

A Celebrated Woman:

The Life and Times of Florence Nightingale, the Influence of her Essay "Cassandra" on John Stuart Mill's "The Subjection of Women" and Some Reflections on Nightingale and the Status of Women Today

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Introduction

Thesis Statement

This thesis will examine Nightingale's feminist ethic and philosophy and her influence on one of Mill's great utilitarian pieces, "The Subjection of Women". Through letters and Suggestions for Thought Mill saw a side of Nightingale that, at the time, very few others had ever seen – a woman desperate to pursue what she considered her life's work but was being held back by the strictures of proper behaviour and family life. Nightingale's text "Cassandra", which gave Mill this picture, substantially influenced Mill's work, "The Subjection of Women". This thesis will analyse Nightingale's influence on "The Subjection of Women" within the essay and then attribute the influence within a historical context. It is this author's hope that through works like this one, Nightingale will once again be seen as a serious thinker as opposed to a legendary force and that others will begin to look at her other works, which include nursing ethics, poor law reform, military reform, hospital reform, sanitary reform, public healthcare, and many other initiatives. Her academic work has lived in the obscurity of her popular legend and it is time for it to come into the light.

This thesis seeks to illuminate "The Woman Question" which weighed heavily on the minds of the Victorians. This is partially due to the contracted role that women began to play in the home compared to their predecessors and because women chafed at the lack of rights accompanied by their legal and social status. There is a rich history of women entering the realm of rights discourse to bring attention to their own plights – from Harriet Martineau and Frances Power Cobbe to Helen Taylor and Mona Caird (Abrams and Greenblatt, Debate 1719). There is no shortage of thought and opinion on the matter (Abrams and Greenblatt, Victorian 1055). The status of women was changing. The debate centered on "how women were regarded, and

regarded themselves, as members of a society” (Abrams and Greenblatt, *Women* 1057). Two very notable voices in the debate were Mill and Nightingale. As a contemporary of Mill, Nightingale’s contribution to early feminism was not writing her essay but establishing a respectable employment option for women. Nightingale created the nursing services and formal training institutions. From a modern perspective Nightingale had a very vocal and emotional complaint amongst her private papers which was only widely available after her death.

Mill, on the other hand, was very active in the women’s rights debate from very early on and his other major works centered on the idea of personal liberty. Mill’s views on personal liberty were carried into his ideas for governance and these combined ideas then overflowed into women’s suffrage. Mill is widely recognised as a strong advocate for women. While serving as a Member of Parliament he was:

(...) ridiculed in the comic press for his support of the ‘fanciful’ rights of women. Cartoonists frequently dressed him in women’s clothes, and referred to him as the ‘women’s member’ (Reeves n. pag).



“Miss Mill joins the Ladies”
July, 25 November, 1868, pp. 46-7

(Proctor n. pag)

Reeves’ work on Mill includes a political cartoon of Mill in a Victorian evening gown – complete with wig and fan, as seen above – leaving the dining room to join the ladies in the

drawing room, dated November 1868. Mill was the “moving spirit” (Reeves 7) in the National Society for Women’s Suffrage; the society that his step daughter founded and was the first member of parliament to draft and try to pass legislation regarding the vote for women (Reeves 7). Reeves gives him further credit: “British Feminism has many mothers, but only one father” (Reeves 7). Mill’s voice rings loud and clear throughout the debate and he makes many appearances in print and in parliament to further the issue (Reeves 218). Clearly, Mill is a very prominent figure in the debate surrounding women’s rights in Victorian England. Nightingale was less prominent on this issue, in print, during the Victorian Era. It was much later that Nightingale became important to the feminist movement through the posthumous publication of her three volume work on philosophy and theology, Suggestions for Thought (McDonald, First Hand 179). The second volume became of most interest to the feminist movement and feminist scholars, it contains the essay known as “Cassandra” and is a diatribe on the plight of Victorian women, “Cassandra” was written when Nightingale was severely depressed and forced to stay at home to nurse her sister (Abrams and Greenblatt, Nightingale 1734) and was of utmost interest to Mill in his long correspondence with Nightingale in the mid Victorian era.

Both Mill and Nightingale wrote about the enfranchisement of women during a period of great oppression. Quite clearly there is a philosophical question occupying Mill and Nightingale’s texts as both pieces are expositions based in rights discourse, although they approach the issue in drastically different ways. Mill’s essay specifically examines the legal rights of women in England at the time and suggests that they actually have no rights as a population, that they are slaves within the household. Nightingale’s essay specifically examines rights from a personal perspective. She states that within the family women have no rights to anything for themselves, not even their time. Mill’s essay is a legal rights discourse, whereas

Nightingale is writing about the non-formal rights structure and hierarchy within families. The philosophical question examined in “Cassandra”, and to a lesser extent, the broader work of Suggestions for Thought, is equality for the sexes. Mill’s text also centres on this question and later would play a pivotal role in the women’s movement:

After its 1869 publication in England and America, Mill’s ‘The Subjection of Women’ was quickly adopted by the leaders of the suffrage movement as the definitive analysis of the position of women in society, American suffragists sold copies of the book at their conventions: at the age of seventy-nine, American reformer Sarah Grimké went door to door in her hometown to sell one hundred copies (Abrams and Greenblatt, Mill 1155).

While there are many female authors in this debate, there are few male authors and fewer still who weigh in on the side of enfranchisement for women. Beyond that, Mill’s very public support and status as an intellectual of the age gives him a peculiar authority when it comes to liberalism. As for the unique approach that Nightingale brings to the debate, it is the pervasive sense of rebellion that permeates her work:

In some households such discontent, whether godly or ungodly, led to a daughter’s open rebellion. A remarkable instance was Florence Nightingale, who found life in the 1850s intolerably pointless (...) (Abrams and Greenblatt, Debate 1720).

Perhaps Woolf’s description is more accurate: “Virginia Woolf put her finger on what troubled them when she described ‘Cassandra’ as more like screaming than writing” (Bostridge 373).

However, what is possibly the unique aspect of both Mill and Nightingale’s works in this debate is the idea that the family could be instrumental in the subordination of women; in terms of the writing of the age, the family was an exalted sphere. The writers that focus on “the woman question” typically examine the rights and enfranchisement of women. Few writers focused on the roles that women already had in society and how this perpetuated the disenfranchisement of the gender.

The idea of family as a tool of subjection illustrates the influence of Nightingale on Mill's work, "The Subjection of Women". Volume two is centered on the rights and spaces of women. The family plays a major role in "Cassandra" as the tool of the perpetuation of the social norms and the continued subjugation of women. Nightingale focuses a great deal of her writing energies on this theme, from the "Theory of Daughters", "The Craving of Women for real Work", "Marriage 'all a Woman's life,' Why?", and "Daughters must follow Parents' Mode of Life" as individual chapter headings in her discussion of religious philosophy before "Cassandra". This argument is repeated in chapter three of "The Subjection of Women", Mill examines closely the idea that the family could contribute to the subordination of women. While most of Mill's essay focuses on the relationship between men and women, the dominant and subordinate relationship, there is a small portion that examines how this relationship is perpetuated through society by the family group and its internal mechanisms.

This thesis is also an examination of the relationship between Nightingale and Mill during the time period that Mill was in the process of writing "The Subjection of Women". This thesis examines their essays "Cassandra" and "The Subjection of Women" and compares certain passages to highlight where Nightingale may have influenced Mill and where the direct quotation of Nightingale can be found in Mill's text. This thesis will also examine their correspondence as there were many letters exchanged while Mill was commenting on Suggestions for Thought and the essay within volume two "Cassandra".

Public ethics as a discipline is intended to examine the ethics within issues that affect society or with ethical issues on a large scale. Public ignorance and obscurity due to legend are two rather large ethical issues that one typically encounters when looking at women in history. Walker discusses the idea of truth in history in her book Moral Understandings:

The underlying moral idea – that securing the truth in the wake of serious wrongs is a matter of moral urgency for societies and a duty of justice to those who have suffered (...). Current (...) understandings about a right to truth emphasize an entitlement of the victims to have truths material to gross abuses sought and established, to *be told* and *have told* the truth of their violation and loss. I argue also that rights to truth must encompass a right to *voice*: and entitlement to witness one's experience of violation out of one's own mouth and in one's terms (Walker 214-215).

History is written by the victor, as the adage states, and as a result few people know and fully understand the contributions of women thinkers to overall academic thought and social reform (McDonald, Founders 1). According to Beauchamp and Childress this is considered as an issue for justice:

These accounts interpret justice as fair, equitable, and appropriate treatment in light of what is due or owed to persons. Standards of justice are needed whenever persons are due burdens or benefits because of particular properties or circumstances, such as being productive or having been harmed by another person's acts. A holder of a valid claim based in justice has a right and therefore is due something. An injustice involves a wrongful act or omission that denies people resources or protections to which they have a right (Beauchamp and Childress 241).

When Walker's claims regarding truth requiring a right to a voice are combined with Beauchamp and Childress's ideas that if a right is violated then a person is due a benefit the result is that Nightingale has a right to her voice and as a witness within history deserves acknowledgement. This can be expanded to include the idea that it is an injustice for Nightingale to go unrecognized for many of her major contributions in the academic realm. This is actually part of a larger issue in feminist ethics, which views the raising of public awareness to the major contributions that women have made but that no credit has been given as this is considered an injustice as women are not given an authentic voice or representation within scholarship. Two factors influence the lack of awareness – ignorance and obscurity; ignorance because many are unaware of the accomplishments and written work of Nightingale and obscurity because most people remember her as the “lady with the lamp”; the heroine of the Crimea. This is a very large ethical issue in

that one of the most analytical minds of the Victorian era (Bostridge xxii) has faded into legend. The good work that she has done is all but lost. Similarly, Nightingale is rarely credited with her contributions to early feminist thinking and the influence that she has had over the major thinkers of her age (McDonald, First Hand 179). In this case, Nightingale has not been credited with the influence that she had over the work of Mill and his thoughts on the enfranchisement of women.

Literature Review

In researching this thesis, this author uses a variety of sources from various subject areas; history, social sciences, nursing, philosophy, and literature, in order to gain a better understanding of the authors and their times. The primary sources for this work were Mill's "The Subjection of Women" and Nightingale's "Cassandra". The correspondence between the two authors also formed one of the primary texts of this analysis. McDonald is currently editing the Collected Works of Florence Nightingale, which spans sixteen large volumes. The correspondence between Mill and Nightingale is in volume five of the collection – Florence Nightingale on Society and Politics, Philosophy, Science, Education, and Literature (Nightingale, Politics and Philosophy 369-409). This correspondence spans several years and deals with many topics, however, the letters that were used in this thesis were the ones pertaining to Mill's review of Nightingale's work Suggestions for Thought and the letters in which he petitioned Nightingale to lend her support to the women's suffrage movement. The letters contain Mill's comments and opinions regarding Nightingale's work and some of his ideas concerning the rights of women. Nightingale's part of the correspondence thanks him for his comments and time, as well as clarifies some of her opinions regarding the rights of women. The supporting documentation for these works is largely articles written across various disciplines. This author was able to find one article that dealt with the relationship between

Nightingale and Mill: “Florence Nightingale and J.S. Mill Debate Women’s Rights” by Evelyn Pugh and appeared in The Journal of British Studies (Pugh 118-138). This article, while not philosophically based, examines the relationship between the two authors and provides a discussion on the influence that Nightingale may have had on Mill’s work. To form further commentary, this author used biographical material on Morris and Cobbe, in addition to their works “Useful Work Versus Useless Toil”, which informed the discussion on the feelings of uselessness that Nightingale claims in “Cassandra” (Morris 1-29) and “Criminals, Idiots, Women, and Minors” (Cobbe 90-109), which informs some of the discussion on women’s rights at the time. The Autobiography of John Stuart Mill informed part of the discussion regarding the influence of Harriet Taylor on his works (Mill, Autobiography 170-180) and for further commentary Rose’s work Parallel Lives: Five Victorian Marriages (Rose 127-131). Rose’s work was also used for information regarding the marriage of Mill to Harriet Taylor (Rose 126-140). Rose discusses the Mill marriage at length, informing the reader as to the entirety of the relationship, from their meeting at a dinner to their respective deaths (Rose 99-140). Jacobson’s article “Utilitarianism without Consequentialism” provides substantive comment on Mill’s brand of utilitarian philosophy which takes into consideration more than just the balance scales of traditional utilitarianism but allows for more emotive interpretations and applications of the ethic (Jacobson 159-164). Jenkins provides commentary regarding “Cassandra” and the feminist philosophy in Nightingale’s work as well as feminist theology; Jenkins’ main thrust concerns Nightingale’s assertion that comfort will be brought to women suffering in her repressive society in the form of a female Christ figure (Jenkins 16-26).

In order to set the stage for the analysis of “Cassandra” and “The Subjection of Women” this author turned to many sources across several disciplines. In terms of historical analysis, brief

histories are provided in the Norton Anthology of English Literature, as are commentaries on specific issues, like women's rights (Abrams and Greenblatt, Debate 1719-1721). For more detailed histories this thesis looks to social scientists, historians, and biographers. Two biographies on Queen Victoria are cited throughout chapter one and two of this work. Gill's We Two: Victoria and Albert: Rulers, Partners, and Rivals examines the power struggles within the Royal Marriage as well as the division of duties within the royal family – who handled the domestic concerns versus peace negotiations (Gill, *We Two* 145-363). Gill also provides a detailed account of family life in the royal court and how this family model informed the creation of the ideal of Victorian domesticity (Gill, *We Two* 225-242). Erickson provides more general commentary on Victoria's life and marriage in her biographical work entitled Her Little Majesty: The Life of Queen Victoria and centers on Victoria's relationship with her mother (Erickson 19-154). Flanders, Horn, and Tosh have written extensively on family life in the Victorian Era. Flanders provides commentary on the domestic life of the average Victorian as she takes her readers through the function of every room in the Victorian home and provides detailed discussion of its various members in her introduction in The Victorian House: Domestic Life from Childbirth to Deathbed (Flanders xix-lii). Horn discusses life and manners in the country in her book Life in the Victorian Country House (Horn 48-67). Horn also provides substantial commentary on the idea of the "Lady Bountiful" (Horn 7-24). Tosh examines the role of men in the new Victorian domesticity with the consideration that men were more and more removed from the home in their day to day business lives but created a refuge and a centre in the home and family in his article "New Men? The Bourgeoisie Cult of Home" (Tosh 78-87). Vickery provides substantial discussion of Georgian home and family in her book Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England and her work helps to inform the discussion regarding the main

differences between Victorian and Georgian family life (Vickery 1-24). The discussion on women's rights is informed by all the above sources as well as the Summers article "Ministering Angels: Victorian Ladies and Nursing Reform" in which she discusses women's rights and how nursing was reformed from a less than respectable volunteer position to respected paid work (Summers 140-147). Further comments are provided by Ellis in her guidebook for Victorian women entering the married state The Women of England: Their Social Duties and Domestic Habits (Ellis 1721-1723).

For the second chapter, concerning the life of Nightingale, this author was reliant on biographical sources. Bostridge has written the current definitive work Florence Nightingale: The Woman and Her Legend providing his readers with the facts of Nightingale's life from birth to death and beyond; going as far as to provide commentary on the yearly mass held in her honour. McDonald's works are invaluable. The collected works project along with Florence Nightingale at First Hand and The Women Founders of the Social Sciences are much cited in chapter two as they provide facts on the more technical aspects of Nightingale's work. Gill also informed some of the discussion on Nightingale's life in her book Nightingales: The Extraordinary Upbringing and Curious Life of Miss Florence Nightingale as she provides a more robust discussion concerning Nightingale's early years and relationship with her sister, Lady Parthenope Verney.

The final discussion in this thesis was informed greatly by current business publications like Through the Labyrinth which is a lengthy study and discussion regarding women in the workplace and domestic life (Eagly and Carli 49-65). Eagly and Carli examine the idea that there is not a glass ceiling anymore but a maze that takes much longer to navigate because of the demands of family life (Eagly and Carli 1-12).

Methodology

Part of the methodology of this thesis was to research and review family life and the status of women during the Victorian Era, an age where women were treated like the impoverished, as an underclass. This required research into the structure of the Victorian home and the new ideal of the family. Beyond this, research and commentary was required on the legal concerns of women as Mill comments extensively on the legal status of women in his essay “The Subjection of Women”. The research on family life was necessary as this forms a major portion of Nightingale’s essay “Cassandra” and is the main evidence of Nightingale’s influence within Mill’s work. In part, some of the research into the status of women and the new family ideal is into the values of the time. Research into the life and work of Nightingale proved necessary in order to fully understand what inspired “Cassandra” and who the author that Mill corresponded with was in her own time.

The essays, “Cassandra” and “The Subjection of Women”, will be analysed and compared, with commentary from related sources. This is done in order to demonstrate that there are similarities between the texts and to pinpoint the areas where Nightingale could have had the most influence on Mill’s writing. The letters that passed between Mill and Nightingale will also be analysed to show the extent of their relationship, again with commentary from various related sources.

The final chapter concerns the modern audience and thus necessitated research into current workplace cultures and how women function within them. Although women have the same legal status and as of recently, the same financial status as men, the workplace still provides challenges to women seeking leadership roles making Nightingale and Mill’s work relevant to the modern reader. As such, a study called Through the Labyrinth will be analysed and

compared to Nightingale and Mill. Commentary on the legendary status of Nightingale and the danger that it poses to Nightingale's scholarly works outside of nursing can be found in this chapter. As such, Nightingale's legacy to women's rights will be discussed.

Overview of Thesis Chapters and Sections

The Introduction section provides an overview of the topic of Mill and Nightingale and the thesis statement for this work, as well as a brief literature review concerning the major sources of this thesis and an overview of the methodology. Chapter One will provide readers with the historical context for family life and the status of women. This discussion will include the family and work life of the Georgians and the Victorians, men and their new role in the home and family life, the evolution of childhood, the role of the wife and mother in the home, and a brief overview of women's rights in the era. Chapter Two will provide a brief overview of Nightingale's life and works, including her early education and upbringing, her later education and training as a result of her calling to be a nurse, her work in the Crimean War, and her later work in social reform. Chapter Three will provide a summary of "Cassandra" and "The Subjection of Women", a comparison between the two essays, with commentary. There is a brief discussion on the thoughts of both authors concerning marriage and what that means for the legal rights of women. From this point the discussion turns to an examination of one of the instances of Nightingale's influence, the structure of the family and its perpetuation of the societal norms. The correspondence between Nightingale and Mill is analysed, as is the acknowledgement of Nightingale in Mill's essay, "The Subjection of Women". Mill typically acknowledges those who have had some involvement in his work and he has acknowledged several women previously; these acknowledgements are compared against the acknowledgement given to Nightingale. Nightingale's own opinion of her influence over Mill's work is examined.

Chapter Four is a discussion and examination concerning Nightingale's legacy, for both feminism and her legendary status in popular imagination. It should be noted that Nightingale has passed largely into legend in the modern popular imagination as the world's first professional nurse. As a nursing theorist she is well known but as a social reformer, philosopher, and ethicist she is relatively unknown. As such, part of this thesis is devoted to bringing at least one of her works into much better focus in modern scholarship.

Chapter 1: Historical Context

1.1 Introduction

The Victorian Era meant a great deal to the status of Britain and changed the face of history in many ways. It was in this era that the world saw Britain rise to what would be considered a political and military superpower by modern reckoning. During Victoria's reign, 1837-1901, Britain had the largest empire in the world – spanning every continent, from Australia in the far south pacific, north to Hong Kong, to India, South Africa, Canada, and the Caribbean. Beyond this, Britain controlled some of the world's most lucrative trading routes and goods bringing riches and curiosities from half a world away to be sold to some of its richest countrymen and the proceeds went to feed the ever growing throngs of London. During this time of swelling cities and massive population growth, due to a decline in the overall mortality rates (Guha 91), Britain eagerly grabbed the reigns of industrialization and drove the world headlong into the industrial revolution on a steam powered engine, whether the inhabitants of the country, the colonies, or their trading partners liked it or not. Britain was unrivalled in its political, economic, and military power; a far cry from the country that conceded the American colonies a few decades previously. This new Britain fought to maintain every inch of its empire and had the financial and human capital to do so (Holmes xv).

The term 'Victorian' has come to be associated with power and wealth on an unprecedented scale (Abrams and Greenblatt, *Victorian* 1043), as well as high morality, and sweeping social reforms, according to the Canadian Oxford English Dictionary. Out of this unprecedented wealth and new social responsibility emerges a new class with new morals and ideals. The idea of the child as free and innocent sees its genesis in the Victorian era, along with the first fanciful

and recognizable trappings of modern childhood. Here the world can still see some of the first stirrings of massive social change that would peacefully increase equality in Britain through acts of parliament and concerned individuals. Facetious comments can be made about the new middle class, its stringent morality, and adherence to convention or the era can be examined through the lens of quaint antiquity, however, much can be said for all that was accomplished during Victoria's sixty four year dominion.

