Gwyneth's sentiments closely resembled those of her contemporary, Vera Brittain, who, once she fell in love, remarked to her diary: "I am afraid that to care for a man makes one more impatient of girls in general than ever."<sup>13</sup> Gwyneth's elation about being a woman "out in the world" soon evaporated when she received a plaintive missive from Harry. As she informed him, upon reading his letter her spirits sank and "all the glamour fades out of my day". Despite her self-image as a modern and

intellectually exceptional woman with a new “vision of life”<sup>14</sup> defined by intellectual achievement and financial independence, like Vera Brittain,<sup>15</sup> she was somewhat nonplussed to discover that when push came to shove, devotion to a man and the attendant desire for marriage and motherhood trumped aspirations for a career and waged work. “It has been an eye-opener for me,” Gwyneth confessed, “and a blow to my budding self-esteem, and sense of independence to find what a thoroughly dependent person I am after all where my happiness is concerned.”<sup>16</sup>

Even though she actively supported the cause of women’s suffrage, believed in equality between the sexes, and while at Cambridge had been inculcated with the belief that women’s freedom flowed from pursuits outside the domestic sphere, Gwyneth’s self-identity became increasingly bound up with love and marriage when she witnessed the nuptials of her beloved brother Jowett to her old Cambridge friend Mary Robertson in June 1913. Their marriage compelled her to discard a modern view of marriage founded upon an ideal of female freedom of choice for a Victorian one, in which she passively waited for her husband to decide when they would marry. The full realization that her own happiness lay not with her work but in her role as a wife and mother was forcefully brought home to her when she shared a train compartment with the newlyweds on their way to their honeymoon in the Lake District, where, as she observed, “I have Joles and Mary’s happiness flaunted in my face.”<sup>17</sup> This exasperating experience gave rise to a combined sense of envy and mortification when confronted with the fact that she was completely in the dark as to Harry’s plans for their future. As she ruefully informed Harry, “I am an impatient critter am I not? I am getting more so too as I get more bored with life here ... remember me waiting impatiently over here.”<sup>18</sup> However, her sense of frustration quickly turned to rage when Harry unilaterally decided to put off their wedding for at least another year, on the specious grounds that she was “too jolly happy”<sup>19</sup> with her teaching for him to take her away from it. Never one to accept Harry’s foolish behaviour sitting down, Gwyneth fired off “a red-hot letter”<sup>20</sup> excoriating him for being a “heartless specimen” for failing to consider her point of view, when he put off their nuptials until 1916. Alluding to the widely-discussed issue of “sex antagonism”,<sup>21</sup> Gwyneth remarked that men were “queer creatures”:

Because I am or have been very happy at my teaching you seem to think it will make no odds to me if I get married tomorrow or in ten years time. Shows how little you understand women even yet. But I doubt if you really



believed it. You just grasped my enjoyment of teaching as a sop to throw to your conscience to keep it quiet! You knew jolly well in your heart of hearts how I should kick at being put off for still another year. It is like a kind of nightmare: however fast the days go by it never gets nearer than the year after next and I find myself wondering if I shall get married at all on this side of 30. You carefully omit any definite mention of dates. You really are the limit Harry aren't you? According to original plans you ought to be through your work of preparation and ready to settle down by now you old rotter.<sup>22</sup>

A year earlier Harry had urged Gwyneth to take up a teaching post because, after his disappointment in finding her lacking in sex appeal after their face-to-face meeting in the autumn of 1912, he believed that new experiences out in the world would make her a more self-confident and interesting prospective companion. Aside from this largely selfish goal of making his own life more stimulating, Harry was greatly concerned to remove her from what he considered the excessive influence of her parents. Harry was caught on the horns of a dilemma: on the one hand he was greatly attracted to the Murrays' high social and intellectual status within Oxford society, but he was studiously aware that their relationship was an archetype of George Bernard Shaw's vision of a "misalliance", a marriage doomed to failure because of the vast gulf in terms of class and culture. His correspondence was peppered with literary references to these ill-assorted unions: not only did he read E.F. Benson's *The Osbornes* in which the protagonists, Claude and Dora, had to navigate their class differences,<sup>23</sup> but in a particularly revealing episode, he told Gwyneth about the "Ibsenish play"<sup>24</sup> written by his former roommate, Arthur Yates, which featured a failed romance between a Rhodes Scholar, the son of "a nobody somewhere in America" and the daughter of a knighted Oxford professor, which endured many tribulations because of the disapproval of her father. Not only was the figure of the professor a thinly disguised reference to Sir James Murray, but the character of the "foppish, brainless, well-bred churchman" purported to be Harry's own father.<sup>25</sup> Gwyneth, for her part, was not blind to the role played in their relationship by her family's high status, but the stern correction that Sir James administered to Harry after he broke off his engagement sufficiently emboldened her to admonish her intended in a frequent and forceful manner, calling him at various junctures heartless, selfish, unmanly and a spoilt baby, all the while, at the behest of her father, demanding that he give an accounting of himself and his prospects.<sup>26</sup> In obvious irritation with his prevaricating, she exhorted

him “for goodness sake choose some sphere where you will be permanently satisfied and keen” for “I have no patience with the hangers back”,<sup>27</sup> a piece of advice which directly echoed that proffered by Sir James Murray who enjoined Harry to only pursue theology if he felt a distinct calling. Notably he also counselled Harry to listen to his daughter’s words of wisdom.<sup>28</sup> Gwyneth’s new-found assertiveness surely reflected her knowledge that her father could at any time charge Harry with breach of promise and ruin his reputation, and it was a sign of the altered power dynamic of their relationship that she could declare, albeit in a jeering tone: “Glad the bachelor life hasn’t palled yet—only don’t fall in love with it, because it’s too late now. No escape from the matrimonial net!”<sup>29</sup>

Harry’s only strategy was the Fabian one of delay. Despite perturbations that the “slow-encircling tentacles of Cambridge”,<sup>30</sup> where friends and employment might all too forcibly persuade Gwyneth to become “wedded to independence”,<sup>31</sup> he continued to prevaricate, arguing that he was not yet ready for marriage, blaming her in fact for having “so raised my ideal in the past two years that you have made me absolutely dissatisfied with marriage until I feel perfectly confident to be able to lead in a clear cut path of work and life”.<sup>32</sup> Harry’s reticence about the conjugal bond was, according to Maud Churton Braby, a common feature of modern life. An opponent of older feminist ideas which celebrated the independent life of the single woman, Braby wrote from a eugenicist perspective, castigating the spinster as unnatural and degenerate. In seeking to reanimate the marital state as a site for the expression of feminine freedom, she made a plea against long engagements, espoused marriage based on mutual affection even though she fully acknowledged that “sex is the pivot on which the world turns”, and recommended that women not marry until they had gained knowledge of both eugenics and the world at large. Men, on the other hand, were encouraged to pledge their troth only after they had “hammered out for [themselves] a philosophy” and gain a “knowledge of women”, conundrums that continued to plague Harry, who still claimed to suffer from a lack of self-knowledge. Harry’s constant refrain between 1913 and 1916 was that the prerequisites of “modern marriage” were money, position, solidarity—and especially the latter.<sup>33</sup>

Braby worried about the modern tendency to vilify marriage, a problem she blamed on men. As women’s horizons had broadened and their intellects developed, men resorted, as did Harry, to constant fault-finding and contributed to the growing conflict between the sexes by claiming that

they could find no woman to live up to their ideal. Women, concluded Braby, were open-minded in seeking a life companion, while a man had to marry "the woman" of his dreams.<sup>34</sup> However, just as cultural commentators like Olive Schreiner and Edith Browne had maintained, now that she was the major contributor to that indispensable passport to marriage, a suitable nest egg, to the tune of £20 per month, Gwyneth was all too happy to express herself as to what kind of "reform you deem necessary in the foundations as in any part of the structures upon my side of the citadel",<sup>35</sup> as Harry had demanded of her in the spring of 1913. When Harry attempted to justify his delay by appealing to the older Victorian ideology of the male breadwinner who must support both the household and his wife's expenditures on "millinery and cosmetics"<sup>36</sup> which, he argued, was the reason that they would not be able to afford a house, she retorted that she was at that time the main contributor to the family finances. Armed with a salary, she declared that she had lost her sense of awe of him now that she found herself "a woman on the same level as you, a mere man!" So when he failed to save for their marriage, remained undecided about teaching classics, and found it difficult "to keep a tight grip upon filthy lucre", she retorted that they had both "looked round and waited long enough", that she was more than willing to live in a flat, and even threatened to arrive on his doorstep in Vancouver and "make you hustle and settle down".<sup>37</sup> As these often fruitless exhortations took their toll on the accommodating Gwyneth, she reminded him what she had given up in order to marry him: his abandonment of a career as a clergyman and professor, she explained, had prevented her from assuming the kind of important role modern women were now taking in church affairs,<sup>38</sup> and she had given up missionary work in China alongside her brother Joles.

Indeed, the couple's correspondence during these three years illustrated the tensions many young, educated Edwardian women were experiencing in choosing between marriage and the satisfactions of a career. As Gwyneth pointedly reminded him, "Marriage isn't a thing which I should fall into for its own sake. There are other vocations open and congenial enough to me." However, her conclusion, that "Love conquers a multitude of sins", expressing her realization that "having once fallen in love with you I can't fall out again, and the edge is taken off other vocations for me now",<sup>39</sup> indicated a deeper ambiguity within the experience of Edwardian women yearning for modernity, one that pitted an older feminist heritage of independence through educational achievement against a newer feminist current that insisted on self-realization through marriage and home life.

Gwyneth's way out of this dilemma was the hope of coming to Canada, after Harry's assurance that many women worked in professional life after marriage, so that she could avoid the trap of simply "ordering the household" or being an intellectual help-meet dedicated to his own career advancement.<sup>40</sup>

Gwyneth Murray hailed from one of those "abnormally enlightened homes" later referred to by Vera Brittain in her history of Oxford<sup>41</sup> which contrasted so volubly with Brittain's own family circumstances. In the household of Sir James and Lady Ada Murray, female intellectual endeavour was not only valued, but actively encouraged. Indeed, all the Murray children were compelled to learn to read at an early age so that they could begin working for their father, sorting dictionary slips for 6d a week,<sup>42</sup> although it seems that Gwyneth managed to avoid being pressed into service for the *Oxford English Dictionary*. The life of the mind was front and centre in the Murray household: not only was their home filled with books but all the children participated in the Sunnyside Debating Society and learned to draw and to play a musical instrument. Then, there was a steady stream of prominent academic friends from Balliol College where Sir James Murray lectured, including the Master, Benjamin Jowett, for whom Gwyneth's favourite brother was named, A.V. Dicey, Professor of English Law, and the eminent Classicist, Robinson Ellis, as well as a constant stream of overseas professors. The fact that Sir James Murray was awarded honorary degrees from nine universities and each of the children who had attended university had garnered firsts or triple firsts, firmly established the family within the precincts of what Noel Annan has termed "the intellectual aristocracy".<sup>43</sup> Gwyneth's older sister, Hilda, a graduate of Somerville College Oxford as well as Trinity College, Dublin, where she studied Modern Languages, had a stellar academic career as did many of her male siblings. However, it is significant that the only two members of the family to study outside Oxford were the girls Hilda and Gwyneth. Hilda shared her father's interests in philology, teaching English and Germanic philosophy at Royal Holloway College in London, and later became vice-mistress and director of English and Philology at Girton College.<sup>44</sup> Like her sisters, Gwyneth was educated at the Oxford High School for Girls, which had the benefit both of low fees and proximity to Sunnyside, located as it was on the Banbury Road. There eminent visitors such as Dr. Charles Dodgson, Professor of Mathematics at Oxford, better known as Lewis Carroll, author of *Alice in Wonderland*, came to speak. Indeed, he seems to have made such an impression upon Gwyneth that

one of her most cherished possessions remained his novel *Sylvie and Bruno* and throughout her Cambridge career, her nickname was Alice.<sup>45</sup> It is unknown if Dodgson's visit influenced her choice of career, but it was most likely that the example of the headmistress, Miss Rosalind Haig-Brown, a graduate of Girton in mathematics, played a large role in her choice of Cambridge which she entered as a scholarship student in 1909 along with Eileen Power, the celebrated historian of medieval England, who had also attended the Oxford High School for Girls. She graduated in 1912 with a First in the prestigious Mathematics Tripos, an achievement which particularly rankled her fiancé Harry who had barely scraped by with a third in classics from Oxford.

Girton was a pioneering institution of intellectual feminism, founded in 1869 by Emily Davies, whose chief aim was to produce female graduates who could compete on the same terms as Cambridge men. This vision continued to animate the college even after Davies had retired and even during Gwyneth's residence the college songs focussed upon academic excellence and exuded a pride in women's equality with men. As the ditty "Lords of the Camus" declared: "For Girton has shown us again and again/ that her students can equal, nay distance the men", with a chorus in which the women would sing "Justice to Girton, come grant the degree!", a reference to the fact that women continued to be barred from taking degrees until 1948. Other songs emphasized a central theme of the college, namely a seamless connection between female higher education and the attainment of suffrage embodied in the life of Emily Davies herself. This was forcefully evoked in "The Girton Pioneers", which proclaimed "And when the vote is won, girls/ and women get degrees we'll cry 'Long live the three, girls/ Who Shewed the way to these!'"<sup>46</sup> Given the strong emphasis on both academic and political equality for women and the persistent resistance of Oxbridge men to accord women any recognition beyond that of "honoured guests" at best or "clumsy masculine bluestockings"<sup>47</sup> at worst, it is not surprising that Harry and his intimate friend John Thomson mocked the Girton songs that peppered Gwyneth's correspondence in the faint hope that they might be converted to the suffrage cause.<sup>48</sup>

Despite the campaign to preserve Oxford and Cambridge as sites for the creation of a male elite, the various women's colleges attempted as best they could, on drastically limited budgets, to create a similar atmosphere as the men's colleges: they encouraged high intellectual standards through a system of tutorials; there were athletics such as tennis, field hockey, and swimming; a wide range of entertainments and societies,

including a debating society and the all-important suffrage society, established to address a range of social and political issues including discussions of empire, poverty, the role of the state and capital punishment; and there were talks from eminent female scholars such as the classicist Jane Ellen Harrison on female independence and Maude Royden on settlement work, as well as lectures on the work of Henri Bergson.<sup>49</sup> Further, although formal educational programmes remained traditional in their emphases, informal discussions between friends and dons considered topics such as psychology, spiritualism, ghosts, dreams and psychic phenomena, as Vera Brittain recorded in her diary.<sup>50</sup> In developing the entire personality of young women, Girton College functioned, much as Emily Davies had intended, as a counterweight to the strictures both of parental indulgence and familial despotism, in allowing women to develop themselves as individuals, in a manner similar to other women's colleges. As Vera Brittain observed of Somerville College, Oxford, "far from turning out a type [college] seems if anything to emphasize what is individual & make one want to emphasize it oneself".<sup>51</sup>

For most young women, the highlight of their College years was the forging of new ties of friendship which created a sphere of emotional intimacy and sociability beyond familial relationships. This was powerfully conveyed in the set of poems and reminiscences collected by E. Brenda List, in the commemorative volume *"Girton, My Friend"*, who wrote extensively about her friendships, loves and honeymoons with women at Girton. Significantly, however, these were viewed as a prelude to heterosexual love and marriage, for she concluded in "The Betrothal" with the reflection that "So his deep love and his manhood,/ Gave my womanhood birth,"<sup>52</sup> a concept often returned to by Gwyneth herself. Like her contemporary, Margaret Cole who entered Girton in 1911,<sup>53</sup> Gwyneth relished her large circle of friends at Cambridge, who, by contrast with her remote relationship with her sisters and parents, drew her out of her reserved disposition, and nudged her towards greater emotional frankness. Eleanor Quebell, her first friend outside her own year to "propose" marriage to her, had, as she remarked to Harry, "a genuine affection & admiration for your baby G".<sup>54</sup> In describing her intense emotional connections to several close friends, some of which she characterized as involving heights of "intimacy and sometimes passion",<sup>55</sup> Gwyneth seems, at this point, to have been oblivious to the increasing opprobrium attached to such friendships, though she later came to see them as threats to what

she maintained must be a more exclusive relationship with her husband. This despite the fact that Harry had made innuendos about the "pretended taste of masculinity"<sup>56</sup>—here paraphrasing Havelock Ellis' concept of "artificial homosexuality"<sup>57</sup>—at their all-female dances. It is entirely plausible that Gwyneth would have known about the much-discussed relationship between the exceptionally attractive Eileen Power, her old Oxford High School classmate and Girton contemporary, and Gladys Jones, when it was bruited about that Power was being "masculine" because of her love for a woman.<sup>58</sup> Having closely perused Edward Carpenter's *Love's Coming of Age*, she would have encountered the chapter he added in 1906 on the "Intermediate Sex", which featured a portrait of the modern lesbian as an overeducated, cigarette-smoking woman in bad attire, a refurbishment of the stereotypical Girton "New Woman" from the 1890s.<sup>59</sup> Certainly Vera Brittain, perhaps because of her boarding school experience, was well acquainted with the cultural associations between "violent adoration" for other women and what she termed "the strenuous & masculine type". Even prior to going up to Oxford in 1914, Brittain, in the midst of discovering her passionate love for Roland Leighton, had reacted in an adverse fashion to the "oppressiveness ... of a lot of women together", because she believed that it gave rise to "sentimental mawkishness" of "grand passions".<sup>60</sup>

Where Brittain saw female passions as enervating love between the sexes, Gwyneth discerned a greater interplay and complementarity between her love for women and her physical attraction for Harry. Of Augusta Green, she stated that she was "one of the very few people whom I find it easy to talk to, partly I think because she is so very expansive herself" and one who would always give her "a candid opinion of my progress", advising her about her career choices, and always ready to give Gwyneth "a pretty straight talking to about my reserve".<sup>61</sup> Stella Browne, the Canadian-born sex radical, validated erotic attachments to friends prior to marriage, on the basis that it developed one's emotional and sexual maturity, echoing Havelock's Ellis' contention that in the majority of cases homosexuality naturally transitioned towards relations with the opposite sex.<sup>62</sup> However, Gwyneth was more ambivalent about the nature of female passion. Far from envisioning a linear passage from female to male love objects, during the period when Gwyneth and Harry were most at odds over the role which physical intimacy would play in their marriage, Gwyneth emphasized her desire that marital happiness must include a large degree of emotional sympathy and understanding, of the sort which she had experienced with her closest Girton friend, Gladys. As she

pointedly reminded Harry, Gladys “had a very large share of my confidence larger than any one else. ... I am awfully fond of her, and I was never so happy at college as when I was slaving for her—helping her with her work, nursing her when she was ill, and doing all kinds of unnecessary jobs for her.” Aside from bringing out Gwyneth’s nurturing impulses, she admired her older colleague’s self-contained and independent nature. More importantly, by contrast with Harry’s harsh assessment of her character, she derived an unconditional “love and sympathy” from Gladys, who understood her moods much better than her fiancé. Annoyed by Harry’s procrastination, in 1915 she again favourably compared Gladys, who relished the give and take of conversation, with Harry: “what with your tongue wagging and the embraces and kisses there isn’t much look-in for me!” she perceptively remarked in 1915.<sup>63</sup> As she admitted, she had been “unconsciously comparing my attachment to Gladys with my feeling for you”, and while she now confided to Harry that she had come to fully understand the differences between homoerotic and heterosexual kinds of love, she nevertheless reminded him that “Gladys has got a large share of me which I won’t give up to you.” Indeed, in the midst of reconsidering whether marriage or spinsterhood living amongst a group of educated women would ensure greater happiness, she expressed her “longing these last few days to get back into the loving, sympathetic, optimistic atmosphere of Girton, where everything seemed easy and possible and the clouds were few and far between”.<sup>64</sup>

While Margaret Cole, later a celebrated social investigator and politician, remembered Girton as a place of freedom, where she looked with eagerness to examining “problems personal and impersonal”,<sup>65</sup> for those students who like Vera Brittain and Gwyneth Murray envisioned themselves as “exceptional & brilliant”<sup>66</sup> young women, college proved more restrictive, involving intensive hours dedicated to study. Reserved and studious women experienced less frivolity than their counterparts in less demanding disciplines.<sup>67</sup> This was especially true of those confronting the formidable maths tripos like Gwyneth. By contrast with both Brittain and Eileen Power, who were active on the sporting field or in the debating hall, she could most often be found poring over mathematical equations and filling reams of paper with calculations, all the while freezing in under-heated rooms, as did the maths student memorialized by Dora Pym, a contemporary of Gwyneth’s.<sup>68</sup> Mathematics at Cambridge was held in such high esteem that any Girton student who showed promise of achieving a first class degree acquired a special status as a woman of glamour, and



in 1910 eight women from Girton finished within the top ten among all mathematics students. Although reputed to be the most intellectually demanding discipline at Cambridge, its status was even more enhanced after the turn of the century, when exciting discoveries by Lord Kelvin, James Clerk Maxwell and Albert Einstein transformed what had been a static discipline into the new field of relativity, one later acknowledged as one of Gwyneth's specialties.<sup>69</sup> For the sense of exhilaration derived from learning in an atmosphere of relative freedom, students like Gwyneth Murray and Vera Brittain were more than willing to put up with the austere living conditions of bad food, strictures against associating with men, and rules about plain dress, in order to belong to an exalted but relatively small circle of intellectual women whose horizons and life choices were much broader than those of their Victorian predecessors, and in so doing no longer felt ordinary or conventional, and could, as Vera Brittain did, aspire to genius.<sup>70</sup> For these women college was a revelation, and for Gwyneth in particular, Girton held "a special place in her heart", having transformed this shy suffragist into a strong minded woman proud of her independent spirit and fierce in her sense of equality with men.<sup>71</sup>

Her sense of the natural equality between the sexes was, in the first instance, shaped by her familial experience, her mother being the President of the Oxford branch of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (N.U.W.S.S.). However, no one who attended Girton College in the Edwardian era could have escaped the overwhelming hold that the pro-suffrage message had on all facets of college life, even though Margaret Cole somewhat disingenuously later claimed that suffrage propaganda held little meaning for her.<sup>72</sup> Not only had the college's founder, Emily Davies led the march of 15,000 women to the Albert Hall in 1908, but the combined forces of Girton and Newnham constantly held jug parties to raise funds and in 1910 secured 1897 signatures for a pro-suffrage petition, many from local workingmen,<sup>73</sup> a tribute to the fact that Emily Davies had drawn up the first suffrage petition which had been presented to John Stuart Mill in 1866.<sup>74</sup> Significantly, the influential editor of the major suffrage publication *Common Cause*, Helena Swanwick, was an alumna of Girton College.<sup>75</sup> Along with Millicent Fawcett, the President of the N.U.W.S.S., she frequently spoke to Gwyneth and her cohort on behalf of the Conciliation Bill but also to drive home the theme that the suffrage cause was "in recognition", as Swanwick stated, "of humanity as bi-sexual; the recognition that there were no 'women's questions' and no 'men's questions', but that all were human questions".<sup>76</sup>

Not only were there talks on that old suffrage chestnut, the licentiousness of marriage, but lectures were designed to appeal to the concerns of young women who self-identified as “modern”, as did Vera Brittain and Gwyneth Murray, both of whom joined their respective college suffrage societies, addressing issues such as employment for women, equal pay for equal work, and the lack of equality in the domestic sphere, questions recently raised by Cicely Hamilton in *Marriage as a Trade*.<sup>77</sup> In opposing both the militant wing and the anti-suffragists, the Girton suffrage movement attempted to bridge several constituencies, inviting speakers to address questions such as women’s vocation in the settlement movement, expanding teaching opportunities, and foreign missions, the latter appealing particularly to Gwyneth. To this end, Lady Osler, the wife Sir William Osler, the Murray family’s physician and personal friend of the Logans, gave a spirited address that praised the suffrage cause as “the most Christian development of modern politics”.<sup>78</sup>

Further, a disproportionate amount of the college’s social life revolved around the issue of suffrage. For example, as a fresher, Gwyneth would have had first-hand knowledge of how active the members of the suffrage club were, when they held a noisy masquerade in which white robed figures processed through the residence halls holding Japanese lanterns aloft under a suffrage banner, and sang “Votes for Women” to the tune of Three Blind Mice, a disturbance that provoked immediate retaliation from the outraged antis. At Girton the suffrage society had 97 members, just over 65% the student body, but there was a vocal anti-suffrage minority consisting of 31 students.<sup>79</sup> In addition, the library subscribed to the *Anti-Suffrage Review*, even though most of the college entertainments directed their energies to increasing subscriptions to the *Common Cause*. According to Brian Harrison, up until 1908 there was sufficient hostility to the suffrage cause that there was no need for an anti-suffrage public position. H.G. Wells may well have ridiculed pro-suffrage advocates for having made Prime Minister Asquith into “the State Husband” and “Public Hen-Peckee”,<sup>80</sup> but at Girton it was the anti-suffrage position that was most under attack. In 1909 members of the suffrage club broke into the meeting of the antis where they mercilessly heckled Mrs. Humphrey Ward who defended the masculinist privileges within the modern state, and exalted domesticity as natural to women, but what most rankled was her denial of the connection between higher education for women and the vote. Given this frontal attack on the foundational ideology of Girton, it is not surprising that the anti-

suffrage slogan "Woman's place is the Home not the Lecture Room" was censured in the student rag, and Mrs. Humphrey Ward was lampooned as "Mary Wumphry Fraud", all the while promoting a vision of a future matriarchal society where men did all the menial work.<sup>81</sup>

Interested as they were in that "enigmatic question of Feminism",<sup>82</sup> modern young women like Gwyneth, although supporting the suffrage cause, would have abjured the pioneers' worldview which exalted the independent working spinster as their ideal. Rather they favoured a range of opportunities for women which included marriage and motherhood, the latter a prominent theme among eugenics advocates who often spoke at the college. For this younger generation of Girtonians, the feminist movement was bringing about "a silent revolution of thought",<sup>83</sup> not simply by offering greater political rights for women, but in establishing a notion of liberty which included the freedom to develop one's individual personality. Because of this, they were open to the issue of the new sex psychology as portrayed in H.G. Wells' *Ann Veronica* and *The New Machiavelli*, both heartily discussed at Girton.<sup>84</sup> Clearly aware of the long-standing stereotype of the Girton girl as a cigarette-smoking mannish figure<sup>85</sup> they feared being labelled in this way, and as a result they firmly rejected Victorian sensibilities as evinced by fusty older dons who saw fashionable dress at odds with intellectual success. As Dora Russell, a later advocate of free love, declared to her prospective husband, the philosopher Bertrand Russell: "Oh. I won't be a Bluestocking."<sup>86</sup>

However much these young women hoped for similar job opportunities and equal wages with men, in addition to full political rights of citizenship, by contrast with the older feminism of the 1890s they fully embraced motherhood and marriage. Gwyneth particularly chafed at the accusation that, because of her college education, she had become "less womanly" and constantly fended off Harry's imputations that she was a bluestocking. She did not entirely attribute her tendency for "manly interests" to the development of her mind, as so many commentators about the woman question had stated, rather she believed that the novel experience of female friendships had contributed to blurring gender identities. She accepted a large part of the anti-suffrage critique which held that women who sought equality were wishing to become like men. However much Gwyneth might have endorsed the suffrage movement's broader humanistic message that gaining the vote would benefit both sexes, she argued that female independence could be best achieved within the home because it allowed women to develop their own interests rather than be relegated into what

she perceived to be the narrow and subordinate role of helpmeet to her husband. As she declared to Harry: “You have treated me as a brother-man because I haven’t insisted on my womanhood but I have tried to share your manly interests.” From her perspective as a modern woman, she averred that “the best kind of womanliness (by which I don’t mean mere domestic virtues)” was developed in the home, a sphere which she conceived as one where she could become a comrade to her husband founded upon an equal balance of power. Accusing Harry of too stridently embracing notions of gender fluidity, Gwyneth studiously adhered to the view of gender difference. “You don’t get much value on domestic qualities,” she told Harry, “but it is generally in the home that a woman shines at her best, and you mustn’t expect the same things in a woman as in a man—not in the same order of importance at any rate.” To think”, she continued, “I should ever turn such a traitor to the cause of Women’s suffrage as to acknowledge this! But it strikes me that you misjudge what I should call the womanly woman, and only really understand the manly type of woman.”<sup>87</sup>

Gwyneth stood closer to the mainstream of the suffrage movement than she was willing to acknowledge. On the one hand, suffragists reproached the idea that marriage disqualified women from equal political citizenship and at the same time dissented from the “older conception”,<sup>88</sup> which stated that women were so biologically and psychologically different from men that they could not assume “masculine prerogatives”. However, on the other side, the perspective of Millicent Fawcett who penned the article “Men are Men and Women are Women”<sup>89</sup> closely resembled the anti-suffrage position of Lord Cromer, who in his speech at the Queen’s Hall reminded “women of their womanhood”.<sup>90</sup> What set the suffragists apart from the anti-suffragists was that they believed that far from breaking up the home, the liberation of women involved their pursuit of “freedom as individuals”<sup>91</sup>—a constant theme of the ostensibly more radical *The Freewoman* which was recommended by the N.U.W.S.S.<sup>92</sup>—and that this could occur both through their participation in the wider world, including paid labour and the development of their unique personality in the experience of motherhood. Greatly influenced by the eugenics movement, Helena Swanwick, editor of *Common Cause*, maintained that

the women’s demand for the vote is more than the mere demand to effect reformative legislation ...It is also the demand that the mother-half of

humanity should be given its proper place: that the preserver and producer of life, the maker of men, should be as highly honoured as the destroyer of life, the maker of things: that the temperate, affectional woman-nature, intent upon the conservation of the home and the race, should have its due representation beside the more extreme and appetitive male nature.<sup>93</sup>

In wishing to conceive of women as human beings with equal rights to work and citizenship, Swanwick and Fawcett identified with old feminists, but in promoting sex difference, personal emancipation and motherhood, they anticipated the new feminism of the 1920s.<sup>94</sup>

By contrast, Harry definitively adhered to the anti-suffrage position. Greatly influenced by his mother, he shared her view that there were more important questions than that of suffrage.<sup>95</sup> Indeed, she encouraged him in his efforts to masquerade dressed as a "saucy Suffragette",<sup>96</sup> as he did at the Murray's New Year's gathering, although it is unclear if he donned the popular suffragette skirt advertised in *Common Cause*. It is clear, however, that many commentators would have read his penchant for dressing as a woman as a clear sign of his hermaphroditic tendencies.<sup>97</sup> In terms of his own experience, his animus against the movement was galvanized when Gwyneth became an activist, marching in suffrage processions and hosting "drawing-room" suffrage meetings alongside her sister-in-law Katie, while teaching at the Perse School. When, to his horror, he was informed that the Cambridge suffrage procession had been preserved for posterity on a newsreel,<sup>98</sup> he tried to dissuade Gwyneth from "developing in the next year into a camp follower of militant suffrage armies".<sup>99</sup> In order to palliate Gwyneth, who had been suggesting that she could combine work and marriage in Canada, Harry conceded, referring to the ideas of J.S. Mill, that women should be educated and have access to some professions, like teaching and journalism, even though he countenanced their exclusion from more prestigious professions like the church and the law, to which Gwyneth also aspired. He fulminated against any idea that men should take a political lead in addressing issues of gender inequality, despite the fact that in viewing man as the "positive, outwardly achieving agent" he was paraphrasing the notion advanced by J. Arthur Thomson and Patrick Geddes in *The Evolution of Sex*<sup>100</sup> that man was kinetic. Interestingly, he did not raise conventional anti-suffrage bogeys which argued that the vote for women would destroy the sanctity of the home or that it would lead to an expanded franchise for working-class men; rather, he took the more extreme anti-suffrage position, advanced most often by outright reactionaries, claiming that he remained "unwoken" to the cause because of wom-

en's innate inferiority to men on both the intellectual and moral planes.<sup>101</sup> Indeed, he echoed the sentiments expressed by Lord Curzon in his Cambridge address in March 1911, who declared: "There is much more difference both physically and morally, between an educated European man and woman than there is between a Negro and a Negress belonging to some savage central African tribe."<sup>102</sup> Writing to his mother who sympathized with his ideas concerning the natural inferiority of women, he stated that most women are like "emancipated negroes; they are simply incapable of high ideals and earnest *resolute* purposes",<sup>103</sup> a perspective which thus placed him firmly in the camp of those denounced by Philip Snowden, the British Labour M.P., who attributed opposition to female suffrage to "men's desire to have a subject class over which they could domineer".<sup>104</sup>

Here Harry's conceptualization of distinct biological differences between men and women closely resembled those of Otto Weininger's, whose misogynistic lucubrations about women as purely sexual objects and the creation of men's desires was roundly savaged by several critics in *The Freewoman*.<sup>105</sup> Even traditionalists like the doctor Charles J. Whitby, called Weininger's book *Sex and Character* a "Titanic disaster" because, in his estimation, his postulate drawn from biology that men and women were a contradiction and mutually exclusive would enflame the "sex war" and the anti-woman faction.<sup>106</sup> Further, Harry's notion that modern life and evolution tended towards greater differentiation between the sexes was enunciated in various quarters, including by the prominent sexologist whom Harry had read, Havelock Ellis, who contended that there were deep biological differences and had become an advocate of the benefits of the sexual instincts because they affirmed the clear boundaries between femininity and masculinity. Harry certainly would have concurred with Ellis' dictum that "woman must be kissed into a woman" during courtship.<sup>107</sup> Like Ellis, Harry greatly feared the prevailing ideas of gender fluidity, a concept which cut to the quick because of the notion that clergymen were unmanly.<sup>108</sup> In an age that celebrated a muscular male physique, Harry constantly questioned his own virility, especially when his lithe runner's body prompted Gwyneth's friend Gladys to remark that he looked like a girl in gym shorts.<sup>109</sup> Even as an undergraduate at McGill University, he declared at his graduation banquet that "There are three sexes—men, women, and clergymen", a view set forth by his favourite author George Eliot and reinforced at Oxford through his reading of Plato who also posited the existence of three sexes.<sup>110</sup> As a devoted reader

of *The British Medical Journal*, he most likely read a 1906 article which stated that "there are men-women and women-men, with mixed mental characteristics, quite independent of complete sexual separateness".<sup>111</sup> By 1912, in the midst of his traumatic questioning of his own masculinity, the idea that there was "a touch of mannishness in woman and femininity in man" had become an *obiter dicta* in popular culture, permeating conservative medical discourse, Christian theology, religious movements like Theosophy, and popular novels, such as H.G. Wells' *Marriage* (1912) which demonstrated that "there's something of man in every woman and a touch of the feminine in every man".<sup>112</sup>

Anchored as he was within a discourse of biological fixity, Harry did not embrace the idea set forth by H.F. Rubinstein in *The Freewoman* that feminism was part of the new evolutionary creed whereby male reason must step down in order to raise the status of woman, even though he thought of himself and Gwyneth as a superior, modern couple<sup>113</sup>; rather, by eschewing an asexual vision of the world, he also roundly opposed the concomitant ideal that modern marriage involved a "balance of power".<sup>114</sup> Gwyneth and Vera Brittain viewed themselves as feminists who could combine sexual desire, spirituality and intellectual prowess and exulted in their femininity.<sup>115</sup> Harry, all too aware of their mutual experience of "the love of man for man or woman for woman", and contemplating entry into the all-male world of war, argued for the centrality of that "nudging element of passion" within their relationship because he, like Ellis, saw it as the pivotal mechanism whereby gender relations could be returned to their "normal form".<sup>116</sup> This was also the conclusion reached by Havelock Ellis, in *The Psychology of Sex*, where he noted that in many instances there is no fixed boundary between "friendship" and "love". This "undefined homosexuality" could, however, be resolved once physical passion moved to the opposite sex.<sup>117</sup> The sex instinct, Harry believed, would restore the natural order of the sexes in which man was dominant and woman subordinate. As Otto Weininger had himself argued, the bondage of woman lies in "the power wielded on them by the Phallus", which explained why men who were interested in sex were not supporters of votes for women.<sup>118</sup>

Like Gwyneth, Vera Brittain's ideal woman was one whose "daily round is one purely concerned with intellect without losing any atom of her womanliness & feminine attractiveness, without having her humanness warped or her sympathies blunted". Vera Brittain was extremely fashion conscious and frequently engaged in what she termed shopping "violently". As a result, she was particularly censorious of "donnish disregard

of dress".<sup>119</sup> Similarly, Gwyneth spurned the stereotype of the ill-clad college woman, and unlike older feminists, saw no conflict between the life of the mind and fashionable attire: "I think more about my dress & my personal appearance than I have let you imagine," she informed Harry, "and it hurt me to find you thought I was not neat and careful about these things and didn't trouble how I looked."<sup>120</sup> The spectre of "the man-woman" who was too rational and impersonal, haunted even feminists like the eminent classicist Jane Ellen Harrison, whose celebrated 1913 lecture "Scientiae Sacra Fames" greatly impressed Gwyneth. Even though Harrison proudly remained a spinster, as a woman who had been spurned by men in several love affairs, she more than anyone else would have well appreciated the degree to which men objected to the overly-intellectual woman. Her ideal of marriage was premised on a bond of intellectual companionship, and as a committed eugenicist she considered the mother-child bond as the preeminent one in society. However, her concept of "educated motherhood" sought to parry women's confinement in the household through the encouragement of "extra-domestic bonds".<sup>121</sup>

This eugenicist strain of thinking also animated articles published in *The Freewoman* which decried the "defeminized spinster and unsexed woman". Modern women like Gwyneth and Vera Brittain would have concurred with Helen Hamilton's assessment that college educated women were not necessarily destined for spinsterhood, for in her view, "sex is sex, and without over-emphasising what is vital and fundamental, it seems to me obvious that any attempt to approximate women too closely to men is not progressive, but foolish". Hamilton was especially critical of the tendency that the ideal of service promoted by suffrage campaigns within colleges like Girton taught young women to think of "sex-attraction" as something shameful and needing to be suppressed, instead of appreciating it as a "great vital force" enabling her to cultivate her "own individuality". For those women like Gwyneth and Vera Brittain who adopted the mantle of unconventionality,<sup>122</sup> equality and freedom meant the discovery of their sexuality through marriage, where they could enjoy emotional satisfaction and at the same time serve the race by the reproduction of "[S]upermen and superwomen". In short, Hamilton like older feminists recognized the ideal of a common humanity shared by men and women, however, she believed that this could be best achieved not through reform within the public sphere, but in the realm of sexual intimacy.<sup>123</sup>

However, the Victorian stereotype enunciated most frequently by doctors like Henry Maudsley, the psychiatrist, who in 1874 postulated that



education unsexed women,<sup>124</sup> persisted into the Edwardian era even within progressive circles, particularly among men. In 1912, A.B. Barnard, the author of *The Girls' Book about Herself*, advised young women to put away trigonometry and do needlework if they wished to remain physically attractive and desirable to men.<sup>125</sup> More notably, Laurence Housman, who campaigned alongside Millicent Fawcett and wrote both for the *Common Cause* and the more radical *Freewoman*, continued to denigrate the "masculine type" of woman, those without the "maternal instinct", even though he argued forcefully against the figure of the "dominant male" which he believed was the source of the "sex war" which had resulted in women's oppression.<sup>126</sup> Even female feminists were not immune to sanctions against claims to equality. The Swedish writer and eugenicist Ellen Key, whose 1911 book *Love and Marriage*, recommended by the N.U.W.S.S., was highly critical of claims for equality for its tendency to "masculinize women". In advocating that modern women should have the right to choose motherhood and not be forced into spinsterhood she agreed with the conclusion of Havelock Ellis that true freedom for women and the new feminism must allow women the freedom "to be unlike men"<sup>127</sup>

Although at one level Harry certainly valued education for women because it made them more interesting, at other times he seemed to have preferred Gwyneth in the guise of the "giddy lighthearted College girl".<sup>128</sup> Besides accusing her of being less womanly because she was emotionally reserved, once she was awarded a First in the Mathematics Tripos in 1912, he blatantly accused her of being "a prim old blue-stocking"—the stereotype of the asexual spinsterish don—who had developed into a shrewish "Xanthippe" who sought to master him. As a devoted reader of *Punch*, which regularly satirized suffragists and college educated women as unfeminine, it was not coincidental that he reproached her for being "less womanly because [Cambridge] filled your mind with ideas which are usually considered to be the prerogative of man". After she resisted this aspersions upon her femininity, he backed off, stating that he had disdain for women who only gossiped and did not use their minds. His attempt at respecting her as an intellectual equal, however, rang somewhat hollow, concluding the letter by claiming her as his childlike possession, as Victorian husbands were wont to do, calling her "my wee girlie".<sup>129</sup> Harry not only channelled the biological determinism propounded by Havelock Ellis in *Man and Woman*, but also accepted his conclusion, that woman was nearer to the child-type than man.<sup>130</sup> Perennially anxious about the

reversal of gender power in their relationship, in another letter, Harry initially posed as a London policeman punishing suffragists, and later he ventriloquized as a nursemaid compelled to spank her charge while putting her to bed. The fact that Harry alluded to the unseemliness of writing these thoughts on the Sabbath indicates that he was aware of the erotically charged character of his references to corporal punishment.<sup>131</sup> Though his thinking in many respects bore the mark of modernity, Harry's concepts of womanhood remained mired in the Victorian polarities of virginal innocence and sexual temptation, or the more intellectualized opposition between the representative of spiritual love, Dante's Beatrice, and Socrates' shrewish Xanthippe, the archetypal bluestocking. His mind had difficulty in grappling with the emergence of two new female types, the "suffragist" and the "feminist"—the latter celebrated by *The Freewoman* as "an Englishwoman with an education, a plan of campaign, and a philosophy".<sup>132</sup>

