MOTHERS IN A MAN'S WORLD: MASCULINITY, MATERNITY, AND SCIENCE IN CHARLOTTE HALDANE'S INTERWAR FICTION

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ABSTRACT

Charlotte Haldane's first novel, *Man's World*, is the only one of her novels to have received any significant academic interest though it has still been overwhelmingly overlooked in favour of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, published five years later. As has been argued by Susan Squier, there is significant value in reclaiming the female literary voice on science because it is through a literary engagement with the sciences that women have penned their experience and involvement in the discursively and institutionally modern. This thesis argues the importance of reading Haldane's work as part of an interwar corpus that, when understood as a collection, reveals a pattern of gendered relationships that negotiate masculine and feminine identities in relation to science, institutional power, and patriarchal control. Haldane's interwar fiction undermines hegemonic masculinity by placing two powerful styles of masculinity – the artist and the scientist – in competition in order to destabilise binary gender roles, therefore allowing the creation of a vocational form of motherhood without masculinizing it. In the power vacuum that Haldane's destabalised gender narratives create, the figure of the 'ideal' mother, the vocational mother, is presented not just as a eugenic instrument but a genetic gatekeeper. She is an active and independent agent, an architect for the modern world.

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Preface

Charlotte Haldane's life is particularly well documented, both through her own writings, *Music, My Love*, and *Truth Will Out*, and through her biography, *Charlotte Haldane: Woman Writer in a Man's World*, published in 1998 by Judith Adamson. These texts reveal the life of a fascinating woman. Born Charlotte Franken to German-Jewish parents in 1894 in an East London suburb, Haldane experienced a European upbringing, moving to Belgium with her father's business. Upon returning she began work in a theatre office where she met the Russian Prima, Anna Pavlova and was briefly employed by her before she moved on to become one of the few female journalists working on Fleet Street. It was during this time – in the mid twenties -that Haldane met her second husband, the famous populariser of science, J. B. S. Haldane. In *Truth Will Out* she recounts their meeting in romantic terms, typical of Haldane's fiction. She tells the reader how the then married Charlotte Burghes orchestrated an interview with the famous biochemist, J. B. S. Haldane, in order to ply from him information for her new science fiction, *Man's World*. She describes a whirlwind romance in which she, cast as heroine of her own story, becomes caught in a thirst for knowledge which can only be quenched by the commanding Cambridge scientist. After a scandalous divorce, the two married and Haldane and her son from her previous marriage, Ronald, moved with J. B. S. to Roebuck House, Cambridge. *Truth Will Out* describes evenings spent reading Marx or attending parties amongst the scientific elite, and whilst J. B. S.'s knowledge of biochemistry helped her in conceiving *Man's World*, it also encouraged her to take up botany. It was from this time, until the breakdown of the marriage and divorce in 1945, that there is a marked interest in the sciences, from genetics to psychology to sexology, in Haldane's writing.

Of course, it is Haldane's first novel – a science fiction based on a paradigm of prenatal sex control – that is the most inventive use of the sciences within her fiction. All of the limited scholarly research on her fiction has been largely focused on *Man's World* and the subject of femininity and reproduction. This is found in books such as Susan Squire's *Babies in Bottles*, which focuses on technological intervention in pregnancy, and papers such as Sarah Gamble's 'Gender and Science in Charlotte Haldane's *Man's World*', which considers the oscillation between resistance and compliance with male dominated science within the novel.

Man's World, however, has fallen out of the popular consciousness, replaced by a text published six years later. Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, published in 1932, shares much in common with Haldane's *Man's World*. Haldane's text is set in a future society run by a male scientific elite, in which the sex of a foetus can be determined and controlled, allowing for 'orders' to be placed for male or female children depending on the current needs of the state. Women, as a result, have been divided into classes – 'neuters' and 'mothers'. 'Mothers' are chosen for their physical and psychical suitability for the vocational role of producing children whereas 'neuters' are considered inappropriate 'types' for motherhood and are sterilised at a young age. Similarly, *Brave New World* creates a society in which reproduction has become ectogenetic and children are created to fit within a hierarchical class system based on intelligence and appropriateness for different labour needs. Both Aldous Huxley and Haldane depict unsettling sanitised societies in which human life has become heavily bureaucratised, especially in the birthing process. However, whilst Haldane focuses on a gendered experience of totalitarian reproductive technology, Huxley is concerned with its problematic relationship with class.

Susan Squier has repeatedly compared *Brave New World* and *Man's World*. She notes the differing treatment of science within the two novels with regard to reproduction. For Haldane, she tells us, science holds a danger for women in its ability to restrict and control their lives, whereas Huxley criticises it as 'the handmaiden of a feminized mass culture' (Squier, 1993, p. 147). Framing *Brave New World* within the 'high modernist criticism of mass culture as debased and feminized' (Squier, 1993, p. 147), she notes that,

> In their passive uniformity, Huxley's ectogenetic embryos reflect the techniques of mechanical reproduction (the cinema, the camera) that have produced modern mass culture. Reprints of one another, that produce and consume in a world devoid of high art or pure science, activities Huxley constructs and valorizes as subversively masculine. (Squier, 1993, p. 147)

It is the gendered connotations of science, then, that is at the heart of the two authors' differing approaches. Huxley fears a world in which human life is feminised by the sanitisation of science whereas Haldane fears the eradication of female agency by a masculinist society utilising science.

In the same way that parallels can be drawn between *Man's World* and *Brave New World*, there is a parallel between the works of another female author of science fiction, writing at the same time as Haldane, and the writing of George Orwell. Katharine Burdekin's *Swastika Night* (1937) is similarly interested in the reduction of women to their reproductive function. The novel is set in a future populated by a Nazi empire in which women are considered an underclass, unworthy of men's respect or love, and are therefore valued only for their reproductive capabilities. Daphne Patai, whose research makes up some of the most extensive and illuminating thought on the works of Burdekin, compares the themes of *Swastika Night* and George Orwell's totalitarian dystopia *1984* (published 12 years later). Noting that both books are, at their heart, 'about the interactions of men' (Patai, 1984, p. 87),

she tells us that whilst Burdekin 'addresses this issue in her exposé of the cult of masculinity' (Patai, 1984, p. 87), Orwell 'misses seeing the political dimensions of the gender roles apparent in 1984' (Patai, 1984, p. 88). She criticises Orwell for talking 'about political power in a social vacuum, without reference to the fact that such power is exercised by males to the exclusion of females, and that it is also exercised in the home' (Patai, 1984, p. 93). These criticisms are equally applicable to *Brave New World* in relation to *Man's World.* Where Haldane explores gender relations within her criticism of power, Huxley eradicates this in his centering of experience on masculinity and his presentation of an equal gendered experience of hierarchy and power.

What is seen in both instances, then, is men's reimagining of women's dystopia to exclude the female experience of patriarchy. As has been established by many scholars of both female and male science fiction, the purpose of the genre is not to write about the future but to illuminate the present, and this is seen in both *Man's World* and *Swastika Night*. Haldane uses the education of new mothers in her novel as a narrative technique by which the reader can learn about the 'history' of motherhood in the twentieth century. This technique, referred to as 'anthropology at home' by Daphne Patai (Patai, 1993, p. 231) allows contemporary society to be understood out of context, and therefore alienated from dominant social structures. Haldane uses this to directly critique masculine control of women's lives within the twentieth century. At the same time, she uses the future-paradigm to translate an anxiety relating to the increasing control of women's bodies by male-dominated medical science. Similarly, *Swastika Night* uses the future-dystopia platform to relate concerns over current events, most obviously the rise of fascism in Germany. However, Patai tells us, Burdekin indicated a pattern that, in its routine guise is our everyday patriarchy, with its local and global nationalisms and hierarchies, and in its exacerbated form is fascism, with its hypertrophied militarism, racism, and masculinity complex (Patai, 1993, p. 238). Whilst the

novel is a chilling precursor to the policies of Germany under Hitler, and the events leading up to the Second World War, at its heart is a universal female experience of oppression. What is seen in *Swastika Night*, then, is a magnification of the everyday.

In both authors' work there is an anxiety communicated relating both to the current state, and to the future of women living within the confines of patriarchy. Whilst Burdekin fears the social devaluation of women will result in the eradication of women as functioning citizens, Haldane is concerned with the future of motherhood in a world in which the biological functions of mothers are being intervened by male-dominated science.

Introduction
Gendering Space: Charlotte Haldane and the Gender-Binary

As this thesis demonstrates, Charlotte Haldane's interwar literature undermines hegemonic masculinity by placing two powerful styles of masculinity in competition in order to destabilise the system of binary gender, thereby allowing her to create a vocational form of motherhood without masculinizing it. This conclusion was met after focusing on the following questions: How do masculinities impact on Haldane's presentation of motherhood? What is the relationship between motherhood and science? And, why is the love-triangle used as a narrative technique throughout the interwar texts? At the heart of these questions and their answers is an exploration of the public and private spheres and women's involvement within them.

Space – public and private – and how it enacts gender for those that inhabit it, is at the centre of the fin de siècle and early twentieth-century 'woman question' and the debates surrounding women's suffrage. Public and private space is heavily gendered. Using the example of twentieth-century Parliament, as a political public space, it is full of non-human actors such as portraits of past important male figures, a Smoking Room, and the infamous mace, all of which imbue the space with gendered meaning, which reads as 'masculine'. Similarly, a private space – a domestic home, for instance – is full of its own objects, such as the kitchen sink, cleaning products, or a crib, which themselves gender the space, but as female. To inhabit these spaces then, to interact with and within them, effectively genders the individual too. This not only accounts for the masculinization of the suffragettes when inhabiting these gendered spaces such as the street, the races, or parliament itself, but also accounts for many suffragettes' great anxiety to reaffirm their femininity *particularly* when inhabiting those male-gendered spaces

Haldane, who was a former member of the Women's Social and Political Union, wanted mothers and maternal women to inhabit male spaces. Haldane's socialist vision saw maternal women – women of a particular skill set – as active contributors, producers of and for society, in the form of a scientific vocational motherhood. Mothers were to be plumbers, teachers, architects of the home and motherhood itself was to be seen as a public service, a career with its best suited candidates, and its regulations, as in any other industry. In effect, Haldane wanted to bring motherhood out of the private and into the public domain. However, sexological models of 'inversion' which had been utilised to demonise the women's suffrage movement by linking the public-woman to pathological categories of sex, threatened Haldane 's own model of the public vocational mother. As if inhabiting the public sphere were not enough to risk the defeminising of Haldane's mothers, however, her active framing of the vocational mother and the maternal woman as scientific workers, skilled producers of new social genetic material, necessitated discourse associated with masculinity. Therefore, in order to create her vocational mothers and maternal women, Haldane's narratives queer notions of the gender binary. This, however, risked un-gendering mothers and undermining their social power. This can be seen through Marcia Allison's discussion of the problematic relationship between gender and language, in which she notes that, 'by lacking a gender marker, *it* automatically dehumanises because its gender-neutral state is low in animacy. The inference is that without a gender and, more specifically, without belonging to one of two clearly binary-gendered oppositions, your humanity is negated' (Allison, 2011, p. 5). By placing her maternal women in masculine contexts Haldane risks them being understood as not fully female, and therefore dehumanising them and disempowering them. In questioning the binary system that biologically and genetically privileged mothers as social producers of children, Haldane risks removing what power mothers and maternal women already had, rather than empowering them.

Instead then, Haldane destabilises the binary from a different perspective. Whilst simultaneously utilising the binary sex system and reminding the reader of the social and genetic importance of 'good', 'healthy' mothers, Haldane undermines hegemonic masculinity. As Raewyn Connell has noted, 'hegemonic masculinity' is always constructed in relation to various subordinated masculinities as well as in relation to women. The interplay between different forms of masculinity is an important part of how a patriarchal social order works' (Connell, 1987, p. 183). This relationship between hegemonic and subordinate masculinities relies on patriarchal, hierarchical structure and power. As this thesis demonstrates, in Haldane's interwar fiction the reader is repeatedly presented with two styles of masculinity that compete for power in the context of the narrative. Haldane utilises the competition between the two masculine styles to destabilise the usual structures of power and with no obvious hegemonic masculine style a power vacuum is created. In the space created in this power vacuum the mother can assert her skills and abilities in an obviously unstable gendered space. As Connell notes, femininity is constructed in relation to masculinity and women's subordination to men, and, therefore, hegemonic femininity does not exist (Connell, 1987, pp. 186–7). Even with the lack of an obvious male power to centre femininity around, however, Haldane still asserts maternal women's supremacy over non-maternal styles of femininity, allowing them to retain the social Darwinist and eugenicist power afforded to them as bearers of the race.

Haldane's interwar fiction is marked by internal conflict and contradiction, however, so that whilst her writing seeks to undermine male hegemonic power via competition, her inclusion of these male characters as love interests also serves to celebrate aspects of these masculine styles. This is a result of the restraints the romance plot device imposes. However, in only allowing aspects of one particular masculine style to be presented positively, whilst simultaneously undermining other aspects of the same style, Haldane

successfully fragments it. Each style of masculinity she presents within the love-triangle dynamic is therefore undermined as a hegemonic whole and masculinity more generally within her novels is then open to discursive deconstruction. This thesis, then, shows that two masculine scripts, articulated in different forms, are undermined and destabilised, so that the mother and maternal figure can fill the role of 'vocational mother' both in a scientifically-based, child-rearing capacity and as a practical and public architect of a maternal world, without being subject to gender questioning.

The Interwar Texts and their Critical Reception

During the interwar years Haldane published five fiction texts. Her first, *Man's World* (1926), was an experiment in the genre now referred to as science fiction. The novel presents a future non-capitalist society run by a scientific elite which has organised infant production as a specific industry. The narrative focuses on protagonists Nicolette and her brother Christopher as they rebel against the State by circumventing the motherhood system with a pregnancy outside of industrial control. At the centre of this story, however, is an ominous love triangle between Nicolette, her brother, and the eminent scientist Bruce. Towards the end of the novel Nicolette is forced to choose between family and freedom, or Bruce, love, and the motherhood industry.

Haldane's second novel, *Brother to Bert* (1930), was published four years later. Written shortly after she had translated a new edition of Johannes Lange's *Crime as Destiny*, Haldane draws upon Lange's criminological theories on twins in her crime novel. The narrative follows the lives of Bert and Len, two identical twins living and performing as dancers in London. The two men drink excessively and womanise but salvation comes for Len in the form of an innocent and moralistic young woman, Lil, whereas Bert finds himself in a chaotic relationship with the ageing stage star, Lottie de Lara. The story's complicating

action comes when Len is mistakenly accused of Lottie's murder after Bert, drunk and enraged, beats her to death. Henceforth, the narrative focusses on Lil's journey to Paris to find Bert and exonerate her husband.

The third novel written in the interwar years is *I Bring Not Peace* (1932). In this novel Haldane places newly divorced protagonist, Michal, in the cultural centre of Paris where she meets American musician, James. Bold and bohemian, James stands in opposition to Michal's old friend, and love interest Jean. Woven through this love-triangle narrative are modernist elements and references. As well as an interest in *temps* and *duree*, and the narrational role of sound, Haldane makes reference to the work of Jean Cocteau. This is presented allegorically through the intense relationship between the siblings which mimics that of Cocteau's characters in *Les Enfants Terribles*, and literally when Dennis's sister describes herself as Cocteau's 'terrible child' (Haldane: 1932, p. 149). Whilst this is not the first time that Haldane has presented avant garde or modernist elements in her writing - *Man's World* experiments briefly with surrealist writing – it is in *I Bring Not Peace* that these efforts appear most self-conscious. Haldane seeds her narrative with references to Jean Cocteau and Picasso, framing her characters within their modernist efforts. For instance, the reader is told that in a corner of James's room there could be found 'together a guitar, a mandolin, and a ukulele' which reminds Dennis of 'Jean Cocteau's 'Mon rêve en musique, serait d'entandre la musique des guitars de Picasso' (Haldane: 1932, p. 89). Quoting Cocteau, Dennis is reminded of the writer's wish to hear the sound of Picasso's Cubist instruments. The owner of the guitars, James, is therefore connected with that unobtainable modernist sound. Here, then, is an example of how Haldane uses keystone authors and artists to imbue her characters and the spaces they inhabit with a modernist aesthetic.

Moving away from modernism, Haldane's next novel, *Youth is a Crime* (1934), follows the narrative style of the Bildungsroman. The story follows the teenaged Elizabeth as she moves from London to Antwerp where she meets two very different young men, René, a rich and aloof lothario, and Werner, a quiet and thoughtful boy interested in art and science. Though much of the narrative is concerned with this love triangle, significant attention is given to systems of oppression as Elizabeth discovers a highly anti-Semitic community. This novel, like *I Bring Not Peace*, has autobiographical elements. Where the protagonist of *I Bring Not Peace* shares an occupation with Haldane (journalist and by-night-author) and a similar international upbringing, Elizabeth of *Youth is a Crime* shares many of Haldane's childhood experiences, including her experience of anti-Semitism in the Belgian city.

The final fictional text of Haldane's interwar career perhaps has more in common with her first novel than with the previous three, due to its interest in the speculative. *Melusine*, published in 1936, is a historical fantasy based on the French folktale, written by Jean d'Arras, of the snake-tailed fairy princess Melusine. In Haldane's version, Melusine must choose between an alliance with her previous lover, and head of the Church of the Serpent, Owain, or Raymond, her husband and king of Luisignan. Though Melusine tries to leave the pagan church, her secret involvement is eventually discovered by Raymond and she is banished to a cave in the northern borders of England where Owain is hiding. Coming at the end of a period of Haldane's writing that is notable for its interest in science, Melusine tries to make the fantastical explicable and Haldane includes an afterword that discusses her research into the royal family of Luisignan and occultist practices in Europe.

In the interwar period Haldane experimented extensively with genre, reiterating the love-triangle model that subverted hegemonic masculinity. Far from being disparate, however, there is found between these texts strong threads of commonality. It was during these years

that Haldane was married to J. B. S. and it is this period that marks a notable preoccupation with the sciences and the figure of the scientist. Both *I Bring Not Peace* and *Youth is a Crime* include the figure of the scientist (or scientist-in-training, as seen in *Youth is a Crime*'s Werner) and both narratives place significant importance on this figure, making him the protagonist's love interest. *Man's World* and *Brother to Bert* deal with this scientific focus more explicitly by not only including the figure of the scientist as a character, but by also having scientific theory as a narrational crux. *Melusine*, written as the marriage began to break down, does not have the same overtly obvious focus on science – it is, after all, set pre-enlightenment and contains fantasy themes – however it is in her depictions of the occult that Haldane's scientific preoccupation is found. In her invention of the character Owain – the pagan leader – and his influence over Melusine, she acknowledges a supernatural side to the occult, which she separates from 'superstitious' 'black magic' (Haldane, 2003, p. 316). Having conducted her own 'experiments…with moderate but definite success' (Haldane, 2003, p. 316), Haldane informs the reader that the 'arts of divination and prophecy' (Haldane, 2003, p. 316) which she connects not to occultism but to psychology, can be developed as a technique by anyone, 'even the most hardened rationalist' (Haldane, 2003, p. 316). In this respect, then, Haldane presents Owain, as head of the pagan church, as a developer and master of these techniques. Owain, then, becomes a continuation of the scientist figure that is found throughout Haldane's interwar novels, though translated for a pre-enlightenment setting.

What is seen in *Melusine* is the beginning of a shift of interest for Haldane. After the breakdown of her marriage she did not publish a fictional text again for seventeen years. When she published *The Shadow of a Dream* in 1953 her scientific interest had moved firmly away from popularly accepted theories and into the realms of pseudoscience. Though *Melusine* begins to show signs of Haldane's later work, I have included it in the corpus of

this thesis because it follows a dynamic found throughout Haldane's interwar texts that links it with her preoccupation with science and her development of the maternal figure. In *Melusine*, as in all of her interwar narratives, Haldane utIlises a romantic plot-line in order to compare and deconstruct two opposing masculine styles, thereby destabilising the gender binary, so that the mother – Melusine – may inhabit male roles and political spaces without appearing masculine. The classic romance plot of the love triangle resurfaces with each of the genres she experiments with: science fiction, crime, modernist realism, bildungsroman, and historic fantasy. What is clear, then, is that whilst Haldane felt the need to rearticulate her agenda in terms of genre, she considered the love-triangle of the romance plot to be successful. Haldane's exploration of different genres is unusual though it has been largely overlooked by the scholarship on her work. Past research has focused on *Man's World* (with the exception of Judith Adamson's biography), which, whilst valuable, is limiting. It is this approach that has led some scholars to understand Haldane's work as anti-Semitic (Gamble, 2004, p. 5) and anti-feminist (Gamble, 2004, p. 5). Haldane approached *Man's World* as a thought experiment, as she demonstrates in the Acknowledgement in which fictionalised writer Anatole France indirectly invites the reader to notice the novel's 'strained avoidance of such definitions as "good" and "evil"'(Haldane, 1926, p. ix). Because of this technique, the morals and political agendas of the novel are at times unclear, and, indeed, this could be argued for many of Haldane's texts. In order to understand Haldane's work, it must be read 'in-the-round', in the context of the other texts she produced during the interwar years, in the time she spent amongst the scientists of Oxford and Cambridge, during her marriage to J. B. S. Haldane. Unlike previous scholarship on Haldane, this thesis focuses on all of Haldane's interwar fiction to reveal what has been previously overlooked; when Haldane's work is understood as a whole interwar corpus of texts, a pattern emerges. This pattern points to the central argument of this thesis: Throughout her interwar literature, Charlotte Haldane developed a model of vocational motherhood; to avoid this maternal

figure from being understood as masculine she undermines the gender-binary system by destabilising hegemonic masculinity. This new understanding of Haldane's work complicates previous readings that have tried to understand her work as either simply feminist or anti-feminist within a binary-gendered context by examining the multiplicity of male, female and 'intermediate' genders and their interactions.

Before meeting J. B. S., Haldane was a successful journalist. As a result, the British media, from national presses like *The Scotsman* to local papers, took an interest in the life and marriage of the couple, especially as the relationship began with a rather scandalous divorce. The media reaction to Haldane's writing often links her to her husband's scientific achievements, though many more articles bestow the merits, criticism, and controversies of Haldane's writing upon her shoulders alone. Though *Man's World* experienced 'success in several countries ('People You Should Know', 1927, p. 365) the overall reaction to the book was mixed. Whilst most critics could agree the novel's creation of a 'scientific Utopia' ('Novels', 1926, p. 2) was provocative, most found it unpalatable and some downright offensive; "Man's World", Beverley Nichols writes, 'tells us all about the world after the next Great War. And if that world is going to be in the least like Mrs. Haldane imagines, I, for one, shall rush headlong into the first cloud of poison gas that comes my way' (Nichols, 1926, p. 475). Interestingly, it was not the racial segregation that galled readers but the overly hygienic response to human life and the destruction of individual motherhood in favour of communal living. There were others who identified with the plight of the protagonist, reading the novel as a dystopia (though of course the 'dystopia' had not yet been defined as a genre) but overwhelmingly critical opinion considered the book 'for the highbrow of certain branches of science' ('Novels', 1926, p. 2) and therefore not suited to the tastes of the general reading public.

Perhaps this critical reaction accounts for Haldane's sharp change of tack – from science fiction to crime thriller – with her next novel. Gone is any notion that *Brother to Bert* is too scientific, but rather science is refocussed as a compelling addition to an established narrative. Evelyn Waugh tells his reader,

> Mrs. Haldane has chosen the old theme of identical twins that makes so much Elizabethan drama - and, for that, many more modern books and cinema films – unconvincing and comic, and by interpreting it in the light of modern psychology has brought it up to date and made it extremely exciting.' (Waugh, 1930, p. 174)

By far one of her most popular books, readers were compelled by her use of criminological science.

Haldane's following novel did not receive the same popularity. In focusing on a sexually free, bohemian woman living alone in Paris, in her thirties, Haldane perhaps stretched the expectations of a readership better used to her predominantly scientifically focused narratives. One of the very few reviews of *I Bring Not Peace* certainly finds the bohemian topic distasteful, and, foregoing the female protagonist, chooses instead to discuss James who 'speaks a fluent Americancso with a meaningfulness and gusto that are quite uncommon in a novel by a woman writer' ('I Bring Not Peace By Charlotte Haldane', 1932, p. 2). The evident gender bias here supports a reading that Haldane may have fallen victim to being a little too risqué for her usual audience.

If *I Bring Not Peace* fell foul of being too female in its narrative presentation, *Youth is a Crime* is celebrated for containing a 'minimum of sentimentality' ('Reviewed', 1934), that common adage of femininity. Another reviewer applauded Haldane's style, noting that her 'earlier works showed a radically experimental tendency, which is happily not so obtrusive – though, just as fortunately, not completely absent' ('Youth Is A Crime By Charlotte Haldane',

1934, p. 13) within her new novel. Again, this goes some way to suggest the lack of popularity of *I Bring Not Peace* whose narrative style, out of all the interwar novels, fits less comfortably into a specific genre. In returning to the clear style of the Bildungsroman, Haldane appears to have won back her audience, though its central themes of young female disempowerment and anti-Semitism seem largely lost on the critics.

Haldane's final interwar text was also one of her most successful in terms of the reviews it received. *Melusine* was placed on magazine and newspaper book lists with titles such as, 'Biography, fiction, and other works for holiday reading' (Fane, 1936, p. 312). Reviewers respond positively to the 'scholarly' (Palmer, 1936, p. 95) element of the novel, enjoying reading a fantastic narrative with a logical and researched explanation. By introducing social and economic theory to the narrative, reviewers considered her approach to be a 'modern' retelling of an 'old legend' ('Melusine by Charlotte Haldane, 1936, p. 17). Implicit here is the value signaling of the scientific (in its widest sense) as 'modern' verses the occult, black magic, and mysticism of the 'old'.

Though criticism of Haldane's final interwar novels rarely discusses their scientific links, this is largely due to the absence of readings that consider these texts as an interwar corpus in order to reveal an intrinsic pattern of vocational motherhood linking the mother figure to the sciences and the scientist, both as cultural actors and institutional power centres. This was made most clear to Haldane's contemporary critical audience via *Motherhood and its Enemies*. Whilst this non-fiction text was picked up in academic circles, in journals such as *Social Forces,* it received notable interest from public publications. Some pushed the text to the 'women's pages', for instance the *Sheffield Daily* produced a positive review within 'The World of Women' section, though most included the book with the rest of their reviews. Its publication was timely as numerous reviews highlight: 'On no burning question of the day is

there more controversy or more need for clear thinking and broad judgement than on the subject of motherhood and its place in the public and private life of the state' writes The *Todmorden Advertiser and Hebden Bridge Newsletter* ('New Books and Their Authors', 1927, p. 7). This same publication draws upon Haldane's scientific credentials – namely her husband, her own interests, and her running of the *Science News Service* – to advocate her work on the subject. Despite the wide previous discomfort with Haldane's presentation of motherhood in *Man's World*, reviews of *Motherhood and its Enemies* present the text as measured and scientific, with only the *Sheffield Daily* noting the irrelevance of the section on the modern woman worker, though the particularly problematic depiction of the 'spinster' is not discussed ('The World of Women', 1927, p. 2).This reaction would suggest that the negative focus on the 'spinster' in *Motherhood and its Enemies* was more palatable to the reader than the anti-family, anti-church message of *Man's World*.

Sex, Science, and Gender in the Early Twentieth Century

It is perhaps surprising that the critical reviews tend to overlook the gendered aspects of Haldane's interwar texts. Lyn Pykett has cited the turn-of-the-century gender crises as 'an extremely important part of the social and intellectual formation in which (and by which) early twentieth-century fiction was produced' (Pykett, 1995, p. 15) and this interdependent relationship between literature and understandings of sex and gender is discussed extensively by Heike Bauer. In the opening decades of the twentieth century, writers like Virginia Woolf, Dorothy Richardson, and Djuna Barnes attempted to express gender, sex, and sexuality, often by negotiating away from the binary and exploring what lies 'between the lines'. However, for other writers such as Wyndham Lewis and D.H. Lawrence, feminism, women's suffrage, and European sexology inspired a process of 'fixing' the categories of 'man' and 'woman'. Charlotte Haldane does not fit comfortably with either of these approaches, however. Understanding 'man' and 'woman' in her interwar fiction necessitates

a complex negotiation of the discourses of gender and sex which both undermine and utilise binary categorisation. This goes some way to account for its general lack of comment in the critical reviews. Disarmed by Haldane's often radical – yet sometimes contradictory – presentation of gender, critics focus their reviews elsewhere.

During the period that Haldane was writing, sexologists were redefining the gender and sexuality binary, and they often found themselves conflating gender and sexuality. In the UK, during the fin de siècle and into the interwar period, Havelock Ellis's work built on the studies of European sexological researchers. In particular, there is a continuation of what was first described by Karl Heinrich Ulrichs in 1868 as 'urning' – a third sex typified by a female psyche and male physiology (Ladenson, 2013, p. 118). 'According to Ulrichs and similar subsequent accounts the *Urning* ... is attracted to other men because he himself is in some innate way feminine' (Ladenson, 2013, p. 118). In her chapter on Marcel Proust's *À la Recherche du Temps Perdu*, Elisabeth Ladenson notes that it was this heterosexualised account of 'inversion' that Proust preferred to describe his homosexual characters, as it allowed his characters to be 'essentially heterosexual, since they are only men to the extent to which they are themselves in some inherent way feminine' (Ladenson, 2013, p. 118). This heterosexualising of the non-heteronormative that theories like Karl Heinrich Ulrichs' 'urning' allowed for is continued by Ellis in his own discussion of inversion. According to Deborah Cohler, 'Ellis refers to congenital homosexuals as "inverts," thus obscuring the differences between female gender inversion (masculinity) and sexual inversion (homosexuality). This elision reveals the core of his theory—that gender deviance indicates sexual deviance' (Cohler, 2010, p. 10). This is, of course, applicable to male 'inversion' too, and so in conflating gender and sex, Ellis begins a process by which homosexuality can be heterosexualised. Cohler tells us that, 'According to Ellis, every Western couple, whether same-sex or cross-sex, is fundamentally heterogendered, because the biologically female

invert is gendered male' (Cohler, 2010, p. 12). Using the female 'invert' as an example, then, Ellis defines the 'congenital' invert as masculine, with the added retention of heterosexual desire, requiring them to find a feminine sexual partner. Though, as Cohler notes, by this logic, their feminine partner or 'womanly woman' (Cohler, 2010, p. 14) should desire men. 'This presents a paradox for the sexologist, resolved by postulating that the sexual impulses of the congenital (masculine) invert's feminine sexual partner are necessarily dulled. This allows the feminine partner to retain erotics still grounded in a heterosexual scheme' (Cohler, 2010, p. 14). And as such, this theorisation of inversion neatly pulls together sex, gender, and sexuality, and defines them within a heteronormative schema.

Class/Race/Criminology: A Question of Sex

Though many of the founding texts of twentieth-century sexology were European, such as Richard Von Krafft-Ebing's *Psychopathia Sexualis* (translated into English from German in the last decade of the nineteenth century) these were largely written with a medical or legal audience in mind (Bauer, 2009, p. 33). English sexology, exemplified by Havelock Ellis and John Addington Symonds's *Sexual Inversion* (first published in German at the end of the nineteenth century) was, according to Bauer, 'linked overtly to wider social reform movements that considered sexual health in relation to political debates ranging from the 'marriage question' to assessments of the class system' (Bauer, 2009, p. 52). Cohler, too, notes that sexology's practice of classification was particularly suited to discourses of racial and class deviance. She tells us that, 'Gendered and sexual deviance, then, could be mapped onto racial or classed otherness: "primitive" sexual urges could be located in their evolutionary place, and an often physiologically inflected order could be established between perversion, deviance, and normalcy' (Cohler, 2010, p. 28). It is clear, then, that sexology fitted neatly into pathologising and criminalising discourses. Cohler specifically highlights Ellis and Symonds's contribution to this discourse, noting that:

by examining the data through which Ellis constructed his theories, and the recourse that the classicist Symonds also made to the anthropological and evolutionary work of his contemporaries, we can see how deeply the sexological theories of British homosexuality relied on narratives of colonial otherness, class differences, and imperial social sciences. (Cohler, 2010, p. 29)

This is seen in Ellis's account of his own wife in *Sexual Inversion*, as discussed by Bauer. Ellis understood Edith Ellis's sexuality in relation to 'contemporary sexological models that considered female inversion the result of hereditary predisposition for deviancy, arguing that Edith's sexuality can be partly explained by her family background and its influence on her physical and mental health' (Bauer, 2009, p. 70). A clear eugenic concern is translated by Ellis. Edith's perceived deviancy is located within her family history, a deviancy, then, that presumably has the capability of being passed on. What we find in Ellis's account of Edith is an anxiety relating to gender roles, sex (in its physical and psychological sense), and the future of a strong, healthy British race.

This connection between sex, sexuality, and eugenics was becoming an established interest within the genetic (and eugenic) sciences in the early twentieth century. Eugenicist Roswell Johnson speculated that human aesthetic attributes were a product of sexual selection (Gillette, 2007, p. 108) and in 1914 Samuel Holmes published his article, 'The Role of Sex in the Evolution of the Mind' in which he cited sex, and the selection of a mate, as the developmental force behind speech (Gillette, 2007, p. 108). Sex-selection is at the heart of Haldane's interwar novels. The love-triangles on which the narratives hang focus on the female choice between two mates, and it is clear that Haldane was drawing on a cultural preoccupation. It is possible that, as the wife of an eminent scientist, she was directly influenced by the eugenic research being undertaken in the early years of the twentieth

century. However, the importance of 'healthy' sex and sexuality to genetic development had a much wider-reaching audience than the sexologist and the eugenicist. Its cultural impact was so great that even the suffragette, a radical figure of social change, felt compelled to take it into account within her own self presentation.

Sex, Eugenics, and the Separate Spheres

Deborah Cohler maps the way in which arguments of sex and expectations of gender, in relation to the nation and the empire, played into the anti-suffrage debates of the fin de siècle and beyond. Like Haldane, the suffrage movement wanted women to inhabit the male-coded realm of the public sphere but the cultural backlash to this provides an important context to Haldane's presentation of the vocational mother. Cohler notes the creation of an image of bourgeois women choosing to inhabit the public sphere as 'poor eugenic subjects' (Cohler, 2010, p. 31). One such example comes in the form of an article written for the *Nineteenth Century* by Eliza Lynn Linton in 1891 in which she compares what Cohler refers to as the 'cultural masculinity' of the suffragette – the woman who inhabits the public political sphere - with that of 'sexological deviants' such as 'bearded women' (Cohler, 2010, p. 31). There is a clear rhetoric here not only of the unusual, but of the unhealthy. 'Not only was separate-spheres ideology critical to sustaining British gender ideologies, but also narratives of empire and nationalism positioned good British women as always mothers' (Cohler, 2010, p. 33). Cohler shows us how, through newspaper and magazine articles, and other print media such as postcards, the figure of the suffragette is undermined in her ability to be a mother, a wife, and therefore a 'healthy' woman in both individual sexological terms, and in wider social and nationalistic ones. By being marked 'deviant' the suffragette is located within the discourse of 'inversion', with the assumed subsequent negative eugenic effects. Cohler does note, however, that the figure of the suffragette is not connected to the

homosexual meaning of 'inversion', and, therefore, is a specific 'gender inversion' (Cohler, 2010, p. 31). It was female masculinity, which destabilised the binary, which was at issue. Lyn Pykett also notes this in *Engendering Fiction*, referring to prominent writers' distrust of feminism as a mode by which women are masculinized (Pykett, 1995, p. 50). Writers such as Wyndham Lewis and D.H Lawrence felt the need to reinvigorate masculinity in response to the feminist threat to the gender binary (Pykett, 1995, p. 51).

The problem was that these women were failing to perform femininity sufficiently. The separate spheres were clear social and even physical (in terms of space) producers of gendered meaning, and by refusing to adhere to their sphere, suffragettes were risking the blurring of the binary through self-masculinization. This 'masculinizing' of the suffragette, verbalised through discourses of sexology, was deemed particularly problematic, not just to the anti-suffrage activists and politicians, but also to many suffragettes. Leaders of suffrage organisations such as the Women's Social and Political Union attempted to distance their members from this bad publicity, aiming to address the suffragette's image as a masculine, un-maternal woman by encouraging members to highlight their femininity, translating this visually through modest, feminine clothing worn during marches or public events (Cohler, 2010, p. 52). In order to be understood as a 'healthy' genetic subject, a eugenic asset, then, the suffragette had to present her sex (and by extension her sexuality) as 'healthy', i.e. feminine, maternal, and heterosexual. Sexology and eugenics united as a cultural force which the suffrage movement had to navigate in order for women to be deemed capable, and suitable active citizens which accounts for Haldane's preoccupation with the two fields in her own presentation of the vocational mother.

Research and Methodology

Science, be it genetic, criminological, or sexual is at the heart of Haldane's interwar fiction. It is because of this interest that her work is best placed within the context of feminist science

fiction. Interest in science fiction from a feminist perspective owes much to the theories of

Donna Haraway whose work on science fiction, technology, and feminism encapsulates the

scholarly interest in female-authored sci-fi that was produced largely in the eighties and

nineties. However, much of this scholarly interest, and the proceeding research conducted in

the twenty-first century, is interested in the recognisable science fiction of the golden age

and beyond. There is less consistent scholarship on female writers of early science fiction

and scientific romance. Of the scholarship that does exist there tends to be a focus on the

utopic and dystopic within these texts, with interest in writers such as Charlotte Perkins

Gilman and Katherine Burdekin. In these earlier forms of female-authored scientific romance

and science fiction, writers tended to use the genre to convey a specific, and often politically

feminist, agenda. Those texts that have survived within scholarly interest have tended to be

left-leaning and overtly clear in their feminist agendas and the scholarly focus has reflected

this. Charlotte Haldane's science fiction, *Man's World*, and the scientifically-influenced

interwar novels that followed, complicate this field, however. In attempting to present her

fiction amorally, Haldane resists a clear understanding of her personal agenda. Furthermore,

the views she expresses on moral, scientific, and political issues such as motherhood,

unmarried women, and eugenics are complex and often contradictory so that a researcher

must tease from the interwar corpus a coherent agenda. At times Haldane draws on

eugenics to bolster her vision of vocational motherhood. In *Man's World* she creates a

eugenically-driven paradigm in which the races are separated and yet, in *Youth is a Crime,*

she is open in her accusations against genetic assumption and race in the context of anti-

Semitism. Though Haldane was an antifascist and a Leftist, her work, unlike, for instance,

Gilman's, cannot be read clearly as feminist literature because in celebrating the figure of

the mother she actively undermines the figure of the unmarried woman. Similarly, whilst

Burdekin's work has been noted for its exploration and celebration of queer identities,

Haldane both undermines and celebrates the non-heteronormative. In introducing the

concept of the novel as an amoral thought-experiment into the genre of female-authored science fiction, Haldane's writing complicates but also therefore enriches the field as, previous to this thesis, scholarship on female authored science fiction favoured writers with more apparent feminist agendas.

It is, in part, Haldane's attempts at amorality within her writing that locates her work within modernism. This is not to suggest that she is part of that school of modernism associated with the Bloomsbury group, but rather she is part of what has come to be understood as 'alternative modernisms'. Her specifically scientific, objective detachment, her interest in gender and sexuality, a sense of modern crisis in her writing, and an aesthetic self-consciousness that is found in her attempts to locate her narratives in the artistically modern, are all traits that have been deemed 'modernist motifs' (Smith, 2000, p. 71-2). Yet, as Susan Squire has noted, Haldane's first novel fits specifically within the field of female modernism because of its feminine response to science. For Squire, *Man's World* 'reveals the resistant doubling of meaning through which female modernist writers managed to find voice' (Squire, 1994, p.121). This 'doubling of meaning' refers to the process of representing the feminine within a frame that scientifically objectifies it. Using the example of Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*, Squire argues that the 'modern female writer' is 'both the subject *and* the object of scientific knowledge' (Squire, 20012, p. 312), hence the double-bind of female modernism. In terms of female modernism as a specific response to modernity and science, Susan Squire has been one of the most prominent and influential scholars. However, her engagement with Haldane's fiction has been limited to her first novel. By incorporating the rest of Haldane's interwar texts this thesis extends Squire's observations on the double-bind relationship of female modernism and the sciences, viewing the sciences as an expression of patriarchal control. Whilst this approach takes into account Squire's institutional and philosophical presentation of the sciences – 'science' as a construct which the female writer

engages with – it also includes individualistic accounts – how the figure of the scientist impacts female characters.

As the work of scholars like Donald J Childs has revealed, modernism has a distinct cultural link with the science of eugenics. Even Woolf, whose work has largely escaped eugenic critique, has been noted by Childs to have expressed support for eugenics both in her diaries and her published writing (Childs, 2001, p. 23). It is perhaps unsurprising that interest in eugenics can be found even in the work of this notoriously liberal author, given its popularity in the early twentieth century amongst both the politically left and right. Haldane's work, too, fits within this literary history of eugenics and, much like Woolf who in *A Room of One's Own,* 'focuses literally upon the question of biological inheritance by examining the relationship between the woman writer and genius' (Childs, 2001, p. 58), Haldane also centres on female participation. However, she is far less metaphorical in her treatment of women and eugenics. Whilst during the early years of the twentieth century scientists like Samuel Holmes were highlighting the importance of sexual selection in the evolutionary process (Gillette, 2007, p. 108), Haldane was writing narratives in which a female protagonist chooses between two competing mates. These women, outlined as 'ideal' mother types based on physical and psychological factors, therefore play a crucial eugenic role in their sexual selections. Though it is not unusual to see maternity linked negatively to eugenics in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, in terms of degeneration, Haldane is unique in her presentation of the 'ideal' mother figure as the holder of genetic power. In this way, then, Haldane's work introduces into the study of the history of eugenics the figure of the mother as genetic gatekeeper, not only an active participant but the controlling factor in genetic 'betterment'.

Whilst this thesis interlinks the fields of feminist science fiction, modernist studies and eugenic studies it is primarily a project on feminist fiction. Its focus on both masculine and feminine performances of gender relates to the female experience of the sciences and scientific institutions, as presented by Charlotte Haldane. In its focus on maternity within the latter half of this thesis, this project has concentrated on Haldane's feminist agenda – the creation of the vocational mother. Haldane's presentation of this figure, often to the detriment of unmarried women, sits uncomfortably alongside modern feminism. I have taken a new historicist approach to the material within this project and have treated Haldane's text as artefacts of their culture. Therefore, whilst Freud is utilised within this thesis, his work is included for its scientific-historic merit, not for its psycho-literary properties.

"Real" Sex, Social Gender?

This introduction has mapped the historic social and scientific understanding of sex and gender, but it is necessary that the reader understand the methodological approach of the researcher – myself - in understanding these terms. Throughout this thesis I refer to 'sex', 'sexuality', and 'gender' often within the context of their early twentieth-century meaning, but with the character of Christopher from *Man's World*, especially, I draw on the modern understanding of non-binary gender in order to better articulate that which was inarticulable to Haldane. The essential difference, here, is that whilst early twentieth-century understandings of inter-sex were rooted in binary understandings of gender, non-binarism subverts the binary altogether.

'Non-binary gender', sometimes referred to (often with politicised connotation) as 'genderqueer' is, in its most simplistic configuration, gender which does not conform to our notions of the binary. (Sometimes non-binary genders are placed somewhere on a spectrum, but the two ends of which are inevitably 'man' and 'woman' (Wilchins, 2017, p.

229)). This can be further complicated, however, when it is considered that gender often relates to sexuality. Riki Wilchins notes this when they tell the reader, 'I take it as self-evident that the mainspring of homophobia is gender: the notion that gay men are insufficiently masculine or lesbian women are inadequately feminine' (Wilchins, 2017, p. 210). It is useful here, to draw on Judith Butler's theory of gender as performance. Butler tells us to, 'Consider gender, for instance, as a *corporeal style*, an "act", as it were, which is both intentional and performative, where *"performative"* suggest a dramatic and contingent construction of meaning' (Butler, 1990, p. 190). If gender is a series of styles or acts one performs, to be non-binary, then, one simply has to perform gender (i.e., 'man' or 'woman') in a manner that is considered 'wrong'. In this example that means being homosexual. As Kristen Schilt and Laurel Westbrook have noted that

> heterosexuality requires a binary sex system, as it is predicated on the seemingly natural attraction between two types of bodies defined as opposites. The taken-for - granted expectation that heterosexuality and gender identity follow from genitalia produces heteronormativity—even though in most social interactions genitals are not actually visible. (Schilt & Westbrook, 2009, p. 443)

Introduced by Schilt and Westbrook, here, is the notion that the body – material sex - is an important factor in the construction of gender, as well as sexuality. Implicit in this, then, is the need to define 'cis'-gender – 'individuals who have a match between the gender they were assigned at birth, their bodies, and their personal identity' (Schilt & Westbrook, 2009, p. 461) and 'trans'-gender – those who experience a 'mis-match'. This definition is problematic, however, in that it attempts to fit gender neatly into the binary. In this configuration 'trans' does not necessarily transgress the binary, it simply re-configures it. Assuming surgical intervention and hormone replacements (though not actually presuming this is a necessary

reality), a trans man adheres to the category of 'man' and a trans woman adheres to that of 'woman'. This perhaps goes some way to explain a cisgender preoccupation with transgender genitalia, revealing an interest in whether or not someone is 'completely' man or woman.

Often when referring to 'sex' something physical, material, and therefore 'real' is meant, whereas when 'gender' is discussed, its social construction is acknowledged. Put in Judith Butler's linguistic terms (and summarised succinctly here by Riki Wilchins), 'sex (male/female) is to 'raw' as gender (man/woman) is to 'cooked.' Sex is there 'on the far side of language,' while gender is something added afterward' (Wilchins, 2017, p. 223). Wilchins complicates this reading, however. Pointing out that, linguistically, 'gender' is regularly used as a replacement for 'sex', Wilchins notes that this behaviour, 'seems to contradict the widely accepted notion that sex is a natural, physical property of bodies, while gender is something culturally derived from the sexual (Wilchins, 2017, p. 223), concluding that, 'The increasing use of gender to replace sex may be an acknowledgment, if only unconsciously, that once you start looking there is nothing, or at least very little, on the far side of language' (Wilchins, 2017, p. 223). Despite this linguistic acknowledgement that neither 'sex' nor 'gender' have a clear material reality, Wilchins's text demonstrates that there is still a social, legal, and medical reliance on a material definition of 'sex'. This can be seen most clearly through the medical intervention on intersex children, that is, children whose genital configuration does not fit the male/female binary. Wilchins affords this to a Western pursuit of 'unity, we believe in singularity, we worship … final Truths' (Wilchins, 2017, p. 239). This can be seen through the surgical 'sexing' of an intersex child, a process by which a surgeon, out of concern for the child's welfare, chooses an 'appropriate' sex – male or female. This is verbalised as an attempt to 'locate the "real" sex' (Wilchins, 2017, p. 231) but, as Wilchins discusses, 'The infant's "real sex," *by definition*, cannot be intersex, cannot be whatever it is.

Any sex but binary male or female is pathology' (Wilchins, 2017, p. 231). The decision to perform surgery on intersex children, therefore, is an example of the Western social interest in 'monolithic truth' (Wilchins, 2017, p. 242), the 'monolithic truth' here being the material existence of the sexual binary.