1.2 Work and Home from the Georgians to the Victorians

1.2.1 Georgian Notions of "the Home"

Vickery provides a description of the Georgian home in the introduction to her book on the same subject. Vickery takes her reader through the various conceptions of home. She introduces her reader to the aging spinster of "decayed gentility" (Vickery 1) tidying her two room lodgings; the wealthy widow contemplating a new townhouse in a fashionable area (Vickery 1). The nobles in their pursuits are glanced over with the mother cleaning her house after family illnesses (Vickery 1). The maid at her small cot with a treasure box in a house full of her employer's children is also considered to have a home (Vickery 1): "All are at home in Georgian England" (Vickery 1). The home in Georgian England was the centre of all existence, it was the place that one worked and lived; the public and the private sphere coexisted:

(...) the publicising of the interior through the increasingly formalised practice of visiting, and the commercial construction of the discriminating female consumer and artistic beautifier of the home redefined the genteel and middling home as an arena of social campaign and exhibition (Vickery 7).

The home is in the middle of the public sphere in Georgian England; business is conducted from within its confines (Tosh 79) and the idea of visiting is rapidly becoming more popular and conventional in the Georgian era:

The late seventeenth century saw the rise of a new mode of sociability that had a transforming impact on domestic behaviour. The emergence of the urban culture of visiting revolutionised the use of interior space, publicising the middling home to a degree unimaginable in the 1500s (Vickery 14).

Apprentices to the business of the householder would often be offered lodgings in the owner's home and were part of the domestic hierarchy: "The Georgian family was still defined as all those living in the same house – the hierarchically ordered household of master, mistress, servants, apprentices, and resident kin" (Vickery 7). The home provided a definite role for all members – structurally and metaphorically (Vickery 7). Children typically did not reside long with their parents within the middling homes as they were often apprenticed to others (Tosh 79); and so their role became that of the working apprentice within another home. For the upper classes and gentry the expression "children are seen and not heard" was paramount and children were often cared for by governesses and teaching masters. For women, however, the home offered a defined role. Vickery comments on this role extensively during her introduction:

The married housewife was a pillar of wisdom and worth, with a prominent position in the hierarchical institution that society recognised as both normal and fundamental to the social order, the male-headed conjugal unit. (...) The pride the women took in their status is obvious in the frequency with which they claimed the label 'housekeeper' in court, and the regret with which widows deposed that once housekeepers, they were now only lodgers. Women did not see themselves as passing guests in the houses of men, but as householders in their own right (Vickery 9).

Women held a valued and "worthy" position within the home, which generally included the place of business at this time and had expectations as a result:

Wives were subject to their husband's authority, yet they were equal souls in the marriage, often fond bedfellows and domestic allies. A matron who had lain twenty years or more on her husband's breast, borne his children, carried his battles, made and mended his shirts and soothed his frailties, fully expected to be a partner in the government of the family (Vickery 9).

The essential concept is that there was an expectation of equality on both sides of this partnership; a concept that had been evolving over time and it soon came to be the expectation of

a woman's partner that she be independent. This independence is exercised within the domestic sphere, which includes the generation of income for the home (Vickery 10). Men are frequently called from the hearth at this point to attend to various duties or for leisure pursuits; hunting and sport, administrative obligations associated with property or the magistrate's office, serving on juries or commissions, and military manoeuvres are occupations that could draw a man far from home (Vickery 10). Vickery also lists some of the occupations that required one to be in the community but one could be called away at a moment's notice like physicians, surgeons, apothecaries, and lawyers (Vickery 10). All of this means that an independent and capable person must be left in charge of the concerns of the home: "A trusted household manager was indispensable to genteel and middling men for their comfort and convenience" (Vickery 10). It almost sounds as though this is employment and indeed that is sometimes what it was considered by those performing the tasks (Vickery 12). Vickery provides her readers the example of Mary Clark, the wife of an MP in the 1690s; in her letter to her husband, Clark discusses how she manages her husband's business concerns, their home, and their children. When Edward Clark claimed to be too busy to run an errand for her, she responded: "I phancey I am as much Employed in the care of my 6 children as you are with your business in parliament and else where" (Vickery 12). In this case the wife was responsible for her husband's concerns at home while he was in London. She was an integral part in his being able to move between London and Taunton – not only did she ensure that through her collections and paying of bills that there was a home for him to return to but her efforts also funded his life in London. Women were encouraged to create the interior space that was both for private living and public visiting (Vickery 16-19). They were encouraged to spend a great deal of money to outfit the home, while men were encouraged to give women the lead in this environment: "Worthy husbands were

ready to grant their wives leading say in the staging of domestic life, a concession which bespeaks the benefits that accrued to men from successful domesticity and an inviting, congenial interior” (Vickery 18). Women at this time were afforded an authority within the home and public life that would later be removed from them in the height of the Victorian era.

1.2.2 Victorian Notions of “the Home”

Life in continental Europe was much different in this time – families could often be found outside of the home (Flanders xxiv). By contrast the Victorians were creating a more inward environment that attempted to balance family and work life:

(...) as the industrial revolution appeared to have taken over every aspect of working life, so the family, and by extension the house, expanded in tandem to act as an emotional counterweight (Flanders xx).

The idea of the home as a restful place, a place outside of the rigors of work, was created here.

House, home, and family were the refuges of the Victorian middle-class man with enough money to own a house and keep a family but could not afford a life of leisure. Even the royal household functioned as a private sphere: “By 1845, Albert had wrapped his wife and family in a protective cocoon of comfort and privacy that no previous English sovereign had ever known” (Gill, *We Two* 199). Even Victoria, after a long day of court functions, and Albert, after a long day of the bureaucratic nightmares that comprised the running of the royal household, could retire to the security of home and family. This division was created in the royal household and the middle class households, as the aristocracy continued as they always had (Gill, *We Two* 204-205).

Flanders discusses the division of the public and private spheres extensively, noting that: “The Victorian house became defined as a refuge, a place apart from the sordid aspects of commercial life, with different morals, different rules, and different guidelines to protect the soul from being consumed by commerce” (Flanders xxi). The idea of the private dwelling as refuge, a grounding

place, and stress relief is commonplace today but for the average Victorian this was a relatively new concept; one that was readily embraced. There were several factors at play to make the home and the new familial structure “de rigueur” for the Victorian middle class; first, the increased amount of disposable income to which the Victorian middle-class had access; second, child mortality rates had fallen; third, work had moved outside the home to factories and offices (Flanders xxii). The house, and therefore the home, became a symbol of domesticity and success. This gave rise to several new concepts as one removed work from the home and replaced it with a “Victorian Virtue Ethic”. The first concept is that of childhood, and the emerging view of the child as something fundamentally different from adults. The second concept is the “Angel in the House”, or the role of the Victorian wife and mother. As Flanders states there were different rules in the home and the “fireside virtues” – love, family, and charity – were upheld by the head of household but they were taught and maintained by the wife and mother. In discussions concerning the Victorian home and its purpose in the changing face of British society it is impossible to separate it from the ideas surrounding the men, women and children of the era, as they are dependent on one another to perform their roles dutifully. Not only was the separation of work and home a drastic change in their way of life but changing domesticity for men, the idea of the child, and the perception of the role of wife and mother constituted equally dramatic changes in the thought patterns of the Victorians over the Georgians.

1.2.2.1 The Home’s Inhabitants: Men and Changing Domesticity

Victorians ushered in a new era of domesticity, which was a massive shift from the Georgians. The home suddenly became a very private existence. This rapid change was a:

(...) response to the gathering pace of urbanization and industrialization. Prior to the nineteenth century men spent much of their leisure time in the saddle, the

street, the tavern and the coffee-house. What had kept them in touch with home was work, since home was usually their place of business (Tosh 79).

Many middle class men could and did recall a childhood spent living with and working in the family business (Tosh 79). Overall, the Victorian era constituted a complete reversal from the older modes of living; the family became wholly separate. Not only did the family inhabit a separate space but the new concepts surrounding family and privacy created a space specifically designed to cater to the needs of men – a refuge, as Tosh states. The home was no longer just the domain of women and children, but of men. Business moved outside of the home to specialised premises like manufacturing centers (Tosh 79). Family and work became increasingly separate as suburbs became a larger part of urban planning (Tosh 79). In essence, while the home was the refuge for men, they were spending less time there as business and travel forced different obligations (Tosh 79). However, men were drawn back day after day: “The distinctive hallmark of British domesticity was that it permeated the lives of men too – as husbands, as fathers, and as upholders of the fireside virtues” (Tosh 79).

The home, increasingly, became lauded as a space of domestic virtue, further removed from the public sphere, more pastoral in concept. In essence, the home and its inhabitants were idealized in juxtaposition with the everyday realities in the evolving work day – those spent in busy shops, warehouses, factories, and offices. Beyond the simple physical separation of no longer having to live above the shop, there was now a division of morality between the workplace and home; separate rules applied to govern men’s conduct in both spheres.

Evangelism swept through England in the Victorian era and was a major force for change at the time (Flanders xxii). The evangelicals promoted the values of Christianity in all action, including the details of day to day life and relationships (Flanders xxii). The values that are important in all Christian action must be exemplified within the home:

The home was a microcosm of the ideal society, with love and charity replacing the commerce and capitalism of the outside world. This dichotomy allowed men to pursue business in a suitable capitalist – perhaps even ruthless – fashion, because they knew they could refresh the inner man by returning at the end of the day to an atmosphere of harmony, from which competition was banished (Flanders xxi-xxii).

Men could pursue their goals in business as they pleased knowing that their families would provide the much needed respite in the closed and comfortable environment of the home; the affluent factory owner could take himself home, away from the noise, stress, and ruthlessness of the business world, to a world of quiet morality and domesticity in his own private sphere, where his children, wife, and servants were well behaved and dignified. This was the private life; the life away from the bustling of the public sphere.

1.2.2.2 The Victorian Home and its Inhabitants: Concept and Romanticism of “the Child”

The Victorian era is where one can pinpoint the origin of the heavily romanticised ideal of the child and its place within family life. A good way to start to trace any conceptual movement is through the literature associated with it; this is the era of the fanciful and the romantic, the innocent and the nonsensical. The high Victorian Era is where one sees The Swiss Family Robinson, Peter Pan, Treasure Island, and Alice in Wonderland. Beatrix Potter makes a late appearance with her famous rabbit in a blue coat and his farmer antagonist. Even Oscar Wilde tries his hand at writing for children with his fantastic tale of a giant, his garden, some errant children, and the Christ child. Griffith and Frey, editors of Classics in Children’s Literature, state that:

As the publishing industry grew and flourished in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and as the place of the child became more and more conspicuous in society, a virtual flood of printed material aimed at children began to issue from the presses. (...) Through much of it ran one large, loose idea: the idea that the child is special in that the child is free from the order and responsibility and the rationality, sobriety, and good sense that are supposed to govern the adult world (Griffith and Frey 1-2).

The idea of freedom within childhood was new and different for the Victorian family even as it concerned social restraints, especially in the middle-classes where convention and strict morality were the rules of the day. This is very different from the Georgian era when children were expected to be productive members of the household. Griffith and Frey give a brief explanation in the introduction to their anthology, distilling hundreds of years of history into a few short lines to assist the reader in understanding the culmination of all of the thinking that brought childhood into being:

There was no children's literature in our sense of the term, because there was no concept of childhood corresponding to ours. Children in most western societies were thought of as being essentially like adults, except in obvious respects, such as size, strength, and amount of experience. (...) society treated them as adults and introduced them into the workaday world much earlier than we do now. The prevailing assumption was that by the time children were weaned and able to move around on their own, they had a responsible, functioning role in the work and business of the community (Griffith and Frey 1).

Children were now kept out of the affairs of adults as business moved out of the home; children were no longer exposed to the work of the parent. Tradesmen no longer provided lodging and training for apprentices within the home (Tosh 80); apprentices were required to find lodging of their own and report to the business premises. However, this was not unique to the middle-class experiences. As industrialization swept through Victorian Britain, the piecemeal work of the labouring classes, typically performed in the home, was conducted outside of the home in factories and workhouses (Flanders xxii). This left the child without any concrete knowledge of the work that sustained the household and further developed the idea that children had no place in the world of adults and in the community, as they were no longer interacting with adults for the purposes of business. With the decline in apprenticeship and decreased exposure to the everyday business of the parent came the fact that children were not sent into the workforce at tender ages any longer: "As the century progressed, improved standards of living meant that

many children who would earlier have gone out to work now had a childhood” (Flanders 34). This is attributable to the fact that the middle classes had more disposable income and were no longer dependent on the earnings of their dependents to sustain the household. Part of this change was due to the growing consciousness of the exploitation of children (Tosh 78). There is a string of Factory Acts starting in 1831, with the third Factory Act proposed by Hobhouse, forbidding night shifts for anyone under the age of twenty-one, and progressing through minimum employment at age eight through to restricting the hours of work for those ages thirteen to eighteen in 1850. As a companion to the Factory Acts, Education Acts were passed requiring children to be educated in schools. The second part in this change in perception concerning children in the work world came from the work Rousseau is famous for, Emile, which concerned child development and education (Flanders 34). The idea of a child as a “tabula rasa”, one who had not yet been fully formed, is one of the main themes of Rousseau’s treatise (Bloom 3). The idea that children needed to be cultivated and educated contrasts greatly from the previously expounded idea that children were lesser adults (Griffith and Frey 1). While Rousseau did a great deal of work in this area, the Victorians made childhood about more than the formation of the mind; childhood for the Victorians was also about freedom from the constraints that adults imposed on themselves.

These changes in attitude and perception were partially made possible because of the decline of child mortality rates throughout the Victorian Era:

At the same time advances in technology were changing more traditional aspects of home life. With improved sanitation and hygiene, child mortality was falling. The middle classes had more disposable income, and thus anxiety about the fundamentals of life – enough food, affordable light and heat – diminished. With the increases in child survival rates came coincidentally the gradual phasing out of the apprenticeship systems (...) which meant that for the first time many parents could watch their children reach adulthood in their own homes (Flanders xxii).

There were fewer and fewer cases of children dying in infancy, although this was still the case for many like the Lewises before the Broad Street Cholera Outbreak: “Thomas and Sarah Lewis lived in the parlour at 40 Broad Street, first with their little boy, a sickly child who dies at ten months” (Johnson 21). Although children still died in infancy of unknown causes there is, however, a distinct and sustained increase in survival rates. More children surviving meant that they could become a subset of society unto themselves, and as such, could command a portion of manufactured goods, an exploitation of a different kind. This provided those who like to and could capitalize on new markets with a unique opportunity to expand manufacture and sales and direct the advertising at a specific new group.

The Victorians tried to form these young minds to the ideals of society through persuasion and punishment (Flanders 34-35), of a much harsher nature than today’s children. Children were still reminded of their manners and disciplined when they erred from the mores of society:

They were also taught the importance of social solidarity and appropriate conduct. Hence when the eight-year-old Blanche Balfour at Inveraray argued with her aunt outside the door of the church, she was firmly reproved, being told she had broken ‘the law about dignity and reticence in the presence of a different class’. Years later she still remembered the reprimand (Horn 59-60).

Clearly, children were not necessarily as free from the strictures of Victorian society as those in the era might have liked to believe, but they certainly were freer than those of the generations that preceded them. They did, however, require guidance, which again was different from the previous iterations of childhood in which society did not presume to teach the young in the same way. As more children survived into adulthood it became imperative to understand how to impart values to them. With no real understanding of the mind of a child, the market exploded with:

Innumerable storybooks, songbooks, schoolbooks, pamphlets, and magazines tried to catch the consciousness of youth and, to do so, experimented with almost every conceivable shading and mixture of hard fact, fantasy, whimsy, moralising,

instruction, humour, scolding, sentimentalizing, and religiosity (Griffith and Frey 1-2).

This concern had always been present but the new aspect was the idea of the happiness and emotional well-being of the child (Flanders 40) as opposed to the appearance of the parent in the eyes of others. The main goal was teaching children to become moral, happy, and healthy adults and this needed to account for the emotional welfare of both the adult and the child. This was exemplified by the royal family, who was creating nine happy, healthy children of their own: “[Albert] earned the rapturous admiration of his wife. He created an idyll of family life that his children sought to re-create as adults.” (Gill, *We Two* 199). The beginnings of the education and happiness of children started within the home.

1.2.2.3 The Victorian Home and Its Inhabitants: Mothers and Wives

Women were decreasingly seen in public workplaces due to the same Factory Acts which restricted children’s working hours, women found themselves with the same working hours as a thirteen year old child. Those who could afford it increasingly kept their wives and mothers at home:

Even émigrés from Golden Square retained their taste for the Broad Street Well. Susannah Eley, whose husband had founded the percussion cap factory on Broad Street, moved to Hampstead after being widowed (Johnson 30).

This is a good example of a woman who was familiar with her husband’s business and had in fact lived within walking distance of the factory (Johnson 30) but was relegated to a home in the country as her sons took over, likely not remembering that she may have had experienced counsel to offer with regards to the family business (Flanders xxii). The role of the woman in Victorian life was defined by the relationship that she had with a man: mother, wife, daughter, and became increasingly centered on the home and domestic pursuits. As discussed previously, part of this was due to the evangelical movement and society at large adopting these ideals and

part of it had to do with the influence that the Queen and the Royal family had on the everyday lives of their subjects. In the enthusiastic embrasure of middle class values by Albert and Victoria (Gill, We Two 199) the Queen lost her place at the helm of her nation:

(...) Victoria was also right to be upset when her husband criticised her management of the nursery and accused her of killing their child from neglect. She was right to accuse her husband of being ambitious and irrationally jealous of Baroness Lehzen. The prince was using Vicky's illness to assert his control over the nursery and thus over the lives of his children from babyhood. Having increasingly surrendered the business of state to her husband, Victoria was now being asked to give up her authority in the nursery (Gill, We Two 184).

The Queen was still officially head of state but Victoria relinquished control of everything from household management and reforms (Gill, We Two 219-222) to the negotiations centering on the Crimean conflict (Holmes 84). Albert created an efficiently running home and kept ahead of matters of state as Victoria attended Court and State functions and to the marriages of her children. After Albert died, Victoria often felt helpless, undirected, and as though she were unheeded in matters of importance, the prime example of this is during the war that threatened modern day Germany during 1863 (Erickson 177-178). This dependence of the Queen on her husband influenced similar behaviour amongst society at large; increasingly women were leaving the family businesses in which they had been active members and leaving all to husbands and sons:

With the growth of prosperity, many middle-class women, whose mothers and grandmothers would have lived 'over the shop', served behind the counter, and worked as active partners in a family commercial enterprise, were removed to leafy suburban villas. Here their lives were confined to the private sphere, and their work to the upbringing of children and the management of domestic staff (Summers 141).

Summers writes in her abstract that part of the reasoning for this change in the social status of women is the problem with having a woman as head of state: "Periods of history stamped with the personalities of their female rulers are not necessarily the most fruitful in advancing the

interests and self-awareness of fellow members of the sex” (Summers 140). These new roles removed them from the public sphere and relegated women and whatever influence they might have to the private sphere of existence.

Summers provides a cursory discussion about the role of women in her article entitled “Ministering Angels: Victorian Ladies and Nursing Reform” (Summers 141-144). Summers discusses three important points concerning women, before examining nursing reform during the high Victorian era: the new role for women in the home, the importance of the word “lady”, and the mission of women. Urbanization and industrialization have their roles to play in the evolving idea of the home but the new role for women was essentially to provide a grounding of religious education in her home:

However, the positive aspects of the ‘separation of the spheres’ between male and female, public and private, were celebrated with equal vigour. The diffusion of evangelical ideas both within and outside the established Church at the turn of the century had popularised the practice of teaching religion in the home, and had thus provided a greater pastoral role for the women who were removed from the bustle of the world. They could exploit their isolation as the means of recalling their menfolk from worldly to heavenly preoccupations (Summers 142).

Patmore, in his poem “The Angel in the House”, propounds precisely this idea, that the beautiful and perfect “creature” that he married could turn his mind from his earthly pursuits by being the absolute paragon of heavenly perfection. In a popular guidebook written by Ellis, The Women of England: Their Social Duties and Domestic Habits, which sounds slightly like a book on bird watching, this role was highlighted in rather blunt terms. Ellis describes men as being buffeted in their places of business with moral quandaries (Ellis 1721-1722). Ellis suggests that men’s recourse in these situations is to make their wives their moral compass:

(...) he has thought of the humble monitoress who sat alone, guarding the fireside comforts of his distant home; and the remembrance of her character, clothed in moral beauty, has scattered the clouds before his mental vision, and sent him back to that beloved home, a wiser and better man (Ellis 1721-1722).

