

‘A ROD OF HER OWN:’
WOMEN AND ANGLING IN VICTORIAN NORTH AMERICA

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my children, Joel, Nathan and Janelle. May your own journeys in angling lead you beside streams of wisdom.

“And upon all that are lovers of *Vertue*; and dare trust in his *providence*, and be *quiet*, and go a *Angling*. *Study to be quiet*, 1 Thes. 4:11.”

From *The Compleat Angler* (1653) by Izaak Walton

Abstract

This thesis will argue that angling was a complex cultural phenomenon that had developed into a respectable sport for women during the Early Modern period in Britain. This heterogeneous tradition was inherited by many Victorian women who found it to be a vehicle through which they could find access to nature and where they could respectably exercise a level of authority, autonomy, and agency within the confines of a patriarchal society. That some women were conscious of these opportunities and were deliberate in their use of angling to achieve their goals while others happened upon them in a more unassuming manner, underscores how angling also functioned as a canopy of camouflage within Victorian society. In other words, though it outwardly appeared as a simple recreational activity, angling possessed the ability to function as a meta-narrative for its adherents, where the larger experiences and intentions of women became subtly intertwined, if not hidden, within the actual activity itself.

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INTRODUCTION

But when he was near the canoe, the reel suddenly refused to work, the fish rose steadily towards us, the line was becoming slack, and in despair I sprang to my feet, though the tossing of the canoe in the rapids made it anything but an easy matter. Standing on tiptoe and stretching my arm as far as I could, and bending the rod back as much as possible, the line was kept taut without an inch to spare; and the fish was drawing nearer, Joseph, with a dexterous sloop of the net, landed him in the canoe.

- Elizabeth Taylor, The Far Islands and other Cold Places: Travel Essays of a Victorian Lady¹

This was how Elizabeth Taylor (1856 - 1932), a “soft-voiced, bespectacled” single woman from Minnesota, described her first fly fishing experience.² It was the summer of 1888 and Taylor was on her “first solo camping trip into the far reaches of Canada’s Nipigon River.”³ Though she did not achieve her goal of catching the largest fish of the season, she did become the only fisherwoman at that time to have made the trip from the head of the Nipigon to its mouth, even running the Victoria rapids in a canoe, a feat seldom attempted by even the hardest of male anglers.⁴

The purpose of this study is to consider how angling appealed to women and to investigate the unique role it played in the public and private lives of nineteenth-century North American women such as Elizabeth Taylor. It will argue that angling was a complex cultural phenomenon that had developed into a respectable sport for women during the Early Modern period in Britain.⁵ This heterogeneous tradition was inherited by many Victorian women who found it to be a vehicle through which they could find access to nature and where they could respectably exercise a level of authority, autonomy, and agency within the confines of a patriarchal society. That some women

were conscious of these opportunities and were deliberate in their use of angling to achieve their goals while others happened upon them in a more unassuming manner, underscores how angling also functioned as a canopy of camouflage within Victorian society. In other words, though it outwardly appeared as a simple recreational activity, angling possessed the ability to function as a meta-narrative for its adherents, where the larger experiences and intentions of women became subtly intertwined, if not hidden, within the actual activity itself.

For example, what is fascinating about Elizabeth Taylor's trip down the Nipigon is how the sport of angling allowed a single, woman fly fisher, to briefly place herself on an equal and competing plane with that of male anglers without the fear of sacrificing her middle-class femininity or respectability. For Taylor, who had exhibited a love of fishing since childhood, a trip down the Nipigon was a chance to not only test her constitution but also to move beyond society's restrictions on gender which hindered her ability to fully engage and pursue her passion for the out-of-doors.⁶ Though still under the watchful male eye of her "educated and very intelligent"⁷ guide Joseph, Taylor deliberately used angling as a canopy under which she could challenge a larger and predominantly masculine culture while still remaining within acceptable feminine spheres. According to historian Mark Cochla, Taylor "needed to challenge herself and to outdo the male anglers on the river."⁸ Thus, her goal of catching the largest fish on the Nipigon followed by her willingness to run the Victoria rapids allowed her not only to compete alongside of, but even surpass her male counterparts, at a time when opportunities for heterogeneous recreation and competition were greatly limited.

That angling provided not only Taylor, but numerous white, middle class, Victorian women with the opportunity to create an independent space within nature while occasionally challenging societal restrictions on gender, is significant. This expression of feminine agency which may be defined for the purposes of this study as the deliberate and active pursuit of self-determination and freedom from “the oppressive code of conduct governing the deportment of the ‘lady,’”⁹ formed the ideological basis for the emergence of the New Woman in the latter-half of the nineteenth century. Indeed, as some women began to redefine themselves in opposition to the notion that nature had destined women to be subordinate to men, the emergence of the New Woman is a significant part of what distinguishes the Victorian era from the Early Modern period in that women such as Taylor were more mobile and could use angling to acquire an experience of adventure that was previously not suitable for women.

Moreover, fishing also allowed women to obtain a place of authority and autonomy within the masculine world of Victorian culture and business. Such was the experience of Sara Jane McBride (c.1845 – c.1880), who publicly earned the respect of male anglers when she pioneered the now common use of entomological study in fly fishing and fly tying. McBride, a self-taught entomologist who learned to tie flies from her father, conducted research on the life cycles of aquatic insects and the effect of climatic conditions and water temperature on Spring Creek in New York State.¹⁰ Though her findings were ignored by an increasingly professional and predominantly masculine scientific community, she did find her voice through popular sporting magazines. McBride’s entomological theses which appeared in *Forest and Stream* in 1876, were “the first American papers of any consequence on the subject of aquatic insects from the

angler's point of interest,"¹¹ and signified the opportunity which angling offered for women to publicly demonstrate their scientific expertise. So impressed was the angling community with McBride's research, that the preface to her third and final thesis stated, "The subject matter of these articles we believe to be altogether new in the Angling Literature of America, and certainly reflects much credit upon their author, who shows herself to be a patient and close observer."¹²

Women who excelled in angling, such as Cornelia 'Fly Rod' Crosby (1854 – 1946), also found prominent space in the areas of education, journalism, and popular entertainment. As a nationally syndicated sporting journalist and as the sole director of the Maine Exhibit at the annual Sportsmen's Exposition in New York City, Crosby exercised a level of expertise and freedom that allowed her to publicly instruct and entertain mixed audiences of men and women on such things as the techniques and strategies of fly fishing which in turn, earned public approval and garnered celebrity status. Moreover, Crosby also earned a voice in the masculine world of politics where her efforts to promote conservation and guiding within the State of Maine led to the creation of the State's first licensing system for hunting and fishing guides.

Thus, the authority which angling gave to women such as Crosby and McBride may be defined in reference to the power and influence earned by those fisherwomen who came to be seen as experts in both the theory and practice of the sport. That this influence could extend beyond the domestic sphere and into the realm of politics is remarkable given that the raising of children was viewed as the sole charge of women while the "less noble government of adults to man."¹³ Moreover, this ascendancy was also intertwined with a sense of autonomy, or personal freedom that came not only from

achieving a level of publicly acknowledged expertise, but also from the physical and ideological space that angling created for women within nature, literature and science. As this study will assert, this independence was inherited by Victorian fisherwomen from their Early Modern predecessors as a respectable extension of the domestic sphere which was then adapted and extended by the Victorians as industrialization and urbanization shaped nineteenth-century understandings of the natural world and subsequently, understandings of gender. Therefore, while agency primarily signified the active pursuit of complete self-determination and self-actualization by a demographically smaller group of 'New Women,' autonomy was defined by the freedoms which angling had already created for women and which were available for both the more traditional woman of the domestic spheres and the 'New Woman.'

Though the examples of Taylor, McBride and Crosby are a small representation of the much larger presence of fisherwomen with Victorian North America, they do highlight how angling was a vehicle through which women could find access to nature, and could express themselves in ways that otherwise may not have been possible. While the historical record shows that some men objected to the presence of women anglers on the banks of a stream, more often than not, the typical response was favorable, and even encouraging. One reason for this attitude came from an agenda among the editors of various nineteenth-century sporting magazines which promoted the involvement of women in field sports so as to increase the level of public respectability. However, this does not fully explain the relative ease at which angling could function as a place of commonality for gender in Victorian North America. Since angling had become a popular and respectable activity for women long before the Victorian era it will be argued

that it was this legacy which spared nineteenth-century women the time and energy of having to create the framework for the vehicle itself. This reality then, challenges the contemporary perception that sport fishing was an inherently masculine activity. As Robert Zboray and Mary Zboray conclude in their study on romance and angling in antebellum New England, “Fishing apparently broke through the cultural coding that deemed many other activities gender specific, even in courtship.”¹⁴ Indeed, angling’s overall potential for commentary on the social and cultural history of North America is immense given its ability to intersect with the tenets of gender, class, leisure, environment, law, literature and religion, though one must be cautious when comparing the Canadian experience to that of the United States in an attempt to construct a singular, North American image of angling. However, since both countries inherited their angling tradition from the British and since American and Canadian middle and upper-class men and women frequently traveled across the border to fish, it justifies such an approach for the purposes of this study.¹⁵ As such, the next section of this introduction will present a chronological historiography of the recent scholarship from North America and Britain on the history of women and angling so as to provide this study with a context and place among the secondary literature.

One of the main challenges faced by historians who attempt to explore the role of women in angling is a lack of published primary and secondary literature. Indeed, prior to the latter half of the nineteenth century, widely published angling material written by women is hard to find. This does not imply that women were not fishing or writing privately about fishing before the late nineteenth-century, but rather “that men have had more access to the primary means of recording history – published writing.”¹⁶ Moreover,

it is most probable that the majority of angling knowledge among women prior to the Victorian era was transmitted through non-literary forms, passed from mother or father to daughter through modeling and repetition, as most female knowledge “came from experience and observation as much as from books.”¹⁷

This research dilemma was encountered by Nicholas D. Smith in his study, “Reel Women: Women and Angling in Eighteenth-Century England” (2003), where he hypothesized that fragmented sources, such as paintings and domestic instructional manuals, would make it possible “to present some idea of the female involvement in the sport.”¹⁸ From this material, which he called sub-literary evidence, he was then able to conclude that the sport was indeed, “popular among ladies of the landed classes on account of its strong associations with gentility and refinement, and, in the opinion of social commentators, angling offered a more viable recreational alternative to women than the more robust and ‘manly’ sport of hunting.”¹⁹ Likewise, this study has also used similar sub-literary evidence to further its conclusions. For example, the pictorial prominence of fisherwomen within the pages of nineteenth-century sporting magazines, postcards, and paintings perhaps outweighs the literary examples in establishing incontrovertible evidence that angling was a heterogeneous activity. As Colleen Sheehy has also noted, “Photographs from the late nineteenth century onwards provide good documentation for fishing traditions among others than the male sportsman.”²⁰

Thus, it is unfortunate that many scholars have overlooked the role of women in angling because the traditional literary approach has led them to conclude that angling was a predominantly masculine activity. This myth, which Andrea L. Smalley calls the “men-only image”, has influenced historians to “interpret the rising popularity of hunting,

fishing and camping at the turn of the century as evidence of an emergent primitive masculinity.”²¹ The result of this has led to a void in secondary source material that has only recently welcomed a small vanguard of popular and scholarly works. Still, for many of these, women anglers only appear on the periphery of a much larger discussion on the history of angling.

One of the earliest attempts to establish women as part of North American angling history was Kenneth M. Cameron’s, “The Girls of Summer” (1977), which appeared as a two part series in *The Flyfisher*. Until this point in the historiography of modern angling, women as participants and contributors to angling had largely been ignored. Cameron’s focus for his articles was on the fly tying industry in nineteenth-century America where the economic exploitation of women fueled “a considerable part of the fly-tying workforce.”²² Noting the irony that “flyfishing, the most pastoral of sports, would be served by the industrial system that was its antithesis,”²³ Cameron documented the emergence of Mary Orvis Marbury and Sara Jane McBride, two women who “climbed out of the obscurity of exploitation,”²⁴ and established a name for themselves within the Victorian angling community. He then concluded that while the two women were gifted, McBride and Marbury were actually quite different from each other in how they approached angling and fly tying. While McBride was an innovator and created her own original patterns from her own entomological research, Marbury was the “follower – a superb compiler of other people’s ideas and creations.”²⁵ Her book, *Favorite Flies and Their Histories* (1892) was a best seller as it standardized American fly patterns and allowed “aspiring middle-class fishermen” to use the “‘correct’ fly, just as they wanted to wear correct clothes and speak correct English.”²⁶

It is unfortunate however, that Cameron considered nineteenth-century angling to be “a masculine pastime,” to which women were otherwise treated as the “handmaidens.”²⁷ While this was true of the exploitation of working class women within the fly tying industry, it did not acknowledge the growing presence of middle and upper class fisherwomen who assisted in the exploitation of factory women through their own demand for flies. For Cameron, the real reason for the success of McBride and Marbury was based on pedigree and literary skill, as both had fathers who were well known in the angling community and both could write well enough to “make themselves known in print.”²⁸ Therefore, while the research and biographical data is extremely valuable, this study has chosen to challenge Cameron’s assumption that McBride and Marbury were feminine isolates, arguing instead that these women exemplified the opportunities for authority and autonomy which angling offered to the multitudes of other Victorian fisherwomen who did not appear as prominently within the literary record.

The next work to appear in the historiography was Austin Francis’s, *Catskill Rivers: Birthplace of American Flyfishing* (1983). Though not intentionally focused on gender and angling, Francis’s inclusion of a chapter entirely devoted to women as fly fishers on Catskill streams during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries is worth noting. Entitled, “Women Anglers of the Catskills,” the chapter observed the gradual emergence of women fly fishers on Catskill streams from the late nineteenth century until the 1950s. Though initially, “not knowing if they would be ridiculed, ignored, or treated as invaders of a male domain,” the growing presence of women anglers resulted in the formation of ‘The Woman Flyfishers Club’ in 1932.²⁹ Of particular interest, was Francis’ brief mention of Theodore Gordon, a nineteenth-century Catskill fly fishing legend, who

openly accepted angling as an ideal activity for the “modern sporting woman.”³⁰ That he shared in a romance with an unnamed female angler who left him “very much disappointed in love,”³¹ exemplified angling’s function as a means of courtship and as a commentary on the changing views toward gender in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

In recognition of the growing numbers of women visitors to the American Fly Fishing Museum in Vermont, historian Thomas A. Verde expanded on an earlier work on Cornelia ‘Fly Rod’ Crosby that was first published by Austin Hogan in 1977. “Diana of the Rangeleys” (1989) highlighted one of the most colourful characters of nineteenth-century angling and provided insight into the acceptability of women as anglers and as promoters of angling in Victorian America. In describing Crosby’s participation at the first Annual Sportsmen’s Exposition in 1895 at New York’s Madison Square Gardens, Verde noted that Crosby was “the first woman exhibitor at the first Annual Sportsman show,” and “was the state of Maine’s first paid publicity agent.... being personally responsible for attracting as many as 5000 people to the state in one summer.”³² The following year, Crosby’s fame as an angler had risen exponentially and Verde describes how Crosby, “awed the wide-eyed New Yorkers with her piscatorial prowess by repeatedly casting her rod over the tanks and getting strike after strike with a delicate turn of the wrist.”³³ Thus, Verde’s work is important to this study because it identifies angling as a means through which one woman in particular, ‘Fly Rod’ Crosby, created a space of her own within the world of politics, entertainment and wilderness.

Though not specifically written as a history on women in angling, Holly Morris’s *Uncommon Waters: Women Write about Fishing* (1991) represented the first anthology

of fisherwomen's thoughts and experiences on angling. Focused primarily on contributions by contemporary female anglers, Morris does include a modernized reprint of Dame Juliana Berners' *The Treatyse of Fysshynge wyth an Angle* (1496) and an essay by C.R.C., entitled "A Woman's Hour has Struck" (1890) where a woman "dares to borrow a camp rod, wets her best shoes, rents her dress, hooks a tree and finally summons up the nerve to venture out onto a log to catch her first trout."³⁴ Taking a philosophical as opposed to a practical approach towards the relationship between women and angling, Morris noted in her introduction to the second edition that, "Combined with the heady tonic of the natural world, angling scrubs clean the soul, enabling one to see possibility around that boulder, beyond this pain."³⁵

Following Morris, the first major attempt to survey the role of North American women in angling was Lyla Foggia's popular biographical work, *Reel Women: The World of Women Who Fish* (1995). Though only briefly touching on the nineteenth century, Foggia does highlight the contributions of Cornelia 'Fly Rod' Crosby, Elizabeth Benjamin, Sara Jane McBride and Mary Orvis Marbury, women whom she describes as "part of an invisible dynasty of collective female experience."³⁶ For Foggia, women have always been at the forefront of the development of modern sport fishing, something which she traced back to Dame Juliana Berners', *The Treatyse of Fysshynge wyth an Angle* which was first published in 1496 as part of an addendum to the *Boke of St. Albans*, a widely circulated work which focused on the practice and theory of various field sports in Early Modern Britain.³⁷ While the *Treatyse* is viewed by many as the cornerstone from which the English angling tradition emerged, recent work by medieval angling historians such as Richard Hoffman, have disputed not only Berners' authorship

of the *Treatysse* but also her existence.³⁸ Despite this controversy however, Foggia concludes her defense of Berners' legacy as the matriarch of modern sport fishing with the rhetorical question, "Are we to believe that 500 years ago a woman would be credited with authoring a document she did not write – when it's extraordinary enough that a woman would be credited at all?"³⁹

The importance of Berner's gender coupled with the portrayal of gender relations within other Renaissance angling works was further explored by Anne McIlhaney in her dissertation, "Renaissance Acts and Images of Angling: An Anatomy of the British Piscatory, 1496 – 1653" (1998). In the chapter, "Guileful Trains and Golden Hooks: Renaissance Images of Erotic Angling," McIlhaney asserted that sixteenth and seventeenth-century authors often described Berners as a "manlike" woman in an attempt to classify her within an erotic Elizabethan angling trope that involved either "images of conquest and subordination, of power struggles in which the woman dominates the man," or of images of "fishing as leading to love and union" as exemplified through courtship and marriage.⁴⁰ This unique relationship between angling, gender and sexuality became a commonly used metaphor within British literature and may be viewed as a precursor for angling's use as both a literal and figurative vehicle for romance and courtship in nineteenth-century North American society. Moreover, McIlhaney's research into the use of the erotic angling trope, though not intended to be a history of women in angling, does provide further evidence for this study's argument that angling developed into a respectable activity for women during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Thus, McIlhaney's work represents one of the first attempts to explore gender and angling within the British literary tradition and, as such, is significant in its importance for

demonstrating that women's association with angling during the Early Modern period was far more complex and nuanced in nature than previously thought. Indeed, *Renaissance Images* serves to highlight that perceptions of the female angler, whether expressed in fiction or reality, were deeply ingrained within British literary culture and that angling's overall importance went well beyond that of mere recreation. The widespread use of the erotic angling trope would suggest that female participation in angling had long been an established reality.

Cornelia Crosby was again the focus of biographical study with the publication of Julia A. Hunter and Earle Shettleworth Jr.'s, *Fly Rod Crosby: The Woman Who Marketed Maine* (2000). Well versed in the particulars of Crosby's life and her influence on Maine's emergence as a destination of choice for sporting tourists, *Fly Rod Crosby* provided little in the way of direct comment on the overall role of nineteenth century women in angling or even of Crosby's influence on women or on the perception of women in angling. One notable exception however, was Hunter and Shettleworth Jr.'s description of the friendship between Annie Oakley and Fly Rod Crosby whom they described as, "professional athletes eighty years before professional women's sports would begin to be taken seriously in North America."⁴¹ Moreover, they contend that Crosby and Oakley's anti-suffrage stance coupled with an ability to be "praised for their demeanor as ladies,"⁴² helped the two women to avoid becoming labeled by the public as radicals. This did not mean however that Crosby refused to advocate for a woman's equal space within the wilderness. On the contrary, Hunter and Shettleworth Jr., demonstrate that it was precisely because of her conservative views on suffrage that Crosby would earn an influential voice for women within the sporting community. As

with Verde's research on Crosby, this book describes how angling could offer women prominence within Victorian society.

Though not focused on women in North America, Nicholas D. Smith's "Reel Women: Women and Angling in Eighteenth-Century England" (2003) provided formal evidence for the respectable participation of women in angling prior to the nineteenth century. Again, as this study will argue, angling was not something which was new to Victorian women or something which they had to invent as a means for opportunity. Since the British angling tradition so heavily influenced North America, Smith's research is a valuable template for discovering the importation of the British experience onto the North American continent and concurrently, provides an evidentiary framework for this study's examination of Early Modern fisherwomen. Moreover, his contribution also highlighted the larger intersection that angling had "with important aspects of eighteenth-century life and culture – art, ethics, gender, law, leisure, literature, property, social class and sport – which argues in turn that the critical tools necessary for the successful recouping of eighteenth-century angling culture are interdisciplinary."⁴³

Notably absent in the historiography of women and angling is any research relating directly to the Canadian experience. Though women are mentioned as active participants in angling in a few of the very limited sources on angling history in Canada, their presence is superficial. Mark Cochla's "Victorian Fly Fishers on the Nipigon" (1999) carries a brief description of both Lady Dufferin and Elizabeth Taylor as avid fisherwomen and notes that while, "Nipigon anglers were primarily men, women anglers were a common sight on the river."⁴⁴ Historian Bill Parenteau also indirectly discussed women and angling in Canada through an examination of the conflict over access

between private lease holders and local residents that occurred on salmon rivers in nineteenth-century New Brunswick. In, "A 'Very Determined Opposition to the Law': Conservation, Angling Leases, and Social Conflict in the Canadian Atlantic Salmon Fishery, 1867-1914", Parenteau used the dramatic case of Susan Howe, an angler from Massachusetts, who was shot and killed while fishing on the Tobique River by a pair of disgruntled poachers who had been chased off of the river by members of Howe's angling party. According to Parenteau, the ensuing murder trial attracted attention not for the homicide itself, but rather because it served to illuminate many of the frustrations and grievances the local community felt toward non-resident, upper-class lease holders.⁴⁵

At present, the only study on gender and the role of angling in nineteenth-century Canada is Richard Manning's M.A. thesis, "Recreating Man: Hunting and Angling in Victorian Canada" (1994). Arguing that hunting and fishing were vehicles through which elite, urban Victorian men could rediscover their masculinity, Manning examined how these sportsmen gained access to nature and how they chose to symbolize and ritualize their experiences. Though he mentioned that "the kind of angling which seemed best suited to female participation in the nineteenth-century was fly fishing,"⁴⁶ Manning provided little else on the role of women anglers, concluding that, "the possibility that hunting and angling provided some Victorian woman with the opportunity to escape the gender constraints of culture is a point that merits further study,"⁴⁷ a task which this current study has accepted. What Manning underscored most dramatically is the need to approach the study of hunting and angling in Canadian history as two separate entities. Though similar in many aspects, the relationship between hunting and angling breaks down most evidently when gender is studied. Manning's argument for the urban male's

need to rediscover masculinity was at its weakest when he attempted to apply these to angling, a pursuit which he acknowledged as “a contemplative, sedentary and unathletic sport,” one that would not “have taxed the ‘delicate constitution of the weaker sex.’”⁴⁸ This study will argue that hunting needed the respectability that came from angling’s long-standing female tradition so as to promote itself as an equally acceptable sport to a Victorian society that was acutely sensitive to the humane treatment of animals.

This then, is a summary of what scholars and enthusiasts have offered to date regarding women and the history of angling in Britain and in North America. Again, what is most striking is not the quality, but the quantity of scholarship available. For several of these works, women only appear on the periphery of a much larger discourse on angling. Until more scholars begin to examine the role which angling played in the lives of women, the “men-only image” identified by Smalley will continue to influence academic and popular conceptions of gender and sport, leaving a substantial gap in the overall landscape of our understanding.⁴⁹ Therefore, a secondary purpose for this study is to create momentum that will hopefully generate further research into the history of women and angling.

Since this study argues that Victorian women inherited an established female angling tradition, which they then used to access nature and to exercise authority, autonomy and agency, Chapter One will present a survey of women and angling in Britain and North America prior to the Victorian era. Outside of the work done by Nicholas D. Smith on women and angling in eighteenth-century England, the research in this chapter perhaps represents the only formal attempt to document the existence of such a tradition in North America. As such, it will be demonstrated that prior to the nineteenth century, Early

Modern women were active adherents of angling and like their Victorian ancestors, found it to be a canopy of camouflage, where, to the patriarchal eye of the outside world, it appeared as an unassuming, insignificant, and respectable diversion, while underneath it provided women with early access to nature and autonomy. This then created the foundation and framework for angling to play a similar but expanded role in the nineteenth century.

Chapter Two will follow the Early Modern tradition into the nineteenth century and will explore how it was expanded as a vehicle through which women could access the natural world. It will examine Victorian attitudes toward nature as well as the ideologies of gender which competed for influence over the involvement of women within nature. Examples from the lives of various women such as Mary Trowbridge Townsend and Lady Dufferin will demonstrate that angling was viewed as an extension of a woman's domestic sphere as well as an independent use of her mind and body, which therefore made angling a borderless sport that appealed to all segments of middle and upper class society.

Finally, Chapter Three will describe how angling allowed Victorian women to exercise authority, autonomy and agency within the public sphere. Women such as Sara Jane McBride, Cornelia 'Fly Rod' Crosby, and Mrs. George Stagg came to be respected as innovators, instructors and experts through the publication of their exploits within sporting magazines such as *Outing* and *Forest and Stream*. Moreover, this chapter will highlight how some women, such as Elizabeth Taylor and C.R.C., used angling and angling literature as a canopy of camouflage to articulate the agency of a growing

feminist movement through deliberate attempts to either out fish men or to satirize male perceptions of the delicate woman.

Before venturing further into the study, it may be useful at this juncture to heed the wisdom of Mary Orvis Marbury, who wrote in her introduction to *Favorite Flies and Their Histories* (1892), that “To create history one should be a great general, an inventor, or an explorer, but to those of us who are not so fortunate as to be creators is permitted the more humble mission of recording what is accomplished by others.”⁵⁰ That this endeavor constitutes the latter is important to note. The remarkable lives of the women in this study and their contribution toward a greater understanding of gender within Victorian North America, strongly argues for their designation as history makers. It is therefore a privilege to stand downstream in the waters of time and learn from an ancient fraternity that may be rightly be called, ‘The Sisterhood of the Angle’.

CHAPTER ONE

“A RECREATION WHICH MANY LADIES DELIGHT IN:” A HISTORY OF WOMEN AND ANGLING, 1496-1837

The coolness of the morning air which lingered from the previous day's rainstorm left a lasting impression on a trio of anglers as they embarked upon a day of fishing in the spring of 1768. Despite the chill in the air and the dampness of the ground, the fishing turned out to be so good, with everyone catching great quantities of carp, perch, and even “one enormous eel,” that the three decided to return that evening to continue the adventure. With the weather now clear, the three “angled & caught carp, perch and roch,” amidst a backdrop filled with the chorus of song birds and the perfume of honeysuckles. Later that night, one of the anglers “supped upon fish,” and reflected on “a great fishing” in “the pleasantest time of the Year,” thus bringing to completion a most perfect and wonderful angling experience.

This was the experience of Lady Mary Campbell Coke, an avid and accomplished eighteenth-century fisherwoman who was the youngest daughter of John Campbell, the second Duke of Argyll.¹ Her companions on that Monday morning in May, 1768, were her sister, Anne Campbell, Countess of Strafford, and a Mrs. Jackson, each of whom also enjoyed the sport of angling. It is the intention of this chapter to demonstrate that female angling forays such as this were not uncommon in either Britain or North America prior to the nineteenth century. Whether on the banks of a purling English stream or from the bow of a boat, women of British descent have fished alongside men and independently of men for centuries. Moreover, since it was historically intertwined within the fabric of

everyday domestic life as both a means of sustenance and leisure, angling maintained for itself an unassuming appearance that provided a canopy of camouflage under which Early Modern women could find access to nature and where they could achieve a level of autonomy and agency. What is particularly interesting is how the image of the fisherwomen was interpreted by male writers of the Renaissance to be an acceptable embodiment of masculine notions of female sexuality and virtue, while for some women, it represented a means of mobility to extend or move beyond the limitations of the domestic dwelling. Subsequently, angling may best be described as a complex cultural phenomenon where a multiplicity of reasons for participation, both conscious and unconscious, came together in the form of an outwardly simple recreational activity. Thus, there was a hidden nature to angling that supported the visible canopy of practicality and enjoyment. As this chapter will argue, it was through this structure that angling became an established and accepted activity for British and North American women long before the Victorian era.

The emergence of angling as an acceptable recreation for women lies in its roots as a pre-modern, pre-industrial British field sport and its association with the virtues of gentleness, patience, contemplation and Christian devotion.² As Carl-Petter Sjøvold notes in his chapter on early angling literature, “it was common for angling writers to begin their books with a brief statement on the virtues of angling – a statement that often referred to a number of scriptural passages affirming the sanctity of the sport.”³ Furthermore, angling did not, as hunting did, claim itself to be “a form of exercise which prepared ‘Heroes and Princes’ for the tasks of defending their countries, protecting their subjects, and maintaining justice.”⁴ By contrast, angling “appears as a sport more

conducive to social and physiological harmony,” and “fell ‘within the capacity of the lowest fortune’ and directed one’s thoughts toward the ‘noblest studies.’”⁵ Concerning this benign nature of angling, Donald Wetherell and Irene Kmet observe that, “fishing seemed less aggressive, more contemplative, and crossed all social lines: ‘all ages, all sexes, all philosophies, all professions and all trades have their representatives among those who fish.’ It could be undertaken with simple equipment and little or no training.”

⁶ Hence, angling’s historic distance from the physicality, violence and power structures of other sports lent itself toward a more heterogeneous constituency.

Angling’s acceptability for women may also be attributed to the traditional inclusion of a woman as the originator of modern sport angling. As noted in the Introduction, the acknowledgement of Dame Juliana Berners as the author of, *The Treatyse of Fysshynge wyth an Angle*, is spurious at best.⁷ However, even if Berners was not the author of *The Treatyse*, the persistent and early historic tradition that she was the author, would still appear “to put women squarely into the fishing picture almost from the start.”⁸ This is important because the publication of the *The Treatyse* in 1496 marked a significant milestone in the evolution of English angling literature. The coup of *The Treatyse* was that it was able to compile previously known information and instructions on angling technique into a form that seemed geared towards “a leisured and sophisticated class.”⁹ Originally an addendum onto the widely popular hunting and hawking manual, the *Boke of St. Alban’s*, that was published in 1486, the *Treatyse*, compared the claims of fishing with “hunting (too laborious), hawking (too chancy) and fowling (too cold).”¹⁰ Most significantly, the *Treatyse* reflected a societal trend toward a wider acceptance of leisure activities that had begun in the late Middle Ages.¹¹ That Berners, who is described as the

Prioress of Sopwell Nunnery and as “a gentlewoman of noble lineage, much celebrated in her time for her wisdom, scholarship, and charm,”¹² was considered for so long to be the author of this text undoubtedly served to forge an early female identity within the sport of angling.¹³

Furthermore, the text’s appeal to the spiritual and medicinal value of angling may have granted acceptability for a woman’s access to nature through leisure. If the popular assumption was that Berners had crafted the text, then its emphasis on the wholistic benefits of angling, and in particular the health and piety which came through the enjoyment of nature, may have influenced or justified the need for women to make such excursions into nature. An examination of the natural world in the *Treatyse* shows an understanding by the author that is reflective of the emerging notion that nature was not a place of chaos, but instead was a raw material that could be harnessed and shaped through human manipulation. Therefore, leisure pursuits such as angling were an outworking of the realization that humans could control not only nature, but also time.¹⁴ Women, who were considered to be subjugate and inferior to men and often portrayed as being aligned with the negative aspects of the natural world, may have found in angling a way of manipulating and controlling nature in an acceptably positive way. At the very least, the attribution of the legendary clerical figure of Berners with the *Treatyse*, further infused within angling, a series of gender neutral virtues such as patience, hope, wisdom and honesty that were most closely associated with Christianity and which were considered appropriate for both sexes to acquire.

Two references from the latter half of the sixteenth-century would appear to suggest that angling was an established form of leisure among Early Modern aristocratic English

women. Sir Philip Sidney's romantic novel, *The Countesse of Pembroke's Arcadia* (1580) told the tale of two princes, Pyrocles and Misodorus, who fell in love with the Arcadian King Basilius's daughters, Philoclea and Pamela. Desperate to win the affection of Philoclea, Pyrocles disguised himself as a woman named Zelmane to gain closer access to the young princess. In one scene, Philoclea and Pamela are described as enjoying a day of angling on a river, wagering among themselves as to who would catch the most fish while Zelmane tries to convince them that they should instead be trying to angle for the hearts of the two princes:

But *Zelmane* fayled not to intice them all many times abroad, because she was desirous her friend *Musidorus* (neere whom of purpose she led them) might haue full sight of them. Sometimes, angling to a little Riuer neere hand, which for the moisture it bestowed vpon rootes of some flourishing Trees, was rewarded with their shadowe. There would they sit downe, and pretie wagers be made betweene *Pamela* and *Philoclea*, which could soonest beguile silly fishes; while *Zelmane* protested, that the fit pray for them was hartes of Princes. She also had an angle in her hand; but the taker was so taken, that she had forgotten taking. *Basilius* in the meane time would be the cooke himselfe of what was so caught, and *Gynecia* sit still, but with no still pensifnesse.¹⁵

What is intriguing about this scene is that Sidney must have worked from the assumption that angling was a culturally acceptable form of recreation for the two young princesses, whom he used to exemplify the ideal notion of balance between virtuousness and humility.¹⁶ If angling was an unacceptable pastime for women in the sixteenth century, then Sidney's portrayal of Philoclea, Pamela and Zelmane (who is assumed by the princesses to be another woman), fishing alone and without male supervision would have been contrary to the ideals ascribed to their characters. That Sidney's sixteenth-

century audience must also have held similar views toward angling and its acceptability for noble women may be speculated upon through the lack of explanation or dialogue around whether the princesses should have been angling at all. The ease as to which this scene transpires implies that a familiar knowledge and acceptance was expected from the audience.

A second reference from the late sixteenth century which directly associates women with angling comes from the diary of an Elizabethan Yorkshirewoman named, Lady Margaret Hoby, “who lived and worked on her own estate in that part of Yorkshire where the barren moors fall to the bleak North Sea.”¹⁷ What is most significant is that unlike Sidney’s fictional account, this is an actual account of a woman who fished for sport and as such, provides clear evidence for this study’s argument that angling had developed into a respectable sport for women during the Early Modern period of British history.

According to Juliana Moody, Lady Hoby was a devout Puritan who “enjoyed fishing” as a recreational activity on the grounds of her estate, angling for crawfish and trout, “either in the river [Derwent] or in the old ponds constructed by the monks who occupied Hackness in earlier times.”¹⁸ Indeed, it would seem that Hoby had little hesitation about interjecting her fondness for the sport into her daily life of prayers and housekeeping, something which is suggestive of the wider acceptability of women and angling within the sphere of Early Modern English society:

After priuat, I did muse my selfe a bout makinge of oile and in my
Clositt tell towards diner time : then I praied : after, I dined : then I
went afishinge, and so I Came home and praied priuatly : after, I went
to supper, then to publeck praers, after to priuat, and lastly to bed.¹⁹

For if a pious, upper-class woman such as Hoby did not find fishing disrespectful or disruptive to her household or spiritual duties, then there is a strong possibility that this was reflective of an even larger societal view. Moreover, Hoby's inclusion of angling into her daily routine reinforces this chapter's earlier argument that the rhythmic nature of angling was complementary to rhythm of Christian praxis, thereby separating fishing from the violence of other field sports and establishing its usefulness for the edification of its adherents and its acceptability for women. Thus, angling for Hoby was as much a practice of devotion as it was a sport.

Similarly, it does not emerge from Hoby's diary that she had any moral struggle or deliberation with the idea of fishing alone as opposed to angling in the company of others. In the four direct references to angling in her diary, Hoby is twice presented as being alone while in the other two she was accompanied by friends:

This after none we all went abroad to take the aire and to fishe...²⁰

After priuat praers I did eate and then went about the house and was busie till dinner time : after, I praed, dined, and after talked with a freind of mine : then I went about busenes, and after walked a fisshinge with a friend that Came to me for that purpose : after, I Came home and did goe to priuat examination and praer : after, I went to supper, then walked abroad, and after, I had hard the lecture, I went to bed.²¹

As with Pamela and Philoclea, Hoby was angling in what was probably considered a 'safe' location within the confines of her private estate, since Early Modern women were susceptible to male violence and according to Sarah Crawford and Patricia Mendelson, "often went in pairs or groups during the daytime, for they were vulnerable to opportunistic forms of bodily harm when they ventured into outdoor or male-dominated

space.”²² Therefore, that Hoby fished alone is indicative of the safety that she enjoyed within the confines of her country estate and because of that, she was able to create an autonomous feminine space where she was the sole agent who could access and manipulate nature for her own enjoyment. Moreover, it may be assumed that since Hoby was married, the friend who called on her to go fishing would have also been a woman. This then, would be an early example of two women who deliberately used angling to demarcate space within the natural world so as to foster friendship and share private experiences, thus making angling an extension of the Early Modern domestic dwelling, where the fluidity of friendship created a communal female space.²³ That this was the foundation and framework for angling to play an expanded role in the creation of space and the exercising of autonomy for fisherwomen in the Victorian era is significant to the argument of this study.

