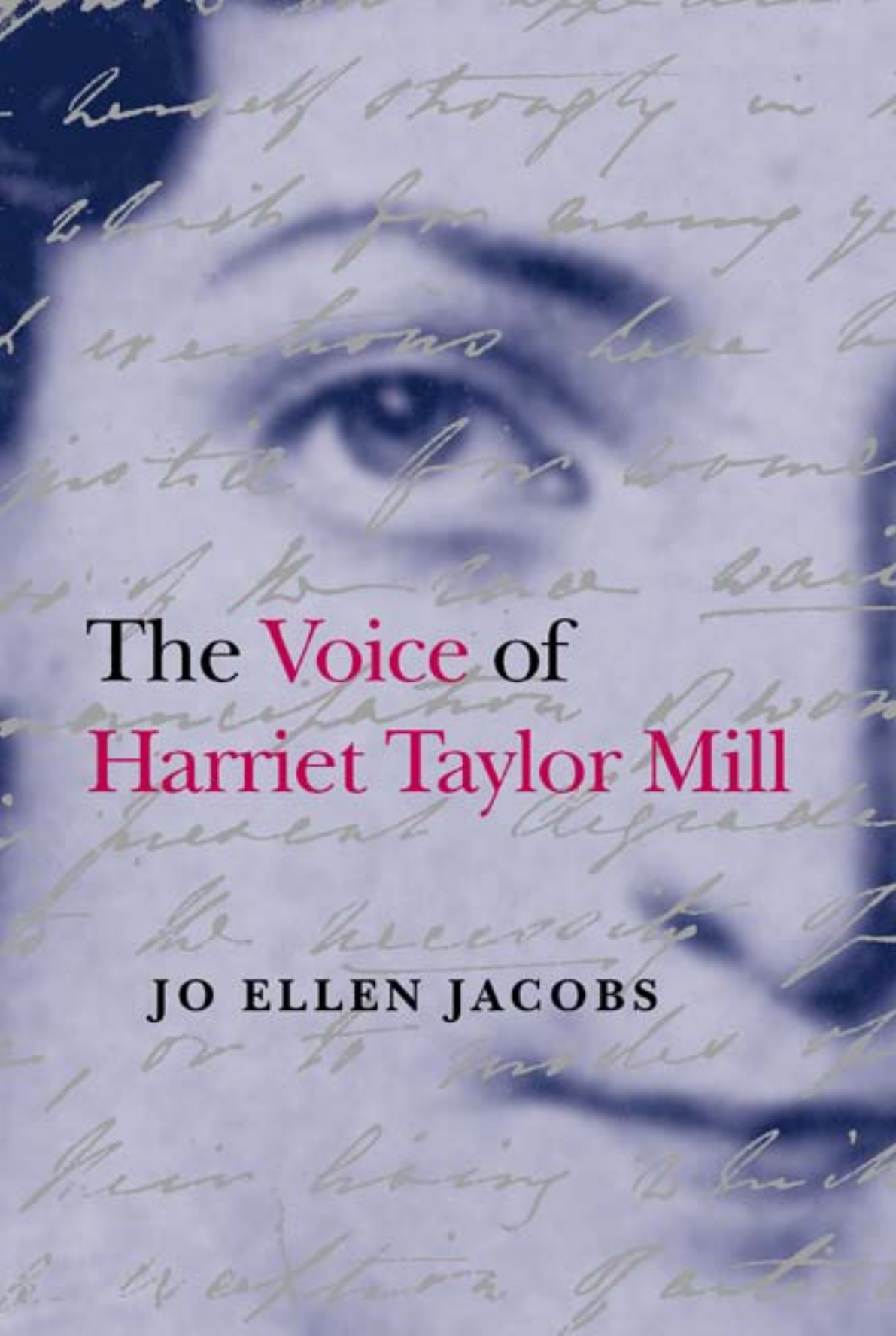

The Voice of Harriet Taylor Mill

JO ELLEN JACOBS

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Contents

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I could not have endured the years of work on this singular voice without the support of my colleagues: Paula Payne, Mary Ellen Poole, J. R. Fralick, Kevin Murphy, and Robin Sterns. Millikin University continually supported this work financially and spiritually. I would not have enjoyed these years without the love of my husband and my daughters.

My thanks to all who aided in this project, named and unnamed. I believe all philosophy and all history is "plural work" and I can only raise my voice in a chorus of others. So, this work should properly be listed as authored by Jo Ellen Jacobs et al. Since it is not, my appreciation must suffice.

Textual Introduction

A number of points about the text require explanation: the use of proper names, the sources of regularly used citations, and the unusual method of documentation, spelling, and style of Chapter 1.

Aside from the usual feminist's complaint that women's family names are regularly defined by a man, either father or husband, Harriet had other problems as well. Harriet Hardy became Harriet Taylor, who then changed her name to Harriet Mill. "Harriet Hardy" was also our Harriet's mother's name, so her maiden name isn't unique. "Harriet Mill" was the name of both John's mother and one sister, so her name when she died will not distinguish her.

Added to the plethora of "Harriets," most historians have not recognized the inequality of their appellations. Biographers and philosophers regularly call John simply "Mill" (despite his having a famous father by the same name), and refer to Harriet as "Mrs. Mill," "Mrs. Taylor," or "Harriet." To commonly label John as "Mill" while Harriet is merely "Harriet" smacks of sexism. How can "Harriet" be the coauthor of "Mill's" most famous book? You get the picture. The equality of initials seems a fair alternative, but "HTM" and "JSM" sound like they are part of corporations or an email address. So, I've settled for "Harriet" and "John." If we're going to gossip, we might as well be familiar. Perhaps the history of philosophy would feel different if we studied Immanuel, René, and Baruch instead of Kant, Descartes, and Spinoza. At least the female philosophers known only by their first names, for example, Heloise, Elizabeth, and Hipparachia, won't be alone.

All quotations of Harriet's writing retain the original spelling. English spelling was not completely standardized in the mid-nineteenth century, so for historical accuracy I have maintained Harriet's peculiar spellings.

Footnotes which offer only individual numbers (e.g., "138") are from *The Complete Works of Harriet Taylor Mill.* Numbers preceded by "CW" are from *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill.* Roman numerals preceded by "M/T" are the number of the manuscript assigned by the Mill/Taylor Collection housed in the British Library of Political and Economic Sciences of the London School of Economics.

Finally, a few words about Chapter 1. In contrast to a strictly academic book, in the first chapter I will try to paraphrase as closely as possible Harriet's own writing. To avoid distracting from the text, I will not use quotation marks in the Diary chapter, but will always list the source for each quote or paraphrase in the notes at the bottom of the page. You will need to consult *The Complete Works of Harriet Taylor Mill* for the exact wording of each of her ideas. (I revert to the usual academic documentation for the remainder of the book.)

The information in Chapter 1 about my finding the "History of the Hardy Family" and Lady Paterson is true. I did have a wonderful conversation with this generous woman. It is also true that Mary Taylor had intended to publish a book containing her grandmother's letters to and from John, but such a text has never been found. The remainder of the introductory section of Chapter 1 is fiction.

Chronology

1807	October 8	Harriet born	
1826	March 14	Marries John Taylor	Drafts of Caxton article
	December	Pregnant with Herbert	
1827	September	Herbert born	
1828	July	Love letter to John Taylor	Writing on ed. of women Poems
1829	May	Pregnant with Algernon	
	July	With parents at Ryde	Mermaid poem
1830	February	Algernon born	
	November	Pregnant with Helen	
		Meets JSM during fall/winter	
1831	January 28	Invitation to JSM for dinner	Published Australia review Writing on ed. of women Writing on marriage/divorce
		Becomes intimate with JSM	Writing on ethics
	July 27	Helen born	Writing on religion
1832	April		"Snow Drop" published
	June		Reviews of Domestic Manners, German Prince, "Seasons," Plato Mirabeau, Hampden, French Revolution, "Summer Wind"
	July	Small crisis with JSM	
	August	Resumes seeing JSM	
	September		"Nature" published
	October	Taylors travel to Wales, move to Kent Ter.	Writing on Ed. of Women Writing on marriage/divorce Writing on ethics Writing on arts

1833	March		William Caxton published Review of Tale of Alroy
	Sept.–October	HTM, then JSM in Paris/ Crisis in marriage; separates from husband	
1834		HTM & JSM work together; troubled period	
	June	HTM moves to Keston Heath	Writing on arts
1835		Both HTM & JSM ill from this year on	
	January	Fox leaves his wife	
	March	JSM inadvertently burns Carlyle manuscript	
1836	June	James Mill dies	
	August	Trip with JSM, HTM's children, and two of JSM's brothers	
1837		Queen Victoria ascends Happy period for HTM and JSM	
1838	November	Arthur leaves for Australia	
1839		Trip from Dec. 1838–July 1839 through Europe	Travel journal
	August	HTM moves to Walton	
	September	Visits Birksgate first time	
1840	September	Visits Birksgate/break with Caroline, who has just married	
	November	William Hardy dies	
1841	June	Partial paralysis onset	
	July	Problems again with trustees for children's trust	
1842	August	John Taylor's mother dies	Writing on ethics

1844	June–Aug.	Trip to Normandy	Comte letter controversy
			Writing on religion
1845			Collaboration on PPE
1846	February		Newspaper collaboration
	April	Herbert goes to U.S.	
	June		Newspaper collaboration
	June–July	Belgium/Rhine trip	
		Visit from Alfred	Collaboration on PPE
	October		Two newspaper collaborations
	November		Newspaper collaboration
	December		Newspaper collaboration
1847		Eliza Flower dies	Writing on women's rights
	April	Herbert returns from U.S.	Ch. of PPE/helped rewrite all
			Personal writing
1848			Writing on women's rights
	April	PPE published	
	May	Letter to Fox about PPE	
	August–Dec.	Ryde/Walton/Dover/Worthing	
		Beginning signs of John Taylor's illness	
	Christmas	Leaves for Pau	
1849	Jan.–April	Pau	
	May	HTM's father dies	
	May–July	HTM nurses John Taylor	Newspaper collaboration
	July 18	John Taylor dies	
1850	February		Newspaper collaboration
	March		Three newspaper collaborations
	May		Two newspaper collaborations
	June		Newspaper collaboration
1851	April	HTM and JSM marry	Writing on women's rights
	July	Fight with George Mill	"Enfranchisement" published
	August		Newspaper collaboration
1852			Revision of PPE
1853			Pamphlet on Fitzroy's Bill

1854			Request to reprint PPE chapter
1855	March	Renewed controversy about trusteeship	
	April–June	JSM to Greece	
	July	HTM and Helen to Switzerland	
	Sept.–Oct.	HTM and Helen in Ryde	
1856	November	Helen goes on the stage	
1857	February	Harriet visits Helen in Glasgow; both ill, Helen quits stage	
1858	October	Helen resumes stage career HTM and JSM leave for France	
	November 3	HTM dies in Avignon, France	

Prelude

> Perhaps the urge to participate in gossip comes from knowledge of the impossibility of knowing. We continue to talk about others precisely because we cannot finally understand them, defying possibility.[1]

When my colleagues ask what topic I am researching, my response, "Harriet Taylor Mill," usually elicits a polite, but foggy, "ohhhhh." If I continue, "she was John Stuart Mill's wife," some lights of recognition and respect begin to shine in my questioners' eyes. Who was she? Harriet was a Victorian radical, a feminist economist, a philosopher, and the author of "The Enfranchisement of Women." For twenty years she worked and traveled with the most brilliant man ever to have lived—all while living apart from her first husband. I hope that the names others have pinned to her will intrigue rather than repulse you. Harriet has been labeled

- a "philosopher in petticoats";[2]
- "one of the meanest and dullest ladies in literary history, a monument of nasty self-regard, as lacking in charm as in grandeur";[3]
- a "tempestuous"[4] "shrew";[5]
- "a female autocrat";[6]
- a "domineering, . . . perverse and selfish, invalid woman";[7]
- a "vain and vituperative, proud and petulant"[8] masochist;[9]

1. Patricia Meyer Spacks, *Gossip* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), 90.
2. Robert Eadon Leader, ed., *Autobiography and Letters of John Arthur Roebuck* (London: Edward Arnold, 1897), 39.
3. Diana Trilling, "Mill's Intellectual Beacon," *Partisan Review* 19 (1952): 116.
4. Michael St. John Packe, *The Life of John Stuart Mill* (New York: Macmillan, 1954), 289.
5. Phyllis Rose, *Parallel Lives: Five Victorian Marriages* (New York: Vintage Books, 1984), 15.
6. Rose, 137.
7. Jack Stillinger, ed., *The Early Draft of John Stuart Mill's Autobiography* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1961), 27.
8. John Robson, "Harriet Taylor and John Stuart Mill: Artist and Scientist," *Queen's Quarterly* 73 (1966): 170.
9. Ruth Borchard, *John Stuart Mill: The Man* (London: Watts, 1957), 67.

- a "very clever, imaginative, passionate, intense, imperious, paranoid, unpleasant woman."[10]

Harriet has been branded everything short of Wicked Witch of the West by John's biographers and historians of philosophy. I disagree with these characterizations.[11] Instead of seeing Harriet in John's shadow, you need to hear Harriet's own voice. Only when you listen to her rejoicings, her silences, and her complaints, can you judge for yourself whether these epithets properly apply.

An Approach to Biography

Harriet Hardy Taylor Mill was born 10 October 1807 at 8 Beckford Row, Walworth. . . .

No, that will not do.

Once upon a time, Harriet Hardy Taylor Mill, a frigid usurper of John Stuart Mill's intellectual manhood . . .

No, that will not do, either . . . [12]

Biographers often pretend to tell the truth about someone. I cannot assume the omniscient voice. Harriet is not an insect whose innards can be disclosed under a microscope. Nor am I interested in inventing a new myth about Harriet Taylor Mill to replace those that John's biographers perpetrate. I must dwell in the land of shadows between truth with a capital "T" and myth. I ask you to join me in making sense of the tea leaves of evidence that remain after the tea of Harriet's life has been sipped. Help me connect the dots that contain the "facts" into a picture as complex and multi-textured as her soul.

Let me be honest: I am inviting you to gossip about Harriet Taylor Mill. I do not know her any more than I know my best friend. All we can do is speculate, ruminate, judge; in short, gossip. Most of us engage in "small

10. Stefan Collini, Introduction to *Essays on Equality, Law, and Education,* vol. 21 of *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill,* ed. John M. Robson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), xxx.

11. I explored the reasons historians have portrayed Harriet in these ways in "'The Lot of Gifted Ladies Is Hard': A Study of Harriet Taylor Mill Criticism," in *Hypatia's Daughters: Fifteen Hundred Years of Women Philosophers,* ed. Linda Lopez McAlister (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995); also published in *Hypatia* 9, no. 3 (summer 1994): 132–162.

12. Forgive my borrowing the style of the opening of Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (New York: Penguin Books, 1980).

talk." Most of us do not like to admit that we do. Perhaps we should all take the process of prattle more seriously because gossip can reveal fundamental ways of being and knowing. In her book *Gossip*, Patricia Spacks claims that "the urge to participate in gossip comes from knowledge of the impossibility of knowing. We continue to talk about others precisely because we cannot finally understand them, defying possibility."[13] The very thing I want most—to know my friends, to know Harriet, to know you—may be futile, but we are driven to talk to one another because we refuse to submit to permanent ignorance. We keep trying to figure each other out—together.

Gossip is part of the action of coming to know someone. A friend mentions a small but puzzling fact: Four sisters embezzled millions of dollars from a charity. Or, we hear the startling news that the husband of an acquaintance has left a twenty-year marriage for a high school sweetheart. People gossip as they consider contexts, question motivations, analyze consequences, demand interpretations, and deliver judgments. As we share the process of gossiping, we form an intimate community of knowers. The Greeks identified this kind of talk among friends as "philantropia," or love of humans.[14] We reveal our most private judgments only to those whom we hold in highest trust.

The key to gossip is that we do it jointly. I agree with Patricia Spacks that in the process of biography, as in gossip, we have "the possibility of genuine dialogue, of meaning emerging gradually and cooperatively, or of meaning not articulated yet mutually understood."[15] As we gossip, understandings are achieved that are consensual yet never spoken. Biography works in the same way. I will bring up questions that you will need to answer and suggestions you may reject. I hope you do. As Spacks writes, "gossip consists not in revelation but in extended interchange."[16]

I trust that you will not sniff at the casual tone of this book. I promise to give you all of the facts and my most carefully reasoned speculation about the meaning of those facts. I depend upon you to question my judgments and not to dismiss me because I admit that I am limited. In short, I hope you are ready to gossip with me.

13. Spacks, 90.
14. Spacks, 43.
15. Spacks, 17.
16. Spacks, 19.

The reason gossip is central to our lives is because each of us is a joint venture. In our lives we absorb and ooze into one another. Each day I create new "selves" in conjunction with those others whom I meet. When I gossip about friends I am trying to grasp how they have collided and coalesced with others. In doing so, I catch a glimpse of my own joinings and rejectings. Talking with others helps me determine how I exist in the world.

If each of us is a permeable being, then biography must recognize the multiplicity of the subject. (I'll talk at length, in Chapter 2, about the many Harriets—Harriet as daughter, mother-of-daughter, sister, wife, etc.) Who I am with my lover is not who I am with my mother. We are each a jumble of selves. Biography can help us sort out some of the messiness of a life lived.

A biography must admit that the reader and writer also converse. Not only are we porous to those we meet, but we also digest those we read. At times you and I will merge and, sometimes separately and sometimes together, we will meld into Harriet.[17]

In *Midnight's Children,* Salman Rushdie describes history as a process of "chutnification." A biographer begins with the raw materials: a jumble of dates, places, and texts. The sensitivity of the historian must uncover the "hidden languages of what-must-be pickled, its humours and messages and emotions." To the carefully selected vegetables, the pickler adds spice bases that "give immortality" along with the "inevitable distortions of the pickling process."[18]

I hope I have carefully sniffed out the artificial, the genuine, the lame, and the profound in Harriet's work. I recognize that I will leach into Harriet's story just as she has permeated mine. You readers must assess the success of the commingled creation. My investigation of Harriet's health problems, my insistence on the philosophical import and extent of her collaboration, and my refusal to separate private and public issues may taste pungent to some of you.

My aim in writing a critical study of Harriet is the same as Rushdie's pickle-maker: "[T]o change the flavour in degree, but not in kind; and above all . . . to give it shape and form—that is to say, meaning." Beyond making sense of the raw material of Harriet's writings, I hope, as Rushdie

17. Calvino's *If on a winter's night a traveler,* trans. William Weaver (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1982), does an excellent job of showing what I'm talking about here. It is a bizarre and wonderful book that I highly recommend to anyone who loves to read.

18. Rushdie, 549.

does, that you will find that my readings of Harriet "possess the authentic taste of truth . . . that they are, despite everything, acts of love."[19] Creating a biography that approaches truth is an act of passion as well as perception.

Why do we bother eating pickles? Biographies, like gossip, offer illustrations of how we ought to live. We need to have these ethical examples packaged in a way that will move us, not merely tickle our intellectual fancies. In addition, biographies help us understand individual lives in another historical period. I have needed to think deeply about what life was like in a period without antidepressants, steady heating, or the legal right of a woman to have her own money. I have learned not only what we have gained, but also what we have lost since that period. Finally, biographies, like good gossip, attempt to understand the soul of another, to get inside someone else's particularity.[20] In *Shadowlands,* C. S. Lewis's student said, "we read to know we are not alone."[21] I don't think he meant we read to discover some facile psychological analysis of others that we can "relate to," but that we read (biographies especially) in order to glimpse the emotional and spiritual life of another, to meet someone who is not invented but who is a real person struggling to endure. As we read and write biographies, we yearn to know how an individual accepts and resists both those close at hand and the greater society, so that we can learn how to live our lives more deeply.

I studied Harriet because I wanted to know why she made the choices she did as a woman. We ponder lives like Harriet's because we can peek at her intimacy with John, long for it, learn from it—just as we assimilate lessons when we whisper about our buddy's losses and loves. We also feel compelled to muse about Harriet as a philosopher and a mother. Love and parenthood are worth gossiping about since they lead us to make some of the most important decisions of our lives. Specifically, Harriet's life may shed some light on why so few philosophers are mothers.

Quick, name five philosophers who are also mothers. Having trouble? Okay, let's start with the easy part. Name five women philosophers. Even if we look only at twentieth-century women philosophers such as Iris Murdoch, Suzanne Langer, Hannah Arendt, Ayn Rand, or Christine Korsgaard, the answer to whether they are mothers is "no, no, no, no, and no." Okay,

19. Rushdie, 550.
20. Spacks makes a similar point, 93.
21. William Nicholson, screenwriter, *Shadowlands.* Thanks to Professor Frank Pajares, Emory University, who helped me find the source of this quote.

Martha Nussbaum is a mother, and many of you may be sitting there saying but what about *X* or *Y* or *Z*? Perhaps Harriet's life will help us understand the decisions of many philosophers not to be mothers.

Some of the Victorian restraints Harriet endured are foreign to us, but many are sadly still with us. Most of her life involves the same difficult choices we confront. You will glimpse Harriet's life with an estranged husband, her fights with her mama, and the high-wire act of mothering a daughter through her twenties. I hope you feel and approve of Harriet's anger. Harriet was often ticked, even at the man who served as the vehicle for her to connect to the world. Harriet's Eve-like curiosity makes me happy. Her sex life makes me sad—and nosy. We'll rummage through the reasons why her sexuality was limited and scout out some possible explanations, including syphilis. (See, I told you there would be juicy gossip.) Harriet's atheism, socialism, and belief in easily dissolvable marriage place her well outside the "moral majority's" political ideology. You won't like her very much if you support that point of view.

The core of Harriet's experience and of this biography is collaboration. Harriet and John were committed to what I've called a collaborative self. (See the Interlude for more on what this means.) They seemed to devote themselves consciously and passionately to living and working jointly but without fusing. No, this will not be a romance novel.[22] For twenty years Harriet and John remained devoted *friends*—a sadly anemic word for what they shared. They traveled together, wrote together, imagined a world without marriage and gender discrimination, lived with passionate sensuality and without sexual intercourse—all while Harriet was still legally married and supported financially by John Taylor. The nuances and undercurrents of Harriet's and John's attempt at an equal relationship between a man and a woman reflect the agonized decisions and small triumphs that I myself have undergone—and I suspect that you have as well.

Much of what they wrote clarifies why they thought collaboration was required for gaining knowledge and for living the most moral life we can live. (Chapter 3 considers their joint work.) They wanted to change the world by changing themselves in relationship to each another while also recommending a more equitable union to others. Could there be a more heroic effort?

22. Elbert Hubbard, *Little Journeys to the Homes of Great Lovers* (East Aurora, N.Y.: Roycrofters, 1913), features Harriet and John as romantic lovers.

Virginia Woolf said, "If I were to overcome the conventions, I should need the courage of a hero, and I am not a hero."[23] I think both Virginia and Harriet were heroes for trying to overcome conventions, even if they were not always successful. Harriet and John's longing for shared power is noble and their effort toward it exemplary.

The Game Plan

Chapter 1 is a deliberate experiment. Because Harriet's voice has been silenced by an avalanche of comments about her in biographies of John Stuart Mill, I wanted to present her world. So, I invented a journal.[24] Each entry of the journal is based on historical evidence, as I detail in the extensive notes at the bottom of the page. I wanted the diary to be Harriet's words as much as possible, so I changed some words only to make them easier for twenty-first-century readers.

Between Chapters 1 and 2, I include an Interlude. This section details Harriet's coexistence with John. I try to answer the following questions: What is this "collaborative self"? What is it not? What does it allow? What results from it? How did they create and maintain it? and Why?

Chapter 2 considers family intimacies. Her parents, siblings, husband, and children each elicited different Harriets. The private details of her sister's domestic abuse, the deaths of her brother and husband, and her health problems are all considered.

Chapter 3 focuses on Harriet's work with John (her early solo work and collaborations with William Fox, William Bridges Adams, and John appear in Chapter 1). The last chapter focuses on her work from the mid-1840s until her death, including *Principles of Political Economy,* newspaper articles on domestic violence, and *On Liberty.*

Who can tell a life? How can I reconstruct the inside, not merely the shell, of another? Margaret Drabble writes at the end of Arnold Bennett's biography, "Many a time, . . . reading a letter or a piece of his journal, I have wanted to shake his hand, or to thank him, to say well done. I have written this instead." Margaret Atwood comments,

23. Quoted in Susan Faludi, *Backlash: The Undeclared War against American Women* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1991), 59.

24. I was inspired to try this experiment by Jamie Fuller's *The Diary of Emily Dickinson* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 1993). Although my chapter is woefully lacking in comparison to Fuller's book, I hope the risk helps readers listen to Harriet.

> "To shake his hand." I suppose this may be what we really want, when we read biographies and when we write them: some contact, some communication, some way to know and to pay tribute. . . . We play Mr. Hyde, constantly, to our various Dr. Jekylls; we supersede ourselves. We are our own broken puzzles, incomplete, scattered through time. It is up to the biographers, finally, painstakingly, imperfectly, to put us together again.[25]

I want to shake hands with Harriet Taylor Mill. I will put the pieces of her life together in a way that will reveal a new portrait, shockingly different from the usual one presented by historians of philosophy who have cast sidelong glances at this puzzling creature in John's life. I'd like to introduce you to Harriet, not Mrs. John Mill.

25. Margaret Atwood, "Biographobia: Some Personal Reflections on the Act of Biography," in *Nineteenth-Century Lives: Essays Presented to Jerome Hamilton Buckley,* ed. Laurence S. Lockridge, John Maynard, and Donald D. Stone (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 8. This paragraph parallels the opening of my "'The Lot of Gifted Ladies is Hard': A Study of Harriet Taylor Mill Criticism."

The Voice of Harriet Taylor Mill

1 The Diary

> Whether I shall turn out to be the hero of my own life, or whether that station will be held by anybody else, these pages must show.
>
> —Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*

> Intimate specificity modifies the myth of heroism. Gossip emphasizes what people hold in common, dwells on frailties, seeks the hidden; . . . heroism thrives on specialness and on public manifestation.
>
> —Patricia Meyer Spacks, *Gossip*, 101

When I first began my research on Harriet, everyone assured me that her papers either were tucked safely away in the London School of Economics library, or had been destroyed during the blitz of World War II. The family historian and protector of the papers, Mary Taylor, had prepared a book about Harriet's and John's personal lives, but the publisher's office and the document went up in smoke during the war.

However, I couldn't resist the image of myself as a discoverer of Harriet's long lost papers. Visions of *Possessions* danced in my head. While surfing the Internet, I discovered a "History of the Hardy Family" in the Library of South Australiana. Harriet's brother Arthur had been a fairly famous early settler of Adelaide. One of his descendants had taken the trouble to compile letters from Arthur's English relatives, including Harriet's letters to her brother.

The archivist, Prue McDonald, made me aware of a living relative of Harriet, Lady Mary Paterson (née Hardy). Immediately, I telephoned her. In talking to Harriet's great-great niece, I was as close as I would ever get to hearing Harriet's own voice. When Lady Paterson invited me to look through their family documents myself, I felt like Harry Potter crashing through the imaginary wall of Platform 9 3/4. I was on my way to Australia!

I felt my stomach churning when I approached the old file cabinet in the Paterson attic. I was taking a long shot by coming to Australia, but if Lady Paterson had a letter or two of Harriet's as well as a painting of her,

perhaps there were even more items to be discovered. What if I found a small leather-bound diary with letters stuck between the pages? What if the first page began with Harriet Hardy's name crossed out, replaced with Harriet Taylor's? To a philosopher, this journal would be the holy grail, the only continuous record of Harriet's life in her own words. I carefully sorted through each file, but nothing relevant surfaced. I was about to close the bottom drawer when I noticed something wedged between the frame and the drawer.

The quacking of my computer sounds 2:00 p.m. I must stop daydreaming and return to my research on Harriet. I need to focus.

If such a diary did exist, a new perspective on Harriet would emerge. Instead of a Harriet seen through the eyes of John's biographers, a new Harriet might slip out between the cracks in the words. Let's pretend a journal had been written based on all the extant letters, drafts, essays, and scraps of writing. My goal is not to entertain by falsifying, but rather to find a way of understanding a nineteenth-century woman through envisioning. The gritty details are recorded at the bottom of each page. Truths sometimes require imagining, so let's conjecture together as we hear Harriet's solo voice become a duet.

* * *

Journal of
HARRIET ~~HARDY~~ Taylor

October 8, 1807 I know I wasn't around to write this, dear diary, when I was born, but I want to record my own birth. My mama and papa lived in a small four-storey rowhouse at 8 Beckford Row, a section of Walworth Road. Walworth Road, a main thoroughfare from South London to the city, is a busy road full of shops. My papa is a man-midwife who helps babies being born. He is called out day and night. Mama and our servant watch after me and my two older brothers, Thomas who is 4 and John who is 2. Every Sunday we go to the Unitarian Church, and many of our friends do too.

October 8, 1807: Information about Harriet's family comes from the family tree found in the Hardy Family History in the Mortlock Library of South Australiana. The information found there differs from that constructed by biographers found in the Mill/Taylor Collection of the British Library of Political and Economic Sciences. The Australian documents appear more trustworthy.

October 8, 1809 I am now two years old. I have a new baby brother, William. Having three brothers is a bother.

October 8, 1811 I am now four years old, and I have another new baby brother, Edward. Having four brothers is an even bigger bother.

October 8, 1813 Now I am six years old, and I have yet another new baby brother, Alfred. Having five brothers is four too many. I am now old enough to write my own diary. That's why I needed to catch up on my life. Sometimes my brothers go to school with other children from the church. We can't go to the regular school because we aren't Church of England.

October 8, 1817 I am nearly grown up now. I am ten. Mama had another baby, Arthur. He is a dear baby, and I like to take care of him. Papa is always worried about Thomas and John because they cough at night. Papa is afraid they have consumption.

October 8, 1821 Today is my fourteenth birthday. Mama needs me to help take care of the children, especially now that I have a new baby sister. Finally I have a sister. She is so tiny and sweet. I wish we were closer in age. With eight children in this house we are cramped, and I wish I had a place to escape the noisy boys. I try to read as much as I can each day. It is not easy with all the younger children around.

October 8, 1825 I turned eighteen. My father has arranged for me to marry John Taylor. He is a Unitarian who lives north of the city near South Place Chapel. He is a druggist and is well-situated, but he is almost thirty! and seems very old to me. I wonder what it will be like to be married? It will seem so odd to leave my life here. Caroline is just beginning to be interesting. I am the first to marry, so none of my brothers can advise me. My brother John is quite ill and Papa fears that he will not survive the winter. Thomas too has the same pale complexion and weakness that John has.

14 March 1826 I married John Taylor in Isington today. We will move into a cozy four-storey rowhouse at 4 Christopher Street, a quiet street just a couple of blocks from Finsbury Square. My happiness is mixed with apprehension and sadness. My brother John did not last until my wedding. His death is a hard blow to everyone in the family.

I cannot imagine what my married life will bring. I must trust that John Taylor will be as kind as he has appeared while we were courting. I wonder

about the women John has known over the past twelve years. It is so odd that I will henceforth be Mrs. John Taylor. How am I to act?

Summer 1826 I am a married woman. I wish I had a sister old enough to whisper about all the odd events which make up my life. John goes to the office each day while I fight with the maid, plan our dinners, and shop. At night we . . . I'm still too embarrassed to write about it—although I do like the intimacy we share.

John and I are very active in the Unitarian Chapel at South Place. William Fox, who preaches at South Place Chapel, delivers the most touching sermons. For the first time, I have found someone with whom I can share my secret thoughts. John is a dear husband, but he thinks mostly about his business. Mr. Fox is not offended when I express my mind. He even listens to me!

Mr. Fox encourages me to write, so I have decided to try my hand on an article on William Caxton, the person who brought the printing press to England. The Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge publishes books compiling biographical chapters as well as pieces on science, history, geography, and art. These books are distributed to the working classes so that they have the benefit of an education they often failed to receive as children.

I feel I can best improve the working classes by writing inspiring biographies. Biographies can be the most "useful" kind of reading since they serve to uplift morality and spirit. Near the beginning of my piece on Caxton, I wrote today that I was glad that the Society did not restrict itself to biographies of brilliant characters whose splendour dazzles the mind. We need the history of those who have been useful rather than brilliant—of those whom the humblest may fairly endeavor to emulate & the imitation of whom w^{d} do honour to all. I may only be eighteen years old, and I'm sure I sound pompous, but I have been privileged to be around educated people during my whole life. I just want to share the gift of education with others.

I decided to include the whole history of printing from the history of paper and pens to Caxton's actual life. We can't fully appreciate Caxton's

Summer 1826: Caxton article, 237–291.
Caxton quotation, 239.
John's help with the Caxton article, 237.

achievements without the full sweep of history. Sometimes I get John to help me either by bringing me the books I need or by writing out my ideas in his neat handwriting. I feel gratified that I can do some good in this world.

8 October 1826 We had a dinner to celebrate my nineteenth birthday today. So much has happened this last year. I am no longer a girl. Why did my mother not tell me what marriage was like? No questions of mine about wifely obligations received a complete answer. Perhaps the reality of it is so strange one can only experience it, not tell it. Each day I tremble as I watch John come up the stairs after work. His arms around me each night make me feel safe. We both look forward to children to complete our family.

I continue daily to work on the Caxton article. Something above the drudgery of everyday life is required. Visits, shopping, dinners, and tea do not sustain me. Thank God for the Flower sisters. Getting to know Eliza and Sarah at South Place Chapel has been a delight. They are my best friends. Their lively discussions of music and books entertain and instruct me.

Christmas 1826

We had a cheerful Christmas with my parents. Five-year-old Caroline whispered to me, "Are you in the family way?" She must have overheard mama and papa talking since she still sleeps in their room. I suspect the answer will come soon. John and I both hope the answer will be yes.

March 1827

Mama and papa were especially pleased to learn that I am three months gone. My body is already beginning to change. How could I have lived in my father's house and still be so ignorant of this process? I am both frightened and excited. So many women die during childbirth, and I cannot imagine the humiliation of delivery.

Best not to think of that now.

Christmas 1826: The delay in Harriet's conception.

Menstruation and fertility were often delayed until after eighteen for Victorian women. Of the fifty women one researcher studied, only one became pregnant before the age of eighteen. This may help explain why Harriet was married nearly nine months before she became pregnant. Judith Schneid Lewis, *In the Family Way: Childbearing in the British Aristocracy, 1760–1860* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1986), 136.

John is very proud and very sweet. He brings me lilies of the valley every day.

24 September 1827 I am now a mother. The event was grueling, but I survived. My father's advice about a good midwife proved useful.

My first-born son, dear Herby, is so sweet! John glows as he tells everyone about our son.

8 October 1827 Twenty. I feel so grown-up. I have everything I need to make me happy: a loving husband, a wonderful baby and good friends. I am so fortunate.

Today I had visits from all my friends at South Chapel: Eliza and Sarah Flower, the Gillies sisters, young Robert Browning, and William Fox. I am still in my "lying-in" month, so they all drank caudle with me to celebrate my birth as well as Herby's.

16 October 1827 I am finally allowed downstairs, although I still spend much of my day on the sofa. As soon as I am able, I must think about continuing to write the Caxton piece. I wonder when I will ever find the time?

3 July 1828 I'm sorry I have been so delinquent in keeping a record of my life, but motherhood absorbs my time. Only now do I have a spare minute to write. My mother is looking after Herby while I dash off a letter to John and take a few moments to return to my diary.

We are on our annual holiday with my parents on the Isle of Wight. I love the sea. The azure and turquoise waves shining far below the cliffs of this island make me long for infinity.

It is amusing to let Herby experience the sea for the first time. I'm sure Herby will profit from the fresh air. He is teething and so is cranky sometimes, but generally he is a cherub.

8 October 1827: Lying-in.

Women typically were advised to remain in bed about ten days after giving birth; followed by another two weeks lying on a couch; followed by another week of going downstairs, but spending most of her time on the couch. Thus the "lying-in month." George Black, *The Young Wife's Advice Book,* Victoria@listserv.indiana.edu.

According to Lewis, in the "old" days, men were not allowed into the lying-in chamber until the fourth week after a birth, but by the 1820s men were allowed to enter the ritual room and to join the women in drinking the hot spiced wine, caudle, which women drank during labor and served visitors during the lying-in month.

3 July 1828: Harriet's letter to John from Isle of Wight, 441.

All of my brothers and my sister are with us. William (19) expects to join the Navy as a surgeon soon. Alfred (15) and Arthur (11) are inseparable. They explore the beach every day collecting shells. Caroline (7) likes to pretend to be Herby's mother. Thomas is looking less pale. He is apprenticed to my father, but I don't know if he'll have the strength to continue. I do hope that Papa is correct in believing he is finally overcoming his consumption. I could not bear another brother dying especially since he is only twenty-five.

My brother Edward, that scalawag seventeen-year-old, returned from London yesterday with a letter from John. How can I be so lucky to be loved by such a dear husband? I wrote him just now: I know that my dear husband loves me, as I have loved him, with my whole heart. I put his letter under my pillow that I might read it to our dear little one as soon as he awoke this morning. When I kissed his sweet rosy cheeks and told him "that was from dear Papa," he held out his little arms towards the door with a look of expectation and made that little noise "ur, ur, ur" which John's knows so well—I gave him some more of the kisses John sent to pacify him.

I long for John. I don't believe I will ever consent to go on holiday while John is confined to the city. I miss him so.

8 October 1828 I look back over the last year on this my twenty-first birthday. I have been so happy. My son is prospering while I enjoy being a mother. All year I've been snatching moments here and there to write poems. I don't have the time to continue with the research necessary for the Caxton article, so I have to concentrate my thoughts into poetry. I've tried composing draft after draft of a poem I call "Daybreak." Finally, today, I have become satisfied with it. Nature is a mystery I tremble before, but it is my child who moves me deepest. How can one person love another as much as I love him? How could I bear to lose him as my mother did when my brother John died? Thomas is frail again.

What if such a fate befalls my son? I tried to write my worry today, but somehow it fails:

> How beautiful an infants sleep—
> The rounded cheek the fair high brow!

Information about brother's occupations from "The Hardy Family," The Mortlock Library of South Australiana, 5.

Pity that sorrow ere should break
Upon a mind so cloudless now;

But come it will those dimpled cheeks,
With graceful limb, and
That open brow, that guileless mind,
Will eager join the busy world,
Where joys unmix'd he thinks to find—

Soon will realities rough touch,
Efface the sketch which hope had made-

When I write, I often do not understand the source of my words, but perhaps that is inevitable with poetry. For example, I wrote:

And then come wild excitements joys,
And maddening pleasures syren song;
To the dark gulf of guilt and pain;
With the full tide he's borne along—

Maybe it is only a mother's fear. Maybe it is more. Now that I have my own son I can grasp the utter sorrow that my mother felt when John died and the anxiety she experiences each day over Thomas's declining health. How can a mother bear the death of one she has held inside herself? Life is so fragile, so fleeting.

Song
Oh what can we wish for in life's little day
But to bask in the sunshine & then drop away
Like that beautiful flower which gladdens our eyes
For an hour, and then sickens, withers, & dies.

Winter 1828–1829 Thomas becomes increasingly ill. Oh, why is death so hard? It is not fair for one so young to be taken from us. Over and over I turn to poetry. Neither writing nor my husband's embrace nor my precious Herby are consolation for the inevitable. The other day I wrote:

8 October 1828: Drafts of "Daybreak," 209–213.
Poem about infant's sleep, 213–214.
Song, 214.

Song

How beautiful at eve,
Is yonder rippling river,
The sun-beam tumbling on the wave
As it glides away for ever!

Just like that sunbeams ray,
On the waves of that sweet river,
The joys of life tho' bright today,
To-morrow fade for ever!

Despite life's transience, I have a duty. I must be a good mother. My first obligation is to Herby. He is beginning to talk now, so I must teach him all he needs to know.

How can I teach him properly if I am not educated myself? If men could only understand that when they fail to educate women, they diminish the first teachers of their children. His mother is the most important person in his life. I feel the weight of my role as teacher grow heavier every day.

Today I wrote: The importance of the education of women is beyond calculation when we consider that in their education is included that of their sons and their daughters and therefore of the whole community. For of all the influences to which children are exposed perhaps there is none at once so resistless and so imperceptible as that derived from the love of thought and feeling of their mothers. Were we to examine with attention into the early history of most of the men who have in any way distinguished themselves in life, we should probably find their minds have been derived from and modified by that of their mothers. Indeed, we have no need to refer to the lives of remarkable men to illustrate the truth of this position—we have only to look around us to see it exemplified in almost every instance in our acquaintances and friends. It is said that the study of mathematics is neither necessary nor useful for a woman—nor is the reading of Euclid, abstractedly and for itself, useful to a man—it is for its results that it is good.

1829 We have lost our dear Thomas. I am now my parents' eldest child. Will I be the next to die?

Winter 1828–1829: Song, 215.
Education of mothers, 7–8.

July 1829 I just realized that by February Herby will have a brother or sister to join him. I am again on holiday with my family in Ryde on the Isle of Wight. I wrote John that I was with child. He wrote with his usual fretting about my health. He is afraid of my bathing in the chilly water. I scratched this poem & rambling thoughts on the envelope.

Mermaid's Song

In chrystal caves of ocean's deep
I made my pearly home
The rocking surges sooth my sleep
With wild & plaintive moan.

Sometimes I roam where glist'ning sands
Reflect bright Hesper's ray
Or bend to distant sunny lands
My happy cheerful way

> Say how is Memory fresh, is she a creature young . . . beautiful as summer flowers after refreshing storms, glittering & bounding in the pride of beauty. No this is present pleasure, gay & fit companion of all that's young and beautiful & joyous—But Memory—ah—how shall I draw her—she's ushered in by sighs, her face seems beautiful through the dim veil caused by the vapour of unnumbered tears—& then she's very various & uncertain —now she'll be young & fair—and then ere we have caught one certain glance she's changed to aged woe-begone & then the frightful & malicious then she will not be disdained, for if we try to fly she'll face us whensoe'r we turn, & laughs in scorn to see us writhe. Sorrowful she'll face us still, yet still we love her under every form.

Perhaps I should take a walk before I write a proper reply.

My memories of Thomas also spark memories of my brother John. I joyously recall one moment with them only to remember the look of their pale faces on their death beds. Worry about bathing in the sea seems trivial nonsense compared to the real tragedies of life.

1829 Eliza and Sarah lost their father. The merciful William Fox has agreed to take them into his home. I must visit them, but I am sick of death.

July 1829: Mermaid Song and following passage, 215–216. During this period John was likewise experiencing a crisis. He writes to Sterling that he expects to remain lonely throughout his life; see p. 130 below.

8 October 1829 As I turn twenty-two, the new baby is beginning to kick. I understand more about this experience than I did with Herby, but I fear my confinement more. This year of deaths has left me numb.

2 February 1830 Another son is born! His proper name is Algernon, but he looks like a "Haji" to me. I only hope I have no other children for awhile.

Summer 1830 Nearly every day I receive a letter from Eliza with new indications that she is becoming more and more intimate with Mr. Fox. They share the same commitment to women's concerns and to the church. Eliza is certainly a lovely young woman. Surely Mrs. Fox must begin to sense that Mr. Fox's attentions are turning away from her. What will Eliza do? I will ask John what I should do in such a delicate situation. Maybe he could talk with Mr. Fox.

8 October 1830 A year of confusion—thus I w^{d} describe the past year on this my twenty-third birthday. Having two children has increased my work immeasurably. Both Herby and Haji always seem to want my attention at the same time. I constantly worry whether a runny nose will turn into a deadly cough. Sometimes my anxiety threatens to overwhelm me.

I am also worried about Eliza. She is in a dangerous position, but all she can think of is her love for the man she admires most in this world. How can I fault her for that?

November 1830 What am I to do? I suspect I am again *enciente.* Haji is only an infant himself. I can't have another now. Whom can I turn to?

Winter 1830 Oh, God. What can be done? I never want to be intimate with John again. I was having some other female problems. Since I was concerned about having the babies so close together, I insisted on seeing a doctor. He said I have . . . I can't even write the word. And he looked at me as though I was the culprit. What will happen to my babies? What will happen to me? I am so angry with the revolting acts of my husband that gave me this curse. I cannot bear to be in the same room.

November 1830: The French term *enciente,* "expecting," was used by upper-class people. The term was considered more proper than the English equivalent. Ginger Frost, Victoria@listserv.indiana.edu.

Winter 1830: Many doctors believed that syphilis was caused by sperm from different men mixing in the uterus. Hence, men could not transmit the disease, only loose women. Doctors at the time advised prospective husbands that they were not contagious if their sores were not oozing. So John probably cannot be blamed for purposefully infecting Harriet. See pp. 134–146 for a complete discussion of Harriet's syphilis.

Winter 1830 I spoke with Mr. Fox about my illness. He assured me that I am in no way at fault. Why w^{d} my husband have practiced such vile acts that he w^{d} have gotten this disease himself? He disgusts me. I simply won't accept the fact that adult men require an outlet for their sexual urges before marriage. Why must women remain chaste, when men do not?

How am I to remain married to this man?

He will not touch me again.

Only the children sustain me, but I worry constantly about their health.

Winter 1830 W. A. sent the book on comparative anatomy I asked for. Perhaps some knowledge of this disease will help me determine what can be done, if anything. Now that my rage has subsided, all I want is medical information. I must understand, even if I cannot act.

Winter 1830–1831 Mr. Fox has encouraged me to turn my focus outward. I cannot continue to dwell on my own miserable situation. He suggested that I become acquainted with others who are devoted to improving society. So, I decided to invite him and some of my friends from South Place Chapel to my home along with three other gentlemen he suggested including John Arthur Roebuck, George Graham, and John Mill. I am hardly in the mood for a dinner party, but I need a diversion from my black thoughts.

Mr. Fox is also determined that I should begin to write for the *Monthly Repository* as a means of distracting me from my anger and melancholy. Eliza and Sarah have added their encouragement. Perhaps I will try my hand at a book review to begin. Anything, anything to focus my mind outside this sham of a marriage.

January 1831 How extraordinary! The dinner we had tonight introduced me to a whole new world. Roebuck, Graham, and Mill spoke passionately and earnestly about their desire to alter society in fundamental ways. Graham and Mill are working together on a book on Political

Winter 1830: The Mill/Taylor collection contains a short letter merely transmitting this book to Harriet (XXVII/1). I speculate as to its use. When John Taylor suffers in his final weeks, Harriet asks John Mill to send several medical books. She seems to take some comfort in understanding the medical problems that confront her. W. A. is unidentified.

January 1831: Mill describes his collaboration with Graham in detail in a letter to Sterling on 20 October 1831, CW: XII, 79.

Mill's trip to France: 8 August 1830 until the first week in September, CW: XII, 54.

John Taylor's connection to John Mill is found in Robert Eadon Leader, ed., *Autobiography and Letters of John Arthur Roebuck* (London: Edward Arnold, 1897), 38.

Economy. They had all visited France last summer and were full of news about the revolution that they believe will save that country. We talked of the workers who were rioting in our own country. Much work can be done. Assuming Mill presents the case accurately, revolution can occur even in England. If I could throw myself into work as they do, perhaps I could make something of what remains of my miserable life.

Oddly, even my husband took an interest in Mr. Mill, since during the conversation we discovered that his grandfather had lived next door to the Mills.

28 January 1831 We invited Mr. Mill along with Mr. Fox and M. Desainteville to dine with us. Mr. Mill introduced us to his friend and political refugee from the French Revolution, M. Desainteville. Both Mr. Taylor and I are eager to help him and other political dissidents who are being persecuted throughout Europe.

The first of Mr. Mill's series, "The Spirit of the Age," appeared earlier this month in the *Examiner.* I liked the piece on the whole, but during dinner I challenged Mr. Mill's taking aim at the "diffusion of superficial knowledge." I do not regard the piece I am writing on William Caxton for the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge to be superficial knowledge of any sort. Mr. Mill did not appear to be put off by my challenge. How interesting.

My first publication just arrived. My modest review of the book on life in Australia is in print in the *Monthly Repository.* It won't change the world, but I am pleased to see my piece appear. If my life is to be short because of Taylor's thoughtlessness, I must strive to make it meaningful.

February 1831 Mr. Mill visits regularly. We share a passion for the unfairness of women's lives. He told me of his walks across St. James' Park when he was seventeen. There he regularly encountered abandoned babies left by women who had been seduced by the fathers of these children. Some of the infants died alone in the park. I am not surprised that he campaigned to teach poor women how to prevent births. Even his arrest on

February 1831: In 1823, shortly after joining his father at work in India House, John was arrested for distributing information about birth control to young, poor women. He was released shortly after his arrest. More information about John's experiences in Hyde Park and the pornography charges are found in Josephine Kamm, *John Stuart Mill in Love* (London: Gordon & Cremonesi, 1977), 22–23, and Michael St. John Packe, *The Life of John Stuart Mill* (New York: Macmillan, 1954), 56–58.

pornography charges did not dampen his commitment to making life fairer for women. I do so admire him.

March 1831 Mr. Mill continues his series on "The Spirit of the Age" for the *Examiner.* Since we first met, we have been discussing his enthusiasm for the revolution in France. Mr. Mill believes that what the revolutionaries and the reformers in England need is an historical and philosophical basis for their ideas. He hopes to supply it.

Last week, Mr. Mill and I had a quiet dinner at home while Mr. Taylor dined at his club. We had a long conversation about the role of pleasure in the good life. I tried to explain to him that I see utility, that is, happiness as distinguished from pleasure in its crudest sense. We are each different; there is no universal formula for pleasure that can apply to all. For some of us, the best kind of life must include moral or intellectual improvements which cause pain.

I didn't know if he understood what I was saying, but I noticed that in the subsequent 13 March installment of "The Spirit of the Age," Mr. Mill discussed the way easy pleasure "enervates the mind." He distinguished between earned and unearned pleasures. The former pleasure is good, the latter is "deadening." I wonder if I influenced his thinking on this?

Both Mr. Mill and Mr. Fox urge me to write. So, for the first time, I decided to express on paper some of my anger at husbands who act as despots. When men behave as tyrants, the wife often reflects her husband's "firmness" and irrational sternness in the way she disciplines. The child resists his mother, and both remain locked in obstinacy. Thus, the husband's abuse becomes the wife's crime as well. The private abuse between husband and wife thereby seeps into their children and through them affects the wider society.

March 1831: In a scrap that Harriet wrote in 1831, she explains: "What is utility as distinguished from happiness? . . . whose experience can decide that such is the only or the worthy result of human existence thus bringing every genuine form of mind, that is to say every individual one, to the crucifixion of conformity to rules wh apply to every manifestation of mind, the measure wh is common to all minds. It is the custom to take the commonest & most marked results of those 5 senses & to make of them Procus's measure to wh minds wh do not fit—must be made to fit" (153–154). I speculate that this insight that pleasure as recorded by the five senses is not the goal for some, but some other kind of utility could be the source of John's argument in "The Spirit of the Age" that the best life is found in improving oneself, not in mere hedonism. See Eugene August, *John Stuart Mill: A Mind at Large* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975), chap. 3 for a summary of John's series, or read it in CW: XXII, 279.

Husbands as despots, 11.

April 1831 The baby is kicking now. Nothing is more miraculous than the stirring of life within. I am glad to be a woman so that I can experience this thrilling moment. Since I know this will be my last pregnancy, perhaps I cherish it more. Although I despise the acts of the one who is this baby's father, I cannot blame my child. I hope so for a girl.

My condition must be obvious to Mr. Mill, but he doesn't seem to notice or mind. My days are filled with concerns about Haji's teething and teaching Herby his letters and colours. I adore my children, but what a joy to have some retreat into adult conversation when Mr. Mill arrives to discuss ideas.

I discovered on rereading my diary that I haven't mentioned the boys for awhile—perhaps because they are always on my mind. Because the rest of my hours are so taken with the practicality of being a wife and mother, this journal is my only escape. I love my children, but I want to spend my time in this journal focusing on ethics and politics and women's issues.

I am sometimes frustrated by Mr. Mill's lack of passion or conviction. We are in the midst of a revolutionary time, but instead of leading the revolution, Mr. Mill is content just to think about it. His "The Spirit of the Age" acknowledges that we are in an age of transition, but he calls for reform—not revolution. I think he aims too low. He reminds me of a philosophical fly who sits on the axle of a wheel and thinks that he creates the dust. He is still too bound to the Utilitarian "greatest happiness" principle, but the result of that principle is the least existing happiness for most people in society.

Mr. Mill has moved with his family to Kensington. I hope that means we will be able to see even more of each other.

April 1831: philosophical fly, 162. That the good life would include the "greatest happiness for the greatest number of people" was a core belief of Utilitarians beginning with Bentham.

Harriet wrote a piece titled "Charlatanism" on paper watermarked 1831 (162–163). In the first installment of "The Spirit of the Age," John refers to "charlatanerie"; CW: XXII, 232. This may be the first expression of Harriet's recognition that her own beliefs are more radical than John's—a pattern that would exist throughout their lives together. In "The Spirit of the Age" John argues that the Middle Ages had the best form of government and moral leadership possible at the time. Harriet's "Charlatanism" says, "The searcher after the origin of the sublime and beautiful weept over the departure of the age of chivalry. Had he lived a few years later he might have hailed the dawn of as prolific an age, that of charlatanerie: of which indeed he might have made a worthy leader," 163. Her anger is clear. That John is the focus of her anger can only be surmised.

John's move to Kensington, CW: XII, 86.

May 1831 I believe that tolerance is the most important virtue. The most intolerant fanatics and sectarians are the loudest to proclaim it, but few practice it. In an age of disparate views, we must learn to tolerate different points of view so that we can find the truth hidden there. The practice of tolerance is the core of a moral life.

I have begun to put my ideas about marriage on paper. Because of my own wretched situation, I am more acutely aware than most of this institution's more despicable aspects. However, I w^{d} never make my proposals public, since too many women who have not yet learned to be independent might be hurt. One day I hope to have the courage to show my essay to Mr. Mill. His almost daily visits lead me to believe that he takes my thoughts seriously.

Essentially, I believe that marriage, as we know it, should be abolished. Marriage is currently indissolvable except in very, very rare instances. Even if good reasons exist (as in my own case) to quit the marriage, I am forbidden from doing so. Marriage is a contract which the wife enters entirely ignorant of the nature and terms of the contract. Men are assumed to have knowledge of the sensual side of marriage. (Oh, how I wish I had known about Mr. Taylor's sensual side when I married!) However, if a woman is not chaste, that is, if she knew what the marriage contract involved, that alone w^{d} be considered just reason for preventing her undertaking it. Furthermore, one party of the contract, the husband, owns the other—no other expression will suffice. Wives are completely dependent upon men, yet men can do as they please with their wives. The government should simply not interfere with affection between a man and a woman. Legislative interference with matters of feeling is unwarranted. As a general principle, governments should not interfere with personal freedom. Or, as I wrote today, every human being has a right to all personal freedom which does not interfere with the happiness of some other.

I am not opposed to the sensual part of marriage, but I believe there is

May 1831: On tolerance, 137.

On marriage, 19.

The nugget about humans having "the right to all personal freedom which does not interfere with the happiness of some other" was expanded into *On Liberty,* a book written twenty-five years later.

Women diarists from the period (for example, Jane Carlyle) would grouse about their own marriages but did not attack the institution of marriage as Harriet did. Harriet Blodgett, *Centuries of Female Days: Englishwomen's Private Diaries* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1988), 168.

The argument Harriet presents here suggests the distinction between higher and lower pleasures published in *Utilitarianism* (written in 1854 and published after Harriet's death).

a difference in pleasures of sense—some are good and some are not as good. Good pleasures stimulate the mind as well as the sense; in "bad-tending" pleasures, sense is the sole object. Pleasure is always good, but even within pleasures there are distinctions. Mere sensuality is not as fine a pleasure as those pleasures which also include higher parts of us. In my discussions with Mr. Mill about utility, I am beginning to make this distinction clearer.

June 1831 Earlier this month, I finally introduced Mr. Mill to Eliza. Our tea grew cold because we were so engrossed in conversation. Mr. Mill and Eliza enjoyed each other quite as much as I had expected. I had spoken so often to Eliza about my admiration for Mr. Mill that they seemed old friends from the start. Mr. Mill even suggested he review one of Eliza's new hymns in *The Examiner.* Eliza was ecstatic.

Eliza, Eliza, Eliza. She is so extravagant. I find it hard to know how to respond to her. She writes flamboyantly, as when she says, "You know how it was with me when I found you and how your smile fell like a ray over a troubled sky . . . you know how I cling to you." Later she proclaimed, "If it were not for fear of accidents and making Mr. Taylor jealous, I could say how 'I w^{d} I were a man' to have laid my heart at your feet while you were talking yesterday." Dear girl. She seems sometimes to be four years younger rather than four years older than me.

30 June 1831 Eliza wrote the most amusing letter today. She wanted to know whether it was Mr. Mill or I who wrote the piece on Lord Byron for the *Edinburgh Review.* How silly! Neither of us wrote it. How presumptuous! And how odd that she cannot distinguish Mr. Mill's ideas from my own. He and I have many common beliefs, but surely Eliza should know where we differ.

Mr. Mill and I promised each other to write out our views of marriage and to exchange our essays.

18 July 1831 I've written a number of drafts of my statement on marriage, but I am not yet satisfied with it. What I say is so radical that Mr.

June 1831: Hayek, 287, fn. 6. Eliza's letters are in Packe, 124.

30 June 1831: Information about Eliza's mistake MT XXVII/32, 37, quoted in Hayek, 36.

18 July 1831: 19 July to 15 August, JSM meets with Wordsworth, CW: XII, 80 fn. 19. Victorians, contrary to popular myth, had no social taboo against visibly pregnant women appearing in public, according to Judith Schneid Lewis, *In the Family Way: Childbearing in the British Aristocracy, 1760–1860* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1986), 124. There are many examples of

Mill may be shocked. We pledged that we w[d] be honest. With my lying-in coming soon, I may not be able to finish it before then. I am so large that I swelter in the heat of late summer. While I face my confinement, Mr. Mill leaves tomorrow to visit Wordsworth in the Lake District. He will certainly have a grander time than I will.

27 July 1831 My sweet daughter, Helen, was born today. At last, a daughter to love and protect. I hope that her life will have fewer barriers than my own. I pledge that I will do all that I can to raise her to be as free as possible.

I miss sharing this moment with Mr. Mill. I wonder what he thinks of Wordsworth?

16 August 1831 Mr. Mill visited today. He was full of conversation about his trip. He holds Wordsworth in the highest esteem. He seemed to miss my company as much as I did his.

September 1831 Mr. Mill reported on a dinner he enjoyed recently at the Austins. He met a Scot named Thomas Carlyle. Mr. Carlyle gave him a manuscript called *Sartor Resartus,* an odd piece, but one Mr. Mill thinks worthy of reading. I suspect he will continue to communicate with Mr. Carlyle.

Three children under five! The house is never quiet or free of fear. Each childhood disease will be times three. How will I cope? Even with a nurse, I am constantly rocking or reading or singing to one or another. Herby is quite curious about his new sister, but Haji completely ignores her. At least I will assure that there will be no other children. I worry which if any may have inherited their parents' disease.

8 October 1831 On my twenty-fourth birthday, my greatest joy is in my new friendship with John—he begs me to forego the formal Mr. Mill. Lily

women in novels who did not observe confinement from the time they first "showed." Examples include Charlotte Yonge's *The Clever Woman of the Family,* in which a woman plays croquet followed by giving birth. (Ellen Jordan, Victoria list) In Austen's *Sense and Sensibility,* Charlotte Palmer entertains guests in December and January before giving birth in early February. Victorian scholar Ellen Moody, concludes that "'confinement' . . . varied considerably." (Victoria@listserv.indiana.da)

September 1831: August, 52; Packe, 169–170.

8 October 1831: Contemporaries of John's mocked his condition and called him undersexed. Carlyle's biographer said of him, "they who ignore [sex] suffer" and suggested that "doctors might agree he should marry or take a mistress and quit Mrs. Taylor." Leslie Stephen quipped John's feelings

is a delight and the boys are rambunctious, but as long as I have John to dine with several times a week, I am content. Given the circumstances, my husband's guilt prevents any objection to our meeting. He knows, as I know, that nothing untoward can happen between John and me, and he knows that I deserve whatever happiness I can find within this monstrous situation called marriage.

November 1831 Mr. Fox has bought the *Monthly Repository*! Now he will have the freedom to change the direction from religion to wider issues. He expects me to contribute regularly. I have assured him I will do what I can. I've already set about reading half a dozen books that I might review. I might even submit a few poems.

December 1831 Mr. Taylor has had words with John. How dare he! I will not condone this affront. He will apologize to John. He knows that we are above reproach. Our dining together and long conversations will not, can not, be replaced by more intimate acts.

Late December 1831 Although I made my position clear to Mr. Taylor, I was unable to formally settle our dispute. At my request, M. Desainteville has managed to reconcile Mr. Taylor and John. I will forever be indebted to him. Although he was unaware of the source of their contention, his invitation for both to dine with him was enough for them to overcome their obvious awkwardness.

1 January 1832 I have resolved this new year to write out more of my thoughts in my journal. I will then be able to use it as a source book for writing articles for the *Repository.* It will be good practice for me to begin my drafts in this private way. Since John and I decided to start the new year with our long-awaited exchange of essays on marriage and divorce, I'll begin 1832 with a summary of my thoughts:

"were, I take it, as tender as a woman's. They were wanting, not in keenness, but in the massiveness which implies more masculine fibre. . . . [A comment no post-Freud thinker could write with a straight face.] The most eminent women, hitherto at least, are remarkable rather for docility than originality" (quoted in Packe, 318). John's sensuality was not adequate, according to John's contemporaries. To be a real man, John needed sexual intercourse. Without sex his body as well as his philosophical vigor languished. One can only chuckle. Poor Harriet was the seductress who wouldn't deliver, so John withered. Just imagine the heights to which he could have risen, if only for Harriet.

Late Dec. 1831: Desaintville's letter to Taylor, MT/XXIX 257; Hayek, 37.

1 January 1832: on marriage, 22–25.

On Marriage and Divorce

Abandoning marriage as it is now constituted is the most important way to improve the condition of women. Government should never interfere with the expression of affection. If women had access to education and were legally equal, they w[d] control their own reproduction or be able to support what children they had. Hence, no marriage laws w[d] be necessary. Even if marriage laws were to continue, they w[d] be perfectly disregarded, because no one w[d] marry. The quickest way to do away with the evil called marriage is through the education of women. We w[d], of course, also need access to all careers and have the ability to inherit from our fathers, just as our brothers do.

Radical ideas about marriage should only be discussed in an educated and advanced society. If such ideas were introduced today, women w[d] not be prepared for them. Centuries of oppression have made most women timid and dependent. Thus, if there were no institution of marriage, for example, many women w[d] now be taken advantage of by men. That is not to say that the idea of marriage isn't a good one, but that society needs to be prepared for such dramatic change.

Those who look back at our era will be appalled by our marriage laws. We scoff at the idea that in Arab countries the law regulates touching, even handshakes, but are we different? Why does the law entitle men to gratify their sexual urges without the consent of their wives? Yet our marriage laws assure just such barbarity. As I said last year, pleasure is good when the senses act on the mind as well, but not when sense is the sole object. Men are currently trained to be sensualists while women are not. Only when both are taught responsible sexuality and enjoy equality will truly pleasurable sex occur. Pleasure w[d] be infinitely heightened both in kind and degree by the perfect equality of the sexes. Sex, in its true and finest meaning, seems to be the way in which is manifested all that is highest, best, and beautiful in the nature of human beings. It is for John to teach

John and Harriet were not at all unusual in their disgust with the sexual insensitivity they perceived as common among husbands. Nancy Cott cites other examples in her "Passionless: An Interpretation of Victorian Sexual Ideology, 1790–1850," *A Heritage of Her Own: Toward a New Social History of American Women,* ed. Nancy F. Cott and Elizabeth H. Pleck (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979), 174. We must remember that the marriage laws Harriet condemns allowed no divorce. A woman could not separate, a wife could own no property in her own name, and a husband had conjugal rights. He had a right to have sex with his wife even if he had just beaten her or regardless of whether she wished it. Although the notion of marital rape is still fairly recent, many would agree with Harriet's repulsion of laws that allowed such a right.

the world that the higher the kind of enjoyment, the greater the degree of pleasure.