Even within the supposed objective field of medicine, however, *gender* and social understandings of what permits 'man' and 'woman', have a significant role. In the practice of 'sexing' an intersex child, Myra Hird notes that deciding factors can be located in social discourses of *gender* not *sex*, citing penis size as an indicator of whether a child is 'truly' male or female (Hird, 2000, p. 351). This decision, of course, is bound with social understandings of masculinity, where penis size may have an impact on whether a man is understood as (and perhaps feels) more or less masculine.

'Sex' and 'gender', then, are often shown to be indistinguishable from one another and, indeed, 'sex' itself appears just as intangible, as immaterial as 'gender'. As Wilchins notes, 'We say two sexes is "nature's way"' (Wilchins, 2017, p. 231) but under interrogation, 'nature' fails to provide us with sufficient evidence of the binary. If it is not 'nature' providing us with the binary, then, it is gender that must take the responsibility. As Wilchins tells us, 'it is gender as a system of meaning that produces the "natural" Mother Nature, male and female sexes' (Wilchins, 2017, p. 232) and by extension, then, 'the gender binary that establishes what is genderqueer' (Wilchins, 2017, p. 232). 'Non-binary', then, is that which falls, or intentionally places itself, outside of the binary. Though here it must be acknowledged that the binary itself is constantly shifting. As Butler notes, 'Gender ought not to be construed as a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts follow; rather, gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a *stylised repetition of acts*' (Butler, 1990, p. 191). If what it is to be 'man' and 'woman' is in a

consistent state of flux, then it follows that what it is to be 'non-binary' is similarly unfixed.

For the purposes of this thesis, however, in which 'man' and 'woman' are fixed by Haldane's

own structured definitions, 'non-binary'refers to those characters whose corporeal gender

performance can be understood as both examples of binary masculinity and femininity.

Part One of this thesis demonstrates Haldane's distrust of the State and its institutions as

facilitators of patriarchal control over women, detailing the ways in which she undermines

patriarchal control. In particular, it demonstrates how Haldane undermines the structure of

hegemonic versus subordinate performances of masculinity by creating a narrative space in

which there is no hegemonic masculinity, thereby inventing a space in which the gender

binary system is undermined. This provides the context for Part Two, in which the figure of

the mother as a public, political, and scientific figure is explored.

In the first chapter of this thesis I introduce the key feature of the love-triangle, found within

all of Haldane's interwar fiction. This chapter focuses on how *Man's World* and *I Bring Not*

Peace presenttwo opposing styles of masculinity – the materialist scientist and the idealist

artist. It discusses Haldane's complication of this trope within *Youth is a Crime* through the

character Werner, who offers a new style of masculinity that is multiple and set apart from

the competing hegemonic styles found within Haldane's other books. At the heart of this

chapter is an exploration of the ways in which Haldane creates two philosophically opposing

masculine styles which undermine one another.

Following on from this, Chapter Two considers the ways in which Haldane creates two

corporally opposing masculine styles. Drawing on the history of early twentieth-century

advertising, as well as the physical presentation of the scientist developed by the British

Association of the Advancement of Science, it demonstrates Haldane's undermining of

middle and upper-class masculinity (styles of masculinity that are socially and economically powerful) and shows that Haldane connects socially and economically powerful masculinities to both class and state institutions. It moves on to explore the gender-nonbinary body of *Man's World's* Christopher as a subversion of hegemonic expectation.

This sense of distrust of the hierarchical, patriarchal social structure and the institutions that uphold it, developed in the previous chapter is expanded in Chapter Three. This is shown through Haldane's undermining of middle and upper-class masculinity and the scientific elite. In Chapter Three I show that power over others is afforded to the socially and economically powerful – to the middle and upper-classes – whereas working-class men are presented as out of control and therefore unable to enact control over others. Focusing on the various acts of rape committed in Haldane's interwar fiction, I demonstrate how socially and economically powerful men are enacting a State-sanctioned control over women's bodies, whereas working-class men are depicted as uncontrolled in their desires (and therefore un-State-sanctioned and deemed criminal). Whilst Haldane presents this issue in her typical, amoral, style, there is an intrinsic critique of this power afforded to socially and economically powerful men, which I explore in greater detail in the following chapter.

In the final chapter of Part One I demonstrate how Haldane distances herself from the State by exploring problematic masculinities not in relation to those behaviours considered problematic to the State (and therefore deemed criminal) but by critiquing those behaviours which are socially problematic. By exploring the various criminal men within Haldane's texts, I show that her narratives are far more concerned with their social impact and, actually, as will be shown through Christopher, non-State-sanctioned, criminal behaviour can be an act of solidarity with women.

Having shown how Haldane uses two socially and economically powerful styles of masculinity to undermine one another to destabilise the gender binary within her narrative, Part Two focuses on how Haldane is able to assert the figure of the mother as a social, political, and public figure whilst also retaining her femininity. However, as Part One demonstrates, Haldane's narratives view the State and its institutions as enactors of patriarchal control, therefore Part Two also focuses on how Haldane asserts the figure of the mother within the context of these patriarchal State narratives in which women are subject to the will of the male-driven State, often via its male-driven institutions.

Part Two begins by exploring how Haldane defines the figure of the mother and maternal women in her interwar texts. Set against those that Haldane considers unmaternal – fathers and 'spinsters' – this chapter demonstrates how the interwar texts often define motherhood against these non-maternal foils. It shows that central to Haldane's formulation of the maternal woman is her ability to counteract the damage inflicted by 'bad' mothers, and to heal the trauma of the men around her, demonstrating her deep social importance.

Part Two, Chapter Two builds on the gendered structure, mapped in the previous chapter of the maternal and non-maternal woman, and frames this in relation to Haldane's non-fictional text, *Motherhood and its Enemies*. This chapter addresses Haldane's complex relationship to the figure of the non-maternal mother and the constraints of writing about maternity within a patriarchal context. Her use of bovine imagery is interrogated to reveal how Haldane frames the figure of the mother within patriarchal structures and in particular the scientific community, as a farmed animal or beast of burden.

Building on this, Part Two, Chapter Three explores Haldane's presentation of the maternal woman as a sacrificial victim to the patriarchal social order. Framing the discussion with *Melusine*, and the theories of Dr Margaret Alice Murray that inspired Haldane's version of

the folktale, this chapter explores how patriarchal social and institutional structures prepare maternal women in Haldane's interwar texts for an attitude of willing self-sacrifice in aid of the men around them.

The sense of disillusionment and alienation demonstrated throughout this thesis towards the State and its patriarchal institutions is summarised in the final chapter. Using the theories of Janet Wolff and Rita Felski, the chapter begins by demonstrating the incompatibility of femininity with conceptions of the industrial, modern, public sphere, with science as a prime example of this exclusion. However, Haldane's figuration of the maternal woman intends her to be scientific, public, and vocational. As previous chapters demonstrate, Haldane destabilises the gender binary within her narratives to allow her maternal women to inhabit these public, political, and scientific roles and spaces without de-feminisation. However, as the closing half of this final chapter demonstrates, the patriarchy is ever-present in Haldane's interwar texts and its impact on social structure means that whilst Haldane actively encourages destabilisation of the gender binary in order to vindicate her maternal women from the constraints of gendered expectation, the non-binary body, which is found throughout her interwar texts, is a tragic source of gendered exasperation in a man-made world.

Part One

Chapter One:
Masculinity Between the Material and the Ideal

In her autobiography, *Truth Will Out* (1949), Charlotte Haldane reflects on the interwar years

of her life, spent in a marriage with the famous biologist, J. B. S. Haldane, a marriage that, at

the point of writing, had come to an end. She remembers her passion for science, in which

she invested 'an aura of magic or mysticism' (Haldane, 1949, p. 31). The cause of this, she

tells us, 'had been partly due to my basic ignorance of the functions of science, partly to my

emotional need for a religion, or a substitute for one, and partly to my passionate adulation

of J. B. S.' (Haldane, 1949, p. 31). Science acts as a 'substitute' religion for Haldane,

suggesting ironically that it is a concept she was able to accept on the basis of faith as

opposed to evidence. Haldane's interwar fiction is marked by the presence of a significant

scientific academic influence. After marrying J. B. S. in 1926, the two settled in Cambridge,

where J. B. S. worked as a researcher in biology. As part of her duties as the wife of an

eminent scientist, Haldane accompanied J. B. S. to both parties and research events,

occasionally recording her experiences, later reproduced in her autobiography. However,

her reflections on this reveal a dissatisfaction with science. She tells her reader, 'science

could not give me the answers I was seeking, because I was seeking the wrong questions…

I was basically preoccupied with the problems of the 'Why?' Of the Universe' (Haldane,

1949, p. 31). Science, she clarifies, could not help her with this because, 'Its business was to

deal with the 'How?' rather than the 'Why?'' (Haldane, 1949, p. 32). The binary she creates

here, between the 'how' and the 'why', is reflective of a central concern running throughout

Haldane's interwar fiction. As this chapter demonstrates, Haldane connects these opposing

questions to materialist and idealist philosophies, and connects this, in turn, to early

twentieth-century masculinities via the cultural figures of the idealist artist and the materialist

scientist. In this chapter, I explore how Haldane translates these cultural figures into her

male characters and how, as opposing scripts, they undermine one another's performance of masculinity, destabilising each other's authority. I begin by exploring the contention between materialist science (exemplified by Haldane's husband, J. B. S. Haldane) and idealism in the form of spiritualism's intrusion into the scientific sphere. From here Haldane's use of the cultural figures of the scientist and the artist are explored by considering her novels alongside authoritative cultural presentations of these masculinities portrayed by the British Association for the Advancement of Science and the Royal Academy of Art. I explore her primary male characters and how they adhere to either a presentation of the idealist artist or the materialist scientist and consider how she interrogates these performances and reveals them to undermine one another in their opposition. Finally, the chapter ends by considering a third masculine identity that Haldane posits through her young character Werner in *Youth is Crime*. I discuss how Werner encapsulates both the materialist scientist and idealist artist and in doing so offers a future possibility for masculinity. As the opening chapter to this thesis, I demonstrate how Haldane destabilises the binary gender system by undermining hegemonic masculinity through two philosophically opposing styles of masculinity. This is extended in the following chapter by considering how Haldane does this with regard to corporally opposing masculine styles.

This chapter begins by acclimatising to the cultural climate of the early twentieth century with regard to materialism, idealism, science, and spiritualism. In 1925, the same year Charlotte Haldane's first novel, *Man's World*, was published, Virginia Woolf produced her essay, 'Modern Fiction'. In this text Woolf critiques the modern writer, exemplified by H.G. Wells, Arnold Bennett, and John Galsworthy. The manner by which she chooses to critique these writers, however, is based in philosophy rather than direct stylistic analysis. She tells her reader,

> If we tried to formulate our meaning in one word we should say that these three writers are materialists. It is because they are concerned not with the spirit but with the body that they have disappointed us, and left us with the feeling that the sooner English fiction turns its back upon them, as politely as may be, and marches, if only into the desert, the better for its soul. (Woolf, 1984, p. 158)

Materialism, which centres around a corporeal understanding of existence, is utilised here as a means by which the writers' reliance on bodily experience (and therefore lack of character internalisation) can be criticised. This is seen when Woolf targets Wells for being a 'materialist from sheer goodness of heart' (Woolf, 1984, p. 159). Inherent here is the suggestion that Wells does not reveal that which may be less pleasant in the human psyche, causing a lack of 'soul' or substance in his characters. This subsequently presents Wells's style as shallow or somehow unfulfilling. However, placed in opposition to Wells and his two contemporaries' writing of 'the body', is writing concerned with the 'spirit'. Writing of the 'spirit', Woolf suggests, is 'better for [the] soul'. By placing greater value on the writing of the 'spirit' and locating it in opposition to the 'materialist' writing of the 'body', Woolf marks the former style of literature as idealist. Idealism, otherwise specified as Cartesian dualism, of course, focuses on the mind as separate from the material, and from the body, and understands it as intrinsically linked to the soul.

The dichotomy presented by Woolf, between two philosophic approaches to art, that of the material 'body' and spiritual 'soul', is reflective of wider cultural concerns relating not only to the arts but also to science in the early twentieth century. Spiritualism, which was popular in Britain well into the nineteen twenties, encroached on twentieth-century scientific materialism by identifying itself as a scientific principle through societies such as the Society for Psychical Research. Spiritualist science tried to make the immaterial material, and therefore more 'scientific'. Spiritualists pointed to 'evidence' such as levitating objects,

photographs of the dead, ectoplasm, and so on, all of which was intended to give the spirits a material reality (Luckhurst, 2002, p. 109). At the same time, however, spiritualists emphasised the apparently immaterial in the established sciences, that is, they highlighted the unseen; infrared, radio-waves, and x-rays, found in the electromagnetic spectrum but undetectable to the human eye. By highlighting this visual immateriality within the sciences spiritualists provided enough uncertainty, for some, to make room inside the largely materially-focused sciences for paranormal possibility. This cultural preoccupation with the material, materialism and idealism, is highlighted by the publication of *Where are the dead?* in 1928. The book was written by philosophers, spiritualists and clergymen, but added was the inclusion of scientists, such as biologist J. S. Huxley. These experts came together in an attempt to answer a letter published anonymously by the *Daily News*, that asked*,* 'Where *are* the mighty hosts of the dead... what happens to the poor bewildered soul?' (Byrne, 2010, p. 1). Here, again, is an attempt to materialise the immaterial. The question asks: Where are the dead *located*? What *space* does the soul inhabit? The discourse returns to that of idealism and materialism. Is the soul separate from the body and so is human experience capable of continuing without a physical boundary? Or are we tied to the earth by our bodies? Huxley's, perhaps slightly disappointing answer consists, he tells us, 'of four words: We do not know' (Byrne, 2010, p. 1). What this answer does show, however, is the significance of materialism and idealism in the early twentieth century. Spiritualism, a product of idealist philosophy, requires the acceptance of the immaterial as possibility and as such, allows for scientific uncertainty. In *Where are the Dead?* Huxley, whose own genetic work relies on materialist science (biology as the creator of individual personality and experience) publicly accepts this uncertainty. Though a good friend of Huxley, J. B. S. Haldane takes a decidedly different stance on the subject. Writing slightly later, in 1940, he explains, in the appropriately titled article, 'Why I am a Materialist'. He begins the article,

WHEN I SAY that I am a materialist I mean that I believe in the following statements:

1. Events occur which are not perceived by any mind.

2. There were unperceived events before there were any minds.

And I also believe, though this is not a necessary logical deduction from the former two, that:

3. When a man has died he is dead. (J. B. S. Haldane, 1940, p. 1)

J. B. S. sets a binary between idealism and materialism. It is clear from this statement – in his rejection of a mind-centered world view – that J. B. S. was a materialist philosophically opposed to idealism. In feeling compelled to clarify his position on an afterlife, however, J. B. S. locates this philosophical discussion within the context of material science vs idealist faith (whether he is critical of organised religion or spiritualism is left ambiguous).

Spiritualism was not the only threat to a hegemonic notion of materialist science. The increasing popularity of psychology from the late Victorian to early twentieth century added its own complexities to the discussion. Sigmund Freud, a founder of modern psychology complicated the philosophic binary between materialism and idealism. Sander L. Gilman notes Freud's reliance on visual evidence when understanding pain, that is, that pain must be understood corporeally (Gilman, 2011, p. 670). Indeed, upon interrogation many of Freud's most famous theories, such as the Oedipal complex and the uncanny, are visually motivated. In both cases it is the psychology of the seen or not seen – what is hidden by the uncanny, or what the mother physically lacks. This materialist approach sits uncomfortably next to other theorisations by Freud, in particular his development of the ego, id, and the ego-ideal. In this theory Freud presents for us a largely compartmentalised human psyche. The id is, according to Freud, 'totally non-moral' (Freud, 1962, p. 44). It is, effectively, our 'base', instinctual self. The ego is 'the representative of the external world, of reality' (Freud, 1962, p. 26) and is, therefore a medium of the mind in its interaction with society. The ego-ideal, as the final level, is a 'representative of the internal world' (Freud, 1962, p. 26) (the

psyche 'untouched') and is associated with 'religion, morality, and a social sense' (Freud, 1962, p. 27). Freud blurs the distinction between materialism and idealism when he tells the reader that, 'Conflicts between the ego and the ideal will... ultimately reflect the contrast between what is real and what is psychical, between the external world and the internal world' (Freud, 1962, p. 26). Freud uses oppositional definitions here. A link is drawn between the 'real' and the 'external world' which is set against the 'psychical' - 'not real' - and the internal world. The separation of the psyche from the 'external world' implies an idealist approach and yet the inclusion of the concept of 'reality', implied as hard physical matter (hence its separation from the mind) still smacks of materialism. Indeed, it was this 'blurring' that made the study of psychology unpalatable to many established scientists. Referring to a meeting by the British Association for the Advancement of Science, held on November 6th, 1914, Oliver Lodge notes that during the discussion it was 'clearly indicated that anything approaching psychical research was taboo' (Hill, 1932, p. 39) and he felt this to be 'typical of the present attitude in the scientific atmosphere'[1]. Freud's own philosophic relationship with his work reflects this fraught scientific relationship between materialism and idealism. David L. Smith discusses Freud's complex philosophic approach noting that during his early career Freud was a 'hard-nosed materialist, and that his movement away from a materialistic stance coincided with his invention of psychoanalysis (Smith, 1995, p. 392). It was, according to Smith, his realisation of the '*reciprocal* relationship between the body and the mind' (Smith, 1995, p. 392) (emphasis added) that caused Freud to move to an approach known as the ''identity theory' of mindbrain relation' (Smith, 1995, p. 396). This theory posits the psyche as a functioning part of the physical human body (via the brain) and is, therefore, essentially materialist. However, as Smith points out, what it left lacking was an explanation for how the material brain creates the psyche (Smith, 1995, p. 396). In attempting to 'fix'

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[1] Lodge did find some scientists sympathetic to his interests, however, as he goes on to note 'I cannot say that I am proud of the average scientific man at the present time; fortunately there are some exceptions' (Hill, 1932, p. 40).

psychoanalysis within a materialist framework, then, Freud inadvertently dealt materialist science the same blow as the spiritualists by creating material uncertainty. Materialist science was under threat in the early twentieth century, then, from the popularity of idealist spiritualism (including those attempts to make it materialist). The dichotomy between science and spirituality, certainty and faith, the material and the abstract, was failing.

Haldane's fiction centres around this cultural preoccupation with idealism and materialism, art and science, the spiritual and the knowable. In dichotomising these concepts and categorising them into a binary, Haldane creates two directly opposing masculine styles. The way these characters function within her literature is as two rivals for the attention of the female protagonist. The protagonist's decision between idealism and materialism is presented as a tussle. This template is laid out in Haldane's very first novel, *Man's World*, in which the protagonist Nicolette finds herself torn between the enigmatic scientist, Bruce, and the scientific order on the one hand, and her talented musician brother, Christopher, and the anarchist rebels on the other. As artists, Christopher and his friend Arcous concern themselves with the abstract questions of life – morality, beauty, meaning-- an approach that clashes with the scientific society that they inhabit, as is seen in Christopher's interaction with the scientist, Raymond, 'As far as your "progress" goes, we have probably lost the desire, for instance, of seeking the immeasurable. You people, who go on noting and measuring, measuring and noting, how often do you dare try to interpret?' (Haldane, 1926, p. 140). Christopher's interest in the interpretation of the 'immeasurable' figuratively connects him (and by extension idealism) to those 'immeasurable' subjects –art, philosophy, spiritualism, etc. This is further exemplified when Christopher tells Raymond, 'The only thing that matters is the Why, not the How. Tell us that' (Haldane, 1926, p. 141). To which he responds, 'My dear boy, you talk like a poet or a mystic or a priest. Nobody cares about that but you. One might find out or one might not, but in the meantime let us look through our

telescopes' (Haldane, 1926, p. 141). The juxtaposition between Christopher's perspective and Raymond's precise, narrow view of the world, concerned with measuring what is physically found– signified by the telescope – stands as a metaphor for the differing approaches of the materialists and idealists.

In connecting art with idealism and the spiritual, and science to materialism and the measurable and logical, Haldane creates a binary definition of two different performances of masculinity. Her fictional definitions follow a pattern being laid out by contemporary artists and scientists in the early twentieth century, however. As the next section explores, anxieties relating to public perception of artistic and scientific masculinity led figures within two well-respected British institutions – the British Association of the Advancement of Science, and The Royal Academy of Art – to consciously define masculinity within their fields.

Masculinity and Science in the Early Twentieth Century

Heather Ellis's research on masculinity and science explores the British male scientific identity, or 'man of science', via a study of the British Association of the Advancement of Sciences at the beginning of the twentieth century. The man of science, in this period, was going through a monumental change in terms of how he was presenting himself, and how, as a result, he was being seen by the public. At the turn of the century, BAAS, and its corresponding men of science, were still recovering their reputation after the vivisection controversy of the 1880s and 1890s (Ellis, 2017, p. 179) in which there was public outcry over inhumane treatments of animals used for scientific research. This controversy had seen the masculinity of the scientists involved (and by extension the figure of the scientist in general) called into question, particularly in relation to the nation, as many worried why British scientists were behaving like 'foreigners' in their treatment of animals ('foreigners'

here, being especially linked with Germany) (Ellis, 2017, pp. 181–2). It was a sense of

scientific internationalism that further emasculated the figure of the scientist in the eyes of

the general public (Ellis, 2017, pp. 183–4). A strong sense of internationalism was regarded

by many men of science as being tantamount to their sense of masculine independence

(Ellis, 2017, p. 181). This reluctance to express their patriotism via closing intellectual

borders and, in particular, their continued relationship with German scientists at the outbreak

of the First World War, led to a cultural representation of the man of science as an 'unmanly'

figure (Ellis, 2017, p. 181).

At the beginning of the war, then, the masculine reputation of the scientist appeared to be

under repeating and continued threat. Over the course of the next few years, however,

public perception began to shift, largely due to the efforts of BAAS. Ellis suggests that as the

fighting progressed, 'voices from inside the Association argued that the war should be

viewed as an opportunity to prove their usefulness to both nation and empire and to

vindicate the collective masculinity of men of science' (Ellis, 2017, p. 184). As well as

working on militaristic, scientific, and industrial advancement, the Association involved

themselves in education. Ellis tells us about the efforts of Ray Lankester in establishing an

independent committee to inquire about the 'neglect of science', which resulted in the

acknowledgement that the war had started badly because, in Lankester's own words, '[n]ot

only are our highest ministers of state ignorant of science, but the same defect runs through

almost all the public departments of the Civil Service' (Ellis, 2017, p. 187). The scientific

education of both children and adults became an important governmental focus and BAAS

ensured its position as integral to this process, thereby successfully outlining the role of the

scientist as both a war-time, and peace-time restoration figure. As Ellis notes, 'From a body

that was generally seen at the start of the war to be slipping slowly but surely off the public

radar, lacking modern relevance, the BAAS could argue by 1916 that Britain's very 'national

welfare' would 'largely depend on the energetic scientific development' of its resources'
(Ellis, 2017, p. 186). In short, largely thanks to the efforts of BAAS, the sciences, and the
scientist had undergone a *radical* shift in reputation after the First World War[2].

Masculinity and Art in the Early Twentieth Century

Similar to Heather Ellis's study, Jongwoo Jeremy Kim has researched masculinity in relation
to the Royal Academy of Arts in the late Victorian and early twentieth century. Within this
powerful institution he identifies the appearance of an anxiety relating to class, sexuality, and
manhood in this period. Focusing on the work of Hubert von Herkomer, Kim notes that
Herkomer 'pursued class stability' (Kim, 2012, p. 58) in his painting. Class stability, and
especially the image of middle-class masculinity as heterosexual and 'manly', was under
threat, however, via the very process found within the artist's and the art college's studio.
Kim uses the example of François Sallé's *The Anatomy Class at the École des Beaux-Arts*.
In this image, he tells us, 'A proud model stands amidst various representations of anatomy'
(Kim, 2012, p. 80). 'Against these samples of anatomy, the model's body becomes the
ultimate signified of all: the model's body is the whole truth validating fragmented imperfect
reproductions' (Kim, 2012, p. 80). The model – a working-class man paid to pose in the
nude, or semi-nude – problematises the masculinity of the middle-class artist in two ways,
then. First, as Kim highlights, because in standing as a fully-realised example of the
masculine form, he personifies masculinity as a *working-class* ideal. His is a body made by
physical labour, not intellectualism. As Martin A. Danahay has noted,

> Like Victorian male writers such as Dickens, the male artist found the domestic and
> professional spheres were intertwined and could not be separated as neatly as the

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[2] This is not to suggest BAAS was a homogenous group that produced a homogenous
scientific culture but rather Ellis indicates an overall, general effect that the Association had
on the male scientific identity.

ideology of separate spheres would suggest. He is himself structurally closer to the

women in his painting than he would like to admit. (Danahay, 2005, p. 100)

In much the same way that the figure of the scientist risked emasculation via a perception of

his professional practice as aloof and private, the artist similarly risked feminine associations

through the domestic location of much of his work. In comparison to his working-class

model, then, he could be perceived as *less* masculine. Secondly, in viewing the nude male

body, and transcribing it to pencil or paint, the middle-class artist risked an eroticized,

homosexual gaze. Herkomer's *A Zither Evening* reveals this anxiety. The image, which

similarly depicts a group of students, removes both the working-class element and the

potentially 'dangerous' sensuality, by removing the model altogether. Instead, the students

watching their teacher playing a zither, themselves decentralised by their number, differing

heights and animation, and the teacher, too, is largely hidden from view. Kim notes, for

Herkomer in the early twentieth century 'English middle-class manhood was at stake' (Kim,

2012, p. 81), shown through what he chooses to depict, or remove, from this particular

painting[3].

At the beginning of the twentieth century, then, both the artist and the scientist were

engaged in a project of masculinization. The scientist, after a long period of risking

emasculation through public perception was now, thanks to the efforts of BAAS, largely

being considered a manly figure, both in his usefulness for war, and for the restoration that

followed. Similarly, the artist, as has been shown through Academician Hubert Herkomer,

was anxious over unmanly presentations of the middle-class artist, and was likewise

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[3] According to Kim, this English middle-class masculine identity was of such importance to Herkomer because as a German immigrant his 'gentleman status was not a confirmed fact' (Kim, 2012, p. 81), and he therefore felt a need to prove it.

attempting to counteract this image[4]. Whilst these two organisations – the British Association for the Advancement of Science and the Royal Academy of Art – are only two institutions within a rich and varied history, they were imbued with some of the greatest authority and cultural gravitas within their respective fields. Despite their cultural power, however, Kim and Ellis have shown that there was a distinct anxiety relating to their masculinity that was met by conscious attempts to define and advertise their 'manliness'. Haldane's interwar work is interested in these two different performances of manhood which she splits and categorises into two distinct groups. In the next section, I consider how Haldane presents the idealist artist and the materialist scientist within her literature.

The Idealist Artist

Haldane's idealist men are largely defined by their artistic capacity, in particular, music. Like religion, music is a means to the idealist sense of self-awareness and Haldane connects the two throughout her interwar novels. In *Man's World*, Christopher, who is a musician, leaves the city to compose. What follows is a surreal chapter in which Christopher, cast as a Moses-figure, finds a song at the top of a mountain and brings it down to the masses (whether this is real or imagined is unclear). Symbolism aside, Haldane connects music with religion in this instance through faith-based lexicon and through the title of the composition itself; after the musical interlude the reader is informed, 'That was how he heard the first performance of his Symphony of God and Man' (Haldane, 1926, p. 268).

It is through the music-faith connection that Haldane reiterates the idealist's independence. During his time in the mountains Christopher is overwhelmed by sound but gradually, as Haldane describes, 'a solitary Voice, began to be heard. This was clearly one man, and only

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[4] This heterosexualising and masculinizing approach to art was by no means homogenous, however. For a discussion of art and late Victorian sexual subculture which the Academician Henry Scott Tuke was a part of, read Jongwoo Jeremy Kim's chapter, 'The Utopia of Inverts: Henry Scott Tuke', in *Painted Men in Britain, 1868-1918: Royal Academicians and Masculinities.*

one, who sang. At first his notes halted often, he would hesitate after a few bars, as if courage failed him to go on' (Haldane, 1926, p. 263). As the music continues the reader 'sees' the lone voice briefly join a crowd of singers only to break off and sing alone. Through this musical interlude in the narrative Christopher's own journey is shown, his 'halting' attempts at individualism and independence before he successfully develops his autonomy. The reader is later told, 'That symphony was his religion, I tell you, his declaration of love of God, of liberty and independence' (Haldane, 1926, p. 260) confirming the composition as a sort of mini bildungsroman, a telling of his journey to independence and, as it will turn out, his swan song.

What is clear from the implied heightened emotion of this crescendo is that art, as well as being connected with 'higher' thoughts like religion, is also an expression of emotion. This is seen directly in the emotive language Haldane utilises in her description of Christopher's music. She tells us that, '…as he walked the sound of the VOICE became clearer and his Voice lost its defiance, its anger, its sorrow, falling finally to a monotonous prayer-like murmur' (Haldane, 1926, p. 263). Christopher has stopped his inward struggle by channeling 'higher' thought – in this context, faith. Following an idealist notion of self-awareness, Christopher finds peace. Arcous's characterisation follows this same format too. His emotion is expressed through his art and not communicated in person. In the chapter 'Usness' Arcous is in the process of finishing a painting of Nicolette. He tells her, 'No one has ever inspired me to work as you do. Just look at that glorious creature. That's you' (Haldane, 1926, p. 214). It is through this chapter, and the two characters' discussion of Arcous's painting of Nicolette, that the reader learns that he has more than an artistic appreciation of her. The painting itself is multilayered. The depiction of a young woman – Nicolette- turning from the goddess of wisdom, Minerva, to the goddess of love, Venus, can be read as an anticipation of the future events of the narrative (Nicolette falling in love with Bruce). It can

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dually be read, however, in the context of Arcous's newly discovered feelings as an image of

yearning. Arcous tells Nicolette, 'Don't worry. I know quite well it cannot be' (Haldane, 1926,

p. 217) and clarifies, 'You are too adorable to be loved less than completely, and I too

unyielding to make such surrender' (Haldane, 1926, p. 217). Acknowledging that he is

unable to show real affection and love to Nicolette, Arcous does so through his art instead.

This particular kind of non-sexualised, 'pure' love connects with the philosophical, 'higher'

thought Haldane associates with idealism. Just as Christopher celebrates or 'worships' his

independence through his music, Arcous worships his love of Nicolette through his painting.

In both instances art is a means by which the character can self-reflect, following the

idealist's mind-centered approach to philosophy.

What is found, then, in Haldane's depiction of music and art, is that they are directly

connected with the 'higher' thoughts – love, morality - and a sense of independence that has

already been demonstrated to be connected to idealism. In addition to this, Haldane's

connection of art to emotional self-awareness further connects it and the characters that

portray it, to idealism, by making the artist reflective and inward-looking.

Materialism and the Unemotional Scientist

The emotional self-awareness and ability to self-reflect that Haldane associates with

idealism sits in stark opposition to the unemotional presentation of her materialist characters.

This mirrors a public perception of the scientist that formed at the start of the First World

War. In a discussion of this issue Heather Ellis cites an article published by the

Nottinghamshire Guardian during the war that 'poked fun at the high moral manliness of the

BAAS, referring to its members as 'liv[ing] on a plane beyond the influence of the passions

and prejudices which move ordinary mortals'' (Ellis, 2017, p. 182). This view of the scientist

as emotionally removed is shown in *Man's World* through Bruce, whose character is

consistently presented as unemotional and often a-moral (he uncritically reminds Nicolette that their child may be killed by the State – of which he is an important member - if her pregnancy is discovered as a revolutionary action, for instance).

In her later novel, *I Bring Not Peace,* Haldane continues to present her scientists as unemotional and unreflective and, in the case of this novel, to their own detriment. In this novel Michal finds herself deciding between an American ex-sailor-turned-jazz-musician, James and an enigmatic Parisian-Egyptian biologist, Jean. Jean too is torn between the young, free, bohemian Michal and his (married) quiet, middle-class housewife, Jeanne. 'Jeanne' the feminine form of 'Jean' in both name and character, is a safe partner for him because she does not require any emotion. Trapped in a loveless marriage that middle-class convention will not allow her out of, she favours understated behaviour and affection so that her affair will not be obvious. Michal, on the other hand, is presented as the polar opposite. Whereas 'Jeanne is like a Victorian drawing-room in November…' (Haldane, 1932, p. 31), Michal lives life '…where the winds blow and drunken sailors go rolling down the street and there are snatches of music' (Haldane, 1932, p. 32). However, Michal's virility is potentially dangerous to Jean and his emotional stability. He believes that, 'Michal was something extremely good to have in one's life, …provided one kept her in her proper place. That was a little to one side, or possibly even, like Satan's, behind one' (Haldane, 1932, p. 106). The implication that Michal is a temptation and a danger is implicit in the comparison to Satan. Jean therefore denies himself a relationship with her, which leads to a repression of feelings culminating in an eventual moment of clarity, seen in the following quote,

> He had come to his crisis; the moment when, lying on one's back in the dark, one
>
> must face bitterness. Truth. Fact. He knew all about them….
>
> One has always wanted to be honest, sincere with oneself, objective. For years a
>
> trap had been preparing itself, no, worse, one has built it, day by day, night by night,

it growing imperceptibly from little lies like wires all woven together: lies like 'I put

honesty first,' 'pretense is disgusting,' 'objectivity is the sole good,' 'one must

preserve one's equilibrium.' (Haldane, 1932, p. 238)

In a Freudian battle between id, ego and super ego Jean is forced to acknowledge that he

has been hiding his feelings for Michal. Unlike his love rival James, who professed his love

in the early stages of their relationship, Jean has to fight himself – his own personality – to

accept his emotions. This reluctance to be emotional is noticed by Michal who finds herself

antagonised by it. In a conversation the two have about James Michal becomes angry with

Jean's cool approach to the topic,

(WHY? Because I'm in love with you, not with him, that's why!) He really had asked

for it and almost deserved it, deserved to be embarrassed and confused…. [It]

occurred to her that he might be deliberately asking for it, that beneath this Olympian,

Latin calm, at last, at last, he was slowly, like lava hotly seeking motion, beginning to

seethe. (Haldane, 1932, p. 54)

Whilst this prediction is true, and Jean does decide to accept his feelings for Michal, it is

unfortunately too late. James, as an idealist artist – a musician – is able to communicate his

feelings with ease and having experienced this emotional honesty Michal is unable to accept

Jean's aloofness. Ultimately Michal rejects Jean because, as she says herself, he can

satisfy 'my intellectual cravings . . . but not my emotional ones' (Haldane, 1932, p. 271). His

inability to marry the objectivism of materialist science and emotion, then, becomes his

masculine failing. It is the reason he fails to 'win' Michal as in the traditional narrative arch of

a romance novel. This is made more visceral when Michal notes, '"The cool and steady

hand of science"; - (does anything ever accelerate its pulse? …)' (Haldane, 1932, p. 57).

Here Haldane makes Jean an embodiment of science. She amalgamates the unemotional,

unresponsive figure of the materialist scientist with Jean's own body by invoking images of

bodily functions – the pulse. Haldane therefore infers that not only does Jean fail as a

corporeal man in emotional terms but in bodily functions as well; a particularly poignant attack on his masculinity.

This bodily-based critique of un-emotionalism is found in Haldane's non-fiction text *Music, My Love*, in which she criticises the work of composer William Walton and author Aldous Huxley. Haldane tells us that,

> Both [Mr. Walton] and Mr. Aldous Huxley are suffering from an overdose of intellectualism. For a creative artist, intelligence is not enough. Of Mr. Walton, as of Mr. Huxley, one can, I think, with truth assert that "his head is in the right place." As for the organ that proverbially is supposed to be there, one sometimes, in both their cases, doubts its existence. (Haldane, 1936, p. 169)

Replacing the creatives' hearts with their heads, Haldane uses bodily imagery or, rather, specifically *incorrect* bodily imagery to highlight the men's problematic lack of emotion in their creative work. The body, then, becomes indicative of the man's ability – here his creativity. Had these men been scientists perhaps Haldane would have been less interested in their hearts, expecting, as she does in her fiction, the scientist to be unemotional. However, she tells her reader, 'If, like Mr. Huxley, Mr. Walton cannot escape from behind the bars of intellectualism, his doom will be the more tragic of the two. …Music must give us first and foremost that complete emotional satisfaction…' (Haldane, 1936, p. 169). Whilst specifying that the composer must have a grasp of the emotions – showing us Haldane's deep connection between art and emotion – what it also shows us is that she understands intellectualism to be a cage. Rather like the imagery she conjures of the failed body – with the head and the heart swapped in the wrong places – this figuration of the man trapped by his intellectualism is equally emasculating.

This sense of entrapment is communicated by Jean in *I Bring Not Peace*. He tells Michal, 'You must remember I am talking about *pure* research, which is unfortunately almost unintelligible to those who have never done any. The only emotion it allows is a relentless, but patient, curiosity' (Haldane, 1932, p. 57). Whilst Jean acknowledges his inability to be emotional as simply a need to be always objective and unemotional due to the requirements of his work, the reader is encouraged to see a man trapped by his work, unable to be a man beyond it. His very emotions must be highly regulated and controlled, as the use of the word 'relentless' implies, so that he is chained to a performance of masculinity that requires the submission of the individual – the suppression of the emotional self. He tells Michal, 'I am insignificant, except in so far as I am able to contribute to science, knowledge' (Haldane, 1932, p. 240). In order to be a good scientist Jean believes he must be consistently objective and never clouded by emotion, and being a scientist is the totality of his being. Just as Christopher is the embodiment of the musician and Arcous the embodiment of the artist, Jean is the embodiment of the scientist. By encompassing these cultural figures these men become, by extension, symbols of what these societal roles represent to Haldane. Both artists are inward focused and ask questions of the world; they are Haldane's articulation of idealism and Christopher is the symbol of the idealist man. The scientists of Haldane's books, being representatives of materialism, measure the world based on what they see. The unseen – emotion, religion, morality – is not important. As is seen through Jean's character, however, this can have detrimental consequences. This inability to connect with his emotions undermines his humanity – he is only able to be a scientist and not a man – and by extension it undermines his masculinity.

This is not to suggest that Haldane presents her scientists as entirely emasculated. Whilst Jean losing his humanity (his emotion) to science is problematic, science and the materialist approach are also shown to be capable of reinforcing masculinity. In fact, lack of emotion

can render the scientist *more* masculine in situations where he is controlled in comparison to his artistic foil. In *I Bring Not Peace* the lack of emotion associated with the materialist scientist allows Jean to control himself in a particularly masculine way[5]. This is made especially apparent when Jean is placed next to his love-rival, the idealist, emotional jazz musician, James. Sharing Michal's small sitting-room, Jean, 'wasn't particularly comfortable about it either, though he didn't make a scene or anything like that. He was too cold, too well disciplined for that' (Haldane, 1932, p. 165). Despite the potential for the situation to become emotionally charged Jean remains calm and it is in his controlled presence that the faults in James's emotionalism are revealed,

> Now he wanted to be just friendly and pleasant and natural but it made a fool of him again; made him sweat and fidget and mumble and not only look but feel inferior to this quiet slick French brother of Michal's with his rather nice smile and watchful eyes behind tortoiseshells. (Haldane, 1932, p. 164)

The tortoiseshell glasses described here provide a physical representation of Jean's ability to remain aloof behind the mask of science and materialism. As an object that allows the user to *view* the world with *precision*, the glasses in this instance can be read as symbols of materialist science. Behind them Jean can remain 'quiet' and 'slick' despite being faced with the man who shares Michal's affection. As a result James, who is driven by emotion, feels 'inferior' in Jean's presence, building Jean's masculinity by binary default.

This presentation of the scientist is consistent with the dominant interwar depiction of the man of science as laid out by Heather Ellis in her exploration of BAAS. The years following the First World War were significant for the cultural figure of the scientist. After the war discussions began regarding increased cooperation between civilian and military science with the navy airing concerns over better preparation for 'next time' (Ellis, 2017, p. 191). The

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[5] Self-control and masculinity are discussed in detail in Chapter Three.

scientist's unique ability to deal with a threat to Britain was finally acknowledged and, for the first time in British history, scientists were considered central figures to national defence (Ellis, 2017, p. 191). As Ellis notes, 'By the mid-1920s, the man of science had emerged not only as a viable war hero, the preserver of nation and empire, but also, and perhaps most significantly, as the preferred model of masculine citizenship in peacetime' (Ellis, 2017, p. 199). Reflecting this new social position of the man of science in a classically patriarchal metaphor, Jean, in his meeting with his rival, James, becomes an allegory for the scientist defending his nation. Like the post-war figure of the scientist Jean can maintain calm when facing adversity. When tested his masculine control of his emotions allows him to deal with difficulty. Behind his tortoiseshells he observes and measures the situation with precision, allowing him to emerge victorious as a result.

Jean is further masculinized by his associations with the cultural figure of the early twentieth-century scientist, and, in particular, his connection with education. As this chapter has discussed, the interwar years produced a new kind of scientific masculinity, with the man of science now being presented as a role model (Ellis, 2017, p. 197). The male scientist began to be viewed as 'the ideal citizen of the future' and an architect of post-war peace (Ellis, 2017, p. 197). Education had a huge part to play in this process. During the First World War and the years ensuing it various educational reports and books were produced that discussed the importance of science in the development of children. BAAS's 1917 report, 'Science Teaching in Secondary Schools' and P. B. Showan's *Citizenship and the School* (1923) both centralised the role of science in children's (especially male children's) education and social development, with P. B. Showan's book for teachers suggesting that the scientist himself played an important role in 'developing inspiring models of manly citizenship suitable for peacetime' (Ellis, 2017, p. 197). In the interwar years, then, the figure of the scientist found himself in the additional role of educator and upholder of the belief that

'Scientific instruction ought to be serious in tone and support the development of a masculine character' (Ellis, 2017, p. 188). Haldane's scientific male characters take on educator roles in her other interwar novels – Bruce takes Nicolette to see a live experiment, for instance – but this role is most apparent in *I Bring Not Peace*. Alongside 'love interest', Jean takes on the role of 'educator' to Michal, who describes him as 'hold[ing] the keys to all the things I want and want to know' (Haldane, 1932, p. 233) and he is masculinized by this role. When thinking about her ex-husband back in England, Michal describes him as a 'moth' to her flame. The power dynamics are clearly in her favour here and, along with stories of Tom's drinking and gambling, it is strongly implied that he is a less than masculine figure in Michal's eyes. Jean is discussed in very different terms, however. She tells us,

> I do get tired and I want, must have, real food to keep this flame burning. Now Jean is no moth. Jean whom I have known all my life, Jean holds a torch at which I can re-light this low-burning flame. (Haldane, 1932, p. 31)

Jean inspires Michal. He 'feeds' her intellect, unlike Tom who has allowed her intellectual flame to burn low. By comparison he is better fitted to Michal's needs, his greater knowledge, therefore, makes him more masculine. This fits with Jean's own view of himself, which is 'the ideal of a man who had seen and tasted and tested life widely, and had on consideration decided which experiences to eliminate from his personal world' (Haldane, 1932, p. 100). Both Michal and Jean see him as knowledgeable and worldly and, again, a 'better' man than his rival.

However, though a perception of the scientist as defender and educator was in one sense masculinizing, Haldane also presents this figure as being rooted in the establishment and therefore married to the State in a manner that undermines individuality. In the case of Jean, though he has 'tasted life widely' he is still conservative in comparison to the exciting James, who drinks until late at night, attends parties and plays jazz music. Jean, in comparison,

works within an institution and is therefore far more conservative than his bohemian competitor in terms of lifestyle.

Idealism and Independence

The independence of the idealist artist is most notable in *Man's World*. Arcous, Christopher's anarchist friend who gives Nicolette a job in his artist's studio when she decides to leave the motherhood profession, is similarly a representative figure of idealism, individualism, and religion. In his studio Arcous exists away from the scientific society outside, and he pushes for revolution,

> 'But'- he flashes an almost accusing finger at Christopher – 'if I were you, if I cared as you do, I should not remain inactive. I should propagandize for anarchy among all the intelligent people I knew, since that is the only mode of living for intelligent folk. The leaders of to-day are treating the people as if they were Versuchstiere ['lab rats'], and the earth one great laboratory. That the world should be transformed into an experimental theatre in the name of Mensch just because it was turned into a circus arena in the name of Jesus, I can't fathom.' (Haldane, 1926, p. 158)

In this interaction with Christopher Arcous links the need for independence with intelligence. Lack of independence is dehumanising; people are simply 'versuchstiere' (lab rats) in this scientific society if they do not have their autonomy. The use of the German, 'versuchstiere' here of course would have reminded Haldane's reader of the particularly cruel practice of vivisection – particularly associated with the Germans at this time – in which an animal is stripped of its right to a humane death. This graphic distinction drawn between man and animal, individualists and collectivists, makes the individualist, idealist artist masculine and subordinates the masculinity of the collectivist, materialist scientist by associating him with the lab rat. By a binary definition, to be an individual is to be a *man*; to be a follower in the

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collective - to be one of the scientists - is to be a tortured animal, a man subject to the desires of the State.

However, despite his impassioning of Christopher's revolutionary action, Arcous does not personally push for revolution in the same way. Christopher is a part of the society he wants to change and is trying to find his place within it – he is the child of an important official, after all - but Arcous is removed from the society. When it becomes clear that the plot to perform a revolutionary birth outside of the motherhood system has failed, Arcous responds, 'E finite la comedia' (Haldane, 1926, p. 260). This quote is taken from the end of the Italian opera *Pagliacci*, and translated as, 'the farce is over'. However, this is not to suggest that he does not want revolution, but, rather, that it does not carry the same weight of importance. It does not mean the same to him because he is not connected enough with society. Upon receiving the news about the foiled plot he is described as 'smil[ing] all alone' (Haldane, 1926, p. 260), because he *is alone*, separate from the surrounding world. Unlike the other characters in the book his individualism is presented as innate and directly related to his Jewish heritage, not built from experience of society. In this respect Haldane amalgamates the Jewish faith and race. Arcous is asked, 'Would you have renounced your faith?', to which he responds, 'Certainly, if at that price I could have kept my art. I should always have had my race, anyway' (Haldane, 1926, p. 158). Haldane implies by this that being racially Jewish, in this context, means sharing the same qualities as the Jewish faith. It is largely through Arcous's self-analysis – a philosophically idealist action – that Haldane connects individualism to Judaism,'We only respect intelligence, and therefore acknowledge no overlordship, whether of sex or personality. That would have been our supreme asset, if only we could have hidden it' (Haldane, 1926, p. 154). Here Haldane reinforces the connection between idealists – those that think beyond the material and, in the context of *Man's World*, to more spiritual matters – and individualists – those that insist on being independent. Arcous continues, 'we

were equally hated by all Gentiles, and this was the cause of their antagonism' (Haldane, 1926, p. 155). Haldane connects a historic persecution of Judaism with a reluctance to accept hierarchical social order. This picks up on a particular cultural concern of the early twentieth century. Between 1880 and 1939 the Jewish community in Britain grew from 60,000 to between 350,000 and 370,000 (Tananbaum, 2013, p. 92) leading some in the established Jewish community to worry that their precarious societal status would be undermined, especially with the rise in anti-Semitism seen in the lead-up to the First World War (Tananbaum, 2013, p. 93). Jewish men were particularly damaged by this; whilst previously seen as mostly law abiding, in the early twentieth century Jewish masculinity began to be connected with the white slave trade, gambling and political subversion (Tananbaum, 2013, p. 93). At the outbreak of war many British-born Jewish men, 'eager to prove their patriotism' enlisted but immigrants, many of whom had only recently escaped Russia, were less enthusiastic, with some contesting government officials (Tananbaum, 2013, p. 94). As a result Jewish masculinity started to be seen as un-English and un-masculine. Haldane reverts this emasculation with her presentation of Arcous, connecting Judaism to the masculine independence and individualism she associates with idealism.