Much as she had done from the beginning of their courtship, Gwyneth was loath to accept Harry's desire to infantilize her or to treat her as an inferior being: "You may think you are miles too good for me, but that is no reason why you should try to force me to think the same is it? At any rate, I claim a right to hold my own opinion about what will satisfy me and what will not, and don't you bother me with your old ha'penny!"<sup>133</sup> From the outset of their courtship in 1911 Harry envisioned their relationship as one defined by hierarchies of gender and age, with himself in the superior position: "Grandpa never forgets his little bonnie-blue-eyed Alice", he wrote in one of his first communications to Gwyneth, a reference to the New Year's masquerade at Sunnyside, where in addition to impersonating Alice in Wonderland, Gwyneth and Mary Robertson performed a dialogue as Mrs. Skinnywinks and Mrs. Wobbledoms, who each ingested remedies, so that Gwyneth's character "gradually assum[ed] the outrageous proportions of Mrs. Wobbledoms".<sup>134</sup> This elicited great hilarity from the assembled audience of Murray relatives, but Gwyneth was much less amused when they began courting and he sent her an advertisement from *The British Medical Journal* a "Complete Cure of Corpulence by a Harmless and Pleasant Treatment" for Antipon which promised a restoration of "beauty of face and figure",<sup>135</sup> which had been preceded by disdainful remarks about how her attire was not fit for "modern civilization".<sup>136</sup>

Harry's admonitions on the subject of her weight and appearance reflected changing ideas about obesity in women which took hold at the turn of the century.<sup>137</sup> For some, the new active image of womanhood as

athletic and slender may have signalled greater equality between the sexes; for Harry, a rotund body did not conjure up an image of fertile femininity as the maternal figure of Venus de Milo suggested,<sup>138</sup> but was viewed as the antithesis of sexual attractiveness. In this regard, he tended to agree with an earlier article published in *The British Medical Journal* which argued that higher education for women unsexed not just the mind but the body as well,<sup>139</sup> thus testifying to his deeper concern that studying mathematics had made her less feminine. Exerting control over her body was a way for Harry to remain in charge of their courtship when her intellectual achievements seemed to be undermining his sense of masculine authority. Writing to her in the guise of "grandpa" in order to make fun of her body and her "chubby cheeks", combined with disparaging remarks about her mathematical prowess which he denigrated as mere "math problems potted for *Punch*", or "Chinese puzzles for the nursery",<sup>140</sup> may have been Harry's gambit to keep Gwyneth in a subordinate position, but she did not allow his reproaches to go unremarked. However, when she upbraided him for making unchristian and insulting comments about her figure, he weakly apologized, with the caveat that he had been persuaded that she liked him "to say imperious things to you". The intense shame he felt at being rebuked by a woman in an age when it was still conventional for a woman to defer to her husband was graphically conveyed by the picture he drew with him in a position of utter humiliation, on his knees with Gwyneth standing in a dominant manner over him striking him with a stick. For his part, he was unwilling to accept her mortification of him, even though it was, as he admitted but a "soft impeachment", and responded in kind, holding her responsible for demeaning his sense of manhood, warning her all the while: "Don't wince! Don't wince under the lash!"<sup>141</sup>

Harry's pose as the paternalistic Victorian suitor secure in his power to establish the tone of both courtship and marriage soon began to dissipate largely because of Gwyneth's conviction that marriage was a relationship of mutuality and equality and not one of obedience and servitude on the part of the woman.<sup>142</sup> Not only had Gwyneth taken the role as the initiator in their first sexual encounter,<sup>143</sup> but she continued to assert herself throughout 1912, not only frequently querying him as to when they would marry but she confidently pressed her own views regarding the balance between sexual passion and spiritual comradeship in producing marital harmony. The fact that after Oxford Harry continued to flounder "without a trade"<sup>144</sup> contributed to his growing unease about his compro-

mised masculinity, but the realization that she had achieved a First in the Mathematics Tripos was the key catalyst behind his growing perception that “the traditional order of things [has] been reversed” and “praps after all I’m the woman”.<sup>145</sup> When earlier Gwyneth had tried to goad him into naming the date for the wedding, he had merely responded by saying “I will not be *HENPECKED!*”, but after her stellar academic performance at Cambridge, his responses became more extreme and focused more exclusively upon the issue of his “unstable *manhood*”,<sup>146</sup> which he used as a pretext for putting off their marriage, arguing that he needed, more than ever, to “recoup my scattered energies” and be “the through and through man”.<sup>147</sup> At first he had sought to praise “the intellectual capacity of my wee girlie”, joking that he need no longer talk down to her. But he could not keep his true feelings under control, and in the next sentence his angst once again spilled forth, when he contemplated the horror of how her newfound sense of intellectual superiority might force him to “the complete submission to the slavery which you seem bound to inflict upon me”.<sup>148</sup> As much as he tried to persist in viewing Gwyneth as an “angel of light”<sup>149</sup> who would help him with his work and steady his nerves, her composed and calm character, analytical mind and lack of emotional excitement continued to undermine his sense of identity as a man<sup>150</sup>: “what am I,” wrote Harry, “but a mere man, and subject to the changing passions of men, while you with your stern rugged unimpassioned script betray not the slightest tones of the vagaries of passion and feeling”<sup>151</sup>

At this juncture, the power differential in their relationship all too closely resembled the dictum enunciated by Jean Finot in *The Problems of the Sexes* that the more a man was feminized, “the more he will seek a masculinized woman”.<sup>152</sup> When Harry was in the company of other men at Oxford, he embraced the ideal of the emotional man, but when confronted with the example of Gwyneth’s analytical and stoic self, he conceived of himself as potentially one of Carpenter’s Uranians, whose male type was emotional, vain and timid.<sup>153</sup> As he pondered his relationships with other men, from the “uncomfy associations” of Hellenism,<sup>154</sup> to comparing his spiritual self to the rough men of athletics,<sup>155</sup> to his admission that he was not a leader like her brothers whom he characterized as “strong men, with their strong, overactive minds”, whereas he suffered from “horrid devotional pauses” in his “mental flow”,<sup>156</sup> he thought he hovered somewhere between the sexes and as a result his discourse subtly shifted from his own lack of manliness to Gwyneth’s unnatural usurpation of power in their relationship. So long as Harry convinced himself that

Gwyneth could envision an equal marriage founded on her willingness "to be a sharer of my thoughts", in other words his helpmeet, he conceded that she was womanly; however, this did not assuage him for as he declared: "I only fear your mind a bit; I often find myself apprehensive of you, fearing that you are subtly keeping yourself under; that you are quiet enough now, till you have brought me safely to land, and then I shall find my 'kingly prerogative' lost sight of; or rather that your mind will possibly develop out of proportion to my own; your love for me will dwindle and you will tower over me a sort of Socratico-Xanthippe being!"<sup>157</sup> Yet, when Gwyneth did attempt to bolster his confidence, after one of his plaintive missives in which he declared "I'm not strong enough; I'm not man enough",<sup>158</sup> by telling him to get "a little back-bone into you",<sup>159</sup> he savagely responded, "you will be my controller: you will regulate my feelings, my passions; my ambitions"<sup>160</sup> leaving him in the passive role as the supporting partner. Harry's analysis of gender inversion now turned to blaming his lack of manliness on her excessive "unwomanly, mannish"<sup>161</sup> character and usurpation of power in their relationship, a conclusion which rested upon a confused amalgam of cultural gender fluidity and an adherence to biological gender polarity, which refuted any acceptance of gender equality or balance because one sex had to dominate and the other to obey. In reaching such conclusions, Harry all too closely resembled the image of the kind of "weak man" described by Vir in "Speculations on Sex War". Not only did he define womanliness in terms of having someone to look after him, but Harry resembled those woman-haters who held that women were his equals but "[w]hat exasperates him ... is that they begin to take, to him, the aspect of superiors".<sup>162</sup>

Lucy Re-Bartlett, among others, had described the Edwardian era as "the age of woman—the age when woman's rights, woman's place, and woman's power are being more considered than in any previous epoch". However, as the tempestuous relationship of Gwyneth and Harry indicated, this often made marriage that "most perilous of partnerships".<sup>163</sup> Feminism increased the chances that marriage might become, just as Robert Louis Stevenson had prophesied, a field of battle,<sup>164</sup> especially when young modern women, like Gwyneth or Vera Brittain, refused to be "the angel, set up on a pedestal", or a mere "hot-water bottle for the husband to soothe himself with",<sup>165</sup> and who wished to craft a new narrative of marriage, one which transcended the "sex-war", in which "each contributes to the Being of the other"<sup>166</sup> because both partners made "sufficient allowance for the essential differences between a man's point of view &

a woman's",<sup>167</sup> a vision of compatibility expounded by Gwyneth throughout their long engagement. Given the nature of their conflicted, long-distance and protracted engagement, it is little wonder that Gwyneth found herself in a quandary as to whether to affirm her independence through work or within a loving marriage. Although rife with anxiety, their lengthy courtship had at least forced Gwyneth to jettison her Victorian view of marriage as a woman's whole existence for which she merely waited.<sup>168</sup>

Two lecturers were critical in persuading her to choose marriage. She had heard Maude Royden speak on "Real Life" at Newnham in 1910,<sup>169</sup> and Gwyneth heard her 1913 Oxford lectures on marriage, and therefore became a devotee of hers, and latterly was persuaded to become a pacifist because of Royden's influence. Royden believed that women rather than men should do the choosing in marriage, an idea that clearly had a major impact on Gwyneth, but she was also a strong advocate of marriage, on the basis that it would develop the individual personality and ideals of women. She was also a keen supporter of "sex-love" on the basis that it produced "equality in passion". More importantly from Gwyneth's perspective, she promoted the idea that marriage continued to be an adventure after the initial attractions of courtship, not least because it functioned as a vital creative force, both in terms of personal development and in terms of serving the larger aims of society, because it was the means of fostering motherhood which she believed remained a sacred cause for women.<sup>170</sup> As Royden cautioned, modern marriage need not result in the absorption of one personality in the other; rather, she envisioned it as the primary means by which individual citizens could participate in a process of self-development and at the same time ensure the continuation of the race through reproduction. But as she pointed out, as she saw it, marriage did not mean the evisceration of selfhood for women, but that the "perfection of her motherhood depends on the perfection of her humanity", just as the vision of men should not be limited by fatherhood which she set on an equal plane with the mother instinct. According to Royden, marriage provided the ideal "association of men and women united by the closest bonds" and was the principal means by which "to increase the value of life". However, she also cautioned that if women were to find self-expression through motherhood they must also discover a range of activities, including some degree of economic independence, outside the domestic sphere which might provide an alternate range of satisfaction.<sup>171</sup> Royden's central message that marriage for modern women should not be

viewed as "purposeless waiting" but should also be viewed as an adventure and route to even greater self-development, was echoed by Marion Moody, the wife of Lester B. Pearson, the future Canadian prime minister. She resisted the "hum-drum" of conventional marriage, including the tedium of meal preparation and having a family, preferring instead the intellectual stimulus of journalism, foreign travel and a life of "misty visions".<sup>172</sup> "Thank God", she remarked, "for youth and its visions."<sup>173</sup>

Part of Royden's concern to promote marriage for women, however, rested on a wider concern she had with the inadequate wages for women which prevented them from living a respectable life.<sup>174</sup> Indeed, *Common Cause* was replete with articles addressing the issue of work and wages for women, including married female teachers. One article cited the talk by Lady Mary Murray, the wife of the Oxford Classics Professor, Gilbert Murray, who maintained that gaining the franchise for women would help in the broader campaign to raise the wages for women beyond what she called "a pocket-money wage", just as it had done in the case of men.<sup>175</sup> While her discussion of low wages for women devolved from her concern for female independence, Charles J. Whitby M.D. feared that an overweening focus upon the economic viability of marriage would induce disaffection from love between spouses and lead to "homosexual alliances."<sup>176</sup> Perhaps to properly engage the interest of her fiancé, a devotee of H.G. Wells, Gwyneth opened up a discussion of marriage by referring to his new novel *Marriage* which, she claimed, set forth a vision of women "being more in the world". In fact, the idea that a woman should have interests outside her husband and home was engendered by Royden's lectures. Writing to Harry at the beginning of the year in which they would be married, she admitted that she would give up everything "for the sake of the home", but made it amply clear that while this might sound as if once again she sided with the anti-suffragists, she insisted that she did not envision that modern women "must stick in the home and never come out", but that she should interest herself in "as many outside affairs as she can", so that her influence will be greater.<sup>177</sup>

The issue of how to choose between singleness and marriage was forcefully brought home to Gwyneth after she heard the famous Cambridge classicist Jane Ellen Harrison speak on "Women and Knowledge". Like Royden, Harrison, although commending the life of the mind, strategically endorsed H.G. Wells' book *Marriage*, arguing, as did Royden, that a modern marriage between equals need not diminish female identity and that in fact the sex instinct was the principal channel by which to develop

one's sense of individuality: "One secret of the intense joy of loving and being loved is the immense reinforcement of one's own personality."<sup>178</sup> When Gwyneth heard her speak about her life as a fellow at Cambridge, it immediately put her in mind of her sister Hilda, who had reckoned that even if she stayed on teaching at Royal Holloway for her entire career, could only look forward to retiring to a rundown cottage in the country. It also made her ponder the fact that because teachers were only paid the meagre sum of £160 per annum, many women would be forced into living a "miserable existence in rooms", without a chance to widen their horizons through travel and a broader sociability.<sup>179</sup> This reflection had followed upon her glibly reminding Harry that if she hadn't met him she could have been a missionary in China. "If only I were a man and had a man's chance and opportunities", she wrote in frustration to her intended. She then chastised him: "You men don't half realize what chance you have. You take them calmly as your due, whilst we women look on in envy, and maybe see you throwing away and despising what we would have given anything to possess,"<sup>180</sup> a thinly-disguised reference to him throwing away a career as a clergyman which would have allowed her to play the kind of engaged spiritual role she had looked forward to by working as a missionary.

"A propos of Miss Jane Harrison's lecture you wonder what is the woman's reason for marrying. I think there are a variety of reasons," she informed Harry, "but I think the one which every woman has in her heart of hearts is the longing for little children of her own. A woman is naturally a child lover and longs for the wonderful joy of having a child of her own."<sup>181</sup> When Harry proposed that she might achieve a greater influence upon the world as a teacher, her response was eerily like that famous anti-suffragist Ethel Colquhoun who, citing Ellen Key, argued that feminism was not about women doing men's work, advancing the argument that teaching was not nearly as valuable as motherhood.<sup>182</sup> Having personally experienced the ennui of teaching young children, Gwyneth agreed with Colquhoun's estimation that teaching was both monotonous and narrowed women's achievements, concluding along with Colquhoun that marriage trumped spinsterhood and the independence of working for wages largely because it enabled woman to have "a house of one's own". In this red-hot letter, responding to his suggestion that her mental capacities "fitted her for a wider influence" over children through teaching,<sup>183</sup> she concluded that as long as the partners loved one another, marriage was, by far, "the happiest existence for women" and that it by no means narrowed her choices or her intellectual acuity.



Obviously influenced by a wide repertoire of commentary on the benefits of motherhood which populated publications both on the right and left, including *The Freewoman*, *Common Cause* and the *Eugenics Review*, Gwyneth proclaimed the public benefits of motherhood as "the highest type of womanhood" both for the individual and future generations: "it seems to me", she declared, "that if a woman has not been a mother, she has missed her purpose in life ... Woman has one function to perform, one gift peculiar to her sex—and if she doesn't fulfill it her life is only half-lived. She has missed the one great thing which is her sex's right."<sup>184</sup> She may well have agreed with Harrison that men only have a vague desire to have a home, but, she clearly weighed all her options. Gwyneth accentuated the call of motherhood, perhaps as a strategy to distance herself from the imputation that her choice was dictated purely by pecuniary calculation, a decision reprobated both by Cicely Hamilton in *Marriage as a Trade* and Maude Royden.<sup>185</sup> It is, however, clear that despite the troubled five-year engagement, during which she consistently tried to give voice to her own ideals, it did have the benefit of allowing her to reflect upon the dilemmas facing modern women, compelling her to think more deeply, so that she might make a conscious choice, rather than experiencing the random fate, as had Vera Brittain, of becoming betrothed simply because love "came unbidden, unwanted almost" because she had aspired, not for "love, marriage and a home" but for a brilliant career as a writer or assistant to a literary man.<sup>186</sup>

As was predictable, the issue of motherhood and children became yet another battleground for this beleaguered couple. What seemed a simple proposition, namely Gwyneth's desire to have children, elicited an anguished response from Harry. Having on several occasions expressed his "natural 'fear' of children"<sup>187</sup> to his mother and, we suspect, Gwyneth as well, for as he made clear, his love was drawn largely to herself, concluding: "Sometimes I feel I don't want marriage for children: and so if that be your first desire in marriage, you should not marry me."<sup>188</sup> In less rancorous moments, Harry prayed that a God provide them with "little precious souls". In part he believed that children would help elevate their focus upon eternal values and higher ideals, but on the other hand, what interest he did evince in children was often driven by eugenics, in which parentage was conceived as a rational choice in which their biological characteristics, especially their high intellects and strong physiques, would help elevate the race.<sup>189</sup> At other junctures, Harry dissented from the concept of marriage as set forth by eugenicists, seeing the instinct for reproduction

to be a blind force that held him in its “iron grasp”. From this perspective, the inexorable laws of natural selection had the potential to eradicate individuality.<sup>190</sup> For the most part, however, Harry fully embraced the modern view of marriage in which the couple took precedence over children, even though this was an issue of some debate between eugenicists and more self-styled modern commentators like the anonymous author of “Husband or Children First?”. According to this writer, in order to avoid squabbling in the home after the birth of children, wives should pay due attention to their husbands while studiously avoiding idolizing their offspring.<sup>191</sup> Others in progressive circles, like Bertrand Russell, although he supported the suffrage cause and espoused the new ideal of sexual mutuality in marriage, nevertheless believed that children formed a part of the “common life” within the ideal conjugal relationship.<sup>192</sup> Harry would not have agreed with Gwyneth’s former mathematics lecturer on this score, for as he told her, his desire to marry was based on the hope of a union

for its complete sympathy, its companionship, its receptfulness [*sic*], its brightness to lighten my work: I want it to help me understand life, a woman by man who is my very own, who loves me, who will give herself to me, to my embrace, who will help me to understand myself and womankind, and so mankind: and you have mind and fullest womanhood, you have the capacity for entering into and enjoying all my interests, you, perhaps transcending them yourself and so I give myself to you.

In short, he desired only Gwyneth, and as he went on to recount, he feared that any progeny would be “your children, not mine, lest they cling to you, finding in you, as I do so much the nobler person, so much the stronger, more complete and entire”.<sup>193</sup> Here again, his fears about his weak character fed his anxieties about children. Harry, however, was not alone in his dislike of children. When Vera Brittain’s matchmaking aunt posed a similar question to Roland Leighton, his immediate response was that he “would rather have an animal than a child”, and only after being reminded that Vera’s own father had “hated children” until he had had his own, did Roland relent and say he would indeed enjoy fatherhood.<sup>194</sup>

Even though cultural messages propagated by eugenicists stressed that individual choice and sexual comradeship could also become the foundation for racial progress,<sup>195</sup> in which the vital force of the biological drive for physical love and reproduction—what Maude Royden termed “the ‘child-expelling instinct’”<sup>196</sup>—thereby made the man and woman into superman and superwoman, Harry dissented, arguing that marrying in

order to have children reflected the life-course of "commonplace" and conventional people, with whom he distinctly did not identify.<sup>197</sup> While Harry took great pains to posit that sex itself did not reduce man to his lower bestial self, he did, however, maintain that those who aimlessly reproduced thereby joined the "brayen mass" of those mired in their "animal existence", shorn of the ability to "reason" and "incapable of real knowledge". The notion of having children, in Harry's estimation, rendered life "a difficult skein to unravel", largely because of his overriding anxiety that becoming a father would irrevocably terminate his youth, that joyful yet problematical journey of self-exploration, and set him on the road of responsibility and old age.

In this respect Harry was a typical Edwardian, obsessed with the Peter Pan syndrome, well captured in Robert Louis Stevenson's warning to bachelors "no man can be 25 forever".<sup>198</sup> Given that Harry was an inveterate consumer of children's literature, including Charles Kingsley's *The Water Babies*, Mark Twain's *Tom Sawyer* and J.M. Barrie's *Sentimental Tommy*, a story about a boy living in a dream world which anticipated his later wildly popular *Peter Pan*, it is not altogether surprising that he wrote in the autumn of 1913: "Gwyneth, I wish I could remain young for always, and never grow old, and have children to call me daddy and then as they grow up and older and I still older, look upon me as that antiquated 'curiosity' of a preceding generation. If we could just be always bright, joyous, unfettered with the bonds of time how glorious it would be."<sup>199</sup> This comment not only provides a sense of Harry's state of mind concerning the passage of time, but it also is revelatory about how he perceived his own father. Despite his reservations, at Gwyneth's prompting, he did purchase life insurance, largely because he remembered that he had heard Lord Rosebery speak in Dundee in 1912 that no man had reached maturity until he had taken such precautions against accident and death, stating "you see I am prepared to do anything and everything to bring myself into the envied state of grown-upness".<sup>200</sup>

The inevitability of parenthood also reignited the perilous issue of the place of sex within marriage which had so plagued the early stages of their courtship. When pondering the number of children Gwyneth might wish to have, he realized to his horror that if he wished to limit reproduction, they would be compelled, either because of a lack of knowledge or interest in the use of birth control devices, to practise periods of abstinence. This was anathema to a man who defined "the true marriage troth" as a "union of soul" through the full and mutual enjoyment of physical love and it raised the question as to whether large swathes of their marriage would be

spent in “parthenogenetic” love.<sup>201</sup> Here again refraining from penetrative sex was viewed by Harry as an interference with his masculine prerogatives of “freedom of action” and his ability of “freely expressing himself”. Because sexual congress was the fundamental form of self-expression for Harry, he interpreted its absence as subverting his manhood: according to Harry self-control meant having sex when he desired because, as he declared, “the mark of complete manhood, is to examine himself. [a]nd doubly blest is that man who has a nice girlie self-controlled”.<sup>202</sup> He assumed that Gwyneth’s chief mode of self-expression was “the mother-instinct”, but he emphasized once again that because his heart remained a “bundle of feelings and passions”,<sup>203</sup> that he must have sex in order to fully develop an integrated personality. Deploying George Bernard Shaw’s concept of the “Life Force”, he reiterated his oft-expressed belief that “Love is not Passion of course” but that “love without Passion is not Love”. “Passion”, he averred, “has one consummation, the imperious fusion of life with life in the so-called creation of life: and so no Love of man and woman is complete until passion is consummated.” Only through the active physical expression of love could the home he so often envisioned in his imagination become that “Holy Place of joy”.<sup>204</sup>

Gwyneth wrote in one of her daily letters to Harry that what she wished for was “a house of my own and a big hulking husband”,<sup>205</sup> the latter a none-too subtle reference to his slight build. Imagining their home became one of the techniques which Gwyneth and Harry used to keep alive thoughts of their marriage as they both waited for Harry to secure a “marriageable salary”.<sup>206</sup> Typical was Gwyneth’s missive to Harry in the autumn of 1912, in the midst of their differences concerning sex: “How I look forward to the time when we shall have a wee home, a home for you’n me together love, a little sheltered secret nook where love will reign triumphant and none can disturb our peace and happiness.” She believed that they needed to psychologically prepare for their nuptials, but she somewhat more pragmatically thought they should contemplate the division of labour within the household. Ironically, this is what they most agreed upon. Harry, for his part, once they were officially engaged after Gwyneth graduated from Cambridge, enjoined her to become an “inspiring” example of the “Cahledge girl turned housewife!”<sup>207</sup> by taking cooking and sewing lessons which would obviate the need for a servant, thus allowing the young couple to economize and to enjoy complete privacy as they continued to work out their relationship. Harry flatly rejected her plans to employ a servant, appealing to her womanly pride in household

management, chiding her that it would be a "humiliation ... to think of marrying a woman who must needs learn the management of her house from a servant!".<sup>208</sup> Gwyneth bridled at his plan to jettison domestic labour, and cagily suggested that he emulate her old Cambridge schoolmate who had married another Canadian and now lived in Winnipeg: "I notice there is a very fair division of labour between Mr. Adams and herself in the early morning. No lying in bed till I have lighted the fires and made the brekker old lazy bones. No! He turns out first in this house—and a very good plan too, and he does the fire."<sup>209</sup>

While it is true that despite the existence of little prescriptive literature upon the question of husbands sharing in domestic and child-rearing tasks,<sup>210</sup> astoundingly, Harry did agree to assume a fair share of home duties, but more tellingly, Gwyneth's recounting of her friend's relationship was intended to make fun of her friend Emilie who, in her estimation, lacked competence as a woman because she was a "regular dandy" unable to cook for her husband. As it turned out, Gwyneth objected to the fact that Harry, in reality, was the very "aesthete" that he portrayed himself as,<sup>211</sup> for he took an unusual interest in household furnishing, how to plan the garden, and was mightily interested in cooking, to the point where he warned her that he would indeed be the kind of "irritable, fault-finding, irritating, meddling person to share domestic duties with when the time comes".<sup>212</sup> The prospect of meddling prompted her to retort "I do think the kitchen is the woman's dominion, and I do know that all the best run houses I know are the ones where the man leaves such domestic questions alone."<sup>213</sup> As was typical, Harry had to concede that he had only begun "to think about home building" two years after their engagement, and even then, his vision of the house, as was typical, devolved to sex. Thus, when he envisioned that blissful day in their own "modest little dwelling" on his salary of \$1500 per annum, he erotically pictured her as "my dearest maid of all work" and consciously committed the Freudian slip of calling the "house" a "*bouse*".<sup>214</sup> On another occasion, he again quickly slipped from practical details of household management, significantly when he was again thinking of servants, which got him thinking about how Gwyneth would service his needs in the bedroom as the melding process got under way in the privacy of the home of their own.

However much Gwyneth and Harry sought to map out their plans for establishing their household, even when this might involve the anticipation of sexual congress, Harry's constant want of self-confidence, combined with his frenetic desire to maintain a firm grip on his youth and its

ideals, meant that his epistolary imaginings never resulted in a real life resolution, thus strangely becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy of Harry's that time remain frozen forever. For the perennially irresolute Harry, the war was a blessing in disguise because, in the first instance, it allowed him to once again delay his marriage to his intended beyond the summer of 1915.<sup>215</sup> "Oh if it weren't for this *BEASTLY* war: how impossible to carry out any prearranged schemes!", he wrote in mock exasperation.<sup>216</sup> However, after training young men in the Canadian Officers' Training Corps at the University of British Columbia, Harry, a tepid imperialist at best, soon saw that he could no longer escape enlistment. This realization caused him to rail against the war which he now perceived as an impersonal "vortex", and to petulantly lament: "What does the individual matter?"<sup>217</sup> Ultimately, he considered himself a "victim of blind force", not because of any pacifist sensitivities or lack of courage, but because of newly instituted Canadian government policies which mandated that a soldier must marry prior to deployment to the front if he wished to obtain a separation allowance.<sup>218</sup> These regulations effectively removed the one remaining weapon in Harry's arsenal in the midst of his perennial gender battle with Gwyneth, namely the power to appoint the date of their nuptials. Little wonder then that he referred to World War I as this "damnable war".<sup>219</sup>

## NOTES

1. LAC, LF, 7:2, G to H, 18 Jan. 1913.
2. R.A. Fisher and C.S. Stock, "The Employment of Married Women", *Eugenics Review*, 6:4 (Jan. 1915), 315.
3. Margaret R. Thomson, "Women and Eugenics", *Eugenics Review*, 4:3 (Oct. 1912), 307.
4. Hamilton, *Marriage as a Trade*, 13.
5. Edith A. Browne, "The Tyranny of Home", *The Freewoman*, 1:10 (25 Jan. 1912), 187; "Where Women Work—i. Teaching", *The Freewoman*, 1:11 (1 Feb. 1912), 205. For *The Freewoman* as a pioneering feminist journal, see Delap, *The Feminist Avant-Garde*.
6. LAC, LF, 7:2, G to H, 24 Jan. 1913, 10 Dec. 1912, 18 Jan. 1913, 26 Jan. 1913. This is a quote from William Wordsworth famous poem "The French Revolution as it Appeared in Enthusiasts at its Commencement", which became a slogan for feminists on both sides of the Atlantic in the Edwardian era. See Adickes, *To Be Young Was Very Heaven*.

7. LAC, LF, 7:2, G to H, 7 Feb. 1913. Prior to the 1920s, "flapper" referred to a silly young girl.
8. LAC, LF, 7:2, G to H, Tuesday p.m., January 1913.
9. LAC, LF, 7:2, G to H, 20 Feb. 1913.
10. LAC, LF, 7:5, G to H, 15 Mar. 1915. Here Gwyneth was musing on the fact that she endorsed new fashioned ideas even though she abhorred the new-fashioned shorter skirts.
11. LAC, LF, 7:5, G to H, 26 Jan. 1915.
12. LAC, LF, 7:3, G to H, 2 May 1913, 16 May 1913.
13. MMUA, Vera Brittain Papers, Box 50, Diary, 18 Jan. 1915.
14. LAC, LF, 7:2, G to H, 15 Mar. 1913.
15. MMUA, Brittain Papers, Box 50, Diary, 31 Dec. 1914. When she realized she was in love with Roland Leighton she began to envision having his child rather than pursuing her dream of literary fame and other "glittering achievements".
16. LAC, LF, 7:2, G to H, 15 Feb. 1913.
17. LAC, LF, 7:3, G to H, 15 June 1913.
18. LAC, LF, 7:3, G to H, 22 June 1913.
19. LAC, LF, 1:9, H to G, 25 May 1913.
20. LAC, LF, 7:2, G to H, 15 Mar. 1913.
21. Heape, *Sex Antagonism*.
22. LAC, LF, 7:3, G to H, 15 June 1913.
23. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 1 Sep. 1911. The theme of *The Osbornes*, in considering the marriage between a nouveau-rich entrepreneur and an aristocrat, rehearsed themes expressed in George Bernard Shaw, *Misalliance* (1910). For the troubled family life of E.F. Benson, see Goldhill, *A Very Queer Family Indeed*.
24. LAC, LF, 14:21, John Thomson to H, 28 Oct. 1911.
25. LAC, LF, 1:4, H to G, 28 Jan. 1912.
26. LAC, LF, 7:5, G to H, 23 Feb. 1915.
27. LAC, LF, 7:2, G to H, 4 Apr. 1913. In this same letter she nastily observed: "you will probably be wondering when I am going to get on to the more interesting subject of yourself".
28. LAC, LF, 14:20, Sir James Murray to H, 7 Dec. 1913.
29. LAC, LF, 7:5, G to H, 19 June 1914.
30. LAC, LF, 1:9, H to G, 1 July 1913.
31. LAC, LF, 1:9, H to G, 25 May 1913.
32. LAC, LF, 1:9, H to G, 1 July 1913.
33. LAC, LF, 1:9, H to G, 16 June 1913.
34. Braby, *Modern Marriage*, 9, 11, 28, 59, 78, 86.
35. LAC, LF, 1:9, H to G, 26 Mar. 1913; *ibid.*, 1:9, Harry to Gwyneth, 9 Nov. 1913.

36. LAC, LF, 1:11, H to G, 14 Mar. 1914.
37. LAC, LF, 7:5, G to H, 4 July 1914.
38. LAC, LF, 7:3, G to H, 20 Nov. 1913. She had recently heard a lecture by Dr. Percy Dearmer, a close colleague of Maude Royden, who, like her, spoke on the contribution of women to the modern church.
39. LAC, LF, 7:5, G to H, 27 June 1914.
40. LAC, LF, 7:5, G to H, 20 Nov. 1914.
41. Brittain, *The Women at Oxford*, 96.
42. Murray, *Caught in the Web of Words*, 180.
43. Annan, "The Intellectual Aristocracy", 241–87.
44. *GR*, no. 26 May Term 1909, 4.
45. UBCA, HTLFP, Box 37A, file 1, "Oxford High School for Girls", 27 Jan. 1908. In 1968 Gwyneth presented her copy of *Sylvie and Bruno* to the University of British Columbia Library with a recollection of Lewis Carroll in the frontispiece. Personal correspondence with Chelsea Shriver, 27 June 2017.
46. UBCA, HTLFP, Box 37A, file 2 "The Lords of the Camus"; *ibid.*, "The Girton Pioneers". On the issue of degrees for women at Oxford and Cambridge, see Deslandes, *Oxbridge Men*, 190–1.
47. Brittain, *The Women at Oxford*, 107, 139.
48. LAC, LF, 14:21, John to dearest Popsy-Wopsy [Harry], n.d. Saturday 1909.
49. *GR*, May 1911, 10; *ibid.*, Lent Term, 1912; 13.
50. MMUA, Brittain Papers, Box 50, Diary, 19 Apr. 1914, 26 Jan. 1915.
51. MMUA, Brittain Papers, Box 50, Diary, 14 Oct. 1914. On the enrichment of individuality, see Davies, *Thoughts on Some Questions Relating to Women, 1860–1908*, 148–50.
52. List, "Girton, My Friend", 83.
53. Cole, *Growing Up Into Revolution*, 38. Cole italicized the word "friends" in order to highlight their importance to her.
54. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 13 Nov. 1912. On raves and pashes and mock marriages at Girton in this period, see Vicinus, "One Life to Stand Beside Me", 603–28.
55. LAC, LF, 9:3, G to H, undated letter, March 1918.
56. LAC, LF, 1:4, H to G, 20 Feb. 1912.
57. Waters, "A Girton Girl on the Throne", 46, 49, 41–60.
58. Berg, *A Woman in History*, 46–7.
59. On the stereotype of the "baggy" outmoded clothing of college women, see Whyte, "The Intellectual Aristocracy Revisited", 15–45.
60. MMUA, Brittain Papers, Box 50, Diary, "Chief Events of the Year 1910", summer term; 16 Oct. 1914, 2 Nov. 1914.
61. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 9 Oct. 1912.



62. Rowbotham, *A New World for Women*, 96. On gender identities viewed as a spectrum of gradations, see Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual", 1–29.
63. LAC, LF, 7:6, G to H, 20 Apr. 1915.
64. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 12 Oct. 1912.
65. Cole, *Growing Up Into Revolution*, 38–9.
66. MMUA, Brittain Papers, Box 50, Diary, 24 Oct. 1914.
67. For Gwyneth's reserved character, see LAC, LF, 14:18, Rosfrith to H, 18 Aug. 1911; *Ibid*, 7:1, G to H, 5 Nov. 1912.
68. GCA, GCPP Pym, "Memoirs of Dora Pym", Michaelmas Term 1910. Gwyneth never appears to have taken an active part in any college societies, apart from the Christian Union, but she did play hockey on the Slackers team who played against the Rotters.
69. UBCA, HTLFP, Box 1:5, Hilda to H, 19 Dec. 1919. On women and mathematics at Cambridge, see Jones, *Femininity, Mathematics and Science, 1880–1914*, 16, 148; Warwick, *Masters of Theory: Cambridge and the Rise of Mathematical Physics*, 367–77. Evidence of Gwyneth's knowledge of Einstein indicates that Cambridge was less hidebound than Warwick suggests.
70. MMUA, Brittain Papers, Box 50, Diary, 15 Oct. 1914. She became "thrilled" after reading the German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer's essay on genius.
71. GCA, "Roll File for Gwyneth Nesta Lillian Ruthven Murray", by Barbara Tunis, daughter. Gwyneth was 90 years old when she died in 1979, when she was living in a room in her daughter's house which she said reminded her of her own at Girton. *ibid.*, Bethy to dear Mary, 23 June 1978. On Gwyneth's sense of independence, see LAC, LF, 1:5, H to G, 10 July 1912.
72. Cole, *Growing Up Into Revolution*, 45. It is significant that her husband G.D.H. Cole was against female suffrage on the grounds that most women were both unintelligent and reactionary. See Harrison, *The Opposition to Women's Suffrage in Britain*, 43.
73. As reported in *Common Cause*, 20 Jan. 1910, 3 Feb. 1910. For the 1908 March, see Stephen, *Emily Davies and Girton College*, 350.
74. Tickner, *The Spectacle of Women*, 8.
75. *Girton Review*, no. 28 Lent Term, 1910, 6.
76. H.M. Swanwick, "Vale", *Common Cause* (3 Oct. 1912), 441.
77. *Girton Review*, no. 29 May Term 1910, 6.
78. "The Religious Aspect of Women's Suffrage", *Common Cause* (31 Oct. 1912), 510.
79. *Girton Review*, no. 25 Lent Term, 1909, 6–7. They raised a mere 10 shillings. For the membership figures, see *ibid.*, 5.

80. Harrison, *The Opposition to Women's Suffrage*, 18–19.
81. UBC, HTLFP, Box 37A, file 5, “Cambridge Magazines”, long vacation 1911. It is unsurprising that Mrs. Humphrey Ward, that archetypal Victorian novelist vilified Lytton Strachey’s *Eminent Victorians*. See Harrison, *The Opposition to Women's Suffrage*, 21. In denying a link between education and suffrage for women, Ward was taking the position outlined by A.V. Dicey, who not surprisingly was viewed as a ridiculously outmoded in his views by the Murray girls. See A.V. Dicey, “Letters to a Friend on Votes for Women”, *Common Cause*, 1:21 (2 Sep. 1909), 265–6.
82. MMUA, Brittain Papers, Box 50, Diary, 22 Oct. 1914.
83. Ralph Rooper, “Women Enfranchised”, *International Journal of Ethics*, 21:2 (Jan. 1911), 85, 97.
84. Russell, *The Tamarisk Tree*, 39–41.
85. Bland, *Banishing the Beast*, 163.
86. Quoted in Hustak, “Love, Sex, and Happiness in Education”, 446–73.
87. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 7 Nov. 1912.
88. “Our Point of View”, *Common Cause*, 1:1 (15 Apr. 1909), 3.
89. Millicent Garrett Fawcett, “Chivalry or Suffrage”, *Common Cause*, 1:15 (22 July 1909), 196. This referred to her article published in *The Englishwoman*. For the argument that Fawcett was not into sex difference, see Alexander, *Becoming a Woman and Other Essays*, 163–4.
90. “Our Friends the Anti-Suffragists”, *Common Cause*, 1:1 (15 Apr. 1909), 1.
91. Millicent Garrett Fawcett, “Congress of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance”, *Common Cause*, 1:1 (15 Apr. 1909), 7–8.
92. Untitled article, *The Freewoman*, 11 July 1912, 143, containing a letter from Maude Royden, who comments that *Common Cause* had noticed the feminist journal “not unfavourably”. It is likely that Gwyneth read *The Freewoman* as she was a devotee of Royden.
93. “Our Point of View”, *Common Cause*, 1:1 (15 Apr. 1909), 3.
94. Pedersen, *Eleanor Rathbone and the Politics of Conscience*, 178, 190–1. For a different perspective, see Oram, “Sex as an Accident”, in Doan and Bland, eds., *Cultural Sexology*, 214–30; Oram, “Repressed and Thwarted, or Bearer of the New World”, 413–33.
95. LAC, LF, 1:4, H to G, 25 Feb. 1912.
96. LAC, LFs, 11:1, H to parents, 1 Jan. 1911.
97. Harry J. Birstingl, “The Human Minority”, *The Freewoman*, 8 Feb. 1912, 234–5.
98. LAC, LF, 7:4, G to H, n.d. Dec. 1913; *ibid.*, 7:3, G to H, 22 July 1913, 28 July 1913.
99. LAC, LF, 1:9, H to G, 5 Aug. 1913.