Marriage as it now is practiced is merely the ownership of the wife by the husband. Women barter their sexuality for protection and economic power. They use their sensuality as power. This arrangement amounts to a type of prostitution that is not unlike the more vulgar type. One observes very few marriages where there is any real sympathy or enjoyment of companionship between the parties.

Since marriage is a legal contract, both must be free to enter and to leave it. Currently, women are innocent of sex when they enter the contract; therefore, they are not competent to enter this agreement. Without the possibility of divorce, such an agreement is unfair. Before the education of women makes marriage laws obsolete, we must allow divorce to be attained by any person, without any reason assigned, and at small expense, but which could only be finally pronounced after a long period. Who w[d] wish to have the person who is not inclined? Women need divorce more than men do because men have all the power and women have none.

I feel like a lawyer in talking of divorce! O how absurd and little it all is!

Perhaps people w[d] like it better if instead of calling it a "Law of divorce" it were to be called "Proof of affection." Divorce and economic independence are absolutely required if marriage is to stop degrading women.

Now I must write out my last draft and deliver it to John. My heart trembles at the thought of what he will say on the subject.

2 January 1832

John's Thoughts on Marriage

He has said it! and in writing as well. "She to whom my life is devoted" and "lovely friend"—how sweet those words. Exchanging these most intimate documents has finally made us face what we've known for some time. We cannot go on without each other. He says I will teach him and that "in the investigation of truth, as in all else, 'it is not good for man to be alone.'" We must pursue the truth together, not merely on this subject but on all others.

John agrees with me that what is right for us may not work for more

2 January 1832: John's essay on marriage, CW: XXI, 37–49. For more on John's impracticality and on the blended family he and Harriet created, see Interlude.

common natures. He recognizes that higher natures like ours are passionate and that for us to live tied irrevocably to a lesser creature who has harmed us is a "continued act of self-sacrifice." We require only voluntary ties. Marriage as it is practiced now is, we agree, about sensuality, not about higher kinds of happiness. He also agrees that the indissolubility of marriage was once a benefit for wives since it prevented abandonment. But, marriage without divorce is now an unequal burden on women. The main problem currently is, and again we agree, that women are financially incapable of independence. We cannot have fiscal inequality but still be equal otherwise. As long as women depend for their subsistence on men, they are essentially prostitutes. Furthermore, monetary independence requires educational and career opportunities. Here too we agree.

However, John writes incorrectly that women should be allowed to work, but naturally w^{d} not choose to. He claims that doubling the "number of competitors" in the labor market w^{d} not be good. I say, good for whom, the men who currently only have to compete with one another, or good for the women who are currently barred from competition? John says a woman's "occupation should rather be to adorn and beautify" life and that this task can be "accomplished rather by being than by doing." (He later says that "the great occupation of woman should be to beautify life.") I strongly disagree, and I told him so. John claims that overseeing a household of servants shouldn't take more than half an hour a day and that this superintendence is quite different from an office manager. How w^{d} he know? He appears perfectly incapable of the most trivial practical tasks in his life. John continues to argue that a woman without servants w^{d} be working as a servant herself. Why couldn't she be employed herself and let her husband share the work in the house? Can't we have equality in every task of life?

I agree that in natures such as ours, we will naturally want to work together. (Actually he says the woman will naturally want to "share *his* occupations." Surely he means share their occupations—I shall have to remind him of that tonight.)

He does reiterate the point that if women can earn a living on their own, marriage can be truly voluntary. Only where women have this choice are they then equal to men. Marriage as it is currently practiced is a lottery. Neither a young inexperienced woman, nor her parents, generally choose a husband wisely. How could they, with so little knowledge of one another and with their complicated motives? But, according to John, repeated divorce will lead to bitterness, and many spouses will unwisely be discontent

with anyone who is less than perfect. Most importantly, children need both parents, so if divorce were more widely available, those involved should avoid having children until they are sure of their future happiness. John sees right to the heart of my pain when he writes, "To be jointly the parents of a human being, should be the very last pledge of the deepest, holiest, and most desirable affection: for *that* is a tie, which independently of convention, is indeed indissoluble." But where does that leave Taylor and me? John writes about "a regulated community of . . . persons intimately acquainted, which w[d] prevent the necessity of a total separation between the parents even when they had ceased to be connected by any nearer tie than mutual goodwill, and a common interest in their children." What is he suggesting? A Utopian community? A compromise short of divorce that w[d] allow my children to see their father, but not require me to act as his wife—as if I could any longer? How shall we live in the future?

February 1832 With each passing month, I feel stronger—surer of myself. I am slowly learning my capability, slowly figuring out what needs to be changed if women are to avoid my plight.

I wrote a letter to Roebuck arguing that the Chartists should work not merely for universal male suffrage but for universal suffrage. Women's interests are often opposed to those of men and so women's views cannot be represented by men's votes. He responded today that changing men's interests to include women's is "beyond legislation's reach. The evil must be remedied by altering the reigning morality, not changing the frame of government." If the solution is to change public opinion, not voting privilege, why do men seek suffrage? Why do they not merely plead that members of the aristocracy change their interests to include all other classes? I am disappointed in Roebuck. I hoped he'd write the sort of paper I suggested. God knows a woman w[d] not be able to publish it.

I was also discouraged that he was not able to furnish me with any mercury. To purchase it is to admit that one has my Disease, and so I hoped that Roebuck w[d] be sympathetic since I know he uses it. Although I realize

February 1832: Roebuck's letter, M/T XXVII/122.

Chartism was a working-class movement for parliamentary reform, including suffrage. In the postscript, Roebuck adds: "Pray be kind enough to excuse my sending this by the post. I have no mercury and am myself too weak to [bear] it." I expect that he apologizes for using the post because if such a private communication were misdirected, the damage to Harriet's reputation would be irreparable.

that he has found the substance toxic, I must try to obtain it so that I can stave off the symptoms for as long as I can.

I've decided to copy a draft of each of my letters to John. I'll just fold them and insert them into this journal. It's nice from time to time, when I am lonely to look back at the affection—or should I say love—I have for my dearest.

* * *

Yes dear I will meet you, in the chaise, some where between this and Southend —the hour will depend on what your note says to-morrow (that is supposing the chaise is to be had of which there is very little doubt.)

bless you dearest! I did not write yesterday. I wish I had for you seem to have expected it. I have been quite well & quite happy since that delicious eveng & I may perhaps see thee to-day, but if not I shall not be disappointed— as for sad I feel since that eveng as tho' I never shall be that again.

I am very well in all respects, but more especially in spirits.

Bless thee—to-morrow will be delightful & I am looking to it as the very greatest treat

so dear—if you do not meet me on your road from Southend you will know that I could not have the chaise

Friday

* * *

Late February 1832

On Education of Women

—Since my entries are getting longer and concern topics I may want to include in articles for the *Repository*, I've decided to add titles from time to time which may be useful to me later.

Inserted letters: This and all other letters from John to Harriet have had the greeting and signature cut. The letters can be identified by handwriting and content. 323–324.

Late February 1832: 5–8.

On Margaret Temple, 9–10.

Several ideas found in Harriet's scraps about women's education are later found in Fox's "The Victim," *Monthly Repository* VII: 164–77. See the March 1833 entry for more details.

It is clear that marriage cannot be abandoned without women first having financial independence and that financial independence requires equality in education, so I must begin with a plea for women's education. Despite the fact that there is now a climate of political reform, white men believe that their own continued happiness depends upon the political degradation of the working and middle classes. They also believe that their happiness requires the subservience of women. Even "liberal" men who argue for equality of all men still refuse to acknowledge the equality of women and men. If women showed as much talent as men in the present state of society, I w[d] argue not that they are equal to men, but that they are superior—because they are entirely deprived of all those advantages of academic or university instruction and examples which are open to all men. Without examples of successful women and without education, we will fail to develop our character, self-knowledge, knowledge of general information, or useful ability. One type of character flaw, duplicity, is the result of women's lack of opportunity for open power. Where there is no open power, women will use other means.

What is the purpose of educating women? If John is right that our job is to "beautify" life, we must be educated as we are now—in the arts and gentility. But I challenge that goal. Is the end desired that we be better ministrants to the pleasures of men? If so, what description of pleasure are we to increase? Are we to titillate the senses or to stimulate the minds of men? I suspect John assumes the latter, but even if the end is to increase men's higher pleasures, they are still <u>his</u> pleasures. Should not the question be, is the object of educating women the production of the greatest amount of happiness for <u>themselves</u>? We don't hear debates about what kind of education will produce the greatest happiness for <u>women</u>. If women are to be educated for the purpose of their own pleasure, a very different sort of education from education for the pleasure of men is required. In his essay on marriage, John is wrong on this point.

I have tried to write something for the *Monthly Repository* about the education of women that focuses on a girl's education. First, I imagined a young woman named Helen Astley, educated by higher middle rank parents who are bland in manner, exceedingly kindly in their intercourse with their neighbors and dependents, and of liberal political feeling. They were incapable of forming opinions for themselves, but they tenaciously held to those they accidentally adopted. My sarcasm may be too much for readers, as was my anger when I described her as marrying a "lesser intellect" who

required private acts in the bedroom she could not imagine to earn her daily bread.

So, I tried again this time with a girl named Margaret Temple. Again my anger at the stupidity of the parents' class threw the piece off-balance. I will show these pieces to Mr. Fox and Eliza and see what they think. Some other time I may be able to succeed where I have failed here.

* * *

No one ever loved as you love me nor made their love <u>one</u> half quarter so happy. I <u>am</u> perfectly happy & my blessed one what a letter this is of yours!

* * *

<u>Late March 1832</u> I complained to Eliza yesterday that I wearied of winter and longed for the flowers of spring. Eliza inspired me to try my hand at writing poems for each of the seasons. In the Autumn poem, my images trace the cycle of the seasons. In "The Snow-Drop," I imagine a "gentle girl, tender and meek" who dies for her love of the "bright God of Day" only to return as a flower courted by his ray.

<u>3 April 1832</u> John has written to Mr. Fox agreeing to send him articles that he thinks will suit the *Monthly Repository.* I'm sure Mr. Fox will be most pleased.

<u>8 April 1832</u> John published the sweetest review of Eliza's "Songs of the Seasons" in the *Examiner.* She wrote me immediately saying how honoured she was to have been so mentioned.

The Reform Bill passed its second reading in the House of Lords. We are one step closer to political change. John and I both are holding our breath to learn whether the Parliament will have the courage to reform itself.

Mr. Fox has published my "Snow-Drop" poem in this month's *Repository.* It looks so lovely to see it printed. It is a spring of a year with work and love and children all prospering.

Inserted letter, 324.
Late March 1832: "Autumn," 216–218.
"Snow-Drop," 218.
3 April 1832: CW: XII, 97–98.
8 April 1832: John's review, CW: XXIII, 436–438.
Information about reform bill: Chris Cook and John Stevenson, *The Longman Handbook of Modern British History 1714–1980* (London: Longman, 1983), 15.

Book Reviews

I'm madly writing reviews for Mr. Fox to use in the *Monthly Repository.* The first is on Sarah Austin's translation of *Tour of a German Prince* by Prince Pückler Muskau. I liked his love of the common folk and his indignation at religious intolerance, but he is an unconscious coxcomb. I focused my review on Mrs. Austin's translation and her plea that more German books be translated. John cherishes his friendship with Sarah, even calling her "Mütterlein." He was particularly pleased with my review. I wonder how well she knows Prince Muskau?

9–15 May 1832 The political situation in England is near anarchy. Who knows where these "May Days" will lead? To our own May Revolution?

Mid-May 1832

Review

For next month's issue of *Repository,* I wrote a scathing review of Mrs. Trollope's *Domestic Manners of the Americans.* The only praiseworthy aspect of this novel is her facile writing style. I know that it is the custom to make only gentle critiques for gentle authors, especially women, but I refuse to accept this custom. This woman's writing reeks with her prejudice against the working and middle classes and against women. She actually sneered at "pretty girls" getting degrees in mathematics and moral philosophy. If only our own daughters were so lucky to have the opportunity for advanced study! I certainly hope my Lily will learn calculus and philosophy.

24 May 1832 It was so dear of Mr. Sterling to send the sea shells from across the Atlantic for the boys. Mr. Sterling sent the shells to John who was greatly touched by his friend's thoughtfulness—as was I. Mr. Sterling is John's closest friend. I wish I knew him as John does.

Review of Austin's translation, 179–180. See CW: XXXII, 14–15 for example of "Mutterlein." See May 1834 entry for more on the Austin–Muskau affair.

Mid-May 1832: Review of Mrs. Trollope, 180–185.

24 May 1832: John's thank you letter to Sterling: CW XII: 101.

In his letter transmitting the shells for John's "young friends," Sterling recalls, "Perhaps you remember our labours on their behalf, along the shore at Looe." Mineka and Lindley's footnote 6 in the *Collected Works* suggests that their meeting in Cornwall was in summer of 1829. But Packe claims that the shell collecting occurred in the winter of 1830 while visiting the Bullers (Packe 131). Sterling writes to his son in 1844 that he and John had become friends "some 15 years ago" (Anne Kimball Tuell, *John Sterling: A Representative Victorian* [New York: Macmillan, 1941], 70).

In spite of the political turmoil, we can't help feeling the romance of spring. Each daffodil and crocus is one more reason for love.

* * *

Far from being unhappy or even low this morng, I feel as tho' you had never loved me half so well as last night—& I am in the happiest spirits & quite quite well part of which is owing to that nice sight this morng. I am taking as much care of your robin as if it were your own sweet self. If I do not succeed in making this live I shall think it is not possible to tame a full grown one. It is very well now but so was the other for two days. & so I shall go adieu darling How very nice next month will be. I am quite impatient for it

* * *

6 June 1832 Jeremy Bentham died today. He must have died happy in the knowledge that something he had labored for, the Reform Bill, will become law. This afternoon I will try to write my thoughts on Bentham. I doubt that I will do anything with them, but it is my act of mourning for the great man.

On Bentham

Critics of Bentham accuse him of promoting self-interest, but he does not promote selfishness. The "Greatest Happiness of the greatest number" is the very opposite of personal selfishness. I certainly agree with Bentham that all creatures desire their own happiness. Yet, in considering others' happiness, we must also consider our own. If we do not count our own interest, we shall not have the strength which w^{d} enable us to do much good even for others. Selflessness is the kind of virtue society tries to instill in women. (Men tend to be hypocrites on this score, since they are allowed

Mineka and Lindley take this literally, placing their visit to 1829. I agree with Packe that Sterling is referring to a visit in late 1830. There is no evidence that John knew Harriet as early as the summer of 1829, so Sterling and John were certainly not collecting shells for Harriet's sons that early (Haji wasn't born until 1830). I assume that Sterling is speaking about approximately fifteen years earlier when writing to his son. However, I can find no corroborating evidence that Sterling and John visited Cornwall in the winter of 1830, and Packe cites no evidence for his claim.

Inserted letter, 325.

6 June 1832: 152–153. John's obituary in *Examiner,* 10 June, CW: XXIII, 467–473.

some freedom for their own desires, while women wound their wings at every attempt to expand them against their gilded bars.)

I tried to write my own thoughts on Bentham's passing. As usual I came back to the problems women have. John's obituary will no doubt be more focused.

7 June 1832 The Reform Bill is law. How wonderful that this progress was made without bloodshed. We are spared. Now we must await the change in government—puny as it is, it is still a step forward.

June 1832

Book Reviews

My long piece on Lord Nugent's *Hampden* for next month's *Repository* is the first real book I reviewed. I begged Mr. Fox to allow me to try something other than travel books. I love good biographies and am pleased to review Hampden's. In the review, I even encourage other writers to pursue biography. To collect materials, just to qualify for the editorship of a good biography, is an undertaking which requires much time and fortune, and in no way could those advantages be more usefully employed. Think well on this, future biographers of Harriet Taylor! It is amusing to think of that unlikely prospect.

Hampden's life could hardly be more heroic. Although there is nothing particularly new in this biography, this man deserves attention. To set the stage, I reviewed English history from Henry VIII through Elizabeth to the inept and selfish Charles I. I recalled Hampden's role in the revolt against the latter king and described Hampden's death rather movingly, I believe.

What a joy to sink my teeth into something worthy. I am proud of my best writing so far. I only hunger to write more.

June 1832 I've tried to focus my journal on my ideas—keeping aside the daily grind of correcting the maid's dusting habits and ordering next week's potatoes—but sometimes I cannot set aside my life as I enter my journal. Today was one of those days.

I sat reading to Herby and Haji when Eliza appeared completely dis-

June 1832: 185–192.

traught. Mrs. Fox is threatening to expose the romance between Eliza and Mr. Fox in front of the entire congregation. Mrs. Fox no longer can abide her husband's love of their ward, Eliza. Again how strongly I feel that marriage should be dissolvable! Why should two who love be apart? Why should two who do not love not separate? I cannot blame Mr. Fox and Eliza, and I don't believe they should receive the blame of others. But, blame they will receive. I've tried to write about the ethics of blame, but I don't know if I make sense. I do know that I am sick of living in a society so ready to blame anyone who differs in the smallest way from "society."

How long can John and I escape notice?

Ethics

Who is entitled to blame whom? is one of the most important of all questions of morals. To award moral blame to another is the utmost assumption & ought to be regarded as involving one of the utmost responsibilities that a human being can undertake. Truly conscientious persons (we speak not of the innumerable pretenders to this fine character) think much & long & silently & are well assured that they have all the links in the chain of evidence complete before they arrive at the conclusion that another is morally blameworthy, & then no one can for a moment deserve the high title of conscientious person who declares this opinion except in order to attain by doing so some certain good. This state of mind & conduct of people is the general one in this country. Everybody can in a moment call to mind fifty twaddles of their acquaintances whose excitement seems to consist in passing judgments.

19 July–6 August 1832 John and Mr. Cole have gone on a walking tour of the South of England and intend to end in the New Forest. I have taken this time apart from him to consider our situation. I don't know how I shall bear it, but after seeing the crisis that has resulted from Mr. Fox and Eliza's love—innocent though it may be, I have determined that I shall not see John again when he returns to London. I cannot risk scandal for my children or endanger his career. Our evenings together while Mr. Taylor re-

For more on Eliza's situation, see Packe, 145.

"Who is entitled . . . ," 155.

19 July 1832: Mr. Cole is Sir Henry Cole.

mains at the club are so habitual now that I am sure they have been noticed. I have asked Eliza to tell him not to write henceforth. How will I live without him?

7 August 1832 Eliza brought John's flowers and his sweet letter today.

* * *

Benie soit la main qui a tracé ces caractères! Elle m'a écrit—il suffit; bien que je ne me dissimule pas que c'est pour me dire un éternel adieu.

Cette adieu, qu'elle ne croie pas que je l'accepte jamais. Sa route et la mienne sont séparées, elle l'a dit: mais elles peuvent, elles doivent, se rencontrer. A quelqu'époque, dans quelqu'endroit, que ce puisse être, elle me trouvera toujours ce que j'ai été, ce que je suis encore.

Elle sera obéie: mes lettres n'iront plus troubler sa tranquillité, ou verser une goutte de plus dans la coupe de ses chagrins. Elle sera obéie, par les motifs qu'elle donne,—elle le serait quand même elle se serait bornée à me communiquer ses volontés. Lui obéir est pour moi une nécessité.

Elle ne refusera pas, j'espère, l'offrande de ces petites fleurs, que j'ai apportées pour elle du fond de la Nouvelle-Forêt. Donnez-les lui s'il le faut, de votre part.

* * *

I read John's letter each hour while the tears stream down my face. "He will obey me because for him it is a necessity." How can I order him away? I love him. Perhaps I should reconsider, but no, I cannot end as Eliza has with an open scandal. I could not bear it. He could not bear it.

Inserted letter: The translation of John's letter follows:

"Blessed be the hand which traced these characters! She writes to me—that is enough: although I do not pretend that it is not to say goodbye to me forever.

She must not believe that I accept such a farewell. Her way and mine have separated, as she says. But they can, they ought to, meet again. At whatever time, in whatever place that may be so, she will find me always the same as I have been, as I am still.

She shall be obeyed; no further letters of mine shall disturb her peace, or pour one extra drop into her cup of sorrows. She shall be obeyed, for the reasons which she gives,—she would have been, even if she had confined herself to telling me her wishes. To obey her is for me a necessity.

She will not refuse, I trust, the offering of these little flowers, which I have brought for her from the depths of the New Forest. Give them to her, if necessary, as if they came from you." Translation in Packe, 139; original, CW: XII, 114.

Mid-August 1832 The heat, the cranky children, and loneliness leave me miserable, but I must work. I've promised Mr. Fox two reviews for the next issue. Both books are unworthy.

Book Reviews

The collection of Mirabeau's *Letters* is a disappointment. Since the selection of letters was so poor, I could do little but make my review focus on Mirabeau's argument about the state's right to claim church property. I hope I do not reveal more about my friendship with John than I should when I write, "The more the mind, either of man or woman, is enriched by acquirement and reflection, the more does it fit its possessor to give and to receive the highest species of enjoyment, social usefulness, and sympathy." After nearly a year in the company of my dearest John, I can but believe that two minds can attain together more happiness and usefulness when they are joined. So why are John and I separated? How can I keep my mind from drifting from Mirabeau to John?

I was delighted when Mr. Fox showed me *The Mysticism of Plato* and asked that I review it. Unfortunately, again it was not what I had hoped. Instead of the soul of Plato, we get only scholastic criticism. Yet, the critique of how Plato was mis-used by Christians is worthy of praise. Perhaps next time, the author will have more courage to take on the meatier parts of Plato.

Late August 1832 I simply cannot stand it any longer. I will die without his companionship. We know that we are above reproach. We must be stronger than society's opinion. If others think we act immorally, we know that opinion is false. We know the truth. I will write him today.

* * *

I am loved as I desire to be—heart & soul take their rest in the peace of ample satisfaction after how much calm & care which of that kind at least have passed forever—o this sureness of an everlasting spiritual home is itself the blessedness of the blessed—& to that being added—or rather that being

Mid-August 1832: Mirabeau review, 192–196. Harriet's review appears in the same issue with a piece about Mirabeau by Desainteville, *Monthly Repository* 6 (1832): 528–536. Harriet's reference to the "highest species of enjoyment" parallels the argument for higher pleasures in *Utilitarianism.*

Plato review, 196–198.

Inserted letter, 325.

brought by, this exquisiteness which is & has been each instant since, & seems as if with no fresh food it w^d be enough for a long lifes enjoyment. O my own love, whatever it may be or not be to you, you need never regret for a moment what has already brought such increase of happiness and can in no possible way increase evil. If it is right to change the "smallest chance" into a 'distant certainty' it w^d surely show want of intellect rather than use of it.

* * *

1 September 1832 John finally summoned the courage to write to Mr. Taylor once more. He assured me that he spoke only of their mutual interest in some new French political refugees. I will try to arrange a dinner party for all of us. It will be yet one more chance to see my dearest.

September 1832 The cool breezes of autumn blow away the misery of the summer's troubles. Now that my love and I have returned to our habit of seeing each other regularly and as often as possible, I can breathe a sigh of relief. I know his love and he knows mine.

Because of our recent experiences with Mr. Fox and our own separation crisis, I want to write my thoughts about the need for each person to think for himself or herself. We cannot be moral without being able and willing to defy public opinion. Moral people must be willing to think for themselves. In John's "Spirit of the Age," he argues that people can't think for themselves, and he wants the wise to set up moral rules for them to follow. But I have more hope. I believe people can be taught to reason indepen-

1 September 1832: John's letter to Taylor, CW: XII, 115.

September 1832: on conformity, 137–142.

Harriet's call to become actively engaged in intellectual and moral reasoning is echoed in John's "On Genius" published in October 1832. John's claims that "To *know* these truths is always to *discover* them," CW: I, 332; and "Let the feelings of society cease to stigmatize independent thinking," CW: I, 338, correspond to Harriet's in "on conformity."

Notice the similarity of language between Harriet's phrase "endeavour to approximate as nearly as possible towards a complete knowledge of, and sympathy with another mind" (141) and John's in "On Genius," "If I would *know* it, I must place my mind in the same state in which he has placed his," CW: I 331. John writes that a man who makes "a practice of forming his opinions for himself" will get the reputation for "eccentricity" CW: I, 337. "On Genius" is quite different from "Spirit of the Age" written just one year earlier. In the latter article, he argues that genius is merely thinking for oneself, not "a rare gift bestowed on few. By the aid of suitable culture all might possess it, although in unequal degrees" CW: I, 334. He also pleads: "Let the feelings of society cease to stigmatize independent thinking" CW: I, 338.

Man includes woman, 145.

Concerning lack of rules, John writes that in grasping poetry, art, or morality, we must comprehend the "central idea or purpose. This idea or purpose it is not possible to extract from the work by any mechanical rules," CW: I, 333.

dently. Perhaps John can begin to understand my argument that the fate of our society rests on its ability to be taught to think as individuals.

On Conformity

Conformity is the source of envy, hatred, and uncharitableness, that is, the source of intolerance. Individual character cannot declare itself against the lazy camaraderie of conformists. In his "Spirit of the Age" series, John wrote that most are too indolent and incapable to be able to draw their own moral conclusions, but I say that through experience, each person is made capable of self-dependence. The vices of conformity and subservience to those in power can be overcome by the ability to make moral decisions on their own counsel.

We have always been an aristocracy-ridden people and hence obsessed with propriety. Many talk of doing their duty, but they have no theory of duty. Most do not act on principle, if you define principle as acting on self-formed opinions. Furthermore, if principle means "independent thinking," then eccentricity should be prima facie evidence for the existence of principle. Instead, we now have a society that functions on the belief that if an act is odd, then it is wrong. Those who are seen as exemplars of principle are merely slaves of public opinion. To these poor souls I say, think for yourself, and act for yourself, or at least don't attempt to impede or resent those who do. We can learn to escape the withering complacency of society.

If children were raised properly, tolerance w[d] be an unconscious and almost intuitive state, not a virtue they need to work to achieve. Now children are raised to be intolerant. The connection between how we come to know and our morality has been overlooked. Most of society believes truth is delivered fully formed by authorities. Society generally fails to realize that what is truth to one mind is often not truth to another. As a poet-philosopher said, "Man is the measure of all truth unto himself" (to which

Mirroring Harriet's point that parents can only point in the direction of goodness, John wrote "Every person who climbs Mont Blanc exerts the same identical muscles as the first man who reached the summit; all that the first climber can do is to encourage the others and lend them a helping hand. . . . It is an advantage also to have some one to point out the way and stop us when we are going wrong. Though one man cannot teach another, one man can suggest to another"; CW: I, 332.

I w[d] add that the term "man" must also include "woman"). Even if two people were to see the same "truth," no two people who think for themselves on the same subject w[d] choose the same words to describe the subject. I still believe in truth, but I understand that fostering truth requires dialogue and sympathetic listening.

To an honest mind, what a lesson of tolerance is included in the knowledge that reaching the truth requires debate. The best way to become tolerant is to approximate as nearly as possible a complete knowledge of and sympathy with another mind. As we do so, we will discover both the sameness and differences that still remain. If we approach another with admiration instead of criticism, our minds will act like a refracting surface which receives the rays of light and gives back the illumination with an added splendour. Tolerance is not an inactive response but an active acceptance of both the other's ideas and a willingness to add one's own thoughts. If we understand that truth can be approached only through discussion, we are also being trained to tolerate differences. Epistemology has moral implications.

There are no exact rules for development of this kind of moral advance. The physical sciences advance by making more complete and more exact rules. Moral science is an art; everyone can do something towards improving it. Every one of us can admire another, and, in that act, learn to acknowledge and tolerate differences and to add something to the dialogue. Tolerance is not blind acceptance but a realization that fault often accompanies beauty. So as we come to know another's faults, we can also learn to appreciate each person's beauty.

Tolerance must begin with children. If children were not surrounded by evil, they w[d] not know from their own nature that evil exists. We should surround children with examples of goodness, but we should not teach them to emulate any particular example. The spirit of emulation in childhood and competition in manhood are the sources of selfishness and misery. They are a part of the conformity plan, making each person's ideas of goodness and happiness a thing of comparison with some received mode of being good and happy. The best parents can do is to point in the direction of the road, but they cannot take children one inch down that road.

When parents train children to emulate, parents are the ones who choose the hero. Children are not required to compare good examples and to select for themselves who they will admire in the same active way I described above. Each of us has different experiences than others, and we can

only contribute to moral science if we learn to see for ourselves and not to have idols chosen by others.

Like emulation, economic and intellectual competition discourages us from becoming moral. Competition encourages fault-finding instead of admiration. We selfishly want to protect our insights instead of wanting to share them with others. Cooperation is frowned on in an age of economic competition, yet cooperation through dialogue is the source of moral advance as well as progress in knowledge. When students approach education as a competition, they see another's idea as better (which therefore is a threat to me), or worse (which therefore can be ignored by me or perhaps even celebrated in its wrongness). In cooperating to find the truth, those who differ from me are those I can learn from and who in turn can learn from me. To learn how to approach truth through dialogue and debate is to learn tolerance.

On Proverbs

Proverbs are inadequate moral guides because the rules they embody do not reflect the context of an individual's acts. Furthermore, language is imperfect and cannot convey the complete understanding of a person's experience. So, even if I invent my own proverb based on my experience, there is much in the phrase that I might understand that will not be perceived by listeners. Language's inadequacies should teach us tolerance.

Language is powerful, since every etymological meaning represents a map of associations. For example, the word "conscience" is a word that could mean principles or it could mean consciousness of arguments concerning principles. In the latter meaning, we lack conscience when our actions do not reflect principles we grasp and accept. But the word "conscience" is most often used by people who have not defined their own principles. These matter-of-fact people use the word "conscience" as if it were some mysterious and innate and incomprehensible faculty. What conscience really expresses is the interest of some class or another. Words

Harriet's ideas on competition and cooperation are echoed in John's "On Genius." See also the mid-October entry and footnote below.

On proverbs, 143–148. There are many different drafts of this document in Harriet's collection in the Mill/Taylor Collection. She must have been trying to prepare a draft of an article.

Endurance, 148.

such as "religion," "loyalty," and "honour" are used to help those in power, just as "virtue" is used to keep women in servitude. Those in power have always known the secret potency of words.

Consider "endurance." What is virtuous about endurance? If it is bearing evils which are remediless, then it is an occasion for fortitude, not endurance. If it is bearing evils which we might change, then it is a pseudo-virtue. If endurance is bearing lesser evil to avoid greater, then it is an example of sagacity and clear-sightedness, not endurance. If endurance is the sacrifice of our own happiness for the happiness of others, then the act is heroism, not endurance. We should be suspicious of those who claim to sacrifice their own happiness for others. Often people do not have the strength of character or the mental or moral courage to act on their principles. Therefore, endurance is a false virtue which is encouraged in women so that men may benefit.

Morality must include critical thought, not merely acting in accordance with the right moral rules. Acting from character requires that we weigh our action and choose it consciously and actively. Mindless adherence even to the best rules is not true morality. I believe Aristotle made the same point.

Late September 1832 John and I debate every day about those issues closest to us: how to improve society, how to overcome conformity, how to inspire tolerance, how to teach the young. Each time he leaves, I feel that we have grown closer to defining our central idea: the need for moral action which results from the effort of the individual, not blind acceptance of social codes. In order to achieve self-directed morality each of us must learn to debate with those who differ and to question every accepted idea. Since our short separation in August, we have appreciated even more than before our need for each other—not just as friends, but as intellectual part-

Again, ideas similar to Harriet's last paragraph appear in "On Genius" as well as the last chapter of *A System of Logic*. The idea Harriet presents here reminds me of the connection Aristotle drew between intellectual and moral virtues. Aristotle also argues that performing a moral act without knowing why or knowingly choosing it is not virtuous.

Late September 1832: "The wayward mind," 219.
"Tis man, not nature," 219.
Rhine poem, 220.
Sappho poem, 220–221.
Quoted untitled poem, 221.

ners. We share conversation and manuscripts, both equally necessary for each of us to grow. This fall has been particularly fruitful for both of us.

I finally received a copy of the September *Repository.* Although it is always pleasant to see my book reviews appear, nothing equals the enjoyment of seeing my poems in typescript. They make me so proud. Two appeared this month, "To the Summer Wind" and "Nature."

Poems

I tried to use the wind as a symbol for our minds in "To the Summer Wind." I ask whence it comes, where it speeds, and what mission it has. There are no answers supplied except that, like the wind,

> . . . the wayward mind,
> Earth thou spurnest
> Heaven-ward turnest,
> And rest canst nowhere find!

I think this poem may be my best. I know I am not a natural poet, but I believe that poetic language speaks to a part of us that we cannot live without. Instead of falling into infinite despair over the horrific discoveries of these past two years, I can write about the "never-failing love" of mother earth, as I did in "Nature."

> 'Tis man, not nature, works the general ill,
> By folly piled on folly, ill the heap
> Hides every natural feeling, save alone
> Grey Discontent, upraised to ominous height,
> And keeping drowsy watch o'er buried wishes.

Or I can drift away thinking about the Rhine, or Sappho's Greece, or give way to my feelings—although I could never publish this!

> I hold the future in my own control,
> A god unto myself—because of stedfast will.
> That neither Time nor circumstance may change
> For that the soul of virtuous Life
> Of useful acts, and lofty purposes
> Is voluntariness—with mind & heart
> To wish, & therefore will,

And so achieve, is the main secret
of the growth of good—
Therefore let those who have it hold it firm
As the wreck'd mariner the stedfast rock.
~~After long struggle with the storm~~
of vantage, gained by long struggle from the storm.

2 October 1832 Mr. Taylor has been trying to win my forgiveness. He has arranged for a holiday in Wales and has purchased a splendid new house at 17 Kent Terrace near Regent's Park. The children will certainly love the duck pond and the open space. The long line of white stuccoed townhouses, each floor of which has twelve foot ceilings, is talked about all over London. The architect is universally admired. I'm sure it will soon be *the* place to live in London. But, it will never be the right place for me to live. I do not expect either the trip or the house to change my feelings for Mr. Taylor.

Since I am to be away, John has decided to visit the Bullers in Cornwall. We shall be apart more than we like this month, and my twenty-fifth birthday will be sadder for it.

Early October 1832 I feel I must respond to Mr. Fox's article "On Political and Social Anomaly" which appeared in last month's issue. I'm sure he meant well when he pointed to the anomaly of a woman as head of government in a country where women have no civil rights, but he missed many important issues.

On Fox's "Political and Social Anomaly"

Civil inequality is not the most important source of women's unhappiness. The main problem is that women must sell their bodies and souls to purchase "a home" and a reputation in just the same way that common prostitutes sell their bodies for money—a practice with which three-fourths of our adult male population is familiar. When we talk about educating women for domestic duties, we might as well be saying train them

2 October 1832: From 3–9 October John goes with the Bullers to Cornwall; CW: XII, 117. Information about Taylors' move, Packe, 141.
Early October 1832: Fox's article, *Monthly Repository* 6 (September 1832): 637–642. On Fox's 'Political and Social Anomaly,' 13.

for prostitution, for that is the result. If we agree that the greatest happiness for the greatest number is a desirable end, our next question must be, do women attain the fullest development of the mental & physical capability with which nature has endowed them? No one of sound mind w^{d} say, "yes." If women do not develop fully, do they reach their greatest happiness?

One small step toward remedying this problem w^{d} be a radical revision of childhood education: boys and girls should learn together.

Why do I continue to write ideas that even the most radical press cannot or will not print? No one, not John, not Mr. Fox, can understand the unfairness of limiting women's education to piano playing and drawing lessons. What if a woman wants to learn anatomy and metaphysics? These pursuits may not prepare me for domestic duties. They might positively unsuit me for them. Is it therefore wrong to learn them? Is the sole purpose of a woman's life to care for husband and children?

Mid-October 1832 I've just read John's first piece for the *Repository*, "On Genius." He has said just what I have argued for so long! Throughout the essay, in direct contrast to "The Spirit of the Age," John contends that genius is not the winning of an intellectual race, which only a few achieve, but rather the accomplishment of thinking for ourselves. Those who discover new truths employ the same method of critical thinking that each learner uses. The only way to assure that we become a nation of geniuses, i.e., thinkers, is to change education to require critical evaluation and exercise of imagination rather than the current method of "cramming" or memorizing facts received from others. These are just the ideas I wrote in my paper on tolerance!

At last our ideas are joined: we believe in the centrality of education of both imagination and discrimination. We must continue this theme, for I am convinced it is the key to progress. Now we can begin "our" work. That word sounds so sweet to me. Together we shall make a difference.

Mid-October 1832: John's "On Genius," *Monthly Repository* 6 (October 1832): 649–659, reprinted in CW I: 329–339.

"On Genius" is a convergence of Harriet and John's ideas on the powers of education and its moral importance. Harriet wrote her pieces in 1832. Whether consciously for John to use, or whether she discovered their similarity as I've represented here is impossible to know. "On Genius" is signed with a pseudonym, so perhaps they intended it to be a joint article, but John does not record it as such in his bibliography.

20 October 1832 John penned a sweet letter today to William Bridges Adams who writes as Junius Redivivus in the *Repository.* He showed me the letter because it has a passage in it that captures what John and I share as much as he and Mr. Adams do. I've copied John's letter because it completely expresses our feeling about our work together:

* * *

We two possess what, next to community of purpose, is the greatest source of friendship between minds of any capacity; this is, not equality, for nothing can be so little interesting to a man as his own double; but, reciprocal superiority. Each of us knows many things which the other knows not, & can do many things which the other values but cannot himself do, or not do so well. There is also just that difference of character between us which renders us highly valuable to each other in another way for I required to be warmed, you perhaps occasionally to be calmed . . . We are far stronger together than separately, & whatever both of us agree in, has a very good chance, I think, of being true. We are therefore made to encourage and assist one another . . . At the same time I feel that this good may be unboundedly increased by association and collision with other minds.

* * *

John does not merely write about the power of collaboration in developing our minds and hearts, he lives it—both with me and others.

Book Review

Mr. Fox is begging for another book review for next month. So, today I take up one of my favorite topics, the French Revolution of 1830. John and I have spoken of our mutual love of the French often and our discouragement at what could have been a more complete revolution. In my review, I trace the history of the revolution and attempt to delineate the cause of its failure. I hope I was able to show that our very innocent Reform Bill will not lead to the destruction of our society, although English conservatives claim it will, just as French conservatives incorrectly predicted the collapse of French society in 1830.

20 October 1832: (CW: XII, 123–124)
Book review, 198–204.

November 1832

On Seasons

Ah, to be free to write as I please for the final issue of this year! What a delight to celebrate the seasons with my favorite quotations from *Hamlet* to *Paradise Lost* to Madame Roland's *Mémoires.* Appreciation of nature depends on the kind of mind and the state of mind in which it is approached. Winter is the season most find hard to savor, so I spend a great deal of time talking of the beauty of winter stars, flowers, fire, music, and friendship. Who can dismiss winter's bright fire or the voice of our beloved?

Spring's flowers seems to be emblems of women—administering to the lives of others, they don't produce but rather consume only what w[d] be noxious if unused—the compost of our lives. Ornaments in happiness, companions in solitude, soothing the "unrest of the soul," spring flowers even remind me of women when at evening. Then they receive the long deep draught of the element they love, and as the delicate fibers fill, the colours brighten, the stalks expand, the leaves rise, they by one consent do obeisance like the sheaves of the Syrian boy's dream. Like flowers, too, women lose in strength what they gain in richness. They both best dwell in the wild.

January 1833 All of our talk about poetry, my own poetry and my article on the seasons, has prompted John to write a piece for the *Repository* on poetry. He distinguishes poetry from prose, novels, description, and eloquence. Storytelling as found in novels is for children, but poetry is about the deeper workings of emotion. It is a special kind of knowledge. Poetry is not restricted to metred language but can be found in music and the visual arts as well. Poets link one idea to another through emotion instead of through the "artificial classifications" used by scientists or businessmen.

January–February 1833 I found a number of my ideas in Mr. Fox's new piece on "The Dissenting Marriage Question." Although most of the article is devoted to an argument against the newly proposed legislation al-

November 1832: "The Seasons," 204–208. Harriet's language about expanding stalks, etc. is clearly pre-Freudian!

January 1833: John's "Thoughts on Poetry and Its Varieties," *Monthly Repository* 7 (January 1833): 60–70, reprinted in CW: I, 343–365.

lowing members of dissenting religions to marry, my ideas about the rarity of "real sympathy or enjoyment of companionship" in marriage are found in his article. The need for divorce and the connection between current law and prostitution which Mr. Fox pointed out echoes my thoughts as well. I wonder if he relied on the drafts I sent him or only on remembered conversations on the matter? Clearly he agrees with Sarah, Eliza, and me on these points. I wonder if, like John and me, he and Eliza have exchanged essays on the topic?

2 February 1833 John and I agree that although Harriet Martineau works hard at learning and writing, her narrowness is appallingly common. John tried to convince me that Miss Martineau's critique of the *laissez faire* system is unfair, but I am not completely convinced. Both of us remain fond of Mr. Fox and the Flower sisters. Despite the uneasiness of Mr. Fox's attachment to Eliza, we believe they remain above reproach.

I have taken up the Caxton piece I began so many years ago. Mr. Taylor has convinced me that the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge w^{d} publish it in their upcoming collection of biographical sketches. Since Mr. Taylor is on the Society's Board of Directors, he w^{d} certainly know their publishing plans. It requires a great deal of research and polishing, but I want to complete it.

17 February 1833 John's kindness in reviewing Eliza's music in the *Examiner* pleases me as much as it does Eliza. Because of the uncertainty of her situation with Mr. Fox, Eliza is so melancholy these days that any encouragement lifts her spirits immeasurably. She and I will both be more cheerful when the snow fades into tulips.

January–February 1833: Harriet uses the phrase "real sympathy . . . ," 22, while William Fox writes, "the institution fails of realizing any approach towards . . . sympathy." "The Dissenting Marriage Question," *Monthly Repository* 7 (1833): 141.

Divorce and prostitution, Harriet 13, 22; Fox, 141.

2 February 1833: John's letter to Carlyle about Martineau, CW: XII, 140 and CW: XII, 152. Martineau was equally disparaging of Harriet. In her autobiography she recalls, "Among the mere pedants were some who were qualified for something better. Such women as Mrs. Opie and Mrs. John Taylor ought to have been superior to the nonsense and vanity in which they participated." Harriet Martineau, *Autobiography,* ed. Maria Weston Chapman (Boston: J. R. Osgood and Company, 1877), 226. Victorian Women Writers Project: An Electronic Collection. John Taylor and James Mill both served on the Board of Directors; see the series page from the *Lives of Eminent Persons* (London: Baldwin & Cradock, Paternoster-Row, 1833).

17 February 1833: John's reviews of Eliza's music, CW: XXIII, 554–555. John also reviewed her works on 21 April, reprinted in CW: XXIII, 561–562.

1 March 1833 I don't know whether to be pleased or furious. Mr. Fox's article entitled "A Victim" appeared in this month's issue. I showed Mr. Fox the drafts that I wrote a year ago on women's education, marriage, and abusive spouses, and now the same ideas appear in his article. Fox and I both blame parents and social morality for training women to be submissive and ignorant of life, which results in bad marriage choices. Both of us contrast a sensitive young woman with her stern, dogmatic, abusive parents. Both of us comment that the parents are seen by society as "well-regulated," as Fox put it. Earlier I stated that society sees parents as "rich, of gentle descent, and as things have been, might be said to be persons of good education." Mr. Fox places the young woman in a poorer family, whereas I make a point of positioning the victim in an upper-class family. We both insist that the woman's story is typical, not unusual. I described one father who "never doubted that it was by a mandate of nature that he set despotic power over the free-will actions of his mate," whereas Mr. Fox characterizes the father as "an austere; cold, stately, precise, dogmatical." The mother was similarly depicted by both of us. I wrote that in vehemently agreeing to her husband's view of his despotic power over her, she made herself amends by constraining all the rest of her household. Her virtue consists in adhering, without benefit of doubt, to an intention once adopted. Fox writes that the mother "lived by rule." Both Mr. Fox and I believe parenting that consists in breaking the will of the child by using corporal punishment contributes to women's victimization. We locate much of the problem with the foul state of women's education. For both of us parenting, social conditioning, and bad education regularly lead to an abusive marriage. My outline of civilization rising from physical

1 March 1833: See entry for late February 1832 for Harriet's discussion of this topic. Whether this borrowing was conscious collaboration or plagiarism cannot be ascertained on the basis of the evidence that remains. Fox does not assign authorship or co-authorship of the article to Harriet in his key to the anonymous articles published in the *Monthly Repository* in the British Library. William Fox, "A Victim," *The Monthly Repository* 7 (1833): 164–177.

"rich . . . " is Harriet's phrasing, 8; "well-regulated" is Fox's phrase, 165.

"never doubted . . . ," 11; "An austere . . . ," Fox, 166.

Characterization of mother, Harriet, 11, Fox, 166.

On parenting, Harriet, 11; Fox, 167. Helen Astley may have been the daughter or granddaughter of the founder of the famous Astley's Royal Amphitheatre. Margaret Temple is unidentified. Mehetabel Wesley is the "younger sister of the celebrated founder of Methodism" according to Fox.

Women's education, Harriet, 9; Fox, 166.

History of abuse, Harriet, 20–21; Fox, 177.

abuse to more subtle forms of submission parallels Mr. Fox's description of the development from slavery to harems to "educating [women] for dependency." I wrote about the fictional character of Helen Astley or Margaret Temple, whereas Mr. Fox has found the perfect focus of attention, Mehetabel Wesley.

I didn't have time last year to complete all of the thoughts I jotted down, but I wish he had asked to borrow my suggestions. I suppose I should be honored that he wished to include them. I do have more opinions than I have time to work out, so why not let others refine my broad proposals? The aim, after all, is to change society. Anyone who can add to that goal does good work.

Yet I can't shake this feeling of anger. Am I merely selfish?

My Caxton biography is nearly finished. As soon as I can recopy it, I will give it to Mr. Taylor to forward to the Society for publication.

John and I continue to see each other nearly every night. We try to give Mr. Taylor the opportunity to dine at home on Wednesdays, but the time from Tuesday to Thursday seems so long. Mr. Taylor has gotten in the habit of dining at the club most nights. Everyone appreciates this consideration.

9 March 1833 Instead of feeling invigorated by John's visit, today I feel discouraged. I don't believe I have ever seen John so dismayed about the do-nothing Parliament. Last year's hopes for real reform must be abandoned in light of the stale quality of the Parliamentary session. Is any government capable of improving the lives of its citizens?

From the abstract, we drifted into the personal. There, too, John was gloomy. He worries about his incapacity to love openly and freely. He is clearly frustrated by our inability to be together permanently. It is impossible! How can two people love as John and I do and not have the freedom to share every moment? How can I continue to live with Mr. Taylor? We feel like common adulterers, despite Mr. Taylor's acquiescence. Neither of us can see any reasonable solution. All I can do is try to convince John that he can and must reject the opinions of those who surround us. I try to contain my anger at his complaints, but it is hard to hide.

9 March 1833: JSM's letter to Carlyle reflects John's belief that he has an incapacity to love and is without hope; CW: XII, 144. His lack of interest in politics may also be a sign of his overall depression. In April he again writes to Carlyle about his "gloomy feelings" of the last month or two; CW: XII, 149.

* * *

This is one thing so perfectly admirable to me, that you, never in any mood, doubt the worth of enjoyment or the need of happiness—one less fine wd undervalue what he had not reached. Does not this prove that you have the poetic principle? for me my hope is so living and healthy that it is not possible to me to doubt that it will increase more & more until it assumes some new and higher form—going on towards perfection

Those words yesterday were cold and distancing, very, at first—Do you not know what it is to receive, with an impulse of thankfulness and joy and comfort, the packet which proves at first sight only a collection of minerals—one feels somewhat like a mineral—but this comes & must come from the uncongenial circumstances—The circumstances wh. tend to elate or to despond do not come at the same time to both—and tho' such things in no degree alter ones mind, they have their effect in deciding which state of the mind shall be for the time uppermost—and always will have as long as it pleases Heaven to endow us with a body and senses.

Yes—dearest friend—things as they are now, bring to me, beside moments of quite complete happiness, a life & how infinitely to be preferred before all I ever knew! I never for an instant could wish that this had never been on my own account, and only on yours if you c^d think so—but why do I say mine & yours, what is good for the one must be so for the other & will be so always—you say so—& whatever of sadness there may sometimes be, is only the proof of how much happiness there is by proving the capacity for so much more.

You say that what you think virtue, "the wise & good" who have long known and respected you, wont think vice—How can you think people wise, with such opposite notions? You say too that when those who profess different principles to the vulgar, act their principles, they make all worse whom they do not make better & I understand you to believe that they w^d *make many worse & few better in your case—Is not this then the 'thinking with the wise, & acting with the vulgar' principle? And does not this imply compromise & insincerity? You cannot mean that, for that is both base & weak—if made a rule, & not an occasional hard necessity.*

I was not quite wrong in thinking you feared opinions.—I never supposed you dreaded the opinion of fools but only of those who are otherwise wise & good but have not your opinions about Moralities.

Inserted letter: 325–326.

* * *

Spring 1833 My piece on William Caxton has appeared in *Lives of Eminent Persons.* I wonder if Mr. Taylor is responsible for its placement as the first chapter? I must remember to tell him that I am pleased. This biography of the man who brought printing to England does not convey the life of a brilliant man like Michelangelo, but because Caxton persevered in his practical pursuits, I believe that his example w[d] serve the working-class audience of this publication well. I don't believe these readers likely to imagine a world without printing, so I spend a great deal of time writing about the advantages of the printing press to society at large and particularly for education. Then I outline the discovery of paper and writing instruments followed by a description of medieval manuscripts. Only after offering the history of the discovery of the printing press do I turn to William Caxton's life. I end by surveying some of the results of Caxton's accomplishments. Whether this chapter or this book will help lift up the lower ranks or not, I cannot tell. I can only contribute my part.

Late Spring 1833 I tried to write a review of Disraeli's *Tale of Alroy,* but my pen failed to comply. The novel has some poetry: I wrote that it is a heap of eastern images with little order or connection, yet all Orient pearls, though at random strung. However, without a moral plot, the novel fails to hold my interest. I cannot write a review on what does not interest me.

11 April 1833 I have no doubt that Mr. Adams publishes ideas we have discussed. Under the pseudonym "Junius Redivivus," he wrote a piece called "On the Condition of Women in England." It abounds in parallels with my own thoughts. I drafted an argument about the detriment of educating women to be mindless pleasers of men; he talks of the same. I argued for the importance of mothers and hence the need for meaningful

Late Spring 1833: Alroy review, 176–178.

11 April 1833: William Bridges Adams, "On the Condition of Women in England," *Monthly Repository* 7 (1833): 217–231.

Educating for men's pleasure, Harriet, 12; Adams, 218.
Educating mothers, Harriet, 7; Adams, 217, 226.
Comparison of English to Turkish women, Harriet, 20, 22; Adams, 217, 227.
Marriage as prostitution, Harriet, 13; Adams, 218.
Chastity, Harriet, 19; Adams, 227–228.
Divorce, Harriet, 22–23; Adams, 228.

education of women; so does he. I compared English women to a Turkish harem, just as Mr. Adams writes. I suggested that marriage is merely legalized prostitution, as does he. My protest of the overemphasis on chastity in women parallels Mr. Adams'. We both discussed divorce as a viable option for unhappy marriages.

My drafts on marriage and divorce from last year have thus appeared in his name. For practical and philosophical reasons, I decided that I will no longer be concerned that I be the sole author of what is published. When Mr. Fox or Mr. Adams use my work, I have helped the cause of women. If they can take my ideas and reflect them in their articles, only selfishness w^{d} demand that I be given credit. In a publication filled with anonymous writing, mine will always remain nameless. So be it. Whenever John reviews "Junius Redivivus'" work in the *Examiner,* I feel he is also praising me. After all, most of Mr. Adams' points were first mine.

John continues to be quite out of sorts, and I am at a loss as to how to help. Even the twittering of the spring birds has not cheered John nor me. I feel that our current arrangement with Mr. Taylor cannot continue as it is. We all hang over a precipice. I get vertigo each time I turn around, not knowing whether I will see Mr. Taylor or John at my side.

Mid-May 1833 Mr. Fox presented us with Mr. Browning's first printed poem, "Pauline." John and I read it together and discussed it at length. Bits of it are admirable, but John was quite offended by its dishonorable treatment of women. He even suggested that Browning needed to meet a flesh-and-blood Pauline. I suspect he is too hard on Browning.

John continues to feel the stress of our situation, as do I. If only either of us could conceive of a better way to arrange our lives without destroying Taylor or our children. But we cannot. Neither of us can bear even an evening apart. How can we go on this way? Mr. Taylor is becoming increasingly distraught.

John's review of Adams, April 1833, CW: I, 367–377. There is no record of Harriet's reaction to Adams' article.

Mid-May 1833: On Browning's "Pauline," CW: I, 596–97. John's harsh criticism was recorded on the fly-leaf along with Harriet's positive comments in the margin of their copy. Neither expected Browning to see the comments, but Fox returned their annotated copy to Browning who was devastated by the comments. Some Browning scholars believe these comments made Browning reconsider "confessional" poetry. See W. C. DeVane, *A Browning Handbook,* 2nd ed. (New York: F. S. Crofts, 1955), 45–47; cited in CW: XII, 157.

John's state of mind is revealed in his letter to Fox, CW: XII, 157.

* * *

I on the contrary never did either 'write or speak or look as I felt at the instant' to you. I have always suffered an instinctive dread that mine might be a foreign language to you. But the future must amend this, as well as many other things.

* * *

June 1833 After Bentham died, we began talking about the strengths and weaknesses in Bentham's ethics. I wrote a few paragraphs labeled "Some Uses of the Word Selfish Selfishness & Sentimentality." I see that some of my ideas appear in John's new article on Bentham. I pointed out the distinction between "self-interest" and "selfishness." John expresses my idea so eloquently when he says that Bentham "by no means intended by this assertion to impute universal selfishness to mankind. . . . He distinguished two kinds of interests, the self-regarding and the social." John also writes about the metaphysical shortcomings of Bentham's ideas in ways first drafted by me.

We seem to have stumbled onto a good method of collaboration. First we talk; then sometimes I write a very rough paragraph or two. Then we continue our conversation until John feels ready to write out our ideas.

We are both convinced that we advance intellectually by dialogue—not confrontation of opposing views. We honestly attempt to understand and incorporate the truth of another's position. Likewise, we are improved morally by surrounding ourselves by other honorable people. Or, as John wrote in this article, "It is by a sort of sympathetic contagion, or inspiration, that a noble mind assimilated other minds to itself; and no one was ever inspired by one whose own inspiration was not sufficient to give him faith in the possibility of making others feel what *he* feels."

Summer 1833 We are in a state of confusion. Mr. Taylor declares that he can no longer go on leaving John and me alone every evening. I cannot

Inserted letter: 326

June 1833: On the difference between self-interest and selfishness, Harriet, 152; John, CW: X, 14. The piece appears anonymously. Harriet even commented "very good" in the margin of the copy in Somerville Library.

Metaphysical shortcomings, Harriet, 152; John, CW: X, 5.

Quoted from John, CW: X, 16. John never acknowledges Harriet's contributions to the articles attributed to him from this period, but the parallels noted above demonstrate that ideas from Harriet's drafts, often a year or two earlier, parallel those in John's articles.

disgrace Mr. Taylor. He does not want to hurt me, yet John and I cannot be apart. I am frantic with worry about where we shall go from here. What about the children? I don't think I could bear to be parted from them. Lily isn't even two years old yet.

June 1833 The children are fretful. I can't eat. Even the full moon of summer couldn't calm me.

One bit of bright news, however. John and I introduced "Junius Redivivus" or William Bridges Adams to Sarah and Eliza last week. Sarah was quite smitten with his anonymous work for the *Repository;* now I think she has found the one whom she can love.

Late July 1833 John and I are struggling to determine how we can live without abandoning our love or disturbing Mr. Taylor and the children. I can think of nothing else. Work is impossible. The household is so upset, we haven't even planned a summer holiday.

John met with Mr. Emerson today, and he asked John to send a letter of introduction for him to Mr. Carlyle.

August 1833 Slavery is abolished in the British Empire! At least this is happy news. If only America w[d] follow our lead.

Sometimes I feel like a slave trapped in Mr. Taylor's house.

5 September 1833 Mr. Taylor has asked me to separate from him so that I can think clearly about our future. I know he hopes that I will return convinced to give up John, but that will never be. As soon as can be arranged, I will leave for Paris for at least six months. If necessary, I may make the move permanent. The children sense the uneasiness in our house. My heart crumbles each time I think of leaving them. I don't know if I can bear it, but I must focus now on making all of the arrangements. I will wait until I arrive in Paris before I begin to think about my marriage.

John plans to follow me to Paris as soon as I am settled. In the midst of my upheaval with Mr. Taylor, John and I must finally define our relationship to one another. Will John have the strength to be open about what he wishes and desires?

Late July 1833: John's meeting with Emerson, CW: XII, 169.

August 1833: Chris Cook and John Stevenson, *The Longman Handbook of Modern British History 1714–1980* (London: Longman, 1983), 16.

5 September 1833: John announces to Carlyle that he is going to Paris, CW: XII, 174.

* * *

I am glad that you have said it—I am happy that you have—no one with any fineness or beauty of character but must feel compelled to say all, to the being they really love, or rather with any permanent reservation it is not love,—while there is reservation, however little of it, the love is just so much imperfect. There has never, yet, been entire confidence around us. The difference between you and me in that respect is, that I have always yearned to have your confidence with an intensity of wish which has often, for a time, swallowed up the naturally stronger feeling. The affection itself—you have not given it, not that you wished to reserve—but that you did not need to give—but not having that need of course you had no perception that I had & so you have discouraged confidence from me 'till the habit of checking first thoughts has become so strong that when in your presence timidity has become almost a disease of the nerves. It w[d] *be absurd only it is so painful to notice in myself that every word I ever speak to you is detained a second before it is said 'till I'm quite sure I am not by implication asking for your confidence. It is but that the only being who has ever called forth all my faculties of affection is the only in whose presence I ever felt constraint. At times when that has been strongly felt I too have doubted whether there was not possibility of dissapointment—that doubt will never return. You can scarcely conceive dearest what satisfaction this note of yours is to me for I have been depressed by the fear that what I w[d] most wish altered in you, you thought quite well of, perhaps thought the best of your character. I am quite sure that want of energy is a defect,* w[d] *be a defect if it belonged to the character, but that thank Heaven I am sure it does not. It is such an opposite to the sort of character.*

Yes—these circumstances do require greater strength than any other—the greatest—that which you have, & which if you had not I should never have loved you, I should not love you now. In this, as in all the most important matters there is no medium between the greatest, all, and none—anything less than all being insufficient[.] there might be just as well none.

If I did not know them to be false, how heartily I should scorn such expressions, "I have ceased to will"! then to wish? for does not wish with the power to fulfill constitute will? It is false that your "strength is not equal to the circumstance in wh you have placed" yourself.—It is quite another thing to be

Inserted letter: envelope dated 6 September, 326–328.

guided by a judgment on which you can rely & which is better placed for judgment than yourself.

W^d you let yourself "drift with the tide whether it flow or ebb" if in one case every wave took you further from me? W^d you not put what strength you have into resisting it? W^d you not wish to resist it, w^d you not will to resist? Tell me—for if you w^d not, how happens it that you will to love me or any most dear!

However—since you tell me the evil & I believe the evil, I may surely beleive the good—and if all the good you have written in the last two or three notes be firm truth, there is good enough, even for me. The most horrible feeling I ever know is when for moments the fear comes over me that nothing which you say of yourself is to be absolutely relied on. That you are not sure even of your strongest feelings. Tell me again that this is not.

If it were certain that "whatever one thinks best the other will think best" it is plain there could be no unhappiness—if that were certain want of energy could not be felt, could not be an evil, unless both wanted energy—the only evil there can be for me is that you should not think my best your best—or should not agree in my opinion of my best.

dearest I have but five minutes in wh to writ this or I should say more—but I was obliged to say something before to-morrow. t'was so long to wait dearest.

* * *

8 September 1833 Mr. Fox dropped by today. He asked me if our piece on poetry will be ready for the October issue. John wrote to him yesterday saying since the piece was mine, (really he should say ours) if I approved, Mr. Fox could have it. I told Mr. Fox I did think it was finished.

Talking with Mr. Fox about John made me feel better. Mr. Fox said that John's letter acknowledged how difficult the current circumstances are for him, but he was also reassuring about his love for me. I can only hope Mr. Fox is right. Sometimes I wonder at John's passivity.

8 September 1833: John wrote to Fox, 7 September 1833, CW: XII, 177–178. In offering the poetry article he says, "you know it is hers—if she approves, it shall be yours. . . . if she is ever out of spirits it is always something amiss in me that is the cause—it is so now—it is because she sees that what ought to be so much easier to me than to her, is in reality more difficult—costs a harder struggle—to part company with the opinion of the world, and with my former modes of doing good in it; however, thank heaven, she does not doubt that I can do it—" (178).

Mid-September 1833 I arrived in Paris yesterday, but I am so anxious that all I can do is fret. I have no appetite. I cannot sleep. These last few months have worn me down. I have been put out of my home, and I long for the children. I have never been without them, and my heart aches for them.

I think Mr. Taylor believes that a separation will reignite my love for him. It will not. My diseased body daily reminds me of his vice. I know he cannot be blamed for infecting me, but I cannot forgive the despicable acts by which he himself was infected. I firmly believe that with time, Mr. Taylor will discover that our present course is the least painful for all. He needs me to take care of the children. I allow him to avoid a public scandal by remaining married. He, of course, knows that John and I must remain chaste, so he has no legal action against me. If I were to openly live with John, not only w[d] I lose my children and hurt my husband, but John's standing as a moral philosopher w[d] be permanently damaged. John's message, our message, is too important to risk for our personal happiness. All day long I try to imagine a better solution for all of us, but I fail.

Early October 1833 The shock of my departure is over, but I remain agitated. What do the children think? Does Lily cry for me each night? I've tried to explain to Mr. Taylor that my affection for him remains steady. I have always and will always have an abiding friendship for him. His guilt permeates everything he does. He is an honorable man and has tried desperately to help me during these last two years. (The doctors who knew of his condition and advised him that he could safely wed are far from honorable!)

I have not been separated from John for this long since we first knew each other. My soul yearns for him. I know more than ever before that I cannot go on without him at my side. We have melded into one another. Together we are better than either is alone. I count the days until he will be here. My heart awaits his arrival.

5 October 1833 A letter from John arrives each day. Today's contained an amusing story about Mr. Carlyle. John lent him our copy of Madame Roland's *Mémoires.* Mr. Carlyle wrote to John saying that the author reminded him of a man rather than a woman! John took him to task, argu-

5 October 1833: John's letter, CW: XII, 184.

ing that there are no essential differences between the sexes. John copied out this sentence of his reply to Carlyle: "But the women, of all I have known, who possessed the highest measure of what are considered feminine qualities, have combined with them more of the highest *masculine* qualities than I have ever seen in any but one or two men, & those one or two men were also in many respects almost women." How typical of Carlyle and how like John to stand up for our beliefs. Soon, soon he will be in my arms.

11 October 1833 My dearest love reached Paris today. He didn't come in time for my twenty-sixth birthday, but his appearance was celebration enough. We have pledged never to part again. We have a true spiritual union more abiding than marriage in its legal sense could ever be. Now we can spend every waking moment together.