The idealist artist and the materialist scientist, then, highlight oppositional qualities in one another. The artist is associated with emotion, 'higher' thought and passion whilst the scientist is unemotional yet, in comparison these qualities seem both idealised and problematic. The scientist, in his emotionalism, is a leader and an educator, but he is also tied to organisations, institutions, the State and the status-quo. The artist, by comparison, is independent but he is also self-centered and uninterested in the collective.

Idealism vs materialism, Artist vs Scientist, 'Why?' vs 'How?'

In presenting these two masculine styles – the idealist artist and materialist scientist – as opposite in terms of their values, Haldane creates a rift by which these two hegemonic styles then undermine one another. Taking Haldane's first novel as the archetype of this relationship it can be seen how Haldane undermines the idealist artist and materialist scientist through an indirect comparison.

Haldane presents the scientist as having a 'fixed' world view, one with structured rules. Christopher compares this to religious dogmatism. Removing himself physically, by flying his aeroplane away from the scientifically-ruled world below him, he reflects, 'the rest of the world does appear to be worshipping a golden calf' (Haldane, 1926, pp. 275–6). In framing the scientific society as worshippers Christopher implies that the scientists are driven not by logic and measurement but by a faith in their scientific belief, suggesting their views are akin to the unshakable, dogmatic beliefs found in organised religion. His concerns that this scientific 'faith' may be a 'golden calf' therefore portray an anxiety that society has chosen the wrong 'faith' to follow and will, in time, suffer for it.

Haldane's introduction to her final chapter of the novel points the reader to the same criticism of the scientist. The chapter starts with a quote,

> All science properly so-called, by which I understand systematic knowledge under
> the guidance of the principle of sufficient reason, can never reach its final goal; for it
> is not concerned with the inmost nature of the world; it cannot get beyond the idea.
> SCHOPENHAUER – 'THE WORLD AS WILL AND IDEA (Haldane, 1926, p. 287)

Here Haldane uses the words of philosopher Schopenhauer to indicate the limitations of the scientist, due to the limitations of science. This is reminiscent of Haldane's criticism of science, discussed at the beginning of this chapter, in which she tells us that science is in

the 'business' of the 'How?' rather than the 'Why?' (Haldane, 1949, p. 32). Here Haldane, through Schopenhauer, tells us that the scientist is limited by his method, by his very way of thinking and in doing so, misses 'the inmost nature of the world'. If the 'inmost nature of the world' cannot be understood by the scientist, it must then be pursuit of the artist according to the binary that Haldane spends the novel (and subsequent novels) creating and maintaining. This suggests, then, that the artist has something that the scientist lacks. However, this same comparative binary that benefits the artist in this instance undermines him in the next.

Though the artist, it would seem, is capable of reaching the 'inmost nature of the world', he is also revealed to be inward-focused and self-centered. Bruce notes of Christopher,

> Sad and proud individualist, he had been as self-opinioned as if he had been self-created. Never had he turned to inquire of the woman who had made him – inadequately – more of those who stood beside and behind her, the ancestry and the blood whence they had both sprung. (Haldane, 1926, pp. 287–8)

Through Bruce's eyes Christopher is seen as arrogant and imperious. His disinterest in biology becomes evidence of his disinterest in those that made him – the *woman* 'who had made him'. In this respect his individualism is not a positive quality but rather evidence of his separation from society and from those whose labour he has benefited from.

This pattern of binary masculinities placed alongside one another in order to draw out each other's flaws is repeated throughout Haldane's interwar fiction. However, in one of her later novels, published in 1934, there is an exception.

Materialism and Idealism: A Unified Approach

Youth is a Crime is Haldane's second-to-last interwar novel. Though published only two years after *I Bring Not Peace*, it does something interestingly different with its presentation of

the scientist. Following the same love-triangle narrative that typifies Haldane's interwar novels, the story follows teenager, Elizabeth, who has just moved to Belgium, as she decides between two young men, René and Werner. René is a wild, rich boy who tempts Elizabeth, in part, by appealing to her maternal instinct (which is discussed in detail in Part Two). Werner is a poor but well-mannered young man whose quiet nature keeps him out of Elizabeth's eye for some time, before his sister steps in to introduce them. It is Werner who is the most interesting of the two, from our perspective, because he breaks from Haldane's purely materialist depiction of the scientist.

Like the idealists, Christopher, Arcous, and James, Werner is connected to the arts. He is described as 'an excellent musician' (Haldane, 1934, p. 145) and he shares with Elizabeth a spiritual relationship with literature. When he attends a performance of *Faust* with Elizabeth the two are described as '…sat side by side …; twin souls receiving the poet's message in almost sacramental silence' (Haldane, 1934, p. 217). However, Werner is a materialist too, always measuring 'and experimenting with figures and instruments' (Haldane, 1934, p. 145). Too young for a laboratory, Werner is instead found 'quietly in his room, reading or writing or amusing himself with scientific apparatus…' (Haldane, 1934, p. 248). The two activities – materialist science and idealist art and literature – are not separate for him. In the space of his private room the two philosophies mix. Haldane notes that Werner's sister, Liese, 'knew that he stayed awake in his room until all hours, generally reading or experimenting; and, she suspected, sometimes writing poetry' (Haldane, 1934, p. 145). Werner therefore manages to encapsulate both materialism and idealism. Importantly, out of all the love-triangles with scientists and artists, Elizabeth and Werner's relationship is the most successful. Whilst there are masculine wins and losses between the idealists and materialists, relationships between the protagonist and the victor are problematic. Whilst Bruce wins Nicolette's heart and independence from Arcous, and her loyalty from

Christopher, the reader is left disturbed when she is driven off to the motherhood garden by Bruce, 'weeping gently' (Haldane, 1926, p. 299). *I Bring Not Peace*, too, ends with Jean winning Michal's affection from James, only for her to realise, in the last few pages, that she actually does not want either of them. Werner, however, builds a relationship with Elizabeth entirely based on communication – through letters – and they talk openly about every topic – art, science, and religion. This innocent relationship, reflective of their age, is in many ways more successful than that of Haldane's previous protagonists. This would suggest Haldane is levelling some criticism at the separate masculine figures of the idealist and materialist. Despite being married to a self-professed materialist Haldane instead presents the 'united' man, capable of understanding the abstract and the material, as the most successful masculine figure and the one who builds the most successful relationships with his female counterpart.

In both *Man's World* (1926) and *I Bring Not Peace* (1932) Haldane explores two masculine identities - the scientist and the artist – that were culturally significant and held cultural power within the early twentieth century. In placing these two characters against each other as love rivals she allows their opposing values to undermine one another, destabilising their hegemonic depictions of masculinity. *Youth is a Crime* (1934), however, offers something different in the character Werner who is both a materialist and an idealist, an artist and a scientist. He is guided by what he can measure and observe but is accepting of the abstract – of art, philosophy, and even possibly the spiritual. Most importantly, by becoming this 'new man' Werner connects with the female protagonist, going beyond the role of love interest and becoming a confidant and friend. In the writing of Werner Haldane creates a masculinity to her own liking, one that is not tied to one performance of masculinity or another but is instead open to new ideas and new manners of being. His youth suggests a future for masculinity that is not based on one performance but is multiple and varied, dissolving its

power as a hegemonic masculine force. In this way Haldane not only complicates her own presentation of hegemonic masculinity as either scientist or artist but she also challenges the separation of the two that would later be described by C. P. Snow as 'The Two Cultures' (Snow, 1998, p. 1). Disregarding developing models of masculinity as either scientist or artist Haldane instead chooses an intellectual masculinity not tied to the dominant social, commercial and political structure. However, this was only the mind of her invented masculinity, and in the following chapter I dissect his body, as well as those of her 'two culture' men.

Chapter Two:
Embodied Masculinity

In the previous chapter I explore how Haldane connects two philosophic schools –
materialism and idealism – to the gendered identities associated with the man of science
and the artist and found her to be critical of both the materialist and the idealist, opting
instead for a man of her own invention who unified the two principles. As the previous
chapter deals with philosophic identities this chapter considers physical identities. That is,
how the body in Haldane's interwar fiction is associated with masculinity and how it
expresses different types of masculinity. This is central to this thesis as a whole as it is this
undermining of hegemonic masculinity that allows for maternal women to inhabit male roles,
as is discussed in detail in Part Two. This chapter, then, focuses on two dominant cultural
creations of masculinity in the early twentieth century – commerce and science – and how
they impacted on the presentation of the male body. How Haldane draws on cultural
presentations of the male body as defined by advertising is considered, as well as the image
of the man of science developed by BAAS. I begin by locating the chapter within this cultural
context, considering how men's bodies were being presented by advertising and by BAAS
who were undergoing a process of masculinizing the scientist. I then explore how Haldane
defines two opposing masculine corporeal styles in order to critique a commercial and
cultural creation of masculinity and to highlight a marginalised masculinity within hegemonic
elitist intellectual culture, a culture that Haldane experienced herself attending parties with J.
B. S.'s scientific colleagues. The chapter then moves on to consider how Haldane presents
this elitist intellectual masculinity as a product of the State and institutional hierarchy and
explores how Haldane presents these men as victims of this masculine expectation. Finally,
I will look at how Haldane uses the non-binary body of Christopher in *Man's World* as a
means to subvert these masculine expectations. As Brent Bilodeau has noted, transgender

research has been gaining popularity since the mid-to-late nineteen nineties (Bilodeau, 2005, p. 30). Non-binary identities, used as an umbrella term that occasionally encapsulates transgender, have therefore been a part of this relatively new interest. Non-binarism (in its more politicised form, 'genderqueer'), has been a part of queer theory since the early nineteen nineties. Due to this relatively new interest in the gender identities, largely in the fields of sociology and cultural theory, it has been increasingly applied to literature (Carol, 2016). However, whilst scholars have been reasonably comfortable to discuss characters in terms of their deviation from hegemonic gender expectation, they have been more reluctant to label characters as non-binary or transgender, particularly when applying the terms retrospectively. This has been noted by Rachel Carol in a conference paper on transgender identity and masculinity in adaptations of George Moore's *Albert Nobbs*, and it is this, in part, that this chapter addresses.

Seeing the Body in the Twenties and Thirties

As discussed in the previous chapter, the British Association for the Advancement of Science was instrumental in painting the man of science as a masculine figure and societal role model in the early twentieth century, and managed so largely through its educational efforts. The act of 'seeing' was central to this process. Heather Ellis tells us that,

> One of the chief strategies which BAAS developed in the early interwar years for
>
> enthusing children, especially working-class boys, with this ideal of science-
>
> citizenship was the promotion of carefully chosen series of pictures for use in
>
> school… [which contained] ... portraits which inspired this ideal of the hard-working,
>
> patriotic citizen-scientist... In particular, they wanted pictures which showed men of
>
> science going about their everyday work. (Ellis, 2017, p. 193)

In the process of masculinizing the man of science it was of particular importance that he was *seen* to be masculine. As hegemonic notions of masculinity valued activity they specifically had to *be seen to be doing* masculine things. As Heather Ellis notes,

> The physical appearance of scientists emerges as particularly important here. The BAAS worried that boys had been brought up to think of scientists as weak, sickly men, living and working in retired isolation. Portraits of active, physically fit men, working outdoors in the pursuit of their science were seen as vital to countering that image. (Ellis, 2017, p. 189)

The books mixed together images of science, war, and industry with photographs of Livingstone being positioned alongside paintings of Nelson, anthropological studies of race, and industrial war work, such as engineering (Ellis, 2017, pp. 193–4). As well as schoolboys' workbooks, the image of the masculine scientist was taken further afield, to the walls of the National Gallery (Ellis, 2017, p. 193) . These images, recommended by BAAS, included a picture from a collection taken by Herbert Ponting of a British Antarctic expedition that took place in 1910-13. This specific photograph was chosen because of 'its depiction of brave and daring men of science, harking back to the Livingstone model of the imperial explorer-scientist popular in the late nineteenth century' (Ellis, 2017, p. 193). All these images looked to link science, and the man of science, with traditional, active, masculine pursuits, largely war and the conquering of new lands. By depicting scientists as explorers and anthropologists and positioning them alongside engineers and generals BAAS were encouraging the viewer to see science as the next step of war and the colonists' best tool. The viewer saw the man of science not only as an empowered man but also as a recognisably masculine one. Those qualities associated with the explorer, the engineer, and the solider - strength, endurance, bravery - were understood as fundamentally masculine and, of course, they spoke to a generation that had recently sent most of its young men to war.

The increased visualisation of the man of science, implemented largely by BAAS, was following a trend emerging in Europe in the nineteen twenties. Advertising, which at this point was largely very visual, had evolved by the early twentieth century. The body, including the male body and how it looked, now became a focus of the consumer's gaze (Lyford, 2007, pp. 88–9), but in more unusual ways than might be expected. Amy Lyford notes the new role of the mannequin as an advertising object. Unblemished and whole-bodied, unlike many of the men who had returned from the trenches, mannequins 'favoured idealized images of postwar masculinity and femininity' (Lyford, 2007, p. 41) and by doing so offered hope of a 'vibrant, healthy consumer society that would attest to the success of social and cultural reconstruction' (Lyford, 2007, p. 45)[6]. Paris was the world leader in advertising and industrial arts at the beginning of the century, and in 1925 solidified this status with the hugely popular exposition, *Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes* (Lyford, 2007, p. 41). The exposition poster attests to this visual fascination with the body and its connection to a postwar society, and a postwar masculinity. As Lyford notes, 'With robust male bodies piled high in the foreground and factories belching smoke at the rear, this advertisement heroises industrial labour and presents pictorial evidence that reconstruction depends not just on the cooperation of man and machine but on the use of the powerful male body as an engine of national rebirth' (Lyford, 2007, p. 41). Just as BAAS-sponsored images of the man of science valorised their depictions of masculinity by

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[6] This is not to suggest that all mannequins and depictions of mannequins had an idealised image in mind. As well as Surrealist fragmentations of the mannequin body, Eugène Atget, an influential figure for the Surrealist movement (though not a Surrealist himself) photographed mannequins in a manner that unsettled as opposed to idealised. For a discussion of how Atget de-familiarises the urban city scape, read Alexandra Tranca's, 'From Pompeii to Paris: ghostly cityscapes and the ruins of modernity in Théophile Gautier and Eugène Atget'. Though this paper does not deal explicitly with his images of mannequins, they are a part of the city scenes in which he disrupts the sense of busy, commercial modernity, which is epitomised by the shop doll.

connecting them to physically robust bodies and physical labour, so too did the advertising agencies. The interwar man, be he scientist or layman, was being measured by his body. At the same time there were great anxieties in literary circles surrounding masculinity and male corporeality. Both Wyndham Lewis and D.H. Lawrence, amongst other notable writers, began at this time a 'masculinizing' campaign. *Men Without Art*, published later, in 1934, summarised over a decade's worth of contempt Lewis felt towards the feminist movements in a chapter dedicated to the work of Virginia Woolf. Merry Pawlowski notes that Lewis focused on Woolf as an example of the militant feminism and the changing attitudes of the twentieth century that were, he believed, 'feminising' men (Pawlowski, 2001, p. 40). Lewis, as a result, proclaimed himself the ''Enemy' and scourge of this feminised democratic 'audience' society' (Pykett, 1995, p. 50). Whilst aggressive and even atavistic, this response relates to that of the Surrealist artist. Amy Lyford argues that the Surrealist interest in the distorted female form was precisely because of cultural interest in the *male* body. According to Lyford, anxieties over the post-First-World-War male body were transferred by the artist onto women. Similarly, Lewis *et al* pushed away the anxieties relating to masculinity that they vocalised as 'feminisation', not projecting onto the bodies of women but removing from the bodies of men. The Surrealists avoided their anxieties and the masculinist writers smothered them with depictions of the hypermasculine. Haldane, too, chose to focus much of her literature on masculinity and the bodies of men but, differing from the others' approaches, she refocuses this cultural anxiety back onto men and corporeal masculinity, returning the microscope to the male body.

Competing Physical Masculinities in *I Bring Not Peace* and *Melusine*:

Two of Haldane's books - *I Bring Not Peace* (1932) and *Melusine* (1936) - translate this interwar societal obsession with the male body in a particularly anatomical and visual way. In both novels two different corporeal performances of masculinity are placed in competition.

As Raewyn Connell has noted hegemonic masculinity 'constructs itself in relation to various subordinate masculinities' (Connell, 1987, p. 183). Haldane presents two powerful performances of masculinity that subsequently undermine each other.

In *Melusine* – a story based on the European folklore tale – the title-protagonist, Melusine, is caught between two men: Owain, the devilish leader of a pagan church and Raymond, the naive ruler of Poitou. The narrative largely revolves around Melusine's relationship with the two men. Owain places her as the symbolic leader of his pagan church and becomes her lover but when his ambitions for his religion require her to marry Raymond, she finds herself falling in love with the Christian king. As she begins to neglect her duties to Owain's church Melusine tries to maintain a loyalty to Raymond instead of her lover. Whilst this could imply a bolstering of Raymond's masculinity in the hegemonic sense, because his performance of masculinity has been chosen as preferable, he is in fact repeatedly undermined. This is done, as shown in the previous chapter, through a comparative study of the two prevalent masculine styles of the novel. Owain and Raymond's styles of masculinity are set against each other.

From the start of his journey to the throne, orchestrated by Owain's pagan church, Raymond is largely unaware of the help he receives from those around him, making it easy for Melusine to control him. This naivety, perhaps unsurprisingly, is presented as un-masculine allowing him to be cuckolded twice, both literally and metaphorically by Melusine and his own subjects. In her role as symbolic goddess to his religion Melusine engages in sexualised interactions with Owain. When she refuses to continue the relationship she is raped, resulting in the birth of a son who Raymond unwittingly raises as his own. Owain further undermines Raymond via his secretive religion. Whilst Raymond, a Christian, rules his people as a sovereign, Owain's religion has infiltrated many of their lives. Even within

Raymond's own home, the maids who raise his children pay particular attention to the 'devil's' son, raising him according to the pagan faith. In this struggle for masculine dominance (in which only one actually knows there is a struggle) Raymond's masculinity is subordinated. This is reflected by his physicality, and specifically how it is seen.

It is largely through Melusine's eyes that the reader views Raymond's body and at the beginning of their relationship she reflects on a previous meeting with him,

> He was young and handsome and healthy; affectionately her fingers remembered
> the nutty brown curls they had stroked, soft and wiry to touch. His white even teeth –
> she smiled remembrance at them; the young virile smell of him, sweaty, masculine,
> had also pleased her. He was beautifully made: broad-chested, wide-shouldered,
> narrow-hipped, with small buttocks and long powerful thighs. (Haldane, 2003, p. 68)

Raymond's body is representative of those strong, fit physiques idolised by a healing post-war Europe through advertising. He is young; he is healthy; he is physically fit; he should be understood as masculine and therefore powerful. Despite this, however, his masculinity is undermined because of *how* it is seen. Raymond's masculine body is rendered passive, and therefore feminised by Melusine's possessing gaze. The gaze that is traditionally associated with the male-possessing view of the female body, thanks to the work of Laura Mulvey in 1975, can be applied to the male body, with the effect of making it feminine as a result.

The heterosexual male gaze, in literary terms, is used regularly in adventure fiction or romance fiction, popular in the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. In these books the male body is viewed in a similar way, but it is not the bodies of the powerful, white middle-class men that are subjected to this gaze but rather the bodies of the colonised. A particular example of this can be found in H. Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's*

Mines, in which the body of Umbopa, the expedition's African employee and soon-to-be-chief, is described as,

> He certainly was a magnificent looking man; I never saw a finer native. Standing about six foot three high he was broad in proportion, and very shapely. In that light, too, his skin looked scarcely more than dark, except here and there where deep black scars marked old assegai wounds. (Haggard, 2007, p. 40)

Here the largely naked body of Umbopa is subjected to the white male gaze; the colonial gaze. In framing Umbopa's body via Quartermain's narrative sight Haggard takes visual ownership over the black masculine physique, using it for his own devices. In this passage Umbopa's body acts as a mirror image to that of Sir Henry Curtis, an English man of esteem, respect, and physical 'excellence'. In placing the bodies next to one another, Umbopa's physicality mirroring Curtis's, Haggard can explore Curtis's body by proxy, allowing the male gaze to remain heterosexual. Kobena Mercer discusses this white framing of black male bodies in the context of Robert Mapplethorpe's photographic work, *Black Males* and *The Black Book*. Mercer notes of these images featuring nude black male bodies,

> The aesthetic and thus erotic, objectification is totalizing in effect, as all references to a social, historical or political context are ruled out of the frame. This visual codification abstracts and essentializes the black man's body into the realm of a transcendental aesthetic ideal. In this sense, the text reveals more about the desires of the hidden and invisible white male subject behind the camera, and what "he" wants-to-see, than it does about the anonymous black men (Mercer, 1994, pp. 174–5)

Mercer then compares this perspective with the male gaze, outlined by Laura Mulvey, as an instance of 'masculine hegemony and dominance over the very apparatus of representation' (Mercer, 1994, p. 175) characterised 'in terms of a masculine fantasy of mastery and control over the "objects" depicted and represented in the visual field…' (Mercer, 1994, p. 176). The

erotic nature of this fantasy, however, becomes problematic for the heterosexual male gaze when viewing male bodies, but when the racial other is invoked – in both Mapplethorpe's and Haggard's cases – 'This *frisson* of (homo)sexual sameness transfers erotic investment in the fantasy of mastery from gender to racial difference' (Mercer, 1994, p. 176).

In being viewed and valued, then, Umbopa's body becomes passive in relation to the active gaze of Quartermain. It becomes an object by which the white heterosexual male gaze can consume male corporeality. By being rendered object, devoid of 'social, historical or political context', simply a vessel, Umbopa's masculinity is subordinated next to that of Quartermain (and Curtis). Not only does viewing his body in this aesthetic manner follow on from a Western artistic tradition in which the conventional subject of the nude is the (white) female body, historicising his body in a feminine manner, but also in the very (in)action of being the passive object of an active gaze.

In the same way that the indigenous male body can be consumed by the white male gaze and rendered passive and feminised or, at least, *less* masculine by it, Raymond's manly body is un-manned by Melusine's gaze. Though the lexis used to describe Raymond is semantically powerful and masculine – his 'long powerful thighs', 'sweaty' body, and 'broad-chest' all *appear* actively, muscularly, masculine – in the process of being eroticised by the gaze they are also 'fixed'. Instead of physical qualities these attributes become visual erotic images, disembodied and fragmented, and therefore inactive. Relatively little discussion exists on the literary female gaze in relation to masculine bodies, though there is more scholarship with regard to its cinematic treatment. Natalie Perfetti-Oates discusses the heterosexual female gaze in relation to cinematography, noting that it is only in recent years that the male body has been depicted on screen for female erotic pleasure (Perfetti-Oates, 2015, p. 20). This sexualisation of masculinity for a heterosexual female audience is

something Kevin Goddard has explored. Discussing the popular 1997 film *The Full Monty,* about a group of unemployed steelworkers who turn to Chippendale-style stripping, Goddard notes the complex nature of the gaze. In being naked and analysed by female viewers the steelworkers-turned-sex-workers are 'subjugated' and therefore 'castrated' (though Goddard points to the irony that the men must visually show their lack of castration in order to be metaphorically so) (Goddard, 2000, p. 25). However, he notes that this is not a simple reversal of power because power can be derived from this subjugation through pride and courage in the naked body – in the case of *The Full Monty* the men take pride in their 'ordinary' bodies and their courage in putting them on view (Goddard, 2000, p. 25). The power can be redressed in this case because the male characters of *The Full Monty* are also our protagonists, and as such are given voices with which to empower themselves. In the case of Haldane's Raymond, however, the reader is barred from his perspective on his nakedness. His silence here only adds to the rigid 'fixing' of his image. Raymond is rendered a passive, silent image under Melusine's gaze. In her mind's eye he is touched by her fingers, he does not touch. Like the post-war mannequin he is 'beautifully made' but does not interact. Even his white teeth do not smile but are instead smiled at. In this image Raymond's body is inactive and exists purely for Melusine's aesthetic and sensual pleasure.

In opposition to Raymond's passive body, Melusine views Owain's body, when she is able to view it at all, as actively hyper-sexualised. Owain visits Melusine when he pleases and without warning and often unseen. During these visits she identifies Owain as 'The God' (Haldane, 2003, p. 36), especially at the beginning of the narrative, whilst she is still a young woman. This relationship is typified at the beginning of the novel:

> His appearance, she soon learned, was Reward. Instructions were always given
> verbally, invisibly. They were invariably preceded by a short laugh, a chuckle, which
> for her, in the course of time, became the most terrifying sound in all creation; for his

laugh, his humour, this was himself, his inaccessibility. His Horn of Power made

audible, was the essence of His mastery over all whom He ruled. (Haldane, 2003, p.

40)

Owain is not beautiful or 'well-made', nor is he fit, young, or healthy. In fact, his

appearance is largely a mystery. However, by being largely defined by sound – his

laughter and voice – he avoids Melusine's gaze. His voice itself becomes proof of his

masculinity. Not only is his laughter active, it is 'terrifying' and therefore powerful. His

voice is the very essence of his masculinity – his 'Horn of Power'. Despite having a

largely invisible body, in terms of its narrative presence, his masculinity is still active.

His 'inaccessibility' and aloofness are character traits that align him with Haldane's

'man of science' characters – Bruce and Jean – who follow the same character

pattern, and he is imbued with the same materialist masculinity and sense of practical

activity. Although he is the leader of a pagan church, his religion is preferred by the

industrious workers (the working-class) for its practicality, as opposed to the high

morality of the Christian church.

In the physical bodies of Owain and Raymond, and Melusine's relationship with them,

Haldane appears critical of the cultural emphasis on the idealised male body.

Raymond, like the passive mannequins used in post-war advertising and commerce, is

an ideal example of the healthy male body and yet he still does not 'measure up' to the

masculinity of Owain. Haldane chooses to highlight *abilities* as opposed to

appearances to define 'successful' masculinity (although, as is discussed in Chapter

Three, this is still shown to be deeply problematic). Owain is defined by his active

voice – by his command and what he is able to achieve as a result – whereas

Raymond is defined by his body and the pleasure that Melusine can derive by viewing

it. This shallowness highlights the distinction between the two men that equates to Owain's masculine dominance.

This is not to suggest that Haldane equates a physically fit body to a shallow, inactive masculinity. In *I Bring Not Peace*, ex-sailor (amongst other things) James is described as '….splendid – from the physical point of view…' (Haldane, 1932, p. 165) and he himself 'like a character from Hemingway' (Haldane, 1932, p. 193) indicating his interest in masculine pursuits such as the sea. James's body is broad and muscular and he keeps it conditioned with physical fitness. Physicality, in fact, becomes an outlet for his 'excess' masculinity. Caught in thoughts of desire for Michal, though away from her in his room, James translates this virility into physical exercise:

> Too much, too much, unbearable, head and heart racking, this premature desire.
>
> "Hell!" James shouted, kicked at his bed and rushed to the corner of the room where lay his barbell, thick iron bar on which he now slipped the weights, grabbed, raised grimly, brows clenched, jaws set, over and above his head again, again, again, until he had concentrated all that furious virility into ordered rhythm of straining biceps.
>
> (Haldane, 1932, p. 75)

As shown here, James turns to exercise when he is unable to express his virile desire directly. His sexual energy is transferred into lifting weights. Exercise, in this context, becomes an almost atavistic act, and evidence of his raw masculinity. This masculine performance is stripped of social convention as his sexual feelings are not hidden but performed. In translating his desire into a physical act, one that is associated with strength and muscularity, he becomes animalistic, an almost Darwinian example of masculine sexuality.

As the scene continues James's body becomes symbolic of a masculinity that was largely marginalised in the early twentieth century. The reader is told that, 'As he worked he sang and shouted the song of the Barbell Man, the strong man, iron man, man of iron, man of Zion' (Haldane, 1932, p. 76). The song and the weights that he lifts are acts of a masculine tradition associated with Jewish strongmen. There is a rich history of Jewish strongmen that Haldane may be drawing on here, exemplified by names such as Joseph L. Greenstein and Benny Leonard but, in particular, Siegmund Breitbart, also known as Zishe, who was famous for his feats of strength, for his bodybuilding book, *Muscle Power* (1924), and for his Zionist efforts to create strong Jewish men. Late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Zionist ideology idealised masculinity and glorified physical labour (Tananbaum, 2013, p. 95). This saw a move towards a muscular Judaism, akin to its Christian equivalent (Tananbaum, 2013, p. 90), which sought to break any previous associations with effeminacy and homosexuality (Tananbaum, 2013, p. 90), brought about by anti-Semitism and xenophobia. In many ways, James's physical use of his body and his innate masculine urges, which he mediates with yet more physical exercise, epitomise the Zionist muscular Judaism movement. In particular, the 'aggressive heterosexualising agenda' (Tananbaum, 2013, p. 95) associated with the movement connects with James's treatment of his friend Dennis, whose homosexual masculinity acts as a foil to James's overt heterosexuality. James's body is subject to the *implied* gaze of Dennis ('implied' because Dennis's thoughts are not given as the reader is shown that he is watching). This prevents James from becoming passive under Dennis's active gaze and instead James becomes more masculine by comparison. As Dennis stands silently in the door, James exercises, 'The pyjama trousers had long since fallen on the floor in a futile heap. He worked and sweated, stark naked, his thoughts at sea, at play, browsing on love and pain and death and beauty he wrestled and sang...' (Haldane, 1932, p. 78). Dennis's inactivity is in stark contrast to James's unabashed, strong movements. His activity not only dominates the room but encapsulates life itself – 'love and

pain and death and beauty'. James's naked body, in this context, goes beyond the shallow idealised images of post-war Europe, and beyond the rigid confines of the mannequin frame. By comparison, Dennis, as the immobile, watching figure, is representative of the superficial mannequin masculinity being popularised at the time.

Though, unusually for Haldane's writing, James is not specified as a Jewish character, he is connected to a marginalised masculinity that was being hyper-masculinized by figures such as Siegmund Breitbart in a manner very different from the 'gentlemanly', 'unblemished' values of masculinity being pushed by advertisers. James becomes a tool by which Haldane critiques upper-class society which she associates with intellectual exclusivity and particularly the scientific elite.

In *Truth Will Out* Haldane describes the 'high-brows…the younger dons of Oxford and Cambridge, and their friends in Bloomsbury or Hammersmith' (Haldane, 1949, p. 21). She recounts to her reader how they would converse in 'loud conversation on recondite topics in public places, making sure of the respectful admiration of the uninitiated by appropriate side-glances, but apparently severely ignoring their existence' (Haldane, 1949, p. 22). Due to her relationship with J. B. S. Haldane – who had been an Oxford and Cambridge scholar – Haldane had to socialise in this 'high-brow' society and she notes the 'sense of inferiority this parade of superior social and intellectual creatures aroused in [her]' (Haldane, 1949, p. 22). Connecting their rudeness to their nationality, she writes that they were 'an example of English bad manners', comparing them unfavourably to the French 'who take their culture more naturally and quietly' (Haldane, 1949, p. 22).

It was not just the friends of her husband who undermined Haldane, however, but J. B. S. himself. Before they married he told her that he had two objections to her as a wife – her

cockney accent and her work as a journalist (Haldane, 1949, p. 23). Though she tells her reader, rather nonchalantly that 'I knew I did not speak in the manner favoured by the high-brows, and had little desire to do so', she does admit to being 'profoundly offended by his contempt for journalism' (Haldane, 1932, p. 23). It was apparently not just Haldane's profession that J. B. S. did not respect, however. Feeling ostracised from the scientific intellectual elite she created her own clique at their home in Roebuck House, Cambridge. J. B. S. named the group 'Chatty's Addled Salon' (Adamson, 1998, p. 72), a diminutive name that creates the impression that he did not take her literary group entirely seriously, though she never explicitly admits this.

It is clear from her autobiography that Haldane felt intellectually and socially ostracised by the exclusive, ostentatious members of J. B. S.'s Oxford and Cambridge scientific clique. James represents a break from this 'high-brow' culture. A similar party scene is created in *I Bring Not Peace*, in which Michal, bored by the pomp begins to feel overwhelmed until she sees 'James, all bulk and brightness (opposed to mere colour) looms huge. Three-dimensional, a statue surrounded by oil-splashed canvasses' (Haldane, 1932, p. 68). James's solidity, his 'three-dimensional' structure gives him depth in comparison to the shallow 'canvasses' around him. His 'brightness' translates as virility as opposed to the 'mere colour' of the 'high-brow', high society intellectuals. There is a strong suggestion that James has something, a 'naturalness', a reality, that they, as 'canvasses', two dimensional images, lack. Michal describes them as, 'child-characters, these almost toy-people' (Haldane, 1932, p. 64), and highlights their shallow drives, 'They needed only money and alcohol and primitive sexual satisfactions out of which to build a cardboard paradise' (Haldane, 1932, p. 64).

Like the post-war mannequin, Haldane represents upper-class society as superficial and disengaged with reality. James is their antithesis; their antidote. James's music becomes an extension of him in a very physical way. His ukulele, which he carries everywhere functions as an insight into his psyche. In one particular passage the reader is told that, 'James groped for the ukulele that lay beside his bolster (he had no pillow) and thumbed it gently whilst he contemplated his love for a while. Then, slowly, in soft syncopation, his fingers touched the instrument' (Haldane, 1932, p. 74).

Whilst indicating that James considers a pillow more of a luxury than his ukulele, revealing its importance, the sexual undertones of this passage reveal James's feelings for Michal. Importantly, his feelings are shown to be virile and masculine because 'love' here is translated to 'sex'. Just like the weights that James lifts to ease his sexual tension, the ukulele here serves to further uncover James's masculinity in a physical, active context. By making the instrument an extension of him it is also made clear that James's music is another way that the reader can come to understand this character. Michal describes one of James's songs;

> the tune was as clean as a folk-song. Indeed it was a folk-song, as natural to the man as the air he breathed, as frank as the words and music one learns from the wind or the rain, quiet, too, with the plain hopelessness of being man-alive who suffers life to befall him and struggles to wrest meaning equally from happiness or pain. (Haldane, 1932, p. 70)

Michal reads James's music as a folk-song – a song that reflects a working-class cultural history – and understands it in an especially authentic manner. Stripped of the 'vices' of the upper-classes, encapsulated by the society parties, working-class culture appears more honest. To Michal, James is able to express the human condition in a manner that feels as natural as the elements. This fits with the way in which she views her relationship with

James. When they first meet she predicts getting to know him '…would be, she felt positively, an experience of reality' (Haldane, 1932, p. 61). James is 'real' unlike the upper-class society that Michal is surrounded with, as she tells Dennis's sister, '"James," …"is more of a person than you, ten times more than Dennis"' (Haldane, 1932, p. 168). James represents a reality lost to the upper-classes. He is literally 'more of a person'; he encapsulates more of what makes us human. Whilst at times this makes him appear more atavistic it also serves to bolster a sense of uninhibited, 'authentic', virile masculinity.

Through James, Haldane critiques the society that ostracised her. James's muscular masculinity overshoots that which BAAS were trying to cultivate in the public's perception of the scientist. Whilst they sought to masculinize the scientist by connecting him with pursuits connected to the upper-classes such as exploration and colonisation, this performance borrowed from a working-class masculine reality - industry, activity, the solider and the mechanic. James's authenticity as well as his hyper-masculinity reveals the upper-class performance, its inauthenticity.

However, Haldane does not present the elitist, intellectual upper-classes as simplistic villains but rather she reveals a flawed hierarchal system that benefits the State above all others. In this light, those that maintain the institutions and hierarchies can also be victims of them.

Science and Lack of Bodily Autonomy

Man's World 's narrative presents a scientific establishment that has a huge amount of control over the human body, from the pre-determined sex of children to the treatment of mental health and gender non-binarism, to the state-determinism of the bodies of its own officials. Part of the way this control is shown is via the treatment of its prisoners. Arcous recounts an uprising in which a high-ranking government official was strangled. The

perpetrator, '…a religious manic, O'Donell' (Haldane, 1926, p. 184) was caught and his body

used '…for the experimental work on stimulation of growth of brain cells in the adult'

(Haldane, 1926, p. 185). It is not just in the case of O'Donell that evidence of non-

consensual experimentation is found. The reader also hears of 'thrilling stories of the

experiments on the adrenal cortex of negroes' (Haldane, 1926, p. 233) among other

indications of forced experimentation. The elision of race and criminality with regard to

experimentation – black bodies are used as criminal bodies, as experimental material -

indicates a society divided on racial grounds in which non-white lives are dehumanised.

O'Donell, in this light, becomes a defender of ethics – his murder of the government official

an act of protest – until he himself is subject to the same experimental treatment of

criminals. Of course, published in 1926 this book predates many of the coming horrors that

are now recognised as history – although the text states that the sex-determination

experiments were originally carried out on Soviet 'human material' (Haldane, 1926, p. 42) –

but, nevertheless, the experimentation on prisoners serves to indicate the scientific society's

lack of respect for body autonomy. However, State control of the body is not portrayed as

only affecting the incarcerated. At the start of *Man's World* the reader is told,

> When the propagandists, through whom a tiny minority of men supplied and
>
> controlled the imaginative concepts of millions, had provided the imagery which
>
> would make the masses submissive to the works of the Patrol, they had translated
>
> the terms of social organization into those of the human body. The Body then stood
>
> symbolically for the entire white race. (Haldane, 1926, p. 63)

Members of this society literally make up the social *body* and so their own bodies are not

their own – from the Brains that organise (Haldane, 1926, p. 63) to the Ears that listen to

grievances and determine their legality (Haldane, 1926, p. 64) – but rather they are physical

parts of the body politic. Bruce, an increasingly famous scientist, is part of the 'Gay

Company', a group of men 'who had professionally devoted their minds and their bodies to

experiment on behalf of the commonwealth…. [and] given proof of complete submission and loyalty to the cause of the scientific state', and within this, a smaller group of 'Stalwarts' made of 'those who had placed themselves, physically and mentally, at the disposal of experimental research' (Haldane, 1926, p. 8). The language here goes beyond a semantic field of dedication and into the realm of fealty in which the body and the mind are submitted to the will of the State. Whilst the sacrifice of the self to the scientific goals of the State appears as a marker of masculinity, it also necessitates the sublimation of the individual's independence and the acknowledgement of a hierarchy in which they are not at the top. It is not just those deemed 'lesser' – whether ethnically (non-white), behaviourally (criminal), or sexually (women) – who are subject to the dehumanisation of the state. The scientists, too, do not own their bodies but rather maintain them for the use of the scientific government. This is solidified when Bruce is banned from the Miracle house (a public laboratory). His sister tells Nicolette,

> You will find him like a bear, because he's forbidden to do any more stunts at the Miracle House for at least a year. He was in the chair for nine hours, for an experiment he'd planned himself, before two hundred teachers of physiology. They exposed rather too much of his brain, and the company Director – Formant – was annoyed about it. He said Bruce was not justified in taking such risks with himself, because he is wanted for important work later. (Haldane, 1926, p. 93)

Here the government displays its authority over Bruce's body and his intellect. As Susan Squier notes, 'Bruce's body is objectified and alienated, constructed as something to *use* rather than to *be*' (Squier, 1993, p. 146). Bruce's body is demonstrated to not be his own but rather a tool of the State – a cog in the social machine. This reflects a particular experience of the veteran in nineteen twenties and thirties Europe, which is discussed in the following section. During this period, there was an increased visibility of prosthetics, largely related to injuries sustained in the First World War. As Amy Lyford notes, 'Although these

devices were promoted as vast improvements on earlier prototypes, they were also chilling reminders of the soldier's role as a cog in the war machine' (Lyford, 2007, p. 55) as the wounded soldier was 'forever tied to a technology created by the war that mutilated him' (Lyford, 2007, p. 62). Just like Bruce and the other men (and women) of *Man's World,* these veterans' bodies visually indicated that they were not fully their own but rather vessels to be used by the government. Their prosthetic limbs are a reminder of how their own bodies became the limbs of the State, enacted in war.

Fractured Bodies

Haldane directly credits this corporeal alienation to medical science. Christopher tells one of the Patrol, the scientist, Raymond,

> Oh, people *are* you and me: or were once, before your accursed medicine men got
> hold of the world and started tinkering about with them. Where's it going to end? Isn't
> any one going to pull them up? I marvel, when I look back to the beginning of the
> scientific era, that no one, not one single man, foresaw what it would all lead to
> (Haldane, 1926, p. 273)

Arcous takes up this same point when he says, 'science takes him into her loathsome workshops, where she repairs him according to the way he ought to go, not the way he wants to' (Haldane, 1926, pp. 158–9). In both instances medical science is depicted as interfering with the body. As the owner's body-autonomy is removed by this process, they become alienated from themselves and there is a sense of fragmentation, as though medical science dismantles an individual in order to rebuild them as a more efficient social body member. Amy Lyford notes a fragmentary trend in the depictions of bodies in inter-war advertisements. She tells us that, 'consumer culture was dependent on fragmentary images whose primary purpose was to generate visual shock through the use of properly aestheticized visual fragment... Many of the images... effectively used body parts to sell

consumer products' (Lyford, 2007, p. 41). There is a strange irony in the selling of masculinity via fragmented imagery to a male population whose bodies bore the scars of war either through mental health problems, physical injuries, or prosthetics.

Haldane reflects this and ties it to State-sanctioned science, through Christopher. Christopher is presented as gender non-binary. Bruce diagnoses Christopher as , 'curiously, dominantly abnormal…' and concludes that 'the cause of his condition was a sexual abnormality…' (Haldane, 1926, p. 227). By pathologising Christopher in this way Haldane, through Bruce, draws on the sexological research popular in the interwar years. Sexologists in the twenties and thirties built on the work of researchers such as Havelock Ellis, Karl Heinrich Ulrichs, and Richard von Krafft-Ebing who deemed sexual 'abnormality' – in both physical sex and sexuality – as an 'inversion' within the individual. This reflected attempts to understand human gender and sexuality as a binary system in which certain individuals simply did not fit. Christopher is an example of this 'invert'. Whilst having a physically male body, and using male pronouns, he is regularly described in feminine terms, for instance the reader is told that 'his eye was quicker and his fingers more sensitive than those of a woman…' (Haldane, 1926, p. 138) which is why he takes up some feminine tasks, such as arranging drapery (Haldane, 1926, p. 138). His interest in religion, too, is attributed to his gender-non-conformity, too. Bruce notes that, 'Christopher's sub-masculinity did not cause more than a slight mental perverseness. It could have easily been corrected. But it developed and grew into this sterile mysticism, which led to his self-ending' (Haldane, 1926, p. 297). Framed within the value system of hegemonic masculinity Christopher is 'sub-masculine'. He is considered by the masculine scientific elite to be lacking. This is because religion, in *Man's World*, is associated with heightened emotion (as seen in Haldane's other interwar novels) and emotion is specifically linked to femininity. Mothers ordered to have female children, for instance, are told to focus on their emotions whilst pregnant. In being connected to emotion and religion, then, he is feminine, and, according to the hegemonic

masculine value system, this means he is lacking in masculinity. By being feminine he is less.

Christopher's body is problematic for a scientific society, Bruce tells Nicolette,

> You see how essential for us it is… that the men and women of the governing class shall be as normal as possible. If they were not, our power would wilt away in a few centuries. We have no use for sterility… (Haldane, 1926, p. 298)

Christopher's non-binarism is understood as 'sterility'. In this light, he becomes fragmented because his gender expression is not consistent with the demands of the male body in this highly gender-polarised paradigm.

Of course, gender- non-binarism was not as uncommon in the interwar years as hegemonic society would have liked to believe. The blurring of the gender binary, in an especially visual way, through transvestism, could be found within cultural performances of gender. Djuna Barnes's *Nightwood*, for instance, explores gender non-binarism through Doctor Matthew Dante O'Connor's transvestism. Man Ray, too, explores the blurred lines of the gender binary both through his tongue-in-cheek depiction of the Mona Lisa – an icon of demure femininity – with a small moustache and goatee, and through his photographic presentation of Marcel Duchamp as Rrose Sélavy.

These gender transgressions – bodies coded male or female being dressed and adorned as the 'opposite' sex – draw on a heterosexual anxiety, as Judith Butler discusses,

> heterosexuality is beset by an anxiety that it can never fully overcome, that its effort to become its own idealizations can never be finally or fully achieved, and that it is constantly haunted by that domain of sexual possibility that must be excluded for heterosexualised gender to produce itself. In this sense, then, drag is subversive to

the extent that it reflects on the imitative structure by which hegemonic gender is

itself produced and disrupts heterosexuality's claim on naturalness and originality.

(Butler, 1993, p. 125)

In producing these performances of the 'wrong' gender, then, these artists and writers

questioned notions of 'natural' gender. In Butlerian terms, the originality of gendered

performance was, through drag, revealed to be false.

Despite its potential to disrupt the viewer's faith in their own performance of gender, female

impersonation was relatively popular and could be found on various well-known stages in

the early twentieth century. Barbette, for instance, was a drag artist from America who

became a cultural icon (Lyford, 2007, p. 165) and was even photographed by Man Ray in

1926 on the advice of Jean Cocteau (Lyford, 2007, p. 165). Amy Lyford believes that

Barbette's gender non-conformity was a specific draw for the Surrealists. She notes that,

'Viewed against a postwar backdrop of male trauma and emasculation, Barbette's oscillation

between femininity and masculinity, and her act's rejection of a rigid categorisation of gender

identity, were likely magnets for Man Ray and his surrealist friends' (Lyford, 2007, p. 174)

and, because of the popularity of artists like Barbette, 'audiences were already primed to

consume the gender instability that the surrealists wanted to sell' (Lyford, 2007, p. 166).

Barbette, then, represented to the Surrealists an antidote to the whole-bodied, robust, hyper-

masculine reconstruction expectations of the male body. She provided a space in which the

male body was not set to the requirements of interwar masculinity. In being a performance of

femininity, Barbette largely removed anxieties surrounding masculinity off the shoulders of

men and onto the bodies of women. Haldane uses Christopher in a similar way, only by

being a body removed from the binary altogether – neither a performance of femininity or

masculinity but both – Christopher breaks the binary without pushing male anxieties onto

women. His body becomes representative of a gender that does not fit with the expectations

of society, like many of those bodies returned from war. His performance of gender is sympathetic to those men whose bodies had been changed by violence, who had to negotiate their masculinity in the context of the advertisers' full-bodied hegemonic ideal and the industrial, active images of masculinity placed on the walls of the National Gallery. Christopher's body is problematic, then, because in not fitting it suggests a corporeal gender performance outside of hegemonic masculine values, a framework that, within the patriarchal paradigm of *Man's World*, maintains the masculine structure of the scientific government. The reader is made aware that the Patrol are concerned about the effects of society harbouring a body like Christopher's when the reader is shown an interaction between two high-ranking officials, Adrian (Christopher's brother) and Bruce;

> 'Oh, I know what you are going to say. Only, as yet Christopher has not given us sufficient indications to warrant an examination.'
>
> …
>
> And then Adrian, looking straight into Bruce's eyes, gave one of the secret signs current among those who had at one time or another been connected with the Patrol.
>
> (Haldane, 1926, pp. 231–2)

There is a clear suggestion here that Adrian would like to remove Christopher. Much like how Barbette's body was non-conforming and problematic in relation to depictions of hegemonic masculinity envisioned through advertising and the mannequin, Christopher's non-binarism poses a threat to the glorified images of the man of science found in *Man's World*, whose gender construction, like the real interwar man of science, relies on masculine qualities bolstered by polarised depictions of gender.