100. Thomson and Geddes, *The Evolution of Sex*, 124–5. Harry need not have read this in the original, for their ideas were synthesized by R. Murray Leslie in "Woman's progress in relation to eugenics", *Eugenics Review*, 2:4 (Jan. 1911), 282–98.
101. LAC, LF, 1:9, H to G, 21 Nov. 1913.
102. Quoted in Harrison, *The Opposition to Women's Suffrage*, 60.
103. LAC, LF, 11:5, H to mother, 12 Feb. 1912.
104. "Unemotional Women", *Common Cause*, 1:14 (15 July 1909), 183.
105. "The Emancipation of Man", *The Freewoman* (4 Apr. 1912), 381–2.
106. Charles J. Whitby, "A Sex Heresy", *The Freewoman* (16 May 1912), 505–6.
107. Ellis, *Man and Woman*; Rowbotham and Weeks, *Socialism and the New Life*, 163–4, 169.
108. Vera Brittain also commented on the difficulty of being "a *man* as well as a clergyman". See MMUA, Brittain Papers, Box 50, Diary, 5 Dec. 1913.
109. LAC, LF, 1:5, Harry to Gwyneth, 30 May 1912.
110. McGill University Rare Books and Special Collections, "Third Annual and Graduating Dinner: Arts 08", *McGill Outlook*, 30 Apr. 1908. Fausto-Sterling, *Sexing the Body*, 33; Morgan, "Iron Strength and Infinite Tenderness", 177, 168–96.
111. Carstens, "Unbecoming Women", 63, 62–94.
112. Wells, *Marriage*, 504. For the wide cultural purchase of these ideas see Dixon, "Sexology and the Occult", 409–39; Densmore, *Sex Equality*, xvi–iii, 223, 229; Harry J. Birnstingl, "Uranians II", *The Freewoman* (25 Jan. 1912), 189. Rupert Brooke thought he was "very female in parts". See Rutherford, *Forever England*, 60.
113. H.F. Rubenstein, "The Philosophy of G.K. Chesterton", *The Freewoman*, 18 Jan. 1912.
114. Holbrook Jackson, "The Dethronement of the Pompadour", *The Freewoman* (28 Dec. 1911), 104.
115. "The Psychology of Sex", *The Freewoman* (23 Nov. 1911), 9–10. For Brittain's views on the interrelationship of the intellect, the spirit and sexuality, drawn from her reading of Olive Schreiner's *The Story of an African Farm*, which she considered "her bible", see MMUA, Brittain Papers, Box 50, Diary, 4 Mar. 1913.
116. LAC, LF, 1:11, H to G, 19 Apr. 1914.
117. Ellis, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, Vol. II, 82–3. Freud also concluded that all humans were capable of making a homosexual object choice. See Strachey, ed., *Sigmund Freud: Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, xxvii. The term "object" occurs frequently in the correspondence of Harry and Gwyneth, indicating a familiarity with Freud's concept.

118. "Woman and Mankind—Chapter XIV of Weininger's 'Sex and Character,'" *The Freewoman* (2 May 1912), 472.
119. MMUA, Brittain Papers, Box 50, Diary, 28 Apr. 1914, 20 Nov. 1914.
120. LAC, LF, 7:1, Gwyneth to Harry, 8 Nov. 1912.
121. Peacock, *Jane Ellen Harrison*, 31–3, 107, 208. On the interplay between suffrage and eugenics, see Richardson, *Love and Eugenics in the Late Nineteenth-Century*.
122. MMUA, Brittain Papers, Box 50, Diary, 25 Jan. 1914, in which she commented upon a sermon about the "demoralizing effect of conventionality" by the progressive preacher, Mr. Ward.
123. Helen Hamilton, "Spinsters in the Making—Types 1.—The College Woman", *The Freewoman*, 4:1 (14 Dec. 1911), 66–7. For a more conservative reading of this process, see R. Murray Leslie, "Woman's Progress in Relation to Eugenics", *Eugenics Review*, 2:4 (Jan. 1911), 282–98, where he situates unconventionality in the sphere of women's organizations in the public sphere. See also Maximilian A. Mugge, "Eugenics and the Superman: A Racial Science and a Racial Religion", *Eugenics Review*, 1:3 (Oct. 1909), 184–93. For the concept of superman in *The Freewoman*, see Fernihough, *Freewoman and Superman*.
124. Kent, *Sex and Suffrage in Britain*, 43.
125. Dyhouse, *Girls Growing Up in Late Victorian and Edwardian England*, 132.
126. "Men's League for Women's Suffrage", *Common Cause*, 1:31 (11 Nov. 1909), 404; "Reviews—*Sex War and Women's Suffrage*: Lecture by Laurence Housman", *Common Cause* (30 May 1912), 125.
127. Key, *Love and Marriage*, xiii–xiv.
128. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 10 Nov. 1912.
129. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 8 Nov. 1912, 17 Nov. 1912. References to Xanthippe appeared in "The Sheltered Life", *The Freewoman* (23 Nov. 1911), 18. Women also subscribed to these cultural norms. Dora Carrington, a member of the sexually radical Bloomsbury circle, labelled Alix Strachey "so impersonal more like a man" while she was a student at Newnham College. See Caine, "The Stracheys and Psychoanalysis", 148, 144–69.
130. Ellis, *Man and Woman*, 387.
131. On sado-masochistic pornography, see Sigel, *Making Modern Love*, 166–7; Cocks, *Classified*, 87–96.
132. "The Emancipation of Man", *The Freewoman* (4 Apr. 1912), 382; "The Sheltered Life", *The Freewoman* (23 Nov. 1911), 18.
133. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 20 Nov. 1912.
134. LAC, LF, 11:3, H to Parents, 1 Jan. 1911.

135. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to Gwyneth, 9 Apr. 1911. Advertisement is from *The British Medical Journal*, 8 Apr. 1911 for Dr. Vincent's Anti-Stout Pills.
136. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 25 Jan. 1911.
137. Stearns, "Fat in America", 239–58.
138. Zweiniger-Bargielowska, "The Making of a Modern Female Body", 299–317. Our evidence shows that this shift was occurring a decade earlier.
139. Quoted in Weeks, *Sex, Politics and Society*, 43.
140. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 29 May 1911.
141. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 26 July 1911.
142. Gwyneth adamantly objected to the word "obey" in the Anglican church service. It was therefore a standing joke that because of the unavailability of a Presbyterian clergyman when wartime exigencies dictated a rushed marriage, they were compelled to take their vows in the local Anglican parish in Oxford. This issue was canvassed in various publications. See, for example, "An Ethical Marriage Service", *The New Age* (29 Apr. 1909), 5; "Emancipation", *The Freewoman* (8 Feb. 1912), 236. Like Gwyneth, Vera Brittain objected to "propitiating any man" as her subservient mother had done, and thus declined marrying an older man. See MMUA, Brittain Papers, Box 50, Diary, 3 Sep. 1914, 7 Sep. 1914, 23 Sep. 1914. For an exploration of the ways in which couples responded to the word "obey" in the Anglican marriage service, see Jones, "Love, Honour and Obey? Romance, Subordination and Marital Subjectivity in Interwar Britain", 124–43.
143. On this as a significant aspect of male control, see Hall, *Hidden Anxieties*, 73.
144. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 14 Nov. 1912.
145. LAC, LF, 1:5, H to G, 28 Aug. 1912.
146. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 21 Nov. 1912.
147. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 15 Nov. 1912.
148. LAC, LF, 1:5, H to G, 8 July 1912.
149. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 15 Nov. 1912.
150. LAC, LF, 1:4, H to G, 29 Apr. 1912.
151. LAC, LF, 1:5, H to G, 28 Aug. 1912.
152. Finot, *The Problems of the Sexes*, 92.
153. Harry J. Birnstingl, "Uranians", *The Freewoman* (4 Jan. 1912), 128.
154. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 1 Nov. 1912.
155. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 12 Nov. 1912.
156. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 5 Nov. 1912.
157. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 25 Oct. 1912.
158. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 14 Nov. 1912.
159. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 17 Nov. 1912.
160. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 18 Nov. 1912.

161. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 7 Nov. 1912.
162. Vir, "Speculations on Sex War", *The Freewoman* (14 Dec. 1911), 65–6.
163. Selwyn Weston, "Woman—And the Revolution", *The Freewoman* (28 Dec. 1911), 107.
164. Stevenson, *Virginibus Puerisque*; "The Tragedy of the Happy Marriage", *The Freewoman* (30 Nov. 1911), 25.
165. MMUA, Brittain Papers, Box 50, Diary, 1 July 1914.
166. Weston, "Woman—And the Revolution", 106.
167. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 4 Nov. 1912. That this was a relatively new concept in marriage, see Elsie Clews Parsons, "When Mating and Parenthood are Theoretically Distinguished", *International Journal of Ethics*, 26:2 (Jan. 1916), 215, 207–16. In this period, marriage was more often seen as enriching one's personality rather than being seen as Victorian women did as a renunciation of the self. On this point, see Winifred Hindshaw, "Self-Sacrifice", *The Freewoman* (7 Dec. 1911), 46–7; Caine, "Love and Romance in Interwar Women's Autobiography", 27, 20–40. Gwyneth was very committed to sympathy in marriage but clearly did not view this as a renunciation of self. Indeed, only Harry admitted that "I am your other self." See LAC, LF, 7:1, Gwyneth to Harry, 9 Nov. 1912; *ibid.*, 7:1, Gwyneth to Harry, 9 Nov 1912. Havelock Ellis referred to Olive Schreiner as "my other self" as did she. See Olive to Henry, 18 Oct 1884, Henry to Olive, 28 Oct 1884, quoted in Drazin, ed., *'My Other Self': The Letters of Olive Schreiner and Havelock Ellis*. Disturbingly, Harry insisted that she be sympathetic as he had passed on several more beautiful women.
168. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to, 8 Oct. 1912.
169. *Common Cause*, 17 Mar. 1910.
170. A. Maude Royden, "Equality of Service", *Common Cause*, 1:8 (3 June 1909).
171. A. Maude Royden, "Modern Love", in Victor Gollancz, ed., 15, 23, 28, 41–3.
172. LAC, K.P. Kirkwood Fonds, MG 27 III E3, 34:7, Marion Moody to Ken [Kenneth P. Kirkwood], 21 May 1924.
173. LAC, Kirkwood Fonds, 34:7, Marion to Ken, 15 July 1924.
174. Fletcher, *Maude Royden*, 81.
175. *Common Cause*, 1:28 (21 Oct. 1909). This was a speech given to refute the conclusions of Professor Dicey and concluded with a resolution for the immediate enfranchisement of women. On teaching as an appropriate career for married women, on the notion, suggested by Havelock Ellis that women stood closer to children on the evolutionary scale, see "Married Women as Teachers", *Common Cause*, 1:4 (6 May 1909), 50; Winifred Hindshaw, "The Maternal Instinct", *The Freewoman* (23 May 1912), 13–14.

176. Charles J. Whitby, "Tertium Quid", *The Freewoman* (18 Jan. 1912), 167–8.
177. LAC, LF, 7:7, Gwyneth to Harry, 26 Jan. 1916.
178. Harrison, *Alpha and Omega*, 73, 83, 97.
179. LAC, LF, 7:7, 26 Jan. 1916.
180. LAC, LF, 7:4, Gwyneth to Harry, 23 Jan. 1914.
181. LAC, LF, 7:4, Gwyneth to Harry, 23 Jan. 1914.
182. Ethel Colquhoun, "Modern Feminism and Sex Antagonism", *Quarterly Review* (July 1913), 143–66.
183. LAC, LF, 2:2, Harry to Gwyneth, 31 Dec. 1915.
184. LAC, LF, 7:7, Gwyneth to Harry, 26 Jan. 1916.
185. A. Maude Royden, "Review of Ann Veronica", *Common Cause*, 1:31 (18 Nov. 1909), 422.
186. MMUA, Brittain Papers, Box 50, Diary, 29 Sep. 1915.
187. LAC, LF, 11:6, Harry to mother, 22 Sep. 1912.
188. LAC, LF, 1:9, Harry to Gwyneth, 9 Feb. 1914.
189. LAC, LF, 1:10, Harry to Gwyneth, 25 Dec. 1913; *ibid.*, 1:9, Harry to Gwyneth, 26 Aug. 1913.
190. LAC, LF, 1:9, Harry to Gwyneth, 24 July 1913. On eugenics and marriage, see "I.A. Thomson, "Parenthood and Race Culture: An Outline of Eugenics", *Eugenics Review*, 1:2 (July 1909), 30.
191. "Husband or Children First?", *Modern Man*, 21 Sep. 1912. For an opposing view, see Chesser, *Woman, Marriage and Motherhood*, 12.
192. B. Russell, "Marriage and the Population Question", *International Journal of Ethics*, 26:4 (July 1916), 461.
193. LAC, LF, 11:1, H to G, 9 Feb. 1914.
194. MMUA, Brittain Papers, Box 50, Diary, 31 Dec. 1914.
195. J. Lionel Taylor, "Race and Marriage", *The New Age* (15 July 1909), 234.
196. Royden, "Review of Ann Veronica", 422.
197. LAC, LF, 11:1, Harry to Gwyneth, 9 Feb. 1914.
198. Stevenson, *Virginibus Puerisque*, v; Rose, *The Edwardian Temperament*, 181–9.
199. LAC, LF, 1:9, H to G, 30 Oct. 1913.
200. LAC, LF, 1:9, H to G, 25 Oct. 1913.
201. LAC, LF, 1:11, H to G, 26 July 1914.
202. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 22 Nov. 1914.
203. LAC, LF, 1:6, H to G, 11 Nov. 1912.
204. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 22 Nov. 1914.
205. LAC, LF, 7:1, G to H, 16 Nov. 1912.
206. LAC, LF, 7:4, G to H, 8 Jan. 1914.
207. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 24 Sep. 1911.
208. LAC, LF, 11:1, H to G, 22 Mar. 1914.

209. LAC, LF, 7:4, G to H, 4 Dec. 1913.
210. A rare example of novels which showed newlyweds sharing housework was Edith Nesbit's *The Red House* (1902). See Miller, *Rebel Women*, 45; Thompson, *The Edwardians*, 63, in which he notes a rare marriage in which a man did the washing up.
211. LAC, LF, 7:2, G to H, Wednesday n.d., ca. March 1913.
212. LAC, LF, 1:9, H to G, 16 July 1913.
213. LAC, LF, 7:4, G to H, 6 Mar. 1914.
214. LAC, LF, 1:9, H to G, 21 May 1913, 18 Dec. 1913; *ibid.*, 1.2, H to G, 23 Feb. 1912.
215. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 10 Mar. 1915.
216. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 12 Mar. 1915.
217. LAC, LF, 1:11, H to G, 8 Nov. 1915.
218. LAC, LF, 2:2, H to G, 27 Dec. 1915. On the wartime policies of the Canadian government, see Christie, *Engendering the State*, 56–8.
219. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 22 Nov. 1914.





## Purring Vaginas and Wagging Penises: Sexting World War I

*“What a curious farce Love is: especially love of man for woman or woman for man: and that ... must be always distinguished from the love of man for man or woman for woman ... underlying all, always the nudging element of passion ... only in the one relationship does it seem to me to be found in its normal form.”*

*Harry to Gwyneth, 19 Apr. 1914*

*“Just a short ‘evening love’ to compensate for Fritz’s morning hate.”*

*Gwyneth to Harry, 23 Sep. 1916<sup>1</sup>*

In March 1918, Gwyneth wrote to Harry, then serving as an officer in the Canadian Machine Gun Corps on the Western Front, to inform him of the impending surrender of Turkey. He responded by saying that he was glad that “the famous Straits are not wired against friendly submarine activity ... Still I can’t believe you are serious when you say the historical passage is open for navigation.”<sup>2</sup> In writing with obvious relief about the long-awaited prospect of an Allied victory, Gwyneth and Harry were remembering his favourite cousin Elmo, who after surviving “that continuous rain of shot and shell”<sup>3</sup> in the horrific failure of Gallipoli, was later killed in Mesopotamia in 1917. Like so many others, they were anticipating the end of the war with its immense casualties graphically listed in daily news reports. Gwyneth’s sister Rosfrith reflected upon the death of so

many of their friends, stating that the war had become intensely personal. Indeed, in Britain, they were so surrounded by the ubiquity of death that it had lost all terror for them.<sup>4</sup> However much family members waiting at home had become inured to the trauma of war, in Oxford, a centre for convalescing wounded, the anguish of fretfully waiting for the return of loved ones and the widespread sense of grief was made all the more intense by the fact that disfigured and wounded young soldiers provided daily physical reminders of the violence and cruelty of the war.

If Gwyneth was, like so many of the war weary, hopeful of an end to her endless waiting, it is likely that Harry, on hearing the news of Turkey's surrender, was, like so many of the officers and soldiers who had endured the daily war of nerves involving the experience of constant noise of bombardment, the persistent screaming of shells, and the jarring rattling of machine gun fire, all the while witnessing the sight of the ruined and mangled bodies of comrades, to say nothing of the discomforts of trench life with its mud, lice, rats and constant lack of food, wished to escape the abnormal chaos of war which had compelled them to suppress their fears and anxieties under the mask of cheerfulness and iron-clad self-restraint. These men, many of whom were forced to adopt the rigid codes of military masculinity and "play the man", eagerly anticipated rejoining their domestic circle and indulging once again in the "tender-hearted feelings"<sup>5</sup> of loving family life with wives, children, and parents.

Responding to an older paradigmatic view of World War I as a cataclysmic event which provoked a sense of alienation, psychic trauma, and inevitable dismemberment, all of which served to unman the front-line soldier, a new generation of historians has questioned the conventional interpretation of the soldier as a victim of modern technological warfare, where the brutality of the war machine eroded individuality and one's human values. Harry was, in many respects, an embodiment of the soldier who experienced a relatively good war: he lived, was never wounded, and bore no evident psychic scars while overseeing the transport section of a machine gun company. It is true that that machine gun work was considered relatively safe, as Leslie Frost, later premier of Ontario, attested, since most of the work occurred back of the front line trenches.<sup>6</sup> The only medical attention that Harry received was treatment for tonsillitis and recurrent gingivitis which demanded dental treatment, and while references to the lack of new socks for three weeks during the Vimy Ridge offensive of 1917 did speak to the physical discomfort of war, Harry's only evident sense of peril, physical hardship and mental anguish occurred at Passchendaele, due to an extended period of action in the front line, but even this appears to have been temporary.

Overall, the war was a great benefit to Harry Logan: he was physically fit, happy in love, enjoyed work that was both stimulating and brought accolades of promotion and the award of a Military Cross for bravery, but most of all, his military service ensured a secure job teaching at the University of British Columbia in peace time.<sup>7</sup> Whether he was being entirely transparent, Harry nevertheless averred that he was happy in doing his duty despite the obvious dangers, and often spoke with good cheer of beating the Germans. Despite the abundance of bullets and machine gun fire, Harry maintained that he had no fear because all was, as he said, in the hands of God. Harry's way of coping with war by taking satisfaction in his work was not unique. Two other machine gun officers spoke of the war in a similar vein: Cecil Frost told his parents that "I am love with this work, I think it is 'jake'",<sup>8</sup> while Georges Vanier, later Governor General of Canada, spoke of his participation in the war in terms of glory, high principles and even great excitement. As he informed his worried parents about fighting the Germans: "Really it is very good sport."<sup>9</sup>

The work of Alexander Watson and Michael Roper has drawn attention to the fact that the majority of men serving on the Western Front did not experience shell-shock or mental breakdown but rather found various ways to cope with daily risk and the expectation of death.<sup>10</sup> As Joanna Bourke has observed, a central purpose of war is that the "corporeal male would eventually become a corpse on some battlefield or mortuary slab".<sup>11</sup> In resolutely exploring the war from the perspective of the emotional experience of the soldiers themselves through innovative analyses of their letters home, Watson and Roper likewise acknowledge that the primary emotion of war was anxiety and terror. However, their analyses have also detailed how front-line soldiers, despite the constant assault on their nerves occasioned by the ever-present thunderous bombardments and the prevalent fear of imminent but unpredictable death, coped by deploying a variety of strategies. Watson has highlighted the efficacy of humour, the role of junior officers in sustaining morale, and the high level of identification of the common soldier with the wider war aims. In his theoretically innovative approach grounded in psychoanalytic theory, Roper has examined the therapeutic practice of letter writing, to explore the emotional experiences of soldiers and the way in which these were both consciously and unconsciously expressed, ranging from terror, to pain and pleasure. Roper demonstrates the degree to which soldiers were sustained both by their families on the home front and their male "families" of comrades in the trenches, with home and front strategically interdependent in

fostering the emotional resilience of the individual soldier. His insistence that historians focus on the subjective experience and on the need to embed gender identities in the realm of everyday life<sup>12</sup> has offered substantial dividends to the new cultural history of the Great War, whose major practitioners<sup>13</sup> have expanded Roper's emphasis upon letters between soldiers and their mothers, to encompass a wide range of familial correspondence. Their findings, like Roper's, have reinforced the earlier conclusion of Joanna Bourke that "the war did not frame the real world for many men. For most, home remained the touchstone of all their actions".<sup>14</sup>

When Gwyneth wrote about the Turkish surrender to say that the Dardanelles were "très ouverte" and that it had been a long time since "Peter" had had "private information and practical experience" of them,<sup>15</sup> Harry amusingly quipped that "Peter" had "actually anointed his head in oil in joyful contemplation" of the fact that the "famous Straits are not wired against friendly submarine activity", hoping to "test it" on every occasion, "even up to eight times a night,"<sup>16</sup> their eager anticipation of the end of war was not primarily intended to celebrate an end to their persistent anxiety. For this couple peace meant enjoying the delights of sexual intercourse. Indeed, between Harry's arrival at the front in August 1916 and the Armistice, Gwyneth and Harry engaged in a daily correspondence in which they wrote in the personae of Dardanella and Peter, namely their vagina and penis. They also developed their own unique language to identify their sexual body parts and to describe the various sexual acts they engaged in, including masturbation, oral sex and a variety of sexual positions, some of which had a distinctly sado-masochistic flavour.

To date, the sexual lives of World War I soldiers have eluded historians. Both Joanna Bourke and Jason Crouthamel have remarked on the fact that soldiers wrote only rarely about their "sexual bodies".<sup>17</sup> Because of his focus upon letters between husbands and wives, Anthony Fletcher has observed that much of men's nostalgia for home revolved around missing sex with their wives, seeing it as their biggest privation. However, most soldiers appear to have not been bold enough to engage in continuous sex-talk with their wives. For example, only on one occasion did the British officer Reggie Trench mention having "night ops" while at home on leave.<sup>18</sup> The lengthy quotidian tongue-in-cheek ruminations of Dardanella and Peter thus constitute a rare body of first-person evidence of that most intimate of personal experiences, sexual intercourse, which, as Peter Gay has remarked, remains among "the most scantily documented".<sup>19</sup>

Our analysis of these letters contributes to a larger body of work which has challenged the older binary between the soldier and families back home, but it seeks to refine the findings of new scholarship which have posited a continuing identity of soldiers with the domestic sphere, by showing that Harry's ideal of "home" resided principally with Gwyneth's sexual body. For them, the domestic was coextensive with sex. In ventriloquizing as "Dardanella"—an obvious reference to Gallipoli—the war was metaphorically inscribed upon her body. Although Harry and Gwyneth often speculated about a future home for themselves after the war, because she continued to live in her parental home at Sunnyside in Oxford with her two sisters and widowed mother, the only memory that Harry possessed of domestic comforts was the voluptuous body of his wife. In keeping with the Edwardian turn of mind, in which the private and interior world took precedence over external events, Harry and Gwyneth rarely mentioned the actual war. As a result, every letter spoke, albeit in euphemistic terms so as to circumvent the prying eyes of military censors, about the pleasures of sexual love.

In part their humorous excursions into their erotic imaginings constituted a means to displace anxiety and fear, but writing about their sexual desires also represented their ongoing journey of love and self-discovery as a couple which had begun several years earlier. There was a continuity in their identity as lovers; however, the war presented a new context in which their language of love was articulated. However, by contrast with their pre-war correspondence, there was little conscious discussion of the vicissitudes of their relationship. On the one hand, Harry obviously concurred with the conclusion of another Canadian Presbyterian officer, Stuart Tompkins, who, though a devotee of the new psychology, informed his wife, the former Edna Christie, that "introspection is not good for one"<sup>20</sup> during wartime, despite the view he shared with Harry that letter-writing was, in usual circumstances, indispensable for the development of personality. At first glance, it would seem that Harry fully embraced the emotional self-restraint enjoined by the British infantry training manual.<sup>21</sup> He was not seeking to conform with military discipline; rather, good sex obviated the need to ruminate continuously upon one's emotional state. As a result, his previously chaotic and expansive emotional register was almost wholly channelled into the articulation of sexual desire, the hallmark of Freudian psychoanalysis. Neither Harry nor Gwyneth were being ironic, therefore, when

they stated repeatedly that they had “found our peace & rest in the midst of war and tumult”.<sup>22</sup> Their conscious emotional temper was framed by their ongoing marital relationship, rather than by the exigencies of war itself. The irony is, that despite using war imagery in their erotic fantasies, such as terming her breasts and nipples “Dug-in” and “Dug-out”, the events of war were remote to their self-identities.

Norman Macdonnell, a captain in the British artillery and Harry’s closest Canadian friend at Oxford, voiced the more conventional iteration of the primacy of physical masculinity as legitimated by war. As soon as he enlisted, he began to fashion his identity around a cult of male camaraderie of the sort that features so prominently in historical scholarship of the war. Drawing both upon the rhetoric of physical fitness movements prior to the war which extolled the admiration of men for other men’s bodies,<sup>23</sup> as well as wartime propaganda which measured army discipline in terms of male bonding, Macdonnell wrote in the fall of 1914: “I am extraordinary [*sic*] happy: fit as a fiddle: free as the wind: jolly as punch.” He revelled in the company of men, stating that “[O]ur tent is a king’s palace in spirit: dirty: full of canteens: crowded: but jovial & kindly and in this way the age of romance has returned—all things are made new and a man can step out feeling he is as strong as anyone & a match for anything ... These are days for men & not for women.” A notorious flirt and womanizer, who had just broken off his engagement, Macdonnell wistfully concluded that he had “various fragment memories to blow across the desert” to relieve him when he was dirty and feeling lonely.<sup>24</sup> For Harry, however, the age of romance centred on the love of man for woman. Macdonnell’s vision of the war was one defined exclusively in terms of men whereby male intimacy inevitably diminished women. Where for his more conventional fellow Canadian Rhodes Scholar the feminine remained a vestigial presence in the remote recesses of his experience, Harry’s ideal of male-on-male love and succor steadily declined throughout the war and was replaced by the “clean” love encompassed by heterosexual passion. For him, war was doubly abnormal: in brutalizing men, it denigrated his belief in male friendship as a source of emotional expression and interchange conducive to higher ideals, and in forcing men to live intimately with one another, it vitiated heterosexual love. The writing of playful and sexually titillating letters to his wife was a psychological act, just as the letters analysed by Roper of soldiers to their mothers, but it was one consciously designed to perform his heterosexuality. Harry did not actualize his masculinity through his work as an officer; rather he achieved mature manhood

through having sex with his wife, which he constantly and elaborately reimagined on a daily basis throughout the war. Other men may have been dismembered, but Harry's member, namely Peter, was the instrument of the psychological achievement of the undivided self. Indeed, the prospect of death hypertrophied his sexual manhood, but sexual love also emphatically reaffirmed his sense of human values and oriented them to the future, thereby enabling him to hold at bay the disillusionment and alienation that were the lot of so many of his contemporaries.<sup>25</sup> The sexually charged wartime correspondence of Gwyneth Murray and Harry Logan both refines and reinforces Joanna Bourke's broader conclusion concerning the continued primacy of heterosexuality and domesticity during that cataclysmic war which many historians have over-interpreted as one naturalized in terms of the male gender.<sup>26</sup>

If there was little war enthusiasm in Britain itself, there was even less in Canada, especially in Vancouver which was geographically so far distant from the Western Front.<sup>27</sup> The standard interpretation of the Great War in Canada argues that voluntary enlistment was fairly robust up until 1916, with the caveat that this was driven largely by the British-born. Native-born Canadians remained more reluctant to involve themselves in what was seen as a distant conflict.<sup>28</sup> Although proud of his family's Scots-Irish and ultra-Protestant heritage, the fact that he was born in Londonderry, Nova Scotia and was raised in British Columbia, helps explain Harry's initial reluctance to enlist. Indeed, his reaction to the outbreak of war was one of revulsion at the "appalling catastrophe", viewing it as a sign of the "fundamental barbarism underlying the specious veneer of civilization".<sup>29</sup> As a result, he steadfastly announced his allegiance to the "arts of peace", which he intended to uphold by continuing to teach the classics. He did, however, stipulate that should Canada be attacked,<sup>30</sup> he would be willing to fight, but his sense of imperial patriotism remained muted. Indeed, in response to Gwyneth's fierce condemnation of Germany as England entered the war, Harry stated: "I hate narrow-minded patriots."<sup>31</sup> Having travelled in Germany and studied its language and culture as a student, he was particularly appalled by the intense anti-German hatred which he believed was an irrational but constituent element of English nationalism,<sup>32</sup> and even after the sinking of the *Lusitania* which spurred worldwide condemnation of the German state, Harry reprobed the anti-German riots that broke out in Victoria, the capital of British Columbia, judging such mean-spirited retaliation to be a disgrace. Even in the wake of such a tragic loss of civilian lives he concluded that it would be

futile to be “engaged in a ‘song of hate’”.<sup>33</sup> Yet by war’s end, while en route to Ottawa to write the history of the Canadian Machine Gun Corps, he expressed equal hatred towards the “fat” self-satisfied Canadians who had no first-hand experience of the horrors of war as well as the German-Canadians he encountered on the train.<sup>34</sup>

Even prior to widespread public awareness of extensive casualties in the stalemate of the trenches, Harry declared that war was futile, and as a believer in the “gospel of peace and love”, he feared that Christianity and individual free will would be extinguished by the juggernaut of war, because, even if it was meant to defend nation and empire, it demanded that men die. The British government’s evocation of death in the name of honour, justice and right was perceived by Harry as merely “external” to the continuing development of his psychological and private self and all personal relationships, key elements in the modernist creed. Alongside his fear of killing and of being killed, Harry was apprehensive that the integrity of his individual personality would be compromised, not least because, as he reasoned, should he enlist, he would become simply like all those “ordinary people” who were just willing to reflexively conform to blind martial forces.<sup>35</sup> To rationalize his unwillingness to enlist to a zealously patriotic fiancée, Harry alluded to a lack of war spirit in Canada and argued that he was needed at home to care for his elderly parents.<sup>36</sup> In the interim, Harry joined the University of British Columbia’s Officer Training Corps (OTC), where he progressively found it impossible to escape its culture of martial masculinity, with its emphasis upon physical strength and doing one’s duty. Despite his claims of being an anti-conformist, Harry revelled in the constant sociability with other young men, the exertions of drill and lengthy marches, and the barrack-room atmosphere of sexual innuendo and spirited hijinks, because it permitted him to reconnect with the world of male camaraderie which had so characterized his years at Oxford. Waxing eloquent about the men under his charge, whom he interestingly compared with public school “old boys” after having read again *Tom Brown’s Schooldays*, Harry recorded the jocularity of mess dinners, which involved singing, physical stunts, cock-fighting and pulling the broomstick,<sup>37</sup> the latter a test of strength which also had obvious phallic overtones. For a young man who constantly fretted about his lack of self-confidence and remained conflicted regarding his career, his enlistment resolved his constant state of indecision: “These are Great days for me, very busy and therefore as happy as possible. It is delightful”, he told Gwyneth, “to feel that one is accomplishing something each day.”<sup>38</sup> Harry



gloried in his new-found consciousness of his bodily strength and competence, ironically complaining of this regimen that “I feel like a being who had in him the springs of an involuntary perpetual motion: I really never seem to get time for rest”, and in semi-jest, declared that “the only way to gain a complete rest would be to enlist for Active Service!”<sup>39</sup>

After six months of exposure to war propaganda, both within the OTC and at church, where they sang “Fight the Good Fight” and heard sermons on “God and the Great War”, Harry became more convinced of the righteousness of Britain’s cause. In his public persona he spoke the language of self-sacrifice, idealism and patriotism,<sup>40</sup> but even in January 1915, he remained convinced that his duty to the empire was best served by teaching Canadian youth. It is evident that reading of the death of so many of his old Oxford friends galvanized a more bellicose sensibility in which Harry now defended Britain’s war aims, which he articulated in terms of Christ’s cleansing the temple of money changers.<sup>41</sup> For the first time, what had hitherto been vague and abstract notions of “strength and nobility”,<sup>42</sup> appropriate for motivating the conformist masses, were now firmly linked in his mind with personal relationships, which evoked the Edwardian “gospel of human relations”.<sup>43</sup> The prospect of their “little circle” of Oxford men being wiped out completely was critical to explaining his abrupt change of mind, and this cult of friendship explains why he began to envision the war as a pathway to international peace because by bringing soldiers together from across the empire it was actually forging dense webs of personal intercourse and why he interpreted this as a component of masculinity: “it comes to me it is my duty as a man first of all to place myself at the disposal of my country in the time of her distress,” he told Gwyneth, “not because it is my country but because there are ideas to be maintained and fought for”.<sup>44</sup> Long an adherent of a timorous, intellectual manhood, Harry now expressed his delight of being an “American weight-throwing Rhodes scholar” instead of a “pious (?) other-worldly, spiritually-minded featherweight”.<sup>45</sup> In choosing to advance into the world of martial masculinity, Harry asserted a distinctly corporeal view of his Oxford friends, transforming them from an inward-looking, emotional group into what he termed a “‘strenuous’ band” of brothers.<sup>46</sup> In so doing he now excluded his closest Oxford intimate John Thomson who had become a conscientious objector because he believed “war is contrary to Christianity”.<sup>47</sup>

In Harry’s mind duty and idealism were in close propinquity to one another<sup>48</sup>; however, the real driving force behind his decision to enlist in

March of 1915 was ultimately a pragmatic one. "I hope to receive some sort of promise of work when it is all over from the University authorities here", he informed Gwyneth.<sup>49</sup> Harry's response to Gwyneth's and his future father-in-law's querying of his decision to enlist, demonstrated the degree to which he had come to fully imbibe state propaganda which proclaimed a natural antithesis between the martial world of men and that of the female home front, for he declared that it would be impossible for him to "honourably stand by" and remain in the "peace and quietness and domestic felicity" as a conventional breadwinner burdened with the "duties of a family". War was, for him, a time of youthful enthusiasm which demanded that he become an "impetuous active sort",<sup>50</sup> a perception of modern masculinity which he juxtaposed against the Victorian platitudes of his aged father-in-law,<sup>51</sup> and which anticipated the sentiments expressed by Rupert Brooke just one month later. Brooke celebrated war because it "caught our youth, and wakened us from sleeping" so that they could "turn, as swimmers into cleanness leaping", away from both "half-men" and "the emptiness of love".<sup>52</sup>

As might have been predicted, the fact that he had not consulted Gwyneth about such a momentous decision aroused her ire,<sup>53</sup> especially as she had made the journey from righteous indignation on behalf of Britain in 1914 to one of pacifism during February and March of 1915, the very months in which Harry was reformulating his own response to war. Gwyneth's extreme *volte face*, from viewing the war as a moral crusade against the military despotism of Germany<sup>54</sup> to her fervent endorsement of anti-militarism occurred after reading Norman Angell's *The Great Illusion*, a paean to the supersession of physical force by economic internationalism,<sup>55</sup> and upon listening to the pacifist and feminist Maude Royden.<sup>56</sup> Unlike the neophyte Harry, Gwyneth had seen some of the horrors of war up close. Living in Oxford she would have seen dispossessed Belgian refugees, maimed and dismembered soldiers being treated in the various Oxford colleges which had become hospitals, felt the terror of Zeppelin raids, endured food rationing, and, most affecting of all, read the daily lists of dead Oxford and Cambridge friends, whose death had an opposite effect, turning her decisively against the war.<sup>57</sup> She was only partially reconciled to Harry's decision to serve on the front in France when it meant advancing the date of their marriage to 18 May 1916.

Historians have debated the extent to which World War I combatants identified primarily as soldiers, whose primary allegiance was, as some have

assumed, to a community of male comrades. As Jessica Meyer has demonstrated, martial masculinity was perceived as a key vehicle for “playing the man”, which suggests that real manhood occupied a separate cultural space from the battlefield. She has, however, identified some officers, such as C.T. Newman, who placed national honour before personal love.<sup>58</sup> As noted above, Harry likewise deployed the language of imperial patriotism when trying to rationalize his choice after Gwyneth’s outrage that he had joined up. However much Harry may have paid lip-service to the ideal of military manhood propagated by the British and Canadian governments, his self-identity was not framed by official views of male camaraderie. It is true that after military training Harry exalted in a new consciousness of having a fit body: “I enjoy most things nowadays. I am really getting very fit, which accounts for a good deal for my increasing joy in life.”<sup>59</sup> Even though martial masculinity may have been idealized in a more intense way during wartime, physical fitness for war did not lead Harry to extoll male comradeship, even though he often described how he was marching in tune with over 100 men on his frequent and extensive route marches.<sup>60</sup> He especially relished growing an officer’s moustache and wearing military dress. The transformative character of military uniforms in remaking youth into mature men of action was attested to by Vera Brittain when commenting upon her friend Maurice in 1914: “He has grown a small moustache, & looks much older & has an air of confidence & self-respect ... He also seemed to have grown taller & held himself splendidly without any suspicion of laziness.”<sup>61</sup> However, Harry had reservations about the kilt worn by the 72nd Seaforth Highlanders because of its association with effeminacy. To counter the imputations of unmanliness many of the men in his regiment exposed themselves in public in order to show their sexual competency.<sup>62</sup> Ultimately, the subject of kilts became a source of sexual titillation for Harry and Gwyneth, just as growing his moustache spurred further sexual ribaldry. When Harry informed her that “all must refrain from shaving the upper lip”, he teased her suggestively: “Won’t you be tickled Gwynerkin? Another toy for you to play with!”<sup>63</sup>

However, entering once again into a wholly masculine way of life reawakened his “impulses of love toward men, toward all men”. At one level Harry alluded to a concept of male friendship bound by higher ideals that was unsullied by sexual desire. Yet, while training young men in the OTC, Harry oscillated between the erotic charge of masculine camaraderie and the allure of heterosexual romance with Gwyneth which he continued to view in tension with one another. As he rather frankly informed her, the

prospect of war increased the impact of the Muse of sexual desire, making him “crazier and crazier over this business of love”. Significantly, he remained unclear as to whether he had taken to masturbating—what he termed “the stimulation of lone impulses”—because of his thoughts of Gwyneth or because of the erotic intoxication provided by close association with “many sober-minded fellows!”<sup>64</sup> It is of considerable interest that Gwyneth’s response was not preserved by Harry, a self-acknowledged pack-rat. We gain some sense of her state of mind as several months later she accused him, once again, of not understanding women, her coded disapprobation of his homosocial proclivities. What we do know is that two letters later, though he again referred to the fact that “the commonest longing of mine now is for [the] companionship of a bright good young man, thoughtful, musical, with ideas”, he deflected the danger of homoeroticism by jokingly concluding “do you think I might find him by advertising in the Times”.<sup>65</sup> This demonstrates a knowingness not only of the subculture of companion ads in English newspapers, but of how an artistic temperament functioned as a code for what Harry Cocks has termed an “unconventional” or “homosexual interest”.<sup>66</sup>

Within Harry’s lexicon, he attributed the “vague”<sup>67</sup> love of men he was experiencing to the exigencies of war and to a state-sponsored rubric of military morale. While he acknowledged the power of the love of men for men as a stimulus to higher ideals, he also positioned this as abnormal and therefore linked it metaphorically with the abnormality of war. Normative love, for him, was equated with heterosexual desire manifested in penetrative sexual intercourse: “no Love of man and woman is complete,” he wrote to Gwyneth, “until passion is consummated”.<sup>68</sup> Ultimately, his increasing consciousness of his physical body as a soldier led him to think of Gwyneth’s “heavenly body”,<sup>69</sup> and the “drawing forth of soul to soul” by the “stirring of the blood at the touch of hands”.<sup>70</sup> As he began to anticipate their impending nuptials, he equated the “matrimonial” with the “physiological”,<sup>71</sup> underscoring yet again the importance he attached to sexual intercourse which he maintained must inhabit “the very centre of our beings”, provide connubial pleasure and function as the “mark of complete manhood”.<sup>72</sup> Heterosexuality, according to Harry, was the crown of fully mature masculinity which he contrasted with the mere boyish “utter and abandoned admiration” he felt for his fellow Oxford athletes who, upon death in the trenches became simply disembodied “beautiful soul[s]”.<sup>73</sup>

The knowledge of the sacrifice of his friends marked a turning point, for in enlisting he abandoned the world of men, in favour of heterosexual-

ity as he anticipated the full sexual masculinity conferred by marriage. The “great thrill”<sup>74</sup> of military victory which suffused the entire empire became transmuted upon his actual enlistment into a “thrill” or orgasm. Donning the uniform and moustache of an officer made him immediately think of sex. It drew to mind their first experience of penetrative sex in the ocean in which he now reimagined Gwyneth holding on to his “upper-lip excrescence” with her lips which she could “wash” as they swam along—the sea a conventional euphemism for eroticism—whereby his facial hair became a simile for pubic hair in which her “fingers” could become “entangled”. Here the kiss also represented the genital kiss, prompting him to remark: “How you will be tickled!” Reminding her of the nautical metaphor in which she guided his penis or ship into her straits, he informed her that she would soon be a “wreck”<sup>75</sup> because the increased physical dimensions produced by the system of military discipline had correspondingly resulted in a hypertrophied sexual organ which Gwyneth had come to refer to as his “long beak”<sup>76</sup>: “I’m growing into the veritable giant you imagined me to be in a recent letter—and a most excitable and heart-pounding giant. I think you will be quite pleased with me when you see me! ... I’m really becoming quite a dog you know ... Huffing and kissing is all bunkum: only a passing thrill or lingering thrill and all is over—the richest joy that flesh is capable of experiencing: Bah! Life is real, life is earnest.”<sup>77</sup>

As he eagerly contemplated the end of “these long poverty-stricken years of bachelordom” and its enforced companionship of men, his letters eschewed love as an emotion as he increasingly envisioned it in strictly corporeal terms, as he began to imagine the actual physical position of their touching bodies in sexual intercourse. Two months before he departed for overseas service, he pictured the “double ridge where my lips would love to be resting upon yours right now ... I could press you to a jelly right now” and invited her to come “slowly, slowly forward till lips and bodies meet. Now up with your arms and down with mine to seal the kiss and press it home: oh joy, oh bliss. Great God was ever such pleasure given to men?” After describing sex standing up, he then imagined her on his knee with his hand on her left breast, followed by a French or “soul kiss”.<sup>78</sup> All the while he mockingly admonished her to have more self-control. Here he was deriding Victorian moral codes inscribed in the officers’ training manual, which called for emotional and physical self-restraint. As Harry fought to control his masturbatory impulses, he burlesqued the moral rectitude of the Canadian Protestant churches by asking Gwyneth

to sign a “TOTAL ABSTINENCE PLEDGE”. Once again invoking religion as a code for sexual passion, Harry described how these special female pledge forms were made of asbestos for use in the nether regions and were to be stored in “a secure sacred and holy place” until women entered “the solemn bonds of matrimony”. The accompanying Bible verses included Job 32:19 which read: “Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent; it is ready to burst like new bottles.”<sup>79</sup>

The acquisition of a robust military physique also served a critical role in resolving the issue of unequal gender power which had so plagued their courtship, in which Harry had perceived himself the weaker vessel. This was because he all too closely resembled the stereotypical effete Oxford intellectual that was now reprobated when war demanded men of large physical mass. Now that he had grown a moustache and put on weight, Harry was more willing to admit that his former self closely resembled the pejorative portrait of Jewish men that had come to dominate cultural scripts all through Europe in the wake of the Dreyfus Affair,<sup>80</sup> that is, as a bookish, sedentary, weak and effeminate individual unfit for military service. Thus he described himself as “plain, long-beaked, pallid, large-eared, croaking”, with “drooped shoulders”.<sup>81</sup> This, added to the fact that he was circumcised, a fact that he revealed when he referred to his penis as the “Hebrew gentleman”,<sup>82</sup> together with Gwyneth’s persistent characterization of him as a “aesthete”, served to raise questions about his sexual prowess and his lack of courage. The fact that he was putting on weight at “an alarming rate” and now weighed ten stone in his blue tweed suit, heavy under clothing and “high-heeled boots”,<sup>83</sup> a joke about effeminacy, meant that there was now “a complete rearrangement of our respective *avoir du poids*”. Significantly, he did not measure his masculinity against other men, but against Gwyneth. For Harry, therefore, his bulkier physique signalled a decisive power shift within the relationship in his favour, especially when Gwyneth had recently reduced her weight. This allowed Harry, for the first time, to claim the role of sexual initiator, permitting him to rewrite their first tryst at Borth, chiding Gwyneth that she was an old maid like her sisters because she had been unable to find “the lover’s lane” because she had forced him to withdraw before he ejaculated, thus preventing her from achieving an orgasm.<sup>84</sup>

In 1911, at the outset of their courtship, Harry was much more scathing about Gwyneth’s hour-glass figure in a culture in which corpulence had come to be associated with racial degeneration and national decline, and therefore viewed as transgressive. In women, the Victorian curvaceous

figure had signified the fertile, reproductive body, but as a slim figure became more fashionable after 1900, the archetype of Venus de Milo, which had long been an ideal of feminine beauty, was now considered too fleshy and sexually unattractive.<sup>85</sup> By 1915, once Harry had lived up to Gwyneth's desire for a "fat and flourishing husband" he more readily tolerated that she was "rugged, strong and beautiful", endowing her with conventionally masculine attributes. It is clear that Gwyneth, at ten stone (140 pounds) did not live up to his ideal of being "petite"<sup>86</sup> and therefore submissive; however, he now favourably compared her with the Winged Victory. For her part, Gwyneth saw their corporeal similarity as a symbol of equality within the marriage, observing that "you with your increased strength and me with my diminished weight, for we might balance more or less for once in a way!"<sup>87</sup> Harry also approved of their physical parity, but he did not endorse the concept of marital mutuality: "I have absolutely no qualms as to my secure superiority now", he stated gleefully as he gained bodily strength, thereby proclaiming his continued allegiance to a proprietary patriarchy, in which she would function as "[his] very own"<sup>88</sup> Angel, there to help him, especially during his time of testing in the trenches.