Late October 1833 We talk, and we go to dinner, and we go for walks, and we go for rides in the Bois de Boulogne. We are so happy in this wonderful city where we can be together so completely.

At first John seemed to think that we w^{d} end my separation from Taylor by going off together. He expected to have to abandon India House, London, and the life we have known. I told him that I had no intention of abandoning my children, or of ruining either his life or Mr. Taylor's. I will never give up the most important friendship of my life—I could not go on without John, but I also have no desire to end as so many we've known. They run away together only to find themselves hating one another a short time later. An artificial life in some foreign place without family, friends, or real work w^{d} not suit John or me. We must find another solution.

Early November 1833 We have finally learned to talk of everything. He now knows about my medical problems. He understands that if he stays with me, he will never be able to have all of me. His reaction was more open and more intimate than I have ever known from him. Even now he will not abandon me. He wants to be my heart's companion for eternity. I did not know I could love him more, but I do.

Edward has been to visit and was quite cordial. Brotherly support dur-

11 October 1833: John's letter to Fox describes his departure, CW: XII, 184–185.

Early November 1833: Edward's visit, CW: XII, 188; info about Harriet, CW: XII, 187. I speculate on Harriet's disclosure of her syphilis based on the intimacy expressed in their letter to William Fox discussed in the next entry.

ing this time has been most helpful. I trust his discretion in what he communicates to our parents and to Mr. Taylor. He has promised to see Mr. Taylor when he returns to London to make it clear to him that Taylor cannot expect me to stop seeing John regularly or to resume being his wife in more than name only. I have always had a deep affection for Mr. Taylor. I know he did not intend to harm me, but I will not desert John. My husband must understand this.

6 November 1833 We received a letter from Mr. Fox yesterday. The second part of the poetry article appeared in October's issue. The characterization of both Wordsworth and my favorite, Shelley, begins to capture their differences, although neither John nor I have much interest in theories of poetry these days.

Today, John and I wrote a letter to Mr. Fox trying to help him grasp our current feelings. Probably because of his own situation with Eliza and because of John's confusion when he last saw Mr. Fox, Fox was under the false assumption that we were to completely break from Mr. Taylor. John tried to explain by telling him what a miracle this last fortnight together has been.

John wrote to Mr. Fox and Eliza, saying in part: It "is an age in what it has done for us two. It has brought years of experience to us—good and happy experience most of it. We never could have been so near, so perfectly intimate. . . . we never could have been together as we have been in innumerable smaller relations and concerns—we never should have spoken of all things, and in all frames of mind, with so much freedom and unreserve. I am astonished when I think how much has been restrained, how much untold, unshewn, uncommunicated till now—how much which by the new fact of its being spoken, has disappeared—so many real unlikenesses, so many more false impressions of unlikeness, . . . I never thought so humbly of myself compared with her, never thought or felt myself so little worthy of her, never more keenly regretted that I am not in some things, very different, for her sake."

6 November 1833: Thomas Carlyle claims to have heard from Godefroy Cavaignac in 1835 that he had spotted Harriet and John in Paris "eatin' grapes together off o' one bunch, like two love birds." He repeated this story to Charles Buller, who may have spread it further. Carlyle's letter quoted in Hayek, 89, and Packe, 325. John mentions Cavaignac in his first letter to Carlyle on return from Paris, CW: XII, 194. This was not the last gossip Carlyle spread about John and Harriet. See May 1834 and 21 July 1834 entry notes.

John's quoted letter, CW: XII, 185–186.

Now finally John knows that I am convinced that we are perfectly suited to pass our lives together. John has said that whatever I decide will be best. John is happy, although I think he was happier when he imagined our lives completely settled apart from Mr. Taylor. I too am quite happy. Despite the anxiety of the past few months, the past two weeks with John have resolved my doubt and intensified my admiration. Our passion for each other is boundless and quite different from the affection I feel for Mr. Taylor. I am now convinced that I cannot completely ruin Mr. Taylor or my children's chances for happiness. We must find a compromise. If Mr. Taylor is to ask me to return, he must understand my feelings exactly.

I added this addendum to John's letter to Mr. Fox and Eliza.

* * *

He tells you quite truly our state—all at least wh he attempts to tell—but there is so much more might be said—there has been so much more pain than I thought I was capable of, but also O how much more happiness. O this being seeming as tho God had willed to show the type of the possible elevation of humanity. To be with him wholly is my ideal of the noblest fate for all states of mind and feeling which are lofty & large & fine, he is the companion spirit & heart desire—we are not alike in trifles only because I have so much more frivolity than he. why do you not write to me my dearest Lizzie? (I never wrote that name before) if you w^{d} *say on the merest scrap what you are talking about what the next sermon is about where you walked to, & such like, how glad I should be! You must come here—it is a most beautiful paradise. O how happy we might all be in it. You will see it with me, bless you! won't you?*

* * *

18 November 1833 John had to return to his duties at India House today. It is bleak in Paris without him, but I hope that Edward will be able to convince Mr. Taylor to have me home again soon under a new understanding.

20 November 1833 Yesterday I had one of those letters from Mr. Taylor which make us admire & love him. He says that this plan & my letters have given him delight—that he has been selfish—but in future will think more

Inserted letter: Harriet's letter inserted in John's to Fox, 328–329.

20 November 1833: John quotes Harriet's first two sentences in his letter to Fox, CW: XII, 189.

for others & less for himself—but still he talks of this plan being good for all, by which he means me, as he says he is sure it will "prevent after misery" & again he wishes for complete confidence. I copied Mr. Taylor's letter exactly in mine to John. He will be so pleased. Now I can begin to plan my return home.

Late November 1833 I am home with my children. They cling to me as I do to them. Now that everything is clear—Mr. Taylor and John and I will go on permanently as we did before Paris—everyone will be happier. John and I will see each other regularly at our house on Kent Terrace while Mr. Taylor dines at the club.

Mid-December 1833 John continues to see me nearly every evening. He has been excited about a new radical periodical he, Roebuck, and Buller want to start. I think it is a wonderful opportunity, but I hope John will not become overworked with his duties at India House. Christmas celebrations will be particularly merry this year. My parents are coming for dinner next week.

January 1834 Christmas is over and now we must face the future along with bleak January. I expected my life w[d] be easier since Mr. Taylor and I agreed that John must be part of my life. It is not. The long days of cold bitter temperatures leave me longing for Paris. Now that I have tasted life in the continual presence of my dear one, any space of time without him is dismal. His nearly daily visits cheer me somewhat.

We debated whether John should announce his atheism to Carlyle. I argued that he should tell Carlyle since for Mr. Carlyle to continue thinking that John's beliefs coincide with his own is unfair to him. John and I have shared our disbelief in God from the beginning just as we did our mutual belief in women's equality. If Mr. Carlyle really wants to understand John, he must know this plain fact about him.

February 1834 John began publishing his series on Plato in the *Repository* this month. I was convinced after he showed the translations to me some time ago that they w[d] be helpful, since society needs to understand

January 1834: John did express his disbelief to Carlyle, CW: XII, 206.

February 1834: Mineka, 418; Protagoras, VIII, 89–99 (Feb.), 203–211 (Mar); Phaedrus, VIII, 404–420 (June), 633–646 (Sept); Gorgias, VIII, 691–710 (Oct.), 802–815 (Nov.), 829–842 (Dec.); Apology IX, 112–121 (Feb. 1835), 169–178 (Mar. 1835).

the Socratic method of dialogue as the only way of coming to know. I am very proud of the series, but I know we will need to work on the articles throughout the year to get them in shape. In the upcoming piece on the Gorgias, we—for we have worked on these together so often, "we" seems like the correct pronoun—managed to reiterate what was also included in the Bentham article last year, that the love of virtue is not gained by argument, but is caught through inspiration and admiration for either those we reverence in life or artists who can breathe feelings into us through our imagination and our sensations. The power of both the arts and of those who surround us has not been sufficiently understood by moral philosophers.

24 February 1834 John and I have been working on an article about the politics of Irish tithes. John sent the latest draft to me for final corrections and asked that I send it on to Mr. Fox if I was satisfied with it. I did so. John and I agree so much lately on all the main ideas that our joint work seems to flow effortlessly.

However, no matter how much we work together, I still feel melancholy. We are still constrained by society to deny our relationship. Being so in love, why can't we live together openly? Why is society so narrow? We had a nice visit with Mr. Fox and Sarah and Eliza last week, but I still feel so isolated. Even Sarah's upcoming marriage to Mr. Adams does nothing to cheer me up.

Somehow I thought it w^{d} all be so different when we returned from Paris, but nothing has really changed. I don't see how we can continue this pattern for the rest of our lives.

2 March 1834 Last night John and I discussed the way we work together. John convinced me that his purpose in life is to translate the Artistic and Poetic into the Scientific. He believes that the highest truths are discovered in the direct insight found in poetry and art, but that those who cannot grasp the language of art can still come to know some of its truths if deciphered by someone who knows the language of argument. He believes his work is to interpret "mysticism" or, as Mr. Carlyle calls it, the direct

24 February 1834: concerning the tithes article, see CW: XII, 215.
Visit with Mr. Fox, Eliza, and Sarah, CW: XII, 213.
Upcoming marriage of Sarah and William Adams, Packe, 148.
2 March 1834: See John's letter to Thomas Carlyle, CW: XII, 219.

insights of an artistic temperament. For us that means that we must work as a team; neither is effective alone. If we want to change society's morality, we must change the feelings of those in society. To change feelings, we need imaginative vision and an ability to communicate that vision to those who are not sensitive to such visions.

28 April 1834 The more my beloved and I share our thoughts, the more we both feel that we differ utterly from our society, even to those nearest us. Each day we feed each other and our ideas become clearer and our insights deeper.

May 1834 Another Spring and yet I continue to be melancholy. Herby will go to school this autumn. Haji and Lily are growing and learning every day. They love the flowers in our garden and the ducks in Regent's Park, but I must fight to find the energy to take them out.

John welcomed the Carlyles to their new home in London today. He has promised to walk with Mr. Carlyle each Sunday. I am happy that John can have a new companion, but I feel more sorely my own isolation.

17 June 1834 John told me of his offer from Molesworth to take control of a new radical periodical called the *London Review.* Because of his position at India House, John cannot be the named editor since that w[d] be considered direct political involvement, but he is to act as editor. He is quite excited. A wonderful opportunity such as this is rare, but I am so low right now that nothing seems worth doing. I cannot go on living this lie with Mr. Taylor. Something must change.

Eliza is even more miserable than I am. Now that Sarah is married, Mrs.

28 April 1834: See John's letter to Thomas Carlyle, CW: XII, 224.

May 1834: CW: XII, 223, fn. 3. The Carlyles began immediately to gossip about John's "affair" with Harriet. Thomas wrote to his brother that Mrs. Austin had relayed the story of John's "having fallen *desperately in love* with some young philosophic beauty (yet with the innocence of two sucking doves. . . . Buller also spoke of it, but in the comic vein" (quoted in Hayek, 80). So Mrs. Austin, deep in her own epistolary love affair with Hermann von Pückler Muskau, happily shared John's private life with Carlyle while Charles Buller joined in making fun of the couple. Mrs. Austin had no right to talk. She had used John Mill to carry Muskau's secret love letters to her while she was on vacation in 1831 (Lotte and Joseph Hamburger, *Contemplating Adultery: The Secret Life of a Victorian Woman* [New York: Fawcett Columbine, 1991], 115–116). Jane Carlyle added to the gossip: "young Mrs. Taylor, tho' encumbered with a husbhande and children, has ogled John Mill successfully so that he was desperately in love" (Hayek, 80). During this period Carlyle thought John was a convert to his philosophy, so he was particularly keen to know the inner workings of his catch. Carlyle never tired of passing along any rumor he heard about John and Harriet.

17 June 1834: Information about *London Review,* CW: XII, 225.

Fox makes life unbearable for Eliza. She needs me more than ever, but I can't see beyond my own unhappiness.

* * *

Happiness has become to me a word without meaning—or rather the meaning of the word has no existence in my beleif. I mean by Happiness the state wh I can remember to have been in when I consciously used the word—a state of satisfaction, by satisfaction meaning not only the mind made up, not only having conviction of some sort on every large subject, but cheerful hopeful faith about all wh I could contemplate & not understand & this along with great & conscious enjoyment from my own emotions & sensations—that Happiness I had often a year ago—I beleive that if the world were as well directed as human beings might direct it, & may be expected to direct it, that all might be Happy, in proportion to their capacity for Happiness & that those with great capacity might be actually happy—live in a satisfied state, without need of more but with, for their forward view, a placid contemplation of the probability of still greater capacity in some other state of existence. I do not believe I shall ever again feel that—the most this world can do for me is to give present enjoyment sufficient to make me forget that there is nothing else worth seeking—for the great mass of people I think wisdom w^d^ be to make the utmost of sensation while they are young enough & then die—for the very few who seem to have an innate incomprehensible capacity of emotion, more enjoyable than any sensation but consistent with & adding to all pleasurable sensation for such if such there be wh I greatly doubt, their wisdom like the others is to live out their pleasures & die—now I beleive that such beings w^d^ not c^d^ not live out those enjoyments but that I think is because they come to them late, thro' struggle & suffering generally, wh gives an artificial depth & tenacity to their feeling, for those who come to such feelings at all are those of the most imagination—& so hold them firmest. I do not beleive affection to be natural to human beings—it is an instinct of the lower animals for their young—but in humans it is a made up combination of feelings & associations wh will cease to exist when artificiality ceases to exist: only passion is natural that is temporary affection—but what we call affection will continue as long as their is dependance.

Inserted letter: 329.

* * *

26 June 1834 We are miserable. No matter how I try to convince John that we have radical differences in ideas and temperaments, he denies that there are any which could make us unhappy. I want him so badly at times. Since he does not know sexual intimacy, he is far more content than I to forego it. I know we cannot act on our—or should I say, my—feelings, but that does not mean that I do not experience the desire.

He is a dear soul, but how can he possible understand what I want and what we can never have and why I am so despondent?

Summer 1834 Mr. Taylor has agreed to lease a house for me in Keston Heath. I might be able to breathe if I leave London. I have been so low these last six months, even he understands that the current situation cannot remain. Lily will be with me and the boys will visit regularly. Herby will be in school and Haji does not want to leave his brother. The little house is close enough for John to continue to visit regularly, and we will have some of the freedom we had in Paris.

Later Summer 1834 The quiet of the country has restored my well-being. Lily loves to walk on the heath, and John can come for weekends of quiet work. We can be together in the way that suits us. I had forgotten what it felt like to be happy.

Even on the few days we aren't together, I write to John at the office.

* * *

I don't know why I was so low when you went this morning. I was so low—I could not bear your going my darling one; yet I should be well enough accustomed to it by now. O you dear one! dear one!

They are not coming to-day nor at all at present, & I am not sorry for it.

26 June 1834: In a letter to Fox, CW: XII, 227, John discusses a deterioration of "our affairs" and acknowledges that Fox disapproves of the relationship between John, Mr. Taylor, and Harriet.

John wrote in a letter to Harriet: "refusing to acquiesce in your seemingly determined resolution that there should be radical differences of some sort in some of our feelings, and now having found, & convinced you, that there are none that need make us unhappy, I have learnt from you to be able to bear that there should be some—consisting chiefly in the want of some feelings in me which you have. But I thought we perfectly knew & understood what those were, & that neither of us saw any good in discussing them further—" (CW: XII, 227–228).

Inserted letter: 330.

I shall get on very well, I have no doubt, untill Thursday comes & you. I wish to-morrow were Thursday, but I do not wish you were coming before Thursday because I know it w^d be so much harder to bear afterwards.

If I knew where at Sevenoaks L & Sallie are I w^d go in the chaise & see them. but that will do any time.

be well & happy dearest—but well before everything. dearest I cannot express the sort of dégout I feel whenever there comes one of these sudden cessation of life—my only spiritual life—being much with you—but never mind—it is all well & right & very happy as it is. only I long unspeakably for Saturday. This place is very lovely but it both looks & feels to me quite lifeless. farewell darling mine.

* * *

July 1834 John has noticed several talented women authors this year. In April he sang the praises of Eliza's songs; in May he reviewed a piece of Harriet Martineau; and this month he noticed a translation by Sarah Austin. John wants women to succeed— w^d that more men were like him.

14 July 1834 John and I are frantic about Mr. Fox and Eliza. Mrs. Fox has accused her husband of committing adultery in their own house. Mr. Fox believes that he must not deny the claim because he sincerely believes that the issue is private and irrelevant to anyone outside the relationship. He has offered his resignation to the congregation at South Place Chapel rather than answer the charge. John and I have tried to convince him that failure to respond will be interpreted as assent. I have even gone to Walworth to appeal to my father for help with the church question. I don't know if he will help or not.

I am so relieved that I am no longer living a few blocks from the church. The panic of the congregation over the Eliza dilemma must invade the entire community. My country home has become an oasis.

21 July 1834 I met the Carlyles last night. Mr. Carlyle seemed charming enough, but Jane was nearly silent. Perhaps if she and I were alone, we w^d have a chance to become friends. I've asked her to visit soon. Meeting new

14 July 1834: CW: XII, 228, fn. 2.

21 July 1834: Thomas Carlyle reports the meeting to his brother: Mrs. Taylor "is a living romance heroine, of the clearest insight, of the royalest volition, very interesting, of questionable destiny" (quoted in Hayek, 80).

people is a welcome relief from the worry about Eliza and Mr. Fox. Their situation remains in crisis.

12 August 1834 We had the Carlyles to dinner tonight with Eliza and Mr. Fox and John. Mr. Carlyle seemed obviously jealous when John discussed the *London Review.* John, of course, did not sense his anger, but I'm sure I detected it. The Carlyles' Scottish Calvinism grates against my Unitarian upbringing. I can't imagine much will come of his friendship with John, but John will need to discover that for himself.

8 September 1834 I was walking in the park today with Mr. Taylor discussing yesterday's nasty piece in the *London Sunday Times* about Eliza and Mr. Fox when we happened upon the Carlyles. Their carriage had broken down while on their way to visit us. I'm glad they were delayed and could not visit. I don't feel well enough for polite chat today.

The piece in the paper headed "The Fox and the Flower" was a nasty bit of gossip-baiting, and it reinforces my disgust with society and my fear for John's reputation. We simply must be discreet, if John is to be effective as a moral leader.

Mid-September 1834 The congregation has met at South Place Chapel and three quarters of them have acquitted Mr. Fox of the charges. They agreed that the real dispute was about Mr. Fox's radical views on divorce presented in the *Repository* and not his marital behavior. Nearly a fourth of the congregation (some 120, I've been told) have left, but the remaining are loyal to Fox and have asked that he withdraw his resignation.

8 October 1834 Many happy returns to myself on my twenty-seventh birthday. What a year! A year ago John and I celebrated a belated birthday in Paris. That seems a lifetime ago. What appeared resolved then only dissolved when I returned. What had been normal before Paris could not remain so after our separation. Eliza's and Mr. Fox's predicament erupted just as I had begun to find peace in Kent. John and I still have painful moments, but our love overcomes them all. Our life and work together are my greatest gifts.

12 August 1834: Carlyle's nasty sarcasm about the party is recorded in a letter to his brother quoted in Hayek, 81.

8 September 1834: The entire newspaper citation is quoted in Mineka, 188.

Carlyle described Harriet during the encounter as "pale . . . and passionate and sad-looking: [I] really felt a kind of interest in her" (quoted in Hayek, 81).

Mid-September 1834: Mineka, 194–195.

14 October 1834 The autumn air invigorates Lily and me as we take a walk each morning. Lily loves to pick up the leaves as she names their colors. Lily, Herby, and Haji have gotten used to the new living arrangements, although Herby tends to be sullen when I'm around.

John is spending some time walking in the country after completing the first three books of his *Logic.* He has given up politics to concentrate on purely intellectual writing. I think it will be his first great book.

Late October 1834 I'm sure I am being overly sensitive, but there seems a coolness toward us from the Austins and Carlyles since Mr. Fox's problems. John assures me that I fret without cause, but I feel as though we are compared to Mr. Fox and Eliza.

November 1834 The King has dismissed the ministry! The country is in turmoil. John and I believe that reform will occur more rapidly and that last year's Reform Act might finally become effective in creating real social change. We are more optimistic about our government that ever before. Buller and Roebuck have finally proven their commitment to radical politics in Parliament.

18 December 1834 John and I are convinced that Peel's administration will promote reform. His Tamworth Manifesto will only backfire. The *London Review* will be the perfect vehicle to help focus the reform measure.

January 1835 Mr. Fox has done it. He has formally separated from his wife and has moved in with Eliza and two of his children. Despite his encouraging us to do the same, I never imagined that he w^{d} act. John and I have urged him to find a means of giving his wife and children some dignity, even if he must suffer more. This move, on top of the scandal of the last few months! John and I are both edgy.

14 October 1834: CW: XII, 235.

Late October 1834: According to Carlyle, the Austins and many of the older Utilitarian Radicals were dismissive of John's relationship with Harriet and all of their Unitarian friends. Again, the irony is that Mrs. Austin was herself involved in an unconsummated secret love. Carlyle's own sexless marriage may not be a "little [Hell] of improvidence, discord, unreason" (his accusation of Harriet's friends' marriages), but it can hardly be called ideal. Letter from Carlyle quoted in Hayek, 82.

November 1834: Cook and Stevenson, 16.

On 26, 28, and 29 November, John's letters delight in Peel's expected appointment as prime minister and pride in Charles Buller and John Roebuck; CW: XII, 238, 240, 242.

January 1835: Mineka, 195.

11 January 1835 Jane Carlyle came to tea yesterday. She asked an impertinent question about Mr. Fox. She really is insufferable.

I have had recurring headaches all month—then there is the torturous cold again with its companion, darkness.

February 1835 The new parliament meets for the first time. We only hope it fulfills our expectations. John is furious over Macaulay's "Minute" supporting English as the language of instruction in India. We agree that the only way education will become customary in India is for the teachers to use native languages. John plans to write a sharp rebuttal, but I doubt he will succeed in changing the policy.

Mr. Carlyle gave John the manuscript of the first volume of his French Revolution. John has promised to read it to me so that we can evaluate it together. Perhaps that will cheer us up.

Our anxiety over the Foxes spoils our time together. John wonders if we should not make the same move. W[d] we be happier? Eliza and Mr. Fox continue to sing the praises of their new lives together. I keep thinking of other women who have gone off with their lovers. None have ended well. I cannot believe that the result will be greater happiness for either the woman, her children, or the abandoned husband. Or am I just a coward?

Both John and I have been suffering physically during these winter months. I expect I will have to wait until spring to feel myself again. Come sweet robin to cheer me.

* * *

Tuesday eveng.

Dearest—You do not know me—or perhaps more truly you do not know the best of me—I am not one to 'create chimeras about nothing'—you should know enough of the effects of petty annoyances to know that they are wearing & depressing not only to body but to mind—these, on account of our relation, I have & you have not—& these make me morbid—but I can say most clearly

11 January 1835: Jane Carlyle gossiped to Mr. Carlyle's brother that Harriet is "dangerous looking . . . and engrossed with a dangerous passion" (quoted in Hayek, 82).

February 1835: Cook and Stevenson, 16.

Information concerning John's fight about Indian education in August, 91–92.

Carlyle's loan of his book: Packe, 185.

Inserted letter: 330–332. I've added the word "different" for an unintelligible word in the sentence "If when first I knew . . . you were different to what . . . "

& surely that I am never so without being perfectly conscious of being so—that I always know that in a better state of health all those morbid & weakly feelings & views & thoughts w^d go. So far from your two instances being like this—those women took the life with the men they loved at once as a desperate throw without knowing anything of those men's characters—if I had done that do you think that I should not have been blindly devoted? of course I should—in such a case the woman has absolutely nothing to make life of but blind implicit devotion. It is not true that my character is 'the extreme of anxiety and uneasiness' if my circumstances do not account to you for all or more of anxiety & uneasiness which I show to you, why there is nothing to be said about that—you do not know the natural effect of those circumstances. If it is true that so long you concealed your feelings from me for fear of paining me, I can only say I am sorry for it because I know you too well not to know that no real feelings of yours w^d ever pain me. Then as to your inquiry of how I should like that you sh^d go for a walk without me I can only say that I am not a fool—& I should laugh at, or very much dislike the thought, that you sh^d make your 'life obscure insignificant & useless' pour les beaux yeux & I cannot think it was consistent with love to be able to think or wish that. If it is true, & I suppose you know yourself, that then 'you w^d never speak a true word again' never 'express natural liking' never 'dare to be silent or tired' why I can but say that if you w^d take such a life as that you must be mad. That one might never be wholly satisfied with the finite is possible but I do not believe that I sh^d ever show that—I think it w^d & must be true of persons of intellect & cultivation without acute feelings—but I have always observed where there is strong feeling the interests of feeling are always paramount & it seems to me that personal feeling has more of infinity in it than any other part of character—no ones mind is ever satisfied, nor their imagination nor their ambition—nor anything else of that class—but feeling satisfies—All the qualities on earth never give happiness without personal feeling—personal feeling always gives happiness with or without any other character. The desire to give & to receive feeling is almost the whole of my character.

With the calmest, coldest view I beleive that my feeling to you w^d be enough for my whole life—but of course only if I were conscious of having as good a feeling.

I have always seen & balanced in my mind all these considerations that you write about therefore they do not either vex or pain me. I know all about all these chances—but I know too what you do not, but what I have always told you, that once having accepted that life I should make the very best of it.

I used long ago to think that in that case I should have occasional fits of deepest depression, but that they w^d not affect our happiness, as I should not let you see them—for long now I have been past thinking that. I shall always show you & tell you all that I feel. I always do. & the fact that I do so proves to me that I should have but little that was painful to show. as to the rash & blind faith & devotion of those women you instance look at the result to them! & that is the natural result of such an engagement entered into in that way. If when first I knew you I had given up all other life to be with you I sh^d gradually have found if not that you did not love me as I thought at least that you were different to what I had thought & so been dissapointed—there w^d never be dissapointment now. I do not know if 'such a life never succeeds' I feel quite sure that it w^d succeed in our case. You may be quite sure that if I once take that life it will be for good.

With not only all that you write—but more all that can be said, fully before me I should without hesitation say 'let it be', I do not hesitate about the certainty of happiness—but I do hesitate about the rightfulness of, for my own pleasure, giving up my only earthly opportunity of 'usefulness'. You hesitate about your usefulness & that however greater in amount it may be, is certainly not like mine marked out as duty. I should spoil four lives & injure others. This is the only hesitation. When I am in health & spirits I see the possibilities of getting over this hesitation. When I am low & ill I see the improbabilities. Now I give pleasure around me, I make no one unhappy, & am happy tho' not happiest myself. I think any systematic middle plan between this & all impracticable. I am much happier not seeing you continually here, because then I have habitually enough to make me able to always be wishing for more, when I have that more rarely it is in itself an object & a satisfaction.

I think you have got more interest in all social interests than you used to have, & I think you can be satisfied, as I can at present perhaps with occasional meeting—but then thro' every moment of my life you are my one sole interest & object & I w^d at any instance give up all, were it ten thousand times as much, rather than have the chance of one iota of diminution of your love.

This scrawled literally in the greatest haste—because you said write—but in the morng I shall see you. mine.

* * *

26 February 1835 Mr. Taylor suggested that we have a dinner party to cheer me up. So last night we had John, Mr. and Mrs. Buller, Mr. Fox and Eliza, the Fonblanques, and the Carlyles to dine. Everyone seemed to enjoy

themselves. The excitement over the prospects of the new parliament pervaded everyone's talk. Even the Carlyles relaxed more than usual.

Early March 1835 I am so angry with John. He has written that he fears he will become "obscure & insignificant" because he has fallen in love with me, so his prospects will be ruined. I have left my two children and have no clear purpose in life other than to care for him and he dares worry about his career to me. We have both been anxious about the Fox scandal, but really, this insult is too much.

* * *

Wednesday

Dear one—if the feeling of this letter of yours were your general or even often state it w^d^ be very unfortunate for—may I say us—for me at all events. Nothing I beleive w^d^ make me love you less but certainly I should not admire one who could feel in this way except from mood. Good heaven have you at last arrived at fearing to be 'obscure & insignificant'! What can I say to that but "by all means pursue your brilliant and important career'. Am I one to choose to be the cause that the person I love feels himself reduced to 'obscure & insignificant'! Good God what has the love of two equals to do with making obscure & insignificant if ever you could be obscure & insignificant you are so whatever happens & certainly a person who did not feel contempt at the very idea the words create is not one to brave the world. I never before (for years) knew you to have a mesquin feeling. It is a horrible want of unanimity between us. I know what the world is, I have not the least desire either to brave it or to court it—in no possible circumstances sh^d^ I ever do either—those imply some fellow-feeling with it & that I have only in case I could do it or any individual of it any good turn—then I should be happy for the time to be at one with it—but it is to me as tho' it did not exist as to any ability to hurt me—it could not, & I never could feel at variance with it. how I long to walk by the sea with you & hear you tell me the whole truth about your feelings of this kind. There seems a touch of Common Place vanity in that dread of being obscure & insignificant—you will never be that—& still more surely I am not

26 February 1835: Carlyle reports on party at Taylor's, Hayek, 82–83.

Inserted letter: 332–333. No date indicates when in 1835 this letter was written. "Mesquin" is French for petty.

a person who in any event could give you cause to feel that I had made you so Whatever you may think I could never be either of those words.

I am not either exceedingly hurt by your saying that I am of an anxious and uneasy character. I know it is false & I shall pity you.

* * *

6 March 1835 Disaster! John came today frantic and nearly hysterical. His maid has burned Mr. Carlyle's manuscript of the *French Revolution.* He has been overwrought with work on the first edition of the *London Review* and with our own unhappiness. He simply did not notice that he gave the maid the manuscript along with other scrap paper. After he regained his composure, I promised that I w^d^ accompany him to Cheyne Road so that he could tell Mr. Carlyle the sad news. In the carriage, he trembled during the entire journey. I was so afraid that he w^d^ collapse. When we arrived, John asked Jane to join me in the chaise while he talked to Mr. Carlyle. Nothing could have been more dreadful. Mr. Carlyle destroyed his own notes after delivering the manuscript to John, so months of work are completely lost. Both Mr. and Mrs. Carlyle kindly comforted us. John's humiliation is complete. Nothing can atone for Mr. Carlyle's loss.

10 March 1835 John has offered Mr. Carlyle books and money to help repair the damage. Mr. Carlyle has been very noble throughout this ordeal. He even suggested that John take the section of book that he has completed since he loaned John the first section. John replied that he w^d^ not take it, but that I could be trusted with it. I w^d^ surely guard it with my life, but I doubt that Mr. Carlyle will have the courage to part with any other section of the manuscript. In his letter to John yesterday, Mr. Carlyle asked for my address in town. What an odd question. He surely is hinting at some indiscretion in this remark.

April 1835 Despite the calamity of last month, the first edition of *London Review* appeared. John has been overwrought the last six months preparing for this event. I don't see how he will be able to continue working at India House, writing the *Logic,* and editing this new journal. I fear for

6 March 1835: The rumor that Harriet was responsible for the disaster continued long after it was obvious she had no part in the accident; CW: XII, 252, fn. 2.

10 March 1835: *Letters of Thomas Carlyle to John Stuart Mill, John Sterling and Robert Browning,* ed. Alexander Carlyle (New York: Haskell House, 1974), 174. John's reply, CW: XII, 253.

April 1835: Cook and Stevenson, 16.

his health. However, the time is ripe for such a journal. Peel has resigned, and Melbourne has formed a government. The political turmoil continues.

May 1835 Neither of us has been well, but we have enjoyed reading M. de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America.* We agree it is the best description of America ever written. John wishes to write to him to congratulate him on his fine insights.

15 June 1835 Until now we have confined our appearances together to social occasions with the Carlyles and Mr. Fox and Eliza and dinners at Kent Terrace where we could invite a number of other people. We decided that the time had arrived for us to try being seen together. We had invited the Bullers to dinner back in February, so we decided that theirs w[d] be a safe party for us to attend. Only John's dearest friends w[d] be there. I put on my prettiest grey gown with a white lace berthe in anticipation of my first evening out with John.

As soon as we entered the room, I knew we had made a terrible mistake. I could hear the gossip circling the room, although John seemed oblivious. I remained so nervous throughout the evening that neither of us enjoyed the company.

16 June 1835 I was right about last night. John had a nasty scene with Roebuck today at the India House. Roebuck had the audacity to lecture John about the impropriety of his relationship with me. Both of us had thought better of Roebuck. John has sworn off any future friendship with

May 1835: John begins a regular correspondence with de Tocqueville on 11 June, CW: XII, 265.

15 June 1835: Roebuck describes the evening in his autobiographical sketch: "I saw Mill enter the room with Mrs. Taylor hanging upon his arm. The manner of the lady, the evident devotion of the gentleman, soon attracted universal attention, and a suppressed titter went round the room. My affection for Mill was so warm and so sincere that I was hurt by anything which brought ridicule upon him." Robert Eadon Leader, ed., *Autobiography and Letters of John Arthur Roebuck* (London: Edward Arnold, 1897), 38. Several of his observations about John are incorrect, and it is certainly disingenuous of him to claim that he knew nothing of their intimacy until that night. The rumors from Mrs. Austin, the Bullers, Carlyles, and no doubt others would certainly have reached Roebuck's ears by this date. He himself was intimate enough with Harriet to write about his use of mercury! A berthe is a deep falling collar attached to the top of a low-necked dress.

16 June 1835: Roebuck, 39. He reveals more than he knew by this description of their relationship: "I knew, and ought to have acted on that knowledge, that where a woman was concerned, the wisest of men are but fools; and that more especially one so little conversant with women or the world would be a slave to the first woman who told him she liked him. Mill's intellect bowed down to the feet of Mrs. Taylor. He believed her an inspired *philosopher in petticoats* and as she had the art of returning his own thoughts to himself, clothed in her own words, he thought them hers, and wondered at her powers of mind, and the accuracy of her conclusions" (Roebuck, 39; emphasis added).

him. I think John and I are being painted with the same brush used on Mr. Fox and Eliza. We have no way of defending ourselves. If we cannot count on friends such as Roebuck, we must simply abandon the society whose morality remains too narrow to judge us fairly.

July 1835 John and I have retreated to our sanctuary in the country. He comes to enjoy the air and peace several times a week and on most weekends. He has completed the second edition of *London Review.* The politics of this journal wear on John. He is far from well.

7 October 1835 As I reflect on my last year, I believe it has been the most painful of my twenty-eight. My informal separation from my husband is bittersweet. John and I have our privacy now, but at the cost of seeing my precious sons less often than I wish. The debacle of Mr. Fox and Eliza has been distressing for them, and the rumors have spilled over to us. I am too distraught to work except for the pieces John and I write or discuss together. John too is drained. I am distressed by his overwork at India House and on the *Review.* Roebuck's impudence last summer is still bitter to us. If our closest "radical" friends cannot understand and support our love, who can? John, Lily, and I dined peacefully here in the quiet of the country. Our sanctuary in Keston Heath is the only bright spot of the year.

30 October 1835 Mr. Carlyle has promised John to visit us at Kent Terrace. I am not keen to have him here, but John enjoys his companionship.

1 January 1836 John has been promoted at India House. He will earn more money, but the added work is not what he needs now. I am so hoping that this new year will prove better than the last.

6 January 1836 Mr. Graham wrote today that he was sending wine over to Kent Terrace for the wine cellar at John's request. We shall have a dinner party next time I go to town and see if the wine is worth the trouble.

8 February 1836 John continues quite ill. I'm sure he suffers from exhaustion. If he is not relieved soon, he will completely collapse. He cannot

July 1835: Packe, 197.
30 October 1835: information about Carlyle in Hayek, 292, fn. 17.
1 January 1836: Packe, 204.
6 January 1836: Graham's letter, M/T XXVII/42.
8 February 1836: John wrote to Sarah Austin about his illness on this date, CW: XXXII, 30–31.

continue to do his own work, his father's work, and the editorship—even with my help.

23 February 1836 John wanted to ask Mr. Fox if he w[d] write for the newly combined *London and Westminster Review*. I advised him to send the letter via Eliza. She will persuade him if anyone can. The opportunity to create the most powerful radical periodical to date excites both John and me. We are grateful to Mr. Molesworth for his trust, but the work has only multiplied.

April 1836 The first edition of the *London and Westminster Review* is published! We are both sapped, but I expect it will do some good. I trust it will.

April–June 1836 The doctor ordered John to rest in Brighton in hopes that he w[d] regain his health there. After he left London in April, Lily and I visited him on the coast. Unfortunately, John had to return to be with his father who is near death. John still fares poorly. We both need a longer trip to refresh us and offer us new perspective. I do not know when we will be able to arrange it.

23 June 1836 James Mill died today. John cannot express his complicated feelings. On one hand, he appreciated his father's effort to educate him, to train his mind so that he learned to think critically and not just to memorize. But John also recognizes his father's shortcomings: his father never understood the contribution women can make to society and failed to grasp the significance of the arts in bringing up children. John's grief mixes with exhaustion. The new work at India House and the dependence of everyone in his family on him wears him down. I must plan a way for us to travel to the continent for a long stay.

16–18 July 1836 Carlyle and Horace Grant accompanied John to the Mills' summer house. The Mills retreated there just as they do each sum-

23 February 1836: John wrote Fox via Eliza Flower, CW: XII, 298.

April 1836: Harriet's role in editing the *Review* is conjecture. Jane Carlyle later reported that Godefroy Cavaignac called Harriet "'the Armida' of the *London and Westminster*" (quoted in Hayek, 103). This is the same man who gossiped to the Carlyles about seeing John and Harriet eating grapes together while in Paris. Armida, the heroine of operas of Gluck and Rossini, enticed knights to abandon their duty.

April–June 1836: Hayek, 101.

16–18 July 1836: On 24 July, Carlyle describes this visit to his wife. Carlyle did not approve of the family's composure in the face of death and suggested that John's health was so compromised that

mer. I'm sure it is a comfort to them. I think I convinced John to go to the continent for a long visit. He will ask Henry and George if they w[d] like to come along. I'm sure Mrs. Mill w[d] profit from having fewer children at home, and the Mill boys are old enough to benefit from the trip. My boys will certainly enjoy the company.

28 July 1836 At last we are on our way. Herby, Haji, Lily, their nurse, and I traveled across the channel today. Once in Paris, we will await John, Henry, and George. Herby and Haji are delighted they will have play fellows. Neither John nor Henry is robust, but I always feel better when distracted by travel. I am sure with time away from England their health will improve.

3 August 1836 We waited until John and his brothers arrived to celebrate Lily's fifth birthday. We had a fine feast while the children tried out their French. John and Henry already seem healthier. None of the children seem as charmed by Paris as by each other's company.

September 1836 Our rowdy group traveled first to Geneva and at last landed in Lausanne. The children are so happy here in the mountains that we decided to leave them with the nurse while John and I travel on to Nice. September and October are glorious months in Provence. There, if anywhere, John's health will be restored.

7 October 1836 John and I had an exquisite dinner and then walked in the mild Provencal air to fête the day of my birth. Twenty-nine—each year now is one to be treasured. How odd that I am now the age Mr. Taylor was when we married. If I had not wed until I was twenty-nine, how different my life w[d] have been. I w[d] never have married a man like Mr. Taylor; and I w[d] be free to marry John.

he may not live long. Carlyle expresses his distaste for John and reports that he does not expect to see him very often in the future. Jane replies that John's strongest failing may be that he is no longer subjected to Carlyle (letters quoted in Packe, 206).

28 July 1836 Packe, 207.

3 August 1836: John's letter to his sister Clara suggests that he is with Harriet and her children, but does not say so explicitly; CW: XII, 307–308.

September 1836: Henry had reported that John's headaches still troubled him (Packe, 207). Carlyle, always ready to share the latest hearsay, wrote to John Sterling, "Mrs. Taylor, it is whispered, is with [John], or near him. Is it not very strange, this pining away into dessication and nonentity, of our poor Mill, if it be so, as his friends all say, that this charmer is the cause of it? I have not seen any riddle of human life which I could so ill form a theory of. They are innocent, says Charity; they are guilty, says Scandal: then why in the name of wonder are they dying brokenhearted?" (quoted in Packe, 207). Despite Carlyle's nasty analysis of John to his wife in July and here to Sterling, he remained friendly in his communication with John through the next year.

Neither John nor I have written much this year, but the work we've completed on the *Review* may prove politically effective. The excitement of last year has begun to fade, yet work remains to be done for radical politics. But first we must be healthy. I cannot hope for much in my well-being, but I worry so about John. He must be strong if he is to face returning to India House and becoming the head of the Mill household.

12 November 1836 Our delicious holiday is over, and we have returned to gloomy London. I think only of the sunny days in Nice, Genoa, the Italian Lakes and Milan. England is so dull after these wonderful places.

On my return, news awaited me that my parents expect to move to Birksgate near Kirkburton. Papa inherited this family home from his uncle. Mama assures me that it is quite fine. She claims she will be delighted to be out of London. She has begged me to visit as soon as they are settled.

1 January 1837 Through the sniffles of influenza, John and I issued in the new year. All the rest and restoration of the last months have been drained out of us in a few weeks.

January 1837 Neither of us is fit for new work, so we pulled out my drafts on proverbs to use for a review of a new book in this topic for the latest *Review.* We simply reiterated the point that all general moral truths are contingent on individual experience. Proverbs are expressed in language which can easily be misunderstood. Because proverbs contain both truth and falsehood, they can be dangerous for those who want a "decided opinion" but don't want to act on it. I liked this sentence we included: "Nor is the fact of having arrived at a 'decided opinion,' even though it be a true one, any reason for not thinking more on the subject; otherwise the time will soon come when, instead of knowing the truth, you will only remember that you have known it, and continue believing it on your own au-

12 November 1836: Packe, 208, 115.

1 January 1837: John describes his influenza in letters, CW: XII, 318–320. Carlyle also reports on their flu in a letter to John Sterling. Carlyle, without any hint of irony, yet again gossips about John and Harriet and bemoans their "suffering the clack of tongues, worst penalty of guilt." Letter from Carlyle to Sterling quoted in Hayek, 86.

January 1837: see entry for September 1832 above. Harriet, 143–150, and CW: I, 421–429.
Contingency and language: 150, 144, and CW: I, 422.
Truth and falsehood in proverbs: 143, 146, and CW: I, 423, 427.
Quoted from article: CW: I, 427–428.
Endurance: 148 and CW: I, 429.

thority." An active mind is at the core of a moral being, not merely an intellect of note. We concluded the article with my point about women and endurance. Endurance is a virtue we praise in women because it hides the reason for endurance, namely the "incessantly recurring physical suffering" they are made to abide.

June 1837 Queen Victoria reigns. I wonder if she'll use her power to improve women's position? We can only wait and see. John and I have been so happy lately; I have little to report. John spends all of his free time here in Keston Heath where we walk and talk and marvel at Lily's latest feats. She is a rosy child who already loves reading and learning. Her sensitivity to nature is a joy for both John and me.

Each day John is not here I receive his letter and read it in the park. Here is what I wrote in response today.

* * *

I went this morning there in hopes of your word, my delight, & there it was. believe all I ever say when I tell you how happy I am, that is, how happy you make me.

This sweet letter has been with me at every moment since I had it & it keeps me so well so happy so in spirits—but I cannot tell thee how happy it made me when first I read it on the highest point of the nice common with those glorious breezes blowing. It has been like an equinoctial tempest here ever since you left. Mama and C are here—I like it & it does me good—in the absence of the only good I ever wish for.

Thank God however the promised summer which was to be so much is come & will be all it was to be—has been already so much. I am to see you on Saturday. indeed I could not get on without.

I can not write better to-day—tho' I never felt better or more.

Adieu my only & most precious—till Saturday—dear Saturday!

* * *

July 1837 John included a review of Carlyle's *French Revolution* in the *Review.* It is quite a good book and should earn Carlyle the reputation he

Inserted letter: 333.

so longs for. John has taken to walking with Lily to botanize on Hampton Heath every Saturday. His love for her is as pure as mine for them both.

* * *

bless you, dearest—dearest I cannot write a word worth having for I am feeling nothing in the world but the immense angst this absence is going to be. I know there is no remedy for it, & so, it must, but I shall feel it more than usual for I do so already.

If you have time to write one word do just say that you will keep me in your thoughts all the day to-morrow? as I shall every moment till I see you darling

* * *

July 1837 The election has turned the Whigs out of Parliament. Many believe the radicals will never recover. All the radicals are dispirited, especially Molesworth. I wonder how long he will continue to support the *Review,* since the Radicals will have no power?

If the *Review* folds, John and I can retreat even more to our blessed country. This year we have grown more sure of our ideas and are more confident in stating them. Together we are strong.

12 July 1837 The insufferable Harriet Martineau has written the most inane piece about the new queen. She must not, will not publish that thing in the *Review.* John met Dickens yesterday. He said Dickens reminded him of Carlyle's Camille Desmoulins whose "face of dingy blackguardism irradiated with genius." His fame has spread with each new part of the *Pickwick Papers.*

* * *

I do hope dearest that you knew the reason I did not write yesterday. I went so very early to that place that I had not a moment to write, but the fear that you might expect a word kept me uneasy all the day.

July 1837: "People who wanted a glimpse of Mill were advised to 'look for him with a flaxen-haired little sprite of a girl any Saturday afternoon on Hampton Heath.'" Elbert Hubbard, *Little Journeys to the Homes of Great Lovers* (East Aurora, N.Y.: Roycrofters, 1913), 123.

Inserted letter: 334.

July 1837: election, Packe, 215.

12 July 1837: John wrote a scathing letter to the assistant editor, John Robertson, refusing to accept Martineau's article. Despite repeated attempts by Robertson to change John's mind, he continued to refuse to print the essay; CW: XII, 342–343, 351–353, 354–355, 356.

a thousand thanks my kindest for that note on Thursday—it was a great happiness to me & kept me well & in spirits ever since it came. all that Mondays adventure is the most delightful possible to think of, has been & will be always.

I long to hear from you again dear.

* * *

Summer 1837 Ah, summer. How I dote on the twilights and revel in the warm breeze that parts the curtains. Each day is filled with Lily's discoveries of insects and flowers; each day is filled with joy.

John has been working steadily on the *Logic* and has nearly given up on writing articles for now. He has clearly shaken his mourning for his father. Our last months together have been the best of our love. Despite the political setback, we are more content than ever before.

11 August 1837 I received a lovely letter from Caroline today. Now that she is sixteen, she feels more like a sister. Her letter was filled with chatter about a dress she had made and contained a charming story about Haji kissing her hand when he was visiting my parents. I'm so glad that even as a seven year old he has not ceased being affectionate.

* * *

Saturday morning

I am so perfectly well & so happy that I must tell you dearest & beg you again & again to be well & in spirits—it w^d seem sparking that I should be so happy —that you should make me so happy & not be so your own dear self I cannot write half that I feel & want to say these children are making such a tassage—so dearest only know that I am & shall be the happiest creature in this world & thank God Monday will come at last.

* * *

September 1837 Mr. Taylor has asked me to help his friend Mr. Usiglio by offering him the opportunity to write for the *Review.* I think we can arrange for both Usiglio's and Mazzini's work to appear there.

Inserted letter: 334.
Summer 1837: CW: XII, 345
11 August 1837: M/T XXVII/92.

Inserted letter: 334.
September 1837: John's letter to Robertson mentions Usiglio article, CW: XII, 351.

* * *

My dear John [Taylor],
I find that Usiglio's article is to be in the next number of the 'London'—Robertson it seems meets the contributors at the publisher's Hoopers Pall Mall—& Mill went in there as he passed a day or two since & found both Usiglio & Mazzini there with Robertson—he had a good deal of talk with both of them & liked both very much—he has undertaken to do all the revising that is required to Usilio's article & has engaged him to write another on new Italian books & Mazzini to write one on Italian politics since 1830 at which time he was involved in them & I do not know how they are paid but I beleive at the old rate of 16 guins the sheet. & I do not know how soon.

I hope you had a pleasant ride yesterday. I am quite well. I hope you will come again, before long. Good bye. Your affectionate

* * *

7 October 1837 What a glorious thirtieth birthday to celebrate. John and I share a passion that sustains us both. The children prosper, and we have good work to do. What could be better?

1 January 1838 Molesworth is finished with the *Review.* Last year's defeat, the squabbling among the radicals, and the constant loss of money has forced him to give it up. John has taken it over completely. I do not know if he can afford to publish it, but he is determined not to abandon it.

February 1838 That nasty Fonblanque! He has insulted John by writing about him as if he believed in Roebuck and Grote's brand of radicalism. How absurd! Of course John has no defense against Fonblanque's charge because he will not publicly distance himself from those who are already suffering from public humiliation in the face of last year's political defeat. At least John had the courage to confront him in his reply.

Inserted letter: 441, slightly edited.
1 January 1838: Packe, 217.
February 1838: CW: XIII, 369–377. Later that year John spoke harshly about Bulwer's submission; CW: XIII, 385. John seems to be willing to state his evaluations in stronger language now that the *Review* is completely his.

* * *

I am sure you must believe what is so true at all times how I feel the immensity of your love—& how true & noble & in all things admirable you have been love for me.

* * *

August 1838 We pulled out the old (June '33) article on Bentham and expanded it for the *Review.* The companion piece on Coleridge will come out later. Both Bentham's strengths and weaknesses appear in the essay, but I suspect that John's radical friends will focus on the critique. Since the original article on Bentham was published anonymously, this is the first writing associated with John that probes Bentham's weaker ideas. The article outlines Bentham's failure to learn from great historical thinkers as well as the narrowness of a method that rejects vague ideas instead of "dispelling the mist" by making amphorous ideas clearer. Perhaps the greatest fault was his failure to consider the importance of imagination followed closely by his refusal to acknowledge that we pursue beauty, love, power, etc. in addition to pleasure. In politics Bentham blundered when he did not recognize the despotism of public opinion in democracies, as de Tocqueville did so eloquently in *Democracy in America.* In the future, governments must create institutions to protect the individuality of the minority from being overwhelmed by the majority. Bentham failed to see that democracy has its own dangers, including the selfish class-interest of the ruling majority. Every line written is a fair critique of Bentham's ideas, but many will see this article as a rejection of Bentham and radicalism altogether.

I wonder if they will blame me for "changing" John despite the fact that we developed these ideas years ago? Now that both Bentham and John's father are dead, a new voice must arise.

Inserted letter: 335.
August 1838: CW: X, 77–115
Greatest fault: CW: X, 96
Protection of minorities: CW: X, 96
Class interest: CW: X, 109.

* * *

I did so hate your leaving me—yet that little visit made me very happy—perhaps that is the reason I am better as I am this morng—not very much but really somewhat better & that is much. Only do you my darling be well & happy & I shall be well as I am happy, the happiest possible—(no not possible—there is a happier possibility always)—but I am perfectly happy. I do not see exactly how to manage going to the sea—so I give it up at present.

When I think that I shall not hold your hand untill Tuesday the time is so long & my hand so useless. Adieu my delight

je baise tes jolie pattes
cher cher cher

* * *

September 1838 We see less and less of Mr. Carlyle even when I am in town. Both John and I have begun to suspect that Carlyle spreads rumors about our private lives. John has decided not to tell him where we are traveling this winter.

Herby and Haji have begun boarding at Mr. Underwood's school. John took lessons in German from Mr. Underwood and thinks his methods are sound. The boys, especially Haji, are still great friends with George Mill and see him often either in Kensington or at Kent Terrace.

Mama and the Gov. are finally moving to Birksgate. I've been helping mama pack. She and I will both be grateful when they are settled.

* * *

a thousand thousand thanks & blessings dearest & kindest one. What a deal of trouble I have made you take—but you think nothing trouble for me beloved!

I think I had best not hope to see you to-day dearest dearest because Arthur is coming & will be here at the time you w^d come—but to-morrow certainly for I could not be longer without. I will get the stupid ticket & we will go for

Inserted letter: 334–335, edited.

September 1838: Hayek, 86. John writes Carlyle that he is going to Malta. See Packe, 329, for information about the boarding school and George Mill.

Inserted letter: 335.

an hour & see our old friend Rhino—will you dear come here & take me to-morrow about five?

Yesterday I walked to Norfolk St—they were not there & then Haji and I went to mama at the old place—she was very busy & I helped her all day untill ten at night, when I came home—so you see dear all the fatigue that had gone before was little compared to this last—& if I had known what it w^d^ be I sh^d^ not have gone there it was a great deal too much—but I am so perfectly & entirely happy, without one single cloud, that I shall soon get over this merely physical fatigue.

I shall hear from Herby soon & on that will depend if I go to that place again. If he is going on well I shall not go 'till next week to bring them up. So we can have Sunday if we please love & we will talk of it to-morrow.

Adieu & bless you my perfect one.

* * *

7 October 1838 John and I made a quick trip to the south of England in honor of my thirty-first birthday! My health remains precarious but stable—probably the best I can expect. This last year our love has grown deeper, and both of us are delighted with each other. Can it really be more than seven years since we first met?

John works diligently on the *Logic*. The usual *Review* questions can be answered from here on the coast. Several of John's friends are quite outraged about some of the decisions we've made regarding the *Review*. They despise Carlyle and Sterling, and the negative review of Bentham convinced the old radicals that John has abandoned utilitarianism.

November 1838 We've had a busy month preparing for another long continental journey. We plan to leave just after Christmas. Mr. Taylor has set up a line of credit for me in Italy, so I won't have to worry about money along the way. Arthur leaves for Australia soon. I dare say it will be a very long time before I see him again, but Papa is convinced the climate will prevent consumption from further damaging his lungs.

I had suggested that John buy medicine to prevent his usual seasickness, but just before I left, I decided it might be bad advice. I then quickly sent a note to warn him not to take it.

7 October 1838: CW: XIII, 388. John was in southern England, and since this was one of Harriet's favorite places, I suspect she accompanied him.

November 1838: M/T XXIX/271.

* * *

My Beauty—
What a nice walk that was! I am quite thoroughly enjoying the thought of this journey. I write this word only to say, do not dear take that thing I told you of in Regent Street. do not, for I w^d rather very much that you w^d not— when that day comes you shall do whatever you like if you happen to remember it you darling—
I shall hear this evening from thee all about our nice to-morrow—

Adieu—caro

* * *

26 December 1838 Mr. Taylor graciously accompanied Lily and me to Paris before he returned to London. Poor John had a miserable crossing. He never did like sea voyages, and because of the tides, they were a full eighteen hours before docking. Safe with me now, we are delighted to again be away from England.

3 January 1839 We arrived in Chalons as we slowly made our way south. We endured bitter cold on our trip. Our breath froze on the windows of the carriage all day, and the inns have been frigid. We have made 7 1/2 posts in about six hours for the first three days from Paris in a very comfortable, if chilly carriage. Yesterday we traveled 11 1/2 posts in 11 hours and today 10 posts in the same number of hours. We mistakenly believed that we needed to hurry to catch the boat at Lyons, but found on arrival that a boat goes to Avignon each day. So tomorrow we will reach Lyons and then we will take two days to go from Lyons by boat to Avignon. We ourselves haven't had time to celebrate the new year, but I hope Mr. Taylor and the boys had a pleasant time.

21 January 1839 We left Marseilles on the 11th and arrived in Leghorn on the 13th. Lily was delighted that the steamer had cannons and was eager to include this information for the boys in my letter to her father. Lily loved the azure blue of the Mediterranean, and the passage was quite smooth. I was delighted when we reached Pisa and received a letter from Mr. Taylor.

Inserted letter: 336.
26 December 1838: 442, and John writes to "Mammy" about trip, CW: XIII, 392.
3 January 1839: Harriet's letter to Taylor, 442–443. A post is the distance a carriage can travel without changing horses.
21 January 1839: Harriet's letter to Taylor, 443–444.

I secured my line of credit letter from the counting house although I don't think I will need it until I reach Rome. I wrote to my brother William, but his wife Emilia's grandmother says they are not at home. We also received a confusing message about William taking a new post.

11 March 1839 We've returned to Rome after a lovely three weeks in Naples. The sunny spring has made us all happy. John's new diet of vegetables and macaroni has improved his stomach derangement. We even had the luxury of staying on the same floor at the *Casa Brizzi* in Naples and *La Sirena* in Sorrento. After leaving Pisa, we traveled slowly through Volterra and Rome to Naples. John, Lily, and I delighted in the verdant countryside. Now that we've arrived back in Rome, John has spent time with John Carlyle and John Sterling. From here we plan to travel north through Terni and Perugia to Florence.

April 1839 John is so annoyed by the upcoming *Review.* Robertson wrote an imprudent article titled, "Criticism on Women," defending women against "Crockerism." Robertson invented the word for the satirical critiques of writers such as Mrs. Norton and Miss Martineau. When will that man ever learn! Yet we can do nothing at this distance from London to prevent it from being published.

6 April 1839 John is considering giving up the *Review.* The Radicals seem defunct—a mere appendage to the Whigs. Thus there seems no need of a radical publication. He has written Robertson about his lack of enthusiasm for continuing and asked him not to seek articles for the July edition. Without this burden, I'm sure his health will improve. Then we can focus on more lasting contributions to society.

12 May 1839 We've reached Padua after leaving Florence. Florence is quite worthy of its reputation for beauty—the valley is so exactly the right size to frame the city, which from whatever point one sees it, is very beautiful. Florence is the only middle-age looking place in Italy. The Gallery contains the beautiful old Tuscan paintings, but I deplore their putting paintings and sculptures on gilded pedestals within sight of each other.

11 March 1839: letter from John to Harriet quoted in Hayek, 221–222; Packe, 239; travel diary, 171.
April 1839: CW: XIII, 396, fn. 2.
6 April 1839: CW: XIII, 396–397.
12 May 1839: Much of this entry and the others through May 30 are direct quotations from Harriet's travel journal—a real leatherbound treasure that includes her sketches of ironwork as well as writing; 171–173.

We visited all the famous sites including the Pitti Palace, Boboli Gardens, Palazzo Vecchio, and others.

Daru's *History of Venice* is not as good as Sismondi's.

The road from Florence to Bologna is extremely beautiful. We saw the fire on the mountain near Pietra Mala. (It is no doubt some gas which takes fire when it touches common air.) I think Bologna is one of the finest Italian towns I have seen. The Gallery is delightful and contains very fine works of Pietro Perugino and several of the Carracci family including Ludovico, Annibale, Agostino, as well as Domenichino, Guercino, Guido da Sina, and Albani. The inn was also quite good.

In the Euganean hills, I can't help but think of Shelley and Petrarch. Padua is fine in the manner of Bologna but inferior to it.

19 May 1839 We have reached Venice in the downpour of rain that has been our constant companion the last fortnight. The Scoula delle Belle Arts has the most beautiful rooms in the world containing their splendid collection. I particularly loved a very fine assumption of Titian seeming to me to combine the amazing quantity of colors of Raphael, with the deep & strongly marked shadows which are characteristic of the Venetian school. In the Doge's palace, a *Europa* of Paolo Veronese & the Baccus & Ariadne of Tentoretto pleased me most.

May 1839 From Venice to Mestic our four rowers took two hours. The boat was boarded by customs officers who invited us to contribute a fee in lieu of examining our luggage—not a bad way of getting an average duty. From Mestic we made our way to Bassano then on to Trent. We found Trent a very fine town with German spaciousness, cleanliness, and pleasant eatables. We were delighted to find ourselves in Germany again. At Borgo the inn people spoke German, and there was German frankness, niceness, simplicity, and honest changes, and from an opposite house, for the first time in six months, the great pleasure of hearing the sound of German music played with the German touch on a German piano-forte. Certainly the Italians have no taste for music.

25 May 1839 We spent the night at The Elephant in Brixen. Tomorrow

19 May 1839: John's letter to his mother, CW: XIII, 398, and travel journal, 173–174.
May 1839: Travel journal, 174–175.
25 May 1839: Travel journal, 175.

we are off to Steinach in route to Innsbruck. We hope to reach Munich by the end of May.

30 May 1839 The route through the Waldensee was very beautiful. The stupid Baedeker's guide says the word "Waldensee" is Latin when it is evidently Saxon. Munich contrasts strangely and not unagreeably with Italian cities. It looks so very new, so dear, and spacious—a most cheerful happy looking place. Two hundred years from now, it will be fine. In the gallery the most remarkable things are the Rembrandts and the Rubens. A very nice Virgin and child raises one's estimation of Rubens.

John has definitely decided to rid himself of the *Review.* It absorbs his money as well as his time. He wrote Robertson telling him as much. John's stomach derangement is not entirely cured, but he doesn't complain as often.

30 June 1839 We've arrived back in England. John has returned to London and to the India House. I've decided to stay in the south of England for the next few weeks. There is no rush to return home, since Mr. Taylor has decided to have repairs done on the house at Kent Terrace. The boys are coming here while Mr. Taylor looks for some temporary housing.

23 July 1839 I wrote Mr. Taylor to let him know that Lily and I have arrived in Brighton and that our apartments overlooking the sea are lovely. I hope that the wind dies down so that the boys can enjoy themselves outside in the warm summer air. They love exploring the beach all day, and I think nothing can be healthier than this fine sea breeze. Mr. Taylor sent Lily a birthday gift, and the boys brought boats which they love to play with on the beach.

26 July 1839 We have had nearly steady rain today. The boys won't venture out without me, and it is much too stormy for me to go outdoors. Despite everything, I feel better than last week. We plan to return to London in a couple of days.

August 1839 I've leased (or more accurately, Mr. Taylor has leased) a

30 May 1839: Travel journal, 172, 175; CW: XIII, 399–400.

30 June 1839: 445. John Taylor moved to Wilton Place while work was done at Kent Terrace.

Carlyle in his typical fashion wrote to Sterling suggesting that Mrs. Taylor might be living with John. Clearly he did not know that both the Taylors were not living at Kent Terrace for this brief period (Hayek, 86–87).

23 July 1839: Harriet writes to Taylor, 444–445.

26 July 1839: Harriet writes to Taylor, 445.

new house in Walton. It is a lovely little house on a railway to London which will make it more accessible for John to visit and for me to travel south to Brighton now that the railways have made travel so much more convenient. All month we have endured the necessary packing and unpacking and are finally settling down to quiet in the new house.

28 September–9 October 1839 I've come to Birksgate for the first time. Papa inherited this house from his uncle. It is quite attractive, far more so than I had been told—indeed it is the very loveliest situation I ever saw. The house is quite large, very plain outside, of stone, & altogether in very good taste; the arrangements within are very pleasing. It is a much better home than one w[d] expect, and the furniture is extremely pretty. Papa busies himself in the garden and with reading. Mama is as usual all warmth and kindness. Carry too is very well tho' she complains a little but that is only owing to the ennui of Ley's absence. They expect to marry soon. Papa has several horses which the boys will love to ride. Celebrating my birthday in this lovely place was a joy in itself.

November–December 1839 John hopes to finish the *Logic* within the next year. We have also worked on the Coleridge article with the help of Sterling's friendly suggestions. John begged for a piece from Carlyle about Chartism, but I think he is too popular now to condescend to write for the last issue of the *Review.* Perhaps I . . .

[manuscript breaks off]

* * *

Ah, to have Harriet's voice heard, even if only in our imagination! The work she began alone in the early 1830s quickly became the work of hers and John's. In the 1840s and 1850s, Harriet continued to collaborate with John to refine their ideas about domestic violence, women's rights, and human development. Harriet's life with an estranged husband was not an easy one. She had to tread very carefully to avoid either giving up her own intellectual dreams or becoming merely another George Sand running off with her Chopin. During the 1830s, she managed to develop a strategy of living that maintained the semblance of a marriage and also allowed her the freedom to be with John Mill.