Haldane offers her reader two alternatives from the hegemonic corporeal masculinity of the interwar period which was largely interested in the image of masculinity, whether that be in the shop front in the form of a mannequin or on the walls of the National Art Gallery. I have

shown how *I Bring Not Peace*'s James, like *Melusine*'s Raymond, is a depiction of corporeal masculinity in its full-bodied, often eroticised form. However, unlike Raymond, James is not 'fixed' by the male or female gaze and is instead depicted as the embodiment of action. This makes him a foil to the upper-class intellectual 'high-brow' society that surrounds him. As seen through Dennis and his friends, this society is shallow – much like the projected image of masculinity encapsulated by the mannequin. James offers instead an 'honest' corporeal masculinity. Through James, then, Haldane looks to change the exclusive, elitist culture found amongst the 'high-brows'. Through *Man's World*'s Christopher, however, Haldane offers a corporeality devoid of the gender binary. Christopher subverts hegemonic depictions of masculinity valued by BAAS – industry, bravery, strength - as well as the idealised images of complete male bodies sold via advertising, which were a corporeal impossibility for many men who returned from war. Christopher manages this subversion by subverting the gender binary itself. As an example of the sexologists' 'invert', he is free from the expectations of masculinity or femininity.

For the purposes of this thesis as a whole, what this chapter has shown is that Haldane wished to destabilise hegemonic masculinity, particularly with regard to science and the masculine identity of the man of science. Through James in *I Bring Not Peace* Haldane destabilises the elitist intellectual culture she associated with the dons of Oxford and Cambridge and in doing so she attempts to undermine key institutions and key figures of scientific research. Through Christopher in *Man's World*, she suggests the inclusion of a figure within the social ranks of the scientific elite who breaks from its masculine expectations. In both of these books, then, Haldane opens the metaphorical and physical spaces of science and scientific institutions to those that do not fit a hegemonic masculine ideal.

Chapter Three:
Masculinity and Control

In the previous two chapters I have explored how Haldane undermines hegemonic masculinity by putting two dominant masculine scripts in competition, allowing them to undermine each other's traits and values, both in mind and body. In the following two chapters, I consider how she dissects and undermines masculinities based on their social and economic power, and how this manifests through the concepts of control and criminality. As this chapter demonstrates, Haldane presents self-control as the domain of socially and economically powerful hegemonic masculinity. Men who are not socially or economically powerful are therefore presented as uncontrolled in their behaviour. However, she also presents the ability to self-control as a problematic sanctioning of the control of others. Chapter Four, then, considers how men who are not socially or economically powerful are not sanctioned in their control of others and are considered instead in terms of criminality. This criticism of socially and economically powerful masculinity as an arm of a patriarchal State is central to this thesis as a whole, as it demonstrates the connections Haldane was drawing between class, masculinity, and the alienation of women from public life via the State and male-dominated institutions. This is demonstrated in detail in Part Two.

What this chapter shows, then, is that Haldane presents the power and self-control afforded to masculine characters differently depending on their social status. Whereas middle-class and socially powerful men are presented as being both in control of themselves and therefore sanctioned in their control of others, working-class men are presented as having no control, over themselves or others. However, they still attempt to exact dominance over the women around them but this translates as aggression or coercion. In both instances Haldane is critical of the control afforded to men but she presents middle-class masculinity

as being afforded State-sanctioned control, which often allows for problematic behaviour to not only be accepted but also socially supported, whereas violent working-class masculinity is immediately read as such because it is recognised as aggressive or non-socially functioning. As such rapes committed by working-class men are recognised as illegal and problematic and are punishable, whereas rapes by middle-class men are not as clearly morally problematic. The control of others, too, is socially and often State-supported when it is enacted by middle-class and socially powerful men but working-class men who try to control others are presented as aggressive and/or coercive.

Sexuality, Power, and the Sanctioning of Dominance

The differing treatment of rape by Haldane in her interwar novels, between middle-class and working-class men, highlights a difference in socially assigned power. Middle-class men use force but it is depicted as the use of their 'natural' power and it goes unquestioned by society. This State-sanctioned aggression appears acceptable. Working-class men, however, are depicted as coercive and aggressive as they have no 'natural' or socially sanctioned power.

In *Brother to Bert* working-class masculinity is presented as 'out of control'. Bert, in particular is impulsive and uncontrolled as shown when he injures his brother. The two men depart a train, drunk and Len, who gets off first, slips and breaks his leg. Bert later admits he 'may have given him a little shove as he leapt first, for they were in a hurry, hungry, the train late' (Haldane, 1930, pp. 70–1). Bert's innate drives are shown to be uncontrolled, resulting in dangerous actions. Just as Peter Gay describes a *Victorian* bourgeois expectation that the working-classes 'freely give way to their impulses' (Gay, 1998, p. 20), *Brother to Bert* depicts, well into the nineteen twenties, two working-class men who fight, drink, and womanise as and when the urge takes them.

As this chapter demonstrates, unlike the middle-class men of Haldane's interwar books, working-class men are not afforded State-sanctioned control. When over-controlling behaviour is seen in these characters, then, it translates as coercion or aggression; because it lacks State support, it depends on individual power, hence a working-class character cannot simply take control as a middle-class character does but must attempt to enforce it. This is seen in *Brother to Bert*. When Len marries Lil she joins Bert and Len on their performance tour. Whilst living with the two men Lil finds herself subject to the men's attempts at control over her. Bert repeatedly tries to elicit a sexual relationship with her, not because of any feelings of affection but because, by sharing intimate space with him, Bert views Lil as an accessible sexual conquest. This, of course is an attempt to control her, to bend her to his will. The narrative informs us that,

> As the weeks went by, his earlier desire for her, Lil, reawakened; he wanted some one to practice on until he should meet Lottie again, to rehearse his poses, his attitudes, his witticisms, everything intellectual and outwardly expressible in which sexual desire can more or less frankly exhibit itself. (Haldane, 1930, p. 175)

As shown in the above quote Bert reduces Lil to an inanimate object on which he can 'practice' until he meets Lottie again. Inherent in his need to 'practice' is the implication that he does not already possess these qualities – the 'wit' or 'intellect' – but must instead develop them. This marks him as both uneducated and less commanding, especially when he is compared to the middle-class Professor who helps Lil track down Bert in Paris. The reader is told that upon meeting the Professor, 'Lil did as she was told. Hadn't she known as soon as she had set eyes on him that she'd have to do just as he told her?' (Haldane, 1930, p. 311). Without knowing him and having only evaluated him with her eyes, Lil affords him respect which allows him to automatically control her. There is the indication here that Lil understands his authority visually. His clothes and his attitude serve as markers of his class

and therefore his suitability to control her, unlike Len who must mimic qualities which he understands as attractive – those that indicate a good education and by extension a middle-class lifestyle.

Whilst Bert finds no resistance from Len, when he looks to gain his permission to sleep with Lil he repeatedly finds a refusal from Lil herself. As a working-class man he has very little control over Lil, or anyone else, beyond what little he can gain from methods of coercion or aggression. When he finally has sex with Lil he does so not through his ability to control her but rather his ability to trick and coerce her. Taking advantage of their uncannily similar appearance, as the twins had done often with girls in the past, Bert slips into Lil's bed, in the dark, in place of Len. It is not until the morning, in the light, that Lil realises the mistaken identity. Remorseless, Bert concocts a story for himself, '(Tell her you was drunk last night, didn't know what you was doing. Sob-stuff. Sorry an' all that.)' (Haldane, 1930, p. 189).By doing so the reader views Bert not as a man who has enacted power and control over Lil, but as a trickster and a fraud.

Another rape is committed by a working-class man in *Youth is a Crime*, when Werner's younger sister is raped by a temporary caretaker at her school. The scene unfolds over a few pages after Liese stays late after school;

> She started at a step behind her. She felt a hand on her shoulder; fingers on her neck; beer-laden breath (Haldane, 1934, p. 301)
>
> For another moment he remained in the front of the door, blocking her way. She stood before him, angry now, but impotent. She realized, with a sudden panic of terror, that she could never leave the room without his permission; that for some reason, he was not going to let her go. She stamped her foot. (Haldane, 1934, p. 304)

Again, the working-class man is presented as uncontrolled – he is drunk at work. Although the caretaker enacts temporary control over Liese, in part due to the power afforded to him as an adult and an employee of the school, he is ultimately caught and punished. He is also only able to control Liese through physical force, through his own individual body, because as a working-class man, he has no State or social power. This becomes clearer when contrasted to another rape depicted in Haldane's interwar texts, committed by a socially powerful man.

In *Melusine* the title character finds herself under the control of Owain, the leader of the pagan church. As has been ascertained earlier in this thesis, although the Pagan church stands in opposition to the Christian church, Paganism is just as, if not more powerful than, Christianity, with its followers infiltrating and controlling every level of society. Therefore, Owain's ability to control is socially-sanctioned to the highest extent, allowing him, despite the historic setting, to function symbolically as a contemporary upper-middle-class man. When Melsuine decides she no longer wants to play a part in the Pagan church agreeing to one last performance at the festivities before she retires, Owain uses the opportunity to rape her in front of his subjects. The reader is told that, 'Up there, on the hard rock platform, he had thrown and taken her' (Haldane, 2003, p. 153). The verb used here, 'to take' her, indicates that this is an act of control over Melusine. Unlike the working-class presentations of rape, Owain is not presented as lustful and unhealthily out of control. Melusine's reaction is different from the other victims too, who all experience shame and violation. The reader is told that,

> Then, for the first time, she saw him as he really was, in all his male glory and majesty, a man of inflexible will, of passion which now blazed the more violently for its sudden release from the rigid control which normally encased it, flashing like a sword suddenly unsheathed. (Haldane, 2003, p. 153)

Owain's brief lack of control is presented as a 'release' of control, so that he appears to even be in control of his lack of control. In this respect his psychology reads as healthier than that of his working-class counterparts. His sexuality fits here with ideas of 'healthy' male sexuality being laid out by sexologists at the time. Angus McLaren has noted that from the late Victorian era, 'there was an understanding that sadism had stages, from healthy to unhealthy' and the atavistic notion that in pre-civilisation sex followed assault 'was carried on by…Andre Lamoureux, who saw sadism as a hereditary trait of the male seizing the female' (McLaren, 1997, p. 173). It was seen by many sexologists as natural for males to want to display some force and for females to enjoy submitting to it and 'Accordingly there existed a biological justification for a degree of male sexual violence' (McLaren, 1997, p. 173). Owain, therefore, is made more masculine by his actions. His rape of Melusine is presented as a healthy expression of raw masculinity[7].

Whilst the rape of Melusine clearly depicts middle-class (powerful) masculinity's ability to control because of State and social support (the rape takes place, unhindered, in front of Owain's followers), Melusine does attempt, with a degree of success to gain a sense of autonomy. She refuses to allow the event to change her feelings towards her husband, Raymond,

> You must try to understand now, dearest, that when I knew love – I mean love of the
>
> body, carnal – I knew that Raymond was the chosen of my heart. He – the other –

---

[7] We see similar figures, who explore an instinctual masculinity, within the works of D.H. Lawrence during the interwar years. Michael Bell discusses Lawrence's criticism of Freud's 'emphasis on instinctual repression as the basis of civilization'(Bell, 2012, p. 44) in his chapter, 'D.H. Lawrence: Sex, Love, Eros - and Pornography', found in *Modernist Eroticisms: European Literature after Sexology.*

had been just a girlish ideal. When He came back, and took me by force, it made no

difference. Raymond is still my love… (Haldane, 2003, p. 189)

She even relates this directly to Owain's attempt to control her when she says, 'A God or a

Devil may command everything a woman has to give, save love' (Haldane, 2003, p. 158). By

focusing on her feelings for her husband, then, she regains a sense of autonomy outside of

Owain's violation. By experiencing Owain's body too and recognising it as distinctly human,

and not a god or devil's, she is also able to take control of her own fear, '…she knew that His

chuckle would henceforward no longer have the power to frighten her – ever again'

(Haldane, 2003, p. 158). Although all this is a positive move towards autonomy outside of

Owain's control for Melusine, it turns out to be a brief interlude in his power over her.

Towards the end of the novel her involvement with the Pagan church is revealed to

Raymond. Melusine fakes her own death and is forced, as a result, to return to Owain. The

novel ends with Melusine resigned to a cave, directly because of Owain's forced-

expectations of her. She resolves, 'God he might no longer be to her; but he was still a most

marvellous man, one whose works were as brilliantly thought out as they were neatly

executed, and, taken all in all, most reasonably humane' (Haldane, 2003, p. 221). Despite

making her be an active part of his church, which resulted in her losing her husband, and

despite raping her and impregnating her, she still considers him 'reasonably humane'. Even

the choice of the word 'reasonable' here relates to the expectation that healthy middle-class

masculinity is calm and in control. Owain, therefore, has effectively taken control of Melusine

so that despite the violence he has inflicted upon her, she still respects him.

Masculinity and State-Sanctioned Control

Whilst the social structure of *Man's World* does not fit with a class system found in

democratic societies – instead it is representative of a communist state – there still is a

hierarchical categorising of both women and men. Women are either producers – as mothers or as entertainers – or they are helpers of male intellectual or artistic work. Between the women, mothers are at the top of the social hierarchy, though they are still disempowered as they benefit very little from their own labour. Scientific men are at the top of the hierarchy as the government is run by a scientific elite, on scientific principles, and, therefore, the scientist is most valued both as an economic and as a social figure.

As a prominent member of the scientific elite Bruce's control of Nicolette becomes an extension of the State's control over her. He becomes, not so much a tool of State control, but rather an active participant. Early on in the narrative the reader is made aware that the State supports Bruce's efforts to have a child with Nicolette. When Nicolette decides to renounce the motherhood career the motherhood council, which regulates this particular industry, meets to discuss her case. Whilst it is decided to allow her some time out of the training programme before the final decision is made and she is 'immunised' against pregnancy, it is also considered that, 'The obvious thing to do was to find a mate for Nicolette as soon as possible, a lover whose kisses would plead more eloquently than a mother's words could do' (Haldane, 1926, p. 169). When Bruce shows an interest in her he therefore has the full support of the State, through the council of mothers, as both parties are working towards the same aim: Nicolette's return to the motherhood programme. In addition to this, however, Bruce himself is a part of the important socio-political structure. Bruce, as a scientist within a scientifically-run government, is not just a member of the State but an integral part of its functioning. Bruce and Nicolette's other brother, Adrian, meet to discuss Christopher, whom both want to remove. Adrian wishes Christopher gone because he does not trust his spiritual interests which fit so badly in this materialist system and Bruce because he wants to remove Christopher's anarchic influence from Nicolette. When the two meet to discuss Christopher – and his suitability for 'examination' (Haldane, 1926, p. 231) - they share 'one of the secret signs current among those who had at one time or another been

connected with the Patrol' (Haldane, 1926, p. 231-2). Haldane therefore strongly suggests

that Bruce has been, or still is, a member of the Patrol – an organised system of men that

maintains the scientific elite establishment and that is, in many ways, a secret police force,

as well. As a member of the Patrol, Bruce is afforded its State power, allowing him

significant control over his environment and those within it. This is made particularly clear at

the end of the novel when Bruce is deciding what to do about Morgana.

> And as soon as they reached Nucleus he would see certain people. She would have
>
> to be silenced. She was a nuisance. He wished she would have the sense to do the
>
> obvious thing. That would be satisfactory, from every one's point of view. Women like
>
> that were useless. (Haldane, 1926, p. 293)

Morgana, of course, does 'the obvious thing' and commits suicide before Bruce is able to

'silence' her, but the extent of his power to control is nonetheless made evident.

Retrospectively applying the reader's full knowledge of Bruce's State-sanctioned power to

control, which is gained by the end of the narrative, to interactions taking place earlier on, it

is clear that Nicolette's attempts at bodily autonomy outside of State control, are futile. In

one such interaction Nicolette attempts to explain her disgust at the State law that neuters

must be sterilised and that mothers may only work as mothers,

> But we should all be in it, not merely me. It's a collective scheme. After all, the rule is
>
> detestable. It should be abolished. If we take a stand, and let it be known we can
>
> make it into a strong agitation for personal liberty. We should gain sympathy. The
>
> movement would grow. (Haldane, 1926, p. 240)

Despite her compelling argument, Bruce responds,

> Little darling, you would not gain an atom. To begin with, nothing would ever be
>
> known. Even now, the Patrol may be just waiting for you. I know about these things.
>
> Do you think that people who, in the common interest, can eliminate whole cities and
>
> keep enormous tracts of land clear of a single human being, who command the

intelligence and the weapons they command, would consider five silly little people

like Christopher and you and me and Brian and Morgana? (Haldane, 1926, p. 240)

With the knowledge that Bruce is a member of the Patrol and that he himself is capable of

'silencing' people, this conversation is deeply disturbing. The implication that Bruce may be

the very Patrol member that he warns might be 'waiting' for Nicolette is clear, creating a

distrust – the reader is never certain of his intentions, whether he is an enemy or a friend.

The threat of the Patrol, then is not just political but personal. The Patrol that has the power

to control a whole society – to 'eliminate whole cities' - is the one-of-the-same as the man,

Bruce, who has impregnated her and wants her to return to her career as a mother. It

becomes clear that Nicolette never had a choice in the first place, because Bruce's power to

control her is not only State-sanctioned, but he is one of the fundamental members of that

controlling State.

Bruce is a controlling and manipulative partner. After revealing his feelings for Nicolette,

Bruce tells her,

> I did not hurry with you. I thought I would wait until you were old enough to mate, and
>
> see if I could give you that same feeling about myself. Then we could begin having
>
> children. But when I arrive I find you have been doing all sorts of things on your own.
>
> (Haldane, 1926, p. 235)

The lack of emotion here, given the emotive topic, reduces their sexual relationship to its

function. Indicative, then, is the connection between an ability to repress emotion and a

suitability to be in control of others. There is a clear patronising tone as Bruce reveals the

plans he had made for their relationship, without Nicolette's input, as well as indicating his

disappointment at her choice of actions when she was not under his guidance (refusing

motherhood). Bruce tells Nicolette that he 'must be responsible for you, and help you out of

the various entanglements I got you into' (Haldane, 1926, p. 225). By infantilising her

through his patriarchic-fraternal treatment of her, Bruce removes her agency. Her independent actions, which he perceives as mistakes, are not afforded to her, but rather to himself. Through the guise of 'protector' of Nicolette he therefore becomes her controller. It is from this point in the narrative that Bruce begins to take complete control of Nicolette's life, positioning himself as the one 'who knows best' out of the two of them. He begins to separate her from her friends. Telling her not to associate with Morgana, a feminist anarchist, he tells Nicolette, 'I don't want you to see her at all. You must arrange to stay quite quietly somewhere until you go to your garden' (Haldane, 1926, p. 252). The 'garden' here refers to the motherhood garden. By going to this space Nicolette is accepting the motherhood career that she has spent most of the narrative trying to rebel against – with the support of Morgana and the other anarchists. Bruce, however, attempts to remove her from their influence. He warns Nicolette that 'Morgana must not know for the time being. She's inclined to be hysterical and unbalanced' (Haldane, 1926, p. 252). Bruce tries to avoid Morgana having contact with Nicolette, after he has managed to persuade her to give up her act of rebellion, so that she will not change her mind. As a neuter, Morgana is unable to have children. To Bruce, her infertility – the source of her 'hysteria' - has poisoned Nicolette and will do so again if they have contact. Similarly, he begins to undermine Nicolette's relationship with her brother, Christopher by both pathologising his personality and his activism, claiming them to be a result of a gender imbalance, and by speaking over and in place of Nicolette, as seen in the final chapter when Bruce 'helps' Christopher to realise that his relationship with Nicolette is a farce, whilst Nicolette, overcome with emotion, bizarrely falls asleep. Bruce manipulates situations and people in order to take control. Noting that Nicolette 'could have been influenced easily enough' (Haldane, 1926, p. 245) but deciding that, '…success so attained would have been of no use, either to him or to her' (Haldane, 1926, pp. 245–6). Bruce nevertheless takes Nicolette emotionally hostage, making her choose between the motherhood career and himself or body-autonomy and Christopher. He

tells her that he is unsure 'if you really have room for me in your mind, or whether you're in love with that charming brother of yours' (Haldane, 1926, p. 254), before reminding her that 'All you little mother-pots need is babies. A little mothering of the rest of the world before you have them is very nice, for you and every one else' (Haldane, 1926, p. 255). Whilst giving her the impression of choice he therefore actually controls her decision. As her trusted faux 'older brother' Bruce can be certain that Nicolette will trust *him* to make the right decision and will dedicatedly follow his instruction. This is made abundantly clear when he tells her, 'There is no doubt that if I had not taken your funny scheme in hand, it might have led to some complications' (Haldane, 1926, pp. 251–2). Once again Bruce uses patronising language – positing her act of rebellion as a 'funny scheme' – to undermine Nicolette's autonomy and ensure that she instead trusts him to take control.

Kaempfer, the headmaster of Elizabeth's German school based in Belgium in *Youth is a Crime*, is another example of State-sanctioned control that enacts violence, this time with racial connotations. Kaempfer is a dominating character, as revealed through his colleague's reactions to him, 'they trembled before his ruthless sarcasms, they jumped in their shoes if they heard his voice or his footsteps in the corridor' (Haldane, 1934, p. 50) and just like Bruce, he has a dislike of working women, as seen when he first takes leadership of the school and the reader is are told,

> These teachers would in due course be replaced by men, for it was well known that
> Kaempfer's profound disdain of the intelligence of the female sex made it
> disagreeable for him to accept women as colleagues. (Haldane, 1934, p. 48)

In addition to his sexism he is also distinctly anti-Semitic. This is revealed upon the reader's first meeting with him, when Elizabeth's mother attempts to secure her a place at his gymnasium.

His light blue, piercing eyes had summed up his lady visitor in about half a minute. He had made no secret of the fact, being a notoriously plain-spoke man, that he didn't want Jews at his school, wouldn't have the males at any price, although he himself was not particularly anti-Semitic, and was prepared to admit that they made successful pupils. But his governors didn't like 'em, and in a place like Antwerp you certainly got the worst types, now didn't you, Mrs. Hermann? Here the good woman's social-racial snobbery was in thorough agreement with him… (Haldane, 1934, p. 45)

Haldane writes in free-indirect discourse to distance Kaempfer's views from the text, allowing us indirectly into the thoughts of the anti-Semite. Kaempfer immediately reads Elizabeth's mother as Jewish and notes that Jews are not welcome at the school. His anti-Semitism is not presented as merely a personal bigotry, however, but rather a State-sanctioned, official position. Haldane notes in *Truth Will Out* that *Youth is a Crime* was influenced by the rise of Hitler in 1933. This, she tells the reader 'recalled to me some of my experiences as the pupil of German pre-Nazi, but similarly orientated teachers at my school in Belgium, which crystallised in my next novel, *Youth is a Crime*' (Haldane, 1949, p. 30). In this respect then, the school becomes a microcosm of government. Kaempfer believes himself to be 'not particularly anti-Semitic' but rather to be conducting the wishes of the governors. His control of the situation – his ability to deny Elizabeth an education at the gymnasium – is posited here, just like with Bruce in *Man's World*, as the control afforded to the middle-class man by the State, so that the State and the individual (the 'individual' here being middle-class masculinity) are united.

Elizabeth does manage to secure a place at the school, however, she finds herself repeatedly held back by anti-Semitic oppression. Finding herself in a competition for 'top girl' with a blonde, non-Jewish, German girl in her class, when she receives higher grades Kaempfer makes the decision not to award her the 'top girl' status, awarding it instead to her

German rival. Again, the patriarchal family structure is used to reinforce his control, as he tells the two girls, '"There is very little to choose between you two, my children"…with almost fatherly tenderness' (Haldane, 1934, p. 80). Despite there being a clear grade that separates the two girl's achievements, Kaempfer is able to enact his anti-Semitism and award the non-Jewish girl by utilising his control over the two girls.

Elizabeth reacts, 'He had cheated her of her due. "Deutschland über alles,' if not by fair means, then by foul…' (Haldane, 1934, p. 81). Again, Kaempfer's anti-Semitism is presented as state-Sanctioned, this time by the German nation itself. His control over Elizabeth's education (which, as a child, is largely her life) is afforded to him as a middle-class German man. He uses his ability to control others to sway the results of the children's test so that Elizabeth cannot 'win' because, as a Jewish student, she should not be seen to be more intelligent than her German counterparts. Elizabeth connects Kaempfer's anti-Semitic actions directly with the German nation. Elizabeth understands Kaempfer's actions as, 'Deutchland über alles', or 'Germany above all else', a phrase from the national anthem under the Nazis, heavily associated with the specifically racially and nationally-branded anti-Semitism of the party. The control Kaempfer exercises over Elizabeth in the school, then, is both a microcosm of the control the German nation had over its people, and, therefore, also specifically State-sanctioned, as an action in 'defence' of the German State. Kaempfer's control, therefore, is simply an extension of State control.

Working-Class Masculinity and Control as Un-Sanctioned Violence

So far in this chapter I have demonstrated how Haldane creates a divide between working-class or non-socially powerful masculinities and middle-class or socially powerful masculinities in specific relation to her treatment of rape. I have then explored how socially-

powerful, middle-class masculinity is afforded State-sanctioning, allowing Haldane's

character's actions to become an extension of the State's control and even violence. To

finish this chapter, I consider how Haldane presents non-socially-powerful, working-class

masculinity as violent and uncontrolled, both pathologising and criminalising these

characters.

In *Brother to Bert* the two twin brothers, Bert and Len, are presented as chaotic characters,

both in their lives and their personalities. Working as stage performers the men lead a lonely

nomadic life with no stable community or family other than each other. This is reflected in

their unstable personalities. Haldane describes the two men: 'They both loved quarrels as

their lives, the more violent the better, especially with women. They could think of no happier

preliminary to going to bed with a girl than quarrelling with her' (Haldane, 1930, p. 160).

They seem to thrive on chaos. Their emotions are un-nuanced and dramatic. Violence here

equates to sex as both involve heightened, passionate emotion. The difference between

'passionate attraction' and 'passionate violence' seems unimportant and instead only the

drama of the affair appears to matter. Both men drink excessively too, and when this is

negatively commented upon by their female companions they react with violence, as seen

when Bert notes,

> Whenever the silly things smelt a spot of whisky they always said you were drunk.
>
> Sometimes they laughed and sometimes they struggled, but it all added to the fun
>
> and didn't make any difference in the long run. How could they know anyway?
>
> (Haldane, 1930, p. 75)

Of course, as implied here, what is considered 'a spot' to the twins is undoubtedly

considered drunkenness by others.

Aggression and violence are defining features of the working-class twins in *Brother to Bert.* However, whilst they both start with these negative traits there is a degree of reformation in Len, through his relationship with Lil (this is discussed in more detail in Part Two), whereas Bert remains deeply problematic in his behaviour. Almost from the first moment the reader meets him he is presented as extremely aggressive, but it is through his behaviour towards Lil that its impulsive, illogical roots are revealed. Upon meeting her Bert tells Len that she is a 'Damned obstinate little bitch, if you ask me' (Haldane, 1930, p. 55). By judging Lil in such an unflattering manner, despite her own quiet politeness, the reader views Bert in brutish terms; aggressive without provocation. An explanation is given later in the novel as to why Bert, more so than Len is so impulsive. Lil's professor acquaintance helps her find the fugitive Bert in order to free Len who has been arrested due to mistaken identity. He tells her, 'I learnt that he had fallen, or rather climbed, out of the perambulator when he was about nineteen months old' (Haldane, 1930, p. 313). This resulted in a head injury which, he explains, is significant because 'An injury to the brain is apt to affect people's powers of self control among other things' (Haldane, 1930, p. 313). Here Haldane picks up on contemporary criminology discussions (which are discussed in more detail in Chapter Four) to explain why Bert has an even lower ability to control his urges.

This inability to control their desires (to drink and to womanise) is best interpreted through the lens of psychoanalysis and particularly Freud. In her autobiography, Haldane notes that, during her time at Roebuck House (during the interwar years), she developed an interest in psychoanalysis and the work of Freud, being suitably persuaded by the concept of 'subconscious and unconscious layers beneath the thin protective coating of the conscious mind' (Haldane, 1949, p. 34). Within the theory of consciousness as id, ego, and super-ego, found in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1921) and *The Ego and the Id* (1923), the id is driven by an instinct to seek out pleasure and avoid pain and the ego functions as the force

controlling the id. Haldane presents the working-class men, especially Bert, as being less in control of themselves, or rather, their egos are less able to control the id's seeking-out of pleasure. The men appear to have under-functioning, self-destructive egos, making them 'out of control'.

Bert's inability to control his aggression would not necessarily be wholly negative, particularly if it was more of an unwillingness to remain controlled. In the *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, published on the brink of World War One, Freud discusses aggression as an unsuitable social emotion. He notes that, 'The limitation of the aggression is the first and perhaps the hardest sacrifice which society demands from each individual' (Freud, 1957, p. 143). This is because, according to Freud, aggression is a natural part of the id but it is also not ideal for socialisation, or indeed, society. Freud goes on to tell the reader,

> But on the other hand, looking at it from a purely psychological point of view, one has to admit that the ego does not feel at all comfortable when it finds itself sacrificed in this way to the needs of society, when it has to submit itself to the destructive impulses of aggression, which it would have dearly liked itself to set in motion against others. (Freud, 1957, p. 143)

Freud explains that a sense of guilt, which can result in psychological issues, is a result of the id's aggression focused inward to allow the individual to remain socially acceptable. Rather than a lack of outward aggression necessarily being the positive result of a healthy ego and super-ego, Freud presents it more as a necessity to function in civilised society. Bert, of course refuses internalise his aggression, in this respect, is less developed, psychologically. In Freud's terms, there is an imbalance between the ego and the id and as a result Bert cannot control his behaviour in a manner that is socially functional.

Lottie, however, is attracted to Bert's uncontrolled, 'passionate' behaviour, seemingly reading it as 'manliness' in the raw. The attractive, older stage-star employs Bert in her touring troupe but also takes him as her 'gigolo' (Haldane, 1930, p. 223). Lottie's attraction to Bert is explained by Haldane in terms of id-based desires,

> what she wanted was a man of unvarnished coarse virility – a bargee, he said, was what she needed – and from the start that had been the dominating note of their relationship. He had fallen easily into bullying and beating her. (Haldane, 1930, p. 235)

Lottie is attracted to Bert's atavistic masculinity – his violence and aggression – with 'unvarnished' here meaning 'uninhibited by societal expectations'. His violent actions, in this light, become proof of his 'coarse virility'. This relationship could at first be understood in similar terms to Owain's rape of Melusine, as an indication of a healthy-yet-sadistic male sexuality. The reader is told that, 'He had been violent with her once or twice, not really brutal, but sufficiently robust to emphasize the superiority of his masculine powers over any femaleness, however experienced and alluring' (Haldane, 1930, p. 75). Whilst being particularly atavistic, this reflects the 'healthy' balance of sexual roles that sexologists had typified, with the female taking a submissive role with regard to a forceful male (McLaren, 1997, p. 174).

However, where Owain is presented as maintaining a level of self-control and control over his environment (those around him), just like Bruce who is always in control both as an individual and as a member of the State, Bert is instead presented as impulsive and therefore problematic in his aggression. The inevitable results of Bert's uncontrolled aggression are foreshadowed by one of Lottie's plays, which Lil goes to see,

> A balcony passed round two sides of the bar, with steps leading up to it, and they had to be pretty firm, for at the crucial moment of the story Lottie, as Eskimo Nell,

was chased up them by an alleged drunken cow-puncher… But the climax came

when the crowd had departed and when, after a soft sentimental duet to dimmed

lights between Nell and the sailor, a violent interruption was made by the

aforementioned villain, who flung a 'burning brand' into the wooden shack which the

scene represented and departed, locking the door behind him. (Haldane, 1930, pp.

166–7)

In this fictional scene Lottie is burnt to death by the jealous cow-puncher (cowboy), whose

aggression, unmediated, results in impulsive and destructive actions. Here Lil is watching a

dramatised version of her life as her romance with Len (played here by the sailor) is

threatened by the destructive actions of Bert (the cow-puncher) who leads Len to drink,

women and violence, as well as threatening Lil. However, the true metaphor here relates to

Lottie's fate at the hands of Bert's aggressive impulses as her death on stage foreshadows

her actual death shortly after in the novel. As Bert loses interest in Lottie their relationship

becomes more toxic. One day, after the two have argued, Bert becomes lost in his anger,

'Slowly the black sullen rage had been rising to his head. It was like a newly-lit fire, when a

thin grey thread of smoke curls and broadens upwards then suddenly the flame breaks

through leaping reddening' (Haldane, 1930, p. 260). He picks up a bottle and beats her to

death. This murder is not pre-meditated. Bert is not even depicted as being in any way in

control of his actions. The reader 'sees' Bert lose control as, much like a forest fire, a small

spark smokes into an out-of-control blaze. What is seen in the murder of Lottie then, is the

problematic side to a sexualised, atavistic masculinity. Enacted by a working-class man who

has no control over himself or others, aggression soon becomes non-socially-functioning

violence.

What this chapter has shown, then, is that in her interwar fiction Haldane depicts a societal

tendency to accept the authority of socially and economically powerful men. In *Man's World*,

the scientists, who are at the top of a cultural hierarchy, have total control of society as seen when Bruce is able to control Nicolette's decision to rebel against the State; in *Brother to Bert* Lil is commanded by the enigmatic Professor who steps in to help her find Len's murdering brother, Bert, thereby freeing Len from prison; in *Youth is a Crime* Elizabeth and her mother are forced to accept the anti-Semitic policies of the school's headmaster. Through the actions of *Man's World*'s Bruce and *Youth is a Crime*'s Kaempfer, Haldane shows that socially powerful and middle-class masculinities are awarded the support of the State because they act as an extension of it.

Whilst socially powerful, middle-class masculinity carries with it an automatic command for respect and the weight of the State, it has been shown that socially non-powerful, working-class masculinity is unable to enact control over others. Instead, framed by Freudian concepts of the id and innate drives, the working-class man is unable to control either himself or others and when he does attempt to control those around him his actions are understood as violent and criminal because he is acting individually; his interests are separate from those of the State.

In the context of this thesis as a whole, this chapter has shown that whilst Haldane presents working-class masculinity as potentially dangerous, these men have no social power and their problematic behaviour is therefore focused and not widespread. Middle-class and socially powerful masculinities – scientists, educators, members of government – are directly associated with the State. The violence these men inflict is not only State-sanctioned, it is institutional. This mistrust of the State provides the context for Haldane's articulations of maternity and their structural alienation from the institutions of public life, which is explored in Part Two. In the following chapter I demonstrate how Haldane questions the structures of society via an exploration of criminality and morality.

Chapter Four:
Criminality, Sexuality, and Morality

In the previous chapter I demonstrated how Haldane shows the problematic actions (excessive drinking, violence, sexual violence) of working-class men to be immediately recognised as criminal, whereas similarly problematic behaviour (controlling partners and sexual violence) of socially and economically powerful men is not recognised as criminal but is instead accepted. Haldane uses criminality, however, to undermine masculinities across the class spectrum. In this chapter I show how Haldane frames crime not as a question of legality but rather of morality and in doing so the problematic behaviour her characters present is not necessarily the same as their criminal behaviour. This demonstrates Haldane's aversion to State rule – her depiction of criminality, or 'wrong-doing', is different from that agreed upon by the State in the form of the law. This is significant to this thesis as a whole because it demonstrates a feminine alienation from the State and its institutions that accounts for her interest in restructuring the relationship between gender, the public and private spheres, and the institutions that represent these spheres, which is discussed in detail in Part Two.

Locating this chapter within the subject of early twentieth-century crime and crime fiction, I begin by exploring *Brother to Bert.* In this novel Haldane depicts immoral sexual behaviour as a precursor to criminal behaviour but locates it within its social context, citing Bert and Len's childhoods and their chaotic lives, which are largely a result of their economic status. In the next section I consider criminality and sexuality in *I Bring Not Peace,* where twentieth-century socially immoral sexuality (homosexuality) is shown. Rather than homosexuality being framed as problematic behaviour, it is the social class system that is depicted as problematic. Similarly, in *Man's World,* the subject of this chapter's final section, I will

demonstrate how Christopher's non-binary sex makes him 'criminal' within the binary-gendered paradigm, but his 'intermediate' sexuality gives him solidarity with women. His non-gendered perspective, unlike other male-coded figures, means he is not invested in the continuation of the male scientific elite and its government and, as a result, he identifies with the female need for autonomy.

Criminality, Sexuality, and Morality in *Brother to Bert*

Thanks to the work of Gill Plain interwar crime fiction can be categorised both stylistically and geographically. Plain attributes 'soft-boiled' crime novels, distinguished by their 'peaceful regime of poison and pokers, expertly wielded in the peaceful environs of their country vicarages' (Plain, 2014, p. 30), to British authorship, whereas the 'hard-boiled' narratives involving 'Americans clubbing each other to death with empty bourbon bottles amid grim scenarios of urban decay' (Plain, 2014, p. 30) were to be found across the Atlantic. Similarly, Stephen Kern separates a 'Victorian' and a 'modern' style of crime fiction, particularly distinguished by their approaches to sexuality and murder. Kern notes that 'Victorians frequently uncoupled the link between sex and murder by having someone other than the sexually aroused do the killing' (Kern, 2004, p. 186). The modern crime novel, however, was more pervasive in its treatment of sex and murder, describing '…more precisely a greater number of interacting sexual sources, aims, and objects of sexual desire involving fetishism, rape, sadism, masochism' (Kern, 2004, p. 187) etc. Where the Victorian crime writer preferred to play on themes of degeneration, the modern author presented sex murders as sexually obsessed but avoided categorising their criminals as degenerates, monomaniacs, and other legalistic-pathological terms (Kern, 2004, p. 187). Though Kern draws these relatively neat distinctions there are texts, of course, that do not fit this modern/sexually explicit, Victorian/sexually distanced crime fiction binary. Charlotte Haldane's *Brother to Bert*, published in 1929, crosses many of the boundaries Kern draws,

mixing both a Victorian crime fiction interest in degeneration and genetics with a modern

presentation of sex and murder This setting of the theatre is outside of usual social

structures and expectations allowing the narrative to explore the sexual development of the

two men. Inside the theatre, the reader is told,

> was the mysterious, exciting odour of sex: the shriek of sex from the screen, the
>
> stare of sex from lonely eyes, the thick damp clasp of groping hands and the long
>
> unsatisfied kiss of the back row of the stalls. (Haldane, 1930, pp. 48–9)

The space of the theatre is filled with sensual stimuli. Sound (the shriek), sight (the stare),

smell (exciting odor), touch (groping hands), all combine to create an erotic experience. The

women the twins meet inhabit this sexual space and are shaped by it. The girls working in

the theatre are enamored by its modern luxury, as the reader is told, '…here, in the old

Alex., were coloured cakes, coloured drinks, coloured lights, music from eleven to eleven,

and from three to eleven, at any rate, men, Men, MEN' (Haldane, 1930, p. 48). Colour –

recently improved and expanded by industrial technology – is both a sign of modernity and a

sensory, sensual stimulus, linking the luxury of the modern with sexuality. Similarly, the late

night music both insinuates the modern jazz movement and, by extension, the flapper, but

also indicates that these women stay in the theatre late into the night, unchaperoned, hence

their dizzying access to 'men, Men, MEN' (Haldane, 1930, p. 48). It is this sexualised space

and these sexualised women that the twins interact with and, as a result, the reader watches

their sexualities develop accordingly. Len, who marries young and is more reserved than

Bert, engages occasionally in 'orgies', and 'petting parties', but stays largely refrained in

comparison to his brother. Bert, on the other hand, becomes a 'gigolo' (Haldane, 1930, p.

223) to the aging actress Lottie de Lara. His sexuality becomes aggressive as the two argue

regularly and he begins to beat Lottie, and the relationship ends when he beats her to death

with a brandy bottle. The novel's unflinching sexual and sexually violent nature makes it

rather similar to Plain's 'hard-boiled' crime novel where 'Americans [club] each other to

death with empty bourbon bottles' (Plain, 2014, p. 30); however, Haldane retains the particularly Victorian interest in degeneration with regard to the criminality of Bert. After Bert kills Lottie and indirectly frames his twin, Lil seeks the help of a professor to track down Bert and prove her husband's innocence. In discussing the case of Bert and Len, the Professor draws on the work of Professor Lange, in his book *Crime as Destiny: A Study of Criminal Twins*. Though published first in 1891, Haldane translated an edition in 1930, with a foreword by J. B. S. Haldane. This goes some way towards indicating why Haldane's Professor was citing a study that was forty years old, as well as suggesting the lasting cultural effect the study had, to warrant another edition. The title suggests a degenerationist tone, which is translated by Haldane through the words of the Professor as,

> if your dizygotic twin is a criminal, your own chances of being one are no greater than if your ordinary brother or sister were one. But if you are an "identical" twin and your brother (they are always of the same sex) is a criminal, your chances of being one yourself are just over three to one. (Haldane, 1930, p. 294)

The sense of being genetically predestined is communicated here as a link is drawn between criminality and fraternity. Certainly the two twins follow in each other's footsteps in terms of womanising and drinking, though Haldane is careful to show us that Bert is the 'worst' of the two in that he,

> in some subtle way emphasized Len's characteristics. If they were angry or hurt, he howled the louder and longer; if pleased, his laughter was the more abandoned. His lips were a shade redder and thicker, his nostrils the faintest degree more arched. (Haldane, 1930, p. 7)

Here Haldane draws upon the connection between genetics and behaviour. Len's emphasised appearance, his 'redder and thicker' lips and 'more arched' nostrils, mirror his emphasised behaviour. However, the narrative does not reduce the twins', and specifically Bert's, immoral or criminal behaviour to degeneration or even genetics, as Haldane spends

much of the early sections of the novel describing the twins' childhood and home life. Growing up without a mother the twins instead have an older sister, May, who is uninterested in maternity. It was perhaps this disinterest that allowed for the accident in which Bert 'had fallen, or rather climbed, out of the perambulator when he was about nineteen months old' (Haldane, 1930, p. 313) causing a head injury, an incident the Professor finds worthy of note.

In connecting Bert's criminality with his early head injury Haldane utilises late nineteenth and early twentieth-century discussions of criminology. As far back as 1879 brain trauma and lesions on the brains of criminals were examined and links made between brain trauma and murder (McLaren, 1997, p. 165). Haldane accounts for some of the responsibility of Bert's excessive and criminal behaviour by pointing to an underlying developmental issue. This is reflective of contemporary pathologisation of perverse and criminal behaviour that is found in sexology and psychology of the interwar period. Stephen Kern considers Freud's response to sexuality, perversity and criminality, noting that whilst Freud was not interested in sexual desire and its relationship to murder, he found the 'desire to inflict pain on the sexual object was one of the most significant perversions' (Kern, 2004, p. 173) displayed by the population. This innate "impulse for cruelty"' was likely a result of abnormalities in psychosexual development (Kern, 2004, p. 173), locating the germ of all perversions within childhood and child development (Kern, 2004, p. 174). This 'treatment over punishment' approach to criminality, spearheaded by figures such as Lombroso in the late nineteenth century (McLaren, 1997, p. 165), can be seen in Haldane's treatment of Bert in the narrative. Rather than simply marking him a 'degenerate' or 'criminal' Haldane writes his full back story – his development, his life experiences – in order for the reader to understand his criminality. It is these details – the twins' home lives, the accident –that Haldane uses to complicate a degenerative narrative, though she does not entirely break from it.

Bert and Len's excessive behaviour, their drinking, fighting, and promiscuity, serves as a precursor to Bert's much greater crime later in the novel. Like many other nineteenth and twentieth-century, detective, gothic, and, later, true crime novels, their socially-problematic, even dangerous behaviour – excessive drinking, fighting, etc - acts as a warning. The true extent of their deviancy is revealed later when Bert murders Lottie. In the case of *Brother to Bert* however, their behaviour also has real-life connotations. To Haldane's contemporary audiences the twins, their working-class background, and their excessive, chaotic behaviour, would have conjured memories of an infamous murder, commonly known as the 'Crumbles murder'[8]. In 1920 Irene Munro a seventeen-year-old typist from London was found murdered on a beach in Eastbourne. Her killers, Jack Field, 19, and William Gray, 29, were two working-class ex-servicemen, who, much like Bert and Len, had led unstable lives. Gray had left the forces due to injury and survived largely on his wife's earnings, a small pension and petty theft, as he himself was unemployed. The two men, who were inseparable, and described by Shani D'Cruze as a 'superficially indistinguishable doppelganger pair' (D'Cruze, 2006, p. 51), and could be found in Eastbourne, flirting with female holidaymakers and buying cheap beer and cigarettes (D'Cruze, 2006, p. 51). The murder received media coverage across the UK. It re-emerged through an edition of *Notable Trials* in 1939 (some years after the publication of *Brother to Bert*), which indicates how this case and its implications for interwar masculinity had rocked post-World War One society. Shani D'Cruze notes that this edition,

> presented a story about what could happen when wasted and wasting working-class
>
> masculinities, aimless and feckless after post-war demobilisation, corrupted by

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[8] The 'Crumbles murders' can also refer to the murder of Emily Kaye in 1924. This crime is unrelated to Irene Munro's but both bodies were found on the same beach – known as 'The Crumbles'.

idleness and unemployment into both habitual petty thieving and mindless violence

collided with the flighty flapper femininities of 1920s (D'Cruze, 2006, p. 51).

The inclusion of 'fringe' details – the men's flirtation with women and their excessive drinking – supports Shani D'Cruze's reading of the *Notable Trials* presentation of the murder case. The men's inappropriate behaviour before the murders – their 'drifter' lifestyle – functions to not only explain why the murder happened and what kind of men murder but also to foreshadow the murder itself. The inclusion of victim-blaming that D'Cruze notes functions similarly, explaining what kind of women make victims and foreshadowing the murder with Irene's own 'problematic' behaviour. This is found in crime fiction of the period too, as Gill Plain discusses. Analysing the work of Agatha Christie Plain notes that, 'The resolution of the mystery in Christie frequently depends…on an accurate reading of the female body. If you cannot tell your *femme fatale* from your virginal innocent, you're likely to be in serious trouble' (Plain, 2014, p. 31). Both as a victim and a perpetrator, the female body is understood by its sexual agency. The sexual availability of a woman, then, codes her as either a victim of her own actions, or criminal, by her transgression of gender norms.