Though marginal in Izaak Walton’s *The Compleat Angler* (1653), the presence of fisherwomen and a female fly tier is notable given that the *Angler* is perhaps the most widely reprinted piece of angling literature in English history and was particularly influential among nineteenth-century anglers.²⁴ Nevertheless, as Nicholas D. Smith observes, “Walton’s attitude towards the female angler (whom he groups with boys, presumably on account of a perceived equation between their technical proficiency) is shaped by his attitude towards the fish for which he recommends they angle.”²⁵ Hence, women are not cited as anglers of salmon, trout or other major game fish and their angling experience is limited to smaller, less sought after species. However, the mention of a woman as the inventor of an artificial fly for trout may indicate that women had some knowledge of how to fish for more gamely species; though in Walton’s mind the

value of a woman's contribution to angling lay solely in a supportive role, using her fine motor skills to procreate useful tools for the male angler. For example, in regard to the use of live minnows as bait for trout, Piscator explains to Venator that, "many old Anglers know right well, that at some times, and in some waters, a Minnow is not to be got, and therefore let me tell you, I have (which I will shew to you) an artificial Minnow, that will catch a Trout as well as an artificial Flie, and it was made by a handsom Woman that had a fine hand, and a live Minnow lying by her."²⁶ That Walton credits the woman for her skill in creating a life-like artificial lure may be a reflection of a larger literary image of women which saw them as being able to skillfully 'angle' for men through deception "in order to coax the fish to the hook."²⁷ Thus, according to Walton, women were inherently skilled as fly tiers because of the dexterity of a "fine hand" coupled with an inherent knowledge of the proper techniques of deception.

Likewise, women are mentioned by Walton as participants in sport angling through a discussion on the merits of catching minnows and sticklebags.²⁸ For example, as Piscator observed regarding the techniques used to angle for a minnow, "He is a sharp biter at a small worm, and in hot weather makes excellent sport for young Anglers, or boys, or women that love that Recreation."²⁹ Furthermore, in regards to the sticklebag, Piscator finds purpose for it, "only to make sport for boys and women-Anglers."³⁰ Thus, while evidence for female participation in angling is provided by Walton, it is minimized by his own views which limit women to catching small bait fish which could then presumably be used in the servitude of male anglers. Indeed, the inability of women in the *Compleat Angler* to provide fish for themselves is highlighted in the scene where the milkmaids are persuaded to sing songs for Piscator and Venator in return for the gift of a

chub.³¹ That the milkmaids, who happen to be a mother and daughter, “love all Anglers” and gladly offer their service to the men only reinforces the secondary, supportive role of women within Walton’s piscatorial paradise.³²

Nevertheless, despite Walton’s limited and dismissive picture of women as anglers in the seventeenth century, further evidence for female angling comes from Edmund Waller, a contemporary of Walton and fellow “Lover of the Angle.”³³ In his Restoration poem, “On St. James Park” (1661) he wrote:

Methinks I hear the musick in the boats,
And the loud ECHO which returns the Notes....
Beneath , a shole of sliver fishes glides,
And plays about the gilded barges’ sides:
The Ladies, angling in the chrystall lake,
Feast on the waters with the prey they take:
At once victorious with their lines, and eyes,
They make the fishes, and the men, their prize.³⁴

Moreover, John Donne’s “The Baite” (1633) presented a picture of a man and a woman angling on the banks of a peacefully flowing river in what Eugene Cunnar describes as Donne’s “witty defense of mutual love as ‘erotic spirituality’”³⁵:

Come live with mee, and bee my love,
And wee will some new pleasures prove
Of golden sands, and christall brookes:
With silken lines, and silver hookes.³⁶

That Waller, Donne and “virtually every major author between the fifteenth and the seventeenth century,” employed “angling in some pastoral of metaphorical capacity,” indicates that heterogeneous participation in sport fishing was an occurrence within Early Modern culture that was common enough to allow for such a literary device to be

effective.³⁷ Furthermore, as Anne McIlhaney observes, in some later seventeenth century “georgic poems, women are portrayed catching fish by virtue of their angling skill.”³⁸ For example, in his poem “The Genteel Recreation” (1700), John Whitney “depicts in verse a woman as an experienced angler, capable of making a solitary excursion, and of fishing with skill”:³⁹

A Reverend Matron [Mrs. Burges of Withyham] with a Hook and Line,
Had nick'd the most auspicious time....
Silent she goes and takes a shady stand,
Watchful her eye and steady was her hand,
For well she knew them both for to command,
A worm well scour'd without the help of sinking tar,
That was her bait and that was best by far...
My Matron at the Fishing Plot...packs up her tools and homeward goes,
Well Laden with a Brace or more,
The just expense of but one only hour.⁴⁰

The authority of skill and the independence of practice that Mrs. Burges exemplified in Whitney's poem was not an isolated example. Indeed, it would appear that by the end of the seventeenth century, angling had become successfully included into the repertoire of necessary skills for the aristocratic English woman. In a work widely attributed to Hannah Wolley, the first woman to write popular skill books on housewifery and medicine, *The Accomplish'd Lady's Delight. In Preserving, Physick, Beautifying and Cookery... And also some New and Excellent Secrets and Experiments in the Art of Angling* (1675), included instructions on angling that according to Wolley, was “a recreation which many ladies delight in, and is not therefore thought altogether improper in a book of this nature.”⁴¹

Though it is tempting to proclaim Hannah Wolley as the undisputed author of this treatise, caution must prevail. Research into Wolley's life and literature by Elaine Hobby

has led her to conclude that *The Accomplish'd Lady's Delight*, though similar in content and title to her earlier work, *The Ladies Delight* (1672), was not written by Wolley because of its literary structure and the inclusion of the section on angling, which Hobby believes, "sits uneasily in the book since it is not addressed to women and does not discuss the suitability of fishing as a feminine occupation."⁴² Moreover, the preface to the book is signed by an individual identified only by the initials, T.P., who in later editions is attributed to be the author.⁴³

Despite Hobby's assertion that the first edition of the *The Accomplished Lady's Delight* has been falsely attributed to Wolley, there are three important observations that can be made to establish *The Accomplish'd Lady's Delight* as one of the most important texts in the history of women and angling. First of all, Hobby's argument that the inclusion of the angling treatise sits "uneasily" because it fails to address "the suitability of fishing as a feminine occupation," is conditionally weak when compared to her second argument that is based on textual criticism. Hobby is assuming *a priori* that angling was not a suitable recreation for seventeenth-century women and that the book's failure to discuss angling's acceptability within society renders it suspect. Contrary, this study would argue that because *The Accomplish'd Lady's Delight* offered little explanation outside of mentioning that angling was something which many women took pleasure in and therefore was not out of place in a manual on housewifery, may be seen as evidence for the pre-existing inclusion and acceptance of angling for women within Early Modern English society. Textually, the angling treatise may not fit within Wolley's literary style (though plagiarism was widely acceptable in Early Modern literature) but its inclusion was definitely intended to give practical guidance to female anglers as opposed to

persuading them on why they should *become* anglers, which indicates that societal concerns over women and fishing were not the author's forefront of concern.⁴⁴

The second observation about *The Accomplish'd Lady's Delight*, is that the angling treatise is written in a manner that appears to be very gender neutral. Unlike later editions of the book which included a decidedly masculine introduction to the text, the original edition from 1675 is ambiguous as to the intended sex of the reader.⁴⁵ While at times fish species are gendered when being discussed, for example the salmon is both a him and a her, the author maintains gender neutrality in discussion of the angler, preferring instead to instruct in the second-person. This may be due in large part to the practical intent of the treatise, though one has to assume that the author could have just as easily used a masculine or a feminine third-person format. Indeed, the second-person style of the treatise fits within the practical instruction style of the larger book thereby placing angling in an unassuming manner among the many skills in need of mastery by an English Lady. The ambiguity as to the gender of T.P. is also noteworthy as the author of the book, whether it was Hannah Wolley or T.P., appeared to have deliberately wanted to portray the book as being written by a woman of experience for other women, as opposed to earlier seventeenth-century manuals of conduct and skill which were written by men to address women.⁴⁶

This then leads to the third and final observation regarding the original edition of *The Accomplished Lady's Delight*. Similar to the attribution of *The Treatyse of Fyshhyng wyth an Angle* to Juliana Berners, the purpose and agenda of linking *The Accomplish'd Lady's Delight* to Hannah Wolley is important. If Wolley was indeed the author, then the angling treatise represents a significant moment in the history of women and their literary

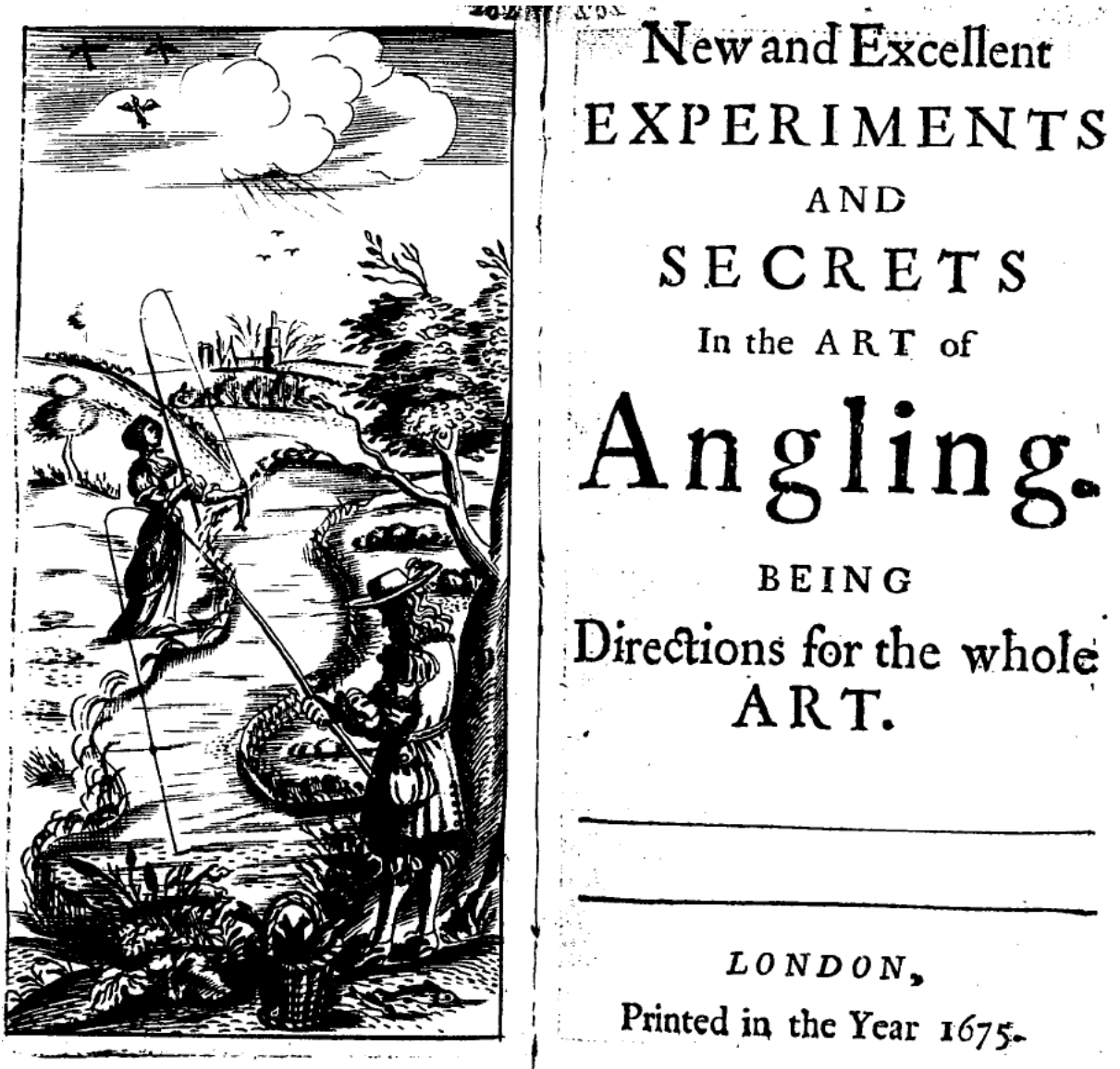
contribution towards the evolution of the sport. If T.P. is the actual author and T.P. was a woman then the same accolades would apply. If however, T.P. was a man, then the text clearly demonstrates an attempt by men to increase the access of women to all forms of angling, helping them to not only become proficient in the sport but making the statement that angling was indeed a heterogeneous activity that was acceptable for both men and women.

A prominent example of this comes from the illustration at the beginning of the text where a woman and man are depicted angling as together on a pastoral stream (see Figure 1).⁴⁷ The woman, who wields her own rod and line, is shown in the process of handling a fish which she had just caught. The man in the foreground appears undistracted by the woman's success and remains concentrated on his own line. Therefore, from this image it would appear that seventeenth-century women such as John Whitney's, Mrs. Burgess, were completely capable of performing all of the functions of angling on their own; including the baiting of the hook and the handling of the fish after it was caught. Even more importantly, the presentation of the couple fishing together undoubtedly served to reinforce not only the practical benefits of angling for a family, but also legitimized angling to the female reader as romantic recreation that could be shared alongside of her husband.

Moreover, contrary to Walton's limitations on appropriate species of fish which women may angle for, *The Accomplished Lady's Delight* appears to offer little restriction (see Figure 2). The proper techniques and bait needed to catch popular game fish such as

Figure 1

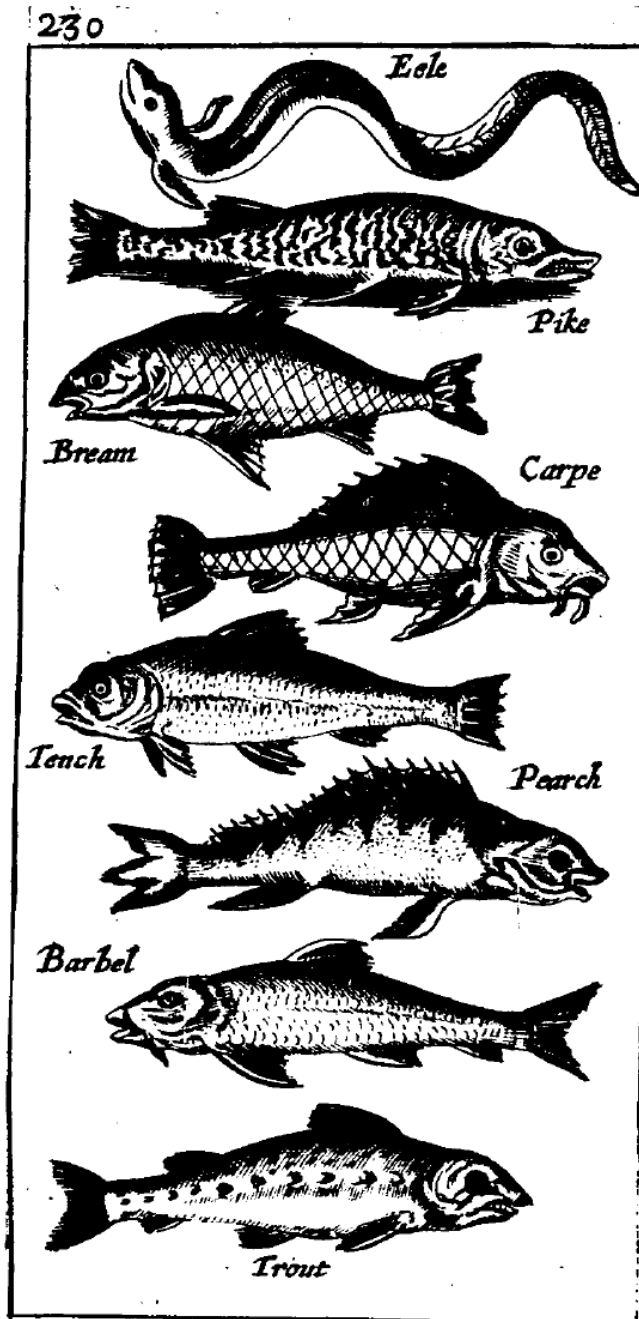
Title page for the angling section in Hannah Wolley's, *The Accomplish'd Lady's Delight. In Preserving, Physick, Beautifying and Cookery*. London: Printed for B. Harris, 1675.



Women were active participants in angling during the Early Modern period. Notice the female angler fishing independently from her male companion in the foreground.

Figure 2

An illustration from the angling section in Hannah Wolley's, *The Accomplish'd Lady's Delight. In Preserving, Physick, Beautifying and Cookery*. London: Printed for B. Harris, 1675, 230.



This illustration demonstrated the variety of fish that the female angler might encounter. Unlike Walton's *The Compleat Angler* (1653), there were no limitations placed on which species were the most suitable for women to pursue.

trout, salmon, pike and carp are all discussed, and a page illustrating the physical differences among the species is included for the female angler's knowledge. The small section on the tying and seasonal use of flies for trout and salmon appears to be a paraphrase of Walton's own descriptions in *The Compleat Angler*, and may be indicative of the author's attempt to reveal the "excellent secrets" which Nicholas D. Smith has observed, go further "in promising the female reader surreptitious access to the hitherto masculine domain of the pursuit," thus overcoming any male secrecy which may have been used to exclude women from angling.⁴⁸ That the author intended the reader to feel as though she were privy to esoteric angling knowledge may also be seen from the section entitled, "The Secrets of J.D." whereby the reader is asked (presumably by J.D.), "Would'st thou catch Fish? Then here's thy wish: Take this Receipt T'annoint thy Bait."⁴⁹ After divulging the secret bait recipe, J.D. then warns the reader, "It's perfect and good, if well understood; Else not to be told, for Silver nor Gold."⁵⁰

Furthermore, the text also includes interjections by the author describing angling experiences and the angling techniques which he or she found to be useful. In discussing how to catch salmon from a swift river, the author writes:

Close to the bottom, in the midst of the water,
I Fish'd for a Salmon, and there I caught her.
My plummet twelve Inches from the large hook,
Two Lob-worms hung equal, which she ne'r forsook:
Nor yet the great hook, with the fix winged Flye,
And she makes at a Gudgeon most furiously.
My strong Line was just twenty six yards long:
I gave him a turn, though I found him strong.
I wound up my Line, to guide him from Shoar;
The Landing-hook helpt much, but the Cookery more.⁵¹

Such an angling experience differed greatly from the small and meager species of fish which Walton had prescribed for women and children. Clearly there is an element of physicality involved in the landing of the salmon, yet there is no mention of help sought by the author or suggestion given that women should not attempt this without the assistance of a man. It is also implied that the female reader of *The Accomplish'd Lady's Delight* not only had the physical wherewithal to similarly battle the salmon in a strong current, but also the ability to gaff it with a landing hook and drag it ashore. Thus, the *Accomplish'd Lady's Delight* offered a foil to Walton's exclusive 'Brotherhood' and formally offered to women the same angling opportunities and secrets that Piscator and Venator had previously enjoyed by virtue of their gender. Furthermore, *The Accomplish'd Lady's Delight* significantly extended the foundation and framework which would later make angling a means for Victorian women to have access to nature and through which they could exercise authority, autonomy and agency. It also serves to establish this study's contention that angling had developed into a respectable pastime for women during the Early Modern period.

By the end of the seventeenth century, fishing as a family activity for the British elite had become a popular recreation as evidenced through the construction of numerous ornamental fish ponds and fishing pavilions as major features within countryside gardens.⁵² The level of sophistication and knowledge used in creating these ponds offered anglers the opportunity to catch more than one species of fish depending on the pond in which they chose to angle. Furthermore, the garden's use of artificial rivers or streams allowed anglers to enjoy a variety of fishing experiences, from still waters to moving streams.⁵³ That these fish ponds were deliberately created to provide angling

enjoyment to men, women and children may be seen from Roger North's comments in 1714 concerning the benefits of fish ponds for families:

But lay aside profit and consider how a gentleman should entertain himself and his Family, which I must suppose every one hath, who lives on an estate, and it may be numerous; he must find some Sort of Diversion for them. Must it be altogether going Abroad to make, or at Home receiving visits? Or if the Female Part are so grave, to decline that Course of Life, must they be always within? Or if they stir out, have nothing but mere Air to invite them? Perhaps the Gentleman himself may find Diversion by Hunting, & c. and meeting Company upon several diverting Accounts; and shall all his Entertainments be exclusive of his family? No, certainly, whoever aims at an easy and satisfactory Course of Life must seek that his Family, as well as himself, be pleas'd: An if he doth not order it so, that they shall be entertain'd, 'tis ten to one they will find such Entertainments as shall not be very grateful to him; therefore there is Advantage enough in the Mastery of Fish, from the Diversion, not to speak of the Employment that it brings to a family.⁵⁴

In her travels across England in 1697 and 1698, Celia Fiennes frequently mentioned the existence of garden fish ponds and the fishing that they offered to anglers. In commenting on the countryside estate of Charles Woolsey in Stratfordshire, Fiennes noted that, "In this parke is severall ponds wch affords good ffish, as does ye moate and ye Trent as trout, Eeles, tench, perch &, the Largest perch I ever saw just Caught and dress'd immediately wch Eates in perfection."⁵⁵ Far from being a passive observer of angling, Fiennes herself was an active participant in the sport during her journey, which is significant because she was an unmarried woman traveling with just two servants.⁵⁶ On occasion it would appear that Fiennes fished in the company of male relatives and companions, while at other times it would appear that she fished alone. In recounting her journey from London to Newcastle and Cornwall, Fiennes wrote:

Thence I returned home 17 mile more, from London to Bednal-green twice, and back againe 16 mile, from London to Highgate 4 miles to M^r Thomas's house, where is a most exact garden wth all sorts of greens and flowers and fish ponds. There my Nephew Ffiennes Harrison wth M^r Showers went to fish wth me. Thence we went to Hampstead, so made it 5 mile home againe.⁵⁷

Again, while staying in the Stratfordshire countryside at the Woolsey's, Fiennes recollected her explorations of the surrounding countryside that appear to have been day-long outings that she made while unaccompanied. On one of these solo outings she wrote that she, "went to a poole in the Kanckwood 3 mile to ffish and from thence to Heywood parke thro' a very fine Coppice of trees on a hanging brow of a hill wch Look'd very fine, and so home 2 mile more."⁵⁸ At a later date in 1698, while staying in the house of a major of Sir Christopher Phillip's estate on the shores of Lake Wiandermer, Fiennes noted that she took a boat onto the water (without mention of any companions) and found the lake to be:

Very Cleer and full of good ffish, but y^e Charr ffish being out of season Could not Easily be taken, so I saw none alive but of other ffish I had a very good supper. The season of the Charr ffish is between Michaelmas and Christmas; at that tyme I have had of them, w^{ch} they pott with sweete spices. They are as big as a small trout, Rather slenderer and y^e skinn full of spotts, some Red Like the finns of a Perch and the jnside flesh Looks as Red as any salmon if they are in season; their taste is very Rich and fatt tho' not so strong or Clogging as the Lamprys are, but its as fatt and Rich a food.⁵⁹

Thus, Fiennes provides further evidence for the active participation of Early Modern English women in the sport of angling. What becomes evident from reading Fiennes' diary is that she was keenly aware of the angling opportunities and variety of fish that each region of England offered which demonstrated a knowledge and interest in the sport

that would have been well beyond that of someone who was merely a passive or occasional participant. Comments regarding the supply of fish and the quality of fish within the rivers and lakes she encountered emerge with a predictable frequency in her writing. Even the sight of other anglers on the water provided Fiennes with enjoyment.⁶⁰ Clearly, Fiennes displayed no signs of hesitancy or knowledge that any societal restrictions existed that would have prevented her from respectable participation in the sport. As with other Early Modern women such as Lady Hoby, Fiennes appeared to find angling to be a means where she could create autonomous space within the natural world and where she could exercise her own agency as a manipulator of that environment.

In the eleventh edition of *The Accomplished Lady's Delight* (1720), an edited form of the original angling treatise appears. Curiously, editions of the book prior to 1696 included the original section on angling while later editions until 1719 did not include it, which may indicate some controversy over its inclusion in a manual on housewifery.⁶¹ Now dedicated to, "The Female Angler, introducing Ladies and others, in the various Method of taking all manner of Fish in the Fish-Pond or River"⁶² the eleventh edition claimed as its purpose to encourage gentlewomen to follow the examples of monarchs such as Queen Mary who, "whether Abroad, or in her Palace, She was never observed never to misspend any of her Time Idly."⁶³ The newly edited angling treatise both instructed women "in the newest and most excellent way of Angling, and taking all manner of Fish, Containing a Collection of Choice and Rare Experiments, and secret; now in Practice among the most famous Fishermen Anglers,"⁶⁴ and in the philosophical and contemplative aspects of the sport. Indeed, the editor of the eleventh edition merely reprinted the original body of instruction while incorporating a new paragraph at the

beginning that placed emphasis on the character and skill which women must master so as to be considered accomplished anglers:

He that would be a compleat Sports-Man, must first acquire to himself the noble Art, of Patience; his Temper must be Calm and Serene, and his constitution strong enough to bear the Vicissitude of all Weathers: He must rightly Understand the practical Part as well as Theory; that he must not any Time stand in Need of a Person to Make or Mend any of his Tackle, but must be wholly Master of performing every Branch of it, excepting the Hook.⁶⁵

Of interest is the use of male pronouns to describe the female angler. When coupled with its emphasis on autonomy for the female angler, this is perhaps indicative of the universality of the praxis and theory of angling when applied to gender. That the eighteenth-century female angler had to endure all types of weather and be able to independently manufacture and repair her own equipment so as to be considered a “compleat Sports-Man,” shows little preference for gender as both women and men needed an identical set of specialized skills and ability. Moreover, the same was also expected concerning the moral qualities needed by an angler, for at a time when, “men’s sporting interests were often pursued exclusive of female company,”⁶⁶ and when other traditional activities such as hunting were seen to de-feminize women, “the moral credentials of angling. . . played an important role in its promotion as a sport appropriate for ladies to pursue. . . when set against the dangers and excesses of the chase.”⁶⁷ The required virtues of patience, calmness and serenity expounded by the editor of the eleventh edition would clearly have been attractive in “introducing Ladies and others” to the sport.

The non-literary application of these virtues may also be found in eighteenth-century angling paintings and portraits, where Nicholas D. Smith observes that “the gentility and social politeness of the recreation is brought to the fore in the representations of women anglers.”⁶⁸ Often, these paintings were used to depict desirable characteristics of women such as their grace, refinement, attractive appearance, and morality.⁶⁹ In the paintings which Smith offered as examples, perhaps the most intriguing is a portrait of Lady Caroline Leigh, who is depicted as a solitary angler on the banks of a pastoral stream. Holding the rod in her left hand and the line in her right hand, Smith notes that she is “the epitome of grace and contemplativeness.”⁷⁰ Moreover, in William Hogarth’s *A Fishing Party* (*The Fair Angler*) (c.1730) (see Figure 3), Smith concluded that the physical separation of the woman angler from the man, and her sharing of the fishing rod with a small girl, “serves as a visual symbol of the bond between mother and child, and it confers the familiar associations of refinement, gentility and conspicuous leisure upon the lady angler.”⁷¹

Though angling may have been commonly portrayed as a serene and virtuous recreation for eighteenth-century women, it also embodied within it the ability to foster competition. After reading a letter from her sister who boasted of an exceptional angling experience, the avid angler, Lady Mary Campbell Coke responded:

Well, my Dear Lady Strafford, you give a pompous account of Your fishing, but I can out do you: this morning I caught fourteen gold & silver fish, & of a size that wou’d have surprised you; it proves that I have such great quantities in that little piece of water, that I kept out half a dozen, which Jane & I eat at dinner; they have but few bones, & are very good. I’ll give you a dish of gold & silver fish whenever you please.⁷²

Figure 3

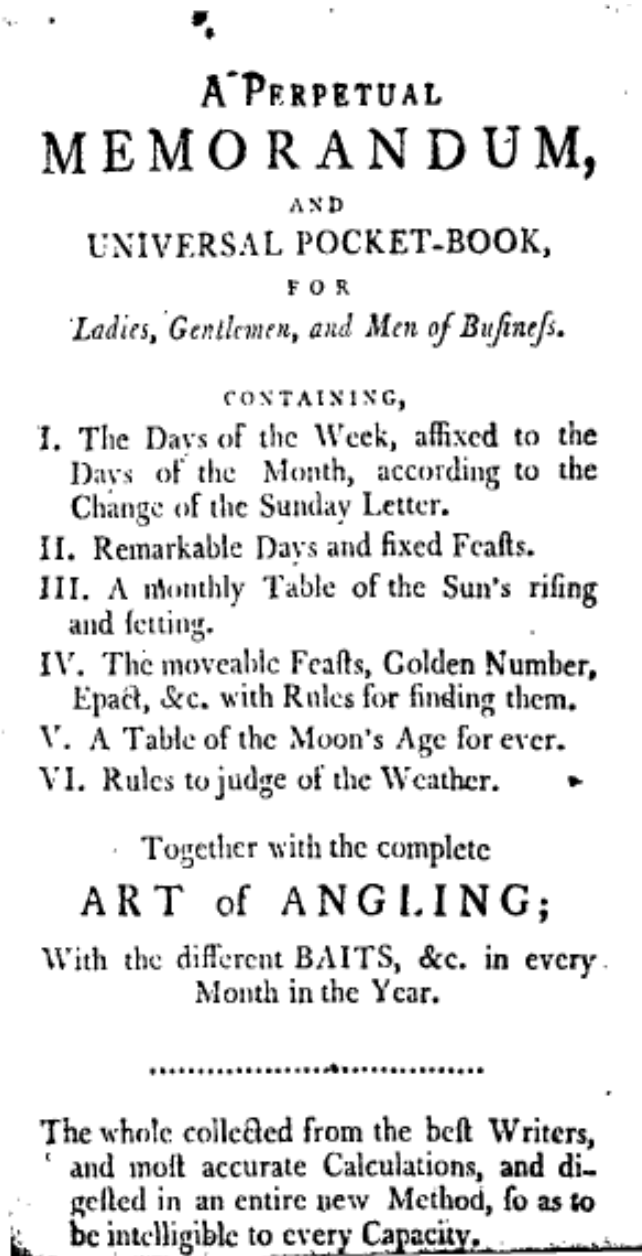
A Fishing Party ('The Fair Angler') by William Hogarth, c. 1730

Source: The Dulwich Picture Gallery website, London. <http://dulwich-ke-ext.atticmedia.com/web/objects/common/webmedia.php?irn=1274>. Also found in Smith, Nicholas D. "Reel Women: Women and Angling in Eighteenth-Century England." *International Journal of the History of Sport* 20, no. 1 (March 2003): 37.



Figure 4

Title page from the anonymous, *A Perpetual Memorandum and Universal Pocket-Book for Ladies, Gentlemen, and Men of Business*. Penrith? 1791?



Nature was not outside the acceptable sphere of the Early Modern woman. This anonymous guide not only provided its readers with information and formulas to calculate important calendar dates, it also contained a section on seasonal angling practices and offered advice and astronomical tables for the angler. Most notable is that the guide was written for "Ladies, Gentlemen, and Men of Business," which demonstrated that angling was not only an accepted practice for women but also that angling was intertwined with specialized knowledge and control of the natural world.

That this sense of good-natured competition also crossed gender lines reveals an important freedom that angling's canopy of camouflage provided to women, especially to those of the aristocracy who found that their social position made them less likely to "share or invade male physical or psychological space."⁷³ Indeed, eighteenth-century women took pride in their angling ability and were not satisfied to be out-fished by their male counterparts. Consider the tone and the appeal to pride which Lady Coke offered as consolation to a fellow angler who had been out-fished by General William Howe:

In the evening Ly Fitzwilliams & Ly Howe came in, & we play'd at Quadrille, & I lost. Lady Howe told me her Son William out does you all at fishing. I suppose you are piqued, for I know you value yourself upon being an excellent fisher-Woman.⁷⁴

What also emerges from Lady Coke's competitive angling experiences is a sense of the conquest and control of nature. As much as women were seen to be limited by nature to a maternal frailty, society also considered nature to be within a women's sphere (see Figure 4).⁷⁵ As such, angling's outward image of communal harmony with nature allowed Early Modern women the ability to exercise a certain degree of autonomous dominion over the natural world. For example, in her diary entries, Lady Coke is not only conscious of the species of fish which she caught, but also of their quantity and size. Success, as with anglers today, was often measured according to the number of fish caught or their unusual size. By catching "near seven dozen of gudgeon, pope, roach, & one perch,"⁷⁶ or having a "very large carp" break her line when she was landing it,⁷⁷ Lady Coke participated in an acceptable female appropriation and possession of the natural world. That she used this as a playful form of competition among her friends demonstrates how angling could be used in the creation of a mystique for the sporting

heroine. Thus, these examples provide further evidence for the argument of this study that angling was a complex cultural phenomenon that had developed into a respectable sport for women during the Early Modern period. Moreover, they also demonstrate how angling was a means through which women could find access to nature and could exercise a level of independence long before their Victorian ancestors.

As British women traveled and emigrated to Canada and the United States they brought a tradition of angling that was readily adopted by North America women. In his very complete and extensive work, *Angling in America* (1939), Charles Goodspeed, included the account of a British traveler who visited either the Schuylkill Fishing Company or the Fort. St. David's Fishing Company in Pennsylvania in 1760:

There is a society of sixteen ladies, and as many gentlemen, called the fishing company, who meet once a fortnight upon the Schuylkill. They have a very pleasant room erected in a romantic situation upon the banks of that river, where they generally dine and drink tea.... There are boats and fishing tackle of all sorts, and the company divert themselves with walking, fishing, going up the water, dancing, singing, conversing, or just as they please. The ladies wear an uniform, and appear with great ease at the neatness and simplicity of it. The first and most distinguished people of the colony are of this society; and it is very advantageous to a stranger to be introduced to it, as he hereby gets acquainted with the best and most respectable company in Philadelphia.⁷⁸

It is apparent from this description that angling on the Schuylkill was as much of a social and class identifier for the elite as it was a recreational activity. This is reflective of the British tradition whereby angling, though historically pan-class in its appeal also carried within itself a "sharp divide"⁷⁹ among classes over access to certain waters, game fish, preferred technique and available leisure time. For the Schuylkill and Fort St. David's

companies, angling offered upper class women the opportunity to gain access to and establish for themselves a place within the elite of the colony.⁸⁰

In eighteenth century Canada, one of the earliest records of a woman angling for sport comes from the journal of Elizabeth Simcoe, whose husband, John Graves Simcoe, was the first Governor of Upper Canada. In describing her family's trip to Upper Canada by boat in 1792, Simcoe not only recalled a brief angling experience on the 29th of June, but also provided valuable insight into the early techniques of angling in Canada by European settlers who undoubtedly derived sustenance, profit and pleasure from this activity.⁸¹

While the tent was pitching I fished and caught a small perch. Many people carry trolling lines, or lines which run out of a small fishing wheel or pulley lying out of the stern in their boat, and catch an abundance of black bass and other fish all the way up the St. Lawrence.⁸²

In another entry from February 2nd, 1796, Simcoe wrote:

At the mouth of the Don I fished from my cariole, but the fish are not to be caught, as they were last winter, several dozen in an hour. It is said that the noise occasioned by our driving constantly over this ice frightens the away the fish, which seems probable, for they are still in abundance in the Humber, where we do not drive; 15 dozen were caught there a few days ago.⁸³

From these two entries it is evident that not only was there an established pattern of sport angling in Canada prior to the nineteenth century, but that women of social standing such as Elizabeth Simcoe, freely and actively pursued it as an acceptable recreational pastime and were cognizant of the success and experiences of other anglers. Indeed, if as Paul Schullery suggests, that the British presence in Canada during the eighteenth century

quickly established a vibrant sport fishery among officers and gentleman, then it may also be argued, as evidenced through the journal of Mrs. John Graves Simcoe, that women were integral to the development of a Canadian sport fishery as well.⁸⁴

Furthermore, that some Canadian women were participants in angling from a very early age may also be asserted based upon the recollections of John Maude, who in 1800, observed “four frolicsome girls, and two men and four boys fishing”⁸⁵ on a Sunday afternoon near Niagara Falls, Ontario.