28 September 1839: Harriet writes to Taylor, 446–448.
November–December 1839: CW: XIII, 411, 414.

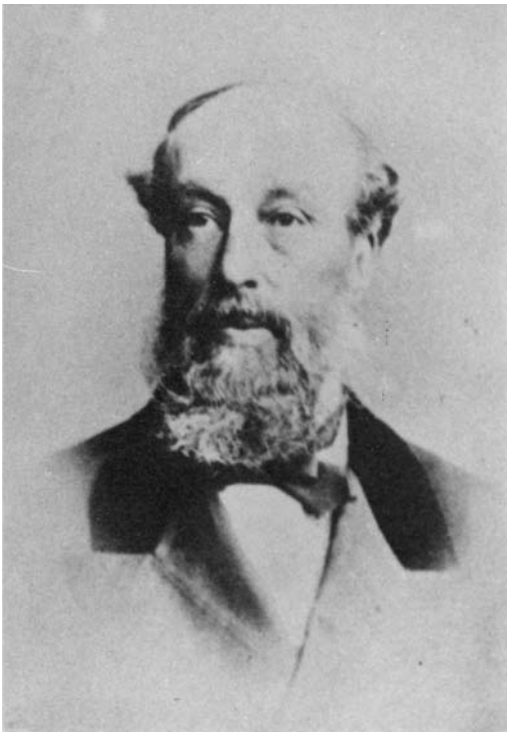
1. Harriet Taylor Mill

2. Harriet Taylor Mill

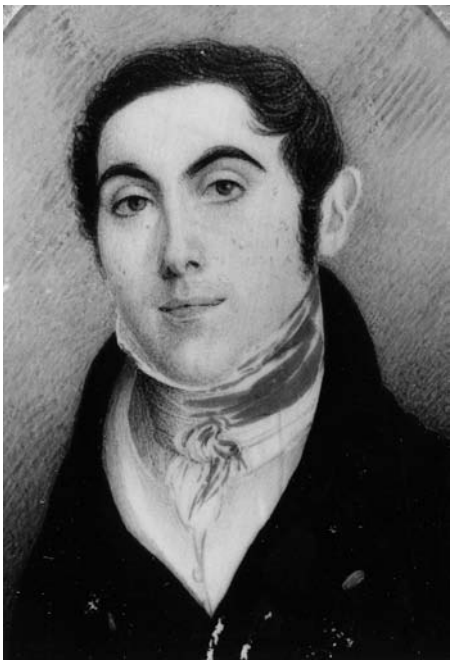
3. Harriet Hardy, HTM's mother

4. Thomas Hardy, HTM's father

5. Caroline Hardy Ley, HTM's sister



6. Arthur Hardy, HTM's brother

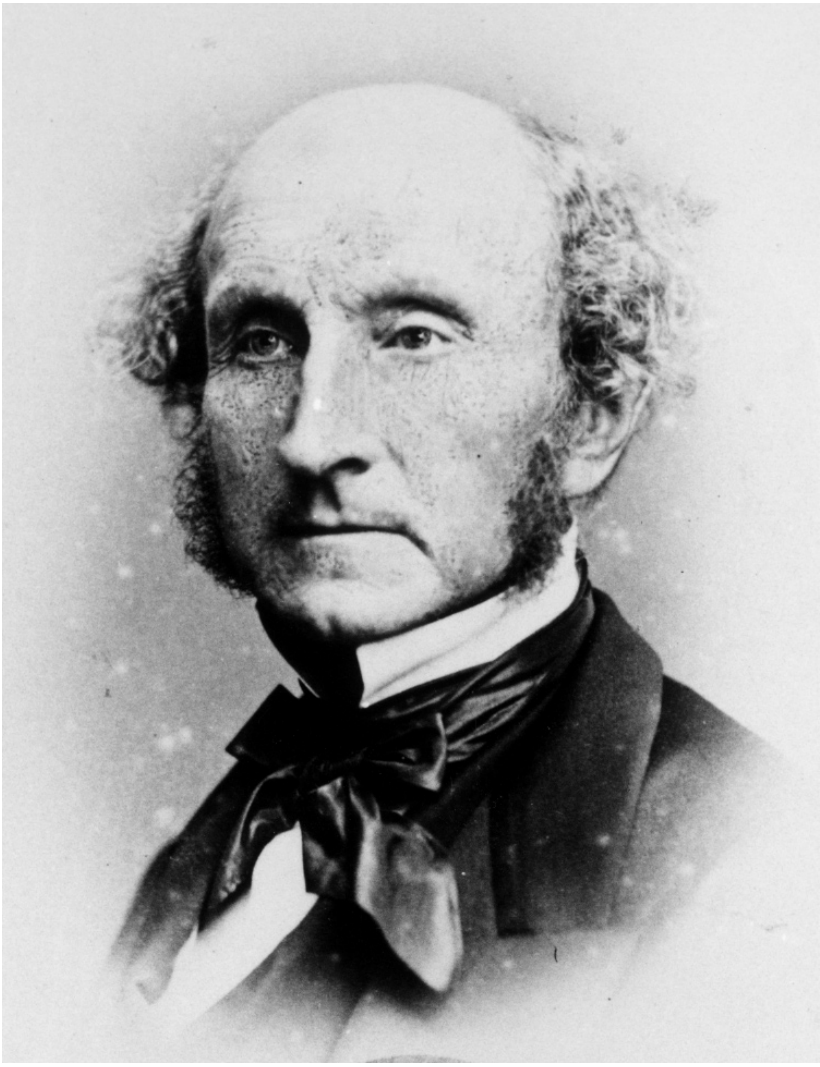


7. John Taylor,
HTM's first husband

8. Herbert Taylor,
HTM's son

9. Algernon Taylor, HTM's son

10. Helen Taylor, HTM's daughter



11. John Stuart Mill, HTM's second husband

12. Birksgate

13. Kent Terrace, London

14. Blackheath, near Greenwich

15. Hotel d'Europe

16. HTM's grave

Interlude

> Who what am I? My answer: I am the sum total of everything that went before me of all I have been seen done, of everything done-to-me. I am everyone everything whose being-in-the-world affected was affected by mine. I am anything that happens after I've gone which would not have happened if I had not come. . . . to understand me, you'll have to swallow a world.[1]

The style of this bio-graphing and the connection to gossip are not a whim. I had to become a swallower of lives because Harriet was. If we are to understand who she is, we must begin with Harriet as a collaborative self. When Harriet stepped outside her marriage to enter a passionate, intense, nameless relationship with John, she and he began an experiment in being. They abandoned the idea of a closeted self held by the nineteenth century—and by much of the twentieth. In her article, "Outside In Inside Out," Trinh T. Minh-ha best describes this process of moving outside. Bear with me; it is not an easy passage, but it is important.

> The moment the insider steps out from the inside, she is no longer a mere insider. . . . She knows she is different while being Him. Not quite the Same, not quite the Other, she stands in that undetermined threshold place where she constantly drifts in and out. Undercutting the inside/outside opposition, . . . she is this Inappropriate Other/Same who moves about with always at least two/four gestures: that of affirming 'I am like you' while persisting in her difference; and that of reminding herself 'I am different' while unsettling every definition of otherness arrived at.[2]

"She is different while being Him." Do you see? There is no either/or separating a collaborative self from an individual self. Harriet is and is not

1. Salman Rushdie. *Midnight's Children* (New York: Penguin Books, 1980), 457–458.
2. Trinh T. Minh-ha. "Outside In Inside Out," in *Questions of Third Cinema,* ed. Jim Pines (London: British Film Institute, 1989), 145.

John. Just as light is wave or particle depending on how it is observed, Harriet is Harriet or part of the Harriet/John self, depending upon what part of her soul you focus on.

At the beginning of my research on Harriet, I was as frustrated at the historians of philosophy as my feminist colleagues were. The biographers either ignored Harriet altogether or were only interested in her relationship with John. Harriet was seen as an annoying boil on John's side or as his emotional enabler. In either case, she had no breath of her own. As I learned more about her, I could begin to see Harriet for herself—her feistiness, her anger, her love for her children, her penetrating curiosity, and so on. There is much to discover about the other parts of Harriet, but the most revolutionary part is this collaboration-in-being that she and John attempted.

As Trinh describes this kind of self as both similar and different, so did Harriet play a role similar to John as thinker and co-author, yet her ideas were different and more radical than his. Harriet was different from John, but she refused the definitions of otherness ("emotional," "woman," "frigid," "bewitching,") that either John or the historians tried to attach to her. John learned from Harriet that he, too, could refuse the labels of "rational," "man," and "undersexed." They discovered that they themselves could be both feminine and masculine, both rational and emotional, both sexy and virginal. They created a new dimension in which to exist, and thought it wonderful enough to recommend to the world.

This new integrated self was not an absorption of either one into the other. Neither John nor Harriet ceased to have a singular voice while maintaining their plural one. Most historians have not understood this point. They talk about Harriet "bewitching" John as if she were the only woman in his life. John's close friendships with Caroline Fox, Sarah Austin, and Eliza Flower demonstrate his interest in and devotion to women other than Harriet. None of these women, including Harriet, dictated what John believed. Nor did Harriet simply parrot John's ideas. Harriet had ideas quite different from John's, and she never hesitated to express those differences.

This tension within the whole defined their new collaboration. Dialogue, not monologue, created their new voice. The danger, as they saw it, was conformity, not distinction. I imagine their lives as a counterpoint similar to a Bach fugue. Sometimes one voice leads, at other times another voice predominates, but always the tension results in harmony—a harmony created by *not* being at the same place at the same time.

In "Enfranchisement of Women," Harriet's and John's practical experience of creating a way of living together became the source of Harriet's objection to those who insisted that it was dangerous for women to become interested in politics. Those arguing to keep women innocently at home claimed that if women entered politics, then marriage would disintegrate into squabbling. Harriet retorts, "There cannot be a more complete condemnation of marriage." If marriage cannot tolerate political disagreement, then "marriage can only be fit for tyrants and nobodies."[3] In language that reverberates from Harriet's and John's own experiences, Harriet explains that "married people live together in perfect harmony although they differ in opinions and even feeling on things which come much nearer home than politics do to most people."[4] Or, as she said in the outline of this section, "men and women . . . are entitled to mental independence and marriage like other institutions must reconcile itself to this necessity."[5] Harriet and John did not meld into one undifferentiated whole, nor did they recommend this abandonment of difference to others. Neither partner was a "nobody."

When the duo of Harriet and John argues, they do not adopt one or other of the differing positions; instead, their reconciliation is more subtle, more true, than either of the original views. The members of a collaborative self also need to confront ideas that challenge from the outside. This collaborative self cannot be self-contained—a dyad removed from the rest of the world is merely a dual version of the Romantic genius. The Victorian Romantic superman's superior nature separates him from the "dull millions" who must wait for the crumbs of knowledge from a true genius. Harriet and John reject this version of the self by insisting on a permeable way of being that develops knowledge through interchange, not supernatural inspiration.[6] The collaborative self must engage in the world to attempt to make the world better and to be made better by it.

For Harriet and John, articulating tensions and reconciliations they had overcome became their way of reaching out to others. They expounded these ideas through journalism, penny pamphlets, articles, and books.

3. 40.
4. 40.
5. 49.
6. Walter E. Houghton, *The Victorian Frame of Mind 1830–1870* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1857), 306.

What the Collaborative Self Is Not

The collaborative self does not involve giving up who one is. Harriet's life is not about victimhood; Harriet was not John's intellectual nursemaid. Nor is this a fairy tale that casts Harriet as the Sleeping Beauty who needed the Prince to kiss her so that she can become a functioning intellectual being. Harriet was as active in building this new combined self as John was.

I think their story is about incorporation—about ingesting what is foreign and sometimes bitter and celebrating that feast because your partner is equally full of you. How we absorb is partly a function of how our bodies work and partly a function of what is being consumed. There is always that which doesn't get digested, that which we reject. In these respects, intellectual feasts parallel nutritional ones.

Fortunately or unfortunately, Harriet and John did not live a fairy tale. Try as they might, they did not achieve equality in their relationship. They did not separate the mental work and household toil in the ghastly way that the Carlyles did (he with his delicate sensibilities requiring his poor wife Jane to rise literally before the roosters in an attempt to silence their call and allow the master writer to sleep). Yet, what John understood as occurring between Harriet and himself probably differed from Harriet's interpretation. John was effusive in his praise of Harriet's contributions to their writing, but I suspect he never understood that she had a second shift of household chores to perform. Harriet both managed the household and wrote. She was a co-author, but he was incapable of being a co-household manager.

John seems to have had a lifelong incapacity to perform even the most obvious practical acts of life, from buttoning his shirt as a child to snagging a seat on the train as an adult. John chuckled about his impracticality after Harriet wrote to him, while he was on a long trip to Greece, suggesting that he might want "some other person's savoir faire" in addition to his own. John replied, "I could not help laughing when I read those words, as if I had any savoir faire at all."[7] John recognized his practical incompetence, but either could not or chose not to overcome this liability.

7. CW: XIV, 418.

Compensating for John's ineptitude became a habit with Harriet. Once while Harriet traveled in Europe, she had to direct the extermination of a rat on their property in England, because John, who was living in the house, did not know how to accomplish the task. Without Harriet to order supplies, the maid ran out of candles, soap, and potatoes.[8] John could not make even a simple practical decision on his own, including ordering dinner from the servants.[9] Another time, John lost his last will and testament (which he was certain Harriet had), only to discover it among his India House papers a month later.[10]

John's impracticality was noted by another woman as well. After a rousing party at the Mills', John, Caroline, and Robert Fox discovered the Foxes' carriage driver was drunk. Caroline records that they "asked for a hackney coach, but J. S. Mill was delightfully ignorant as to where such things grew, or where a likely hotel was to be found."[11] Living in the neighborhood for more than a decade was no guarantee that John knew anything about the basic services offered.

In one of the most ludicrous episodes of his life with Harriet, John worriedly reported to Harriet that the house needed considerably more coal in January than from May to August.[12] Amazingly, one of the most brilliant philosophers of this or any period and perhaps the most intelligent man to have ever lived could not grasp the parallel between cold weather and the need for more coal.[13] Sometimes John's ineptitude had sad consequences. In a very poignant letter to her daughter during the final two weeks of Harriet's life, Harriet reports, "the fact is we always get the last seats in the railway carriages, as I can not run on quick, & if [John] goes on he never succeeds, I always find him running up & down & looking lost in astonishment."[14]

Given John's practical incompetence, we can charitably assume that

8. CW: XIV, 131.

9. CW: XV, 524–525.

10. CW: XIV, 144, 179–180.

11. June 3, 1840. Caroline Fox, *Memories of Old Friends,* 3rd ed., ed. Horace N. Pym (London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1882), 204.

12. CW: XIV, 136.

13. In 1926, psychologist Catherine Morris Cox published a study estimating the I.Q.s of historical figures based on what they were capable of doing before the age of 17. In a revised version of that study, John Stuart Mill is ranked number one with an I.Q. of over 222 (see, e.g., www.lifepositive.com/mind/evolution/iq__genius/iq__article.asp).

14. 581.

John's lack of contribution to the nitty gritty of his life with Harriet was due to inability, not unwillingness.[15] In any case, the result was that Harriet carried the full weight of keeping their lives organized. I doubt that John ever fully comprehended the strain of this burden. Harriet did. Those who complain that Harriet did not work out the details of her arguments or that her ideas are scattered must wonder how much more complete her drafts might have been, could John have been counted on to kill a rat on his own.[16]

Harriet recognized the lack of equality in her life with John and showed her anger about that injustice both to him and in her public writings. According to Harriet, the claim that "the proper sphere of women is domestic life" amounts to the incorrect belief that "a large proportion of mankind must devote themselves mainly to domestic management, the bringing up of children &c. and that this kind of employment is one particularly suitable for women."[17] She impudently asked why a certain portion of the population is devoted to being "coalheavers, paviours, ploughmen, sailors, . . . and so forth, but . . . it [is not] therefore necessary that people should be born all these things, and not permitted to quit those particular occupations."[18] Some people need to nurture children and tend households, but being born a woman does not uniquely qualify one for either job. There is no "natural" ability in women to be a good parent or housekeeper.[19] John's gender is no excuse for his lack of domestic skill.

In "The Enfranchisement of Women" Harriet proclaims, "we deny the right of any portion of the species to decide for another portion, or any individual for another individual, what is and what is not their 'proper sphere.'"[20] Women, even women like Harriet, with an equal intellectual relationship with a man, "wound their wings at every attempt to expand

15. Francine M. Deutsch makes the point that inability is still a common excuse used by men for not doing their fair share of childcare (or, I might add, housework); *Halving It All: How Equally Shared Parenting Works* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999), 75–78.

16. As Linda Silverman points out in "Why Are There So Few Eminent Women?" *Roeper Review* 18, no. 1 (September 1995): 5–13, "Not excused from the more general duties that constitute the cement of society, most women of talent have had but one hand free with which to work out their ideal conception. Denied, at cost of 'respectability' itself, and [self]expression . . . they have had to make secret and painful experiments of self-expression after spending first strength in the commonplace tasks required of all their sex" (9).

17. 38–39.

18. 39.

19. Apparently this lesson is still being learned. See Deutsch, Ch. 6, especially.

20. 57.

them . . . against their gilded bars."[21] The inequalities of their practical lives were the bars that kept Harriet confined to a life spent caring for John in a way he did not care for her. The gilding of satisfaction that she received from their intellectual camaraderie did not dissolve the bars. Could John have written all the words in the thirty-three volumes of his collected works had he not had a mother or Harriet to secure his daily needs? How much more could Harriet have written if she had enjoyed his running ahead to smooth out the bumps of her daily life?

John never understood that remedying the inequality of household duties was central to women's liberation. In the early 1830s, John wrote to Harriet in an essay on marriage that in a household without servants, the woman will "naturally" do the work of servants. Long after Harriet died, when he wrote *Subjection of Women,* he dropped the "naturally" but still contended that

> Like a man when he chooses a profession, so, when a woman marries, it may in general be understood that she makes a choice of the management of a household, and the bringing up of a family, as the first call upon her exertions, during as many years of her life as may be required for the purpose; and that she renounces, not all other objects and occupations, but all which are not consistent with the requirements of this.[22]

Harriet would have been disappointed and angry. Neither in theory or practice did John fully liberate himself from the backwater of sexism. We sympathize with his struggle to free himself, but we cannot overlook the fact that the result of his shortcomings was that Harriet did double duty—intellectual and practical labor both—while John did not.

A side note: Harriet as well as John seemed unconscious of the abridged life their servants were living. Despite their campaigns for various specific reforms for the working classes and for slaves in the United States, neither of them really comprehended their own servants' misery and frustration. Recognizing discrimination and unfairness is always more obvious to those who suffer than to those who impose pain.

But when we focus on Harriet and John, I continue to insist that Harriet was not John's victim. Harriet found a place with John to create some free-

21. 153.
22. CW: XXI, 298.

dom for herself. That freedom involved love. No, it was not perfect, but it was a beginning.

I am reminded of the film *Babette's Feast.* Babette fled from the French Revolution to the home of Swedish sisters whose religious fervor resulted in bland, cold lives for themselves and their community. Babette, a French chef, slowly transformed their lives with the sensuality of food. When she won the lottery and could have chosen her own freedom, Babette sacrificed her winnings to produce a sumptuous meal for those who had initially offered her sanctuary—even though they could not fully appreciate either her feast or her sacrifice. Babette's tale is nonetheless a story of love, of connections to be celebrated. Her life is not portrayed as a form of victimhood to be rejected. Babette chose to spend her winnings on the feast, just as Harriet chose to spend her life with John. These sisters did not fully appreciate the talents of their new maid; nor did John fully comprehend the sacrifices Harriet made. But sanctuary is sanctuary, and when the alternative is living as a caged bird surrounded by a society bent on keeping a woman pretty and ignorant, idle and pretentious, any increase of freedom, any space for thought, any attention to higher values is worth applauding.

What the Collaborative Self Allowed

Role-Switching

The cooperation Harriet and John enjoyed created an opportunity for each of the participants to expand their lives. The collaborative self Harriet and John established allowed for a sharing of gendered pleasures and duties. For example, John could perform two of the tasks specifically ordained by Victorian society for the lady of the house: serving tea and playing the piano for one's spouse. After Helen left home, she wrote to her mother that she always thought fondly of the time of day when John came home and poured tea for Harriet.[23] During the Victorian era, women ruled the tea table as their only empire, so John's assumption of this duty was far from trivial. One feminist journal, *Kettledrum,* mockingly used the tea-

23. 27 November 1856, M/T LI/13. All of Helen's letters were transcribed by Amy Kuhl, my wonderful student assistant.

kettle as its signature because " 'the rule woman bears over the tea-kettle' is a 'natural dominion' which . . . was incontestable"[24]—except by John.

Piano playing was one of the arts in which girls were trained as a vehicle for attracting and soothing their future husbands. As Jane Austen's novels demonstrate, piano playing was a requirement of womanhood, but not one that every girl learned eagerly. Frances Power Cobbe and Florence Nightingale, among others, said that piano playing—"emblem as it is of the trivialization of women's abilities—drives women mad."[25]

Thus when John played the piano for Harriet, this familiar icon of Victorian domesticity became a weapon to destroy stereotypes. Instead of the typical wife consoling her husband at the end of his tiring and often troubled public day, John volunteered to play for Harriet when she needed distraction. Harriet's son, Algernon, recalled John improvising at the piano "but only when asked to do so by my mother."[26] At the piano, John would conjure up storms, sunrises, marches, and other images as he entertained Harriet. Harriet's children had cherished memories of their step-father's enjoyment of this "womanly" activity.

Meanwhile, Harriet assumed the responsibility of arranging the financial affairs with the publishers. She determined which fonts to use and made other aesthetic decisions; she renegotiated publishing contracts. Concerning the second edition of *Principles of Political Economy,* John wrote to her, "The bargain with Parker is a good one & that it is so is entirely your doing—all the difference between it & the last being wholly your work, as well as all the best of the book itself so that you have a redoubled title to your joint ownership of it."[27] John may have been oblivious in regard to Harriet's contributions to their daily living arrangements, but he noted her help in his financial concerns.

Harriet's business acumen was well-known to her first husband as well. On hearing news of the California gold rush, Harriet quickly wrote Taylor, a druggist, suggesting that this event might precipitate a need to export pharmaceuticals to California. She also wondered about the possi-

24. Quoted in Philippa Levine, " 'The Humanising Influences of Five O'Clock Tea': Victorian Feminist Periodicals," *Victorian Studies* 33 (1990): 306.

25. Quoted in Regenia Gagnier, *Subjectivities: A History of Self-Representation in Britain, 1832–1920* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 96.

26. Algernon Taylor, *Memories of a Student* (London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent, 1895), 11.

27. CW: XIV, 17.

bility of the influx of gold lowering "the value of fixed incomes, but . . . benefit[ting] trade."[28] She had a head for business, but only John Mill relied on her. His willingness to do so was part of the freedom developed in their new "self."

Playing the piano, serving tea, and financial responsibilities are merely the surface evidence for a commitment to de-gendering roles—even those that were legally binding. The rejection of the traditional roles in marriage was formalized before they married. Six weeks before their wedding, John announced that he would never assert any of the legal rights to control his future wife's actions, body, or money which accompany matrimony.[29] Their lives aimed at equality, and they succeeded in escaping many of the prescribed roles at a level few Victorians achieved. Whether they succeeded to the extent they should have, given the society in which they lived, is a judgment you will have to make.

Passion

Passion ignites easily in the beginning of a "forbidden" love. A famous psychologist need not confirm what we all know: the forbidden is erotic by its very nature. Early in their love, Harriet croons, "No one ever loved as you love me nor made their love one half quarter so happy. I am perfectly happy."[30] And, again, "I feel as tho' you had never loved me half so well as last night."[31]

Harriet's passion in the 1830s and 1840s (as witnessed in Chapter 1) and John's in the 1850s are cut from the same cloth.[32] John pouted, "This is the first time since we were married my darling wife that we have been separated & I do not like it at all."[33] For John, Harriet's love letters were "what

28. 499.
29. The entire document is recorded in Chapter 2.
30. 324.
31. 325.
32. In their married love, we hear John's whispered passion but rarely Harriet's because nearly all of her letters were destroyed by John at her request. When Harriet's letters followed John's travels with the risk of their being stolen or lost, Harriet's desire to obliterate the traces of her ideas would seem perfectly understandable. Yet John burnt Harriet's missives received in the safety of Blackheath. I wonder what parts of her letters she wanted hidden from the world. Descriptions of her illness? The contributions she made to John's writing? Whatever the motivation, the hundreds of pages of letters which John wrote Harriet offer only half of the conversation they maintained in their times apart (CW: XIV, 140). In an odd parallel, few of John's letters from their early years together survive.
33. CW: XIV, 111.

keeps the blood going in the veins." Without them, John assured her he would have "a sort of hybernating existence like those animals found in the inside of a rock."[34]

More than twenty years after they fell in love, John still writes the most touching crie de coeur, "Her existence & love are to me what the Deity is to a devout person."[35] His letters are full of not only the abstract pronouncements of love, but the intimate physicality of passion. He sent "a thousand . . . kisses,"[36] the sweet "x x x x x x,"[37] and "mille baci,"[38] Italian kisses. John even asks Harriet to "kiss her next letter just in the middle of the first line of writing—the kiss will come safe & I shall savour it."[39]

Passion of a twenty-four year old for her secret lover is expected, but romance sustained for twenty years deserves attention. The rarity of such devotion nowadays lends it an air of unreality. Few permit themselves to remain this vulnerable for this long. Only very lucky or very gifted couples develop this openness and nurture their being together with so much devotion.[40] Over and over Harriet has been portrayed as the overbearing boss of a submissive (undersexed) John. I would have to disagree. Do you?

Anger

Even more remarkable, Harriet's and John's personal and professional alliance allowed very un-Victorian displays of a woman's anger in publications and in private conversations.[41] Harriet was enraged about child abuse, child custody judgments, conformity, domestic violence, the French Revolution, the legal system, religion, and marriage institutions. She was exasperated with Chartists, John Mill, Thomas Carlyle, her children, her husband, her parents, her siblings, judges, politicians, doctors, and women writers who did not support women's equality—among others.

34. CW: XIV, 110.
35. CW: XIV, 373.
36. CW: XIV, 118.
37. CW: XIV, 217.
38. CW: XIV, 478.
39. CW: XIV, 259.
40. Walter E. Houghton gives several examples of such effusive devotion between other couples from this period including Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Marguerite and Matthew Arnold. Houghton's discussion of the cultural values that lead to such commitment is instructive. *The Victorian Frame of Mind* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), 385–393.
41. Conduct books advised women to show no signs of anger. The Victoria list had an interesting discussion of this topic in March 1999. You may read the archive of the thread at its website at victoria@listserv.indiana.edu.

I begin with Harriet's outrage over corporal punishment for children, written in a newspaper article dated 1850:

> It is assumed, and goes uncontradicted, that a punishment [flogging] which is brutalising and degrading to grown men is quite fit and proper for helpless infancy. . . . Why does not the unbrutal part of the public—the part which does not sympathise with cruelty, rouse itself and demand of the legislature how much longer the flogging of children shall be sanctioned by law?[42]

In speaking of marriage, Harriet scoffs in an 1831 essay,

> Let me not be mis-understood when I speak of purchase—that is not less a purchase whose payment is a home, an establishment, a reputation even, than that for which money is counted out—nay even to this last excess of degradation do 3/4 of our adult male population.[43]

In another selection, she rails,

> I should think that 500 years hence, among the whole mass of absurdity by which former ages like to be remembered, there will be nothing which will so excite wonder and contempt as the fact of legislative interference in matters of feeling—rather in the expressions of feeling. It seems to me just as absurd that there should be legislation about marrying as about shaking hands.[44]

Speaking about two well-known writers on women's issues, Mrs. Ellis and Anna Browell Jameson, Harriet sneers,

> They write as if their object was to bribe their masters into allowing a little, a very little freedom to their bodies by telling them that they have no idea how voluntarily servile their minds shall be . . . one long apology is all they have to say for themselves or for women. apology that women exist—apology that they are women, which last is needless as it is easy to see they are so only in as much as they cannot help it.[45]

Some of Harriet's sharpest rebukes toward those who perpetrate and condone domestic violence appear in her newswriting in 1846:

42. 121.
43. 13.
44. 20.
45. 32–33.

> Disgusting enough it is that animals like these should have wives and children; and disgusting that, merely because they are of the male sex, they should have the whole existence of these dependents as much under their absolute control as slave masters in any modern slave country have of their slaves.[46]

And yet again in 1849,

> If a brutal punishment can ever be appropriate, it is in the case of a brutal offence. Every day's police reports contain cases of ruffianly assaults, committed in the mere wantonness of brutality, against creatures whose sole offence is to be inferior in physical strength, oftenest of all against helpless children, or the slaves called wives, whose death, by a long continuance of personal torture, has of late been so frequently brought to light, and without a single exception so leniently passed over. . . . But who ever hears of corporal punishment for assault? . . . while, if property is in question—if pounds, shillings, and pence have been tampered with, years of imprisonment, with hard labour (not to mention transportation) are almost the smallest penalty. . . . [this is the fault of laws and courts, not just police.] . . . They, it seems, have yet to learn that there is a thing infinitely more important than property—the freedom and sacredness of human personality; that there is an immeasurable distance in point of moral enormity between any the gravest offence which concerns property only, and an act of insulting and degrading violence perpetrated against a human being. Mankind could go on very well, have gone on in time past . . . with property very insecure. But subject to blows, or the fear of blows, they can be no other than soulless, terror-stricken slaves, without virtue, without courage, without peace, with nothing they dare call their own. Yet because persons in the upper and middle ranks are not subject to personal outrage, and are subject to have their watches stolen, the punishment of blows is revived, not for those who are guilty of blows, but for middle-aged men who pawn watches. Is this to be endured?[47]

In 1844 when John shows Harriet his correspondence with Auguste Comte, Harriet rails at Comte's sexism.[48] Comte had written that because women's

46. 90.
47. 97–98.
48. 337–338.

brains were smaller they must also remain permanently subjected to men. To this misogynist argument, Harriet replies with ripe, open contempt.[49]

Much more subtly, Harriet conveyed her frustration with John over his mealy-mouthed responses to Comte. She began her letter to John saying she was "pleased" by his part of the correspondence, but then quickly demonstrated that she was also annoyed by his "tone." She indicated their distinction on this debate when she begins a sentence: "If the truth is on the side ~~we~~ I defend I imagine C. would rather not see it."[50] That strike out of "we" and replacement of "I" would have cut John to the quick.

Harriet is not only exasperated with John's weak rhetoric, but she suspects that he may be agreeing with Comte that nature is more important than nurture. Comte and John had both agreed that the same mind would be incapable of "work of active life" and the "work of reflection."[51] Harriet recognized the implications of this position: Women, like her, who had to do the active work of running a household were not fit for intellectual pursuits; and, more generally, people were inherently fit for some sorts of activities as opposed to others. The correspondents agreed that some minds (men's, upper classes) were naturally superior; therefore, they had a right to rule. That women's minds or workers' minds were stunted by the nurturing they received was overlooked by Comte and John. This was one of many times that Harriet, sometimes angrily, had to remind John of his tendency toward this position.

Harriet was annoyed not only at John's intellectual arguments. She also openly fumed at John when he wrote that his relationship with her could squelch his prospects in his career as a moral philosopher. Having recently left her husband and relinquished the primary care of her two eldest children in order to sustain her relationship with John, Harriet could not be counted on for sympathy about John's "career."

> What can I say to that but "by all means pursue your brilliant and important career'. Am I one to choose to be the cause that the person I love feels himself reduced to 'obscure & insignificant'! Good God what has the love of two equals to do with making obscure & insignificant[.] if ever you could be obscure & insignificant you are so whatever hap-

49. Robbins is one of the few commentators to argue that Harriet's disgust with Comte is justifiable. L. Robbins, "Packe on Mill," *Economics* 24 (August, 1957): 250–259; in *John Stuart Mill: Critical Assessments,* vol. 4, ed. John Cunningham Wood (London: Routledge, 1988), 95.

50. 337.

51. 338.

> pens & certainly a person who did not feel contempt at the very idea the words create is not one to brave the world.[52]

As a woman working at his side *and* doing all the grunt work of living, obscurity was Harriet Taylor Mill's forte. Few Victorian women would have had the courage to confront any man with this sarcasm, much less the famous child prodigy and philosopher John Stuart Mill.

Harriet's anger has philosophical implications. Aristotle says that anyone "who does not get angry when there is reason to be angry, or does not get angry in the right way at the right time and with the right people, is a dolt."[53] Cognitive theories of the emotions recognize that anger includes a judgment that something is unfair, wrong, or unjust. As Elizabeth Spelman points out in "Anger and Insubordination," subordinated groups are typically thought to be more "emotional" and less rational than the dominant group. Serfs, servants, slaves, and subjects are expected to be sad, jealous, depressed, and so on—but they are not allowed one particular emotion: anger. Anger involves a judgment about the dominant group that assumes equality (for the time). For example, a maid who displays anger at her employer assumes she can rightfully judge him. If she truly believes he is superior to her—morally or intellectually—she will not object to his action. Spelman writes, "To be angry at him is to make myself, at least on this occasion, his judge—to have, and to express, a standard against which I assess his conduct."[54]

If one recognizes one's subordinated state and the injustice implied by that situation, one has an obligation to be angry. If subordinate individuals are not angry, why aren't they? Spelman argues, "Either they . . . lack the self-esteem or self-respect or respect for their community necessary to make them protest it; or they won't see or articulate the situation they are in, and are deceiving themselves."[55] If the oppressed are not enraged, they either lack respect for themselves or their community; or, they do not recognize how unjust their situation is.

Spelman would have applauded Harriet's vehement expressions of disapproval. Harriet lacked neither the knowledge of her situation and that of others in her society, nor the respect for herself and her community

52. 332–333.

53. *Nichomachean Ethics,* 1126a4. Quoted in Elizabeth Spelman, *Women, Knowledge, and Reality,* ed. Ann Garry and Marilyn Pearsall (New York: Routledge, 1996), 263.

54. Spelman, 266.

55. Spelman, 269–270.

necessary to feel anger. She was no dolt. She did not hide her anger. Nor did John punish her for it. Harriet expressed anger both personal and abstract without fear of rejection or abandonment. This is a rare place for a woman to be, even today.

I wonder if Harriet paid for that anger in the way she has been disparaged in the history of philosophy. Many scholars are as appalled by angry women now as they were in the Victorian period.

Intimacy

Demonstrations of passions and anger require trust. Harriet and John also shared the most private experiences of anyone's life: dreams,[56] money concerns, comedy, and tragedy. Both before and after they married, Harriet and John disclosed themselves to each other with complete vulnerability. They revealed their ambitions, doubts, prejudices, and fears. They asked for advice about that most taboo of subjects, finances. They held each other's hands through the lowest moments of their lives.

Money matters are still considered the most personal details of our lives. How many of you know the financial state of your dearest friends? How much do they have saved for retirement? How much have they given to relatives? Even before they wed, Harriet and John consulted each other about their most private financial affairs. Not only did Harriet help John negotiate book contracts, but she discussed with him whether and how much he should loan to family, friends, and colleagues.[57] When they considered retirement, they consulted each other on how much capital they would need to ensure their security.[58] John, unlike many men well into the twentieth century, freely revealed his fiscal state to and asked for advice from his friend and later wife. Harriet, unlike many women well into the twentieth century, understood and gave sound advice about her own and John's financial questions.[59]

The intimacy of the gossip reveals another element of their closeness.

56. The dreams reveal John's insecurity and sexual fantasies and frustrations. Their lives, even their unconscious lives, were revealed to each other. CW: XIV, 289, 476; CW: XV, 523–524.

57. For example, CW: XIV, 134 and money for George Mill, 345.

58. CW: XIV, 170, 220.

59. Harriet's long campaign to protect her dowry and the estate of John Taylor from the unscrupulous trustee and brother-in-law, Arthur Ley, is detailed in Chapter 2.

In their letters and personal writings, Harriet and John exchange gossip about those they didn't like as well as give each other emotional support, health reports, and political news.[60] The most charming moments for the reader are those in which they chatter about humorous events.[61] For example, when John was in Europe he sent a detailed travelogue of everything he saw each day—and the fleas he battled at night. In Greece the fleas were particularly bad. John's vivid descriptions must have amused Harriet. He said,

> Since I began the last sentence I caught [a flea] in the act of getting into my nostril. . . . The fleas are now attacking in columns, & firing into many parts of my body at once. . . . A hundred times since I began writing I have stripped my trousers up & my socks down when numbers of the enemy jump from their encampment—I am afraid they will consider my clothes as their permanent quarters.[62]

The next day John continued, "I never saw so many fleas in the whole of my precious life, as I found on my clothes & body on undressing last night. After chasing them one by one I laid the palm of my hand over six or seven at once. During the night they danced a saraband on my face, & I fancied I could hear the sounds of myriads of them jumping on the floor."[63] Not exactly the picture of John Stuart Mill the public saw. I can see Harriet cackling as she read this missive at Blackheath.

What remain of Harriet's private scraps of writings often appear to be one side of a written conversation between herself and another. The unguarded quality of her communication suggests that several of these were written to John. For a woman to write that the object of a woman's life was neither love nor motherhood, to profess that sexuality was not a necessity, but neither was chastity a virtue, and to acknowledge the power that money sometimes has to make us happy required absolute trust in the reader.[64] Sometimes her desire for empathy appears claustrophobic, as

60. 233–235, 237 and CW: XIV, 133.

61. The playfulness noted in John's letters reveals what María Lugones calls an "openness to self-construction or reconstruction and to . . . lack of abandonment to a particular construction of oneself, others and one's relation to them" in "Playfulness, 'World'-Travelling, and Loving Perception," *Hypatia* 2 (Summer, 1987): 17.

62. CW: XIV, 461, 463.

63. CW: XIV, 463.

64. 225–226.

when she complains that John should have "guessed" that his nervousness had caused her own throat to swell.[65] Whether offering her recommendations for reading (skip Dickens, but read George Sand) or trying to explain the delicate relation of "breeding" in the development of a moral person, Harriet openly reveals her most confidential ideas to the one person she trusted, John.

The most poignant view of Harriet and John comes from their dependency on one another during hard times. Three periods will illustrate: the Carlyle disaster, John Taylor's death, and, oddly, the aftermath of their marriage.

Only a few years after they met, on 6 March 1835, John arrived at Harriet's house with the stunning news that his maid had accidentally burned the only copy of the first part of *The French Revolution,* which Thomas Carlyle had loaned him. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, Harriet was John's source of strength in facing the humiliating confession.[66] In his time of shame, John did not turn to India House colleagues nor to his parents or his siblings. He turned to Harriet.

Harriet, in turn, depended on John during the most tragic period in her life, the death of her first husband. During the weeks in which Harriet nursed Taylor, John was always available via letter to share the grief, anxiety, momentary hope, frustration, and sorrow.

In an era when doctors did not tell their own patients or their families when an illness was fatal, Harriet discussed in detail her varying feelings about Taylor's mortality.[67] She communicated the daily highs and lows as Taylor slowly sank into his death. Harriet wrote:

> He is in good spirits & to-day almost free from any pain. The Opium must be right as Travers orders him to take it incessantly in almost any quantity, & tho' theretofore he could not take <u>any</u> opium without headache now he takes it all day without <u>any</u> apparent effect not even sleepiness, there it <u>must</u> be right.[68]

65. 228.

66. 6 March 1835: The rumor that Harriet was responsible for the disaster continued long after it was obvious that she had no part in the incident; CW XII: 252, fn. 2; 10 March 1835: CW: XII, 253. *Letters of Thomas Carlyle to John Stuart Mill, John Sterling and Robert Browning,* ed. Alexander Carlyle (New York: Haskell House Publishers, 1970), 174.

67. 343–373.

68. 346.

Nearly every day, a report of this sort was sent to John: "After the bad morn[g] of Sunday, he went on tolerably easy & well till yesterday at noon when he had a sudden fit of pain of the most sudden acute & violent kind."[69] These daily narratives allowed Harriet to continue to feel close to John even while she was nursing her dying husband. John, too, did what he could to sustain Harriet during this trial. He sent her the medical books she requested so that she could research Taylor's symptoms and possible cures. Harriet agonized with John about whether or not to demand a consultation with a new doctor. In several anguished letters, Harriet laid out the arguments pro and con,[70] pleading with John on a number of occasions to tell her what he thought about getting a second opinion.[71]

During this ordeal, John was Harriet's only solace. She did not share the same details with her mother, siblings, friends, or children. She communicated her most private thoughts to John: "The being in the midst of such a solemn and terrible fact surrounded entirely by people destitute of all ideas will or tolerance but for strict commonplace makes me feel like a caged lion."[72] Harriet trusted John alone with the intimate details of her feelings, including her guilt.

Harriet revealed to John her secret guilt about her abandonment of Taylor. She wrote, "It is now that I feel in this most serious affair of his life the terrible consequences of the different milieu."[73] I can't be certain about what she meant by "different milieu" but it is plausible that she wondered how her life and how Taylor's life and death would have differed if she had not committed herself to John.

Harriet also felt free to express her anger at the unfairness of death and her refusal to be comforted by religious explanations. Harriet fumed,

> thank (I was going to say God but can not use that form so repugnant more than ever to my present feelings). . . . why sh[d] he have these torments to endure! what good to any body is all this—He never hurt or harmed a creature on earth. If they want the life why cant they take it—what useless torture is all this![74]

69. 353.
70. 347–353.
71. 347–353.
72. 356.
73. 355. I consider other meanings of this quotation in the next chapter.
74. 358.

Later she scribbled "Often I have thought, what would crucifixtion be compared to this—mercy."[75] Her annoyance with religious reactions to death were never far from her.

> And what a cheat is life! With a fatal painful hopeless tragedy at all moments hanging over the head of every creature & sure to descend at last—And what weak selfish fools are men that instead of all joining heart & hand to oppose the common enemies chance & death they call it religion to praise it all, punish suicide, & pray to be delivered from sudden death![76]

Even in the face of death, Harriet's atheism remained, and John was the sole person she relied on to hear her voice without condemnation.

Despite the fact that she appreciated John's support, the demands of twenty-four hour care began to show in her sniping at John. In one letter she penned, "Your letter & sympathy is a great comfort but I feel & know all the time that I have it all,"[77] but in the next letter she complained,

> you talk of my writing to you "at some odd time when a change of subject of thought may be rather a relief than otherwise"! odd time! indeed you must be ignorant profoundly of all that friendship or anxiety means when you can use such pitiful narrow hearted expressions. The sentence appears to have come from the pen of one of the Miss Taylors. It is the puerility of thought & feeling of any utterly headless & heartless pattern of propriety old maid.[78]

Clearly Harriet's feelings of emotional and physical exhaustion were beginning to show. In her most bitter words to John she exclaimed,

> On Sunday I went down to you, sat down, stayed some time, & finally left the room in irrepressible indignation for you did not once during all the time you saw me ask how he was nor mention his name in any way! This fact and the feelings necessarily caused by it I can never forget as long as I live.[79]

75. 366.
76. 370.
77. 359.
78. 360.
79. 360.

John understood that these words, written a month before Taylor's death, were the cries of a woman consumed by her death watch. John remained steadfast and soon Harriet longed to speak to him, for only in his presence could they attain complete intimacy. She whispered, "I have so very much to say which must wait."[80]

After Taylor died, Harriet leaned on John to help with questions about where to bury Taylor, who would deliver the sermon, and whether or not it would be proper for John to attend the funeral—a particularly awkward decision. Through the whole ordeal, John supported Harriet, even when exhaustion made Harriet confrontational. The death of your husband—even if, or perhaps, particularly if, you are estranged—is one of the most private experiences. Harriet shared it with John.

Two years after Taylor's death, Harriet and John wed. Rather than experiencing the quietly joyous time they expected, Harriet and John's marriage years quickly became a period of adversity that they weathered together. John happily received the good wishes of his sisters Jane and Wilhelmina, but his mother, and his sisters Clara and Harriet, failed to pay the expected social call on Harriet after the announcement.[81] Although to twenty-first-century sensibilities this missed meeting seems trivial, to Victorians it would have been an egregious snub. In Austen's *Emma,* Mr. Woodhouse proclaims that "not to wait upon a bride is very remiss."[82] Mrs. Mill's dereliction of duty was not an accident, and John was rightfully annoyed.

Other family members were more vocal in their criticism of the nuptials. John's brother, George, a close friend of Harriet's son Algernon, had the audacity to write to Harriet that he was shocked to learn that she and John had married. George wonders aloud, "I don't know therefore what changes your union will make in your mode of life, if any."[83] He even suggests that John had made "easy bargains" with his publishers and that otherwise he could give up his position at India House to write full time. Even if he did not know that Harriet was the negotiator of those publishing contracts, the remark was impudent from a sibling who had been in the habit of asking his brother for money.[84] The final stab was to address

80. 368.

81. CW: XIV, 60–61.

82. Quoted in Daniel Pool, *What Jane Austen Ate and Charles Dickens Knew* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993), 68.

83. M/T XLVII/16.

84. 344–345. George requested money from John to buy a horse (a huge expense during this period) during the summer John Taylor died. The tone of the correspondence between Harriet

Harriet at the end of the letter as, "dear Mrs. Taylor (I can't forget the old name)."[85] Ouch.

John and Harriet were both furious.[86] Even after a summer of cooling down, John's reply is scorching. On 4 August John remonstrated forcefully: "I have long ceased to be surprised at any want of good sense or good manners in what proceeds from you—you appear to be too thoughtless or too ignorant to be capable of either—but such want of good feeling, together with such arrogant assumption, as are shown in your letters to my wife & to Haji I was not prepared for."[87] George tried to repair matters by writing Harriet an innocuous letter about his ship voyage, but he still referred to her as Mrs. Taylor.[88] Later that month, George wrote his friend and Harriet's son, Haji:

> I certainly implied that your mother might not have acted consistently in marrying, but is consistency such an universal virtue & inconsistency such a vice..? Believing that your mother would generally rather discourage than encourage the marriage of others I certainly was at first surprised to find her giving so deliberate an example of marriage in her own case; in which moreover there seemed to me less to be gained than in almost any marriage I could think of.[89]

Ouch, again. Calling someone a hypocrite and suggesting that a newly married couple either would not want to or could not have sex (the obvious advantage to marriage) would not endear one to them. George never reconciled with his brother.

John's sister Mary Colman described John's nastiness toward several members of the Mill family during the summer after his marriage.[90] Her portrayal of John's behavior is far from complimentary. John continued to fight with his sisters into the spring of 1852.[91] Perhaps forty years of living with his family and serving as their tutor, brother, son, and head of

and John about the matter suggests that George and John were having difficulties even before John's marriage.

85. 20 May 1851, M/T XLVII/16.

86. Harriet's irate reply to George was probably never sent, but may have served as a draft for John's response. 433–434.

87. CW: XIV, 73.

88. 9 September, M/T XLVII/14.

89. 27 September 1851. M/T XLVII/21.

90. Hayek, 171–175.

91. CW: XIV, 83.

the household had left wounds that finally erupted when he at last found a new home. The venom of John's response is not typical of his behavior before or after. Whether the reasons justified his response or not, he could count on Harriet to console him in his anger and grief over his family feud.

Through funny moments and bitter ones, through twenty-one years of unmarried and seven years of married life, Harriet and John relied on each other for counsel and for love. They bared their unconscious souls and their bank accounts. They divulged their secrets and their losses. Nothing was too awful or too trivial to relate—even fleas up one's nose.

Blended Family

Harriet had temporarily parted from Taylor in 1833 and finally separated from him in 1834 when her eldest son Herbert was six, Algernon (Haji) was four, and Helen (Lily) was almost three. Harriet and John created a life for Algernon and Helen that nurtured their minds and hearts and earned their appreciation. The collaboration between Harriet and John allowed John to participate in the parenting of Lily and Haji in a way that is similar to what we would now call a blended family. Their relationship with Herbert was more distant.

Although Harriet enjoyed her time with Herbert and Algernon on jaunts to southern England and on vacations in Europe, she never bonded with Herbert as she did with the other two children. Despite her early attachment to her infant son,[92] Herbert and Harriet rarely corresponded either in childhood or adulthood. Herbert was clearly not close to his mother. After Taylor left his entire estate to Harriet rather than to his adult son who had worked so hard in his father's business, Herbert openly rebelled against Harriet.[93]

In contrast, Algernon, from childhood through late adolescent to adulthood, had a much firmer connection to Harriet. To her eighteen-year-old son Harriet wrote a series of notes full of motherly affection, spiced with references to current political issues including the Hampden controversy,[94]

92. Recall the early letter to Taylor about Herbert as a toddler, paraphrased on p. 7.

93. This is clearly demonstrated in his fight with his mother over the trusteeship discussed in the next chapter.

94. M/T XXVII/103.

the affairs of a journalist who immigrated to Australia[95] and Brougham's pamphlet about the Revolution of February.[96] Harriet also sent Haji vivid descriptions of her travel to Pau during the winter of 1848–1849.[97] Even after she married John, Haji lived with them when he was in England and traveled with them to Switzerland.[98]

Harriet's letters to Helen reveal the irritation with her son Algernon that all mothers feel from time to time. For example, Haji kindly chaperoned Helen on her first gig as an actress, but he abandoned this duty before Harriet wished him to.[99] Harriet also had the tricky task of gingerly judging and reacting to her son's affection for various women, including a Mrs. Cholemely.[100] Harriet complains to Helen about disagreeable conversations she endured with Haji.[101] Nevertheless, she supported him financially and emotionally when he chose to travel in Europe, including the time he spent at a Barnabite Convent.[102] As he became an adult, Harriet managed to learn to give up control of her son while communicating her concern and love for him.

Haji and Helen both felt great affection for John and he clearly served as an active father-figure in their lives. As an old man, Algernon wrote a memoir recalling all the books "suggested and lent" by John even before Harriet and he were married. The philosophy of Locke, Hume, Hobbes, Berkeley, and Brown were not as easily grasped by Haji as by his sister. In a touching anecdote, Haji recalls how John gently suggested metaphysics might not be Haji's cup of tea. Algernon remarked to John that he found Brown's discussion of causation hard to follow. John replied that Haji "must have read the book with more attention than many, for Brown's argument . . . was not usually considered difficult to follow."[103] Haji got the message: "I was led to suspect that my talent lay not in the direction of metaphysical speculation." Thus Algernon turned his attention to jurisprudence and mathematics. The diplomacy of John's suggestion and the grace with

95. M/T XXVII/109.
96. M/T XXVII/110.
97. M/T XXVII/108, M/T XXVII/109, and M/T XXVII/110.
98. 424.
99. 532.
100. 426 and 540.
101. 558.
102. 426.
103. Taylor, 231.

which it was received exemplified the mutual respect Algernon and John had for one another.

As an adult, Algernon continued to live with John at Blackheath even when Harriet was traveling for her health.[104] Haji was impressed with the universality of John's knowledge of botany, chess, opera, art history, languages, mathematics, and science—as well as with his self-deprecation in suggesting that Haji could recall more of his previous travels to Italy without notes than John could have.[105] Algernon recalled the "sense of my own ignorance and incapacity" that resulted from acquaintance with John, but he also remembered his joy in being able to supply any tidbit of knowledge that John lacked.[106] The fondness of Haji for his stepfather surfaced in Haji's proud announcement that "my stepfather was present and signed the register" at his wedding.[107]

Having grown up with several younger siblings, John was familiar with the hubbub of a large family. Haji describes him as a stepfather capable of reading a book at supper even while his stepchildren were present, although never when Harriet was at the table.[108] John even managed to read in a room full of chatter.[109] However, in general Haji remembers his stepfather as being fully present to the family. Haji recalls, "When in the society of others—especially of his own family—he was full of interest in whatever was going on; taking his share in the conversation, though at the same time the best of listeners, not only from courtesy, but also because his avidity for knowledge made him eager to learn all he could from everybody he came in contact with."[110] Notice that he refers to Haji, Helen, and Harriet as John's "own family." His stepson had no doubt that John saw him and his sister as his family.

Helen loved her biological father, but the life she spent with her mother and stepfather was so natural that she refers to John Mill as her "father" after her mother died.[111] No doubt their closeness began with her birth.

104. Taylor, 231.
105. Taylor, 232–233.
106. Taylor, 236–237.
107. Taylor, 239.
108. Taylor, 234.
109. Taylor, 241.
110. Taylor, 241.
111. Bertrand Russell and Patricia Russell, eds., *The Amberley Papers: Bertrand Russell's Family Background,* vol. 1 (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1937), 372.

Helen Taylor was born July 27, 1831, about nine months after Harriet and John met. Falling in love at the same time that Harriet grew increasingly large with child must have generated conflicting emotions. This child, Helen, always remained central in Harriet and John's life together. Helen was only two years old when Harriet finally moved out of her husband's house. The central triad of Harriet, Helen, and John remained at the core of the lives of all three of them.[112]

In her diary spanning four years, Helen records eleven visits to her father's house in London. If the seven visits in 1846 are typical,[113] Harriet and Helen saw Taylor in London fairly regularly.[114] Harriet clearly did not isolate Helen from her father, but the majority of the time Helen resided with Harriet in Walton, where John spent much of his free time.

Both "parents" conferred their awe of the natural world as well as their intellectual tastes to Helen. Her enraptured recording of hearing a nightingale, her enthusiastic descriptions of the stars, and her lovely account of walking on the beach in the moonlight reflect the sensitivities of both Harriet and John.[115] Helen's lifelong love of walking, however, resulted from her regular association with John. One of John's biographers described John's relationship to Helen: "As she grew into childhood he taught her botany, and people who wanted a glimpse of Mill were advised to 'look for him with a flaxen-haired little sprite of a girl any Saturday afternoon on Hampton Heath.' "[116] Even into womanhood, Helen continued to walk with John, including taking an extended camping trip to Greece with him after Harriet's death in 1862.[117]

Harriet and John created a welcome home to her children from their childhoods through maturity. Haji describes their house as "the sweet home of my mature years, and the scene of some of the happiest days of my life."[118] The children were encouraged to learn, gently steered in the

112. The next chapter will include an extended discussion of Harriet and Helen's relationship.

113. Since her diary entries for 1846 are much more complete than for other years, the difference between the years may be a difference in record and not in occurrence.

114. The stays lasted from one day to fifteen. Helen records only two visits with her father outside of London. On 12 May 1842, John Taylor traveled about ten miles outside of London to Harriet and Helen's home in Walton. On 9 August 1846, John Taylor joined the family in Ryde on the Isle of Wight for a holiday.

115. Helen's diary entries: 11 May 1846, 25 February 1846, 30 May 1846.

116. Elbert Hubbard, *Little Journeys to the Homes of Great Lovers* (East Aurora, N.Y.: Roycrofters, 1913), 123.

117. CW: XXXII, 131.

118. Taylor, 256.

direction of their abilities, and paid attention. No wonder Haji saw his life with Harriet and John as a happy one. Such a home made Helen's decision to continue living with John for the remainder of her life after her mother's death easier to comprehend. Both Haji's and Helen's adult descriptions of their childhood convince readers that Harriet and John gave them the support and love necessary to thrive. This achievement required the close cooperation of Harriet and John.

Collaborative Intellectual Work

The collaborative self Harriet and John built became the basis for their co-authorship. Historians have fought about the extent and quality of Harriet's contribution of the work published in John's name for the last one hundred fifty years. This particular aspect of their lives together is too large to consider here; arguments on this topic are presented in the last chapter of this book.

Reverberations of the Collaborative Self

Understanding the intimacy of the cooperation between Harriet and John helps us hear the reverberations of their lives with others and their philosophical positions.

Connections to Subjugated Groups

Struggling toward equality with one another made John as well as Harriet ardently committed to other subjugated groups. They were convinced that reforming—even revolutionizing—the partnership of women and men was at the heart of fundamental social improvement, especially with regard to the most flagrant misuse of power between men and women, domestic violence.[119] The inequality of African-American slaves, Italian political refugees, Irish peasants, and atheists (or non-orthodox believers) echoed the injustice found in most families. Harriet and John were fervently dedicated to eliminating unfair treatment of any group.[120]

119. Recognizing the power of the politics of the family is one of Harriet and John's most fundamental insights. See 232, 235, and 243–244 below.

120. Although Gagnier uses the unfortunate singular "Mill," she makes the same point I make here when she writes: "Mill's imaginative extension of sympathy to cooperativists, revolutionaries,

Harriet praised the associations of laborers in American trading ships, Cornwall miners, whaling vessels, and French piano makers who had freed themselves of the classic capitalist division between rich owner and poor worker.[121] In the French case, Harriet enthusiastically recorded in *Principles of Political Economy* the expenses and earnings in detail as if they were the A's on her child's report card. She praised the efficiency and intellectual growth that results from the workers taking charge of their own remuneration. Harriet remarked, "Associations like those which we have described, by the very process of their success, are a course of education in those moral and active qualities by which alone success can be either deserved or attained."[122] Association, collaboration, cooperation: These are the keys to the greatest goods in life. Harriet and John had discovered this principle in their own lives.

Just after finishing *Principles of Political Economy* in 1848, Harriet wrote to William Fox, thanking him for his admiration of the book. In two letters on the subject, Harriet praised England for its emancipation of slaves, but criticized Fox's belief that subjugated groups must speak out for their own freedom. Subordinated people are silenced by those in power, according to her. The injustice laborers suffer parallels that of slaves and women.[123] Harriet was more familiar with gender discrimination and was convinced that it was the most fundamental form of injustice, but other forms of injustice pushed their way into her consciousness.

While working on her "Enfranchisement of Women,"[124] Harriet exhorted John to write an article criticizing the meanness of a bill designed to allow Jews to enter parliament by no longer requiring them to swear a belief in Christianity. They objected to the "Jew Bill" for making the exception for Jews only and not for "sceptics and infidels, . . . Hindoos, Buddhists, and Mahomedans." Their article in the *Daily News* of 26 March 1849 argued that being a disbeliever in Christianity or in God did not make a person immoral. Their argument for acceptance of non-Christians and atheists later reappeared in *On Liberty*. Harriet and John continued to fight for the widest possible tolerance of those on the outskirts of society.

workers, North American slaves, Irish tenants, Jamaican Blacks, women and political refugees may be seen as the making public of passionate relations with others." Gagnier, 255.

121. 302–313.

122. 313.

123. 390–392.

124. CW: XIV, 13.

Two of their campaigns were directed against the violent injustice of domestic abuse. Between 5 February 1850 and 28 August 1851, Harriet and John wrote seven newspaper pieces on domestic violence, including as their topics wife murder, child abuse, and servant battering. Harriet's "Enfranchisement of Women," published in 1851, connected the fight for women's equality with that of the slaves in America.

In many of their critiques, Harriet and John did not bother to attack the right. Instead, they reprimanded the left for not going far enough, whether in proposed domestic violence laws[125] or in religious oath requirements. Harriet and John keened loudly to draw attention to and demand equity for workers, slaves, non-believers, and women. John had been intellectually committed to justice before he had met Harriet, but only in the struggle that they endured in their determination to live equally did he grasp the difficulty and <u>feel</u> the energy needed to achieve it. Their fight for others was fueled by their commitment to living collaboratively.

Refusal to Accept Either/Or Ways of Thinking

Harriet and John's most fundamental intellectual breakthrough began as they came to see themselves as "joint." They necessarily had to abandon the gendered opposition that informed so much of their lives. At a more fundamental level, they asked whether any oppositions accurately described reality. Individual and community development no longer appeared to be antithetical. Free will did not need to be divorced from determinism. Socialism and capitalism did not have to conflict. One might also be a worker and a mother or live in passionate abstinence. Harriet and John systematically refused either/or ways of thinking.

Individual and Community Harriet and John did not believe that improved laws alone would fundamentally alter society. They argued for a mixture of private and public moral development. Roebuck wrote to Harriet in 1832 with similar ideas. Concerning women's rights, Roebuck argued, "They appear beyond legislative reach. The evil must be remedied by altering the reigning morality, not changing the frame of government."[126]

125. Harriet and John's "Remarks on Mr. Fitzroy's Bill for the More Effectual Prevention of Assaults on Women and Children" is a good example; 126–131.

126. M/T XXVII/122.

Altering "reigning morality" begins with one person reforming himself or herself, then having the access and willingness to engage in public debate.

Journalism, for example, has the ability to reach large numbers of people, and when done well, it moves its audience to reform society.[127] I have described how individuals might reform society, but how these active women and men are created is a question yet to be answered even today. Harriet and John would reply that moral individuals are cultivated in a reformed society! Although this appears to be a circular argument, it is not. Improving society requires a dialogue between reforming selves who clarify the problems and point to solutions. One only becomes interested in reforming oneself in the company of others. By finding each other, Harriet and John developed a mini-community in which they could discover new ideas that could then be shared with the larger community. As that larger community improved, Harriet and John would grow better together as well. The dialogue between Harriet and John was reflected in the dialogue between them and public opinion at large.[128] Neither the institutions of the church nor of government can succeed in improving society at its core. Only when public opinion not only allows freedom, but demands it, will slaves, workers, and women be free.

The relationship between reforming selves and reforming society can be seen as a spiral. In the beginning a few, perhaps even just two people, by chance connection improve each other. As they grow, they seed the surrounding community with their belief that the process of exchange and conversation is the best method of improving society.[129] Once those in the surrounding community develop, they in turn spread the dialogue to a wider audience. Not only does the spiral spread outward, but it also travels downward. As the conversations widen, they also deepen, so that all of those already involved are strengthened by those added and by the process of intellectual exchange itself. The reforming selves first change society and then, as a result, society alters individuals. In the dissemination of many religious doctrines, there is a Truth to which everyone must adhere

127. Paul Loeb also suggests that people are best changed by stories—the same kind of stories that Harriet and John focused on in their newspaper articles; *Soul of a Citizen: Living With Conviction in a Cynical Time* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 1999), 12.

128. Eldon Eisenach first pointed to this mixture of private and public reform in "Self-Reform as Political Reform in the Writings of John Stuart Mill," *Utilitas* 1, no. 2 (November 1, 1989): 242–258.

129. Loeb reiterated this idea, 21–22.

in order to join the group. Those who enter the reform of themselves and society that Harriet and John outline merely adhere to a *method*: philosophical dialogue—the belief that together we can all come closer to the truth. We never have enough knowledge to declare that we have arrived at all the answers, but together we can move away from injustice and toward a more caring, tolerant society. The method that saves us from staleness and rigidity can improve the world. Harriet and John lived their lives believing this, and *On Liberty* is their manifesto.[130]

Free Will and Determinism *A System of Logic* argues against the choice between determinism or moral responsibility. Many philosophers believe that people are either caused to do every act and can't be held morally culpable, or that people have the freedom to choose what they do and are therefore morally responsible for those choices. John and Harriet believed otherwise. John wrote that we can change our character in precisely the same way it was formed, by placing ourselves under determining influences. For example, if parents require a child to do no household duties, he will become lazy. These parents created the child's character. But John notes that as an adult this same person could change by surrounding himself with an environment that encourages a better work ethic. John points out, "If [those who originally created our character] could place us under the influence of certain circumstances, we, in like manner, can place ourselves, under the influence of other circumstances. . . . Our character is formed by us as well as for us."[131] We are responsible for who influences us. Certainly we are caused with those around us, but that does not take us off the moral hook. Each of us can surround ourselves by those who would cause us to be good. Harriet and John chose to become better people when they chose to keep each other's company. Again, the solution was not either/or.

Socialism and Capitalism Self and community reform are not in opposition; neither are free will and causation, and neither are socialism and capitalism. In *Principles of Political Economy,* Harriet and John cele-

130. Harriet and John had no illusions that they were inventing a method for helping people become more moral. They looked to Socratic dialogue as their source of inspiration.

131. CW: VIII, 840.

brated cooperation between workers and owners as, for example, when whaling ships shared the catch between the sailors and owners. They also lauded industries that were run by the workers themselves. An example of piano-makers in Paris was examined in detail. In their factory, profits were shared and the managers were not remunerated at a much higher rate than those who built the pianos. The association provided for illness and disabilities. Harriet and John argued that the successful French example showed that it is possible to combine "freedom and independence of the individual, with the moral, intellectual, and economical advantages of aggregate production."[132] The choice between the freedom of capitalism and the advantages of social production is a false one. Various forms of cooperation are possible while one maintains individual liberty.