The similarities between this case, and the anxieties it revealed, and Haldane's *Brother to Bert* are multiple. At the beginning of the novel, after the twins are forced into finding work by their family, Bert effectively steals from his employer in order lend Nanette money. 'It gave him a pleasant feeling to give away the old man's dirty money, and he liked Nanette and would make her pay all right and not only in cash neither' (Haldane, 1930, p. 27). Bert considers the 'old man's' money 'dirty' because it is procured illegally – Bert is an errand boy for an illegal betting business. He justifies his theft morally yet immediately acts immorally when he considers how he will make Nanette repay him (presumably sexually). His morals, then, do not function as a compass but instead are picked and chosen when they suit his intentions. In the end it transpires that Nanette is far too seasoned a femme fatale to be

completely manipulated by the twins, though they try. What this scene reveals very early on, however, is that the twins are willing to steal and risk the little employment they have, as well as showing a glimpse of their sexually aggressive or coercive natures.

Similarly, the twins have no respect for socially important institutions such as that of marriage,

> Len himself, though he was more in love with Lil than ever, was a bit worried now and then by the recollection of his rash promise to marry her. Not that he wished to take it back – he'd just as soon be married to her as not, if that was the only way to get what he wanted. He rather thought it was. (Haldane, 1930, p. 122)

As shown in previous quotes, the monogamy of marriage is largely unimportant to Len and the institution itself is seen as a way of having a sexual relationship with a less 'liberal' girl. Lil's own chastity is, however, valued by Len, 'It was not, after all, as if Lil was like most girls you met nowadays, and whilst he absolutely approved of chastity in his future wife, he saw no reason to practice it himself' (Haldane, 1930, p. 127). Len appreciates Lil's chastity, unlike the 'modern' girls she works with at the theatre with whom he continues to have sexual relations anyway. Len's view of sexual activity draws on a sexual morality that separates male and female sexual behaviour. This in turn has the potential for 'good' (chaste) women to have to pay the price for their husbands' promiscuity with their sexual health.

After the marriage both men quickly return to 'The old round of drinking and betting and promiscuous love-making…' (Haldane, 1930, p. 154). Whilst this in itself is disrespectful to the sanctity of marriage, the twins soon take it a step further after Bert notes, 'She's a nice kid, Lil is. Wouldn't mind marrying 'er meself. Why not? Go on. I'll look after 'er for you when you're busy, ol' man' (Haldane, 1930, p. 131). Len, who sees Lil mostly as a sexual

conquest, is happy to 'share' and she finds herself having to '[foil] all their attempts to make her be 'nice' to Bert…' (Haldane, 1930, p. 156). Described as a 'virtuous wife' (Haldane, 1930, p. 156), Lil's resistance to their non-traditional marriage suggestions serves to further highlight the twins' incivility. Her chastity serves as a foil to their hedonistic excess, which makes Bert's rape of Lil all the more galling to the reader.

The twins are used to sharing women, however, either by using their shared appearance to trick a woman into having a relationship with them both, and subsequently embarrassing that same woman upon the 'reveal', or by openly sharing a partner. We are told,

> Their habit of sharing their sexual adventures as they shared everything else occasionally brought them rebuff; but one young lady summed up their general effect when she squealed delightedly (as a right and a left hand gripped her simultaneously beneath each armpit), 'Going with you two fellers is really just like going with one boy. Here, stop it *will* you!' An injunction which was meant to be, and properly was, ignored. (Haldane, 1930, p. 43)

This orgiastic behaviour, usually with 'modern' women, epitomised by the flapper movement, conflates moral outcry with anxieties over modernity. The twins' promiscuity, their disrespect for societal institutions such as marriage and their disregard for work, paint them, like Field and Gray, as 'wasting working-class masculinities, aimless and feckless after post-war demobilisation' (D'Cruze, 2006, p. 51) . The editors of the 1939 *Notable Trials* used excessive drinking, promiscuity, violence, and petty criminality to paint Field and Gray as a 'type' and to foreshadow, as a direct result, the much greater crime of murder. Haldane also utilises this technique in *Brother to Bert*.

After their relationship goes sour, fueled by anger and alcohol, Bert murders Lottie. The murder is presented as a crime of passion. The reader is told that, 'Slowly the black sullen

rage had been rising to his head. It was like a newly-lit fire, when a thin grey thread of smoke curls and broadens upwards then suddenly the flame breaks through leaping reddening' (Haldane, 1930, p. 260). The change of tense, here, from past to present, with the invocation of the simile of smoke, encourages the reader to understand this act as happening 'in the moment'. However, by this point in the novel the murder does not come as a significant surprise. Bert has been shown to treat women as sexual objects, get into drunken bar fights, push his own brother out of a train, beat Lottie for kicking a dog, and rape Lil. The twins' masculinity is shown to be criminal, well before it is truly criminal. Haldane utilises middle-class fears surrounding the unoccupied, unemployed working-class men. Working-class masculinity is pathologised in this respect and considered unable to maintain itself as 'healthy' (non-criminal and moral) unless it is given the strict structure of working-class employment. Just as *Notable Trials* does in its retelling of the 'Crumbles murder' years later, Haldane points to the 'unsavoury' activity that these men may be undertaking to fill their unstructured time and uses it to build for the reader a 'criminal type' based on social and criminological ideas. As reluctant workers, who are often unemployed until they become stage performers, Bert and Len are not typical of a working-class lifestyle that necessitates regular employment to survive. Instead they relate to a subdivision of working-class culture that is largely under- or unemployed and associated with criminality. In giving the men this more complex class identity, Haldane can utilise middle-class fears that pathologise the working-class man without making the twins' behaviour emblematic of the working-class. Haldane was, at the time of writing *Brother to Bert*, a communist and it is clear through her presentation of the twins that she intended to avoid a middle-class demonisation of the working-class.

Though the men engage in criminal behaviour the narrative's problematising of the twins is largely moralistic, as opposed to criminal in nature. In their sexual behaviour the two are

described as attending and hosting 'gay and mildly orgiastic parties' (Haldane, 1930, p. 127) and even after Len is married, he 'found, much to his surprise, that his love for Lil did not keep him away from other girls as he had expected it to' (Haldane, 1930, p. 127). Their drinking, as well as their sexual behaviour, is excessive and often leads to violence (as seen when the two men are caught up in a bar fight leading to the arrest of Len), and ultimately it is this lifestyle that leads to the murder of Lottie. In this respect, Haldane reveals that though Bert's behaviour becomes criminal, in that the murder of Lottie is not State-sanctioned, both twins are socially problematic in their lack of morality, yet both are simultaneously the result of a problematic society. Bert and Len are equally made by their environment as much as they make their environment and are victims of their economic state. What Haldane does, then, in *Brother to Bert*, is reveal the roots of sexual aggression within a working-class context. By extending this context beyond even the 'usual' working-class spaces, choosing to set the narrative within the theatre as opposed to a more traditional working-class industry, Haldane can explore sexually aggressive masculinity with relatively little controversy. This allows her to discuss it in greater detail (it is the theme of the entire narrative) with little fear of rebuke, by placing the experience not only outside of middle-class masculinity but outside of most working-class masculinity too.

In its treatment of degeneration, genetics, and criminality, *Brother to Bert* translates a Victorian style of crime writing, though in its treatment of sexuality and violence it is decidedly modern. Though this text was Haldane's only novel written in the crime genre, the rest of Haldane's interwar fiction continues and predates this interest in the genetic, social, and sexual route of criminality and the relationship between criminality, masculinity, and sexuality runs through her interwar fiction.

Criminality, Sexuality, and Morality in *I Bring Not Peace*

So far I have discussed how Haldane interacts with societal notions of socially

dangerous/criminal masculinity with regard to heteronormative sexuality and cis-gendered

masculinity. The next two characters to be discussed, Dennis from *I Bring Not Peace* and

Christopher from *Man's World*, bring to the foreground questions of criminality and its

relation to sexuality and gender expression. Sexuality and what was deemed 'healthy' and

'unhealthy' found itself under the spotlight with the rise of sexology in the late nineteenth and

early twentieth century. Intercourse between men, which of course was illegal, had become

a very public criminal offence during the Wilde Trials of 1895 in which the author was found

guilty of 'gross indecency'. Haldane's opinion on homosexuality appears, through the lens of

her writing, rather ambivalent.

Dennis, from *I Bring Not Peace*, is not once referred to as 'homosexual'. Instead the reader

is given social whisperings - "Oh, that boy? I was at Cambridge with him. He was at

Magdalen. He was sent down" (Haldane, 1932, p. 14). His companions are described as,

'he-willows, too, bending and swaying in the keen-edged breeze of one another's spiteful

adulation feeling 'Too, too hideous, my dear,' unhappily envious of the women whose frank

make-up they dared not emulate' (Haldane, 1932, p. 62). Conflating homosexuality and

effeminacy here, Haldane depicts these men as embittered, forced to hide their sexuality,

and therefore 'envious' of the women around them. The expression of effeminacy depicted,

however, is not merely a reflection of their sexuality.

Despite homosexuality's criminality, which is later used against Dennis when he is

blackmailed, it is not Dennis's socially problematic feature. His hidden sexuality is presented

more as another mask that highlights his inauthenticity. Brief moments that reveal his

humanity serve to highlight his usual aloofness. The reader is told his face '…seemed now a

mask of misery, or rather a real face from which a bland unrevealing mask, previously adjusted with scrupulous care, had fallen' (Haldane, 1932, p. 71).

The reader is encouraged to see Dennis as lacking substance, but rather than linking this directly or indirectly to his sexuality, Haldane makes a clear connection with his class. Dennis is described as a '…faintly tottering figure…held erect by the invisible strings of Eton's code and the genes of four generations of three-bottle ancestors' (Haldane, 1932, p. 65). Haldane chooses to use a genetic discourse associated with eugenics as well as sexology to refer not to sexuality but to class. This is indicated by both the reference to Eton – the boys' school that served the Empire's elite – and to the 'four generations of three-bottled ancestors'. The phrase used here, 'three-bottled ancestors' is not a popular literary phrase. One of the few literary uses of it can be found in an anonymous article titled 'Thoughts on Inns' found in a magazine published in 1845. Whilst Haldane is unlikely to have read the article, it indicates the phrase's common usage. The writer tells us, 'Could any of our hardy three-bottle ancestors see the libations of their sons, how they would blush for their degeneracy!' (ANON, 1845, p. 312). In this context 'three-bottle' is used to refer to the excessive drinking practices of London's ancestors, which, apparently, would be insignificant in relation to the 1845 Londoner's drinking habits. Applying this reading of 'three-bottle ancestors' to *I Bring Not Peace*, then, shows Dennis is being connected to a genetic history of excessive alcohol consumption.

Haldane utilises the semantic field of genetic hierarchy – associated with 'good breeding' - used by the social and economic elite, but she connects it not with power and status but with alcoholism. In this way she undermines the genetic and social Darwinist rhetoric used to justify a social class structure. It is not, then, Dennis's criminal sexuality that Haldane problematises but his class and the underserved power and respect it affords him. This is

made evident when the reader is told, 'Dennis, without acknowledging a single accomplishment, without working or playing games, without dancing, singing, acting, painting, photographing, debating, or ragging, was considered the most accomplished young man of his time' (Haldane, 1932, p. 79). Despite having achieved nothing, Dennis is afforded social power – a direct result of his upper-class status and money. It is, as Haldane writes in *Man's World*, his 'homosexual soul; the soul in which the seeds of 'love' [are] doomed to infertility' (Haldane, 1926, p. 282) that is the issue. His social infertility, his unproductivity is the problem. The homosexual body, however, that which enacts sexuality, is not criticised. As I have discussed in Chapter Two, Dennis's marked differences from James are no accident on Haldane's part. James's solidity, his vibrancy and productivity (he is a talented musician and ex-sailor) provide a foil to highlight Dennis's high-society, lack of work-ethic. This is summarised when Dennis arrives at James's house to discover him naked, lifting weights, 'Dennis, motionless. Watched him heave and lift and sing and swear and sweat. Dennis stood erect, conscious of being fully clothed, a person saturated in twentieth-century convention, intellectual, impertinent, impotent' (Haldane, 1932, p. 88). James's atavistic, active, virile masculinity stands in direct opposition here to Dennis's upper-class, polite, inactive performance of gender.

Doing and producing nothing is shown to have self-destructive results as Dennis's removal from university is revealed. Rather than studying,

> Dennis was too busy nursing his despair and an intrigue which attracted him, not
> only because it was sordid, but chiefly on account of it's danger, and as he had both
> feared and hoped, it got him sent down in the end. (Haldane, 1932, p. 79)

Of course the reader is required to 'read between the lines' to assume his 'sordid' behaviour is related to homosexuality, however, it is not the act itself that is the focus of his problematic behaviour but rather his personality. It is his 'despair' that causes the problem. It is

insinuated to be rather self-indulgent as the reader is told it is 'nursed' and therefore it is understood it to be self-inflicted. Likewise, that 'intrigue' that leads him to the 'sordid' behaviour that results in his dismissal is attractive because of its danger. In short, upper-class life has produced in Dennis a need to be self-destructive in place of the working-class need to be productive as exemplified by James.

Although Haldane avoids framing Dennis as socially dangerous because of his sexuality, she still posits him as such. Whilst being unproductive, Dennis provides a more concrete threat in terms of his relationship with James. It is, of course, James, who Michal first identifies as being the dangerous figure,

> This stranger, she felt, was bringing not peace but a sword. And if it was a Samurai sword with which he meant (probably dramatically, in her presence, blast him) to commit hara-kiri, was she indeed compelled to strike it from his hand? (Haldane, 1932, p. 60)

James has the potential to be a more fitting classic, 'dangerous' character. He is atavistic and has worked in traditionally working-class jobs. Dennis, by comparison, is polite and civilised but it is Dennis who dramatically commits suicide. It is James who tries to help Dennis, tries to strike the Samurai sword from his hand. He takes on Dennis as his own 'project', telling him, 'I'm going to kill you or cure you. I just won't believe you're queer. You can be as hearty as me or anyone else if you want to and all you do is to sit round wailing about life…' (Haldane, 1932, p. 173). James tries to share with Dennis some of his own life force, though this inevitably translates as an atavistic attempt to 'convert' him to 'healthy' pursuits. His attempts fail, however and Dennis's self-destructive tendencies take over. At the end of the novel he kills himself with carbon-monoxide poisoning when the two men leave Paris to live in London. Upon hearing that something had happened, Michal travels to the metropolis to see James. When she arrives she finds him physically and mentally

reduced by what has happened. His relationship with Dennis has 'unmanned' him. When she first sees him Michal wonders,

> Was it James, or someone like him? Someone haggard and thin, rather older than James, dirty, standing stiffly at attention, straining his eyes along the platform; eyes that failed to scrutinize anyone near him, but just kept looking into the distance, as if they had looked that way, expectantly for many days and nights. (Haldane, 1932, p. 291)

In describing him as 'standing stiffly to attention' Haldane actively encourages the reader to make connections between James and the figure of the soldier. His actions – 'straining his eyes', 'looking into the distance' – reflect those of the exhausted trench soldier who could spend days and weeks waiting and watching. James later reveals that he has been sleeping in the Victoria station waiting room, in between being 'turned…out' (Haldane, 1932, p. 299) for three days, whilst waiting for Michal. His emotional distress combined with his lack of sleep make him forgetful too, as he forgets he and Michal are on their way to visit a friend only moments after he has announced it. This exhaustion is reflective of the experiences of Great War veterans, discussed by Jessica Meyer in her research on soldiers' memoirs during the First World War. Their memoirs reveal that, 'It was at moments [of extreme exhaustion] that men felt themselves to have been least manly... Exhaustion thus undermined memorists' perceptions of themselves as men both physically and emotionally' (Meyer, 2009, p. 132). This is seen in James too. His body once 'all bulk and brightness' (Haldane, 1932, p. 68) is now 'haggard and thin'. James is transformed by the suicide of Dennis. His current emotional and physical state is a direct result of having been in close contact with the self-destructive figure. Inherent in this is a critique of the social hierarchy. James is a healthy, virile, active young man destroyed by the will of the upper-classes, his productivity and life force used up by the self-destructive, unproductive Dennis.

Despite its criminality, it is not Dennis's homosexuality that is problematic but rather the undeserved power and respect afforded to him as a member of the social elite. His alcoholism, a trait usually connected with the working-classes by social Darwinists, is revealed as hereditary, and his unproductive 'impotence' is facilitated by his social status. Trying to 'save' him, James is ultimately destroyed when his efforts fail. In this way, he is 'used up' by Dennis; his life-force is borrowed and then thrown away.

Criminality, Sexuality, and Morality in *Man's World*

The character Christopher, from *Man's World*, suffers, like many real individuals of the early twentieth century, from the ignorance of sexology, psychiatry, and biology of the period. He is described to the reader as 'intermediate sexually' (Haldane, 1926, p. 296) and the indistinct use of 'sex', 'gender', and 'sexuality' of the time is what has led scholars such as Sarah Gamble to read Christopher as homosexual (Gamble, 2004, p. 10). As previous chapters have demonstrated, there is better evidence that Christopher is gender non-binary. Gender non-conformity existed in many different ways in the early twentieth century, such as in the form of artistic drag with figures like Barbette, which I discussed in Chapter Two. Angus McLaren discusses one particular example of a trans* woman, Norma Jackson, who became the subject of a very public legal case in 1931. As has been demonstrated in the introduction to this thesis, neither gender nor sex have comfortable binary positions and the categories of male/female, man/woman are largely subjective. Therefore, in the presentation of this case Norma Jackson, who lived as a woman, is referred to using female pronouns, despite being tried as a man. This treatment of her gender is different from McLaren's who refers to Jackson using male pronouns.

Norma Jackson was arrested after being reported by Mr Burrows for marrying him under the 'pretence' that her sex was female, and later deserting him (McLaren, 1997, pp. 211–13).

She was eventually sentenced under the same law that had led to the exile of Wilde; the Criminal Law Amendment Act. Her specific crime was 'inducing another to commit "gross indecency"' (McLaren, 1997, p. 210). Burrows claimed to have been unaware that his wife had a penis, but continued to refer to her as 'she' after this was revealed to him (McLaren, 1997, p. 213). This in itself is evidence that layman-society had an awareness, in some respect, that gender could function outside of a binary system. According to McLaren, headlines at the time read "Man with a Feminine Mind," "Masquerading as Girl," "Posing as a Woman," "Man-Woman Sentenced." But importantly, papers referred to her using *both* male and female pronouns (McLaren, 1997, p. 210). Again, this points to attempts from society to represent what was at the time un-representable. Indeed, McLaren tells us that Dr. Charles Rankin described her as a, 'medical curiosity. He was a man with a feminine mind. This condition was a congenital one, recognised in medical law and practice' (McLaren, 1997, p. 212). Because of this she was referred to as an 'invert not a pervert' (McLaren, 1997, p. 212). This shows a move in the nineteen thirties to understand transgender as being distinctly different from homosexuality and a connection made between 'inversion' and non-cis-genders. However, even long before this case, gender non-conformity had its own very public space in the music halls of Europe[9], with female impersonation being found throughout the nineteenth century (McLaren, 1997, p. 214) and, as I discussed in Chapter Two, in twentieth-century France with the especially famous Barbette. This is not an attempt to conflate drag performances, in which gender is treated as a costume that is taken off and changed, with the lived experiences of trans* and gender non-binary individuals, but the music hall female impersonators allowed for public spaces in which gender could be viewed as distinctly less constrained and, importantly, not tied to a particular sex.

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[9] Outside of the stage, we can also find figures like Herculine Barbin, who changed gender from female to male, part way through their life. Barbin's memoirs were collected and published by Michel Foucault in the nineteen seventies.

As well as society trying to navigate gender via science and law, cultural leaders were also referring to non-binarism. Virginia Woolf famously advised the unity of the 'two sexes in the mind' (Woolf, 2004, p. 63) to achieve 'satisfaction' and 'happiness' (Woolf, 2004, p. 63). 'Bisexual' is a conflated term, used here to mean being neither male nor female, but it is also able to be used to mean being attracted to both men and women (it is easy to see how societal understandings of gender and sexuality became – and to an extent remain – confused). At the turn of the century Edward Carpenter's *Love's Coming of Age* was published, promoting 'uranianism', a third sex usually understood as a female mind in a male body. Sean Brady highlights the importance of urnings in Carpenter's socialism. He tells us that, 'The urnings in Carpenter's work were devoid of sex, and existed to work towards heroic ends to alter and enhance society' (Brady, 2005, p. 220). Carpenter's urnings have clear connections to Haldane's Christopher, as the last section of this chapter shows. Christopher's gender non-binary identity, an identity that is criminal in the scientific State built on the gender binary, allows him to work towards a better society for women.

In the paradigm of *Man's World*, the production of specific sexes is controlled through prenatal exercises undertaken by the mother-workers. It is revealed to us that before Nicolette's older brother was born, their mother Antonia 'had a daughter who owing to some mischance was born abnormal' (Haldane, 1926, p. 296). In this society non-conformity of its citizens is not acceptable and so, it is implied, the baby is removed. The reader is told that 'Antonia never saw her, but she grieved. She wanted a girl, you know' (Haldane, 1926, p. 296). Bruce deduces that Antonia's mourning for her lost girl caused her to be lax in her duties when producing Christopher, resulting in what Bruce refers to as a 'sexual abnormality' (Haldane, 1926, p. 227). He is androgynous. The reader is told that when he and his sister are together, it is difficult to see 'which was the boy' (Haldane, 1926, p. 79), and that 'his eye was quicker and his fingers more sensitive than those of a woman'

(Haldane, 1926, p. 138). His career too marks him as potentially non-male. Although he is part of the high-scientific class – his father and brother are members of the government – he chooses to become a musician. This career is also open to 'entertainers', 'neuter' women who are not allowed to become mothers, whereas the pursuit of science is a largely male career. Therefore, Christopher is aligned with women both in his choice of career as well as in his un-masculine, 'intermediate' biology.

It is Christopher's 'intermediacy' that marks him as socially problematic, even criminal, to Haldane's more conservative reader. Male effeminacy ran the risk of being understood as homosexual even whilst twentieth-century sexology and psychology were working to pathologise instead of criminalise non-heteronormativity. As well as 'intermediate sex' being used as a term to describe gender non-conformity, it is also used by psychiatrists such as Edward Carpenter and Magnus Hirschfeld to refer to the psychological 'anomalies' presented in homosexual patients; similarly Havelock Ellis used the term 'inversion' for the same purposes (McLaren, 1997, p. 219). Whether Haldane's contemporary reader saw Christopher to be suffering from an 'inversion' that, 'like color-blindness… [had] some congenital basis but [which] was a harmless anomaly' (McLaren, 1997, p. 219) or whether they viewed him as a homosexual criminal, it is clear from the paradigm of the text itself that Christopher is a danger to the scientifically-governed society of *Man's World*. At the end of the novel, after Christopher has committed suicide, Bruce tells Nicolette,

> 'You see how essential for us it is,' he went on after a pause, 'that the men and women of the governing class shall be as normal as possible. If they were not, our power would wilt away in a few centuries. We have no use for sterility, for above all things we aim to keep the race going until each individual shall have achieved complete self-consciousness.' (Haldane, 1926, pp. 298–9)

He continues, 'In the meantime there will always be Christophers, and they will always suffer. But it's the experiment that counts for us, not the result.' (Haldane, 1926, p. 299) Much like in her treatment of Dennis in *I Bring Not Peace*, Haldane subverts the reader's expectations of what is socially dangerous or even criminal. Christopher is not dangerous to people but he is dangerous to the status quo and to the continuation of a class-based society. His 'sterility' here literally means his unlikelihood to father children as, unlike Dennis, he is very productive in terms of his musical career. Although he has a sexual relationship with Lois, a neuter, he shows no interest in taking part in society and therefore fathering children through the motherhood system.

In this society, based on strict binary genders, it is Christopher's non-binarism that immediately sets him apart as 'other' and encourages him to live separately from society. This is why Christopher tends to be placed in natural settings, in the countryside or on the beach, as opposed to in the metropolis where society is enforced. Likewise, when Christopher and Nicolette speak privately together they often do so in his plane, well above the community he feels so apart from. When this disillusionment grows into rebellion he tells his friends, 'Something must be done. I haven't the slightest interest in the community. Let it take care of itself. But I will not have the individual sacrificed to it' (Haldane, 1926, p. 160). This is described by Arcous as 'the immortal soul versus the body corporate' (Haldane, 1926, p. 160). The perspective of 'the body corporate' (the scientific elite) is mostly represented by Bruce who views Christopher as an anomaly, but this view is also reflected by one of Haldane's other scientists, Jean, in *I Bring Not Peace*. He tells Nicolette,

> There's another word to help you there – adaptation. In every society there are unhappy or unhealthy or poor people who are so because they cannot successfully adapt themselves to what constitutes success in the society in question…The task of a scientific politics would be a double one: to create an environment in which it would

be possible for everyone but lunatics or idiots to adapt themselves far more easily than is the case anywhere to-day, and to avoid the breeding of types which would have difficulty in adapting themselves to that society. (Haldane, 1926, p. 271)

In *Man's World*'s scientific society Christopher is one of these 'un-adapted' individuals. He berates what he refers to as 'your hundred per cent. man and your hundred per cent. woman, with your normality and your dreary talk of intelligence' (Haldane, 1926, p. 274), openly distancing himself by exclaiming, 'I'm glad I'm not one of you!' (Haldane, 1926, p. 274). It is only when he leaves society for the final time that he is able to be fully free of his trappings. For Christopher this means being free of their binary categories of gender and the procreative expectations they come with. As he flies his plane into the outer-atmosphere, physically placing as much distance between himself and society as possible, he notes,

That word sex (words were like stepping-stones in the pools of thought to-night) – that had to be thrown overboard too, before Christopher could soar freely towards his destination… Neutrality was not negation. On that ground you were either one of the army of propagatives, or an enemy whom they would ultimately extirpate. (Haldane, 1926, p. 282)

Unlike the women not chosen to be mothers, whose sterility was strictly enforced, Christopher, as a man of the scientific-elite, is duty-bound to reproduce. His aversion to this, his 'inadaptability' to the social order, mark him as extremely problematic. However, in a society that openly (and subversively) manipulates its citizens both physically and mentally, Bruce notes that, 'Christopher's submasculinity did not cause more than a slight mental perverseness. It could have easily been corrected' (Haldane, 1926, p. 297). The reader has learned what 'fixing' means by figuratively watching brains be physically manipulated into performing certain actions during a live public experiment, and hearing about the mass sterilisation of the people of Exton who did not conform to modern standards of social

cleanliness, choosing to forgo communal living in favour of family units. It is clear, therefore, that the 'fixing' of Christopher would undoubtedly be invasive.

Like all of Haldane's artistic, idealist characters, Christopher values individuality. This is seen through his music. Morgana describes his symphony as, 'his religion. . . his declaration of love of god, of liberty and independence. It was simply a prelude to what he means, or meant, to do, with Nicolette's help. It was defiance of them all' (Haldane, 1926, p. 260). His aversion to uniformity and conformity – to science and atheism - is related to what he perceives as a loss of humanity. As I have shown in Chapter Two, Haldane often relates science and scientists to an un-emotionalism that can become 'stabilised'. These 'stabilised' individuals, *Man's World* informs the reader, 'are a nuisance, and in extreme cases a danger' (Haldane, 1926, p. 211). Christopher resists being 'fixed' in order to remain an individual and, therefore, to retain his humanity.

It is Christopher's individualism, and his separation in values from the male scientific elite, that make him want to rebel against the State and defend women's right to bodily autonomy. Titled 'Antibodies' (Haldane, 1926, p. 193), this is the chapter in which Christopher and the anarchists plan their revolutionary action and plot to reverse Nicolette's 'immunisation' so that she can be become pregnant outside of the motherhood system. The title of this chapter has two meanings. The anarchists are working against the body politic – itself described in corporeal terms, with members of the government being referred to as 'ears' and 'hands' - and so the title in this respect refers to the anarchists as anti-State. However, the analogy of the State to a body, and the anarchists acting as antibodies, can be taken further. The State is structured as a body both through the naming of its government roles and in the cartology – the capital is named 'Nucleus'. In this respect the anarchists are antibodies within this corporeal system. They are antagonists in the body of the State. Antibodies, of course, are

part of a healthy immune system, used to fight disease and infection. The anarchists, therefore, with their dose of morality, ethics, art, and emotion, are fighting against the over-stabilisation of the body-politic. They are, in effect, curing a sickness. Haldane uses the metaphorics of disease and cure here to present a flawed political system – a body with an illness – and the anarchists, with Christopher as their leader, are posited as the antibodies intent on curing the system.

As a figure socially understood as male, fighting for freedom via the bodies of women, Christopher is symbolic of the early twentieth-century men who had been doing the same with regard to individual freedom and the law. Male suffragists found their masculinity questioned and undermined under government treatment. Sandra Holton has discussed the treatment of male suffragists, noting that the warrants that imprisoned them were often unclear on their actual offence but used infantilising and 'un-English' terminology to refer to them (Holton, 1997, p. 125). She refers to examples, including the case of William Ball, recorded by the WSPU in 1911. Ball was imprisoned, stripped, force-fed and later sent to an asylum - he was reported by prison doctors to be hallucinating. This mental health issue revealed itself to be temporary but was blamed on himself by the Home Office appointed George Savage to exonerate the prison officials. Bell was accused of having a 'feeble intellect', to be 'illiterate' and to be undertaking a 'common labourer's work' (Holton, 1997, p. 126). The clear attempt here to 'unman' Bell, based on class and education, and to feminise him by treating him much in the same way as a woman – questioning his sanity and his intelligence - is similar to the eugenic and social Darwinist arguments about 'breeding' that are reflected in Bruce's discussions of the need for 'the men and women of the governing class [to] be as normal as possible' (Haldane, 1926, p. 299). Bruce dislikes Christopher for not being 'normal', for being too feminine. In this same way the male suffrage activist is understood by his government as being empathetic of the feminine cause. Both men,

therefore, are understood as feminised. In both cases this is largely a reaction by a male

social elite to what is perceived as the strange behaviour of a man who benefits from the

continuation of the system rebelling against it in support of women. Holton notes that 'In all

these ways, the government dragon repeatedly secured the effective unmanning of those

militant sympathizers who sought to act as knights of old, championing and defending the

rebellious suffragette' (Holton, 1997, p. 125). In this way Christopher's criminality, his

attempt at rebellion, treason even, against the State, reflects the experience and treatment

of the male suffragists. Just as them, his values are different from those of the State, and he

tries to fight for the freedom and autonomy of women – to change the societal structure – but

in the same way he is 'othered', his femininity understood as a threat. Holton's comment on

the treatment of the male suffragists that 'Such defeats demonstrated their relative

powerlessness against the might of the state' (Holton, 1997, p. 125) is equally applicable to

Christopher who, despite his attempts to empower his sister, and to fight for women's equal

freedom to not be sterilised, eventually finds himself powerless to the insidious influence of

the State. In both instances the men who defend the autonomy of women find themselves

subject to the same treatment. Men who already have access to the vote, and are therefore

considered capable citizens, find themselves stripped of this trust, imprisoned, their

intelligence and mental faculties questioned and their class used as evidence of their

incapability. Christopher too is pathologised, understood as un-masculine, as the scientific

elite attempt to distance him from their ranks.

By connecting Christopher in this way to the 'criminality' of the male suffragists, Haldane,

who was a suffragette herself, is justifying his criminal behaviour. His act of treason is a

rebellious fight for freedom akin to that of the suffragette fight. Both Christopher and the

suffragettes fight over the right to female autonomy. For Christopher it is the autonomy of

women's bodies –by subverting the motherhood system - and for the suffragettes it was the

autonomy of women's minds – the symbolic independence of the vote. As Holton notes, the male suffragists were attracted to a sense of chivalric justice in their fight for women's right to the vote (Holton, 1997, p. 125). In this respect, then, Christopher's criminal action is actually a chivalric fight for individual freedom and feminine autonomy.

Brother to Bert has provided the conceptual frame of this chapter, looking at criminality, sexuality and morality. In the first section it was shown how the twins' problematic behaviour, especially their problematic sexuality, acts as a precursor to their criminality. It was also shown, however, that the twins are a product of their environment and social status and their criminality is located within a criticism of social class that creates working-class inequality. The following section looked at sexuality, morality and criminality within the upper-classes in *I Bring Not Peace*. Though Dennis's homosexuality makes him potentially criminal, this does not feature as his problematic behaviour. Instead it is his unproductivity and his destructive personality. The cause of Dennis's 'impotent' masculinity is located within his class; his problematic traits are framed as part of an upper-class genetic heritage. Christopher, from *Man's World*, who is examined in the final section, stands in opposition to Dennis in many ways. Despite being a member, by birth, of the scientific elite, he is distanced from them by his non-binary gender. Christopher becomes a criminal, a rebel leader, because of his sexual identity. His lack of gendered or sexual difference means he is not invested in the continuation of the male scientific elite and the binary system it enforces and as a result is sympathetic to the female fight for body autonomy. As a result, he is the only feminist male-coded character in Haldane's interwar fiction.

In terms of this thesis as a whole, this chapter has shown how Haldane undermines working-class masculinity but also explains its problematic behaviour in terms of its socio-economic

context. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, she undermines socially and economically powerful masculinities, connecting them through Dennis in *I Bring Not Peace* with a lack of function or productivity. However, as shown through Christopher in *Man's World,* when bodies that are coded male and connected to powerful masculinities are not part of a hegemonic masculine culture they can be a force of solidarity with women.

Part One has shown that in each of Haldane's interwar novels two styles of masculinity compete for power in the context of the narrative. The competition between these masculinities makes them undermine one another, destabilising the usual structures of power. Haldane ensures that each novel lacks a clear hegemonic masculinity and with no obvious hegemonic masculine style the gender binary itself is destabilised. As Part Two will demonstrate, in this unstable gendered space Haldane is able to assert the figure of the mother, not only as a worker but as a scientist – a skilled creator of genetic material – without risking undermining her as a gendered ideal.

Part Two

Chapter One:
"Bad blood on Mamma's side": Defining Maternity and its Social Significance.

'Only three hours for a first confinement is almost a record. You're a splendid little woman. And she's a fine little girl, too' (Haldane, 1930, p. 222). This is how the reader is given the news of Lil's successful birth in Haldane's 1930 novel, *Brother to Bert*. Choosing to avoid a description of the birth itself, she instead represents it through the words of a midwife congratulating Lil. The congratulations cut deep into Haldane's depiction of the maternal figure across all her interwar novels. Lil's short confinement is the source of her praise. 'Managing' it (as though this is something a mother has control over) in under three hours is 'almost a record', and the following sentence, 'You're a splendid little woman' creates a connection between Lil's 'ability' to birth her daughter quickly and her value as a mother. In physical terms, birthing her daughter quickly minimises the chances of problems occurring and maximises the chances of a healthy baby and so Lil's ability to be a 'good' mother is presented here as innate, something that is genetically inbuilt. There is a tension, here, between maternity defined by binary notions of womanhood and non-binarism as a positive social force. Whilst this is something that is explored in the final chapter of this thesis, it is worth noting here that Haldane depicts non-binarism as positive when it reduces masculine qualities -as in the case of Christopher. When defining her mothers, then, Haldane looks to create her own binary of femininity – the maternal and the non-maternal – as this chapter explores.

Whilst Part One demonstrated the process by which Haldane destabilised the gender binary, allowing for the presentation of maternal women within masculine contexts, which is the subject of Part Two of this thesis, it also demonstrates the alienation Haldane felt towards

the State and its patriarchal institutions, exemplified by science and what she viewed as its elitist gatekeepers. The following chapter introduces the maternal woman as a character within Haldane's interwar texts and provides a deep analysis of who this character is, so that the following chapters of Part Two can explore the ways in which this figure must navigate the patriarchal structures Haldane critices, as shown in Part One. It is, therefore, the presentation of maternity as an innate trait, a biologically suited state for *some*, not all women that is the focus of this chapter. I will consider the ways in which Haldane defines the maternal women, often in contrast to non-maternal figures (fathers and un-maternal women) and presents her as a vital functioning figure of interwar society. Starting by demonstrating the importance Haldane affords to mothers by undermining the role of the father (and subverting the patriarchal family model), I then explore how Haldane solidifies mothers' importance by centering them as 'gatekeepers' of genetic health. After establishing the fundamental genetic importance Haldane affords to mothers, outside of the patriarchal structure, I then consider 'who' – in terms of traits and characteristics - the ideal mother is by comparing maternal and non-maternal femininities in her interwar novels. Finally, I explore how Haldane highlights the social importance of maternal women over non-maternal women by considering the negative effects of non-maternal women on the men of Haldane's novels, and the subsequent healing of these men, performed by the maternal characters. As a whole, the chapter illustrates that Haldane uses her interwar texts to highlight the fundamental necessity, both biologically, and socially, of the maternal woman to a European society in the midst of recovery and reconstruction.

Fathers

One of the initially noticeable ways in which Haldane implies the supremacy of mothers to her reader is through the exclusion of fathers. Haldane subtly critiques the patriarchal social

structure that favours fathers over mothers in *Motherhood and its Enemies* where she

considers the cultural concern over the illegitimate babies of the Great War,

> As a matter of fact, illegitimate war babies were afterwards shown to have been
>
> negligible in number compared to their luckier brethren, but they were too good a
>
> 'story' for the Press to resist. The idealization of their putative fathers – 'those brave
>
> boys' – served to counterbalance the lapses of their undoubted mothers. (Haldane,
>
> 1927a, p. 90)

Haldane uses the Press to reflect the views of the public body - the Press represent the

public's interest - and, without directly addressing the double-standard, she highlights the

cultural bias toward the moral and physical actions of a father over a mother.

In her own writing, then, Haldane counterbalances this bias by removing the influence of the

father almost entirely. In *Man's World* fathers are not involved in the rearing of a child at all.

Once a woman is pregnant she leaves society for the motherhood gardens, which are

devoid of any adult male presence. The role of fathers in their children's lives is sparse in the

case of St John, with his children Nicolette and Christopher, whom Nicolette only visits once

and Christopher not at all, and non-existent in the case of Bruce and his offspring. The

reader is told that Bruce,

> had mated several times, and on one occasion had experienced a short but fairly
>
> intense sentimental affection; for none of his children had he so far known a more
>
> than decorous friendliness. The son of his dreams had not yet been given to him; the
>
> son for whose mother he longed to feel deep and permanent love. (Haldane, 1926, p.
>
> 110)

Bruce has many children with whom he is only familiar with and whilst the promise of the

'son of his dreams' suggests he intends to be more involved in the life of the 'right' child, this

is contradicted at the end of the novel when he drives Nicolette, who is carrying his baby, to the motherhood gardens, where he will leave her whilst he continues his tour.

Fatherhood, in this book, is relegated to a service as opposed to a role. This is evident in the language used. Before meeting Nicolette, Bruce, 'gave a child to Ruth, at her own request' (Haldane, 1926, p. 142). As the language here suggests, this interaction is presented much like an act of gift giving – Bruce has provided Ruth with an object with which he intends no further interaction. As the narrative of *Man's World* reminds us, 'a mating was not a marriage' (Haldane, 1926, p. 142), it is an act of procreation exempt from emotional or financial obligation. In this new world, devoid of marriage and therefore of its expectations of each gender to their families, fatherhood often stops at this initial stage of 'mating.'

The theme of absent fathers continues into the nineteen thirties with *I Bring Not Peace,* in which it is revealed that one of Michal's love interests, James, has an illegitimate child. 'Nothing to tell, (Haldane, 1932, p. 228), he tells Michal and the reader,

> 'No romance. It's somewhere in Cardiff. She's a very nice woman.'
> 'What fun. Was she pleased to have it?'
> 'Terribly; it's the very spit of me. She was a widow; a fireman's widow.' (Haldane, 1932, p. 228)

The absence of the child's identity intensifies the amorality of James's actions. Much like Bruce in *Man's World*, James is depicted as giving the fireman's widow a gift – a child she could not otherwise conceive on her own – which ultimately has little to do with James himself. What the reader is being shown here is that fatherhood is largely unimportant both in its role to the child and to the man.

This same message is reflected by Len in *Brother to Bert* who views his baby at worst as a noisy nuisance and at best as a distraction for his wife whilst he misbehaves. His emotional separation from his child is shown from the very beginning of Lil's pregnancy when, upon hearing she is carrying his child he responds,

'Well, what are you going to do then?'

'You leave that to me.'

'All right then. But I don't see what you're going to do with it.' (Haldane, 1930, p. 202)

Len immediately separates himself from the cultural role of father and its associated expectations by distancing himself from the pregnancy. By repeatedly identifying the pregnancy as belonging solely to Lil (asking 'what are you going to do', not 'what are *we* going to do'), Len effectively places all responsibility on Lil, relieving himself from the expectations of fatherhood.

In *Youth is a Crime* fathers are present, unlike Len, but still mostly aloof. When their presence is occasionally felt it is often belligerent and very far from the maternal care, which though at times overbearing, is mostly gentle and intuitive. Elizabeth believes that her father has 'has god-like attributes, and is sometimes withdrawn, forbidding, wrapped up in himself like Jehovah, on other occasions coarsely gay and good-natured like Zeus' (Haldane, 1934, pp. 97–8). Her detachment from her father is symbolised by her description of him as a deity. Her separation from him is so great she does not even think of him as human. She, 'finds him a virile, amusing, but nevertheless an inadequate representative of his sex. He teaches her little about it which seems interesting or important to herself' (Haldane, 1934, p. 98). Elizabeth does not recognise her father as a man, he is an 'inadequate representative of his sex'. Whilst this undermines him as the patriarchal leader of the family, in her eyes he still comfortably inhabits this position, to Elizabeth's detriment. When her father's business travels from Britain to Antwerp the family must follow, despite the break it causes in

Elizabeth's education, only for her father to move the family back to England as soon as she has settled in Belgium. In both moves she laments the effect it will have on her education, at first leaving the UK education system behind and then having to return to it having missed so much of the curriculum. This frustration at her father's apparent disregard for her education is reflected by a role Elizabeth is chosen to play at school. When Kaempfer choses her to play the title role in *Iphigenia in Tauris* Elizabeth seizes the opportunity passionately (Haldane, 1934, p. 291). Without explaining the plot Haldane draws upon her readers presumed knowledge of Ancient Greek tragedy to translate the metaphor. The play centres around Iphigenia, who narrowly escapes being sacrificed by her father and must now make a new life in Tauris. Of course this serves as a dramatic metaphor of Elizabeth's own young life in Britain and then in Belgium, 'sacrificed' for the sake of her father's business.

It is not only Elizabeth's father who is presented as a dictator. Elizabeth's friend Werner has a similarly aloof relationship with his father. When Werner has to sneak past his father, but not his mother, to visit Elizabeth at a party the reader is told that, 'Unlike their father, [Werner's mother] remembered that she too had been young once' (Haldane, 1934, p. 249). Werner's mother, as the maternal presence within the home, is able to connect with the children where their father cannot. Her ability to sympathise highlights the father's masculine inadequacies, his lack of empathy.

In undermining the role of fathers as important figures in their children's lives Haldane undermines the patriarchal structure of the family. This is perhaps seen most clearly in *I Bring Not Peace* through Jean and Jeanne's affair. Refusing to leave her husband, for reasons of social convention, Jeanne has an affair with Jean whilst also retaining her family. Describing Jeanne, as well as French women in general, Haldane notes that they 'joined in

the maintenance of that curious Gothic crumbling structure, the family, which must remain paramount' (Haldane, 1932, p. 185). Describing the family as a 'Gothic' structure invokes the oppressive Medieval and Victorian architecture that, in comparison to modern, art deco, open spaces, devoid of fussy detail, seems old-fashioned. Describing the structure as 'crumbling' not only attests to this but suggests that even the conventional 'maintenance' of it by Jeanne and other women is insufficient. It is clear that even though these women believe the family is 'paramount', its crumbling nature reveals it to be unsuited to the modern world. Inherent in this is the notion that the patriarchal structure of the family too is outdated, old-fashioned, and crumbling.

Genetics

Whilst subtly undermining the role of fathers and the patriarchal family, Haldane simultaneously emphasises the importance of mothers, using the language and interests of biological science at the time – genetics. In both Britain and Europe there was significant interest in the health of the nation in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and these concerns were summarised by the World Population Conference held in Geneva in 1927 and attended by J. B. S. and Haldane. The conference intended to bring together leading figures in the discussion of population control, with speakers from the fields of biology, sociology, and statistics. As well as an interest in the quantity of the population, however, the conference was also concerned with the quality, as the conference pamphlet describes,

> Meanwhile, another problem of population has obtruded itself upon the world – that
> of quality…. To-day, a great volume of scientific work has been devoted to a study of
> the alarming fertility of some stocks and classes, the alarming slow reproduction of
> others, to the question of the inheritance of mental and physical defects, and in brief,
> to discovering whether the quality of national stock is deteriorating, and if so, what

steps could be taken to stem the process. ('World Population Conference: Pamphlet',

1927, p. 2)

These concerns over the 'quality' of children produced included a discussion (and often

debate) of both nature and nurture, the responsibility for which could be placed at the

mother's door, a burden that Haldane took full advantage of. By exploring the popular

scientific topics of genetics and race Haldane is able to centralise the figure of the mother

within them. She used the scientific conference to further her own agenda in legitimising the

mother as an important social figure in interwar society. In letters to her publisher she

reveals an intention to publish her 1927 socio-historic exploration of motherhood,

Motherhood and its Enemies, in time to take copies to sell in Geneva (Haldane, 1927b).

Susan Squier has discussed the eugenic concerns of Haldane's first novel. She notes that

the 'mythology of the purity of the blood structures the dystopian state of *Man's World*'

(Squier, 1994, p. 63) and that Haldane, 'translated the terms of the social organisation into

those of the human body. The body then [stands] symbolically for the entire white race…'

(Squier, 1994, p. 63). Whilst it is true that there is symbolic treatment of the topic, Haldane

often engages directly with genetics and race.

In *I Bring Not Peace,* bio-chemist Jean envisions a future scientific society, much like the

one pictured in *Man's World,* ruled by a scientific political system,

> The task of a scientific politics would be a double one: to create an environment in
>
> which it would be possible for everyone but lunatics or idiots to adapt themselves far
>
> more easily than is the case anywhere to-day, and to avoid the breeding of types
>
> which would have difficulty in adapting themselves to that society. (Haldane, 1932, p.
>
> 271)

This view is repeated by Haldane herself in *Motherhood and its Enemies* where she

advocates the prevention of breeding between people with disease or disability, placing the

responsibility on the individual to prevent the continuation of ailments (Haldane, 1927a, p. 232). This form of eugenic activity – the prevention of 'types' of people via the limiting of childbearing - places the discussion of genetics within the fields of fertility and childrearing, traditionally female realms. In this manner Haldane draws on eugenic argument to bolster her creation of the maternal woman. The eugenic argument was useful in that it provided scientific 'proof' of the central importance of the mother by framing her as an indispensable social and racial component.

