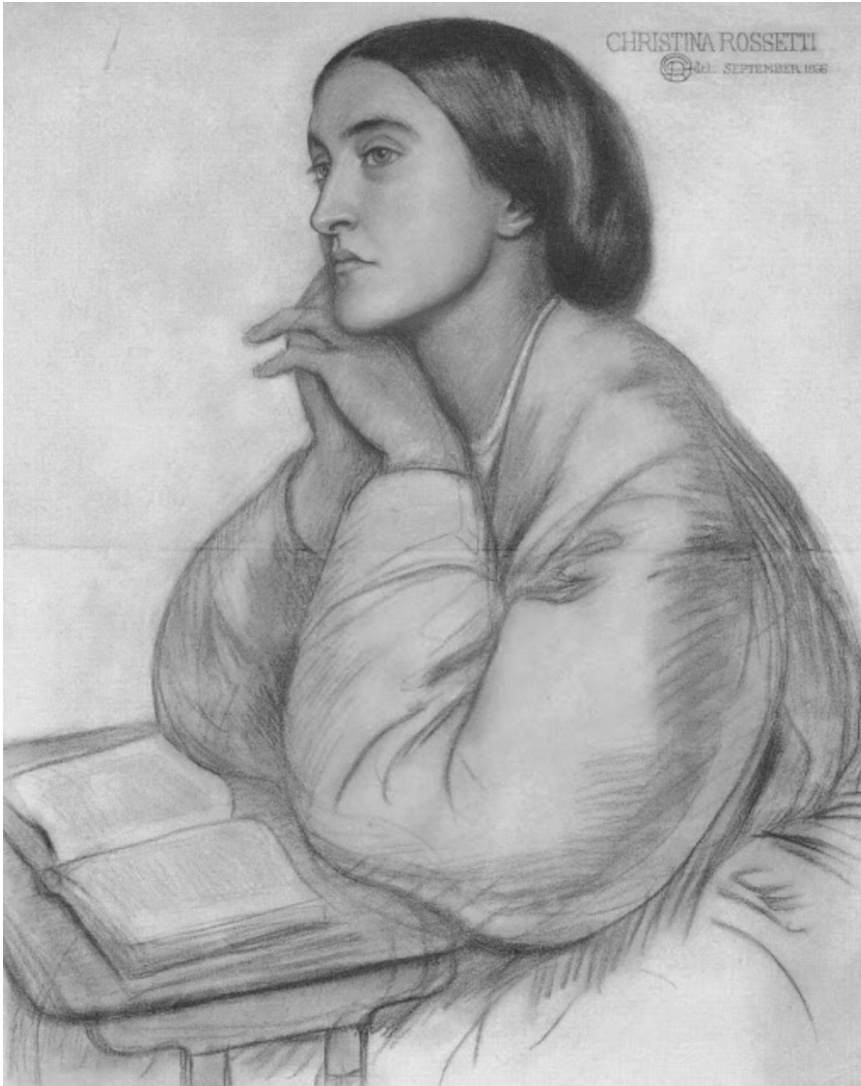


TRANSATLANTIC IDENTITIES



10. CREATED EQUAL?

November 29, 2023

CREATED EQUAL?

THE WORDS IN THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE must be taken literally: "all *men* are created equal" meant just that; women in American did not get the vote until well into the 20th century, and it was pretty much the same in Britain. All the same, there were movements towards women's equality gaining momentum in both countries, with such landmarks as Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Women* in 1782, and Margaret Fuller's *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* published in 1843.

Feminist history is a vast subject and impossible to handle solely from the artistic record, so there will be more documentary and biographical material in this class than usual. Many important names will have to be omitted. In the first hour, on Britain, we shall look at a number of nexuses of people connected by kinship or shared belief. This approach is harder to maintain in an American context, but the same principle of sampling the waters at different times and places still applies. *rb.*

A. SO MUCH FOR CONVENTION

Activist Mary Wollstonecraft, philosopher William Godwin, and their daughter, the future Mary Shelley.

- ♪ **Biography:** Mary Wollstonecraft (Jacqui Rossi)
- ♪ **Shelley:** *Love's Philosophy* (Tom Hiddleston and Iain Batchelor)

B. THE ANGEL'S HANDBOOK

Two books that enshrined Victorian views of womanhood: Coventry Patmore's poetry sequence, *The Angel in the House* (1864–72) and Mrs. Beeton's *Book of Household Management* (1861).