Wife and Worker Harriet, alone this time, would argue against the dichotomy between wife and worker. John could not bring himself to this position, despite Harriet's arguments outlined at the beginning of this chapter. Of the few times he disagreed with Harriet and clung to either/or thinking, John was wrong. Women, like men, should have the freedom to combine careers and parenthood. No one should be forced to choose between these employments as strict alternatives.

Passionate Abstinence Can one be lusty and celibate simultaneously? The answer Harriet and John arrived at was yes. The details of how and why await you in the next chapter.

Instead of seeing genders, classes, economic systems, positions on free will, or paid and unpaid employment in opposition to each other, Harriet and John found a middle ground. They looked for the center that would unite opposites. Their philosophical positions reflected their physical lives and vice versa.

How Did They Create and Maintain This Collaborative Self?

Intense collaboration as enjoyed by Harriet and John required conversation, persuasion, resistance, and sarcasm. They debated with, railed against, and cajoled each other. They loved each other.

132. 313.

Intimacy on this level requires time together. Before they married they found that time both on weekends and through extensive travel—sometimes for as long as a six-month period. Such a strategy required Taylor's cooperation. He footed the bill for her separate house and for her travel. Furthermore, in order for Harriet and John to live this life together, they resorted to subterfuge to smooth over her parents' questions. Taylor forwarded letters sent to Harriet at Kent Terrace despite the fact that she had not lived there for twenty years. The delicate game of finding time for each other led Harriet to withdraw from London society. She retreated to the country towns of Keston and Walton. It was not easy.

The sensual and intellectual threads that held them together never frayed. They were lovers, not merely pals. They wanted each other's physical presence—the sideburns and eyes and lips. Their passion extended into and surrounded their give and take about ideas. Body and soul were each committed to the other.

Why Did They Do It?

They both gained from the integration of their lives. Harriet acquired the freedom to write provocative articles on domestic violence and women's rights and the need for liberty from public opinion and to be heard as a man, with seriousness and consideration. She was not ignored or ridiculed as a woman. Other women hid behind pseudonyms. George Eliot and Currer Bell were not alone in sensing that male names lent an aura of credibility to a text. Since Harriet wrote in the era before women's journals, she did not have the access women advocates and thinkers even a generation later would have for publication of their views.[133] Because anonymous writing was commonplace during the mid-Victorian period, Harriet and John could easily hide their collaboration by having John submit the work and by having no name attached to the published article.

When Harriet began her life with John, he gained a life manager who directed his publication contracts, chose his book topics, and secured seats for him on the train. More importantly, John gained the source of his professional and personal passion. He would no longer be spiritually lonely. The year before he met Harriet, John wrote to his friend John Sterling that he expected loneliness to be "my probably future lot." He continues:

133. The first feminists' journals were in 1858. Levine, 293.

> By loneliness I mean the absence of that feeling which has accompanied me through the greater part of my life, that which one fellow-traveller, or one fellow-soldier has towards another—the feeling of being engaged in the pursuit of a common object, and of mutually cheering one another on, and helping one another in an arduous undertaking. This, which after all is one of the strongest ties of individual sympathy, is at present, so far as I am concerned, suspended at least, if not entirely broken off.[134]

Unlike Descartes, Abelard, or Sartre who never acknowledged the philosophical contributions of their friends and lovers, John did. John gained a fellow-traveller, not just a manager.

Harriet also served as John's sparring partner. The ideas he and she and they wrote were generated in their debates. As you saw in the first chapter, many of the ideas Harriet had in her twenties eventually found their way into the work published in John's name. In the final chapter of this book you will trace the later co-authorship. Like Beatrice and Sidney Webb, Harriet and John were a "double-star personality, the light of one being indistinguishable from that of the other." With Harriet and John, as with the Webbs, "one and one, side by side, in a proper integrated relationship, make not two but eleven."[135]

Harriet administered John's daily life, nursed his ego, and provided him with ideas. Did Harriet lose more than she profited? Did she fail to accomplish what she was capable of attaining? Harriet may confront some of the same dilemmas George Eliot's character Dorothea faces. Those of you familiar with *Middlemarch* will recall her bittersweet tale. George Eliot had enormous insight into this question of an extraordinary woman's limited expression. She wrote at the end of *Middlemarch:*

> Dorothea herself had no dreams of being praised above other women, feeling that there was always something better which she might have done, if she had only been better and known better. Still, she never repented that she had given up position and fortune to marry Will Ladislaw, and he would have held it the greatest shame as well as sorrow to him if she had repented. They were bound to each other by a love stronger than any impulses which could have marred it. No life would

134. CW: XII, 30.

135. Mary Agnes Hamilton, *Sidney and Beatrice Webb: A Study in Contemporary Biography* (London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co., nd. [1932?]), 1–2.

> have been possible to Dorothea which was not filled with emotion, and she had now a life filled also with a beneficent activity which she had not the doubtful pains of discovering and marking out for herself. . . . Many who knew her, thought it a pity that so substantive and rare a creature should have been absorbed into the life of another, and be only known in a certain circle as a wife and mother. But no one stated exactly what else that was in her power she ought rather to have done.[136]

Although Harriet was no Dorothea, nor John a Will Ladislaw, Harriet shared the difficulty Dorothea experienced in finding any course of life worthy of her spirit. Given the limitations of mid-Victorian British society there is nothing else beyond collaborating with John that she could have done that would influence so many people throughout the past one hundred fifty years.

Her life and work with John was a compromise but not a defeat. Their commitment to living as a team may be the most productive and admirable way to exist, not merely second best, not merely a requirement of society's unfairness. In his *Autobiography,* John characterized his companionship with Harriet:

> Two persons of cultivated faculties, identical in opinions and purposes, between whom there exists that best kind of equality, similarity of powers and capacities with reciprocal superiority in them—so that each can enjoy the luxury of looking up to the other and can have alternately the pleasure of leading and being led in the path of development.[137]

The miniature community Harriet and John formed with each other and with her children was noncoercive and open—allowing men to pour tea, girls to read philosophy, and women to negotiate contracts. When I read of their passion and respect for one another, I walk away envious, not disappointed. Do you?

136. George Eliot, *Middlemarch* (London: Penguin Books, 1965), 893–894.
137. CW: I, 251.

2 Operatic Ensembles

> The Bororo Indians . . . believe that there is no such thing as a private self. The Bororos regard the mind as an open cavity, like a cave or a tunnel or an arcade . . . In 1969 José M. R. Delgado, the eminent Spanish brain physiologist, pronounced the Bororos correct. . . . He cited experiments in which healthy college students lying on beds in well-lit but soundproofed chambers, wearing gloves to reduce the sense of touch and translucent goggles to block out specific sights, began to hallucinate within hours. Without the entire village, the whole jungle, occupying the cavity, they had no minds left.[1]

Harriet and John created a complex duet moving through time, but each of them was also an ensemble of family and friends. Harriet's selves fracture like a cubist painting—just as all our selves do. How many different selves does one call *me*? The self that goes to your mother's for holidays is different from the self the grocery clerk sees. The lover self and the best friend self are often distinct. Harriet's life, like each of ours, was an operatic ensemble that involved intense long-term anguished relationships, death, betrayal, and violence as well as the rather minor roles that she created with the supporting actors in her life.

Each family member, friend, and associate realizes a different Harriet. The variations are not due to psychological illness nor to deception, but are the result of the complexities that make up each of us. We readers look for one defining self. For Harriet, there isn't one. She is a composite of Victorian lady, chatty girlfriend, daddy's girl, angry daughter, passionate intellectual, and dedicated mother. There is no single who. There are only collaborations with various people at various times.

After the First Death

By the early 1840s the passionate and permanent commitment of Harriet and John to each other replaced the discovery and uncertainty of

1. Tom Wolfe, *Bonfire of the Vanities,* quoted in Regenia Gagnier, *Subjectivities: A History of Self-Representation in Britain, 1832–1920* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 12.

their early love of the 1830s. Death circled Harriet and John in the 1840s, beginning with Harriet's brother, then with John's sibling, followed by too many others. Each death revealed a new side of Harriet. Dylan Thomas moaned, "after the first death, there is no other,"[2] but each death wounds the soul in a unique way and calls forth unexpected virtues and unanticipated emotions.

The series of deaths shadowing their relationship began on 11 November 1839 when Harriet lost her brother, William. Unlike the expected deaths of her two older brothers who died when Harriet was still a teenager, William's loss was a shock. As a surgeon in the Navy, William had been living for years in Italy and had married an Italian woman, Emilia. Emilia was financially destitute after her husband's death. Shortly thereafter, Harriet begs her father, "Dear Papa what shall you do for poor Emilia."[3] Replying to what she believes will be her father's criticism of Emilia, Harriet argues that whether English or Italian, Emilia deserves the support of her family. Her supplication was apparently in vain. Harriet's father's hardness and stinginess even in the face of his son's death brought out the beseeching child in Harriet. Harriet's poignant appeal before this ogre of a father is unparalleled in any other relationship she had.

Early in 1840, John too suffered several significant professional and personal losses: He abandoned the *London and Westminster Review;* he broke with Carlyle; and his favorite brother, Henry, died. Overwork on the *Westminster Review* had driven him to flee to Italy where he and Harriet had time to reflect on what they wanted to accomplish over the next few years. They recognized that radical politics was defunct and that they needed to work on more lasting projects. The new decade found Harriet and John free of the journal.

Just days after selling the *Review,* John traveled to Falmouth to be with his dying brother. Despite the sad circumstances, John's stay involved long friendly meetings with John Sterling and his new friends Robert Barclay Fox and Caroline Fox. They had *al fresco* lunches, visited caves to see luminescent mosses, and spent long evenings in philosophical discussion.[4]

2. Dylan Thomas, "A Refusal to Mourn the Death, by Fire, of a Child in London."

3. 386–388. These are the only extant letters Harriet wrote to her father.

4. Caroline's diary from this period reveals John's kindness and openness. Caroline Fox, *Memories of Old Friends,* 3rd ed., ed. Horace N. Pym (London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1882), 69–88. John was not immune to Caroline's charms; nor was his friend Sterling, an invalid husband and father of six at the time who was himself convalescing away from his family. John unhooked Caroline's dress from brambles while mumbling about turning annoyances into pleasures. He created a Cal-

These entertaining distractions did not mask the fact that John was losing his dearest sibling, Henry. Every death is a reminder of others, and Henry's was no exception. The following Christmas, John wrote to his friend, Gustave D'Eichthal, that losing a father means losing the link to one's childhood, but a wife or child's death is worse, since it causes one to lose hope for the future.[5] Losing Henry meant losing part of John's hope for a better world.

The deaths of Harriet's and John's brothers were accompanied by further estrangements from family and friends. After years of being neglected, Thomas Carlyle had finally become a popular intellect in London, where he presented a series of lectures attended by large crowds. In the middle of Carlyle's lecture on "Hero as Prophet," John stood quaking with rage to shout, "No!"[6] Those around him were surely appalled at his uncharacteristic outburst. John could not tolerate Carlyle's ridicule of Utilitarians. John's gradual retreat from Carlyle's company, which had begun in the late 1830s, became increasingly more obvious. Neither Harriet nor John abandoned the Carlyles immediately, but the process of alienation would never be reversed. The Carlyles visited the Mills in May, and John took a long walk with Carlyle on Christmas Day, but they would never correspond as frequently or as intimately as they had during the 1830s. We define ourselves not only when we collaborate, but also by when we move away from connections. Thus Harriet and John signaled a new sense of themselves when they disassociated themselves from the Carlyles.

Harriet's Illness

Harriet and John both hobbled through 1840 saddened and more isolated than ever, but their suffering was only beginning. Harriet's health appeared to be frail from the time she met John. Despite her "weakness," she managed to travel extensively in Europe at the end of 1839. One might suspect Harriet used health complaints to serve as her excuse to escape family gatherings or to accompany John and resist association with her

endar of Odours for Caroline so that she would know which plants her nose should search for during each month. Caroline reveled in John's spontaneous jump for joy at being in the countryside. The often heard accusation that Harriet isolated John from others does not jibe with Caroline's portrayal of him.

5. CW: XIII, 455.
6. Packe, 264–265; alienation from Carlyles, CW: XXXII, 57; XIII: 463.

husband. Fair enough. John also invented a convenient illness that required him to travel to the continent for six months.[7] Harriet may have employed the same strategy to enjoy the luxury of a holiday with her lover, John.

Whatever the real state of her health prior to 1841, beginning in June of that year Harriet was seriously ill.[8] In a letter written to her brother, Arthur, in Australia on 15 June 1841, Harriet wrote, "[I] had a severe illness with a sort of paralysis from which I have quite lost the power of moving my right leg, and very nearly that of the other."[9] Confirming her illness in October but not the cause, Harriet asked John to pass along to Sarah Austin a report of her sudden paralysis earlier that year.[10] Harriet's message to John during this illness was the most ardent: "They keep me here yet—indeed I could not stand when I tried to get up. . . . I am nervous & feverish . . . You did not come today. Mr. Fox said he would write but I told him not[,] that he has just been here, & I am so tired—that I could sleep—I have told them to wake me in the morning early & then I can say a word more to you."[11]

Although Harriet recovered use of her leg to some extent, she continued to be plagued by ill health the rest of her short life. While some of the complaints seemed trivial, others announced a serious illness. Being sick became part of her identity from 1841 to her death seventeen years later. Her symptoms included recurring inability to walk, pain (especially at night), numbness in her hand, facial aches, headaches, broken blood vessels in the lungs, nose bleeds, and fevers, culminating in her death at the age of fifty-one.[12] We usually do not think of illness as a part of who we

7. CW: IV, 12.

8. Forgive me for this extended argument about Harriet's illness. My strong suspicions that Harriet had syphilis will no doubt be controversial. In order to present my argument as completely as possible, I must interrupt the flow of the narrative for longer than I would like. Some of what I present here parallels the introduction to *The Complete Works of Harriet Taylor Mill,* xxix–xxxii.

9. 389.

10. CW: XIII, 486–487.

11. 336.

12. These afflictions were recorded in letters to her family, mostly to John and Helen Taylor.
inability to walk: 1841, 389; 1844, 459; 1848, 468–469, 471, 482–484, 486–487; 1849, 494–498; 1857, 567–568.
pain: 482; at night: 468, 471, 482, 484; back pain: 562, 566.
numbness in her hand: 1857, 543, 552, 556, 559, 561, 566.
coughing: 1846, 461; 1848, 467, 482.
face aches: 1847, 457, 466, 468, 473.
headaches: 1848, 468, 488, 489; 1849, 500; 1856, 525; 1857, 541, 552, 570; 1858, 579.
broken blood vessels in the lungs: 1853, 416; 1857, M/T XXIV/704.

are, but of course constant pain and paralysis color every aspect of how we act and how we see ourselves.

"Consumption," that quaint word for the plague of the nineteenth century—tuberculosis—probably accounted for the cough and maybe the lung hemorrhages and fevers. However, the numbness in her legs and hands remains a mystery. The explanations for this ailment suggested by historians of philosophy are not convincing. Hayek reported that Harriet's paralysis resulted from a carriage accident, citing as evidence Helen's diary entry of May 1842. But Harriet was lame in June 1841, long before the accident recorded in 1842. Furthermore, Hayek incorrectly transcribed the diary, which actually says Helen's "gr[and] papa" and grandmother were in a carriage accident.[13] Hayek apparently overlooked the critical "gr" while transcribing this passage, making it seem that Harriet, not Helen's grandparents, was injured. The other common explanation given for her lameness, that "the paralysis in 1841 is clearly of psychological origin," simply exasperates me.[14] We are left with the question: why did Harriet have the recurring partial paralysis and pain?

Not only is it difficult to explain her symptoms, but some of the medications Harriet took are suspicious. Harriet consumed a number of tonics: tinct of bark, tinct of hops, quinine with sulfuric acid, laudanum, and Tuson's iodine treatment and cough medicine, in addition to the favorite Victorian treatment, baths. Laudanum, bark, hops, and cough medicine were common nineteenth-century remedies. An iodine/mercury treatment (e.g., "Tuson's iodine course") strong enough to loosen one's teeth[15] and quinine with sulfuric acid were serious treatments not usually prescribed for consumption. In fact, John's doctor would not prescribe "mercury [for John because] he thinks [it] the death warrant of a consumptive patient."[16]

nose bleed CW: XIV, 193.

fevers: 1841, 336; 1850, 403; 1856, 513; 1857, 541; 1858, 583.

13. Hayek, 296, fn. 46.

14. Bruce Mazlish, *James and John Stuart Mill: Father and Son in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Basic Books, 1975), 318. Five months after Harriet's death, John wrote William E. Hickson to suggest iodine combined with bromide of potassium as a remedy for paralysis (CW: XV, 602). He claimed that Harriet took this treatment for "an injury to the spine, suffered in a carriage." It is possible that Harriet's condition was caused or exacerbated by traveling in a carriage, or John may have used this explanation to disguise his late wife's use of a popular medicine for syphilis. There is no evidence for any accidental cause of Harriet's paralysis in 1841. If John is referring to 1841, he contradicts the two accounts (Harriet's to Arthur and John's to Sarah Austin) given at the time of her first attack that it occurred "out of the blue."

15. 486.

16. CW: XIV, 200.

Not only did Harriet take Dr. Tuson's iodine medication, but she also she consulted Tuson in the 1850s.[17]

To put together a plausible diagnosis of Harriet's medical problems, we must sift through the facts and see what deductions we can make. The list of symptoms and medications yielded one proper name: Dr. Tuson. When John recommends that Harriet visit Dr. Tuson for a swelling in her side, John tries to reassure her: "I have no doubt it is something not necessarily connected with the general state of the health & capable of being treated & cured separately."[18] John implies that her general state of health is incurable, but hopes her current ailment is unconnected. John is relieved that the swelling leading Harriet to seek Tuson's advice is an abscess that John perceives as "proof positive of chronic inflammation."[19] Harriet later visits Tuson for a "pain in the chest."[20] The question remains: who is Dr. Tuson?

Tuson was noted for his treatment of syphilis, based on his work in the Lock Hospital for venereal diseases in London.[21] In 1840, the recommended treatment of syphilis that manifested "bone involvement" was iodine with mercury, "Tuson's Iodine course"—although bark, sulphate of quinine with dilute sulfuric acid, opium (laudanum), and baths were also recommended.[22] The therapies for syphilis exactly match those treatments used by Harriet.

In order to understand Harriet's disease we must begin with what the Victorians knew about syphilis.[23] In 1838, doctors identified three main

17. CW: XIV, 223, 226.
18. CW: XIV, 223.
19. CW: XIV, 233.
20. CW: XIV, 304–305.
21. Herbert Mayo, *A Treatise on Syphilis* (London: Henry Renshaw, 1840), 122.
22. Mayo, 181. Use of mercury for syphilis had varied from the seventeenth until the nineteenth century because of the horrible side effects, but during the Victorian period it was again popular. Judith R. Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society: Women, Class, and the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 52.
23. Harriet's symptoms and medications match those for syphilis in Victorian medical books, but could twentieth-century doctors diagnose Harriet's illness more accurately? After a careful look at all of Harriet's symptoms and medications in her "medical history," everyone, from my family physician to the Head of Pathology at Carle Hospital to David Christie, a Victorian historian and retired professor of physiology from New Zealand, claim that "syphilis is the great impersonator" capable of presenting a wide variety of symptoms (personal correspondence from David Christie, 8 June 1997, Charles L. Wisseman, 17 April 1997). Thus, an accurate diagnosis based on symptoms, especially without a physical exam, is impossible. (Some of the consulted doctors suggest that she may have had multiple sclerosis or sciatica, but for a proper confirmation of syphilis, one would need her doctor's report or an autopsy.) An added difficulty in making such a diagnosis is that virtually no contemporary doctors see tertiary syphilis patients since penicillin easily cures this disease.

stages of syphilis. The primary stage usually involves small sores on the penis or vagina—often undetected by women.[24] During the secondary stage, a latency period, the patient occasionally suffers sore-throats, sores, fevers, night pain—"the excruciating pains of the limbs, forcing the wretched sufferer from a wearisome bed, at the midnight hour" or other symptoms.[25] In the final phase, the patient's joints are often inflamed and painful[26] and, according to a treatise from the era, the nervous system was attacked "manifest[ing] itself either by paralyses (hemiplegia, aphasia) or by epileptiform attacks."[27]

A diagnosis of syphilis would explain the numbness and paralysis of Harriet's limbs. Her symptoms may have been temporarily relieved by the mercury and iodine treatment (mercury does help some patients, just as arsenic helped Isak Dinesen in the post-mercury, pre-penicillin era). On the other hand, mercury was such a dangerous drug that some of the symptoms may have been caused by *it* rather than by the syphilis. For example, the mouth pain or "faceache" which Harriet complained of, and the destruction of the leg bones, may be a side effect of this most ineffective "cure."[28]

Syphilis was common during the Victorian period. Many middle-class men used prostitutes at this time. As many as 80,000 prostitutes may have worked in London alone.[29] Shelley, Harriet's favorite poet, claimed that ten percent of London's population were prostitutes,[30] and an even higher percentage must have been their clients.

Syphilis, an incurable disease at the time, was rampant among prostitutes and their upper- and middle-class male clients. The fact that syphilis shadowed the Victorians was acknowledged by Acton, a famous recorder

24. Mayo, 120.

25. George Nesse Hill, quoted in Nora Crook, *Shelley's Venomed Melody* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 47. See also Walkowitz, 50, and Crook, 15.

26. Mayo, 120.

27. F. Buret, *Syphilis in the Middle Ages and in Modern Times* (London: F. A. Davis, 1891), 220. In the tertiary stage, "Osseous gummas can create outgrowths of diseased bone called 'exostoses' with resultant crippling. . . . Deep bone pain [is an]other complication. In twenty-five percent of all cases, the final stage takes the form of neurosyphilis, which may appear from anything between seven and thirty years after infection. Tabes dorsalis (paralysis) and dementia are among the manifestations"; Crook, 16. It is during the tertiary period that iodine and mercury were generally prescribed during the mid-nineteenth century.

28. J. Miriam Benn, *The Predicaments of Love* (London: Pluto Press, 1992), 85.

29. Daniel Pool, *What Jane Austen Ate and Charles Dickens Knew* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993), 189. Crook suggest the number may have ranged from 12,000 to 100,000; Crook, 18.

30. Crook, 19.

of the sexual life of the period. He determined that almost half of the surgical outpatients in one London hospital in 1846 had a sexually transmitted disease and that twenty percent of the children awaiting surgery had hereditary syphilis.[31] Dr. Buret, a Victorian physician, recommended that patients newly aware of their condition should be reminded by their physicians that when the patient strolls down the street, he—for the patient is always "he"—will pass "hundreds of syphilitics who are not so badly off; when he has exchanged confidences with his friends situated as he is, and whose appetite, muscular strength, etc., are unimpaired, he will take courage and be treated."[32] At least this Victorian doctor believed that patients needed to be reassured that the disease was common.

Hundreds of thousands of English men and women suffered from syphilis during the nineteenth century, but how Harriet might have contracted it remains unexplored. If Harriet had syphilis, she presumably was infected by John Taylor who became her husband when he was nearly thirty and she was eighteen. John Taylor probably did not remain celibate until his marriage. Added to the classic double standard, the relatively late age of Victorian middle-class men marrying, and the comparatively young age of Victorian middle-class brides, one can understand the wide use of prostitution among Victorian men. Given the incurable state of venereal disease for both prostitutes and their clients, the likelihood of men acquiring sexually transmitted diseases was high.

John Taylor must not be judged harshly, however. Quite likely Taylor, knowing that he had a venereal disease—even that he had syphilis—may have been advised that he posed no threat to his new wife. A man about to marry in the 1820s, like Taylor, was routinely instructed incorrectly by his doctor that if the sores on his penis were not oozing (a condition lasting a short period of time), he would not infect his soon-to-be wife or prostitutes.[33]

Furthermore, the "fermentation of seeds" theory of syphilis was still current in medical circles. According to this theory, a woman develops the disease when her uterus contains the "seminal products" of several healthy

31. In Walkowitz, 49.

32. Buret, 213.

33. Even as late as 1850 doctors were debating whether a man with "secondary" syphilis could infect his bride. See Erasmus Wilson, "Clinical Illustrations of Cutaneous Syphilis," *Lancet* II (1850): 202–205. Also, William Acton, "That Secondary Symptoms are Contagious, and Capable of Transmission," *Lancet* V (1847): 39–42.

men. Bad women create and spread the disease, but men can't infect a virgin. Therefore, men need not be careful about contaminating their wives. Wives with syphilis, according to this flawed theory, were automatically guilty of adultery.

Buret, a medical historian from the late nineteenth century, claimed that the evidence supporting this theory was offered by M. Lacombe, published in 1814. M. Lacombe's "evidence" is too amusing to ignore, so forgive this momentary digression:

> Young seminarists, fearing the 'pox,' had resolved upon having the same mistress at their common expense during the course of their theological studies. It may be seen that these embryo spiritual advisers did not neglect the temporal. By excess of precautions, says the author, they even took a young virgin girl. But they, none the less, contracted syphilis, and about at the same time.[34]

Buret mocks this evidence from the dark ages of the early part of his century, concluding "the idea of a fifth rogue—this one syphilitic, however, —who might have delighted the leisure moments of the charmer, seems to us much more acceptable."[35] Clearly men as well as women could spread syphilis, so the "fermentation of seeds" theory was inadequate.

By the 1830s, the number of syphilitic middle-class women appearing in doctors' offices caused physicians to realize that middle-class men were spreading syphilis to their brides.[36] In 1832, too late for John Taylor and Harriet, Ricord set the record straight.[37] John may have been a rogue, but not a damned rogue when he married the virgin Harriet.

If Harriet had syphilis, several puzzling aspects of her life would be illuminated.

Many of the questions regarding Harriet's unexplained behavior have traditionally been answered with the *ad feminem* attacks listed on the first page of this book: Harriet was fickle and frigid, while Taylor was altruistic beyond imagining. Harriet always wanted her own way and tried to shield John from a larger social life. If Harriet indeed had syphilis, philosophers may have to revise their negative portrayal of her. Biographical details help

34. Buret, 267.
35. Buret, 268.
36. See footnote 33 above, and Patricia Anderson, *When Passion Reigned: Sex and the Victorians* (New York: Basic Books, 1995), 127.
37. Buret, 269.

illuminate Harriet's actions in light of the proposed diagnosis and aid in answering each of the following questions:

- Why did Harriet turn away from her husband after her early passion for him?

Harriet's diagnosis of syphilis may have been discovered near the time she learned she was pregnant with her third child. Precisely at this point, Harriet suddenly turned away from what had been a loving relationship with her husband. Remember that passionate letter she wrote Taylor when Herby was about a year old? Abruptly in 1830, Harriet developed an aversion to her husband. She met John within weeks of beginning the pregnancy, and by the time Helen was delivered, Harriet was in love with John. The psychological atmosphere in which Harriet could fall in love as she grew large with child must have been life-changing. Certainly discovering that your husband had given you AIDS or its nineteenth-century equivalent, syphilis, would lead to a dramatic change in your relationship and therefore lends credence to Harriet's dramatic emotional reversal.

Aside from the psychological plausibility that this scenario suggests, one important letter survives which indicates Harriet's desire to obtain mercury early in the 1830s. At the same dinner party where Harriet met John, she also was introduced to John Roebuck. A great friend of John Mill, Roebuck sends a curious letter to Harriet apologizing for sending the letter by post and saying that "I have no mercury and am myself too weak to [bear] it." He continues, "I have found that the weakness of the body [extends] to the mind."[38] The intimacy revealed in this exchange stuns the reader. For a Victorian woman to ask a relatively new male acquaintance to send a drug that was clearly associated with a venereal disease seems unimaginable. A contemporary, Mary Shelley, "considered that the mere mention of mercury would invite inferences that Shelley had really been suffering from a shameful disease."[39] Yet, the reply from Roebuck indicates that Harriet had asked him to send her some mercury. This evidence suggests that Harriet had already been diagnosed shortly after she met John Mill.

Harriet's writing supplies additional evidence for her diagnosis and answers the question:

38. M/T XXVII/122.
39. Crook, 115.

- Why did Harriet, as a woman less than twenty-five, write so knowingly about prostitution?

Harriet's essays during the early 1830s disclose an interest in the parallel between prostitution for money and prostitution for house and home, i.e., marriage.[40] She wrote about the use of prostitutes by "3/4 of our adult male population."[41] Harriet's angry tone and knowledge about prostitution suggests she may have had intimate knowledge of the problem.

Perhaps money is the most revealing indication that Harriet's relation with her husband was tainted by their illness. No historian can avoid raising the following question:

- Why did Taylor treat Harriet so benevolently while she lived apart from him?

The diagnosis would elucidate Taylor's much-praised "generosity" of feeling and would explain as well the financial support given his estranged wife. John's biographers present Taylor as a good ol' boy whose tolerance for his wife's desire to see her lover regularly in their house was only surpassed by his goodwill in providing her with ample money to lease houses and for travel abroad with John. Even more peculiar, Taylor's will left everything to Harriet despite their twenty-year separation.[42] Herbert, their first-born son and an adult who had worked with Taylor for several years, did not receive his expected inheritance. Taylor's final benevolent act was anything but usual given the irregularity of their married life.

Perhaps John Taylor was simply an extremely compassionate man who wanted to be charitable toward his wife and her lover. I'm a bit too cynical to accept this version of reality. Guilt buys a lot of goodwill. If Taylor knew he had given his loving and innocent wife a fatal illness because of his own debauchery, he'd be willing to do anything to make it up to her.

Harriet's medical condition may answer the most provocative question:

- Why did Harriet restrict her sexual relations with John?

40. 21. I also wonder about the connection between Harriet's syphilis and John's later campaign against the Contagious Diseases Acts. His insistence that the government should not make it easier for men to have illicit sex may have grown from his acquaintance with Taylor's immorality.

41. 13. Chrisabel Pankhurst's estimate that 75–80 percent of English men had gonorrhea in 1913 corroborates Harriet's guess of three-quarters. J. A. Banks. *Victorian Values: Secularism and the Size of Families* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981), 136.

42. Packe, 345.

Historians have made of primary concern the question of whether Harriet and John had sex. The speculation began by the early 1830s. Many of John's friends, including Carlyle, Buller, Cavaignac, and Sarah Austin, loved to gossip about Harriet and John's love affair.[43] The image of Harriet and John eating grapes together in the Parisian autumn entices us to picture them enjoying sexual intimacy as well. Harriet's and John's love letters to each other expose their passion. However, the description of their affair that Harriet gives to be included in John's autobiography is chaste:

> Should there not be a summary of our relationship from its commencement in 1830—I mean given in a dozen lines—so as to preclude other and different versions of our lives at Kesn and Waln—our summer excursions &c This ought to be done in its genuine truth and simplicity—strong affection, intimacy of friendship, & no impropriety: It seems to me an edifying picture for those poor wretches who cannot conceive friendship but in sex—nor beleive that expediency and the consideration for feelings of others can conquer sensuality. But of course this is not my reason for wishing it done.[44]

Why would Harriet have suggested that John lie about their relationship in the *Autobiography* when they could easily have ignored the issue altogether? Furthermore, their innocence seemed so clear to contemporaries that they mocked John for his lack of sexual prowess rather than condemn him for adultery.[45] The most plausible explanation for Harriet's words is that they are true: Harriet and John did not have sexual intercourse so that John would not contract the disease she endured.

Neither Harriet nor John disapproved of sex. In the first piece of writing she showed John—her essay on marriage—she remarks, "Sex in its true and finest meaning, seems to be the way in which is manifested all that is highest best and beautiful in the nature of human beings."[46] In her private writings, Harriet claims that chastity is "neither virtuous nor vicious."[47]

43. See the notes for 6 November 1833, May 1834, 21 July 1834, 8 September 1834, Late October 1834, 11 January 1835, 2 February 1835, 15 June 1835, 16 June 1835, April 1836, September 1836, and 30 June 1839 in Chapter 1. The Austins had a particular advantage, since they were neighbors of the Taylors at Kent Terrace; CW: XXXII, 12.

44. 375.

45. See Packe, 318.

46. 23.

47. 226.

John writes in his diary, "What any persons may freely do with respect to sexual relations should be deemed to be an unimportant and purely private matter, which concerns no one but themselves."[48] They both defend the privacy of sexuality in *On Liberty*.[49]

Not only in the abstract, but in the flesh, both she and John display their sensuality towards one another. They describe the desire to kiss each other or each other's letters. They were also alert to erotic moments. Harriet describes an Italian boatman who, after catching Harriet admiring him, "passes to reach an oar . . . takes ones hand to his lips for an instant—in fullest view of everybody—a half gentle smile—then passes on never again looks or shows anything but the never ceasing intense respect."[50] Likewise, John unhooks his friend Caroline Fox's dress from the brambles while discussing the alchemy of turning annoyances into pleasures and later sends her an almanac of smells listing the aromatic plants of each month.[51] Both Harriet and John swim in sexy waters.

If Harriet had syphilis, both the eroticism and the abstinence would be comprehensible. She and John would happily have had intercourse had it been safe to do so. Unfortunately, it was not. In a famous letter from John to Harriet on 17 February 1857, John describes a dream in which a woman sat at his left and a young man opposite. The young man said, "there are two excellent & rare things to find in a woman, a sincere friend & a sincere Magdalen." John answered, "the best would be to find both in one," to which the woman remarked, "no, that would be *too* vain." At this, John "broke out 'do you suppose when one speaks of what is good in itself, one must be thinking of one's own paltry self interest? no, I spoke of what is abstractedly good & admirable.' " Later he explains to Harriet that he tried to correct the young man's quotation to say " 'an *innocent* magdalen' not perceiving the contradiction."[52]

The psychosocial historians and Freudians have had a field day with this comment.[53] One interpretation of the dream would be fairly straightforward: John would have liked to have a Magdalen as well as a friend, but he

48. CW: XXVII, 664.
49. CW: XVIII, 296.
50. 234–235.
51. Fox 80–81, 87.
52. CW: XV, 523–524.
53. See, for example, Mazlish, 302.

had to settle for the contradictory but actual "innocent magdalen." Neither he nor Harriet fooled themselves into thinking that their situation was ideal. Given the prolonged ardor and physical hunger in their letters, I fancy they had an inventive sexual life that simply did not include coitus. But then, *Middlemarch* can be described as eight hundred pages of foreplay. There are a multitude of ways we can live a sensual life.[54]

Harriet's medical needs might answer the following question:

- Why did Harriet travel to warm climates?

Not only does a diagnosis of syphilis explain Harriet and John's sexual expressions, but it also makes Harriet's travel patterns understandable. Doctors regularly ordered syphilitics (renowned for their susceptibility to sensing cold) to travel to warm climates.[55] The need for temperate weather may, in part, account for Harriet's peripatetic existence. Harriet certainly spent much of her life traveling to or dreaming about being in southern England, southern France, or Italy. On the continent, medical practice urged mineral baths and drinking mineral waters, a practice in which Harriet also indulged. Syphilis does not always progress steadily, but has periods of remission. Doctors correctly realized that fresh air, a good diet, and the calm surroundings of a spa would often prolong a period of remission. Syphilis was also treated directly at the bath in a variety of ways, including having clients sit on a cane-bottomed chair under which was placed a steaming bowl of iodine- or mercury-infused water in an attempt to fumigate the patient.[56]

The last mystery solved by Harriet's diagnosis concerns the following question:

- Why did Harriet and Taylor's children and grandchildren die tragic deaths?

54. Peter Glassman agrees that the intellectual union Harriet and John enjoyed was sensual. He even calls their letters to each other "libidinal surfaces." *J. S. Mill: The Evolution of a Genius* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1985), 98.

If Harriet did not have syphilis, her sexual restraint with John may have been part of her feminism. Kathleen Blake argues persuasively for the "feminism and creative potential found in erotic self-postponement" in *Love and the Woman Question in Victorian Literature: The Art of Self-Postponement* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1983), 107.

55. Crook, 110, 112.

56. Langston Parker, *Modern Treatment of Syphilitic Diseases* (London: John Church, 1839), 18, 246–251. For amusing pictures of such chairs see *www.victorianturkishbath.org/3TOPICS/AtoZArts/CabinetBody.htm*

One last oddity can be illuminated by Harriet and Taylor's syphilis: the disease and untimely deaths of their children and grandchildren. Of their three children, Helen never married and died insane. Herbert's death is a mystery. Algernon had three children: Elizabeth, Cyprian, and Mary. A family tree found in the British Library of Political and Economic Sciences records the fact that Elizabeth died "paralyzed but sane," Cyprian "suffer[ed] for about forty years from religious mania of Folie circulaire," and Mary died "after having been certified." These sad histories may be due to the hereditary effects of syphilis.

Unfortunately, the convenience of the syphilis explanation does not verify the diagnosis. Short of exhuming Harriet's body, we are left with only intriguing gossip that could radically change the way historians evaluate Harriet's life and work.

As we move through life, we not only collaborate by incorporating others' ideas and values and by rejecting others. We also accept and reject aspects of our bodies as we age and become ill. Harriet lost her brother in 1840 and her health in 1841. Harriet's sense of her mortality was heightened by her illness. In the early 1840s her relationships with her family grew increasingly fragile as well.

Caroline Hardy Ley's Domestic Abuse

Despite her anger with her father's stinginess toward her sister-in-law, Harriet returned to Birksgate for a visit with her family in 1840. Her sister, the nineteen-year-old Caroline, had recently married. The lighthearted girl who wrote the sweet letters you read in Chapter 1 had vanished and was replaced by a married woman. Instead of the friendly moments Harriet had experienced with Caroline during her stay of 1839, during this visit Harriet fought bitterly with her sister.

Harriet mentioned in her letter to John Taylor that "poor little" Caroline was "in a peck of troubles—but only about domestic arrangements."[57] This euphemism indicates the first report, but not the last, of Caroline's physical abuse from her new husband, Arthur Ley. Harriet was incensed at Caroline's ill treatment and by Caroline's defense of her husband. In the summer of 1842, Caroline relayed almost nonchalantly that she missed an annual cricket match because

57. 448.

> I had had some immensely disagreeable fuss with A[rthur Ley, her husband], about some of his family and had one of the fits of excessive crying which are fits & which I only have on very rare occasions and my face was so swollen and disfigured that I did not choose to go to be compared with other more successful women of whom he has one who follows him every where & who by insolence and boldfacedness carries him and everything else before her.[58]

As with most domestic physical abuse, the pattern continued for years. As late as 1855 Harriet's mother painted a nauseating picture of her daughter's pain. Mrs. Hardy inserted the following in a letter to Harriet:

> Caroline has been unable to write in my stead as she would otherwise have done by an injury she received from her worth[less] husband during my illness. He had been drinking all day by the fire as usual & on her trying to dissuade him from going to the Inn at nine o'clock to finish the night he siezed by the hair, pulling out a quantity by the root, & struck her on the back of the neck [where] he had before injured her so severely & caused such mischeif that I was forced to send for [Jerome]. & she has not had the use of her right arm properly since. The wretch even kicked her & brought on flooding. She has not seen him since & has taken her meals with me & the children.[59]

The phrase "brought on flooding" may indicate that her husband's beating induced a miscarriage.

Harriet responded to Caroline's plight with alternating sympathy and anger that Caroline would not leave this brute of a husband. Like too many abused women, Caroline remained with her husband and even defended him. Seeing her baby sister abused must have been one of the most emotionally devastating experiences of Harriet's life. Much of what Harriet wrote about domestic violence at the end of the 1840s and 1850s was informed by this sad state of her sister's life. The publicity campaign could never erase the emotional scars that every victim's family endures. Her father's nastiness in the face of William's death, followed by her sister's abuse, fostered Harriet's distaste for nearly everyone in her family.

58. M/T XXVII/94.
59. M/T XXVII/59.

Trustee Problem

Caroline's domestic abuse was intertwined with another ongoing dispute within the family, concerning Arthur Ley's trusteeship of Harriet's marriage settlement for her children. On 27 July 1842, after Caroline had visited Harriet at Walton on 20 June, Harriet received the letter from her twenty-two-year-old sister and mother of a one-year-old describing her inability to go to the cricket match because of her swollen and disfigured face. Both the visit and the letter convinced Harriet that she no longer wanted Caroline's husband to serve as trustee. But her attempt to rid herself of Ley's legal tie would not be easy. Each revelation of Caroline's abuse is followed by Harriet's renewed bid to oust Ley as trustee.

On 9 July 1842, Harriet began the long campaign to protect the trust from Ley's control. She appealed to Thomas Carlyle to replace one of the trustees who was about to leave England.[60] The plea to Carlyle demonstrated Harriet's desperation, since she was not on intimate terms with the Carlyles at this point. Harriet was concerned that Arthur Ley would abscond with the trust funds. Not only was Ley an abuser, but he was untrustworthy as well.

Herbert Taylor entered the fray after his father died in 1849. He apparently sided with Ley by writing to his uncle Arthur Hardy, asking that Ley be kept as trustee. No doubt this move of Herbert's was not unconnected to his anger at discovering that his father had left his entire estate to Harriet and not to himself.

Harriet did not renew her crusade to dislodge Ley until 1855, after her mother wrote to her detailing Ley's drunken assault on Caroline. In Harriet's mother's letter recounting the horror, Mrs. Hardy suggests that Caroline could rid herself of Ley "if she could pension him out to Adelaide as Mrs Walker did with her drunken husband, Arthur might pay [them] both."[61] The practice of forcing a family member to move abroad was so familiar that the disgraced party had a slang name: "remittance man." Such a person was an emigrant supported by someone back home who paid a relative to keep the black sheep. Since Arthur was already living in Australia, putting Ley in his keeping would protect Caroline.

60. 412–13. Taylor later called on Carlyle to reiterate the request.
61. M/T XXVII/59.

In addition to Harriet's disgust with the mistreatment of her sister, Mrs. Hardy's suggestion that Ley be "pensioned out" to Arthur Hardy in Australia made Harriet surmise that Ley was even more unstable as a trustee than ever. If Ley left for Australia, he might abscond with the trust and Harriet would have no easy way to punish him. Harriet's brother, Arthur, safely living far from the family battles in Australia, was her only trusted sibling. Harriet pleaded with Arthur to help settle the dispute with Ley.

In a long letter to her brother, Arthur Hardy, Harriet outlined why her fears about Arthur Ley were justified.[62] Harriet didn't mention Caroline's battering in February, but explained that on the previous Christmas Caroline had told her that Arthur embezzled about £700 of another trust he controlled. According to Ley's own brother, William, this knowledge of his son's disreputable behavior may have caused their father's death. Still, no one was able to persuade Arthur Ley to give up Harriet's trust. In drafts of her letter to her brother, Harriet alternated between castigating Ley himself and blaming her sister for manipulating Herbert and Ley.

In 1856, Harriet wrote again to her brother, Arthur, thanking him for his attempts to solve the trusteeship problem. In this letter she places responsibility squarely on Caroline for Ley's refusal to resign the trusteeship. She growled, "Indeed Ar Ley's has long been a mere name, as he acts in all matters of business only under Caroline's direction and it was plain from her letter that she thought she should gain some advantage by refusing to resign the trust, & when once she thought that nothing would move her."[63] Even her last letter to her brother, on 8 June 1857, declares that the problem remained unresolved. Throughout the debate about the trusteeship, Harriet's reliance on Arthur to be the conciliator in the family discloses an intimacy with Arthur she shares with no other sibling. However, Harriet is silent about her sister's abuse, even though if Ley were recognized as a brute, her brother would certainly have insisted on Ley's removal from the estate.

Domestic violence like Caroline's not only harms the victim physically, but it often drives wedges between the victim and her family. No one who has not been abused can ever grasp the difficulty of escaping violence of this kind. Most observers find it difficult to fully sympathize with a person who will not leave an abusive relationship. Harriet finally broke ties with her sister only after years of trying to maintain a connection. She wrote to

62. 416–422.
63. 423.

her brother, "I have suffered more than you would perhaps imagine from the rupture with her & its cause."[64] Arthur never knew that the cause of the rupture was Caroline's abuse as well as Ley's fiscal mismanagement.

The year 1842 was not only the beginning of Caroline's marital problems, but was also one in which Harriet and John experienced financial worries. John lost an enormous amount of money when many American states repudiated their debts. Investors like John, the Austins, and the Grotes all suffered in varying degrees. For John, the loss meant no trip abroad for the next two years. Harriet, too, stayed in England, watching her adolescent children grow into adults.

Religion

Harriet's daughter Helen's delightful diary began in 1842 when Helen (Lily) was eleven. The journal proclaims Lily's essential happiness, curiosity, and intelligence. Oddly, given her mother's dismissal of organized religion, the journal also records Helen's devotion to religion. Harriet's own atheism did not prevent her from tolerating, even sympathizing, with Helen's spiritual longings. Helen was inclined to Catholicism, refusing both the orthodox Church of England and her mother's Unitarian past. She delved into the lives of the saints. In her diary, Helen recounts each time she performed mass for herself, and she lovingly pictures each trip to a cathedral. Lily announced her decided opinions about Westminster Abbey versus Rouen Cathedral. Haji, too, was fascinated with Catholicism and spent time in his twenties in a Barnabite convent in Rome.[65]

Meanwhile, Harriet was writing essays that would earn her the name of "infidel" in the history of philosophy. As a mother, Harriet condoned her children's religious yearnings. But as an intellectual, Harriet had no hesitation condemning established religion. Biographers of John since 1874 have decried Harriet's "infidelity and atheism."[66] Antagonistic to both Protestantism and Catholicism, Harriet cites many of the same shortcomings in Christianity that Marx identified and popularized in the same century.

64. 423.
65. M/T XLIV/426.
66. S. E. Henshaw, "John Stuart Mill and Mrs. Taylor," *Overland Monthly* 13 (1874): 522. See also Knut Hagberg, *Personalities and Powers,* trans. Elizabeth Sprigge and Claude Napier (London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1930), 196.

Harriet's anti-religious comments were sometimes sparked by the simplest experiences. For example, on their trip to Normandy in 1844, Harriet shares her aesthetic sensitivity to the Gothic cathedral at Ameins, France, with her daughter, but she also deplores the church whose only remaining function is the "consolation of the victims of society,"[67] women, and the poor. Harriet is not always as alert to the similarity between women's oppression and class subjugation, but here she points to the parallel. Harriet wished to have buildings dedicated to better ideas than the "old [religious] fables," that is, the Bible. Neither the Church's poetry nor its "maxims of benevolent philosophy" makes amends for its "mischievous moralities." Further, Harriet argues that the Catholic religion had been useful for the world but now needed to be replaced by more "practical" and "elevated" ideas such as those she and John were developing.[68]

Harriet argues that equality will be promoted only by abandoning current religions. The hierarchical structure of Christianity is an anathema to Harriet. Furthermore, neither Protestantism nor Catholicism elevates the moral nature sufficiently. Harriet observes that Catholics have succeeded in a limited way by teaching morality through the senses, but the Protestants have failed completely by attempting moral education through understanding alone.[69] Harriet's argument explains her actions as a mother. Harriet saw Lily's and Haji's interest in Catholicism as a rudimentary moral training not to be cut short.

Privately, Harriet argued that spirituality is not "connected with any traditions on the subject—neither Jewish nor Christian nor any other."[70] She did not necessarily want her children to be devoid of religious sentiment, but the "high qualities of the head & heart. Poetry & integrity. These are to be found in perfection" both in those raised as atheists and in those who grew up in a religious tradition which they later abandoned.[71] For Harriet, the goal was to become a "[person] of the highest moral principles, embodying rigidest integrity & most ardent admiration of the beauties of nature & the keenest curiosity & deepest interest in the unknown powers & mysteries of the universe & the highest appreciation & acutest judgment

67. 161.
68. 161.
69. 161–162.
70. 225.
71. 225.

of acts."[72] Such well-grounded people are often "serious calm conscientious erudite warm hearted cool headed . . . unbeleivers."[73] If her children needed the rituals of religion to grow into moral adults, she would not discourage them.

In her private papers, Harriet comments snidely that Catholics had not succeeded in commerce in England because they had no inhibitions against lying. Protestantism had no better moral backbone, but English Protestantism benefited from the Puritan ethic that demanded trust, the core ethic required for commerce.[74] The tartness of her comments on religion may sting some of you readers. Imagine how Harriet would have been perceived if she had published her essays in the 1840s.

In 1842, George Jacob Holyoake, editor of the *Reasoner,* a journal proclaiming its disbelief in God, was jailed for blasphemy for six months. Harriet and John co-authored a letter to Holyoake six years later, transmitting their subscription to the journal while rebuking the shoddiness of the arguments given for disbelief in God found in the publication. Their letter to the editor never appeared in print, but in the draft they suggest that the contributors need to find worthier arguments for their atheism. Harriet and John offer their own reasons: the problem of evil, the wickedness of a God who creates sentient beings doomed to hell, and the poverty of Christian morality.[75] If God created the world full of moral and natural evil, he is either incapable of stopping the slaughter or he is omnipotent and evil—he could stop evil but does not. Since most people insist on God's omnipotence, the latter choice seems most likely, but that would make God the worst moral model. Harriet and John note that the philosophical problem of evil they outline is not as persuasive with the public as an argument focusing on revealed religion's doctrines. For example, the belief that the Christian God created "sentient creatures foreknowing that they will be sinners, and . . . [yet condemns them] to hell to torture them eternally for being so"[76] is a more compelling argument for most people in their society. Finally, Harriet and John advise readers to focus on creating a healthier and fairer set of ethical beliefs than those found in Christian morality, es-

72. 225.
73. 226.
74. 162.
75. 159–160.
76. 160.

pecially that of St. Paul. Their ideas are not unlike those of John's "ungod" son,[77] Bertrand Russell, author of "Why I'm Not a Christian," a piece that in 2000 still raised students' ire.

Harriet continues her assault on religion in a collection of private snippets of writing. She includes thoughts on religions as part of a piece that separates "Popular Fallacies" from the corresponding "Corollaries." The corollaries include:

> That the Bible is Holy.
> (It is in the highest degree immoral & indecent, cruel & unjust.)
> That Christianity is a Philosophy.
> (It is the inculcation of one single virtue—Benevolence.)[78]

Harriet rejects the traditional Judeo-Christian tradition as the only adequate spiritual exercise. She is particularly incensed by the Bible. However, she does not reject spirituality per se. Harriet does not abandon the search for meaning and value; she simply does not equate that search with Christianity.

When we hear angry words about Christianity from her fellow nineteenth-century thinkers such as Nietzsche or Marx, we react with interest or anger, but when they are spoken by a woman and a mother, somehow the impact is deeper. Harriet's role as a mother and as an intellectual elicited different expressions of her religious beliefs. Her style of mothering required that she not deny her children their spiritual quest. Her honesty as a thinker compelled the sharpest critique.[79] Harriet could and did collaborate with her children to create a stable and supportive environment for their growth, without compromising her own intellectual freedom. The cultural assumption that mothers must not question traditional institutions or they will stymie their children's spiritual development is proven wrong by Harriet.

77. Ann Robson, "Bertrand Russell and His Godless Parents," *Russell* 7 (1972): 3–9.

78. 226.

79. When John was running for Parliament, Helen chided him for not being more honest about his atheism. In response to a question put to him, John apparently denied he was an atheist. Helen wrote, "I do not know which I dislike most—the assertion that to be called an atheist is calumny, that you are as much one as Gladstone is a Catholic, or that dignitaries of the ch. of Eng. have spoken for you ! ! ! Surely to use such arguments is to sacrifice all that it is worth while to be elected for. . . . I cannot tell you how ashamed I feel . . . this letter which makes me literally blush for you . . . Do not disgrace yourself as an open truthful man; do not shut the door to all future power of usefulness on religious liberty, by such mean & wretched subterfuges as this letter" (M/T LII/149).

The Dedication Controversy 1848

During the second half of the 1840s, Harriet and John worked diligently on *Principles of Political Economy.*[80] When it was finally finished, John suggested the following dedication be added:

To
Mrs John Taylor,
as the most eminently qualified
of all persons known to the author
either to originate or to appreciate
speculations on social improvement,
this attempt to explain and diffuse ideas
many of which were first learned from herself,
is
with the highest respect and regard,
dedicated

Despite the fact that Harriet had long lived apart from Taylor, she was still formally his wife. That Harriet still felt some allegiance to this role is apparent in her desire to consult Taylor about the dedication. Harriet writes,

> I am somewhat undecided whether to accept its being dedicated to me or not—dedications are not unusual even of grave books, to women, and I think it calculated to do good if short & judicious—I have a large volume on Political Economy in my hands now dedicated to Madame de Sismondi—yet I cannot quite make up my mind—what do you advise—on the whole I am inclined to think it desirable.[81]

Listening to Harriet's soft suggestion belies her characterization as "a female autocrat."[82] Did she know Taylor would forbid it, so she wrote without hope of success but merely on the chance that he might concede? Or was she trying to gently ask his permission because she believed that if the request were downplayed, Taylor would be more likely to accede? Or was she genuinely undecided because of the reasons she would later give to William Fox?

80. The exact nature of their work will be discussed in detail in the final chapter.
81. 472.
82. Phyllis Rose, *Parallel Lives: Five Victorian Marriages* (New York: Vintage Books, 1984), 137.

We don't have the first letter that Taylor fired back, but even the calmer second letter still brimmed with outrage. Taylor penned,

> All dedications are in bad taste, & that under our circumstances the proposed one would evince on both author's parts, as well as the lady to whom the book is to be dedicated, a want of taste & tact which I could not have believed possible.—Two days have since passed & my conviction remains the same notwithstanding your letter of yesterday. It is not only 'a few common people' who will make vulgar remarks, but all who know any of us—The dedication will revive recollections now forgotten & will create observations and talk that cannot but be extremely unpleasant to me.[83]

His response indicated John Taylor was sorry that Harriet was angry with him and that he regretted differing with her, but he pointed out that she had, after all, asked his opinion. Note that Taylor calls Harriet and John "both author's." He did not dispute her co-authorship, only that any acknowledgement of it should become public.

The dedication was only included in a few copies to friends. One explanation for this is that Harriet acquiesced to John Taylor's demand, but another interpretation is possible. Harriet wrote to William Fox in May of the same year about the dedication. "I should have said that the Ded^{n} was confined to copies given to friends at my especial request & to the great dissapointment & regret & contrary to the wish & opinion of the author. My reason being that opinions carry more weight with the authority of his name alone."[84] Harriet may be hiding her defeat with John Taylor from William Fox, or she could be revealing yet again her practicality. You must decide.

Harriet was not being paranoid when she suggested to Fox that the work published in John Stuart Mill's name would receive a more serious reception than a co-authored text. Sexism in how texts are perceived by male and female authors of the sort Harriet proclaimed is still not eradicated. Her motivation to comply with her husband's demand was complicated by both her desire not to openly offend the man who still financially supported her as well as the desire to have the ideas in the book receive their fair notice.

83. 472–473.
84. 392.

Harriet's excitement about the book is unambiguous. Her ideas are much more complete and focused than they had been a decade earlier. She bubbles to Mr. Fox:

> I am glad you like the book. It is, I think, full of good things—[especially] the cause to which for many years my life & exertions have been devoted, justice for women. The progress of the race waits for the emancipation of women from their present degraded slavery to the necessity of marriage, or to the modes of earning their living which (with the sole exception of artists) consist only of the poorly paid & hardly worked occupations, all the proffessions, mercantile clerical legal & medical, as well as all government posts being monopolised by men. Political equality would alone place women on a level with other men in these respects.[85]

Two days later, she continued by assuring Fox that she was as interested in class liberation as women's.

> You must not suppose that I am less interested in the other great question of our time, that of labour. The equalising among all the individuals composing the community (varied only by variation in physical capacities) the amount of labour to be performed by them during life. But this has been so well placed on the tapis by the noble spectacle of France ('spite of Pol[l] Ecoy blunders) that there is no doubt of its continuing the great question until the hydra-headed selfishness of the idle classes is crushed by the demands of the lower.[86]

To her friend William J. Fox, Harriet is a professional writer and thinker.

By insisting that the "woman question" is more fundamental than labor, Harriet reveals her feminist side to Fox in a way that she does not to her family. That Harriet feels comfortable presenting her most radical arguments to Fox offers us a glimpse of their comradeship. Her voice here is closest to the one she must have had with John when they discussed philosophical issues. Her voice with both these men rings strong and confident. Her passion for ideas and for improving society does not need to be whispered in the presence of men who are willing to collaborate with an equal.

After the work of writing *Principles of Political Economy,* Harriet drifted

85. 390–391.
86. 392.

through the fall of 1848 traveling to various resorts in southern England. John Taylor complained in letters that his stomach was upset; Arthur Hardy, home for a visit from Australia, made Harriet nervous that he would notice and report her estrangement from her husband to her family; and her father was whining of ill heath.[87] These factors, combined with her own exhaustion after the work on *Principles,* caused Harriet to flee England. Shortly after Christmas 1848, she and Helen left for the Basque town of Pau in the southwest of France.

John Taylor

While in Pau, working on the first revision of the *Principles of Political Economy,* Harriet wrote long letters to John Taylor, showing concern about his "stomach derangement." She was most relieved when he reported that the doctor said he was recovering. Harriet's cheerful descriptions of their lodgings on the Place Royale in the heart of Pau, along with scenes of the band concerts and promenading English expatriates, were bound to lift Mr. Taylor's spirits.[88] In February 1849, after hearing of the gold rush in California, Harriet applied her economic understanding to this affair, noting,

> Do you suppose this Californian discovery will make any change in the value of money for some time to come? If it continues I suppose it will lower the value of fixed incomes, but I suppose benefit trade? If I were a young man I would go there very quickly. The most probable chance is that the gold will not continue below the surface meanwhile there must be fine opportunities of placing goods, & especially drugs, in the placiemento. Are you going to send out quinine.[89]

Harriet's sense of adventure combined with her fiscal acumen, as is revealed in this letter to her husband. Harriet realized that the real money to be had in a gold rush is earned by those who provide the gold-seekers with supplies.

On 20 March, Harriet gossiped with her husband about family affairs, including Herbert's trip to the United States, Arthur's report that their fa-

87. 481.
88. 494–496.
89. 499.

ther's health was improving, and the sad news that Caroline's baby had died.[90]

By 30 March 1949, Taylor's description of his very poor health required Harriet's immediate attention. Harriet faced the dilemma of whether to return home to nurse Taylor or stay for the expected arrival in Pau of John on 20 April. Harriet did not hesitate: she did her "duty" by waiting for John—a fact she declares simply to her husband. Harriet and John planned to travel back to Paris together, a fact that John refused to tell even his own family "as I so hate all tittle-tattle."[91] John, Helen, and Harriet left Pau on 17 April, traveled slowly north and reached Paris on 9 May. Harriet arrived at Kent Terrace on 14 May to face disaster.

Harriet's father had died before she returned to England. About Harriet's reaction to his death on 3 May 1849 we have no account, but the long, sad, "dying by inches" that Taylor suffered between May and July 1849 infiltrated Harriet's anguished missives to her dearest John. Harriet stumbled into her husband's death at Kent Terrace with little warning. No one, not even Taylor himself, had told Harriet just how ill he was. Given standard medical practice, Taylor himself may not have known that his disease was terminal.

Upon her return, Harriet immediately tried to determine the nature and prognosis of her spouse's illness. In nearly every letter to John, she wondered aloud whether Taylor was fatally afflicted. Like any loved one who nurses the dying, she vacillated between denying and accepting his dying. When Harriet finally badgered the doctors into giving her a written diagnosis, she "kept it some hours before [she] could take courage to read it so frightful [she] dreaded it would be."[92] The news was horrifying: John Taylor had rectal cancer.

Harriet quickly sent to John for a number of medical texts to try to understand the disease and to determine whether an alternative treatment was recommended.[93] Harriet hoped that knowledge would give her comfort or a means of action. It offered her neither. She considered consulting Dr. Tuson.[94] (Yes, the Dr. Tuson mentioned above as the expert in syphilis.) However, she finally decided that a second opinion would only distress Mr.

90. 500.
91. 501.
92. 356.
93. 357.
94. 348–349, 353.

Taylor and would offer no prospect of help. She pleaded with John to help her decide what to do and whom to trust.

Taylor's syphilis may have complicated the diagnosis and the decision of what to do about his rectal cancer. While Harriet nursed her husband, she had an impossibly difficult time understanding and believing the doctor's diagnosis and refusal to consider surgery. Anyone nursing the dying weathers many emotions, including doubt about the nature of the illness, skepticism about the care the patient is receiving, and uncertainty about the prognosis. Harriet's behavior went well beyond this. Her ambivalence and uncertainty seem extreme.

The mystery of her anxiety is solved by an understanding of Victorian beliefs about the connection between syphilis and cancer. In *Shelley's Venomed Melody,* Nora Crook quotes George Nesse Hill saying that venereal disease often causes tumors. Hill also cautions against "operating for cancer until the possibility of syphilis has been eliminated."[95] After Harriet suggested to John that her husband's illness might be contagious, she included the following curious sentences: "I have so much to say to you which no one but you could understand. What a duping is life & what fools are men who seem bent upon playing into the hands of the mischievous demons! One comfort & hope lies in the fact that the worst they suffer is from their own bad qualities—but the good suffer with the bad."[96] When John submits that Mr. Taylor's condition is not communicable, Harriet angrily responds, "You have no notion what a mistake you make in saying that it could be no more contagious than a fractured skull—. . . . I have very little doubt that this is as often contagious as Typhus or plague. . . . However I cannot now give my reasons for this opinion. I have so very much to say which must wait."[97] Harriet was quite aware that most cancers were not infectious, but may have been led to believe by the medical texts of the time that her husband's syphilis caused his rectal cancer, and like syphilis was therefore contagious.

Throughout the agonizing process of his dying, Harriet praised her spouse's bravery and endurance. Harriet cried, "He never hurt or harmed a creature on earth. If they want the life why can't they take it—what useless torture is all this! & he is so sorry & hurt to give so much labour to me

95. Crook, 16.
96. 365.
97. 368.

. . . alas I feel as if he besides you is the only life I value in this wretched world. He is so thoroughly true direct honest strong."[98] Harriet's fondness and respect for this man radiated throughout these letters. She chose not to be his wife, but when she left her husband in the 1830s, she was honest in her declaration of affection for him. Her actions as nursemaid and her letters to John serve as witness to her continuing affection and commitment.

As she struggled to understand the disease, Harriet attempted to protect her children. Herbert was now twenty-two, Algernon nineteen, and Helen eighteen. Herbert rushed back from the United States to be with his father. Despite the fact that Herbert had twice traveled alone to the United States, Harriet did not judge him mature enough to consult with doctors about a second opinion because he was "quite ignorant of medical language & quite incompetent to judge from signs a man's half expressed thought."[99] Herbert was twenty-two. Enough said.

Harriet also tried to keep her own anxious desire for knowledge of the disease from her children. When Harriet sent for medical texts from John, Harriet asked him to wrap them before giving them to Haji because "I do not wish the young ones to get hold of medical books nor therefore to see them read."[100] When and how she spoke to the children about their father's ailment, we do not know.

Despite her attention to Taylor, Harriet did manage to advise John about a few external problems. She discussed John's ongoing correspondence about his family and "throw[s] out for [John's] approval" her advice that George Mill should not be provided with a horse.[101] Harriet also submitted that Holyoake be told to bloody well forget his request for money.[102] Holyoake, the editor of *The Reasoner: A Weekly Journal, Utilitarian, Republican and Communist,* angered Harriet the year before when he reprinted her chapter of the *Principles of Political Economy* without permission. She

98. 358. Although this quotation can be seen as evidence against my argument that Taylor gave Harriet syphilis, if, as I outlined earlier, Taylor was unaware or misguided into thinking he could not infect his wife, then Harriet could be disgusted with his original depravity, but still recognize that he had not consciously harmed her. Certainly Taylor's behavior after Harriet separated from him had been above reproach. I also believe that part of the grief of nursing the dying expresses itself in focusing on only the good qualities of the terminally ill person.