Similarly, in *I Bring Not Peace*, Haldane warns of the negative genetic effects of 'bad' mothers (women unsuitable for the role), as Dennis tells Michal that he and his siblings are 'all degenerates' (Haldane, 1932, p. 92), attributing this to 'Bad blood on Mamma's side' (Haldane, 1932, p. 92). Here Haldane implies genetic responsibility of mothers. As the creators and bearers of children, Haldane posits them as the source of 'good' and 'bad' genes, having the ability, through their procreation to excel or prevent their continuation. When read in conjunction with Haldane's presentation of the maternally-segregated *Man's World*, a picture of mothers as the gate-keepers of genetic 'refinement' is created. The motherhood gardens, set in idealised, natural environments, are described as 'breeding grounds, the nurseries, in the true horticultural sense, of the white race' (Haldane, 1926, p. 54). The analogy here with childrearing and botany is of course no accident. Here Haldane simultaneously defines motherhood as inherently natural (which is perhaps not so unusual) *and* scientific. Haldane practised horticulture whilst living in Roebuck House where she 'made genetical observations' (Haldane, 1949, p. 27) of plants. In the conception of the motherhood garden, then, Haldane thematically applyies her knowledge of horticulture and the genetic manipulation of plants to imply the 'refinement' of human genetics through the scientific practices of the mother.

Whilst Haldane uses the scientific language of genetics, and even at times eugenics, in order to emphasise the important role of mothers in the production of infants for society, she complicates her own eugenic message with her treatment of race, especially in relation to Judaism. In *Motherhood and its Enemies* Haldane rejects genetic 'betterment' on racial lines, aligning it with a lack of scientific understanding,

> Let the class-conscious or race-proud individual with a capacity for stating sophistries with all the weight of learned argument, but with a mere smattering of scientific knowledge, attain any influence in this matter, and those whom he fears or hates (the same thing) will fare hardly. (Haldane, 1927a, p. 238)

This sentiment is repeated five years later in *I Bring Not Peace* when Jean tells Michal,

> we come to ourselves via genes, which are the bases of differences in human personality…As I see it, we shall know enough quite soon to put the eugenists in their proper place, and also the Bolshevists; the people who 'believe' - horrible word – in heredity purely and solely, and those who claim that by changing the environment, levelling down, you can canalize human instincts, let alone human personality. We don't know enough yet. (Haldane, 1932, p. 270-1)

Jean is arguing for a far more complicated system of influence on the individual, implemented by a number of factors including genetics and environment. Haldane's conflicted use of the genetic argument to frame the superiority of mothers is a result of her growing concern about anti-Semitism in Europe. As she notes in *Motherhood and Its Enemies*,

> No one would now think of killing a Jew to stop an epidemic; science has seen to that. But Jews and others will still continue to be killed in the stupider parts of the world, or to be socially or economically outlawed, whenever humanity's misery brims over. (Haldane, 1927a, p. 253)

Here Haldane connects anti-Semitism with scientific ignorance, though in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries science was being used by some to categorise racial difference and to justify racial hierarchies.

Youth is a Crime was written in response to 'the rise to power of Hitler in 1933' (Haldane, 1949, p. 33), following the anti-Semitic experiences of the young girl, Elizabeth, as she moves from London to Antwerp. Elizabeth's own prejudices are revealed when she moves into the highly anti-Semitic city. Upon moving into her new home Elizabeth meets her Jewish neighbours whom she takes an immediate dislike to, preferring the high-society German-Christian neighbours on her other side. Her dislike is not based on their race or faith – Elizabeth's family are also Jewish – but because of their social status,

> It was offensive to belong to the same race as a fat, oily girl who actually spoke
> Flemish as well as French and whose father was a diamond merchant. Diamond
> merchants were an important social and economic factor in life in Antwerp. One
> could not possibly know them, said Mother. (Haldane, 1934, p. 22)

Their low social status is signified by their language. Flemish is considered 'the tongue shouted by those social outcast, the proletarian children of the town' (Haldane, 1934, p. 37). This is a cause of embarrassment to Elizabeth because, as they both share the same race, they are perceived to be connected and therefore their 'bad' qualities become in some way her own. Elizabeth wants desperately to speak with the girls living on her right but she is told, 'they are very grand. They have a 'von' to their name. Their uncle is an ambassador. They won't be allowed to talk to you. They are not allowed to associate with Jews' (Haldane, 1934, p. 24). The irony of her eschewing her Jewish neighbour, considering her beneath her, in favour of two girls who consider her equally inferior seems lost on Elizabeth but is clearly translated to the reader. This is the first in a long list of anti-Semitic experiences Elizabeth has in Antwerp, however, including finding that her school, when facing financial trouble

becomes 'obliged, in order to keep going at all, to admit the *hoi polloi*: a few Belgian Catholics to begin with, and finally, when ruin seemed grimly imminent, even Jews' (Haldane, 1934, p. 31), and culminating in being cheated out of the position of 'top girl' by her anti-Semitic headmaster.

Elizabeth pits herself against fellow classmate, Bertha Stubbe, nicknamed by the protagonist 'the monument', a German girl who 'Term after term, year after year, through form after form … passed as top girl, easily between the ages of nine and fourteen, beating all comers' (Haldane, 1934, p. 60). Subverting the German racial idealisation of blonde hair and blue eyes, Haldane makes Elizabeth's nemesis one of the 'thick plaited blondes [who] were unintelligent, [though] every single one of them was a hard worker, with that peculiar respect for masters and lessons only to be found in Teutons' (Haldane, 1934, pp. 53–4). Bertha is described as having,

> no chin and no temper; her most violent reaction to whatever unpleasantness confronted her was to sulk quietly for a few hours. But somewhere she did have a brain, sufficient intelligence never to think for herself, but to mop up all she was taught with the perfection of Teuton exactitude. It could not have been said of her that, like the Bourbons, she never learnt and never forgot anything. In fact, she learnt everything and remembered everything with the efficiency of a machine constructed solely for that purpose. (Haldane, 1934, p. 59)

Bertha's genetically curated blandness stands as a foil to Elizabeth's fiery intelligence. When Elizabeth beats Bertha's marks but is denied the title of 'top girl' she proves herself both righteous and unafraid to challenge authority. Before demanding a meeting with the headmaster Elizabeth tells her mother,

> So he's simply cheated. The beastly old hypocrite. Just because her father pays for half the school. Just because her brothers are feeble minded. Just because I'm a

Jewess. That's what it is, Mother. I won't stand it. Neither shall you. (Haldane, 1934, pp. 82–3)

Although as a largely powerless child caught within an anti-Semitic education system, Elizabeth loses this fight, but the battle itself and her righteousness – she did, after all, get the better marks – reveal arguments of genetic 'superiority', in this instance at least, to be based not in science but in cultural bias.

These problematic interactions cause Elizabeth to develop her own prejudice against Germans. When she starts attending dances she resolves not 'to accept even tributes of admiration from anti-Semites, as most of them being Germans are, or must be' (Haldane, 1934, p. 98) and she develops a dislike for the German language. This is, however, until she meets Werner who shares with her his favourite German literature. Through their relationship she begins to build an appreciation of German culture.

By following Elizabeth on this journey –revealing prejudice and anti-Semitism –Haldane encourages her reader to be critical of eugenics and to question what is genetic and what is socially constructed. The public and scientific interest in genetics and the population, however, was too great an opportunity to highlight the important role of maternity, so whilst she maintains a critical eye, she utilises genetics to highlight the important social and racial role of the mother in producing healthy productive members of the social body.

Defining Motherhood and Maternal Women

Now that I have established how Haldane implies the supremacy of mothers via the undermining of fathers and the use of the language of genetics, I now explore how she *defines* maternity within her literature as an idealised identity. Just as Haldane's male characters become studies in idealised and problematised masculinities, in specific relation

to the figure of the scientist and the intellectual elite, Haldane's female characters provide an opportunity to explore femininity – idealised and problematised – in specific relation to motherhood.

According to Susan Squier who has written about Haldane's *Man's World* and *Motherhood and its Enemies*, Haldane's privileging of motherhood was not unusual at a time 'when the quality and quantity of population was considered to be of such great national importance' (Squier, 1994, p. 108). What is found in Haldane's writing, however, that is perhaps not found as clearly elsewhere, is an image of the idealised mother as an inherently natural state for *some* women. The mothers of *Man's World* are chosen from a young age to train as mothers on the basis that they reveal a natural predisposition to being capable mothers. Once pregnant they are sent to the motherhood gardens, which have been shown in my discussion of genetics to be natural environments, scientifically refined to produce the best offspring. In describing the gardens as the 'breeding grounds, the nurseries, in the true horticultural sense, of the white race' (Haldane, 1926, p. 54) Haldane amalgamates scientific, naturalistic, and maternal language – 'nurseries', 'horticulture', 'breeding grounds' - to both bolster motherhood with scientific rigour and to also define it as natural. Motherhood, then, is both an inherently natural state and the access point to override nature through genetic science.

In *Man's World* the reader follows the journey of Nicolette, who resists motherhood and yet, throughout the novel, her innate maternal instincts are regularly referred to. Haldane introduces the idea of maternity as a natural instinct early in the novel, during Nicolette's initial training, when she is told, 'You are instinctively a little mother…' (Haldane, 1926, p. 49). This reading is supported by her own behaviour. Although she wants more than a motherhood career, Nicolette is subconsciously preoccupied with maternity. At the beginning

of the novel Nicolette's mind is taken with 'its favorite maternal musings' (Haldane, 1926, pp. 32–3) again suggesting maternity as Nicolette's most comfortable biological state. In this biological sense Nicolette is most contented when behaving maternally. Without being pregnant or a mother she is able to enact her maternal instinct via her brother Christopher, who is described as her 'shadow baby' (Haldane, 1926, p. 270). When the two are together she feels contented – a clear sign of her maternal instincts fulfilled – as seen in the following interaction,

> 'Do you ever feel, Christopher,' she asked presently, looking straight ahead, 'as if you were one of those nice, fat, stone jars, filled to the brim with cool wine?'
>
> 'No, you nice, fat little mother-pot,' he smiled on her. (Haldane, 1926, p. 76)

Despite wanting more in terms of her career, Nicolette still feels most complete and contented within her body – signified here by the full jar - when she is able to exercise her maternal instincts on Christopher. Christopher himself picks up on this, attributing her contentment to her social position as a chosen mother.

The 'best' or perhaps 'most' maternal women take on guiding roles. This is seen most directly in *Man's World* where the reader is told that 'vocational motherhood was a career which had its grades like all others' (Haldane, 1926, p. 55). Experienced and accomplished mothers become guides in the motherhood garden as well as members of the mothers' council. When in training Nicolette asks her teacher Leila, 'Do you like bringing your babies to these gardens to teach us?', to which she responds, 'Of course. It is glorious. Remember that it is an honour to be chosen to do so. To make our motherhood useful to our successors expands its purposes' (Haldane, 1926, p. 52). To be sought as a guide is to be recognized, then, as a successful maternal figure. Haldane takes this further with the motherhood council who act as advisors on their industry. When a group of biological scientists goes to visit the council it is noted that, 'To meet such mothers, to exchange views with them, to enjoy their

conversation and companionship, was part of the unvarying custom of those men whose

province touched theirs' (Haldane, 1926, p. 55). This indicates to the reader that the

mothers, in acting as advisors, are respected figures. Whilst this is complicated by a

presentation of the scientists as potential threats to the position of mothers, by undermining

their power, the reader is still shown an idealised image of motherhood as a guiding role, of

equal importance to that of the scientists. This is emphasised by the description of the

motherhood gardens as, 'an inspiring part in the social life. It was here that informal counsel

was most often taken; here that men sought inspiration…' (Haldane, 1926, p. 55).

Motherhood, here represented by the council and the gardens, is both a guide and a catalyst

of thought. The ideal mother to Haldane, then, is an integral and important part of society,

able to inspire and lead.

Defining Maternal Women via Non Maternal Women

For Haldane maternity is defined, in part, by its opposing characteristics. The reader comes

to understand what it means to be maternal, partially, by being given examples of non-

maternal women. In *Man's World* Haldane divides femininity, based on natural

characteristics, into two categories: mothers and neuters. This relates closely to the work of

contemporary sexologists who had been for some time categorising the sexes and defining

'abnormalities'. *Man's World* follows closely the idea perpetuated by Havelock Ellis that 'The

more highly developed the society the more differentiated would be the sex roles and the

more able women would be to produce better offspring' (Kiernan, Land, & Lewis, 1998, p. 4).

In the novel mothers are chosen to continue the race because of their biological

predisposition whereas neuters are prevented from having children as they are deemed

inappropriate – i.e., not maternal enough – therefore only the women most differentiated

from men procreate. Haldane at times seems to conflate maternity and femininity, though

this does not mean that non-maternal feminine women are absent from her novels. As Susan Squier notes in her book, *Babies in Bottles*, Haldane contracts intersexuality as the social and rhetorical opposite of vocational motherhood (Squier, 1994, p. 108). The 'intersexual woman', by Haldane's definition, laid out in *Motherhood and its Enemies*, is one who '[deviates] more or less markedly from the feminine form towards the anatomical and psychological characteristics of the masculine sex' (Haldane, 1927a, p. 158). However, to what extent a non-maternal character is 'anatomically' or 'psychologically' closer to the masculine varies extensively. *Brother to Bert*'s Lottie de Lara, for instance is physically very feminine – she is valued as a particularly attractive woman by the twins – but her insatiable sexual appetite is presented as unfeminine and coded masculine in its possessive and sexually aggressive nature. Lottie collects her sexual conquests, adding them to her acting company.

This is not to suggest that Haldane is entirely negative about the non-maternal woman. Though in *Motherhood and its Enemies* she is concerned that the 'war-working' type of woman, who she defines in masculine terms as 'aping the cropped hair, the great booted feet, the grim jaw, the uniform, and if possible the medals, of the military man' (Haldane, 1927a, p. 94), has fulfilled her use after the end of the Great War, she also presents her neuters in *Man's World* as happy, socially useful women: 'Their interests were wide and entirely communal; they led calm and beautiful lives; their friendships were lifelong and many, and between those of all communities there was constant interchange of visits, and stimulating contact' (Haldane, 1926, p. 130). This is partly why Nicolette feels drawn to a career outside of motherhood, working as an entertainer (a neuter in the music, art, or even sex industry) as it appeared to her that 'nothing could be more joyous than the existence of an entertainer' (Haldane, 1926, p. 130).

What is found in *Man's World*, then, is the suggestion that motherhood is the natural pursuit of some women and not of others; the removal of the expectation of children from all women means that more women can feel content with their lives. Haldane considered some 'types' of women as suited to motherhood and others not. Teaching is depicted as an important part of being a mother; though motherhood can be refined through education, maternal instinct cannot be taught.

Maternal and Non-Maternal Sexuality

Another way Haldane differentiates maternal and non-maternal women in her books is via representations of sexuality. As this section will show, Haldane explores female sexuality openly, acknowledging female sexual desire and female sexual agency, but she also reveals sexuality to indicate qualities – both psychological and physical – that are suited or unsuited to maternity. This approach to motherhood via sexuality follows on from Victorian bio-medical practice. Jill L. Matus notes that Victorian bio-medical texts connected sexuality and reproductive function, seen through the treatment of ovulation. Despite the discovery of involuntary ovulation in the mid-Victorian period, 'Many biomedical texts continued to assert that ovulation and fecundation were the effect of sexual excitement' (Matus, 1995, p. 43). A 'healthy' sexuality, in this respect then, meant greater reproductive function. This connection between female sexual excitement and successful pregnancy continued well into the twentieth century, as Hera Cook notes, with the avoidance of the female orgasm being a suggested contraceptive method found in marriage and sexuality books, along with advice such as suggesting 'sitting upright the moment after ejaculation has taken place and coughing violently or taking some other exercise to contract the pelvis', which were not completely rejected until the mid-nineteen thirties (Cook, 2004, p. 127). Along with a 'healthy' sexuality, being a 'healthy' example of your sex (with the accompanying heterosexual expectations) was also an indication of maternal suitability, at least physically.

Haldane extends this so that sexuality, by which I mean the sexual choices an individual woman makes and the way in which she presents her sexuality, are all indicators of her personality and psychology and as such, indicate her suitability as a mother.

For Haldane childrearing did not necessitate marriage, as seen in her autobiography *Truth Will Out*, when she describes J. B. S.'s insistence that they get married before trying to have children. Although she eventually concedes, Haldane was not interested in getting re-married. She tells the reader 'I had no fear of social ostracism, and as a feminist I considered myself entitled to have a child if I desired one' (Haldane, 1949, p. 23). Her disinterest in marriage also extends to a literary interest in polyamory as seen in *I Bring Not Peace*. Almost all of Haldane's interwar novels are based around some form of love-triangle, often with characters feeling forced to choose between one of two men[10]. This is particularly clear in *I Bring Not Peace* where recently-divorced journalist Michal finds herself, 'simultaneously in love with two men, and weeping in self-pity because she could not have them both' (Haldane, 1932, p. 236). The two men – Jean and James – as shown in previous chapters, represent different masculine ideals, one intellectual, one muscular, one materialist, one idealist. For Michal having them both means having a 'completed' or 'rounded' masculinity. Michal finds her feelings reflected in a copy of David Hume's *Essays*:

> If the public interest will not allow us to enjoy in polygamy that *variety* which is so agreeable in love, at least, deprive us not of that liberty which is so essentially requisite. In vain you tell me that I had my choice of the person with whom I would conjoin myself. I had my choice it is true of my prison; but this is but a small comfort, since it must still be a prison. (Haldane, 1932, p. 237)

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[10] With the exception of *Brother to Bert* in which Lil is forced to *endure* the advances of her husband's brother.

Upon reading this Michal feels that, 'A pin in the Bible would not have answered better, the old man does not let one down' (Haldane, 1932, p. 237). Haldane presents a female sexuality that is open and uninterested in the stability and security of monogamy. At the end of the novel Michal notes of Jean, 'Now I love him as I may love him, without greed, without possessiveness, I don't 'give him up' because I never had him, never was entitled to have him, because no human being can possess another' (Haldane, 1932, pp. 312–3). Here Haldane subverts the concept of ownership that is found in traditional understandings of relationship and marriage (particularly the ownership a man has over his wife). She associates monogamy, in this context, with 'greed' and 'possessiveness'. In not adhering to these values Michal is free to 'give up' Jean and, in doing so, solidifies her personal and sexual agency.

In *I Bring Not Peace* polyamory does not have to be sexual, however, and it is specifically this ability to be both platonic and erotic in her intimate relationships that elevates Michal to an idealised form of femininity, suited to motherhood. Whilst Michal is in a relationship with James and Jean, they too are in relationships. Jean is having a long-term affair with the married Jeanne, whilst James is in an intense platonic (from his perspective) relationship with Dennis who is in love with him. Despite these complex relationships the reader is told that 'Michal co-accepted Dennis with James as she accepted Jeanne in Jean's life-pattern' (Haldane, 1932, p. 157). Michal proves here that she is not possessive or selfish in her relationships, a quality cited by the mothers in *Man's World* as being highly unsuitable for mothers. Michal in fact benefits from the wider relationships of her partners. Jean's affair allows Michal to be far more independent of him, whilst Dennis provides his own draw. Whilst there is no sexual relationship with Dennis, their relationship is sexualised, with Michal seeing him as her 'muse' as she notes the first time she sees him, 'He had made her wish quite suddenly…that she knew Greek and could read Pindar' (Haldane, 1932, p. 15).

She is inspired by her relationships as, 'She admitted candidly that out of her relations with these three people she got emotions of a new, exotic quality; that now Dennis and James, as well as Jean, mattered more to her than anyone else in the world' (Haldane, 1932, p. 155). Each man brings something unique into Michal's life, as is summarised towards the end of the novel when all three share Michal's sitting-room at the same time,

> Now she could see them all three in one glance; James, rocking, singing, giving his heart: Dennis, a bitter little smile round his lips, but his eyes softened, forgetting: Jean, always understanding, having deliberately, without moving, formed himself into the picture, into some inexplicable union with James, so that they appeared to her together, as in her heart they were now inseparable… (Haldane, 1932, p. 263)

Here are shown different figurations of masculinity. James's artistry, Dennis's eloquent cynicism, and Jean's unemotional observance are capabilities each man does not share with the other but which Michal, in her attempts at a polyamorous relationship, benefits from. In short, Michal's sexuality signifies independence and a disinterest in sentimentality.

Michal is engaged in constant personal renewal. She tells herself,

> Really all the song and dance we make about life is a battle between our living and our dead selves. Change and habit. Shall the present living Michal carry all those dead Michals around with her? Shall she become stifled by those ashes that surround, seeking to choke, the flame of the present living Michal? Or shall they be thrown out, discarded where they belong, so that the flame, the present living Michal, may have air, to soar, burning brightly, free? (Haldane, 1932, p. 30)

Drawing on imagery of the phoenix, Haldane presents Michal here as being filled with vitality, ever-youthful, and refreshed by her lack of sentimentality. Considering the past and

her past selves to be 'dead', she is devoid of tradition, as seen through her wish to 'discard' the 'dead Michals' rather than carry them.

Michal's sexuality is a result of this phoenix-like, ever-youthful, cycle of renewal. Her polyamorous ideals are free from the tradition of marriage and its inherent possessiveness and her disinterest in the past makes her unsentimental. These are qualities shown to be admired by the mothers of *Man's World* in which motherhood has been 'refined' to a calculated science – semantically devoid of emotionalism – where emotion is not lacking but is carefully moderated and controlled. The mothers warned of,

> the old days, when any woman could breed, before it was realized that motherhood was a vocation, and should therefore be carefully prepared for, many women had a sensual and passionate affection for their children that harmed both. Foolish men encouraged those women in that false affection that was about as noble as the feelings of a tiger for her cubs. (Haldane, 1927a, pp. 50–1)

To the mothers an animalistic possessiveness is problematic. Michal is able to share her intimate partners to allow for greater intellectual and emotional transactions. Her sexuality then, is evidence of her suitability as a maternal figure.

In direct opposition to Michal's communal understanding of love and sexuality is Lottie de Lara's selfish, possessive sexuality. Lottie is found in *Brother to Bert*, in which she is an ageing stage actress with whom the twins, Bert and Len, have a sexual relationship, both feeling 'a hell-of-a-lad for having clicked with her – she was their first mature conquest' (Haldane, 1930, p. 174). Lottie is a 'conquest' to the two men and it is suggested that this is how she is largely seen. She is wholly defined by her sexuality. The reader is told that,

> she couldn't have, and didn't want, more than one husband, but she could have, and did have as many lovers as Catherine the Great. She liked them young, too, with

plenty of guts to them, and more than one youth, with or without talent, but always

with an attractive face and a lusty body and a bit of the devil to him somewhere, had

she taken up and launched on his stage career. (Haldane, 1930, p. 165)

It is important that Haldane chooses to associate Lottie with the Russian Empress. Whilst

Catherine is known for her many lovers, who were each placed in important roles, her long

reign of the country, like Britain's own Victoria's, saw an age of military strength for the

empire. Similarly, Lottie is representative of the glory days of the theatre and, as a result,

can still 'launch' the careers of her young actors. Her sexual magnetism, too, means that

'Countless numbers had felt the violent, electrical pull of Lottie in their blood, and had taken

years to get rid of it' (Haldane, 1930, p. 162). Though, 'A good few, too, couldn't stand the

woman at any price: her blatant vitality, her vulgar power' (Haldane, 1930, p. 162). Whilst

Lottie is in many ways powerful, she is a woman of dramatic extremes; her values are at

odds with Michal's calm, self-reflective nature. Inherent in the statement that she polarises

people in their opinions of her, is the suggestion of moral difference. The brash sexuality

implied by 'blatant vitality' and 'vulgar power' suggests a sexual being too garish for some's

moral tastes.

Upon first meeting Lottie the reader is informed that 'She had two natural talents, one for

getting on and the other for making love'(Haldane, 1930, p. 162). Using 'making love' as

opposed to 'intercourse', or a similarly objective word, introduces subjectivity, implying that

'making love' is an action that someone can be good or bad at. Therefore, as 'getting on' or

rather in modern parlance, 'getting old', comes to everyone, Lottie's only unique feature is

her ability to make love. This reduction of Lottie to her sexuality differentiates her greatly

from Michal who is defined by her writing – her journalism and her novels.

Where Michal is presented as a phoenix, an evergreen of youthful renewal, Lottie is an

'ageing', hyper-sexualised being. It is the combination of these factors that marks her as an

unsuitable maternal figure. The reader is told that 'to Lottie … the best compensation for her of lost youth was that of a lover. As little boys love green apples, so Lottie loved Bert' (Haldane, 1930, p. 175). In this context her sexuality becomes an act of desperation – an attempt to reclaim lost youth. The allusion to a 'little boy' loving 'green apples' associates Lottie with a childish greed with the corresponding emotional immaturity. It is also deeply selfish, as the reader is told,

> She had an act now with six or seven men in it, and it was said that every one of them had slept with her at one time or another. As a matter of fact, one or two in the minor parts were amateurs, just doing it for a lark, or, like one ex-undergraduate super, because they were or had been crazy about her. (Haldane, 1930, p. 166)

In collecting men her relationships become self-serving – a particularly un-maternal characteristic. Her promiscuity, then, opposes Michal's because whilst Michal curates relationships, Lottie simply collects men, as any collector does, for her own purposes.

Her selfishness is shown again when Bert moves in with her. The two foster a destructive relationship in which Bert tortures Lottie with other women and Lottie tortures Bert with her financial power over him. As this situation begins to boil Len observes one scene in which the couple have been drinking heavily; Bert has slipped into a stupor whilst Lottie, stricken with insomnia, paces the room. Lottie lashes out at Bert because, 'It irritated her to distraction to see another person asleep when she herself was awake' (Haldane, 1930, p. 215). Lottie is uninterested in Bert getting rest because in doing so he is not fulfilling his role in their relationship, to soothe her anxieties, be they related to her age or her to sleep. Again, in her sexuality – her relationship with Bert – Lottie proves herself to be emotionally over-reliant on others and selfish, qualities that define her as an unsuitable maternal character.

For Bert, Lottie's draw is that her sexuality is devoid of maternal possibility. On hearing that Len has become a father he tells him, 'Awful nuisance, a kid. Take care not to have another one. Not much chance of that with Lottie. Good job too' (Haldane, 1930, p. 274). As an older woman Bert expects that Lottie is unable to have children. This allows her to function as a sexual satisfaction for him, without risking the responsibility of fatherhood. In this way Lottie's sexuality is undermined. It is framed by its use to Bert, not to herself (in the form of her own sexual pleasure) or to society (in the form of procreation) and she becomes not an agent of her own sexuality but a thing to be used.

The dichotomy between Lottie and Michal is one between acceptable and unacceptable sexuality, based on whether that sexuality and the resulting relationships reveal maternal qualities. Whilst both are highly sexual characters, whose sexual lives are openly revealed to the reader, it is only Michal who demonstrates maternal qualities. Her sexual behaviour is indicative of an unsentimental personality, devoid of animal possessiveness (which translates to bad mothering). Lottie, on the other hand is both jealous and possessive, using her sexual conquests to bolster her own failing sense of vitality. Her sexual incapacity for maternal qualities is encapsulated by Bert's choice of her as a partner precisely because she cannot have children.

'Bad' Mothers Who Damage, Maternal Women Who Heal

Now that I have established that Haldane presents in her novels two different kinds of women – the maternal and the un-maternal – and I have shown that any activity, including sexual activity, is an opportunity for a character to demonstrate these qualities, I now explore the effects of non-maternal women as mothers and what 'bad' mothering can produce. In a short passage found in *Man's World* a member of the council of mothers summarises the

ways in which a woman could become a 'bad' mother. Citing mothers who were uncontrolled in their emotions, the reader is told that,

> Many of those mothers were hysterical or neurotic, and their children also lacked self-control. Then there were women forced into motherhood by custom. They feared it and revolted from it secretly. So that when they had borne a child they imagined they had done something abnormal and wonderful, instead of something to which not the least merit was attached. Thus they spoiled their own minds and those of their offspring. (Haldane, 1926, p. 51)

The medicalised terms 'hysterical' and 'neurotic' indicate a woman who is unable to control her emotions. Being emotionally unstable, in this sense, as well as feeling forced into motherhood by custom, creates mothers who are unsuitable. It is also, importantly, shown that being a bad mother does not just impact the individual but instead leads to children who 'lack self-control' and have 'spoiled' minds. In the following section of this chapter I look at how Haldane depicts the effects 'bad' mothers have on their offspring. I show how 'bad' mothering creates problematic masculinity. However, though non-maternal women have the ability to create problematic men, I also show how Haldane presents maternal women as having the ability to counteract their bad influence.

I Bring Not Peace: A 'Bad' Mother and a Maternal Woman Healing Trauma

The effects of 'bad' mothering are seen in the men of *I Bring Not Peace*. Dennis's homosexuality is attributed, in part, to his relationship with his mother, 'whom he honestly hated' (Haldane, 1932, p. 81). Michal asks his sister, 'Doesn't he dislike women in general?' to which she responds, 'It's all due to my dismal old mother' (Haldane, 1932, p. 151). Dennis himself claims that, "All women are fundamentally abnormal, of course" (Haldane, 1932, p. 134), presumably basing this information on the woman who, in the Freudian sense, taught him about women – his mother. Very little detail is given about her and what it is she has

done wrong except that Dennis does not want to go home because, as he tells James, 'my mother lives there. An impossible woman. Mad' (Haldane, 1932, p. 134). This of course relates to the motherhood council's criticism of mothers who are unsuitable because of their emotional instability and mental health issues.

James, too, has a 'bad' mother who, it is implied, is part of his reason for leading a bohemian lifestyle outside of America. Again this is related to an emotional instability. James tells Michal that his mother was 'So scared of real life the house was kind of fortified against it' (Haldane, 1932, p. 124) indicating the kind of neuroticism highlighted by the motherhood council as problematic to 'good' mothering. When Dennis asks, James responds,

> 'Nearly everyone one knows has a mad mother nowadays. Have you?'
>
> 'Well I reckon my old woman's not altogether sane. She's got religion. But she's the
>
> family boss all right.' (Haldane, 1932, p. 134)

This reference to emotional instability is repeated when James recalls his mother trying to ban a record that she found to be against her religious teaching, 'Then she found it and smashed my records. With her hands; into little bits' (Haldane, 1932, p. 125). James inherits this emotional instability and has similar emotional outbursts. For instance, after a heavy drinking session the two friends retire to Dennis's flat where Dennis falls into a drunken stupor but James, tortured by the mantle clock, and the onward march of time, smashes it on the floor in a fit of rage. The picking up and smashing of the clock mimics his mother's breaking of his records. James becomes an echo of his mother's problematic behaviour, displaying the generational effect of 'bad' mothering.

Michal stands in opposition to this 'bad' mothering. As the 'good' maternal figure in James's life she has a comforting, healing effect. Though not an actual mother, Michal has maternal qualities. Her flat reveals 'a genius for home-making' (Haldane, 1932, p. 258) and it is this

that Jean is most drawn to, as he tells her, 'I'm so utterly weary of not having a home' (Haldane, 1932, p. 258), and in other ways too she reveals her maternal instincts, such as in the company of Dennis and his sister she finds herself with a, 'curiously maternal feeling towards them…Partly no doubt owing to their obvious defensiveness, their common vulnerability and their desperate knowledge of it' (Haldane, 1932, p. 159). Her maternal instincts reveal themselves more clearly when she meets James. At their first meeting James is introduced to her as a child. She finds him outside her door drunk, with a head injury that she helps him attend to. The reader is told that, 'At first she saw, looking down blinkingly at her, the red puckered face of the small boy caught by mother in irresistible naughtiness' (Haldane, 1932, p. 35). His drunkenness renders him childlike – the 'irresistible naughtiness' here referring to him getting mixed-up between Michal's door and his own. The language here is heavy with maternal affection – his 'puckered face' looking 'blinkingly at her' which she reads as 'irresistible' and 'naughty' – he is rendered fully in her eyes as a child in need of care. This first meeting defines the nature of their relationship. In courting her James sends, 'an old envelope torn into a conventional heart-shape' (Haldane, 1932, p. 52). This gesture is childish and innocent but Michal is drawn to the relationship out of maternal concern. The reader is told that,

> This stranger, she felt, was bringing not peace but a sword. And if it was a Samurai sword with which he meant (probably dramatically, in her presence, blast him) to commit hara-kiri, was she indeed compelled to strike it from his hand? (Haldane, 1932, p. 60)

This vision of potential suicide is perhaps more manly in its presentation of James's active agency – he is likened to a Samurai who commits suicide out of duty and the return of honour. However, it speaks to Michal's maternal instinct to protect, as a mother protects a child. Indeed, she resolves that she must keep James safe so that when he finds himself away from Paris, in London, alone after the death of Dennis, Michal rushes to him. When

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she arrives James has had little sleep, sleeping when possible at the train station where he has been waiting for her arrival. He relaxes as soon as he is safe in Michal's presence. In their taxi to her hotel 'He lay back in his corner of the taxi worn out, his eyes closed, relaxed' (Haldane, 1932, p. 294) and, 'She fancied he might almost be asleep. All her affection was watching over him, but it was pure, impersonal' (Haldane, 1932, p. 294). Although Michal no longer has a romantic interest in James, her maternal nature brings her back to England to care for him. His ability to sleep now that she is there indicates a future emotional recovery thanks to her presence. After the trauma of his friend's death James turns to Michal as the only maternal figure in his life. Her acceptance of this need, despite its great cost to herself in terms of travel and time, suggests a selflessness within her maternal feminine identity but also a great capability to bear this responsibility. Here, then, Haldane presents maternal femininity as both caring and strong, and capable of bearing the weight of masculine trauma.

Brother to Bert: Lack of Maternal Influence in Development and the Redemptive Maternal Woman

In *Brother to Bert* a lack of mothering of the two twins is shown. The reader is told that, 'Lil knew their mother was dead; she reminded grannie that that was how Len came to have no one to look after him when he had his accident' (Haldane, 1930, p. 140). This introduces early on in the novel the idea that the twins are dependent on women – specifically on maternal types. Despite being a grown man (he is, however, still a very young man) this interaction and Len's accident show that there are times still when a maternal figure is necessary. Although Bert and Len share a home, Bert, as a man, is never considered as a potential caregiver. As their mother had died when they were children their only available female presence is their sister May, who is entirely unsuited to the role. May suffers from mental health problems which Haldane presents as an emotional imbalance. The reader is told that, 'May, in spite of her general vivacity, would, as adolescence came upon her, have

strange fits of lethargy and depression, when never a step danced she, and for days hardly a word was to be got out of her' (Haldane, 1930, p. 4). This revelation of May's mental health illness harks back to the criticisms laid by the motherhood council in *Man's World*. May exhibits qualities associated with the 'neurotic' or 'hysteric' that the mothers attach to emotional imbalance. Much like Lottie, with whom May shares the profession of the stage, she is depicted as selfish and shallow. At Len and Lil's wedding, 'May arrived only half a minute before the bride, and, to pile sensation on sensation, brought with her own fiancé. Mr. Frank Trumpington' (Haldane, 1930, p. 146) and her choice of attire when meeting her husband's new bride was 'magnificent though definitely corpulent in a mink-marmot coat' (Haldane, 1930, p. 145). May is a person distinctly interested in the spectacle and someone in need of adoration and the public's interest. She is also sexual in a particularly aesthetic sense, in her 'corpulent' mink coat, which gives the indication that her sexuality is for 'show' rather than for procreation or personal intimacy.

After the murder of Lottie Bert first distances himself from his actions by immediately leaving the crime scene and then heads for his sister May's home. The professor employed to track down the fugitive predicts these actions, telling Lil, 'he was a lost little boy. There was only one person to go to. The little lost boy always wants his mother, to have her hold his hand and tell him what to do' (Haldane, 1930, p. 262). Here Haldane presents masculinity as vulnerable to moments of emotional infantilisation – during periods of great distress - in which the support of a maternal figure is needed. May fails in this role, however. Although she helps Bert practically, aiding in his flight to Paris, she provides little in the way of maternal comfort, viewing Bert more as an inconvenience, exclaiming, 'Good riddance to bad rubbish' (Haldane, 1930, p. 269) as soon as she manages to make him leave. This is not to suggest that May wants to distance herself from her brother on moral terms, though in fact she largely blames Lottie for her own murder, telling Bert, 'If you're in trouble, as you

were bound to be sooner or later, going with *Her*, I suppose I'll have to get you out of it' (Haldane, 1930, p. 265). Rather, Bert's criminality poses a threat to her new life as a respectable, married, middle-class woman and threatens to bring her back to her working-class roots.

Instead of May the twins briefly find a mother in Lil's grandmother. When Len is injured it is Grannie who steps in as a maternal carer when May lets him down. After his accident Len worries because, 'May could not look after him, she'd made that clear to Bert. Even if she had not just been engaged for a South African tour she couldn't…' (Haldane, 1930, p. 81). As a non-maternal figure May is unable to offer support to Len, not just because she physically cannot be there but because it is not in her nature. Grannie, however, is a practiced matriarch. Not only has she raised Lil but she and Lil also cared for her husband who, in her own words, 'was an invalid fer six years before 'e died' (Haldane, 1930, p. 83). Grannie connects the twins with their own biological mother. The reader is told that her home reminds the twins of their own home in the short time that their mother was alive (Haldane, 1930, p. 63). Implied within this view is that the universal feature of the maternal home is the mother figure. In being a 'good' mother figure Grannie is able to create a safe maternal space. This is seen when Len and Lil retreat here after Lil's rape and Len's arrest, when the reader is told that 'Both of them found grannie's little home a haven of rest, a delightful anti-climax to the hectic night they had (in different ways) been through' (Haldane, 1930, p. 197). Grannie creates a protective space where the couple can avoid the chaos of their lives. Implicit in this is a creation of a calm, emotionally secure space, in line with the maternal teachings found in *Man's World*.

Grannie's capabilities as a maternal figure are presented through Lil, whose behaviour is a result of her upbringing. The reader is told that, 'The reasons for Lil's lack of sportsmanship

were simple. She was a one-man girl who had not yet met her man, and she had been very well brought up by her grandmother' (Haldane, 1930, p. 50). Here Haldane presents the effects of a 'good' maternal role model through Lil's chaste sexuality, unlike the twins whose sexual promiscuity the reader is already familiar with, even at this early stage in the novel. When Lil begins working at the theatre her grandmother, through maternal concern, arranges for a trusted man to escort her home, 'but it soon became clear that Lil was not going to be corrupted by the atmosphere of the place and could be trusted to look after herself' (Haldane, 1930, p. 53). It is Lil's disinterest in the 'vices' of the theatre, unlike many other of the girls that work there, that leads Len to believe that 'She's sort of different from the others …Sort of good' (Haldane, 1930, p. 56). In being judged 'good' the reader is not only being informed of her character but also the maternal abilities of her grandmother, whom she is to learn her own mothering from, as is found when Lil and Len get married and 'Grannie gave her some final good advice about being economical and saving money and not letting Len get into mischief, nor Bert neither, for that matter' (Haldane, 1930, p. 148). The extent of Grannie's maternal abilities is shown when Len has his accident. After Len is taken to hospital Bert gets drunk and decides to find Lil, who is walking home from work, in order that he might kiss her. Lil spurns his aggressive advances but Grannie unknowingly interrupts the situation and invites Bert into their home, exclaiming, 'Whatever's the matter with the boy? Lil, put the kettle on, quick, an' we'll make him a cup of tea. Come on now, sit down here by the fire…' (Haldane, 1930, p. 77). Though Grannie's naivety potentially puts Lil at risk by inviting a possible attacker into their home, the narrative also presents her actions as a maternal act. The reader is told that, 'It had to be gone over several times as grannie drew out supplementary details one by one, prodding him with questions, suggestions and exclamations, giving in generous dose the maternal sympathy he had stood so desperately in need of…' (Haldane, 1930, p. 78). Bert is 'so desperately in need of' 'maternal sympathy' not only because of Len's accident but also because of how the accident had happened and

what had occurred afterwards. Bert's drinking had caused him to drunkenly shove Len off the train and his continued drinking and lack of restraint caused him to attempt to kiss Lil without consent. By taking him in and listening to him – offering a maternal role in his life – Grannie offers relief from that life. 'As soon as Bert had removed his boots and fairly curled up on it under the thin pink quilt from Lil's own bed, he fell into a stupor of sleep' (Haldane, 1930, p. 79). This is because for the first time he is in a safe maternal space. As a maternal figure Lil's grandma understands the need for a mother in the twins' lives. She tells Lil, 'They're both quite good boys in their way, though, mark you, they'd be better if they 'ad a mother to look after them' (Haldane, 1930, pp. 134–5). There certainly is evidence for this diagnosis. The twins are thieves, they are lazy, and they are promiscuous. Bert is particularly affected because unlike Len who has Lil, he has no consistent maternal figure in his life. It is Bert, then, who is the worst of the two, becoming a rapist and then a murderer.

Lil is the redemptive figure in Len's life. Her maternal care for him prevents him following the same path as his brother. As soon as their relationship starts Lil begins to develop an intuition relating to Len. She feels 'he might be doing other things she would not approve of – drinking, and worse' (Haldane, 1930, p. 134), which, as discussed in previous chapters, he most certainly is. However, despite his cheating Lil decides to stay with him as 'she feared that if she ever abandoned Len that'd be the end of him…' (Haldane, 1930, p. 156), which, if Len's life is compared to Bert's, is clear is the case. As soon they are married she becomes the only influence in his life, keeping him, as much as she can, from the destructive lifestyle that Bert falls into. As the boys have no ambition to progress their careers Lil tries to save what little money she and Len have, viewing it as 'the only possible means of their future salvation' (Haldane, 1930, p. 154). For Lil their savings mean the ability to buy a small business, leave the theatre, and live as a healthy family, free from excessive alcohol and the company of show girls. It is precisely this that she manages to achieve. Whilst Bert is caught

up in his antagonistic relationship with Lottie, drinking and fighting, Len becomes, through

Lil's hard work, the proprietor of a small shop in a middle-class suburb of London. Even

when Len is accused of Lottie's murder Lil travels to Paris to retrieve Bert and clear Len's

name. In this respect Lil saves Len both morally – from vice – and physically – from the

gallows. The trauma that Len experiences, first through the loss of a maternal figure early in

his life then through false imprisonment, are both healed by Lil's maternal care.

Youth is a Crime: Absent Mother and the Future of a Maternal Society

It is not only the twins whose behaviour suffers without the influence of a maternal figure.

René from *Youth is a Crime* who, like Bert and Len, is promiscuous and a heavy drinker, has

a mother but her unsuitability for the role leaves him affected. René's mother is a sex worker

and as a result he has no relationship with his father. Haldane tells the reader that, 'When he

had discovered that the clay was more common even than most, he had, figuratively

speaking, taken her sins upon himself, since his love remained, and refused to allow him to

blame her for them' (Haldane, 1934, p. 107). His mother's career has made her an

undesirable maternal figure, by causing distress to her son. As she is a sex-worker René's

mother is connected to Lottie and May in that they share professions categorised under the

umbrella role of 'entertainer' in Haldane's *Man's World*, a subcategory of the un-maternal

'neuter'. Like Lottie and May, René's mother is defined largely by her appearance. The

reader is presented with a photograph of her, 'The face was in profile. Soft dark hair was

piled above it. She was looking down modestly at a spray of artificial lilies held loosely in her

hand…' (Haldane, 1934, p. 182). The use of such a heavily symbolic flower is interesting

here. The lily's symbolism is wide ranging – from Roman purity to Medieval motherhood,

and, of course, contemporary death – but though the composition of the image is

reminiscent of the Virgin Mary and therefore connotated with chastity, purity and

motherhood, Haldane makes a point of telling her reader that these lilies are artificial, and it

is this symbolism in particular that she uses to imbue René's mother. Whatever 'good' qualities she has – beauty, modesty, or motherhood – they are artificial, like her flowers. Though the reader meets her on very few occasions her rejection of motherhood is displayed during most of these. In one instance the reader is told,

> No one ever took them for mother and son; she looked far too young to warrant it, and was not anxious to enlighten her admirers in the matter. Mostly people thought them brother and sister; they both enjoyed the joke hugely, and except among their intimate circle of friends, kept it up. (Haldane, 1934, p. 191)

Though 'both enjoyed the joke', this reluctance to be recognised as René's mother suggests an unwillingness, albeit driven by vanity, to fulfil the role. This is found to be the case when upon returning home from boarding school, he finds his mother has left, visiting friends. His promiscuity, in this light, points to an attempt to find maternal warmth elsewhere, which he eventually does through his relationship with Elizabeth.

Elizabeth takes to the role of maternal figure. When she first moves to Antwerp, before she meets René, she attends a small girls' school where she finds the girls, and the teaching, unstimulating. The children, however, attempt to include her in their socialisation,

> 'Don't you want to play?' she asked kindly.
>
> 'What are you playing?' asked Elizabeth with a threatening scowl.
>
> 'Mothers,' said the friendly child. 'Would you like to be my baby?' (Haldane, 1934, p. 34)

Elizabeth is reluctant to join in the games however, as the reader is told, 'Elizabeth firmly resolved that she would die – as all joy had died in her – before she would play 'Mothers' (Haldane, 1934, p. 35). It is revealed that Elizabeth's reaction to the game is due to her maternal instincts being better developed than those of her peers, meaning she is more maternal outside of play. This is seen when she eventually agrees to join in the games but

only with a fellow girl, Erna, who is depicted as having a learning disability. 'Erna became her 'baby' and she played with her alone' (Haldane, 1934, p. 36). Her decision to join in the games is based solely on the perception that Erna was being left out, in favour of 'Gisèle Wouvermanns; Gisèle, aged twelve,' who, unlike Erna 'was more than pretty; she was a startling beauty' (Haldane, 1934, p. 36). For Elizabeth 'Mothers' is not really a game but a chance to exercise her developing maternal instinct in a 'real' situation, 'Elizabeth couldn't bear it, just to show them up, the little beasts, who fancied themselves at the game of 'Mothers' and ignored brutally, in the least maternal manner imaginable, the one 'baby' – the poor nitwit in their midst' (Haldane, 1934, p. 36). She reads the girls' reluctance to socialise with Erna, and her inability to engage them socially, as a vulnerability that demonstrates the need for a maternal figure – a role that she takes to comfortably.

When, later in the novel, she meets the troubled René, she is able to utilise these already developed maternal instincts. René's behaviour is, to Elizabeth, immoral. The reader is told that,

> She did not think him either clever or good. She disapproved of him thoroughly, in fact. Kind friends have told her horrible tales of him; that he frequented sordid haunts, that he was known to smoke and drink and consort the ladies of easy virtue and rarely to work. (Haldane, 1934, pp. 91–2)

Despite René's bad behaviour Elizabeth views it as a reason to save him from himself because 'As the poets had taught her, the mission of woman was to raise man to her own superior level' (Haldane, 1934, p. 105).

René's behaviour is a result of his 'bad' mother, whose work means he has to contend with the shame of not knowing his father. He 'was desperately unhappy' (Haldane, 1934, p. 108)

and his promiscuity and drinking become an extension of this unhappiness; however, an innocent relationship with Elizabeth offers him hope.

Elizabeth offers him no moral judgement when his lack of father is revealed,

> 'Tell me, does anything matter to you, you strange girl?'
>
> 'Not the conventions,' she answered firmly. 'Certainly not. Why should they? ...'
>
> 'It certainly mattered to me. Can't you imagine what it means to be a boy at school, not have a father?' (Haldane, 1934, p. 324)

Elizabeth's disinterest in societal convention, and therefore her disinterest in René's lack of a father, makes the young man believe 'that she possessed a power which alone could help him' (Haldane, 1934, p. 109) and, indeed, by the end of the novel, when René has renounced his past life and decides to train to be an engineer, he tells Elizabeth 'I'm a very different person now, you know. Thanks to you' (Haldane, 1934, p. 323). This is because Elizabeth has provided for him a replacement maternal figure. The reader is told, 'He was in love with that virginal purity, that candid innocence, which once he had attributed to his mother, until he had found out the truth' (Haldane, 1934, p. 108).