In this new role women were expected to provide a religious education to their children and to recall their husbands from the earthly realm by being a constant reminder of the ideal. Ellis, in the passage above, speaks to the idea of a man being able to recall a woman at home, wearing her superior morality, and uses this image to make the proper decision. Oddly, Ellis has cast women into the role of the virtuous mentor. Ellis imbues the private sphere with a sense of power despite the fact that being so far removed from the world, as Summers points out, would limit the power of the private sphere. Ellis writes further in this vein, and actually addresses the idea of the removal from the world. Ellis states that the women of England are better educated than women elsewhere and in recognition of that fact they have been given the duty of “protecting the minor morals of life” (Ellis 1722) (the minor morals are those of the home and not those that affect decisions outside the home and family). Ellis directly contradicts these previous thoughts with this comment:

The sphere of their direct personal influence is central, and consequently small; but its extreme operations are as widely extended as the range of human feeling. They may be less striking in society than some of the women of other countries, and may feel themselves, on brilliant and stirring occasions, as simple, as rude, and unsophisticated in the popular science of excitement (...) (Ellis 1722).

A woman’s influence was restricted to her family and considered herself as rather poorly educated in comparison to others and she is supposed to inspire moral courage and all manner of noble emotions in the opposite sex, this appears contradictory and likely highly difficult to accomplish. However, Ellis thinks that men will stray further from the moral right and require further guidance:

It is a fact well worthy of our serious attention, and one which bears immediately upon the subject under consideration, that the present state of our national affairs is such as to indicate that the influence of women in counteracting the growing evils of society is about to be more needed than ever (Ellis 1722).

This section of Ellis' work she addresses three main points about the private sphere, its size (consequently small), its removal from the world, and its influence. The sphere of influence is a woman's immediate family, not the one into which she was born or that into which she marries but the one that she creates. This is an extremely small sphere limited to her husband and any children that they may have. This sphere is very removed from the commercial world, which Ellis makes abundantly clear in her guidebook. Not only is the middle-class Victorian woman isolated from the world of work but she was also isolated socially, at least according to Ellis, having no one but her children and possibly servants. Ellis does, however, try to give some sort of consolation to a new wife contemplating the prospect of this sort of isolation, which is that her influence will be carried to the far reaches of the globe. The sense of power with which Ellis attempts to imbue this sphere is again prevalent, a sort of control that this woman can now have over her husband and sons even as she occupies the place by the hearth.

The word "lady" implied the idea of the gentlewoman (one of the peerage or landed gentry). The key distinction here, in the British class system was landed, the landed gentry were the wealthy landlords that one sees in Austen and Brontë with Mr. Darcy and Mr. Rochester, respectively. For the middle classes, they owned property but it was never used solely for the purposes of family life; there was always an element, if not the whole enterprise, of business conducted on the premises. Summers discusses the use of the term lady to apply to the middle class women at some length in her article:

This affectation was at its height some fifteen or twenty ago ... women and the females are all gone – and the feminine terminations are following them very fast. To supply their places we have *ladies*, - always *ladies*. There are no authoresses – only lady authors; and there are lady-friends, lady-cousins, lady-readers, &c (Summers 141).

Summers, in her examination, asserts that the industrialization of England changed social relationships on a fundamental level (Summers 141). In order to understand how the

relationships changed one must first understand how these women formerly interacted with the world, which was as active members of both the social and commercial worlds. This is a direct contrast to what they later became: “These women had become ‘ladies’ or ‘gentlewomen’. Their leisured and unwaged status, and the increased elaboration of their households, figured as emblems of the worldly success of their male kin” (Summers 141). Summers fails to mention that when middle-class women became ‘ladies’, in the same sense as the generations of ‘gentlewomen’ before them, turned relationships between the middle-classes, working-classes, and upper-classes on their heads. This does speak to something else that would have happened when the appellation “lady” was given to the middle-classes; they would have been the “social betters” of the class below them. Summers gives her readers an idea of what accompanied the rights of a “lady” in relation to the class beneath her:

This domestic, religious, and maternal role had, moreover, a more than familial dimension. The lady had a moral responsibility which extended beyond her kin to her servants. She had the right to mould the conduct of her social inferiors both for their own good and for the convenience of her household (Summers 142).

The responsibilities of wealth and leisure are apparent in this passage (Summers 142) with regards to those within the direct sphere of influence.

The mission of middle-class women had its genesis during the Victorian era. Women were intended to keep their husbands within the proper moral codes by being moral beings themselves and were expected to influence not only their husbands in proper behaviour but teach their children and servants. It should be noted that the servants are classed with the children in requiring this type of guidance despite the fact that they were often adults themselves. A lady was to visit the homes of the poor and properly educate her servants in order to improve their minds and their opinions:

If then it were possible, ... for the ladies of England to extend that influence over all classes of the poor which, for the great good of this country, they are extending

over one large portion of the classes below them (...) to offer society the benefits of the domestic model: to bridge the gulf between the ‘two nations’ of rich and poor, to perform kindnesses which would transform mutinous sentiments into grateful ones, and to refashion the lower orders in the image of their betters (Summers 142).

This is the influence of the “Lady Bountiful” convention from the gentry and aristocracy, the exception being not the provision of food stuffs but moral instruction and character. Essentially, the Victorian middle-class woman is to hold herself above all and provide the example for all, including the aristocracy. Prince Albert, through embracing the middle class values, reinforced this notion. He was not well liked among the aristocracy, for a variety of reasons, and he thought that they were dissolute. In fact, he urged Queen Victoria to refuse invitations from those who had any marks against their character; she complied (Gill, *We Two* 208-209). Gill even refers to “the Court of St. Albert” because of the way that he conducted his affairs with the British aristocracy and gentry. The idea of instruction is prevalent; with no training and very little guidance, the middle-class wife was to provide religious and moral education to the masses based on her presupposed strength of moral character.

While women were becoming permanent fixtures of the home their role in larger society was diminishing. While they kept home and hearth and the private refuge of husbands, fathers, and brothers, they removed themselves and further allowed their presence to be removed from the public spaces.

1.3 Victorian Debates: The Woman Question

A central question that garnered much debate in the Victorian era was ‘the woman question’: what is the role of women in the ever evolving society of the industrial age as Britain moved through urbanization? This question has never been easily answered. From the previous

discussion it can be concluded then the primary and ideal role for a Victorian woman was to get married:

It was entirely accepted by the vast majority of the population that the central event in any woman's life was marriage. Women who remained unmarried had failed to fulfill their destiny, both biologically and psychologically. (...) With that marriage came a home, the key to happiness; without marriage women could only hope to live as dependents in someone else's house. Marriage was success, spinsterhood failure: it was stark (Flanders 177).

There was no other way for a woman to gain any sort of independence and it was assumed that entry into the married state would automatically fulfill all the needs and desires of the Victorian woman. Perhaps a more evocative example is provided in a further passage by Flanders in which she quotes one of Butler's novels:

In *The Way of All Flesh*, Samuel Butler set out the possibilities running through the mind of Christina Allaby (...): 'What else could she do? Run away? She dared not. Marry beneath her and be considered a disgrace to her family? She dared not. Remain at home and become an old maid and be laughed at? Not if she could help it. (...) She was drowning; Theobald might be only a straw but she could catch at him, and catch at him she accordingly did' (Flanders 177-178).

Women were expected to marry and maintain the moral and physical space of the home; that was their role. This was even expected of the Queen: "If only you would do your duty by your family and the nation and marry your cousin Albert, sighed the duchess" (Erickson 87). This was not a new expectation for women by any means; Austen and many of her forbears discuss the need for a woman to marry, perhaps the most evocative example of the expectation is Charlotte Collins, who marries Mr. Collins, Lady Catherine's obsequious parson who changes his affections on a whim, at the age of twenty-seven, to gain a home of her own. What was new for the Victorian era is that women might have rights and not just those accorded by her relationship to a male figure. Queen Victoria herself had mixed opinions about the question of supporting education for women - but not the vote (Abrams and Greenblatt, Debate 1719). The more interesting comments made by Victoria come in the form of a letter:

In 1858, writing to her recently married daughter, Victoria remarks: 'There is great happiness ... in devoting oneself to another who is worthy of one's affection; still, men are very selfish and the woman's devotion is always one of submission which makes our poor sex so very unenviable. This you will feel hereafter – I know; though it cannot be otherwise as God has willed it so.' (Abrams and Greenblatt, Debate 1719).

An interesting comment if one considers the power struggle in the royal marriage:

Albert, for his part, was determined to institute the traditional balance of power between husband and wife by becoming master in his wife's house. He would manage her worldly goods even if he could not own them. Educated in statecraft by King Leopold and Baron Stockmar, Albert planned to take the reins of power from Victoria once they were married. He would leave her queen only in name (Gill, *We Two* 150).

This particular ordering of the world was based on a popular misconception within science, like so many other assumptions of the age (one calls immediately to mind phrenology):

The required 'submission' of which the queen wrote was justified in many quarters on the grounds of the supposed intellectual inferiority of women. As popularly accepted lore expressed it: 'Average Weight of a Man's Brain 3 ½ lbs; Woman's 2lbs, 11ozs.' Such inferiority justified woman's dependent role. Another early Victorian guidebook, *The Female Instructor*, in reminding wives of their dependent roles, recommended always wearing one's wedding ring so that whenever a wife felt 'ruffled,' she might 'cast [her] eyes upon it, and call to mind who gave it to [her].' In such quarters it would follow that a woman who tried to cultivate her intellect beyond the drawing-room accomplishments was violating the order of Nature and of religious tradition (Abrams and Greenblatt, Debate 1719).

Due to women's more diminutive stature, both in physical appearance and its attendant matter weighting, women were easily determined to be inferior to men. This obviously rankled some of the ranks and others accepted it as the natural order of universe. Women were supposed to be kept at home and to aspire to nothing beyond the private sphere. Ellis, as with other notions, has taken this to the extreme:

I still cling fondly to the hope that some system of female instruction will be discovered, by which young women of England may be sent from school to the home of their parents, habituated to be on the watch for every opportunity of doing good to others; making it their first and last inquiry of every day, 'What can I do to make my parents, my brother, or my sisters, more happy? I am but a

feeble instrument in the hands of Providence, but as He will give me strength, I hope to pursue the plan to which I have been accustomed, of seeking my own happiness only in the happiness of others (Ellis 1723).

Ellis likely did not make too many young women happy with such a pronouncement. It seems that by divine decree women were to have no happiness of their own but were to live entirely for those surrounding them. This was to be the private sphere for women: a life lived making others happy. A definite negative aspect to the idea of the public and private spheres is that there is no opportunity for woman's individual happiness. There was a great deal at stake for a woman who could not move in the public sphere as her rights were debated. The laws that the Victorians were subject to did not afford the majority of women the same degree of legal rights that one now sees. The legal system in Victorian Britain was harsh on all parties, but especially harsh for women. Gill writes of some aspects of the Victorian legal system, as it pertained to women, in her discussion of the legal status of a queen. Victoria's status as a queen granted her the lonely position of being the one woman in the kingdom to whom the law afforded full legal rights. This status was partially at the root of the power struggle within the royal marriage, as Albert was a Victorian male, brought up with traditional ideals and Victoria was anything but as the head of state. However, women were chattel, not persons, under the law:

A husband could legally enforce sexual congress on his terms. He could physically chastise his wife, sequester her in the home, or commit her to a madhouse without much fear of the law. The children of the marriage were, in effect, the property of the husband, and through his last will and testament he could dispose of them as he chose even after his death. (...) Like a child, a felon, or a madman, she had no role to play in the public sphere. (...) Her place was in the home. Her duty and pleasure must be to obey her menfolk, and dedicate her life to her family (Gill, *We Two* 148).

While this is just a cursory list of some of the marital laws, it was difficult for women to own property outright, and more often than not it was signed over to her husband at her marriage.

However, outside of servitude, like the Brontë sisters who took positions as governesses while

unmarried, marriage was the only viable option. One has only to look back at the young Allaby girl going through all of her options before playing at cards with the rest of her sisters to see which would have the privilege of entering into the state described above. Leaver sums up the entire state in her article, “Why Anne Brontë Wrote As She Did”:

(...) the institutions of marriage, family life and the home were the locus of some of the most strongly contested ideological debates of the nineteenth century. (...) popular songs and mottoes (...) point to the excessive sentimentalization and idealization of the home and of family life. However, the reality was that under British common law a wife was in many ways regarded as a commodity, as the property of her husband (Leaver 231).

This article looks at the central premise of The Tenant of Wildfell Hall, which is that ‘Matrimony is a serious thing’ (Leaver 228). Brontë looks at the less palatable side of marriage for a young woman in her last novel. It is an ‘unpalatable truth’, especially in light of the combined voices above: “Conceived under a powerful sense of duty, it is an unsentimental depiction of individual excess and its contagion for family, friends, and society, and a plea for the independence of women and equal education for the sexes” (Alexander and Smith 495). While her heroine did achieve a ‘happy ending’ it did come at great personal cost. Marriage was not kind to the middle-class Victorian woman. However, what alternative was there; there was very little opportunity outside of marriage for any woman in the middle and upper classes in the British system. What little opportunity existed for women was harsh. One could remain a dependent in the home of one’s birth; forever living on the charity of a father or a brother. One could go into service; becoming a companion to a wealthy dowager or take up a position as governess or housekeeper and never again able to exist in either the realm of the servants or the masters. Or, one could take a chance and marry. The stark reality was that in the minds of the Victorians, and the many generations that preceded them, women were ideally designed to

become the wife of someone; the difference for the Victorians was the diminished role that women were expected to play in society and public life.

Chapter 2: Florence Nightingale – A Nursing Life

2.1 Early Years

Out of all of this was borne Miss Florence Nightingale, statistician, social reformer, and nurse. Nightingale was born in 1820, just outside of Florence, Italy and she fared much better in location and name than did her older sister, Parthenope, born near the Parthenon. Her family was wealthy, her father having inherited an estate in Derbyshire from an elderly male relative: “The Nightingale fortune came from ‘Mad Uncle Peter’, who had made his money from lead quarrying and mining in Derbyshire” (McDonald, *First Hand* 5). The facts of Nightingale’s life before she became a professional nurse in the 1850’s are actually quite mundane for one of her station. Her family divided their time between the two family estates, Lea Hurst in Derbyshire and Embley Park in Hampshire (McDonald, *First Hand* 5). Fanny, Nightingale’s mother, had drive and great social ambitions (Bostridge 41) and to such an end made decisions that would help her achieve those goals, even in the arena of religion: “The family had been Unitarian and liberal on both sides, but Nightingale’s mother moved them back to the Church of England, as more befitting the landed gentry.” (McDonald, *Methodologists* 183). Nightingale and her sister were educated by governesses and their father. The education by a governess was not uncommon; however, Nightingale, like many of her female compatriots of a keen mind, did not thrive on this type of education:

Lessons were a great success. (...) However, increasingly, while Parthe was allowed to continue in her carefree ways, Florence earned sharp reproofs. (...) The effect of Miss Christie’s regime on Florence was marked. In just a few years she had changed from a ‘voluble little body’ into a child who was increasingly morose and withdrawn. Moreover, she had begun to noticeably retreat into an imaginary world (Bostridge 36).

Nightingale later remarked that her governess did not understand children (Bostridge 37).

Christie's interpretation is that Nightingale was very self-absorbed and thought that all were to serve her in some capacity (Bostridge 36); this interpretation can be seen in the written reports from the governess to Nightingale's mother. Christie left the Nightingales to marry and relinquished the education of the two young girls (Bostridge 37). In 1831 the imperative question for the Nightingales became the question of a girl's education:

There was talk of sending them away to a school where, it was thought, other children – not cousins – might 'operate upon them beneficially'. It proved impossible to find a new governess who could unite the teaching of social graces with academic excellence. Finally it was decided that a Miss Hawkes would give the girls lessons in music and drawing: Florence showed 'no taste' for the latter, but enjoyed singing and was learning to play the piano (...). At the same time William Nightingale himself would assume responsibility for his daughters' academic tuition (Bostridge 37).

It was highly unusual for a father, at this time, to take such a keen interest in the studies of his daughters. However, Nightingale did benefit greatly from her father's tutelage:

For the next seven years Florence thought of little else but the 'cultivation of my intellect'. The importance of the instruction that she received at her father's hands cannot be overestimated. Its breadth and range put her on equal footing with male contemporaries, as well as ensuring that she would never think twice about engaging in discussion or debate with the opposite sex (Bostridge 37).

Bostridge comments that this type of education for women was not uncommon in the Unitarian circles (Bostridge 38), but it certainly left Nightingale on a different footing than many other daughters of the landed gentry. McDonald comments further on Nightingale's early education: "Apart from learning French, Latin, and German, her Greek was good enough to correct Jowett's translation of Plato's dialogues" (McDonald, *Methodologists* 183). This is not to say that the Nightingale girls did not learn the social graces, after all Parthenope married quite well and became Lady Verney (Bostridge 351); however, Parthenope was always more the ideal of what a Victorian lady should be (Bostridge 39).

Nightingale became her father's constant companion and studied with him whenever possible, further developing her intellect and her voracious appetite for learning. Nightingale's education at her father's hands is not to be overlooked and it was undertaken with great seriousness by both father and daughter:

The seriousness with which Mr. Nightingale undertook the task of educating his daughters was reflected in the long hours of study expected from them. Florence would sometimes rise at three in the morning to prepare her Greek, and both girls recited the lessons of the previous day to their father at breakfast, where he was already deep in his own reading. (It was a standing joke that William Nightingale was unable to get through any meal 'without covering the table-cloth with literature') (Bostridge 38).

From learning languages Nightingale went on to study maths through the intercession of one of her many aunts, a decidedly unsuitable subject for a lady in the Victorian era, despite the emergence of such figures as Lovelace and Somerville:

At first light, before the rest of the household stirred, Florence and her aunt cemented their bond in reading and study. German and the history of the Thirty Years War were their particular focus, though Florence craved something more: the kind of certainty that she believed only mathematics could provide. Studying Euclid's *Elements of Geometry* with her young cousin Beatrice only whetted her appetite (Bostridge 70).

After many months Nightingale was finally allowed to take math lessons while ostensibly helping another aunt during her pregnancy (Bostridge 71). Nightingale became so adept at maths that she was able to tutor a male cousin through his exams (Bostridge 72). However, this type of education was not without its pitfalls:

Equipped with an education which would not have been found wanting at the male bastions of Oxford or Cambridge – and Florence imagined running away to college dressed as a man – it was unlikely that she would be satisfied with the conventional path mapped out for 'young ladies' of her class (Bostridge 37).

Later Nightingale would be far from satisfied with the life of a traditional young woman in Victorian England. While Nightingale's education in mathematics provided her with the means to become the "passionate statistician" (McDonald, *Statistician* 92) a different type of education

provided her with strong personal convictions. Her work on lying-in institutions is one of the better examples of the balance that Nightingale struck between a personal sense of duty and her statistical research. While her father provided her with the means, her mother provided her with the drive:

The parish, both at Lea and at East Wellow, the neighbouring village to Embley, was another center for Mrs. Nightingale's activities. (...) In fact Fanny's charitable impulses went beyond the small acts practiced by a Lady Bountiful, of the type later dismissed by her younger daughter as 'poor peopling' or, even more contemptuously, under the general heading of philanthropy (...). Fanny Nightingale was in large part a creature of convention, but her strain of social benevolence was stronger than has often been suggested (Bostridge 41).

In addition to the education of local children, Fanny took a large interest in the health of her tenants, paid for their medical treatment, and Fanny also kept notes on their continuing conditions and care (Bostridge 49). This is the sort of involvement Nightingale learned from her mother. Bostridge comments on Nightingale's journals and the condition of the impoverished:

Some sections of Florence's childhood journal reveal knowledge of the dark and desperate underside of lives of deprivation that seems to reach well beyond her years. In an entry for May 1830, for example, she had recorded the death of Mrs. Petty, a woman from East Wellow, who had killed herself and her youngest child while her husband tried to beat down the door (Bostridge 49-50).

At the age of ten her knowledge of the lives of the poor belies an involvement in the concerns of the impoverished that goes beyond what was expected of a young girl. This level of involvement was promoted by Fanny Nightingale as she saw it a necessary part of her daughters' education (Bostridge 49). Experiences like the one above shaped Nightingale's ideas as it came to Poor Law Reform in her later life. Nightingale did not defend the type of charity in which one was a Lady Bountiful but the type of charity that enabled people to live for themselves and on their own power (McDonald, Methodologists 192). She believed in the type of charity that provided one with an occupation and the salary that would compensate one for the efforts.