By the early nineteenth century and into the infancy of the Victorian era, North American women’s participation in angling became even more established and defined. In the United States, “the personal papers of antebellum New Englanders reveal that men and women of all social classes together enjoyed fishing and, on occasion, they centered their courtship and even honeymoon entertainments upon this sport.”⁸⁶ In Canada, this reality was closely paralleled as demonstrated through the writings of pioneer author, Susanah Moodie, who was an active participant in the sport of angling. In *Roughing it in the Bush* (1852), Moodie described her romantic and “delightful” fishing and shooting excursions with her husband and made note of the joy and usefulness which angling provided to her family.⁸⁷ In describing a trip to Stony Lake in 1835, she wrote:

It is an excellent place for fishing; the water is very deep close to the rocky pavement that forms the bank, and it has a pebbly bottom. Many a magic hour, at rosy dawn, or evening grey, have I spent with my husband on this romantic spot; our canoe fastened to a bush, and ourselves intent upon snaring the black bass, a fish of excellent flavour that abounds in this place.⁸⁸

Even after her husband’s death in 1869, Moodie continued to fish on her own which would indicate that angling was more than something which she had participated in out

of obligation or duty toward her husband.⁸⁹ For Moodie, angling was an intensive, amusing and natural part of her life. That she lost a young son in a fishing accident in 1844 was a terrible irony that haunted her for the rest of her life.⁹⁰

Though the previous section has provided evidence that would establish angling to be a respectable activity for women prior to the Victorian era, more needs to be said regarding the historic acceptance of women as anglers and in particular, any objections that may have been raised to the contrary. This is important because an exploration of anti-angling sentiment contributes not only toward understanding the role of fisherwomen in Victorian North America, but it also serves to place angling within the larger context of societal attitudes towards nature and gender.

Prior to, and even into the Victorian era, masculine objections to female involvement in angling appear to centre on a fear that the “delicate senses” of a woman would “revolt at the presence of distress and pain”⁹¹ which accompanied both the fish being caught and the bait used to catch it. Furthermore, the physicality of angling was seen by some as being too much for a woman to bear, where potential blisters that came from casting would have a severe effect “on the delicate hand of a lady,” and where the “slime and blood would daub her clothes,” making her stink of fish and dirtying her fingers.⁹²

This image of the frail and delicate woman would become popularized in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, propagated by a medical community who promoted the inherent weakness of female biology and a middle-class female demographic who accepted this to be true and who subsequently, “ate little and took no exercise, so that, not surprisingly, they would often faint, become ill and behave submissively, thus confirming the medical stereotype of the ‘delicate’ female.”⁹³ Moreover, there was also concern that

if delicate and sensitive women began to perceive angling as being inhumane it may also bring the sport under the increasing scrutiny and criticism of an emerging humane movement which had already targeted other traditional field sports for their cruelty toward animals.

Regarding this, Nicholas D. Smith observes that by the end of the eighteenth century, there were two related discourses concerning angling and the humane movement; the first being “the inclusion of angling in discussions of humanity to animals,” and the second being, “the received convention that women out not to participate in cruel amusements.”⁹⁴ This was reflective of a changing worldview within western society where the anthropocentrism of Baconian rationalism and Cartesian dualism was being challenged by several complex and emerging worldviews that no longer perceived human beings to be the focal point of the universe. Animals were viewed as more than mere automata and were capable of experiencing emotions such as pain and suffering in much the same manner as humans. Thus, the growing question for adherents of the eighteenth-century humane movement was no longer the Cartesian one of ‘Could animals reason?’, but rather that of, ‘Could animals suffer?’⁹⁵

That male anglers were conscious and fearful of their sport being targeted by an increasingly powerful humane movement came from their observations of the public conflict between hunting and those who branded it as being barbarically cruel, where participation could serve to undermine social morality.⁹⁶ For a sport which had traditionally distanced itself from other field pursuits in favor of a more pastoral and contemplative image, the emergence of eighteenth-century detractors of sport fishing, such as Charles Lamb, who “described anglers as ‘patient tyrants, meek inflictors of

pangs intolerable, cool devils,”⁹⁷ and Byron, who satirized Izaak Walton as, “The quaint, old, cruel coxcomb, in his gullet Should have a hook, and a small trout to pull it,”⁹⁸ only served to solidify their concern. This anti-angling sentiment also extended to North America, where Samuel Low would write near the close of the century:

POOR little struggling captive wretch,
Ah! not for thee was meant the lure
Which thou, too credulous, didst catch,
Which renders thee my prey secure...

“If, like this captive fish you grasp
At joy on Treach’ry’s hook that’s hung,
Or soon or late like him you’ll gasp,
And with Remorse your soul be wrung!”⁹⁹

When women, such as Frances Power Cobb, began to publicly abandon angling for sport based upon her “moral sense”¹⁰⁰ this provided reason (and more opportunity) for some male anglers to question the involvement of women in the sport on account of the perceived inability of women to separate their “tender feelings” from the inherent but necessary cruelty which accompanied angling.¹⁰¹ Likewise, male anti-angling advocates, such as Thomas Young, also tried to dissuade women from angling and focused their appeals on the supposed gentle nature of the female character. In *An Essay on Humanity to Animals* (1798) he wrote:

It must be observed, that fishing with any living bait, is to be condemned for the same reason as fishing with the worm: in all such instances we torture two animals at once for our amusement; in others only one.... In opposition to these [hunting and shooting], it may be observed, that in this sport there is not the excuse of even hoping to kill instantaneously. I am sorry the gentler sex have been led to practice it. If cruel diversions must be retained, it were to be wished that at least they may be reckoned fit only for the men.¹⁰²

Similarly, the anonymous male author of the poem, “The Cruelty of Angling” (1792), dedicated his work to a Miss M. Labbatt whom he praised for humanely and sensibly observing, “that the cruelty of this diversion shocks us the less, as the subjects of it make no audible complaint.”¹⁰³ He then went on to condemn the hypocrisy of women who opposed other field sports on the basis of humanity but continued to engage in angling for sport:

Miss cries humane – “what pity ‘tis
Those squalling fowls are slain!
While yet – delightful angling is!
For – fishes don’t complain!”¹⁰⁴

Arguments against the participation of women in angling that were based upon assumptions that the female character was incompatible with the inhumanity of fishing did not just come from men. Certain women also condemned female participation in the sport and attempted to evoke the empathetic and emotional as a tool for their persuasion. In the poem, “On the Dutchess of Atholl and Lady Wright Fishing at Atholl-House” (1785), the anonymous female author described how her contemplative and “rapt’rous” encounter with God on the banks of a “murm’ring stream,” was interrupted when she encountered a fish who mournfully recounted the painful capture of his wife by “two pleasing forms lean’d o’er the trembling brook”:¹⁰⁵

Each held a magic wand with wond’rous grace,
A pendant line convey’d the tempting bait;
O fight, portentous to the finny race,
Fraught with the dire command of cruel fate

My tender mate play’d fearless by my side;
With eager joy she snatched the hidden dart,
Instant, alas! I lost my lovely bride;
What racking torture seiz’d my wounded heart.

E'er since that hour, to pining grief a prey,
My flowing tears increase my native flood,
In melancholy sighs I waste the day,
And shun the commerce of the scaly brood.

Shou'd chance this mournful tale at Blair relate,
Where dwell the dang'rous fair who caus'd my pain,
They who can love so well, wou'd mourn my fate,
And ne'er disturb our harmless race again.¹⁰⁶

Furthermore, women who were opposed to angling also encouraged their children and households not to participate. For example, in 1794, Sarah Trimmer wrote that although fishing with nets for sustenance was permissible, “neither my good man nor I can bear the cruel diversion of angling; nor do we allow our children to follow it from a notion that it hardens the heart, and leads to idleness”¹⁰⁷

While opposition to angling such as this existed and was promoted by both men and women of the humane movement, the overall extent of this criticism was minimal when compared to the volume that was directed toward hunting and other blood sports. Indeed, it would appear that on the whole, angling received remarkably little attention by the humane movement, something which Keith Thomas speculates as being linked to the inability of fish to communicate their sense of pain in recognizable human terms.¹⁰⁸ He states, “It was this uncertainty as to whether fish had sensation, since, as well as being virtually bloodless, they did not cry out or change expression, which enabled angling to retain its reputation as a philosophical, contemplative and innocent pastime, given impeccable ancestry by the New Testament and particularly suitable for clergy.”¹⁰⁹ Thus, angling's ambiguity in relation to the issue of cruelty to animals allowed it to remain largely unscathed by the humane movement which in turn, enabled women

anglers to maintain their respectability and humanity.¹¹⁰ In other words, women became involved in angling because of its innocent and pastoral nature, while the participation of women, with their perceived gentle and compassionate natures, further protected the sport from serious criticisms of brutality and cruelty.¹¹¹

Despite its failure to effectively hinder the practice of angling, the humane movement did however, have influence on the conscience of some female anglers which lasted well into the nineteenth century.¹¹² As Frances Anne Kemble explained in 1875, an interesting paradox emerged whereby female anglers often wrestled more with the sufferings of the bait itself than with the fate of the fish they were pursuing:

I am not myself a cruel or hard-hearted woman (though I have the hunter's passion very strongly), an invariably baited my own hook, in spite of the disgust and horror I experienced at the wretched twinning of the miserable worms round my fingers, and springing of the poor little live bait with its back pierced with a hook.... Moreover, if I have ever had female companions on my fishing excursions, I have invariably done this service for them, thinking the process too horrid for them to endure... The sick feeling of hatred that my unfortunate victims excited in me, precisely because of their struggles nearly drove me wild with a sense of my own barbarity is, I am sure, the sort of horrible, nervous passion that has produced crimes that are pronounced peculiarly "cold-blooded."¹¹³

This concern over the suffering of the bait and its cleanliness to the angler was also intertwined and indicative of a greater societal expectation that women who angled must do so in a decidedly "feminine spirit."¹¹⁴ To openly delight in the baiting of a hook would border on a masculine barbarity that would be unacceptable for a woman of character. That Kemble is both horrified and stimulated by this action is perhaps indicative of an underlying primal element to angling which may have offered women a momentary aside to the notion that they were gentle and compassionate by nature.

This tension however, did not prevent women from using bait altogether, but it may have had some influence on the decision of many eighteenth and nineteenth-century women to take up fly fishing, which Richard Bowlker had described as a clean and neat form of angling, “free from the trouble of baiting your hook or fouling your fingers,”¹¹⁵ and which *Forest and Stream* founder, Charles Hallcock, had called, “that most graceful and artistic style of angling [which] is infinitely preferable to all other methods.”¹¹⁶ When combined with its traditional association with the upper-classes, fly fishing may have been the most socially acceptable form of angling for women following the eighteenth century. Moreover, the ability for either gender to master it successfully undoubtedly made it the ideal vehicle for women such as Elizabeth Taylor to respectably challenge their male counterparts.¹¹⁷

The scale of criticism regarding the appropriateness of angling for women should not be exaggerated. In many ways it was in keeping with other nineteenth century concerns about women’s proper roles especially in regard to education, employment, physical activity, and ultimately, suffrage.¹¹⁸ What might be most significant about the debate on whether it was humane or graceful for women to fish is that it clearly suggests women were actually participating in the sport in sufficient numbers so as to warrant a campaign against them.

By the Victorian era, the acceptability of angling as a recreational activity for British and North American women had long been established. Indeed, the persistence of women as sport anglers is evident in the historical record from at least the earliest days of the Renaissance and most probably, long before that. Far from being on the fringe of recreational pursuits, angling claimed adherents from an elite social class of women who

pursued their sport with passion and skill. Underneath angling's canopy of camouflage, Early Modern women found access to nature, and opportunities to exercise a level of authority and autonomy. Moreover, angling provided women of the aristocracy with a reprieve from the isolation of gender that came from their social position, allowing them to master the same set of skills and techniques as their male counterparts. The existence of an Early Modern tradition of fisherwomen would provide women of the Victorian era the foundation and structure upon which they could further their opportunities and where they could begin to more formally leave their mark as innovators and influencers of the sport.

CHAPTER TWO

“THE CHARM OF BEING ‘LOOSE AND FREE’: ANGLING AND A WOMAN’S ACCESS TO NATURE

In 1898, *The New York Times* published an article entitled, “Feminine Izaak Waltons: There Are Many of Them Who Enjoy the Delicate Sport of Angling.” To introduce the piece, the anonymous author began with the observation that, “The latter part of the nineteenth century is developing a great many fisherwomen. The man who fishes says that while women have been maligned in a great many ways there is no way in which she has been more maligned than when it has been said that she could not fish.”¹ The author later went on to interview a passionate fisherwoman from New York who boldly proclaimed that “you may take away anything that I have, but I won’t give up my fishing.”² This type of sentiment was far from uncommon during the nineteenth century. As the previous chapter has argued, angling was not a new activity for Victorian women, but instead, had a long tradition of female participation. However, during the nineteenth century, angling’s popularity among women increased as it came to be seen as an ideal and respectable means of access to the benefits of nature. Evidence for this rise in popularity comes from American and Canadian newspapers such as *The New York Times*, which published fishing reports from local angling destinations that increasingly included detailed records of the fish caught by women, and the *Globe*, which reported the results of fishing parties on rivers such as the Nipigon and which mentioned the presence of women anglers within these parties. Moreover, the emergence, innovation and mass production of angling equipment in the United States during the nineteenth-century

testifies to the burgeoning popularity (and profitability) of fishing in Victorian North America, in particular, the manufacture of equipment specifically marketed toward women and girls.³

This chapter will explore how Victorian women used angling to encounter and engage the natural world either alongside of men or by themselves, expanding upon the framework of opportunity that had been created by Early Modern fisherwomen. Initially, it will attempt to outline and define Victorian attitudes toward nature and how they influenced nineteenth-century concepts of gender. Subsequently, the specific ways in which fisherwomen both discovered and created access to the natural world will be examined. Emphasis will be placed on how angling became an antidote to the ill health, boredom and limited opportunities of middle-class urban life that in turn, led women to seek opportunities for adventure within nature. Moreover, it will also be demonstrated that angling allowed women access to a romanticized aboriginal culture that was viewed to be as much a part of nature as the flora or fauna. Finally, as women gained more access to nature and nature based activities through angling, it will be argued that they asserted a feminine voice for the conservation of nature. Thus, angling will be shown to have continued the canopy of camouflage which had developed during the Early Modern period and under which Victorian women could find unique opportunities for access to nature while on the outside, it would appear that they were merely participants in an unassuming, yet respectable pastime.

The word nature itself is difficult to define and is subject to various understandings based upon the context to which it is applied. As environmental historian Peter Coates observes:

Understandings of nature in the Western world can roughly be divided (with some inevitable overlap) into five historically important categories: nature as a physical place, notably those parts of the world more or less unmodified by people (as in ‘unspoiled nature’) – especially those threatened by human activity; nature as the collective phenomenon of the world or universe, including or excluding humans; nature as an essence, quality and /or principle that informs the workings of the world or universe; nature as an inspiration and guide for people and a source of authority governing human affairs; and, finally, nature as the conceptual opposite of culture.⁴

Modernist concepts of nature tend to define it as a physical place that is separate from human culture and modification. Hence, there is the natural world and the unnatural world, though as Coates observes, “Without a concept of culture as the works of humankind, there can be no concept of nature.”⁵ Therefore, human understandings of the natural world and in particular the animal realm are most often reflections of how a society views itself in relation to the larger universe.⁶ For the Victorians, this reality is clearly identifiable as they sought to interpret the natural world through the lenses of scientific rationality and romantic idealism. These two ideologies tell of a culture that paradoxically sought to both conquer nature and be set free by nature. Whereas the natural world could be possessed through intellectual and technological progress, it was also looked upon to provide relief from this progress, specifically the pressures which came from industrialization and urbanization.

The continued influence of seventeenth-century Baconian rationality coupled with the theory of evolution as presented by Charles Darwin in *The Origin of the Species* (1859) provided the Victorians with a rational and ordered view of nature that was potentially devoid of supernatural influence or origin. New discoveries in the world of science had marginalized the role of humans within the cosmos and challenged earlier views which

had asserted the divine centrality of human beings within the natural world.⁷ In this new form of anthropocentric thought, humans were now perceived to be biologically equal to other species within the animal kingdom, differing only through the evolved ability to reason. This in turn, gave humans the evolutionary prerogative to dominate non-sentient forms of nature in the name of natural selection. Thus, nature became a commodity that could be possessed through reason.

The development of standardized scientific methods which organized and explained the natural world coupled with advancements in technology and economics, such as the railroad and the rapid growth of capitalism, served to underscore the belief in the superiority of human rationality. This level of integration between scientific thought and the everyday world of the Victorians, “publicly altered the ways in which individuals viewed their common world. Never before had the centers of culture and education been confronted with such a vast new body of knowledge.”⁸ Science therefore, became the primary criterion upon which the universe was interpreted and valued and through which the British Empire could be extended.

For example, the Linnean System, originally created by the Swedish naturalist, Carl von Linné, in 1735, categorized the world according to internal anatomies and distinctions as opposed to external appearances or attitudes. Thus, the wild wolf and the beloved family dog came under the same genus of *Canine* (though with distinct modifiers for individual dog species) as opposed to being classified based on their domestication and service.⁹ This ability to manage and organize the world of nature “into an interacting whole” was termed by Linné as the ‘Economy of Nature’, and it eventually became synonymous with British imperialism, where it was readily adapted and used by traveling

British anglers and hunters. As Greg Gillespie explained, the “gathering of foreign specimens, building and contributing to collections, and the naming of new species became central themes within nineteenth-century British travel and exploration narratives. As they extended and explored their empire, the systematizing of nature through the Linnean System became a hallmark of British order and control.”¹⁰

That Mary Orvis Marbury, in her best selling book *Favorite Flies and Their Histories* (1892), used the Linnean System to list sixteen orders of insects as they were known by entomologists of the time, demonstrates how intertwined science had become with angling, and most particularly with the making and use of artificial flies. This then, was representative of a class stratification within the angling world, as literate and elite members of society could demonstrate their sophistication and intelligence by not only choosing to fly fish, but also by being able to identify various flies and fish through Latin nomenclature.¹¹ Therefore, when an angler went fishing for salmon, he or she was not just participating in a recreation that could satisfy his or her palate, but rather, he or she was angling for *Salmo* and were thus participants of the greater world of nineteenth-century scientific thought.

As understandings of nature became increasingly systemized and detached, a counter-movement emerged from within the literary world that sought to reintegrate humanity back into a primitive and enchanted world of nature. The rapid onset of the pressures of urbanization and industrialization coupled with capitalism’s insatiable use of nature as a raw commodity, “combined to make people nostalgic for slower, simpler times. Part of this mentality was a ‘wilderness ethic,’”¹² and the North American landscape with its “thousands of sparkling streams” offered an ideal point of relief.¹³ This attitude toward

nature - known as romanticism - had begun in the eighteenth century but would not reach its zenith until at least the middle of the nineteenth century.

For the Romantics, closeness to nature was viewed as the most liberating and free state in which a person could live and the loss of this connection to nature was considered to be one of the great tragedies of modern civilization.¹⁴ This belief in the inherent goodness of nature was inspired by ideologies such as Rousseau's concept of the Noble Savage and countered the earlier views of Thomas Hobbes, who had concluded that nature could only be redeemed through human culture as it was expressed in the form of government.¹⁵ Thus, Romantics began to invoke "nature as a force subversive to the power wielded by state, monarch, Church and God."¹⁶ Nature's inherent and pantheistic goodness was to be the panacea for humanity's oppressive use of rationality.

A key ideology of the Romantic Movement was the distinction made between the beautiful and sublime aspects of nature so as to elevate the role of emotion to the same level as that of interpretation and objectivity.¹⁷ Nature was sublime when it was considered for its vastness, ruggedness and its ability to stir up feelings of pain and terror. Thus, the ability for an object of nature to be at the same time both beautiful and sublime is indicative of the human experience between the tame and the wild aspects of nature: where human control over certain elements of the natural world represented but a fraction of the larger, more complex elements of uncontrolled nature. Therefore, in the minds of Romantics, the feelings that were evoked when wild nature was encountered served to challenge the unswerving rationality of modernism into the possibility that a world existed beyond that of the senses. Stated in a different way, Richard Kuhns, in describing Kant's view of nature and sublimity as expressed in the novel, relates how

beautiful art “makes nature conformable to our deepest needs as human beings,” while congruently, it may also be experienced in a way that is “beyond the capacity of our senses and our understanding to organize and structure it.”¹⁸

Furthermore, Romantics wanted their “entire beings to be thrilled with a delicious terror”¹⁹ from an encounter with nature and yet have the experience be temporary and safe enough so as to still enjoy the benefits of modern life. In describing the psychological structure of sublimity, James Twitchell states:

‘Sublimity is the elevated thought and inspired perception that resides in the mind of the beholder, and suffuses everything it touches with grandeur.’ When the experience succeeds, the perceiver is released from the anxieties of isolation and achieves momentary unity with both his inner ‘self’ and the world ‘beyond’. But it does not last; the threshold soon collapses and we are returned to the mundane.²⁰

The implications of the Romantic Movement on a woman’s understanding of fishing is best demonstrated by writer and abolitionist, Francis Anne Kemble (1809 – 1893), who, in a series of autobiographical memoirs published between 1875 and 1876 for *The Atlantic Monthly*, reflected on her intense passion for angling:

I have often wondered that both my mother and myself (persons of exceptional impatience of disposition and irritable excitability of temperament) should have taken a delight in so still and monotonous an occupation, especially to the point of spending whole days in an unsuccessful pursuit of it. The fact is that the excitement of hope, keeping the attention constantly alive, is the secret of the charm of this strong fascination, infinitely more than even the exercise of successful skill. And this element of prolonged and at the same time intense expectation, combined with the peculiarly soothing nature of the external objects which surround the angler, forms at once a powerful stimulus and a sedative especially grateful in their double action upon excitable organizations.²¹

Kemble's astute observations as to why angling provided her and her mother with so much joy demonstrate a complexity of thought which indicates that fisherwomen were extremely cognizant and articulate regarding the philosophical nature of their sport. That Kemble's mother, who clearly was an ardent angler long before the Victorian era, struggled with an "exceptional impatience of disposition" exemplifies an underlying societal expectation that an angler (and a woman) must be a patient person by nature. However, her contrasting temperament provided a sublime balance to her angling experience whereby she could be simultaneously stimulated and sedated, thus creating a powerful metaphysical attraction to the sport. Here, the hidden nature of a woman's impatience that may have been inexpressible in certain realms of society, could give meaning and purpose to angling while concurrently, giving the outward appearance of patience and gentleness.

Moreover, the Romantic Movement also influenced angling through the emergence of the sporting adventure and travel narrative of the nineteenth century. As the British Empire expanded, the natural world came to be seen as a playground for British army officers and colonial elites who began to write of their experiences and adventures in the 'wild' for eager audiences back in England. These narratives were important for hunters and anglers because it allowed for the reinvention of their sport in the eyes of a public that was now sensitive to the treatment of animals. Through sporting adventures, hunters and anglers could portray themselves noble empire-builders, "versed in science, nature and art," as they described the exploration of natural worlds where no European had ever set foot.²² The sublime terror of anglers running the rapids of a wild Canadian river in a canoe that was piloted by a native guide, evoked imagination and longing for similar

experiences among male and female urbanites in England and North America. Hence, angling's popularity increased as more and more middle and upper-class men and women saw it as an ideal point of connection with not only nature, but also as a compliment to other activities such as canoeing, bird watching, camping and hunting.²³ Furthermore, it also provided white, urban Victorians with access to an idealized and romantic aboriginal culture through the emergence of a tourist economy which employed the use of native fishing guides.

When rationalistic and romantic attitudes towards nature were applied to understandings of human gender, a struggle emerged between a competing sub-set of ideologies over women and their engagement of the natural world. For post-Darwinian Victorians, who wrote frequently of “a personified Nature, a beautiful or fearsome dummy through which to pass their own pronouncements,” control over whose voice could be heard in regard to the interpretation of nature was important.²⁴

On one hand, according to the doctrine of separate spheres, men “occupied the ideological public, professional, objective and commercial sphere, while women focused on the home, children, the amateur position, and moral and aesthetic domains.”²⁵ This ideology was firmly entrenched within both the Canadian and American political systems during the nineteenth century, which did not allow women to vote because it was an activity of the public sphere. Furthermore, though the Canadian and American legal systems had advanced somewhat beyond British common law, which prior to the mid-nineteenth century (and in some individual provinces and states, several decades later) did not allow for married women to hold property, women were nevertheless at a distinct disadvantage when it came to property rights and ownership. Single women may have

enjoyed a slightly more favorable standing within the letter of the law because they had not been required to surrender their legal rights to a husband, but they still struggled for economic independence from male family members due to the lack of suitable and adequately remunerated employment for women.²⁶ Thus, if women ventured into the wilderness in pursuit of leisure or learning, they carried with them all of these societal, political and legal realities for appropriate feminine behavior and domesticity.

Activities that were deemed to be excessively physical, or violent, or those which placed women in direct competition with men, were seen as detrimental for a woman and “wore out her body and unfitted her for maternal duties.”²⁷ These accepted norms were part of the rationale that relegated women to an amateur or subordinate role when participating in nature based activities alongside of men. For instance, in their study on gender and birdwatching in Southern Ontario from 1791 to 1886, Kirsten Greer and Jeanne Guelke note that, “the thrill of the hunt, the physical involvement of killing, dissecting, and stuffing dead birds, lay outside women’s experience of recreational birdwatching. Women therefore tended to observe birds more passively and even to express a shared maternity with female birds, while men more directly attempted to conquer and collect them.”²⁸ Furthermore, women were excluded from the professional field of ornithology despite their knowledge and skill at identifying and classifying various species of birds.²⁹ That women anglers such as Sara Jane McBride, who pioneered the use of entomological study in North American fly fishing, were not recognized by an emerging community of professional male scientists is therefore not surprising given their gender and lack of formal training.

Thus, women, who were thought by many evolutionists to be biologically weaker and less intellectual than men, were publicly restricted in having authority over nature because of their apparent closeness to or embodiment of nature itself.³⁰ Though similar to the Early Modern image of the delicate and frail woman who was enslaved to a sedentary lifestyle because of her reproductive biology, this post-Darwinian attitude towards women did however, allow for a slightly more positive and mobile image. As previously stated, Victorian women were still seen as suffering from an “eternal wound,” though certain kinds of gentle exercise and activity were now being prescribed by male physicians to “aid women’s health and ability to bear children.”³¹ When this was combined with the Victorian’s growing romantic idealization of nature, pre-existing recreations such as angling came to be seen as being particularly beneficial for women. Concerning the advantages that outdoor activities such as angling offered to Victorian women, Emily Thackvay enthusiastically wrote in 1889:

The most encouraging signs of the times in American life is the increasing love for out of door life and sports, indulged in now not by men alone, but also by those who used to be termed ‘the weaker sex....’ No woman is so free as an American girl; if she uses up her freedom in summer to build up her bodily strength and refresh her mental vision, if she tramps through the forests and over mountain peaks, drinking in ozone and beauty with every breath, if she elects to camp out under the starlit canopy, paddle her slender canoe and cast her trout fly upon the unsullied mountain lake, gathering there with the silver-white lilies that star its surface the “seed of white thoughts, the lilies of the mind,” she will come home in the late autumn with rosy, nut-brown cheeks and a fresh spring in her steps.³²

The sense of freedom that outdoor recreation gave to women such as Thackvay did not, however, always imply an absence of limitation. Women in the wilderness were still

expected to be feminine in spirit and in character, and still needed male oversight and influence.³³ For example, even though the respected editor of *Forest and Stream*, Charles Hallock, openly encouraged the participation of woman in hunting and fishing, he still argued that they should not pursue their sport unattended.³⁴ For Hallock and other male sporting writers of the nineteenth century, whose primary agenda for promoting women in activities such as hunting was to change its public perception, a woman out-of-doors could, “never be out of her sphere, she must always exert her softening influence.”³⁵ As one *Forest and Stream* editorial implored, “Any necessity is deplorable which draws women forth from the retirement which is her sphere, unless it be to something high and noble.”³⁶ This then, was reflective of the pervasiveness of the doctrine of separate spheres which exercised considerable influence regarding the female engagement of the natural world.

Contrastingly, despite offering women “their own autonomous space,” the doctrine of separate spheres “rested on the premise that women’s lives were always ancillary to those of men, and that women should always be *dependent* on men.”³⁷ By the latter half of the nineteenth-century, some women began to redefine themselves in opposition to the notion that nature had destined females to be subordinate to men. As Barbara Gates notes, the New Woman of the 1880s and 1890s began to argue against the assertions made by the scientific community that she was predestined for motherhood and domesticity.³⁸ As these women began to reinterpret the meaning of ‘nature’ as it pertained to the understanding of gender, they also discovered within the natural world a realm that they could independently describe, enjoy and interpret. Contrary to the belief that nature was inherently dangerous for the maternal health and safety of the domestic woman, the New

Woman of the nineteenth century began to perceive the engagement of the natural world as inviting and stimulating.

Far from being helpless in the wilderness, these women “lived, worked, and played in nature,” in such numbers that any suggestion of their supposed fearfulness or lack of participation is easily dispelled.³⁹ For female anglers in North America, this meant a departure from the more sedentary nature of British angling. Prior to the nineteenth century, it would appear that fisherwomen in Britain (and even in places such as the Schuylkill in Pennsylvania) were more confined to fishing in localized garden ponds, streams and rivers. By the late nineteenth century, women anglers in North America were venturing further into the wilderness and were wading mountain streams, canoeing rivers and stalking their prey in a manner that was far more active than perhaps previously noted. For example, prior to her first trolling experience, Carrie Foote Weekes expressed a reluctance to participate in fishing from a boat because it would not give her the same sense of mobility and adventure that she had experienced from angling on a mountain stream:

I followed mountain streams in search of those wary, fighty, cocky little brook trout. There was sport! To follow a brook, to see a ‘hole’ hemmed in by birches or alders, to stand on rolling stones, and cast your line, gently, as you hide in shadow; to feel your fly nipped by a passing flash; to give a quick jerk of the rod, only to find your hook fast in an old log, under which the trout had hidden.⁴⁰

Indeed, this active and rugged pursuit of fish is indicative of a major change between the angling practices of Early Modern women and those of Victorian women and is linked to the expansion of a woman’s acceptable space within nature that had begun to develop in

the mid-nineteenth century and which subsequently offered the New Woman angler a greater degree of mobility and adventure.

Moreover, these adventurous fisherwomen were often portrayed to the public as doing so independently. In two separate articles by Mary Trowbridge Townsend for *Outing* magazine in 1897 and 1899, the accompanying illustrations show a solitary female angler, presumably Trowbridge herself, wading in a stream while casting her fly rod. In “A Woman’s Trout-Fishing In Yellowstone Park,” (1897) Trowbridge is pictured as wearing a high-collared white blouse that was tucked into a plain, dark, all-purpose skirt which is strikingly similar to what Jean Matthews has described as the “uniform of the New Woman” (see Figures 5 and 6).⁴¹ This form of dress “imparted an appearance of brisk competence” and physical freedom which is most evident as Trowbridge is shown confidently wading within the Yellowstone River.⁴² Pictured behind her is a stark backdrop of rugged and barren mountains. The caption, which read, “A Mistress of the Gentle Art” exemplifies what Glenda Riley describes as the influence of the English feminist movement on American sporting women, where on the one hand, women “worked to maintain the image of dignified ladies seeking health, collecting information, and carrying their civilization to others. On the other, they exercised their independence along with their bodies.”⁴³ Through contrasting Trowbridge’s femininity and civility against the wilderness, the statement was made that women were well equipped to handle themselves independently within nature without having to surrender their respectability. Expanding on the framework provided by their Early Modern ancestors, Victorian fisherwomen created their own autonomous space within nature. That some women, such as the author known only by the initials C.R.C, began to publicly satirize the myth

Figure 5

“A Mistress of the Gentle Art”

Source: Townsend, Mary Trowbridge. "A Woman's Trout Fishing in Yellowstone Park."
Outing May 1897, 165.



Painted for *Outing* by J. L. Weston.

“A MISTRESS OF THE GENTLE ART.”

Figure 6

“Among the Haunts of the Eastern Trout”

Source: Townsend, Mary Trowbridge. "Angling for Eastern Trout." *Outing* May 1899, 124.



Painted for *Outing* by James L. Weston.

AMONG THE HAUNTS OF THE EASTERN TROUT.

of the helpless woman through fishing stories such as “A New Hand At The Rod,” clearly demonstrates how cognizant women were of the stereotypes that existed and how angling provided women with a literary context through which they could oppose these myths.⁴⁴

Another example of an independent, New Woman angler, was a lady nicknamed, ‘Gypsy,’ who was described by Emily Thackvay as having a passion for solitary angling experiences in the wilderness. On one occasion, ‘Gypsy’ left her party of four women to fish by herself on another lake. After renting a boat and rowing to the middle of a deep lake to fish for lake and brook trout, “her fisherwoman’s instinct was up and she did not notice the black clouds gathering fast.”⁴⁵ After almost being swamped by the stormy weather, ‘Gypsy,’ “though frightened, was determined to ‘paddle her own canoe.’” Nearing the shore, a young man in another boat attempted to help her, but ‘Gypsy,’ “her blood up,” preferred instead to leap from the bow into knee deep water and drag the boat ashore by herself like a “young lioness.”⁴⁶ The astonished young man, after beaching his own boat, sat down twenty feet away from her and only after some time, timidly approached ‘Gypsy’ to offer his umbrella.

What becomes apparent upon examination of the doctrine of separate spheres and the emergence of the New Woman is how borderless angling was. It was a respectable pastime for both the domesticated woman of the separate spheres and the highly mobile New Woman. As argued in the previous chapter, angling’s historic image of being genteel in nature coupled with its ambiguity in relation to the cruelty of animals, made it possible for women to participate without fear – either their own or that of others - of over-exertion or barbarity. For example, in two separate articles on the same page of the August 30th, 1883 edition of *Forest and Stream*, the respectability of hunting and fishing

for women was indirectly compared. In the article, “Diana,” readers expressed contrasting opinions on whether “the shooting of game was unladylike,” while the editor of *Forest and Stream* shrewdly decided to maintain “a discreet silence,” in regard to the matter.⁴⁷ Contrastingly, just one article below “Diana” was an update on the Princess Louise’s angling excursion to the Cascapedia River in Quebec, where she is complimented for her “good luck” and for her “pluck in braving the winged insect terrors.”⁴⁸ An additional article on the Princess’s trip was also included in the same issue that recorded the number of and weight of the salmon which she had caught.⁴⁹ Thus, while the respectability of a woman who hunted for sport could be challenged, it was much more difficult to question the respectability of angling when the epitome of ladylikeness that was found in British royalty, openly modeled the sport to the public. Moreover, as with their Early Modern predecessors, Victorian women could justify their angling excursions as an extension of the domestic realm since women “who fished often fished privately.”⁵⁰ In this way, their participation in the sport did not threaten traditional gender roles.

Yet, for the New Woman of the late nineteenth century who chose to challenge the “old boy”⁵¹ myths of womanhood, she could utilize angling’s unisexual skill set and its capacity for adventure to exercise agency. As C.R.C. wrote in “A New Hand At The Rod,” “A woman’s hour has struck. I will go fishing.”⁵² Therefore, within either ideology of gender, angling maintained itself to be a canopy of camouflage under which women could encounter and engage the natural world either alongside of men or alone.

For Victorian fisherwomen who were for the most part, white and privileged, it comes as little surprise that their encounters with nature were primarily interpreted through the

dominant cultural lenses of scientific rationality and romantic idealism, which were further filtered through their own notions of gender. The application of these ideologies is most identifiable when demonstrated through the three primary and overlapping roles of tourist, naturalist, and conservationist. It was through these roles that women could find access to nature in a way which complemented the sport of angling. Likewise, it may also be argued that it was the sport of angling itself which created new opportunities for access to nature and broadened the ways in which these roles allowed women to encounter the natural world.

When the fisherwoman known only as ‘Eergethora’ wrote of her 1897 summer fishing trip to Canada for *Outing*, she began with the statement:

The most perfect summer of my life was spent on that stream dear to all anglers – the Nepigon. There are yachts, private cars, and luxurious coaches, but give me an August day, a birch canoe, swift-flowing water, and the tiny, always lonesome, cry from a little bird which we look for, but never find – and you have rest in its best sense.⁵³

Similarly, when reminiscent about her initial angling experience many years beforehand, Mary Trowbridge Townsend made a connection between the triumph of catching her first trout and the awakening that it stirred within her of being “near to Nature’s heart,” and of finding gentle rest on Nature’s “peaceful bosom.”⁵⁴ Canadian pioneer and angler, Susannah Moodie, also implored that, “Next to the love of God, the love of nature may be regarded as the purest and holiest feeling of the human breast,”⁵⁵ while American Mary Orvis Marbury wrote of the “fresh vigor and strength” which angling offered because it occupied the mind and body in the open air, and yielded “excitement without worriment.”⁵⁶ Indeed, these descriptions of the metaphysical rest and physical

restoration which angling provided were not uncommon. As the pressures of industrialized urban life increased within North American cities, concern grew among the middle class over what was perceived to be a mental and physical degeneration of society. The root cause of this came from a fear of over-civilization, which “could unfit people for the ongoing battle of life,” and undermine the superiority of “the very businessmen and society women who had assumed the duty of sustaining the social and economic fabric in the face of rising odds.”⁵⁷ In other words, too much progress in the forms of technology, economy and science meant overexertion and ill health as people struggled to keep pace.