99. 356.

100. 349.

101. 345.

102. 349–350.

was also infuriated with his imbecilic arguments supporting atheism.[103] She agreed with his conclusions, but was insulted by the weakness of the evidence Holyoake offered.

In addition, Harriet collaborated with John on a reply to John Sterling's brother's request to reprint letters that John had written to Sterling.[104] John Sterling, one of John's dearest friends, had died earlier. His brother was compiling an edition of his letters to and from various famous Victorians with whom he had corresponded. Sterling's brother naturally asked for permission to print the exchange between Sterling and Mill. Harriet, however, was furious with John for even contemplating allowing his reputation to be damaged by having a book published that would link him with "the old bugbear words 'married woman.'"[105]

Finally, just two days before Taylor's death, Harriet sent John a newspaper clipping about the use of corporal punishment for property crimes and a rough outline of an argument against this practice.[106] That paragraph and clipping would be worked into the first of many articles they would write together the following year on public and private violence. The final paragraph of the published piece almost exactly duplicates Harriet's draft.[107] This article, like several others, is accurately listed by John as co-authored by Harriet. Bringing up questions about George, Holyoake, and Sterling, John may have been trying to redirect Harriet's attention from her ever-present sorrow, but he is rarely successful.

When John Taylor died, Harriet felt the classic emotions of bereavement: guilt, anger, exhaustion, pity, and grief. Three weeks after arriving at Kent Terrace to nurse Taylor, Harriet had written to John about her guilt: "For me the consideration that I am able to keep him in this easy comfortable state of nerves & spirits is the only feeling to set against extreme sadness & the constant acute sense of being in an <u>utterly</u> false position—It is now that I feel in this most serious affair of his life the <u>terrible</u> consequences of the different <u>milieu</u>[.]"[108] Harriet's guilt may have been the result of feeling that she was in a false position because she was an estranged

103. 340.
104. 364.
105. 367.
106. 368–369.
107. Compare Harriet's letter, 368–369, to the newspaper article, 95–98.
108. 355.

wife. Or she may have felt like a hypocrite for nursing a man who brought about the illness himself. Perhaps "the terrible consequences of a different milieu" is a code for syphilis. Or perhaps she was simply trying to cope with a man whose preferences were far less radical than her own. Although *she* would have opted for experimental treatment and second opinions, she had to realize that Mr. Taylor did not. Maybe she was experiencing the ordinary guilt of wondering whether she should have come home from Pau more quickly so that she could have intervened in time to save Taylor. The guilt is palpable. The source, as is often the case, is less clear.

Working around the clock for nearly two months left Harriet exhausted. The labor was mental as well as physical. As Harriet described to John: "It is extraordinary the hard work both I & L[ily] have gone through & still take each day but I have lost almost all count of the days & know not when it is the beginning or end of a week—the whole time passed in soothing the pain by words of sympathy or diverting it by inventing talk or actively engaged in all the incessant operation for releif."[109] At the end of Taylor's life, mother and daughter sat up all night for nearly a month as Harriet mournfully relayed: "Tho' the terrible anxiety & passion of pity which I [feel] at every moment before is in some degree less active the various requirements of severe illness & total helplessness continue, & . . . we do every thing for him ourselves."[110]

Harriet's exhaustion exploded into anger at John. In a mid-June letter, she shouted:

> You talk of my writing to you "at some odd time when a change of subject of thought may be rather a relief than otherwise"! odd time! indeed you must be ignorant profoundly of all that friendship or anxiety means when you can use such pitiful narrow hearted expressions. . . .
>
> As to "odd time" I told you that I have not a moment unfilled by things to be done when not actually standing by the bedside or supporting the invalid—& as to "change of subject of thought a relief"! Good God sh[d] you think it a relief to think of somebody else some acquaintance or what not while I was dying?[111]

109. 358.
110. 361.
111. 360.

The following week, Harriet is again irritated at John because "on Sunday I went down to you, sat down, stayed some time, & finally left the room in irrepressible indignation for you did not once during all the time you saw me ask how he was nor mention his name in any way! This fact and the feelings necessarily caused by it I can never forget as long as I live."[112] Like children who misbehave only around their parents, adults in grief often strike out at those they most love.

Harriet tried to cope, but sometimes her frustration at her spouse's never-ending suffering engulfed her. She painted a grim picture of Taylor's anguish: "His suffering has been more such as one hears of the tortures inflicted by demons than anything else. Often I have thought, what would crucifixtion be compared to this—mercy."[113] Her anger at this pain is not only directed at John Mill. God, himself, stands accused. In one letter, Harriet started to say "thank God," but interrupted herself, "I was going to say God but can not use that form so repugnant more than ever to my present feelings."[114] In the hours before Taylor's death, Harriet fumed at the stupidity of those who turn to religion instead of real social concerns when faced with an existential crisis. "And what a cheat is life! With a fatal painful hopeless tragedy at all moments hanging over the head of every creature & sure to descend at last—And what weak selfish fools are men that instead of all joining heart & hand to oppose the common enemies chance & death they call it religion to praise it all, punish suicide, & pray to be delivered from sudden death!"[115] Sudden death or even euthanasia seem wonderfully humane compared to the agony Taylor endured.

Finally her anger gave way to pity & indignation, then grief. "Now there seems a gradual fading away. My heart & feelings have been so wrung & for so long a time now that acute sorrow comes only at intervals, it is deadened too by bodily fatigue—but the deepest & truest grief pity & indignation . . . will remain with me as long as I live."[116] All that is left after his death is numbness:

> I cannot write much now not on account of the sorrow & distress for that has been as great for weeks—but I find I am quite physically

112. 360.
113. 366.
114. 358.
115. 370.
116. 367.

> exhausted & faint after two nights & a day of most anxious and sad watching ended by his gently breathing the last without a sigh or pang at 3oclk this morning.—I must defer saying anything till this next week has passed—To me a very painful one—feeling has to remain in abeyance while the many absolutely necessary mechanical details are ordered.[117]

Harriet did not turn to her children for help with the decisions that had to be made after Taylor's death. She turned, instead, to her beloved John.

The 1840s was a decade of deaths for Harriet. Death claimed her brother William, John's brother Henry, John Taylor's mother, both Eliza and Sarah Flower, Caroline's baby, Harriet's father, and Taylor. The last death was the most bitter. Harriet's unusual "marriage" to John Taylor never lessened her fondness for this generous father of her children.

Just as her intellectual outrage at organized religion could be set aside in favor of her role as mother when her children needed acknowledgment that their longings were different than their mother's, so she could return to play the role of supporting wife in sickness when her estranged husband was in need. Harriet could have reasoned that her own fragile health precluded her "duty" to provide sustained nursing for Taylor. She did not give herself this excuse. Taylor may have wronged her in the most tragic way by giving her syphilis, but he was probably unaware of the consequences of his debauchery for Harriet, and once he was aware, he consistently acted nobly in offering her freedom to live and work apart from him. Harriet was not unappreciative of his generosity and kindness. Her extraordinary care of him in his last illness demonstrated her own tenderness and benevolence. The tragedy of the final duet of Harriet and her husband penetrates us with its anguished sounds.

Marriage to John

"Reader, I married him." Jane Eyre thus announces her marriage to Rochester. John was no Rochester, nor Harriet a Jane Eyre, but marry they did. After twenty years of "violent friendship" as one wag put it, including almost two years of Harriet's widowhood, Harriet and John were wed. On

117. 370–371.

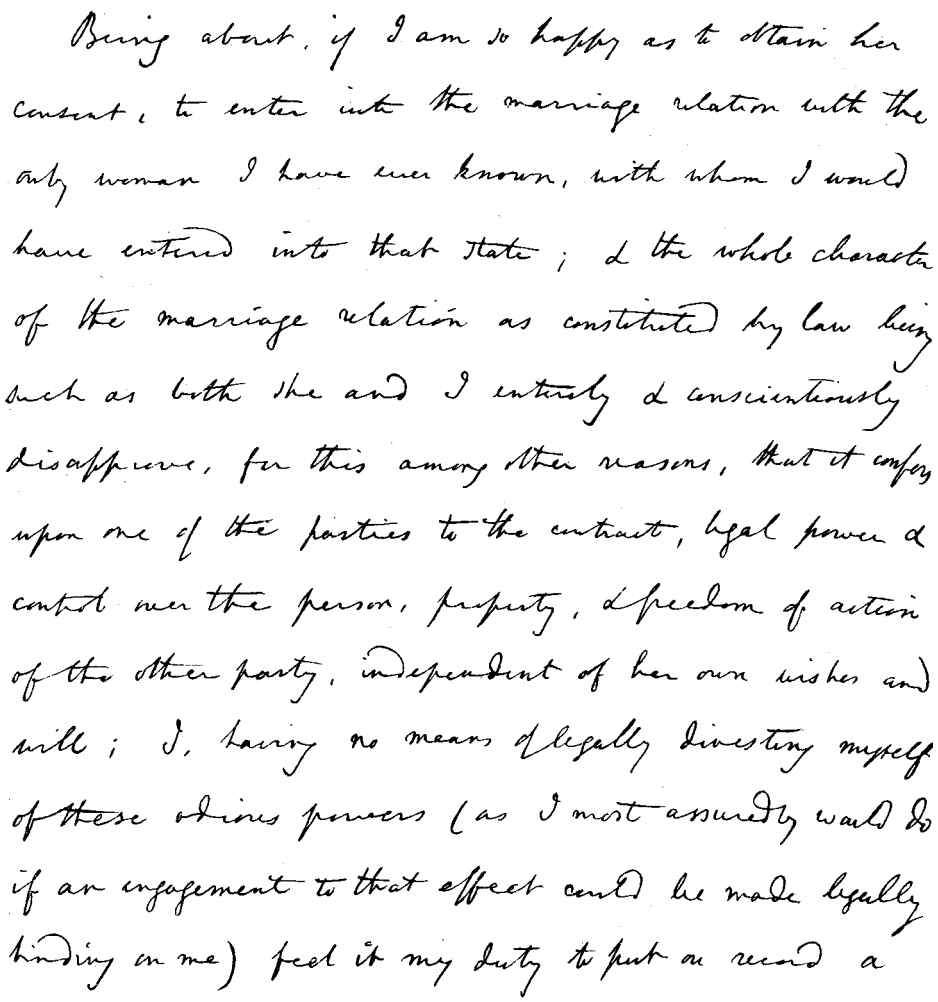
the 6th of March, 1851, John proposed to Harriet and formally announced that he would never assert any of the legal rights that accompany marriage. His declaration is so heartfelt and so wonderfully romantic that no feminist could help falling in love with John for this piece of writing alone:

> *Being about, if I am so happy as to obtain her consent, to enter into the marriage relation with the only woman I have ever known, with whom I would have entered into that state; & the whole character of the marriage relation as constituted by law being such as both she and I entirely & conscientiously disapprove, for this among other reasons, that it confers upon one of the parties to the contract, legal power & control over the person, property, & freedom of action of the other party, independent of her own wishes and will; I, having no means of legally divesting myself of these odious powers (as I most assuredly would do if an engagement to that effect could be made legally binding on me) feel it my duty to put on record a formal protest against the existing law of marriage, in so far as conferring such powers; and a solemn promise never in any case or under any circumstances to use them. And in the event of marriage between Mrs. Taylor and me I declare it to be my will and intention, & the condition of the engagement between us, that she retains in all respects whatever the same absolute freedom of action, & freedom of disposal of herself and of all that does or may at any time belong to her, as if no such marriage had taken place; and I absolutely disclaim & repudiate all pretension to have acquired any rights whatever by virtue of such marriage.*
>
> 6th March 1851 J. S. Mill[118]

Harriet and John quietly married in the Register Office at Melcombe Regis on 21 April 1851. Helen and Algernon signed as witnesses. John signed his usual "J. S." and then had to squeeze in the rest of his Christian name when told it was required—a fact that haunted him since he feared the marriage might not be legal.[119]

In the nearly two years between John Taylor's death and her marriage to John, Harriet continued to work with John by focusing on the newspaper articles they co-authored. All, save one, centered on a critique of an is-

118. CW: XXI, 99.
119. CW: XIV, 96–97.

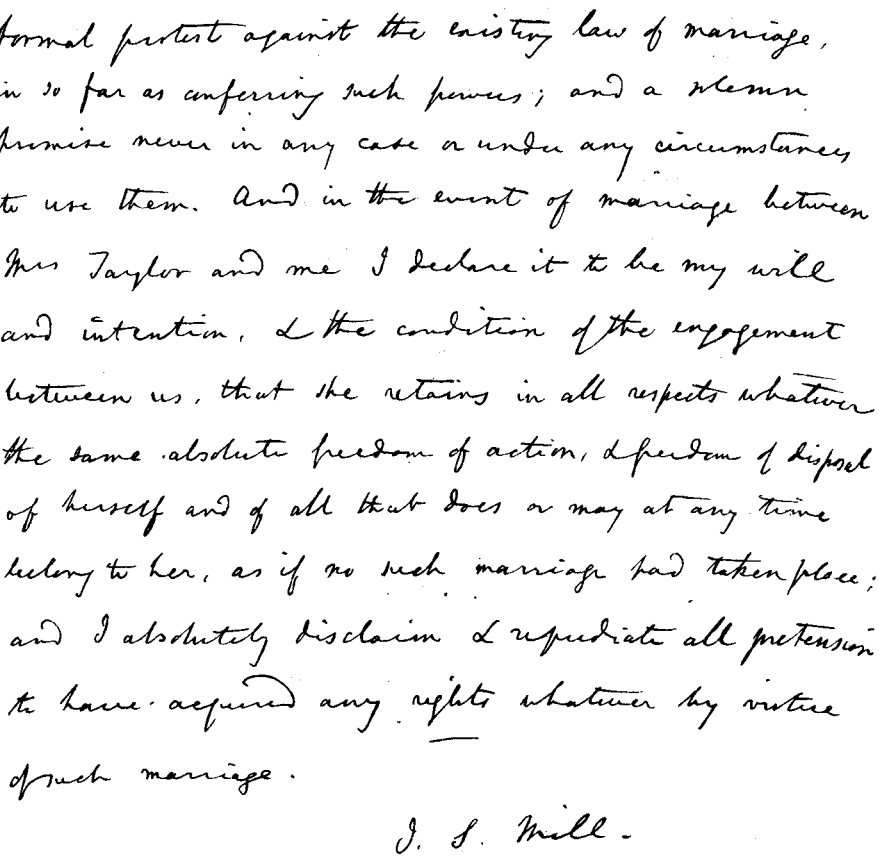


Being about, if I am so happy as to obtain her consent, to enter into the marriage relation with the only woman I have ever known, with whom I would have entered into that state; & the whole character of the marriage relation as constituted by law being such as both she and I entirely & conscientiously disapprove, for this among other reasons, that it confers upon one of the parties to the contract, legal power & control over the person, property, & freedom of action of the other party, independent of her own wishes and will; I, having no means of legally divesting myself of these odious powers (as I most assuredly would do if an engagement to that effect could be made legally binding on me) feel it my duty to put on record a

sue that had shadowed her writings since the 1830s: domestic violence. She also completed her most well-known work, "The Enfranchisement of Women."

The month before their wedding, John wrote to William Hickson on 3 March, suggesting an article for the *Westminster Review* on the "Emancipation of Women."[120] The April issue was full, but the article appeared in

120. CW: XIV, 55–56.


formal protest against the existing law of marriage, in so far as conferring such powers; and a solemn promise never in any case & under any circumstances to use them. And in the event of marriage between Mrs Taylor and me I declare it to be my will and intention, & the condition of the engagement between us, that she retains in all respects whatever the same absolute freedom of action, & freedom of disposal of herself and of all that does or may at any time belong to her, as if no such marriage had taken place; and I absolutely disclaim & repudiate all pretension to have acquired any rights whatever by virtue of such marriage.

J. S. Mill.

6th March 1851

July. Three days after John proposed the article to Hickson, he made a very different sort of proposal to Harriet—the marriage proposal written above.

Their routines did not change with their marriage. They spent as much time as possible together, but were comfortable spending long periods of time apart when their health demanded it. During the first two years of their marriage, Harriet and John were constantly together and therefore we have little record of their lives, but beginning in the winter of 1853 they spent much of the next two years apart. From December 1853 until 11 April 1854, Harriet was in France while John remained at Blackheath. June to August of the same year, John traveled in Europe while Harriet remained

at home. John left again on 7 December 1854, traveling as far as Greece before returning home in midsummer 1855.

During 1854, they spent only four and a half months together, and during 1855, only six months; the separations resulted from their illnesses. Harriet nearly died of a lung hemorrhage in 1853,[121] and John was seriously ill with consumption in 1854–1855. Luckily, John's regime of walking twenty or more miles a day and sleeping in flea-ridden pallets in the hinterlands of Greece cured him sufficiently for him to resume his duties at India House in July 1855. From that time until Harriet's death three years later, they were rarely apart, and then only for short periods.

In letters recording their married love, we hear John's whispered passion, but rarely Harriet's because her letters were destroyed by John at her request. When Harriet's letters followed John's travels and would have been in risk of being stolen or lost, Harriet's desire to obliterate the traces of her ideas would seem perfectly understandable. The conditions of travel and postal services of the mid-nineteenth century were irregular at best. Yet, John also burned Harriet's missives received in the safety of Blackheath, their married home near Greenwich. I wonder whether it was the descriptions of her illness or the contributions she made to John's writing that she wanted hidden from the world. Whatever the motivation, the hundreds of pages of letters that John wrote to Harriet offer only half of the conversation they maintained in their times apart.[122] In an odd parallel, few of John's letters from their early years together survive.

The diary John kept from 8 January to 15 April 1854 records his love for Harriet as well as his intellectual debt to her during the first separation of their married life. John cries, "What a sense of protection is given by the consciousness of being loved . . . for I feel as if no really dangerous illness could actually happen to me while I have her to care for me."[123] The ease with which John expresses the protection of love, an emotion usually found in women's descriptions of their relationships, demonstrates the flexibility and openness of their companionship. He relies on her strength.

John insists in his diary entries, just as he would later in books, dedications, and private letters, that Harriet was his intellectual as well as emo-

121. CW: XIV, 123.
122. CW: XIV, 140.
123. CW: XVII, 641.

tional comrade. On 8 February 1854 he wrote, "Nor would I, for anything which life could give, be without a friend from whom I could learn at least as much as I could teach. Even the merely intellectual needs of my nature suffice to make me hope that I may never outlive [my] companion."[124] The learning and teaching they shared meant that John "[wrote] only for her when . . . not . . . entirely *from* her."[125] John declares that he is not the first male writer whose "original thoughts . . . came to them from the suggestion and prompting of some woman."[126] But surely he is one of the few who acknowledges his collaboration. Neither Sartre, nor Fitzgerald, nor Rodin acknowledged the contributions of Simone de Beauvoir, Zelda Fitzgerald, or Camille Claudel. John knows that he sings a duet, not a solo.

In their relationship before and during their marriage, John was not a fool in love, blindly following a single star. He criticizes Carlyle for hero worship, arguing "Whoever gives himself up to the guidance of *one* man, because that one is the best and ablest whom he happens to know, will in nine cases out of ten make himself the slave of that most misleading thing, a clever man's twists and prejudices. . . . One hero and sage is necessary to correct another."[127] John does not become such a slave. He both disagreed at times with Harriet and had other sources of ideas, as did Harriet. What John didn't find from other intellectual companions was love. As has everyone who has loved deeply, John contemplates in his journal the fragility of the "few fibres or membranes" that keep the beloved alive and longs for an immortality for which he can find no proof.[128] The unique attraction of love abounded, but should not be confused with enslavement.

Mrs. Mill

For twenty-three years Harriet had negotiated the unusual role of Mrs. Taylor, a wife but not one that followed any typical pattern. Now she would need to create a new role as Mrs. Mill. Generally Harriet presents herself as John's partner, although sometimes she becomes the quintessen-

124. CW: XVII, 652.
125. CW: XVII, 654.
126. CW: XVII, 663.
127. CW: XVII, 666.
128. CW: XVII, 654.

tial Victorian lady as, for example, when she asks for a reference for a maid. Her formality is precious:

> Mrs Mill presents her Complimets to Mrs Darling & being much indisposed & unable to have the pleasure of calling on her to morrow requests Mrs D will favour her by saying if Elizabs Chalk can cook the ordinary English dishes really well—& did Mrs. Darling find her willing to alter her way of cooking any dish & to follow directions given her—is she strictly honest with regard to the provisions—or is she wasteful or extravagant—does she keep the part of the house in her care—the kitchen dining room &c thoroughly clean. . . . [129]

Mrs. Mill, wife of John Stuart Mill, presents herself full force. Even Harriet can assume this pretension when necessary. Here Harriet is not concerned about a laborer's rights or woman's degradation, but whether or not her servant can cook her potatoes as the family prefers and whether or not she'll steal the silver.

Harriet as Daughter

Wife, mother, daughter: These are three of the most complex identities of a woman's life. None of them was easy for Harriet. Each elicited different Harriets, the ugliest being her posture as daughter. A series of letters Harriet writes to her mother, Harriet Hardy, begins just two days before John Taylor's death 18 July 1849 and characterizes the complex link between them. Mrs. Hardy appears in her letters to Harriet to be a whining, often cruel woman. She did not make being a daughter easy. Mrs. Hardy was even capable of complaining about the lack of attention she was afforded when her daughter's husband lay on his death bed. After six weeks of twenty-four-hour-a-day care for her dying husband, and out of sheer exhaustion, Harriet asks that her mother not visit them. After John's death, Harriet's mother writes to her, but rather than supplying her daughter with sympathy and support during this period of grief, her mother harshly rebukes Harriet for not having properly notified her of Taylor's death. Harriet responds with righteous indignation.[130] Mrs. Hardy continues to fail to recognize her daughter's exhaustion, frustration, de-

129. 434–435.
130. 402.

pression, and sense of loss when John Taylor dies. Harriet feels outrage at her mother's lack of empathy.[131] Somehow mother and daughter apparently move beyond their quarrel because in January 1850, Harriet sends her mother advice regarding an awkward request for money from another relative.[132] Although they never broke relations completely, Mrs. Hardy's hypersensitivity and lack of warmth for another's pain and discomfort made a close relationship between them impossible.

After Harriet's marriage to John, her relationship with her mother continued its bumpy path. During Mrs. Hardy's visit to Harriet at Christmas 1854 while John was in Italy, John writes to console Harriet, "It is always so—when you are for any time with the grand'mère your feelings & conscience are always revolted & nerves set on edge."[133] Mrs. Hardy's messages from 1855 to 1858 were thin-skinned and whiny. Her birthday greetings to Harriet provide classic examples of her self-centeredness:

> The silence of months towards a neglected mother might be expected so to torment. In what respect I have ever failed as a mother, it is for you to decide. You will receive this on your birthday & as has been my habit for years past I offer you my best wishes for many succeeding ones. How often it may be in my power to repeat this I cannot say, the warnings of increasing debility make it very doubtful.[134]

What a cheerful contribution to Harriet's celebration! Mrs. Hardy tried to browbeat Harriet into letting her stay with her and John at Blackheath because she wanted to move out of Caroline's tense household, but Harriet ignored the request. Of her three children living in England (Caroline, Edward, and Harriet), only Harriet's life was in any way stable. Caroline's domestic abuse could no longer be ignored. Edward's wife was in and out of asylums while he cavorted with the maid. Having moved from fourth-born to eldest living son as his three older brothers died, Edward was enjoying his newly achieved sense of entitlement. No wonder Mrs. Hardy longed for a room at Blackheath. But Mrs. Hardy's sniveling and bickering assured that her daughter would never grant her request.[135]

Six of Harriet's letters from 1855 plead for Mrs. Hardy to return the let-

131. 402–403.
132. 403–406.
133. CW: XIV, 262.
134. M/T XXVII/82.
135. M/T XXVII/60, 61, 62, 64, 66, 68, 69, 71, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 81, 82, 84, 85, 86.

ters Harriet had mailed over the years. A note from her mother[136] indicates that she had complied, but Harriet doubts her mother's word. And, as late as December of the following year, mother and daughter are still squabbling over whether Mrs. Hardy actually returned the letters.[137] As Mrs. Mill, Harriet was exceedingly cautious about her correspondence with anyone, including her mother, fearing that John's biographers might scavenge for any details of the famous story of John Stuart Mill and his mysterious wife.

More evidence of the recurring misunderstandings between Mrs. Hardy and her daughter surfaces when the touchy Mrs. Hardy goes into a dither because of an innocent reference made by Harriet. Harriet writes her mother, "I know these particulars will not interest you but I have nothing more amusing to write about."[138] Since Harriet's letter is filled with nothing more exciting than her concern over her children's health, Harriet may have believed her comment to be justified and was merely recognizing that her own letter was indeed dull. Her mother interprets the remark as an insult.[139] Mrs. Hardy's overreaction to her daughter's letter indicates the unnecessary problems Harriet encounters when trying to communicate with her difficult mother.

The collection of family letters is also filled with the petty sibling rivalry that afflicts many families. Harriet's subtle sarcasm regarding her mother's attention to her sister's children is obvious in the following passage: "I am very glad to hear you have so much satisfaction in Caroline's children & that Louis improves so much. That Annie is making not only a pleasant but an improving visit is indeed fortunate."[140] The "I-got-to-see-it-but-you-didn't" childishness she exhibits when mentioning to her mother that she had seen a photograph of Arthur Hardy's children, which she returned without showing to her mother, demonstrates that Harriet is not above peevishness herself.[141] By her last letter, ironically a Christmas missive, Harriet characterizes her mother a liar as she writes, "In yours of Nov 22^{d} you repeat what you said in a former letter that my having written to you last February is a delusion. Now I hold in my hand your answer, dated

136. M/T XXVII/76.
137. M/T XXVII/83 and XXVII/80.
138. 407.
139. M/T XXVII/70.
140. 412.
141. 411.

March 1st 1856 which begins with these words. . . . "[142] Touché. Obviously, these mother–daughter correspondences are not filled with sympathy or grace.

Mrs. Hardy's poor mothering skills may have resulted in Harriet's overprotection of her own daughter, Helen. The thin-skinned quality of Harriet's relation to Helen is more understandable in light of Mrs. Hardy's behavior. Certainly Harriet's letters to Helen reveal that she strove for a far more loving relationship with her daughter than she experienced with her own mother and father.

Harriet as Mother

Helen, known in the family as Lily, was Harriet's companion, confidant, and pupil as well as beloved daughter. But since Harriet's death, historians have accused her of being a bad mother. Even in 1991, Janice Carlisle quips that Harriet's "children lived for her convenience, not she for theirs."[143] Her sons' failures to make names for themselves, in some critics' opinions, were due to Harriet's abandonment of them, while her daughter's overdependence was the result of her having held Lily too close to her.[144]

Neither of these judgments about Harriet's parenting is fair. Helen's diary from 1842–1847, when she was between the ages of eleven and fifteen, depicts a cheerful, opinionated, extremely well-read, and loving young woman.[145] Lily recounts not the myth of isolation from family that biographers have perpetuated, but the many visits she and her mother shared with John Taylor and her brothers. In 1846 alone, Harriet and Helen visited Kent Terrace in March, April, June, September, October, November, and December. In addition, Taylor visited them in Ryde in August. Each of these visits lasted from a few days to two weeks. Helen was hardly "isolated" from her father and brothers.

Helen's education may not have equaled John's extraordinary boyhood training by his father at home, but it would clearly have been superior to

142. 411.

143. Janice Carlisle, *John Stuart Mill and the Writing of Character* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1991), 257.

144. See Mazlish, 311–322; Kamm, 225; Packe, 327–328; and Mary Taylor in her introduction to Hugh S. R. Elliot, *The Letters of John Stuart Mill* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1910), xliii.

145. M/T XLIV. All references to her journal in the following are found in the volumes in her diary. It is not numbered by page.

any tutoring she would have received in a girls' school at the time. At the age of ten, Lily translated Cinderella into Italian. At twelve, she read Carlyle's translation of Tieck's Märchen in *German Romances* and proclaimed: "I like them very much they have a beautiful mysterious air about them. [T]hey breathe the spirit of marchen." At thirteen, she read Mary Wollstonecraft and Thompson's "An Appeal . . . " and spiritedly responded, "Why do not people write now? Why is there neither man nor woman who dares to say his or her opinion openly and so that all may know it? People fancy now that cowardice (of opinion) is prudence, and indifference, philosophy." Lily showed more confidence then than most junior high school girls do in the twenty-first century. By adolescence she was firmly a feminist and a thinker. Her confidence was inspired by her mother.

In her fourteenth year, she read about Marie Antoinette, Thomas à Kempis, Emerson, Shakespeare, Coleridge, Hahn-Hahn,[146] the memoirs of Madame du Bani, *Jane Shore* (which she would later perform on stage), Dickens, Daniel Webster, M. de Staël's *Corrine*, and Fichte, among others. One biographer snoots, "Helen would dearly have liked to go to school but with a mother who demanded her company wherever she went, this was out of the question. . . . [Harriet] gave the girl few, if any, organized lessons."[147] If Helen's education is the outcome of few organized lessons, we should all campaign for less organization! The unusual quality of her training outshines the schooling of most Victorian girls who would have learned to draw, paint, play the piano, and sing a bit. Their education was "devoid of intellectual content, let alone intellectual challenge."[148] Meanwhile, Helen was reading Fichte in German.

Far from showing unhappiness, Helen's contentment pervades the diary. She even declares at the end of 1846, "No year has ever seemed to me to pass so quickly as this. Yet, it has been to me a happy one." Helen traveled to Europe with her mother and John, visiting cathedrals, art museums, and musical events, but her life is not all about high art. She and her mother saw Tom Thumb when he was in England. Helen loved nature and displayed an extraordinary sensitivity to it for a child. On Midsummer Eve

146. Gräfin Ida von Hahn-Hahn, a German novelist, was quite popular during her visit to London in 1846.

147. Kamm, 115. Mary Taylor offers the same picture of her Aunt Helen's complaints about her mother's refusal to send her to school. Mary's record of Helen's memories must be read with the understanding that she only knew her aunt when she was suffering from dementia during the final years of her life. See Elliott, xliii.

148. Richard D. Altick, *Victorian People and Ideas* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1973), 54.

1846 she recalls in her diary the same day two years prior when "we were at Brighton and walked by the sea side singing gloria in excelsis while the moon shone." A life filled with books, conversation, travel, nature, and love is not one of neglect or suffocation.

The Amberley Papers, the journals of Kate Amberley, a friend of Harriet and Helen and mother of Bertrand Russell, registers the clearest indication of Helen's adult view of her mother. In it, Helen recalls being

> allowed to read every book [I] wished, & [I] used to begin at one end of the shelf & go on straight through, often not understanding, but reading on. [I] read Berkeley at 11 & [my] father's Logic at 14. [I] was never taught to believe anything but to judge for [my]self. All [my] mother used to say to [me] was: "Be good & do what you know is right"; or "I cannot love you if you are not good." [My] mother used to say all that should be done was to awake the moral nature & leave the intellect & mind quite free.[149]

Helen's intellectual curiosity was fed by her mother's library and her gift of freedom.

Kate Amberley's journal continues, "once Miss Tayler *[sic]* was much inclined to R. Catholicism fr reading Th. à Kempis (which is still her favorite book) & her mother said nothing to dissuade her, but she got out of it alone."[150] Helen's diary confirms her cousin's observation. Examples of Helen's devotion to religion during her early adolescence abound in her writing. Harriet clearly did not impose her own atheism on her child, yet Lily came to reject organized religion just as her mother had.

The happiness of Helen's childhood seems clear, but the question remains whether Helen as an adult was overly dependent upon Harriet. Helen lived with her mother and John after they married in 1851. The only letters from Harriet to Helen were written during their sole separation, when Helen left home to become a professional actor in regional theaters in 1856 (she was twenty-five years old). She would have been too young in 1851 or 1852 to leave home, and from 1853–55 Harriet was dangerously ill. When Harriet's health improved in 1855, Helen began training to go on the stage, and in November 1856 won her mother's approval to work in regional theaters. She remained at that work until February 1857 when another severe

149. *The Amberley Papers,* ed. Bertrand Russell and Patricia Russell (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1937), 372.

150. *The Amberley Papers,* 372.

lung hemorrhage, which Harriet suffered while visiting Helen, brought them both back to Blackheath. In 1858 as Harriet's health appeared to be improving, Helen again resumed her career, but only for the few short weeks that Harriet survived.

Harriet's anxiety over Helen's decision to pursue acting was reasonable given the reputation of the theater during the mid-Victorian period. Only in the 1850s were theater jobs opened to those who had not grown up in a theatrical family, so Helen's decision to wait until 1856 may have been the result of new opportunities within the theater as much as from practical considerations at home.[151] New middle-class audiences wanted middle-class actresses whose accent, clothing, and genteel performance of life's rituals were properly bourgeois.[152]

Newspapers referred to prostitutes as "actresses" throughout this period, and the association, although not necessarily true, must have weighed on Harriet. Acting was more disreputable than any other artistic career for women. As a prostitute one was hidden from sight, but a daughter who took to the stage lived before the public eye of neighbors and friends.[153] One could not adhere to Victorian standards of womanly modesty and at the same time flaunt oneself on a stage. Thus women who pursued this profession were thought to be "unfeminine, anti-family, and anti-male . . . [because they] chose to contravene their properly gendered upbringing."[154] In short, "[an actress] was criticized for doing exactly what men did: turning outside the home for social intercourse, intellectual stimulation, and occupational fulfillment."[155] Although others might condemn such women, to object to such employment would have been against the beliefs Harriet had published in her "Enfranchisement of Women." Like many of us, Harriet found it difficult to practice what she preached when her own daughter's reputation was at risk. Nevertheless, she gritted her teeth and wished her daughter good luck.

In *Actresses as Working Women,* Tracy Davis notes that "surrendering unmarried daughters to the co-sexual profession of acting . . . was trau-

151. Christopher Kent, "Image and Reality: The Actress and Society," in Martha Vicinus, ed., *A Widening Sphere: Changing Roles of Victorian Women* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977), 94–116, 288, fn. 1.

152. Tracy C. Davis, *Actresses as Working Women: Their Social Identity in Victorian Culture* (London: Routledge, 1991), 77.

153. Davis, 97.

154. Davis, 85.

155. Davis, 86.

matic for parents," but she also points out that Harriet was rare in tolerating and even bolstering Helen's career.[156] Just when Harriet had secured respectability by marriage, her daughter entered a questionable profession. It was not easy for Harriet to let Lily go. Harriet's letters to her daughter negotiated the pain of their first separation as well as the trepidation about her theatrical calling. Neither was easy, but Harriet eventually offered her support for both projects.

In many ways the relationship between mother and daughter matched the intensity Harriet and John shared. Helen was devoted to her mother, and Harriet was equally dedicated to Helen. Their extensive correspondence details the roller-coaster ride of emotions that afflicted both mother and daughter as they attempted to achieve a new balance of dependence and independence suiting their new living and working situation. Helen sometimes begs for advice, only to be frustrated that her mother offers it. Harriet sometimes attempts to use guilt to influence her daughter's decisions. The letters written during the first months of their separation echo in the heart of every parent who has witnessed such a breach. How does one encourage independence without appearing to be pushing the person away? How does one express one's sadness and loneliness without appearing to be heaping guilt on the person who has departed?

Harriet struggles to learn to express opinions while acknowledging that her daughter must make difficult decisions for herself. Accepting her daughter as a responsible adult who is working and living away from home is particularly hard for Harriet whose own relationship with her mother was anything but a model. These letters disclose that Harriet is consciously afraid that this separation from her daughter might lead to the same kind of alienation she felt from Mrs. Hardy. Harriet replies to her daughter, showing reassurance of their closeness: "The sentence in your letter 'let us keep a firm alliance & we will not care for them or anybody' does me the greatest good—it is the doubt of your feeling so which has been so dreadful." [157] Because Harriet derived so much happiness and security from her close ties with Helen, she required reassurance that Helen's feelings for her had not changed despite the miles separating them.

In the first set of correspondences, Harriet and Helen negotiate Helen's career options, discuss what Helen should wear on the stage, consider where

156. Davis, 72–73.
157. 517.

Helen should go for Christmas holiday, examine how Helen spends money, and debate how often Helen should write to her mother. In short, all the usual points of potential conflict that arise when a daughter leaves home for the first time become topics in these missives. Mother and daughter manage to survive the slight hurts, assertions of independence and dependence, and the emotional turmoil that always accompany a separation from the family.

During the first ten days of their separation, Harriet and Helen test each other with passive-aggressive questioning of each other's actions. Clearly a quarrel had preceded Helen's departure. Harriet writes in an otherwise affectionate and helpful letter,

> I have you see dear gone thro' your letter answering each question as well as I can but I feel the writing very badly. I do not wish to say anything about my feelings or state because I wish you to be wholly uninfluenced by me in all your future proceedings. I would rather die than go through again your reproaches for spoiling your life. Whatever happens let your mode of life be your own free choice henceforth.[158]

There isn't much joy in Harriet's gift of freedom. Helen's solution to Harriet's unhappiness is to invite Harriet to join her on the road. Helen suggests, "If you were with me too I should have every thing I could wish for on earth. I could then say I am perfectly happy, I have nothing left that I wish for. Will you give me this happiness?"[159] Helen is as unhappy without Harriet as her mother is without her, so why not have her cake and eat it too? Harriet reassures Helen that they will adjust, and she is not about to leave John.[160] Helen won't give up trying to talk her mama into joining her. She returns with a whine of her own: "You and Mr. Mill were willing to be seperate for six months for the sake of his health, would you be so again to give me a chance of happiness?"[161] Harriet patiently reasons with Helen that she is asking too much, and that she must try her "experimental life" and judge the happiness of such a life for herself. Little spite permeates her writing at this point. She really tries to help Helen see that what she has asked is impractical while encouraging her to pursue her dream.[162]

158. 514.
159. M/T LI/8.
160. 515.
161. M/T LI/12.
162. 517–518.

Helen follows her mother's logic and accepts the love Harriet offers: "I feel dearest that all that you say about the uncertainty, and indeed at present impossibility of knowing how this will go with me is quite true. . . . Your letter is so sweet so kind so loving that I have felt happy ever since I read it first, and every time I have read it since."[163] Harriet and Helen thus survived the first round of homesickness and loneliness.

Helen's debut as Jane Shore was weak, and the managers at Sunderland overlooked her for other parts. She joined her mother and John in Brighton for Christmas week without knowing where her next engagement would be. Although Helen would have moderate successes during the remainder of her short acting career, she was clearly not a natural actor. Nevertheless, Harriet's desire to have Helen flourish never wavers, and just days before her death, she asks John to write to Helen to reassure her that "[Harriet] does not wish you to come to her because she thinks she has taken the turn to get better & therefore it w^{d} be a very great pity to break up your good arrangements w^{ch} are a great pleasure to her to hear of. . . . She is anxious that you sh^{d} not think of coming to her. She w^{d} be extremely annoyed if you did."[164] These do not sound like the words of a woman who uses "emotional blackmail" to get her daughter to come to her rescue. Harriet wanted terribly for Helen to be free to do what she had hoped all women would one day have the liberty to do: to work at a job of her own choosing. The "experiments in living" she and John encouraged in *On Liberty* began with her own daughter.

For many, perhaps most Victorian women, dressing in style was the focus of life. As one Victorian scholar notes, "In a life of limited opportunities for individual self-expression, dress can take on heightened importance, become a little world of its own."[165] Although Helen spent a fair amount of time talking about clothing with her mother, she did not substitute concern for it with concern for her work. Helen's work required attention to her dress both on-stage and off, but Helen was more angry about fellow actors who failed to learn their lines than about a dress that fit badly. Likewise, Harriet gave advice when it was sought but did not dwell on the subject the way Jane Austen's mothers were liable to do. Harriet and Helen's feminism seem reflected in their focus on substance over style.

163. M/T LI/17.
164. CW: XV, 573.
165. Harriet Blodgett, *Centuries of Female Days: Englishwomen's Private Diaries* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1988), 126.

Helen had a particular reason to be unsure about her wardrobe, since actresses supplied their own costumes when performing in the theater. Harriet patiently answered all of Helen's questions about dress. Do I need a pattern to sew new stockings? Is this white satin swatch too flimsy for the price? How should I trim the white merino dress with gold and pearls or with "puffs of white Tulle interspersed with bow of blue & silver"?[166] Did I overdress for dinner at the theater manager's? What jewelry should I wear? Harriet replies, but rarely makes suggestions unasked—a wise choice for a mother.

Determining the appropriate dress for rehearsals at the theater was in itself a challenge. Just as women still have apprehensions about dressing for a career, imagine the misgivings of a young woman from an upper-middle-class family trying to remain anonymous in a completely unfamiliar environment. Harriet gave sound advice, but constantly reminds Helen that she would have to judge for herself since she alone knows the context.

To fully understand the dynamics of the intense mother–daughter bond depicted within the lines of these letters, one dimension of Harriet's emotional state deserves special attention. Harriet displayed a personality prone to "nervous" depression. Harriet reports bouts of depression after her second separation from Helen at Christmas 1856. Harriet explains to Helen that she went to London with Algernon "feeling the black melancholy into which I has *[sic]* fallen must be in some way lessened."[167] She also writes about feeling "nervous & bored lately"[168] and "nervous."[169] Harriet further complains, "I have got out of spirits about everything, but as I do my utmost to argue myself into better in time I shall succeed."[170] At intervals in her life, depression overwhelms Harriet. For example, she states, "I cannot write this even[g] at all—but it is only a sudden intense nervousness which I shall get over by to-morrow."[171] When this sadness overtakes her, Harriet is determined to improve her outlook and usually succeeds.

The record of Harriet's depression begins following Helen's return to the theater after a Christmas holiday together in 1856. Harriet warned her

166. 516.
167. 535.
168. 542.
169. 567.
170. 547.
171. 569–570.

daughter before Christmas that a second separation would be more difficult than the initial one, since a second parting would reinforce the permanent nature of their divided lives.[172] She and Helen also disagreed during their time together, probably about money. They settled their differences, but the hurt they inflicted on one another lingered. This rift may have added to Harriet's depression. Furthermore, Harriet suffers from the considerable cold; the thermometer located in her bedroom read 38°! The congestion in her lungs from the coal-fired chimneys in curtain-enclosed rooms wearied Harriet. Her back ached from bending over the fire all day or sitting hunched over the fireplace.

In addition, Harriet's son Algernon left for Italy during this period, so she had an empty nest for the first time. The realization that she was henceforth a crone may have hit Harriet with the departure of both her daughter and son. At forty-nine, Harriet may also have been experiencing the pangs of menopause. Put together the missing children and the loss of estrogen, and you find a woman who is nagged by aging. As Mary Shelley put it, "My brow is sadly trenched, the blossom of youth faded. My mind gathers wrinkles."[173] All of these factors contributed to Harriet's "nervousness" and melancholy.

Harriet joined legions of women also experiencing depression, a feeling endemic to the gender in the Victorian period. Although some women reacted to illness or aging, many could not identify the catalyst of their melancholy. The powerlessness of women's place in society and in their families inevitably contributed to the despair felt by many.[174] Facing the lack of choice each and every day along with the enforced idleness of their lives, these females experienced despondency and gloom. Twentieth-century studies confirm that women who have never worked are the most depressed; those with interesting and demanding jobs are more physically and mentally fit.[175] Victorian culture itself was cause enough for women's depression.

Harriet did not consciously use her reports of depression to inflict guilt on Helen or to motivate her to return home. However, she was not above some passive-aggressive whining. Twice Harriet complains about an in-

172. 527.
173. Blodgett, 217.
174. Blodgett, 212–219.
175. Faludi, 38.

tense headache & feverishness, and she writes, "I must not be ill in your absence dear if I can help it."[176] Harriet also composes a long opening paragraph in one letter describing her poor health and disparaging the lack of care she was getting from the servants. She believed that she "got my present cold & earache by standing ringing [the maid's] bell."[177] Helen must have reeled from the guilt this letter surely inspired.

This grumbling may be the innocent expressions of a woman who suffered from chronic illness and temporary depression, but it is not inconceivable that the grousing was meant to make Helen feel guilty. This young woman's function for many years included assuring that the servants were prompt and that Harriet was well-tended when ill. Lily must have recognized that her absence in her mother's life was perhaps the greatest gift Harriet could have given her daughter.

On the other hand, dwelling too much on the possibility of Harriet's using descriptions of her illness as a means of manipulation is unfair, since Harriet *was* actually quite ill during this period. She suffered a severe illness, probably a lung hemorrhage, when visiting Helen in February 1856. On 5 May 1857, Helen wrote Algernon to say that Harriet's lungs were again bleeding, so Helen had "quite give[n] up the idea of any theatrical plans for this year. I will not leave her (not because she does not wish it, but because of the dreadful anxiety I should feel) 'till she is stronger."[178] This private communication with Haji suggests that Helen was not being psychologically manipulated so much as she was genuinely concerned about her mother's health. Her anxiety was justifiable. Harriet died in November 1858, ending the second series of letters exchanged between her and Helen.

In addition to syphilis, Harriet may have also been suffering from tuberculosis for a number of years. This could account for the depression and for a fair amount of honest complaint. Being the daughter of a physician and having had two elder brothers die of tuberculosis in their youth, Harriet had both personal and professional knowledge of this disease. The regular reports of her health that she includes in her letters must be evaluated in light of her real state of health in a period without decongestants or antibiotics.

Harriet's support for Helen went beyond psychological encouragement.

176. 541.
177. 543.
178. M/T XXII/705.

Harriet also provided the finances for Lily's venture. In total, Helen earned only £2 for all her months of work in the theater. She spent more than £50 during the first ten weeks of her career. (Although converting currency into modern equivalents is extremely difficult, estimates range from £1 = $20–$200.)[179]

The question of money was tricky because there were no Victorian standards for supporting a daughter pursuing a career. In addition, there was the class question. It was difficult to assess how a relatively rich girl should appear in a regional theater with those who were attempting to make a living by their craft. Helen wrote less than a week after her departure for the stage to thank her mother for the money she was supplying and to reassure her that it was well spent since she expected to "make myself soon a good actress and then I can take a position as one of the first class, and so our being well off would not excite any particular observation."[180] Indeed, well-known actresses were making quite a lot of money during this period. Some comic actress commanded £40 a night, and Fanny Kelly accumulated £20,000 during her career.[181]

To Helen's expression of gratitude, Harriet replies graciously, "I always feel that all we have is in common—& you are to have & use whatever you like—we have always been perfectly one about that darling."[182] So Helen went merrily on her way, spending about £10 during the first ten days.[183] (This might compare to your college daughter spending $600 in ten days!)[184] By 15 December she had spent another £10. Her mother promptly sent more money saying only, "You have been quite right about the money dear all along."[185]

Harriet was supportive in her missives, but in person during their Christmas holiday, Harriet and Helen had a fight that Helen perceived to be about money. Harriet, by contrast, felt that the fight resulted from Helen saying something hurtful. Helen accused Harriet of being "disappointed that [she] could not disgust [me] with [my] taste & induce [me] to give [the theater] up."[186] Harriet writes, "What I said at Brighton was not about

179. Pool, 21.
180. M/T LI/8.
181. Kent, 99.
182. 517.
183. M/T LI/17.
184. Information about prices supplied by Paul Lewis on the Victoria list, 17 October 2000.
185. 531.
186. 537.

money but about a feeling which hurt me because I thought it & still think it unjust—but this is another subject. About making use of money you & are I ~~are~~ always[,] have been[,] & must continue to be <u>one</u> if I am to ~~be~~ have any happiness from & with you."[187] Helen replies, "When at Brighton you seemed to speak of this trusting to you [about money] as presumptuous selfish and mean. I was utterly amazed [but] when a day or two afterwards you spoke kindly and lovingly as you had always hitherto done and pressed me to take more and more I felt I must have misunderstood you and whatever it was you thought wrong in me it was not the asking you for money."[188]

Helen claims that she understood that the fight was not about money; nevertheless, when Helen returned to the stage, she took lodging at a third of the price of those she had paid before the holiday and refused to have a seamstress help her. Before Christmas, Helen had played only one part, the lead in *Jane Shore*, a play she had known since her adolescent days. She clearly did not need help with sewing her costumes at this stage of her career. When she transferred to Doncaster, however, she began to work regularly, with a hectic schedule. A seamstress would have been a great help. Harriet is angry at Helen's stubbornness at insisting on poorer lodgings and not having a maid. Harriet may have been right to question Helen's use of money in her pre-Christmas work, but she *did* want Helen to have a safe place to live, and the aid of a servant when needed.

Continued financial dependence on parents is a delicate issue for many young adults. Any suggestion that the young person might be able to conserve is taken as a horrible rebuke, and the response is often to go to the other extreme when one sacrifices even the basics. Harriet reassures Helen repeatedly that she wants her to spend the money as if it were her own.[189] Helen suspects that Harriet is simply indulging her while secretly believing that she is really extravagant. Helen remarks, "I should like very much to <u>know</u> your real opinion and not only to guess at it, but I do not think you will tell it me. Now you will only tell me to spend in every possible way."[190] They finally reconcile when Harriet says gently, "Do not say you were extravagant, you never have been, & if you love me you will spend much

187. 536.
188. M/T LII/60.
189. 551–552, 554.
190. M/T LII/92.

more & be <u>really</u> comfortable, as well as buy not only all you want but all you would like."[191] The topic of money never arises again.

Arriving in Glasgow on 21 January 1857, Helen was welcomed into a warm and well-run theater. She began to see new ways of "making up" and to observe techniques of good actors and actresses.[192] Helen also earned her first salary of £1 per week.[193] She began playing bit parts at a tiny stage in nearby Paisley during the first week in February. Helen got her break when the actress who was to play Lady Capulet fell ill. Helen thenceforth returned to the larger theater in Glasgow and remained employed in small parts there.[194]

Just when Helen should have been happiest with her situation, she indicates some mysterious problem. Helen writes, "Things seem for the first time to have gone unluckily with me here—but I shall talk to my darling when she comes."[195] A few days later, 16 February 1857, Harriet arrived for a visit only to become ill enough that both she and Helen returned to Blackheath. Helen's longest acting job was over.

Harriet tried to give wise counsel to Helen's questions about professional issues regarding her theater work. Should she change theaters if she were not getting enough practice? Should she push for certain parts? Should she take a certain position with its particular pros and cons or choose another with a different set of advantages? Should she take money when she hadn't yet worked? How should she approach the boss? Whatever her advice, Harriet repeatedly reminds Helen that she must judge for herself since she understands the situation better.[196] Harriet insisted that Helen be independent in her judgment. She wanted her daughter to realize that the best course of action depends on assessing many aspects of the context in which the actions occur.

Harriet is perceptive in her advice not to offend managers when Helen quits, since one never knows when a former manager can be useful in the future.[197] Harriet even astutely recognized that a little schmoozing with the

191. 555.
192. M/T LII/97.
193. £1/week was slightly below average for the period. In 1867, the average wage was £1.90, or approximately $37,000 in contemporary currency. So Helen's salary was not inadequate, unless you compare it to her spending habits above. Paul Lewis, Victoria list, 17 October 2000.
194. M/T LII/119.
195. M/T LII/119.
196. 531, 538, 543, 547.
197. 547.

boss's wife cannot hurt.[198] However, some of Harriet's guidance is given with a passive-aggressive twist. She says, "I wish you do as you like best as then at least somebody does as they like."[199] Yet, most of her support of Lily's very risky adventure rings authentic. When Helen acknowledges her failures in *Jane Shore*, Harriet writes as empathetic a response as anyone could wish for: "In the night I lay awake for hours anxious & dispirited from thinking you are perhaps so dearest."[200] As Helen heads for Glasgow after weeks of professional uncertainty, Harriet tries to cheer Helen.

> I cannot tell you how earnestly I wish that the Glasgow engagement may prove all that you hoped & expected. Ah if it depended on me you should succeed to your heart's content. . . . How I wish I could but shield you from every dissapointment. But do not, dear one, be discouraged if all does not turn out as you hoped—I so hope it will, but the sudden engagement seemed almost too good to be true. . . . How can I write dear to make you know how much I love you.[201]

After the mysterious event that Helen records as "unluckiness" in Glasgow,[202] Harriet quickly recognizes the underlying pain of this poignant passage and pours out her support:

> I have been terribly out of spirits all day dearest because I have thought you were so—I would give any thing that you should not be dissapointed there. It makes me perfectly miserable to think of it, you so counted on Glasgow and the Glovers—but do not feel dissapointed dear one—you are tired and overdone. It will take a turn & go better before long no doubt, things always do in such cases, and it is so natural to feel disheartened when one has been excited with expectation. . . . All day I have kept repeating oh my dearest girl you must not, you shall not be dissapointed. . . . There is <u>nothing</u> I would not do to help you, my spirits rise and fall exactly as you are pleased or the contrary. We must remember that we should not have heared so much about the disagreables of the profession even from those in it, if there were not all sorts of dissapointments & annoyances to be expected & these in life

198. 564.
199. 531, cf. also 532.
200. 529.
201. 555; see also 549.
202. M/T LII/119.

never come where one could best bear them, they always hit one on the tenderest parts.[203]

Harriet's reminder that obstacles are inevitable in the professional theater must have helped cheer Helen. There is no hint of finger-wagging or "I-told-you-so's." Harriet wants to give her daughter the strength to bear life's trials with grace. That Helen felt this succor all along is clear when Helen writes: "That you will let me be an actress and still love me that is happiness to me. Ah my darling I feel deeply that while I have such love as yours I can never have any cause to be unhappy. . . . you have done everything possible to obtain [happiness and success] for me and have given me every possible assistance."[204]

In addition to the professional dangers, Harriet worried about Helen's traveling alone,[205] house or theater fires,[206] and her safety walking down dark lanes late at night[207]—all the concerns any mother has about a daughter who leaves home. Given the society in which they lived, the seedy side of the profession Helen chose, and Harriet's very real health concerns, I think her counsel reflects her continued love for her daughter.

Harriet as Friend

Helen left the theater in February 1857 because of Harriet's ill health, though perhaps the mystery "unluckiness" may have also contributed. Lily continued her communication with her mentor, Fanny Stirling. In 1856, Mrs. Stirling did not know Helen's true name,[208] but by 1858 Fanny and Harriet exchanged intimate letters about the theater and the difficult decision about Helen's return to the stage. Harriet became friends with this most unlikely woman, the one who helped her daughter leave home.[209]

This tiny glance of the "girlfriend" Harriet reveals an unexpected side

203. 572–573.
204. M/T LII/98.
205. 581.
206. 559.
207. 535.
208. 569. The earliest extant letter from Fanny to Harriet is 22 September 1856. M/T XXIII/624.
209. Some of Harriet's personal writing may have been shared with Mrs. Stirling. Harriet has a long discussion about female beauty (230–232). She refers to Lily; hence, she is not writing directly to her. The chattiness of her views of women's dress and hair styles seems to parallel her tone in this letter to Mrs. Stirling. Additionally, a passage in which Harriet urges the listener to visit Italy for the first time by recounting her hand being kissed also echoes the style of this letter (234–235).

to her. In a brief letter to Fanny Stirling, Harriet speaks in a voice heard nowhere else in her letters. The gossipy, bantering tone written about a recent play they had attended is worth reading in full. Harriet quips:

> I only mean that we look at things from different points of view. You seem to have a great taste for the ordinary English 'strong calvinistic bias (while I strictly speaking do not even believe in ~~the idea~~ of sin. This you will allow is a ~~wide~~ difference
> [on separate page]
> I thought L^{d} Bali[ ] delicious but was outvoted by ~~Mr Mill & Lily. when voted I stupid~~ I delighted in the elegant young page, wished I c^{d} get him, then the bride sitting in a chaise & the bride's mama & the coming ~~on fast &~~ going back altogether I ~~delight~~ it is full of ~~real~~ fun
>
> tho why I agreed sh^{d} the Turk lady not be a Jewess? It reminded me of the ballad of little Bernard in The ages religeus[e]—where her Lord having found his lady & little Bernard making a faux pas incontinently killed them, orders his servants to bury them together but adds, "but lay my lady on the upper hand, for she comes of the better race" having quenched his honour by killing them there is a touch of natural sentiment in burying them together mitigated however by pride in my lady & 'our' superiority—[210]

Harriet teases Fanny about her "calvinistic bias" and reveals her own lack of belief in sin only to the closest of friends. They were dear friends despite their obvious difference of beliefs. Like her love for John, her affection for Fanny does not require unity of beliefs. Fanny tutored Helen for a job that would take her away from her mother, but Harriet clearly does not dislike her. This letter alone should prove that Harriet did not try to block Helen's career at every turn.

The discussion of the play they had seen is equally revealing. The casualness of the penmanship as well as the flippancy of wanting to "get" the "elegant young page" suggests that her friendship with Mrs. Stirling was completely confidential and familiar. The bawdy tale of Little Bernard certifies that Harriet is far from the frosty controlling *prima dona* of John's biographies. I wish I could have known the author of this letter. How about you?

210. 574.

Harriet as Mother, Again

The second and much shorter series of letters exchanged between Harriet and Lily began 12 October 1858 and ended November of the same year, upon Harriet's death. As the second group commences, Helen is about to assume a position in the theater in Aberdeen while Harriet prepares to leave on a trip to Europe. John had finally retired after more than thirty years of work at India House, so they are free to travel throughout Europe to choose a home in a warmer climate better suited to the health of both of them.

The final series of correspondences from Harriet to Helen records the sad decline of Harriet's health. They begin in Paris and continue through the final two weeks of her life, when she finally dies in Avignon, France. These letters are especially moving because they are *not* more alarming than any of Harriet's other complaints about her health. All of Harriet's letters from 1856–1858, to Helen, report various episodes of numbness, pain, coughing, and so on. Helen must have had no idea that her mother's death loomed just ahead. Harriet's health had long been so precarious that her last attack did not at first seem any more unusual than the many she had survived. Both her acknowledgment of her illness and her downplaying of its seriousness in the final two weeks of her life substantiate the significance of Harriet's earlier reports of health problems. In retrospect Helen had every reason to note every murmuring about a cough or fever that her mother included in her letters. More than anyone, Helen may have recognized the potential hazard inherent in such seemingly trivial announcements. Nevertheless, Harriet's survival through various crises had lulled both of them into believing that her last would just be another in a series of medical emergencies.

Perhaps even more striking than Harriet's constant references to her medical problems is Harriet's desire for privacy. From the beginning, Helen Taylor worked in the theater under the name "Miss Trevor." The practice of using stage names survives today, but in the Victorian theater the desire for anonymity went beyond the desire for a more noteworthy marquee. Proper Victorian young women were not to appear regularly in professional theater productions. In order to maintain Helen's anonymity, Harriet instructed her to mail her letters at post offices not at a distance from residence and to direct some letters to John at work so that servants would not know Helen's exact location. Algernon, who stayed with Helen

for a short period in 1856, aroused his mother's anger when he returned home with his suitcases displaying the travel stamps that would indicate to servants and other observers where he had traveled.[211] Before Harriet visited Helen, her letters discussed what Helen should tell the theater manager[212] and what to tell the landlady about her mother's identity.[213] Not only are these measures designed to protect Helen's reputation, but they are also intended to keep the Hardy and Mill family members from learning of Helen's work in the theater.

In the second set of letters, Harriet worries incessantly about her own privacy and John's reputation. As a precaution against these correspondences falling into the wrong hands, Harriet regularly refers to John as "he" or at most "Mr. M." On their trip to France, Harriet went even further in trying to protect herself and John from gossip by asking Helen to check for press coverage of their journey,[214] and she invented excuses to avoid traveling with governmental officials who knew John.[215] Harriet even objected to writing the French "Angleterre" as part of the address in her letter to Helen because "it makes [the envelop] perhaps more observable."[216] Although she says in the same letter, "I avoided the Merivales quite as much because it was a bore to get among a large party of staring women, as on account of any thing they might think," she wrote on the inside of the envelope flap, "I think it would be better to address from Scotland the name without the initials."[217] Furthermore, Harriet assures Helen in the next letter that "no one has seen or heared one word of any of your letters, nor will," and in a final note to Helen, she records her hiding place of the key that unlocks the box of her letters.[218] Whether her illness during the last two weeks of her life caused this paranoia or exacerbated it is unknown.

Historians have discovered what lucky mothers and daughters already know. "At the 'heart' of the female world, . . . lay 'an intimate mother-daughter relationship,' with 'closeness and mutual emotional dependency,'

211. 532.
212. 569.
213. 570.
214. M/T LIII(i)/1.
215. 576.
216. 582.
217. 581.
218. 587.

rather than 'that mother-daughter hostility today considered almost inevitable to an adolescent's struggle for autonomy.' "[219] As in many non-western cultures throughout history, Victorian women did not assume that rebellion against one's mother was a prerequisite to adulthood. Perhaps because so many were cut off from professional achievement in the "world," women focused on private relationships.[220] The extravagance of their language in calling each other "darling" and "dearest" seems odd, even sappy, now. Many who have written about Harriet and Helen have failed to see that their closeness was as typical as the language that expressed their relationship. However, they flaunted the typical pattern of mothers teaching daughters "to fit in."[221] Unlike most mothers, Harriet helped Helen find a life outside marriage and the typical expectations of women.

In order to evaluate Harriet as a mother to her daughter, we need to look at the assumptions many make about this misunderstood relationship. Daughters who are too dependent on their mothers are considered emotionally immature. They have failed to separate and thus have failed to "grow up." Mothers are blamed for smothering their daughters and for not encouraging their independence. Women learn the message that mothering is so dangerous, so lacking in healthy nurturance, that motherless daughters are the only role models of women able to reach true adulthood (as exemplified by the fiction of Virginia Woolf, Charlotte Brontë, and George Eliot).[222] According to Vivien Nice in *Mothers and Daughters: The Distortion of a Relationship,* all of these unhealthy attitudes about mothers and daughters are advanced by patriarchal cultures that fear the potential power of the mother–daughter bond. How many times has a husband accused a wife of needing to grow up because she calls her mother so often? Patriarchal societies want girls trained by their mothers to be empathetic and caring, but they are condemned as "mama's girls" unless that caring shifts to supporting their husband's, not their mother's, emotional needs.[223]

Nice offers an alternative model of mothers and daughters. Instead of

219. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, quoted in Blodgett, 230.
220. Blodgett, 223.
221. Blodgett, 231.
222. Vivien E. Nice, *Mothers and Daughters: The Distortion of a Relationship* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), 9, 74, 78.
223. Nice, 12.

training daughters to be independent and separate from mothers (and others), real emotional maturity is reached through interdependency and "differentiation through attachments."[224] Being grown up does not mean being psychologically on one's own, but rather being empathetic and caring for others as well as being cared for by those we love. As mothers and daughters transform one another, they learn that *we-ness* is at the core of the good life. Mothers and daughters are not melted into an undifferentiated being, but recognize that ambivalence is inevitable in any close relationship.

Self-awareness of these complicated feelings is required for maturity. A mother both wants to hold onto and push away her daughter. Likewise, a daughter is both liberated and suffocated by parts of her alliance with her mama.[225] Danger occurs when this ambivalence is unacknowledged. When a daughter is never allowed to see that her mother has a life beyond mothering, and that there are aspects of mothering she doesn't like, the daughter feels what Irigaray vividly describes here: "What I wanted from you, Mother, was this: that in giving me life, you still remain alive."[226] When a mother can use her power of nurturing not to control but to teach creativity and to heal, both daughter and mother are reconstructed. Both daughter and mother can use this power reciprocally. A daughter mothers her mother as well as vice versa.[227] A daughter's questions can rouse her mother, just as a mother can inspire her child's thoughts.