Throughout her young life Nightingale found various situations to practice what would later become her craft and profession. Nightingale continually nursed her thirteen dolls from sickness to health (Bostridge 45), which is perhaps not unusual for any girl and cannot be the necessary predictor of her future profession (Bostridge 45) but there are more stories surrounding Nightingale and her youthful preoccupation with the occupation. There are descriptions of her binding an injured dog's paw (Bostridge 46) and to have gone further: "she bound up the hand of a boy cousin injured in a game and found that 'she liked it'" (Bostridge 47) and she states later in her life: "the first idea I can recollect from when I was a child was a desire to nurse the sick" (Bostridge 47). Nightingale had found her calling early on and continued the practice of it throughout her youth, including on her own family members:

In February 1836 the Nightingales were plunged into crisis when Parthenope fell seriously ill with a severe chest inflammation (...). 'Dear Flo is a most kind nurse,' her mother wrote (...). The illness of a sister had called 'forth all the latent good which in common occasions lies so deeply buried', a sentiment shared by Aunt Mai on Parthenope's behalf when she noted (...) of whose nursing she speaks very affectionately' (Bostridge 49).

Beyond the care of her family Nightingale could often be found offering what care, comfort, and consolation she could to the dying in her neighbourhood (Bostridge 50). And so began the career of one of England's more illustrious heroines.

2.2 Travel and Education Abroad

On their first tour since Nightingale and her sister had been born abroad, the Nightingales were exposed to nursing institutions, hospitals (McDonald, Methodologists 183), political theorists and radicals in France, and political refugees in Italy and Switzerland (Bostridge 88-111). Through 1847 to 1850 Nightingale travelled to Rome, Cairo, and throughout more of Europe with an elderly couple, the Bracebridges. In 1851 Nightingale finally convinced her parents to let her undergo formal training as a nurse in Germany with an order of sisters

(McDonald, First Hand 1) while her sister was taking in the health spas (Gill, Nightingales 268-271). However, McDonald points out that this really amounted to no formal training in nursing and living in poor sanitary conditions (McDonald, First Hand 7-8). There were many objections to Nightingale training as a nurse, one of which being that: "Nursing was not then a profession but a low-paid occupation pursued in appalling conditions by working-class women, who were often said to drink too much" (McDonald, Methodologists 185). Nightingale was chafing continually at her "wholly useless role" (McDonald, Methodologists 183, 185); for two years after her return from Germany her Aunt Mai and Mrs. Bracebridge argued on her behalf with her mother to find her a more independent existence that used her skills and passion in nursing (Bostridge 181-182). Even if there was little to no opposition to Nightingale leading an independent life it seemed like the opportunities would be of her own or family's making until Lady Canning offered the institution on Chandos Street (Bostridge 183).

It was not until January of 1853 that she was approached by the administrator of a charitable hospital institution in London and by April she had taken the position and won her independence through an allowance that her father allotted her (Bostridge 185-186) and suddenly: "the days of wasting time in her mother's drawing room, instead of going out into the world to do God's work were over" (Bostridge 186). Nightingale had what many women of her class did not, a father who understood her desire for independence and while it was much later than Nightingale wanted, he did provide her with the means to pursue a career and make a life for herself. Nightingale spent one year at the Upper Harley Street Establishment for Gentlewomen during illness as the Lady Superintendent.

2.3 The Crimea

War broke out in 1854 on the Crimean Peninsula. The Crimean War is considered by some to be the first modern war because of its use of new technologies. The Crimean War was the first to use percussion caps and changes in weaponry were made; with the invention of the telegraph came the use of a battlefield telephone (Royle 355) and the train was used to transport supplies quickly, and as one astute observer put it: “A fortnight later Newcastle also arranged for the despatch of railroad equipment and engineers ‘for laying down a line of railroad between Balaklava and the heights above Sebastopol’ which could be used to bring up siege equipment and remove the wounded” (Royle 257). This is also the first war where the public had access to news from the front in what was considered at the time to be instant media, the telegraph. This war is also known for its tactical debacles, the Charge of the Light Brigade is perhaps the most famous of these errors as the Light Brigade charged into a valley and lost many men on the battlefield and later to illness related to infection (Lacey, Valley 382-386) as a result of poor planning, miscommunication, and rivalry amongst the commanding officers (Lacey, Valley 383).

This war is also famous because of Nightingale. After Russell reported on the disgusting conditions in which soldiers were forced to live and recover the British public became outraged, demanding that something be done to alleviate the conditions in which the sons of Britain were living, fighting, and dying in:

When *The Times* 40,000 readers opened their copies on the morning of October 12 1854 they received an unwelcome surprise. (...) they were treated to the harsh reality of the aftermath of battle and the suffering of the soldiers (...). While wounds and death are unavoidable in war, and while it is true that British soldiers were not immune to suffering and official indifference, in the past they died like flies far removed from the public gaze. Now, thanks to the presence of reporters the people of Britain could understand what was being done in their name and, to do them justice, the mid-Victorian British public showed that they cared (Royle 246).

Russell's original article in *The Times* revealed his disgust with the "official indifference" (Royle 246) of the London administrators and bureaucrats. Russell was horrified with the deplorable conditions of the wounded and his stark words opened the public's eyes: "words could not describe its filth, its [British Base at Balaclava] horrors, its hospitals, its burials, its dead and dying Turks, its crowded lanes, its noisome sheds, its beastly purlieus, or its decay" (Holmes 90). It was after reading these articles that Nightingale wrote a fateful letter to the wife of the Secretary of War. Herbert, the Secretary of War, had also written to Nightingale on that day to propose her taking on the commission of head of the Army Nursing Service at Scutari Hospital:

There is but one person in England that I know of, who would be capable of organising and superintending such a scheme (...). The difficulty of finding women equal to the task after all full of horror, and requiring besides knowledge and goodwill, great energy and great courage (...). The task of (...) introducing system among them is great; and not the least will be the difficulty of making the whole work smoothly with the medical and military authorities out there (Royle 248-249).

Herbert's words could not have been more prophetic; it was a long and arduous journey to reform the army medical systems and continued long after her return to England when the hostilities in Crimea ended. However, the beginning was a struggle and Nightingale was greeted with a less than pleasant sight when she arrived at Scutari:

Many of the orderlies ignored the dying. One man was 'very dirty, covered with wounds, and devoured by lice,' but could get little attention and there were too few nurses to go round. Food was unpalatable, and was often simply laid beside men who were 'in a state of stupor or exhaustion, unconscious of its presence, and even if conscious quite unable to sit up and feed themselves...' (Holmes 262).

It was not just the care of the men that Nightingale found to be inadequate but the supplies, the human resources, the financial resources, and the distinct lack of management in the whole of the system. These factors led to the appalling conditions in which the soldiers lived out their last days:

Nightingale found ample evidence that (...) everything at Scutari was thoroughly inadequate. (...) It was not just the absence of medical supplies or the inability to cope with the hopelessly unsanitary conditions (...) it was the unyielding mismanagement of the resources. The medical department was a law unto itself (...). The Commissariat and the Purveyors departments (...) their obsession with red tape and responsibilities produced an atmosphere of indecision and paralysis. (...) they combined to hinder Nightingale (...) the doctors because they resented her presence and the administrators because nurses were an unwarranted intrusion (Royle 252).

Nightingale brought order and reform to Scutari. Sanitary conditions were improved and nurses gained a respected place amongst the British Military services, much like the nursing services from France (Royle 441). Nightingale became a popular heroine in the British press, which labelled her “the lady with the lamp”; she became such a popular figure that a fund was established in her honour to allow her to continue her good works when she returned to England:

Nightingale returned to England a national heroine. Her soldiers and their families would be ever grateful – her feats were widely reported in the press. Now a celebrity, she declined the numerous invitations of the rich, noble and famous. She decided to ask nothing for herself, but to devote her political capital to argue for basic reforms. This gave her great power in the negotiations to follow, when she sought a royal commission to investigate the causes of the deplorable conditions and massive deaths suffered by the British Army in the East (McDonald, First Hand 74).

2.4 Later Work

Now that she had returned with her successes in Scutari, Nightingale needed to find another project. Summers discusses the lack of any real forum in which a gentlewoman could turn her charitable tendencies in the mid-Victorian era:

How best to harness the religious and charitable impulses of the lady became a subject for quite intense debate with the growth of the movement to revive sisterhoods within the Protestant churches. (...) It was after her visit to Kaiserworth in 1840 that Elizabeth Fry founded her own Sister of Charity in London, later re-titled The Institution for Nursing Sisters. This was a protestant but non-denominational establishment. High Anglican initiatives followed, with the Sisterhood of the Holy Cross set up under the influence of the Reverend Pusey in 1845, and the Sisterhood of Mercy of Devonport and Plymouth by his friend

Priscilla Lydia Sellon in 1848. These orders undertook nursing in addition to other charitable work (...) (Summers 143).

What is seen throughout this litany of nursing orders and even through Nightingale's own training is that there is a lack of true professional training offered to any woman undertaking the role of "nurse" during this time. In addition, these positions were charitable in that women undertook nursing as a form of charity and so there was no real collective professionalization of the discipline. However, the most noticeable trend through Summers' list of sisterhoods and orders is that they were all linked in some way to a church or Christian institution, often supervised by pastors, rectors, and vicars in an effort to direct those charitable impulses of the mid-Victorian woman. Summers' posits the question in her article – why the directed focus towards nursing:

At a time when cure was always uncertain, a sick body was a soul close to salvation, or its opposite. If those about the sick were not devoutly inclined, a great pastoral opportunity was going to waste. The expansion of urban centers had removed large numbers of the poor from the effective reach of parish organisation in the first half of the century (Summers 144).

As such nursing was viewed as a voluntary pastoral position providing care to the soul and not to the body. Summers states that industrialization of the nation means that vast numbers were no longer within reach of the church. As such, the church ministered in hospitals where it could be assured of reaching at least a few of the poor:

These were indeed Anglican foundations, where chaplains were appointed, and discharged patients were required to attend church and render thanks for their recovery (Summers 144).

Nursing was viewed as an extension of the charitable and Christian impulses that founded the institution. The women that volunteered in these positions were viewed as an extension of this ministry:

Nursing, unlike the occasional visit of the chaplain or the medical man, involved constant attendance at the bedside of the sick person; nurses, therefore, were the

key figures in a movement to reclaim both the persons of the poor (...) from creeping secularisation (Summers 144).

The role of nursing, in the cases described above, was an extension of the roles of women discussed by Summers earlier in the article. This is merely the role of wife and mother on a grander scale: reminding the suffering patient of the divided world by being a virtuous paragon. This is not to say that nurses should not be respectable but to point out that the main function of the Christian nursing orders was not necessarily the recovery nor the physical comfort of the patient but the comfort or recovery of his or her immortal soul. Nightingale had two projects in mind for the fund in her name: “the creation of the first non-sectarian training school for nurses, at St. Thomas’ Hospital, and a midwifery nursing training programme, at King’s College Hospital (both hospitals in London). They began in 1860 and 1861, respectively.” (McDonald, *First Hand* 74). McDonald comments further on the training institution for nurses in the short biography in her book, The Women Founders of the Social Sciences:

Nightingale devoted the fund raised in her honour after Crimea to establish a training school for nurses, the first in England without religious affiliation. She began the transformation of the ill-esteemed occupation of nursing into a skilled profession (...) (McDonald, *Methodologists* 185).

There are several considerations in how to move to a profession forward. Helmstadter comments on respectability and efficiency in the new nursing services in her article, “Building a New Nursing Service: Respectability and Efficiency in Victorian England”, nurses needed to be respectable and, essentially, virtuous individuals to become part of the nursing service:

The main problem in staffing military hospitals with female nurses, Florence Nightingale explained in 1857, was to find ‘respectable and efficient women’ who would be willing to undertake such work. Many women would apply for positions but few would be acceptable. (...) ‘As a body, the mass of Assistant-Nurses are too low in moral principle, and too flighty in manner, to make any use of.’ Nightingale thought that efficient and respectable assistant nurses had ‘in a great degree, to be created.’ Developing respectability and efficiency in hospital nurses were two major goals of nineteenth-century nursing reformers, and vigilant supervision was to be the major method for achieving them (Helmstadter 590).

As much as the focus of nursing training at Nightingale's facility and the religious orders was on respectability, moral education, and obedience (Helmstadter 594), Nightingale tried to provide some education in the technical aspects of nursing as well. Notes on Nursing was published in 1860 and was to provide practical education and advice on nursing in general and was not meant just for nurses as: "every woman at some time or other of her life, becomes a nurse, i.e., have charge of somebody's health, how immense and how valuable would be the produce of her united experience if every woman would think how to nurse" (Nightingale, Nursing ix). The book itself provides advice on the cleanliness of homes, the need for ventilation, fresh air and light in the sickroom; this advice is partially due to the miasma theory of illness in which all sickness is caused by foul smells. However, the advice concerning cleanliness and fresh air given is still relevant in nursing today. Nightingale started her training facility for a myriad of reasons, one of them being the provision of opportunities to women in order to earn an income:

Nightingale held that women have the same right to develop their abilities as men – to become perfect, in her terms. She accepted conventional gender roles somewhat less than her contemporaries. That she wanted women to become nurses rather than doctors was largely practical: women did not have the education for medicine and medical prejudice was then formidable. (...) By developing professional nursing, a whole new, well-paid occupation could be provided women who needed to earn their living (McDonald, First Hand 47).

Nightingale went further than just stating that women should have opportunities; she did not believe the popular theory concerning brain size and the moral status of men and women: "the two sexes had the same moral responsibilities, she held, and a common moral nature" (McDonald, First Hand 47). This is actually in response to the military's stance on prostitution and the controversial *Contagious Diseases Act*, which she opposed, but the idea that men and women were on equal footing on a moral level means that there really could not be an "angel in the house" and men and women would be as moral or as amoral as they chose for themselves. However, time went on and Victorian values and roles within the home stayed the same.

Women were still in the home and taking advantage of marriage as an opportunity as opposed to striking out on their own. As this state of affairs persisted Nightingale became critical:

Yet Nightingale was often critical of women. She felt that women did not take up the opportunities they had, notably in nursing. She began her post-Crimea work with a dedicated band of male collaborators, but no women. Nightingale complained that women did not know the names of Cabinet ministers, the ranks in the army or which churches had bishops, all of which was available in reference books. She decried women's desire for *love*, to be loved that is, but failure at *sympathy*, the ability to feel with others (McDonald, First Hand 47).

Nightingale is railing against the idea that women cannot achieve independence because of their need to be loved by someone and to have the love of a family in her life. Nightingale also looked critically at women for not taking advantage of the work that she fought hard to eke out in a very male dominated world, work that used to be unpaid: "When Nightingale complained in 1861 that she had left no school behind her, that her work had taken no hold among women, she was stating the simple truth" (McDonald, First Hand 47-48). As Nightingale's own life is examined in reference to these two complaints against women in general one can see a very interesting picture of Nightingale the woman. Nightingale never married in her ninety years. For Nightingale marriage was not an option and one can see the reasoning behind this from a very early age:

As for Miss Christie [Nightingale's governess], Florence remembered her in years to come with fondness mixed with an awareness of her shortcomings: 'She was just and well intentioned, but she did not understand children ...' At the end of January in 1832 came the tragic news of the death of the former governess in childbirth (her newborn son survived). Florence was filled with sorrow, but paused to reflect that if Miss Christie had not married, and had not had a baby, she would still be alive (Bostridge 37).

For a young girl who was exposed to the suffering and illness of the tenants on her family's estate this would not be a strange conclusion but for the average Victorian twelve year old girl, who was taught to believe that marriage was her destiny, this would be very strange indeed.

McDonald comments on this further:

Nightingale's decision not to marry was a logical consequence of her call to service. At the time there were no effective means of contraception, so the very life and health of a wife was entirely subject to forces beyond her control. (...) Nightingale (...) seems to have regretted that her life would be without a husband (...) she did not regret not having children, but rather took on motherly roles both with young soldiers and nurses (McDonald, First Hand 10).

For Nightingale it was simple: get married, become pregnant and possibly die or continue her work through her call to service. Nightingale chose to continue her work. She was dedicated to nursing from an early age. Nightingale was so devoted to her profession that she actively fought to have it included on her census forms:

For the 1871 census Nightingale asked an official how she should describe her occupation, and objected to his reply of 'none, gentlewoman'. She joked that she would deserve to be fined for false information' if she replied 'no occupation' and thought that she should at least put 'war hospital matron, or hospital matron retired from active service through illness.'

In fact throughout her life she gave her position as head of the Nightingale Fund and Training School on the census return, although it was never a paid position (she never held one) and she always lived on her own means (McDonald, First Hand 34).

Between Bostridge and McDonald there is some debate as to what "her own means" actually is in terms of financial independence. Even still, Nightingale is clearly a woman who defied the traditional role for women throughout the Victorian era seeking more complex education, professional training, and independence. In the process of doing this she provided women with the best opportunity to have an independent income through professional means that the gender had ever had access to as it was not the life of a paid servant but a skilled profession.

Nightingale made it possible for a myriad of further options to be made available to women by using skills that they cultivated in the home, nursing was just the first. However, behind the scenes Nightingale worked to influence some of the more prominent people of the day, including politicians, royalty, philosophers, and novelists. Nightingale's work during the Crimean conflict provided her with the very powerful image of being the "lady with the lamp"; in fact, the statue

that was erected in her honour in Waterloo Place, London depicts this very image. Part of this fame was due to the war correspondents, the same intrepid group that originally broke the stories about the sanitary conditions in the Scutari hospitals lauded the newly minted Victorian heroine; MacDonald of *The Times* wrote:

She is a 'ministering angel' ... and as her slender form glides quietly along each corridor, every poor fellow's face softens with gratitude at the sight of her. When all the medical officers have retired for the night, and silence and darkness have settled down upon those miles of prostrate sick, she may be observed alone, with a little lamp in her hand, making her solitary rounds (Lacey, Lady 387-388).

Nightingale was not comfortable with her fame on her return to England and continually insisted on a quiet and private homecoming; the public that so wanted to welcome her back had to be contented with her wagon from Crimea instead (Bostridge 305). Nightingale was actually burdened by feeling of guilt on her return from the Crimean Peninsula, wanting to have achieved more for her patients than she did:

Within weeks of coming home, however, Florence [sic] would commit herself to reform. She was haunted by thoughts of 'living skeletons' of the dreadful first winter; men, ulcerated and covered with vermin, who wrapped their heads in their blankets, and died without uttering a word. Overwhelming herself with work might at least keep these memories at bay. Almost a decade after the war, she was to look back, and shudder at the memory of the 'slaughter houses' of Scutari. It was like 'a horrid spectre' that she was afraid of conjuring up from the dark corners of her mind, where it was ever present, waiting to spring out on her (Bostridge 299).

In actuality, the image that followed her home and was responsible for the depiction of her heroism was this one:

By the end of the war, the Scutari hospitals had been transformed into efficiently organized, smooth-running operations. The mortality rates from illness in all the hospitals of the East were no higher than those of a comparable civilian population in an industrial city like Manchester. The hospitals of the French Army, with their Sisters of Charity, once the object of such admiration, were now suffering from death rates that significantly outran those experienced by the British at the height of the terrible winter of 1854-55 (Bostridge 298).

Nightingale used this fame to pursue bold and new systems of social reform:

(...) she spent the rest of her life campaigning for army and hospital reform. She also fought to improve the training of midwives and the conditions inside maternity ('lying-in') hospitals, had a nursing school named after her, became an expert on sanitation and related health issues in India, and conducted a survey aiming to improve the lot of the 'Sick Poor' in workhouses.

Scarcely a day went by when Florence [sic] did not fire off a detailed letter to promote one of her causes (...) (Lacey, Lady 388).

All this she did from her sick bed:

Florence Nightingale has become one of history's most famous invalids. The image we have of her, tirelessly continuing to work while confined to bed, or reclining on a sofa, has become a dominant impression in many people's minds, second only to the popular notion of the Lady with the Lamp (Bostridge 324).

Nightingale wrote letter after letter to regulators, members of parliament, Prince Albert, Queen Victoria, social reformers, authors, philosophers, and others in prominent positions. Nightingale was so prolific in her writing of letters and reports that the surviving written material was collected and catalogued in a massive effort by McDonald. In this mass of writing there are statistical reports on the sanitary conditions of maternity hospitals and notes on the success of the reforms that Nightingale suggested; there are reports on public hospital reform; reports on the reform of the social welfare systems; reports on the governance of India; reports on the sanitary conditions of the military. Her reports and her analysis are so detailed that she has been recognized in history for this aspect alone:

Nightingale's methodological advice was and remains superb. The studies she herself did were models of new and higher standards of data collection and analysis. The methods she devised became standard practice in mainstream social science. (She used the advice of the Belgian statistician Quetelet for a start, but her own research went well beyond his methodologically.) The term 'evidence-based health care' was not used in her lifetime, but this is what Nightingale was doing. Not a technical statistician, and living before the invention of regression analysis and tests for statistical significance, she nonetheless showed formidable ability to make sense of data and present it persuasively. She has been so recognized by historians of statistics (McDonald, First Hand 177).