After three, long, dreary years of separation, Harry and Gwyneth were married "in a blaze of sunshine and happiness", in St. Giles' Anglican Church, Oxford, on 18 May 1916. So delighted was Gwyneth to have finally tied the knot, that even so staunch a feminist as she could joke that she had to promise to "obey" as part of the Church of England marriage vows, but had hers back, because Harry, a notorious tight-wad, had to also promise to bestow all his worldly goods upon her.<sup>89</sup> For Gwyneth, their honeymoon was a complete revelation of ecstasy and sexual bliss, a contrast with many of her female contemporaries of all social classes, including Lady Lutyens and Marie Stopes.<sup>90</sup> Like them, Gwyneth did not know "quite what to expect",<sup>91</sup> lacking the requisite carnal knowledge, but this in no way hampered her excessive enjoyment of sexual intercourse. For Gwyneth, sexual instinct rather than book learning was all that sufficed for her to delight in her first orgasm. Her ecstasy led her, for the first time, to wholly identify love with sexual pleasure. "What an insatiable thing this love is," she informed Harry, "but how empty life would be without it." Where previously she had imagined comradeship in terms of a spiritual, emotional affinity and a sharing of ideals, she now decidedly saw it as a manifestation of satisfying sexual relations: "I didn't imagine such perfect comradeship existed."<sup>92</sup> In viewing mutual equality as no longer an abstract ideal, but achieved literally by an exchange of sexually dominant

positions during intercourse, with Gwyneth either “on top, or underneath”,<sup>93</sup> she discounted the advice of one writer in the putatively radical feminist journal *The Freewoman* who warned against confusing sexual emotion with marital compatibility.<sup>94</sup>

Further, it was heterosexual passion which interrupted the gender fluidity which she had once considered central to her conception of friendship with both women and men. For her, sex was now fundamental to the production of a heterosexual identity. As she wrote to Harry after their honeymoon at Liphook, “[O]rdinary friendship seems a very poor thing to me beside our relationship, a very feeble and faint imitation.” Although still somewhat reserved on their wedding night, Gwyneth maintained that Harry had “captured my entire confidence” because of their sexual intimacy. Rather than flowing out of the exchange of confidentialities, sex now served as the prelude to intimacy. As a woman previously emotionally inhibited, sexual pleasure was the key to unlocking her self-consciousness and enabling her to reveal her “natural” self: “you have been so perfectly sweet and calm and natural about everything; so that it seems the most natural thing in the world to talk to you as I can talk no one else in the world”.<sup>95</sup>

Following their first night of sexual bliss, Gwyneth became wholly consumed with the carnal aspects of love. As she anticipated their next weekend of unhampered sexual “experiments”, aimed at this juncture at both pleasure and procreation, Gwyneth wrote to Harry saying: “I wonder how you are feeling tonight. If you are half as lonely as I am you are in a bad way. I’m writing this in bed ... Don’t you just wish you were near at hand? I really had a beautiful sleep last night ... only spoilt by sundry feverish searchings after you ... It was miserable work though going to sleep without any thrills or strokings! Never mind. Only one more night after this one, and then bliss again! ... I shall merely remark I have some fine marble specimens awaiting your inspection.”<sup>96</sup> While Gwyneth obsessively thought of his body, purring while she contemplated his “prickly old epidermis”, “wooly chest”, his “hot bottle” or penis and his “clean tongue”, all of which conveyed the insatiability of sex after she had eaten cherries, namely losing her virginity,<sup>97</sup> Harry’s response to the consummation of their marriage nuptials was couched in a language of romantic soulfulness, describing his sexual climax in spiritual terms, as “a little bit of heaven”.<sup>98</sup> He repeated this analogy when writing to his mother, along with the observation that his happiness recalled his boyhood love for her.<sup>99</sup> In a complete reversal of their courtship, Harry relegated Gwyneth’s own “care and consideration”<sup>100</sup> to the relatively asexual realm of mother love,



which remained an expression of “the sweet savour of [her] personality”,<sup>101</sup> a perspective on romantic love which mirrored that of the married women interviewed by Kate Fisher, who conflated sexual pleasure with the unselfishness of maternal tenderness.<sup>102</sup> In conceiving of sensuality as akin to spiritual passion, Harry’s attitude to sex closely resembled not only that enunciated by Gwyneth during their courtship but also that propounded by Dora Marsden, the editor of *The Freewoman*. Marsden believed that sexual love was an expression of the spiritual personality and she therefore cautioned against allowing passion to become a slave of the body.<sup>103</sup>

By contrast, after her initiation into orgasmic pleasure, Gwyneth’s views on sex came to evoke the attitude of “A Would-Be Freewoman” who argued that women’s sexuality was as potent as that of men, and that they were as likely to separate physical desire from spiritual concerns.<sup>104</sup> Love for Harry was not merely a function of corporeal eroticism. His oblique references to having morning sex which interrupted his “matutinal slumbers” was almost Victorian in its tenor; the raciest comment about sexual pleasure was his observation that he wished to bestow “a kiss where you would prefer to have it”,<sup>105</sup> which only vaguely alluded to kissing her entire body. Even when he sought to coyly refer to his erect penis, he only implicitly hinted at sexual desire. When he stated “[m]y admiration rises and rises till it promises to surmount all bounds”,<sup>106</sup> his carnal self remained detached from the body and sex was valorized in terms of high-flown ideals of chivalrous romanticism. Their post-coital sex-talk suggested a reversal of normative gender roles: Gwyneth as the sexually rapacious initiator and Harry passively responding to her more explicit sexual ardour. This was ironic for, given Harry’s earlier renunciation of traditional Christian ethics, his circumlocutions seemed to evoke the Edenic myth regarding the licentious sexuality of womanhood.

The muted tenor of these honeymoon letters abruptly changed once Harry departed for the front. Thereafter the correspondence of Gwyneth and Harry became an expression of sexual urgency and unbridled lust, in which their respective personalities became submerged in the identities of their sexual organs, Dardanella and Peter. Michael Roper has insisted on the need to interpret wartime letter-writing as a psychological practice whose central purpose was to convey emotional experience. The capacity of letters to impart both at the conscious and unconscious levels a variety of emotional states is acknowledged by Roper; however, he privileges fear as the central animating affective element.<sup>107</sup> The remarkable feature of Gwyneth and Harry’s wartime epistolary experience is their almost com-

plete lack of psychological introspection as compared with their self-conscious self-exploration during their long-distance courtship. This does not mean that their letters were not redolent of emotional intensity, but rather, that the communication of sexual desire occluded the articulation of other emotional states. During their courtship, other emotional registers and linguistic devices were deployed to circumvent the implications of lust; by contrast, during wartime, sexual innuendo served to deflect from confronting the debilitating effects of emotions such as fear, anxiety and suffering, which they deemed dangerous not only to their psychological integrity but to the progress of their relationship.<sup>108</sup> Gwyneth was entirely typical of wartime correspondents in stating to her husband that “Your letters are the bright spots in my life at present and I don’t know what I should do without them.” Her claim that she *had* censored herself “in my letters and my conversation” during their courtship but that marriage had freed her so that her every thought she now exchanged with him was wholly uninhibited,<sup>109</sup> was somewhat disingenuous, as they had both agreed not to share negative feelings in the midst of the ordeal of war.<sup>110</sup>

However, when viewed from the perspective of young Edwardians who believed that “internal equanimity” trumped “external conditions”,<sup>111</sup> Gwyneth was quite accurate in saying that she was being entirely transparent about her psychological state in her letters, when the growth of their sexual emotions remained the most fundamental aspect of their self-identities. Although Harry conceded that Gwyneth did not know of the depths of the “foulness and lowness” of life in the trenches, his diffidence about exposing her to its brutality did not spring from a paternalistic desire to protect her, but arose from a mutually agreed strategy that writing extensively about their sexual love, with its joys and “deep soul food,”<sup>112</sup> with its life-affirming effects, would divert their attention away from the distressing reality of war. As was typical of this period, they perceived a close affinity between those two elemental urges, sex and death.<sup>113</sup> As Edward Carpenter observed: “Love in some mysterious way forbids the fear of death.”<sup>114</sup> Just as Freud anticipated, Gwyneth and Harry saw love and hate as “constant companions”.<sup>115</sup> For her part, Gwyneth was very self-aware that their letters were a form of psychological diversion, for as she stated to Harry, “I am pleased with my letter and that it made you feel happy and forget your old dingy dug-out for a time, for that was what it was meant to do, and what all my letters are meant to do.”<sup>116</sup> Irrespective of the fact that their letters were censored by other officers or occasionally by Harry himself, during the trauma of war they continued the kind of

self-censorship that had served so well after “the nightmare” of their mutual depression in 1912.<sup>117</sup>

Because the couple used their own letters to navigate their emotional selves, Harry’s letters to his parents remained by necessity relatively anodyne.<sup>118</sup> In them he communicated routine news about his work and his relations with fellow officers. What emotions they contain were platitudinous: “I am very happy. I know there are dangers ahead: I face them gladly. I know this is my duty: that knowledge makes me happy”, he wrote to his parents upon his arrival at the front.<sup>119</sup> The only truly emotionally revelatory letter was that written in the aftermath of the horrendous slaughter of Passchendaele. There he spent forty-eight hours stranded in his pillbox and was gassed, which necessitated his evacuation to the base hospital for treatment for acute tonsillitis and gingivitis. Only several months later did he confess to his father: “I have no desire to see that country again!”<sup>120</sup> Although he only laconically revealed the intense physical and emotional strain of battle, like many men he was affected by nerves during the intense bombardment, which provoked recurrent nightmares.<sup>121</sup> In most of his letters home to his parents, he kept up the pretence of cheerfulness, so that between a few references to his going up to the line for “his baptism of fire” where shells of every size fell, he spoke of his officers—“a jolly lot”—and the good cheer of his men, concluding always that he went about his work “absolutely without fear and without apprehension for the future”, both in the belief that all was in God’s hands and that once “this trying time” concluded, it would be “as gold tried in fire”.<sup>122</sup>

In his letters to his wife, Harry rarely mentioned his work in the Machine Gun Corps, largely because he saw the war as “abnormal”, having no bearing upon their relationship or self-identities. As was typical of many officers, Harry, though a Canadian, adopted the public school tropes of war as a game, stating on several occasions that he was excited by the logistics of war. Although he narrowly escaped being hit by shrapnel, he described his first experience under German fire in terms of having had “heaps of lovely experiences ... more excitements than in the whole back period of my life”, and looked forward to having “great sport when we get up nearer to Fritz”.<sup>123</sup> Throughout his daily letters—over 500 spanning the duration of war—he only referred on three occasions to the death of comrades, the most painful being that of Lieutenant Gauvreau who was killed at Passchendaele.<sup>124</sup> Most references to the front were mere iterations of the mundane and routinized nature of army life: he described their billets, the food he ate, his relations with his batman, sporting events,

vignettes of encounters with German officers during temporary truces in No Man's Land, and his obsession with collecting German war paraphernalia, much in the style of a travel journal.<sup>125</sup> Harry did however evince the fatalism so common among World War I soldiers, believing death was simply a matter of "one's own position coinciding with the position of an exploding shell, bomb, or bullet". But as he made clear to Gwyneth, his belief that he could be killed, never induced him to "turn aside from any job I had in hand".<sup>126</sup> More than anything, he relished having a challenging job that he could execute to his satisfaction, and the war definitely gave him a sense of purpose. Far from viewing soldiering as conferring a new identity upon him, he rejected the convention that war "makes men of our men and women of our women", viewing it merely as a temporary interlude until he could resume his university career. Rather than extolling the virtues of martial manhood, he blamed it for ruining "many 1,000s of our men", continuing to adhere to a concept of moral manliness in which he thought a teaching career, rather than his work as an officer, would make him a "better man" with wider influence.

However much Harry might castigate the war as full of "immoral hazards" and risk,<sup>127</sup> he nevertheless remained fully committed to the Allied war aims. For the most part, Harry's response to the war was a pragmatic one, in which his energies were focussed upon seeking a promotion and better pay, with the larger goal of securing a permanent university post. His increasing disenchantment with war was a manifestation, not of alienation from ideals of patriotism or self-sacrifice, but with the army bureaucracy itself. He expressed his "deep dissatisfaction" over the capricious decisions of General Brutinel—the "Brute"—believing that the senior officers were derelict in failing to recognize the work ethic and expertise of junior officers like Harry. Having been continually passed over for command of a company, even though he had taken on such responsibilities on an acting basis throughout 1917 and 1918, Harry expressed his frustration to Gwyneth: "There is no incentive left me to continue slaving, as I have done, in M.G. [machine gun] work." The decision to parachute in a twenty-one-year-old infantry officer over Harry's head roused his ire: "Such an appointment will make an utter farce of the C.M.G. Corps' organization and its principles and system of training."<sup>128</sup>

Harry's attitude to war stood in stark contrast to that of another Canadian Presbyterian theology student, William Finland who, despite not seeing front line service as a Y.M.C.A. officer, perceived the war as the crucible of personal transformation. Not only did the camaraderie of other men influ-

ence him to start drinking and smoking, but his constant efforts to sustain morale among the battle weary Canadian soldiers rendered him “oblivious to the world outside France”. With only faint memories of a short courtship with his fiancée, Etta McDiarmid, he admitted that he found it difficult to “link up the love of woman and my work”.<sup>129</sup> Fingland believed that one of the concomitants of war involved losing the thread of pre-war personal relationships which now seemed to him “so far away” because the “full life” of a soldier “left little time for thought beyond or for reflection”.<sup>130</sup> Harry also believed that his character had evolved but not because of the war, which he considered a parenthesis in his life which he characterized in temporal terms as “standing still or marking time”, because he continued to situate his personal self-development in his intimate relations with Gwyneth. For this couple, the war constituted but an ersatz reality; Harry and Gwyneth maintained that the only true reality was sexual intimacy, through which they could achieve ongoing personal development. As he confided to her in 1918, as they were both becoming increasingly war weary: “My life here seems very empty and unachieving. I should love to be given a big thing to do where I might be with you... where I might enjoy the sweetness of your companionship and have my life daily purged of its dross: where my ideals might be constantly raised and kept up: where I might have that feeling of growth, which is mine each day we are together.”<sup>131</sup>

More typical of Harry’s letters were words of love: after reading her letter, he declared that “[y]ou have been very near to me darling to-day: I have been almost stroking the marble limbs and they ... [were] just sweet and round as always. I want to kiss you all over darling mine and then good night—a soul kiss and again good night.”<sup>132</sup> The anticipation of receiving her letters meant the arousal of desire, where he might imagine “petting and stroking” “D.I and D.O.”, Dug-in and Dug-out, her breasts, and think of Peter enclosing a little message of love to Dardo, her vagina, to say that he was “living very quietly and soberly”, meaning not exciting Harry’s urge to masturbate.<sup>133</sup> In a literal sense, their correspondence did not simply evoke strong memories of previous sexual experiences but were designed to stimulate their sensual selves, so that Harry often masturbated while writing letters to and reading letters from Gwyneth,<sup>134</sup> so that he often signed off saying: “My love to poor, lonely, longing D[ardanella] in which P[eter] joins with a waggle of his head”,<sup>135</sup> a clear indication that he was holding his erect penis or “Waterman fountain pen”<sup>136</sup> while engaged in his amorous correspondence. Thus the hunger for letters and sexual hunger were synonymous, for as Edward Carpenter and Havelock Ellis

argued, there was little to distinguish them, apart from the fact that love, as Carpenter adduced, was a special form of hunger which demanded nourishment from the literal exchange of cells during sexual intercourse.<sup>137</sup> Feminists, like Dora Marsden, the editor of *The Freewoman*, also spoke of sex in terms of “the hunger of the body”.<sup>138</sup> Longing for letters telegraphed the “insatiable hunger” of their sexual urges, even though they were a “poor makeshift” for the real thing.<sup>139</sup> Correspondence involved the “natural outflowing of soul to soul”, but more fundamentally, it meant the literal exchange of their “corporeal and pleasure-loving bodies”, which explains why Gwyneth demanded her “daily allowance of posted petting”.<sup>140</sup>

Letter-writing was thus a virtual means of having sex in which the satisfaction of reading mimicked post-coital bliss, such that Harry could comment that he was most grateful “for the satisfaction you have given in so large measure by letter!”.<sup>141</sup> Thus when Harry asked for a letter he wrote: “you simply MUST give me a LIMP-producing kiss ... I’m so very ravenously hungry”,<sup>142</sup> and when she received three letters at once, she remarked that “I was most feecceerfully hungry you know after 3 foodless days ... How I hunger for the days when I shall have you yourself always ... every bit of you: the inquisitive old beak, the bristly moustache, the prickly chin, the strong arms, the wagging thumbs, the funny old hair chest, and all the rest.”<sup>143</sup> Even though, as Gwyneth periodically noted, she would have preferred his “concrete arms” around her body, they both carried on the pretence that the letters were a real substitute for sex, so much so that the reading of one of his daily epistles so powerfully called to mind their actual sexual life, with Gwyneth “imagining it so successfully that old D actually gave a real thrill! It was jolly. How I do hunger for the reality though.”<sup>144</sup> At one level, it was true, as Harry observed, that because of the war he had been forced into forsaking “Venus for Mars”,<sup>145</sup> when in fact their correspondence functioned as convincing talismans of their love for one another. The act of reading a letter in and of itself contributed to the deepening of their intimacy, not only because it fostered even greater sexual desire but by alluding constantly to their erotic bodies, they offered “very good and tangible evidence of your equal appetitish, vacuumish feelings ... Even your letters raise me into the 8th Heaven, and that is just the merest imagined and faintly conceived bliss of the real companionship with my sweet.” Although Harry professed to have forgotten “the features of my wife’s figure”, even though her mind and soul were in full view,<sup>146</sup> the letters so palpably stimulated his sexual

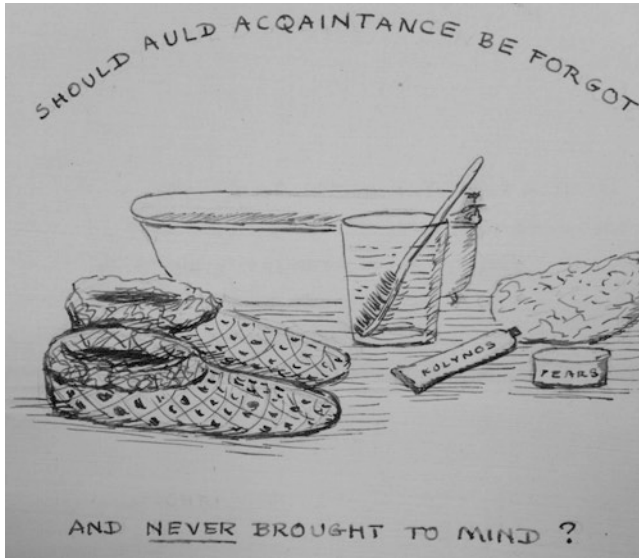
imagination that he could write: “How I long to be close to you to-night, this very moment, to taste you and maul you, to stroke the marble, to put cold hands down a soft warm back, to give my own and all my own special friends [her erogenous zones] their own proper caressing, and last of all to sink slowly to restful, joyful life-giving happy sleep, oh so sweet, in the soft love embrace of my darling....”<sup>147</sup>

Even though Harry often wrote under hazardous conditions, for example at Passchendaele, where he composed his letters squatting in his pill-box, or amidst the distractions of chatting officers in their dug-out,<sup>148</sup> their quotidian correspondence not only diverted attention away from the “sordid, stupid” war, but it provided actual “soul food”<sup>149</sup> which nourished their relationship and fed their insatiable sexual longing. As Harry revealed “your love is so wonderful, so soul-ful so life-giving”.<sup>150</sup> The act of “chit-chat with wifey”<sup>151</sup> was not simply an act of nostalgia for home and the domestic circle, as Anthony Fletcher has maintained,<sup>152</sup> but by awakening “the constant sometimes conscious, sometimes unconscious knowledge that you are with me, a part of me, all about and around me always, and will continue to be into the ‘beyond’, it served to deepen their relationship.”<sup>153</sup> In this way their letters not only drowned out the noise of war, rendering it an unreality compared to the “very real and very solid”<sup>154</sup> fount of love, but also established a narrative of romance which looked to the future. After all, the central purpose of their letter-writing was not to report on the war, but to enrich their relationship. Indeed, Gwyneth reproved the type of letter whose purpose was not to evoke sexual intimacy, commenting on the tone of a number of Harry’s letters from the front line that they were the missives of “the stern warrior writing a duty letter to his wife ... instead of the lover writing to his lady love”.<sup>155</sup> The elision of past and future was echoed by Gwyneth, when she wrote to Harry that by reading his letters she was enacting their relationship, for “in memory I live over again the precious moments of the past till the longing for you becomes almost unbearable, and then I try to console myself with thoughts of a bright future ahead, when we need never be separated again”.<sup>156</sup>

If letters were a medium for the expression of their love in order to preserve a sense of happiness during wartime, there were obvious impediments to their joy, the least of which were the vagaries of the wartime postal system which did not always live up to the promise of a three-day delivery.<sup>157</sup> In this regard, Harry was in a more favourable position than many of his compatriots who had to wait several months for transatlantic mail delivery.<sup>158</sup> However, censorship of Canadian mail was stricter than

its English counterpart. Scott Smith, a Presbyterian from Toronto promised to write his parents once a week but cautioned that he “could tell you lots of things but the censors aren’t having any”.<sup>159</sup> In the Canadian army even officers were not immune to having their mail opened, and although as in the British army, officers at the company level were often weighted down by this onerous task, the Canadian Y.M.C.A. officers took up the slack, so that few letters escaped official scrutiny.<sup>160</sup> In reality, Gwyneth and Harry experienced a triple censorship: their own self-censorship so they did not “growl and grizzle” about personal troubles;<sup>161</sup> the first-level Canadian censorship; as well as the base censorship of letters going to England. They found themselves in the same predicament as Percy Caiger, a sergeant in the cyclist corps of the British 60th Division, who told his wife that he loved her but “there is no need to tell the Officer”. His strategy to circumvent the possibility that officers might use his love letters to his wife as a source of amusement was simply to expunge all expressions of love from his correspondence.<sup>162</sup> Their all-devouring love combined with a penchant for privacy meant that Harry and Gwyneth chose to evade the “searching eyes” of the censors by inventing a coded system of “hidden expressions”, full of “pungent private jokes”.<sup>163</sup> They used the model of *Punch* magazine<sup>164</sup> to endow their sexual organs with actual personalities which drew from the cultural tropes of the war: their vagina and penis spoke in the voices of Dardanella and Peter, the latter a reference to Peter Pan; as already noted, her breasts were Dug-in and Dug-out, the latter denoting an erect nipple in which the breast served as a metaphor for a safe place under fire; her buttons referred both to her nipples and to her clitoris, referencing the soldier’s duty to shine the buttons of his uniform; his blue silk pyjamas, which made her “mouth water” for his tumescent penis; the “purple patches” of her areola while pregnant had their inspiration from the fact that the First Canadian Division was affectionately called the “Old Red Patch”. Sending up the moral earnestness of the Victorians who likened sex to dirtiness, they concocted a whole panoply of everyday paraphernalia devoted to bodily cleanliness, namely soap, the toothbrush, toothpaste and the shaving brush, to signify oral sex. “My shaving brush [penis] is still going strong: it is a lovely s.b. you know, so soft and lathery, isn’t it dear? Wouldn’t you just like to feel it against your cheek again?”<sup>165</sup> he jovially teased. Finally, the phrase “where are my bedroom slippers”, which punctuated their epistolary sex-talk, telegraphed that they were familiar with Sigmund Freud’s equation of bedroom slippers with the





**Fig. 6.1** Gwyneth's drawing of various objects including Freud's bedroom slippers, denoting penetrative sex, and the shaving brush, bathtub, and toothpaste, all of which suggest oral sex. Library and Archives Canada, Harry Logan Fonds, 10:5, Gwyneth to Harry, 14 Nov. 1919

vagina as explained in his *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, which had been translated into English in 1910 (see Fig. 6.1).<sup>166</sup> Here the couple deployed their familiarity with modernism to mock what they deemed old-fashioned marriage advice books given by her mother, notably that of Mary Scharlieb, who maintained that a sound marriage depended on the wife bringing her husband his dressing gown and bedroom slippers as well as providing a cheery fire at the end of a tiresome workday.<sup>167</sup> Although the medical establishment was not receptive to Freud, students of the classics had been exposed indirectly to Freudian ideas largely through the work of Jane Ellen Harrison, whose interpretation of Greek myths was informed by Freud's psychological categories.<sup>168</sup> If Harry and Gwyneth spoke of their mutual sexual desire in the language of euphemism and circumlocution, this did not reflect a lingering allegiance to conventions of Victorian prudery about the sexual body, but owed more to the exigencies of wartime censorship, which enjoined a reticence about overt expressions of intimacy.

This style of sexual banter brought such titillation to the couple that even when Harry was censoring his own letters, they continued their ribald exchanges which signified the intense pleasure they took in their new intimate life together. They also indulged in irony, which, according to Paul Fussell, became the primary mode of wartime diction, such as when Harry, though craving several overdue letters, remarked that reading them was a “waste of time”, forcing him to spend 15 minutes, and taking him away from the “most important BUSINESS” of being an officer, and that he had no desire to exchange “this comfy billet”, his dug-out, for the “prospect of a night or two in the cold Sunnyside bedder”.<sup>169</sup> Their sexual banter obviously was meant to elicit laughter and raise the spirits of its recipient in order to obviate the terror of the war, as Michael Roper and J.G. Fuller have maintained,<sup>170</sup> but it was not a feature, as Koenraad Du Pont has argued, merely of the bawdy humour of the frontline soldier.<sup>171</sup> In the case of Harry and Gwyneth, a common language of sexual humour drew upon an Edwardian sensibility, what Jonathan Rose has aptly termed “a gospel of fun”, whereby mischievous humour was used to talk about more serious issues,<sup>172</sup> although it may have been intensified by the war. Not only were both Gwyneth and Harry inveterate practical jokers, but even prior to the war they were much given to visual parody, using it as a further prop to their sexual games during the war. Their predilection for joking about sexual desire, which ordinarily signified the transition to full adulthood, bespoke a deeper longing for the prolongation of childhood. One of the most popular and long-running plays in London was *Peter Pan*, and its theme of never growing old appealed so much to the couple that it inspired her to name her cat Tinker, a sobriquet for her pubic hair and Harry to call his penis Peter. The whimsical mixture of humour and sex that set the tone for their wartime correspondence served, in their minds, to underscore the prolongation of youth and the life-affirming qualities of the individual personality, thus setting them apart from many of their contemporaries, notably Vera Brittain and the male wartime poets, like Siegfried Sassoon, who viewed the war as a testament that memorialized the passing of youth.

As we have already seen, Harry and Gwyneth were unusually perceptive about selectively utilizing contemporary cultural scripts to create their self-identities. It should not, therefore, be surprising that they appropriated war imagery when fashioning their own unique language of sexual love. Even though Victorian poets and writers, such as Robert Browning,<sup>173</sup>

had metaphors for passion and the sexual act itself, it is of significance that Gwyneth and Harry forsook these in favour of a private language of sex. The use of such sexually graphic language has come to be associated with sexual radicals, such as Emma Goldman and her husband, studied by Christine Stansell, who also evolved their own euphemisms for their vagina and penis, calling them her treasure-box and his Willy.<sup>174</sup> Although Gwyneth and Harry's apparent lack of embarrassment about talking about coitus, their sexual body parts and their sexual urges prefigured the vivid use of sexual language in the work of D.H. Lawrence and James Joyce,<sup>175</sup> the fact that this conventional religiously-minded couple could speak so freely about sex clearly indicates that this new 'modern' sexual temperament had spread beyond a small coterie of the avant-garde. Both partners indulged in creating alter-egos. For example, Harry took on the persona of Larry Hogan to identify his role as a hyper-masculine and hyper-efficient officer who orders his wife about, which sometimes also stood in for his penis, when he wished to exalt his sexual prowess.<sup>176</sup>

But it was Gwyneth, likely as a result of private discussions with Harry, who took the lead in introducing the alter-egos Dardanella and Peter into their correspondence. Dardanella Petronella Jane first made her appearance on 25 June 1916, just after she had been helping Harry with his map reading skills, where they would have discovered that the Dardanelles looked remarkably similar to the female vagina. Resorting to black humour, her vagina, the site for their reproductive "experiments", was juxtaposed against the then widely-held popular perception that Gallipoli was a code-word for death, destruction and official bungling. Not only was Dardanella often abbreviated to the more masculine Dardo, in recognition of the similarity of male and female sexual libido, but when she was about to give birth, the famous straits were also designated as Scylla and Charybdis. Thus, when Harry mused that she might give birth to a "14lb monster", Gwyneth retorted: "I hope for Dardo's sake you are doomed to disappointment. Scylla and Charybdis would be mere child's play to squeeze between in comparison with Dardo's narrow passage with such a dreadnought attempting to force a way through",<sup>177</sup> a mocking reference to Winston Churchill's failed plan to send a naval expedition to Constantinople in 1915.

The seamless conjunction between sex and war was strikingly underscored when Peter wrote his lengthy lament about how much he was missing Dardanella in September of 1916, after Harry's first tour in the line:

The fact is I am a love sick fool: I want you near me. I want to have you to mock you, to scold you, to batter you about, to spank you, to see your smile emerge from this overbearing attack, patient under my rough onslaught, full of love and sweetness: And then I want to have you on my knee just as you are and stroke you and kiss my sweet girlie just everywhere, cover you with kisses; and give D.I. and D.O. [Dug-in and Dug-out] their own fair share of petting, not even forgetting the quiet, shy little Dardo in her sylvan grotto so difficult to access for poor little lonely neglected Peter. The wee chap is lonely though; and yesterday I thought I overheard him murmuring and muttering something about “revolt” or “mutiny” or “taking things into his own hands” or something of the sort. Anyhow I took him to task about it and told him how foolish it was of him, pointing out the long months of servitude he must still undergo willy-nilly and ordered him to get all such silly ideas out of his silly little head at ONCE. I reminded him also of Dardo’s sufferings and privations on his behalf and urged him to play the man. He, rather peevishly, I thought, retorted that Dardo so far from suffering in the present state was rather pleased with her little self, in fact even more so than usual, and he added, with the little rascal’s boyish impertinence and a wicked wag of his head that anyhow Dardo didn’t seem to like him particularly well and as much as told him she was pleased when kind old mother nature put a stop to their games altogether. I told the impish fellow he ought to be ashamed of himself of talking that way of his tiny sister: that he didn’t know the very first thing about her: that he hadn’t taken the time to try to understand her: that he wasn’t old enough or bright enough to understand himself. This remark seemed to carry some weight with him. I was rather pleased to notice this effect and went on to remind him of his obligations to Dardo, pointing out to him that to her he owed the enjoyment of the only pleasure he had had in his short life and that she had generously indulged his desires even beyond her own better judgement and his own good just to please him. I heard him muttering something to himself at this point and got him to repeat it out loud. He said his quarrel was really with me and not with Dardo: that it was my restraining hand upon him all these years which had denied him the pleasures of [that] nearly all his little playmates enjoyed so freely and promiscuously: that I had made his life miserable and that he used and would use the only means of retaliation in his power: he said this too with a wicked look in his little almond eye and I knew perfectly well what he meant. I concluded with a love thrust for I was at last thoroughly roused. I told him to bear in mind that he was not his own master: that he was there for a special purpose of which he himself was quite unaware: I told him if he had any sporting instinct whatever he would stick to the rules of the game once he had started playing whether his side was winning or losing and quite generally, in the role of virtue herself, gave him

a proper telling off? This last effort of mine “put the wind up him” and he became quiet and gentle and subdued but I knew he planned retaliation and sure enough the damned little devil, Delilah like, cut my hair as I slept and took away my strength.<sup>178</sup>

Using expressions such as an “attack” and “rough onslaught” as a metaphor for sexual intercourse, “play the man”, “the rules of the game”, and “put the wind up him” were clear wartime allusions, which, like the moniker Dardanella, conveyed the extent to which the war was literally imprinted upon their sexualized bodies. War games were thus transformed into sex games. Peter’s jeremiad was, at one level, an invocation of a mood of simmering discontent that pervaded the Western Front, which could not be publicly voiced. Like the soldiers serving at the front, Peter mutters about his discontent, threatens mutiny, but must play the game, like a man, and see the war through, even though this means a long period of servitude to the state which deprived him of the sexual delights of home. Flouting nearly a century of medical and religious proscriptions against self-abuse, in the guise of Peter, Harry justified masturbation, reasoning that because the British and Canadian governments had created such a sexually impoverished environment for men that their only outlet for their desires was self-pleasure, which was intimidated by his “restraining hand” on Peter.

By concluding his tirade with the rueful observation that he was “not his own master” and that his subsequent nocturnal emission had taken away his strength, he mocked Victorian shibboleths about how self-abuse subverted manhood by debilitating physical strength and moral fibre.<sup>179</sup> By forcing soldiers into an artificial world of male homosociality, war heightened sensuality and therefore offered men only the alternative of masturbation, which was frequently regarded as a prelude to homosexuality. Speaking through Peter, Harry ironically contended that war therefore undermined a man’s physical masculinity, thus lampooning the cult of military manhood propagated by the state. But, because his masturbation was carried on in conjunction with that of his wife and was performed within the context of heterosexuality, he saw himself as carrying out “a planned retaliation” against Victorian mores and the military machine, so that his erect phallus became a synonym for courage<sup>180</sup> and emblematic of the kind of assertive masculinity demanded of war, as well as a marker of the value of youthful impetuosity against the stodginess of the high command. That his sexual prowess had become a surrogate for courage on the battlefield was made manifest in a dream that Gwyneth recounted in

1918 in which a battle occurred in their bedroom. In it their bedroom furniture became props on the battlefield, with victory achieved by his penis transforming itself into an actual weapon, whereby his semen became poison gas which he squirted at the invading Boche, having been propelled by the intensity of his orgasm.<sup>181</sup> Manhood, in his view, no longer resided in the cultivation of self-restraint; rather, virility was activated through heterosexual pleasure. Finally, in having Peter allude to his previous failure to understand himself, Harry was now declaring that because of penetrative sex he had come to fully realize his self-identity. Indeed, throughout the course of the war, his masculine identity became increasingly defined by his penis, so that by 1918, in a curious twist on Otto Weininger's conception of women as *the* sex, Gwyneth remarked: "I'm sure I can't remember the features of your body accurately. In my mind's eye you are almost entirely composed of all-devouring lips, an all-investigating beak [penis], and the same which D has to swallow."<sup>182</sup>

When "singing the phallus"<sup>183</sup> in his letters, it took on various forms including his Quonset hut "the drain-pipe", his machine gun, a German sausage, a Dachshund, an oak table leg, hot water bottle, long nose (a reference to the supposed hypersexuality of Jewish men),<sup>184</sup> exploding beer bottles, a cigar, an oil can, his toothbrush, shaving brush, a teazle, submarines and bombs. After Gwyneth's witty remarks about her love of cigars—a reference to fellatio—Harry cheerfully countered: "aren't you sorry you hadn't begun smoking with a cigarette instead of a cigar",<sup>185</sup> one of the many allusions to his penile size. By contrast, Gwyneth's sexual parts were more variable and more strongly linked to the war. Not only were "night operations" code words for sex,<sup>186</sup> but food rationing became an allegory for her sexual hunger in which her body served as food ready for Harry to devour. Her sexual starvation was meant to parallel the perennial lack of nourishment for the soldiers at the front, as when she lamented: "Poor hungry D.: poor hungry G: poor hungry P. What a shortage of rations all round."<sup>187</sup> In turn, their sexual experience was used as a form of war talk. For example, Harry used the phrase "care and consideration" which was Gwyneth's code language for sexual abstinence when menstruating, to describe to his father his strategies for keeping out of danger.<sup>188</sup> Further, his military uniform's buttons signified her nipples, as in "dug in and dug out are rapidly resuming their normal healthy condition, being no longer subjected to button pressure", while the "most inconspicuous button"<sup>189</sup> denoted her clitoris. When she had stopped nursing, Gwyneth said that

her breasts now looked like “punctured gas bags”, but she also used her sexual body parts to comment on his military activities, such as capturing a German trench, which prompted Gwyneth to exclaim that “poor old Dug-out has her nose put badly out of joint by hearing that you are consorting with a German of the same name, and Dug-in is sulking out of sympathy”.<sup>190</sup> Although for those at home, as Lindsay Stonebridge has argued, the war was physically at a distance and had the potential for alienating loved ones because of its remoteness from daily sensory perceptions<sup>191</sup>, by extending the language of war to their erogenous zones, it not only showed the degree to which the war had infused even the most intimate domains of their everyday life, but by so consciously enacting the war upon their bodies, indicated how committed Harry and Gwyneth were in seeking to find a means to both mediate and control the impersonal juggernaut of warfare, in a way which conferred purpose and meaning to the female body, which might otherwise have been diminished.<sup>192</sup>

In writing so particularly about their sexual body parts and their functions, particularly their vagina and penis, the couple emphatically voiced a biological interpretation of sexual identity which was the antithesis of the culturalist gender fluidity which had dominated their courtship. Not only did Gwyneth’s breasts serve as a synecdoche for the home, much as in D.H. Lawrence’s statement that “[b]etween her breasts is my home”, but in situating her breasts in terms of the soldier’s dug-out, the trauma of war was being displaced and diffused through its association with the female form. This explains why, after recounting her dream of a battle in their bedroom, Gwyneth could declare without irony: “It is so lovely to have such entire peace & restfulness in our relationships, I can’t imagine a more perfect union.”<sup>193</sup> In conflating the war and the sexual body, Harry and Gwyneth’s body parts served as a metaphor of life, wholeness and the vitality of the human personality as against the anomie, horror and dismemberment that accompanied mechanized modern warfare: on the front Harry deployed his machine gun to fragment young German’s faces and bodies, which could not be reconstructed,<sup>194</sup> but on leave, he used a particular body part, his phallic machine gun, to recreate life and affirm the sanctity of human values through love. Historians have written extensively about the continued cultural power of the idea of home in wartime soldiers’ letters.<sup>195</sup> That men on the front yearned constantly for home was eloquently attested by a Canadian officer, William Fingland. In a poignant letter to his fiancée he related how, during a route march, the officers

engaged in a discussion about what made a good home whose joys and comforts were amplified, Fingland stated, simply because in the present, “home is our blanket”.<sup>196</sup> Because Harry and Gwyneth had had a hurried war wedding, they were unable to establish their own independent household. Forced by wartime circumstances to live in Gwyneth’s childhood home at Sunnyside, their only sense of privacy as a married couple was furnished through their exchange “of private & particular little jokes with which no none else in the world would understand or appreciate”,<sup>197</sup> all of which related to the joys of sex. While they could not embrace an ideal of domesticity, their memories and hopes for the future resided entirely in the pleasures of the body.