The solution to this problem was to look to nature as means of creating a balance between the primitivism of the Noble Savage and the civilized superiority of the white, middle class. Thus, brief and controlled encounters with nature could restore one’s health and provide rest to the overworked soul. Furthermore, nature-based activities also offered a respite from the constraints of urban society, which for women could mean a relaxation of gender expectations such as around clothing, where in the wilderness, “common sense mattered more than fashion.”⁵⁸ As the nineteenth century progressed, the number of women tourists who sought to find rest and a simpler way of life within the North American wilderness increased dramatically. While many outdoor excursions and activities retained a larger number of male participants, women looking for a rest cure in the wilderness most often found angling to be the ideal activity on which to centre their vacation or retreat.⁵⁹ As Mary Shipman Andrews explained about her attachment to an Adirondack lake, “It was there I learned the charm of being ‘loose and free.’ There I

have sat under the trees by a bark table while my own catch of trout sputtered over the birch logs.”⁶⁰

One such person who sought the healing benefits of nature was Cornelia Crosby, a single woman who worked as a bank clerk in Franklin County, Maine. Suffering from chronic ill health as both a child and as an adult, Crosby had been prescribed by her physicians to spend as much time in the outdoors as possible. At a point prior to 1878, Crosby had become so seriously ill with a lung infection that she was not expected to survive. In what was likely a last attempt to save her life, Crosby was “carried, one June day, to the very foot of Mount Blue,” where at a farmhouse in the Rangeleys’, she was “to try the healing power of nature.”⁶¹ It was on this medicinal excursion into nature that Crosby discovered an intense passion and skill for the sport of angling.

As Crosby’s health continued to be problematic over the next few years, she would make repeated visits to Rangeley and the farmhouse at Mount Blue to find healing through fishing. In July of 1882, after what the local newspaper, *The Phonograph* called, “an illness of seventeen weeks,” Crosby again returned to the farmhouse at Mount Blue where she “took frequent excursions after mountain brook trout.”⁶² These fishing trips and her journalistic skill of recounting them for local newspapers inspired other tourists to visit the Maine wilderness. By 1886, her fame as a fly fisher had become widespread and her annual vacations to the Rangeleys became publicly documented.⁶³ On her frequent long walks of restoration, Crosby would practice her fly casting with a rod that had been given to her by her friend, Charles Wheeler. As Thomas Verde notes, it was “a gift that could be said to have changed her life forever,” as she became so adept at casting, “that she would amaze the various fishermen she encountered.”⁶⁴ By the early

1890's, Crosby's discovery of angling had apparently succeeded not only in restoring her "health and vitality,"⁶⁵ but also led to significant remuneration and even fame as she perfected her skill.

Tourist encounters with nature however, were not always about seeking a cure for ill health. There were also other reasons for women to venture into nature. One of which was to lay claim to the land in such a way that it either possessed it for civilization or for personal glory. Since Victorian women inherited their angling tradition from the British upper class, it may be argued that angling was intertwined with a colonial agenda. The use of traditional field sports by traveling British sportsmen to culturally appropriate the Canadian landscape revealed "a desire to present the land from the perspective of the colonizer, to identify the resources of the land, to display colonial territories that belonged to the broader empire, while also hinting at the capacity of the land to support British colonization."⁶⁶ For American anglers, the wilderness was a blank slate; a place without history that was open and free and similar in many aspects to the Garden of Eden itself. Concerning how nineteenth-century American anglers looked upon nature, historian Carl-Petter Sjøvold observes that, "The 'ideology of space,' the belief which attached 'progress' to territorial expansion, had always been one of the most potent forces in the American imagination, and nowhere did this ideology resonate with such force than in the mind of an American angler, who found rugged delight in roaming the wilderness for more, and bigger, fish."⁶⁷

When the experienced fly fisher, Lady Dufferin, fished the Nipigon River in 1874, it was by no coincidence that her canoe was "painted white, with Union Jacks on the bows."⁶⁸ The presence of her party's large entourage of boatmen, native guides, and

members of the British aristocracy - all being led upriver by Lady Dufferin's canoe - was undoubtedly a powerful visual reminder of the Empire's claim to the Canadian wilderness. Moreover, Dufferin's use of angling to possess the land may be seen from her angling experience on the St. John River in the Maritimes in the same year. On writing of the experience, Dufferin excitedly began her journal entry on June 29th, 1874, with the phrase, "The first fishing on our own river."⁶⁹ This sense of personal claim over the land was further expanded upon two days later when it was merged with an imperialist display of grandeur as she described her party's Dominion Day celebrations, where several flags were prominently flown above their riverside wilderness camp. The final step in her appropriation of the St. John River occurred the following day when Dufferin wrote of a salmon which she had caught from what was described as a nameless pool:

A salmon-rod with a fish at the end of it is no joke! I began 'to wish he were dead,' and say to myself that I would never go through such an anxiety again, for the fish is never safe till he is in the boat. At last we gaffed him, and brought him safely to his death, weighed him, and found him twenty-six pounds – the largest caught here this year; so I am very proud of my success. The nameless pool is now the 'Countess Pool.'⁷⁰

Through conquering the salmon and bringing him "safely to his death," Dufferin had exacted obedience from the wilderness.⁷¹ It was the salmon's duty as nature's royal representative to yield its life to her.⁷² Furthermore, the pool from which it came was now 'owned' by Dufferin through the powerful act of having it named after her heroic achievement. Therefore, what was previously unnamed and untamed had now been brought under subjugation through the innocent sport of angling. For women of

aristocracy such as Lady Dufferin, angling was a respectable means through which this form of control over the wilderness could be achieved. Thus, Dufferin's experience underscores this study's argument that angling acted as a canopy of camouflage, where on the outside it appeared to be an unassuming and benign activity, while underneath it provided fisherwomen with a unique opportunity to access, create, and even dominate space within the natural world.

The use of naming to achieve power over an object of nature may also be seen from the outdoor experiences of Susannah Moodie. When describing her fishing and canoeing excursions in the wilderness with her family, she stated, "We felt as if we were the first discoverers of every beautiful flower and stately tree that attracted our attention, and we gave names to fantastic rocks and fairy isles, and raised imaginary houses and bridges on every picturesque spot which we floated past during our aquatic excursions."⁷³ Thus, naming, as Barbara Gates suggests, "implies power, the human power of the word over the thing named, the power of the word to bring into being through naming, the power to change situations by changing what they are called, the power of rhetoric to spin unbelievable cultural myths."⁷⁴

That this claim to ownership was also linked with a belief in the North American wilderness's potential as a raw commodity may be seen from Dufferin's detail in recording the size and numbers of fish caught by her party.⁷⁵ Not only did it tell of her party's proficiency in angling, but it sent a message to other tourists about nature's ability to more than meet their own sporting needs. When other anglers, such as 'Eergthora', described to an eager audience how on rivers such as the Nipigon, that the fishing was so

good that, “It was almost unsportsmanlike to take advantage of them,” it reinforced the message of wild nature as a vast sporting paradise that was waiting to be harvested.⁷⁶

While Victorian women did view nature as something to be owned, this sense of possession could also lead to a desire to understand nature’s intricate details and generate feelings of responsibility for its well being.⁷⁷ These sentiments were most commonly manifested through the practices of naturalism and conservation. In her study on the influence of British sporting culture and the rise conservation in the Canadian West, Karen Wonders observes that, “Natural history collecting in Victorian society was viewed as a fashionable and respectable pursuit that contributed to science while at the same time encouraging aesthetic and religious sentiment.”⁷⁸ For women, angling was a means which provided access to the field of natural history and was a canopy of camouflage under which more serious scientific investigation could occur.

As mentioned in the Introduction, Sara Jane McBride was an amateur entomologist who became well known in the 1870s for pioneering research on the life cycles of aquatic insects which she could then imitate through the tying of artificial flies. While McBride’s work was respected among nineteenth-century American anglers, it received little attention from the scientific community.⁷⁹ As part of her research, McBride spent hours on Spring Creek in New York State, collecting and cataloguing various mayfly and caddis fly species, and “raised nymphs in her aquarium so that she could observe their metamorphoses, which she understood and portrayed well.”⁸⁰ While entomology was an acceptable pursuit on its own for Victorian women, Lyla Foggia suspects that McBride’s “grubbing around in the mud while studying the various stages of insect life,” probably led to disapproving gossip among local residents.⁸¹ Nevertheless, the desire to find a

new method of fly tying provided McBride with a sense of mission which led to highly detailed observations and experiments.⁸² This type of determination and the understanding that fly fishing and fly tying performed one and the same function as that of a naturalist was further exemplified by another fisherwoman from New York State:

The name of the flies that the fisherwoman has to choose from are legion... There are flies that apparently never saw the like on sea or land. But that is to the ordinary observer. The naturalist or fisherman knows differently. The fisherwoman knows all the flies and calls them by their names without error... It is a question of study and patience... I have studied everything I could from observation, from what I saw would be a benefit and from where I saw people were wrong.⁸³

The pride in accurately observing nature for the purposes of correction, which the anonymous New York angler spoke of, was important to fisherwomen. Through her studies on the effects of climatic change on larvae and pupae, McBride concluded that it was a mistake for the American angling community to rely on English fly fishing works because they were an unreliable authority on New York State's climate.⁸⁴ Despite the detail of her observations however, McBride's attempts at using the Linnean System, suggested "that she did not keep up with current scientific writing."⁸⁵ This aside however, McBride's work highlighted the important link between fly fishing and natural history for Victorian women. Moreover, as will be explored in the following chapter, it was the angling community which would provide the voice through which the research of McBride and other women naturalists could be heard.

Victorian women anglers were also keen observers of the fish they caught. Frances Anne Kemble "examined the heart of one of the fish, and was surprised at the long continuance of pulsation after the cessation of existence."⁸⁶ Susan Margaret McKinnon

St. Maur, The Duchess of Somerset, demonstrated a similar sense of scientific observation and knowledge during a fishing expedition on Cowichan Lake in British Columbia. Reluctantly forced into trolling with a spoon when her fly failed to catch fish, St. Maur used considerable detail when she described the unfamiliar type of trout that she caught:

I have every reason to believe [the fish], were charr, for they were singularly rich in colour, seven rows of gold and yellow spots on either side, the back similar in tint to a mackerel, the under part a silvery white, with a beautiful pink stripe down both sides, the lower fins bright scarlet, the head small, the tail and back fins mottled like tortoise-shell, and the flesh a rich coral colour.⁸⁷

St. Maur also included a footnote where she quoted the scientific differences between two species of trout. The “yellow trout (*Salmo fario*) and the great lake trout (*Salmo ferox*) can always be identified from charrs by the characteristic of having two complete rows of teeth in the vomer or central bone in the roof of the mouth, whilst in charrs the vomer has only a few teeth, and those in the most forward part.”⁸⁸ Like McBride, her inclusion of Latin nomenclature exemplified this chapter’s earlier discussion on the British use of the Linnean System to categorize and control nature.⁸⁹ Moreover, it also gave an air of sophistication and credibility which marked her angling experience to be a rational form of recreation. St. Maur’s experience is like many other nineteenth-century travel accounts, where women frequently demonstrated a heightened attention to the details of nature which they then conveyed back to women who could not travel themselves.⁹⁰

The pursuit of fish also led women anglers into other areas of naturalism. The explorer and passionate collector, Annie Alexander, while angling, once, “swung her

fishing pole high into the air to bring down a bat of a rare type.”⁹¹ In the same manner, Moira Harris noted that, “On her travels, Elizabeth Taylor liked to botanize and fish.”⁹² To highlight the seriousness of her preparations for her trip down the Mackenzie River in 1892, Taylor wrote:

As I was going to such a far-off region I wished to collect as many natural history specimens as possible on a summer trip. So I wrestled with the problem of carrying poison bottles for butterflies, materials for drying plants and preserving bird-skins, camera and stew-pans, hats and frying-pans, field-glasses and boots, blankets, medicines, and artist’s materials, in addition to my scanty wardrobe; and all in waterproof bags or gunny sacks, which were easier to transport than boxes or trunks.⁹³

During her trip on the Nipigon River in 1888, Taylor also made detailed observations on the birds and flora that she encountered. She was particularly delighted to have made “a list of thirty-eight” birds after being told by a gentleman at Red Rock House that she would not find “more than a dozen kinds of birds.”⁹⁴ Indeed, Taylor made it a point to advise other travelers to take an interest in bird watching so that at the very least, they could forget the “onslaughts of flies and mosquitoes.”⁹⁵ Moreover, as with Susan St. Maur, Taylor was adept at classifying what she encountered through use of the Linnean System.⁹⁶ As a testament to her skill as a naturalist, Taylor discovered and recorded an unknown herb and moth on her Mackenzie River trip, which were later named by the scientific community, *Lychnis Tayloriae* and *Psuedosiona Taylora*, in recognition of her achievement.⁹⁷ Thus, these experiences in nature could not have been realized without women’s participation in the sport of angling.

Angling was also a compliment to Victorian women’s use of sketching and photography to catalogue the natural world. Upon visiting a Restigouche, New

Brunswick, lease holder's fishing house in 1888, an anonymous male angler was impressed with the skill in photography and angling that was demonstrated by the lease holder's daughters. After being invited outside to see an exceptionally large salmon which one of the daughters had caught, he commented, "It seemed to me, as we went on our way, that there could hardly be a more wholesome and pleasant summer-life for well-bred young women than this, or two amusements more innocent and sensible than photography and fly-fishing."⁹⁸ Likewise, in an article on for *Outing* in 1885, Edmund Collins noted that Lady Lorne, "found her greatest pleasure with her pencil or fishing-rod in the wilderness of the Restigouche, or by the rushing waters of the Cascapedia... The princess was passionately fond of fishing and sketching."⁹⁹ Helen Church expressed similar sentiments when she stated, "Meg and I had come here for a quiet vacation of fishing and sketching," as she recalled the purposes for her trip to the Michigan wilderness with a friend in 1895.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, Emily Thackvay, a member of the 'Sketch Club,' "a party of four ladies with artistic proclivities and slightly Bohemian tastes," ventured into the Adirondacks for six weeks, where they "painted, sketched, fished and climbed."¹⁰¹ That fishing and the visual representation of nature had become embedded into North American society as respectable activities for women long before the end of the nineteenth century, may also be seen from their inclusion in works of fiction. In *Bluebell* (1875), a Canadian novel by Mrs. George Croft Huddleston, fishing and sketching were among the activities which upper-class women participated in during their summer excursions on the St. Lawrence.¹⁰²

American society's acceptance of women depicting nature through art and photography in the nineteenth century, gave rise to numerous artists and photographers

who enjoyed public credibility for their work.¹⁰³ Many of these women constructed their own interpretations of nature where, “On the one hand, nature might be wild and uncontrollable, threatening and ‘male’ in its ferocity. Or, it could appear tractable and in balance with its surroundings, totally ‘female’ in its beauty and lushness.”¹⁰⁴ Angling, because of its heterogeneous tradition and its historical perception of being communal with nature, offered women the ideal opportunity to immerse themselves into the landscape and take notice of the environment that surrounded them.¹⁰⁵ Moreover, like angling, activities such as photography and sketching were viewed as being within the domestic sphere, which made the two activities mutually compatible.¹⁰⁶ When combined with the pursuit of naturalism or conservation, the visual representation of nature could also enhance a woman’s voice. For example, Elizabeth Taylor frequently made sketches of nature on her travels and then used the illustrations to accompany her written accounts in magazines. Moreover, as Glenda Riley observes, “The proud woman who posed for a photograph holding a string of fish might be the one to urge her club colleagues to consider a conservation project or to lobby for the establishment of a national park.”¹⁰⁷ Thus, angling allowed Victorian women to not only have respectable access to nature, but was a gateway through which women could both shape and be shaped through their experiences within nature. That angling provided an existing foundation and framework through which this could happen also meant that Victorian women did not have to expend their energies in the creation of a new means of access but rather, could focus on constructing their own interpretations and images of nature.

While angling facilitated and complimented Victorian women’s encounters with the natural world, it also allowed access to a highly romanticized aboriginal culture through

the employment of native fishing guides. These guides, who were viewed by the Victorians as being a part of nature itself, provided anglers with “a carefully managed exposure to the mysteries and romance of the wilderness, and a chance to ponder, at close hand, the differences between their own race and the one they regarded as distinctly other.”¹⁰⁸ The dominant perception that civilization and progress would soon alter both the landscape and native culture heightened the desire of anglers to encounter a primitive way of life. Moreover, anglers understood that once their canoe entered the wilderness, they had to place their “trust in the guides to provide food, lodging, transportation, and a pleasant and safe vacation.”¹⁰⁹

Attitudes towards native guides by female anglers varied according to experience, expectation, and race. Fisherwomen would often comment on either the intelligence or ‘civility’ of their guides based on their ability to facilitate the desired adventure or because of the purity of the guide’s blood lines. When ‘Eergthora’ recalled her angling experience on the Nipigon River (see Figure 7) she described her chief guide, John Watt, as “a Scotch half-breed with a sturdy name and a quaint accent.”¹¹⁰ She also presented a very romantic image of the physical attributes of a Métis guide named, Guilbert, as she observed him loading the canoe after a portage. What surprised her the most however, was the “comfortable home and trim garden,” that belonged to the “merry” and “handsome” Métis guide, Joe Bouchard.¹¹¹ Clearly, while ‘Eergthora’ and her angling party wanted a primitive wilderness adventure, it was of comfort to have a guide who shared some of their own civility and race.¹¹²

Contrastingly, when expectations were not met, women anglers displayed their displeasure. During a two week “pleasure trip” to Lake St. John, Quebec, in 1872,

Canadian tourists, Mrs. Davenport and her husband, apparently were misled into believing that they would be traveling on a good road. When it became obvious that the

Figure 7

“On the Nepigon”

Source: Eergthora. "A Woman's Outing on the Nepigon." *Outing* September 1897, 582.



Printed for OUTING by Jas. L. Weston.

ON THE NEPIGON.

‘Eergthora’ and her native guide in the Canadian wilderness.

road was still under construction and that they and their native guides would have to make their way upriver through the bush, a miserable experience followed. By the sixth day of their fourteen day journey, Mrs. Davenport began to become frustrated with her

guides, who she felt were leading them in the wrong direction and who were delaying their progress on purpose.¹¹³ Convinced they were lost, Davenport wrote, “The Indians seemed quite at a loss which way to go, till finally, Malcolm and I took the lead, trusting entirely to our compass, and being careful to keep due west.”¹¹⁴ When this incident was coupled with her charge that, “as usual, the Indians had left some baggage on the road,” Davenport became “very angry” at what she understood to be constant delays in progress.¹¹⁵ Moreover, by the eleventh day, with the party short on food and supplies, they came across a lake teeming with fish, but because the guides had left the Davenport’s fishing tackle and flies behind, they could not catch any fish to relieve their hunger.¹¹⁶

Likewise, Susan St. Maur used a paternalistic tone at times to describe her native British Columbian guides and their failure to make camp one evening. After noting that her guides failed to appreciate the amusement of playing a fish, St. Maur wrote, “Our Indians are very sulky, and we had to do everything for ourselves. They are often difficult to deal with, taking offence for no apparent reason; the only thing to be done was to leave them alone to recover their tempers.”¹¹⁷ Thus, experiences such as the Davenport’s and St.Maur’s demonstrate that female anglers in the wilderness believed that like their male counterparts, “they had a right to the services of guides, and that the Indians had a duty to oblige them,”¹¹⁸ which was a form of colonization that paralleled Lady Dufferin’s possession of rivers in Ontario and New Brunswick as described earlier in this chapter.

Participation in angling excursions also allowed women the opportunity to engage in aboriginal traditions and culture that they may otherwise not have had. Being able to

witness native life away from urban centres reinforced the belief for some women, that aboriginal cultures were disappearing. Susan St. Maur felt empathy at times for the aboriginal groups who were losing their hunting grounds while other women, such as Katherine White, expressed dismay that the natives whom they encountered still preferred to use wigwams rather than log cabins. For White, the sight of “forlorn, dirty and half-dressed” inhabitants of a native community and their “too well filled,” graveyard removed any romantic feelings that she once held for aboriginal peoples.¹¹⁹

Being able to participate in traditional native fishing practices also offered women the opportunity to experience a more primitive way of life with respectability. While many anglers blamed native fishing practices for depleting fish stocks and for being unsporting, when given the chance, many of these same anglers delighted in being able to fish so primitively. Susannah Moodie wrote of her first attempt at spear fishing by torch light that, “I was a novice in the art of spearing, but nevertheless succeeded in capturing several fine maskalongy and bass.”¹²⁰ Moreover, for pioneer settlers such as Moodie, traditional ways of fishing also served to secure large quantities of fish which allowed for the provision of food for her family.

Occasionally, a fisherwoman would form a unique bond with a guide whereby both could share in a mutually beneficial and potentially romantic outcome. Reminiscing about her Nipigon guide, Joseph Esquimaux, Elizabeth Taylor commented that, “My other friends have now only some remaining fragments of my heart, the rest is all Joseph’s...”¹²¹ This bond between guide and angler was formed after Joseph helped Taylor land her first trout on a fly rod, upon which Joseph cast “an exulting look over the other guides.”¹²² Regarding this mutual relationship, Mark Chochla, observes, “Joseph

needed the approval and respect of his fellow guides and Elizabeth needed to challenge herself and to outdo the male anglers on the river.”¹²³

Later, on losing her first large trout on the Nipigon, Elizabeth Taylor remarked, “I shall never forget the reproachful look that Joseph turned upon me as the fly floated free on the water. It was not a time for words. Indeed, I felt that I was under a cloud until I had run the Victoria Rapids, below those on the fishing-ground.”¹²⁴ After successfully running the rapids with Joseph, Taylor saw him smile and felt that she was “forgiven for losing the big fish.”¹²⁵ When they returned from their journey, Elizabeth wanted to go again and Joseph offered to take her for free, “but propriety made that impossible.”¹²⁶ In a gesture that was perhaps romantically inspired, Joseph then asked Elizabeth for her photograph so that he could keep it “for memory sake.”¹²⁷ Indeed, it is plausible to assume from this evidence that there was an attraction between Taylor and Joseph that went beyond the usual relationship between angler and guide. A correspondent for the *Globe* in 1888, who wrote of his angling journey on the Nipigon noted that the recently married, Antoine Bouchard, another guide on the Nipigon, “made excursions of pure friendship from camp to visit the young Indian ladies at certain points,” which would indicate that angling guides did find time for encounters with the opposite sex.¹²⁸ ‘Eergthora’ also noted that her female companion’s blue eyes, “had a great charm” over their Nipigon guides in the moments when the women and guides were alone together.¹²⁹ That Joseph may have worked with Elizabeth’s romantic images of a guide to his advantage (and vice versa) is not entirely beyond the realm of reason.

Women anglers were also concerned about the conservation of nature and the protection of their sport from over-fishing and the environmental destruction caused by

industrial progress. Fisherwoman, Helen Church, commented on the destruction of virgin forests as she and her companion traveled by a logging branch railroad to their Michigan vacation camp, while Mary Shipman Andrews lamented that, “a railroad has come between me and my quiet little Adirondack lake. It is lost to me forever.”¹³⁰ Indeed, during the latter-half of the nineteenth century, individual anglers and fishing clubs bought or leased millions of acres of land to protect not only what they perceived to be declining fish stocks but also to “protect and preserve waters for themselves.”¹³¹

That the organized participation of women in these clubs was limited has been noted by historian, Carl-Petter Sjøvold, who stated that, “Although wives sometimes accompanied their husbands on trips to the club’s preserve... they usually did so as ‘guests’ of the club, not as members.”¹³² However, this did not mean that women anglers who were concerned about the environment did not have the ability to formally express themselves (see Figure 8). In 1893, Cornelia ‘Fly Rod’ Crosby began to promote ‘catch and release’ fishing in the Rangeley’s as she became concerned about a law which allowed anglers to take home up to fifty pounds of trout.¹³³ The following year, Crosby attended the Maine Sportsmen’s Fish and Game Association’s meeting of the committee on legislation. As Julia Hunter and Earl Shuttleworth Jr., record, “Although she was not an official member of the committee, Fly Rod, the fish and game commissioners, and about half a dozen other interested men participated in an eight-hour work session that

Figure 8

“A Fair Angler” by Hy S. Watson.

Source: Courtesy of www.olderels.com/lady_prints.htm.



This painting by Hy S. Watson was included in the State of New York Forest, Fish and Game Commission's Annual Report for 1907. By the end of the nineteenth century, women anglers such as 'Fly Rod' Crosby had found a voice within the conservation movement.

produced a set of recommendations for legislation they felt would benefit 'the fish and game interests of Maine.'¹³⁴ The following April at least two of their recommendations

had been adopted by the State of Maine, clearly indicating Fly Rod's success in political advocacy more than two decades before women in Maine gained the right to vote.¹³⁵

The conflict between what anglers perceived to be the immoral and illegal harvesting of fish by local residents who lived along private rivers and lakes was also a constant concern. Urban anglers in the United States who, "looked upon the countryside with feelings of romance and nostalgia as the forces of industrialization transformed their cities and towns," seemed to lose these sentiments when they came into contact with rural residents whom they saw, "as a group of people who lacked all the virtues celebrated by the apostles of middle-class modernity."¹³⁶ The perceived inability by potfishers and poachers to respect nature in the same way as that of anglers, was seen to stem from a moral and intellectual flaw that ultimately led to social disorder and lawlessness.¹³⁷ Therefore fish wardens were hired by anglers and angling clubs to enforce laws and to keep members of the public from trespassing on private waters.

Not all fisherwomen held the view that rural residents were poachers. In the conclusion to an editorial series for *Forest and Stream*, entitled, "Six Years Under Maine Game Laws," Fannie Pearson Hardy forcefully argued for "reform in the equitable enforcement of the game laws," but cautioned however that, "The fate of the game in this State depends very largely on the good will of the rural classes. Sportsmen may be able, as has been boasted, to pass any reasonable laws here, but the veto power lies with the people, and unacceptable game laws will be destructive to the game. This is something worth remembering."¹³⁸

Other women, such as the angler interviewed by the *New York Times* in 1898, credited country people for catching more fish than the urban angler because of the extra time that

they had to observe the insect life which trout fed on, not because they used snares or other devices.¹³⁹ However, the anonymous fisherwoman did note that the extra time rural people did enjoy came because they were “lazy,” and could focus on fishing and fly tying, morning, noon and night. Thus, even though she identified that urban anglers were out-fished by rural residents using the same angling methods, she still asserted that there was a moral and class divide between hard working middle class urbanites and slothful country folk.

Occasionally, the tension between visiting anglers and the local subsistence fishers became violent and fisherwomen could find themselves caught in the middle. As Bill Parenteau explains, in 1888, the provincial government of New Brunswick, “granted an exclusive lease” of a large section of the Tobique River to the Tobique Salmon Club, who then proceeded to threaten local residents with prosecution if they were found fishing illegally.¹⁴⁰ The result of this action created hostility among local subsistence fishers who, according to one local fisheries officer, “brought out spearing implements that had not been used for years.”¹⁴¹

When the Howe family of Brookline, Massachusetts leased a stretch of land on the same river later that year, the existing tensions between visiting anglers and local residents reached a boiling point. During an August fishing excursion, the Howe’s chased off of their lease, two local residents who they had caught spearing salmon by torchlight. The next morning, the two poachers, Frank Trafton and Henry Phillipe, returned to the Howe’s angling camp and fired their guns to scare the party away. This was the same tactic which the Howe’s had used to drive them off the river the night before. Unfortunately, one of the bullets struck Susan Howe in the head and she died in

front of her family. The ensuing trial became a flashpoint for members of rural society who felt that private angling leases such as the Howe's were an unfair class legislation which hindered their right to agrarian life.¹⁴²

The latter-half of the nineteenth century saw the presence of more female anglers on the streams and rivers of North America as evidenced from the attention fisherwomen received in newspapers, sporting magazines, from tackle manufacturers, and through photographs and pictures. The increased amount of leisure time that was afforded to the middle classes combined with the belief that nature offered both a stimulus for the mind and a rest cure for the body, justified many women's participation in the sport. Women could angle alongside of their husbands and other male companions or they could angle alone. That it was seen to be both an extension of a woman's domestic sphere as well as an independent use of her mind and body, made angling a borderless sport that appealed to all segments of middle and upper class society. Moreover, angling complimented other respectable nature based activities for Victorian women and provided a canopy of camouflage under which they could participate in botany, sketching, entomology, photography and ornithology. Through participation in angling excursions, women tourists were also exposed to aboriginal peoples and culture in ways that may otherwise have been limited and for some women, angling also offered the opportunity to lay claim to nature in such a way as to either possess it, as Lady Dufferin so forcefully did in 1874, or to preserve it, as Fly Rod Crosby successfully achieved in 1894 and 1895. However, as the following chapter will explain, angling offered more to nineteenth-century women than access to nature. It was also a vehicle through which women could obtain and

express authority, autonomy and agency in manner which did not sacrifice their respectability.

CHAPTER THREE

“THERE IS NO REASON WHY A LADY SHOULD NOT IN EVERY RESPECT
RIVAL A GENTLEMAN IN THE GENTLE ART.”

ANGLING AND A WOMAN’S MEANS TO AUTHORITY,
AUTONOMY AND AGENCY

While *Forest and Stream*’s founder and editor, Charles Hallock, was not overtly in support of New Woman feminism, he, along with his successor, George Bird Grinnell, did provide Victorian women with the opportunity to have a public voice through the pages of his magazine. In a letter to the “Women’s Column” in 1880, a Michigan sportswomen thanked Hallock for the opportunity to write for his magazine and “for paving the way, so that editors of other papers may follow after.”¹ Indeed, during the latter half of the nineteenth century, sporting magazines such as *Forest and Stream* and *Outing* provided women with a certain level of authority, which they subsequently used to express their opinions, demonstrate their angling skills, share their scientific research and market their fishing related businesses. Yet, the autonomy and authority which these magazines offered to women were as much a reflection of what Victorian women had already discovered through angling as they were a catalyst. This chapter will explore the areas in which women grasped the opportunity to obtain prominence within the public sphere through their expertise and knowledge of angling. Furthermore, it will also discuss how angling continued to develop a canopy of camouflage under which a growing feminist movement could articulate – at times boldly – the agency of the New Woman through deliberate piscatorial competition with men.

In the inaugural issue of *Forest and Stream* in 1873, Charles Hallock stated that, “Ladies are especially invited to use our columns, which will be prepared with careful

reference to their personal perusal and instruction.”² Though Hallock’s motives behind the inclusion of women in his magazine were based on reforming the public image and respectability of field sports such as hunting, the Michigan sportswoman who thanked Hallock for providing women with the opportunity to have their own column in *Forest and Stream* recognized something of much greater significance. In her letter to the “Women’s Column,” she openly challenged a male reader who had questioned the authorship of the first article ever printed in the column because it “was too well written,” to have come from a woman.³ By stating that, “a woman can not only write a spicy article for a sportsman’s journal, but is capable of doing any work that requires brain power equally as well as a man,” she established both an argument for the capabilities of women as well as proof that male sportsmen were not only reading what women were writing, but that they also felt compelled to respond to it.⁴ Furthermore, this exchange also illustrates how angling, and sporting magazines in particular, offered women a space where they could exercise a level of influence and where some women could act as agents by taking this opportunity to address the crux of major societal issues such as that of equal intelligence.

Regarding the literary relationship between men, women and the sport of hunting, Andrea Smalley has observed that the sporting world of the nineteenth century was surprisingly heterogeneous, where “Male writers and editors not only affirmed female hunting competence but also asserted that women’s participation would reform hunting, making it a modern, respectable recreation.”⁵ While angling had developed into a respectable female pastime centuries beforehand, it too, benefited from the impetus given to the inclusion of women in sporting magazines. Fisherwomen now had a vehicle

through which they could publicly share their experiences and knowledge of the sport to not only a new generation of women, but also to a wider circulation of supportive and appreciative men. As one male sportsman remarked about the abilities of his wife, “she has caught as many fish and killed nearly as much game as her lord and master, and many a night we should have gone to bed hungry but for her ‘luck with the fish.’”⁶

Likewise, and in a more persuasive manner, a father exhorted his fellow sportsmen to invite their daughters to participate in outdoor recreations because “nature is ready to give impartially to boy and girl alike.”⁷ Even more important to the father, a girl would not be deemed “unmaidenly” by her friends or “unwomanly” to a male companion if she were to “conquer a game fish” or if she were to “catch the largest and finest fish.”⁸ Instead he argued, “without losing any of her gentle attributes,” a girl could fish and have her exploits “cherished tenderly and often recounted in words of all praise,” among her friends and family.⁹ In other words, teaching one’s daughter to fish would not jeopardize her capacity to attract a husband.

A fisherwoman who gained notable attention from Charles Hallock and the constituency of *Forest and Stream* was Sara Jane McBride. As has been previously stated, McBride’s expertise in entomology and fly tying allowed her to obtain a level of public authority within the heterogeneous angling community which she later used to her advantage in the marketing of her own fly tying and tackle business. McBride’s experience then, is a good example of how nineteenth-century sporting magazines could give voice and authority to women in a way that was mutually beneficial. For Hallock and other editors, a woman who was already skilled in the most complex details of fly fishing, such as entomology and fly tying, gave credibility toward their efforts to produce

a product and an image that would, “pander to no depraved tastes, nor pervert the legitimate sports of land and water to those base uses which always tend to make them unpopular with the virtuous and good.”¹⁰

Moreover, Hallock and other editors also understood the value of a dollar, and the inclusion of women as correspondents to sporting magazines also opened up a larger market for not only the publishers, but also to the various manufacturers and entrepreneurs who advertised within the magazines. It must have delighted Hallock to hear from women such as ‘Paulina,’ who wrote, “I peruse the *Forest and Stream* each week with interest, and think the editor deserves all the praise we can give him, in publishing a man’s paper of so much interest to women and children.”¹¹ In a similar manner, ‘Copetka,’ from New Westminster, British Columbia, wrote Hallock to thank him for providing a source of knowledge and education for her family:

Permit me to congratulate you for enlisting sportsmen’s wives in your large staff of contributors. Your paper is a very welcome one to our household, and my husband thoroughly enjoys and appreciates it. Many of the articles in it he reads to me, and many pleasant evenings are spent in discussing various topics, a knowledge of which is only gained through your columns.... We have only one child, a little girl, who bids fair to follow in her father’s footsteps – her principal talk being about shooting bears, deer and other wild animals, and if my husband carries out a tithe of his projects concerning her, I expect her to turn out a second edition of Mayne Reid’s ‘Wild Huntress.’¹²

Indeed, the circulation of *Forest and Stream* and *Outing* grew throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century, with *Outing* reaching a circulation of 88,148 North American homes, making it one of the most popular outdoor magazines among Victorian youth.¹³ Entrepreneurs, eager to capitalize on a new market, increasingly advertised for family fishing and hunting excursions, and in 1880, advertisements for beauty products

began to appear in the pages of *Forest and Stream*, followed in 1881 by fishing equipment that was specifically designed for boys and girls.¹⁴ For example, J.F. Marsters sold a “Three piece ash rod and reel” set that was designed for boys and girls, while the Horton Mfg Co., of Bristol Connecticut, frequently used images of fisherwomen to market their line of ‘Bristol Steel Rods.’¹⁵ In an 1893 Bristol Rod advertisement from *Forest & Stream*, a fisherwoman was shown playing a large fish while a gentleman prepared to help her land it with a net.¹⁶ Moreover, this direct and deliberate marketing campaign toward women was also combined with a growth in the mass production of fishing equipment that was described in the previous chapter. Undoubtedly, this would have made angling more accessible to middle and upper-class urban women who did not have previous fishing experience and who could not tie their own flies, make their own lines, or build their own rods. Clearly then, the potential to create a new generation of respectable sportsmen and sportswomen who would then patronize the sporting goods industry was an important reason to encourage the presence of women within the pages of sporting magazines. If mothers and fathers were giving approval to *Forest and Stream* as both an educational tool for their families and as an influence on their daughter’s development, then Hallock and the other editors were succeeding in their goal to change societal views of respectability and, in the process, were opening up new consumer markets.