Chapter 3: Florence Nightingale and John Stuart Mill - Influence and Correspondence

3.1 Summary of the Pieces

“Cassandra” is an emotional cry for changes in thought patterns surrounding women at large in English society during the reign of Queen Victoria. The emotional tenor of the piece is extraordinarily angry for one of Nightingale’s position in society. One does not typically see the same degree of emotion and open rebellion that is present in “Cassandra”. As an example of another feminist writer at the time, Cobbe, Anglo-Irish essayist and journalist who focused much of her time, effort, and money on women’s and animal rights (Hamilton 144-145), addresses her concerns surrounding marriage through a third party observer who becomes slightly indignant in “Criminals, Idiots, Women, and Minors” (Cobbe 90-91). On the whole Cobbe’s writing is less emotional than Nightingale’s and the same could said of other writers at the time who were pursuing this subject.

“Cassandra” is named after the prophetess who predicted the fall of Troy and is based on the Cassandra myth, which is part of the larger Trojan series. Cassandra, as the story goes, is given the gift of foresight by Apollo because he is infatuated with her; when she does not return his affection, she is cursed which causes the Trojans to disbelieve and disregard everything that she says. Cassandra knows that Troy will fall but is utterly powerless to stop it. Cassandra has become synonymous with the feeling of powerlessness, which makes her the perfect bearer of Nightingale’s message; the evocation of this myth: “creates a powerful symbol for women, whose silenced voices could also hold truths” (Jenkins 17). In her introduction to Suggestions for Thought McDonald provides a succinct description of Nightingale’s message:

Cassandra, the most well-known part of *Suggestions for Thought*, is also the most altered of the drafts to reach print. As described in the introduction above, there is a substantial draft of its early novel form, without the name “Cassandra” ever appearing in it. Rather, the characters were Nofariari, the unfortunate heroine

with a Cassandra-like role, prophetess of doom, here not the fall of Troy but the plight of educated and intellectual women (Nightingale, *Suggestions* 547).

The version without the Nofariari narrative is what Mill reviewed in 1859 and went to print many years later. The substance of “Cassandra” is simple: that women should be able to be useful in society and pursue useful work. As discussed earlier, women were not able to take a useful position in society at large; however, there were a few outliers – women who managed to become doctors, women writers who were extremely successful (Cobbe, Martineau, Gaskell), and women who managed broad, sweeping social reforms (Fry); but these women were far from the norm in Victorian society.

The question becomes how to define “useful work”. Perhaps the best definition comes from a contemporary of Mill and Nightingale, Morris, an artist, textile crafter, poet, writer, lecturer, and socialist (Abrams and Greenblatt, *Morris* 1605). Although Morris’ definition appeared in 1888, it still expresses many of the aspirations of Victorian society at large. Morris’ definition appeared in his essay “Useful Work Versus Useless Toil”. His definition is apt, especially as it relates to Nightingale’s ideas concerning women. Morris writes:

(...) that it is of the nature of man, when he is not diseased to take pleasure in his work under certain conditions. And, yet, we must say in the teeth of the hypocritical praise of all labour, whatsoever it may be, of which I have made mention, that there is some labour which is so far from being a blessing that it is a curse; that it would be better for the community and for the worker if the latter were to fold his hands and refuse work, and either die or let us pack him off to the workhouse or prison – which you will.

Here, you see, are two kinds of work – one good, and the other bad; one not far removed from a blessing, a lightening to life; the other a mere curse, a burden to life (Morris 1-2).

Morris believes in time spent well and time spent pursuing an occupation that would bring about adequate compensation for the task. Adequate compensation, in this case, does not mean money but providing a service or product that makes life better for the self and others. The farmer is the

prime example of “useful work”, taking pleasure in a job well done and the fact that he has provided food for countless families, including his own. While the farmer may not have a large fortune he has derived pleasure from the task and has provided a community service. Morris discusses the idea that a man should be able to refuse work from which he is not able to derive pleasure; that it would be better for all involved if work that one could not count as useful could be refused. Morris then defines “useful work”:

(...) hope of rest, hope of product, hope of pleasure in the work itself; and hope of these also in some abundance and of good quality; rest enough and good enough to be worth having; product worth having by one who is neither a fool nor an ascetic; pleasure enough for all of us to be conscious of it while we are at work; not a mere habit, the loss of which we shall feel as a fidgety man feels the loss of the bit of string he fidgets with (Morris 2).

Granted, Morris was referring to revolution in the Arts and Crafts industry due to industrialization where he was seeing the equivalent of Victorian mass production and the shoddiness of new products in the market (Abrams and Greenblatt, Morris 1605). But the same definition can apply to Nightingale’s view of women in “Cassandra”. Nightingale discusses the intellectual and moral life of women in her society throughout “Cassandra”. Throughout the piece Nightingale discusses the uselessness of women’s occupations: visiting, embroidery, courting, and caring for family as opposed to being able to pursue intellectual pursuits and provide a commodity besides a child. One of the ways in which Nightingale provides her audience with a concrete example of the useful versus useless work is her “knights of the carpet” (Nightingale, Suggestions 557):

But suppose we were to see a number of men in the morning sitting round a table in the drawing room, looking at prints, doing worsted work, and reading little books, how we should laugh! (...) Now why is it more ridiculous for a man than for a woman to do worsted work and drive out every day in the carriage? Why should we laugh if we were to see a parcel of men sitting round a drawing room table in the morning, and think it alright if they were women? (Nightingale, Suggestions 557-558).

In this example the expectation is to see women huddled around the table performing these tasks but instead it is men, who would typically have their time differently employed. When women were meant to be embroidering cushions and covering screens men were intended to be meeting with the household steward and seeing to matters of the estate (in the case of the gentry) or actively pursuing some profession. For Nightingale it is the relative importance between the sexes definable by the degree of usefulness in their daily occupations that drives the uselessness of women's occupations. Nightingale presses this analogy further:

Yet time is the most valuable of all things. If they had come every morning and robbed us of half a crown we should have had redress from the police. But it is laid down, that our time is of no value. If you offer a morning visit to a professional man, and say 'I will just stay an hour with you, if you will allow me, till so and so comes back to fetch me,' it costs him the earnings of an hour, and therefore, he has a right to complain. But women have no right, because it is 'only their time' (Nightingale, *Suggestions* 561).

The sense of Nightingale's frustration at the thought of being counted as useless and having nothing useful to contribute to humanity at large is pervasive in this passage; which is of import in Morris' definition of useful work – something good enough to be worth having as well as contentedness within the task itself. For Nightingale the example of women in the drawing room is the ultimate example of useless toil as there can be no pleasure in it as women's intellectual and moral needs are being neglected (Nightingale, *Suggestions* 553).

From here her essay progresses to detail, with much anger and chaffing, women's places in the home, family, marriage, work world, and society at large. Nightingale's analysis of the situation was from a time when Nightingale was very dissatisfied with her life at home, comes to a very negative end. *Suggestions for Thought* is dedicated to the searchers after truth: "The stated purpose of *Suggestions for Thought* was outreach to the unchurched working class" (Nightingale, *Suggestions* 1). "Cassandra" actually has little to do with religious philosophy of any kind until the end of the piece where Nightingale discusses the consolation of Christ and the

story of Mary of Bethany and goes further to discuss the rather subversive notion of a female Christ: “The next Christ will perhaps be a female Christ. But do we see one woman who looks like a female Christ? or even like ‘the messenger before’ her ‘face’, to go before and prepare the hearts and minds for her?” (Nightingale, *Suggestions* 589). The end of “Cassandra” is rather predictable and follows the myth of the namesake; Cassandra dies without having accomplished her goal in extreme unhappiness at her failure (Nightingale, *Suggestions* 592). So much for the prophetess.

3.2 Nightingale and Mill: The Subjection of Women

While Nightingale discusses the needs of women and decries the idea that women are inferior to men and, therefore, that their time and opinions should only be rendered in the service of others, Mill discusses the rights of women and the need to recognise women as persons with individual rights and freedoms. Mill’s essay “The Subjection of Women” is an interesting philosophical discourse simultaneously addressing two issues – the status of women and how the elevation of that status would contribute to the overall good of society. Mill’s work is very structured and, as always, presents both sides of the argument (Rose 103-104). Mill’s piece starts on extremely high moral ground; marriage is slavery for women. Nightingale underlined and highlighted a passage regarding slavery and marriage that she particularly agreed with in the text that Mill’s publisher had sent (Nightingale, *Politics and Philosophy* 231). Mill presents some very tangible arguments for his final assertion: “Marriage is the only actual bondage known to our law. There remain no legal slaves except the mistress of every house” (Mill, *Subjection* 220). Mill believed this and acted upon it as no other would have in his own marriage by writing a quasi-legal document to his prospective wife renouncing all rights that he would have as her husband:

Marriage, however, had dismal associations for Harriet, and both of them disliked the institution, believing it legalized an essentially immoral transfer of all power and property to the man. As they moved closer to marriage in 1852, Mill produced a remarkable document disclaiming the rights which would be conferred on him as a husband (Rose 119).

Harriet Taylor and Mill created a marriage that was different from all others in their time:

The nineteenth century's most important theorist of feminism was concerned not to reproduce in his own life the historical inequities of his sex (...). But so unusual was this situation that for Harriet to be anywhere near equal she had to be "more than equal". Think of it as a domestic case of affirmative action. To achieve equality, more power had to go to Harriet, in compensation for the inequality of their conditions (Rose 136).

While Nightingale did not influence Mill's relationship with Harriet Taylor, it is notable that his main focus was the relationship between husband and wife and not within the larger family context (Harriet Taylor already having three children). It is unsurprising then that Mill would have written "The Subjection of Women" such as he did, a powerful work regarding women's place in society and in her own home. As with all of Mill's works, this one is distinctly utilitarian. Although utilitarianism is often known as ethical calculus – maximizing the goods or benefits and minimizing the harms – Mill takes a slightly different tactic in all his works and especially this one:

The failure of the standard interpretation of Mill to account for his sentimentalism has led to a profound misreading of his moral theory, which makes Mill out to be the predecessor of the most fashionable view in the neighbourhood of utilitarianism: namely, multilevel maximizing act consequentialism (Jacobson 160).

Jacobson's major thrust in his article is that Mill is not strictly a consequentialist, measuring the harm against the good to make an ethically based decision; this is the case in "The Subjection of Women". For Mill, the sole consequence of women having access to rights as a person meant that a marginalised group would be provided full rights and freedoms due to them. This is one of

the irreconcilable differences between a strictly consequentialist view of Mill's work and Mill's work itself:

(...) it cannot be reconciled with some of Mill's most distinctive and important claims. Its advocates therefore must ignore or traduce crucial aspects of his work, to the point of attributing a dissimulation hypothesis to Mill, on which he (sporadically) conceals his genuine but "esoteric" morality for instrumental purposes. Surely this should be an interpretive strategy of last resort, especially when another reading both comports better with what he actually wrote and fits more neatly into his historical context. (...) including its engagement with disparate emotions, both moral and nonmoral, and its resistance to the pervasiveness of more orthodox forms of the theory which allow moral considerations to occupy the entire evaluative domain (Jacobson 160-161).

This reading tends to suit the reading of "the Subjection of Women" much better than the consequentialist view, which, at the time, would have had to give consideration to the harm that the enfranchisement of women would have done to the family sphere. Mill's preference is to balance off ethical considerations with the more emotive and sentimental sphere. With this counterbalance Mill was able to avoid the common pitfall of utilitarianism which is the consequentialist aspect. This is evident in reading of "The Subjection of Women". Not only does Mill look at the benefits of the enfranchisement of women but he seeks to move his readers on a guttural level by referring to husbands as "slave masters" and to their wives as "slaves to the families that they begat". In Mill's work each chapter addresses a different aspect of his argument. Chapter one of the essay states the aim of the work and his basic argument. Mill wishes his readers, and society at large, to contemplate a different system. Mill's first thrust in this argument is that there has never been any other system contemplated as concerns the relationship between the sexes (Mill, Subjection 137). Mill's second point is that the system under which he lives was not the result of consideration and consultation, which he states is necessary for any theory (Mill, Subjection 137). Mill answers the implied question of how the current system did arise:

It arose simply from the fact that from the very earliest twilight of human society, every woman (owing to the value attached to her by men, combined with her inferiority in muscular strength) was found in a state of bondage to some man. Laws and systems of polity always begin by recognizing the relations they find already existing between individuals. They convert what was a mere physical fact into a legal right, give it the sanction of society, and principally aim the substitution of public and organized means of asserting and protecting these rights, instead of the irregular and lawless conflict of physical strength. Those who had already been compelled to obedience became in this manner legally bound to it (Mill, Subjection 137).

Simply stated, women did not become legally bound to men because of any experiment in practical thought or societal reorganization. Women became bound to men because of the fact of their physicality. Mill challenges what is perceived as the “naturalness” of this arrangement as it has simply always existed.

3.3 Nightingale and Mill On Marriage

In chapter two of his essay Mill looks at the legal aspects of marriage. As discussed in the previous chapter, the Victorian legal system was inherently biased against women, especially when it came to the married state. Mill investigates the historical state of laws and punishments as well the current legal status of women in England. Mill’s first argument in this examination concerns the laws surrounding the marriage contract (Mill, Subjection 164). The first point that Mill makes in this series of arguments is that women are all meant to aspire to marriage and to be “chosen” by a man, although Mill comments that this choice is often based on the attractiveness of the potential bride (Mill, Subjection 164) and the reader is left to infer that other considerations, such as intellect, are left by the wayside. Mill states the converse of marriage contract – that while she must be attractive marriage is very likely unattractive to the average woman (Mill, Subjection 164). Mill makes a bold statement regarding the current status of women’s rights in his society:

Society, however, both in this, and, at first, in all other cases, has preferred to attain its object by foul rather than fair means: but this is the only case in which it has substantially persisted in them even to the present day (Mill, Subjection 164).

Mill states that a woman might regret marriage because of how little is afforded by her married status. Mill examines just how unattractive the state can be for women by giving a brief survey of laws governing marriage before the Victorian era. Mill looks at the idea of marriage as a business arrangement; daughters used as bargaining pieces to bolster the family coffers (Mill, Subjection 164). Mill states that the father did not require consent and that the Church required a yes from the bride but it was merely a concession to a “higher morality” (Mill, Subjection 164).

From this family state, Mill looks at the state of laws regarding the marriage contract:

After marriage, the man had anciently (but this was anterior to Christianity) the power of life and death over his wife. She could invoke no law against him; he was her sole tribunal and law. For a long time he could repudiate her, but she had no corresponding power in regard to him. By the old laws of England, the husband was called the lord of the wife; he was literally regarded as her sovereign, inasmuch that the murder of a man by his wife was called treason (petty as distinguished from high treason), and was more cruelly avenged than was usually the case with high treason, for the penalty was burning to death (Mill, Subjection 164-165).

According to this brief historical survey marriage has never been an attractive state for women.

In this passage Mill states that religion and monastic service would be the only way to escape the authority of husband and father but even then, a woman is not governed by her own authority but that of the male headed church. Mill further examines marital laws but from a contemporary perspective, stating that most of the practices and laws that he has just discussed have long been disused and were not “abolished” until long after the practice had been discontinued (Mill, Subjection 165). Mill states that society at large believes that the Church has restored rights to women (Mill, Subjection 165). However, Mill then argues that:

(...) the wife is the actual bond servant of her husband: no less so, as far as legal obligation goes, than slaves commonly so called. She vows a life long obedience to him at the altar, and is held to it all through her life by law. Casuists may say

that the obligation of obedience stops short of participation in crime, but it certainly extends to everything else. She can do no act whatever but by his permission, at least tacit. She can acquire no property but for him; the instant it becomes hers, even if by inheritance, it becomes ipso facto his (Mill, Subjection 165).

One of Mill's main objections in this passage is that contemporary society has been informed that women have all the rights that they should. This statement belies the very aggressive attack that Mill makes on the marital state in his next statement, likening marriage to indentured servitude for women. Through her vow of obedience she loses everything, personal freedom and property. That is quite a price to pay. Mill provides his reader with the metaphor of the payments that Roman slaves received and likens settlements within marriage contracts to be something similar, although with considerably less freedom (Mill, Subjection 165). Mill examines the idea of the marriage settlement closely and what precisely it allows under English law:

(...) the rich usually contrive to withdraw the whole or part of the inherited property of the wife from the absolute control of the husband: but they do not succeed in keeping it under her own control (...). The property itself is out of the reach of both; and as to the income derived from it, the form of settlement most favourable to the wife (that called "to her separate use") only precludes the husband from receiving it instead of her (...) but if he takes it from her by personal violence (...) he can neither be punished, nor compelled to restitution (Mill, Subjection 165-166).

Marital contracts, while common practice could rarely protect the wife or property from a husband who respects neither her nor the settlement. He can still squander the property or financial resources left at her disposal and as Mill points out can abuse his wife to gain and maintain control of the financial resources. Even if the parent is loving, kind, and of sufficient income to provide such a settlement it is very little in terms of assurance for the daughter contemplating giving everything to a spouse:

This is the amount of the protection which, under the laws of this country, the most powerful nobleman can give to his own daughter as respects her husband. In

the immense majority of cases there is no settlement: and the absorption of all rights, all property, as well as all freedom of action, is complete. The two are called "one person in law," for the purpose of inferring that whatever is hers is his, but the parallel inference is never drawn that whatever is his is hers; the maxim is not applied against the man, except to make him responsible to third parties for her acts, as a master is for the acts of his slaves or of his cattle (Mill, Subjection 166).

This is actually quite a damning critique of the married state. Mill's opinion is that, at the time, society could not make marriage any less palatable for women; for men the married state meant that they would have someone to keep home and hearth but for women it meant the subjection of the very few rights they had to a male dominant. Mill then further goes on to examine how women are trained by society to accept their fate. This will bear further examination in this chapter. In chapter three Mill examines women's enfranchisement (Mill, Subjection 189). He again examines the physiological basis, both the arguments on brain size being the reason that women will never be in occupations outside the home (Mill, Subjection 203) and the nervous complaint (Mill, Subjection 199). Mill also addresses the idea of women's moral superiority to men, as outlined by Carlyle and Ellis (Mill, Subjection 216-217) and how this should belie their presupposed inferiority. In this chapter Mill calls men to arms for the rights of women: "Women cannot be expected to devote themselves to the emancipation of women, until men in considerable number are prepared to join with them in the undertaking" (Mill, Subjection 218). In chapter four Mill looks at the benefits of full rights for women – what could society attain, at large, if women were given equal rights and trained for something other than marriage? Mill concludes that the greatest benefit would be the advancement of all of society:

The principle of the modern movement in morals and politics, is that (...) what they do, constitutes their claim to deference; (...) is the only rightful claim to power and authority. If no authority (...) were allowed to one human being over another, society would not be employed in building up propensities with one hand which it has to curb with the other. The child would really (...) be trained in the way he should go, and when he was old there would be a chance that he would not depart from it. But so long as the right of the strong to power over the weak

rules (...) society, the attempt to make the equal right of the weak the principle of its outward actions will always be an uphill struggle; for the law of justice (...) will never get possession of men's inmost sentiments; they will be working against it, even when bending to it (Mill, *Subjection* 222-223).

In this example Mill discusses what the right to rule over another human being does to the sensibilities of those who hold the dominant position. His thought is that the removal of the dominant position would benefit all and create a system based upon the merits of an individual and intelligence bent towards its true purpose.

3.4 Nightingale and Mill On Women's Rights

Clearly, "Cassandra" and "The Subjection of Women" extensively examine women's rights at a time when women had few rights – not even to their own children. But the authors deal with the idea in different ways; Nightingale's piece is the more emotional, Mill's more logical, presenting reasoned arguments, although hers is arguably the more illustrative piece. Although the temperature of Nightingale's piece is higher the work is not less legitimate than Mill's, and perhaps the best evidence of this is that he encouraged her to publish it after he had finished reading it (Nightingale, *Politics and Philosophy* 380). While Nightingale's work was never published in her lifetime Mill's work was certainly received in his lifetime with mixed emotions. It became the work that supported suffragist movements in the western world and was received as a prime illustration of Mill's beliefs in equality and human nature (Reeves 417).