Children who have a strong sense of attachment are those best able to distinguish themselves. The sense of self is often strongest in those who are connected to and care for others.[228] Instead of seeing the training of girls to be caregivers as demeaning or immature, the ideal of the completely independent—even solipsistic—adult is what needs revision.

Daughters learn physical and emotional caring. Since men usually do less housework, daughters often join their mothers at an early age in "helping." [229] Physical support of housekeeping is not the only lesson they learn. Subordinates know a great deal more about those who dominate them

224. Nice, 120, 129.
225. Nice, 11.
226. Luce Irigaray, "And the One Doesn't Stir," quoted in Eléanor H. Kuykendall, "Toward an Ethic of Nurturance: Luce Irigaray on Mothering and Power," in *Mothering: Essays in Feminist Theory,* ed. Joyce Trebilcot (Totowa, N.J.: Rowman & Allanheld, 1983), 267.
227. Kuykendall, 264.
228. Nice, 63.
229. Nice, 44.

than the other way around. They *must* to survive. Subjugated groups learn how to please by learning to "[read] many small signals, both verbal and non-verbal."[230] In the same way, women's intuition, i.e., women's emotional intelligence, is passed along to their daughters. The wisdom and empathy taught to daughters is worth celebrating. "Without empathy, there is no intimacy, no real attainment of an appreciation of the paradox of separateness within connection."[231] Helen grew up seeing Harriet's nurturance of John's physical, emotional, and intellectual life. Thus, Helen learned the intimate connection whose tensions and sustenance leads to the best life for humans. Harriet had the wisdom to practice this emotional comradeship with her daughter was well as with her husband.

The underbelly of a typical mother–daughter attachment is that men's needs come first. If a daughter sees her mother caring for the needs of the man in the house, and if she rarely sees *him* attending to his wife's needs, she often begins to mother her own mother. If her mother does not care for her daughter as well as accept her daughter's attention, the inequality in the mother's relationship with her partner is passed to her daughter. The keys to break through this unhealthy cycle are mutuality and reciprocity. Spouses and parents and children all need to care for each other as well as to care about each other. To say you care *about* someone you never care *for* is to spout hollow words. To care for someone you do not care about is work that should be compensated for, and not the dynamics of a loving family.

Harriet has been condemned for Helen's failure to become independent of her mother. Helen is sneered at for being a "handmaiden" to her mother. Harriet is a bad mother, since "Helen was kept always at her mother's side."[232] Poor Helen was so warped by her overbearing mother that she never married. Or so the story goes.

Helen's letters to Harriet offer a portrait of a relationship that was closer to interdependency and "differentiation through attachment" than of a mother being excessively needy and emotionally damaging. They fought and made up. They suffered each other's oversensitive moments and forgave one another. Harriet supported her daughter's decision to enter a profession that required the ultimate in independence. Harriet probably didn't

230. Jean Baker Miller, quoted in Nice, 44.
231. Jordan and Surrey, quoted in Nice, 66.
232. Packe, 327, 329.

like Helen's choice, but her plea that "there is nothing I would not do to help you, my spirits rise and fall exactly as you are pleased or the contrary" could not be more sympathetic and encouraging. Harriet was certainly not mothered as she should have been, and John needed more emotional support than he gave, so Harriet erred on the side of holding Lily close and appreciating Lily's care of her. But, Harriet also set Helen free to earn a salary for doing what she loved. She was free not to marry if she found no one to suit her, free to become the writer and thinker she became.

On the whole, Harriet's maternal role is played with much love and support. It is often dangerous to extrapolate the quality of parenting from the character of the grown child, but Harriet's values seem reflected in Helen's life. Helen Taylor matured into an outspoken feminist, accomplished writer, and faithful supporter of John. The one person who knew Harriet most intimately, her daughter Helen, never abandoned the view of her mother as a wise and caring woman.

Helen's response to her mother's death is genuine and heartbreaking. Helen writes her brother Haji: "O dear Haji it is all over but I too was too late too late too late."[233] She later whimpers, "It seems to me I can never sign Lily any more. I was her Lily—now I no longer anybody or anything but a miserable wretch."[234] Helen and Haji's grief fills their letters and their hearts.

After Harriet's death, Helen returned to live with her stepfather and never resumed her career in the theater. The letters from her mother may have been good preparation for the longest running role Helen would play, the intellectual sparing partner, confidant, and practical caretaker of John her mother had assumed.

From 1840 until her death eighteen years later, Harriet sang in a series of metaphorical ensembles that can only be described as operatic. The keen of death, the wail of betrayal and tragedy, the coo of mother's support and the sigh of mature passion converge to form the story of Harriet's final decades. Harriet's strength and sadness, anger and care reverberate throughout these harmonies.

233. M/T XXIV/708.
234. M/T XXVI/1053.

3 Joint Work

> If each person involved in the [philosophical] enterprise is no longer in the position of being the subject of the enterprise but in that of being a worker, engaged in and committed to an enterprise which is seen from the outset as collective, it seems to me that the relationship to knowledge—and to gaps in knowledge—can be transformed.[1]

The derogatory assessments of Harriet's character cited at the beginning of the Prelude parallel comments that insist that however Harriet "helped" John in his intellectual work, her effort *did not, did not, did not,* amount to co-authorship. Again, a list is instructive.

- John Robson writes, "The implication is strong that . . . *Mill* wrote a draft, and then went through it with *Harriet;* the process may have been repeated; but eventually the final manuscript emerged, again *composed in full* by Mill. [This position is] supported by the *common experience of the way husband and wife collaborate.*"[2] [emphasis added]
- Jack Stillinger comments, "It is reasonably clear in fact that *Harriet* was no originator of ideas, however much she may have aided *Mill* by *ordinary wifely discussion* and debate. . . . It is *unfortunate that Mill did not simply thank his wife for encouragement, perhaps also for transcribing a manuscript or making an index, and let it go at that.*"[3] [emphasis added]
- Jonathan Loesberg adds, "The evidence shows her participation to be only of the most tangential kind, *hardly amounting to anything that*

1. Michèle Le Dœuff, "Women and Philosophy," in *French Feminist Thought,* ed. Toril Moi (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987), 207.

2. John Robson, "Harriet Taylor and John Stuart Mill: Artist and Scientist," *Queen's Quarterly* 73 (1966): 175.

3. Jack Stillinger, Introduction to John Stuart Mill, *Autobiography* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1969), xvii, xix. Stillinger completely reverses this view in "Who Wrote J. S. Mill's Autobiography?" *Victorian Studies: A Journal of the Humanities, Arts and Sciences* 27, no. 1 (1983): 7–23.

might be reasonably called joint authorship. . . . [H]er contributions were probably only in the direction of *minor stylistic emendation.*"[4]

These judgments are as misguided as are those that call Harriet a sniping, frigid woman. Harriet and John worked together from the commencement of their relationship. Beginning with the *Principles of Political Economy,* their collaboration tended more and more toward co-authorship. Their work, like their lives, was a duet.

Why Their Collaboration Has Been Discounted

Harriet and John repeatedly said that they wrote with each other. Very few commentators in the last one hundred fifty years have believed them. From Courtney in the 1880s to contemporary historians, the general judgment has been the one expressed by H. O. Pappe: There "is no reason for elevating [Harriet's] *secondary contribution* to a primary influence in *our* intellectual heritage"[5] [emphasis added]. The reasons for this assessment of Harriet's work are complicated.[6]

One reason is the historical disagreements between Philosophical Radicals (John's heritage) and Unitarian Radicals (Harriet's heritage). Scholars who adhere to the former group usually are most vehement about discounting Harriet.[7] The sexism of historians of philosophers cannot be ignored either. The aggressive *ad feminem* attacks on Harriet noted in the Prelude reveal the antipathy that John's biographers still have toward curious, assertive women who stand up for women's equality.

However, the problem may be much larger than Harriet and John, and much larger than determining which group of Victorians nurtured them. The rejection of Harriet and John's combined work may be part of a problem philosophers have with recognizing collaboration. This problem can be traced back to Plato.

4. Jonathan Loesberg, *Fictions of Consciousness: Mill, Newman, and the Reading of Victorian Prose* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1986), 48–49.

5. H. O. Pappe, *John Stuart Mill and the Harriet Taylor Myth* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1960), 48.

6. An extensive academic discussion of this question can be found in my "'The Lot of Gifted Ladies Is Hard': A Study of Harriet Taylor Mill Criticism," *Hypatia* 9, no. 3 (summer 1994): 132–162. This piece also appears in *Hypatia's Daughters: Fifteen Hundred Years of Women Philosophers,* ed. Linda Lopez McAlister (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 214–245.

7. John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor Mill, *Essays on Sex Equality,* ed. and intro. Alice S. Rossi (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 33–34.

History of Philosophy

Socrates teaches dialogue as the method for all of us to get closer to the truth. We must struggle together to discover the contradictions and falsehoods that point away from the truth. Education and ideas are social events, with the community taking ownership of the nuggets of truth whenever they are discovered. Everyone who lacks knowledge, but loves it, and everyone who offers herself up to the collaborative enterprise of dialogue is a philosopher.

By the time Plato wrote *The Symposium,* this ideal of philosophy as a joint undertaking had been replaced by a very different myth. When noting how one person initiated an idea, Plato describes a person who has "been pregnant with virtue from an early age and [who has] never had a partner, . . . longs to procreate and give birth, and so he . . . goes around searching for beauty, so that he can give birth there, since he'll never do it in an unattractive medium."[8] The crucial bit is he has "never had a partner." *His* pregnancy (one can only smile) requires only one parent. He only needs an attractive midwife to ease the pain of delivery. After one person alone creates a tidbit of knowledge, he can then educate others. Plato continues:

> Since he's pregnant, . . . he's particularly pleased if he comes across a mind which is attractive, upright, and gifted at the same time. This is a person he immediately finds he can talk fluently to about virtue and about what qualities and practices it takes for a man to be good. In short, he takes on this person's education.[9]

Hmmmm. The pregnant guy needs an attractive attendant whom he can educate while he delivers his long hidden (but fully developed) educational babies. This scenario sounds suspiciously familiar. The beautiful mid-WIFE is merely catalyst, support, comfort, succor, or sounding board. For all the midwife's loving attention to *his* pregnancy, *she* is awarded the fruits of his labor in the form of an education.

Plato is quite explicit about the emotional bond shared by the pregnant teacher and his "attractive medium." The one who births the ideas is en-

8. Plato. *Symposium,* trans. Robin Waterfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 209b.
9. Plato, 209b–c

thralled by the one who stood by faithfully while his crowning achievement issued into the world.[10] The parent is attentive to the one who helps his philosophical system develop, but the sole source of the ideas and the mere support of that person are never confused.

The Eumenides established the biology of one parenthood for the Greeks. Recall the argument asserting that the "mother is merely the incubator," which persuaded Athena and the rest of Western civilization to think the father is the only true parent until an embarrassingly short time ago. Plato merely states the philosophical equivalent to this biological silliness.

I believe that this myth of the one parent may account for the historical evaluation of Harriet and many other assessments and practices in the history of philosophy. Plato's "one parent myth" is so entrenched in this discipline that we have a difficult time imagining joint thinking, multiple creation, or collaborative writing.[11] Philosophers continue, on the one hand, to believe that one person can give birth to a thought. On the other hand, Harriet and John believed philosophy often required at least two parents. In letters, forwards, dedications, autobiographies, and drafts, they naturally refer to "our" ideas and the work "we" did. Throughout the history of philosophy, no one has quite believed what they were saying. Historians of philosophy have assumed a single-parent household for every philosophical child. The really obtuse critics believe Harriet had nothing to do with HIS ideas, while more "sympathetic" historians acknowledge her role as Plato's "attractive medium" assisting John's delivery of his mental offspring.

However, the work of Harriet and John can serve as an example of an alternative model of philosophical production. Harriet and John's cooperative production demonstrates how future philosophy might turn aside from Plato's myth to see philosophy rather as "plural work."[12] Their greatest contribution to philosophy may be not in what they said but in their method of producing philosophical texts.

10. Plato, 209c

11. Stewart Justman is disgusted with John's claim that Harriet is the "begetter" of John's ideas. Justman asks incredulously, "Can a woman beget? . . . What is the relation of pen to penis?" For Justman in 1991, "authorship stands as the pure example of womanless birth." *The Hidden Text of Mill's Liberty* (Savage, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 1991), 132–133.

12. Le Dœuff, 208.

History of Authorship

Collaborative. Joint. Combined. Co-authored. When does a piece of writing gain these titles? Think about the following: an advertisement for a philosophical journal, an article in that journal, a contract for the sale of a house, an Associated Press news release, a poem, a novel, instructions for the use of a DVD, a paper for Philosophy 101, a policy and procedures manual. Only some of these written pieces have "authors." We need to explore "what kind of relationship between authors and texts . . . the term *authorship* impl[ies]."[13] This is the question left unanswered in the critiques of Harriet's collaboration with John.

The reasons for claiming sole authorship when work is collaborative easily come to mind: fame, fortune, tenure, promotion. Why someone would claim co-authorship when the work is solo is less obvious. Critics use the attacks mentioned at the beginning of this book to answer that question. The story goes something like this: Harriet clawed her way into John's heart and then psychologically pistol-whipped him into claiming she was the co-author of some of his work. Furthermore, none of the manuscripts are in her handwriting, so that "proves" that she did not write the texts.

Do you suppose Stephen Hawking is not the author of his books because he did not physically produce the text?

Part of the problem of where on the continuum from solo to collaborative to co-authorship a piece should be identified is usually the result of verbal debates, suggestions, additions, creations, and editings that occur in private. There is no physical record of the musings and questions that lead to arguments that someone then writes into the text. No smoking guns reveal how half thoughts become whole during a conversation. In addition, because few academics are familiar with the firsthand experience of collaborative writing, they do not understand the silliness of asking whose ideas are whose when an essay is jointly produced. The only legitimate analysis of any common writing project must be made by the participants.

Yet another problem arises when we consider Harriet and John's work.

13. Lisa Ede and Andrea Lunsford, *Singular Texts/Plural Authors: Perspectives on Collaborative Writing* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1990), 72.

Even if we could clearly answer the question about what constitutes authorship for the twenty-first century, we would still need to recognize that the concept has changed over time. Multiple writers working on a single text was an acceptable, indeed ordinary, way of writing during the medieval period. If any author was named, it was usually the person who copied the text.[14] During the Early Modern period, as printing became the norm, the possibility of making money from writing offered an incentive for writers to claim authorship and its accompanying financial reward.[15] Furthermore, the developing view of the individual self as the "knower," the foundation of all knowledge, provided the philosophical support for the idea of, as Margaret Atwood describes it, "a kind of spider, spinning out his entire work from within. This view depends on a solipsism, the idea that we are all self-enclosed monads, with an inside and an outside, and that nothing from the outside ever gets in."[16]

The history of "authorship" becomes intertwined with the history of copyright laws. Two hundred years of squabbling about copyright are not entirely due to bureaucratic ineptitude but to a questioning of the idea, which most modern writers and scholars now assume as commonsensical, of the relationship between author and text. Those who pushed for copyright protection did so because they wanted to guarantee their income in the new profession of living by the pen. Those who opposed the new laws argued that the notion of "intellectual property" on which the new laws would be based was an oxymoron.

Fichte and the English Romantics argued for an almost complete identification of the author and text. Fichte, for example, wrote that to steal the form of a writer's ideas was to steal the writer's self.[17] This romantic view of the genius writer virtually eliminated the possibility of coauthorship of a text. This view of the writer also led directly to critics

14. Ede and Lunsford, 76. John Gardner points out both the habits of medieval writers as well as their contribution to his own style of writing: "If I have any doubts about what a character would say or what a room would look like, I ask my wife. Perhaps I should have used 'John and Joan Gardner' all along; I may do this in the future. But in modern times such work is regarded as not really art. The notion that art is an individual and unique vision is a very unmedieval and unclassical view. In the Middle Ages it was very common to have several people work on one thing: the thirteenth century Vulgate cycle of Arthurian romances had hundreds of writers. I feel comfortable with this approach, but I haven't felt comfortable telling people it's what I do. As I get more and more into the medieval mode, I'll probably admit how many writers I have."

15. Ede and Lunsford, 81.

16. Margaret Atwood, *Second Words: Selected Critical Prose,* in Ede and Lundsford, 69.

17. Ede and Lunsford, 85.

mixing criticism of author and text.[18] This style of criticism has been thoroughly critiqued in recent years by Roland Barthes, Foucault, Marxists, feminists, and others.[19]

Where do Harriet and John fit into this history? Their love of Socrates, their admiration for cooperative production, and their commitment to the idea best expressed in *On Liberty* that truth must be approached together encouraged Harriet and John to recognize that their work was shared. The biographical and historical evidence supports the conclusion that they practiced their beliefs. However, their acknowledgment of their collaboration grew throughout their association.

Harriet's and John's Collaboration with Others

Both Harriet and John worked with others before and after they met. As noted in Chapter 1, Harriet's discussions of marriage, divorce, and the education of women were clearly used by William Bridges Adams and William Fox for anonymous articles in *The Monthly Repository.*[20] Fox's key to the anonymous writing in the journal nevertheless identifies himself and Adams as singular authors, and he thus ignores Harriet's contribution.[21] Here, as elsewhere, the historical account silences Harriet's voice. No record remains to verify whether their joint work was privately acknowledged by the participants at the time or whether Harriet's work was used without permission.

Just as Harriet shared the work of writing with others before collaborating with John, so did John experiment with co-authorship. In a letter

18. "The Victorians' near adulation of authors such as Dickens, Scott, and Thackeray undoubtedly helped to establish what has come to be called the man-and-his-work tradition of literary criticism—a critical program that depends in essential ways on the identification of author and text. This identification is so complete, in fact that the distinction between author and text almost collapses"; Ede and Lunsford, 86.

19. Ede and Lunsford, 88–89. Although contemporary writers are breaking the bounds of the one-text-one-author assumptions, the old economic and prestige award system still operates to restrict collaborative efforts or to suppress recognition of collaboration when it does occur. Publishers still insist that co-authored works result in fewer sales and persons who are more famous are credited with the editorship (rather than the person who actually does most of the work) again because their fame makes the book more marketable.

20. F. A. Hayek, *John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor: Their Friendship and Subsequent Marriage* (New York: Augustus M. Kelley, 1951), 28–29. Hayek mentions the possibility of Harriet being the source of Fox's and Adams's articles, but he does not focus on the possibility that this early collaboration became a pattern with Harriet.

21. Francis E. Mineka, *The Dissidence of Dissent: The Monthly Repository, 1806–1838* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944), 401–402, 406–410.

to John Sterling in 1831, he described a joint project with his friend George Graham:

> I have just put the finishing hand to my part of a work on Political Economy, which Graham & I are writing jointly: our object is to clear up some points which have been left doubtful, to correct some which we consider to be wrong, & to shew what the science is & how it should be studied. I have written five essays; four on detached questions & one on the science itself. Graham is to write five more on the same subjects: we are then to compare notes, throw our ideas into a common stock, talk over all disputed points till we agree (which between us two, we know by experience to be by no means an indefinite postponement) & then one of us is to write a book out of the materials. Graham is to add a sixth essay on a very important part of the subject which is above my reach, & which I am only to criticize when it is done.[22]

This work was never completed. However, John's careful description of their division of work and the assumption of collaborative writing are important bits of evidence that show how he and Harriet might have collaborated.

Furthermore, in his handwritten bibliography, John notes other times he collaborated, from "augment[ing] or complet[ing] Bentham's narrative" to having his original text altered by the Board of Control.[23] In the *Autobiography,* John points out two further types of collaboration. He acknowledges the improvement to his *System of Logic* derived from the editorial suggestions of Alexander Bain.[24] John also attests to contributions to the *Subjection of Women* made by Helen: "As ultimately published it was enriched with some important ideas of my daughter's, and passages of her

22. CW: XII, 79.

23. Ney MacMinn, J. R. Hainds, and James McNab McCrimmon, eds., *Bibliography of the Published Writings of John Stuart Mill* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1945). Of one article he says, "much altered by Board of Control" (87); of another he says, "of this I was partly the author and partly the Editor, the facts being furnished by the departments of the India House" (90). He also lists his contribution to Bentham's *Rationale of Judicial Evidence* as "The Preface, Additions and Editorial Notes" (8).

24. A "great number of additional examples and illustrations from science; many of which, as well as some detached remarks of his own in confirmation of my logical views, I inserted nearly in [Bain's] own words" (CW: I, 255). Beverly G. Merrick notes that "no critic has said Mill erred when he asserts Carlyle helped him think better" but they regularly question Mill's comments about Harriet's collaboration. "A Bill of Rights on Collaborative Authorship: Harriet Hardy and John Stuart Mill Controvert Ideas of Rights and Liberty," Association of Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, National Conference (1991), 42.

writing."[25] These are all the words of a man careful to give credit where it is due, not of a henpecked husband or "besotted" lover trying only to appease a pretentious lover or wife, as John is so often portrayed. He both takes credit when the writing is his own and generally gives credit when authorship is joint.

Evidence of Collaboration with Each Other

Harriet and John's intimate working relationship began early in their friendship. Eliza Flower wrote a letter to Harriet demonstrating that Harriet and John's collaboration probably began as early as June 1831, the first year of their acquaintance. Eliza writes, for example, "Did you or Mill do it?"[26] Eliza incorrectly believed they had both worked on a piece that appeared in a journal, but it is the *assumption* behind the question that is important. Eliza speculates they are working together and that their views are so close that she cannot sort out who the author is.

As shown in Chapter 1, ideas in Harriet's writing on Bentham and utilitarianism, conformity, proverbs, and religion appear in John's writing between one and twenty-five years after Harriet composed drafts of the ideas. These contributions to what is known as John's work are not specifically acknowledged either in private or public documents; neither are Harriet's minor additions to the *Logic*.[27] Given John's careful attribution of their later work as joint, I surmise that John may not have acknowledged

25. CW: I, 265.

26. M/T XXVII/32.

27. John asserts in the *Autobiography* that he wrote the *Logic* with only minor help with "matters of composition" from Harriet. However, several ideas found in the final book of *A System of Logic* are similar to ideas Harriet wrote in the 1830s.

Both suggest that humanity's progress depends on "the study of the mind of others" (as Harriet put it, 141) or "the laws of the formation of character" as John writes, CW: VIII, 865. This ethnology, or science of character, is not like other sciences because as Harriet said a decade earlier, "The science of morals should rather be called an art: . . . for every one may at least show truly their own page in the volume of human history, and be willing to allow that no two pages of it are alike" (141). Both Harriet and John recognize the possibility of some wide universal rules, but because of individual differences, the general rules must be arrived at only after exhaustive study of unique situations (CW: VIII, 866). Furthermore, the rules thereby deduced must remain "provisional" because science was concerned with general cases and the most ordinary ones, but it cannot relieve us of our responsibility to review the specific case at hand.

The point about science and art's contributions to moral rules is a very tiny point at the end of a very long book. I am not suggesting that Harriet co-authored the *Logic*. I am arguing that John, in this case, may have *under*stated Harriet's contribution. Harriet's contribution to this idea is clearly more than a "matter of composition."

Harriet's addition to the work completed in the 1830s and 1840s because she was hesitant to publicize her intimacy with John during the early years of their relationship.[28]

Except for the oversights just mentioned, Harriet and John noted both publicly and privately when their work was collaborative. It is clear from the intimate letters of Harriet and John, as well as from Harriet's letters to Taylor and Eliza Flower, that Harriet and John worked closely together on many projects. Unfortunately, Harriet destroyed most of her letters just prior to her death, and hence we have more evidence of their collaboration in John's voice than in Harriet's. However, John's letters ask advice and thank Harriet for editing, writing, and discussing, as well as for contributing ideas.[29]

Still other evidence for their co-authorship appears in John's *Autobiography.* He says repeatedly that Harriet collaborated in much of his work, from *Principles of Political Economy* until *On Liberty.* Listen to these passages:

> It was at the period of my mental progress which I have now reached that I formed the friendship which has been the honour and chief blessing of my existence, as well as *the source of a great part of all that I have attempted to do,* or hope to effect hereafter, for human improvement. . . . I have often received praise, which in my own right I only partially deserve, for the greater practicality which is supposed to be found in my writings, compared with those of most thinkers who have been equally addicted to large generalizations. *The writings in which this quality has been observed, were not the work of one mind, but of the fusion of two,* one of them as preeminently practical in its judgments and perceptions of things present, as it was high and bold in its anticipations for a remote futurity."[30] [Emphasis added]

28. However, in September 1833 and February 1834, John sent drafts of articles, one on poetry and one on tithes, to Harriet for final corrections. She was to submit them to *The Monthly Repository* when she was finally satisfied with them. John indicated in letters to William Fox that the pieces were Harriet's or co-authored, although they continue to be listed as John's writing alone. (Chapter 1 gives more details. See the entries and footnotes for 8 September 1833 and 24 February 1834.)

29. CW: III, Appendix G, contains all of John's letters to Harriet about the revisions of the *PPE.* It is a good source for understanding their working habits. Letters cited in this paragraph can be found in that appendix, according to dates. The detailed evidence of all the letters is found in my essay, "Harriet Taylor Mill's Collaboration with John Stuart Mill," in *Interruptions: The Voices of Women Philosophers,* ed. Cecile Tougas and Sara Ebenreck (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000), 155–166.

30. CW: I, 193, 197.

John thus does not thank Harriet merely for vague moral support or merely for her inspiration. He specifically thanks her for her contribution to the ideas and the *writing* published in his name alone, but he makes it clear that the writing was actually the result of "the fusion of two" minds working together.

He describes her contributions to individual texts, e.g., *Principles of Political Economy.*

> Up to this time I have spoken of my writings and opinions in the first-person singular because the writings, though (after we became intimate) mostly revised by her, and freed by her judgment from much that was faulty, as well as enriched by her suggestions, were not, like the subsequent ones, largely and in their most important features the direct product of her own mind.[31]

Notice that John distinguishes the revisions and expansions of earlier collaborations from the direct contribution of her ideas in texts from the *Principles of Political Economy* to *On Liberty.* And John honestly uses the plural *we* and *us* and *our* to describe the *Principles of Political Economy.*[32]

Harriet's contribution does not end with the *Principles of Political Economy.* Her ideas are most evident in *On Liberty,* according to John.

> The *Liberty* was more directly and literally our joint production than anything else which bears my name, for there was not a sentence of it that was not several times gone through by us together, turned over in many ways, and carefully weeded of any faults, either in thought or expression, that we detected in it. It is in consequence of this that, . . . it far surpasses, as a mere specimen of composition, anything which has proceeded from me either before or since. With regard to the thoughts, it is difficult to identify any particular part or element as being more hers than all the rest. The whole mode of thinking of which the book was the expression, was emphatically hers.[33]

The Dedication of *On Liberty* continues the recognition:

31. CW: I, early draft, 234.

32. For example, "*We* were now much less democrats than I had been, because so long as education continues to be so wretchedly imperfect, *we* dreaded the ignorance and especially the selfishness and brutality of the mass: but *our* ideal of ultimate improvement went far beyond Democracy, and would class *us* decidedly under the general designation of Socialists" [emphasis added]. CW: I, 239.

33. CW: I, 257, 259.

> To the beloved and deplored memory of her who was the inspirer, and in part the author, of all that is best in my writings— . . . Like all that I have written for many years, it belongs as much to her as to me; but the work as it stands has had, in a very insufficient degree, the inestimable advantage of her revision; some of the most important portions having been reserved for a more careful re-examination, which they are now never destined to receive. . . . [34]

This dedication, written shortly after Harriet died, was John's first public proclamation of her contribution to their work. This dedication, like all his statements about his collaboration, was brushed aside by historians of philosophy as if it were sentimental blather, devoid of fact.[35] The details of their collaboration are so carefully delineated, however, that they are impossible to ignore.

The conclusion that they collaborated is based on not only these general statements, but also on a detailed look at Harriet's contributions that appeared in John's name from *Principles of Political Economy* through the *Autobiography.*

Collaboration on Principles of Political Economy

In 1846, Harriet and John began openly to co-author texts, beginning with newspaper articles and some sections of the massive *Principles of Political Economy.* Harriet's letters in early 1848 to Taylor told of her work on this manuscript with John. While working on *Principles of Political Economy,* Harriet wrote to her husband:

> I do certainly look more like a ghost [than] a living person, but I dare say I shall soon recover some better looks when we get to Brighton. I think I shall not be able to go before the end of next week being just now much occupied with the book [*Principles of Political Economy*].[36]

34. CW: 18, 216.

35. Two historians of philosophy have noted limited similarities in the writing of Harriet and John's later published work. Two commentators, Albert Levi and Ann Robson, have noted similarities between certain passages in works designated solely as John's and passages in Harriet's letter to John. Albert William Levi, "The Writing of Mill's *Autobiography,*" *Ethics* 61 (1951): 284–296, esp. 292. Professor Ann Robson also notes a similarity of language in a newspaper piece on "enlightened infidelity" about religious infidelity "intended for G. J. Holyoake's *Reasoner* but not published. Some of the phrasing suggests Harriet Taylor's prompting" (CW: XXII, lxxxiv, fn. 125).

36. 471.

> I am so taken up with the Book which is near the last & has constantly something to be seen to about binding &c that I could not leave town before the beginning of April if even then.[37]
>
> The book on The Principles of Political Economy which has been the work of all this winter is now nearly ready & will be published in ten days.[38]

Harriet helped make the practical and aesthetic decisions about the book, as well as co-writing the content.[39] The original manuscript indicated that Harriet made pencilled changes—most accepted, but some rejected by John.[40]

Principles of Political Economy was recognized as the first book of its kind to attend to women's economic concerns and to view women as autonomous agents.[41] For the first time, a book considered the question of why women's wages are lower than men's.[42] The authors attacked Adam Smith's belief in the division of labor. The efficiency of repetitive work that Smith argued for was based on men's industrial labor, not on women's work experiences. Harriet and John countered that due to customary training, not to natural ability, women were able and even delighted to move rapidly from one type of work to another. Harriet and John noted that "Women are usually (at least in their present social circumstances) of far greater versatility than men. . . . There are few women who would not reject the idea that work is made vigorous by being protracted, and is inefficient for some time after changing to a new thing."[43] Only by ignoring women's experience do theorists make such errors. Unfortunately, scientists and medical researchers did not learn until well into the twentieth century that looking only at men's experiences leads to skewed results.

In his *Autobiography,* John declared Chapter VII of Book IV of the *Prin-*

37. 473–474.
38. 472.
39. See p. 105 above.
40. Joseph Hamburger, introduction to *Essays on England, Ireland, and the Empire,* ed. John M. Robson, vol. 6 of *Collected Works of John Stuart Mill* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), lx, 500–503.
41. Michèle A. Pujol, *Feminism and Anti-Feminism in Early Economic Thought* (Brookfield, Vt.: E. Elgar, 1992), 24. Many of the points I make here are also made by Pujol.
42. CW: II, 394–96.
43. CW: II, 127.

ciples of Political Economy to be written primarily by Harriet. John explains:

> The first of my books in which [Harriet's] share was conspicuous was the *Principles of Political Economy*. . . . The chapter of the *Political Economy* which has had a greater influence on opinion than all the rest, that on 'the Probable Future of the Labouring Classes,' is entirely due to her: in the first draft of the book, that chapter did not exist. [Harriet] pointed out the need of such a chapter, and the extreme imperfection of the book without it: she was the cause of my writing it; and the more general part of the chapter, the statement and discussion of the two opposite theories respecting the proper condition of the labouring classes, was wholly an exposition of her thoughts, often in words taken from her own lips.[44]

The chapter to which John refers is such a distinctive part of this thousand-page book that the Christian Socialists, among others, reprinted it as a separate tract.[45] The chapter's clear argument against the paternalism of the upper classes and the need for working classes to become more independent struck a chord with others who were interested in socialism.

"On the Probable Future of the Labouring Classes" focuses on the working class, but Harriet argued that the name *labourers* was only a description of current practice. If the world were as it should be, everyone would be a labourer since everyone would "labor" except those who were disabled or retired.[46] Harriet crisply pointed out that a non-laboring class would not exist in an ideal world. However, in the Victorian world, there were two theories of how those in power should treat labourers: the theory of dependence and the theory of self-dependence.

The theory of dependence, essentially a patronizing one, suggested that higher classes of men believed they should think for the subordinated class or gender. The ruling class assumed things "should be regulated *for* [the oppressed group], not *by* them."[47] According to this view, the higher classes would protect and provide for the labouring class while the laborers re-

44. CW: I, 255.
45. Packe, 311.
46. Harriet's anger at her brother Edward, who on becoming the eldest surviving son in 1840 also became a cigar-smoking laggard, may have inspired the tone on this section.
47. 293.

spected the upper class. Even morality and religion would be provided by the higher class. The problem with this ideal, according to Harriet, is that we all like to think of a golden age in which this relationship between workers and owners existed, but "it has never been historically realized."[48] The privileged have always "used their power in the interest of their own selfishness"[49] and that situation will not be changed until the power is removed (whether the power is held by rich over poor, or men over women).

The subjugated class or gender looked to the powerful for protection in the past, but Victorian laws now serve to shield the powerless. Feudal lords no longer need to protect serfs; laws now safeguard the weak. When the laws fail to protect, not only can the defenseless not depend on those in power for protection, but "the so-called protectors are now the only persons against whom . . . protection is needed."[50] For example, according to Harriet, police reports are filled with wife-beatings and child abuse. Men don't protect; they inspire fear. The key to stopping such domestic violence is economic independence for women. As long as a person has her own money, the laws will adequately protect. "No man or woman, who either possesses or is able to earn an independent livelihood, requires any other protection than that which the law could and ought to give."[51] Economic autonomy and the laws are all that are needed for "protection." Harriet declares that events in nineteenth-century Europe and England demonstrate that the working classes will no longer tolerate a patriarchal system of dependence.

The alternative theory of the relation between labourers and upper classes, a system of self-government, must be instituted. "Whatever advice, exhortation, or guidance is held out to the labouring classes, must henceforth be tendered to them as equals, and accepted with their eyes open."[52] Society's success will depend on workers becoming educated enough to make wise choices about the advice offered. England had seen some movement in this direction, according to Harriet. Even without the help of government, workers spontaneously have sought wider sources of information. Each "increase of intelligence" in workers has resulted in the laboring

48. 294.
49. 294.
50. 295.
51. 295.
52. 297.

class being less in awe, less willing to be led, by the class above them. Workers had also begun to demand laws that benefit them. Harriet declares that respect of those in power must henceforth be earned.

Two other effects of self-government outlined in her chapter concern a reduction in birth rate and women's access to industrial occupations. Just as the working classes will no longer depend on higher classes, so women will no longer depend on men. But in order for women to become independent, they must have economic freedom. The current system requires a woman to marry in order to gain her living. "Let women who prefer that occupation [wife and mother], adopt it; but that there should be no option, no other *carrière* possible for the great majority of women, except in the humbler departments of life, is a flagrant social injustice."[53]

Furthermore, both women's access to work and more "provident habits of conduct" of better-educated male workers lead to lower birth rates. With fewer workers to compete and fewer children to provide for, the standard of living for laborers will increase.[54] Earlier in *Principles of Political Economy,* birth control was suggested as a remedy for low wages. Harriet and John argue that if men could be convinced that reduced population would benefit workers, women would become "powerful auxiliaries" of this policy, since "it is never by the choice of the wife that families are too numerous; [since] on her devolves . . . the whole of the intolerable domestic drudgery resulting from the excess."[55] If men decided to practice birth control, women would eagerly support them, since women are the ones who suffer most from having too many children.

Harriet further argues that self-dependent workers will not remain laborers all their lives, but will gradually work toward becoming employers. Classes will no longer be divided permanently between employers and workers, not only because workers want to advance, but because employers cannot get the best work out of those who feel they have nothing to gain but their subsistence salary.[56] Only when the working class has the freedom to move up or to change jobs will they become productive workers.

Harriet hastens to offer a moral warning: The family must change as the economic system does. The goal of this new economy should not be to

53. 298–299.
54. 299.
55. CW: II, 372.
56. 300.

"disperse mankind over the earth in single families, each ruled internally, as families now are, by a patriarchal despot, and having scarcely any community of interest, or necessary mental communion, with other human beings."[57] Wives should not be dependent on husbands any more than workers are dependent on bosses. The goal was "to enable them to work with and for one another in relations not involving dependence."[58] Only then can public spirit, generosity, justice, and equality be achieved. Hierarchies of power must gradually be replaced by partnerships either of laborers with capitalists or of laborers themselves, just as Harriet abandoned a marriage of power and subordination with John Taylor for a partnership "not involving dependence" with John Mill.

Harriet notes that partnerships of workers and capitalists can been seen in American ships trading in China, Cornish miners, whaling ships, and some Parisian housepainters.[59] In these arrangements, laborers get a percentage of their product, so the more that is produced, the more that is earned by workers. Such collaborations between owners and laborers are admirable, but if people continue to advance, partnerships between laborers themselves will become more common.

Harriet examined a piano-makers association in Paris whose "capacity for exertion and self-denial"[60] was admirable. Profits were shared, and the worker/managers were not remunerated at a much higher rate than those who worked at building the pianos. The association provided for support during illnesses and disabilities.[61] This French example demonstrated that it is possible to combine "freedom and independence of the individual, with the moral, intellectual, and economical advantages of aggregate production."[62] The best workers would naturally want to join such cooperatives. Capitalists would then be left with the less ambitious and less capable workers. Capitalists would thus gradually learn that workers' associations operate more efficiently than capitalism. If workers were to achieve these alliances, and if women as well as men had equal say as both workers and managers, the goal of "social justice" would finally be met.[63]

57. 301.
58. 301.
59. 302–303.
60. 305.
61. 312.
62. 313.
63. 313.

The French plan celebrated by Harriet is very similar to socialism but differs in that it does not deny the freedom and independence of the individual. Nor does it eliminate economic competition. Harriet argues that an economic system without competition is a monopoly, and monopolies lead to ruin. Competition *for* workers is to the workers' advantage; only competition *among* workers is to their disadvantage. (Thus, a reduction in birth rates leads to reduced competition among workers.) Harriet points out that socialism overlooks the "natural indolence of mankind; their tendency to be passive, to be the slaves of habit, to persist indefinitely in a course once chosen."[64] Competition is a necessary stimulus to the economy.[65]

In the *Principles of Political Economy,* Harriet and John recognize that as workers are educated and as economies improve, the birth rate drops. They eerily forecast the demise of the socialism of Eastern Europe when they write that the criterion for judging economic systems is liberty. Any economic plan that constricts rather than expands the freedom of workers to choose jobs or products should be abandoned. Harriet and John are equally clear about the problems with an unregulated capitalism that unfairly restricts workers' freedom and rewards those who obtain their wealth without earning it. They inspire later generations when they remind them that production and accumulation of wealth in a society are not as important a criteria of its economic value as its distribution—a lesson that many economists have yet to learn when evaluating Third World countries.[66]

In recognizing the economic basis of women's inequality, Harriet goes further in "Enfranchisement of Women" than in "On the Probable Future of the Labouring Class," but the *Principles* has been read by far more people. Because of the popularity of the *Principles,* Harriet's impact on this work may have been more effective in altering the way economics is studied and in changing attitudes towards various forms of communal production than her more radical work.

64. 314.

65. Harriet argued against competition in education in September 1832 (see Chapter 1), but not in economics in the 1850s. Here John's strong promotion of competition influenced Harriet's initial position.

66. I applaud their lesson that preserving the environment must be considered in a discussion of economic growth. I would like to require scholars such as Gary Becker—in his 1990s Nobel Prize work in family economics—to use Harriet and John's non-sexist language.

Collaboration on the Revision of Principles of Political Economy

The first edition of the *Principles* sold out so quickly that work on the second edition began by the end of 1848. Unfortunately, since Harriet was in France, John and she were not together to work in their usual manner in the quiet of Walton. Fortunately for us, John's letters during this period give the clearest indication of the nature of Harriet and John's collaboration on this text.[67] Forgive me for the detailed analysis of their revision, but as we see them struggling over how to incorporate their new views about socialism after the French Revolution, we can view their collaboration most intimately.

The original version of *Principles* did not fully support socialism, but because of the events of the French Revolution of 1848, Harriet and John re-evaluated their belief in the possibility of socialism's success. In their letters of 1849, the two hashed out the view that would finally be included in the second edition.[68]

The first indication of their collaboration on the revision is found in John's letter of 19 February 1849. Both the tone and result of their interaction point to a lively and respectful exchange. Harriet made a number of recommendations, and John indicated that he would send the text back to her "when I have been able to make up my mind about it."[69] First, Harriet objected to a paragraph critical of communism. In the first edition they had claimed that if laborers' self and family were not to be the sole beneficiaries of the work, they would work less. Harriet had now rethought this claim. John reminded Harriet that the original paragraph was hers, but agreed,

> this is probably only the progress we have been always making, & by thinking sufficiently I should probably come to think the same—as is

67. None of the letters that Harriet wrote to John during her stay in Pau exist now. John and Harriet numbered their letters so that if one went astray they would discover it; therefore, we know that John Mill wrote Harriet twenty-seven letters during the ten weeks they were apart. We have only seven of John's letters, so the collaboration evidence is unfortunately limited and one-sided.

68. The discussion of Harriet's chapter of the *PPE* focused on the third edition of 1852, not the first edition.

69. CW: XIV, 8.

> almost always the case, I believe *always* when we think long enough. But here the being unable to discuss verbally stands sadly in the way, & I am now almost convinced that as you said at first, we cannot settle this 2d edit. by letter.[70]

John clearly feels fettered by their inability to talk face to face about the revisions (thus indicating their typically verbal method of exchanging ideas). The French Revolution of 1848 made them much more inclined than they had been just a year earlier to support a communist system on a trial basis, but Harriet was clearly more eager to do this than John. Harriet was persuasive about her queries, so John replaced the paragraph in question with a softer warning about the potential dangers of communism.[71]

Next, Harriet advocated deleting of one of John's "favorite" sentences in the revised chapter "Of Property." The sentence reads, "It is probable that [whether communism or capitalism is the best system] will finally depend upon considerations not to be measured by the coarse standard which in the present state of human improvement is the only one that can be applied to it."[72] John offered his argument for keeping the thought, but deleted it in a draft that he returned to Harriet. Harriet's suggestions were thus both accepted.

The letter of 21 March demands a long quotation because it exemplifies John's comfort in challenging Harriet's ideas. In a previous letter (one sadly now destroyed), Harriet advanced an idealistic view of education's potential to improve society. Here, John challenges her argument.

> I cannot persuade myself that you do not greatly overrate the ease of making people unselfish. Granting that in "ten years" the children of a community might by teaching be made "perfect" it seems to me that to do so there must be perfect people to teach them. You say "if there were a desire on the part of the cleverer people to make them perfect it would be easy"—but how to produce that desire in the cleverer people? I must say I think that if we had absolute power tomorrow, though we could do much to improve people by good laws, & could even give them a very much better education than they have ever had yet, still, for effecting in our lives anything like what we aim at, all our plans would fail from the

70. CW: XIV, 9.
71. CW: III, 978. No practical differences distinguished communism and socialism at this time.
72. CW: XIV, 9. The sentence John is debating does not appear in any edition of this work.

> impossibility of finding fit instruments. To make people really good for much it is so necessary not merely to give them good intentions & conscientiousness, but to unseal their eyes—to prevent self flattery, vanity, irritability & all that family of vices from warping their moral judgments as those of the very cleverest people are almost always warped now. But we shall have all these questions out together & they will all require to be entered into to a certain depth, at least, in the new book, which I am so glad you look forward to as I do with so much interest.[73]

Good character demands a special kind of moral, critical education. John correctly pointed out that Harriet's solution would require great teachers, yet enough excellent teachers did not exist to revolutionize society.

In March, as was true of his February letter, John yearned to have the kind of intense discussion through which he and Harriet could reach a greater depth of understanding. Even without the luxury of conversation, Harriet was convinced, and the next edition contained the following sentence, which is quite similar to John's initial one cited earlier. The revised sentence reads: "We are too ignorant either of what individual agency in its best form, or Socialism in its best form, can accomplish, to be qualified to decide which of the two will be the ultimate form of human society."[74] John's argument to keep the sentence was persuasive, although Harriet helped to make the sentence much more powerful than the original had been. Harriet was far from being unreasonable; when she was wrong, she recognized it and corrected the error. Harriet and John's give-and-take over this concept exemplifies their ability to work through a debate to find a better solution than either had individually suggested.

Finally, Harriet advised that a sentence about the lack of motivation in Socialist workers be deleted in the second edition of the *Principles.* The sentence in the first edition reads: "The majority [of labourers] would not exert themselves for anything beyond this & unless they did nobody else would &c."[75] Harriet now wanted the sentence eliminated. John argued, however, that such a move would nullify their entire argument against communism.[76] Harriet prevailed in this debate, and the sentence did not

73. CW: XIV, 19.
74. CW: II, 208.
75. CW: XIV, 9.
76. CW: XIV, 9.

appear in the second edition. Despite John's warning to the contrary, they still managed in the revised text to point to problems as well as advantages with this economic system.

Harriet sometimes created sentences of her own, as when she wrote, "Little improvement can be expected in morality until the producing of large families is regarded with the same feelings as overfondness for wine, or any other physical excess. But while the aristocracy and clergy are foremost to set the example of incontinence, what can be expected from the poor?"[77] John was so excited about Harriet's two sentences on birth control and her point about the hypocrisy of the aristocracy and clergy that he rushed off to the printer to make sure her sentences were included in the new edition.[78]

Of the thorny issues about which they conferred in their first extant letter on the revision, the text for the 1849 edition sometimes reflects Harriet's position, and sometimes John's. Both Harriet and John give reasons for their positions on each disagreement and respect the other's counsel. John says, "I feel that I never should long continue of an opinion different from yours on a subject which you have fully considered."[79] As we have seen, the final text is the result of a consensus.

In March 1849, they worried over changes in the typeset, format, and contracts. About the type, John wrote, "You know what difficulty we had before."[80] Harriet urged John to ask for a contract that covered only one edition, with the rights to renegotiate each subsequent edition. Her practicality earned John much more money than the contract for the *Logic*.[81] Harriet's cooperation went beyond textual details to business affairs.

In 1851, the third edition of *Logic* was published and in 1852 the third edition of *Principles* appeared. These two new editions contain the most extensive alterations of any of the editions that appeared before or after.[82] Revised in the first two years of their marriage, these texts clearly demonstrate Harriet's influence. A most obvious change in both books is seen in the removal of sexist language. "Men" was replaced by "people" or "man-

77. CW: II, 368 fn.
78. CW: XIV, 21.
79. CW: XIV, 11.
80. CW: XIV, 14.
81. CW: XIV, 17.
82. John M. Robson, "'Joint Authorship' Again: The Evidence in the Third Edition of Mill's Logic," *Mill Newsletter* 6, no. 2 (1971): 16.

kind" and "a person" was substituted for "a man."[83] In case readers did not get the point, the authors added a footnote in *Logic* that read,

> The pronoun *he* is the only one available to express all human beings; none having yet been invented to serve the purpose of designating them generally, without distinguishing them by a characteristic so little worthy of being made the main distinction as that of sex. This is more than a defect in language; tending greatly to prolong the almost universal habit, of thinking and speaking of one-half the human species as the whole.[84]

The feminist declaration was removed, however, in the 1862 edition published after Harriet's death. Harriet and John together were far more committed to complete equality than when John worked alone.

The collaboration of the revision of *Principles* continued through 1854 when Harriet and John again revised "On the Probable Future of the Labouring Classes." Mr. Furnivall, a Kingsley Socialist, asked to reprint Harriet's chapter as a separate pamphlet for the working class in England. John and Harriet revised the chapter extensively, again while they were apart because of illness. John wrote to his "guide philosopher & friend" that he had "not the least idea at present what additions they require, but between us we shall I am sure manage to improve them very much."[85]

They set to work to enrich this chapter. Harriet suggested incorporating part of the chapter "Of the Stationary State" into the treatise, as well as several other alterations. Like the 1849 revision, the 1854 text did not always reflect Harriet's opinions. For example, John commented, "I think I agree in all your remarks & have adopted them *almost* all—but I do not see the possibility of bringing in the first two pages (from the preceding chapter [Of the Stationary State])—I see no place which they would fit."[86] Some textual corrections were made simply by John, but meatier matters required the contribution of both. John writes, "One page I keep for consideration when I can shew it to you. It is about the qualities of English workpeople, & of the english *[sic]* generally. It is not at all as I would write it

83. Robson, 16.
84. CW: VIII, 837.
85. CW: XIV, 163.
86. Added emphasis, CW: XIV, 185. This paragraph reflects the argument and some wording from my "Harriet Taylor Mill's Collaboration with John Stuart Mill."

now, but I do not in reality, know how to write it."[87] In these private letters to Harriet, there was no reason to pretend that Harriet had more influence than she did. John depends on Harriet's input. Like any good joint product, the final text reflects a compromise to which both parties agree.

Collaboration on "Enfranchisement of Women"

While working on the revision of the *Principles of Political Economy* in 1849, John complained to Harriet about an article he had recently read on the subject of women. John commented that the only way to alter the misconceptions about women was to have a "better psychology & theory of human nature, for the few; & for the man, more & greater proofs by example of what women can do."[88] John concluded by urging Harriet to finish her work on women so that it could be published as early as "next season." Taylor's death precluded Harriet from working further on this piece in 1849, but she resumed her work in 1850.

On 23–24 October 1850, a convention of women was held in Worcester, Massachusetts. News of this grand meeting quickly reached England, and John immediately wrote about it to Harriet.[89] Now was the time to complete the article on women's issues. Harriet and John drafted arguments for the positions they had been discussing since they had first met. Some of their scraps of writing are mere outlines, but others are more carefully composed pieces that Harriet used as springboards for "Enfranchisement of Women," published finally in 1851.

John assigned authorship for "Enfranchisement of Women" to Harriet. A reprint of the article in 1868 lists the author as "Mrs. Stuart Mill" on the title page.[90] They clearly worked together on drafts of ideas that would serve as the core of the article. However, unlike those books and articles that John labeled as "joint," this article contained ideas with which John did not completely agree. (His *Subjection of Women* published nearly two decades later is noticeably more conservative.)[91] Since John labeled

87. This exchange was about the 1857 revision. CW: XV, 525–526.
88. CW: XIV, 12–13.
89. CW: XIV, 49.
90. Mrs. Stuart Mill, "Enfranchisement of Women" (London: Trübner and Co., 1868). In private letters, John also refers to the article as Harriet's; CW: XXXII, 128.
91. Others have done a good job of outlining the ways in which "Enfranchisement of Women" is more consistent and more radical than Mill's book, so I will refer you to them for more infor-

this famous article as Harriet's, I will as well—but with the proviso that readers realize that the two collaborated on early drafts of this piece together.

Reactions to "Enfranchisement of Women" "Enfranchisement of Women" became widely known and loved by women activists as far away as the United States. Lucretia Mott described Harriet as "a widow who had recently married J. S. Mill who 'assisted her in writing it—although he says she wrote it.' "[92] Lucy Stone was enthusiastic about the article and Susan B. Anthony described the piece, which she distributed far and wide, as "Mrs. Mill's splendid article:"[93] "Wendell Phillips proposed a special resolution expressing the appreciation of American women to 'that noble English woman, Mrs. Mill, who gave the world though the medium of the *Westminster Review* that able exposition of our reform.' "[94] The article was reprinted and given away or sold at conventions, bookstores, and Anti-Slavery Offices. It was also privately distributed.[95] One St. Louis resident had a thousand copies printed and given out at his own expense.[96] In fact, "Enfranchisement of Women" was "one of the best-selling tracts in the American women's rights movement."[97]

In England, radicals continued to find Harriet's article of value long after its initial publication. Five years later, the intrepid George Holyoake reprinted Harriet's article and sold thousands of copies under the title "Are Women Fit for Politics? Are Politics Fit for Women?" John rebuked him for reprinting "my wife's article . . . without asking the permission of the author which you could easily have done through me."[98] However, not everyone reacted positively to this radical essay.

mation on this topic. See, in particular, Julia Annas, "Mill and the Subjection of Women," *Philosophy* 52 (1977): 179–194; Susan Moller Okin, *Women in Western Political Thought* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1979), 229–230; Richard W. Krouse, "Patriarchal Liberalism and Beyond: From John Stuart Mill to Harriet Taylor," in *The Family in Political Thought,* ed. Jean Bethke Elshtain (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1982), 145–172.

92. Evelyn L. Pugh, "John Stuart Mill, Harriet Taylor, and Women's Rights in America, 1850–1873"; *Canadian Journal of History* 13 (1978): 425.

93. Pugh, 434.

94. Pugh, 426.

95. Pugh, 426.

96. Pugh, 427.

97. Pugh, 426. In contrast, John's *Subjection of Women,* published in 1869, did not prove useful in the American Women's Movement and many were disappointed in its argument (Pugh, 434–435).

98. CW: XV, 509–510.

Thomas Carlyle's misogynist declaration that Harriet was a "silly woman" who might be better off quietly darning socks is not unexpected.[99] On the other hand, Harriet's disdain for women novelists might have gained some justification had she known Charlotte Brontë's reaction to her *Westminster Review* article. Brontë wrote an acerbic letter on 20 September 1851 about "Enfranchisement of Women" to Elizabeth Gaskell, a novelist and biographer of Brontë. In it Brontë says, "When I first read the paper, I thought it was the work of a powerful-minded, clear-headed woman, who had a hard, jealous heart, muscles of iron, and nerves of bent leather; of a woman who longed for power, and had never felt affection. . . . I believe J. S. Mill would make a hard, dry, dismal world of it; and yet he speaks admirable sense through a great portion of his article."[100] This letter appeared in Gaskell's 1857 biography of Brontë. John discovered the passage sometime after Harriet died. He was furious that Gaskell had made public these unfavorable remarks about Harriet, who was the acknowledged author of the article by the time the biography was written. He wrote to Gaskell, expressing his anger.[101] Neither Mrs. Gaskell's attempts to atone, nor her condolences about Harriet's death, were met with sympathy from John.

The repercussions of "Enfranchisement of Women" reached as far as Austria and Germany. Here, as in England, some reactions were typical while others were completely unforeseen. Freud, as you may imagine, had a very different view from Harriet of the role of husbands and wives. In 1880, as a medical student, Freud translated a collection of works that included the "Enfranchisement of Women." When Freud's fiancée mentioned the article in a letter to him, Freud replied that he found the treatment of women in the piece "so unrealistic as to appear not 'quite human.'" Freud was shocked at Harriet's suggestion that married women might earn their own salaries; he retorted: "as if the management of a household and family did not 'claim the whole person and practically rule out any profession.'" Freud repeated a warning to his fiancee: "He himself could not think

99. Lady Kate Amberley listened to Thomas Carlyle spout his misogynist view that women "had better not meddle with those things [like writing books] but be quiet with darning stockings." When she immediately contrasts his statements with those of "Mrs. Mill's in her Enfranchisement of women," Carlyle replied with the *ad feminem* that Harriet was "a silly woman." 29 September 1859. Quoted in Blodgett, 134.

100. Elizabeth Gaskell, *The Life of Charlotte Brontë* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1857), 229–230.

101. CW: XV, 628–30. Gaskell's response is found in J. A. V. Chapple and A. Pollard, ed., *The Letters of Mrs. Gaskell* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1966), 563–569.

of his 'delicate, sweet girl' as a competitor and that he had every intention of getting her 'out of the competitive role into the quiet, undisturbed activity of my home.'" Freud agreed with Harriet that women, if educated differently, might attain the goal Harriet suggested, but Freud was disgusted with the prospect and wrote,

> I believe that all reforming activity, legislation and education, will founder on the fact that long before the age at which a profession can be established in our society, nature will have appointed woman by her beauty, charm, and goodness, to do something else. No, in this respect I adhere to the old ways, to my longing for my Martha as she is, and she herself will not want it different; legislation and custom have to grant to women many rights kept from them, but the position of woman cannot be other than what it is: to be an adored sweetheart in youth, and a beloved wife in maturity.[102]

Luckily we are closer to Harriet's hope for the future than Freud's.

Another European, Nietzsche, of all people, also studied Harriet's "Enfranchisement" article.[103] A man who had also innocently contracted syphilis, Nietzsche had views on marriage unexpectedly similar to Harriet's. He describes marriage as a "long conversation" and downplays the role of sexuality in marriage.[104] As Ruth Abbey points out in her "Odd Bedfellows: Nietzsche and Mill on Marriage," the language of Nietzsche sometimes mirrors Harriet's directly. For example, in the "Enfranchisement" Harriet writes, "All social or sympathetic influences which do not raise up, pull down." Nietzsche in turn writes, "All society that does not elevate one draws one down."[105] Both see the best marriages as a union of equal friends

102. *Letters of Sigmund Freud,* ed. Ernst Freud (New York: Basic Books, 1960), 75–76. Quoted in Gertrude Himmelfarb, *On Liberty and Liberalism: The Case of John Stuart Mill* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974), 220–222.

103. Oddly, Ruth Abbey quotes Karl Brose's report "that Nietzsche had a copy of Taylor and Mill's writings on marriage and female enfranchisement and studied these carefully. See 'Nietzsche's Verhaltnis zu John Stuart Mill,' Nietzsche, *Studien* 3 (1974): 152–154. Nietzsche characterizes "the higher conception of marriage as the soul-friendship of two people of differing sex." Nietzsche uses the word *Seelenfreudschaft*, soul-friendship, which is precisely the same word Theodor Gomperz uses to describe Harriet's relationship with John. See Ruth Abbey, "Odd Bedfellows: Nietzsche and Mill on Marriage," *History of European Ideas* 23, no. 2–4 (1997): 98; and Theodor Gomperz, *Briefe und Aufzeichnungen ausgewählt, erläutert und zu einer Darstellung seines Leben verknüpft* (Wien: Gerold & Co., 1936), 233. Isn't it interesting that Abbey's title is Nietzsche and Mill, not Taylor. Although the main comparison concerns the "Enfranchisement" article, Abbey's article will attract more readers with Mill in the title than Harriet's name.

104. Abbey, 86, 88.

105. Abbey, 91.

who are devoted to teaching each other and who urge each other to more noble pursuits. Such relationships must be formed freely and must be constantly revitalized. Neither Nietzsche nor Harriet wished for sappy companionate marriage in which both partners relax into complacency. They both envisioned honorable combatants who pushed their lover to want more and to expect more of themselves and others. Nietzsche never knew the joy of such a union. Harriet did.

From American feminists to Nietzsche, readers of this little article were passionate in their reactions. Thousands of copies were read by women in America, workers in England, and intellectuals throughout the United States and Europe. What Harriet argued for in 1851 still sounds refreshingly contemporary because women still desire what she desired. The article is sadly modern because her vision of equality has yet to be fully enacted.

What "Enfranchisement of Women" Says Harriet begins the article by restating the goal of the women's convention in Worcester, Massachusetts: "Equality in all rights, political, civil and social." Although Harriet notes that both the Declaration of Independence and English law theoretically support equality[106]—and hence by implication women's equality[107]—she is more concerned with human development than with abstract political "rights."

Harriet wanted women's liberty to be equal to men's because freedom is the only means for improving either individual character or collective humanity. We cannot better ourselves, singly or as a species, without the political, economic, and social contributions of half of our number. All suffer when some are enslaved. Inequality between lifelong companions leads to psychological stunting of both participants. Men become despots, and women turn into simpering prostitutes. The very inequality of their relationship trains them to follow these patterns. Likewise, inequality in political and economic concerns results in domestic violence, political apathy, and unjust criminal verdicts for domestic violence indictments. Personal relationships, political institutions, and "pecuniary" interests are equally important elements that can lead to social progress. Human devel-

106. Harriet and John make some practical suggestions in earlier drafts. One, if English law forbids taxation without representation, then at least women who have property must be allowed to vote (49). Restrictions on voting should include only educational qualifications (50).

107. 52–55.

opment will soar only when women and men live together in homes as equals, when we vote and serve on juries together, and when we have equal access to jobs and the education needed for those jobs.

As in *On Liberty,* the "Enfanchisement of Women" proceeds by stating and replying to a number of objections to its thesis. The first is that customarily, women have never been men's equals. Just because a particular practice has always existed does not mean that it is just. History reveals that until recently, hierarchies based on power and not ability have ruled most people's interactions. The relationship between men and women is merely among the last to abandon the practice of might-makes-right. Besides, Harriet replies, many smart individuals and social groups have fought for women's equality.[108]

The second objection to which Harriet responds concerns women entering public politics and jobs. Her critics maintained that "the proper sphere of women" is private life.[109] Harriet's retort is that no one has the right to tell another person what is "proper" for her. Everyone's proper sphere is "the largest and highest which they are able to attain to. What this is, cannot be ascertained, without complete liberty of choice."[110] The question of whether there is a natural attraction of women to domestic duties cannot be answered until girls have been nurtured in the same way as boys and until women have the freedom to choose among the occupations. If and only if there is true openness to careers will those who hire choose the person who is truly the most capable. When girls are raised

108. 55.

109. Harriet and John had considered this objection in their preliminary drafts. Others who do not approve of women's rights argue that "the proper sphere of women is domestic life." Harriet and John ask what is meant by this phrase. Women writers and sovereigns have proven that women are certainly qualified to be more than mothers and wives. Women have been forced to "devote themselves mainly to domestic management, the bringing up of children &c.," but that is because no other careers are available to them. Economic independence is impossible. An alternative understanding of "the proper sphere" claims that domestic life is "particularly suitable for women." Just because people have other occupations, are "coalheavers, paviours, ploughmen," does not mean that they were "born" to do these tasks, or that they must not be allowed to quit their trade and take up another. Why then are women "born" to be domestic workers?

Harriet and John also contend that the refusal to allow women access to public or private occupations because of women's natural abilities is wrong for three reasons. First, "the alleged superior adaptation of women to certain occupations, and of men to certain others, does not even now, exist." (45) Look around the world and you'll find women doing what English culture defines as "men's work" and vice versa. Second, whatever differences exist are chiefly if not completely the result of societal training. Thirdly, if there are natural differences, there need be no law forcing such segregation.

110. Certainly the history of queens indicates that women can serve well in a political capacity (58).

with equal opportunity, women will not choose to do work that men do better. Neither government nor public opinion has the right to decide what women do best before equal opportunity has been achieved.[111]

Those who support restrictions on women in public life offer one of three reasons for their position: Pregnancy is incompatible with public life; public life will harden women; and, if women work outside the home, there will be increased competition for jobs. To the first objection, Harriet counters that no one requires that women be mothers. If they had an option, many women might choose not to become mothers. Furthermore, if maternity is really incompatible with work, women will deduce this conclusion for themselves. "Where incompatibility is real, it will take care of itself."[112] The second concern about politics "hardening" women ignores that fact that we don't live in an age when hand-to-hand combat is a part of public life. If by warning against "hardening" men only want to prevent women from all disagreement, they will have to seclude them in harems as they do in other parts of the world.[113]

Concerning the economic question, men certainly have a monopoly on jobs, but capitalist theory rejects monopolies. The worst-case scenario is this: Women entering the workforce results in men's compensation being reduced by half, so that a couple can only earn together what a man earned himself prior to women entering the job market. Harriet retorts that this development would be a step toward progress, not a problem. "The woman would be raised from the position of a servant to that of a partner."[114] Furthermore, by earning her own wage the woman will have no need to rely on men to dispense the family funds. Harriet insists that money offers power. Even under current laws, "a woman who contributes materially to the support of the family, cannot be treated in the same contemptuously tyrannical manner as one who, however she may toil as a domestic drudge, is a dependent on the man for subsistence."[115] Hear! Hear!

111. 57.

112. 59.

113. 62. Removing politics from the home will not "prevent ill feeling," but will only make disagreements about trivial issues. If women's "active minds" are denied real problems to be solved, they will become petty (42). As long as adults are only interested in their own isolated family, they will fail to focus on the more important issue of community interests. Excess involvement in family life also is a form of moral education that trains adults to ignore broader social concerns. In addition, women have taken active part in all the recent advances in "the larger interests of humanity" such as abolition, prison reform, and universal education (42).