Where René's mother has let him down, Elizabeth is able to take her place. Where his mother provided uncertainty as to his paternity, he tells Elizabeth that 'your loyalty had not let me down' (Haldane, 1934, p. 328). Elizabeth's role as a replacement mother is made most clear when René gives her a photograph of himself – a commonly used love-token – except that rather than the expected image of René as a young man, she receives a photograph of a child,

> At first glance she was deeply disappointed. It was the photograph of the little boy of twelve, in an Eton jacket and a large white Eton collar, obviously taken at the time of his 'first communion'. She thought it hardly resembled him at all. (Haldane, 1934, p. 203)

René wants to be understood by Elizabeth as he was as a child, innocent and vulnerable. His communion dress further signifies this need to be seen as 'pure'. In showing her this image René gives himself to Elizabeth as that child, seeking in her a maternal guide because, as he later tells her, Elizabeth 'will always know what is good for you– and for me' (Haldane, 1934, p. 325).

Out of all of Haldane's maternal women, Elizabeth – her youngest protagonist – extends her maternal care the furthest. As well as the left-out Erna and the abandoned René, Elizabeth shows maternal warmth towards Ilse, a teenage girl whose pregnancy leaves her a social outcast. Refusing to judge Ilse Elizabeth instead offers her friendship. This care for Ilse has an even greater significance, as Ilse tells her, 'You have saved my life' (Haldane, 1934, p. 236), after Elizabeth's kindness interrupts her contemplation of suicide. The reader is told, however, that,

> In talking to Ilse, giving her wholehearted sympathy to her, she had as usual acted unconventionally. There seemed not much good endeavouring to convince the world–she, an ignorant girl of sixteen–that it was once again absolutely in the wrong… (Haldane, 1934, p. 238)

This maternal action, motivated by compassion not judgement, is revealed to be unusual in Elizabeth's contemporary society. This world, where mothers are relegated to the private sphere, is devoid of the social maternal care Elizabeth offers. Haldane suggests change however, through the young woman and her peers. The novel ends with Elizabeth's thoughts,

> The strange country in which the young are set down is the whole world; the strange people, the enemies, are the grown-ups, she thought, who bear us and rear us and allow Fate to overwhelm us. … It is time to counter attack, here, though; it is time for

us to vow never to compromise with them; to make no truce, neither with their gods

nor their conventions. Once we accept them we are lost.

Somehow, some time, we will change all that. (Haldane, 1934, p. 339)

In this battle-cry Haldane presents youth, but specifically the young, maternal woman, as the

future society. Devoid of patriarchal convention she will change the world. In this respect,

then, Haldane builds on the presentation of the maternal woman as a healing figure with the

character of Elizabeth. Her maternal care both heals (Erna, René, and Ilse) but it will also

create (a new society).

What this chapter has shown, then, is that Haldane's interwar fiction is interested in

presenting a specific vision of maternal femininity, one that is emotionally capable but

controlled in that emotion; a femininity that is not only scientifically but also naturally

maternal. It has been shown how she defines these maternal women, in part, by their un-

maternal foils, who demonstrate selfish, possessive and emotionally uncontrolled qualities

and it has been shown how she demonstrates 'good' mothering qualities within her maternal

characters. What is seen across these three books, *I Bring Not Peace*, *Youth is a Crime*,

and *Brother to Bert*, is the maternal ability to heal and protect – a much needed skill in an

interwar Europe still reeling from the effects of the First World War. Each man that Haldane's

maternal characters heal is suffering with trauma and each maternal woman deals with that

trauma accordingly. In *I Bring Not Peace* James is traumatised after the death of his friend

and Michal sails from Paris to London to find him and care for him; it is only when in the

safety of her company that James can finally sleep. *Brother to Bert's* Len lacks a maternal

influence and finds himself 'in trouble' easily. Lil's maternal care saves him from this

immorality and when he is falsely accused of murder, her maternal instinct to protect him

leads her on a journey to Paris to clear his name and save him from the gallows. *Youth is a*

Crime follows on from these two novels; like Lil, Elizabeth saves René from immorality, and

like Michal she cares for those suffering, whether it be Erna, left out of games, René hell-bent on self-destruction, or the socially ostracised Ilse. However, with this last novel Haldane suggests something new. Elizabeth's youth brings with it the future and her own assertion that society will change towards her own convictions. By this Haldane tells us, then, that the maternal woman is not only the answer to healing the society left behind from the war but also the figure who will change it altogether.

Now that I have defined the figure of the mother, I show in the following chapter how Haldane feels this figure to be under threat, both economically and socially in the interwar years.

Chapter Two:
Motherhood and its Enemies: Social and Economic Threats to Motherhood

In the last chapter I discussed how Haldane creates two separate feminine styles – the maternal woman and the non-maternal woman. I demonstrated how she idealised maternity and criticised the qualities of the non-maternal woman in her interwar literature. In this chapter I explore how Haldane understands the figure of the mother to be under threat. Using her non-fiction text *Motherhood and its Enemies* (1927), I show how Haldane communicated a concern over the economic, and social, threats to motherhood. It will be shown that whilst Haldane's main concern was the defence of motherhood from these perceived threats, her criticisms were largely dependent on her intended audience. I show that in *Motherhood and its Enemies*, a book written for a male scientific audience, unmarried, childless women are largely blamed for their perceived professional preferential treatment over mothers. Though this seems at odds with the central strand of this thesis that acknowledges Haldane's anti-State, anti-patriarchal institutions (of which science was one) perspective within her fiction, it accounts for her economic savvy. Haldane, as a successful journalist, knew how to sell a story to a specific audience. In Haldane's interwar fictional writing it will be shown that she complicates this reading by adding criticisms of both patriarchy and class; it is this reading that is important to this thesis as a whole as it demonstrates Haldane's distrust of the patriarchal State and its structures. This is made clear at the end of this chapter, through an exploration of how she uses the image of the cow – a domesticated animal used for its produce – to represent the status of motherhood in a patriarchal society.

'The normal woman is the subject of this book' (Haldane, 1927a, p. 134) the reader is told in *Motherhood and its Enemies*, a book, concerned with modern motherhood that was part social history, part social theory. The statement continues, 'In the past the economic situation has often made life difficult for her. All men theoretically approve of her; many have idealized her; but hitherto very little has been done for her directly as mother' (Haldane, 1927a, p. 134). 'Normal' according to Haldane means adhering to a sexual, physical, and psychological type. The 'normal' woman is heterosexual and maternal; she is, in short, one of Haldane's fictional maternal women, her 'good' mothers as depicted in her literature. That is not to say, however, that she was against the rights of unmarried, childless women, as she tells her reader,

> the spinster has won her present recognition largely at the expense of the potential or actual mother…her growing economic and political status constitutes a definite menace to the future of motherhood, I do not wish it to be assumed that I would deny her all the rights she has won by such hard labour. Destructive criticism is valueless if it is not followed by constructive proposals. Those I hope to make. (Haldane, 1927a, pp. 107–108)

Although Haldane does not wish to 'deny' the rights of the unmarried, childless women, she does consider her a threat to the economic survival of the 'potential or actual mother'. Here is the resurgence of the theme of 'maternal' and 'non-maternal' women that is found throughout Haldane's interwar fiction, which I defined in the previous chapter. Women, for Haldane, do not yet have to be mothers to exhibit the maternal qualities that will make them 'good' mothers. Haldane is not just worried for the economic survival of actual mothers but also for that of potential mothers. The threat, therefore, is long-reaching and affects the production of future generations.

Haldane warns of the non-maternal woman, described in *Motherhood and its Enemies* as 'the spinster', 'There is the woman unwilling to bear children, largely a product of civilization, who, whether she be deified or prostituted, is prepared to gratify masculine desires, provided she may avoid child-bearing and may cultivate or express her own 'personality'' (Haldane, 1927a, p. 134). Haldane is not anti-prostitution or, rather, is not against the sex-worker. Her major concerns relating to sex-work are that of health and workers' conditions. She points out to her reader that, 'There is no Trade Union of Prostitutes; there are no legally controlled hours; no one is obliged by law to supply them with so much fresh air per individual or so many 'nights off' per week' (Haldane, 1927a, p. 92). When she refers to the woman who prostitutes to avoid child-bearing, she is referring to the 'Amateur prostitute' (Haldane, 1927a, p. 96), a woman who utilises sex as a commodity (though not necessary monetarily), but unlike the professional prostitute, does not rely on it as her main source of income. These women are presented in *Brother to Bert* in the colleagues of Lil at the theatre. The girls' thoughts are communicated to the reader,

> Among the groping males who might brush one rather too closely as they stumbled to their seat by the light of one's torch were quite often a few of those altogether superior and splendid beings, men with cars…Such men, one or two at least of such demi-gods, might, after catching one's eye and a swift inspection of one's breasts and legs, offer one a lift home which might, and mostly did, develop into a petting party…. As a common rule one got back, fagged out, by tube or tram or bus: but such luxury, whilst rare, was nevertheless not undreamable. (Haldane, 1930, p. 49)

Whereas *Motherhood and its Enemies* is written with a strong air of scientific detachment, in this quote from *Brother to Bert* a similar critique of 'amateur' prostitution is communicated but with a sympathy for the girls' economic situation. The girls recognise their sexuality as a commodity, one that might buy them an evening of luxury, but in their return home, used, alone, on public transport, having experienced luxury only briefly, the real economic divide

between patron and theatre girl is revealed. Her body is a means to buy that which otherwise would be 'undreamable'. In presenting the economic divide between the girls and the patrons, Haldane introduces economic, class-based criticism. Whilst *Motherhood and its Enemies* presents the 'amateur prostitute' as being solely responsible for her problematic behaviour, this scene in *Brother to Bert* frames the rich patrons as predatorily seeking these women. Using their economic power – their 'luxury' lifestyle – to pay for sexual favours, they then reveal their disregard for the girls by leaving them to return home on public transport. Whilst Haldane is critical of the 'amateur prostitute', then, she is equally critical of the socially and economically powerful men who use her.

Whilst Haldane shows through her literature that she is sympathetic to the unmarried 'spinster', the actions of the 'spinster' still pose an economic threat to the mother. As she tells her reader, 'Here we are not considering the desirability of supporting one class of women as against another; we only recognize the fact that economically their interests conflict' (Haldane, 1927a, p. 137). Haldane's economic anxieties were particularly pressing in the interwar period. As Nicola Beauman has noted, the return of men at the end of the First World War created a pressure for women to return to the home. It was socially accepted for a woman to work between school and marriage but she faced stigmatisation if she remained in the workplace after (Beauman, 1989, p. 76). A woman remaining in the workplace when she had a husband who could financially provide for her was taking the place of another man looking to work to support himself and his family. Just as the female worker was a competitor for the male, then, Haldane perceived the childless female worker as a competitor for the mother looking to remain in employment. To make matters worse, however, Haldane saw the employment of the 'spinster' over the mother as a direct threat to the future of motherhood. She notes,

With growing independence for all, educated women begin to demand more personal freedom; feminine celibacy is no longer confined to nunneries; the governess, unloved, poor, despised, underpaid, insists on her 'rights,' and begins to leave her unremunerated field for others more fertile…the war beats down all the former barriers to women's freedom; brings forward new successors to the nun and the prostitute in the war-worker and the non-professional light-o'-love; and the economic conditions following it render the tasks of the mother more and more difficult, and the position of the home less and less secure. (Haldane, 1927a, pp. 119–20)

This perhaps slightly paranoid expression nonetheless communicates Haldane's fear that the modern world was becoming less and less suited to motherhood or, indeed, motherhood was no longer suited to it, as she worries that having children is no longer an interest or economic possibility for many women. She frames 'spinsters' (war-workers, governesses, and amateur prostitutes) as having interests opposed those of the mother, hence the 'former barriers to women's freedom' is not a cause for celebration. Without changing conditions for mothers it allows 'spinsters' more professional roles, roles that are denied to women as soon as they have children. Haldane tells her reader that,

Political emancipation by itself, though advantageous in some ways, could hardly suffice to secure a higher standard of living for mothers. I have tried to show that in many instances the vote, shared by mothers and spinsters alike, operates to some extent in favour of the unmarried as against the married women. (Haldane, 1927a, p. 209)

Because of this perceived political power imbalance between the mother and the 'spinster' Haldane presents the twentieth-century mother as threatened, weakened, and powerless, and in competition, politically, socially, and economically with the 'spinster'.

Haldane undermines the employment of the 'spinster' by undermining her 'normal', in the sexological sense, 'feminine' qualities. The role of the governess and her move out of the private home and in to the public's schools, is picked on because of her direct contact with children. Haldane cites a potential for the unmarried, childless woman to discourage an interest in motherhood in her wards, creating a new generation of 'spinster' women (Haldane, 1927a, p. 119). Haldane elaborates on her concerns over the 'spinster's' influence on young girls, 'she will teach them to admire and imitate those pseudo-male forms of behaviour – her 'sense of fair play, of sportsmanship,' her ability to 'play the game' – which convince her that she is as manly as any man' (Haldane, 1927a, p. 151). This objection to young girls being trained to think that they are 'as manly as any man' reflects a split being formed within feminism in the twenties. Beauman discusses the emergence of 'old' and 'new' feminism during the period,

> The 'Old' feminists fought for equal pay, equal opportunities, equal rights, while the 'New' feminists were anxious to emphasise the differences between men and women and to use the basic fact of this difference as a starting-point for their efforts on women's behalf. (Beauman, 1989, p. 70)

Although Haldane had been a suffragette in her teenage years, her focus on the masculinizing effect of the 'spinster'-educator is in line with this 'new' feminist focus. Difference between the sexes was positive and therefore Haldane's 'spinsters' represented a threat to children by their perceived attempts to eradicate this difference.

There was an economic incentive behind Haldane's mistrust of 'spinster' educators, too, however. *Motherhood and its Enemies* notes,

> Recently there has been a movement to exclude mothers, actual or potential, from the education of children in municipal schools. The danger of exclusively employing virgins here is not so great, in view of the fact that such children mostly live at home, and that they leave school at the age of fourteen. (Haldane, 1927a, pp. 154–5)

Acknowledging the minimal 'danger' of allowing 'virgins' to educate children, Haldane still posits this as negative because of its *economic* threat to mothers, both as individuals and as a group. Here she tells the reader that unmarried, childless women are being chosen *instead* of mothers. The very presence of the 'spinster' in the workplace, then, threatens mothers' economic survival. She tells the reader, 'In addition to the lack of adequate space and apparatus, the mother has a dominant problem with which to grapple ceaselessly; the adjustment of her income to the cost of living and to the family's food and clothing needs' (Haldane, 1927a, p. 196). Haldane here depicts the mother from a struggling-economic perspective, as a woman attempting to feed and clothe her family on a limited budget. Indeed there were many reasons why a mother at this time might need to rely on her own income as well or instead of that of a partner (that is, apart from perhaps wanting to), such as the birth of illegitimate war babies (though, as Haldane herself notes, this was not particularly extensive), injured or killed partners, or a lack of work available for returning soldiers. Haldane herself experienced being the only earner during her first marriage as her husband struggled to find work and succumbed to an alcohol and gambling addiction. Many women found their families struggling. As Jane Lewis has noted, working-class mothers struggled with the burden of large families, having to take on paid work, washing or in-home work such as covering tennis balls, in order to financially support the family whilst also physically attending to them (Arnup, Lévesque, & Pierson, 1990, p. 9). As the pressure for women, particularly mothers, to return to the home intensified in the nineteen twenties, Haldane felt the mother to be particularly under threat. Of the education industry she notes that 'it is perfectly clear that persecution of teachers will either relegate them to the unmarried class or will drive them to birth control' (Haldane, 1927a, p. 213). Haldane predicts that in order to retain their income, mothers will give up motherhood. As the individual mother is attacked economically, the role of motherhood becomes less and less appealing.

Unwilling to openly criticise the patriarchal structure that demonises the working mother, Haldane understands the 'spinster' to be the economic threat to motherhood. *Motherhood and its Enemies* does not acknowledge the patriarchal structures that benefit the 'spinster' and not the mother. It was written for the benefit of the Geneva World Population Conference, as seen through Haldane's correspondence with her publisher in which she requires the book to be published in time to take copies to the conference (Haldane, 1927b). The World Population Conference was organised for a middle-class male-scientist attendance and, as a popular newspaper journalist, Haldane was accustomed to 'selling' her work to her audience; therefore a criticism of patriarchy and class is largely absent. In not acknowledging the patriarchal societal structure that has led to the privileging of the childless woman in independent economic terms, she must instead frame the mother as a work-place competitor and therefore demonstrate the superiority of the mother over the 'spinster' in certain workplaces. This is seen in her reference to the contemporary case of Dr. Turnadge, headmistress of Twickenham Girls' Secondary School. After four years as headmistress of the school, Twickenham Higher Education Committee decided to 'dispense with the services of Dr. I. Turnadge….in view of her having become a mother' (Haldane, 1927a, p. 210). Haldane tells us that Turnadge, in defence of her position, wrote 'a letter to the Education Committee [stating that] she felt that her experience as a mother would have been an additional asset to her in dealing with the girls' (Haldane, 1927a, pp. 210–11). Nevertheless, her position was terminated. Turnadge defends her position from being taken either by a man or by a childless woman and she does this by citing her maternity as a unique and specialist feature. Haldane does not detail why, as a mother, Turnadge is a more suitable candidate, so the reader has to frame her suitability via the criticisms of the 'spinster'-educator as a masculine presence in the class room, dissuading young girls away from maternity. In drawing the reader's attention to the case of Dr. Turnadge, highlighting her

maternity alongside her education as evidence of her suitability as a teacher but framing her largely against previous discussions of the unsuitability of the 'spinster', Haldane is creating the maternal/non-maternal dichotomy that is found throughout her fictional literature in this period.

This threat from the non-maternal woman to the mother is found in *Brother to Bert.* May becomes the incompetent replacement for their mother as she becomes sick and dies. Far from attending to the home, May is repulsed by it, 'Home was too much pervaded by mother and compulsion of more or less heavy-handed kind to assist in whatever casual washing or cleaning might be in progress. May was not at all addicted to domestic tasks' (Haldane, 1930, pp. 14–5). Not only is May problematic because the role of mother and domestic duties do not interest her, but in her mother's illness and subsequent death May appears to 'take' something from her. The reader is told that, 'In her the same splendid vitality which had but recently deserted her mother was now in full display; she danced with legs, arms, lungs, heart, effortlessly, joyously, lavishly' (Haldane, 1930, p. 12). Haldane positions in the narrative the 'blossoming' of May alongside the decline of her mother so that she appears almost vampiric. Here, in fictionalized form, are the anxieties Haldane held over the increased economic stability of the 'spinster' in relation to the perceived increased instability for the mother. Just as May destroys her mother insidiously, sapping her 'splendid vitality', so too the 'spinster' takes from the mother.

Although Haldane criticises the 'spinster's' power relative to that of the mother, she does not dislike the individual, the unmarried, childless woman, as she tells her reader 'The virgin may be an excellent and useful member of the community or she may not…' (Haldane, 1927a, p. 155). In *Man's World*, where women's bodies are strictly controlled but the economic worries have been removed by communism, 'neuters' are therefore found working

as musicians, science technicians, and artists. In this context, free from the economic threat

to mothers, Haldane does not view the non-maternal woman, the neuter, as a competitor.

Instead, the two styles of femininity are both subject not to economic oppression but to

patriarchal oppression. In this fictional space Haldane is able to critique the male-dominated

scientific elite, within reason, without opening her work to controversy. This is seen largely

through the treatment of the mothers. In a visit to the council a group of scientists announces

that research into *in vitro* fertilisation is being undertaken with an end goal of creating a

'human termite queen' (Haldane, 1926, p. 61). Even in this pro-natalist world the future of

motherhood is not safe from male ambition.

Haldane's neuters (the paradigm's equivalent of the 'spinster') are even more threatened.

This is seen through Bruce's treatment of Morgana, a neuter, Nicolette's friend and fellow

rebel. Once he has convinced Nicolette to halt their revolt, he still has Morgana to deal with,

'She would have to be silenced. She was a nuisance. He wished she would have the sense

to do the obvious thing. That would be satisfactory, from every one's point of view. Women

like that were useless' (Haldane, 1926, p. 293). In this paradigm which values maternity,

Morgana, the 'neuter' and 'spinster', is not a threat to the mothers but she clearly is to the

male-dominated establishment. Bruce labels her 'useless' because as a woman unable to

provide the State with children she has little social or economic value in his eyes. In

becoming disillusioned with this role she becomes dangerous – a threat to the equilibrium of

the State.

Through the experiences of Nicolette in *Man's World* both mothers and neuters are shown to

be trapped by an imposed bureaucratic system. Nicolette tells Morgana, 'But I don't want a

child,' to which she responds, 'Not now. But you will. Sooner or later we all do. If you don't

sooner, they won't let you later' (Haldane, 1926, p. 189). Here is the human cost of this

system. Morgana indicates that she too wants a child but as a neuter she will have been 'immunized' against pregnancy, against her will it would seem. Individual choice is sacrificed to the State's system. Arcous joins the conversation,

> 'Well, that's got to be …You can't have it both ways, and you can sublimate your maternal cravings.'
>
> 'For your benefit,' retorted Morgana angrily. 'Of course the argument suits your sex admirably.' (Haldane, 1926, p. 189)

Haldane acknowledges a conflict of interests between men and women – something not found in *Motherhood and its Enemies*. Women's bodies are framed here by men. Who becomes a mother and who has to 'sublimate' that urge becomes the decision of science – controlled by the male population. Women's bodies become split between those to be used for the State and those, to use Bruce's words, that are 'useless'. When Nicolette is persuaded to give up the rebellion, then, it is only herself, Morgana, and Christopher who suffer. Christopher, of course, as an 'intersex' character, does not experience the lack of autonomy that the women feel but is also not a comfortable member of the male scientific elite. After Christopher's death and Nicolette's departure Morgana confronts the other rebels. Finding them inebriated and indifferent to the events she chastises them for their 'cold feet', reminding them that, 'Christopher meant it, and I meant it, and Nicolette meant it – then' (Haldane, 1926, p. 257). Here she lists the only people directly affected by the State's system; those who do not fit a gendered ideal – Christopher – and those whose bodies are State-controlled – Morgana and Nicolette. Despite being a mother and a neuter they are equal in their lack of independence. Though in *Motherhood and its Enemies* - written to sell to a largely male scientific audience – Haldane defines the 'enemy' as the 'spinster', in *Man's World*, a fictional and therefore less controversial platform, she defines the enemy as the patriarchal hierarchy.

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Haldane also uses *Man's World* to directly address the social patriarchal structures found in the early twentieth-century home. In a discussion on the history of motherhood Nicolette's teacher tells her,

> You see, in the old days a mother of the white race was required to be an employee in the home of the father of her children. How they attempted it we cannot imagine, but we know that an individual cannot accomplish more than one important task successfully, could not expect to. Some one always suffered, and the order of the sufferers was first the mothers, then the children, then the man. (Haldane, 1926, p. 52)

To make the point clearer to her reader Haldane has Nicolette's teacher clarify that the burden of this kind of mothering 'did not become really acute in Europe and North America until the dawn of the twentieth century' (Haldane, 1926, p. 52), to which Nicolette wonders why the mothers did not revolt (Haldane, 1926, p. 52). Haldane identifies the reproductive labour undertaken by mothers as 'work' – she is an 'employee in the home' - and in doing so Haldane reveals the power structure inherent in this model which benefitted the husband over the wife and children. Indeed, many early twentieth-century mothers were suffering under the burdens of their families. Jane Lewis points to the great effect a large family had on working-class women. With limited or non-existent access to birth control many poor mothers with large families found that their food provisions would not stretch. Many mothers struggled to feed themselves as they provided the family – particularly the husband – with most of their meagre meals, which could often result in harder pregnancies (Arnup et al., 1990, pp. 8–9). Whilst this is a lower-working-class extreme Lewis notes that,

> It is clear that late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century women of all social classes desired smaller families. Such sentiments are recognizable in the famous statement of Queen Victoria that she would prefer not to be the "maman d'une nombreuse famille" [or 'mother of a numerous family']; in the case made by Dora

Russell on behalf of working-class women to male socialist leaders that, irrespective

of the better living standards that might be expected under socialism, women would

not want a baby every year… (Arnup et al., 1990, p. 10)

With limited and often stigmatised access to birth control a mother, regardless of her class,

was expected to be content as a "maman d'une nombreuse famille", with the potential for 'a

baby every year' and yet Haldane's novel reveals deep dissatisfaction. Hera Cook notes that

in Britain in the early twentieth century contraceptives were 'generally crude, unreliable,

expensive and difficult to obtain' (Cook, 2004, p. 123). Whilst advertising of various

contraceptives is found in trade literature during this period, 'most people were embarrassed

and uncertain of what they needed and where to go to obtain it' (Cook, 2004, p. 123). Cook

tells us that,

At the beginning of the 1920s the few experts on birth control had limited knowledge

as to which birth control methods were effective and why. Contraception remained a

matter of self-help in the face of advice that was often confusing at best. (Cook,

2004, p. 124)

Many turned to the advice of birth-control manuals (also known as marriage manuals) with

one of the most recommended books being *Parenthood: Design or accident? A Manual of

Birth Control* (1928) by Michael Fielding (Cook, 2004, p. 125). However, advice in these

books varied in its effectiveness, with contraceptive methods such as placing a sponge next

to the cervix being recommended well into the interwar years (Cook, 2004, p. 126). The

prominent sexologist Norman Haire cited doctors as part of the reason for women's limited

access to more technological methods of birth control. Of the cervical cap, he noted that

women often found it hard to use, requiring instruction from a doctor; however, he also found

doctors to be unwilling to fulfill this role and as a result the supply of the cap was limited

(Cook, 2004, p. 133).

This concern over women's lack of bodily autonomy – over a mother's inability to limit her children – caused directly or indirectly by the actions of a scientific male elite, is reflected by Haldane in *Man's World*. The scientific government of *Man's World* controls women's bodies through a mixture of genetically-influenced bureaucracy (through an institutional system that selects mothers on a basis of genetic qualities and filters out non-mothers) and scientific intervention (those selected as 'neuters' or non-mothers are sterilised). This mirrors Haldane's own society in which access to birth control was legally and medically controlled and whilst prominent pro-birth-control activists like Marie Stopes were largely female, their legal, medical, and moral (in the form of the Church) opposition was overwhelmingly male. In addition to the anti-contraception or limited-contraception movements, male dominated science was conversely discussing the use of contraception to curb the production of 'undesirable' infants. As discussed at the Geneva World Population Conference, and much like the bureaucratic mother-selection system of *Man's World*, the use of contraception was suggested for poor or disabled members of society to prevent continuation of disability or poverty. Just like in *Man's World*, then, the interwar female body struggled to have independence outside of social, legal, and medical institutions.

Without acknowledging patriarchal structures Haldane intimates this female-male power dynamic in *Motherhood and its Enemies*. She assures the reader she is not 'supporting one class of women as against another' (Haldane, 1927a, p. 137) but within this statement is the implication that women fall into two distinct sets, like those seen in *Man's World*, based on whether they provide society with children. There is a hidden but implicit power dynamic within this. Interwar society was defined largely by the law, science and, to a lesser, though still relevant extent, the Church, and these institutions were heavily male-dominated. As such, the society a woman provided children for was a male-centric one. By splitting women into 'classes' Haldane implies a hierarchy, like that of the economic class system, defined by

a woman's reproductive productivity. 'Woman', by this classification – Haldane's own classification (though with a male scientific readership in mind) – is defined solely by reproduction.

There is a resistance to this idea, however, within Haldane's interwar fiction. Sewn through this collection of novels is a preoccupation with cattle as a representation of women. This reflects stories being published within the papers that Haldane had worked for during the twenties. Susan Squier discusses articles published in the *Daily* and *Sunday Express* in the years preceding *Man's World*. The *Daily Express* published an article on 10th July 1924 titled "Secret of Sex Control on the Verge of a Discovery" which contained a prediction from a director of animal breeding research who was interviewed at a Scottish cattle-breeding conference in Edinburgh. Researchers predicted that 'within the decade "The scientist will have obtained such information concerning the process of sex determination and sex differentiation…that the means of controlling the sex of offspring will have been developed"' (Squier, 1994, p. 109). This was followed on July 24th in the *Sunday Express* by a story detailing an MP's wife who claimed to know the sex of her child before it was born, using knowledge and experience gained with dairy cattle (Squier, 1994, p. 110).

These stories are directly reflected in the narrative of *Man's World*. The opening chapters of the book, which locate the reader within the paradigm, describe the development of sex control in the bodies of cattle and cite the first instance of this in humans coming from the efforts of a Lady who learns to use the technique herself. However, this connection between women and cows and the use of cattle in researching female reproduction clearly struck a deeper chord with Haldane. She first aligns mothers with cattle in a discussion between the council of mothers and a group of scientists. The scientists reveal to the mothers that research is being undertaken, using cattle, to enable *in vitro* fertilisation and ectogenetic

pregnancy, beginning the process to eradicate the council of mothers and the motherhood

industry altogether. The mothers are told that the scientists had successfully 'turned out

seventy-eight ectogenetic calves' (Haldane, 1926, p. 56) whose milk is 'free from all harmful

bacteria' (Haldane, 1926, p. 57). Using the cattle the scientists begin to encroach on the

territory of the mother by creating 'ideal' genetic material. These women are chosen for their

physical as well as psychological abilities, in order that they produce the 'best' children. With

the scientists working on eradicating impregnation and pregnancy, minimising the chances

of undesirable genetic variation, the mother's role is in jeopardy.

Whilst the cows here are in some ways co-conspirators with the scientists, working, albeit

rather inactively, to eradicate the mother, they are also in a similar position to the mothers.

Both groups are effectively indentured to the scientist; their bodies and its products

inextricably tied to his interests. Haldane reiterates this connection through the words of

Morgana, 'We are becoming so utterly gregarious that most of us already have no kind of

existence apart from the herd. Mental and manual workers, entertainers, mothers, it is the

same everywhere' (Haldane, 1926, p. 159). Referring to the various occupations of 'neuters'

as well as the sole occupation of the mother, Morgana describes these women as being a

'part of the herd', calling on the reader's association of herded animals as those that are

used, that produce for society but, of course, do not benefit from their produce. She extends

this point when she tells Arcous,

> There are other forms of love of which you know nothing, which cannot matter to you.
>
> Love of freedom, of independence. Your kind may make a race, but mine is what
>
> keeps its banner flying. It's the love worth dying for, though yours may give life – as
>
> the beasts do. (Haldane, 1926, p. 259)

With the previous association of cattle and herded animals already established, Morgana's

reference to the production of children as giving life 'as the beasts do' plays into the existing

semantic field. Now, however, Morgana suggests that the production of infants is not enough, that society *and* the individual need more. Without 'freedom' and 'independence' women are 'beasts', those cows whose purpose is to simply create products for social consumption.

This is reiterated in *Youth is a Crime* by Ilse who, shortly after losing her illegitimate child, tells Elizabeth, '…we're not just cows like most of them, because we read, and think, and dream' (Haldane, 1934, p. 230). Here again, Ilse differentiates herself from 'the herd' and 'beasts' via her intellectualism. She defines herself and Elizabeth (who is a maternal figure and therefore a 'potential mother') as having more to produce than just offspring. Societal attempts to remove female individuality and creativity are met with anger by Elizabeth who, seeing a woman publicly feeding her child, reflects,

> The Old Testament had already offended her sense of personality by making it perfectly clear that women were inferior beings, born to breed and to respect their lords and masters. These daily spectacles seemed to reinforce a point of view which to her had seemed, from the moment she had been brought into contact with it, intolerable; the point of view that women were not intelligent human beings at all, but just another kind of cow. (Haldane, 1934, p. 102)

In our contemporary society, in which women have fought (and continue to do so) to feed their children in public, this reaction to a woman publicly breastfeeding can seem jarring. Haldane, however, through the voice of Elizabeth, presents this act as a metaphor for the social position of mothers. In feeding her child on the street the mother, to Elizabeth, is 'uncivilised' and animalistic. She reveals herself as 'just another kind of cow', her only social function laid bare, as it were, for public display. In visually and physically admitting her role as a 'cow', the mother forgoes being understood as 'intelligent', instead she is simply 'born to breed'.

The connection between women and cattle is reiterated in 1937 in *Swastika Night* by Katharine Burdekin, in which a post-Great War Nazi Empire has reduced women to 'Poor cattle' (Burdekin, 1985, p. 11), an animalistic herd. In this novel women are valued only for their procreative abilities and are not permitted to be a part of society. Elizabeth Russell has compared the depictions of women in both *Man's World* and *Swastika Night*, noting the reduction of women to 'female animals' (Russell, 1991, p. 24) in the latter. Whilst Russell notes that 'Charlotte Haldane and Katharine Burdekin both depicted dystopian societies of the far future in which women and life are worthless' (Russell, 1991, p. 26), she argues that the two books differ significantly in their presentation of women. In *Swastika Night* all 'women have been reduced to 'nothingness'…they have neither a will nor a soul' (Russell, 1991, p. 24). In *Man's World* though, all women are ultimately worthless because 'there is no space for the feminine principle to develop freely' (Russell, 1991, p. 24) but the 'vocational mothers in the scientific state are aware of their power over men, the power to create life' (Russell, 1991, p. 25). Russell suggests some glimmer of hope in the figure of the mother, that she perhaps has more power. However, whilst the mother is certainly considered valuable to the scientist she can be eradicated through technology, as shown through the scientists' discussions with the motherhood council. The connection that the scientists make between their research material – cattle – and mothers' bodies show that whilst the mother is valuable, for now, she is not powerful.

These connections between woman and cattle follow on from what Amanda J. Zink refers to as a 'nineteenth-century conceit comparing women to beasts of burden' (Zink, 2014, p. 206) which is also found in Charlotte Perkins Gilman's socio-economic text, *Women and Economics*. In this book a connection is drawn between the mother and the domesticated horse. She is depicted as 'no different from the enslaved horse that is only an economic

factor because of the labour it provides for its master' (Zink, 2014, p. 207). For the mother

the only way to distinguish herself from the animal 'is to gain control of one's own economic

production' (Zink, 2014, p. 208). Similarly, what is found in both Charlotte Haldane and

Katharine Burdekin's depictions of cattle-like women is the revelation of an anxiety over

mothers' socio-economic value, and the female body's vulnerability to exploitation of its

reproductive labour. The cow, an animal that is farmed and used for its produce, becomes

symbolic of the societal treatment of the mother in Haldane's literature, just as the cow-like

women of Burdekin's *Swastika Night* serve as a warning of the end result of this treatment.

This anxiety over the bodies of mothers and, specifically, governmental and medical

interventions into them, found in Haldane's fiction, exemplified by the treatment of the

mothers by the scientists in *Man's World*, is reflective of the treatment of mothers in the early

twentieth century. As Jane Lewis notes, 'Motherhood was undoubtedly a dangerous

business; as late as the 1930s mothers ran a greater risk of mortality than did coalminers'

(Arnup et al., 1990, p. 11). This is corroborated by Tania McIntosh who notes that,

> The maternal mortality rate (maternal deaths per thousand births…) was as high in
>
> 1934 as it had been 50 years previously... Up until the closing years of the First
>
> World War maternal mortality had not generally been considered an issue, as
>
> numbers were considered to be at acceptable levels. (McIntosh, 2012, pp. 45–6)

Despite this, McIntosh criticises the interpretation of the increased medicalisation of

maternity in the twenties and thirties as a move from female to male medical care noting

that, 'at the time there was no sense that there was one 'right' solution to the issue of

maternal well-being. It was not simply about replacing women with men or hospitals with

home' (McIntosh, 2012, pp. 51–2). However, she notes that 'there was definitely an anti-GP

sentiment developing, with GPs increasingly seen as the perpetrators of many of the

problems, just as midwives had been in the early years of the century' (McIntosh, 2012, p.

52). This is because one of the most common killers of new mothers was puerperal fever and, as McIntosh tells us,

> Although the notification of cases of puerperal fever was compulsory after 1893, rates of notification were notoriously low. It was suggested by some that this would remain the case as long as blame for the condition attached to the medical attendant... It could ruin a doctor's career if he was found to be spreading fever, so…deaths from puerperal fever were in some areas higher than notifications, suggesting a certain 'laxity' in reporting on the part of doctors. (McIntosh, 2012, p. 49)

What was particularly scary for middle-class mothers was that social status and the mother's hygiene did not protect her (McIntosh, 2012, p. 52). In fact, by 1937 a government report actually found that middle and upper-class women were at a greater threat because they were receiving antenatal care from 'GPs whose experience would have been limited' (McIntosh, 2012, p. 52). Despite this there was a growth in maternity hospitals during this period, which was, according to McIntosh, very much demand-lead (McIntosh, 2012, p. 45). However, this move by mothers to want increased formal medical intervention into their pregnancies was in response to Government advice. McIntosh tells us that,

> It was made clear that women who received antenatal care were doing the best thing by themselves and their babies... it was a species of victim blaming to suggest that women who did not attend for care were deliberately putting themselves at risk. Powerful language was used by both the Ministry of Health and government reports looking at maternal mortality. (McIntosh, 2012, pp. 56–7)

This is seen too in Katherine Arnup's analysis of interwar government policy on maternity. She tells us that,

> Throughout all the publications of the period, one finds evidence of the increasing medicalization of pregnancy, childbirth, and child rearing. From the moment a woman

first thought that she might be pregnant, and throughout her pregnancy, confinement,

and her child's early years, a mother was to consult her doctor and follow his advice.

Women were cautioned to ignore traditional sources of information and support, such

as family members or friends, and to follow instead the 'modern' methods of

'scientific' child rearing advocated in the government health publications. (Arnup et

al., 1990, p. 193)

In short, mothers at the time were feeling at risk from malpractice by under-experienced GPs

whilst simultaneously feeling morally obliged, as new mothers, to seek professional medical

care and to value male medical intervention over the help of traditional female birthing

figures.

This double-bind reflected the experience of women as a whole, as Jane Lewis notes,

in large part it was doctors who mediated the new scientific doctrines on sex

differences and sex roles and who succeeded in becoming the new moral arbiters.

Not only did the medical profession deny women control of their own sexuality, but in

promoting motherhood as women's natural task, they both reinforced assumptions

regarding sexual divisions and asserted their fitness to 'manage' pregnancy,

childbirth and childbearing. (Arnup et al., 1990, p. 3)

Motherhood, then, was a facet of the male-dominated medical control over the female body.

To be female was to be part of a pathologised category, whether that referred to

motherhood, sexuality, or sexual difference, and it is this medicalised language that Haldane

had to contend with. According to Susan Squier, Haldane is caught in a 'difficult balancing

act between feminist desire for female agency and the discursive hegemony of the largely

male medical profession' (Squier, 1994, p. 109) so that 'Central to *Motherhood and its*

Enemies is an argumentative strategy Haldane shared with other women of her day:

recourse to scientific discourse to advance her feminist goals' (Squier, 1994, p. 108). As I

have shown in this chapter, however, Haldane uses her fiction to undermine and criticise male-dominated science and medicine. The male-dominated scientific society of *Man's World*, in which mothers and 'neuters' are obligated to follow the State's rulings over their bodies, becomes symbolic of the anxieties women faced over the increased use of male-dominated medical science to categorise their bodies and control their births. Especially, as the high maternal mortality rate indicated, male-dominated science appeared to be less interested in the well-being of the mother and more interested in the successful production of the child. In this light mothers were being treated like Haldane and Katharine's cattle-women, as figures to be used and sacrificed to the State.

In this chapter, then, I have revealed Haldane's more contradictory nature. In highlighting the importance of the economic and social survival of the mother she demonises what she refers to as the 'spinster' whilst repeatedly insisting she does not intend to do so. As social pressure mounted for mothers to return to their homes, the relative freedom of the unmarried, childless woman was, to Haldane, problematic. However, because her text on the matter –*Motherhood and Its Enemies* – was written with the male scientific community as a targeted readership, her criticisms of the social and economic pressures on mothers are directed solely at the 'spinster' with no analysis of the wider social and economic factors influenced by the male-dominated spheres of the law, science, and the Church. It is in her fictional work, then, that the reader finds these criticisms and women are revealed to be of a lower social class than men. Whilst this system defines non-married or childless women as 'useless', the 'mother' class is valued only for its reproductive uses. Relegated to a 'herd' class, the mother is cultivated for her produce but valued for nothing more. The threat of the patriarchal social structure – the government and male-dominated medical science - is acknowledged, then, as Haldane depicts the treatment and social valuing of mothers as livestock –cattle to be farmed for their produce.

Chapter Three:
Interwar Motherhood: The Sacrificing Madonna

In the previous chapter it was shown how, in adopting the rhetoric of science in order to demonstrate the importance of the mother, Haldane was unable to engage critically with the patriarchal social structure that was undermining and even threatening the social and economic positions of mothers. It was also shown how it was in Haldane's fiction that she was able to engage with the topic more fully. In this chapter I explore this further to reveal how Haldane's interwar fiction demonstrates the mother as a sacrificial figure within patriarchal society. This iteration of the maternal figure indicates how Haldane envisioned her to be alienated from the public, political, and scientific by the structures and institutions of patriarchy. Much as the previous chapter showed the maternal woman to be a beast of burden, *used* by patriarchal society, this chapter demonstrates how the maternal woman is moulded by that society in order to make her complicit in her own alienation. This feeds into the final chapter of this thesis, which discusses how Haldane pushes back against this alienation of the feminine from these public institutions.

In preparing to retell the French folk-tale about the serpent sorceress, for her final interwar novel, *Melusine*, Haldane tells us (in the afterword) that in her research she 'revealed many interesting confirmations of Dr. Murray's theories, including that of the Ritual Victim, which has given rise to much controversy' (Haldane, 2003, p. 313). The doctor referred to here is Margaret Alice Murray, an anthropologist and folklorist whose theories on witchcraft in Europe caused some controversy with fellow academics rejecting the quality of her analysis. The 'Ritual Victim' that Haldane refers to here can be found in Murray's 1921 book, *The Witch Cult in Western Europe*. In this text she posits the ritual victim as divine and as part of

a female-centred fertility ritual though, as Geoffrey Parrinder has pointed out, there was no actual evidence of this in Europe (Parrinder, 2013, p. 126). This interest in the ritual victim, which Haldane found compelling, is part of a wider cultural interest found in the early twentieth century. As Parrinder notes, Murray's theories on witchcraft saw the cult of the witch like a religion ruled by a god or masked priest (much like in *Melusine*) - 'and made it into a fertility cult similar to the synthetic 'near eastern religion' of Frazer's *Golden Bough*' (Parrinder, 2013, p. 125). Sir James George Frazer's *The Golden Bough*, published originally in 1890 and rereleased numerous times between 1900 and 1915, is synonymous with a modernist concern with ritual and rebirth. As Derek Hughes notes,

> human sacrifice was to be a major Modernist theme. That other great inventor of early twentieth century music, Arnold Schoenberg, portrayed it in his opera *Moses und Aron*. A dream of human sacrifice is the psychological center of Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain*, and it also figures powerfully in the Joseph tetralogy. *The Waste Land* portrays a world that has lost the Frazerian rituals of rebirth, and several of Lawrence's works portray human sacrifice as a source of sexual and social renewal. It is everywhere. (Hughes, 2007, p. 216)

The extensive interest in human sacrifice across the modernist artforms is made clear here by Hughes. However, what Hughes focuses on is a specifically masculine view of sacrifice. He connects this modernist interest with the event of the Great War noting that, 'The First World War is the first war which the British habitually imagined in terms of sacrifice' (Hughes, 2007, p. 218). The thousands of young men lost in the war were sacrificed for their country. Whilst this understanding helps in the exploration of the masculine artistic interest in the ritual victim and human sacrifice, it does relatively little to help us understand the feminine perspective outside of maternal loss.

What this chapter will show is that for Haldane the mother was the ritual victim of early twentieth-century Europe. I explore how Haldane shows, through her interwar literature, the ways in which the mother was prepared for her role. First, I consider how Haldane presents a cultural distaste for girls' sex education as a way in which they are kept ignorant of their bodies. I then show how the limiting of education limits characters' prospects outside of the home. Then I will move on to explore how marriage is presented as a means to entrap women within the patriarchal order and I show how the social invocation of a sexual double-standard allows the bad behaviour of men to be absorbed by the bodies of women. Once I have established how women – specifically those maternal, 'potential mothers' are prepared by society to accept their role as ritual victims, I then look at how motherhood is presented as a religion, a faith that each maternal women must follow. At the same time, I explore how the figure of the mother is idolised and made into a conceptual icon. This leads into the final section where I discuss how Haldane presents the mother as a sacrificial Madonna, imbued with religious responsibility, willing to sacrifice herself for the continuation of a male-dominated social order.

Preparing the Victim: Separation from the Body via a Lack of Sex Education

Haldane shows us how society creates its mothers via different methods of control over female development – both intellectual and psycho-physical (how she understands her body). I begin by exploring how Haldane presents how young women are alienated from their bodies through lack of education.

Haldane reveals a problematic disregard for educating women on matters of sex. In *Brother to Bert* Lil's naivety is almost child-like. She wonders, 'What did boys and girls really do besides kissing? It must be something wicked, because it was made such a secret of' (Haldane, 1930, p. 106). The phrasing of Lil's musing frames the issue of sex education in

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terms of religious morality; the word 'wicked' sharing a religious sematic field with 'sin'. In the age of the sexologist the idea of sex being 'wicked' and therefore in need of secrecy seems particularly archaic. However, her lack of understanding soon proves itself to be a potential danger.

Len discovers, in a conversation with Lil, that she has no understanding of the biological process of sexual intercourse and this news is met with mixed reactions,

> He was quite sure of her physical purity, but that she didn't even *know*...! He had never met a girl like her. She fairly had him beat, and for the first time in all his young life Len was at once hot and cold with embarrassment and with respect and with the discomfort of desire aroused by her amazing innocence of mind and body. (Haldane, 1930, p. 117)

Whilst words like 'respect' and 'amazing' may initially mislead the reader, Len quickly reveals these feelings to be fleeting as shortly afterwards he is joking with Bert over Lil's ignorance. Although the shock of finding a woman so uninformed about the world momentarily makes him react with 'respect', he soon returns to his old attitude, only now armed with the knowledge of Lil's innocence. Len quickly monopolises this innocence for his own gain. He thinks he can have affairs with other women because '…she'd never understand a person being in love with one girl and going with another, so she'd not be suspicious…' (Haldane, 1930, p. 127). Lil's innocence, in this respect, becomes her greatest vulnerability in their relationship. Not only this but it is this very innocence – or rather inflicted ignorance – that pushes Lil into a relationship with the womaniser not only because she simply does not really know what a womaniser is but also because Len (and Bert) can offer information that others have kept from her. The reader is told that,

> She had always been a silent, repressed child, feeling oddly shy with members of her own sex. Not that she had been less timid with boys – but she was to learn from

association with Len and Bert that she could apparently be less embarrassed when certain matters were mentioned by men – at any rate, by her husband. (Haldane, 1930, p. 104)

Haldane is careful not to present this as fact. Lil learns 'from association' that she can be more open around men. The addition of this phrase encourages the reader to question whether Bert and Len are using the situation to their advantage. As Lil has no frame of reference she does not know what 'usual' conversations about sexuality are like, after all. The content of these conversations, or how explicit they are, is not revealed but the framing of their talks as those that may take place between a husband and wife allows the reader's imagination to wander.