Pugh makes an interesting comment in her 1982 article, "Florence Nightingale and J.S. Mill Debate Women's Rights":

At the time his correspondence with Miss Nightingale was in progress, Mill was working on the *Subjection of Women*. He noted in his *Autobiography* that the book was written during 1860 and 1861. As early as 1913 Sir Edward Cook, the official Nightingale biographer, asserted in one sentence not without any supporting data that "a good deal of Mill's treatment of his branch of his subject recalls Miss Nightingale's *Suggestions*" (Pugh 128).

Cook's statement has not sparked any lasting study in the field and is relied on by Nightingale biographers to bolster their own assertions to this affect. Pugh is the one major writer who examines the statement in greater detail:

An examination of "Cassandra" and Mill's treatise on women reinforces that opinion: that she had already anticipated in 1852 some of the arguments which appeared in the 1869 *Subjection of Women*. Admittedly, in any two compositions by thoughtful, perceptive individuals on the general condition of women similarities are almost inevitable. Yet in the discussion of certain themes, particularly the question of women's time and its relationship to their scholarly contributions, the similarities are too striking to be ignored (Pugh 128).

This is certainly an insightful comment; these thoughts are echoed in Martineau, Cobbe, and Taylor. However, Mill's work evocatively recalls Nightingale's in many respects and as Pugh remarks the lack of training that women have is one of the many places in which one can see the similarities and even the direct influence of Nightingale on Mill's work (McDonald, *First Hand* 179).

Nightingale's discourse on the subject is carried all the way through "Cassandra" and the first mention of it is in section two of her essay. The discussion actually starts with a plea:

Give us back our suffering, we cry to heaven in our hearts – suffering rather than indifferentism, for out of nothing comes nothing. But out of suffering may come the cure. Better have pain than paralysis! A hundred struggle and drown in the breakers. One discovers the new world. But rather, die in the surf, heralding the way to that new world, than stand idly on the shore.

Passion, intellect, moral activity – these three have never been satisfied in woman. In this cold and oppressive conventional atmosphere, they cannot be satisfied. To say more on this subject would be to enter into the whole history of society, and the present state of civilization (Nightingale, *Suggestions* 553).

Mill had no such objection to taking on the whole of the history of society as he so eloquently does throughout his work. This is Nightingale's first salvo in "Cassandra", merely an indication of what the reader will encounter further into the work. Nightingale paints quite a picture for her readers; part of it is based on the life that she was then leading, where she was required to play a

specific part for her sister and family, another part was based on what she perceived in other drawing rooms where she was required to sit and interact in the proper manner. Nightingale's primary example of the expectations of women's time is the dinner hour:

If she has a knife and fork in her hands during three hours of the day, she cannot have a pencil or a brush. Dinner is the great sacred ceremony of this day, the great sacrament. To be absent from dinner is equivalent to being ill. Nothing else will excuse us from it. Bodily incapacity is the only apology valid. If she has a pen and ink in her hands during other three hours, writing answers for the penny post; again, she cannot have her pencil (...) (Nightingale, *Suggestions* 555-556).

It is impossible for her to take up a useful occupation as she is required to do so many other things that her time is not her own. Cassandra then goes on to tell her audience another story, that of a young girl's life. This is one of the many instances where scholars of this text come by the opinion that "Cassandra" is semi-autobiographical (Jenkins 16):

Women often try one branch of intellect after another in their youth, e.g., mathematics. But that, least of all, is compatible with the life of "society". It is impossible to follow up on anything systematically. Women often long to enter some man's profession where they would find direction, competition (or rather opportunity of measuring the intellect with others) and, above all, time (Nightingale, *Suggestions* 556).

Jenkins comment is substantiated as the mathematics comment above is a reference to Fanny Nightingale's original objections to her daughter pursuing studies in the subject (Bostridge 70). Although Nightingale's assertions seem scattered, there is a driving thrust behind them and that is the want of useful work and training for women. Nightingale comments regarding the time that all the society and social functions require:

Among us, there is *no* time appointed for this purpose and the difficulty is that, in our social life, we must be always doubtful whether we ought not to be with somebody else or doing something else" (Nightingale, *Suggestions* 557).

Nightingale further laments the lack of useful work and the reasoning behind it:

Women are never supposed to have any occupation of sufficient importance *not* to be interrupted, except "suckling their fools" and women themselves have accepted this, have written books to support it, and have trained themselves so as

to consider whatever they do as *not* of such value to the world or to others, but that they can throw it up at the first “claim of a social life.” They have accustomed themselves to consider intellectual occupation as a merely selfish amusement, which it their “duty” to give up for every trifle more selfish than themselves (Nightingale, Suggestions 558).

Guidebook upon guidebook was produced at this time to do exactly what Nightingale outlines above – this was of course Ellis’ goal when writing her book. Jenkins comments on this in the introduction to her article:

The application of Carlyle’s and Ellis’s directive often meant difficult labor for the working classes, domesticated duties for women. The distinct spheres of activity that resulted from locating female duty in gender specific responsibilities contributed to complicated patterns of behaviour for women; they lived in a culture that revered an active life of good works and industry but defined and evaluated femininity by a passive model. Because of this double standard, the means by which and the scope in which women demonstrated their “moral discipline” and “hard work” were gender bound (Jenkins 16).

The passive model of femininity is what Nightingale protests through “Cassandra” and, consequently, how women were valued in society. This value judgement, thrust on women, made it difficult to pursue any opportunity outside of the domestic sphere:

Thus many women found themselves frustrated by a community that circumscribed their salvation - limiting their opportunities to answer Carlyle’s cry to work in the same way as their male contemporaries. In short, women faced *different* standards for their salvation – social as well as spiritual (Jenkins 16).

In short, women live by different teachings and training, just as Nightingale stated. This does, however, raise the very real question as to how history generated so many women thinkers and authors if the Ellis/Carlyle statement of women restricting themselves to the domestic sphere were true. Nightingale answers the question:

Widowhood, ill-health, or want of bread, these three explanations or excuses are supposed to justify a woman taking up an occupation. In some cases, no doubt, an indomitable force of character will suffice without any of these three, but such are rare (Nightingale, Suggestions 559).

Nightingale herself would be called an “indomitable force of character” as she wanted neither money nor marriage and recently some aspersions have been cast on her illness. However, this does not temper the fact that what she said was true and Mill goes further to comment on the state of women’s contributions to scholarship. Nightingale went further to describe why these contributions are lacking in her own observations:

Then as to solitary opportunities. Women never have half an hour in all their lives (excepting before or after anybody is up in the house) that they can call their own, without fear of hurting someone. (...) A married woman was heard to wish that she could break a limb that she might have a little time to herself. Many take advantage of the fear of “infection” to do the same. (...) Women have no means given them whereby they *can* resist the “claims of social life.” They are taught from their infancy upwards that it is wrong, ill-tempered and a misunderstanding of “women’s mission” (with a great M) if they do not allow themselves *willingly* to be interrupted at all hours (Nightingale, Suggestions 560-562).

Nightingale is advocating for women to have time and training to pursue intellectual activities which they rarely receive due to the time and attention that others require and women are trained to take care of the needs of others before caring for their own moral, intellectual, and spiritual needs. Later, Nightingale will find an ally for these beliefs: Mill.

Much of what Mill argues sounds like a more reasoned and less self interested echo of Nightingale’s statements. Chapter three in “The Subjection of Women” deals with the belief structure of the time, to which Mill lays waste with his characteristic brand of logic. The chapter opens with Mill arguing, contrary to Nightingale, that women should be able to choose the management of the household and still be considered equal to men (Mill, Autobiography 186-188). Mill then argues on behalf of female suffrage and then examines why women have been intellectually marginalised as compared to men:

Let us consider women only as they already are, or as they are known to have been; and the capacities which they have already practically shown. What they have done, that at least, if nothing else, it is proved that they can do. When we consider how sedulously they are all trained away from, instead of being trained towards, any of the occupations or objects reserved for men, it is evident that I am

taking a very humble ground for them, when I rest their case on what they have actually achieved (Mill, Subjection 190).

Mill directly states that the physical differences between men and women (size and stature) do not correlate to psychological and intellectual differences. In fact, they have made significant achievements even though they have typically been trained away from many occupations. Mill deprecates on behalf of all women in this instance but it becomes clear that this is only an argumentative device in the next few sentences and he provides conclusive positive evidence (Mill, Subjection 190) Mill's "conclusive evidence" is that women have been successful in occupations that legally women are excluded from as a result of the perceived psychological differences, the rule of people and decision making, and that they cannot produce works of unmitigated genius in others because they have not been allowed the time (Mill, Subjection 190). This second aspect, Mill examines more closely in comparison to the fact that women are legally excluded from some occupations based on gender bias:

There is no law to prevent a woman from having written all the plays of Shakespeare, or composed all the operas of Mozart. But Queen Elizabeth or Queen Victoria, had they not inherited the throne, could not have been entrusted with the smallest of the political duties, of which the former showed herself equal to the greatest (Mill, Subjection 190-191).

This statement is provocative in that women having access to the channels of power was forced on society through birthright and generally, a woman producing other works outside the political sphere is limited as society has managed to limit occupation by restrictions on time and behaviour. Mill thinks that women have shown their qualifications for political work and this relates to his larger argument on suffrage, more specifically the reason that women should be given a political voice (Mill, Subjection 191). Mill addresses more than just their qualifications but their suitability in the position as compared to men:

It is remarkable, too, that they have, in a great number of instances, been distinguished by merits the most opposite to the imaginary and conventional

character of women: they have been as much remarked for the firmness and vigour of their rule, as for its intelligence (Mill, Subjection 191).

Mill draws on the historical arguments regarding the longstanding female monarchs that have ruled his own country and that of his readers. Mill offers the idea that women have no training to take on these offices and are not allowed training under current social expectations. Mill looks at the reasons that women are not allowed training and divides them into categories:

They have always hitherto been kept, as far as regards spontaneous development, in so unnatural a state, that their nature cannot but have been greatly distorted and disguised; and no one can safely pronounce that if women's nature were left to choose its direction as freely as men's, and if no artificial bent were attempted to be given to it except that required by the conditions of human society, and given to both sexes alike, there would be any material difference, or perhaps any difference at all, in the character and capacities which would unfold themselves (Mill, Subjection 194).

Mill believes that women have been trained only for one purpose and with that training there is no way to determine what the “true nature” of women may be or what the actual aptitudes of individuals. As such, without such evidence it would be unfair to predetermine what women are actually meant for without experimenting with other systems. Mill looks further at a perceived difference between men and women, the capacity for intuition, which he defines as being able to see what is present in a given situation and make a quick determination based on the facts at the moment (Mill, Subjection 195), whereas men are: “much taught, are apt to be deficient in the sense of present fact; they do not see, in the facts which they are called upon to deal with, what is really there, but what they have been taught to expect” (Mill, Subjection 195). Mill states that the only fault with this is the over generalization that women are apt to make out of lack of knowledge (Mill, Subjection 195). Mill, however, redeems the common mistake:

A woman's mistakes are specifically those of a clever self-educated man, who often sees what men trained in routine do not see, but falls into errors for want of knowing things which have long been known. Of course he has acquired much of the pre-existing knowledge, or he could not have got on at all; but what he knows

of it he has picked up in fragments and at random, as women do (Mill, Subjection 195-196).

Mill states that all of humanity requires three things for learning – education, experience, and practice. Women do not have as broad an experience or education as men do and as such, Mill states that one cannot expect the same things from them until they have the same opportunities.

Reeves provides commentary on the beliefs of Mill at this juncture:

For Mill, no arguments based on the supposed inferior ‘nature’ of women had any force in a society where women were taught from the day of their birth to act and think in particular, approved ways. ‘Conventionalities have smothered nature still more in women than in me,’ he wrote to John Nicol in 1869, so ‘the greater is the necessity for getting rid of the conventionalities before the nature can be manifested’. Women might appear to be focused solely on getting a husband, but this was only to be expected, given the current state of affairs (Reeves 416).

As a result, the state of women’s rights and education was perpetuated through the generations.

Nightingale looks at this very same subject in “Cassandra”:

Women long for an education to teach them to *teach*, to teach them the laws of the human mind and how to apply them – and knowing how imperfect, in the present state of the world, such an education must be, they long for experience, not patchwork experience, but experience followed up and systematized, to enable them to know what they are about and *where* they are “casting their bread” and whether it is “*bread*” or a stone (Nightingale, Suggestions 569-570)

It is evident how Mill’s arguments echo these thoughts and how both coalesce into a later argument related to time. Mill then looks at one of the modern objections to women taking on any vocation; the hysterical nature of women:

It will be said, perhaps, that the greater nervous susceptibility of women is a disqualification for practice, in anything but domestic life, by rendering them mobile, changeable, too vehemently under the influence of the moment, incapable of dogged perseverance, unequal and uncertain in the power of using their faculties. I think that these phrases sum up the greater part of the objections commonly made to the fitness of women for the higher class of serious business (Mill, Subjection 198).

It is not just the hysteria or “nervous susceptibility” but the perceived malleability of their characters and perception that women could not pay attention to any one thing for lengthy

periods of time. Mill's explanation for this would have women direct themselves to a useful purpose:

Much of all this is the mere overflow of nervous energy run to waste, and would cease when the energy was directed to a definite end (...). Moreover, when people are brought up, like many women (...) untrained in any of the occupations and exercises which give stimulus and development to the circulatory and muscular system, while their nervous system, especially in its emotional department, is kept in unnaturally active play; it is no wonder if those of them who do not die of consumption, (...) and without stamina to support any task, physical or mental, requiring continuity of effort (Mill, Subjection 198).

For Mill, the fact that women can so easily change with the fashion means that women were looking for an outlet, especially upper class women who were brought up in very sheltered and emotionally charged environments. Essentially, Mill believes that there is over stimulation in the emotional faculties but not enough in the intellectual and physical realms. His reasoning is that women with directed energies do not exhibit these tendencies (Mill, Subjection 198) and that this is positive proof that women can be suitable for more intellectually active pursuits (Mill, Subjection 198). Mill's conclusion in this line of reasoning is: "Experience of races, as well as of individuals, does not show those of excitable temperament to be less fit, on the average, either for speculation or practice, than the more unexcitable" (Mill, Subjection 200).

In this case, Mill is analysing the idea of the ever popular fainting spell and hysterical outbursts; this being a manner of disqualifying women from useful occupation. Mill interprets this as a pent up energy trying to release itself. Instead of disqualifying women as a whole from enterprise, Mill is stating that they have so much energy that it naturally releases itself in the form of nervous episodes. Nightingale makes similar statements in "Cassandra" and Pugh investigates the relationship between Mill and Nightingale's works in the relation to the "nervous energy complaint:

Women were denied useful work and yet their time was consumed with the trivialities of conventional idleness, as Miss Nightingale called the life-style of

women in her circles. Mill listed the same activities: “the dinner parties, concerts, evening parties, morning visits, letter writing, and all that goes with them.” The physical strain of that life, “Cassandra” said, resulted in an “accumulation of nervous energy, which has had nothing to do during the day; makes them feel every night, when they go to bed, as if they were going mad; and they are obliged to lie long in bed in the morning to let it evaporate and keep it down.” (Pugh 129-130).

As such, women have more than enough time and energy to devote to education and other intellectual pursuits, if one is to take into account this previous argument. Mill’s major thrust in this case is that women have been trained away from useful work. Mill’s next argument concerns the fairness at judging women for not having produced original works in any intellectual sphere, especially when it is difficult for men to produce works in any great numbers:

Two women, since political economy has been made a science, have known enough of it to write usefully on the subject: of how many of the innumerable men who have written on it during the same time, is it possible with truth to say more? If no woman has hitherto been a great historian, what woman has had the necessary erudition? If no woman is a great philologist, what woman has studied Sanscrit and Slavonic, the Gothic of Ulphila and the Persic of the Zendavesta? (Mill, Subjection 209).

Mill reasons that one cannot judge the female sex on its lack of scholarship until society has given full access to the training of men and they have had time to produce these feats of intellect. From this point Mill argues further that women have contributed in very significant ways to intellectual pursuits. Pugh also comments on this portion of the two works, delineating the direct comparison between the two pieces:

“Cassandra” insisted that women’s intellect remained unsatisfied because the “stimulus, the training, the time, are all wanting to us; or, in other words, the means and inducements are not there.” (...) Mill listed the lack of opportunity to pursue systematic training and study which left women amateurs. He presented his elaboration of reasons for the disparity in a two-dimensional framework of time: the problem of the individual women’s time as well as an historical discussion of the comparative lateness (...) His catalogue of a woman’s daily routine – the care of family and a household, her role in society, and necessary attention to dress – emphasized by the ever present expectation that her time was at the command of everybody else (Pugh 128-129).

However, Mill makes one further argument as to why women have not made the contributions that men have:

There are other reasons, besides those which we have now given, that help to explain why women remain behind men, even in the pursuits which are open to both. For one thing, very few women have time for them. This may seem a paradox; it is an undoubted social fact. The time and thoughts of every woman have to satisfy great previous demands on them for things practical (Mill, Subjection 212).

Mill then lists the demands and comments on them in detail: family, household, society, and appearance. These concerns take up the majority of their time, leaving little to no time for intellectual pursuit, even in those families that have enough disposable income to delegate some tasks. Mill then compares the expectations of men and their professions to the expectations of women and their time.

Are a woman's occupations, especially her chosen and voluntary ones, ever regarded as excusing her from any of what are termed the calls of society? Scarcely are her most necessary and recognised duties allowed as an exemption. It requires an illness in the family, or something else out of the common way, to entitle her to give her own business the precedence over other people's amusement. She must always be at the beck and call of somebody, generally of everybody. If she has a study or a pursuit, she must snatch any short interval which accidentally occurs to be employed in it. A celebrated woman, in a work which I hope will someday be published, remarks truly that everything a woman does is done at odd times (Mill, Subjection 214).

She has no time! This passage is strangely evocative of Nightingale's work. Nightingale comments that women have no time for an intellectual pursuit because of social obligations (Nightingale, Suggestions 557,561), and that married women have wished themselves damaged in some way to have some time on their own (Nightingale, Suggestions 560); family plays a large role in ensuring that women's time cannot be used for their own purposes (Nightingale, Suggestions 567-568). Nightingale does devote a large percentage of her work to the idea that women have very little time to devote to any pursuit outside of that of her family and social obligations. Historians know that Mill and Harriet Taylor were able to spend a great deal of time

together in intellectual pursuit and Harriet Taylor's first husband allowed her to re-arrange the family schedule to accommodate these pursuits (Rose 110). After their marriage, Mill and Harriet Taylor continued in their joint pursuits, withdrawing largely from social activities (Rose 127). Harriet Taylor had time for as many intellectual pursuits as she could wish for and time to attain the training that she wished to pursue the activities. Mill's relationship with his step-daughter was much the same; he encouraged his step-daughter in her intellectual pursuits and acknowledges her in his autobiography. As such, Mill might not have been privy to the concerns of women like Nightingale, which were very detailed in his essay, given his familial relationships.

In terms of a comparison between the works, both Mill and Nightingale elaborate on the same themes in their works. Both authors highlight the fact that both time and training are lacking for women to pursue a useful occupation outside of the trivialities of the family and social sphere. Mill references the fact that even though upper class families have the ability to engage a hired "agency" to ensure that children are raised properly, regardless of the behaviour of the person engaged for that office, the lady of the house will still not have time because of the added social obligations that she is expected to fulfill. Nightingale comments on this further in her passages concerning the time wasting that social obligations constitute at a country house. Time and training do affect the intellectual agency of women. Pugh looks at this concept very closely in her analysis of the relationship between Mill and Nightingale, her comparison is very pointed – even highlighting areas in which Mill paraphrased or directly echoed Nightingale:

Recognizing that the management of time was sex-related, Mill asked the same question as "Cassandra" when he inquired: "Are a woman's occupations, especially her chosen and voluntary ones, ever regarded as excusing her from any of what are termed the calls of society?" His observation that is required an illness in the family or some other extraordinary development to enable a woman to devote any attention to her own affairs was almost a paraphrase of Miss

Nightingale's plaint that "a married woman was heard to wish that she could break a limb that she might have a little time to herself" (Pugh 129).

In addition, Pugh further states, which is also based on Cook's assertion in 1913, that:

For several pages in *The Subjection of Women*, Mill was, in effect, describing Miss Nightingale's life during her "Cassandra" phase. He must have had her in mind when he wrote that is a woman "has a study or a pursuit she must snatch any short interval which accidentally occurs to be employed in it." Referring directly to her he acknowledged that "a celebrated woman, in a work which I hope will someday be published, remarks truly that everything a woman does is done at odd times" (Pugh 130)

Mill stated this in such a way to leave no doubt that it was indeed a reference to the lady herself, but that will be analysed later in this thesis. Mill was clearly contemplating the work of Nightingale when he wrote this and it is possible that his thoughts extended beyond this unaccredited quotation to the paraphrase of her work. Given the high degree of similarity, so close that it is almost a paraphrase of Nightingale's work and life, it is reasonable to infer that Nightingale's work influenced Mill's writing within these concepts.