It may also be speculated that the inclusion of women anglers such as McBride and Martha Ewing, who wrote angling poetry for early editions of *Forest and Stream*, provided valuable assistance in gaining respectability for hunting. Since respectable and ladylike women fished and wrote of their experiences, then it was not out of the question

for women to cross over and try hunting, especially when they were away from the expectations of urban society and out in the obscurity of the wilderness. As one woman wrote to *Forest and Stream*, “I want to go hunting with my husband. I get along very nicely fishing, but on the hunting end of it I seem so terribly inefficient.”¹⁷ Similarly, the father who wrote to encourage sportsmen to take their daughters into the field implied that while it was common for girls to accompany their fathers on fishing excursions and that “girls everywhere are learning the use of the rod,” more persuasion was needed to include them in hunting and shooting.¹⁸ He wrote, “If in rare instances, she should so desire, why not teach her the use of the gun. . . though she may have no liking for the gun, still, invite the girl, when going afield.”¹⁹

A unique strategy to overcome this type of aversion to guns and hunting was promoted by one sportsman whose story was told to *Forest and Stream* in 1895 by a fellow reader. It was explained that the sportsman deliberately and deceptively used angling as a gateway to foster his wife’s interest in hunting. Knowing his wife thought hunting was barbaric, he began to teach his wife to fish through “easy stages” until she became “proficient with the rod, and could climb brush fences and wade through bogs without any assistance. From that time on his deep laid scheme worked beautifully, and the logical relation of the gun to the rod was easily established.”²⁰ Though imaginative, this attempt to portray women as passive and naïve participants in fishing and hunting was not normative or realistic. Some men may have been able to manipulate their wives into an initial participation of fishing and hunting, but without further enthusiasm and engagement of the sport by the woman herself, it is doubtful that there would have been a progression to such independent sub-activities as wading through bogs or climbing

fences. That this transition from novice to expert required a woman's full ownership of the sport is evident from fisherwomen such as Mrs. F. Cauthorn who wrote to *Forest and Stream* in 1892 in an effort to persuade more men to invite their wives and sisters to try fishing. At the end of her letter entitled, "Feminine Success in Troutng," she argued:

We are glad to know that there are some sportsman who consider their wives or sisters as real chums on a troutng excursion, instead of leaving them at home wishing 'that they were men' that they, too, might enjoy an outing and leave their perplexing cares at home on a shelf. A woman will soon learn to love the ripple or roar of a trout stream and the song of the reel as much as her husband or big brother, and look forward expectantly to a 'day off' in the mountains enticing the wary trout.²¹

Therefore, though some women may have been introduced to the sport by a husband, brother or father, they could still establish their own independent identity as an angler. However, what the example of the sportsman's deceptive strategy does suggest is that it was in the best interest of both hunters and sporting magazine's to piggyback on the respectability of angling so as to encourage the public to see the two sports as one and the same.

While the editor's reasons for giving women voice and authority within the pages of sporting magazines are clear, what benefit did it offer to the women themselves? For Sara Jane McBride, it further served to establish her reputation as an authority on entomology and fly tying which she then used to promote the tackle business that she had inherited from her father, John McBride. Like the Michigan sportswoman who used *Forest and Stream* to argue that women's intelligence was equal to men's, McBride also used the same sporting magazine to not only demonstrate the intelligence of a woman, but also to market her business. On April 6th, 1876, shortly after the publication of her

first two articles on “The Metaphysics of Fly Fishing,” McBride ran the following advertisement in *Forest and Stream*:

MCBRIDE FLIES. Having been for the past twelve years associated with my father, John McBride, in the manufacture of fishing tackle, I feel competent to continue the business and supply the custom with the same quality as heretofore. Parties supplied with casting lines and artificial flies for Pennsylvania trout streams, Adirondacks, the Maine Woods, Lake Superior, Thousand Islands, Canadian, and other waters. Anglers not acquainted with the nomenclature of these flies by mentioning the locality where they intend to fish, will have the varieties best suited to these waters sent to them. Flies copied from any natural insect of pattern desired. Sara J. McBride (Successor to John McBride) Mumford, Monroe County, N.Y.²²

It is evident that McBride considered herself to be an extremely competent angler and fly tier who not only knew the most popular angling waters of the day, but also the particularities of the insect life present therein. She was also confident in her ability to successfully duplicate any insect in the form of an artificial fly that could be given to her by a customer. Indeed, she was so self-assured, that by 1878, McBride’s advertisements included mention of her “Medal, with Special Diploma, Decreed at International Exhibition, 1876,” which she had earned in the fly tying category (see Figure 9).²³ When such advertisements ran on the same page against formidable competitors as Charles F. Orvis and Thaddeus Norris, McBride was claiming herself to be an independent and distinguished equal, both in the business world and on the stream.

Yet, an important question remains. Was McBride considered to be an oddity by the angling community? Was she a woman angler who, despite possessing obvious skill, was promoted by the sporting fraternity as more than what she was *because* she was a woman? This is possible since her presence within *Forest and Stream* would have

Figure 9

Two advertisements for Sara Jane McBride's tackle business that appeared in *Forest and Stream* in 1878 and 1879.

Sources: *Forest and Stream*, February 14th 1878, 82 and *Forest and Stream*, May 29th 1879, 340.

ESTABLISHED 1845.

Sara J. McBride,
(Formerly of Mumford, N. Y.),
889 Broadway, N. Y.; Redditch, England,
Manufacturer and Importer of

Fishing Tackle.

FLIES selected for the different seasons and for any given stream or locality.

TAPERED CASTING LINES for trout and salmon. Also, the celebrated Salmon Lines without knots, Tapered and Reel Lines of horse hair and English waterproof braided silk.

REEL LINES of every style and quality.

RODS and REELS of the best manufacture.

HOOKS, Gut, Colored Mohair, Feathers of all kinds, Tying Silk, Tinsel and all material necessary for making flies, supplied to amateurs.

BAITS for trolling, artificial Minnows and spoons. The best BAITS of the PERIOD for pickerel, perch, bass, sea trout and salmon.

Medal, with Special Diploma, Decreed at International Exhibition, 1876.

My motto is, THE BEST GOODS AT THE LOWEST FIGURES,



FISHING TACKLE.

Send for descriptive catalogue containing names of flies, prices, etc.

SARA J. McBRIDE, Mumford, Monroe Co., N. Y.

greatly assisted Hallock's agenda of respectability. However, her gender is not a topic of comment by Hallock in either of his introductions to her, "Metaphysics of Fly Fishing," or even in an 1878 article which discussed her business and its change of location from Mumford to New York City. In regard to her theses, mention is simply made that, "This lesson of entomology is imparted in a very lucid and delightful way by Miss Sara J. McBride, of Mumford, N.Y., in the following passages. It is the foundation of all knowledge that pertains to fly-fishing, and no one can become a scientific angler who builds on any other."²⁴ Moreover, in examining the article on her move from Mumford to New York City, it would appear that Hallock and other male anglers considered McBride to be a respected innovator and professional who was able to supply and assist amateur fly makers:

Miss McBride's skill in fly tying has long been known to the angling fraternity. For neatness, finish and skill, the flies made by Miss McBride have but few equals. Having removed from Mumford to New York City, this lady has now opened an establishment at 889 Broadway, where flies adapted to all seasons or localities may be found. Amateurs desirous of making their own flies can be supplied with all the materials necessary. The general fishing public can find a full selection of rods, reels, lines, with all the newest trolling baits. In her present locality it is to be trusted that Miss McBride will not only retain her former extensive patronage, but will be able to secure a large portion of new business.²⁵

Thus, it may be best to argue that McBride and Hallock needed each other. That McBride was a woman could only have helped Hallock in his desire to have *Forest and Stream* be read "with propriety in the home circle."²⁶ That Hallock provided McBride with a public forum to voice her scientific theses at a time when the scientific community eschewed the contributions of women, bestowed on her a level of authority and respect

within the angling community. For according to Hallock, if one wanted to become a “scientific angler,” then he or she must read McBride’s entomological theses. Moreover, these theses went beyond detached scientific knowledge. With Hallock’s encouragement and blessing, the theses were presented to male and female anglers as the foundational building blocks on which all fly fishing knowledge is based. Therefore, McBride became an authoritative instructor of men and women through the pages of *Forest and Stream* by imparting to the public her knowledge and skill of angling.

It is unfortunate that the fate of Sara Jane McBride is unknown. As Kenneth Cameron observed, in 1880 or 1881:

She simply vanished. Her advertisements stopped appearing. She was dropped by her church and she left no record in Mumford... In June of 1879, *Forest and Stream* reported that she was about to ‘close up her business.’ In August she advertised that she had ‘removed to Caledonia, New York,’ the next town to Mumford; and the last we hear from her is a cheerful and chatty letter to *Forest and Stream* dated 15 December 1879, describing the Allcock tackle factory. And that is that.²⁷

Her reasons for disappearing from the landscape of the angling world remain the subject of speculation. It is quite possible that she lacked the business savvy to compete successfully in the volatile world of tackle manufacturing. It is also possible that she experienced a change of direction or setback in her personal life. It may even be possible that her gender as a female proprietor played a role in the demise of her business, though the literary evidence does not suggest this.²⁸ Whatever her fate, Sara Jane McBride’s public presence within the Victorian sporting community fits within the thesis of this study which has argued that angling was a complex cultural phenomenon

that had a long established female tradition which provided Victorian women with a pre-existing and respectable pastime through which they could find authority and autonomy.

Another area of influence and independence that angling provided to Victorian women was through the public role of promoter and marketer. By 1895, Cornelia ‘Fly Rod’ Crosby (see Figure 10) had become nationally known in the United States as “an authority on the outdoors and its recreational activities.”²⁹ Her articles in various sporting magazines and newspapers coupled with her own skill as an angler caused one journalist to remark that, “She is as patient in whipping a stream in the Maine woods as any man, and when she gets a strike, is far more expert than most men who pride themselves on the dainty way in which they can kill their game.”³⁰ Likewise, another journalist noted, “She is an expert and ardent sportswoman, who is said to have the remarkable record of fifty-two trout in fifty-four minutes. She is quite clever with the pen as with the rod, and her articles are widely read.”³¹

With her reputation as an expert angler and journalist well established, Crosby came up with the idea to create an exhibit which would promote the State of Maine at the first ever Sportsmen’s Exposition which was to be held at Madison Square Gardens in New York City in the spring of 1895.³² Though the State could not provide any funding, Crosby knew that the Maine Central Railroad had the necessary money and influence. Therefore, “with characteristic frankness and abruptness,” as well as the authority derived from her reputation, Crosby approached the president of Maine Central, Payson Tucker, with a shrewd plan, stating that, “if you want to give the Maine Central Railroad some advertising of permanent value, I know how you can do it.”³³ Charmed by Crosby’s manner and excited about the potential of reaching thousands of new customers in New

Figure 10

‘Fly Rod’ Crosby

Source: Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife website:
<http://www.maine.gov/ifw/licreg/guide.htm>.



This picture appeared in the March 14th, 1897 edition of *New York Times* as part of a promotional article for the third annual Sportsmen's Exposition. The caption under the picture stated, "Miss Cornelia T. Crosby, 'Fly Rod,' In Charge of the State of Maine Exhibit."³⁴

York, Tucker declared to Crosby that, “you are a great young woman. . . you will be the Maine representative in full charge [of the exhibit].”³⁵

Thus, in May of 1895, Crosby’s Maine Exhibit, which featured a full-scale log cabin, displays of taxidermy, and the chance for visitors to interact with authentic Maine guides and even Crosby herself, appeared at the Sportsmen’s Exposition in New York City.³⁶

Describing the success of the display, a *New York Times* reporter stated that, “Miss Crosby won for herself a great deal of well-merited praise by representing the State of Maine at the Sportsmen’s Exhibition in 1895. She was at home to many friends in a typical backwoods log cabin, such as are occupied by the hunting guides of the Maine forests and the city sportsmen who visit the forests in search of big game.”³⁷ Crosby herself commented on the success of both the Show and her display, remarking that, “Six to eight thousand attendance in the afternoon. . . . I never saw such a crowd in my life.

You could not get near the Maine Central log cabin... We gave out 3,000 papers yesterday... It has, I believe, been truthfully said: ‘The log cabin will do more to advertise the hunting and fishing of Rangeley and Dead River than anything else ever before done and greatly increase the summer travel to Maine.’”³⁸ By the end of the Show, over 40,000 people had attended, with the largest day’s attendance being upwards of 15,000.³⁹ For it all, Crosby was personally credited for the record number of five thousand new tourists who visited the State of Maine throughout the summer of 1895.⁴⁰

The next year, Crosby was again in charge of the exhibit at the Sportsmen’s Exposition and was determined to produce an even bigger and better display.⁴¹ In a promotional article for the upcoming 1896 Maine exhibit, the *New York Times* wrote:

From the State of Maine there is to come to the exposition one of the most marvelous exhibits that was ever attempted in a show of this character. So effective was the display made by the people of the State a year ago in attracting sportsmen to the woods of Maine, that those interested in catering to the sporting visitors have combined to pay the expenses of a most complete exhibit, in the charge of Miss Cornelia T. Crosby, who is known to readers of sporting literature by her nom de plume of "Fly Rod." Miss Crosby is adept in the use of the rod and the reel, as well as an authority on the trout and salmon.

In order to aid her exhibit, the Government, for the first time in the history of the Fish Commission, has placed at her disposal one of its fish cars, so that she might bring here a number of salmon and trout for exhibition. These have arrived safely and will be shown alive in the five glass tanks that have been provided.⁴²

While providing the thousands of visitors with the opportunity to view live Rangeley trout and salmon in an artificially recreated environment was a unique attraction, nothing equaled Crosby's own appearance in a sensational costume that shocked the New York audiences. Modeled after the famous Parisian fashions of the day, Crosby's skirt "rose a daring six inches off the floor," and was designed by the Spaulding Brother's sporting goods company which had recently opened up a ladies' department in New York City.⁴³ As a reporter from the *Washington Times* described, "The hunting costume worn by 'Fly Rod' during the exposition is probably the most expensive and elaborate ever made in this country... The material alone cost over \$100 and cannot be duplicated in this country."⁴⁴ When Crosby ascended the casting platform which overlooked the aquariums, the enormous crowd of men, women and children were spellbound.⁴⁵ When she began to demonstrate her fly casting ability, she further "awed the wide-eyed New Yorkers with her piscatorial prowess by repeatedly casting her rod over the tanks and getting strike after strike with a delicate turn of the wrist."⁴⁶ While the State of Maine had accepted Crosby on the basis of her skill, it would seem that she was acutely aware

of societal restrictions on her gender. Concerning this, Thomas Verde notes that Crosby later reflected on the spectacle by saying, “Nobody in New York had seen anything just like me before. What the men thought of me I cannot say, but I am sure the women considered me a freak.”⁴⁷

Though Crosby undoubtedly crossed the lines of propriety for some women, her showmanship and flair for the dramatic demonstrated not only a sense of marketing genius but it thrust her into the world of popular entertainment with the likes of Buffalo Bill Cody and Annie Oakley, with both of whom she would later form friendships.⁴⁸ In comparing the lives of Crosby and Oakley, Julia Hunter and Earle Shettleworth Jr. observe that, “The two women had much in common as professional athletes eighty years before professional women’s sports would even begin to be taken seriously in North America.”⁴⁹ While Crosby would go on to direct the Maine exhibit at the Sportsmen’s Exposition for two more years as well as taking the display to other sporting shows around the eastern United States, her emergence as a celebrity, like that of Oakley, was carefully balanced with an outwardly conservative view of gender. In an interview with the *New York Times* prior to Crosby’s first appearance at the 1895 Sportsmen’s Exhibition, the reporter assured the audience that Crosby had not, “adopted knickerbockers for her life in the woods,” and that though she has never worn a corset, she still dressed “in other ways in the ordinary fashion of womankind, with high boots occasionally for fishing.”⁵⁰ Indeed, Crosby’s costume for the Sportsmen’s Exposition was not her everyday apparel and was intended as a marketing gimmick, not as a political statement. Like Oakley, she was ‘on record’ as a committed anti-suffragist, although

Hunter and Shettleworth Jr. suggest that Crosby may have been aware that being pro-suffrage could have interfered with the wide public acceptance she received:

Her anti-suffrage stance, and the willingness to hand over the formal decision-making power that it implied, was an important factor in her work in masculine spheres. By not opposing men on the bigger issue of women in political power, she did not open herself up to the level of hatred and opposition that was expressed on both sides of the Atlantic toward such political radicals as Emmeline Pankhurst, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Alice Paul, or Susan B. Anthony. Fly Rod was able to maintain a position of influence, using her writing to make her views and those of her friends known, as well as working directly with and for the politically powerful male membership of the Maine Sportsmen's Fish and Game Association.⁵¹

Therefore, the public authority and voice which Crosby had gained from angling was bolstered by a level of trust which came from the perception that she was not a radical. That Payson Tucker gave her complete control of both the Maine Central's money and reputation for the initial Sportsmen's Exposition was a strong statement about Crosby's reputation within the political and business community, something which she would shrewdly use to her advantage as the only female member of the influential Maine Sportsmen's Fish and Game Association when it came to matters of conservation and law.⁵² Thus, angling provided Crosby with a platform on which she could develop a respectable and influential voice within the masculine world of politics decades before women had been granted the right to vote. Though her influence was limited to a specific area of concern, it was nonetheless a significant achievement for a nineteenth-century woman. Her contributions would later be recognized by the State of Maine's Commissioners of Inland Fisheries and Game, who in addition to honoring Crosby by granting her the first ever guiding license to be issued by the State, stated, "She has long

been an intelligent friend of the fish and game interests of the State of Maine, and has done a great and invaluable work, not only on the line of game protection, but in advertising the great fishing and hunting preserves of our State. . . . she is held in the highest esteem, not only by the Commissioners and the Association of the State, but by all true lovers of fish and game.”⁵³

Furthermore, Crosby’s influence and celebrity status as an angler provided her with the opportunity to instruct thousands of men, women and children in the art of fly fishing and the practice of game conservation through public lectures and demonstrations. Her charismatic and articulate stage presence made her a “much sought after” presenter and as one *New York Times* correspondent observed, she could entertain, “a host of sportsmen” with her stories while also spending the time to answer the “inquiries of ladies who, like her, have a fondness for fishing and hunting.”⁵⁴ This same voice, like that of Sara Jane McBride, was also heard through the pages of various sporting magazines, including *Field and Stream*, who put Crosby in charge of its “Maine Department” and also *Shooting and Fishing*, where her articles were often the only ones on angling that were published.⁵⁵

That Crosby considered herself to be an authority who could speak with confidence on behalf of her sport, and that she encouraged other women to do the same, is most evident from a paper which she submitted to the Congress of the Press Women of the World at the 1893 World’s Fair in Chicago. The title, “Woman as an Authority on Troutng,” generated a mild debate among the men who were present, as one *New York Times* reporter commented that “Izaak Walton would have turned over in his grave,” while a correspondent for *Forest and Stream* would retort, “If the male biped man should get too

‘cocky,’ the ladies, God bless them! should remind his self-satisfied highness that a woman holds the record for the largest tarpon with rod and reel, and that on two occasions last year the women beat the men, at the record, in salmon fishing with the fly in Great Britain.”⁵⁶ Therefore, though Crosby may not officially have been a suffragist, she did challenge women to exercise some autonomy by getting out-of-doors to discover “one’s true nature,”⁵⁷ which in turn, may have led other women to pursue the self-determination and self-actualization that Crosby had enjoyed.

Crosby’s respectable authority also extended over the male hunting and fishing guides who were an integral part of her Maine exhibit. Promoted to the public as “crack guides” who “will dress just as they do when on hunting and fishing trips, and at all times will be ready to tell hunting and fishing yarns,” Crosby understood the economic importance of bringing potential tourists together with the men who would be servicing their sporting needs in the wilderness.⁵⁸ Moreover, by creating a glamorized version of the Maine wilderness that included native guides as part of the landscape, Crosby played upon the fascination of the urban public with what was perceived to be a romantic and heroic way of life.

Though Crosby appeared to align herself with the guides and their interests throughout her career, even advocating on their behalf before the Maine State Legislature on the need for a licensing program for guides, both she and the public understood that part of her role as the director of the exhibit was to be a parental figure that brought civilization and restraint. For the 1896 Sportsmen’s Exposition, a *New York Times* reporter remarked that though the guides received multiple requests for private dinner engagements, “Miss Crosby is truly the guardian angel of these men, for she limits the number of

entertainments they can take part in and the hours that may be allotted to each.”⁵⁹ The article then went on to mention that some visitors were able to “secure from Miss Crosby permission to capture a guide or two for an hour or two,” which not only reinforced Crosby’s authority over the men as director of the exhibit, it also exemplified her ability to use the guides as an integral part of a carefully managed marketing strategy through which she could then carefully negotiate power and propriety. Moreover, as sought after as they were by the “hundred to a thousand persons that they have camped with or guided in the woods,” Crosby’s guides were viewed as needing the maternal skills of a woman, someone who could shield them from overindulgence and over-commitment.⁶⁰ As such, Crosby and her guide’s gender roles were interdependent.

This patronizing view was expressed by one *New York Times* reporter who commented that, though the Maine guides never get lost “in the forests or on the lakes,” they were unaccustomed to the city and “may get lost in the Ashland House, which will be the headquarters of the Maine exhibit, and it will not be surprising if they attempt to light their pipes from one of the electric lights.”⁶¹ As Patricia Jasen observes, many Victorian tourists who praised their guide’s expertise in the wilderness, often felt that he was “less capable and perhaps thoroughly dysfunctional in any environment except the wilderness.”⁶² Therefore, the desire from the urban public to hear romantic and heroic wilderness tales from the guides was a major component in their role as an attraction. When a *New York Times* reporter visited the 1896 Sportsmen’s Exposition he expected to hear such tales from an aboriginal guide named, Sebat Glossian, whom Crosby had brought in specifically for the Maine Exhibit. When neither Glossian nor the other Maine guides spoke of “anything that approached romancing,” the reporter was disappointed

and blamed their “stage fright” on the poor weather outside and not enough visits to the café.⁶³ Thus, Crosby’s role as perceived by the public was to ensure that on one hand, the guides performed by entertaining visitors with the heroic and romantic tales of fishing and hunting in the wilderness that they were “greedy for,”⁶⁴ while on the other, to make sure that the guides did not bring harm to themselves or others through their childlike exploration of an urban environment.

For their part, the guides understood that their presence at the Maine exhibit was vital for ensuring that the livelihood which they had come to rely on would continue and even expand as more tourists visited New England’s hunting and fishing camps. Crosby herself understood that in order for her exhibit to be a success, she needed both cooperation from the guides and a public perception that she was in charge. In an article in the *Phonograph* concerning the success of the Maine exhibit at the 1898 Eastern Maine State Fair, she stated, “I am well pleased with my show. The *Guides Are All Very Loyal to Me* [original emphasis in the type] and have worked hard and in perfect harmony with me in getting ready for the show.”⁶⁵ Thus, it would appear that Crosby increasingly saw herself as an entertainment promoter and the guides as an integral part of her wilderness “show.” Like any traveling performance, the loyalty of the cast was needed to ensure the success of the show and to testify to the ability of the show’s promoter to keep order and turn a profit.

For a woman who had initially taken up fly fishing as a cure for ill health, Cornelia ‘Fly Rod’ Crosby would later emerge as one of Victorian North America’s most recognizable angling authorities. Through angling she was able to achieve a level of political and popular authority that was reflected in her overlapping roles of promoter,

instructor, conservationist and entertainer. Furthermore, as a 1903 article which ran in both the *Kennebec Journal* and the *Maine Woods* noted, “She was the first champion of woman’s rights in the hunting and fishing line, and was the first to advocate that women should go into the woods with rifle and shotgun to enjoy the sport which men had preempted.”⁶⁶ As Crosby herself would later argue in 1908, “Why should not a woman do her share of fishing, hunting, tramping and mountain climbing and ask no odds of the men? . . . There is no more graceful, healthful and fascinating accomplishment for a lady than fly fishing, and there is no reason why a lady should not in every respect rival a gentleman in the gentle art.”⁶⁷ Through it all however, Crosby maintained a sense of Victorian femininity and respectability, as evidenced through her establishment of the ‘Glad Helpers’ - a Christian service organization for young women, as well as her hosting of “pink teas” for the ladies of the New England Women’s Press Club.⁶⁸ This combination of skill and savvy coupled with an ideology of gender that was selective in its how it challenged the status quo, further demonstrated how angling offered a Victorian woman opportunities for public influence and independence without the loss of respectability.

Angling’s ability to allow women to challenge and compete alongside of men in an acceptable way was also a topic of discussion among nineteenth-century sporting magazines (see Figures 11 & 12). Lucy Tomlin argued that wives who were “too absorbed in the cares of family life,” ran the risk of having an unhappy home life, and implored women to join their husbands in outdoor recreations.⁶⁹ Though Tomlin spoke with domestic harmony in mind, she had no hesitation in proclaiming that, “I had caught my large black bass, turning the scale at over 4lbs., and had earned my right to enter the

Figure 11

“Out For Sport”

Source: McFarland, A.G. "Out for Sport." *Forest and Stream*, March 2nd, 1893, 183



OUT FOR SPORT.

First Prize, Forest and Stream Amateur Photography Competition.

PHOTO BY A. G. MCFARLAND.

Victorian fisherwomen found literary voice through the pages of magazines such as *Forest and Stream*. Their presence on North American waters was also allowed them to respectably and informally, compete alongside men through angling's unisexual skill set. In this photo, a fisherwoman is shown with two male companions.

Figure 12

“On A California Trout Stream”

Source: McFarland, A.G. "On a California Trout Stream." *Forest and Stream*, December 30th, 1893, 561.



ON A CALIFORNIA TROUT STREAM.

Amateur photo by A. G. McFarland.

Probably the same woman from the picture, “Out For Sport.” She is also the angler who would later be described in this chapter as the “model for everything that is satisfactory in the fisherwoman’s dress.”

anglers' brotherhood. . . ."⁷⁰ This idea, that initiation into the universal fellowship of angling was not based on gender but on skill, was important to Victorian fisherwomen because it created a canopy under which they could legitimately demonstrate the equal abilities of a woman against a man using an identical skill set.

In an editorial for *Forest and Stream*, George Bird Grinnell wrote, "On every suitable occasion I have for many years advocated angling for women, particularly fly-fishing, and when they have placed themselves in competition with men, or rather when from force of circumstances they have been so placed, I have noticed that they occupy a position close to the front, even if they do not fill the first place."⁷¹ He would then go on to warn male anglers that they should, "never take it for granted that a woman cannot fish because she does not parade the fact after the manner of men who fish."⁷² In other words, though it would have been improper for Grinnell to state that women were formally competing against men in angling, he nevertheless acknowledged that women did so informally whenever they fished alongside of a man. Moreover, though women might approach the sport in a different manner, men should not assume that female anglers would not achieve an equality of success. Concerning the thought that some male anglers might laugh at a novice woman fly fisher, Mrs. F. Cauthorn was quick to remind male anglers that, "they themselves once cast a fly awkwardly and got their hooks, too, entangled in all sorts of meshes."⁷³

This feminine approach, as one fisherwoman would argue, could even give women the superior advantage when it came to overall success in the sport:

I have fished with men who enjoy fishing, and who can endure a great deal of hardship, but they say I can endure more hardship than they. I do not wade in the water, but I walk from five to twelve miles, and the

men are tired and I am not. And I have had luck in one way in getting the biggest fish – not the quantity, but the quality. But that is because I have patience. Women can do better in that way, for they have more patience. A man will throw his fly and wait a little while, and then he says the fish will not bite, and he goes away, when perhaps if he waits a second longer, he gets the fish.⁷⁴

This same attitude of resiliency was also echoed by another fisherwoman who noted that while her husband and other male anglers had their angling success spoiled by swarms of mosquitoes, she herself was not bothered and as a result, out-fished all of the men in her party. She then noted wryly that all her male companions “were eager to share their baskets with me and relieve me of the trouble (?) of carrying my fish. Was it chivalry? or to gain the opportunity of saying, ‘We caught these.’”⁷⁵

Certainly, one of the greatest statements concerning fisherwomen and their ability to compete alongside of men was Mrs. George Stagg’s world record tarpon that was caught in May of 1891. Put on display as “the most prominent attraction” at the *Forest and Stream* exhibit at the 1893 World’s Fair in Chicago, the tarpon weighed 205lbs and was seven feet, three inches long.⁷⁶ The immense size of this fish surprised even an experienced male tarpon angler who had visited the exhibit and who concluded that though other anglers had come close to beating the record, “Mrs. Stagg still holds the belt, or cestus, or girdle, or whatever should be the appropriate decoration for her sex.”⁷⁷ Moreover, it is important to note that this was not a ‘fluke’ catch by an inexperienced woman. As the *New York Times* noted, Mrs. Stagg was an experienced angler who had out-fished her husband over the course of their Florida fishing trip and who had also landed a sawfish which was nine feet, ten inches in length.⁷⁸ While fish of this size would be difficult for most male anglers to land, *Forest and Stream* reported that Stagg

hooked and landed the enormous tarpon herself after a “gallant fight of one hour and twenty-five minutes,” which suggests that Victorian women were able to display a level of physicality within the sport of angling which was comparable to that of men without the fear of being branded as unwomanly.⁷⁹ Furthermore, Stagg was able to publicly voice a respectable level of pride and competition in her achievement as she boldly declared to *Forest and Stream*, that she would, “try and break her own record.”⁸⁰

Thus, the public display of Stagg’s tarpon at the 1893 World’s Fair was a powerful reminder that women were capable of besting men when it came to piscatorial ability. Unlike other activities which either prohibited the participation of women or placed men and women into separate categories, Stagg’s record setting tarpon set a universal benchmark whereby both men and women could respectably compete with one another in an attempt to break it. It was not merely the world’s largest tarpon ever caught by a woman, instead, it was the world’s largest tarpon *ever* caught “with rod and reel, or in any other manner for that matter.”⁸¹ Moreover, that its display coincided with the deliberate and highly visible focus on women and women’s issues at the Congress of Representative Women during the Fair, only served to underscore the message of feminists such as Frances Watkins Harper who would declare to her fellow delegates that, “Today we stand on the threshold of woman’s era. . . .”⁸²

Indeed, the dawning of Harper’s “woman’s era” and the deliberate use of angling by some women as an expression of their agency may be clearly seen by the latter half of the nineteenth century. Fisherwoman Elizabeth Taylor used her angling trip on the Nipigon River in part to “challenge herself and to outdo the male anglers on the river.”⁸³ For Taylor, who as a child felt limited in her ability to fully participate in out-of-door

recreations because of her gender, angling proved to be a pre-existing and respectable activity which both met these needs and provided opportunity for her to openly display what a woman could do out-of-doors.⁸⁴ As Moira Harris observes, Taylor, like other Victorian women travelers, was a role model who “found it possible to do something different and to challenge society’s expectations.”⁸⁵

When *Forest and Stream* published a front page article on Taylor’s 1892 journey to the arctic, George Bird Grinnell made sure to tell his readers that Taylor, “started on her trip alone, and made it alone successful to the end. She is the first woman explorer that has ever ventured in the Polar regions on her own account, and with an amount of pluck and steadfastness that would have done credit to a strong man, she has carried out her programme and completed her round trip to the far northern forts of the Hudson’s Company.”⁸⁶ For her part, Taylor would later give *Forest and Stream* readers a detailed report on the natural history of the region, including a tantalizingly long section devoted to the various arctic fish species and their potential for sport. Though as Taylor would admit, she regretted that she did not have more opportunity to fish during her trip and when she did find the time, had frustratingly little success.⁸⁷ Nevertheless, the confidence and thirst for adventure that Taylor had gained on her initial angling trip on the Nipigon River had well prepared her to break the “monopoly”⁸⁸ of male only expeditions into Northern Canada.

This ability for North American women to use outdoor experiences and travel as an expression of female ability was encouraged by the example previously set forward by European women, in particular the British.⁸⁹ These women established a tradition of retelling their travel adventures through literature which proved to be a powerful force in

the motivation of North American women to assert themselves through the exploration and interpretation of nature.⁹⁰ One British feminist who used angling as a literary vehicle to illustrate how a woman could act as an agent was Mary Chavelita Dunne, who wrote under the pseudonym of George Egerton. In her short story, “A Cross Line,” Egerton used the story of a confident and intelligent woman fly fisher who bewitched a male angler in what Barbara Gates has called a cliché on “that of ‘old boy’ meeting New Woman.”⁹¹ For Gates, Egerton’s story represents a New Woman who was confident in both herself and in her superior knowledge of fishing to that of the man, who had come to view her as “prey.”⁹² In the end, the fisherwoman “outfoxes him both as a hunter of women and as a hunter of fish.”⁹³

Similarly, the example of the New Woman outfoxing the “old boy” may also be observed in North America where the image of the frail and helpless woman was challenged by fisherwomen. In her story, “A New Hand At The Rod,” author, C.R.C., gave the readers of *Outing* magazine a humorous account of a ladylike woman’s premeditated decision to try fly fishing after the male members of her camping party leave for the day. Presumably alone by herself in camp, she selectively borrowed the rod of a gentleman who she felt would “have to look pleasant if anything happens.”⁹⁴ Then, the novice angler in her pursuit of a trout, proceeded to: stumble down a steep slope and destroy her best shoes; hook her hat and a tree with her flies; wet her feet; rip the front of her dress; climb onto a log from which she then fell waist deep into the water; and where finally, she achieved success by diving into the water to seize a trout with her bare hands.

While amusing for its antics, the story hides beneath its humor a deeper message for both male and female readers. Despite appearing helpless, the fisherwoman displays a

detailed understanding of fishing and nature, knowledge that she apparently gleaned from listening to the conversations of her male companions. When put into practice the woman achieves success despite being unaccompanied, thus challenging her male companion's notion that women "have no adaptability,"⁹⁵ or intelligence. Moreover, her unannounced departure from camp with the declaration that, "Woman's hour has struck,"⁹⁶ is reflective of her interest in increased agency. That her angling experience was done in secret and that she was able to return to camp undetected by the men, is a metaphor for how a woman's desire to exercise more agency was a venture that carried a significant degree of risk and disapproval from a patriarchal society. The seizing of the trout and her unwillingness to surrender it "to any fish commissioner,"⁹⁷ furthers the literary device into a statement that could be perhaps interpreted as a woman's refusal to surrender her new found agency into the hands of the status quo. The purpose for fishing then, becomes about a quest for equality and space in the wilderness, where the woman needs to prove that she is capable to the task so as to "be entitled to a rod of my own,"⁹⁸ an assertion that might be compared with Virginia Woolf's notable declaration decades later that, "a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction; and that, as you will see, leaves the great problem of the true nature of woman and the true nature of fiction unsolved."⁹⁹

Furthermore, throughout the story, the fisherwoman is gradually unshackled from the constraints of Victorian expectations through the destruction of her clothing. As Helene Roberts notes, in Victorian society, "clothing defined the role of each sex," and the expected feminine characteristics of "frivolity, delicacy, inactivity, and submissiveness," were projected onto a woman through the conformity of dress.¹⁰⁰ Therefore, the

fisherwoman's comment that, "those men who wear big boots, climb right into the water up to their knees, and, of course, they catch trout – who couldn't?" was a statement of the advantages and freedoms which Victorian men enjoyed compared to women and which made the lives of men easier. Her comment expressed a desire to break with conformity and redefine the role of the woman. Thus, the New Woman, as portrayed through the fisherwoman, had to work harder to catch fish because she was a cultural disadvantage and when these restrictions on gender were removed, a woman was free to experience the same successes as a man.

Likewise, it would appear that the woman's lament for her "incapacity to wear those big rubber boots that fasten around the waist!"¹⁰¹ was an endorsement for a woman's use of pants or bloomers, which had become a feminist symbol of mobility and sensibility that even Cornelia Crosby had herself refused to adopt. Indeed, a frequent point of discussion within nineteenth-century sporting literature was the appropriate way in which women should dress for the wilderness. Glenda Riley comments that Victorian women were in a paradoxical situation when it came to dressing for the out-of-doors, where if they argued too forcefully for the right to wear pants in the field "they spent precious time and energy that their male peers expended on other activities."¹⁰² While if they rejected female fashion and "especially if they wore trousers, they often found themselves reviled and discredited among their colleagues and the public."¹⁰³ Finding the middle ground between remaining ladylike and yet retaining practicality was therefore an important consideration for women and often led to feelings of frustration. One sportswoman summarized the sentiments of many Victorian women when she asked, "Why would it not pay some dealer in sportsmen's goods to make a specialty of ladies

outfits, so that we can hunt and fish without suffering more inconvenience than a man does?”¹⁰⁴

When a fisherwoman did find an acceptable middle ground for clothing, it then became the model for others to imitate. As one fisherwoman declared concerning the dress of a woman angler who appeared in a photograph in *Forest and Stream*:

[She] has served as the model for everything that is satisfactory in the fisherwoman's dress. . . . She wears a skirt that is short in itself, and then looped here and there until it reaches about to her knees over extra-length fishing boots. Her waist bodice is a loose woollen jersey, the sleeves snug up to the elbow, and from there to the shoulder very loose. There is a little turnover collar, the waist blouses over the band; there are loose wrested gloves that come up over the sleeves, and a little fancy hat very much like an ordinary street hat, which is pretty but it would seem might be improved, as it has not a sportsmanlike appearance. The fisherwoman carries her game basket slung over one shoulder, and of course carries her rod, and as a genuinely womanly touch to the costume wears a little chatelaine bag at her waist.¹⁰⁵

However, despite retaining its “womanly touch,” such a costume was still restrictive when it came to allowing women equal opportunities for angling. For the struggling fisherwoman in “A New Hand at The Rod,” the complaint about her inability to wear waders on the stream was a clear message to the reader about the inequalities of society and how, by allowing women to wear less restrictive and more sensible clothing, women could gain an equality and mobility equal to that of men.