Continuing the analogy between war and their corporeal selves, in the spring of 1918 Gwyneth wrote to Harry, who was then experiencing nightmares and nervous disorders after the trauma of Passchendaele: “Dodging shells will be child’s play in comparison with dodging my all-devouring mouth and all-swallowing body.”<sup>198</sup> Historians of women in World War I, when seeking to redress narratives that have traditionally focussed upon war as an all-male terrain, have generally concentrated either upon female work as a sign of female emancipation, or have studied the integration of maternalism into wartime ideals of citizenship, concluding, as Susan Grayzel has done, that motherhood was a unifying factor for many women and essential to the war effort.<sup>199</sup> When historians have addressed the question of female sexuality during wartime, for the most part, they have done so by exploring ‘illicit’ sex either in terms of adultery, prostitution, or emerging categories of lesbianism.<sup>200</sup> To date, few historians have examined sexual subjectivity nor have they shown how it either contributed to or undermined the “naturalness” of normative categories of masculinity and femininity.

Like her better-known contemporary Dora Russell, who also attended Girton College, Gwyneth subscribed to the “new eroticism”, which saw sexual freedom and expression as an integral part of feminism, even though she was not a self-confessed bohemian. As Russell was to later write in 1925 in *Hypatia*: “It is the experience of modern women that sex is an instinctive need to them as it is to men.”<sup>201</sup> Although Gwyneth remained a stalwart Liberal throughout her life, she nevertheless shared many of the ideas of socialist-feminists like Russell: not only did she fully embrace in marriage the idea of the eroticized female body, which she believed brought about greater harmony, mutuality and equality between husbands and wives, but throughout her pregnancy she continued to view herself as a sexual being, engaging in sexual relations



throughout, even if this meant being on top. However, unlike Russell, Gwyneth did not derive her ideas of sexual pleasure as a constituent element of married love from reading Marie Stopes and D.H. Lawrence, nor did she envision female sexuality as a political idea related to reforming policies within formal governmental structures.<sup>202</sup> Gwyneth's ideas about modern sexual morality were not occasioned by either the putative freer climate of sexual expression during wartime nor from marriage itself; rather, they seem to have been formulated prior to her marriage while a single woman at Cambridge and while teaching at the Perse School for Girls, where, by her own recounting, she engaged in cheeky and suggestive sexual innuendo along with her colleagues. She may have shown a reserve in her letters to Harry about sexual topics; meanwhile, she openly discussed such issues with her friends. Indeed, she had a reputation at Cambridge for having a "repertoire of unmentionable stories—at least only mentionable in select companies",<sup>203</sup> and therefore was the undoubted ringleader of a prank while teaching which involved concocting a fake will which involved the legacy of two bicycle pumps for Miss Kennett, the headmistress. As Gwyneth later recounted, "the one she was take to bed with her and the other she was to keep under her mattress!"<sup>204</sup> Clearly, even prior to her marriage, Gwyneth did not live up to middle-class codes of female respectability which demanded that young women display no carnal knowledge.<sup>205</sup> Certainly as a devotee both of Thomas Hardy and Walt Whitman she was no stranger to women of voracious sexual desire or to the pleasures of the body.

One must not forget that Gwyneth initiated the couple's first sexual encounter at Borth. So it was not surprising that she expressed her sexual agency by taking charge not only of sexual intercourse, but of the sexual discourse which peppered their correspondence. Such was the impact of marital bliss upon her sexual impulses that even ordinary material objects within the family home became an opportunity to talk about sex: the prayer rug sent them by Harry's cousin Elmo from the Middle East became the occasion to quip in a letter to her husband that it might serve for saying "grace" before having his "meat"—sexual congress—so that he might enjoy his "meal" with a clear conscience; mention of breakfast inevitably led to a discussion of early morning sex; brushing one's teeth or having a bath suggested oral sex, as did her claim that "I have even been known to enjoy(?) a cigar myself."<sup>206</sup> Eating the newly ripened pears from the garden at Sunnyside prompted the comment: "The lips, as well as other parts, feel rather neglected nowadays", an obvious allusion to her labia and vagina;

while eating chestnuts put her in mind of his testicles.<sup>207</sup> After having reproved Harry as an old-fashioned sort for wishing to read Disraeli's novel *Coningsby*, she flaunted her own modernity, firstly by alluding to the Freudian notion of the bedroom slippers, and then taunting him on the subject of his batman purchasing a set of new pyjamas for him, she teasingly suggested that they share the pair between them, declaring: "I purr at the mere thought of it!"<sup>208</sup> Even pondering the colour scheme for their future home was imbued with sexual allusion: thus Gwyneth imagined Harry studying a colour scheme of "purple on pink & white" (her breasts), while she looked "at sky blue on a pinky-grey hairy background", a reference to his tumescent penis.<sup>209</sup> Even Freud himself, who, as Peter Gay demonstrated was most fond of itemizing all the material goods that he and his wife had purchased for their private marital abode, did not endow them with sexual potency.<sup>210</sup>

Gwyneth did not need to read modernist novels with their unashamedly graphic descriptions of sex and sexual body parts to contrive a carnal verbal feast in her correspondence; she only needed the prospect of leave to ignite her sexual fantasies. At one level, Gwyneth's sex-talk had a self-consciously performative aspect, with the intention of keeping fear and anxiety at a distance, and to ensure that the experience of war did not push her husband into a despondent state. On hearing about Harry's impending sojourn at Sunnyside, Gwyneth wrote in high anticipation: "My heart is singing away, and J[ohn her foetus] is dancing with joy, and my purring organs are producing wonderful music."<sup>211</sup> However, marriage had unleashed such a powerful consciousness of her sexual body that even hormonal changes during pregnancy elicited humour rather than shame, so that her maternal body remained a sexualized one as well. "You know I don't believe you would recognize Dug-in & Dug-out now," she informed Harry, "they have changed so much, grown so in size, and Dug-in has even thought fit at this stage to grow a miniature mustache! I fear it was contact with your hairy chest that planted the seeds."<sup>212</sup> Her voluble flow of epistolary sex-talk was often so lascivious that it made Harry blush, but also goaded him to respond in kind as when he stated that "the beak I understand is so fully coloured by other means that no amount of blushing causes any appreciable difference in its hue".<sup>213</sup> To her great satisfaction and pleasure, her titillating "sexting" always compelled her husband "to rise to the occasion when necessary".<sup>214</sup>

The idea that sexual emotions were a source of personal power for women, was remarked upon in *The Freewoman*.<sup>215</sup> This was likewise acknowledged by

Harry, who, responding to Gwyneth's epistolary eroticism, observed that "I know one dear little woman who .... is steadily helping me to understand the deep meaning of things ... anyhow I am not affrighted by what you say of the grave dangers I shall be exposed to from your all-devouring mouth and all-devouring body". The context of this remark was yet another discussion about his failure to enjoy the companionship of womanhood in general, which Gwyneth saw as a critical aspect of gender equality both within marriage and in society as a whole. Harry confessed that he was not afraid of sexually dominant women, signalling that he was breaking with the prevailing cultural convention that women's sexuality was a power to be feared by men.<sup>216</sup> However, he was not entirely willing to jettison his long-held belief in the intellectual inferiority of the mass of women. Nor did he wish to learn to converse in an affable manner with women because it demanded too much effort on his part. As he confessed to Gwyneth: "I think you are right when you say (you think) I am not a woman's man. I do not enjoy the companionship of many women I have known, and I have only known one woman whose companionship never tired or bored me". In short, Harry chose Gwyneth because she was sexually attractive and available to him.<sup>217</sup> As this revealing letter indicates, Harry might have accepted the idea of female sexual pleasure as part and parcel of a concept of mutualism in marriage, but that the primacy of passion, orgasmic experiences and a cornucopia of sexual practices and positions were not deemed by him to endorse feminism. By contrast with sexologists like Havelock Ellis who interpreted sexual dominance in woman as a sign of mannishness,<sup>218</sup> Harry believed that Gwyneth's initiative in their sexual lives contributed further to transforming her from a masculinized, intellectual blue-stocking into a womanly woman. Unlike many feminists, including Margaret Sanger, the American birth control advocate,<sup>219</sup> he fully acknowledged female sexual mastery, simply because her sexual intensity was a means to intensify his own sexual gratification. In short, Gwyneth's vast sexual repertoire and robust sexuality made him more of a man. The most ecstatic sexual experiences occurred when Gwyneth took charge: "Monday's joy was the most intense for me," he wrote to Gwyneth, "that was the occasion on which D[ardo] was so very vigorous and energetic and determined: when she took things into her own hands, the bull-by-the-horns sort of thing."<sup>220</sup>

For her part, Gwyneth was a willing participant in this game of mutual arousal in which she performed as the temptress who engaged in frequent masturbation, enjoyed oral sex and a variety of sexual positions, and had erotic fantasies. Gwyneth's heightened sense of herself as a sexual being anticipated modernist literary heroines like

Molly Bloom in James Joyce's *Ulysses* who, according to Stephen Kern, epitomized the fully liberated woman because sex infused her entire being.<sup>221</sup> Moderation, as the Victorians would have practiced it, was not a virtue in Gwyneth's lexicon; her attitudes to sex were therefore in the forefront of the educated American teachers who were surveyed in the 1890s by Clelia Duel Mosher, who discovered that, although a substantial minority enjoyed orgasm and many continued to have sexual intercourse during pregnancy, most disliked frequent sex and admitted that they submitted only because of their husband's more strenuous sexual needs.<sup>222</sup> Gwyneth took the lead in conjuring their sexual fantasies and therefore frequently apprised Harry in her letters about her sexual dreams and masturbatory practices: "I had an absolutely luscious dream about you last night, ooh I was enjoying myself, you were so nice and comfy, no buttons anywhere, all soft and sweet. I hope I can manage to repeat the joyful performance tonight."<sup>223</sup> A large part of the enjoyment she took in writing in a ribald manner about her unbridled sexual desires was the power she could wield over Harry, for she relished her role as a dominant and sexually uninhibited woman as was manifested by her basking in the glory that Dardo had enticed Peter to masturbate: "He needs to let off steam again, use the exhaustion pump you know. I calculate up to 4 times since September means every fortnight, why that's worse than D!"<sup>224</sup> At other junctures she encouraged Harry to display his love for her by telling him to "shake hands" with Peter "on [her] behalf."<sup>225</sup> Indeed, to underscore her belief that by having an equally strong libido as Harry signified equal gender power within the relationship, Gwyneth arrogated the male power of ejaculation to her vagina, explaining how, while masturbating in the bath, D "had played a funny trick", whereby she "has a good old drink" and "shoots the whole lot out again", having caught the habit "of "ejecting" from "old P".<sup>226</sup>

However, when her claim to sexual agency became too excessive, to the point where she could have an orgasm without him, Harry was discomfited by her "masculine" sexual dominance, writing acerbically: "Your imagination is getting on when you can effect a thrill by means of it: you really won't be needing me at all soon", and he threatened to begin consorting with French prostitutes,<sup>227</sup> a posture which he resorted to even more frequently after Gwyneth proposed periods of "care and consideration" or abstinence following her pregnancy. Harry's allusions to the reality of sexual temptation on the front points to another dimension of Gwyneth's constant flow of sex-talk in her letters. Much like Marie Stopes, who cautioned strong-minded women about getting their way in the bedroom, especially over issues

concerning birth control, pointedly concluding that, “some bad girl will get him”,<sup>228</sup> Gwyneth had a fear that men at war could easily become like “eastern potentates who openly keep a harem”, advising Harry that under such circumstances she preferred openness to secretness. Her fear that Harry would consort with prostitutes increased as she became pregnant and when she realized that Harry would only receive two leaves per year. As she informed Harry, she feared adultery and bigamy less than prostitution and fraternization with French women which she felt were all too easily “condoned & all but encouraged” by the military authorities. “It seems to me”, she wrote, “that consideration (& care), self-control & real love are bound to bear fruit of the right kind.”<sup>229</sup> Her fears were, of course, not allayed by Harry who was never shy about conveying in full the many opportunities offered in France of female company: not only were there nurses at the regular army entertainments, but French women abounded, not only in the estaminets, but in various billets. Just as Gwyneth was experiencing the first pangs of pregnancy, Harry rather insensitively wrote of how he and Lieutenant Gauvreau went for tea in a French couple’s home, where the entertainment included a “Parisian damsel” who serviced men by offering what he euphemistically termed “a French lesson”, while the men stood outside humming a version of *Alouette*, a French Canadian folk song. “It was fun”, noted Harry.<sup>230</sup> As much as Harry might observe that such illicit sexuality was part and parcel of the “abnormality” of war, he knew well enough that when he again mentioned “Daphne or Yvonne”, jokingly comparing French girls with the “old remnant” of sex Gwyneth could offer, now that she was on the verge of delivery, that the sting in the humour would elicit a dressing down from his wife.<sup>231</sup>

Other Canadian men were more circumspect with their wives. Deward Barnes only hinted at prostitution at the front, merely saying “there is the immoral life of the army that I can’t write about”.<sup>232</sup> Single men like Ernest Swanston, a private from Saskatoon, were much more explicit in letters to his parents, describing in detail the availability of “whorehouses” in France, as well as the process of medical inspection.<sup>233</sup> The reaction of the Canadian officer Stuart Tompkins to the sexual longing for his wife was likely more typical. Throughout his letters to his wife, one palpably senses the constant temptation that plagued him, for between talking of the mud, the constant sound of machine gun fire and the crump of the bombs, he wrote incessantly of the loose sexual morals of the men around him. He struggled to preserve his ideal of love as a realm of the sacred, as that “mysterious realm” of the meeting of body and soul, especially when he

missed the “touch” of his wife’s hand on his body.<sup>234</sup> Just as Tompkins feared that during the war physical desire might become severed from romantic love, Gwyneth was concerned that the “cleanness” of sex within a loving marital relationship might become subverted by the sordid sex-talk of the officers’ mess, adorned as it was, as Harry blithely informed her, with etchings of Parisian girls. To allay her concerns that his views of love might degenerate into barrack-room smuttiness, he frequently wrote about their relationship in the language of high-flown, romantic idealism, rather than graphically about sex. Writing in February 1917, Harry drew a clear contrast between an idealized vision of married love and his “stroll[s] among our delectable ??? girls”<sup>235</sup> in the officers’ dug-out. “How ‘my heart and my flesh’ long for you darling,” he extolled, “how my soul cries but for you, my own little wife. I hate to think what my life would be now had I not the direct converse and communion with you: it is like nothing else in heaven or on the earth. No other friendship or intercourse can compare with it, darling. To think that your life, so soft, so sweet, so pure, so rich, so strong, so wise, so good, belongs absolutely and entirely now and forever to me, fills me with the fond, joyous hope that my own life may one day comprise in itself the same softness, directness, purity, wealth, strength, wisdom and goodness as my darling’s.”<sup>236</sup>

A perhaps greater problem was Harry’s association with his fellow officers in the 16th Machine Gun Company. During their courtship she had often called Harry an “aesthete” because of his musical tastes<sup>237</sup> and his androgynous skinny body shape, but all the same, she seems to have been quite surprised when he visited her in Cambridge, after three years’ separation, when she saw, apparently for the first time, Harry’s interaction with one of his Oxford intimates, Nat Micklem. As she informed his mother three days prior to their nuptials, when he met the young Congregational preacher, Harry “quite went into raptures over his appearance”, and waxed “so enthusiastic over him” that she was convinced that “Nat was the real attraction of Cambridge and not me”.<sup>238</sup> Historians have recently debated the extent to which the all-male community of the front produced a real cult of male camaraderie, which challenged the domestic sphere of heterosexual love. Joanna Bourke and Santanu Das, while acknowledging that warfare introduced new modalities of male intimacy, centred on touch, caring, and even “mothering”,<sup>239</sup> have affirmed that however much these relationships may have been homoerotic in nature, these “romances”

rarely represented actual homosexual practices.<sup>240</sup> Harry's correspondence was similarly replete with sentiments of love and admiration for a number of his officers. Significantly, he never confided these to Gwyneth, but sought to defuse the imputation of homoeroticism by telling his mother (but not his father) much as he had done during his Oxford years. Indeed, Harry drew distinct parallels between his wartime male friendships and his Oxford intimates in his Christian Union meetings, comparing Captain Basil Foster "an absolute darling" with Maurice Richmond, whom he had so intensely loved.<sup>241</sup> Of his superior officer, Leslie Pearce, he observed: "I find him more and more attractive."<sup>242</sup> Nicknaming him "Potty", Harry later informed Gwyneth of how "wonderful" it was that he and Major Pearce had become so "attached" to each other: "You know we have been lovers almost from our first meeting." He continued: "Out there at Hastings Park you know we were very devoted to each other: we occupied adjoining beds and my last thought at night and my first in the morning were of my darling Potty: he is a dear deary boy: I would give him all I own if he wanted it."<sup>243</sup>

There is an obvious slippage here between Potty the actual person and Potty his penis, as when he stated: "Potty has of course made love to the little girl & boy of this household",<sup>244</sup> a reference to her pregnancy and their expectations of either a girl or boy. However, while this self-conscious slippage was intended by Harry to sublimate his same-sex friendships into heterosexual love for Gwyneth, it is obvious that the issue of sleeping with other officers rankled with his wife, for when he mentioned sleeping in the same hotel room with Lieutenant Christie, he emphasized that it was "clean"—a reference to purity of mind—and that it contained "TWO beds along TWO sides of the room". Still, this did not entirely mitigate the ambiguity of his sexual identity, for he recounted how "the wretched little rascal Peter" had, during the night "imagined himself of elephantine dimensions and swayed and swanned about in glorious fashion quite by himself until ... the inevitable happened", thus forcing him to take a cold bath in the morning. Left unresolved was whether he masturbated while thinking of Gwyneth or contemplating his roommate Christie.<sup>245</sup> On another occasion, Potty clearly personified his heterosexual penis, for Harry noted how Potty had had to hold up a candle so that he could see the "entrance" to an imagined vagina, but that he was so tightly bundled against the cold that he could not masturbate.<sup>246</sup> And, at another juncture, he hastened to add that Potty "darling" and another officer had

“warm feelings” for the fair sex, signing off his letter with thoughts of “the sweet serpent” wife and his “big bellied boa-constrictor”.<sup>247</sup>

As much as Gwyneth could joke, in turn, about how jealous she was of his batman, Walters, who slept alongside him, saying that “[Y]ou surely will miss him when you are relegated to bachelor quarters on your next leave”<sup>248</sup> during her postpartum recovery, the fact that he often related how “lovely” it was to get back in “the buzzom of the Company”—a riff on her breasts—often described the trenches as “home-like”, and compared the “attentions” of his batman to the sexual comfort she offered<sup>249</sup> continued to play upon her fears that he might prefer the sociability of men to women. She conveyed her misgivings in a letter written during the latter stages of her pregnancy when her body was no longer as sensual or attractive: “You far away in France perhaps can sometimes deceive yourself and imagine you are still an old bachelor.”<sup>250</sup> When she continued to probe the question of the differences between same-sex friendships and heterosexual love by admitting to him that at Cambridge her friendships had, at times, become passionate and that her former Perse School pupils continued to send her love letters,<sup>251</sup> he responded to her accusation that he did not understand women by pretending that she was talking about consorting with French women.<sup>252</sup>

In an era of increasing discourses that pilloried same-sex friendships as deviant, there was a growing awareness, observed by Harry in the epigraph to this chapter, that these were not innocent or pure, but verged towards the abnormal or pathological. So that when Gwyneth stated that Harry did not understand the female sex or that when Mrs. Leighton, the mother of Vera Brittain’s fiancé Roland, observed that Vera’s brother Edward did not possess that “touchstone” for women,<sup>253</sup> these were freighted with coded meanings. Mrs. Leighton’s concerns about Edward’s sexual preferences were borne out, as he was later charged with having had sexual relations with men in his company.<sup>254</sup> In Harry’s case, Gwyneth’s anxieties were related to the fact that he was writing less as a lover and more about army life and that these men might usurp her role in attending to him during a critical period of nervous exhaustion. “I’m glad you like your officers and can speak of being a happy little family where you are”,<sup>255</sup> she ruefully observed in May 1918. But the fact that she could jest about his “gossiping & gramophone & smoking & drinking” in the mess as an “orgie” where, she suggestively commented, Harry had had “thumbs” in his “mouth”,<sup>256</sup> points to deeper fears about the homoeroticism of the front. Clearly, she feared that military life would draw Harry into the



world of men, where he might entirely lose interest in heterosexual love symbolized by the influence of women. However, her quip about his artistic tastes, namely that they might produce a child which would grow up to resemble Oscar Wilde, “wearing long hair and a velvet coat”,<sup>257</sup> indicates that her previous jibes about Harry’s feeling “pretty” on the train, in which she imagined him with his hair “done up in curling papers” and his “cheeks rouged” and the “beak powdered”,<sup>258</sup> were much more than chivvying him to write as her lover. After all, Gwyneth knew that Harry had dressed as a female suffragette at Sunnyside in 1911 and that during their honeymoon had danced in her underwear.<sup>259</sup> As Dominic Janes has observed: “Literal cross-dressing was only sometimes read as evidence of same-sex desire, but it certainly provided opportunities for queering in the sense of problematizing the boundaries between male and female roles.”<sup>260</sup> She well knew the rumours of homosexuality in the army and knew from another source that a member of Harry’s own battalion, a Mr. Ladler, who earned the sobriquet “Lizzie” because he wore a monocle, was considered to be effeminate.<sup>261</sup>

In the aftermath of the notorious trial of Oscar Wilde it had been irrevocably established that effeminacy in dress could well signify homosexual acts.<sup>262</sup> It is obvious, then, that Gwyneth fully understood the ease with which both men and women could move back and forth between same-sex and heterosexual love and friendship, but she herself constantly reminded him of how she had abjured “the old intimacy” with women which had characterized her life as a student and that she was now enjoying “a so much sweeter intimacy with you”,<sup>263</sup> grounded on the exclusivity enjoined by penetrative sex. Hence the primacy accorded Dardanella and Peter, their vagina and penis. In an environment in which their marital love was often only a memory, heterosexuality was not assumed to be natural, but had to be constantly nurtured through a barrage of epistolary sex-talk with which to remind Harry of her intense sexual hungering for him. So acute were her fears regarding homosexuality on the front that in 1918 when she herself had begun to forget how Harry’s body felt to the touch, Gwyneth, sensing that sex talk was no longer sufficient, enclosed a lock of her pubic hair—the “spun gold”—as a tangible token of her sexualized self.<sup>264</sup>

There may have been a variety of reasons why Gwyneth took a dominant role in fashioning the tone of their sex-talk, but her doing so meant that she had decisively altered the basis of power within their relationship. Prior to enlisting, Harry had relied upon his physical size to justify his masculine authority, but following their marriage, Gwyneth instantiated sexual desire as the central channel both for articulating and determining

gender authority within the marriage. That sexual desire had become a proxy for mastery of one over the other was confirmed by Harry himself when he remarked: “So, it is really a case of training a lion or tigress or she-wolf or what not—this welding process.” But even here, he was reluctant to subordinate himself to his wife in full recognition of her feminism: “And you did have a most independent spirit and a furious love of independence in 1911? Well, well, well ...[n]ow we are both independent together—all one, as free as the air, both enjoying a service which is that perfect freedom one finds in a true love relation”.<sup>265</sup> Throughout their wartime correspondence the couple devised an ongoing parody of wifely obedience in which their crossed thumbs signified the constantly shifting axes of power: left over right signified that Harry was in the dominant position, while right over left showed that Gwyneth was on top. Sometimes Gwyneth played the subordinate wife, who obediently took orders from her officer husband, as when she stated: “I knew you would be missing those splendid bedroom slippers and I shall be quite prepared to be ordered (thumbs still in position) to send them out to you one day soon”, but with the reminder that she remained, as always, the preeminent seductress, offering him her toe to suck to remind him that it was she who had him coiled around her heart, that it was she who possessed him.<sup>266</sup> As part of her sex play, she often performed the role as his slave, in which she might don an apron like a French housemaid.<sup>267</sup> “it is rather nice to be under your orders. Isn’t there some story about a captive learning to kiss his chain? That’s what I feel like!”<sup>268</sup>

Of course the humour of their repartee turned on the reality that Harry was so entirely dependent upon his wife’s moral sustenance during the war, as were many other men. Harry was much like another Canadian, Lance Corporal George Timmins who recognized that he had to refrain from “the old bullying spirit you used to resent so much!”<sup>269</sup> Her pose of submission was also a send up of Harry’s opposition to feminism, for as a well-educated Girton girl, such as that portrayed in Grant Allen’s *The Woman Who Did* (1895), Gwyneth never would actually be “a slave to any man”.<sup>270</sup> Indeed, Gwyneth made clear that when she drew a left thumb over right as a “sign of obedience”<sup>271</sup> that this was simply a performance, for as she confided to him: “All right old tyrant: it is best to let you believe that you are the master: but I’d like to know where you would often be if it were not for your wife’s wisdom and sagacity.”<sup>272</sup> Gwyneth fully realized that his demands could be ignored, and that she could merely pose at quaking at his commands,<sup>273</sup> remarking that because he was so far away she could simply “flick her fingers in his face” and reposition her thumbs in their dominant position.<sup>274</sup>

Their raillery about Harry being a hen-pecked husband was, at another level, a running commentary expressing their mutual disparagement of the shibboleths of the social purity movement, in which feminists vilified men as rapacious sexual predators within marriage. These diatribes against the pleasure of sex within marriage were most forcefully restated by Christabel Pankhurst's 1913 tract, *The Great Scourge and How to End It*, which continued the theme of marriage as a form of legalized prostitution for women, which now linked the subordination of women with the moral panic over venereal disease during wartime. Thus when speaking of his anticipation of sexual intercourse, Gwyneth joked that he was merely demanding his "lawful sustenance".<sup>275</sup> With tongue firmly in cheek, Gwyneth admitted that taking his name was a "symbol of my bondage to you", and, when alluding to Harry's long bachelordom, she quipped: "Really you have been so long in claiming your ownership that I had begun to think you didn't want me, so it is a relief to feel that you are asserting your rights of possession at last! My ruler and owner and possessor!"<sup>276</sup> In this badinage, Gwyneth could blithely acquiescence in her putative subordination because Harry just as frequently evoked the "cruelty" of his "bondage",<sup>277</sup> by which he meant his enthrallment in the face of her intense passion. In turn, Gwyneth masqueraded as the timid, passive Dardanella, meekly cowering before the immense libido of Peter.<sup>278</sup> Declaring that he would be compelled to send her a copy of "Family Daily Orders"<sup>279</sup> to curb her sexual voraciousness belied a deeper insecurity about his own sexual masculinity, in which he chafed at being the passive partner with his wife literally on top.<sup>280</sup> To counter such imputations of effeminacy, Harry manfully asserted his sexual potency by equating riding his horse, whom he named Nesta (Gwyneth's middle name), with mounting Gwyneth.<sup>281</sup> On other occasions, he enacted the "beast", comparing his erect penis to the stove-pipe, swishing her face with his shaving brush, thus putting "lather" on her face (oral sex), so that he could truly "feel my superiority" (see Fig. 6.2).<sup>282</sup>

At other junctures, Harry observed that marriage was "a wonderful bondage": this was because, embodying as she did all the qualities of mankind, Gwyneth's love had propelled him towards the realization of his highest ideals. However, in personifying purified ideals in the face of a brutal war, Gwyneth had effectively embodied the Winged Victory of his imagination, combining male and female qualities that transcended gender roles. Effectively, she inhabited a dual role performing as both "masculine" friend and "female" lover. In short, her ability to take on the masculine role hitherto occupied by his Oxford friends, combined with her strapping

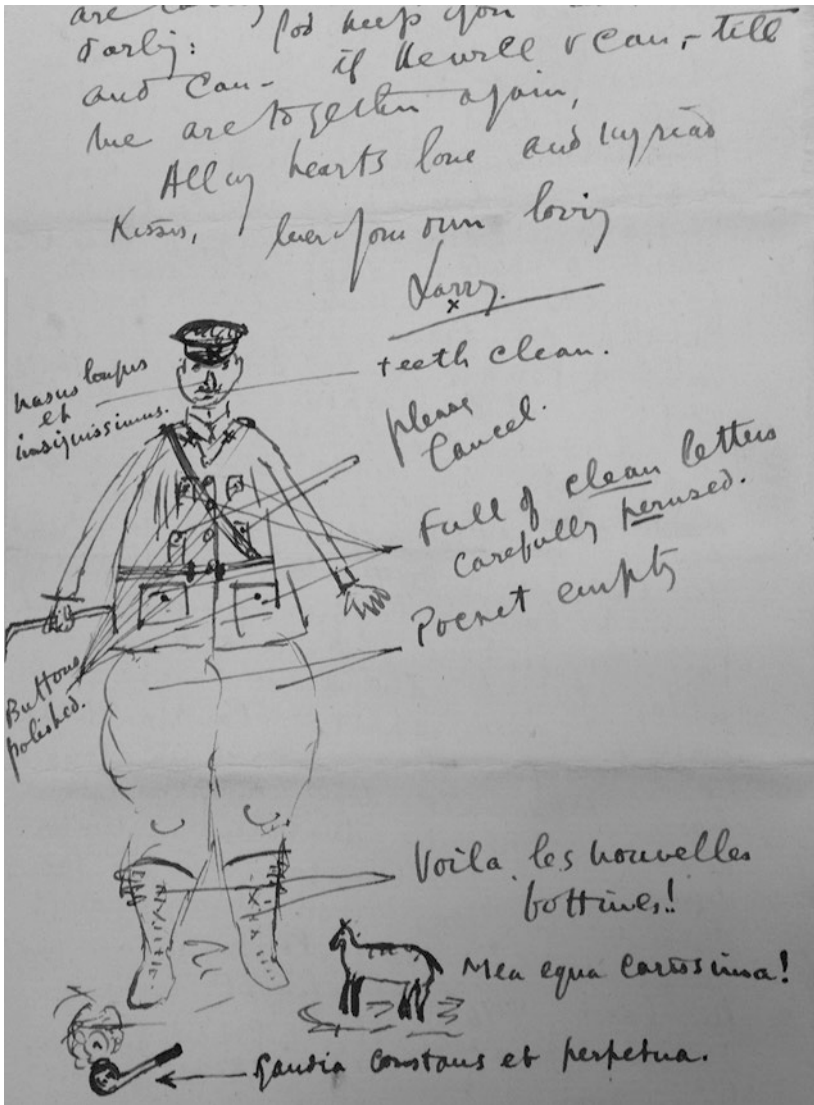


Fig. 6.2 Harry's self-portrait, in which the prominent "Clean letters" in his pocket lampoons the Victorian characterization of sex as dirty. Note the suggestive pipe and his horse "Nesta", who was given Gwyneth's middle name. Library and Archives Canada, Harry Logan Fonds, 2:9, Harry to Gwyneth, 17 Feb. 1917

figure and vigorous sexuality, involved her in figurative hermaphroditism, whereby she had assumed the qualities of both men and women. By reasoning thus, Harry could unselfconsciously assert that married sexual love had in fact only intensified his “passion for men”, meaning his hyper-sexual wife. “I love men, true, earnest, upright, honest, striving men...and so I hope when the welding process is complete that I may acquire more of those qualities in myself”.<sup>283</sup>

At one level, their verbal antics about who was more sexually dominant were intended to enflame their passion, but they were also designed to rebalance the gender order. “You really deserve to be bullied,” declared Harry in a pungent missive with sado-masochistic overtones, “and you shall be really truly bullied when at last my leave comes: leg-pulled, arm-pulled, great-toe pulled, spun-gold pulled, beak-pulled and quite generally cock-pecked ... I am full of desire and passion and longing and love all confusedly intermingled but all centred and flowing out to my darling.”<sup>284</sup> In some cases, giving orders for her to submit to “frequent inspections” of her “most personal and private affairs”<sup>285</sup> denoted sexual intercourse, with Harry playing the role of the autocratic officer, but as with all humour, this disguised a more serious issue over his masculinity, especially when Gwyneth displayed “signs of democratic revolt”.<sup>286</sup>

Conflicts over gender power may have persisted, and although certainly tempered by humour, their love was made truly complete through the alchemy of sex. In the midst of war they had found peace and harmony, for as Harry averred, “[m]y heart is right inside yours: all the rest of the world is outside you’n me”.<sup>287</sup> Whether this was simply a conceit that masked deeper conflicts and emotional distress, it did, nevertheless, point to a continuation of the Edwardian psychological sensibility, which distinctly privileged introspection and the cultivation of personal relations over external events. To some extent this was a contrivance, for they were certainly aware that the war had shaped their relationship. However much Harry and Gwyneth waxed eloquent about how their happiness had grown each and every day of the war, they were certainly aware that their joy was nevertheless full of yearning and never fully satiated, attributing the bitter sweet dimension of their love to the “strange devious danger-bestrewn road” they were forced to traverse.<sup>288</sup> They were also more than willing to acknowledge that the frisson of war had elevated the sensual aspects of love: “Perhaps the reason why we find so much of thrills and romance in life is that our married life exists under such ‘romantic’ conditions.”<sup>289</sup> Because the war experience became so thoroughly integrated into their own ongoing personal narrative

of themselves as superior beings, far above the common herd, it was without irony that Harry could liken himself to “Sir Galahad”,<sup>290</sup> who had found the holy grail of marital sexual satisfaction. The couple thus conceived of themselves as advanced sexual moderns because of their constant and intense desire for one another and their willingness to experiment in oral sex, various sexual positions and mutual (but far distant) masturbation.<sup>291</sup> From their perspective the war was merely “trying”, but was infinitely preferable to the emotional turmoil of their long-distance engagement, and, after suggestively referring to their “strenuous efforts”, sex had in fact made their marriage a success so that it shone “like a bright star against the blackness of the surrounding sky”.<sup>292</sup> “Never, I believe,” wrote Harry, “were the two hearts of a man and a woman more nearly one than are our hearts now: despite the unkind finger of destiny which has kept us apart so much in all these months.”<sup>293</sup>

Historians have often characterized the First World War as an abrupt discontinuity with the past because it ushered in cataclysmic change. Our couple also believed that their lives had altered irrevocably, not, however, because of the trauma of war, but because of the “deep joys”<sup>294</sup> brought about by their marriage. For both Harry and Gwyneth sexual love was utterly transformative. Indeed, she concurred with E.M. Forster who presented the new modernist perspective in his novels, in which marriage was no longer the “the old full stop.” In contrast to Victorian fiction in which the convention was to end the story with the wedding vows, in the novels of the Edwardian period, life began with matrimony.<sup>295</sup> A few months into their marriage, even though they had spent only a few weeks together, it was she who summed up her very modern ideas about the marital state: “I used to think that all the extremes of love & desire occurred & exhausted themselves during the engagement period & that after marriage one settled down to a sort of hum drum friendship without any thrills. That just shews how far out I was in my ideas of things: but really the majority of books one reads tend to create that impression don’t they? They mostly stop with the wedding bells as if that was the end of romance instead of the beginning... I suppose the truth is that no one can picture the joys of married life till they have been experienced, and when they have been experienced they are far too precious & private to be written down and made public.”<sup>296</sup> According to Gwyneth, sex had made her into a new person, but more remarkably, in a stunning confessional letter, she said that, only through the discovery of her sexual and corporeal self in marriage, was her previous “maternal love”<sup>297</sup> and tenderness for her husband

transmuted into sexual passion. Harry concurred that it was sex that had elevated their marriage into a true comradeship and had made their life and romance authentic and real, a state of being which they contrasted with the abnormality of war. Courtship was but a “pre-natal” stage of adolescent love, an “empty existence” which Gwyneth compared with the “present fullness of life”.<sup>298</sup> It was not the war that had transported them across the threshold to manhood and womanhood; rather it was their growing knowledge of sexual love that had done so.

In their minds, the psychological elusiveness and lack of carnal knowledge during the “old unsatisfactory regime” of their courtship signified their old-fashioned Victorian selves; while their new sense of the most “completest and fullest union” accomplished through “soul-satisfying”<sup>299</sup> sex marked them out as moderns who knew how to “purr” audibly while they imagined a lifetime of “thrills”.<sup>300</sup> The new regime was one in which those pillars of the Victorian temper, the mind, character and spirit, were fused into a consciousness of the body through coitus. In their minds progress was identified completely with the development of their marriage and sprung from the deepening desire brought about by their growing knowledge of their erotic bodies. Their sexual union in turn brought about an increasing unification of the self which was now seen as co-extensive with the sexual body. That sex was the ultimate channel for the unification of mind, body and spirit was artfully conveyed by Harry during one of his many soliloquies on love: “Then I thought of how our intimacy grew and grew and your sweet self gradually took hold of my mind and came to fill and permeate my whole thoughts. I thought of your mind, so free and independent, strong like the oak, yet subtle and buoyant. I thought of your form, I will not say of slender—rather of sturdy grace, and of all your sweet woman’s charms that reach the heart of a man: I thought of our love, so real, so natural, so perfect: I thought of the thrills.”<sup>301</sup>

As their ruminations on married love made clear, thrills (orgasm) and sexual awakening were what separated love from friendship. Indeed, it was Harry’s newly acquired “knowledge of the equal and opposite sex” which allowed him to say that he had attained “the peace and rest which no rough and confused outward conditions can remove—ever”.<sup>302</sup> Despite the geographical distance between them, “the welding process” had created, in Gwyneth’s words, “a Siamese twin effect” in which they experienced such communion of body and soul, that it “gives good promise for that idealistic future to which we look forward with so much longing”.<sup>303</sup> In Gwyneth’s estimation, orgasm—that apogee of sexual pleasure—increased her

emotional availability for her husband, and thus her capacity for intimacy within marriage. For these young moderns, sex not only lay at the core of the individual personality, but it also possessed the utopian power of transcending time, space and the “unkind finger of destiny”.<sup>304</sup> In short, sexual satisfaction offered the ultimate assurance of progress, no longer defined, as the Victorians did, through the dialectic of individual character and social institutions, but through inner psychological development. Indeed, for Harry and Gwyneth, the progress they envisioned had entirely lost its reference in the social, for its ideals and values now resided entirely in the cultivation of sexual communion. Mutual sexual fulfilment had instilled in them such an imperturbable idealism that they would not emerge from the war with fragmented psyches, largely because it had allowed them to sustain their primary identities as lovers. Thus, after a week of blissful lovemaking while on leave, Harry could exclaim: “But my leave was glorious and a foretaste of rich happiness in store.”<sup>305</sup> If Rupert Brooke had conceived of the war as the validation of youthful idealism encapsulated by the image of “swimmers into cleanness leaping”,<sup>306</sup> by war’s end Gwyneth and Harry had come to understand that it was sexual passion, based as it was upon “purity of thought and mind”, that was the wellspring of those values that would empower them to face the future feeling “young and cheerful and sweet and pure again”.<sup>307</sup> How fitting then that they carried a book of Rupert Brooke’s poems with them as they began to contemplate “the beautiful things still to come”<sup>308</sup> when they could be “independent in a wee cottage of our own”.<sup>309</sup>

## NOTES

1. LAC, LF, 1:11, H to G, 19 Apr. 1914; *ibid.*, 7:10, G to H, 23 Sep. 1916.
2. LAC, LF, 4:4, H to G, 17 Mar., 1918.
3. LAC, LF, 2:2, H to G, 22 Dec. 1915.
4. LAC, LF, 18:6, Rosfrith Murray to Mrs. John Logan, 16 Jan. 1916.
5. Cyril Newman, quoted in Meyer, *Men of War*, 21.
6. Leslie Frost to mater and pater, n.d. 1917, quoted in Fleming, ed., *The Wartime Letters of Leslie and Cecil Frost*, 136. This was due to the new battle tactics of the Canadian Machine Gun corps as designed by its commander, Brigadier Raymond Brutinel who broke with the standard British military doctrine of using heavy machine guns as close support weapons for infantry, preferring to deploy them like artillery in concentrated barrages. See Grafton, *The Canadian Emma Gees*. This latter volume was based on Harry Logan’s research notes for a history of the corps that was never published. For Brutinel, see Baylaucq and Baylaucq, *Brutinel*.