3.5 Family as an Instrument of Tyranny – An Instance of Nightingale's Influence

Another pervasive theme common to the two works is that the family is an instrument of tyranny. Nightingale and Mill clearly agree that marriage is an unattractive prospect for women (Nightingale, *Suggestions* 560), (Mill, *Subjection* 164); with marriage typically comes a family and a home of one's own. Marriage and family make demands on women's time, leaving them no time for any other pursuit than the "superintendence" of family and household (Mill, *Subjection* 212-214). Thus, the family, by virtue of its status as the chief time occupier, is a tool of oppression for women in society; even though this is the sphere that society intends all women to occupy.

Nightingale's family history is well known and is also pertinent to this discussion. The discussion concerning Nightingale centered on her family history and part of that discussion

concerned her relationship with her sister and mother. This relationship was strained, at the best of times, not surprisingly, that in her semi-autobiographical work she would write about the family in a negative light. Her indictment of the family is scathing, in a section in “Cassandra” entitled “The Family uses its Members for itself”:

The family uses people, *not* for what they are, not for what they are intended to be, but for what it wants them for – for its own uses. It thinks of them not as what God has made them, but as something which *it* arranged that they shall be (...). This system dooms some minds to incurable infancy, others to silent misery. (...) And the individual thinks that a great victory has been accomplished, when, at last, she is able to say that she has “no personal desires or plans” (...). Marriage is the only chance (and it is but a chance) offered to women for the escape from this death, and how eagerly and how ignorantly it is embraced! (...) *Passivity* when we want to be active. So many hours spent every day in passively doing what conventional life tells us, when we would so gladly be at work. (Nightingale, *Suggestions* 567-568).

Her allegation concerning the family is the death of the individual. Nightingale talks about the internal and individual life but this can be extended to individuality as a whole when she discusses the “conventional life” that all are supposed to lead. Nightingale also discusses the individual talents and gifts of women that are not being put to use because of the demands of family and actually suggests that Victorians are committing a kind of moral injustice by not embracing the individual gifts that they have been given and demanding that everyone, particularly women, follow the same path. Nightingale goes further to discuss courting rituals under the very watchful eyes of the family:

(...) under the eyes of an always present mother and sisters (of whom even the most refined cannot abstain from a jest upon the subject, who think it their *duty* to be anxious, to watch every germ and bud of it) (Nightingale, *Suggestions* 579).

It is the ever present mother and sisters in this case that provide supervision to a couple, the paths to marriage were so anxiously monitored by those in the drawing room. Nightingale makes one further comment about the family when it comes to courtship that elucidates her comment about marriage being ignorantly embraced: “Unless a woman has lost all pride, how is it possible for

her, under the eyes of all her family, to indulge in long exclusive conversations with a man?"

(Nightingale, *Suggestions* 580). As such, a woman cannot conduct anything with regards to her future life without the scrutiny of her family.

Mill prefaces his very similar indictment with a discussion of the self sacrifice of women:

If women are better than men in anything, it is surely in individual self-sacrifice for those of their own family. But I lay little stress on this, so long as they are universally taught that they are born and created for self-sacrifice (Mill, *Subjection* 178).

As such women are taught that their families will claim all of their time and women must sacrifice their own pursuits. As Nightingale said, everyone that is more selfish than they are.

Mill's examination of family is enlightening, in light of Nightingale's opinions:

The family is a school of despotism, in which the virtues of despotism, but also its vices, are largely nourished. (...) The family, justly constituted, would be the real school of the virtues of freedom. It is sure to be a sufficient one of everything else. It will always be a school of obedience for the children, of command for the parents. What is needed is, that it should be a school of sympathy in equality, of living together in love, without power on one side or obedience on the other. This it ought to be between the parents. It would then be an exercise of those virtues which each requires to fit them for all other association, and a model to the children of the feelings and conduct which their temporary training by means of obedience is designed to render habitual, and therefore natural, to them (Mill, *Subjection* 180-181).

This is the ideal of family life for Mill. Part of the ideal is that relationships are based in freedom, love, and equality. Children should learn correct behaviours from their parents and this should perpetuate positive behaviours for the rest of society:

The moral training of mankind will never be adapted to the conditions of the life for which all other human progress is a preparation, until they practise in the family the same moral rule which is adapted to the normal constitution of human society. (...) of which he has no abhorrence whatever in the abstract, but which he is abundantly ready to impose on others for his own interest or glorification (Mill, *Subjection* 181)

Again, Mill picks up the threads of Nightingale's argument for individuality and the death of it within the family: "more importantly, the correspondence brought to Mill's attention her then

unpublished feminist tract, “Cassandra”, which provided him with insight into the life style of upper class women, examples of which emerged later in *The Subjection of Women*” (Pugh 119). The family as the “school of despotism” is an interesting statement given what Mill is about to argue. Granted, the vast majority of this argument is about what the family should be, however, Mill does talk about what the family is currently in which the perpetuation of the current modes of behaviour occurs with no accounting for where humanity should be venturing. The last sentence is particularly enlightening as to Mill’s argument as a whole. All individuals are willing to impose their own beliefs upon others in their family for their own “glorification” and self interest. Mill and Nightingale agree that the family is the death of individuality because others will impose their beliefs and standards of behaviour on their family.

Bostridge looks at the influence that Nightingale had on Mill during the writing of this argument. This is clearly a claim but as:

‘Cassandra’ provided valuable first-hand testimony to back up his own indictment of the family in the book he was working on in the winter of 1860-61. In *the Subjection of Women*, unpublished until 1869, Mill argued that women’s subordination to domestic life was one means of ensuring that they did not make themselves ‘remarkable’, and thus denying them equality with men (Bostridge 373-374).

Pugh comments further on the relationship between these two pieces and the conclusions that each author draws:

Both regarded the family as an instrument of tyranny. (...) With a philosopher’s more comprehensive view, his indictment of the family in *The Subjection of Women* was even more severe than hers as well as more generalised in its social effects. Identifying the family as the culprit in the continuing subordination of women to men, Mill claimed that women’s “disabilities elsewhere are clung to in order to maintain their subordination in domestic life; because the generality of the male sex cannot yet tolerate the idea of living with an equal.” She wrote from first hand experience of the tedious and “tyrannous trifling” of her own family life. Without carrying it to the point that Mill did, there are indications that she had come to, or with further study might have arrived at, approximately the same conclusions (Pugh 130).

Pugh argues for a straight forward similarity while Bostridge claims direct influence by providing Mill with much needed evidence to back the claim he was about to make, thereby making it true. However, the point still remains that the essentials of the argument are the same – that the conventionalities of family life and obligation remove the ability of an individual contributor to develop and pursue the lines of thought or occupation in their own service; always needing to bow to the needs of the family first and themselves last. As Nightingale states elsewhere in volume two in her “Theory of Daughters”: “The other is, as we have said, to adopt the way of life which her parents have adopted for themselves from necessity and inclination, necessarily without any regard to her vocation, or capabilities for it, before she was born” (Nightingale, *Suggestions* 442). Out of self interest, parents force a lifestyle upon their daughter, for the sake of public appearances (Nightingale, *Suggestions* 442) in order to ensure that all within their sphere have conformed to the defined conventions, thereby, stripping an individual of his or her autonomy.

3.6 Mill’s Acknowledgement of Nightingale in his Work and Analysis of Correspondence

While Mill’s essay acknowledges the plight of all women it simultaneously acknowledges very few women individually. One of the women given such an honour was Nightingale: “A celebrated woman, in a work which I hope will some day be published remarks that truly everything a woman does is done at odd times” (Mill, *Subjection* 214). Now while the lady is not named and only given the moniker of “a celebrated woman” the thread of history can be followed to establish that this is indeed Nightingale.

What is needed is the timeline for Nightingale’s writings in order to start this line of inquiry. She started writing her work of philosophy and theology on her return from her tour with the

Bracebridges. After having spent time in Europe and Cairo, Nightingale was to stay home with her sister Parthenope and was forced into a life of idleness:

And so when Florence finally came home from Germany in late August, her mother told her in no uncertain terms to put her philanthropic plans back in her trunk and devote herself entirely to her sister. Flo's job, for six months, was to make her sister well and happy and thus relieve the load on her mother. After all the money that had been lavished upon Flo in the last two years, this was the least she could do (Gill, Nightingales 260).

This new life, with no direction outside of the family and the private sphere, caused Nightingale to become horribly depressed:

Unsurprisingly, the next months were unhappy for all. On the good days, when she was not lying in bed longing to die and thus accede to the next stage to come after death, when she might happily find herself an orphan without siblings, Florence wrote notes to herself urging pragmatism in dealing with Parthe. At times, Florence saw Parthe's rising distress. But most of the time she angrily refused to take on the role of her sister's keeper and bitterly resented Parthe's attempts to be hers (Gill, Nightingales 260).

From late August until October of that year Nightingale was at her family's disposal and she disliked the path set out before her. Between 1850 and 1853 she suffered from suicidal depression. Part of what she did to alleviate the depression and boredom was to write Suggestions for Thought. She began in 1852 and hoped to: "lead the atheist artisans of England back to the Christian religion" (Gill, Nightingales 261). In 1853, when Nightingale left for an independent life, as a result of Parthenope's unhealthy obsession with her sister:

Clark had [said] (...) that Parthenope's health depended on her being separated from her sister, and they had accepted his advice (...) by producing a particularly threatening set of symptoms (...) manipulated her mother (...). She had shown that she could be well only if Florence was with her (...). Clark made a point of instructing Florence that Parthenope would never think herself well as long as she and Flo lived in the same house. (...) As Florence wrote (...) 'A very successful (...) physician once seriously told a sister who was being Devoured that she must leave home in order that the Devourer might recover health and balance which had been lost in the process of devouring.' (Gill, Nightingales 274).

When Nightingale was finally allowed to leave home to pursue her own interests she left all thoughts of her manuscript behind for several years. She returned to it in 1859 and had several private copies printed. Nightingale began to correspond with Chadwick, as she required statistics from him for her reform work (Bostridge 333). Chadwick actually suggested the idea that became Nightingale's Notes on Nursing in 1858:

He wanted Florence to reach a wider audience than she had through her work on hospital construction, and suggested at first that she provide practical instructions for her 'hundred thousand children' in the Army on how to treat wounds and look after themselves when medical care was unavailable. What caught her attention, however, was his alternative suggestion, that she offer advice to nursing or young mothers on sanitary matters 'before the arrival of the physician'. (...) but in the writing its scope broadened as *Notes on Nursing* attempted to focus the public's attention on care for its own health, enshrining a principle of prevention rather than cure (Bostridge 357-358).

Chadwick and Nightingale established a relationship – one that Nightingale would trade on to get an introduction to Mill:

Miss Nightingale does me the honour to ask me to introduce her to you. Her present ill health and little bodily strength does not enable her to see anyone, even near relations, whose occasional presence is not absolutely necessary for her aid or for the mitigation of her suffering, but she desires this introduction to enable her to write to you. I cling to the hope that the strong and brilliant mind may, for our common good, yet prevail over the disease which afflicts the body (Nightingale, *Politics and Philosophy* 371).

The above is from a letter that Chadwick wrote to Mill in June of 1860. Although this was not her first attempt to contact Mill. In the editor's notes of Volume 5 of the Collected Works of Florence Nightingale, McDonald provides a brief timeline before offering readers the collection of letters:

Nightingale's first attempt to meet Mill occurred during the meeting of the International Statistical Congress (...) [Mill] was unavailable or otherwise declined. The approach was made through Chadwick, whom she asked to bring Mill to a breakfast. When this failed Nightingale asked Chadwick for an introduction, which he thought was unnecessary, and suggested that she write Mill directly. (...) Chadwick had prepared the way some months earlier by giving Mill a copy of Nightingale's just published *Notes on Nursing*, so that the first

letter in the series is from Mill to Chadwick acknowledging its receipt, and expressing the highest praise of Nightingale as a person (Nightingale, Politics and Philosophy 370-371).

Thus began the correspondence between Mill and Nightingale. The critique of Notes on Nursing was provided to Chadwick in letters from Mill; the comment was about the “jargon” of women’s rights and that women should endeavour to make their own occupations rather than seek to follow men, a comment with which Mill disagreed (Nightingale, Politics and Philosophy 371-374). Nightingale and Mill started to exchange letters in September of 1860. On September 12, 1860 Nightingale sent the first volume of Suggestions for Thought to Mill Nightingale writes:

Taking advantage of your extreme kindness (an article which nobody ever fails to take advantage of) I have sent you, by book post, Volume 1 of the religious work in question. There are, I am sorry to say, to other “devils” (I mean volumes) “worse than the first.” But as I fear you will never read five pages of the first, I have, with admirable caution, sent you only one (Nightingale, Politics and Philosophy 375).

Mill responds to Nightingale on September 23, 1860 that he had read the Suggestions for Thought and provided substantial comment on the first volume which included theology, the idea of the self, moral determination, ideal moral existence, and the overall structure of the work (Nightingale, Suggestions 59-269). Nightingale had the volumes printed on only half the page to leave room for Mill’s comments and he included further comments in his letter: “With regard to the substance of the book, it is scarcely necessary to say that there is very much of it with which I am in entire agreement and strong sympathy; and where I am not, I neither have any desire to shake your own conviction” (Nightingale, Politics and Philosophy 376). Mill disagrees with her ideas concerning the governance of the world by a perfect being, have: “tried to do what I could with that hypothesis many years ago” (Nightingale, Politics and Philosophy 377) and further disagrees with moral law being determined by an external, rule based, omnipotent (Nightingale, Politics and Philosophy 377) but he does agree with her assertions concerning self-

determination, freedom, and free will (Nightingale, *Politics and Philosophy* 378). On September 28, 1860 Nightingale responds to Mill's letter and sends him the further two volumes of her work, one of which included "Cassandra":

I cannot tell you how I feel the extreme kindness of your letter, and of your consenting to read so very tedious and unfinished a "treatise." I have ventured to take advantage of you by sending you the second part, which is only a kind of diary of the applications of my theories to *life* (from the time I first read your *Logic*, up to seven years ago, when I first entered active life and had no time for thinking). The third part is merely a summary of the two others.

Mill sent his reply to the second and third volumes on October 4, 1860: "I should have been sorry to miss reading the sequel of your book" and urges Nightingale to publish her writings in this letter: "If when I had only read the first volume I was very desirous that it should be published, I am much more so after seeing the second" (Nightingale, *Politics and Philosophy* 371). The correspondence on this issue ceases on October 4, 1860 (Nightingale, *Politics and Philosophy* 380) only to resume, at Mill's initiative, on June 7, 1866 as it regards the Women's Suffrage movement and Nightingale joining the movement and signing his petition (Nightingale, *Politics and Philosophy* 388-389).

During this initial correspondence Mill had started two works that would take his time in 1860 and 1861: "The work of the years 1860 and 1861 consisted chiefly of two treatises, only one of which was intended for immediate publication" (Mill, *Autobiography* 185). Mill then goes on to discuss the content and purpose of the two works; his statements further reinforce the loose time frame surrounding the work:

The other treatise written at this time is one which was published some years later under the title "The Subjection of Women." It was written at my daughter's suggestion that there might, in any event, be in existence a written exposition of my opinions on the great question, as full and conclusive as I could make it. The intention was to keep this among other unpublished papers, improving it from time to time if I was able, and to publish it at the time when it should seem likely to be most useful (Mill, *Autobiography* 186).

At the time of his correspondence with Nightingale, Mill was doing one of two things – he was either in the throes of writing the first draft of the essay or he was already in the process of improving the essay. After the publication of “The Subjection of Women” in 1869, Mill sent Nightingale a copy through his publisher (Nightingale, *Politics and Philosophy* 231). The established facts are that Mill and Nightingale corresponded regarding Nightingale’s Suggestions for Thought and that he believed that she should publish the whole work, especially “Cassandra”. During this time Mill was working on some aspect of “The Subjection of Women”. In order to avoid the fallacy of post hoc ergo propter hoc (after this, therefore because of this), it is admitted that the order of correspondence between Mill and Nightingale occurred but it cannot determine alone that the “celebrated woman” was Nightingale. It does, however, help to establish a timeline that could provide further evidence to bolster the original claim. The major question becomes: how does one identify the “celebrated woman” that Mill discussed in his essay? One way is to examine the notion of a “celebrated woman”. Quite obviously, authors have postulated that “celebrated woman” was indeed Nightingale. Bostridge discusses the homecoming of Nightingale:

Florence’s homecoming was more muted than she could have hoped for. Only a young girl presenting some flowers to her, as she made her way from London to Derbyshire on the afternoon of 7 August, after spending the morning at the Sisters of Mercy Convent in Bermondsey in prayer and meditation with Mother Clare Moore and her community, must have briefly revived fears of wider recognition. Faced with her ‘noiseless’ reappearance in England, Florence’s expectant public had to make do with the return of her Crimean carriage, which rolled off the steamer at Southampton ten days later, exciting a great deal of interest (Bostridge 305).

The public had read about her exploits in the papers ever since she took over the reigns at Scutari hospital. While the Crimean war minted many heroes, Nightingale, as with many other areas of public life, was one of very few heroines of the war. At the time that Nightingale was corresponding with Mill, she was working tirelessly on military and hospital reform and sanitary

conditions in India (Bostridge 497). She was a frequent correspondent with many authors in England at the time and even with the Royal couple, Victoria and Albert (Nightingale, *Politics and Philosophy* 410-427). So Nightingale does qualify as celebrated. Nightingale certainly did qualify as a woman as she is undeniably female. Nightingale fits the definitions of both “celebrated” and a “woman” but again, this does not solely determine the fact she was one in the same that Mill was discussing, even coupled with the historical timeline. However, a direct quotation coupled with the timeline would establish the identity of the lady. To refer back to Mill’s original statement: “A celebrated woman, in a work which I hope will some day be published remarks that truly everything a woman does is done at odd times” (Mill, *Subjection* 214). The fact that Mill had read “Cassandra” during the composition of his essay “The Subjection of Women” has already been established and so one must look to “Cassandra” to find the comment that Mill refers to: “*They do everything at “odd times”*” (Nightingale, *Suggestions* 571). In Nightingale’s case, the “they” is women in general, as at this point in the work she is discussing a “Woman’s Practical Activity”. Mill has pulled the quote directly from Nightingale’s work and used it to refer to herself.

Nightingale and Mill, while this series of written correspondence was short, had a long relationship discussing several topics in letters, including issues relating to India, public health reform, and further discussions on women’s rights and the right to vote (Nightingale, *Politics and Philosophy* 388-406). However, it was out of this series of correspondence and the reading of manuscripts that the influence of Nightingale on Mill can be seen. A timeline can be established for their manuscripts, the writing of Nightingale’s having happened much earlier, when she was in her early thirties and Mill’s writing having occurred over the period of time that they were corresponding. It can also be established that Nightingale was both “celebrated” and a “woman”.

However, the evidence that is most compelling that Nightingale is Mill's "celebrated lady" is the direct quotation from her work. This proves to the reader of both works that Mill read Nightingale's work and thought that it was valuable and used it to bolster some of the ideas within his own manuscript. This however, is just one point amongst many concerning Nightingale's influence in this particular work.

3.7 Mill's Acknowledgement of the Women who influenced his work

Mill has a history of acknowledging women in his work and Millsian scholarship has had a history of denying the contribution of the women that Mill acknowledged. In her examination of the marriage of Mill and Harriet Taylor, Rose distils the essence of traditional Millsian scholarship's resistance to the idea that Harriet Taylor contributed to Mill's discourses:

Harriet's co-authorship of Mill's work has proved a hard fact to swallow (...) commentators laboured mightily to prove that Mill was mistaken (...) Harold Laski downplayed the importance of Harriet's role in Mill's thinking because he did not want Mill's socialism to appear the result of a mere woman's influence. (...) [scholars] of Mill's life and work has believed what Mill says about Harriet's share in his intellectual life. "In so far as Mill's influence, theoretic or applied, has been of advantage to the progress of the western world (...)the credit should rest upon his wife at least as much as himself" (Rose 128-129).

Essentially, there has always been a certain amount of resistance to the idea of Harriet Taylor's collaboration with her husband on his major works. Rose refers to Mill's own assertion that Harriet Taylor should be credited as well, which can be found in his autobiography. Over several pages Mill discusses Harriet Taylor's involvement with his work and her intelligence. He does credit her with assisting in writing his convictions but not the formation of them:

It might be supposed, for instance, that my strong convictions on complete equality in all legal, political, social and domestic relations, which ought to exist between men and women, may have been adopted or learnt from her. This was so far from being the fact, that those convictions were among the earliest results of the application of my mind (...). But for her rare knowledge of human nature and comprehension of moral and social influences, though I should have doubtless have held my present opinions, I should have had a very insufficient perception of

the mode in which the consequences of the inferior position of women (...) (Mill, Autobiography 173).