- Patmore:** *The Angel in the House* (1864–72), excerpts
- Beeton:** *Book of Household Management* (1861)

C. ART IN REFLECTION

Three leading figures in the Pre-Raphaelite circle: painter and poet Dante Gabriel Rossetti, his sister poet Christina Rossetti, and his wife, model, and muse Elizabeth Siddal.

Christina Rossetti: *In an Artist's Studio*

Elizabeth Siddal: *The Lust of the Eyes*

♪ **Christina Rossetti:** *Goblin Market* (1859), opening

D. HIGH AND LOW

To end our survey of Victorian women, we contrast two roughly contemporary artists: James Tissot, who specialized in bourgeois subjects, and Frank Holl, who depicted the difficult lives of common people.

Holl: *Far Away Thoughts* (1870s?)

Tissot: *Waiting; in the Shallows* (1874)

Holl: *No Tidings from the Sea* (1871, Royal Collection)

Holl: *Her Firstborn, Horsham Churchyard* (1876, Dundee)

Holl: *Newgate—Committed for Trial* (1878, Holloway College)

♪ **Gaskell:** *North and South* (1855), Margaret visits Bessy (BBC)

E. THE AMERICAN WOMAN

We use the paintings of the minor *genre* artist Edward Lamson Henry to introduce a brief survey of attitudes to American womanhood over the 19th century: the True Woman, the Real Woman, the Public Woman, and the New Woman.

Henry: *A Sunday Visit* (1902)

Henry: *The New Woman* (1892, White River Valley Museum)

Henry: *Memories* (1873)

Henry: *A Country School* (c.1890, Yale)

Homer: *The Red Schoolhouse* (1873, NGA)

Homer: *Inside the Bar* (1883, NY Met)

F. TRANSCENDENT WOMEN

Two of many remarkable women associated with the Transcendental Movement: polemicist Margaret Fuller and novelist Louisa May Alcott.

♪ **Alcott:** *Little Women* (Greta Gerwig film 2019), opening scene

♪ **Alcott:** *Work: a Story of Experience* (1872), excerpts

♪ **Biography:** *Margaret Fuller, Transatlantic Revolutionary*

G. WOMEN WHO MOVED A NATION

The campaigns of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony for Women's Suffrage in America, and Emmeline Pankhurst's use of civil disobedience to achieve the same ends in Britain.

♪ **Video:** Seneca Falls Convention

♪ **Biography:** Susan B. Anthony

♪ **Smyth:** *March of the Women*

♪ **Smyth:** *Serenade in D* (1889), scherzo, with Suffrage posters

Louisa May **Alcott** (1832–88, *American novelist*), Susan B. **Anthony** (1820–1906, *American activist*), Isabella **Beeton** (1836–65, *English writer*), Julia Margaret **Cameron** (1815–79, *English photographer*), Margaret **Fuller** (1810–50, *American activist*), Elizabeth **Gaskell** (1810–65, *English novelist*), Edward Lamson **Henry** (1841–1919, *American painter*), Frank **Holl** (1845–88, *English painter*), Winslow **Homer** (1836–1910, *American painter*), John Everett **Millais** (1829–96, *English painter*), Lucretia **Mott** (1793–1880, *American activist*), Amelia **Opie** (1769–1853, *English writer*), John **Opie** (1761–1807, *English painter*), Emmeline **Pankhurst** (1858–1928, *English activist*), Coventry **Patmore** (1823–96, *English poet*), Emily Andrews **Patmore** (1824–62, *English writer*), Christina **Rossetti** (1830–94, *English poet*), Dante Gabriel **Rossetti** (1828–82, *English painter and poet*), John Singer **Sargent** (1856–1925, *American painter*), Mary **Shelley** (1897–1851, *English novelist*), Percy Bysshe **Shelley** (1792–1822), *English poet*, Elizabeth **Siddal** (1829–62, *English model and painter*), Ethel **Smyth** (1858–1944, *English composer*), Elizabeth Cady **Stanton** (1815–1902, *American activist*), James **Tissot** (1836–1902, *French painter*), Mary **Wollstonecraft** (1759–97, *English activist*)

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