7. LAC, LF, 11:9, H to father, 2 June 1916; 12 July 1916; *ibid.*, 11:9, H to mother, 1 Sep. 1916; *ibid.*, 12:1, H to father, 16 Jan. 1918.
8. Cecil to parents, 22 Apr. 1917, quoted in Fleming, ed., *The Wartime Letters of Leslie and Cecil Frost*, 146.
9. Cowley, ed., *Georges Vanier Soldier*, 67, 17, 21.
10. Watson, *Enduring the Great War*, 6; Roper, *The Secret Battle*, 29. See also Fuller, *Troop Morale*. On the need to avoid overstating the impact of war on the private psyche of soldiers, see Francis, "Attending to Ghosts", 347–67, 366. There is new scholarship which has focussed upon the non-combatant aspects of the soldier's life. See van Emden, *Meeting the Enemy*; Proctor, *Civilians in a World at War*; Gibson, *Behind the Front*.
11. Bourke, *Dismembering the Male*, 11.
12. Roper, "Slipping Out of View", 57–72.
13. Meyer, *Men of War*; Fletcher, *Life, Death and Growing Up on the Western Front*; Crouthamel, *An Intimate History of the Front*.
14. Bourke, *Dismembering the Male*, 23.
15. LAC, LF, 10:1, G to H, 1 Nov. 1918.
16. LAC, LF, 4:4, H to G, 17 Mar. 1918.
17. Bourke, *Dismembering the Male*, 26; Crouthamel, *An Intimate History of the Front*, 10. Crouthamel explores heterosexuality, but devotes more analysis to homosexuality on the front. While highlighting comradeship, Das, *Touch and Intimacy in First World War Literature* downplays physical sex between men on the front. The theme of illicit sex, especially prostitution, has been given much more concerted treatment by historians. See, for example, Cassel, *The Secret Plague*; Grayzel, *Women and the First World War*, 62–78. On sexuality among women munitions workers, see Woollacott, *On Her Their Lives Depend*, 134–61.
18. Fletcher, *Life, Death and Growing Up*, 204.
19. Gay, *The Bourgeois Experience: Victoria to Freud*, Vol. I, 71.
20. Tompkins, *A Canadian's Road to Russia*, 49.
21. Morton, *When Your Number's Up*, 80.
22. LAC, LF, 3:6, H to G, 4 Oct. 1917.
23. Budd, *The Sculpture Machine*; Bourke, *Dismembering the Male*, 124–70; Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Managing the Body*. For ideas of the body following the war, see Carden-Coyne, *Reconstructing the Body*.
24. LAC, LP, 16:9, Norman Macdonnell to H, 23 Nov. 1914.
25. For scholarship which has viewed the war as a decisive break with Edwardian culture, which produced massive disillusionment, see Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*; Leed, *No Man's Land*; Eksteins, *Rites of Spring*; Hynes, *A War Imagined*.
26. Bourke, *Dismembering the Male*, 25.
27. Watson, *Enduring the Great War*, 44–5.

28. Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*; Morton, *When Your Number's Up*; Vance, *Maple Leaf Empire*, 4.
29. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 2 Aug. 1914.
30. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 9 Aug. 1914.
31. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 22 Nov. 1914.
32. LAC, LF, 1:12, Harry to Gwyneth, 27 Dec. 1914.
33. LAC, LF, 2:1, H to G, 2 May 1915.
34. LAC, LF, 5:11, H to G, 21 Sep. 1919. As George Coppard, an English machine gunner acknowledged in his memoirs, once patriotism evaporated it was replaced by an "implacable hatred for huns". See his *With a Machine Gun to Cambrai*, 109.
35. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 8 Nov. 1914; *ibid.*, 5:1, H to G, 4 Aug. 1918.
36. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 30 Aug. 1914, 6 Sep. 1914.
37. LAC, LF, 2:1, H to G, 13 Oct. 1915. As several historians have observed, *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, while it centred upon asexual homosociality, did not celebrate physical masculinity or institutionalized games, although it might have come to be interpreted in this way during wartime. On this point, see Hilton, "Manliness, masculinity and the Mid-Victorian Temperament", 68; Alderson, *Mansex Fine*, 61; Nelson, *Boys Will Be Girls*, 44.
38. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 12 Mar. 1915.
39. LAC, LF, H to G, 22 Feb. 1915.
40. UBCA, HTLFP, Box 1:4, Harry Logan, Canadian Officer's Training Corps, "Circular", 8 July 1915.
41. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 22 Feb. 1915.
42. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 15 Feb. 1915, 22 Feb. 1915; *ibid.*, 2:1, 18 June 1915.
43. Rose, *The Edwardian Temperament*, 41.
44. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 28 Mar. 1915.
45. *Ibid.*
46. LAC, LF, 2:1, H to G, 24 May 1915. "Strenuous" here denotes masculinity, just as Vera Brittain referred to the "strenuous & masculine type", MMUA, Vera Brittain Papers, Box 50, Diary, 2 Nov. 1914. Manliness according to Vera Brittain was closely aligned with duty and honour and physical courage. See *ibid.*, 2 Sep. 1914. As Michael Roper has noted in "Between Manliness and Masculinity", 348, Oscar Wilde's son signed up so that he would not be thought to be an "effeminate aesthete".
47. LAC, LF, 14:21, John to H, 13 Mar. 1915.
48. The interchangeability of duty and sacrifice in Harry's thought does not accord with Anthony Fletcher's conclusion that middle-class Englishmen were animated by sacrifice and working-class men by duty. See *Life, Death and Growing Up on the Western Front*, 49.

49. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 28 Mar. 1915.
50. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 10 Mar. 1915.
51. Sir James Murray died four months later of pleurisy, attended by Sir William Osler. LAC, LF, 7:6, G to H, 27 July 1915.
52. Rupert Brooke, "Peace", *Poetry: Magazine of Verse*, 6:1 (Apr. 1915).
53. LAC, LF, 7:5, G to H, 15 Mar. 1915. On 8 March 1915 Gwyneth had written to tell him not to enlist, but their letters crossed.
54. LAC, LF, 7:5, G to H, 3 Dec. 1914.
55. Angell, *The Great Illusion*, vi–vii.
56. LAC, LF, 7:5, G to H, 2 Feb. 1915; 2 Mar. 1915. Royden, *The Great Adventure*, 4. On Royden, see Fletcher, *Maude Royden*, 114–19; Morgan, "A 'Feminist Conspiracy'", 777–800. Pacifism had been a critical aspect of Girton College. See Tickner, *The Spectacle of Women*, in which Girton students carried a banner at the 1908 procession for female suffrage declaring "Better is Wisdom than Weapons of War", 187; Wiggins, "Gendered Spaces and Political Identity", 749.
57. LAC, LF, 7:5, G to H, 6 Aug. 1914, 15 Feb. 1915; *ibid.*, 7:6, G to H, 31 May 1915.
58. Meyer, *Men of War*, 30, 34. See note 4 above.
59. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 31 Jan. 1915.
60. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 10 Mar. 1915. On this point, see Budd, *The Sculpture Machine*, 113; Hammerle, Uberegger and Zaar, "Introduction: Women's and Gender History of the First World War", 3; Carden-Coyne, "From Pieces to Whole", 209.
61. MMUA, Vera Brittain Fonds, Box 50, Diary, 26 Sep. 1914.
62. Mock trials were held for such infractions. See LAC, LF, 2:2, H to G, 6 Jan. 1916.
63. LAC, LF, 2:1, H to G, 16 May 1915, 13 Sep. 1915; *ibid.*, 7:8, G to H, 2 May 1916.
64. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 6 Dec. 1914.
65. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 23 Dec. 1914.
66. Cocks, *Classified*, 8–17.
67. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 6 Dec. 1914.
68. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 22 Nov. 1914.
69. LAC, LF, 2:2, H to G, 10 Mar. 1916.
70. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 22 Nov. 1914.
71. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 30 Dec. 1914.
72. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 22 Nov. 1914.
73. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 30 Dec. 1914.
74. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 31 Jan. 1915.
75. LAC, LF, 2:1, H to G, 13 Sep. 1915.
76. LAC, LF, 7:5, G to H, 13 Nov. 1914.

77. LAC, LF, 2:1, H to G, 13 Sep. 1915.
78. LAC, LF, 2:2, H to G, 10 Mar. 1916.
79. LAC, LF, 2:1, H to G, 21 June 1915.
80. Forth, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 18, 36–42.
81. LAC, LF, 2:1, H to G, 21 June 1915.
82. LAC, LF, 2:6, H to G, 3 Oct. 1916. Here, of course, he was ironically evoking another stereotype of Jewish men as sexually rapacious.
83. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 28 Mar. 1915.
84. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 4 Oct. 1914.
85. Zweiniger-Bargielowska, “The Making of a Modern Female Body”, 299–317; Webb, “Constructing the Gendered Body”, 253–75. Stearns argues for an earlier shift to a slimmer body type. See Stearns, “Fat in America”, 240–57.
86. LAC, LF, 1:12, H to G, 4 Oct. 1914. His mother also thought she was “short and pudgy”, but as she lost weight he was pleased that she was the same dimension as his mother had been when she got married.
87. LAC, LF, 7:6, G to H, 7 June 1915. For a similar gender analysis of Victorian marriage as seen through divorce proceedings, see Hammerton, *Cruelty and Companionship*, 149–63.
88. LAC, LF, 2:1, H to G, 28 June 1915.
89. LAC, LF, 18:4, G to Mrs. Logan, 14 June 1916. Gwyneth continued to maintain that she had to bully him into marrying her, but the prospect of free sex while on leave was perhaps a greater inducement. *Ibid.*, 8:11, G to H, 4 Oct. 1917.
90. Gay, *The Bourgeois Experience: Victoria to Freud, Vol. I*, 281–2; Stopes, *Married Love*, xi.
91. LAC, LF, 9:2, G to H, 30 Jan. 1918.
92. LAC, LF, 7:9, G to H, Sunday n.d. May 1916.
93. LAC, LF, 7:9, G to H, Tuesday, n.d. May 1916.
94. E.S.P.H., “The Sanctions of Modern Monogamy”, *The Freewoman* (14 Dec. 1911), 74.
95. LAC, LF, 7:9, G to H, Sunday n.d. May 1916.
96. LAC, LF, 7:9, G to H, n.d. May 1916.
97. LAC, LF, 7:9, G to H, Mon. n.d. June 1916, Tuesday n.d. June 1916, Sunday n.d. June 1916, n.d. May 1916; *ibid.*, 8:6, 6 July 1917.
98. LAC, LF, 2:3, H to G, 19 June 1916.
99. LAC, LF, 11:8, H to mother, 29 May 1916; *ibid.*, 2:3, H to G, 6 June 1916.
100. LAC, LF, 2:3, H to G, 6 June 1916.
101. LAC, LF, 2:3, H to G, 6 June 1916.
102. Fisher, “Lay back, enjoy it, and shout happy England”, 189.
103. “Interpretation of Sex, IV”, *The Freewoman* (23 May 1912), 1–2.

104. "A Would-Be Freewoman, "The Individualism and the 'Normal' Woman", *The Freewoman*, 21 Mar. 1912.
105. LAC, LF, 2:3, H to G, 14 June 1916.
106. LAC, LF, 2:3, H to G, 14 June 1916.
107. Roper, *The Secret Battle*, 19–27.
108. On how certain emotions can acquire greater valency while others are suppressed or occluded, see Christie, "Affliction", 87–101.
109. LAC, LF, 9:2, G to H, 28 Jan. 1918.
110. LAC, LF, 9:2, G to H, 12 Feb. 1918. "And I am a beast to write you horrid depressing letters".
111. LAC, LF, 7:9, G to H, Sunday n.d. June 1916.
112. LAC, LF, 2:9, H to G, 23 Feb. 1917.
113. Walt Whitman saw death as a metaphor for sex. See Killingsworth, *Whitman's Piety of the Body*. See also Barreca, *Sex and Death in Victorian Literature*; Sigel, "Name Your Pleasure", 394–419; Dollimore, "Death and the Self", 249–61. Freud believed he would die during sex. See Friedman, *A Mind of its Own*, 196.
114. Carpenter, *The Drama of Love and Death*, 2. For a similar point, see Browne, *Sexual Variety and Variability Among Women*, 1–14.
115. Gay, *The Bourgeois Experience, Vol. I*, 10.
116. LAC, LF, 9:4, G to H, 9 Apr. 1918.
117. LAC, LF, 10:4, G to H, 29 Mar. 1919.
118. This accords with Fletcher's conclusions regarding British war correspondence. See *Life, Death and Growing Up on the Western Front*, 77.
119. LAC, LF, 11:8, H to parents and Willie, 16 Apr. 1916.
120. LAC, LF, 12:8, H to father, 16 Jan. 1918; *ibid.*, 4:7, H to G, 6 July 1918.
121. Watson, *Enduring the Great War*, 169. On his nightmares, see LAC, LF, 9:2, G to H, 2 Feb 1918, in which she states that he may still be "a victim to windiness". His nightmares seemed to have continued until the end of the war. See *ibid.*, G to H, 20 Feb. 1918.
122. LAC, LF, 11:9, H to mother, 16 Aug. 1916, 1 Sep. 1916, 18 Sep. 1916; *ibid.*, H to father, 12 July 1916, 8 Sep. 1916. On the necessity of presenting a cheerful front in wartime, see Scott Smith to parents, 4 Aug. 1918, who observed: "one learns to be good natured as its [*sic*] no use to be anything else". A.F.S. Smith Papers, in private possession of the authors.
123. LAC, LF, 2:4, H to G, 28 Aug. 1916, 31 Aug. 1916.
124. LAC, LF, 2:10, H to G, 4 Mar. 1917, 13 Mar. 1917; *ibid.*, 3:8, H to G, 4 Nov. 1917. Lance Corporal Curtis Forsey, from Newfoundland, claimed that he soon forgot the deaths he had witnessed, and that an empty stomach was worse. His response to death was less distinctly personal than was Harry's. Curtis to father, 17 May 1918, quoted in *Grand Bank Soldier*.

- By contrast, Billy Gray, though stating that they “jocularly” spoke of death because they must put away their tears “in this game of death”, he nonetheless expressed to his mother how much he had loved a fallen officer. See Gray, *More Letters from Billy*, 47–9.
125. LAC, LF, 2:4, H to G, 26 Aug. 1916, 27 Aug. 1917; *ibid.*, 2:10, H to G, 4 Mar. 1917, 17 Mar. 1917, 21 Mar. 1917; *ibid.*, 5:1, H to G, 8 Aug. 1918.
  126. LAC, LF, 5:4, H to G, 13 Nov. 1918. Significantly, he only expressed his method of enduring the war after the Armistice was signed.
  127. LAC, LF, 2:5, H to G, 9 Sep. 1916.
  128. LAC, LF, 4:5, H to G, 2 May 1918.
  129. MMUA, William Fingland Papers, File 25, William to Etta, 29 Apr. 1917.
  130. MMUA, William Fingland Papers, File 25, William to Etta, 29 Apr. 1917; *ibid.*, file 33, William to Etta, 20 Mar. 1918. He did ultimately marry Etta, despite his fears that she would find his character ineluctably altered.
  131. LAC, LF, 4:3, H to G, 17 Feb. 1918.
  132. LAC, LF, 2:5, H to G, 11 Sep. 1916.
  133. LAC, LF, 2:5, H to G, 15 Sep. 1916.
  134. On the tradition of writing letters while playing with an erect penis in pornographic literature, see Stephenson, *The Yard of Wit*, 127.
  135. LAC, LF, 4:4, H to G, 16 Apr. 1918.
  136. LAC, LF, 2:7, H to G, 18 Nov. 1916.
  137. Carpenter, *The Drama of Love and Death*, 9. On Ellis and the conjunction between the nutritive and reproductive systems, see Forth, “A Diet of Pleasures”, 141, 140–55. The analogy between hunger and sexual longing was a long-standing trope in the history of love, especially in Christian discourses. See Reddy, *The Making of Romantic Love*, 15–16.
  138. Bland, “The Shock of the Freewoman Journal”, 75–89, 87.
  139. LAC, LF, 8:3, G to H, 11 Jan. 1917, 14 Jan. 1917, 17 Jan. 1917, 22 Jan. 1917.
  140. LAC, LF, 2:4, H to G, 22 Aug. 1916; *ibid.*, 1:12, H to G, 22 Nov. 1914; *ibid.*, 8:3, G to H, 1 Nov. 1917.
  141. LAC, LF, 3:1, H to G, 18 May 1917.
  142. LAC, LF, 5:2, H to G, 13 Oct. 1918.
  143. LAC, LF, 9:2, G to H, 1 Feb. 1918.
  144. LAC, LF, 9:3, G to H, 11 Mar. 1918.
  145. LAC, LF, 2:6, H to G, 7 Oct. 1916.
  146. LAC, LF, 5:5, H to G, 21 Apr. 1918.
  147. LAC, LF, 5:4, H to G, 2 Nov. 1918.
  148. LAC, LF, 2:10, H to G, 5 Mar. 1917; *ibid.*, 3:8, H to G, 2 Nov. 1917.
  149. LAC, LF, 2:10, H to G, 23 Feb. 1917.
  150. LAC, LF, 2:9, H to G, 17 Feb. 1917.

151. LAC, LF, 2:9, H to G, 3 Feb. 1917.
152. Fletcher, *Life, Death and Growing Up on the Western Front*, 3.
153. LAC, LF, 2:6, H to G, 25 Oct. 1916.
154. LAC, LF, 2:9, H to G, 17 Feb. 1917.
155. LAC, LF, 9:2, G to H, 25 Feb. 1918.
156. LAC, LF, 8:1, G to H, 1 Oct. 1916.
157. LAC, LF, 9:2, G to H, 28 Feb. 1918.
158. Having a wife living in “Blighty” certainly helped with their evolving relationship, as the majority of Canadian soldiers were forced to wait for up to three months for transatlantic mail service, leaving soldiers cut off from home. See Fuller, *Troop Morale*, 9–12. For comments on the long delays in Canadian army mail, see Scott Smith to Daddy, old pal, 3 Jan. 1917, who accused “mean English blokes” of stealing food parcels, and William Fingland to Etta, 11 June 1915, MMUA, Fingland Papers, File 2. Harry did, however, lose one of his precious food parcels from Vancouver in the Halifax explosion of March 1917.
159. A.F.S. Smith letters, Scott to parents, 28 Jan. 1918.
160. MMUA, Fingland Papers, File 2, William to Etta, 3 June 1915.
161. LAC, LF, 1:9, H to G, 15 Feb. 1913; *ibid.*, 7:8, G to H, 13 Sep. 1916.
162. MMUA, P.T. Caiger Papers, Box 1, Percy to Annie, 18 Oct. 1916. A similar inability to communicate his feelings to his wife encumbered George Timmins. George to May, 23 July 1916, quoted in Bennett, ed., *The Wartime Letters of George Timmins*, 4.
163. LAC, LF, 2:6, H to G, 3 Oct. 1916; *ibid.*, 4:1, H to G, 23 Jan. 1918.
164. They saw their humour as “high class” like *Punch*. Gwyneth vilified the American publication *Stars and Stripes* as too vulgar. LAC, LF, 10:3, G to H, 11 Feb. 1919.
165. LAC, LF, 3:1, H to G, 18 Aug. 1917; *ibid.*, 9:3, G to H, 13 Mar. 1918.
166. Strachey, ed., *Sigmund Freud: Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, 21.
167. Fisher, “Lay Back, Enjoy It and Shout Happy England”, 193.
168. Mills, *Virginia Woolf, Jane Ellen Harrison*, 25. Modern psychoanalytic techniques were being used by doctors outside of London, as an Oxford friend of Harry’s described the use of “auto-suggestion” to cure his wife’s neurosis. See UBCA, HTLFP, Box 1:2, Donald Matheson to Harry, 6 Dec. 1913. Freud’s ideas were also promoted by David Eder in *School Hygiene*, which would have been widely read by British educators. See Steedman, *Childhood, Culture and Class in Britain*, 97.
169. LAC, LF, 2:9, H to G, 7 Feb. 1917.
170. Roper, *The Secret Battle*, 21; Fuller, *Troop Morale*, 143–5.
171. Du Pont, “Nature and Functions of Humor in Trench Newspapers (1914–1918)”, 107–21.
172. Rose, *The Edwardian Temperament*, 163, 175–8.

173. Sussman, *Victorian Masculinities*, 105; Vicinus, *Intimate Friends*, 233, 235, for allusions to passion and the clitoris among women.
174. Stansell, *American Moderns*, 294–5. Like Gwyneth and Harry, Emma Goldman was acquainted with the work of Freud.
175. Kern, *The Culture of Love*, 331–48.
176. LAC, LF, 7:10, G to H, 17 Aug. 1916.
177. LAC, LF, 8:5, G to H, 30 Mar. 1917.
178. LAC, LF, 2:5, H to G, 23 Sep. 1916.
179. Hall, “Forbidden by God, Despised by Men”, 365–87; Forth, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 118; Crozier, *Sexual Inversion*, 25; Rothman, “Sex and Sex-Control”, 409–25; Forth and Crozier, “Introduction: Parts, Wholes and People”, 1–16, 3; Greenslade, *Degeneration*, 217.
180. Roseman, “Body Doubles”, 365–99, 371.
181. LAC, LF, 9:2, G to H, 13 Feb. 1918.
182. LAC, LF, 9:4, G to H, 27 Apr. 1918.
183. This is a reference to Walt Whitman, quoted in Friedman, *A Mind of Its Own*, 100.
184. For the “bad little Hebrew gentleman”, see LAC, LF, 2:5, Harry to Gwyneth, 30 Sep. 1916. Gilman, “Sigmund Freud and the Sexologists”, 323–4, 323–49. It should also be noted that “playing the Jew” was a reference to female masturbation or stimulating the clitoris, 342.
185. LAC, LF, 2:4, H to G, 25 Aug. 1916. On the more manly nature of cigars in general, see White, *The First Sexual Revolution*, 21; Hilton, *Smoking in British Popular Culture*.
186. LAC, LF, 2:9, H to G, 17 Feb. 1917.
187. LAC, LF, 5:4, H to G, 21 Nov. 1918; *ibid.*, 10:1, G to H, 6 Nov. 1918. Hunger plagued many Canadian soldiers, about which Scott Smith observed that soldiers did not have “enough food to eat to keep a hummingbird living”. Smith papers, Scott to parents, 30 Sep. 1917. Many thoughts of home revolved around food. See Roper, *The Secret Battle*, 70.
188. LAC, LF, 11:8, H to Father, 2 June 1916.
189. LAC, LF, 3:5, H to G, 1 Oct. 1917. Marie Stopes in her famous 1918 book, *Married Love*, also emphasized the importance of the clitoris for female pleasure. See Holtzman, “The Pursuit of Married Love”, 39–51, 40.
190. LAC, LF, 7:10, G to H, 14 Aug. 1916; *ibid.*, 8:1, 2 Nov. 1916; *ibid.*, 9:3, 11 Mar. 1918.
191. Stonebridge, *The Writing of Anxiety*, 8.
192. Hynes, *A War Imagined*, 379.
193. LAC, LF, 9:2, G to H, 13 Feb. 1918. For D.H. Lawrence’s notion of breasts as his home, see Giles, “The Tears of Lacteros”, 123–41, 124. On the association between the dug-out and the soldier’s body, see Das, *Touch and Intimacy in First World War Literature*, 238.



194. Carden-Coyne, *Reconstructing the Body*, 138. It is likely that Harry was aware of Christopher Nevinson's painting *La Mitrailleuse* (The Machine Gun), which was exhibited in 1916 in Britain because of his reference to cubism during the war. See LAC, LF, 2:10, H to G, 3 Mar. 1917.
195. Bourke, *Dismembering the Male*, 21; Roper, *The Secret Battle*; Meyer, *Men of War*, 5; Fletcher, *Life, Death and Growing Up on the Western Front*, 3.
196. MMUA, William Fingland Papers, File 4, William to Etta, 11 Aug. 1915.
197. LAC, LF, 7:10, G to H, 14 Aug. 1916.
198. LAC, LF, 9:3, G to H, 15 Mar. 1918.
199. Grayzel, *Women's Identities at War*, 2; Woollacott, *On Her Their Lives Depend*.
200. Grayzel, "Liberating Women", 113–34 and Woollacott, "Khaki Fever and Its Control", 325–47; Doan, *Disturbing Practices*; Doan, "Topsy-Turvydom", 517–42. On the need to examine sexuality as part of female agency, see Carden-Coyne, *Reconstructing the Body*, 13.
201. Quoted in Brooke, "The Body and Socialism", 147–77, 163.
202. Brooke, *Sexual Politics*, 70–5.
203. LAC, LF, 18:1, Flora to G, 27 Apr. 1917.
204. LAC, LF, 8:1, G to H, 26 Oct. 1916.
205. Bland, "The Shock of the Freewoman Journal", 81.
206. LAC, LF, 8:5, G to H, 15 Mar. 1917.
207. LAC, LF, 8:1, G to H, 10 Nov. 1916.
208. LAC, LF, 8:1, G to H, 20 Sep. 1916, 14 Oct. 1916, 18 Nov. 1916; *ibid.*, 2:8, H to G, 9 Jan. 1917.
209. LAC, LF, 8:10, G to H, 28 Sep. 1917.
210. Gay, *The Bourgeois Experience, Vol. I*, 441.
211. LAC, LF, 8:4, G to H, 10 Feb. 1917.
212. LAC, LF, 8:1, G to H, 15 Oct. 1916.
213. LAC, LF, 8:5, G to H, 4 Mar. 1917.
214. LAC, LF, 2:8, H to G, 2 Jan. 1917.
215. "Clearing the Ground", *The Freewoman*, 22 Feb. 1912.
216. Pugh, *Sons of Liberty*, 91.
217. LAC, LF, 4:4, H to G, 21 Mar. 1918.
218. Vicinus, *Intimate Friends*, 204.
219. Simmons, "Modern Sexuality and the Myth of Victorian Repression", 157–77, 163.
220. LAC, LF, 5:5, H to G, 17 Jan. 1919.
221. Kern, *The Modernist Novel*, 35.
222. Gay, *The Bourgeois Experience, Vol. I*, 136–41. They were also in advance of the women interviewed by Kate Fisher. See Fisher, "Lay Back, Enjoy It and Shout Happy England", 181–2.

223. LAC, LF, 8:1, G to H, 15 Nov. 1916.
224. LAC, LF, 10:1, G to H, 16 Nov. 1918.
225. LAC, LF, 9:2, G to H, 17 Mar. 1918.
226. LAC, LF, 9:5, G to H, 20 May 1918. Gwyneth's sexual subjectivity endorses the conclusion of Lesley Hall that women were not passive dupes of male sexologists but immersed themselves in sexology's new emphasis upon sexual pleasure for feminist ends. On this point, see Hall, "Feminist Reconfigurations of Heterosexuality in the 1920s", 135–49, 136.
227. LAC, LF, 4:4, H to G, 17 Mar. 1918.
228. Marie Stopes, "Letter to Working Women", 1919, quoted in Hall, ed., *Outspoken Women*, 144.
229. LAC, LF, 8:10, G to H, 9 Sep. 1917.
230. LAC, LF, 2:6, H to G, 8 Oct. 1916.
231. LAC, LF, 2:11, H to G, 2 Apr. 1917.
232. Quoted in Craig Gibson, *Behind the Front*, 18.
233. Burgess and Burgess, *Who Said War Was Hell!*, 47.
234. Tompkins, *A Canadian's Road to Russia*, 207, 189–90, 165.
235. LAC, LF, 3:5, H to G, 22 Sep. 1917.
236. LAC, LF, 2:9, H to G, 11 Feb. 1917.
237. Cocks, "'Sporting Girls' and 'Artistic Boys'", 457–82.
238. LAC, LF, 18:4, Gwyneth to Mrs. Logan, 15 May 1916.
239. Bourke, *Dismembering the Male*, 124–53; Das, *Touch and Intimacy*, 111–16; Roper, *The Secret Battle*, 167–70; Cole, *Modernism, Male Friendship and the First World War*, 23.
240. Crouthamel, "Love in the Trenches", 52–71, 53, argues that male friendships in the trenches were sexual in nature.
241. LAC, LF, 11:9, H to mother, 26 July 1916.
242. LAC, LF, 11:9, H to mother, 11 Oct. 1916.
243. LAC, LF, 2:7, H to G, 4 Nov. 1916.
244. LAC, LF, 2:7, H to G, 1 Dec. 1916.
245. LAC, LF, 2:5, H to G, 24 Sep. 1916.
246. LAC, LF, 2:6, H to G, 22 Oct. 1916.
247. LAC, LF, 2:7, H to G, 25 Nov. 1916.
248. LAC, LF, 8:4, G to H, 5 Feb. 1917.
249. LAC, LF, 2:10, H to G, 8 Mar. 1917; *ibid.*, 5:5, 8 Dec. 1918; *ibid.*, 2:9, 12 Feb. 1917.
250. LAC, LF, 8:4, G to H, 26 Feb. 1917.
251. LAC, LF, 9:3, G to H, n.d. Mar. 1918; *ibid.*, 9:4, 11 Apr. 1918.
252. LAC, LF, 4:5, H to G, 21 Apr. 1918.
253. MMUA, Vera Brittain Papers, Box 50, Diary, 31 Dec. 1914.
254. Bostridge, "Historical Notes: Hero of the Somme Fatally Outed".
255. LAC, LF, 9:5, G to H, 8 May 1918.

256. LAC, LF, 8:10, G to H, 13 Sep. 1917; *ibid.*, 8:11, 3 Oct. 1917.
257. LAC, LF, 8:4, G to H, 8 Feb. 1917.
258. LAC, LF, 9:2, Gwyneth to Harry, 16 Feb. 1918.
259. LAC, LF, 9:3, G to H, 7 Mar. 1918.
260. Janes, *Oscar Wilde Prefigured*, 67.
261. LAC, LF, 9:5, G to H, 6 May 1918. She may actually have been portraying Harry, as he had, as we suggest in Chap. 2, written a satirical letter to his brother Willie soon after he arrived in Oxford in 1908, about effete, aesthetic English toffs wearing monocles.
262. On the male bodily form and styles of dress as a signifier of homoerotic desire between men, see Janes, *Oscar Wilde Prefigured*, *passim*.
263. LAC, LF, 9:4, G to H, 27 Apr. 1918. On the normalcy of “homosex” relations prior to marriage, see Houlbrook, “Soldier Heroes and Rent Boys”, 351–88, 360.
264. LAC, LF, 9:4, G to H, 2 Apr. 1918.
265. LAC, LF, 5:2, H to G, 21 Oct. 1918.
266. LAC, LF, 7:10, G to H, 25 Aug 1916.
267. LAC, LF, 8:11, G to H, 8 Oct. 1917.
268. LAC, LF, 8:1, G to H, 5 Nov. 1916.
269. George to May, quoted in Bennett, ed., *The Wartime Letters of George Timmins*, 7.
270. Showalter, *Sexual Anarchy*, 52.
271. LAC, LF, 8:1, G to H, 18 Nov. 1916.
272. LAC, LF, 7:10, G to H, 10 Sep. 1916.
273. LAC, LF, 8:1, G to H, 28 Nov. 1916.
274. LAC, LF, 7:10, G to H, 19 Sep. 1916.
275. LAC, LF, 8:5, G to H, 25 Mar. 1917.
276. LAC, LF, 8:10, G to H, 2 Sep. 1917.
277. LAC, LF, 4:7, H to G, 16 May 1918.
278. LAC, LF, 7:10, G to H, 29 Sep. 1916.
279. LAC, LF, 2:9, H to G, 4 Feb. 1917.
280. On the wider cultural anxiety about women on top, see Gay, *The Bourgeois Experience, Vol. I*, 157. For Gwyneth on top, see LAC, LF, 2:8, H to G, 27 Jan. 1917. She was of course pregnant at this time and this was likely the most comfortable position for her.
281. LAC, LF, 3:5, H to G, 20 Sep. 1917.
282. LAC, LF, 3:5, H to G, 18 Sep. 1917; *ibid.*, 3:1, H to G, 28 Aug. 1917.
283. LAC, LF, 4:7, H to G, 16 May 1918.
284. LAC, LF, 5:1, H to G, 1 Aug. 1918.
285. LAC, LF, 2:7, H to G, 13 Nov. 1916, 15 Nov. 1916.
286. LAC, LF, 3:1, H to G, 29 Aug. 1917. Gwyneth and Harry participated in a smorgasbord of sexual acts, including toe sucking, oral sex and anal

sex. On the variability of sexual impulses in the work of Havelock Ellis, see Crozier, *Sex Inversion*, 26–7. Gwyneth and Harry considered themselves quite exceptional in terms of their sexual lives, and frequently commented unfavourably on the sex lives of other couples. For example, Harry had been talking to another officer only to discover that they were so old-fashioned that they had not discovered oral sex. Mrs S., he remarked, was not given “to doing her washing at night!” LAC, LF, 3:1, H to G, 27 June 1917.

287. LAC, LF, 2:4, H to G, 14 Aug. 1916.
288. LAC, LF, 2:8, H to G, 22 Jan. 1917.
289. LAC, LF, 3:5, H to G, 5 Sep. 1917.
290. LAC, LF, 2:6, H to G, 29 Oct. 1916.
291. LAC, LF, 8:5, G to H, 15 Mar. 1917.
292. LAC, LF, 8:4, G to H, 26 Feb. 1917.
293. LAC, LF, 3:1, H to G, 16 May 1917.
294. LAC, LF, 3:5, H to G, 5 Sep. 1917.
295. Rose, *The Edwardian Temperament*, 100. See also, Kern, *The Culture of Love*, 357.
296. LAC, LF, 8:9, G to H, 30 Aug. 1917.
297. LAC, LF, 10:1, G to H, 2 Nov. 1918.
298. LAC, LF, 3:5, H to G, 5 Sep. 1917; *ibid.*, 8:4, G to H, 2 Feb. 1917.
299. LAC, LF, 4:4, H to G, 4 Apr. 1918; *ibid.*, 7:10, G to H, 8 Sep. 1916.
300. LAC, LF, 2:5, H to G, 5 Sep. 1916; *ibid.*, 3:1, H to G, 3 Aug. 1917.
301. LAC, LF, 3:1, H to G, 3 Aug. 1917.
302. LAC, LF, 4:7, H to G, 27 May 1918.
303. LAC, LF, 7:10, G to H, 21 Sep. 1916; *ibid.*, 9:5, 12 May 1918.
304. LAC, LF, 3:1, H to G, 16 May. 1917.
305. LAC, LF, 4:1, H to G, 25 Jan. 1918.
306. Brooke, “Peace”. They remained devotees of Rupert Brooke. Harry carried a copy of his poems across the Atlantic to Canada in 1919.
307. LAC, LF, 2:11, H to G, 8 Apr. 1917; *ibid.*, 8:10, G to H, 11 Sep. 1917.
308. LAC, LF, 7:10, G to H, 8 Sep. 1916.
309. LAC, LF, 4:1, H to G, 25 Jan. 1918.



## CHAPTER 7

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# The Maternal Body: Pregnancy, Child-Rearing and Birth Control

*“How sporting of you to have a boy now that they are needs so much!”  
Marjorie to Gwyneth, n.d. 1917*

*“But why is sex passion any more degrading than the mother’s passion  
for her children?”  
A Rationalist, Freewoman, 22 Feb. 1912*

In April 1917, just over two months prior to Britain’s first national “Baby Week” exhibition, inaugurated by Queen Mary, Gwyneth gave birth to their first child, a son named John. The Bishop of London’s pro-natalist pronouncement that the “loss of life in this war had made every baby’s life doubly precious”,<sup>1</sup> underscored the widespread notion that civic motherhood and the act of childrearing were deemed a public and patriotic duty. There was, at the turn of the twentieth century, a proliferation of writing by medical professionals, eugenicists, and some feminists, from all across the political spectrum, exalting motherhood as a national duty. The tenor of this maternalist discourse focussed particularly on increasing the birth-rate of the middle classes and was motivated by fears of racial degeneration in the wake of the Boer War. It also naturalized the instinct for motherhood in women. The wider implications of this current of thought were to draw together more firmly than before the family and the state, a tendency which was amplified during World War I. Dr. Saleeby, a leading eugenicist,

famously wrote: "The history of nations is determined not on the battlefield but in the nursery, and the battalions which give lasting victory are the battalions of babies."<sup>2</sup> This theme was not only echoed by many writers in the *Eugenics Review*, but was reaffirmed by a number of Gwyneth's friends, all of whom subscribed to the correlation during wartime of reproduction, maternal citizenship and national progress.

Although these eugenicist tenets were certainly pervasive within British culture, there existed other interpretations which also valorized motherhood, less as a national duty but as a source of female power, in which reproduction and sexual pleasure were viewed as mutually reinforcing. Conventionally, maternity and sexuality were seen to be incompatible, but this was changing just prior to World War I.<sup>3</sup> The Swedish feminist Ellen Key was a firm exponent of maternalism but also vociferously advocated the "new morality" which demanded greater sexual freedom and expression for women.<sup>4</sup> Writing from a different perspective, Havelock Ellis, who penned the preface to Key's influential treatise, stressed how sexual pleasure for women would help foster the desire for children, even though he, like Stella Browne, privileged the idea that maternity was voluntary and not a social duty.<sup>5</sup> Sigmund Freud also subscribed to the emerging idea of mothers as sensual beings, and although many of his theories were rebuffed by the British medical establishment, they gained increasing currency through the efforts of George Tansley, author of the popular *The New Psychology and its Relation to Life* (1920), who succeeded in placing Freud's work on the natural science Tripos at Cambridge between 1910 and 1913.<sup>6</sup> As Stephen Brooke has concluded, the modern mother was one who combined sexuality and maternity.<sup>7</sup>

In perceiving herself and her husband to be superior and exceptional individuals, it was not surprising that Gwyneth attended eugenics talks and read the work of leading women eugenicists, such as Dr. Mary Scharlieb and Norah March who wrote "Eugenic aspects of national baby week" in which she underscored the importance of motherhood to the state in wartime.<sup>8</sup> Gwyneth's comments about eugenics display an ironic tone of detachment, and she remained ambiguous as to whether mothering was a natural instinct or one that required training and education as the eugenicists believed, and she only selectively appropriated the advice of scientific experts if it fit into her preconceived notions of "modern" childrearing. In fact, she balked at the intervention of medical professionals, stating during her second pregnancy while in Vancouver, that having a doctor attend to her prior to the birth was "[a] lot of rubbish ... My goodness you would

think a birth was a dangerous freak of nature instead of a common natural process.”<sup>9</sup> At other junctures, she willingly absorbed old-fashioned ideas, such as that promulgated by Georgiana Kirby in *Variation of Character through the Mother* (1889), who argued that listening to good music would affect the unborn baby.<sup>10</sup> Gwyneth also subscribed to Kirby’s notion that the emotions of the parents at the moment of conception would influence the child. Therefore she constantly spoke about their own happiness in their marriage as prophesying the birth of contented children.<sup>11</sup> She did, however, firmly reject her mother’s advice, even though Lady Murray had raised eleven children of her own. Gwyneth relegated this to the realm of outmoded Victorian ideas. There is nothing in Gwyneth’s voluminous correspondence with her husband to indicate that she accepted the main tenet of the eugenicist credo, that maternity was a state duty; rather, she conceived of motherhood as a choice, therefore evincing a strong interest in the issue of birth control. It is clear that she envisioned her maternal role as a critical aspect of her individuality, her feminism, and a means to further marital intimacy, but the fact that she continued to view herself and her child, both during and after her pregnancy, in sexual terms, indicates a familiarity with Freud’s theories of childhood sexuality, and places her within the ambit of advanced thinking on these issues.