While this leaves much to be desired concerning Harriet Taylor's involvement in Mill's work he does credit her with much more in subsequent pages:

The chapter of Political Economy which has had the 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, the chapter did not exist. She pointed out the need of such a chapter, and the extreme imperfection of the book without it: she was the cause of me 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 (Mill, Autobiography 174).

Perhaps Rose's assertion that she should be credited with co-authorship goes a too far but according to Mill she should at least be credited with providing him with the ability to make his work concrete, and perhaps this is more of a case of influence rather than direct production.

However, Harriet Taylor is currently credited with providing Mill's direction forward:

On his own he seemed unable to decide whether one thing was more worth doing than another, so she set him topics. (...) "I want my angel to tell me what should be the next essay written. I have done all I can for the subject she last gave me. And, (...) I am quite puzzled what to attempt next – I will just copy the list of subjects we made (...) Differences of character (nation, race, age, sex, temperament). Love. Education of tastes. Religion de l'avenir. Plato. Slander. Foundation of Morals. Utility of religion. Socialis. Liberty. Doctrine that causation is will. Practically all Mill's later work may be seen in that shorthand list of ideas (Rose 130-131).

It is very obvious that Harriet Taylor had a far reaching influence on Mill and he has acknowledged her on multiple occasions as having a specific type of influence on him. She provided him with direction and with grounding to his work. Mill has given her credit for her influence on "The Subjection of Women": "But that perception of the vast practical bearings of women's disabilities which found expression in the book on the "Subjection of Women" was acquired mainly through her teaching" (Mill, Autobiography 173). It is interesting to note that he states that it was mainly through her teaching.

Mill also credits his step-daughter in his autobiography for being the driving force behind the essay:

The other treatise written at this time is one which was published some years later under the title "The Subjection of Women." It was written at my daughter's suggestion that there might, in any event, be in existence a written exposition of my opinions on the great question, as full and conclusive as I could make it (Mill, *Autobiography* 186).

Later, Mill credits his step-daughter as being the one with the initiative to start the suffrage society:

The time appeared to my daughter, Miss Helen Taylor, to have come for forming a Society for the extension of suffrage to women. The existence of the Society is due to my daughter's initiative; its constitution was planned entirely by her, and she was the soul of the movement during its first years, (...) a large proportion either directly or indirectly through my daughter's influence, she having written the greater number, and all the best, of the letters by which adhesions was obtained, even when those letters bore my signature. In two remarkable instances, those of Miss Nightingale and Miss Mary Carpenter, the reluctance of those ladies had at first felt to come forward, (for it was not their past difference of opinion) was overcome by appeals written by my daughter though signed by me (Mill, *Autobiography* 214).

Mill credits his step-daughter with some influence over his work, including the idea that he should write and publish his autobiography and he allowed her to sign his name for her own initiatives concerning the suffrage movement.

Mill does tend to acknowledge in his work those who provided him with assistance or influenced him during the creation of his works. He acknowledges Harriet Taylor and Helen Taylor explicitly in his autobiography, both as contributors and influences. It is not a stretch, academically, to assume that in his credit to Nightingale in the midst of "The Subjection of Women" that he was acknowledging her influence on his work at the time.

3.8 Nightingale's Own Voice in the Fray

The last question becomes what did the lady herself have to say about Mill's work and her influence and inclusion. Nightingale is, after all, a very opinionated person. Nightingale had opinions on everything from the sanitation of soldiers' barracks and hospitals to the governance of India to her varied opinions on the status of women. Just after "The Subjection of Women" was published:

J.S. Mill had his publisher send Nightingale a copy of his *Subjection of Women* in 1869, which she underlined and highlighted in the margins (now in the Girton College Archives). She bracketed and wrote 'bravo' in the margin at Mill's statement: 'Marriage is the only actual bondage known to our law. There remain no legal slaves, except the mistress of every house' (Nightingale, *Politics and Philosophy* 231).

It can be inferred, rather easily, from the above statement that Nightingale agreed with at least the opening of Mill's work. Nightingale had opinions of other portions of Mill's work as well – more specifically chapter three. Chapter three of "The Subjections of Women" is where one sees Nightingale's direct influence, through the depictions of family life in the upper classes to the idea that the family could be an instrument of tyranny. In Pugh's article, the author looks at the correspondence of Mill and Nightingale throughout their acquaintance and their opinions with respect to one another. Pugh pulls most of her information from the Cook biography. In her article, Pugh references a statement from Nightingale regarding Mill's newest essay: "When she read his *Subjection of Women* she said he had 'quoted' her 'stuff' as she called it and declared he should not have done it" (Pugh 136). Nightingale saw the similarities between her own works and that of Mill and perhaps the author herself should know her own voice within the works of others and have her word taken that it was there.

Chapter 4: Meaning for the Modern Audience

Thus far, this thesis has established the historical context for both “Cassandra” and “The Subjection of Women” and for Mill’s and Nightingale’s need to compose these works. Both were written because the authors felt the need to respond to the repression of women and their lack of rights within Victorian society. This thesis has also established Mill and Nightingale’s thoughts on “The Woman Question”. Mill clearly supported women’s rights throughout his career as a philosopher and Member of Parliament; Nightingale established a domain of respectable paid work for the women of her time. This thesis has also argued by an analysis of the essays, correspondence, and supporting documentation, that Nightingale influenced the writing of Mill’s “The Subjection of Women” and provided him with some of the concrete evidence that bolstered Mill’s arguments regarding the life of women.

The relevance of this relationship and the influence that Nightingale may have had over Mill to modern scholarship is still to be determined, given that both works have their accredited authors and influences. The first element of this question is the idea of “modern”; the Canadian Oxford Dictionary defines “modern” as of the present or recent times, (which would have a continually changing definition depending on the recent times one is discussing); or, “modern” is defined, by the same source, as designating or pertaining to art, architecture, etc, of the 20th century marked by a departure from traditional styles and values. The second definition, while still not incredibly useful, at least gives a timeframe in which to frame the rest of the definition. In terms of women’s rights, women achieved the vote in Britain, with many conditions, in 1918 but the full vote for women was not until 1928, when it was granted to all women over the age of eighteen. From this point forward advocacy in this vein achieved much: women were granted

access and rights to all things to which men were granted access (with the exceptions of the Catholic priesthood and papacy); the face of the workplace changed; sport and the Olympics changed; and women took their place as partners as opposed to subordinates. In this case, the modern era must be defined as the timeframe in which women are working within this framework. Again, the question should be posited concerning the relevance of these two figures and their discussion through letters and published works.

From this perspective of time a discussion can begin concerning the legacy that this relationship and the works have left for modern scholars. Mill and Nightingale looked very closely at the role of women within the family, home, and society and their rights therein. The conclusions of both authors are that Victorian society is wanting in terms of support for women. Mill and Nightingale discussed, at length, the role of women within the home. Mill argued that women should be able to choose the home as a profession, amongst many others:

The *power* of earning is essential to the dignity of a woman, if she has not independent property. But if marriage were an equal contract, not implying the obligation of obedience; (...) but a separation, on just terms (I do not now speak of a divorce), could be obtained by any woman who was morally entitled to it; and if she would then find all honourable employments as freely open to her as to men (...) (Mill, Subjection 184-185).

There are two thoughts in this passage; the first being that having the ability to earn income contributes to the dignity of a person and for a person to feel empowered. The second thought expressed here is that if a woman seeks separation from her marital partner (which should also be attainable) she should have the ability to choose from any occupation, providing her with sufficient means to live independently and comfortably. However, when she marries, it can be surmised that she is choosing the occupation of the home over all others:

Like a man when he chooses a profession, so, when a woman marries, it may in general be understood that she makes 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 maybe 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 (Mill, Subjection 185).

Mill has expressed a desire here, and in many of his other works, that women should have access to all avenues of employment that are open to men and if they are to give their lives to the home, then they should be recognized for it. In Mill's previous statement he implies that women should be given adequate compensation for their work in the home as it should be considered a chosen profession. With these arguments he actually anticipates the wages for housework movement of the 1970s (Hirschmann 199). Nightingale argues that women should be allowed to pursue training and occupation outside the house; in addition, Nightingale desires to see women's time be respected and not be at the disposal of the rest of the household members. While women can and do pursue occupations outside of the home and family in contemporary society they remain responsible for the vast majority of the work of the home:

The fact that women continue to perform the vast majority of household labour, that such labour is still unpaid, does not count toward Social Security, and entitles women to no medical care (unless they are extremely poor) suggests that women have achieved in abstract rights and in the workplace have not translated into the most fundamental equality: within the family (Hirschmann 199).

The passage above comes from an article written in 2008, which addresses the idea of women's work and Mill's assertion that homemaking should be considered an occupation. The idea that women performed the vast majority of the work of the home was still prevalent in 2008. This means that they are responsible for the majority of cooking, cleaning, and child rearing in the modern home. It should be noted that men are more involved now than they have ever been but that women still carry the majority of the burden (Eagly and Carli 49,50,51,64-65). A woman's time is still primarily spent at the whims of her family. In their major study, Through the Labyrinth: The Truth About How Women Become Leaders, Eagly and Carli look at the issues that prevent women from becoming leaders in organizations. They devote an entire chapter to

“family responsibility”. Eagly and Carli question women’s opportunities to move forward in their careers when taking on most of the responsibility for domestic responsibilities.

Consequently, women are giving up leisure pursuits and solitary activities to ensure that their families are cared for (Eagly and Carli 55). Moreover, interruptions such as maternity leave, result in women with fewer hours of experience and less major project experience than their male counterparts, all of which limits their ability to be promoted to higher income earning positions (Eagly and Carli 56-58). The conclusion that the authors draw echoes Mill and Nightingale is particularly startling, given the sheer expanse of time between the publications:

Many women worry that success in the workplace comes at the expense of family life. Increasing the number of women who can successfully have children and maintain employment depends on men becoming more involved in the domestic sphere (...). Therefore, to manage family responsibilities, women continue to be the ones to interrupt their careers (...). These actions result in women’s having fewer years of job experience and fewer hours of employment per year; interruptions that slow their career progress and reduce their earnings (Eagly and Carli 64).

It should be noted that men are becoming increasingly involved in domestic work. This applies to a specific sub set of working mothers, those that cannot afford a full time hired agency to take on the duties of the domestic sphere. Eagly and Carli go on to look at higher income earning mothers and how domestic work affects them:

Women with high earnings or other sources of wealth likely do not experience as great an interference between family and employment responsibilities, because they can pay for a substantial amount of domestic help. Such women may delegate a portion of childcare and housework to nannies and housekeepers, and they can afford to send their children to excellent childcare centers. However, because most families find such options financially difficult, women’s greater workplace advancement for the most part depends on greater domestic inputs from men (Eagly and Carli 65).

Mill’s discussion of a hired agency for the upper classes and being able to delegate a portion of household responsibility to another still holds true here (Mill, Subjection 212-213). If one does

not have the resources to secure a housekeeper, cleaning lady, or nanny, then one is reliant on other sources for childcare and one's self for the provision of cleaning and cooking.

Much in the vein of Ellis, guidebooks are still produced for women, except now they concern how to progress one's career in the face of stereotypes, one of which being the absentee mother:

Working moms will forever be leaving early, staying home with sick kids, or running off to school plays. When you are planning a family, you also must plan for how to care for the family if you have work responsibilities. It's the part that most of us leave out when trying to get pregnant. It's only after the baby has arrived and you are looking at only a month left of maternity leave that it hits you ... what if the baby gets sick and can't go to day care? What if my partner is unable to pick the baby up when I am out of town on business? What if my child joins a soccer league and I have weekend workshops scheduled? It's smart to think about all the issues that may come up (or at least a good portion of them) and how you are going to handle them, because even the most family friendly organization is going to be impatient if you are never around because you are too busy attending to your family (Friedman and Yorio 125).

Women are still at the whims of family and lack the ability to concentrate on work if they have a family. This is reminiscent of Nightingale's statements concerning women's time being completely devoted to the service of others. The questions listed above concerning sports, illness, school plays, and out of town business are very similar to the questions that Nightingale posits about visiting, childcare, and drawing room duties.

As much as the situation regarding women's time has not changed much over the past one hundred and forty years since Mill's work was published and one hundred and fifty years since Nightingale's was penned, just added extra responsibilities of having to contribute to the household income base. The situation regarding women in marriage has not changed overly much either, especially in the upper echelons of modern society. In 2004 Kingston published The Meaning of Wife in which she looks closely at the meaning of the role in modern society and what it now means to be bound to someone else. Her study ranges through such subjects as

divorce, being the “starter wife”, and abuse, among others. In one chapter Kingston questions the worth of a wife. This chapter starts off with a rather odd job advertisement:

Employment opportunity: partnership opportunity in a venture known to have more than a 40 percent failure rate. You will fulfill a support role. Candidates must be attractive, cheerful, sociable, and organized. Responsibilities include domestic administration, entertaining, traveling, accompanying your partner to professional events, and will often include reorganizing personal schedule at last minute. Salary, vacation, sick leave, and pension to be determined by partner, and will be commensurate with the success of the venture. Performance to be evaluated at whim by partner. Position may require the abandonment of education and/or career goals and is subject to termination at any time, without notice, by partner, even after thirty years of service. Severance to be determined by partner or courts. No experience preferred (Kingston 236).

This is actually a modern case of Mill’s lack of attractiveness in marriage for women. Women typically earn less than men (Eagly and Carli 57) and are not promoted as quickly because of career interruptions (Eagly and Carli 58). From this, it can be inferred that this is exaggerated in the instances of single mothers; divorce is still a difficult notion because of the dependence on multiple incomes in modern families and the expense of the legal process.

Kingston goes further to look at prescribed behaviour in the modern context and it is strangely similar to Nightingale’s arguments concerning the proper behaviour of women within the home; Kingston uses the examples of Matthew Barrett, CEO of the Bank of Montreal and later Barclay’s in England and David Frum, one of George Bush’s speech writers. Her statements are very interesting when paired with these examples:

Husbands are mocked, even professionally penalized, if their wives deviate from prescribed behaviour. (...) The insinuation is clear: how can a man who doesn’t pick an “appropriate” wife have the proper judgement to run a financial institution? (...) The wife who dares to step outside the boundaries of wifely propriety can still compromise her husband’s career (Kingston 251).

Strict behaviour rules still apply in marriage and there are still unwritten rules that govern the everyday behaviour of women in marriage and within the family, much the same as what Nightingale railed against in “Cassandra” and what Mill described as a form of slavery in “The

Subjection of Women”. Women are still dealing with a great many of the same concerns as their Victorian counterparts only now women have rights and access to all employment opportunities as men and the rights to vote, own property, and children after divorce.

With the writing of “Cassandra” and its subsequent influence on Mill’s “The Subjection of Women”, Nightingale leaves a powerful legacy for women still struggling with similar issues of time for career and self and the dictates of proper behaviour. Nightingale offers concrete examples of the plight of women in her time that could also be applied to women in current circumstances – lack of time for education and career often affects modern women and makes it difficult to progress in a work world where their male counterparts tend to be able to have the time for further education and the resources because they do not take as much time away from the workplace. Jenkins offers her opinions on the legacy of Nightingale and “Cassandra”:

Polemic and revolutionary, “Cassandra” reveals an alternative voice and a challenging vision afforded scant attention in scholarship on Victorian prose. More than simply a manifesto for women’s rights, “Cassandra” subverts the foundation upon which her culture bases female subjection: divine authority based on a patriarchal interpretation of the Word. By reclaiming such sacred power, Nightingale revises the fundamental narratives of Western culture to account for authentic female experience and to enable alternative interpretations of the natural and supernatural worlds. In this way, “Cassandra” suggests a more complex and less univocal relationship between the issues that define the Victorian period and the individuals who sought to understand them (Jenkins 22).

Jenkins offers the female Christ figure and her voice as lasting legacies for consideration; although, this would belie the seriousness of Nightingale’s rhetoric elsewhere in the text. This is still an issue with the determination of Nightingale’s lasting legacy with regards to the ethics surrounding the right of women in Victorian and current society. Showalter offers a different opinion regarding the legacy:

Nightingale never became a feminist leader in her own time. But she has much to say in our time, especially about the development of women who burn themselves out in the struggle against mothers and sisters and who demand freedom from women’s culture as much as from women’s sphere. Florence Nightingale’s life is

an example of the psychic cost of matrophobia, but it is also an example of courage and power. If we fail to respond to Nightingale, we betray a Cassandra whose complaint came from a female experience as authentic and profoundly felt as that of any of our cherished heroines (Showalter 412).

For Showalter the legacy is that the women of today still struggle within a very stringent culture and code of behaviour and that “Cassandra” should be used as a guide. While this provides modern day readers with a bit more direction as to what Nightingale has left for modern women there is still an element of Nightingale’s legend in this passage. Bostridge seeks to give some clarity surrounding the legend of Nightingale and how it is incongruent with how Nightingale presented herself and what that legend has done to her scholarly works: “To a twenty-first century onlooker, the commemoration in Westminster Abbey appears to do a disservice to all the many other dimensions of Nightingale’s life and work, by confining her to her best-known and most traditional role, as a nurse” (Bostridge 546). Nightingale would be proud that she had created such an enduring and respected profession but she would be at a loss concerning how her other works had been lost to the ravages of legend. Penner discusses this precise phenomenon:

I hope that this book may help make some of the far-reaching resonances of Nightingale’s work in the literature, culture, and politics of her day more visible through the shadow of the Nightingale legend. Though the legend will assure that Nightingale will never be one of those remarkable women who “lived faithfully a hidden life and rest in unvisited tombs” as George Eliot’s brilliant conclusion to *Middlemarch* describes its heroine’s fate, my hope is that the Nightingale legend does not live on at the expense of our ability to learn from the details – the mundane, the mistakes, and the heroic effort – of her remarkable life and work (Penner 152).

This passage can be directly related to Showalter’s ending to her article – both state that Nightingale has much to teach a modern audience. In the case of “Cassandra”, the lesson is that women must still strive for complete equality. This is part of the legacy that Nightingale leaves the world but one must look past the legend to see this side of Nightingale and to learn from her experiences. It is McDonald who gives a summary of Nightingale’s legacy to feminism:

Nightingale's legacy to feminism (not a term used then) is more nuanced. She stressed economic opportunities more than political, contrary to the emerging women's organizations of the time (...). She led in the opposition to the sexist and degrading 'Contagious Diseases Acts', which targeted women prostitutes to try to reduce syphilis in the army, while ignoring the role of men. Her 'Cassandra' (...) was appreciated by later generations of feminists. Her insistence that women have an equal right with men for the life of the mind, to pursue a calling, to live their dreams, must resonate still. John Stuart Mill used her ideas on women in his influential *The Subjection of Women*, 1869 (McDonald, First Hand 179).

While Nightingale's contribution to early feminism is limited, in that it mostly dealt with the signing of a petition for women's suffrage (Nightingale, *Politics and Philosophy* 392) and her influence on Mill's "The Subjection of Women". Pugh states Nightingale's contribution in the feminist history as:

A suffrage speaker commented in 1870 on the curious situation of women like Florence Nightingale who were consulted by men on political questions and whose views influenced masses of people. That kind of power was perfectly acceptable but such women were prohibited from voting for members of parliament and exerting their influence in an open, natural fashion. As a practical matter, which she undoubtedly realized, she could only have such influence if she did not insist was due as a matter of political principle. In approaching the women's problem, Miss Nightingale would chop the branches off the tree while Mill attacked the trunk (Pugh 138).

Nightingale's "Cassandra" can still resonate with a modern audience. While women are not restricted to the home any longer they are still the main caregiver and homemaker which typically denies women the ability to be higher income earners. The chains of domesticity are still firmly in place and less escapable for women in the modern context.

Mill and Nightingale give modern women a basis for rights and the strength to pursue the intellectual life as well as enabling men to take more responsibility in the domestic sphere and to become more involved in the creation of the home. While Mill fought for women's rights in parliament and gave a male voice to their concerns – which Mill recognized was sorely needed for women to move their legitimate concerns further than the drawing rooms. Nightingale gave Mill the evidence that he needed to make his arguments and the fundamental understanding of

the perpetuation of the situation through the family unit. Without these two voices in the night it would have been impossible to accomplish the legislative changes to enable women to have rights. In terms of a modern audience these pieces still present an important outlook, one that Showalter rightly insists must be acknowledged and never betrayed nor forgotten.

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