Thus, “A New Hand At The Rod,” provides further evidence for the effective use of angling as a canopy of camouflage under which women could find a ways of expressing their desire for greater autonomy and freedom. It is unfortunate that Margot Page, in her preface to Holly Morris's, *Uncommon Waters: Women Write About Fishing*, was content to limit her brief analysis of this story to that of calling it a “tragicomedy. . . the bone-

chilling story of a lone woman in a men's fishing camp.”¹⁰⁶ This story is far more valuable to the history of women and their contribution to angling literature as a metaphor for the struggle of the New Woman against the patriarchy of Victorian society than it is as a tragicomedy.

The expression of a woman's sexuality and agency was also explored in a number of nineteenth century romantic stories and poems which were centered on the sport of angling. As Ronald J. Zboray and Mary Saracino Zboray observe in their study on romance and fisherwomen in antebellum New England, “men and women of all classes together enjoyed fishing and, on occasion, they centered their courtship and even honeymoon entertainments upon this sport.”¹⁰⁷ They go on to state that the popular fictional character of the fisherwoman “embodied the tensions inherent in antebellum courtship. These included the need to discriminate between infatuation and lasting affections, to temper desire while investing the relationship with the romantic, even erotic love, and to balance deliberation and anticipation of future married life.”¹⁰⁸ Of particular interest was the use of the fictitious fisherwoman to challenge the “prescribed femininity” of courtship through “a blurring of the separate spheres.”¹⁰⁹

This literary connection between angling and a woman's sexuality, love and courtship had been a commonly used metaphor in English literature for centuries.¹¹⁰ By the latter half of the nineteenth century, the use of romantic angling fiction was a regular feature in magazines such as *Outing*, where the “blurring of the separate spheres,” sometimes took the form of a sexually charged encounter between a man and a fisherwoman. Often, the fisherwoman would surprise the man with her skill as an angler of both fish and men. Similar in many ways to George Egerton's “A Cross Line,” these angling stories

presented fisherwomen who took it upon themselves to challenge traditional means of courtship in favour of one where the woman took on a more active role as the initiator of a relationship.

For example, in her story, “Ingleby’s Neighbor,” (see Figure 13), M. Gertrude Cundill wrote of an English woman named Aileen Winthrop who moved to a small rural village in Quebec where, “it was possible to get shooting, fishing and boating, in fact, everything that constituted her happiness.”¹¹¹ Winthrop, who shocked the traditional community by her bicycle riding and independent spirit, lived alone with her two servants in a manor suggestively named, ‘Maison Rouge.’ Here, she could, “do as I like and think as I like,”¹¹² as she acted upon her own sense of independence. When she encountered her new neighbour, Hugh Ingleby, he asked how many people lived in her house, to which Winthrop then initiated a bold flirtation that was thinly veiled as a conversation about fishing:

“*Men*, you want to say; no, there are none, except Marshall, our old butler. I am here quite alone, I am glad to say. And I mean to shoot, and fish, and ride, and paddle as much as ever I can. I hope the fishing is good, by the way.”¹¹³

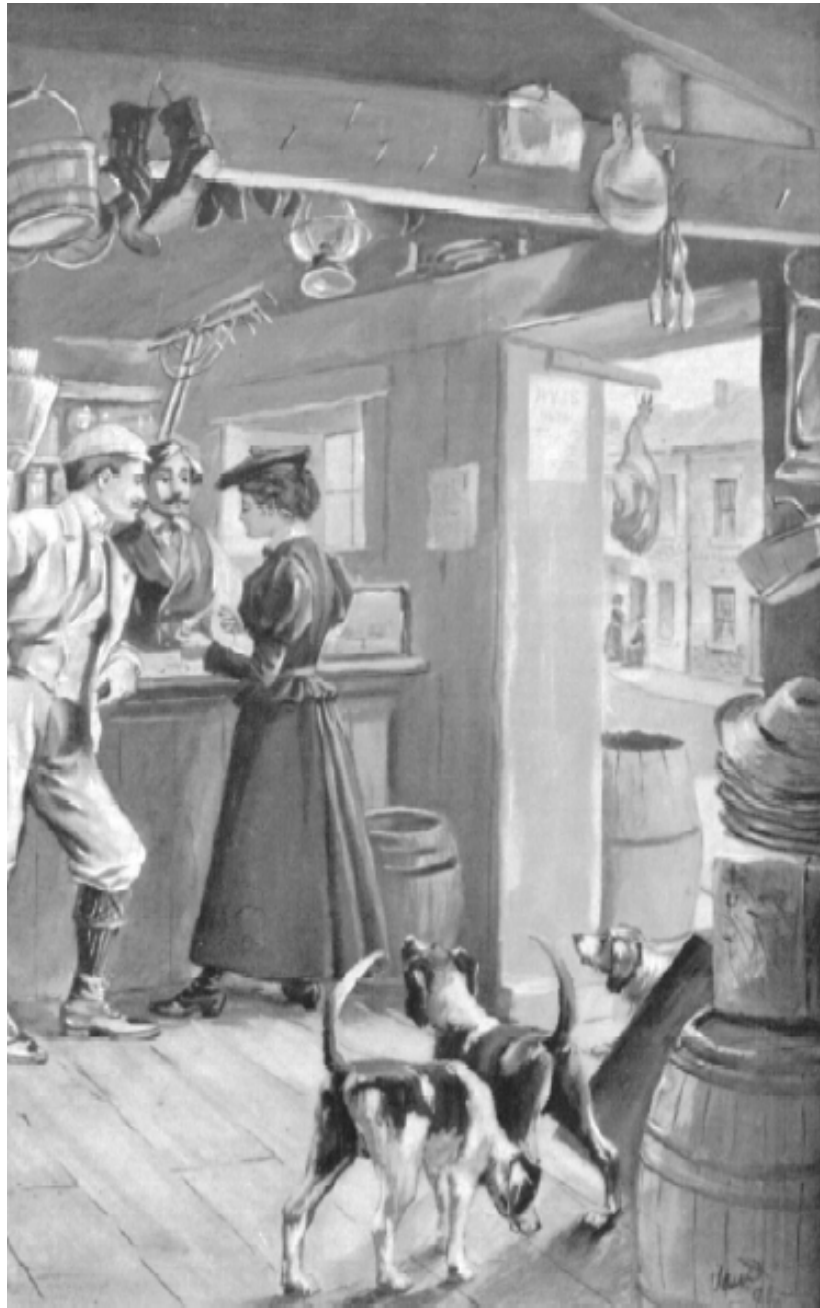
Infatuated with Winthrop because he had met a girl “who could meet a man on his own ground,”¹¹⁴ and who refused to be passive in the presence of a man, Ingleby encountered resistance to furthering the relationship from his sister, Catherine, whom Cundill used as a negative metaphor for traditional ideas of romance and courtship:

“Who is your new friend, Hugh, may I ask?” demanded that lady.
Our new neighbor in whose arrival you took such an interest
yesterday.”
“Indeed; and how came you to meet her?”

Figure 13

“Miss Winthrop Chose Her Tackle....”

Source: Cundill, M. Gertrude. "Ingleby's Neighbor." *Outing* August 1897, 441.



"MISS WINTRHOP CHOSE HER TACKLE WITH THE AIR OF A CONNOISSEUR." (p. 443.)

An illustration from "Ingleby's Neighbor." Notice the posturing where Winthrop is shown to be independent and almost indifferent to Ingleby's flirtatious stance.

“Well, she wanted to buy some fishing tackle, and asked me where to go.”

“Do you mean to say she accosted a strange man? Girls of my day behaved differently. Why could not her brothers do their own messages?”

“Things have had time to change since your day,” he repeated, “and her brothers didn’t go, first, because it was for herself, and, secondly, because she has none here.”

Miss Ingleby gasped.

“Hugh, you must be mistaken. She’s surely not one of those dreadful ‘New Women’ who ride bicycles, and – and smoke cigars. I shall speak to Caron about it at once.”

Her brother could hardly control his face.

“No, you won’t. She does ride a bicycle, but I am sure she is guiltless of the other sin.

“At all events, I shall certainly not call, no matter what the rector says.”¹¹⁵

Cundill’s image of the independent New Woman eventually triumphed over traditional society when Hugh Ingleby and Aileen Winthrop joined together as a couple who “were capable of listening and still standing,” their ground together against his sister.¹¹⁶ Thus, even though Hugh Ingleby wrestled at times with the “strong will” of Aileen Winthrop and the knowledge that it would not be hard “to tell who would have the upper hand when she married,”¹¹⁷ he could not resist the freedom which the New Woman offered to him when compared with the repression and guilt of a society that was embodied in the character of his sister. That Cundill upheld the importance of courtship and marriage but presented a more egalitarian model was an important message sent to the readers of *Outing* that spoke of the need for a realignment of the traditional roles within marriage. It also demonstrated to women that being proactive and selective in the initiation of courtship or, as Cundill presented it, that women could choose their “tackle with the air of a connoisseur,”¹¹⁸ did not mean they had to surrender their independence for marriageability. Indeed, though Aileen Winthrop’s expression of agency made her

“rather different from his cherished ideal of what a woman should be,”¹¹⁹ she became even more attractive to Hugh Ingleby as he was forced to rethink and reconstruct his notions of “prescribed femininity”.¹²⁰

While women found angling to be a canopy under which they could challenge traditional courtship roles, they also used it to become agents of sexuality (see Figure 14). One theme of eroticism and sexuality which made repeated appearances in the literature was that of a fisherwoman who submerged herself up to her waist in the water. In E.W. Sandy’s “An Evened Score,” a fisherwoman named Ruth repaid a man for saving her life by taking him to her favourite fishing pool where he then proceeded to hook a large trout. When the fish broke the man’s fishing line, the woman jumped into the water “and seized the silk line with both hands. Luckily she landed on her feet and remained upright, although in water which curled about her waist.”¹²¹ After doing so the woman then “bewitchingly” asked if she had repaid the man for the saving of her life.¹²² This scene, similar to the one presented in “A New Hand At The Rod,” where the New Woman found the “water sweeping my skirts around me,”¹²³ was also echoed in another work by M. Gertrude Cundill entitled, “The Romance of A Jock Scott,” where a lady angler “waded in up to her waist nearly,”¹²⁴ as she pulled a boat ashore that had drifted down the river with only a small child on board. The gentleman who was courting her had initially refused to do the same, which proved to mark the end of the relationship.

This provocative image of the fisherwoman wading in the water was centred on the Victorian notion of the female waist as the “quintessence of feminine beauty” and as the site “from which health or disease emanated as the limits of femininity were fixed and renegotiated between the shifting polarities of ‘nature’ and ‘art’.”¹²⁵ While the unnatural

Figure 14

“The New Woman’s Fishing Smack”

Source: Singley, B.L. “The New Woman’s Fishing Smack.” Stereograph. Meadville, PA; St. Louis MO: Keystone View Company, Manufacturers and Publishers, 1897.



Angling allowed women to use their sexuality to determine the space and parameters of courtship. In this stereograph from 1897, the bare legged New Woman is shown with her arm around the man in a pose suggestive of her intent to angle for more than fish.

exposure of the waist through the wearing of the corset diminished in popularity in the nineteenth century, a new image, that of the smooth or natural curve, established “a norm of femininity consistent with existing ideologies of difference but applicable to the growing autonomy of women.”¹²⁶ The fisherwoman who submerged herself into the water consciously demonstrated her sexuality through the accentuation of the natural curves of her body as the force of the water both pressed against and flowed around her. Her willingness to expose herself to the revealing nature of the water may be interpreted as an act of agency much in same way that Victorian sensationalist novels used sexuality as “a key element in determining feminine power and self-assertion.”¹²⁷

Sometimes, as in Sandy’s “An Evened Score,” fisherwomen could use their sexuality to determine the space and parameters of courtship. When ‘Ruth’ took her rescuer to her special pool it was a conscious decision to give something of herself to her suitor. It was also a stage upon which she provided him the opportunity to demonstrate his masculinity, which he did so through the barbaric act of using the eyeball of another trout as an “additional bait inducement.”¹²⁸ Her assistance in the capturing of the trout by willingly submerging herself into the water, was a metaphoric sexual encounter that *she* had initiated and orchestrated. Thus, like the New Woman in C.R.C.’s, “A New Hand at the Rod,” ‘Ruth’ had created a space of her own within the wilderness where she could freely and deliberately use her sexuality to influence and initiate courtship.

For Victorian women, angling was a vehicle through which they could obtain a heightened level of authority and autonomy and therefore exercise their own agency. For Sara Jane McBride, angling provided a voice of influence as an entomologist and as a master fly maker. It also allowed her to continue her father’s fly tying business as an

autonomous proprietor. That nineteenth-century sporting magazines such as *Forest and Stream* and *Outing* provided encouragement and a platform through which women such as McBride could express themselves to a heterogeneous angling community proved to be a mutually beneficial partnership which complimented the desire of the magazines to bring respectability to field sports such as hunting.

Furthermore, angling provided women such as Cornelia Crosby and Mrs. George Stagg with an arena through which they could promote, instruct and compete with male anglers in a universal display of piscatorial skill. For Crosby, angling also became a means to fame and political activism, where she became an influential and powerful proponent of conservation and licensed guiding in her home state of Maine. Beyond this however, angling also provided a canopy under which the New Woman of the late nineteenth century could articulate and challenge traditional views of femininity through presenting images of the fisherwoman as an independent agent.

Indeed, angling's ability to allow Victorian women to achieve power and create independent space was not a new development but a rediscovery and an expansion on what angling had offered to women since the Renaissance. It did however, come of age in the nineteenth century when larger social forces such as urbanization and industrialization caused an ailing middle class to turn toward traditional nature-based activities for relief and a renewed sense of purpose. Occasionally, as in the case of Elizabeth Taylor, angling was the gateway to more adventurous activities whereby a woman could push the limits of both herself and society. While for women such as C.R.C., angling became the means to a deliberate and active pursuit of self-determination and self-actualization. Thus, the confidence and experience that was gained through the

respectable pursuit of angling provided Victorian women with unique opportunities that they may otherwise not have encountered. Even though the authority, autonomy and agency that angling offered to women was far from incidental, its power and subtlety has largely escaped analysis. This then is the ongoing ironic nature of angling. On the one hand it is an unassuming and respectable pastime which hardly seems to merit attention from the casual observer, while on the other, it is because of its subtlety that angling could become a canopy under which Victorian women could find fulfillment and expression and a stage on which they could further social and political causes.

CONCLUSION

In his 1892 review of Mary Orvis Marbury's, *Favorite Flies and Their Histories*, Henry P. Wells wrote to the readers of *Forest and Stream*, "Whatever of other reward she may receive for her labors, Mrs. Marbury may be assured that her contribution will be quoted and her name remembered, long after all of her contemporaries in angling literature are quite forgotten except by the book collector."¹ This was high and public praise for a woman who was not only an exceptional fly tier but also an accomplished angler and author. It also echoed a genuine sentiment that was common among many nineteenth-century sportsmen who saw women's participation in angling as respectable, productive and warranted.

Indeed, this study has endeavored to prove that angling was the preferred outdoor pastime of many middle and upper-class, nineteenth-century North American women who had inherited it as respectable sport from their Early Modern predecessors. Evidence for this comes from the examination of diaries, pictures, photographs and literature which demonstrate a long tradition of women in angling from the Renaissance through to the Victorian era. Domestic housekeeping manuals such as Hannah Wolley's, *The Accomplish'd Lady's Delight* from 1675, firmly establish angling as among the repertoire of independent skills and pastimes of Early Modern aristocratic British women. Moreover, because of angling's ambiguity in relation to the cruelty of animals and its historic associations with genteel, Christian virtues, it provided women with an acceptable means of access to nature. Thus, angling allowed Early Modern women to create a space of their own within the natural world, one in which they could extend the domestic sphere with relative ease and where they could exercise a level of control over

the environment without the fear of judgment regarding over-excursion, barbarity, or unwomanly behavior.

As British women emigrated to North America they brought with them their passion for angling which subsequently became intertwined into the fabric of North American leisure culture. In assessing the transmission of angling from Early Modern Britain to Victorian North America, perhaps the most notable change was in the degree of mobility which nineteenth-century Canadian and American fisherwomen enjoyed. This increased opportunity for mobility emerged as middle and upper-class Victorians reacted against the ill-effects of urbanization and industrialization and began to turn toward encounters with nature, particularly wild nature, in search of relief. This romantic wilderness ideal was also coupled with a slightly more positive view from the Victorian medical community in regard to the physical constitution of women and the approval of certain forms of exercise and nature-based activities as beneficial to the overall health of a woman. Thus, women who sought an exciting and respectable way to engage nature found angling to be an ideal pastime, not only in itself but also as a gateway into the worlds of science, literature, art and politics. By the end of the nineteenth century, fisherwomen were able to be more active and aggressive in seeking out new opportunities for adventure within the North American wilderness as compared to the more sedentary demeanor of past generations of female anglers. Moreover, though the essential praxis of angling had changed little since the Early Modern period, Victorian women benefited from the mass production of fishing tackle which made angling accessible to those urbanites who had no experience in tying their own flies, making their own lines, or building their own rods.

The nineteenth century thus witnessed a significant growth in the popularity of angling among women. While some Victorian women, such as Francis Anne Kemble, who had inherited her passion for fishing from her mother, represented the direct and conscious continuum of the Early Modern tradition, many other women discovered the sport for the first time. Evidence for the increase in angling's popularity among women comes from the heightened attention that fisherwomen began to receive in newspapers, sporting magazines, through photographs, and from a growth in their own contributions to literature. Furthermore, women also began to receive attention from commercial tackle manufacturers who viewed them as a potentially profitable demographic. What is perhaps most striking is that beyond being a mere recreational activity, angling became a complex cultural phenomenon through which Victorian women, like their Early Modern predecessors, could find access to nature and where they could now respectably exercise a level of authority, autonomy, and agency from within the confines of a patriarchal society. That women could achieve this without the same level of public controversy or attention that was directed toward hunting highlights the meandering and subversive nature of angling. Much as camouflage netting can hide something or someone from casual view, angling provided a similar canopy for Victorian fisherwomen. On the outside it appeared as an unassuming and harmless activity while underneath it was a complex myriad of opportunities and expressions.

This is not to say that all Victorian women were immediately conscious of what angling could offer. Some women, such as Cornelia 'Fly Rod' Crosby, happened upon angling's opportunity for power, influence and independence, only after it had met her initial expectation of providing a rest cure for her chronic ill health. Soon afterward

however, Crosby discovered that she could combine her skill as an angler with her abilities as a journalist, educator and entertainer so as to derive both income and fame from the sport. She then used her prominence to deliberately, but shrewdly, influence the masculine sphere of politics and law within the State of Maine decades before American women had the right to vote. Though outwardly an anti-suffragist, this study has suggested that Crosby understood how to use the sport of angling to undermine the Victorian middle class ideology of the separate spheres which had dictated that the public world belonged to men while the private world belonged to women. Subsequently, Crosby was able to successfully advocate her passion for the conservation of fish and game among the State's most powerful men and in turn, decidedly influenced the creation of Maine's first laws concerning the licensing of guides. It is extremely significant that angling had provided Crosby with the vehicle through which she could earn the right to 'vote' which in turn, may have influenced other women toward self-determination and self-actualization.

Victorian women, who were perhaps conscious of the Early Modern tradition, also used angling to their advantage. For example, Sara Jane McBride, who as a child had learned the art of angling and fly tying from her father, John McBride, used these skills to market her fishing tackle business to the North American public. Furthermore, like so many other fisherwomen, she found space and voice within the pages of sporting magazines such as *Forest and Stream*, where she was free to demonstrate her scientific knowledge and to promote her business on an equal basis with those of her male competitors at a time when women were largely restricted from such activities. Likewise, Elizabeth Taylor, who had also inherited a love for angling as a child, took

advantage of angling's existing respectability to gain access to a Canadian wilderness adventure from which she could then develop not only her skills as a naturalist, but also use the sport's outwardly unassuming nature as a cover under which she could exercise her agency as she attempted to out-fish the male anglers. From her initial trip down the Nipigon in 1888, Taylor would then go on to become one of America's pioneer women explorers of the arctic, writing and telling of her adventures within the pages of magazines such as *Forest and Stream* and *Outing*, all while maintaining her intense passion for angling.

Though the literary space that was given to women such as McBride and Taylor by the male editors of various sporting magazines was influenced by an agenda to bring respectability to controversial activities such as hunting, they nevertheless, openly affirmed that women could possess angling skill, practice and knowledge equal to that of men. This was most clearly demonstrated when Mrs. George Stagg independently broke the world record for Tarpon in 1891 and her achievement was judged on the basis of her angling prowess and not on her gender. Indeed, this study has contended that within the historical landscape, angling and hunting should not be treated as being one and the same, but rather that they should be examined independently based on their divergent histories. Moreover, in the case of gender, it has been argued that it was the proponents of hunting who attempted to piggyback themselves onto the heterogeneous tradition of angling so as to make it a respectable activity in the eyes of a public that was sensitive to the treatment of animals and the immorality of barbarism.

Finally, publications such as *Outing* magazine also offered Victorian fisherwomen an alternate form of literary expression. By the latter-half of the nineteenth century, the

New Woman's movement had begun to openly attack the image of the delicate and helpless woman through the use of fishing as the metaphorical subject matter for fictional short stories. Works such as C.R.C's "A New Hand at The Rod," and Gertrude Cundill's, "Ingleby's Neighbor," overtly asserted a woman's right to self-determination, while E.W. Sandy's, "An Evened Score," presented a fisherwoman who used her sexuality in a premeditated act of agency so as to create space and redefine the parameters of courtship. This then, challenged traditional views regarding the role of men and women through placing the initiative into the hands of a women and giving her the power to determine where, when and with whom, she could engage in relationship.

Furthermore, it was C.R.C's supposedly helpless fisherwoman who perhaps best summed up the New Woman's movement, as well as the other opportunities offered to women through angling, when she stated, "I'll catch a string of fish that will prove me entitled to a rod of my own."² Therefore, the research in this study has led to the overarching conclusion that to possess one's own fishing rod, whether metaphorically or in actuality, meant the achievement of a higher degree of independence, equality and freedom for Victorian women that came through participation in the supposedly unassuming and innocent sport of angling.

Perhaps it is from Izaak Walton's the *Compleat Angler* that the masculine myth of angling owes its origin, where civil men roamed a patriarchal countryside in pursuit of contemplation and sport. Called the 'Brotherhood of the Angle,' this fraternity would become angling's most popular and prevailing image even though it did little to acknowledge the existence of a parallel, female tradition. While the 'Brotherhood' has become a unifying symbol of comradery among male anglers throughout the centuries,

nothing of the sort has existed for fisherwomen. Hence, this may be why there is disconnection between angling's heterogeneous heritage and the modern perception that women do not fish. Therefore, to use the words of fisherwoman Emily Thackvay, who concluded her article, "Camps and Tramps For Women," for *Outing* magazine in the summer of 1889: "This simple record of their adventures and misadventures has been compiled from their memories and sketch books. If these random recollections of a healthy, happy summer should lead other women to go and do likewise, the members of the Sketch Club will feel fully repaid."³ Thus, it is hoped that this study has achieved its secondary purpose and will generate further interest and research into the gendered history of angling.

Endnotes

Introduction

¹ Elizabeth Taylor, *The Far Islands and Other Cold Places: Travel Essays of a Victorian Lady*, ed. James Taylor Dunn (St. Paul: Pogo Press, 1997), 44.

² James Taylor Dunn, "Nipigon Fisherwoman," *The Beaver* (September 1949), 20.

³ Taylor, *The Far Islands and Other Cold Places: Travel Essays of a Victorian Lady*, 7. In the nineteenth century, the Nipigon River in Ontario was also spelled, Nepigon. Except in cases where it is part of a direct quotation or the title of a publication or a figure, I have chosen to use the spelling, Nipigon.

⁴ Elizabeth Taylor (1856-1932) was the youngest daughter of James Wickes Taylor who served as the American Consul in Winnipeg from 1870 to his death in 1893. Following her initial trip up the Nipigon in 1888, Taylor went on to travel and explore the Faroe Islands, Norway, Iceland, Scotland, and the Canadian Arctic. She recounted her adventures in several outdoors magazines and newspapers including *Outing*, *Popular Science*, and *Forest and Stream*. Her trip down the Mackenzie River in northern Canada was published in a four part series in *Outing* magazine that ran from 1894 to 1895. By 1908, Taylor was the only woman recognized by the American government in its official list of American Arctic explorers. Throughout her life, fishing remained one of her favorite recreational pursuits.

⁵ I am not the first to describe angling as a cultural phenomenon. Richard Hoffman states regarding angling for sport in medieval Europe, "I shall argue that sport fishing is older than has previously been thought and that it was a European cultural phenomenon, originating independently in England and other countries." Found in, Richard C. Hoffman, "Fishing for Sport in Medieval Europe: New Evidence," *Speculum*, October 20, 2005 1985, 877, 901.

⁶ According to James Taylor Dunn (a great-nephew of Taylor), Elizabeth Taylor often complained, "If I'd only been a boy, . . ." Taylor, *The Far Islands and Other Cold Places: Travel Essays of a Victorian Lady*, 7. Dunn also states that Taylor inherited a love of fishing and the outdoors from her father. Ibid.

⁷ Ibid., 42.

⁸ Taylor's relationship with her aboriginal guide Joseph served a mutual purpose. As Mark Chochla explains, "Joseph needed the approval and respect of his fellow guides and Elizabeth needed to challenge herself and to outdo the male anglers on the river." Mark Chochla, "Victorian Fly Fishers on the Nipigon," *Ontario History* 91, no. 2 (1999), 159. For a discussion on native guides on the Nipigon, see also Patricia Jasen, *Wild Things: Nature, Culture, and Tourism in Ontario 1790 - 1914* (Toronto, Buffalo, London:

University of Toronto Press, 1995), 137-140. Taylor's relationship with Joseph will be discussed in Chapter Two.

⁹ Matthews, Jean. *The Rise of the New Woman: The Woman's Movement in America, 1875-1930*. (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2003), 10.

¹⁰ Lyla Foggia, *Reel Women: The World of Women Who Fish* (Hillsboro: Beyond Words Publishing Inc., 1995), 35, 36.

¹¹ Kenneth M. Cameron, "The Girls of Summer Part 2," *The Flyfisher* (Winter 1977), 15.

¹² Sara Jane McBride, "Metaphysics of Fly Fishing," *Forest and Stream*, May 4th 1876, 198.

¹³ Reverend Robert Sedgewick, "The Proper Sphere and Influence of Woman in Christian Society," in *The Proper Sphere: Woman's Place in Canadian Society*, ed. Ramsay and Mitchinson Cook, Wendy (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1856), 13.

¹⁴ Ronald J. and Mary Saracino Zboray Zboray, "The Romance of Fisherwomen in Antebellum New England," *American Studies* 39, no. 1 (Spring 1998), 20.

¹⁵ Similarly, Nicholas D. Smith has also noted the ability of angling to intersect "with important aspects of eighteenth-century life and culture – art, ethics, gender, law, leisure, literature, property, social class and sport – which argues in turn that the critical tools necessary for the successful recuperation of eighteenth-century angling culture are interdisciplinary." Found in, Nicholas D. Smith, "Reel Women: Women and Angling in Eighteenth-Century England," *International Journal of the History of Sport* 20, no. 1 (March 2003), 45. I am cautious about the presentation of a singular view of women and angling in Victorian North America. However, there are a number of reasons why I have chosen to proceed with such an approach. First of all, the British angling tradition was the primary influence on the development of a sport fishery in both Canada and the United States. Since, as I argue in Chapter One, that upper-class women had become established as anglers within the British tradition during the Early Modern period, then Victorian fisherwomen in both the United States and Canada shared a similar origin and thus a comparable experience. Secondly, there was a degree of fluidity to the border between Canada and the United States when it came to tourism and wilderness adventure. American women fished in Canadian waters and British women fished in American and Canadian waters. In my research I have not found evidence which would suggest that there were significant differences to warrant a separation between the two. Finally, while there is obviously evidence for Canadian and British fisherwomen, more sources exist for documenting the American experience. However, since this study is essentially a vanguard into the topic, it seemed appropriate to compile all of the available sources so as to present a more forceful argument for the widespread activity of women in angling and to counter the perception that angling was an inherently masculine pastime. As more sources emerge, this initial establishment of a North American experience can now be

used to precipitate further study into perhaps the differences between women anglers in Canada and in the United States.

¹⁶ Margot Page, "Preface", in *Uncommon Waters: Women Write About Fishing*, ed. Holly Morris (Seattle: Seal Press, 1991; reprint, 1998), xii. Nicholas D. Smith also uses this quote.

¹⁷ Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998; reprint, 2003), 203.

¹⁸ Smith, "Reel Women: Women and Angling in Eighteenth-Century England", 29.

¹⁹ Ibid., 31.

²⁰ Colleen J. Sheehy, "American Angling: The Rise of Urbanism and the Romance of the Rod and Reel," in *Hard at Play: Leisure in America 1840-1940*, ed. Kathryn Grover (Rochester: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992), Note 41.

²¹ Andrea L. Smalley, "'Our Lady Sportsmen': Gender, Class and Conservation in Sport Hunting Magazines, 1873-1920," *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 4, no. 4 (October 2005), 355. Though her study is on hunting, the "men-only image" surrounding outdoor leisure pursuits also fits equally as well for the purposes of this study.

²² Kenneth M. Cameron, "The Girls of Summer Part 1," *The Fly Fisher* (Fall 1977), 8.

²³ Ibid., 9, 10.

²⁴ Ibid., 9.

²⁵ Cameron, "The Girls of Summer Part 2", 17.

²⁶ Cameron, "The Girls of Summer Part 1", 11.

²⁷ Cameron, "The Girls of Summer Part 2", 17.

²⁸ Cameron, "The Girls of Summer Part 1", 9.

²⁹ Austin M. Francis, *Catskill Rivers: Birthplace of American Fly Fishing* (Guilford, Connecticut: The Lyons Press, 1983; reprint, 1996), 90, 93.

³⁰ Ibid., 89.

³¹ Ibid.

- ³² Thomas A. Verde, "Diana of the Rangeleys," *The American Fly Fisher* 15, no. 2 (1989), 10.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, 12.
- ³⁴ Morris, ed., *Uncommon Waters: Women Write About Fishing*, xi.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, xvi.
- ³⁶ Foggia, *Reel Women: The World of Women Who Fish*, ix.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, vi.
- ³⁸ Hoffman states, "Put bluntly, the alleged Dame Juliana is a fabrication, a myth, confirmed and supported by no historical records." Hoffman also objects to the use of the "Treatyse" to depict medieval fishing without, "any testing of its assertions and assumptions against the record of actual practice, or recognition of advances in historical knowledge and criticism." Richard C. Hoffman, *Fishers' Craft and Lettered Art: Tracts on Fishing from the End of the Middle Ages* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 6.
- ³⁹ Foggia, *Reel Women: The World of Women Who Fish*, 6.
- ⁴⁰ Anne E. McIlhaney, "Renaissance Acts and Images of Angling: An Anatomy of the British Piscatory, 1496-1653" (Dissertation, University of Virginia, May 1998), 16, 203.
- ⁴¹ Julia A. and Shettleworth Jr. Hunter, Earle G., *Fly Rod Crosby: The Woman Who Marketed Maine* (Gardiner, Maine: Tilbury House Publishers, 2000), 29.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*
- ⁴³ Smith, "Reel Women: Women and Angling in Eighteenth-Century England", 45.
- ⁴⁴ Chochla, "Victorian Fly Fishers on the Nipigon", 158.
- ⁴⁵ Bill Parenteau, "A 'Very Determined Opposition to the Law': Conservation, Angling Leases, and Social Conflict in the Canadian Atlantic Salmon Fishery, 1867-1914", *Environmental History*, no. 3 (July 2004), <http://0-www.historycooperative.org.darius.uleth.ca:80/journals/eh/9.3/parenteau.html>.
- ⁴⁶ Richard P. Manning, "Recreating Man: Hunting and Angling in Victorian Canada" (M.A. Thesis, Carleton, 1994), 113.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 139. Recent work on gender and hunting by historians such as Andrea Smalley has provided evidence that female participation in sport hunting during the late

nineteenth-century “did not ‘challenge middle-class patriarchy’ as much as it upheld middle-class respectability.” Nevertheless, it may be argued that the female tradition in hunting was considerably smaller than that of angling and came under more scrutiny prior to and during the late nineteenth century. For example, as will be argued later in this paper, hunting demanded physicality and a level of cruelty and uncleanness that was not viewed to be as present in angling, which therefore put it beyond the tolerance level of many women. However, Smalley’s work is groundbreaking because it demonstrates that the sporting culture of the nineteenth century was inherently more complex and less masculine than previously thought. See, Smalley, ""Our Lady Sportsmen": Gender, Class and Conservation in Sport Hunting Magazines, 1873-1920", 364.

⁴⁸ Manning, "Recreating Man: Hunting and Angling in Victorian Canada", 113.

⁴⁹ The same can also be argued for the overall historical treatment of angling in Canada, where scholarship is virtually non-existent when compared with the work done in the United States and in Great Britain.

⁵⁰ Mary Orvis Marbury, *Favorite Flies and Their Histories: With Many Replies from Practical Anglers to Inquiries Concerning How, When, and Where to Use Them* (Guilford, Connecticut: Globe Pequot Press, 1892; reprint, First Lyons Press edition, N.D.), 1.

Chapter 1

¹ Lady Mary Campbell Coke, *Diary of Lady Mary Campbell Coke, May, 1768*, vol. 2, *The Letters and Journals of Lady Mary Campbell Coke, Vol 2*. (Endinburgh: David Douglas, 1889), 276, 277.

² An early example of sport angling’s association with Christianity may be found in a picture from an English Gospel lectionary from approximately 1000 A.D. which depicts St. Peter as standing before Jesus with a fishing rod that sports a single line with a single barbed fish hook affixed to the end. Found in, Richard C. Hoffman, "Economic Development and Aquatic Ecosystems in Medieval Europe," *The American Historical Review* 101, no. 3 (June, 1996), 637.

³ Carl-Petter Sjøvold, "An Angling People: Nature, Sport and Conservation in Nineteenth Century America" (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Davis, 1999), 16.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 24.

⁶ Donald G. and Kmet Wetherell, Irene, *Useful Pleasures: The Shaping of Leisure in Alberta 1896-1945* (Regina: John Deyell Company, 1990), 180.

⁷ For more discussion on *The Treatyse*, see John McDonald, *The Origins of Angling* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1963); Rachel Hands, "Juliana Berners and the Boke of St. Albans," *The Review of English Studies, New Series* 18, no. 72 (November 1967); Richard C. Hoffman, "Fishing for Sport in Medieval Europe: New Evidence," *Speculum*, October 20, 2005 1985; and Richard C. Hoffman, *Fishers' Craft and Lettered Art: Tracts on Fishing from the End of the Middle Ages* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997). See also, Anne E. McIlhaney, "Renaissance Acts and Images of Angling: An Anatomy of the British Piscatory, 1496-1653" (Dissertation, University of Virginia, May 1998). Wynkyn de Worde's edition of the 1496 *Treatyse* may be found in, Dame Juliana Berners, *A Treatyse of Fysshynge Wyth an Angle (Transcribed by R.S. Bear, November 2002) with an Omission of Matter Restored [[within Double Brackets]] from the Edition of Wynkyn De Worde, 1496*. (The University of Oregon, 1561 [cited February 22 2006]); available from <http://www.uoregon.edu/~rbear/bern timers/bern timers.html>.

⁸ Nicholas D. Smith, "Reel Women: Women and Angling in Eighteenth-Century England," *International Journal of the History of Sport* 20, no. 1 (March 2003), 28. Smith is quoting Silvio Calabi. I am indebted to the pioneering work of Nicholas D. Smith for providing an evidentiary framework for this chapter.