During the first months of their marriage, Gwyneth and Harry used some form of birth control, which she referred to as the “Petro-Dardanella experiment”.<sup>12</sup> They may well have employed withdrawal as she commonly referred to periods of “care and consideration”. This confirms the findings of Simon Szreter and Kate Fisher who have concluded, in their analysis of oral testimony gathered from couples who came of age just after Gwyneth and Harry, that “care” usually denoted withdrawal.<sup>13</sup> The Logan couple, however, seemed to have done a complete about face when confronted with the reality that he could die on the battlefield, and on 2 July 1916, they conjectured that she became pregnant. Although Harry later hinted that withdrawal was a risky business, lacking in “certainty”,<sup>14</sup> it appears that this was a mutual decision for as Harry later related, it brought them both immense happiness when they realized that after they had “groaned and travailed” there was going to be a successful “harvest”. “What development!”<sup>15</sup> exclaimed Harry. This echoed Gwyneth’s own competitive sense of pride in the fact that unlike her friend Mrs. Dalley who had experienced a miscarriage, she was the only one of the three “Persean schoolmarms” “able to pull things through safely the first go off.” As she confided to Harry, “I think it is rather a feather in our cap to

have accomplished so much in one year of married life.”<sup>16</sup> In modern style they kept the pregnancy secret from both sets of parents, that is, until the cat was out of the bag when Gwyneth fainted in church when she was three months pregnant.<sup>17</sup>

Apart from an initial short bout of morning sickness, Gwyneth seemed to have enjoyed the pregnancy, or at least, this is what she attempted to convey to Harry while he was at the front. A more candid perspective was offered by her sister Rosfrith, who willingly confided to Harry after the successful birth about “those anxious months of waiting” when Gwyneth had to face the prospect of intense pain, the possible loss of her child, or her own death, having known of schoolfriends who had died in childbirth.<sup>18</sup> We only gain brief glimpses of Gwyneth’s impatience while pregnant, as when she stated that although the prospect of having a child was one of the few things that consoled her during Harry’s absence, even after one month of pregnancy she was wishing that the child was there “in the flesh”.<sup>19</sup> This was but the expression of how morning sickness affected her spirits, for a few weeks later she brushed aside Harry’s suggestion that she should see a doctor, stating that she may have exaggerated her poor health, that her present condition was “quite normal and ordinary” and that she would use her own judgement while continuing to teach at the Perse School until Christmas.<sup>20</sup> Her one moment of intense resentment, however, occurred when her mother tried to force an old advice book on her which recommended almost complete rest for nine months. “Anyway,” she declared to Harry, “don’t you for a moment think I am going to sit down & live an abnormal life and be forever contemplating my inward parts”,<sup>21</sup> a somewhat ironic comment given Gwyneth’s robust body consciousness. She was, however, quite willing to take advice from her contemporaries, for she informed Harry that her morning sickness would pass in the second trimester based on “other people’s experiences”.<sup>22</sup> In this case her mother may have been concerned that Gwyneth had not yet felt the baby move. Even Harry seemed perturbed, and Gwyneth had to assure him that “when B[arbara] starts pulling J[ohn]’s hair and makes him jump I will be sure to let you know: I’m expecting something of the kind to happen this month”, an admission which indicates that she was indeed reading her own advice books on pregnancy.

When coming up to her sixth month of pregnancy, at the end of November, she finally reported that “there have been some queer flutterings in the dove cot lately, which I put down to wind and storm at first until their frequency gave me to think”.<sup>23</sup> At this juncture, because Gwyneth wanted a girl and Harry a boy,<sup>24</sup> they still spoke about both gen-



ders when referring to the foetus, but it was also a source of disagreement as Harry joked: “So J[ohn] is pulling his little sister’s hair ... no doubt he is trying to teach her the somewhat difficult lesson of thumb-crossing in the traditionally approved manner”, a reference yet again to the power relations within their marriage.<sup>25</sup> The issue was apparently resolved during his leave at Christmas, because thereafter they only referred to the desire for a male child. Pregnancy did not staunch the stream of either Dardanella or Peter’s sex-talk, and indeed, they continued to have sex when he was on leave, even though this meant Gwyneth had to be on top. In their minds reproduction and sexual pleasure were in close propinquity, for when contemplating his upcoming leave Harry wrote: “It is lovely to hear of the warm welcome J or B is preparing for me, even lead my wifey a dance in that regard.”<sup>26</sup> For her part, Gwyneth’s sexual appetite remained robust throughout her pregnancy, and as has been argued in the previous chapter, she talked constantly about her sexual hunger. She may have continued to feel sexy, but Harry seems to have been somewhat repelled by her girth, for after his leave, he cautioned her against growing too fat, urging her to exercise, which she duly undertook, joking that it would enable her to specialize “in other qualities than mere bulk!” Even though she assured him that her size was no “curiouser”—a reference to her other alter-ego Alice in Wonderland—her fear was not her girth but the potential size of the child, stating: “I don’t wish for a 13 lb ejection in April which I understand is the record size. Poor old Dardo would fairly burst her buttons in the effort in that case.”<sup>27</sup>

During the last three months of her pregnancy, Gwyneth was beginning to despair about Harry’s prospects of leave and that he would not be in Oxford for the birth. It is also clear that she considered him somewhat insensitive, ironically averring to his “care and consideration” of Dardo who might be “heavily bombarded” in April, and one can palpably sense her unease about the pain of childbirth, attempting to salve her fears by saying that “her troubles are very momentary, and what a glorious and wondrous termination to them!”<sup>28</sup> Like many pregnant women, Gwyneth had trouble sleeping during her third trimester, commenting on J[ohn]’s “gymnastics”, which elicited Harry’s observation that the “rascal” needed “the firm hand of his father to keep him in check!”, a foretaste perhaps of his fathering skills. He only hoped that John’s “night operations” were not a rehearsal for wakefulness when Harry next came home.<sup>29</sup> By contrast, Gwyneth was simply waiting to give birth and we gain a sense of how confined she felt when she remarked on the degree to which J[ohn] was finding his quarters uncomfortable, hoping that he would soon find exit

to his “prison” “through and along Dardo’s constricted passage hitherto navigated by your Peter only”.<sup>30</sup> We sense her anxious anticipation during her final month when she began to refer to John as “the unpunctual young beggar”, stating just a day prior to the birth on 18 April 1917, how she was “frankly out of patience”—a rare admission for the unemotional Gwyneth—because he was causing her intense discomfort in her back.

As was typical Gwyneth turned to the prospect of future sex to assuage her pain, saying that it was “comforting to think that after the awful experience before her Dardo will find Peter a mere gnat in comparison with the large camel ejected. I am almost afraid he will be swallowed so greedily that you will never recover of him again! Are you quite sure dear that life has not lost all its interest?”<sup>31</sup> Even Gwyneth’s indefatigable sense of humour could not disguise how fraught the situation truly was. Lady Murray was more willing to express the family’s sense of trepidation, telling Harry that, despite the fact that they had hired a trained midwife, Nurse Brooker, to attend at the birth, Gwyneth “feels this waiting time, when everything is ready” and knowing after eleven live births what was awaiting her daughter, stated that she wished she could go through it for her. Fearing that Gwyneth could die, she tried to mitigate her disquietude by declaring that she hoped Gwyneth’s health would stand her in good stead.<sup>32</sup> As it turned out her labour was quick, lasting only three hours, when just past midnight a baby weighing 7 lb. 10 oz. was born. Thankfully the birth was relatively painless because with no doctor in attendance Gwyneth only had Lady Murray’s prayers to comfort her during her travail. Just to show what a remarkable woman her daughter truly was, Lady Murray concluded her account of the birth with the observation that Dr. Sankey and Nurse Brooker were both “marveling at Gwyneth’s quick time”. In her letter informing Harry of the birth of his son, Gwyneth declared him “the most wonderful & beautiful baby ever seen” and took pains to assure Harry that the baby was first and foremost quiet, looked like him, and was healthy and fat, the hallmarks of the modern scientific baby. She could, however, jokingly speculate as to whether he would turn out to be a domineering man like his father, when she observed that she could not yet detect which thumb was on top, and already attributed a precocious sexuality to him by alluding to her efforts to teach him how to suckle Harry’s “friends” Dug-in and Dug-out.<sup>33</sup>

Gwyneth still longed for a daughter and because the pain was minimal declared less than a week following the birth that she would be willing to do the experiment a second time: “Doesn’t that make Peter rear with

pleasure?"<sup>34</sup> In the months following the birth she continued to tempt him by talking endlessly about her sexual dreams, enticing him to come home so that he could caress her marble limbs, confident that "your early morning horse exercise is good training for early morning bed exercise".<sup>35</sup> Harry likewise anticipated the renewal of their intimate relations, and was hoping for an early birth because Peter was already "swollen and blushing red with pride and stalking about with deck cleared for action".<sup>36</sup> What should have been a period of bliss for both parents, turned into one filled with conflict as a full three months prior to the birth Gwyneth was preparing Harry for the fact that "D is nervous about the beak: feels sure it will scratch her tender walls",<sup>37</sup> meaning that sex would not be in the offing after she gave birth. His first salvo was to lament the fact of her pregnancy with the insensitive comment that if only they had used better "care and consideration" the previous summer they "might still have been enjoying the assiduous attention...and I might still have such joys in store to look forward to on my next leave!! Isn't it a shame, now dearie?"<sup>38</sup> In this instance, Harry showed little concern for Gwyneth's intense desire for children. For Harry the pregnancy was an event entirely external to his own life and his response indicates that his sense of virility was in no way connected to producing progeny, but rather, focussed entirely upon his sexual identity. In response to her hint that they would have to wait to resume sexual intercourse, Harry retorted that he still looked forward to the prospect of "masculine bliss" and threatened to "grow tyrannical" and exert his "undisputed sovereignty" over questions of sex.<sup>39</sup> Irritated by his refusal to conform to her wishes, she donned "the apron strings"<sup>40</sup> firmly informing him that there would be no sex for several weeks because the nurse would be sleeping in the room with her.<sup>41</sup> Once he realized that the birth of his son also implied a prolonged period with no sex and that he could not assert his masculine prerogatives in the bedroom, he lamented his enforced "solitary confinement"<sup>42</sup> and found a myriad of excuses as to why he would not be given leave to attend the birth, including the pretext that he would be thought a "married malingerer" if he applied for leave.<sup>43</sup>

Not only does the correspondence of Gwyneth and Harry provide a first-person account of pregnancy, but it also opens up new understandings of the decision-making process that couples engaged in while discussing birth control, a perspective often lacking in the superb accounts of birth control which have largely relied either upon prescriptive literature or retrospective oral testimony.<sup>44</sup> In the first instance, our couple

clearly dissented from one of the cardinal tenets of the eugenics movement which enjoined all married couples, especially those of the middle class, to procreate as a racial duty.<sup>45</sup> The *Eugenics Review* strongly disavowed birth control, but among feminists, like Helena Swanwick, there was a growing critique of the motherhood cult which dictated incessant childbearing.<sup>46</sup> Historians have long assumed that women took the initiative in limiting births, but recently Kate Fisher has concluded that because men viewed birth control as an extension of sex, that they were determined to control it.<sup>47</sup> Harry's views on the matter were somewhat more ambiguous. On the one hand, when Gwyneth stated that she wished to only bring "not more than one piece of live goods"<sup>48</sup> back to Canada, which would necessitate either abstinence or the use of birth control, Harry retorted that he was "fearrfully angry", as he had been planning "further conquests" until her announcement that she had taken it upon herself to make "an important decision affecting our own and our family's welfare, without consulting me", charging her with fomenting "revolt" and "anarchy in my realm".<sup>49</sup>

For several months, Gwyneth had tried to convince him to limit their family size, pointing to the example of her friend, Mrs. Dalley's sister, who had experienced three pregnancies in rapid succession which, like many of her contemporaries, she found to be distasteful: "Don't you think it is awful to go at that rate? You know it quite revolts me to think of it."<sup>50</sup> In an oblique reference to Harry's sexual demands, Gwyneth said that if she found herself in a similar situation, she would blame her husband for her unwanted pregnancy on the premise that it was up to the husband to practice "care and consideration". Harry, who likewise desired a small family like the one he had grown up in, blamed the woman, declaring: "No doubt the gentleman relied upon, or was led to rely upon, the good little lady preventing the retention and subsequent nourishment and growth of his little contribution to their mutual enjoyment." Admitting to a lack of knowledge in this department, he believed that because birth control related to maternity, a female sphere, that it was the woman's responsibility to use a douche.<sup>51</sup> It is apparent that Gwyneth was, like many middle-class women, unwilling to use artificial methods of birth control because they were deemed unhygienic and unreliable,<sup>52</sup> preferring that Harry use a condom, then readily available to the troops. Although commentators often warned against abstinence because it would create "sexual irregularities", Gwyneth actually recommended the traditional practice of "self-control" or abstinence, rather than resort

to separate bedrooms as recommended in the advice books offered her by her older sister-in-law.<sup>53</sup> However, from Harry's point of view, abstinence was out of the question, and he reluctantly began using "French letters", which they termed reading "French" together in their censored correspondence.<sup>54</sup> These were either ineffective or unused, for Gwyneth found herself pregnant again in January 1918, but she miscarried at the end of February, which caused such physical and emotional distress that Gwyneth felt it "makes me nervous for future occasions",<sup>55</sup> prompting her to admonish Harry that greater care would have to be taken in the future. A second miscarriage occurred in March 1919, and even when she remarked that she felt disheartened and adamant that they defer any pregnancy until they reached Canada,<sup>56</sup> even her lament did not compel Harry to abstain. Harry's dilemma was that he too wanted to space their children, but at the same time, he was unwilling to relinquish the full enjoyment of sexual intercourse while on leave, which meant rejecting both the use of a condom and withdrawal. As he pithily informed Gwyneth, he preferred "his normal role as a bicycle pump to his functioning as a garden syringe", as "natural" sexual relations was "1,000% more enjoyable". Similarly, he protested against "this business of self control", a reference to withdrawal, which he confessed was straining him in "mind, limb and muscle". He blamed her for robbing him of his "daily portion of fresh food", comparing withdrawal with being dished out an "old meal, just hastily placed in the oven and just as hastily removed before even the outside had properly warmed". He concluded by accusing her of being "a beast" and warning darkly that he intended to administer "your own fitting and proper punishment",<sup>57</sup> a most insensitive riposte in light of her recent miscarriage which again necessitated a period of care.

However much Harry tried to convince Gwyneth that they had mutually agreed on family limitation, this was not so in practice and it is evident, given their intense sexual appetites, that each leave was the occasion for a complete loss of self-control resulting in frequent coitus. Yet it seems Harry was intent on asserting his marital rights, for soon after John's birth, after warning him that B[arbara] must remain "an elusive shadowy form to become substantial in the very dim & distant future", she ruefully observed: "How extraordinary to hear of such a change in Peter's habits & nature! But I know how it is, he is disguising his real nature & pretending he is someone quite new & different so as to have an excuse for being re-introduced to Dardo. But she doesn't intend to be taken in by him—nor to take him in!"<sup>58</sup> Ultimately, they had three

children, the exact number recommended by the feminist author and advocate of birth control, Maud Braby,<sup>59</sup> the last born in 1923, which shows that they used a combination of traditional spacing of births and a more modernist stopping of births, which implies strict abstinence or a resort to artificial means.<sup>60</sup> As Szreter has noted, “attempted abstinence within marriage was the single most widespread and frequently used method of birth control” prior to World War I, and even those who, like Harry and Gwyneth, were married between 1910 and 1919, rarely employed appliance methods of birth control. For a couple for whom sex was integral to their self-identities as well as their vision of conjugal love, this must have posed a considerable strain upon their relationship.

Another source of conflict in their marriage surrounded the question as to whether, after giving birth, Gwyneth would put her husband or her children first. This issue was addressed in 1912 in *Modern Man* in an article entitled “Husband or Children First?”, which warned women to avoid idolizing their children to the point of making them into “little tin gods”, which would result in the neglect of the husband who, the author advised, should always get first attention and interest so that he would not be reduced to a mere breadwinner role.<sup>61</sup> The prospect of having a child was not an unalloyed joy. From Harry’s perspective, he believed that its presence would interfere with his sexual relationship with Gwyneth, so that within one month of her becoming pregnant Harry raised the potential of a conflict between “mother-love” and “wife-love”, explaining to her that while he deeply loved his own mother “there is a special, very special love which only you & I can share; which no one in the universe can share with us”.<sup>62</sup> Gwyneth brushed these concerns aside until just before the birth of the baby, after Harry had “an old swear” about the baby, eliciting her observation that he seemed fixated that the baby “is going to oust you from your own particular niche”.<sup>63</sup>

While it is true that in each of her letters to Harry she kept him informed of his son’s development and that she clearly relished being a new mother, her own identity was never exclusively tied to motherhood. Despite this, when John was but three weeks old, she had to convey to Harry that his emotional and physical needs were still her first priority, stating “[I] value yourself over others—even John”, joking that she had informed his son that “Daddy is the most important person in our little world” and without him he wouldn’t be here at all.<sup>64</sup> Both Harry and Gwyneth were concerned about whether, with John demanding constant care, whether they could enjoy “to the full” his next visit to “Blighty”, with Harry anxious

that the joys of motherhood may have diminished her sexual desire to the point where she would no longer know how to treat a husband.<sup>65</sup> These issues were partly resolved by having a paid nurse and a pragmatic resort to Glaxo, a popular milk substitute, so that the couple could enjoy complete privacy during their already infrequent encounters.<sup>66</sup> The continued presence of these issues provides another explanation for Gwyneth's persistent references to her sexual desire which served to affirm the fact that she did not perceive a conflict between motherhood and sexuality even if Harry did. Writing constantly about sex in her correspondence with Harry advertised the priority of her sexual identity. She therefore confided that she was "absolutely starved for want of my other half, life is a sorry stunted thing without you even with John here to keep me busy".<sup>67</sup>

Family and friends largely conceived of John's birth in eugenic terms. Thus Gwyneth's aunt declared that she was "glad that Gwyneth has successfully presented a man child to the nation. I am sure she will be pleased to have done her bit."<sup>68</sup> Gwyneth, though not convinced by the idea of maternal citizenship, subscribed to biological notions of heredity, claiming as she did that their offspring would be a combination of practical joker and mathematical genius,<sup>69</sup> which evoked the views of Harry's old science professor at McGill University, E.W. MacBride, who hypothesized that the father and mother were "equally potent" in transmitting their racial qualities to their offspring.<sup>70</sup> Although she had recently read her friend Norah March's eugenic manual, *Towards Racial Health*, which Gwyneth valued as instructive because of its recommendations regarding sex education for children,<sup>71</sup> the question of childrearing presented yet another occasion to talk about sex. Hence, John often appeared in her letters as a sexual surrogate for Harry: "I'm very hungry for a little petting and cuddling which John is too young to supply yet." Harry joyfully participated in employing his son as a sex toy, quipping about the prospect of "future joy" when John had mastered "the art of stroking" so that he would function as a perfect substitute for his father,<sup>72</sup> even fantasizing about John sitting "laughing" while watching his parents having sex.<sup>73</sup>

However, when writing to her mother-in-law in Vancouver, the baby was reinvented as the "little parson" because he clapped his hands together, which concealed a private joke about how John's sexual tastes mimicked those of his father.<sup>74</sup> Thus, when John grabbed her breasts with his hands, she compared his appetite to his father's, observing how when he suckled, his hand began wandering all over her breasts and that he liked to snuggle in the front of her nightie as did Harry.<sup>75</sup> Gwyneth was not alone in con-

ceiving of breast feeding in sensual terms, describing it as “painful pleasure” because John’s hungry lips reminded her of Harry’s desire “for a different sort of food”.<sup>76</sup> Helen George, a suffragist, associated the “the very pleasant sensation” produced by suckling with “sensuous enjoyment”, which, she concluded, explained the “beatific smile” of maternity.<sup>77</sup> Gwyneth may have followed the New Zealand doctor Truby King’s strict regime of nursing every four hours without a night feeding, but she certainly diverged from his recommendations when she concluded that breastfeeding was the means of “flirting” with her son.<sup>78</sup> As part of her ongoing effort to titillate Harry, she often imagined John as a sexual being himself, anticipating the day when he would “develop his Daddy’s gift of stroking the marble limbs”.<sup>79</sup> Indeed, one day after his birth, when he was being circumcised, Gwyneth characterized John in sexual terms, describing the baby’s penis as “Peter minimus”.<sup>80</sup> Gwyneth may have been reading Norah March, who, while recommending sex education to young children, conveyed a version of Freud’s concept of childhood sexuality, emphatically stating that children had unconscious sexual feelings.<sup>81</sup> Therefore, it is not surprising that Gwyneth was familiar with Sigmund Freud’s *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* in which he removed the stigma of degeneracy from childhood masturbation, believing that such manifestations of childhood sexuality were merely the mark of being a normal human being, for she was amused rather than disgusted by John’s sudden awareness of “the juvenile Peter” which he duly played with until Gwyneth covered it with clothes.<sup>82</sup> More striking still, she compared John’s body size at four months to Harry’s engorged penis, stating “Not that Peter seems very much the smaller of the two in the state in which I know him best! Give the old boy my greetings won’t you dear?”<sup>83</sup> There could be no greater indication that John functioned in her imagination as a sexual being than her enclosing of a drawing by John of a comet which bore an uncanny resemblance to “the paternal thumb”, Harry’s penis, which prompted her to mention once again that the “Dardanelles” were “très ouverte”, signalling how for her motherhood engendered sexual desire.<sup>84</sup>

During the Edwardian era, British women of all classes were bombarded with motherhood advice literature, on the supposition that motherhood could no longer be regarded as a natural instinct, but one which required a good deal of study and expert instruction. C.W. Saleeby, the prominent eugenicist, articulated what was undoubtedly the consensus view that to forestall infant mortality and racial decline, mothers, and especially working-class women, required instruction in motherhood, a



theme echoed by female eugenicists like Alice Ravenhill, who advocated technical classes in the domestic arts and courses specifically designed to teach women about the special character of early childhood.<sup>85</sup> Gwyneth was not averse to the cult of scientific motherhood, but only selectively appropriated its recommendations for childrearing and maternal health, especially when it served her larger purpose of remaining fully independent of her mother. She was more than happy to receive advice or reading material from her sister-in-law and friends, but balked when her mother, who had skilfully raised eleven children to maturity, offered instructions about child-rearing. Viewing herself as a thoroughly modern woman, she was especially dismissive of the Victorian idea that pregnancy was an abnormal condition and that the mother must be treated as an invalid, and was particularly impatient with being forced to rest in bed for a full month following her gestation, when, as she ruefully observed, working-class women were actively attending to their domestic work after one week.<sup>86</sup> Gwyneth, while in company with her friend Mac (Norah March), spent many hours of great hilarity parodying the prescriptive literature offered her by her mother, one of which counselled pregnant women to devote their last trimester to contemplation of religion.<sup>87</sup> One can almost hear the raucous laughter engendered by the reading of another of her mother's advice books which cautioned wives against excessive embroidering and piano playing should they wish to keep their husband's interest. "How wise I have been to steer clear of these occupations!", wrote Gwyneth with glee.<sup>88</sup> However, Mac had also made fun of Gwyneth for her complete lack of knowledge of children, chiding her that she hoped she would not upset the pram as had the hapless Miss Kennett, their headmistress, when she walked her niece around Cambridge.<sup>89</sup> Her conclusions about her friend were based on the prevailing stereotype that bluestocking women made incompetent mothers.

Gwyneth certainly approved of March's *Towards Racial Health*, becoming an instant convert to the concept promulgated in it, that children needed sex education, labelling herself a victim of extreme ignorance, having been told that babies drop from the skies. When as a young girl she had asked her mother about the biological differences between boys and girls, was told by this strict Congregationalist that boys cried "'aaaah' after Adam" and girls "'eeeee' after Eve".<sup>90</sup> She was equally appalled that her sister-in-law, who was some twenty years older, had never allowed her own children to see a little boy undressed nor to watch breastfeeding. It was for this reason, coupled with her husband's obvious incomprehension of womankind, that Gwyneth

insisted that all boys have sisters so that they might avoid developing a distorted view of the opposite sex.<sup>91</sup> At junctures such as these, scientific knowledge was deployed not simply to flog her mother and older relatives, but was also used to enjoin Harry to agree with her modern principles of childrearing, especially after he chastised her for permitting John to sleep in her bed with her because his presence would interfere with their sex life.

Gwyneth seemed particularly at odds with her family and even dismissed the counsel of her brother Jowett, with whom she was particularly close, and his wife Mary, an old friend from the Oxford High School for Girls. While her lack of affinity with her eldest brother Harold who was twenty years older may have been understandable, as she regarded him as representing the conventions of an older generation, her easy dismissal of the advice of her youngest brother, whose wife had just given birth, seems somewhat more anomalous.<sup>92</sup> When they recommended the Montessori system of schooling, which privileged childhood initiative and independence, something she ostensibly believed in, since she was keen to encourage John to sleep in his own cot, play by himself and to learn to desist from crying, she dismissed it out of hand as had the popular paediatrician Truby King because it would encourage demanding forms of behaviour. She spurned their interventions maintaining that the fostering of childhood initiative would encourage chattering, declaring that she preferred silence from children as was customary at the Perse School.<sup>93</sup> As part of a long-standing self-portrayal as an unconventional and modern individual, she was particularly at odds with her mother, whom she reflexively castigated as old-fashioned not least because she continued to believe the folk wisdom that a boy's testicles were an indicator of his overall health, inducing her to remark that she had never seen any such theory in any book she had read.<sup>94</sup> Armed with the scientific authority of Truby King, she felt emboldened to vilify her mother's idea that John should be constantly picked up and rocked when he cried, dismissing her mother's irritation at hearing his howling as merely pandering to tyrannical instincts that might undermine the child's character. In turn, her mother thought Gwyneth cruel and unnatural which, not surprisingly, galled her. On such occasions Gwyneth adopted the superior attitude of the university graduate, stating that it was useless to reason with her mother as "it will just be a case of sticking to my guns". As she pointedly declared, she would never be overruled.<sup>95</sup>

Even though Gwyneth herself was wont to employ old-fashioned methods, namely confining John in stays, a centuries-old practice, in order to force him to sit up early,<sup>96</sup> she easily condemned her mother's idea that

extended breast feeding constituted a form of birth control, especially when her period returned after just four months. Her mother's obvious misstep only reconfirmed Gwyneth's belief in book knowledge. In fact she had very decided views about encouraging childhood independence, which took on a talismanic quality as she found herself increasingly restive with the routine and "over-officiousness" of the Sunnyside clan,<sup>97</sup> which tended to increase her sense of war weariness and distance from Harry. When her mother later questioned her judgement about allowing John, who was then over a year old, to romp barefoot in the garden in May 1918, she condescendingly ascribed their differences to a generational sensibility.<sup>98</sup> Even though Gwyneth herself experienced constant anxiety as she waited out the war, she nevertheless disavowed her mother's apprehensiveness about childhood diseases that could be potentially fatal, indicating that she resented Lady Ada's attitudes to the behaviour of her children. Her claim that her mother's child-rearing practices were inflexible was somewhat ironic, since Gwyneth herself was a zealous convert to Truby King's strict regimen for babies. Because he recommended forcing toilet-training at under three months of age, she thus suspended John over the "Jerry" every morning to compel him to produce a bowel movement on command.

The inconsistency in her attitudes to freedom and constraint was directly related to whether her mother subscribed to a particular practice. However, Gwyneth's primary emphasis on enhancing her child's sense of independence and ability to cope with new situations was also conditioned by the fact that Harry was at that juncture suffering from shell-shock and constant nightmares, and her remedy was to encourage him to rejoin his unit in the line and face his fears. However, she also ascribed her conflict with her mother to a radically divergent generational perspective: "There are many many miles between 20th century and early 19th", she stated sententiously, "so very many that they can't be bridged", a perspective that directly echoed Edmund Gosse's concept of the two temperaments. It also nicely anticipated the caustic tone of Lytton Strachey's *Eminent Victorians*, which Gwyneth began reading in the ensuing months. Gwyneth stated that as long as "I have the upbringing of him"—note that she emphatically took charge of child-rearing despite injunctions about the need for paternal involvement—he "shall crawl and roll and sit on the grass to his heart[']s content" and become a natural child rather than a "molly coddled nincompoo".<sup>99</sup> This almost exactly replicated the advice proffered by H. Lambourne in 1909, who urged parents against too much maternal

solicitude and against confining children, particularly boys, to the indoors for these “mollycoddled” progeny could all too easily become “a poor hermaphrodite sort of creature” who would grow into “lady-like young gentlemen”.<sup>100</sup> Gwyneth was therefore greatly dismayed to find that when she arrived in Vancouver where differing child-rearing practices were employed, John appeared to be a quiet, contemplative fellow, rather like his father, who paled in comparison with his boisterous female cousin.<sup>101</sup>

As has become evident, Gwyneth was both domineering and decisive when it came to matters of childrearing, and even though she was intent on having Harry’s participation, there was very little scope, given his absence, for the cultivation of a strong emotional bond with his son. Given his extreme fear of children, Gwyneth was surprised that he sounded pleased to have an offspring and also relieved that when Harry first set eyes on his son, in August 1917, when John was four months old, that he took to him at once, even though he had been wont to “pull a lip” with strange men. In this same letter, in which she backhandedly praised Harry’s fathering skills, she nevertheless communicated how he had failed to get John to laugh in the bath and how he was repelled by the baby’s wet, open-mouthed kisses. The best that could be expected was that Harry was not awkward with the child.<sup>102</sup> Her non-committal response to Harry’s prospective role as a father stemmed from her fear that Harry was uninterested in paternal responsibilities. As a result, Gwyneth did not think that the father’s role was particularly important, and accordingly she concluded her letter to Mrs. Logan by ruefully exclaiming that it was amusing to see the degree to which Harry “imagines he is quite an authority on babies now”, an observation which telegraphed her resentment at his desire to usurp her position as primary caregiver. For a self-confessed modernist, Gwyneth conceived of Harry’s role in patriarchal terms better suited to the Victorian age, for she believed that he should assume the duties as the symbolic head of the household by attending church and assuming the financial burden of the family.<sup>103</sup>

Periodically Harry wrote inquiring whether John remembered him or missed him, but his references to his son were relatively scarce, in part because Gwyneth increasingly filled her letters with detailed accounts of John’s activities and development. For obvious reasons his sense of being a father was very remote: fatherhood in his estimation related mostly to the need for discipline,<sup>104</sup> a conventional trope of Victorian attitudes to childhood;<sup>105</sup> to ensuring adequate financial provision by becoming a viable breadwinner, making a will, and taking out life insurance; or to reveries about his future education.<sup>106</sup> While Harry interested himself in his son’s

intellectual development, he left the shape of John's moral character entirely in Gwyneth's hands.<sup>107</sup> Indeed, he largely viewed playtime and his domestic responsibilities as an entirely temporary affair, a responsibility which he might take on board when his wife was ill,<sup>108</sup> despite earlier assurances during their courtship that he would assume such duties on an equal basis with Gwyneth. In this respect, his attitude to fathering closely resembled that aspired to by H.G. Wells, who commented of his children that even though they brought him happiness "they do not go deeply into the living structure of my Self".<sup>109</sup>

We gain a sense of how Harry perceived fatherhood through his comments about Sir James Murray upon his death. Although he largely dismissed him as a domineering old fossil, he also praised him because he had been a responsible breadwinner and "visible head of the household", who was a devoted husband and loved his children manifested though it was "in different ways".<sup>110</sup> By thus characterizing himself as a dutiful but emotionally remote father he sounded a traditional note especially given the increasing public discourse enjoining fathers to become chums with their sons and the model of his own father who, by Harry's own admission, was a "teasing kind of friend".<sup>111</sup> For the most part Harry retained an idealistic view of fatherhood, in which the imagined joy of producing a progeny would serve to "drive away dull care and heavy saddening thoughts".<sup>112</sup> For parsimonious Harry, his embrace of fatherhood was also studiously pragmatic, as the birth of John ensured an addition of a mother's pension worth £30 a month to their income.<sup>113</sup> The only interventions Harry undertook in which he clearly conceived of John as a real, developing being, ironically centred on criticizing Gwyneth's childrearing practices. Indeed, his most angry riposte was to instruct her to prevent at all costs the child from touching his penis out of a fear that it would lead to the excessive masturbation which crippled Harry's Oxford years.

As John became a toddler with a distinctive personality, Harry began to envy Gwyneth's privileged relationship with him,<sup>114</sup> yet in demanding that John not displace him and remain a secondary figure outside the primary conjugal couple, he had unwittingly established a family dynamic in which she shielded him from real intimacy with his children, in the belief that he desired her above all. Thus when she observed that it was indeed "heart-breaking to think you will never see him at this particular stage", and that none of the activities of their subsequent children would appear as novel, she quickly reverted to their conventional sex-talk, evoking the metaphor of hunger, and signing off her letter by saying: "Darling, all my being cries

out for you: there isn't a bit of me that doesn't cry out and long and ache for you. I love you altogether & entirely with a love that nothing can ever change except to make it greater and fuller",<sup>115</sup> a perspective which preserved her status as the mediator between Harry and his children. However much she might suggest that she would domesticate him and transform him into a marvellous father,<sup>116</sup> one who, like his brother Willie, might push the pram,<sup>117</sup> and be emotionally demonstrative with his children,<sup>118</sup> by 1919, once Harry had decamped to Germany and later to Ottawa, the fact remained that she continued to believe that his biggest paternal function was a biological one, namely the donation of his sperm. Resorting to the language of the eugenics movement, she suggestively but pointedly remarked: "Didn't I always say that you contributed most largely to his production?"<sup>119</sup> The diminished role Gwyneth perceived for Harry seems to confirm that she had fully internalized the cult of motherhood promulgated by eugenicists, although she clearly saw it as part of her feminist claim which sought to balance authority structures within the family, as was demonstrated by her intense resentment when her father-in-law sought to undermine her maternal prerogatives when he suggested that Harry assume a greater role in training John.<sup>120</sup>

Harry revelled in achieving full sexual manhood, but becoming a father was for him but a sad reminder that he had lost his youth, at least according to the normative codes of society which identified parenthood with the soberness of being a paterfamilias and matron. By contrast, the continued enjoyment of sex which had secured for him a happy comradeship, would not only shelter his ego from the "storms & the heat of life", but would likewise allow a perpetual connection with the freedom from conventionality that animated their sense of modernism.<sup>121</sup> Although his sense of his paternal role remained rather shadowy, having produced offspring did in fact represent a milestone in his life, as did his ability to obtain a secure university post, both of which enabled him to finally jettison his sense of filial duty to the father he so admired but whose narrow vision for a clerical career for his son Harry had so strenuously fought to repudiate. His total rejection by war's end of his father's vision of the world was forcibly evoked in his vivid Oedipal dream in which he found himself in his parents' home where he confronted a "strange, tall, dark, villainous fellow in the study in evening dress (!!) alone with mother", whom he shot and killed with his army revolver.<sup>122</sup> He further rejected his father's religious orthodoxy by branding his father's good friend and fellow

Presbyterian clergyman, the famous Canadian novelist Ralph Connor, a fool because of his inability to understand the real needs of men “with blood in their veins”.<sup>123</sup> Modern men could no longer simply rely upon mawkish sentimentality and simplistic idealism, but needed, according to Harry, to organize their self-identity around their natural sexual impulses which could not be sublimated through warfare.

The final capstone on Harry’s metaphorical disavowal of the Victorian generation represented by his and Gwyneth’s parents, who were over forty years older than themselves, was his unalloyed admiration for Lytton Strachey’s *Eminent Victorians*. To Harry, Strachey embodied the final renunciation of Victorian conventionality and the outmoded value systems of old men like former Prime Minister Herbert Asquith,<sup>124</sup> who had brought the world to the brink of destruction. For Gwyneth, the prospect of a new home in Vancouver signified her freedom from the obsolete ideas which she so powerfully associated with the large and rambling Victorian home of Sunnyside, once a refuge for youthful fun and frolic, which she now described as “littered up with furniture & rubbish” of a bygone age.<sup>125</sup> As a youth crossing the Atlantic for the first time Harry had been smitten by G.K. Chesterton’s anti-modernist diatribe censoring the work of George Bernard Shaw, H.G. Wells, and Rudyard Kipling, and it was a sign of the immense cultural journey that both he and Gwyneth had undertaken through the arc of their relationship that by 1918, as they finally attained a sense of contentment in their personal life, they both embraced the work of Strachey as a symbol of their own disdain for the moralizing of the Victorian generation. For them, this was not the plaintive lament of a “lost generation”, but the confident manifesto of a generation that had arrived, fully conscious of its distinctive qualities. Not only did *Eminent Victorians* connote their disavowal of Victorian sensibilities, but Strachey himself personified the sexual freedom that they believed would satisfy their mutual longing for a completeness of union. It was entirely unsurprising but rather cheeky, that Harry deployed that avatar of sexual modernism, Strachey, to animate their own sexual epistolary conversation. As Harry averred “[m]y mouth waters for Strachey—and one or two other things too”,<sup>126</sup> an allusion to the fact that they had surpassed mere sex-talk, the hallmark of the ostensibly modern temper of the Bloomsbury group,<sup>127</sup> to achieve enjoyment of an authentic and pleasurable sexual relationship within marriage.

## NOTES

1. Quoted in Allen, *Feminism and Motherhood in Western Europe*, 122.
2. Quoted in Davin, "Imperialism and Motherhood", 9–65, 29; Richardson, *Love and Eugenics in the Late Nineteenth Century*; Greenslade, *Degeneration*; Lewis, *The Politics of Motherhood*; Grayzel, *Women's Identities at War*; Robb, "Race Motherhood", 58–74. On maternalism and pronatalism during the war and its impact on welfare policy, see Koven and Michel, eds., *Mother of a New World*; Pedersen, *Family, Dependence, and the Origins of the Welfare State*; Christie, *Engendering the State*, 94–159. The *Eugenics Review* was replete with articles about motherhood and racial progress, but see, for example, J. Arthur Thomson, "Eugenics and War," *Eugenics Review*, 7:1 (Apr. 1915), 1–14; Major Leonard Darwin, "Eugenics During and After the War," *Eugenics Review*, 7:2 (July 1915), 91–106. More radical journals, such as *The Freewoman*, also contained many articles extolling motherhood. See, for example, Edmund B. D'Auvergne, "Marriage and Motherhood" (letter), *The Freeman* (7 Dec. 1911), 52.
3. Fissell, "Remaking the Maternal Body in England, 1680–1730", 114–39, 131.
4. Key, *Love and Marriage*, 9.
5. Dobb, "The Way of All Flesh," 591; Bland, *Banishing the Beast*, 248, 308.
6. Cameron and Forrester, "'A Nice Type of the English Scientist': Tansley and Freud," in Daniel Pick and Lyndal Roper, eds., *Dreams and History*, 199–236, 204. Writers in the *Eugenics Review* appear to have been familiar with Freud's theories of childhood sexuality. See M. Andrew "Book Reviews—*The Sexual Life of the Child*" [Dr. Albert Moll], *Eugenics Review*, 4:3 (Oct. 1912), 319–20. Moll was critical of Freud's ideas.
7. Brooke, "The Body and Socialism", 169.
8. *Eugenics Review*, 9:2 (July 1917), 95–108. See also Mary Scharlieb, "Adolescent Girlhood under Modern Conditions with Special Reference to Motherhood," *Eugenics Review*, 1:3 (Oct. 1909), 174–83. On Norah March as a eugenicist, see McLaren, *Reproduction by Design*, 70; Fisher, *Birth Control, Sex and Marriage*, 29. On Scharlieb, see DeVries, "A Moralistic and Modernizer", 298–315; Jones, "Women and Eugenics in Britain", 481–502.
9. LAC, LF, 10:5, G to H, 3 Nov. 1919.
10. LAC, LF, 8:1, G to H, 15 Oct. 1916, on the need to instil artistic gifts during the first two months of gestation. See Robb, "Race Motherhood," 62.
11. Bourke, *Fear*, 84–6.
12. LAC, LF, 7:9, G to H, 26 June 1916.
13. Szreter, *Fertility, Class and Gender in Britain*, 404; Brooker, "Women and Reproduction, 1860–1939", 149–71, 158.
14. LAC, LF, 2:8, H to G, 24 Jan. 1917.