114. 60.

115. 60–61.

Harriet recognizes that unpaid domestic labor is neither privately nor publicly valued. If women want equality, they must have economic independence, i.e., paid work outside the house. Period. In addition, Harriet spots the connection between domestic violence and women's economic independence. She argues that domestic violence would cease "if women both earned, and had the right to possess, a part of the income of the family."[116] One of the reasons reformers had pressed to extend the vote to laborers was to avoid the kind of violence that swept Europe during the Victorian period. Harriet recognized that extending women's economic rights would help to eliminate the violence that was already a regular threat in many of their lives.[117]

(I agree with Richard Krouse who points out that Harriet does not answer the question about who will do the housework and care for the children when both parents work. Not everyone has access to servants and nannies. Harriet's vision of equality would probably extend far enough to propose that men share these tasks, just as women share the work of providing money for the family. John Taylor was uninterested and John Mill incapable of taking care of the basics of a household, even one surrounded by servants. Hence, Harriet was probably realistically skeptical about men's ability to share house and child care. I like to think that she simply had not considered this question, although I wish she had.)[118]

Harriet extended her argument for women's freedom to work by attacking child labor practices. Children should be learning and growing, not providing for their families. Harriet claims that population control and a move away from unregulated capitalism will reduce competition between workers in the future (just as Harriet and John had argued in *Principles of Political Economy*). However, in a world where competition is integral to the economic system, "it is tyranny to shut out one-half of the competitors."[119]

After all the initial objections to Harriet's thesis that women should have equal political and economic and social equality, the real question for her remains: Is it "right and expedient that one-half of the human race should pass through life in a state of forced subordination to the other

116. 61, fn. 42.
117. Malcolm Hardman, *Six Victorian Thinkers* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991), 83.
118. Krouse, 169.
119. 61.

half"?[120] If the best of all possible worlds is one in which men can assert their will while women are mere appendages meant to "[bring] up *his* children, and [make] *his* home pleasant to him," then we should educate women to believe this.[121] But, the only reason men can honestly give for belief that this inequality is the best state of affairs is that "men like it."[122]

Although this unfair situation seems initially to be pleasurable to men, it ultimately leads to moral and political decay, according to Harriet. Women's inequality hurts men as well as women. A quick review of the history of the relationship between women and men proves instructive. Women began as slaves of men "for purposes of toil." They then proceeded to become sexual slaves. Men just prior to the Victorian era secured their superiority with "ideas of duty," but the inequality remained. "The wife was part of the furniture of home" and nothing more. A man was a "patriarch and a despot within four walls" trained to be "domineering, exacting, self-worshipping, when not capriciously or brutally tyrannical."[123]

This pre-Victorian model was in her era replaced by the Victorian ideal of "correlative obligation." Harriet claimed that during her own lifetime, most men "of any conscience" want women to be happy. They want companionship. The problem is that companionship between unequals leads to a "progressive deterioration among men."[124] Instead of women becoming the intellectual companions of men, sharing in the public questions of the day, men are adopting the narrowness and apathy of women who have been trained to be uninterested in intellectual or political questions.[125] Men become mentally stunted when surrounded by dolts—which is what uneducated women are.

Harriet's autobiography of her relationship with John is the clincher in her argument:

120. 62.
121. 62.
122. 62.
123. 64. In an early draft, Harriet and John wrote that in middle- and upper-class families a husband's domination is accomplished without "active collision," whereas "ill bred" men will resort to domestic abuse. The effect is the same: Anyone "who is always having homage paid to the power vested in him" will not resist a dominating character. Again we see the effect of moral education at the most personal level (49).
124. 65.
125. 65.

> The mental companionship which is improving, is communion between active minds, not mere contact between an active mind and a passive. This inestimable advantage is even now enjoyed, when a strong-minded man and a strong-minded woman are, by a rare chance, united: and would be had far oftener, if education took the same pains to form strong-minded women which it takes to prevent them from being formed.[126]

"Moderate reformers" wanted women educated to be companions to men (but not vice versa, as Harriet points out). Their idea for a smattering of general education would develop women who are "very agreeable to [their husbands] no doubt, but unfortunately the reverse of improving." If a man's only intellectual companion is someone to whom he can "lay down the law," he will not likely advance as a thinker. "The most eminent men cease to improve, if they associate only with disciples."[127] Companionate marriage is a worthy goal only if the companions are worthy of each other. If one of the two is uneducated, both will sink into mind-numbing apathy.

If the goal of companionship is to be achieved—that is, if we are all to advance intellectually—women need to have *thorough* training in the liberal arts. "What makes intelligent beings is the power of thought: the stimuli which call forth that power are the interest and dignity of thought itself, and a field for its practical application."[128] Development of abstract thought alone is not sufficient, according to Harriet. Vital, living, controversial ideas will serve as catalysts for thought, but if there is no avenue of "practical application," education will not be enticing. For women to live up to their potential, they must not be told from infancy on that thinking is someone else's business. They must have the opportunity to enter every career. Like men, women need to be "educated for themselves and for the world—not one sex for the other."[129] When women are so educated, humans—both men and women—will be able to develop in untold ways. Until then, women and men cannot have friendships that are genuinely transforming.

In sum, Harriet has thus far argued that if society wants to educate

126. 66.
127. 66.
128. 66.
129. 66.

women, it must stop telling them that they don't need to bother and must instead give them the incentive of an interesting career. If women have these catalysts, they will hunger for a education that develops their whole mind. Once they achieve that, they will be able to compete for good jobs, and once they are economically independent they won't allow themselves to be abused or otherwise dominated. When women have been taught to think for themselves, they can form the kind of comradeship with men that will improve both genders. Men are currently under the misguided assumption that they benefit from women's subjugation, but they too suffer intellectually from inequality.

Not only was the current system bad for men intellectually, but it was also morally corrupting for both men and women. Harriet disagrees with the sentiment that women's duties include encouraging their husbands to become more moral. Neither men nor women are morally inspired by the Victorian marriage. Instead, she alleges that men's role as head of the house fosters their selfishness.[130] Harriet concludes that "if there is any self-will in the man, he becomes either the conscious or unconscious despot of his household."[131] Meanwhile, the wife is trained in the vice of artifice.[132] In addition, because of the way women are educated, they have almost no public spirit and are educated to focus selfishly on family interests. As the companions of their husbands, women gradually drag men away from interest in public policy questions.

If men and women sought "genuine friendship," they might escape the detrimental scenario just outlined, but the "habitual and almost mechanical feeling of kindliness" typical of marriage will not alleviate the damage of unequal relationships. If society is to advance, we must all concern ourselves with public policy, and the current inequality in women's education succeeds in diverting even men's interest in social advancement.

Harriet confronts one final objection: Women themselves don't want more freedom. If this objection were true, there would be no need for laws

130. 67.

131. 67.

132. 68. In an earlier draft, Harriet and John noted that women are often scared of the idea that they should be independent because of "the everlasting dread of the givers of the loaves and fishes," in short, the message of Christianity that they are to be submissive to their husbands. Furthermore, women often overestimate the unpleasantness of "having to work instead of being worked for" and they have been educated to believe acquiescence is a virtue (47). With this type of education, "the woman's whole talent goes into the inducing, persuading, coaxing, caressing, in reality the seducing, capacity. In what ever class in life, the woman gains her object by seducing the man" (48). This argument would be vividly explored in Tolstoy's "Kreutzer Sonata."

prohibiting women's freedom. They would naturally accept dependence. Harriet retorts that women fail to complain not because they don't have reason, but because they don't believe they can succeed. Harriet asserts that those who are in the habit of submitting become submissive. Moreover, to protest is dangerous. Because they have stood on the shoulders of others who have struggled to give them what freedom they do enjoy, women writers should be in the best position to protest inequality. However, even they tend to be conservative, because they don't want to lose the advantages they have, and don't want to be thought of as unfeminine or as bad wives. Harriet insinuates that they are mere toadies.[133] The convention in Worcester makes it obvious that women by the thousands do indeed want their freedom, despite the existence of some women who ought to be in a position to risk more for other females and the acquiescent majority of women.

What do women want? "What is wanted for women is equal rights, equal admission to all social privileges; not a position apart, a sort of sentimental priesthood."[134] They do not want to be coerced into marriage and motherhood. They want the intellectual give and take of a "strong minded" partner. They don't want to be beaten. They want to be well-educated and have good jobs. They want to be able to control their earned wages. They want to participate fully in political and social life. They want to have the independence to set their own course in life, and not to be an appendage to a man's life. Did you hear that, Freud?

Collaboration on Domestic Violence

Imagine a man in 1850 sitting at his morning breakfast. The servant brings in the toast while his wife oversees the tea. The genteel setting is complete with wax-rubbed sideboard and shiny silverplate. He picks up the paper to read the following:

> Let any one consider the degrading moral effect, in the midst of these crowded dwellings, of scenes of physical violence, repeated day after day—the debased, spirit-broken, down-trodden condition of the unfortunate woman, the most constant sufferer from domestic brutality in the poorer classes, unaffectedly believing herself to be out of the protection of the

133. 71–72.
134. 72.

law—the children born and bred in this moral atmosphere—with the unchecked indulgence of the most odious passions, the tyranny of physical force in its coarsest manifestations, constantly exhibited as the most familiar facts of their daily life—can it be wondered if they grow up without any of the ideas and feelings which it is the purpose of moral education to infuse, without any sense of justice or affection, any conception of self-restraint—incapable in their turn of governing their children by any other means than blows? the victims regard their suffering and debasement as the regular course of things,..[and] seek a wretched compensation by tyrannizing in their turn, when any hapless fellow-creature comes within their power.[135]

A self-congratulatory shake of the paper signals our reader's relief that he is not one of the laboring classes. As he takes another sip of tea he wonders whether "domestic brutality" is as pervasive as the writer alleged. He recalls hearing a rumor that one of his colleagues at work would, on occasion, get drunk and hit his wife. He tries to swallow the implications with his bite of toast. Clearly this is uncivilized behavior.

In the nearly two years between John Taylor's death and her second marriage, Harriet focused on the newspaper articles she co-authored with John.[136] Between 5 February 1850 and 28 August 1851, Harriet and John wrote seven newspaper pieces on domestic violence, dealing with subjects such as wife murder, child abuse, and servant battering.[137] One of the most remarkable features of these articles is that Harriet and John insisted that the middle- and upper-class public acknowledge the existence, extent, and effect of domestic violence.[138] As they argued in one of the articles, "Per-

135. 104.

136. Harriet began feeding her ideas about domestic violence to those with access to the press as early as 1833. Remember Harriet's writing that William Fox borrowed for his article, "The Victim"? Harriet also wrote "as long as physical power exercises any influence over the moral power of a community" women will continue to be dominated by men (6). Long before she had an abused sister, Harriet had spotted the evil of physical tyranny within marriage.

137. In addition, they had penned six articles in 1846 on a range of topics including abuse in the military, animal abuse (and its connection to domestic violence), and the rights of single mothers and widows to child custody.

138. The working classes on the whole were better acquainted with domestic abuse both because of their literature and because their living arrangements provided little chance to hide such violence. During the mid-century, working-class street ballads and popular literature graphically portrayed domestic violence, including women killed by their husbands or lovers in order to control their sexuality, and servant battering. For example, "In 'Horrible Cruelty to a Servant Girl at Slough,' a 'gentleman farmer' and his wife repeatedly wound their seventeen-year-old nurse. The nurse does not die even after drunken Mrs. Morris, who is far more violent than her spouse, beats

sons who are not conversant . . . with the breadth and depth of popular brutality, have very little idea of what is comprehended in the meaning of the words, 'domestic tyranny.' "[139]

Harriet and John's reporting of crimes aimed not only to inform, but also to educate the morality of the public.[140] The objectivity so prized by twentieth-century journalists was not the goal of writers during this period. Instead, writers used character study and melodrama to seduce the reader into an emotional connection with the characters they wrote about. In order to alter morality, factual education was to be accompanied by sensitivity training. Harriet and John had long agreed with this approach to moral education—recall Harriet's rebuke of both Protestant and Catholic moral education as leaving out one side of the equation, either the intellectual or the sensual. When Harriet and John describe the fingernails ripped from appendages in gruesome detail, the horror of the event is much more moving than learning the fact that in the United States in 2000 a woman is beaten every eight seconds.

Other newswriters typically described actual events to fortify contemporary mores, not to challenge them,[141] while Harriet and John confronted the common view of the "angel in the house" protected by a loving and

her with a cane, runs scissors through her hand until 'they went out on the other side,' cut her head several times with a poker, and hit her with a shovel." Kalikoff details many examples of ballads and other types of popular literature that describes domestic violence with gory examples. Beth Kalikoff, *Murder and Moral Decay in Victorian Popular Literature* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1986), 65.

What appears in their ballads was also part of their daily lives. During the swings of the business cycles in early capitalist England, the stress of unemployment or low wages was inevitable. Workers' housing was cramped and privacy unknown. As Nancy Tomes explains, "No working-class man or woman could escape exposure to violence between the sexes. Their behavior toward one another was shaped by the realization that violence was one possible outcome of a conflict. . . . [Furthermore] their acts were tolerated and often condoned by their neighbors." The working classes could not escape almost daily exposure to domestic violence. Nancy Tomes, "A 'Torrent of Abuse': Crimes of Violence between Working-Class Men and Women in London, 1840–1875," *Journal of Social History* 11 (1978): 329.

139. 103.

140. As Judith Knelman points out, reporters wanted to stir up readers, to make them feel the horror of the crimes so that they would lobby for justice. Judith Knelman, "Subtly Sensational: A Study of Early Victorian Crime Reporting," *Journal of Newspaper and Periodical History* 8, no. 1 (1992): 40.

Back in the 1830s, John wrote that the only vehicle for reaching public opinion is through journalism. In fact he claimed, "The peculiar 'mission' of this age. . . . is to popularize among the many, the more immediately practical results of the thought and experience of the few." In order for the thoughts of the few to become practical not only must truth be conveyed, but hearts must be "awakened" (CW: I, 372–373).

141. Knelman, 35.

devoted husband and father. A reader such as our imaginary breakfasting husband would find it difficult to reconcile an "angel" with the woman strangled, poisoned, or beaten by her husband. Exposing the amount of violence between married couples revealed the fallacy of the "cult of domesticity," thus destroying one of the basic principles upon which Victorian society was built, the belief that the woman's place in the home reflected her moral, gentle, submissive nature.[142]

Harriet and John were convinced that the politics of the family was central to all possibility of social advance. If the power within families were to become more equal, the darkest secrets of domestic abuse had to be felt by those with enough power to change the laws as well as their own actions, i.e., upper-class men. The best vehicle for reaching this audience was a newspaper.[143] Publication in "women's" magazines would have been ineffective in reaching the audience that not only caused most of the problem, but that also had the power in both their private and public lives to diminish it.

Not only did the Victorian press differ from contemporary media practices by not aspiring to cold objectivity, but they also aimed to affect ongoing events, not merely report them. Harriet and John blatantly attempted to influence juries, judges, and parliamentarians and to incite public opinion whose outrage could sway the other groups.[144]

142. Myra Glenn explains, "By its very nature the problem of wife-beating threatened to explode the myths cultivated by the canon of domesticity. It dramatically contradicted this cult's cherished idealized views of marriage and the family. Violent husbands and their suffering wives were a far cry from the loving, gentle and happy spouses depicted in popular domestic works." Myra C. Glenn, "Wife-Beating: The Darker Side of Victorian Domesticity," *Canadian Review of American Studies* 15 (Spring 1984): 28.

143. The co-authors chose *The Morning Chronicle* before 1848 because it was the primary liberal vehicle that John had used regularly. In 1848 it was sold. Although John was offered part ownership, he did not accept. *The Daily News* suffered financially and threatened to collapse, but it offered a clearer liberal slant after 1848 than the *Chronicle*. Therefore, Harriet and John naturally turned to it more often in their later series of pieces (467).

Newspapers effectively aroused their male readers to change their jury vote and lobby for parliamentary changes. The power of the institutions of the Church and the universities declined as the periodical press rose. Doggett writes that "Politicians who supported increased penalties for assaults on women made heavy use of such [newspaper] accounts." Maeve E. Doggett, *Marriage, Wife-Beating and the Law in Victorian England* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1993), 111. Aled Jones claims that the idea that newspapers were "the active agent of change exerted a powerful hold over the contemporary imagination." Aled Jones, *Powers of the Press: Newspapers, Power and the Public in Nineteenth-Century England* (Brookfield, Vt.: Scolar Press, 1996), xi.

144. They were not alone in this intention. One newspaper even grumbled over the fact that the jury was probably reading a rival paper during a recess in an ongoing trial (Knelman 38). Cap-

In the articles written in the 1850s, their interference becomes conspicuous. In the case of a servant beaten to death by the victim's employers (the Parsons), Harriet and John first ridiculed the coroner's jury for failing to indict the couple, and then praised those who continue to pursue the case before a magistrate.[145] However, when the judge directed a verdict of not guilty, Harriet and John wrote a second time on the case in order to urge the public humiliation of the guilty party despite the judge's acquittal.[146] The public pressure brought by Harriet and John as well as by *The Times* accounts of the trials[147] may have contributed to the couple's conviction on a second set of assault charges despite the challenges of the defense lawyers that this trial amounted to double jeopardy.[148]

Harriet and John clearly intended to influence current and future juries, shame judges by pointing to faults in their legal reasoning, change public opinion, pressure outcomes in actual ongoing cases, and rewrite the laws themselves where they contained shortcomings. The newspapers offered the only means for immediate reaction to trials in progress, the only means for changing the judges', the juries', and the public's opinion quickly enough to alter actual events in the making.

Harriet and John were attracted not only to journalism's efficacy and power, but also to its anonymity. Few men sitting at their breakfast table reading these articles would suspect they were co-authored by a woman.[149] Harriet could hide her gender and her co-authorship while creating the sharpest and most emotional rhetoric aimed at stopping domestic abuse.

Family violence was already noted in newswriting, but the tone was of-

tain Johnstone was acquitted of beating one of his underlings to death while captain of a ship. Harriet and John openly attempt to intervene in other cases as well: See 77–78 and 94.

145. 100.

146. 105.

147. *Times,* 2 February 1850, 25 March 1850.

148. *Times,* 7 August 1850.

149. Feminists who might have argued for better domestic violence laws were shut out of the conversation. Doggett writes, "Feminists at this time . . . played no part in the campaign to increase the penalties for wife-beating. Women who attempted to make their views known to reforming parliamentarians were disregarded or treated with contempt" (133).

Women writing about domestic violence presumed a knowledge of and involvement in the world that would have drawn readers' disapproval. To preserve innocence, a Victorian woman must not only be sexually pure, but also intellectually virginal. Women should not concern themselves with knowing such dangerous aspects of life as wife murder or child abuse. See the introduction to Susan Mendus and Jane Rendall, eds., *Sexuality and Subordination: Interdisciplinary Studies of Gender in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 1989), 7.

ten in stark contrast to that of Harriet and John. A report of wife murder on 23 December 1848 will serve as an example. According to *The Times,* Judith Holdsworth's husband poisoned her with arsenic. On her deathbed, she told a friend of her suspicions about food prepared for her by her husband. Mrs. Holdsworth also mentioned that she had fed some of the food to her cat. During the trial, the doctor confirmed the presence of arsenic in her stomach. That the husband's previous wife had died in similar circumstances was also acknowledged. Despite overwhelming evidence, the jury was deadlocked until their request for chops and ale was denied, whereupon they quickly voted for conviction. The paper noted, too, that the cat had not died. The humor with which the trial and details about the cat were reported is not unique in the treatment of such murders. The tone contrasts sharply with that of Harriet and John's newspaper accounts.

Four points recur throughout the newspaper articles co-authored by Harriet and John: causes and effects of domestic violence; sexism in the legal system; domestic violence and property rights; and suggestions for improvement.

Causes and Effects of Domestic Violence Their investigation of the individual effects of specific acts of cruelty led Harriet and John to speculate about the systemic effects of family violence on society. As you read in the long passage above, they recognized that women who are abused by their husbands will tend to abuse their children, and that children who grow up in abusive households will tend to become abusers; thus the cycle perpetuates itself.

Because abuse degrades and encourages the abused in turn to become abusers, the battering of children is especially damaging. Harriet and John wrote:

> On a boy of a dull, hard nature, its effect is to render him ten times harder than he would be without it—to qualify and prepare him for being a bully and a tyrant. . . . The object of his respect will be power. He will crouch to power in others, and will have nothing in his own nature to prevent him from trampling on those whom he has power over.[150]

150. 122.

Relationships with those outside the family will be warped as well. Just as our higher faculties are "very tender [plants], easily killed, . . . by hostile influences" (as they later say in *Utilitarianism*)[151] so our ability to have free and open relationships with others is ruined by abuse.

The effects of domestic violence go beyond psychological degradation. Abuse is a fundamental roadblock to society's progression. Harriet and John recognized that until sexism in the legal system is rectified, until children are brought up without being flogged or seeing their mothers beaten, until all members of society recognize the essential equality of men and women, no legislative action will be effective. They sensed that the key to the next major advance in civilization would be not merely the legal equality of women and men, but the respect of each partner in every private life for the sanctity of each other and their children. Until that time, fundamental advancement for society would be inhibited.

Ultimately, what Harriet and John's newswriting revealed was a fundamental difference between women's and children's interests on the one hand, and the head of household's interest on the other. As they pointed out in an animal abuse case, it was to the husband's advantage to pay the legal fine when he abused his horse, while the family would benefit from his imprisonment. They would benefit because if the head of the house were jailed, the family was spared a fortnight's beatings, the public disapproval of cruelty was enforced, and the prisoner would have time to reconsider his cruel actions. Harriet and John also noted that it was to the husband's advantage that divorce remain illegal, but not to the wife's advantage. If a man beats his wife and she reports him, and, if he is so unlucky as to be convicted, he is able to seek his revenge when his jail sentence ends since his wife cannot leave the marriage. He can even legally demand conjugal rights.[152]

Harriet and John's strongest argument regarding the difference between women's and men's roles in most relationships compared the current institution of marriage to slavery. The inequality of power between men and women paralleled that between slave-owners and slaves. Their rhetoric is unsparing: "Disgusting enough it is that animals like these should have wives and children; and disgusting that, merely because they are of the

151. CW: X, 213.
152. 118–119.

male sex, they should have the whole existence of these dependents as much under their absolute control as slave masters in any modern slave country have that of their slaves."[153] Harriet and John perceived that the unequal power relationship that typified Victorian marriages was at the root of domestic violence.[154]

Domestic abuse was caused by the unequal power afforded men and women. Violence also causes victims to become violent toward others. Just as individual relationships are ruined by abuse, so, too, is our social progress stunted by domestic tyranny.

Sexism in the Legal System Harriet and John exposed the sexist problems inherent in the entire judicial system, including police magistrates, juries, judges, sentences, the laws themselves, and even the Queen as the head of government because she remained silent on this women's issue. They wrote sarcastically about police magistrates[155] and mocked the "jury of respectable (!) yeomen."[156] Harriet and John noted the unlikelihood of a woman receiving justice from a group that by law excluded women. They wrote:

> At present it is very well known that women, in the lower ranks of life, do not expect justice from a bench or a jury of the male sex. They feel the most complete assurance that to the utmost limits of common decency, and often beyond, a tribunal of men will sympathize and take

153. 90.

154. According to Maeve Doggett, wife-beating was not perceived as "[having] anything to do with the nature of the marital relation generally." Clearly this was not true of Harriet and John's analysis (Doggett, 133).

By showing in case after case that women's concerns were not equivalent to men's, Harriet and John bequeathed to the women's movement in the United States and in Britain good ammunition to use in the struggle for enfranchisement. If domestic violence reveals the opposition of men's and women's interests, then the chief argument against women's suffrage—that women's and children's interests are the same as those of the head of the house—has been destroyed. Showing that the husband's and wife's points of view and values are different also challenged the "fiction of marital unity" that supported nearly all of the laws that refused married women the right to own property, have custody of children, or have legal standing. As early as 1850, Harriet and John radically opposed the myth of marital unity, laying the groundwork for the Married Women's Property Act, Married Women's Custody Act, as well as the laws against domestic violence that would be passed in the next decades.

155. "We know that the office of police magistrate is one to which a man is appointed usually because he is fit for nothing else; because, being too stupid to fill any other appointment, he is thought good enough to be the dispenser of law, justice, and moral instruction to those who most need all these" (96).

156. 100.

> part with the man. And accordingly they die in protracted torture, from incessantly repeated brutality without ever . . . claiming the protection of law.[157]

Judges treated women complainants only marginally better than the male jurors did, regularly urging women to submit to the abuse of their husbands by offering "a piece of kind advice to be gentle and submissive," [158] a practice Harriet and John publicized as unfair to women. Judges also leniently applied the law to men who murdered their wives, saying, "there had been 'chastisement of which [the judge] did not approve' but that there was no proof that the death of the victim was caused by the 'chastisement.'" [159] Even those entrusted by the government with dispensing justice could not be counted on to be fair to women.

According to Harriet and John, the most offensive element of sexism in the legal system involved unequal sentencing. Just as social activists currently point to racism in the inequality of sentencing between abusers of cocaine and crack in the United States, so did Harriet and John point to the fact that men often escaped with manslaughter convictions rather than murder convictions when they killed their wives:

> If the case had been reversed, and if the woman had been charged with killing the man [and the words 'I am going to kill you'] could have been proved to have been uttered by the wife—no matter under what circumstances of just exasperation—she would not have had a chance to escape a capital conviction. Is it because juries are composed of husbands in a low rank of life, that men who kill their wives almost invariably escape—wives who kill their husbands, never? How long will such a state of things be permitted to continue?[160]

Wives were more vulnerable than other women. When men kill unrelated women, they face the same penalty as killing a man, but if they kill their wives they are excused. Harriet and John concluded, "The vow to protect thus confers a license to kill."[161] Both jury and judges participated in handing out egregious sentences.

Even if the administration of the laws by police, juries, and judges

157. 87.
158. 87.
159. 111.
160. 111.
161. 124.

changed, the laws themselves still favored men in their sentencing of abusers. Aside from the inequity in the punishment of property crimes and violent crimes, the chief problem—the lack of protection for the victims of wife and child abuse—remained. Divorce was practically impossible in England during this period. Abusers returned from prison to live with their victims. There was therefore no incentive to prosecute an abuser. Harriet and John observed, "The sufferers themselves are either unable to complain, from youth or ignorance, or they dare not. They know too surely the consequences of either failing or succeeding in a complaint, when the law, after inflicting just enough punishment to excite the thirst of vengeance, delivers back the victim to the tyrant."[162] Then, as now, most women homicide victims were killed by their husbands (or ex-husbands), and most are slain after their partners leave home.[163] Women realistically feared both reporting abusive partners to the police and leaving them.

Harriet and John were particularly incensed that these injustices occurred under the reign of a female monarch. They complained, "There is not to be imagined a position so degraded, or so hopelessly miserable, as that of the women thus at the mercy of ruffians; and it is a deep disgrace to our Government that, in the fifteenth year of the reign of a woman, nothing has yet been done for their relief."[164] Assuming Queen Victoria read the newspaper, she must have been aware of the abuses Harriet and John pointed out.

Harriet and John fought through their newswriting to expose the sexism that permeated the judicial system from common jurors to the Queen herself. The solution to inequality in prosecuting, convicting, and sentencing offenders and protecting the victims of domestic violence required action at every level. Harriet and John's early campaign to enlighten the public about this problem began a crusade that continues today.

162. 104. Tomes notes that in London during the Victorian period, "Going to the police and swearing a warrant against her husband could be a very dangerous step for the wife. . . . When one man found out his wife had gotten a warrant for his arrest after a beating, he said, 'you ——, you want to swear my life away,' and stabbed her to death. Another husband said he 'would be hanged for her [murder] if she appeared against him in court.' A woman had acid thrown on her by an angry husband after she obtained a judicial separation from him. . . . Figures kept between 1850 and 1854 show that approximately 10% of all cases were dismissed because the female complainant failed to appear at the trial" (333).

163. "First Domestic Violence Courtroom Opens," *Mid-Illinois Newspapers,* October 15, 1993, A7, and Faludi, 360.

164. 126.

Domestic Violence and Property Rights Property, class, and money do not at first glance seem to be connected to the question of domestic violence. Harriet and John discovered that each of these concepts was indeed intertwined with the problem of abuse.

Domestic violence is inevitable, according to Harriet and John, when society teaches men to think of women as property like horses, asses, or slaves. The core of the problem is not merely the irascibility of a few men, but the marriage institution itself as it was practiced in Victorian England. In 1850 they wrote that men feel they have "a *right* to inflict almost any amount of corporal violence upon *their* wife or *their* children. That any one should claim to interfere with this supposed right causes them unaffected surprise. Is it not *their* wife or child? . . . They have the same right, in their own opinion, over their human as over their inanimate property." [165]

Harriet and John understood that this view of women as property was built into the language itself. Whenever wives or children were referred to in casual speech, the speakers typically used the possessive "my" or, in the third person, "their." "The baser part of the populace think that when a legal power is given to them over a living creature—when a person, like a thing, is suffered to be spoken of as their own—as *their* wife, or *their* child, or *their* dog—if such—they are justified in supposing that the worst they can do will be accounted but as a case of slight assault."[166] The co-authors even italicized all the instances of "their" in the text of this article to emphasize the power that word alone has for shaping our ideas and relationships.

Unfortunately, Harriet and John wrote as if they assumed that lower classes exhibited more domestic violence than middle class folks, despite the fact that they were intimately acquainted with Caroline's abuse from her middle-class husband. Harriet and John urged sympathetic reactions from their readers while maintaining the illusion that such events never or rarely occurred in their own class.[167] They did attempt to ground their

165. 116; original emphases.

166. 125.

167. They described the plight of lower-class women who didn't believe in the legal system (87); they pointed to the inequity of working-class mothers required to support illegitimate children while middle-class fathers felt free to abandon them or take them away from their mothers (92); they reminded middle- and upper-class citizens that although crime had generally been reduced and that those crimes that remained "have their source in poverty or cupidity, but not in ferocity,"

ideas about the frequency of crime in the lower classes by citing statistics found in the police reports, although in their news they ignored writing about the ways middle-class crimes were kept hidden from neighbors and the police.[168]

However, when a middle-class example, a barrister named Kenealy, beat his six-year-old son, they quickly pointed out the prejudice on the part of the judge who said, "no serious stain would attach to the character of Mr. Kenealy" for the abuse of his child: "Whether because the offender's station in life was nearer than usual to his own, or from a total absence of moral sense in the mind of the judge, we know not, but his address is almost an apology to the prisoner for convicting him."[169] Here they noticed the class bias in the judge's opinions.

Their writing indicates that Harriet and John perceived evidence that domestic violence manifested itself regardless of class, but they generally seemed blinded by the Victorian view that such unsavory behavior occurred only in poor homes among people who were not likely to read newspapers.[170]

The second connection they drew between domestic abuse and class or property focuses on property law. Harriet and John were certainly not the first journalists to raise the issue of the unequal sentencing between defendants convicted of property offenses and those convicted of violent crimes.[171] The articles they wrote were part of the general call for a fairer system of sentencing. In their news article on corporal punishment, Taylor and Mill stated the case clearly and forcefully. Punishing property crimes of the most minor sort (e.g., the theft of a pocketwatch) by transporting the criminal to Australia or by imprisonment for extended periods is un-

the reduction in criminal behavior is not true of "some classes of society" where there is "the habitual abuse of brute strength, and the indulgence of wanton cruelty" (101).

168. As James Hammerton points out in "Victorian Marriage and the Law of Matrimonial Cruelty," by the late 1850s, the new divorce court records revealed the fact that domestic violence permeated the upper classes; *Victorian Studies* 33 (Winter 1990): 276.

169. 120–121.

170. Elizabeth Cady Stanton was also convinced that rape and wife-beating occurred more often in the working classes. Elizabeth Pleck, "Feminist Responses to 'Crimes against Women,' 1868–96," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 8 (Spring 1983): 453.

171. *The Times* report of 28 October 1846 ran a leading article contrasting the punishments of the following three crimes: the theft of a pocket-handkerchief, an assault on another citizen, and the abuse of a woman. The thief received the most severe punishment while the soldier who abused a woman received only a slight punishment. This article concluded, "It is quite hopeless to attempt to find the principle upon which our criminal tribunals are guided in passing their sentences."

fair when compared to punishing violent crimes such as assault or even manslaughter with a fine or with short imprisonment. The following passage argues the point:

> If a brutal punishment can ever be appropriate, it is in the case of a brutal offence. Every day's police reports contain cases of ruffianly assaults, committed in the mere wantonness of brutality, against creatures whose sole offence is to be inferior in physical strength, oftenest of all against helpless children, or the slaves called wives, whose death, by a long continuance of personal torture, has of late been so frequently brought to light, and without a single exception so leniently passed over. . . . But who ever hears of corporal punishment for assault?. . . . while, if property is in question—if pounds, shillings, and pence have been tampered with, years of imprisonment, with hard labour (not to mention transportation) are almost the smallest penalty. . . . [this is the fault of laws and courts, not just police.] . . . They, it seems, have yet to learn that there is a thing infinitely more important than property—the freedom and sacredness of human personality; that there is an immeasurable distance in point of moral enormity between any the gravest offence which concerns property only, and an act of insulting and degrading violence perpetrated against a human being. Mankind could go on very well, have [*sic*] gone on in time past . . . with property very insecure. But subject to blows, or the fear of blows, they can be no other than soulless, terror-stricken slaves, without virtue, without courage, without peace, with nothing they dare call their own. Yet because persons in the upper and middle ranks are not subject to personal outrage, and are subject to have their watches stolen, the punishment of blows is revived, not for those who are guilty of blows, but for middle-aged men who pawn watches. Is this to be endured?[172]

Specifically, if a person were convicted of child abuse, the largest fine a judge could impose on the abuser was a £5 fine and the longest period the convicted could serve was two months, but for stealing five shillings, the thief could be transported to Australia or other colonies.[173] Harriet and John were equally insulted that middle-class people could buy the right to abuse others, since the law enabled those with money to pay a fine

172. 99.
173. 102; see also 90.

rather than to be imprisoned or transported.[174] Harriet and John attributed the unfairness to the likelihood that property crimes would victimize the upper and middle classes while violent crimes were restricted to lower classes, implying that the laws themselves benefit middle- and upper-class interests.

The laws protect material goods more than people, and yet because men see women as property they feel they have the right to treat their own possessions as they wish. Harriet and John's outrage at these beliefs is justified. Their assumption that lower classes were more prone to domestic abuse was not.

Suggestions for Improvement Finally, in their newswriting Harriet and John called for the institution of a number of new laws, as well as other types of social or judicial action to improve the legal system and reduce domestic violence. They felt that England should pass laws to recognize degrees and different types of assault and include more severe punishment for domestic abuse.[175] Assault on an innocent, defenseless child should be treated differently than a barroom brawl. Marriage laws also needed reform. They suggested that men convicted of abuse be required to support their wives financially with the promise that the wives should be free to separate: They never go so far as to say divorce, but the idea hovers around the discussion.[176] They also urged Parliament to pass a Declaratory Act "distinctly setting forth that it is not lawful for a man to strike his wife, any more than to strike his brother or his father."[177] Not until the Jackson Decision in 1891 did English law clearly forbid husbands to beat their wives, thus enforcing the improvement Harriet and John sought.

Throughout these articles, they insisted that the police, judges, and laws themselves influenced the moral behavior of the convicted as well as those who merely read or heard about them. Each time police failed to intervene,

174. 90 and 127.

175. 102–103, 117, 125.

176. Harriet and John believed the conviction of domestic violence "should free the victim from the obligation of living with the oppressor, and from all compulsory subjection to his power—leaving him under the same legal obligation as before of affording the sufferer the means of support" (119). The simple right to leave an abuser who is still required to continue to financially support the victim is still not universally acknowledged.

177. 117. That the law was not clear on this issue is apparent from the fact, pointed to by Doggett, that "legal textbook writers had been assuring their readers, right up until 1891, that a husband was entitled to 'coerc[e] his wife into domestic habits'" (32–33).

or judges were lenient on abuse, or the laws punished defendants more severely for stealing a few shillings than for beating a woman, the public learned that society accepted the unjust treatment of women.[178] Everyone in the legal system needed to recognize that each magistrate, juror, and lawyer has an obligation to educate the public, especially women, about their rights under the law.[179]

Changes in the laws, however, would never be enough. Through their journalism, Harriet and John called for activism on the part of local police, church officials, and friends and relatives of abuse victims.[180] The community needed to be educated about their responsibility in bringing abusers to justice and in offering emotional and legal support for victims of domestic violence. Legal improvements will not provide all that is necessary for the transformation of society into a better state.

Like detectives who have unraveled a mystery, Harriet and John finally arrived at one of the origins of domestic violence: violence against children in the home. They argued that if society expects to advance and to achieve the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people, it must raise children without violence. They proposed: "We conscientiously believe that more large and lasting good, both present and future, to the moral and social character of the whole people, would be achieved by . . . [outlawing domestic as well as judicial corporal punishment], than fifty years of legislative efforts without it would be required to supply."[181] To those who believed that violence was necessary in order to break children's wills, they replied, "It is as possible to govern children without the aid of

178. Harriet and John stated, "It would show a profound ignorance of the effect of moral agencies on the character not to perceive how deeply depraving must be the influence of such a lesson given from the seat of justice" (103).

179. 87.

180. 111.

181. 98. They were convinced that the elimination of violence in the punishment of children, either in the legal system, schools, or in the home would result in the most improvement in society. Given the resistance in many quarters, even today, to eliminating spanking as a disciplinary tool either in schools or home, Harriet and John's call to cease corporal punishment for children seems hopelessly idealistic. When the Queen refused to have a person who had shot at her flogged, they hoped she would go further and ban flogging altogether: "Would that her Majesty would take in hand this vast and vital question of the extinction of personal violence by the best and surest means—the illegalizing of corporal punishment, domestic as well as judicial, at any age" (98). Flogging had been virtually abandoned as a public punishment of adults for even the most severe crimes, but ironically, it was still upheld as an appropriate punishment for children. Harriet and John asked, "Why does not the unbrutal part of the public . . . demand of the legislature how much longer the flogging of children shall be sanctioned by law?" (121).

the lash as grown persons. . . . A parent or teacher who cannot rule without the lash shows as much incapacity as brutality."[182] The solution to the problem of society's failure to advance morally, economically, and politically cannot be achieved simply by legislative action, but must include the private politics of the family itself.[183]

Harriet and John's writing on violence in the home was not a side issue separate from their overall desire to find the "greatest happiness for the greatest number of people."[184] They believed they had a solution to a problem that had haunted radical philosophers: Why was human progress stymied? Harriet and John uncovered the disease at the heart of the engine of a society: the family. Child abuse and wife abuse both infected the basic social relationship, and no fundamental improvement in the whole society could result unless this virus was destroyed.[185] If domestic violence explained the lack of advancement in society, then the problem could be overcome, and opponents who claimed an inherent incapacity on the part of some classes (or races or gender) to advance socially, morally, or economically could be shown to be incorrect.

Even from the perspective of the twenty-first century, after sociologists, feminists, and psychologists have probed this issue intensely, virtually all of Harriet and John's views on this topic remain relevant. They were cor-

182. 121.

183. My evaluation of the news writings supports Eldon Eisenach's position that self-reform and political reform must occur in conjunction with one another. Eldon J. Eisenach, "Self-Reform as Political Reform in the Writings of John Stuart Mill," *Utilitas* 1, no. 2 (November 1, 1989): 242–258.

My analysis also lends credence to Susan Mendus's view that Harriet and John's belief that private lives are political and that the need for a complete revision of the moral relations between men and women is necessary. Susan Mendus, "John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor on Women and Marriage," *Utilitas* 6, no. 2 (November 1994): 287–299. Neither of these authors cites the news articles in support of their respective cases. The threat of domestic violence and its corrupting influence on the family are important elements in the relationship between the sexes that Mendus fails to note. But I agree with both authors that the philosophy of Harriet and John was much more radical than many interpreters of John have realized; that is, Harriet and John realized the limitation of merely legal and political reform.

184. Harriet and John did not stop their investigation of the effects of domestic violence when their collaborative newspaper series ended. Both separately and together they continued to explore the ramifications of domestic battering.

185. As Anne Robson notes, "Harriet Taylor's interest in cases of domestic brutality, whatever its origins, profoundly influenced John Stuart Mill's understanding of the present condition of society and its historical development. [Domestic brutality] had provided an environmental cause —and hence a remediable one—of the condition of the working classes to refute the anti-democratic assumption of the innate brutishness of the lower orders." See John Stuart Mill, *Collected Works of John Start Mill: Newspaper Writings*, ed. Anne P. Robson and John M. Robson, introduction by Anne P. Robson, vol. 22 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), xcvi.

rect in their recognition of the cycle of violence that transforms abused into abusers. They were correct in their understanding of the psychological damage to women and children who are abused. They were correct in their realization that domestic violence is a festering social problem that reveals one of the basic power relations in marriage that is the source for many of the inequalities that women experience. Their sarcasm and their anger may surprise contemporary readers, but I believe their tone proved a useful tool in stimulating Victorian readers to think seriously about this important crime and to react with moral outrage.[186]

Collaboration on On Liberty

As early as the summer of 1853, John indicates in a letter to Harriet that the next book they plan to write will be their "best."

> But I shall never be satisfied unless you allow our best book, the book which is to come, to have our *two* names in the title page. It ought to be so with everything I publish, for the better half of it all is yours, but the book which will contain our best thoughts, if it has only one name to it, that should be yours. I should like every one to know that I am the Dumont & you the originating mind, the Bentham, bless her![187]

Like Dumont, who made Bentham's ideas intelligible to the public, so John hoped to present a coherent text that would combine Harriet's insights. The book was titled *On Liberty,* a classic that is still part of the philosophy canon.

Both Harriet and John were critically ill during 1853, so they did no more work on the manuscript until 1855. In January 1855, from Rome, John wrote to Harriet, recalling that liberty was "an idea we have talked about & thought that the best thing to write & publish at present."[188] However, John did no writing on his six-month trip through Italy and Greece. Near the end of the trip, he eagerly anticipated "resuming old occupations & beginning again to write something that may be useful after us."[189] They

186. "Starting in the 1850s other radical feminists, particularly Amelia Bloomer, Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, declared that wife-beating was symptomatic of women's general oppression within marriage" (Glenn, 21–22).
187. CW: XIV, 112.
188. CW: XIV, 294.
189. CW: XIV, 453.

must have worked diligently on the manuscript from June 1855 when they were again reunited, since within eighteen months John wrote to his publisher, Parker, that he'd have a new book ready by May 1857.[190] Nine months hence, John again stated that the new book on "Liberty" would be finished by the following winter.[191] But Harriet and John could not let go of the manuscript. They hoped to complete their final revision the winter after John retired from India House, in 1858. Harriet's death prevented this work, so John submitted *On Liberty* to his publisher in the same month that Harriet died. He wrote, "I can at least put in order for publication what had been already written in concert with her."[192]

On Liberty looks disdainfully at the Victorian practice of education, religion, and morality, and passionately pleads for a new "atmosphere of freedom" that will foster human development. The picture of the world as Harriet and John knew it was not pretty. Most people are mediocre and want to have their thinking done for them.[193] They are naturally intolerant and moral cowards.[194] The masses rarely practice religious tolerance unless they simply no longer care about religious questions.[195] Religious intolerance is particularly evident in the revival of bigotry witnessed in that same era. No public leader then (as now) will publicly confess his or her disbelief in God for fear of public opinion.[196] Christianity trains humans to be submissive and stunts moral development by focusing on "thou shalt not" instead of "thou shalt."[197] Instead of working to discover moral principles, people sink into pre-ordained moral and professional patterns without any attempt to form their own character or decide their own fate.[198] What is considered right and wrong is dictated by those with power—specifically by men and the rich.[199] The moral code is reinforced by social intolerance of anyone who diverges from the common mores. Thus, the majority lack moral courage and tremble at the thought of being spurned by neighbors and friends.[200] The most obvious example of the moral complacency of

190. CW: XV, 519.
191. CW: XV, 539.
192. CW: XV, 578.
193. CW: XVIII, 268–269/HTM 138. See pp. 15, 33, 37 above.
194. CW: XVIII, 222/HTM 8, 137–138; 149 fn. 39. See pp. 33, 36–37, 222 above.
195. CW: XVIII, 222/HTM 24, 138, 147; and CW: XIV, 18. See pp. 16, 26, 150–153 above.
196. CW: XVIII, 239–240, 257/HTM 93, 138, 163, 370. See pp. 36, 150–153 above.
197. CW: XVIII, 256/HTM 147, 159, 226, 161–162, 374. See pp. 150–153 above.
198. CW: XVIII, 266/HTM 8, 96, 138–39, 145–47. See pp. 33–34 above.
199. CW: XVIII, 221/HTM 146 fn. 31, 147–48. See p. 36 above.
200. CW: XVIII, 241/HTM 8–9, 139, 142, 147. See p. 34 above.

this generation is revealed by its constant use of trite proverbs instead of considered moral judgments.[201]

Not only are most people moral pygmies, they are also intellectual dwarfs. When those who think differently do not have the freedom to express their opinions, everyone loses. Those who hold erroneous ideas lose the chance to learn the truth, causing the perpetuation of false beliefs. Those who have valid views lose the chance to clarify and to invigorate the arguments supporting their position.[202] Even Victorian universities fail to teach critical thinking, so that those with the "best" education are not taught to think for themselves, but rather to cram in "facts" on the basis of authority.[203] In short, the reigning intellectual and moral slavery cuts off the very possibility for humans as a whole to develop.

In contrast to the way the world is, Harriet and John sing the praises of a world where freedom rings. The following quotation sounds the theme that will echo throughout the book: "The grand, leading principle, toward which every argument unfolded in these pages directly converges, is the absolute and essential importance of human development in its richest diversity,"[204] and, as they say later, "The only unfailing and permanent source of improvement is liberty."[205] Liberty must include expressing one's thoughts and opinions, publishing one's ideas, following one's own pursuits, and assembling with whomever one chooses.[206]

Fully cultivating an individual or a society requires open discussion and speculation.[207] *On Liberty* includes some of the most moving passages defending open, critical, Socratic thinking. It is a statement of faith in a liberal education meant to train the mind and leave it free to discover truth for itself. Harriet and John encourage teachers to act as devil's advocates who present the most unacceptable positions with as much force and persuasiveness as possible so that students have the opportunity to test their beliefs in a cauldron of discussion and debate.[208] Such an education remains the goal for every undergraduate teacher worthy of the name.

The Socratic method Harriet and John used to present their ideas in this

201. CW: XVIII, 250/HTM 143–48. See pp. 36–37 above.
202. CW: XVIII, 229, 238/HTM 65, 241. See p. 227 above.
203. CW: XVIII, 245/HTM 6, 8, 13, 46, 66. See pp. 25, 227 above.
204. CW: XVIII, 215. See p. 34 above.
205. CW: XVIII, 272. See p. 222 above.
206. CW: XVIII, 225–226/HTM 138, 241. See p. 16 above.
207. CW: XVIII, 242/HTM 140, 232. See p. 16 above.
208. CW: XVIII, 244–247/HTM 46, 66, 138–141, 187. See pp. 35–36 above.

text and in their personal lives is the very method they proclaim[209]: "The only way in which a human being can make some approach to knowing the whole of a subject is by hearing what can be said about it by persons of every variety of opinion."[210] Even outside the classroom, the general public needs newspapers, books, and speakers who are free to proclaim even the most outrageous ideas. Those who are in the midst of such an intellectual debate may not receive the most benefit because their competitive urges may make them ignore their opponents' good ideas, but those who hear such a debate benefit. Everyone is improved, if just a little, when a variety of positions are spoken by those who present them persuasively.[211] Most of what is learned prior to college was then and is still learned by rote on the basis of authority. If the teacher or textbook asserts that something is true, it is. Do parallel lines meet? No. Why? The geometry book and teacher say so. The possibility of a mathematical system in which parallel lines converge never enters most freshmen's minds. They know "the truth" because someone told them. Very often we come closer to the truth when we reconcile opposites. People approach truth for themselves if they hear the full debate of an issue. At least, "there is always hope when people are forced to listen to both sides."[212]

These freedoms are not merely academic, but they also include the freedom to act, to experiment, to stumble and fall, to choose one's own path through life. If I am to develop to my potential, I must choose to marry or not, choose whom I marry, choose my career, choose my entertainments, vices, and desires.[213] I must especially be "sovereign" over my own "body and mind."[214] Only I can decide when and with whom I have sex, or fall in love, or offer my kidney as a transplant. In training our passions, the goal is to emulate Pericles—a person capable of sensual and intellectual pleasures—not the abstemiousness of John Knox or the promiscuity of Alcibiades.[215] But only I can decide where on this spectrum I want to live.

Humans are not machines but organic beings who can develop only through interpreting experience in their own ways.[216] When individuals

209. CW: XVIII, 228–259/HTM 55–73. See p. 222 above.
210. CW: XVIII, 232/HTM 139–141. See p. 16 above.
211. CW: XVIII, 243/HTM 144 fn. 21. See pp. 227–228 above.
212. CW: XVIII, 257/HTM 19, 46, 144. See p. 16 above.
213. CW: XVIII, 260–261/HTM 6, 13, 54, 57, 66, 231, 518. See pp. 16, 22, 179, 227–228 above.
214. CW: XVIII, 224/HTM 6, 7, 9, 11, 13—among others. See pp. 22, 39 above.
215. CW: XVIII, 266/HTM 18, 226. See p. 20 above.
216. CW: XVIII, 262–63/HTM 138, 531, 538, 543. See pp. 24–25 above.

have the freedom and the boldness to dig into the marrow of life as Thoreau did and to see what kind of life suits him or her, everyone benefits. The surrounding community has its eyes opened to new potentiality. New prospects are particularly important to those who, like women and workers, have little freedom.[217] The first women truck drivers or airplane bombers in the United States helped create an atmosphere of freedom even for those who had no desire to be either.[218]

Freedom must extend wide and far with only one "simple principle" to rein it in: The "only reason to interfere with liberty is to prevent harm to others."[219] If a person does harm only to herself by falling in love with a loser, by gaining three hundred pounds, or by drinking herself silly at home each evening, we can try to persuade her to see the damage she suffers or we can avoid her as a bad example, but the law should not force her to stop what the majority perceive as acts which harm her alone.[220] As a society and as parents we must use natural consequences. If a child harms himself he must suffer the results of his poor choice.[221] If a worker is lazy, he must accept the lower pay or lack of employment that results. (Their critique of some practices of socialism is quite explicit).[222]

Harriet and John go on to consider how this principle applies in specific cases including blue laws, polygamy, selling opiate to the Chinese, gun registration, drunkenness, work for welfare, public indecency, fornication, gambling, pimping, sin taxes, divorce, domestic violence, education, and marriage of the poor. Domestic violence is a clear case in which the law should intercede to prevent harm done to another, but fornication between consenting adults is none of the society's business.[223] Much of the work of constitutional law in the United States over the last one hundred and fifty years has been done in an attempt to determine what defines freedom and when restrains should be imposed to prevent harmful acts to others. It is not simple to implement this principle, but it continues to be one of the guiding concepts for defining the limits of government.

When there is little freedom, everyone suffers, even if individuals don't

217. CW: XVIII, 266, 269/HTM 57. See pp. 223–224 above.
218. CW: XVIII, 269/HTM 138–139. See pp. 223–224 above.
219. CW: XVIII, 223/HTM 19. See p. 16 above.
220. CW: XVIII, 276/HTM 20. See pp. 16, 20 above.
221. CW: XVIII, 279–280/HTM 149, 467–470. See pp. 208–209, 212 above.
222. CW: XVIII, 287/HTM 314. See p. 212 above.
223. CW: XVIII, 301/HTM 61 fn. 42, 126–131, and newswriting on domestic violence. CW: XVIII, 296/HTM 19, 23. See pp. 20, 229–245 above.

realize it. People suffer by not learning new truths and by the stagnancy of retaining whatever truths they do hold. When society allows an atmosphere of freedom, everyone benefits, even those who continue to live a bourgeois life. No great state or culture can develop without the "vital power" that comes from a population weaned on liberty of thought and action.

These are the ideas in *On Liberty.* If you've been looking carefully at the footnotes for this section you will have noted two sets of numbers beside each idea found here. One number is the location of the idea in *On Liberty.* The other number is the location of the idea in Harriet's writing. Each idea—I repeat, each idea—I have summarized from *On Liberty* can be found in Harriet's work, much of it written in the 1830s. In his *Autobiography,* John writes that during 1856–1858 "my wife and I were working together at the 'Liberty.'"[224] For the first time, Harriet and John could pull together their ideas, including those Harriet wrote during the first months of their relationship.

Despite the dedication to *On Liberty* that reads in part, "To the beloved and deplored memory of her who was . . . in part the author . . . Like all that I have written for many years, it belongs as much to her as to me," and despite his claiming in 1853 that this book should either have both their names as authors, or if only one, hers, only John's name appears on the book. Why?

In addition to the predictable observation that a book by J. S. Mill would receive a fairer hearing than one by John and Harriet Mill, John may have also hesitated to place Harriet's name on a text he feared would be seen as "an infidel book." In a letter to George Holyoake (the infamous atheist), John declared that although the book was likely to be perceived so, "I would rather that people were not prompted to call it so."[225] The tirade against Christianity in *On Liberty* and the questioning of the belief in God were the most stridently anti-religious writing yet published in Mill's name. Harriet's private views on religion were even stronger than the anti-religious ideas published by either of them. John, however, was far more conscious of the sanctions an author might suffer for stating such unpopular beliefs. Helen later chastised John for pretending that he wasn't an atheist when running for parliament, thus confirming that John was more

224. CW: I, 249.
225. CW: XV, 593.

publicly conservative on religious issues than Harriet would have been.[226] Harriet no doubt co-authored the anti-religious examples, but John may have wanted paternalistically to shield her name from potentially intense criticism of the book. Whatever the excuse John gave himself for not placing Harriet's name as co-author of the book, anyone who now studies all of Harriet's drafts and John's letters concerning their work will find it difficult not to conclude that she is the co-author of this classic.

Conclusion

Harriet's influence appears in other books that were published in John's name after her death. As early as 1832, Harriet urged John to teach that "the higher the kind of enjoyment, the greater the degree."[227] This distinction between kind and amount of pleasure is the core of *Utilitarianism* published in 1861, but written in 1854 while Harriet was still alive.[228] In addition, Stillinger has carefully documented the many ways in which Harriet contributed to John's *Autobiography;* of interest is his article, "Who Wrote J. S. Mill's *Autobiography*?"[229]

Nevertheless, most "Mill" scholars continue to discount Harriet's collaboration. Every author incorporates the echoes of conversations and shadows of texts that she or he has read but may have consciously forgotten. When working closely with another person, where is the line drawn between friendly suggestions, editorial corrections, minor stylistic changes, close collaboration, and co-authorship. The privilege of claiming sole authorship is a position of power that men rarely give up, even when their wives or partners clearly deserve the label. Women's voices are often overlooked in history because they are hidden by their collaborators.[230] Yet

226. M/T LIII/149 John's later discovery of Charlotte Brontë's harsh words about the author of "The Enfranchisement of Women" suggests that John's concern about his wife's reputation was well-founded.

227. 24.

228. Packe, 420.

229. Jack Stillinger. "Who Wrote J. S. Mill's *Autobiography*?" *Victorian Studies: A Journal of the Humanities, Arts and Sciences* 27, no. 1 (1983): 7–23. I disagree with his characterization of Harriet's contributions (e.g., wicked sister-in-law or Victorian prude). I believe Stillinger's list of alterations between the first and last draft is complete. Stillinger concludes that the autobiography has "two authors" (10)—a dramatic change from his 1969 declaration that Harriet had only made "ordinary wifely" additions to the text noted in the beginning quotes in this chapter.

230. A number of books and articles, including Andrea Gabor, *Einstein's Wife: Work and Marriage in the Lives of Five Great Twentieth-Century Women* (New York: Viking, 1995), Kate and Edward Fullbrook, *Simone de Beauvoir and Jean-Paul Sartre: The Remaking of a Twentieth-Century*

scholars are equally reluctant to believe John when he proclaimed publicly and privately that their work was done jointly.

Francine Deutsch claims in *Halving It All* that "strong women and reasonable men" are required in order to persuade men to give up the privilege of superiority and do their fair share of childcare.[231] The same combination of personality traits may be required to attribute authorship equitably. No one gives up an advantage without being persuaded by a compelling argument that the privilege is unjust. Whether negotiating your husband's right to put up his feet at the end of a day and let you cook supper and put the kids to bed, or arguing over your partner's claim that he is sole author with a nod to your additions in the acknowledgments page, strong women must fight to convince reasonable men that inequality is unacceptable. Authors who accurately acknowledge co-authorship are persuaded by forceful arguments, not bullied into inaccurately describing the writing process. Men who fail to share childcare equally or who refuse to publicize their collaboration often portray men who succeed in living equally with women as henpecked and wimpish. I suspect that many philosophers are threatened by the arguments that Harriet was co-author because they do not want to admit that what they claim as their own work should also be described as collaborative.

John's handwritten bibliography cites a number of texts as "a joint production with my wife" or as work in which John "acted chiefly as amanuensis to my wife."[232] I believe him. He is to be commended for his honesty, and other scholars should stop calling his statements "extravagant."[233]

I am disappointed that John did not designate Harriet as co-author of *On Liberty* as he intended when they began to write the text. With her death, the strong woman was no longer present to insist that John be reasonable. The decision to point to her contributions only in the dedication may have been the patronizing protection of his dead wife's legacy, or it may be the reassertion of male privilege. (My doubts are heightened by

Legend (New York: Basic Books, 1994), and Jim Holt, "Whose Idea Is It, Anyway? A Philosophers' Feud," *Lingua Franca* (February 1996): 29–39, demonstrate that men continued to hide women's work into the twentieth century.

231. Francine M. Deutsch, *Halving It All: How Equally Shared Parenting Works* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999), 81.

232. Ney MacMinn, J. R. Hainds, and James McNab McCrimmon, eds., *Bibliography of the Published Writings of John Stuart Mill* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1945), x.

233. Ibid.

John's return to sexist language in *Logic* and his sliding back to more conservative views of women's equality in *The Subjection of Women.*)

Scholars, too, have been disappointed with the dedication in *On Liberty,* but for the opposite reason. They not only want to dismiss the textual and biographical evidence of collaboration, but also insist that even the dedication is too extreme. They want this classic preserved as John's solo. You may read the parallel passages in Harriet's early work and *On Liberty* cited in the footnotes and judge for yourself. I believe you will be as convinced as I am that *On Liberty* is shared work.

I hope that you have had a chance to shake hands with Harriet, and I apologize if you have gotten your hands dirty. Although I think you may find that her philosophical works concerning domestic violence, the prostitution of marriage, and the need to escape established religion are nasty, I believe you will also find them important in the sense that Wittgenstein suggests:

> You see I know that it's difficult to think *well* about 'certainty,' 'probability,' 'perception,' etc. But it is, if possible, still more difficult to think, or *try* to think really honestly about your life and other people's lives. And the trouble is that thinking about these things is *not thrilling,* but often downright nasty. And when it's nasty then it's *most* important.[234]

Harriet's voice was self-confident, angry, and passionate. Her love for her children and her desire for equality for women motivated her. Harriet saw herself as a philosopher as well as a mother—refusing to give up either identity. She lovingly listened to Herby's "ur, ur, ur," eagerly consulted Haji on contemporary politics, and steadfastly encouraged Lily's love of nature and thought. She wrote by and for herself. Harriet also co-authored texts, sometimes without and sometimes with the acknowledgement of her partner.[235] She shouldered the burden of a second shift.

Harriet's cries of injustice and arguments on how to make the world better must not be forgotten. We must strain to hear a voice that has been muffled and distorted. Instead of seeing Harriet as a frigid woman, bad mother, and whiny wife, we must try to remember Harriet living in a crowded rowhouse south of London during her childhood, writing poems

234. Quoted in Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Public Man, Private Woman: Women in Social and Political Thought* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1981), xi.

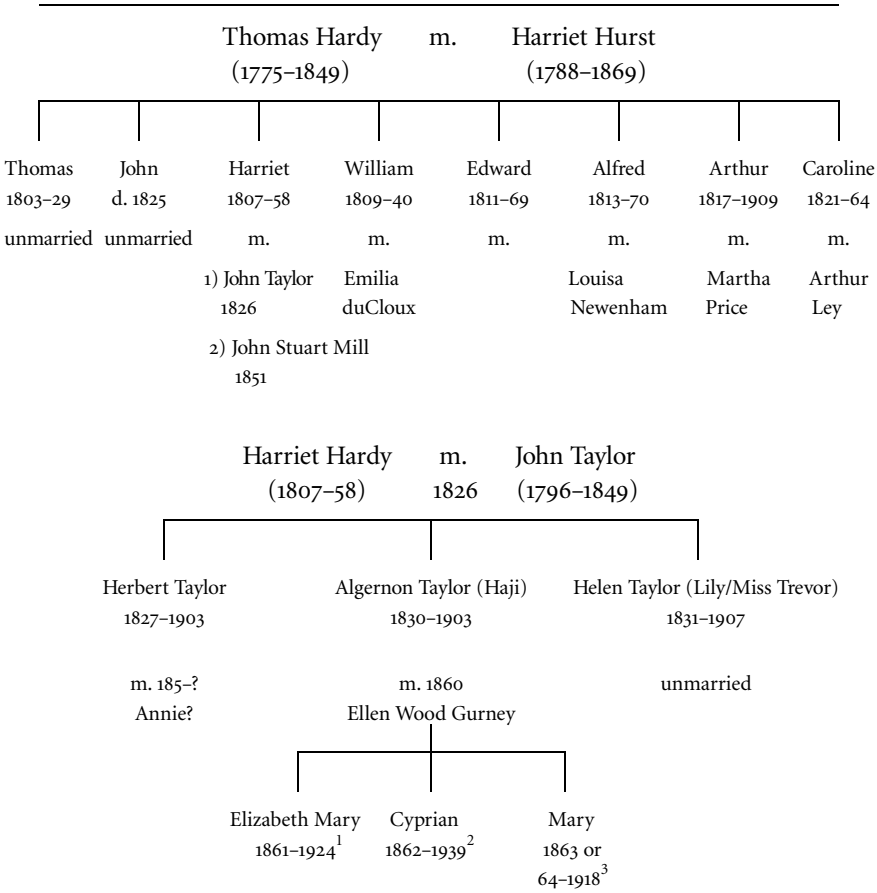
235. William Fox and William Bridges Adams did not acknowledge her work; nor did John in some of her minor additions to *Logic* and other early works. See Chapter 1.

to her babies, eating grapes in the sensual Paris autumn with John after separating from her husband, walking along the sea coast with her children singing in the moonlight, nursing her husband through his final bitter illness, receiving word of her sister's abuse, and working on manuscripts that reflected her own as well as John's ideas. Let us no longer ignore the spunky clamor of Harriet asking, "Can you hear me now?"

The power of sight that made Medusa a monster made Perseus a hero.[236]

236. Anne Higonnet, "Myths of Creation: Camille Claudel & Auguste Rodin," in *Significant Others: Creativity and Intimate Partnership,* ed. Whitney Chadwick and Isabelle de Courtivron (London: Thames and Hudson, 1993), 15.

Hardy Family Tree



1. A copy of a family tree found in the Mill/Taylor Collection comments: "paralyzed but sane."

2. A copy of a family tree found in the Mill/Taylor Collection comments: "suffer[ed] for forty years from religious mania of Folie circulaire. was removed in 1899 from Totnes Union Workhouse to Asylum, had before been Midshipman in Navy."

3. A copy of a family tree found in the Mill/Taylor Collection comments: "at Northumberland House after having been certified."

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