⁹ Conrad Voss Bark, *A History of Fly Fishing* (Ludlow, Shropshire: Merlin Unwin Books, 1992), 6.

¹⁰ Sir Derek Birley, *Sport and the Making of Britain* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1993), 55.

¹¹ When compared with Peter Burke's seven indicators as to the growth of leisure in Early Modern Europe, the *Treatyse* fits within the parameters of five. See, Peter Burke, "The Invention of Leisure in Early Modern Europe," *Past and Present*, no. 146 (February 1995), 146-149.

¹² Lyla Foggia, *Reel Women: The World of Women Who Fish* (Hillsboro: Beyond Words Publishing Inc., 1995), 2. Foggia is quoting Ernest Schwiebert.

¹³ Rachel Hands attributes the myth of Berners to the sixteenth century. She states, "Since Bale in the sixteenth century credited her with the authorship of the whole work, and apparently from its contents alone produced an imaginative reconstruction of her character and opinions, a series of attempts has been made to identify her as a woman of noble birth, as a daughter, elsewhere unmentioned, of Sir James Berners of Essex in the mid or late fifteenth century, and as Prioress, unlisted in its own records, of Sopwell Nunnery near St. Albans." Hands, "Juliana Berners and the Boke of St. Albans.", 24. Foggia's question as to why a woman would be credited with authorship still stands.

While recent research has cast doubt on Berners' authorship and existence, there presently is little speculation as to the purpose or reason behind the creation of a female figure such as Berners. As noted previously, Anne McIlhaney suspects that John Pit's description of Berners in 1619 as being, "a manlike woman endowed with brilliant gifts of nature," is crucial to understanding the sexual metaphors of later Renaissance angling texts. She states, "the notion of the female angler as 'manlike' is central to the angling metaphor as it comes to signify erotic love in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries." According to McIlhaney, literary allusions to angling in the sixteenth and seventeenth century frequently focused on matrimonial union, love, cross-dressing, and reversal of gender roles. McIlhaney, "Renaissance Acts and Images of Angling: An Anatomy of the British Piscatory, 1496-1653", 16, 77-128.

¹⁴ Peter Burke states, "In French, *passetemps* was a word coined in the fifteenth century and it has been argued that the new word expressed a new assumption, 'that time was a substance which might be shaped by human will'. In English, the word 'pastime' is first recorded in 1490." (Burke, "The Invention of Leisure in Early Modern Europe." Burke, "The Invention of Leisure in Early Modern Europe.", 142.) The internal evidence of the *Treatyse* would appear to suggest that it was written for the urban angler who would take the time to make a journey of several days into the countryside and would need to know the rules of proper conduct in relation to private waters.

¹⁵ Sir Philip Sidney, *The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia* (London: Printed by John Windet for William Posonbie, 1593), 29. Anne McIlhaney identified this angling passage in Sidney's *Arcadia* and she also very briefly identified Lady Margaret Hoby and Celia Fiennes as being fisherwomen.

¹⁶ For an examination of Sidney's ideals see, Myron Turner, "The Heroic Ideal in Sidney's Revised Arcadia," *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900. The English Renaissance*. 10, no. 1 (Winter, 1970), 63-82.

¹⁷ Joanna Moody, ed., *The Private Life of an Elizabethan Lady: The Diary of Lady Margaret Hoby 1599-1605* (Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing Limited, 1998), xv.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, xxxiv, xxxvi, 84.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 101.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 214.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 87

²² Sara Crawford and Patricia Mendelson, *Women in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998; reprint, 2003), 211.

²³ Ibid., 206. Mendleson and Crawford write, “women treated their dwellings as fluid and open. . . . making use of neighbour’s dwellings much like a series of linked female spaces.”

²⁴ Over the course of his lifetime, Walton would revise the *Angler* five more times, increasing the size of the original edition by more than half as he added further instructions on proper angling techniques and increased his “moral suasion”. See, Anna K. Nardo, ““a Recreation of a Recreation”: Reading the Compleat Angler,” *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 79 (1980), 302. The last edition, which was published in 1676 and shortly before his death in 1683, has been the most reprinted volume, as it contained not only Walton’s most mature form of angling writ, but also featured a new section on fly fishing that was written by his friend Charles Cotton. See, John Lowerson, “Izaak Walton: Father of a Dream,” *History Today* 33, no. 12 (1983), 29.

²⁵ Smith, “Reel Women: Women and Angling in Eighteenth-Century England”, 30.

²⁶ Izaak Walton and Charles Cotton, *The Compleat Angler: With an Introduction by John Buchan and an Appendix Containing a Modernized Text of the Arte of Angling (1577)*, 5th, reprint 1960 ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1676), 96.

²⁷ McIlhaney, “Renaissance Acts and Images of Angling: An Anatomy of the British Piscatory, 1496-1653”, 77. The use of the erotic angling trope will be further discussed in this study.

²⁸ Or what is now commonly known as a stickleback.

²⁹ Walton, *The Compleat Angler: With an Introduction by John Buchan and an Appendix Containing a Modernized Text of the Arte of Angling (1577)*, 204.

³⁰ Ibid., 206.

³¹ Ibid., 80.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid., 192.

³⁴ K.M.P. Burton, *Restoration Literature* (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1958; reprint, Second Edition, 1965), 35. In his 1797 reprint of Izaak Walton’s *The Compleat Angler*, Sir John Hawkins uses Waller’s “On St. James Park” to note that, “Nevertheless, I find in that canal at St. James Park, which though a large one, is yet a pond, it was in the reign of Charles II, the practice of ladies to angle.” Found in, Izaak Walton and Charles Cotton, *The Compleat Angler, or the Contemplative Man's Recreation*, ed. Sir John Hawkins, The sixth edition, with reprints. ed. (London: Printed for F. and C. Rivington,

G.G. and J. Robinson, J. and J. Taylor, R. Faudler, W. Bent [and 3 others in London]. 1797), 243.

³⁵Eugene R. Cunnar, "Donne's Witty Theory of Atonement in 'the Baite'," *Studies in English Literature* 29, no. 1 (Winter 1989), 78. Cunnar traces the use of the fishing metaphor in history as was known to Donne. He states, "Quite early the fishing metaphor appears in discussions of the relationship between body and soul, the ideal and real, and sacred and profane love, all issues central to Donne's philosophy of love." *Ibid.*, 80. According to Cunnar, Donne uses the poem to test:

"the limits of patriarchal discourse in achieving or expressing his love with Ann More. This love involves the union of the sacred and the sexual. The speaker's initial perception that the sexual relationship is structured and dominated by the male fisher is subverted and reversed through the woman's atoning role. The poem's abrupt shifts and witty reversals not only undermine the male fantasy of domination, but also may be Donne's way of renouncing his own ambitions for the possibility of mutual love. The poem is Donne's witty way of telling Ann More that their mutual love has atoned for his courtly and male ambitions. *Ibid.*, 80, 92-93.

Concerning, Donne, McIlhaney writes, "In 'The Baite', Donne works directly within the erotic angling tradition. Like Spenser in the *Faerie Queene*, he rejects deceptive or coercive angling for destructive ends – the woman's domination and feminizing of the man (as in the cases of Clarinda)." McIlhaney, "Renaissance Acts and Images of Angling: An Anatomy of the British Piscatory, 1496-1653", 125.

³⁶ C.A. Patrides, ed., *The Complete English Poems of John Donne* (London and Melbourne: Dent, 1985), 93-94.

³⁷ McIlhaney, "Renaissance Acts and Images of Angling: An Anatomy of the British Piscatory, 1496-1653", 198. McIlhaney states, "The seventeenth century saw a profusion of erotic piscatory poems in the wake of Donne's piscatory lyric. Like "The Baite", these poems—for example, William Browne's *Britannia's Patorals*, Drayton's "Shepherd's Sirena," or Lovelace's "Aramantha" – are written by men, from the perspective of a male speaker who loves, or seeks to seduce or to escape the hook of the woman angler. Furthermore, these women anglers are generally not seductresses who hide their hooks beneath false baits; rather, they attract both fish and men by virtue of their presence and appearance alone." Found in, McIlhaney, "Renaissance Acts and Images of Angling: An Anatomy of the British Piscatory, 1496-1653", 127, 128.

³⁸ McIlhaney, "Renaissance Acts and Images of Angling: An Anatomy of the British Piscatory, 1496-1653", note 78 on page 128.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Hannah Wolley, *The Accomplish'd Lady's Delight*. In *Preserving, Physick, Beautifying and Cookery* (London: Printed for B. Harris, 1675), A3. Wolley can also be spelled Woolley. Other works by Wolley include, *The Ladies Directory* (1661), *The Cooks Guide* (1664), *The Queen-like Closet* (1670), *The Ladies Delight* (1672) and *A Supplement to the Queen-Like Closet* (1674).

⁴² Elaine Hobby, *Virtue of Necessity: English Women's Writing 1649-88* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1989), 175.

⁴³ See for example the eleventh edition of *The Accomplished Lady's Delight* (1720).

⁴⁴ The treatise is extremely practical in nature offering advice on techniques, bait, methods of fishing and fish species. It is included as part of the book's section on the "Physical Cabinet," which offered medicinal remedies, beauty secrets and recipes for cooking. The treatise is located directly after the section on beauty and right before the section on cooking recipes, which fits with a belief in the health of angling for sport and physical wellness and the practicalities that it hold for feeding one's family.

⁴⁵ Subsequent editions of *The Accomplished Lady's Delight* will be discussed later in the chapter.

⁴⁶ See for example, Richard Brathwaite's *The English Gentlewoman* (1631). A hint that T.P. might be a man comes at the conclusion to the preface where he or she states, "I hope it may deserve the Title of the Accomplish'd Lady's Delight, and may acquire Acceptance at your fair Hands, whereby you will very much encourage and Oblige, Ladies, Your very Humble Servant and Admirer, T.P." Wolley, *The Accomplish'd Lady's Delight*. In *Preserving, Physick, Beautifying and Cookery*, A3.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 202.

⁴⁸ Smith, "Reel Women: Women and Angling in Eighteenth-Century England", 31. Smith cites the tenth edition of *The Accomplish'd Lady's Delight* as an example of this.

⁴⁹ Wolley, *The Accomplish'd Lady's Delight*. In *Preserving, Physick, Beautifying and Cookery*, 209.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 210.

⁵¹ Ibid., 234, 235. The same prose appears identically in an earlier work entitled, *Barker's Delight: or The Art of Angling* (1659).

⁵² Elizabeth Whittle and Christopher Taylor, "The Early Seventeenth-Century Gardens of Tackley, Oxfordshire," *Garden History* 22, no. 1 (Summer 1994), 51, 53. Christopher K.

Currie, "Fishponds as Garden Features C. 1550-1750," *Garden History* 18, no. 1 (Spring 1990), 25.

⁵³ In 1618, William Lawson described the variety of fishing experiences which an angler may have in an English Renaissance garden. He states, "I could highly commend your Orchard, if either through it, or hard by it there should runne a pleasant River with silver streames: you might sit on your Mount, and angle a peckled Trout, or fleightie Eele, or some other dainty Fish. Or moats, whereon you might row with a Boate, and fish with Nettes." Found in, Whittle, "The Early Seventeenth-Century Gardens of Tackley, Oxfordshire", Elisabeth Woodhouse, "Spirit of the Elizabethan Garden," *Garden History* 27, no. 1 (Summer 1999), 51.

⁵⁴ Roger North, *A Discourse of Fish and Fish-Ponds. Done by a Person of Honour*. (London: E. Curll at the Dial and Bible against St. Dunstan's Church in Fleet Street, 1714), 72, 73. Nicholas D. Smith also uses this quote by Roger North.

⁵⁵ Celia Fiennes. "Through England on a Side Saddle in the Time of William and Mary." (London, 1888), http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/text/contents_page.jsp?t_id=Fiennes (accessed September 7, 2006), selection 21.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid., selection 19.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid., selection 23.

⁶⁰ Regarding the sight of anglers on the River Emount in Scotland, Fiennes writes, "I Rode somtymes on a high Ridge over a hill, sometimes on the sands, it turning and winding about that I went almost all the way by it and saw them with boates fishing for Salmon and troute, wch made my journey very pleasant." Ibid., selection 24.

⁶¹ Nicholas D. Smith uses the tenth edition in his work, "Women and Angling in Eighteenth-Century England," which is dated at 1719. I have not been able to find a copy of this edition, but every other copy of the book which I found between 1696 and 1720 did not include the angling section. From Smith's work it would appear that the tenth edition included the same angling treatise as the eleventh, though I can't verify this at present.

⁶² T.P., *The Accomplish'd Lady's Delight, in Preserving, Beautifying, Cookery, and Gardening*, ed. Eighteenth Century Collections Online, The eleventh edition enlarged, 1720? ed. (London: Printed for John Willis and Joseph Boddington, 1670?).

⁶³ Ibid., A2.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 131.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 131, 132.

⁶⁶ Smith, "Reel Women: Women and Angling in Eighteenth-Century England", 33.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 35.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 36.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 40.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 37.

⁷¹ Ibid., 36.

⁷² Lady Mary Campbell Coke, *Diary of Lady Mary Campbell Coke, August 1768, The Letters and Journals of Lady Mary Coke, Vol 2.* (Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1889), 440. From reading her diaries, it would seem that angling was among one of Lady Coke's favorite pastimes and something which she found great joy in pursuing.

⁷³ Mendelson, *Women in Early Modern England*, 210.

⁷⁴ Lady Mary Campbell Coke, *Diary of Lady Mary Campbell Coke, The Letters and Journals of Lady Mary Campbell Coke* (Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1889), 321.

⁷⁵ Glenda Riley, *Women and Nature: Saving the Wild West* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), 26.

⁷⁶ Lady Mary Campbell Coke, *Diary of Lady Mary Campbell Coke, July, 1768, the Letters and Journals of Lady Mary Coke Vol. 2.* (Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1889), 440.

⁷⁷ Lady Mary Campbell Coke, *Diary of Lady Mary Campbell Coke, June, 1768, the Letters and Journals of Lady Mary Coke Vol. 2.* (Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1889), 440.

⁷⁸ Charles E. Goodspeed, *Angling in America: Its Early History and Literature* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1939), 41. On the following page Goodspeed records the list of toasts given at the Schuylkill Fishing Company on May 1st, 1832, in celebration of the state's centennial. The ninth toast listed is dedicated to, "The Fair – when angling for hearts, may their hooks ever be baited with modesty and good nature. – Oh! Woman."

⁷⁹ John Lowerson, "Angling," in *Sport in Britain*, ed. Tony Mason (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 15.

⁸⁰ Diary entries from eighteenth-century Pennsylvanian women also mention fishing as a leisure (and courtship activity). In a diary entry by Hannah Callender in May of 1759, she writes, "Rode a mile to Preserve Brown's where we passed the morning agreeably in seeing his mill and its works, attending to the fall of the water, pleasing discourse, fishing, &c. till two o'clock. Then we set out for Burlington, through Crosswicks, and pleasantly home by six o'clock." Found in the book, Hannah Callender, "Diary of Hannah Callender, May, 1759," in *Extracts from the Diary of Hannah Callender*, ed. George Vaux (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, 1888), 436.

⁸¹ Maxwell and Reet Howell note that even as early as the seventeenth century, Samuel Champlain was encouraging French settlers and officers in Port Royal to engage in fishing to improve the daily diet of the colonists and to combat loneliness, "passive existence" and to establish an atmosphere where "the colonists could relax and enjoy themselves in congenial surroundings." Maxwell L. and Reet A. Howell, "Developments Prior to 1800," in *History of Sport in Canada*, ed. Maxwell L. and Reet A. Howell (Champaign, Illinois: Stipes Publishing Company, 1981; reprint, 1985), 24.

⁸² J. Ross Robertson, *The Diary of Mrs. John Graves Simcoe Wife of the First Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Upper Canada, 1792-6*, 1973 Facsimile Edition by Coles Publishing Company ed. (Toronto: William Briggs, 1911), 106. Simcoe also makes an entry on May 22nd, 1794 which states, "The Governor and I dined alone. We fished near the wharf at Niagara." Robertson, *The Diary of Mrs. John Graves Simcoe Wife of the First Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Upper Canada, 1792-6*, 227.

⁸³ Robertson, *The Diary of Mrs. John Graves Simcoe Wife of the First Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Upper Canada, 1792-6*, 301.

⁸⁴ Schullery notes that, "most of our earliest works on salmon fishing, for example, are from the pens of visiting British officer-sportsmen." He also states, "I agree with David Ledlie, who has studied early northeastern fishing history far more than I, that the British influence in Canada quickly established a sport fishery...." Paul Schullery, *American Fly Fishing: A History* (New York: Nick Lyons Books, 1987; reprint, 1999), 21, 23.

⁸⁵ Thomas L. Altherr, ed., *Part 2 - Sports in the New Republic 1784-1820*, vol. 1, *Sports in North America: A Documentary History* (Gulf Breeze, FL: Academic International Press, 1997), 223.

⁸⁶ Ronald J. and Mary Saracino Zboray Zboray, "The Romance of Fisherwomen in Antebellum New England," *American Studies* 39, no. 1 (Spring 1998), 6.

⁸⁷ Susannah Moodie, *Roughing It in the Bush or Life in Canada*, ed. Carl Ballstadt (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1988), 297.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 349. British traveler, Anna Jameson, also took part in sport fishing during her travels in Canada in 1838. In, *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada*, Jameson makes references to her party's fishing and shooting excursions that she herself was a participant in. For example, in volume 3, she writes, "To-day we caught seven bass, shot four pigeons, also a large water-snake..." Later, she writes, "Next day we went on a fishing and shooting excursion to Lake Couchiching..." Found in, Mrs. Jameson, *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada*, vol. 3 (London: Saunders and Otley, Conduit Street, 1838; reprint, 1972), 329, 353.

⁸⁹ In a letter to Maggie Rous on June 22, 1872, Moodie writes, "I often amuse myself by fishing in the evening, and have been tolerably successful. But the black flies have prevented me this week." Found in, Susannah Moodie, "Letter from Susannah Moodie to Maggie Rous, June 22, 1872," in *Letters of a Lifetime*, ed. Carl Ballstadt, Hopkins, Elizabeth, Peterman, Michael (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 306.

⁹⁰ Charlotte Gray, *Sisters in the Wilderness* (Toronto: Penguin Books Ltd., 1999). Johnnie Strickland Moodie drowned while watching his two elder brothers fish for brook trout. He apparently fell off a wharf and into the Moira and by the time his absence was noticed, it was too late.

⁹¹ John Adams, *Woman. Sketches of the History, Genius, Disposition, Accomplishments, Employments, Customs and Importance of the Fair Sex, in All Parts of the World. By a Friend to the Sex.* (London: Printed for G. Kearsley, 1790), 135. Though Adams is not making this statement specifically about women and angling he does precede it with, "Every thing inclines them to generosity and pity." It comes from his chapter on 'Female Benevolence' to which he praises this feminine virtue as a "beautiful rose", that instinctively and "without reason" compels women to offer relief to suffering. This book, written by a man, highlights the common view that women were by nature, gentler and softer and more apt to respond to perceived cruelty or suffering with emotive reaction as opposed to reason, which would thus set them in opposition to any suffering which may be endured by fish through being caught by a hook. Modern day objections to women anglers are still prevalent. For perspective and reflection on these see, Holly Morris, ed., *Uncommon Waters: Women Write About Fishing* (Seattle: Seal Press, 1991; reprint, 1998).

⁹² Smith, "Reel Women: Women and Angling in Eighteenth-Century England", 42.

⁹³ Jennifer Hargreaves, *Sporting Females: Critical Issues in the History and Sociology of Women's Sports* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 47.

⁹⁴ Smith, "Reel Women: Women and Angling in Eighteenth-Century England", 43.

⁹⁵ Peter Coates, *Nature: Western Attitudes since Ancient Times* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998), 131, 132. Keith Thomas, *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800* (London: Penguin Books,

1984), 176. Both of these books are good resources for examining changing attitudes toward nature in the western world.

⁹⁶ Robert W. Malcolmson, *Popular Recreations in English Society: 1700 - 1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 137. Malcolmson quotes from a sermon by Edward Barry in 1801 who states, "Whatever is morally bad cannot be politically right. The monster, who can willfully preserve to torture the dumb creation, would feel little or no compunction, to serve a purpose, in aiming his bludgeon at the head, or engulfing the murderous blade within the warm vitals of his fellow creature."

⁹⁷ Thomas, *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800*, 177.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Altherr, ed., *Part 2 - Sports in the New Republic 1784-1820*, 211.

¹⁰⁰ Smith, "Reel Women: Women and Angling in Eighteenth-Century England", 44.

¹⁰¹ Smith notes that there was also concern by some male anglers in the late eighteenth-century over an apparent decline in women's participation in angling, something which they speculated was linked to the growing humane movement. Ibid., 43.

¹⁰² Thomas Young, *An Essay on Humanity to Animals* (London: Printed for T. Cadell, jun. and W. Davies; W.H. Lunn; and J. Deighton, 1798), 90, 91. Young notes that sportsmen who claim that they take no pleasure in killing must remember that "it is not enough that they feel no pleasure – they ought to feel pain; and their culpability consists, in part, in rendering themselves nearly, if not wholly, insensible to the sufferings of the animals which they sacrifice to their diversion." Ibid., 79. Nicholas D. Smith also quotes Thomas Young.

¹⁰³ "The Cruelty of Angling," in *The Anti-Halcyon, and Other Poems* (London: Sold by Robinsons; Burnham, Northampton; and Ware, Whitehaven, 1792), 45.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 46.

¹⁰⁵ Lady, "On the Duchess of Atholl and Lady Wright Fishing at Atholl-House. By a Lady," (Perth? 1785?). <http://0-galenet.galegroup.com/darius.uleth.ca/servlet/ECCO?dd=0&locID=leth89164&k=A1&d1=1077602100&srchtp=t&c=95&SU=All&docNum=CW116183318&vrsn=1.0&m=Lady&mx=lady&seg=0&ste=11&dc=f1c&stp=Author&d4=0.33&tiPG=1> (accessed September 21, 2006).

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Sarah Trimmer, *Fabulous Histories, Designed for the Instruction of Children, Respecting Their Treatment of Animals*. (Dublin: Printed by William Porter, for W. Watson and Son, P. Wogan, P. Byrne, W. Porter, J. Moore and W. Jones., 1794), 163, 164.

¹⁰⁸ Thomas, *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800*, 177.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid. Donald Wetherell and Irene Kmet also comment that the distinction between hunting and angling, “appeared to be that killing fish was a different experience, in conceptual terms at least, from killing feathered or furred animals.” Found in, Wetherell, *Useful Pleasures: The Shaping of Leisure in Alberta 1896-1945*, 180.

¹¹⁰ Nicholas D. Smith notes that Frances Power Cobb, even though she abandoned angling based upon its cruelty, would later admit that, “angling scarcely comes under the head of cruelty at all,” and that she did not, “take on myself to blame those who followed them [angling and other field sports].” Smith, “Reel Women: Women and Angling in Eighteenth-Century England”, 44.

¹¹¹ This is especially important when one looks at the Victorian era when other field sports such as hunting tried to update their image through the inclusion of women. Andrea Smalley notes that sporting magazines “did not portray the sport as an exclusively masculine enterprise, but instead connected certain of women’s ‘essential’ qualities to ‘correct’ forms of hunting in contrast to ‘common’ or even ‘immoral’ methods of taking game. Andrea L. Smalley, “Our Lady Sportsmen”: Gender, Class and Conservation in Sport Hunting Magazines, 1873-1920,” *Journal of the Guilded Age and Progressive Era* 4, no. 4 (October 2005), 357. That angling had this feminine presence embedded long before the nineteenth-century is significant.

¹¹² It undoubtedly had influence on the conscience of male anglers as well.

¹¹³ Frances Anne Kemble, “Old Woman’s Gossip V,” *The Atlantic Monthly* 1875, 722.

¹¹⁴ Sydney Cox, *Friendly Counsel for Girls, or, Words in Season* (New York: G.W. Carlton, 1868), 50. Cox writes, “Riding and driving, and even hunting and fishing are innocent amusements, so long as you undertake them in a strictly feminine spirit and with no wish to acquire the reputation of being a fast girl, or a dashing girl, or a jolly girl.”

¹¹⁵ Richard Bowlker, *The Art of Angling Improved, in All Its Parts, Especially Fly Fishing* (Worcester: Printed by M. Olivers, 1758), 56. Nicholas D. Smith also uses this quote.

¹¹⁶ Mark Chochla, “Victorian Fly Fishers on the Nipigon,” *Ontario History* 91, no. 2 (1999), 153.

¹¹⁷ When describing her visit to the Nepigon, female fly fisher, 'Eergthora', pronounced, "We scorned bait and spoon fishing." Found in, Eergthora, "A Woman's Outing on the Nepigon," *Outing* September 1897, 582.

¹¹⁸ For a source of nineteenth century opinions regarding the role of women in society see, Alison Prentice, et al. *Canadian Women: A History*. Second ed. Toronto: Harcourt Brace & Company Canada, Ltd., 1996 and Ramsay Cook and Wendy Mitchinson, ed., *The Proper Sphere: Women's Place in Canadian Society* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1976).

Chapter 2

¹ "Feminine Izaak Waltons: A New York Fisherwoman," *The New York Times*, August 14 1898, 14.

² Ibid.

³ Other evidence concerning an existing tradition of American women and fishing in the nineteenth century comes from Colleen Sheehy who writes, "Photographs from the late nineteenth century onwards provide good documentation for fishing traditions among others than the male sportsman." See, Colleen J. Sheehy, "American Angling: The Rise of Urbanism and the Romance of the Rod and Reel," in *Hard at Play: Leisure in America 1840-1940*, ed. Kathryn Grover (Rochester: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992), Note 41. Newspaper articles detailing the success or presence of angling parties became commonplace by the late nineteenth century. For more information and examples of angling equipment for women see Chapter 3 of this study.

⁴ Peter Coates, *Nature: Western Attitudes since Ancient Times* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998), 3.

⁵ Ibid., 6.

⁶ Joyce E. Salisbury, *The Beast Within: Animals in the Middle Ages* (New York and London: Routledge, 1994), 2. Salisbury makes the point of emphasizing human treatment of animals is related to human attitudes towards animals. She notes that in a post-Darwinist world "we have accepted people as animals, we have also made animals more human, so animals shown simply as animals have disappeared," 2. See also Thomas R Dunlap, *Nature and the English Diaspora: Environment and History in the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). Dunlap defines nature for the purposes of his study as "the culture's understanding of the land and the living creatures on it at the level of 'unaided observation.' It was what people saw without telescopes or microscopes, felt, smelled,

fixed in memory, and thought of as their 'direct experience' with all the world around them." Ibid., 4.

⁷ In particular, inventions such as the microscope opened up the cellular world for human eyes, where millions of organisms lived indifferently and independently from human control. See, Keith Thomas, *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800* (London: Penguin Books, 1984), 167. Moreover, continued explorations across oceans and continents unveiled a vast host of new flora and fauna while advances in the field of astronomy built upon the discoveries of Galileo and Copernicus, concluding that the earth itself was but a small speck within the vastness of what was believed to be an infinite universe. These new discoveries also helped to redefine and recalibrate concepts of time and space such as the biblical chronology of the earth's age, which was speculated by Anglican Bishop, James Ussher, in 1650, to be 6000 years old from the time of creation. (Ussher calculated the time of Creation to be early in the evening on Saturday, October 22nd, 4004 B.C.E. Ussher's chronology has held influence even into the twentieth century). See, Ronald L. Numbers, "'the Most Important Discovery of Our Time': William Henry Green and the Demise of Ussher's Chronology," *Church History* 69, no. 2 (June 2000). Even by 1738, geological observations were leading some to conclude that the earth was "of much older date than the time assigned in the Holy Scriptures." See, Thomas, *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800*, 168. Prior to the twelfth century, medieval views of nature saw it as place where humans were to have dominion over a created world that had fallen from a state of perfection into a place of chaos and curse. Thus, medieval peasants "believed that the changing of the seasons, and the suffering involved in winter, were directly attributable to God's curse on the land, where eternal spring and summer had once reigned." See, Coates, *Nature: Western Attitudes since Ancient Times*, 57. Moreover, it was through nature and in particular through the animal kingdom that larger theological and philosophical themes were exemplified. Hence, attitudes towards uncontrolled nature (most notably wild places and wild animals) often took on allusions of damnation and hell and it was imperative that a clear distinction and separation between nature and humanity be drawn so as to prevent chaos and preserve the order of God's divine command.

⁸ James Paradis and Thomas Postlewait, "Introduction," in *Victorian Science and Victorian Values: Literary Perspectives*, ed. James Paradis and Thomas Postlewait, (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1985), x.

⁹ Thomas, *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800*, 56, 65, 66.

¹⁰ Greg Gillespie, "The Imperial Embrace: British Sportsmen and the Appropriation of Landscape in Nineteenth-Century Canada" (PhD Dissertation, The University of Western Ontario, 2001), 39.

¹¹ Mary Orvis Marbury states:

Of these sixteen orders, five only are of special interest to the angler: the Ephemeroptera, or short lived day-flies; the Plecoptera (πλέχος, plaited; πτερόν, a wing), from the peculiar folded way in which the wings rest upon the long flat body, concealing and extending beyond it; the Neuroptera (νεῦρον, a nerve), or lace-winged fly, as the beautiful ‘golden-eyed gauze-wing;’ the Trichoptera (hairy-winged flies), sometimes called caddis-flies or case-worms; and the Diptera, or two-winged flies. The orders Hemiptera, Coleoptera, Lepidoptera, and Hymenoptera furnish occasional specimens for imitation, but the five just named yield those of more frequent service. Mary Orvis Marbury, *Favorite Flies and Their Histories: With Many Replies from Practical Anglers to Inquiries Concerning How, When, and Where to Use Them* (Guilford, Connecticut: Globe Pequot Press, 1892; reprint, First Lyons Press edition, N.D.), 7, 8.

It is clear from this example that by the end of the nineteenth century, the Linnean System as expressed through the science of entomology had become inter-twined with fly fishing. Marbury however, is sensitive to the complexities of sub-species within entomology and that an angler could become frustrated in trying to sort out the minute differences of separation. Therefore, she recommends that an angler engage in both the study of nature for scientific knowledge and the identification of the angler with the spirit of the natural world that surrounds him or her. Moreover, she implores anglers to adopt a standard for both the scientific and common names for flies: “Mention has been made of the need of a better knowledge of entomology, and this, when attained, will assist the whole system of flie making and naming; but, until it is acquired, let us take good care to keep the present knowledge as clear as possible.” Ibid., 11. The eighteenth and nineteenth century British use of the Linnean System for the classification of fish and other animals may also be seen through an examination of the works produced by the Linnean Society of London. In the five volumes of *Transactions of the Linnean Society* from 1791 to 1800, there are several essays describing the discovery of new species of fish (especially from distant lands such as Sumatra) and the attempts to identify and reclassify currently known species of fish, such as the sawfish. For example see, Mungo Park, "Descriptions of Eight New Fishes from Sumatra," in *Transactions of the Linnean Society. London 1791-1800* (London: Printed by J. Davis, 1794) and, John Latham, "An Essay on the Various Species of Sawfish," in *Transactions of the Linnean Society. London 1791-1800* (London: J. Davis, 1793).

¹²Mark Chochla, "Victorian Fly Fishers on the Nipigon," *Ontario History* 91, no. 2 (1999), 151.

¹³ John J. Rowan, *The Emigrant and Sportsman in Canada: Some Experiences of an Old Country Settler* (London: Edward Stanford, 1876; reprint, 1972 Facsimile edition).

¹⁴ Coates uses Arthur Lovejoy and George Boas's definition of cultural primitivism as, "the discontent of the civilized with civilization." See, Coates, *Nature: Western Attitudes since Ancient Times*, 128.

¹⁵ Ibid., 128. Hobbes had expressed his views on the state of nature in *Leviathan* (1651).

¹⁶ Ibid., 127.

¹⁷ Richard Kuhns, "The Beautiful and the Sublime," *New Literary History* 13, no. 2 (Winter 1982), 288. In discussing Kant's distinction of beauty and sublimity as related to the world of the arts, Kuhn states "The distinction worked for Kant not only to analyze the experience of nature and art, but also to contribute to a larger architectonic need that preoccupied Kant and expressed some of his deepest philosophical concerns, especially surrounding the conflict between religion and science." Ibid., 287.

¹⁸ Ibid., 293.

¹⁹ Coates, *Nature: Western Attitudes since Ancient Times*, 133, 135.

²⁰ James B. Twitchell, *Romantic Horizons: Aspects of the Sublime in English Poetry and Painting 1770 - 1850* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1983), 28. Twitchell is quoting Andrew Wilton's definition of sublime in relation to the works of Turner.

²¹ Frances Anne Kemble, "Old Woman's Gossip IV," *The Atlantic Monthly* 1875, 597.

²² Gillespie, "The Imperial Embrace: British Sportsmen and the Appropriation of Landscape in Nineteenth-Century Canada", 7.

²³ For example, companies such as The Orvis Company, founded in 1856 by Charles Orvis, competed with one another for share of the growing market. Factories mass produced rods, reels, tackle and flies and advertised their products within the newly established industry of sporting periodicals. For an exploration of the growth in fishing equipment in the United States see, Paul Schullery, *American Fly Fishing: A History* (New York: Nick Lyons Books, 1987; reprint, 1999), and Charles F. Waterman, *A History of Angling* (Tulsa: Winchester Press, 1981). Concerning the growth of angling in the United States, Mark Chochla notes that between 1870 and 1901, "nearly one hundred books on American angling were published." Found in, Chochla, "Victorian Fly Fishers on the Nipigon", 152. See also Chapter Three of this study for more detail on the specific manufacturing of angling equipment for women.

²⁴ Barbara T. Gates, *Kindred Nature: Victorian and Edwardian Women Embrace the Living World* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 11. Gates notes that, "Interpreting the meaning of nature became second in importance only to interpreting the meaning of God."

²⁵ Kirsten Aletta Greer and Jeanne Kay Guelke, "'Intrepid Naturalists and Polite Observers': Gender and Recreational Birdwatching in Southern Ontario, 1791-1886," *Journal of Sport History* 30, no. 3 (Fall 2003), 324.

²⁶ For further information on the political, legal, and societal restrictions on women in nineteenth-century Canada, see, Alison Prentice, et al. *Canadian Women: A History*. Second ed. Toronto: Harcourt Brace & Company Canada, Ltd., 1996. For similar information on the nineteenth-century United States, see, Sara M. Evans. *Born for Liberty: A History of Women in America*. New York: The Free Press, 1989 and Jane Pease, and William Pease. *Ladies, Women, & Wenches: Choice and Constraint in Antebellum Charleston and Boston*. Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1990. Linda Kerber has pushed historians on the understanding and use of the separate spheres in her book, *Toward an Intellectual History of Women* (1997). She states:

One day we will understand the idea of separate spheres as primarily a trope, employed by people in the past to characterize power relations for which they had no other words and that they could not acknowledge because they could not name, and by historians in our own times as they groped for a device that might dispel the confusion of anecdote and impose narrative and analytical order on the anarchy of inherited evidence, the better to comprehend the world in which we live. Linda K. *Toward an Intellectual History of Women*. Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997, 199.

I do agree with Kerber that the use of the separate sphere is perhaps a static model of trying to describe "dynamic relationships" (197), but for a study such as this, which focuses on middle and upper-class, white Victorian women in both Canada and the United States, the separate spheres model provides the best way to understand the parallel experience of women in both countries. This is not to claim that the experiences of American and Canadian women in the nineteenth century were entirely the same or that there were not differences. However, there is sufficient commonality between the two countries in regard to how Victorian society interpreted and defined the role of middle and upper-class women so as to make an angling study such as this possible. For more information on Kerber's excellent analysis on women in American history, see Kerber, Linda K. *Toward an Intellectual History of Women*. Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997. Regarding women and the ownership of property, Kerber mentions that the property acts that were revised in the mid-nineteenth century still benefited men as opposed to women. It was not until "long after limited elements of those relations had been modified by the state," that married women were permitted to "define the full use of her own earnings." *Ibid.*, 177. In the case of Michigan which revised its property laws in 1855, it was not until 1911 that this occurred. As Kerber explains, "until then her husband had the right to decide whether or not a woman could work for wages." *Ibid.*

²⁷ Patricia Vertinsky, *The Eternally Wounded Woman: Women, Doctors and Exercise in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), 23.

²⁸ Greer, "'Intrepid Naturalists and Polite Observers': Gender and Recreational Birdwatching in Southern Ontario, 1791-1886", 339.

²⁹ Ibid., 334.

³⁰ Gates, *Kindred Nature: Victorian and Edwardian Women Embrace the Living World*, 13-14.

³¹ Vertinsky, *The Eternally Wounded Woman: Women, Doctors and Exercise in the Late Nineteenth Century*, 40. Jennifer Hargreaves, *Sporting Females: Critical Issues in the History and Sociology of Women's Sports* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 48.