15. LAC, LF, 2:11, H to G, 8 Apr. 1917.
16. LAC, LF, 8:4, G to H, 16 Feb. 1917.
17. LAC, LF, 8:1, G to H, 8 Oct. 1916.
18. LAC, LF, 14:19, Auntie Ros to H, 18 Apr. 1917; *ibid.*, 9:2, G to H, 6 Feb. 1918.
19. LAC, LF, 7:10, G to H, 13 Aug. 1916.
20. LAC, LF, 7:10, G to H, 29 Aug. 1916.
21. LAC, LF, 8:1, G to H, 6 Nov. 1916.
22. LAC, LF, 7:10, G to H, 2 Sep. 1916.
23. LAC, LF, 8:1, G to H, 12 Nov. 1916, 28 Nov. 1916.
24. LAC, LF, 8:3, G to H, 9 Jan. 1917.
25. LAC, LF, 2:7, H to G, 3 Dec. 1916.
26. LAC, LF, 2:7, H to G, 13 Dec. 1916.
27. LAC, LF, 8:3, G to H, 12 Jan. 1917.
28. LAC, LF, 8:4, G to H, 7 Feb. 1917.
29. LAC, LF, 8:3, G to H, 13 Jan. 1917; *ibid.*, 2:8, H to G, 24 Jan. 1917.
30. LAC, LF, 8:6, G to H, 5 Apr. 1917.
31. LAC, LF, 8:6, G to H, 10 Apr. 1917, 17 Apr. 1917.
32. LAC, LF, 14:20, Lady Ada Murray to H, 15 Apr. 1917.
33. LAC, 8:6, G to H, 18 Apr. 1917; *ibid.*, 14:20, Lady Ada to H, 18 Apr. 1917. For an examination of nineteenth-century discourses about pain during childbirth, see Bourke, *The Story of Pain*, 208–14.
34. LAC, 8:11, G to H, 16 Oct. 1917; *Ibid.*, 10:1 G to H, 17 Nov. 1918.
35. LAC, 8:8, G to H, 8 July 1917.
36. LAC, 2:10, H to G, 12 Apr. 1917.
37. LAC, LF, 8:4, G to H, 23 Feb. 1917.
38. LAC, LF, 2:9, H to G, 15 Feb. 1917.
39. LAC, LF, 2:9, H to G, 19 Feb. 1917.
40. LAC, LF, 8:6, G to H, 15 Apr. 1917.
41. LAC, LF, 8:4, G to H, 13 Feb. 1917.
42. LAC, LF, 8:4, G to H, 13 Feb. 1917.
43. LAC, LF, 2:10, H to G, 4 Apr. 1917.
44. There is now a large historical literature on the question of birth control in twentieth-century Britain. For major statements, see McLaren, *A History of Contraception*; Szreter, *Fertility, Class and Gender*; Cook, *The Long Sexual Revolution*; Fisher, *Birth Control, Sex and Marriage in Britain*; Szreter and Fisher, *Sex Before the Sexual Revolution*.
45. Dean W.R. Inge, "Some Moral Aspects of Eugenics," *Eugenics Review*, 1:1 (Apr. 1909), 29–31.
46. Allen, *Feminism and Motherhood*, 124. Writers were particularly censorious of birth control during wartime and therefore dismissed Marie Stopes' advocacy of it. See H. McKenna, "Review of Marie Carmichael Stopes Married Love: A New Contribution to the Solution of Sex

- Difficulties," *Eugenics Review*, 10:4 (Jan. 1919), 237–8; Bernard M Hancock, "Love and Life," *Eugenics Review*, 11:4 (Jan. 1920), 231.
47. Fisher, *Birth Control, Sex and Marriage*, 202–3, 207–9. For women's leading role in birth control, see Cook, *The Long Sexual Revolution*.
  48. LAC, LF, 8:4, G to H, 2 Feb. 1917.
  49. LAC, LF, 3:5, H to G, 7 Sep. 1917.
  50. LAC, LF, 8:3, G to H, 30 Jan. 1917.
  51. LAC, LF, 2:9, H to G, 7 Feb. 1917; *ibid.*, 8:4, G to H, 12 Feb. 1917.
  52. Fisher, *Birth Control, Sex and Marriage*, 131–3, 166–7.
  53. E.S.P. Haynes, "Sex and Civilisation," *The Freeman* (15 Feb. 1912), 247; LAC, LF, 8:9, G to H, 26 Aug. 1917. This seems to be at odds with her constant references to menstruation or Dardo making her egg basket, so that he could time his leave accordingly. On the medical discourse surrounding menstruation, see Strange, "Menstrual Fictions", 607–28.
  54. LAC, LF, 9:1, G to H, 31 Dec. 1917.
  55. LAC, LF, 9:2, G to H, 28 Feb. 1918.
  56. LAC, LF, 10:4, G to H, 10 Mar. 1919, 30 Sep. 1919.
  57. LAC, LF, 5:4, H to G, 24 Nov. 1918; *ibid.*, 5:10, H to G, 27 Mar. 1919.
  58. LAC, LF, 8:7, H to G, 23 June 1917.
  59. Quoted in Hall, ed., *Outspoken Women*, 187.
  60. Szreter, *Fertility, Class and Gender*, 371, 389, 398–9.
  61. *Modern Man*, 21 Sep. 1912. Penny Tinkler has identified this phenomenon with the 1920s, when it was popularized. See *Constructing Girlhood*, 146.
  62. LAC, LF, 2:4, H to G, 22 Aug. 1916.
  63. LAC, LF, 8:6, G to H, 16 Apr. 1917.
  64. LAC, LF, 8:6, G to H, 20 May 1917.
  65. LAC, LF, 3:1, H to G, 19 June 1917.
  66. LAC, LF, 4:1, H to G, 30 Jan. 1918; *ibid.*, 18:7, Rosfrith to Mrs. Logan, 23 Nov. 1917.
  67. LAC, LF, 8:8, G to H, 21 July 1917.
  68. LAC, LF, 14:20, Lady Ada to H, 29 Apr. 1917; *ibid.*, 18:1, Mary Glover to Mrs Logan, 8 May 1917.
  69. LAC, LF, 8:1, G to H, 30 Oct. 1916. She made this observation after having tea with her friend Mac, Norah March, the eugenicist.
  70. E.W. MacBride, "The Study of Heredity—II," *Eugenics Review*, 8:2 (July 1916), 137–57.
  71. LAC, LF, 8:2, G to H, 16 Dec. 1916.
  72. LAC, LF, 3:1, H to G, 28 Aug. 1917.
  73. LAC, LF, H to G, 5 Feb. 1918.
  74. LAC, LF, 18:4, G to Mrs. Logan, 30 Apr. 1917.
  75. LAC, LF, 8:6, G to H, 19 Apr. 1917.

76. LAC, LF, 8:6, G to H, 20 Apr. 1917.
77. Helen George, "Maternitis," *The New Age* (11 Feb. 1909), 322. On the sexual pleasure found in nursing during the eighteenth century, see Perry, "Colonizing the Breast", 204–34.
78. LAC, LF, 8:11, G to H, 21 Oct. 1917. King, *Feeding and Care of Baby*. On King, see Smith, *Mothers and King Baby*. Gwyneth clearly did not subscribe to the Victorian advice that sexual emotion would deteriorate the quality of her milk. See Christina Hardyment, *Dream Babies*, 95.
79. LAC, LF, 8:9, G to H, 22 Aug. 1917.
80. LAC, LF, 8:6, G to H, 19 Apr. 1917, 1 May 1917; *ibid.*, 8:11, G to H, 26 Oct. 1917.
81. March, *Towards Racial Health*, 29–33. She also introduced the concept of homosexuality, 79.
82. LAC, LF, 9:1, G to H, 31 Jan. 1918. See Roudinesco, *Freud in His Time and Ours*, 109. We are grateful to Professor Deryck M. Schreuder for drawing this book to our attention.
83. LAC, LF, 8:10, G to H, 5 Sep. 1917.
84. LAC, LF, 10:1, G to H, 1 Nov. 1918.
85. C.W. Saleeby, "Psychology of Parenthood," *Eugenics Review*, 1:1 (Apr. 1909), 42; Alice Ravenhill, "Eugenic Ideals for Womanhood," *Eugenics Review*, 2:4 (Jan. 1910), 271–2.
86. LAC, LF, 8:6, G to H, 15 May, 23 May 1917.
87. LAC, LF, 8:5, G to H, 7 Mar. 1917.
88. LAC, LF, 8:1, G to H, 29 Oct. 1916.
89. LAC, LF, 17:16, Mac to my dearest Alice, 20 Apr. 1917.
90. LAC, LF, 8:9, G to H, 18 Aug. 1917, 23 Aug. 1917. She also appreciated Mary Scharlieb's *What Mothers Must Tell Their Children* for its advocacy of sex education.
91. LAC, LF, 9:3, G to H, 15 Mar. 1918.
92. The large gap in age between youngest and oldest siblings resembles that which obtained in the Strachey family, where there were ten children born over a thirty-year span. See Caine, *Bombay to Bloomsbury*, 83.
93. LAC, LF, 9:4, G to H, 10 Oct. 1918.
94. LAC, LF, 9:2, G to H, 29 Jan. 1918.
95. LAC, LF, 8:6, G to H, 9 May, 15 May 1917.
96. LAC, LF, 8:8, G to H, 3 July 1917. He was three months old at this time.
97. LAC, LF, 9:1, G to H, 30 Jan. 1918.
98. For a discussion of new childrearing ideas that blamed mothers if the child was fearful, see Bourke, *Fear*, 89.
99. LAC, LF, 9:5, G to H, 9 May 1918.
100. H. Lambourne, "Finding Yourself," *Modern Man*, 27 Mar. 1909.
101. LAC, LF, 10:4, G to H, 13 Oct. 1919.

102. LAC, LF, 18:5, G to Mrs. Logan, 6 Sep. 1917; *ibid.*, 8:6, G to H, 24 Apr. 1917.
103. LAC, LF, 8:3, G to H, 28 Jan. 1917. For these older discourses privileging fathers as responsible for the moral and religious development of offspring, see Christie, "Proper Government and Discipline", 389–412.
104. This was a frequent theme in his correspondence, but see LAC, LF, 9:2, G to H, 3 Feb. 1918.
105. Fletcher, *Growing Up in England*, 368. For persistent attitudes to child discipline following World War I, see King, *Family Men*, 17, 52–5.
106. LAC, LF, 3:1, H to G, 27 Aug. 1917; *ibid.*, 3:5, H to G, 2 Sep. 1917.
107. LAC, LF, 4:1, H to G, 3 Feb. 1918; *ibid.*, 4:10, H to G, 11 Mar. 1917.
108. LAC, LF, 5:4, H to G, 30 Nov. 1918.
109. Brandon, *The New Women and the Old Men*, 208.
110. LAC, LF, 2:1, H to G, 28 July 1915.
111. "The Father's Part," *Modern Man*, 22 Mar. 1909; LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 1 Sep. 1911.
112. LAC, LF, 2:10, H to G, 22 Mar. 1917.
113. LAC, LF, 3:3, H to G, 2 July 1917.
114. LAC, LF, 3:1, H to G, 20 Aug. 1917.
115. LAC, LF, 9:2, G to H, 12 Feb. 1918.
116. LAC, LF, 10:4, G to H, 20 Mar. 1919.
117. LAC, LF, 9:2, G to H, 27 Jan. 1918. On the unmanliness of pushing a pram within working-class British culture, see Strange, *Fatherhood and the British Working Class*, 167.
118. LAC, LF, 9:2, G to H, 14 Feb. 1918.
119. LAC, LF, 8:9, G to H, 31 Aug. 1917.
120. LAC, LF, 8:6, G to H, 8 May 1917.
121. LAC, LF, 3:5, H to G, 25 Sep. 1917; *ibid.*, 2:10, H to G, 8 Apr. 1917.
122. LAC, LF, 4:1, H to G, 6 Feb. 1917.
123. LAC, LF, 4:9, H to G, 13 July 1918.
124. LAC, LF, 5:2, H to G, 22 Sep. 1918.
125. LAC, LF, 8:9, H to G, 30 Aug. 1917. Freud had developed the theory of the Oedipus complex between 1910 and 1913 in a number of essays later published under the title *Totem and Taboo*. See Roudinesco, *Freud*, 164–5.
126. LAC, LF, 5:2, H to G, 5 Oct. 1918.
127. On the prevalence of talk rather than actual sexual enjoyment, particularly by Strachey, see Taddeo, *Lytton Strachey*, 109; Caine, *Bombay to Bloomsbury*, 138.



## CHAPTER 8

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# “Are the Thumbs Still Wagging?”: Gwyneth, Harry and the Psyche of an Age

*“all individuals are potentially bisexual, one sex being usually recessive or latent.”*

*Havelock Ellis, Eugenics Review, Jan. 1911<sup>1</sup>*

*“You are enough for me, as far as a woman is concerned. You are all women to me. But I wanted a man friend, as eternal as you and I are eternal.”*

*D.H. Lawrence, Women in Love, 1920*

The protagonists of D.H. Lawrence’s modernist novel *Women in Love*, Birkin and Ursula, are discussing the meaning of love, in which she proclaimed that he was enough for her and she did not wish for anyone else, whereas the husband protested his love for her, but nevertheless wished for “another kind of love”, which involved male comradeship.<sup>2</sup> In *To the Lighthouse* (1927), Virginia Woolf commented on the failure of the Edwardian faith in sex as an ultimate unifying bridge between men and women,<sup>3</sup> concluding that it could never, of itself, produce that higher personal and social harmony that would assure the progress of culture. In 1924, Virginia Woolf gave her famous lecture, “Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown”, celebrated as a manifesto that drew a decisive line between the

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LAC, LF, 10:7, G to H, n.d. June 1925.

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Edwardians and the high modernists. Although in it she made her now famous declaration that “On or about December 1910 human character changed”, she outlined a further cultural rupture, defined by the war, in which human society was, in her view, now more fragmented and in flux. The sentiments of both Lawrence and Woolf perceptively capture the post-war experience of Gwyneth and Harry, whose marriage, less than a decade after their nuptials, appeared to be sundered, divided by contrasting attitudes to love and sexuality which closely paralleled D.H. Lawrence’s male and female characters, and which seemed to subvert the optimistic integrated identities that they believed that they had achieved during the war. Sadly, their optimism at the conclusion of the war that they had “reached a stage where we can’t go back in our relationship” proved to be a false calculation.<sup>4</sup>

In the summer of 1925, Gwyneth departed with her children for an extended visit to England, leaving Harry behind to relive his bachelor days, holidaying on the West Coast. There had already been intimations of trouble between the couple. She was now burdened with three children whom she largely cared for alone, the two youngest being extremely fussy, even though they continued to live either with or in close proximity to Harry’s parents. For his part, Harry had divided loyalties, for as early as 1919, just after Gwyneth came to live in that “hole”, Vancouver, Harry wrote a panegyric to his mother, who was clearly jealous that Gwyneth would compete for Harry’s affections. He proclaimed that he owed his entire life, “bodily, mental and spiritual”, to his mother’s “sweet influence”, assuring her that she would never lose the primary place in his heart.<sup>5</sup> More troublingly, when volunteering to serve in the occupation force in Germany and later, while writing the history of the Canadian Machine Gun Corps, Harry had, like Birkin in *Women in Love*, sought a new male intimate, Captain Mark Levey, which explains, in part, his obvious procrastination in returning to his growing family in Vancouver. The transgressive nature of the presence of Captain Levey in Harry’s life did not go unnoticed in the Murray family: Harry’s choice to share quarters in Ottawa with Levey rather than live with his wife and child provoked the wry comment from Gwyneth’s mother that at least he had Levey to keep him company; and from Gwyneth herself, who caustically observed that Captain Levey was “the most sentimental man” she had ever met,<sup>6</sup> and should he be inclined to matrimony, Harry could guide him in that direction. In Edwardian culture the term “sentimental” carried a variety of meanings, ranging from a tendency to overly romantic forms of expression to excessive emotionalism, both of which constituted slurs on masculinity.

The idea of companionate marriage which enjoined a mutuality of values and interests complicated the indeterminacy of sexual categories because it made the qualities of openness and equality that were so crucial to the Edwardian ideal of friendship a critical aspect of marital happiness. Feminists, such as the famous Newnham classicist Jane Ellen Harrison, pondered the problem of how one could reconcile the conventional sex-subjugation of women with the new marital expectation for equality and comradeship.<sup>7</sup> Gwyneth believed that this reconciliation could be accomplished by asserting a robust sexual drive which comported with that of her husband. Thus Gwyneth often referred to their marriage as a friendship founded on equality, but this sense of parity between the sexes was not presumed to flow from intellectual or spiritual concord; rather it emanated from their mutual and powerful sexual libido. She also averred that marriage was qualitatively different than same-sex friendships, not because as the sexologists maintained that one's identity was biologically fixed by the focus of one's sexual desire, but that sex enhanced emotional intimacy which, in turn, dictated the disavowal of all other friendships and other forms of love. In short, Gwyneth envisioned the attainment of adulthood in terms of making the full transition from the love of man for man or woman for woman to a higher love between woman and man, a perspective that reversed Edward Carpenter's privileging of platonic love between same-sex partners. Carpenter contended that the sexes or genders were continuous and that love and friendship were not distinct but rather shaded into one another imperceptibly.<sup>8</sup> Through her own experience, Gwyneth progressively disavowed this position, because she accepted that there was a fundamental distinction between the emotions involved in love and friendship. Because of the passion she had once felt for some of her special Cambridge friends, Gwyneth well understood the degree to which gender and sexual identities remained in flux, and like Ursula in *Women in Love*, she believed that penetrative sex constituted the dividing line between these different kinds of love and that once an object of one's sexual desires was chosen, this dictated an exclusive emotional intimacy with that partner. Harry likewise considered "normal" love as the sexual communion between a man and a woman, and although he conjured this as a form of modernity, ultimately, his primary interest in women was a purely sexual one. This confirmed Gwyneth's constant criticism of him that he evinced little interest in women's intellects or conversation. From his point of view, this left him free to seek emotional sustenance from a range of male friendships which he regarded as a vehicle for furthering a

lifelong search for self-realization. Without invoking the modern fixed categories of identity—"heterosexual" or "homosexual"—Gwyneth's concept of exclusivity came close to articulating the modern sexual economy, but one based not on biology but rather on an act of personal commitment which became her measure of an authentic and truly meaningful relationship. Even if she did not fully embrace the sexologists' definition of homosexual, although her friend Norah March certainly deployed this term in her eugenicist publications, she did, however, wish that heterosexuality become universal, even though she was aware that it might not be the obvious choice for either men or women. What is clear is that what she thought Harry was doing with Captain Levey, even if this only involved merely a close emotional bond, was transgressive.<sup>9</sup>

It is true that Gwyneth's vision of modernism did not encompass free love, but it was no less modern for that. The enjoyment and free expression of the sexual emotions was viewed by her as a confirmation of her feminist aspirations, but she saw herself as an exponent of modern marriage because she firmly equated sex with love, as did Harry. They also saw themselves as able practitioners of modern love because they envisioned the conjugal relationship as the principal means by which to develop the human personality, a perspective which was meant to repudiate the older feminist idea that stated that a woman lost her individuality when she married. As was typical of many Edwardians, Gwyneth and Harry believed that the marital relationship fostered a superior form of love because it led to greater self-understanding, and it was out of this sense of mutual introspection that a broad range of corporeal, spiritual and social ideals could be realized. By contrast with Victorians who viewed marriage as an endpoint of individual development and as a symbol of conventionality, this modern couple saw it as a vital sphere for the perpetual creation of youthful ideals. Courtship and marriage was a terrain for self-exploration, and, in that struggle, it served as a terrain of debate about the gendered personality and gender roles.<sup>10</sup> Further, both Harry and Gwyneth came to both idealize and practise love and sex as a means to create unity and harmony, which had hitherto been conceived in terms of religious ideals, a typical move in terms of Edwardian culture. Based upon this idea, as well as their unconventional but highly emotional view of religion, they came to appreciate Jane Ellen Harrison's conclusion that marriage "through the lure of passion for the individual, compels your service to the race".<sup>11</sup> In shifting his concept of service from the realm of religion to that of their sexual communion, in which Gwyneth became "my own other soul",<sup>12</sup> Harry



voiced yet another manifestation of the Edwardian temperament. This exalted the quest for satisfying personal relationships as the supreme source of values, a philosophy which replaced orthodox Christianity, with its emphasis upon theology and the institutional church, with a more diffuse belief in the authenticity of human emotion, particularly that of love, which was the ultimate well-spring of both self-development and spiritual wholeness. For the erstwhile clergyman, Harry, the psycho-sexual pleasures of marital intimacy ultimately became a form of natural religion, in which ethics worked harmoniously with instinctual urges to abolish notions of sin and shame in bodily desires.

Gwyneth's knowing comment about the intimacy and potential romance of the friendship of Harry for his war comrade was confirmed by Levey himself who wrote in the overwrought terms that previously characterized Gwyneth's own strong emotions when seeing Harry off at Oxford railway station. When Harry boarded the Canadian Pacific Railway for Vancouver, Levey wrote a confessional letter to him, stating that he was so "overwhelmed with sorrow" that he could not bring himself to see him off at the station. Not only did he recount how they had been "constantly together" during the past three months, but his definition of a friend as one "who likes me even after he has found me out" is very suggestive not only of a strong sharing of their deepest emotions and innermost thoughts, but the "finding me out" perhaps obliquely hinted at same-sex desire. Levey's love for Harry was surely profound, for he exclaimed that "[e]very sentence I write and every word I correct for final typing remind me of you", as I can no longer "turn around and see you at your desk". Not only did he miss Harry's jokes and his sympathetic emotional support, the latter a quality that was often attributed to women, but as he later confided: "My association with you has left a very delicious and lasting taste in my mouth", signing himself in both letters "hugs, love and kisses to you".<sup>13</sup> Read in this light, Harry's pseudonymous "The Rime of the Discharged Soldier", in which the "kiss of a dying comrade" was equated to "the love of man and wife", appears to have more distinctly erotic overtones than was intended by this well-trod motif of trench comradeship which was intended to quite innocently evoke the tender care soldiers had for one another in the midst of terror on the front, in which it was seen as a substitute for the mother's kiss. Here, however, the kiss is clearly erotic as it stood as a surrogate for the passionate love of man and wife. Levey's friendship was, however, of a different order than the more functional relationships that developed after the war between Harry and a number of his former subordinates, many of

whom remained unemployed and clearly suffered deep psychological damage, often alluding to their difficulties in fitting back into civilian life.<sup>14</sup>

We have no clear understanding of Harry's psychological condition following the war; however, it is clear that as a man with a marriage, healthy progeny and a career, he was no longer, in the words of Robert Louis Stevenson, "a man in the making".<sup>15</sup> Echoing Stevenson's admonition in *Virginibus Puerisque*, the book that played such a profound role as a guide to navigating the transition from same-sex friendships to sexual love as man and wife, Harry had, even during their courtship, often expressed anxieties about that most perplexing issue, namely once the "material [sexual] bonds of our affection have loosened", how could they endure "the forced companionship of later years".<sup>16</sup> Tragically, this moment arrived long before they had reached old age, for as Gwyneth poignantly wrote as she sailed to England, she had had a dream in which "I was trying to arouse some signs of affection in you, but without much success."<sup>17</sup> It is not surprising, given their obeisance to H.G. Wells, that Harry's own life experience paralleled that of Trafford, the hero of the novel *Marriage*. Trafford, despite his protestations to his feminist wife, that the ideal conjugal relationship should be based on a frank and equal comradeship, became disillusioned with his relationship largely because sex was no longer a thing filled with wonder. Harry's and Gwyneth's marital woes also closely resembled those of Sigmund Freud and his wife Martha. Like our couple, the Freuds experienced a lengthy long-distance courtship, and developed their relationship through the epistolary medium. Once married Freud, much like Harry, lost complete sexual interest in his wife, and his wife, in turn, ceased to feel involved in his work. Thereafter, as Joel Whitebook has perceptively observed, "Freud's orientation toward men continued for the remainder of his career",<sup>18</sup> as did Harry's. As Harry got older, his identity as a soldier became more pronounced, for he insisted on being addressed by his military rank by his students at the University of British Columbia, while his experience of that other all-male fraternity, Oxford, remained the most vivid of his life. Other than the sexual frisson of their constant sex-talk in their war correspondence which kept their imaginations in a constant state of arousal, Gwyneth was constrained to admit that the wonder was "that we can get so close and keep so close when we have practically nothing in common: when we are living entirely separate lives, different work, different interests".<sup>19</sup>

Harry's teasing prophecy of 1915 had, by the early 1920s, come true, in which she would find him "deadly dull after the first three weeks of married life", and that her fate would be that of the high-achieving blue-stockings reduced to being his "miserable, apron-bedecked helpmeet".<sup>20</sup> Distance did, clearly, make their hearts grow fonder, and this perhaps explains their decision to lead separate lives during the summer of 1925. Once in Oxford, whose mores she now viewed as oppressive and antiquated and where, as she ruefully observed, "90% of the people we see are over 60", Gwyneth also began to contemplate the passing of her own youth. By contrast, all her Cambridge friends who had remained single, pursuing teaching careers, remained youthful. Thus Gwyneth, surrounded by her troublesome brood, observed that her old friend Gladys did not look "a day older".<sup>21</sup> When she realized that her friends earned a sufficient income to allow them the luxury of overseas travel, it galvanized her resentment at finding herself a matronly housewife dependent on her husband's allowance. Indeed, that "wretched miserly old BEAST"<sup>22</sup> Harry made good on the threats he uttered during their courtship to exert the power of the purse as a means to control and discipline his strong-minded wife. At moments of marital discontent Gwyneth had often pondered the road not taken, so that in 1919, when Harry grouched about teaching, she proposed that they switch gender roles.<sup>23</sup> In 1925, when, while reading John Galsworthy's classic *The Forsyte Saga*, she began to palpably sense Harry's growing resemblance to that Victorian patriarchal villain Soames Forsyte, she not only bewailed giving up a "lucrative profession" but it sparked a train of nostalgic recollections of their first sexual tryst at Borth in 1911.<sup>24</sup> This was the event that had launched the couple on their journey from youthful expectation to the achievement of ecstatic sexual communion which now, sadly, belonged to the Edwardian past.

This book has narrated the journey of how Harry Logan, a Canadian clergyman's son and aspiring cleric and Gwyneth Murray, an educated English middle-class girl who sought a life of service in the missionary field, came to throw off the constraints of Victorian culture and embrace advanced views of love, selfhood, sex and marriage. This Edwardian revolt against those Victorian attitudes and systems of thought which exalted external authority within the church, the law and the family and insisted that private values be confirmed in the public sphere has been told in many ways, largely through analyses of public commentary and canonical literature, but rarely have scholars treated this movement from the perspective of individual subjectivity. The strikingly introspective character of the cor-

respondence of Harry and Gwyneth, together with their acute self-awareness of their surrounding culture, offers an exemplary terrain for such an inquiry. Both Harry and Gwyneth were avid consumers of all Edwardian cultural products, ranging from philosophical, psychological and theological treatises, to middle-brow fiction, particularly that of H.G. Wells and Robert Louis Stevenson, to popular works on marriage and the sex problem, to light fare such as *Punch* and children's literature, including that of Lewis Carroll, J.M. Barrie and Charles Kingsley. At the beginning of their courtship, Harry especially, was a great devotee of Victorian worthies, who celebrated styles of masculinity which underscored the development of moral character through self-restraint and activity in the public sphere, and it was only after Oxford that he began in earnest to integrate the findings of the new psychology in which introspection was the pathway to achieving an integrated personality. Throughout their courtship and marriage, this couple became increasingly exposed to modern thinking on a range of subjects, from sexuality, to the articulation of emotions, to the marriage question and the vote for women, to scientific notions of childrearing, and to psychological notions of religion. And although it is clear that they also read such pioneering works such as those of Freud and Havelock Ellis, they nevertheless drew heavily upon imaginative literature, such as that of G.B. Shaw and H.G. Wells, which they adopted to explain and negotiate issues and tensions that arose in their relationship. In Gwyneth's case, when she wished to convince Harry of the validity of her own feelings, she often resorted to authoritative texts through which she could speak more confidently by ventriloquizing through literary characters. Indeed, they both were so fully immersed in the prevailing cultural milieu that they often joked that they had become characters in novels.

Culture, however, was not as determinant as their humour implied, for they drew very selectively from a variety of cultural scripts, and these choices were driven by their own life story. For example, Gwyneth, though a voracious reader, may never have turned to Lytton Strachey's generational polemic against the strictures of Victorianism had she not herself been experiencing a fundamental clash of values with her aged mother. Similarly, Harry may not have decided to reread Thomas Carlyle, who, by the early twentieth century had been presumed through scandalous exposure to have had an unconsummated marriage, unless he was himself tortured with the prospect of a sexless marriage if he failed to persuade Gwyneth to place sexual desire at the centre of their future marriage. It is the self-consciousness that both Harry and Gwyneth displayed about

becoming modern that makes their correspondence so compelling and important for furthering our understanding of the interrelationship of human subjectivity and contemporary British culture. This book has shown how the Edwardian temperament was lived by a relatively ordinary but educated middle-class Canadian/English couple who had been raised according to the shibboleths of Victorian attitudes but who, as they came of age, began to question the conventional opinions of their parents' generation, metamorphosing into fully fledged moderns by war's end. Yet, this modernist narrative was not driven by the war itself, but materialized out of the contestation which occurred as they strove to develop their own personalities in the context of an evolving relationship. Here, as in so many cases, in privileging the realm of private personal associations they had so thoroughly internalized the new outlook of their generation that they appear as quintessential Edwardians.

The defining characteristics of British modernity have been elaborated by historians in a variety of ways, chief among these were the search for sexual freedom and untrammelled individualism. These have often been given precedence because of the prominence of Lytton Strachey and the Bloomsbury circle in promoting these particular tenets of the modernist outlook, but as Barbara Caine has recently pointed out, the familial correspondence of the Strachey family, for all their familiarity with modern psychology and psychoanalysis, remained bereft of emotional expression and betrayed little concern with introspection. By contrast, the letters of Gwyneth and Harry, especially those of the latter, self-consciously pursued personal relationships as a venue for personal growth and introspection and, following their marriage, they engaged in a greater degree of sex-talk than any of the Bloomsbury circle or other inter-war "sex radicals" like Dora Russell, whose group identity was so forcibly constructed around their putative sexual frankness.<sup>25</sup> Further, by contrast with many of the avant-garde and sex radicals of the Edwardian era, Gwyneth and Harry put the new doctrine of sexual pleasure, especially that of women, fully into practice. However, there are a variety of modernisms addressed in this book beyond the more obvious realm of sexuality. Harry rejected orthodox Christianity, especially its superstructure of theology and its conventions regarding institutional forms, deciding to ultimately reject the profession chosen for him by his father because he preferred a faith based upon emotional authenticity and because his attitude to sexuality was in conflict with the moral teachings of the Presbyterian Church. His sense of manhood also did not square with supposedly "hegemonic" notions of

military and imperial masculinity, and here he drew both upon the new psychology of William James and his experience in the Student Christian Movement, to evolve a new definition of emotional masculinity that privileged friendship, personal relations and self-exploration. Gwyneth displayed her modernist commitment by supporting women's suffrage and through endorsing an even newer feminism which equated female emancipation with sexual pleasure and the enjoyment of more equal relations within marriage, eschewing what she now deemed old-fashioned attitudes to the sex question, namely choosing singleness and a career over marriage and family. Despite her feminism, she disavowed the idea of free love, remained wedded to her corsets, and disparaged new trends in fashion, preferring her Girton girl look. However, she did embrace post-impressionism in art, though not futurism, and evinced a preference for a more minimalist interior design for the house she imagined in Vancouver that she and Harry would build, and embraced the concept of limiting the number of children, even though the use of birth control remained somewhat contested in their marriage.

Together the couple experimented with a range of sexual practices, and definitively rejected Victorian associations of sex with filth, especially the association between the dirtiness of unproductive sex, namely masturbation and oral sex, which they deemed "clean" because it occurred within the context of love. The couple mutually shared a vision of youth that was in direct contradistinction to their parents' generation, and in unique ways they both rejected a variety of Victorian values, such as strict discipline, the hierarchical family and the oversight of parents in matters of career, friendship and courtship. Indeed, they both subscribed to more modern notions of the family by viewing the more egalitarian friendships with their peers as a realm of intimacy and emotional sustenance which competed with the Victorian domestic model in which the family was demarcated to be the exclusive sphere for emotional interaction and moral development. When our couple envisioned the family, they conceived of it as more private, a site of gender equality, and a wholly secluded realm, entirely removed from the outer world, revolving largely around the conjugal couple and the cultivation of sexual intimacy and the psychological self. There remained, however, a deep gender divide around the question of patriarchy and issues of fatherhood, with Harry remaining decidedly more antiquated with regard to assuming the new emotional tenor of paternal involvement, preferring to uphold the tradition of distant *paterfamilias* who compelled his own son to wholly replicate his education and career.

The transition from Victorian to modern was not seamless, but remained highly contested and fraught, resulting in a very harrowing courtship for Gwyneth and Harry, but once they had navigated these conflicts they loudly proclaimed their identity as moderns. One manifestation of the newness of their modern identities was the proclivity for Harry and Gwyneth to engage in such strident sex-talk, which reflected the fact that the centrality of sexual pleasure to conjugal love and happiness was so novel that it had to be forcefully proclaimed so that it become imbedded in the daily experience of married life.

The fundamental conflict in Gwyneth and Harry's courtship, both of whom had been raised in strong Christian households, remained the vexed question of the degree to which sex should animate married love, given Christian perceptions that even sex within marriage should be restricted to reproductive purposes. Their quarrels over sexual love were amplified by a decided shift in gender power within the relationship which occurred when Gwyneth achieved her remarkable First in the Maths Tripos in 1912. Prior to this, Harry treated her as a shy ingénue whom he could tutor and mould to his desires and although he continued to believe that he should, according to convention, be the dominant partner, Gwyneth resisted, asserting her own views on love, marriage, religion and sexuality, and, most critically, on the value of introspection, to the point where Harry believed a gender reversal had occurred, marking him as the disempowered female and Gwyneth the strong-minded male. These gender conflicts continued to plague their relationship even through wartime, when the terrain of sexual desire became the determinant of gender power, signified by their joke about their crossed thumbs, which could be displaced onto humour, so long as Harry was dependent upon his wife's emotional support during a period of trauma. However, at war's end, more conventional roles and identities reasserted themselves in the couple's relationship, when motherhood confined Gwyneth to a more domestic role, forcing her to relinquish any aspirations for a career in teaching. One narrative in this book traces a contested but relatively linear transition from Victorian to modern, but when viewed through the lens of gender, the process appears more circular, looping distinctly back towards Victorian models of gender hierarchy within the home and family, when Harry recused himself from all household responsibilities and childcare. When Harry failed in asserting his virility through the intellect and through sexual mastery when his wife surpassed him in intellectual attainments and sexual desire, his only remaining claim to male mastery was to assert his role as breadwinner with sole

control of the family finances. Though intent on purging the Edenic myth of its Christian linkage of sex and sin, Harry was willing to refurbish it in the name of patriarchy, portraying Gwyneth as “Adam’s rib”. The gender plotline thus reads as modernism expunged, for like that archetype of anti-Victorianism, Lytton Strachey,<sup>26</sup> whom Harry so admired, his modernism was adulterated by his resolute commitment to the subordination of women, which constitutes the one persistent theme of Harry’s character from adolescence to manhood.

Above all, this book has narrated the development of sexual love in a period when it was gaining validity as a critical aspect of personal identity and marital harmony. In so doing, it has confirmed the recent findings of William Reddy that sexual desire is historically contingent,<sup>27</sup> and that the idea that it was constitutive of the self was a radically innovative idea on or about 1910. However, despite the greater valency of sexual and personal liberty within British society, the borderlines between same-sex friendship and the love between man and woman remained unresolved. Although as our first-person accounts demonstrate, the increasing conflation of sexuality with romantic love remained problematic and contested because it confronted long-held Christian attitudes to morality, the early twentieth century was nevertheless a key watershed in breaking down the compartmentalization between romantic love and erotic sensuality. Although Peter Gay has done much to dispel the myth of the Victorians as joyless and sexually repressed,<sup>28</sup> it was not until the next generation that sexuality was reconceived as a fundamental aspect of positive psychological development, despite Freud’s darker rendering of it. It was, therefore, a peculiarity of the Edwardian period, when there occurred a conjunction between the new psychology which highlighted the importance of emotions and instincts to the human personality, new ideas about womanhood which moved female aspirations beyond the achievement of the vote to the realm of personal relations and sexual pleasure as the touchstones of equality, and new, more psychological and vitalistic registers of religious faith which had, by integrating evolutionary concepts from science and the social sciences, conferred greater validity upon a broader concept of “the natural”, which broke the traditional Christian protocol of sex as sin, that provided a unique crucible for the formation of new ideas of sexual love as a positive personal and social good.

This peculiar convergence of ideas of selfhood, sex and love, despite their public iteration in 1918 in Marie Stopes’ *Married Love*, lost its resonance in the inter-war period, as collectivist political ideologies increasingly



took precedence over individual self-realization. Some older Edwardians like H.G. Wells retained their faith that human values flowed from the private sphere, in which “sexual life is ... a real source of energy, self-confidence, and creative power. It is ... the fundamental substance of our existence ... as true for an ordinary woman as for an ordinary man”.<sup>29</sup> However, the Abdication Crisis demonstrated that by the 1930s giving priority to personal relationships over public duty was viewed as anomalous, and marked a resurgence of Victorian puritanism. Even Edwardian progressives like Bertrand Russell decried sexual pleasure as a route to emotional intimacy, because of its affinity with women’s emancipation. The views of many progressives, therefore, converged with the tenets of conservative thinkers who espoused a more traditional view of the family in which maternal love predominated over the conjugal bond. C.S. Lewis, an opponent of both feminism and sexual psychology, promoted the idea of romantic or courtly love which, because it served as a surrogate for divine love, remained essentially chaste. Sex, and especially sexual pleasure, was thus excised from the history of Western civilization. During the 1930s, even Sigmund Freud, that great prophet of the primal character of sex, doubted that love could overcome the destructive forces then menacing the human race, a gloomy perspective which echoed E.M. Forster’s postwar pessimism about the regenerative power of personal intimacy.<sup>30</sup> Although love was revalorized in the public domain during and after World War II, its expression took a highly-romanticized form in which sexual desire was largely absent.<sup>31</sup> The Edwardian emphasis upon sexual expression as the signifier of personal freedom was not to reappear in the Western world until the 1960s when once again it would offer perceptive individuals “a new language, a new vocabulary, new thoughts” animated by the “heart’s wand”<sup>32</sup> of love.

## NOTES

1. Havelock Ellis, “Review of F.H.A. Marshall, *The Physiology of Reproduction*”, *Eugenics Review*, 2:4 (Jan. 1911), 325–6, 326.
2. D.H. Lawrence, *Women in Love* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1976, c.1920), 472.
3. Froula, *Virginia Woolf and the Bloomsbury Avant-Garde*, 145.
4. LAC, LF, 9:2, G to H, 2 Feb. 1918.
5. UBCA, HTLFP, 1:1, H to mother, 16 Nov. 1919.
6. LAC, LF, 10:4, G to H, 1 Oct. 1919. For the homoerotic implications of this term, see Goldhill, *A Very Queer Family Indeed*, 206–7.

7. Harrison, *Alpha and Omega*, 99.
8. Carpenter, *Love's Coming of Age*, 116.
9. Reddy in *The Making of Romantic Love*, 31.
10. Moi, *Henrik Ibsen*, 10.
11. Harrison, *Alpha and Omega*, 11.
12. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 17 Apr. 1912; *ibid.*, 1:5, H to G, 13 Aug. 1912.
13. UBCA, HTLFP, 1:6, Mark Levey to H, 9 July 1920; *ibid.*, Mark Levey to H, 1:5, n.d. 1919.
14. UBCA, HTLFP, 1:6, Harold Lake to H, 28 Dec. 1920, Laurent Beaudry to H, 22 Jan. 1920.
15. Stevenson, *Virginibus Puerisque*, 28.
16. LAC, LF, 1:2, H to G, 17 Apr. 1912.
17. LAC, LF, 10:7, G to H, 11 June 1925.
18. Whitebook, *Freud*, 132, 127–32.
19. LAC, LF, 9:1, G to H, 28 Jan. 1918.
20. LAC, LF, 2:2, H to G, 31 Dec. 1915.
21. LAC, LF, 10:7, G to H, 15 June 1925.
22. LAC, LF, 10:7, G to H, 22 July 1925.
23. LAC, LF, 10:3, G to H, 21 Feb. 1919.
24. LAC, LF, 10:7, G to H, 5 July, 9 Aug. 1925.
25. Caine, *Bombay to Bloomsbury*, 85; Brooke, "The Body and Socialism", 147–77, 150, for the lack of Russell's erotic view of her own body.
26. This is the theme of Taddeo, *Lytton Strachey*, 138.
27. Reddy, *The Making of Romantic Love*, *passim*.
28. Gay, *The Bourgeois Experience*.
29. H.G. Wells, *The World of William Clissold* (London: Ernest Benn, 1926), 759–60.
30. Passerini, *Europe in Love*, 76–7, 83–4, 152, 198, 210–12; Rose, *The Edwardian Temperament*, 70; Langhamer, *The English in Love*, *passim*.
31. Langhamer, *The English in Love*; Francis, *The Flyer*; Green, *The Passing of Protestant England*, 135–79.
32. LAC, LF, 1:5, H to G, 30 July 1912.

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