³² Emily A. Thackvay, "Camps and Tramps for Women," *Outing* August 1889, 333. An advertisement for the A.G. Spalding & Bros. sporting company appeared in book of the same year, entitled, *How to Be Beautiful*. The caption for the advertisement read, "To become beautiful... you require health and strength and plenty of exercise in the open air. It is highly beneficial to indulge in out-door sports and pastimes: play tennis, or croquet, ride a bicycle, go a-fishing, etc..." A.G. Spalding and Bros., "To Become Beautiful," in *How to Be Beautiful*, ed. Teresa Dean (Chicago: T. Howard, 1889), 102.

³³ Thackvay tells the story of two sisters who tried to camp in the woods without a gentleman or male guide present. She says, "it has been done, but it's an open question whether 'its worth going through so much trouble to get so little.'" In the end, the sister's only last 24 hours before a male guide named, John Wesley, provides them with a civilized and organized campsite.

³⁴ Andrea L. Smalley, "'Our Lady Sportsmen': Gender, Class and Conservation in Sport Hunting Magazines, 1873-1920," *Journal of the Guilded Age and Progressive Era* 4, no. 4 (October 2005), 366.

³⁵ Ibid., 367. As I have argued earlier, angling had a different image than hunting and already had a female tradition. Sport hunting, because of its violence and cruelty, probably needed the public image of women as participants than angling did. The relationship between hunting and fishing will be further discussed in Chapter Three.

³⁶ "Unmanly Men and Unwomanly Women," *Forest and Stream*, March 27th 1879, 151.

³⁷ Jean V. Matthews, *The Rise of the New Woman: The Woman's Movement in America, 1875-1930, The American Ways Series* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2003), 5.

³⁸ Gates, *Kindred Nature: Victorian and Edwardian Women Embrace the Living World*, 21, 22. Gates suggests that New Woman feminists argued that, "If girls were not allowed

to explore the intellectual parts of their nature, how were they, as women, to know for what endeavor they were best suited? And what if nature, in view of the sweep of human evolution, had actually intended for enfranchisement and a greater role in political life for evolving women?" Ibid., 21. Thus, there was standoff between proponents of eugenics and the New Woman feminists concerning women's "primary responsibilities: feminists arguing for women's (actually, middle class women's) right to self-determination; eugenicists were arguing for women's duty to motherhood. At the center of all of this controversy were the female body and the jurisdiction of nature, two contested areas in heated and sometimes humorous debates of the 1890's." Ibid., 22.

³⁹ Glenda Riley, *Women and Nature: Saving the Wild West* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), 10.

⁴⁰ Carrie Foote Weeks, "My First Land-Locked Salmon," *Outing* Sept 1900, 618.

⁴¹ Matthews, *The Rise of the New Woman: The Woman's Movement in America, 1875-1930*, 13,14. Matthews states that the image of the New Woman as wearing "a high collared, rather severe white shirtwaist blouse, tucked into a plain dark skirt," began to appear in *Life* magazine during the 1890's and became known as the Gibson Girl.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Riley, *Women and Nature: Saving the Wild West*, 36.

⁴⁴ C.R.C., "A New Hand at the Rod," *Outing* May 1890. The story can also be found in Holly Morris, ed., *Uncommon Waters: Women Write About Fishing* (Seattle: Seal Press, 1991; reprint, 1998), 51-57. I will further discuss C.R.C and others of the 'New Woman' movement in Chapter Three.

⁴⁵ Thackvay, "Camps and Tramps for Women", 341.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ "Diana," *Forest and Stream*, August 30th 1883, 81.

⁴⁸ "The Princess Louise," *Forest and Stream*, August 30th 1883, 81

⁴⁹ J. U. Gregory, "The Vice-Regal Angling Party," *Forest and Stream*, August 30th 1883, 88.

⁵⁰ Gates, *Kindred Nature: Victorian and Edwardian Women Embrace the Living World*, 208.

⁵¹ Ibid., 207. Similarly, Glenda Riley demonstrates how some nineteenth century women used the sport of mountain climbing to challenge a male-dominated culture. See, Riley, *Women and Nature: Saving the Wild West*, 116.

⁵² C.R.C., "A New Hand at the Rod", 117.

⁵³ Eergthora, "A Woman's Outing on the Nepigon," *Outing* September 1897, 582.

⁵⁴ Mary Trowbridge Townsend, "Angling for Eastern Trout," *Outing* May 1899, 124. Mary Shipman Andrews also wrote of the mystical bond she felt with nature when given the opportunity to leave the city. Reminiscent of her first hunting and fishing experiences that occurred in the wilderness, Andrews wrote that, "As Miss Alcott says of love-making, so with the witchcraft of the woods – for people who have not known it, any description seems overdrawn, and for people who have, it is quite beyond description." See, Mary R. Shipman Andrews, "A Woman in Camp," *Outing* January 1894, 187.

⁵⁵ Susanna Moodie, *Life in the Clearings*, ed. Robert L. McDougall, *Pioneer Books* (Toronto: The MacMillan Company of Canada Limited, 1853; reprint, 1959), 3.

⁵⁶ Marbury, *Favorite Flies and Their Histories: With Many Replies from Practical Anglers to Inquiries Concerning How, When, and Where to Use Them*, 3.

⁵⁷ Patricia Jasen, *Wild Things: Nature, Culture, and Tourism in Ontario 1790 - 1914* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 106, 107. Andrea Smalley also notes that according to nineteenth century sporting magazines, "Hunting and fishing... counterbalanced the 'over-civilization' which threatened to degrade the mental and physical conditions of urbanites." Smalley, "'Our Lady Sportsmen': Gender, Class and Conservation in Sport Hunting Magazines, 1873-1920", 360.

⁵⁸ Jasen, *Wild Things: Nature, Culture, and Tourism in Ontario 1790 - 1914*, 115.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 113. On the same page, Jasen states that in relation to Canada, by the late nineteenth century, "The camping and canoeing trip remained to some extent a male preserve, but women often participated, especially in fishing expeditions."

⁶⁰ Andrews, "A Woman in Camp", 184.

⁶¹ Julia A. Hunter and Earle G. Shettleworth Jr., *Fly Rod Crosby: The Woman Who Marketed Maine* (Gardiner, Maine: Tilbury House Publishers, 2000), 4.

⁶² Ibid., 6.

⁶³ Ibid., 7.

⁶⁴ Thomas A. Verde, "Diana of the Rangeleys," *The American Fly Fisher* 15, no. 2 (1989), 10.

⁶⁵ Ibid. Verde states that by the early 1890's, "Nature had literally revived her . . ." Crosby was by now writing for various sporting magazines and had established herself as an outdoor writer and journalist.

⁶⁶ Gillespie, "The Imperial Embrace: British Sportsmen and the Appropriation of Landscape in Nineteenth-Century Canada", 26.

⁶⁷ Carl-Petter Sjøvold, "An Angling People: Nature, Sport and Conservation in Nineteenth Century America" (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Davis, 1999), 46.

⁶⁸ Lady Dufferin, *My Canadian Journal 1872-1878*, ed. Gladys Chantler Walker (Don Mills: Longmans Canada Limited, 1969), 129. Lady Dufferin's skill as an angler was recorded by George Stewart Jr. who wrote of her experience on the Gaspé, "Lady Dufferin with a deftness which would have delighted the gentle Isaac himself, proved herself a thorough mistress of the gentle art, and after killing several dozens of trout averaging half a pound to four and a half pounds each in weight, she succeeded in landing from one of the upper pools a thirteen pound salmon." See, George Jr. Stewart, *Canada under the Administration of the Earl of Dufferin* (Toronto: Rose-Belford Publishing Company, 1878), 249.

⁶⁹ Dufferin, *My Canadian Journal 1872-1878*, 115.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 116.

⁷¹ The use of military terminology to describe British angling experiences in North America was not uncommon. In describing the Dufferin's angling expedition on the Gaspé, George Stewart Jr. writes, "While the gentlemen of the party devoted their skill to the capture of the king of fish, the ladies waged war on the speckled and delicious trout." See, Stewart, *Canada under the Administration of the Earl of Dufferin*, 248, 249.

⁷² Concerning women anglers and hunters in the nineteenth century, Barbara Gates writes:

Sport for the late Victorians was seen as a contest between a human's canniness, intelligence and prowess, on the one hand, and an animal's instincts and strength, on the other. It was also a means of upward mobility (Lowerson). Well-to-do middle-class people gained prestige by participating and excelling in upper-class blood sports. The bag was sheerly a reward for one's skill; one simply appropriated what one deserved." See, Gates, *Kindred Nature: Victorian and Edwardian Women Embrace the Living World*, 200.

The salmon in particular had long been regarded as a royal game fish in Britain and had frequently been ascribed the characteristics of nobility. For example, Walton called the salmon, "the King of freshwater fish." See, Izaak Walton and Charles Cotton, *The Compleat Angler: With an Introduction by John Buchan and an Appendix Containing a Modernized Text of the Arte of Angling (1577)*, 5th, reprint 1960 ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1676), 126. See also George Stewart Jr.'s reference to the Dufferin's in my previous note. The goal of the anglers was to capture the king of fish.

⁷³ Susannah Moodie, *Roughing It in the Bush or Life in Canada*, ed. Carl Ballstadt (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1988), 298.

⁷⁴ Gates, *Kindred Nature: Victorian and Edwardian Women Embrace the Living World*, 1.

⁷⁵ Dufferin was not uncommon in recording the number and weight of the fish which her party caught. Fishing clubs and members of the British sporting elite also kept detailed log books. For example, James Whalen notes that, "Over a five-year period, 1888-1893, Lord Stanley's fishing parties, which often included both men and women, caught 894 salmon with an average weight of 23.7 pounds, although fish over 40 pounds were landed on occasion. In 1888, his best season, Lord Stanley and his entourage, reported and impressive total of 300 salmon taken with an average weight of more than 25 pounds." See, James M. Whalen, "A Viceregal Kettle of Fish," review of Reviewed Item, *Legion Magazine*, no. 3 (March/April 1999), <http://www.legionmagazine.com/features/canadianreflections/99-03.asp>. George Stewart notes that in ten days of fishing, the Dufferin's fishing party, "netted a total of seventeen salmon killed; total weight 295 pounds." See, Stewart, *Canada under the Administration of the Earl of Dufferin*, 248.

⁷⁶ Eergthora, "A Woman's Outing on the Nepigon", 585. For further discussion on how British sportsmen described the Canadian wilderness see, R.G. Moyles and Doug Owram, *Imperial Dreams and Colonial Realities: British Views of Canada, 1880-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988).

⁷⁷ Riley, *Women and Nature: Saving the Wild West*, 39.

⁷⁸ Karen Wonders, "A Sportman's Eden Part 2: A Wilderness Besieged," *The Beaver* 79, no. 6 (1999), 33.

⁷⁹ Gender and her amateur status was the most probable cause, however, Kenneth Cameron also notes that a rivalry with Seth Green, a fish culturist on Spring Creek, may have led to her exclusion from a scientific study on the creek by J.A. Litner, who used Green's water and moss samples. "Too bad," writes Cameron, "Sara probably could have provided him with all stages of the most important insects." See, Kenneth M. Cameron, "The Girls of Summer Part 2," *The Flyfisher* (Winter 1977).

⁸⁰ Schullery, *American Fly Fishing: A History*, 89.

⁸¹ Lyla Foggia, *Reel Women: The World of Women Who Fish* (Hillsboro: Beyond Words Publishing Inc., 1995), 35.

⁸² Kenneth Cameron goes into detail about McBride's observations and experiments. See, Cameron, "The Girls of Summer Part 2." In an 1870 article in *Punchinello*, entitled, "Fish Sauce," which also features a cartoon of a lady fly fisher, the anonymous author tries to dissuade the imitation of natural insects in fly tying. "Artificial flies, like artificial flowers, should never follow nature. Manufacturers of both articles perfectly understand this; and hence the superiority of their productions to the mere realities that flutter and bloom for their brief hour and then die. There is nothing in entomology so beautiful as a well-busked trout or salmon fly." See, "Fish Sauce," *Punchinello*, Saturday, April 2 1870. This type of mentality in the nineteenth century is also noted by contemporary fisherwoman, Joan Wulff, who Lyla Foggia quotes to state that McBride, "was ahead of her time, . . . the fly fishing fraternity, as a whole, didn't have a clue about insect life and most fly patterns were what we now call 'attractors.'" See, Foggia, *Reel Women: The World of Women Who Fish*, 35. For McBride to carefully craft artificial flies based on reality was to go against the common practice and thinking of the angling community.

⁸³ "Feminine Izaak Waltons: A New York Fisherwoman", 14.

⁸⁴ McBride stated, "Insects in the water are the most afflicted by changes of temperatures. Any guide for a fly-fisher would be almost useless unless this important point is remembered. English works can never become positive authorities for our climate." Sara Jane McBride, "Metaphysics of Fly Fishing. Part First," *Forest and Stream*, March 16th 1876, 89.

⁸⁵ Cameron, "The Girls of Summer Part 2", 16.

⁸⁶ Frances Anne Kemble, *Diary of Frances Anne Kemble, August 1832, Journal of Frances Anne Butler, Vol 1* (Philadelphia: Carey, Lea & Blanchard, 1835), 39. Although Kemble is examining a fish caught by her husband's fishing party, Kemble was herself a passionate angler. Her description of her passion for angling was documented earlier in the chapter.

⁸⁷ Susan Margaret McKinnon St. Maur Somerset, Duchess of, *Impressions of a Tenderfoot During a Journey in Search of Sport in the Far West* (London: J. Murray, 1890), 88.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ St. Maur uses Latin nomenclature in other instances after first giving the popular name of the fish. See page 87 for an example.

⁹⁰ Riley, *Women and Nature: Saving the Wild West*, 38.

⁹¹ Glenda Riley, "Victorian Ladies Outdoors: Women in the Early Western Conservation Movement, 1870-1920," *Southern California Quarterly* 83, no. 1 (Spring 2001), 69.

⁹² Moira F. Harris, "Elizabeth Taylor as a Victorian Lady Traveler," in *The Far Islands and Other Cold Places*, ed. James Taylor Dunn (St. Paul: Pogo Press, 1997), 301.

⁹³ Elizabeth Taylor, "A Woman in the Mackenzie Delta. Part 1: Northward to Athabasca Lake," *Outing* XXV, no. 1 (October 1894), 44, 45.

⁹⁴ Elizabeth Taylor, *The Far Islands and Other Cold Places: Travel Essays of a Victorian Lady*, ed. James Taylor Dunn (St. Paul: Pogo Press, 1997), 36.

⁹⁵ James Taylor Dunn, "Nipigon Fisherwoman," *The Beaver* (September 1949), 21.

⁹⁶ Taylor, *The Far Islands and Other Cold Places: Travel Essays of a Victorian Lady*, 37. At least for botanical specimens.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁹⁸ "Salmon Angling on the Restigouche," *Scribner's Magazine* January - June 1888, 580.

⁹⁹ Edmund Collins, "Canadian Social Life and Sports," *Outing* December 1885, 269, 270.

¹⁰⁰ Helen Church, "Two Idlers in Camp," *Outing* August 1895, 394. British tourist, Lady Jephson, also combined fishing and sketching during her vacation travels in Canada. In *A Canadian Scrap-book* (1897), Jephson wrote of how her fishing equipment and sketching arrangements were strapped onto their buckboard. See, Lady Jephson, *A Canadian Scrap-Book* (London: M. Russell, 1897), 37.

¹⁰¹ Thackvay, "Camps and Tramps for Women", 335, 341.

¹⁰² Mrs. George Croft Huddleston, *Bluebell, a Novel* (Toronto: Belford, 1875), 131. Bluebell, or Theodora Leigh, and her friend, Cecil Rolleston, are staying at the newly purchased wilderness retreat of Cecil's father, Colonel Rolleston. Set in the Thousand Islands of the St. Lawrence, Cecil did not want to go with her father on an excursion down the Saguenay in Quebec, but instead was, "perfectly content to be all day long in her canoe, fishing, sketching, reading or picnicking with the children on the island."

¹⁰³ Riley, *Women and Nature: Saving the Wild West*, 82.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 81.

¹⁰⁵ In a *New York Times* article from 1889, angling was linked explicitly with the growth of amateur photography. "Anglers often find the camera of much service as well as amusement in their visits to the trout streams and lakes. The small space which the latest detective and small cameras take up allows of them being carried on the stream. The camera can be strapped to the fishing creel, where it is out of the way in casting." "Fish Caught in the Air: Angling and Photography Hand in Hand," *The New York Times*, February 25 1889, 8.

¹⁰⁶ Margaret Bisland wrote, "Photography makes a strong appeal to [a] woman for the reason that she may study and practice it within her own home... and it does not interfere with her daily duties." See, Margaret Bisland, "Women and Their Cameras," *Outing* XVII, no. 1 (1890), 38.

¹⁰⁷ Riley, "Victorian Ladies Outdoors: Women in the Early Western Conservation Movement, 1870-1920", 76.

¹⁰⁸ Jasen, *Wild Things: Nature, Culture, and Tourism in Ontario 1790 - 1914*, 134.

¹⁰⁹ Chochla, "Victorian Fly Fishers on the Nipigon", 158.

¹¹⁰ Eergthora, "A Woman's Outing on the Nepigon", 582.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Katherine White upon seeing her native guides remarked, "They looked civilized enough and another fear vanished." See, Katherine White, "Through Darkest America," *Outing* March 1893, 398.

¹¹³ Mrs N. Davenport, "Diary of N. Davenport, August, 1871," in *Journal of a Fourteen Days' Ride through the Bush from Quebec to Lake St. John* (Quebec: Daily Mercury Office, 1872), 14.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 15. Davenport's 'saving the day' by taking the lead is a similar literary device that was used by women travelers where the local guides are seen as incompetent, "and the woman traveler, through the prized Victorian values of resourcefulness, perseverance, and intelligence," saves herself and others from adversity. See, Karen M. Morin, "Peak Practices: Englishwomen's 'Heroic' Adventures in the Nineteenth-Century American West," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, no. 89 (September 1999), 502.

¹¹⁵ Davenport, "Diary of N. Davenport, August, 1871", 18.

¹¹⁶ Mrs N. Davenport, "Diary of N. Davenport, September 1871," in *Journal of a Fourteen Days' Ride through the Bush from Quebec to Lake St. John* (Quebec: Daily Mercury Office, 1872).

¹¹⁷ Somerset, *Impressions of a Tenderfoot During a Journey in Search of Sport in the Far West*, 90.

¹¹⁸ Jasen, *Wild Things: Nature, Culture, and Tourism in Ontario 1790 - 1914*, 139.

¹¹⁹ White, "Through Darkest America", 463.

¹²⁰ Susannah Moodie, *Diary of Susannah Moodie, April, 1833, Six Years in the Bush: Or, Extracts from the Journal of a Settler in Upper Canada* (London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co., 1838), 126.

¹²¹ Dunn, "Nipigon Fisherwoman", 21. A *Globe* correspondent named 'Spinner' also took a trip down the Nipigon the same year as Taylor and noted that "Esquimaux Joe is the most distinguished cook on the river," and that he and Louis Bouchard were, "stars" in their quality as guides. See, Spinner, "Ten Days on the Nipigon," *The Globe*, Thursday, July 19 1888.

¹²² Dunn, "Nipigon Fisherwoman", 22.

¹²³ Chochla, "Victorian Fly Fishers on the Nipigon", 159.

¹²⁴ Taylor, *The Far Islands and Other Cold Places: Travel Essays of a Victorian Lady*, 45.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 46.

¹²⁶ Chochla, "Victorian Fly Fishers on the Nipigon", 159.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸ Jasen, *Wild Things: Nature, Culture, and Tourism in Ontario 1790 - 1914*, Spinner, "Ten Days on the Nipigon.", 139. See also, Jasen, *Wild Things: Nature, Culture, and Tourism in Ontario 1790 - 1914*, 139.

¹²⁹ Eergthora, "A Woman's Outing on the Nepigon", 584.

¹³⁰ Church, "Two Idlers in Camp.", 392. Andrews, "A Woman in Camp", 184.

¹³¹ Sjovold, "An Angling People: Nature, Sport and Conservation in Nineteenth Century America", 161.

¹³² Ibid., 163. The 'Red Ibis Club' in New York did include women as members. According to the *New York Times*, this club was made up of about, "20 New York and Brooklyn people," which included well known New York newspapermen of the time and several women. See, "The Thousand Islands: Fishing and Boating on the Old St. Lawrence," *New York Times*, July 8th 1888, 16; "Two Hooks and One Fish," *New York Times*, July 29th 1888, 12.

¹³³ Hunter, *Fly Rod Crosby: The Woman Who Marketed Maine*, 15.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 19.

¹³⁵ Women earned the right to vote in presidential elections in Maine in 1919.

¹³⁶ Sjøvold, "An Angling People: Nature, Sport and Conservation in Nineteenth Century America", 205, 206.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 207.

¹³⁸ Fannie Pearson Hardy, "Six Years under Maine Game Laws. Part 6 - in Conclusion," *Forest and Stream*, August 6th 1891, 46.

¹³⁹ "Feminine Izaak Waltons: A New York Fisherwoman", 14.

¹⁴⁰ Bill Parenteau, "A 'Very Determined Opposition to the Law': Conservation, Angling Leases, and Social Conflict in the Canadian Atlantic Salmon Fishery, 1867-1914", *Environmental History*, no. 3 (July 2004), <http://0-www.historycooperative.org.darius.uleth.ca:80/journals/eh/9.3/parenteau.html>.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid.

Chapter 3

¹ J.M., "A Michigan Sportswoman," *Forest and Stream*, February 5th 1880, 17. The entire quote in context is as follows:

I do not know whether the editor of *Forest and Stream* be a woman's-right's man, so I will not write a suffrage article, but I do think he would not have been so kind as to give us a column in his paper if he expected it to be filled with lines utterly devoid of sense. I thank him for paving the way, so that editors of other papers may follow after. He has given us ladies an opportunity of spending a few pleasant moments occasionally in

writing, and, in the words of Sol Smith Russell, I say: "Girls, improve your opportunities.

² Charles Hallock, "To Correspondents," *Forest and Stream*, August 14th 1873.

³ J.M., "A Michigan Sportswoman", 17.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Andrea L. Smalley, "'Our Lady Sportsmen': Gender, Class and Conservation in Sport Hunting Magazines, 1873-1920," *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 4, no. 4 (October 2005), 364.

⁶ A. Benedict, "Letter to the Editor," *Forest and Stream*, August 13th 1874, 6.

⁷ Agma Awahoose, "A Plea for the Girl," *Forest and Stream*, July 23rd 1891, 2.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Charles Hallock, *Forest and Stream*, August 14th 1873, 8

¹¹ Paulina, "The Pennsylvania Plan," *Forest and Stream*, March 4th 1880, 96.

¹² "Woman in the Field," *Forest and Stream*, January 29th 1880, 36.

¹³ John Rickards Betts, "Sporting Journalism in Nineteenth-Century America," *American Quarterly* 5, no. 1 (Spring 1953), 48.

¹⁴ Mme M.B.T. Gouraud, "Dr. T. Felix Gouraud's Oriental Cream, or Magic Beautifier," *Forest and Stream*, March 4th 1880, 102. It is interesting to note that the proprietor of the cream was also a woman, Mme M.B.T. Gouraud.

¹⁵ J.F. Marsters, "Boys & Girls Fishing Rods & Reels," *Forest and Stream*, July 7th 1881, 445. By the turn of the century, the 'Bristol' Rod advertisements not only showed women fishing with men and women posing by themselves, they also included more sexually charged images. In one advertisement a man and a woman are shown sitting next to a picnic lunch while a young boy uses a fishing rod to lift the woman's dress up above her knees, much to the delight of the man.

¹⁶ "The Bristol Steel Fishing Rods," *Forest and Stream*, January 12th 1893, 45.

¹⁷ As quoted in, Smalley, "'Our Lady Sportsmen': Gender, Class and Conservation in Sport Hunting Magazines, 1873-1920", 373.

¹⁸ Awahoose, "A Plea for the Girl", 2.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ "The Sportswoman," *Forest and Stream*, January 26th 1895, 63.

²¹ Mrs. F. Cauthorn, "Feminine Success in Troutng," *Forest and Stream*, November 17th 1892, 426.

²² Sara Jane McBride, "Mcbride Flies," *Forest and Stream*, April 6th 1876, 143.

²³ Sara Jane McBride, "Sara J. McBride, Fishing Tackle," *Forest and Stream*, February 14th 1878, 82.

²⁴ Sara Jane McBride, "Metaphysics of Fly Fishing. Part First.," *Forest and Stream*, March 16th 1876, 88.

²⁵ "Flies, Lines, Rods, Reels, Hooks and Material," *Forest and Stream*, February 21st 1878, 46, 47.

²⁶ Hallock, *Forest and Stream*, August 14th, 1873, 8.

²⁷ Kenneth M. Cameron, "The Girls of Summer Part 2," *The Flyfisher* (Winter 1977), 17.

²⁸ In regard to women and the selling and manufacture of sporting equipment, it may also be asserted that though the presence of nineteenth-century women angling entrepreneurs such as McBride were limited, it would appear that there were even fewer female gun manufacturers or sellers (from what I have found), which would further speak to an existing tradition of female respectability within angling that did not yet extend to hunting or shooting.

²⁹ Thomas A. Verde, "Diana of the Rangeleys," *The American Fly Fisher* 15, no. 2 (1989), 10.

³⁰ "Club Chat About Sports - Miss Crosby's Judgement of Fetching Trout Flies," *The New York Times*, March 15 1896, 6.

³¹ "Women in Journalism," *The New York Times*, May 25 1893, 2.

³² Verde, "Diana of the Rangeleys", 10.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ A.F. Aldridge, "The Sportsmen's Show", *The New York Times*, March 14th, 1897, SM9.

³⁵ Verde, "Diana of the Rangeleys", 10.

³⁶ Julia A. Hunter and Earle G. Shettleworth Jr., *Fly Rod Crosby: The Woman Who Marketed Maine* (Gardiner, Maine: Tilbury House Publishers, 2000), 21-23. Thomas Verde notes that at the 1895 Sportsmen's Show Crosby coined the still used phrase, 'Maine: The Nation's Playground.' See, Verde, "Diana of the Rangeleys", 10.

³⁷ "The Sportsmen's Exposition," *The New York Times*, June 22 1896, 2.

³⁸ Hunter, *Fly Rod Crosby: The Woman Who Marketed Maine*, 21-23.

³⁹ "Novelties for Sportsmen. Some Attractions That Will Be Seen at the Coming Exposition.," *The New York Times*, March 1 1896., 6. Hunter, *Fly Rod Crosby: The Woman Who Marketed Maine*, 22.

⁴⁰ Verde, "Diana of the Rangeleys", 10.

⁴¹ Crosby understood the popular culture of her day and like P.T. Barnum, knew how to create a sense of expectation and excitement among the public. In a letter to the *New York Times* shortly before the 1897 Sportsmen's Exposition, Crosby described to the public, a detailed plan for her Maine exhibit, stating, "I intend to make the Maine exhibit the most attractive spot at the Sportsmen's Exposition." See, Aldridge, "The Sportsmen's Show", SM9.

⁴² "From Stream and Forest. Trophies of Sports of All Kinds to Be Shown at the Garden. Live Trout and Salmon from Maine.," *The New York Times*, March 15 1896, 12.

⁴³ Verde, "Diana of the Rangeleys", 10.

⁴⁴ Ibid. As quoted by Thomas Verde.

⁴⁵ For the 1897 Sportmen's Exposition, seating for the casting demonstrations was increased to accommodate "thousands from convenient seats." See, Aldridge, "The Sportsmen's Show", SM9.

⁴⁶ Verde, "Diana of the Rangeleys", 11, 12.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 11.

⁴⁸ Hunter, *Fly Rod Crosby: The Woman Who Marketed Maine*, 29, 41, 42, 56. Verde, "Diana of the Rangeleys", 12. Crosby was never a part of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, but she was a guest of Buffalo Bill in his private car and it would appear that Annie Oakley and Crosby formed a lasting friendship. Crosby had also taken up hunting and shooting and apparently could rival Oakley for accuracy.

⁴⁹ Hunter, *Fly Rod Crosby: The Woman Who Marketed Maine*, 29.

⁵⁰ "These Are Two Sportswomen," *The New York Times*, May 19 1895, 3.

⁵¹ Hunter, *Fly Rod Crosby: The Woman Who Marketed Maine*, 27.

⁵² Ibid., 40. Crosby was influential in the establishment of a State run licensing system for guides and in 1897, spoke before the Maine legislature in support of the law. See, Verde, "Diana of the Rangeleys", 12. She also spoke as a full member during the annual meetings of the Maine Sportsmen's Fish and Game Association. Hunter, *Fly Rod Crosby: The Woman Who Marketed Maine*, 40.

⁵³ Hunter, *Fly Rod Crosby: The Woman Who Marketed Maine*, 47.

⁵⁴ "Club Chat About Sports - Miss Crosby's Judgement of Fetching Trout Flies", 6. "The Sportsmen's Exposition," *The New York Times*, January 15 1898, 4. "From Stream and Forest. Trophies of Sports of All Kinds to Be Shown at the Garden. Live Trout and Salmon from Maine", 12.

⁵⁵ Lyla Foggia, *Reel Women: The World of Women Who Fish* (Hillsboro: Beyond Words Publishing Inc., 1995), 16.

⁵⁶ A.N. Cheney, "World's Fair," *Forest and Stream*, June 22nd 1893, 543. "Women in Journalism", 2.

⁵⁷ Hunter, *Fly Rod Crosby: The Woman Who Marketed Maine*, 106.

⁵⁸ Aldridge, "The Sportsmen's Show", SM9.

⁵⁹ "Some Big Maine Trout," *The New York Times*, March 20 1896, 6.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Aldridge, "The Sportsmen's Show", SM9.

⁶² Patricia Jasen, *Wild Things: Nature, Culture, and Tourism in Ontario 1790 - 1914* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 144.

⁶³ "Sportsmen's Show Opens", 6.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ As quoted in, Hunter, *Fly Rod Crosby: The Woman Who Marketed Maine*, 44.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 54. Again, it is interesting to note how hunting is singled out as having far more masculine borders around it than fishing. Crosby's own experience as an angler opened the doors for her later excursions of hunting which reinforces the previous argument that hunting needed angling to be a gateway of respectability, through which women, once

they had experienced the acceptable thrill of 'hunting' with a rod and reel, could then do so with a gun.

⁶⁷ Verde, "Diana of the Rangeleys", 13.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Lucy J. Tomlin, "Fisherwomen," *Forest and Stream*, January 18th 1894, 31.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ George Bird Grinnell, "Angling Notes. Women Anglers," *Forest and Stream*, February 20th 1897, 152.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Cauthorn, "Feminine Success in Troutng," 426.

⁷⁴ "Feminine Izaak Waltons: A New York Fisherwoman," *The New York Times*, August 14 1898, 14.

⁷⁵ A Sportsman's Wife, "Reminiscences of the North Woods," *Forest and Stream*, February 12th 1874, 2, 3.

⁷⁶ F.S.J.C., "The Champion Tarpon," *Forest and Stream*, September 12th 1893, 190.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ "What Anglers Are Doing. Mrs. Stagg Has Broken the Tarpon Record," *New York Times*, July 4 1891, 8. The *Times* reported that Mrs. Stagg caught 1774lbs of tarpon over a 13 day period. All but one were six feet long or more.

⁷⁹ "Mrs. Stagg's 205lb. Tarpon," *Forest and Stream*, May 14th 1891, 332. Stagg suggests that 'Dode, presumably her husband, assisted her with advice on when to set the hook. After describing how the fish stripped her line and fought with a steady pull, she stated, "When we got him in we found the snood nearly in two." Whether this implies help from her husband is not clear. Neither the *New York Times* or *Forest and Stream* suggest that Stagg had any help.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Jean V. Matthews, *The Rise of the New Woman: The Woman's Movement in America, 1875-1930, The American Ways Series* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2003), 35.

- ⁸³ Mark Chochla, "Victorian Fly Fishers on the Nipigon," *Ontario History* 91, no. 2 (1999), 159.
- ⁸⁴ Elizabeth Taylor, *The Far Islands and Other Cold Places: Travel Essays of a Victorian Lady*, ed. James Taylor Dunn (St. Paul: Pogo Press, 1997), 7.
- ⁸⁵ Moira F. Harris, "Elizabeth Taylor as a Victorian Lady Traveler," in *The Far Islands and Other Cold Places*, ed. James Taylor Dunn (St. Paul: Pogo Press, 1997), 302.
- ⁸⁶ "Woman in the Far North," *Forest and Stream*, September 29th 1892.
- ⁸⁷ Elizabeth Taylor, "In the Far North Land. Part 1," *Forest and Stream*, August 22nd 1896, 142, 143. Elizabeth Taylor, "In the Far North Land. Part 2", *Forest and Stream*, September 12th 1896, 207.
- ⁸⁸ "Woman in the Far North", front page.
- ⁸⁹ Glenda Riley, *Women and Nature: Saving the Wild West* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), 36.
- ⁹⁰ Ibid.
- ⁹¹ Barbara T. Gates, *Kindred Nature: Victorian and Edwardian Women Embrace the Living World* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 207.
- ⁹² Ibid.
- ⁹³ Ibid.
- ⁹⁴ C.R.C., "A New Hand at the Rod," *Outing* May 1890, 117.
- ⁹⁵ Ibid., 118.
- ⁹⁶ Ibid.
- ⁹⁷ Ibid., 121.
- ⁹⁸ Ibid., 120.
- ⁹⁹ Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* (London: The Hogarth Press, 1959), 6.
- ¹⁰⁰ Helene E. Roberts, "The Exquisite Slave: The Role of Clothes in the Making of the Victorian Woman," *Signs* 2, no. 3 (Spring 1977), 555.
- ¹⁰¹ C.R.C., "A New Hand at the Rod", 119.

¹⁰² Riley, *Women and Nature: Saving the Wild West*, 52.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 53. Karin Morin also explores the question of dress and the English Victorian women out-of-doors. She observes that when English travelers and mountain climbers in the American west described their own clothing, they associated "their ladylike behavior and mores with the English upper classes, yet at the same time contesting dominant Victorian constructions of femininity." Moreover, Morin indicates that British women found that, "feminist challenges to appropriate dresswear were an American invention," and adopted them while traveling only to revert back to more appropriate clothing upon their return to Britain. See, Karen M. Morin, "Peak Practices: Englishwomen's "Heroic" Adventures in the Nineteenth-Century American West," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, no. 89 (September 1999), 495-498.

¹⁰⁴ J.M., "A Michigan Sportswoman", 17.

¹⁰⁵ "Feminine Izaak Waltons: A New York Fisherwoman", 14.

¹⁰⁶ Margot Page, "Preface", in *Uncommon Waters: Women Write About Fishing*, ed. Holly Morris (Seattle: Seal Press, 1991; reprint, 1998), xi. Holly Morris includes the complete text of the story under the name, "Woman's Hour Has Struck."

¹⁰⁷ Ronald J. and Mary Saracino Zboray Zboray, "The Romance of Fisherwomen in Antebellum New England," *American Studies* 39, no. 1 (Spring 1998), 6.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 20.

¹¹⁰ For a detailed analysis of the use of angling as a metaphoric device for eroticism and sexuality in the Renaissance see, Anne E. McIlhaney, "Renaissance Acts and Images of Angling: An Anatomy of the British Piscatory, 1496-1653" (Dissertation, University of Virginia, May 1998).

¹¹¹ M. Gertrude Cundill, "Ingleby's Neighbor," *Outing* August 1897, 440.

¹¹² Ibid., 442.

¹¹³ Ibid., 443.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 447.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 445.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 452.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 448.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 443.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 445.

¹²⁰ Zboray, "The Romance of Fisherwomen in Antebellum New England", 6.

¹²¹ E.W. Sandys, "An Evened Score," *Outing* May 1900, 142.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ C.R.C., "A New Hand at the Rod", 121.

¹²⁴ Sandys, "An Evened Score", 474.

¹²⁵ Ken Monatague, "The Aesthetics of Hygiene: Aesthetic Dress, Modernity, and the Body as Sign," *Journal of Design History* 7, no. 2 (1994), 94, 91.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 104.

¹²⁷ Natalie Schroeder, "Feminine Sensationalism, Eroticism, and Self-Assertion: M.E. Braddon and Ouida," *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 7, no. 1 (Spring 1988), 90.

¹²⁸ Sandys, "An Evened Score", 142.

Conclusion

¹ Henry P. Wells, "Favorite Flies," *Forest and Stream*, October 13th 1892, 317.

² C.R.C., "A New Hand at the Rod," *Outing* May 1890, 120.

³ Emily A. Thackvay, "Camps and Tramps for Women," *Outing* August 1889, 342.

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