The extent to which Lil's lack of experience makes her vulnerable is displayed when she first marries Len, an act that thereby morally sanctions, for Lil, sexual activity between the couple.

Oh yes, she loved him right enough, and if her mind was still pure, her body had been broken into womanhood to such effect that Len only had to lay hands on her to render her incapable of all further battling with his bad ways…to make her for the time being his completely submissive and docile little slave. (Haldane, 1930, p. 156)

With no understanding of it, Lil is overpowered by her sexuality. This damages her relationship with Len by rendering her a 'docile little slave', unable to defend herself and their relationship against his 'bad ways'. It is clear to the reader that her naivety, in part, has led to this situation.

In *Youth is a Crime* it is again shown that a lack of sex education has dangerous implications. Elizabeth has some awareness that her body will change and,

> She knows that this change is necessary in order that she shall one day be able to
> have a child. Her mother has also informed her in tender tones that she will carry this
> child inside her body "under her heart", and that "nature is very wonderful". (Haldane,
> 1934, p. 98)

This unscientific explanation is particularly sentimental, perhaps exaggerating for effect the lack of clear information provided to young women. As a result Elizabeth thinks 'Her mother's information is more than puzzling; though ridiculously inadequate, it is somehow mysteriously exciting' (Haldane, 1934, pp. 98–9). It is this phrase 'mysteriously exciting' that the reader understands to be most problematic as it conveys both her fundamental lack of understanding as well as her attraction; a dangerous combination.

To intensify this point the reader is presented with the case of Ilse, a girl of a similar age who meets a young man and, to the horror of her family and community, becomes pregnant. Ilse tells Elizabeth, 'My aunts – my father's sisters, you know –say that my 'misfortune' is due to the fact that I was bought up too unconventionally, allowed too much freedom, and so on. It's ludicrous, of course; I simply *didn't know*' (Haldane, 1934, p. 234). Ilse has been led to this situation through her lack of knowledge; her lack of sex education has resulted in pregnancy. The reader is led to wonder how she was meant to instinctively know that sex led to pregnancy and yet, as is seen through her social ostracisation, she is blamed for her ignorance. This is shown again through the reaction of Suzanne, Elizabeth's friend, to the pregnancy of Ilse, '…A girl of her size.' Suzanne giggled again, 'ought to know how to take care of herself' (Haldane, 1934, p. 223). Ilse's physical sexual maturity is viewed as evidence of her ability (or rather, her need) to 'take care of herself' (not to get pregnant), but there is no expectation that anyone should have taught her. Again, the ridiculousness of the suggestion that this knowledge is innate is revealed.

Some girls, however, are shown to acquire this knowledge without formal guidance – from other children and 'petting parties', Suzanne included. She tells Elizabeth, 'Would a thing like that happened to me? It might possibly happen to a little fool like you, who refused even to talk about such things, and so mightn't know the danger, but me!' (Haldane, 1934, p. 223). Here is the crux of the issue. For girls like Elizabeth, who are unwilling or unable to learn from their peers, sex poses a 'danger'. The suggested danger here is, of course, unwanted pregnancy, like Ilse's experience. As Haldane demonstrates, the cause of this danger is the infliction of ignorance on young women.

Haldane presents the lack of sex education given to girls as a decision based on social taboo. Girls are kept ignorant of their bodies and bodily functions out of social ideas of 'appropriate' knowledge for young women. However, Haldane also reveals that this decision makes young women vulnerable to predatory male sexualities. Kept in a state of ignorance young women must remain celibate or risk social ostracisation. In this way the only option for a young woman wanting to engage in sexual activity is to get married, which ensures she remains in the patriarchal structure of the family. As the following section will show, the limiting of academic education is also used to keep women from straying from the family.

Preparing the Victim: Limiting Education

In *Youth is a Crime* Haldane shows us how education is deemed less important for a young woman than for a young man. When Elizabeth is moved from her home in London to Antwerp her new girls' school is a particular disappointment. Frau Müller's private school was intended to 'cater for the daughters of true-blooded German Protestants' (Haldane, 1934, p. 30) but had started to allow in non-Protestant girls as the school's finances suffered due to the opening of another school. Being catered to the daughters of a specific subsection of Belgian society, the reader is told that, 'the early pupils entrusted to her had in

due course married and provided her with a later generation of flaxen-haired maidens'
(Haldane, 1934, p. 30). The school's economy, then, is based on training wives not workers.
Certainly this is what Elizabeth experiences, as her lessons consist of 'two subjects; crochet
and writing' (Haldane, 1934, p. 31). Müller loses 'custom' to a German gymnasium as 'In
recent years a girls' school had been added to the 'gymnasium' originally founded for boys
only, where their sisters enjoyed precisely similar instruction from the highly-qualified men
teachers, university graduates all, assembled under the brilliant young headmaster, Dr
Kaempfer' (Haldane, 1934, p. 31). Whilst this could imply that parents were interested in
giving their daughters an education – from graduates – in order that they might be
ambitious, the parental reaction to Elizabeth's nemesis 'the monument' disproves this
reading. Whilst Bertha Stubbe spends 'Term after term, year after year, through form after
form' (Haldane, 1934, p. 59) as 'top girl' her parents are not content. This is because of the
'mistake of having created their only daughter intelligent and their three sons nit-wits'
(Haldane, 1934, p. 60). As a woman Bertha's intellect is of less value than that of her
brothers. This is also seen in the treatment of Elizabeth and her education.

Upon Elizabeth leaving her London school, where she enjoyed taking part in sports as well
as academic lessons, her mother has a conversation with an unnamed, but authoritative,
voice assumed to be a teacher;

> Better to take her away from those violent school games and to distract her mind
> from the everlasting burying of her nose in books. "She's very intelligent, Mrs.
> Hermann; she is almost certain to get a scholarship later on." No harm in that, nice to
> have little girls who did their lessons well, but her future husband wasn't going to
> worry whether or not she had won a scholarship. (Haldane, 1934, p. 19)

Here is the disconnect between Elizabeth's mother's ambitions for her daughter and
Elizabeth's own hopes for her life. For Mrs. Hermann her expectations for her daughter do

not go beyond becoming a wife. Elizabeth however, wants to be a writer and to study languages when she finishes school. When this narrative is compared with Haldane's own childhood, in which she too was moved to Antwerp and had unfulfilled ambitions to study languages, as Judith Adamson tells us in her biography of the author (Adamson, 1998, p. 13), a deeper sense of the societal issue she is pointing to in *Youth is a Crime* is conveyed. Elizabeth's intellectual talent is undervalued by her family because, as a woman, her intellect was not valued by interwar society.

As Elizabeth's experiences in *Youth is a Crime* demonstrate, women's education was not valued because it risked the disintegration of the patriarchal family built on a structure of the father as breadwinner and the mother as housewife. Elizabeth's ambitions are not encouraged because they limit her chances of being part of a traditional family unit. In the following section I show how Haldane demonstrates marriage to be a socially inflicted trap for young women.

Preparing the Victim: Marriage as Entrapment

Haldane is critical of the importance placed upon marriage. Werner tells us in *Youth is a Crime*, 'Marriage had nothing whatever to do with romance. In fact, the two were practically incompatible' (Haldane, 1934, p. 156), and this cynicism is apparent throughout her interwar fiction.

Haldane shows the importance placed on marriage by society through the cruel treatment received by unmarried pregnant mothers, through the experiences of Ilse in *Youth is a Crime*. In becoming pregnant outside of marriage Ilse's social-crime is so great it sanctions illegal action from her family. After learning of her pregnancy, 'A Dr had been called in to see her, had done horrible, unthinkable things to her…' (Haldane, 1934, p. 227). It is therefore

implied that the baby, which Ilse tells Elizabeth she wishes she had been able to keep as 'That would at least have been some consolation' (Haldane, 1934, p. 231), is aborted by order of her family. Abortion was not legalised until 1967 and had been the subject of a new law, the Infant Life Preservation Act (1929), a few years before the publication of *Youth is a Crime*. In implying abortion Haldane looks to engage her reader emotionally; at the time an embryo was considered a child under the Infant Life Preservation Act and so Ilse's family's decision to terminate the pregnancy – not only a severely invasive act – is, from the interwar cultural perspective, akin to murder. Therefore Haldane is presenting a society that values the convention of marriage above the life of a child.

The ostracising of Ilse too shines a light on the cruelty directed at unmarried mothers. The reader is told that 'when she had got better she had been sent home to face the disgrace anew' (Haldane, 1934, p. 227), indicating the barrage of violation aimed at the sixteen year old. The sense of shame pushed on her by her family and the community causes her to try and kill herself. The reader is told that 'Hope, love, trust in her fellow-creatures, those had gone too; no one but she seemed to mind that in the least; it was all in order that a shameless wanton should suffer for her sin' (Haldane, 1934, p. 227). Religion is used to justify the punishment of a young girl who transgresses the patriarchal structure of the traditional family. Religion, therefore is presented as an extension of the patriarchal society, though Haldane is careful to connect this to organised religion as a whole, as Elizabeth tells Ilse, 'Good people are the worst; it's all the fault of religion. Jews and Christians alike, they're all the same' (Haldane, 1934, p. 232). Religious morality, based on dogma, of which the institution of marriage is a part, is depicted by Haldane to be problematic. When Elizabeth, motivated by humanity not faith, offers her an un-judging ear, Ilse tells her,

> You know, at the beginning, I tried to kill myself… But this afternoon, when you
>
> overtook me, I was thinking about it seriously; I wondered whether I might not, after

all, have another shot and managed it successfully this time...You've saved me from

that. You've given me new hope. (Haldane, 1934, pp. 234–5)

Here Haldane shows the violence of the patriarchal social order, policed by religious

morality. Ostracised by her religious community and robbed of her child, this young mother

turns to suicide. She is only saved when she is presented with sympathy from someone too

young to have been indoctrinated. Only she is able to view Ilse's actions outside of a

morality created to uphold the patriarchal structure of the family.

The morality of the Church – the insistence on marriage for mothers – is shown to damage

only women and not men through the father of Ilse's child. The reader is shown a young

woman repeatedly punished, taking the brunt of the blame, whilst the young man, 'her

seducer…had, not altogether unwillingly, been sent about his business…' (Haldane, 1934, p.

227). The father is able to largely escape punishment and is not subject to the same moral

outcry. Society's insistence on a marriage certificate therefore becomes the responsibility of

the woman, as the carrier of the child. Society's punishment, then, is directed only at the

mother.

In *Brother to Bert* marriage is undermined in both the relationship of Bert and Lottie and the

relationship of Len and Lil. Len is initially motivated to marry Lil, not because of love but in

order to sleep with her. When he makes advances towards her she tells him, 'I'm not sure

it'd be right unless we was married' (Haldane, 1930, p. 118). To which he responds,

internally, 'Married? What a lark! Well, why not? Why should they not get married?'

(Haldane, 1930, p. 118). As his initial thoughts suggest, Len does not take their marriage

vows seriously and after a short period of monogamy he begins to have affairs, leaving Lil in

an unhappy, one-sided marriage. Whilst Len's behaviour is largely suggested to be caused

by his relationship with his brother, which ends abruptly when Bert tries to escape murder

charges in Paris, his treatment of Lil throughout the novel does not leave the reader confident that without the influence of his brother, Len will learn to be the doting husband.

Just as Len is depicted as constantly attempting to escape the constraint of the marriage certificate, so too is Bert. The reader is told that Lottie 'was planning to marry him' (Haldane, 1930, p. 238) but, as Bert gets bored of her, he begins a new relationship with a younger woman, causing him to become cold and uncaring. However, Lottie, whose acting company is full of her ex-lovers, is used to retaining the power in her relationships. Her power over Bert is an inversion of what the reader would expect of a traditional relationship as, '…what was hers was his, provided he was willing to be 'good'' (Haldane, 1930, p. 242). Her economic power should, she expects, be enough to retain Bert but as his interest fades their relationship becomes increasingly turbulent. She reflects that, 'So long, she felt, as she could still spur him to some show of emotion (whether love or hatred was the same to her) she would know she retained power over him' (Haldane, 1930, p. 237). As a result the two become argumentative and violent towards each other, Bert resisting Lottie's attempts to control him as, 'He would be her lover so long as it suited him – he would never be her slave' (Haldane, 1930, p. 242). For Lottie marriage is her final attempt to control him. Just like Len she intends to use the marriage vows for her own purposes. This battle for control culminates in the drunken argument that leads to Bert's murder of Lottie and with that violent act any lingering connection between love and marriage is effectively severed.

For Haldane, marriage at best is synonymous with dissatisfaction and at worst it is a violent power struggle. In addition to this she depicts the societal need for marriage between two lovers to be motivated by religion, which in turn is motivated by the preservation of the patriarchal structure of the family. In whichever way Haldane depicts marriage and its social importance, she shows it to be problematic for women. Ilse receives the whole blame for her

pregnancy and is socially ostracised; Lil becomes shackled to an alcoholic cheat, and Lottie

is killed by the man she intends to marry.

Haldane shows us that the institution of marriage, far from benefiting mothers, leads to male

violence, male infidelity or the ostracisation of unmarried mothers. In short, it is only of

benefit to a patriarchal social order. In the next section I demonstrate how patriarchal social

standards in the form of the sexual double-standard allow for the absorption of male

transgression by female bodies.

Preparing the Victim: Sexual Double-Standard and the Absorption of Male Responsibility

As seen in *Motherhood and its Enemie*s, Haldane criticises the sexual equality of men and

prospective mothers, should the standard be set by men. She tells her reader, 'I do wish to

stand definitely as an opponent of the equal moral standard for men and women constantly

preached to-day, if that standard is to be a masculine one' (Haldane, 1927, p. 97). She goes

on to consider the problems of sexually transmitted diseases threatening monogamous

mothers because of husbands' sexual appetites and a lack of industrial hygiene standards

for professional prostitutes. In other words, as seen through Haldane's literary undermining

of the father and her problematic depictions of men, she does not view the contemporary

man as particularly suited to the family or to child-rearing, and therefore any sexual standard

set by him is not suitable for 'good' mothers. Whilst, in *Motherhood and its Enemies*,

Haldane reveals the innate incompatibility of the male sexual standard with family life, in her

interwar fiction the social function of a male/female double sexual standard is utilised so that

the sexual transgressions of men may be absorbed by the bodies of women.

In *Melusine* and *I Bring Not Peace* the sexual double standard is not only refuted but completely ignored. For both protagonists, Michal and Melusine, whose considerable sexual appetites are openly discussed in the narrative, the sexual double standard is of such little consequence to them that it is not mentioned. However, this may be due to the specific double standard that their behaviours allude to. Whilst both characters are sexual and sexually active, they are not promiscuous. Throughout *I Bring Not Peace* Michal has a physical relationship with only one man, whilst she pursues a relationship with both James and Jean. In both of these relationships, however, she builds a connection beyond the physical, finding in both men artistic, intellectual, and philosophic qualities. Similarly, in *Melusine* the protagonist has a sexual relationship with two men but this is depicted as a fraught and complex relationship in which Melusine is partly bound by duty and partly bound by awe of Owain. It is of course, further complicated when Melusine's and Owain's relationship becomes non-consensual. Melusine experiences her rape as a sexual experience, but the narrative framing of it as a non-consensual act prevents Melusine being understood by her reader as promiscuous or even a 'cheat'. This is not to suggest that Haldane is necessarily interested in displaying female sexual morality in a manner conducive to the hegemonic, monogamous culture of the interwar years. Instead, Haldane's women are sexual characters, as interested in intercourse as are their male counterparts.

In *Brother to Bert* Lil finds herself at odds with her Grannie's opinion on the divide between the sexes and the double standard for men and women. Grannie made,

> a hard-and-fast distinction between conduct suitable for males and conduct appropriate to females. Men and women were fundamentally different – so God had made them and God intended them to remain. Men were strong and stupid creatures – great babies, she thought them, all of them. They had not the same things to put up with as women, which was a mercy, for how could they have borne them if they had?

Women were superior in character: self-denial was a duty in women. Men, great children that they were, had all sorts of desires that were all right for them, and might therefore be gratified – always, of course, in moderation. (Haldane, 1930, p. 90)

Grannie's infantilisation of men absolves them of responsibility for their actions. She almost dehumanises them by referring to them as 'strong and stupid', a description fitting of a large animal. In doing so, however, she places *more* responsibility on women, and frames this within the patriarchal institution of religion – 'so God had made them'. However, Lil recognises this not as the hand of God but the result of society. Lil, 'differed from grannie in not believing in a double standard for boys and girls. She couldn't see at all why boys shouldn't be able to be good as easily as girls' (Haldane, 1930, pp. 90–1). The difference between the two women is that whilst Lil viewed the problem objectively – there was *no reason* men could not be as well behaved as women. Grannie trusts in the permanence of institutional structures; men 'couldn't be expected to know any better, and God had decided that that was how the world was to go on' (Haldane, 1930, p. 90). God, and by extension the Church, had set a double standard and that was unchangeable. It is this dichotomy between reason and religion that causes the narrative to explain that Grannie's was a 'simple body's working philosophy' (Haldane, 1930, p. 90). Although, as shown in the chapters on masculinity, Haldane connects the spiritual to philosophy and art, here it is shown that religion, in its organised, bureaucratised, institutionalised form, is synonymous with ignorance. Unlike her grandmother, Lil is not trapped by institutionalised thinking.

In Grannie's presentation of the sexes the responsibility for sexual behaviour lies largely with the woman as it is her responsibility to mediate the 'childish' 'desires' of men, but Lil does not agree with this. When posed with the question 'An' after all, you can't blame a boy for taking what's offered, can you, now?', referring to the sexual availability of some of her female coworkers at the theatre, she responds 'I'm not so sure as I can't' (Haldane, 1930, p.

116). The reader is informed that Lil answers 'reflectively' (Haldane, 1930, p. 116) . She is

not speaking semi-instinctively, from a conditioned mindset, but is considering her own

opinion on the matter. Whilst Lil believes that 'Things that were nasty for girls were just as

nasty for boys…' (Haldane, 1930, p. 91), she also conflicts, morally, with many of her female

co-workers. Lil is 'a one-man girl' (Haldane, 1930, p. 50) but also single, having not yet

found that man, whereas other women at the theatre frequently attend 'petting parties'

(Haldane, 1930, p. 102). It is noted of Lil and her co-workers that, 'there's not many girls of

your way of thinking nowadays. They're mostly worse than boys' (Haldane, 1930, p. 115),

and it is this that is at the crux of Lil's response. She is reserved and reflective because

those women are behaving worse than men and, as a 'good' mother figure (although she is

not yet pregnant at this point in the narrative, she is still a maternal figure) she, like Haldane,

is 'an opponent of the equal moral standard for men and women . . . if that standard is to be

a masculine one' (Haldane, 1927, p. 97). However, unlike Grannie, she does not deem

women *responsible* for men's moral conduct.

This sentiment is repeated, though much less directly, in *Youth is a Crime* when Elizabeth

discovers that René has been watching his school's maid, Yvonne, undress. Elizabeth

immediately lays the blame on Yvonne.

> She visualized Yvonne, so pretty, so unashamed, taking off her clothes at the
>
> window, peeping slyly to see whether René was watching, whilst she pretended
>
> completely to ignore the mere thought of the presence of any onlooker. Elizabeth
>
> could have killed her; whilst neither of them knew it, she absolutely agreed with René
>
> that Yvonne was to blame. It was up to girls to behave carefully and modestly.
>
> (Haldane, 1934, p. 186)

Elizabeth's response is typically juvenile – she is, of course a teenager – melodramatically

threatening to 'kill' the girl on the basis of the situation she imagines. She, like Lil's Grannie,

believed '…you couldn't, expect such a high standard of conduct from boys as from girls' (Haldane, 1934, p. 188). Hence her disappointment in the maid, but the narrative is clear in its depiction of René's wrong-doing. A disturbing scene is revealed in which René finds Yvonne cleaning in his room,

> 'Do you know what you deserve?' He asked, as with the other hand he forced her towards him.
>
> 'What?' she retorted invitingly, her chin impudently tilted.
>
> 'To be raped' he answered brutally, and embraced her fiercely, forcing his tongue between her half-closed teeth. Her resistance was only feigned.
>
> 'What's more,' he went on rather breathlessly, after a moment or two, 'if you don't lock your door very securely to-night, you will be.' (Haldane, 1934, p. 194)

Although the kiss does not appear to be non-consensual, the violence of his actions is made palpably clear by the detailed bodily interaction. He is described in hyper-aggressive terms – 'brutally', 'fiercely', 'forcing'- whilst Yvonne remains largely passive. Even though she 'invites' his attention, his response is quite shocking and infringes on her ability to consent. Not only this but his threat to return later to her room requires the caveat that she lock her door 'very securely' if she does not want him to enter. René's threat to rape Yvonne is mirrored by the actual rape of Liese and it is through the connection of these two events that the danger in allowing a man to exonerate his behaviour via a woman's passive body is revealed. Liese is raped by the caretaker after staying late after school. After becoming pregnant, a mixture of guilt, fear, and knowledge of public judgement (which is seen in the ousting of the pregnant Ilse) causes her to commit suicide. René blames Yvonne for his behaviour, noting that if women were 'virtuous, modest, and chaste, it would be a great deal easier for men to be good' (Haldane, 1934, p. 174), and so too does Elizabeth. It is unsurprising in this cultural climate, then, that Liese chooses to take her own life rather than face public judgement and the assumption that she has not been 'virtuous, modest, and chaste'. Liese's death therefore

becomes symbolic of the societal responsibility placed on women to mediate men's behaviour.

Whilst Haldane appears to support the idea that 'good' or 'suitable' mothers must behave in a certain way (as I have discussed in detail in a previous chapter), she reveals the double standard as a way of projecting men's bad behaviour onto women. This is an extreme way to enact control over women by regulating their behaviour to such an extent that they become responsible not only for their own actions but for men's as well.

In her depiction of the double standard, Haldane shows how men's 'bad' behaviour – largely sexual behaviour – is often seen as, in part, the responsibility of women, whilst women are also judged on their own behaviour as well. Whilst Haldane interrogates this notion through her characters, depicting it to be driven by ignorance, she reveals how women are conditioned to accept the transgressions of men and to place the responsibility on their own bodies.

So far in this chapter I have shown the various ways in which Haldane presents the social conditioning of women in order to ensure their compliance with a patriarchal social structure. In the following sections I show how motherhood is connected with religion in order placate women and indoctrinate them into a faith-based conception of motherhood and maternal duty that requires their sacrifice.

Preparing the Victim: Women Placated by Religion

In her interwar literature Haldane presents a societal attempt to placate women with religion. Her non-fiction text, *Motherhood and its Enemies*, is openly critical of religion noting,

Where, however, you have human beings feel themselves extended and uplifted by such means, they will nearly always be lulled and moderately satisfied with their lot. Even among people of a higher culture, one can note with astonished interest how faith in gods, according to the believer, vitiates independence of thought or action. (Haldane, 1927, p. 66)

Religion for Haldane, then, can mollify those with faith, but she also draws on the concept of a religious need, particularly in relation to women.

Elizabeth, in *Youth is a Crime*, is described as 'Like many naturally religious people, [seeking] in religion a personal message' (Haldane, 1934, p. 76) and the reader is told 'she had to satisfy her religious cravings somehow, to find a god, a concept which could be worked into her own awareness of the universe' (Haldane, 1934, p. 78). This description has much in common with Haldane's description of her own 'emotional need for a religion, or a substitute for one' (Haldane, 1949, p. 31) which drove her interest in science. Haldane conflates religious faith with science, suggesting that, emotionally, the two can have the same function for the individual.

This need for religion is taken advantage of by the scientists of *Man's World*. Bruce explains the religious context of vocational motherhood,

You do not quite understand race psychology in these matters. Especially of the women. If you invent a biological religion, as we had to do for them, and call it vocational motherhood, heretics will be as surely attacked by the female inquisition as protestants were by the catholic one. (Haldane, 1926, p. 200)

The scientists redirected a 'need for religion' toward vocational motherhood to create, effectively, zealots who would defend the regime faithfully. Religion – the need to have faith in something – becomes not just the means by which people can be 'lulled and moderately

satisfied with their lot' (Haldane, 1927, p. 66) but, more specifically, how a lack of 'independence of thought or action' can be assured of mothers.

Preparing the Victim: The Idolisation of Mothers

The 'emotional need for religion' is explored in *Motherhood and its Enemies*. Building on the psychological theory of Hermann Lotze that ornaments, decoration, and clothing act as an 'extension of personality' (Haldane, 1927, p. 62), Haldane positions Madonna worship similarly, noting that 'Madonna worship, both on its religious and on its secular side, was then an outlet for the subjective extension of emotions' (Haldane, 1927, p. 64). In the context of the nunnery *Motherhood and its Enemies* notes that 'Madonna worship, to use the Freudian terminology, was a sublimation of the maternal desire' (Haldane, 1927, p. 62) but, as the text tells us, Madonna worship is found in secular society too. In both cases Madonna worship serves the emotional needs of the individual and, as a result, the maternal becomes idolised. The idolisation of maternal figures is found throughout Haldane's interwar fiction.

In *Man's World* Arcous reveals society's idolisation of the mother through his mural. The reader is told that,

> For the portrait of the World Mother, Arcous had drawn on his imagination. Behind her lay a crowd of figures symbolizing man's slow development: great louty shapes crouched, squatted, and, slowly assuming an erect posture, acquired at the same time a softer outline, until there appeared among the gibbering, trembling satyrs of an ancient wood, modern man. He was drawn in profile, standing proudly alone, poised on tiptoe, ready it seemed to run or to fly. A darker, slightly negroid type a little to his right and behind him, had a hand still on his shoulder, but it was being shaken off by the glorious one, whose own two palms were laid fearlessly in the mighty fist of his mother. (Haldane, 1926, pp. 148–9)

Haldane requires no interpretation from the reader here as she depicts images of 'man's slow development' (accompanied by a racially-inscribed Neanderthal) flanking the 'World Mother'. Motherhood is being focused on here, presented as 'mighty'. Yet, recalling Bruce's confession that the scientists 'invent[ed] a biological religion…and call[ed] it vocational motherhood' (Haldane, 1926, p. 200) it is shown that despite her idolisation, the mother is not as powerful as she is depicted here. In Arcous's image she is leading humanity into his future – his two hands in her one – and yet, Bruce's admission suggests the mothers are being controlled by the scientists. With this context in mind the mother is presented not as a leader but as a rally – an image that society can gather around. Society – represented here as the man in the image - can be 'fearless' while ever it has the mother figure there, but that does not necessarily benefit the mother. In fact, idolisation appears to serve the scientists and not the mothers.

This form of male-serving idolisation sets a precedent for the rest of Haldane's interwar novels. In *I Bring Not Peace* Michal is idolised by Jean largely through comparison to his partner, Jeanne. The reader is told that 'Jeanne is like a Victorian drawing-room in November…' (Haldane, 1932, p. 31). The invocation of 'Victorian' connects with Haldane's discussion of the monarch in *Motherhood and its Enemies* in which she notes,

> I was seven years old when Her Majesty died. At her death I was greatly impressed by the numbers of women who went into mourning for her….. Victoria identified herself to an extraordinary degree with the ambitions, views, and behaviour of the sensible middle-classes women of her period. (Haldane, 1927, p. 80)

Not only does Jeanne's description as a 'Victorian drawing-room' create connotations of warmth, perhaps even 'fussy-ness', but also, then, of 'middle-class' and 'sensible'. Michal, however, is a vast departure from these qualities. She highlights this when she tells the reader, 'Life is *not* in there but out here, where the winds blow and drunken sailors go rolling

down the street and there are snatches of music' (Haldane, 1932, p. 32). Michal and Jean's

relationship is balanced between his interest in Michal's vitality and also his fear of it.

Haldane tells us that,

> Now a cowering tepid-fingered Jean, torch thrown away, comes from that warm room
>
> into frosty day, to warm those fingertips for an instant at that clear bright flame,
>
> Michal. But an east wind blows out here and Jean will soon creep back to his warm
>
> room. (Haldane, 1932, p. 32)

However, it is his inability to recognise the maternal in Michal that is problematic. In idolising

Michal as an exciting departure from his everyday life he fails to understand that she wants a

family, perhaps because it is too ordinary an ambition. In idolising her, then, Jean creates a

version of her that is useful to him not her.

Elizabeth, in *Youth is a Crime*, represents a slightly more classical figuration of idolised

maternity. Elizabeth possesses a 'magnetism' (Haldane, 1934, p. 81) – a common feature of

Haldane's female protagonists, and it is this that René first notices,

> He never thought of her as he had thought of other girls and women; he did not
>
> desire her, he barely wanted to touch her lips with his. Yet when he looked at her he
>
> felt that she possessed a power which alone could help him. (Haldane, 1934, p. 109)

This 'power' that René senses is described by Elizabeth as 'Magnetism…that awe-inspiring

quality which floated about the universe, and which Elizabeth suspected was what people

really meant when they referred to God' (Haldane, 1934, p. 75). In this sense then, René is

detecting a 'holy' quality within Elizabeth. This accounts for his aversion to kissing her as

she is, in effect, like a nun or even the Madonna herself. Elizabeth is, as has been

discussed, a 'natural' mother and she meets René's silent plea with enthusiasm, feeling 'that

she must make a last desperate effort to rescue René' (Haldane, 1934, p. 189). René

senses her magnetic maternalism and in idolising her he makes her a Madonna however,

again, this is for selfish ends. He is looking to be saved; Elizabeth functions as his Madonna, his reason to be good, but there is nothing he intends to give in return and once her maternal affections have been utilised, their contact ends.

The Sacrificial Madonna

Haldane presents societies that make maternal women idolised Madonnas, then, but not for their own benefit, and placates them with religion. However, she also reveals what this dynamic creates – women willing to sacrifice themselves because of a sense of 'religious' duty. This is reflected in the figure of Melusine in Haldane's 1936 book of the same name. Melusine, the religious figure head of Owain's pagan church, is presented as a Madonna figure. When Raymond finds her double in a church statue, the reader is told,

> His eyes encountered an image that sat there on high, enthroned: a black Virgin, nursing her dark baby, one so familiar, so dear and precious, that he thought he must be dreaming her. For this sculpted, dark, wooden standing, tenderness, and also a certain remote severity, was non other than the double of the Dark Lady of Poitou – of Melusine. (Haldane, 2003, p. 305)

Melusine is connected to Mary conceptually; like the Virgin Mary she is the maternal icon of her faith, she is its Madonna, but Raymond recognises her physically in the image of the Virgin too. Creating the Madonna out of dark wood, Haldane is inviting her reader to view Melusine as an inversion of the religious symbol, in the theological sense. She is a 'black Virgin' in that she is the leader of a pagan faith – the antithesis of the Christian faith. Her experiences in this role have been analogous to those of the Virgin Mary in that she conceives a child by the 'god' Owain. However, rather than this being an immaculate conception, Melusine is raped. As a pagan figurehead and a victim of sexual assault, then, she functions as a somber version of the Madonna. However, in fulfilling this role, in being worshipped and idolised, Melusine becomes duty bound to her followers and to her role. She

becomes a mother to the nation, in particular the 'hundreds of women and children under her care were looked after better than any in that land before' (Haldane, 2003, p. 147). Whilst, as this quote suggests, she was very capable in this role, it is also what destroys her.

Following the story of the folk-tale, when Melusine and Raymond marry she asks him to give her one day of privacy a week. Raymond is unaware that it is on this day that she meets with her congregation, dressed in snakeskin. Many years in to the marriage Raymond is persuaded by his brother to follow Melusine on this day, to see what she is doing. When Raymond does this he reveals her secret to the upper-class Christian society. She tells him, 'now I must die alone... Now I must die in the Faith of my own People, which you have wronged…' (Haldane, 2003, p. 261). On being discovered Melusine is duty bound to end her life. In feeling forced to 'die in the Faith' of her people she is absorbing the transgressions of her husband and taking the responsibility for his actions. In this way Melusine is a victim of her idolisation but a willing one; she sacrifices herself for the continuation of the pagan church.

This image of the mother as the sacrificed Madonna is perhaps Haldane's most vivid, but the connection between sacrifice and motherhood is found throughout her interwar fiction as mothers are conditioned to feel duty bound – via an almost religious sentiment – to the maternal role in the family. In *I Bring Not Peace* Jean's partner, Jeanne, willingly sacrifices her happiness out of a sense of 'duty'. Though in a long-term relationship with Jean, Jeanne is married, but, the reader is told, 'she would never divorce because she really believed with all her heart that her duty to the family and the home should come before any personal happiness' (Haldane, 1932, p. 257). This is because a religious value is inscribed into the figure of the mother and her role in the family. As the reader is told, 'Family life being quasi-sacred, it was better to pretend to make a success of an impossible situation than to

acknowledge that the system was at fault' (Haldane, 1932, p. 184). As the sacred 'Madonna', then, Jeanne has a duty to sacrifice herself.

Instead of having a 'normal' relationship with Jean she is only able to see him at intervals. The problematic nature of this is highlighted through Jeanne's inversion of her maternal role. The reader is told that whilst away from Jean in her marital home, Jeanne behaves as a housewife but 'The more scrupulously she performed her daily duties, the more essentially she lived for him alone' (Haldane, 1932, p. 185). Jeanne therefore remains at home in body alone, implying that her ability to be a 'good' mother is compromised. This is certainly how it is understood by her children whose,

> Discovery of their mother's double life had shown them that she was unfit, rather unwillingly, to exercise authority: they bore her an additional grudge for her inability to satisfy their desire to be riled, to participate in the hallowed tradition. So after all her efforts and sacrifices Jeanne was forced to realize that her children regarded her as an unsatisfactory mother. (Haldane, 1932, p. 187)

Jeanne gains nothing, then, from her sacrifice. She does not get Jean and she does not get the respect of her children. Haldane does not cite the affair as the children's reasoning for disliking their mother but rather the 'double life' she leads, and when Jeanne is contrasted with Michal it is clear that Haldane is supportive of divorce (she did, of course divorce her own first husband). Michal reflects on the marriage she has just left, 'I refuse to cling to a fading fattening Tom, in whose coarsened blurred features I can still, if I look carefully, trace the dim survival of a pretty youth I once loved' (Haldane, 1932, p. 30). Michal feels no sense of honour-bound duty and as a result she may move on. Jeanne in accepting the Madonna role – motherhood not as a practical role but a symbolic one – is trapped. The severity of her situation is made clear when she becomes very ill.

> Illness, however, meant for her more than physical suffering, meant separation from Jean, whose comforting loving presence she just at those times most needed. But never would she have dreamt of defying her children, her family, her creed, to the extent of sending for him. (Haldane, 1932, p. 188)

Though Jeanne has a family, she has lost them in insisting on playing the Madonna role. The only person she has left is the only person she has forbidden herself from seeing. In this way it is revealed how damaging society's creation of the unrealistic image of the Madonna is, and how its performance is insidious.

Haldane's presentation of Madonna-worship is reflective of the harm of duty-driven sacrifice many new mothers inflicted upon themselves in the interwar period. This can be seen through Tania McIntosh's description of the work of Lady Florence Bell 'who studied working-women in Middlesbrough before the first World War' (McIntosh, 2012, p. 66). Lady Florence Bell found women refused pain relief during labour due to fear about its side effects (McIntosh, 2012, p. 66). Despite medical research, then, many women felt duty-bound to endure more pain. However, Lady Bell also noted that whilst the administration of pain relief could not be done without consent, sometimes consent was refused by the husband. As McIntosh notes, 'This has a bearing on power structures within the family, demonstrating that perhaps childbirth was not an exclusively female concern' (McIntosh, 2012, p. 66) and she posits that this may help explain women's interest in moving out of the home and into the hospital during the twenties and thirties (McIntosh, 2012, p. 66). What this suggests, then, is that there may have been patriarchal pressure placed on a new mother to accept sacrifice as part of her role. In instilling her with a sense of religious power, and therefore religious duty, through Madonna-worship (idolising the mother-role) women would be 'satisfied with their lot'. This certainly seems to be what Haldane is suggesting through her literature.

In *Man's World* Nicolette is an interesting example of sacrifice because it is the result of becoming totally subsumed by motherhood. Nicolette spends much of the novel as a rebel, fighting to redefine motherhood in this segregated society. However, when she begins her relationship with Bruce, a scientist and member of the Patrol (or, at least, one-time member), her transformation into the Madonna is almost instant. After coming to visit Nicolette at Arcous's studio where she works, largely to find out why she is not behaving as she should be, Bruce begins to talk Nicolette, indirectly, into the perspective of the scientific elite. In a chapter titled 'Usness' she completely gives in,

> Something new happened to her at that moment: it was as if a part of herself, the
>
> puzzled, fretful, immature part that had always been imprisoned deep in her
>
> consciousness, arose and left her, flying from this magic communion, leaving behind
>
> a strengthened being. (Haldane, 1926, p. 237)

Spiritual imagery is used here. 'Arose' has connotations of the negative parts of her 'spirit' leaving and 'magic communion', of course, has connotations of conversations with a higher power. In this interaction, then, the reader begins to see Nicolette accept the Madonna role – to become a mother-idol. In her relationship with Bruce she is reassured that 'what she had found was not what she had thought herself to be seeking; but she had no doubt at all that 'it' was Bruce, and their future life…' (Haldane, 1926, p. 247), leaving her 'in no doubt that motherhood was after all her vocation' (Haldane, 1926, p. 250).

Motherhood, in its practical form, is not presented as negative in *Man's World* and so the reader would be forgiven for thinking that Nicolette had finally found her 'right path'. This reading is problematised, however, by Bruce and the scientific-government, of which he is a part. When Nicolette reveals her plan to Bruce, to flout the motherhood system by becoming pregnant whilst in the role of a neuter, Bruce warns her that she will fail because the rebels

have no power against the State. As he tells Nicolette, 'the Patrol may be just waiting', and, indeed, he may be that member of the Patrol. Bruce therefore begins to be seen as an agent of the scientific society sent to imbibe Nicolette with the Madonna role, to speak to her 'need for religion' as the scientists had done with the council of mothers, in order to make her compliant. By making the love interest in her romance also her villain, Haldane reveals how the Madonna role is an insidious part of female life, fed to her by the very man she loves.

Nicolette comfortably slips into the role of sacrificing Madonna, as seen through the way she identifies with her unborn child, 'Already the embryo in her womb was to her Someone, was her son, and the sun that caressed her eyes, the perfumes which delighted her nose, the food she ate, the sleep which refreshed her, were His' (Haldane, 1926, p. 250). Nicolette's body ceases to be her own; instead it is sacrificed, totally, to the child. The capitalisation of 'Someone' and 'Him', which continues in every reference she makes to the baby, clearly invokes the religious practice of capitalising pronouns that reference a deity, so that the reader knows that Nicolette has been indoctrinated into the religion of motherhood as the State intended.

In both examples of Jeanne and Nicolette Haldane connects the idea of motherhood functioning as a religion, something that all faith is placed in without questioning, and the image of the Madonna, the mother-idol used by society. In showing the sacrifice expected of the Madonna she shows how damaging the role is to the mother, revealing it as only serving to aid in the continuation of patriarchal society.

What this chapter has shown, then, is that like many of the male modernist artists of the early twentieth century, Haldane was engaged by the cultural interest in human sacrifice. However, Haldane's work differs from her male modernist counterparts in that rather than

being influenced by the sacrifices of the young men in the Great War, she is influenced by what she perceived to be the sacrifice of the mother as a social figure imbued with quasi-religious significance. By exploring the figure of the maternal woman in Haldane's interwar literature the maternal woman is revealed as a figure who is socially conditioned to accept a patriarchal social order that requires her sacrifice, much like the concept of the ritual victim that Haldane refers to directly as an influence on her last interwar novel.

I began this chapter by revealing how Elizabeth's experiences in *Youth is a Crime* indicate a social devaluation of women's education in order to curb ambition and ensure the continuation of the traditional family unit. I then demonstrated how the institution of marriage itself was problematised by depictions of violence and infidelity and connected to the morality of the Church in order to police women's behaviour and dissuade female transgression from the family. I then discussed how Haldane depicts a social view of women as more responsible than men, allowing for both the absorption of male sexual transgressions by female bodies and the justification for punishment of women who transgress social expectations of female chastity. In the final three sections I focused on the presentation of motherhood as a religion. I showed how Haldane demonstrates the feminine 'need for religion' to be intentionally utilised by a male-dominated society in order to indoctrinate women into an understanding of motherhood that willingly accepts self-sacrifice as part of the responsibilities of the role. I demonstrated how Haldane presents societies that worship mothers as idols but for the benefit of men. What Haldane suggests, then, through her interwar literature, is that society idolises motherhood, imbuing mothers with a sense of duty akin to that of a religion, but this is in order to create the willing sacrificial victim, duty-bound to sacrifice herself for her maternal wards. The role of motherhood is extended via social idolisation of the mother so that maternity becomes a social role. This means that women feel a maternal responsibility to men and, by extension then, to patriarchal society. The 'duty' of maternal sacrifice is therefore utilised to ensure the continuation of the

patriarchal order. The treatment of women in this light – their lack of education, the

expectation of marriage, the policing of female sexual behaviour - becomes a process of

conditioning, a ritual preparing of the victim.

Chapter Four:
'The Home of the Future': Maternalism, Science, and the Working Mother

Part One demonstrated the masculine nature of science and the patriarchal structure of the concepts of 'public', 'political', and 'scientific', indicating their aversion to the feminine. Part Two built on this to show how the maternal woman was trapped and controlled by the very institutions she was barred from. However, it was also shown in Part One how Haldane destabilised the binary gender system by undermining hegemonic masculinity. In this chapter, then, I show how Haldane utilisies this destabilised gender platform to assert her creation of the vocational mother as a public, scientific worker.

In her influential articulation of the 'invisible flâneuse' Janet Wolff describes the process by which 'modernity' became understood as 'masculine'. 'First,' she tells us, 'the institutions were run by men, for men... and they were dominated by men in their operation and hierarchical structure' (Wolff, 1985, p. 37). Whilst the male-dominated public sphere allowed for the presence of, 'some women in certain contained areas, it was a masculine domain. And insofar as the experience of 'the modern' occurred mainly in the public sphere, it was primarily men's experience' (Wolff, 1985, p. 37). It was then, the public sphere, with its public institutions, that was coded both modern and masculine. This, however, was not just a question of the conceptual spaces of the public and private spheres but how these spaces manifested physically. As Wolff notes,

> The rise and development of sociology in the nineteenth century was closely related to the growth and increasing separation of 'public' and 'private' spheres of activity in the western industrial societies. The condition for this was the separation of work from home, with the development of factories and offices. (Wolff, 1985, p. 42)

Drawing on ''public' and 'private' spheres of activity' Wolff is coding actual space based on the activities undertaken in them, hence the separation of work from home. Activities in the home are coded 'private' whereas activities in the 'factories and offices' are coded 'public'. As 'public' largely equates to masculine and 'private' to feminine, this then becomes a question not of an individual's gender but of gendered space.

'Science' as a monolithic concept was synonymous with modernity. Its various representational institutions – universities, organisational bodies, etc – were all public spaces and, like the rest of 'the modern', were deemed overwhelmingly masculine. To be deemed a 'scientist', then, an individual must inhabit one of these public/masculine coded spaces. Conversely, the home as a private space was not only coded feminine but also anti-modern. As Rita Felski notes, modernism is built on the 'distain for the everyday as it is conventionally lived [which] often relies on a disparagement of domestic activities and skills associated with women' (Felski, 2002, p. 613), as,

> It is women above all who embody repetitive time, whether equated with the
>
> mindless instinctual rhythms of biological life or the standardized soul-destroying
>
> routines of capitalism. Repetition is seen as a threat to the modern project of self-
>
> creation and self-determination… (Felski, 2002, p. 613)

The home, then, was coded as both feminine and domestic but also as distinctly anti-modern. Haldane, however, changes this codification in her interwar fiction by redefining the home as a space in need of modernisation. In doing so she begins a process by which the home can be understood as 'public' and therefore open to the activities usually considered masculine, allowing motherhood to be redefined in the process as a vocational role specifically linked to science and technology.

It is this process of redefining the public and private and defining motherhood as a vocation that I explore in the following chapter. I begin by discussing how Haldane redefines the home as a modern, scientific space and the mother as a worker within it. I then move on to explore how she defines motherhood as a vocation and how motherhood was being seen in the interwar years as a pseudo-industry in need of governmental intervention. Finally, I conclude by considering how Haldane's destabilising of the gendered body indicates a dissatisfaction with the parameters placed on femininity.

Redefining the Home: Maternity as a Skilled Science

Haldane envisioned the mother as a form of scientific worker. Calling for the professionalisation of motherhood in *Motherhood and its Enemies*, she tells the reader,

> Assuming that in due course she learns it, one may perhaps envisage her then as a 'qualified' mother, just as other trained women workers are qualified architects or doctors. But in all trades or professions employing qualified workers, clear rules of professional conduct are laid down. Could such rules be formulated with regard to motherhood? (Haldane, 1927, p. 223)

Haldane wishes motherhood to be subject to the standards and expectations found within traditional industry. However, she connects the professionalisation of maternity with the modernising of the home. She tells her reader,

> The home of the past, like other institutions that have outlived their utility, cannot be the home of the present. But what the home of the future might be can only be known when its problems have been investigated and solved by the one reliable method available to human beings: scientific method. (Haldane, 1927, p. 199)

Here Haldane wants the reader to do away with that 'crumbling structure' (Haldane, 1932, p. 185), the home of the past, and to replace it with 'the home of the future', improved by the most modern institutions of modernity – science. In doing so Haldane opens up the domestic

sphere and invites in the public through the masculine concepts of both modernity and science. In this new, modern light, then, the home becomes an extension of the public sphere and the mother can be framed not only as a worker – an active participant in the public sphere – but as a scientist.

It is this utilisation of the 'scientific method' that Haldane suggests is the ideal undertaking of the maternal woman. In a study of the Engineering and Plumbing Institute's members lists, Haldane discovered that, 'The total number of women members of the Engineering Institutes in the list is 8 including two women marine engineers. The institute of plumbers, however, is not one woman member!' (Haldane, 1927, p. 111). This perhaps appears to be a strange concern for a text discussing motherhood in its social and vocational contexts. This study, however, was motivated by a concern for the state of the modern home. She tells her reader, 'The widespread and notorious inadequacy of the average home with regard to heating, lighting, and water facilities made me eager to ascertain what number of women were directing their attention to these problems' (Haldane, 1927, p. 111). Here Haldane connects the inadequacies of the home with the low numbers of female engineers. According to Haldane, the condition of the modern home would be greatly improved should encouragement and access be given to women to train in the areas of plumbing, engineering, and electrical engineering, as she notes,

> The reform of the home, as far as it is a housing question, calls insistently for such study and skilled treatment as a woman trained with this one end in view would be peculiarly fitted to give. Here at last we find ground on which the woman competing with a man of similar intellectual and practical ability would be really able to hold her own. But we find little evidence that the type of woman wanted is being produced...
> (Haldane, 1927, p. 113)

Haldane passionately argues for the increased presence of mothers in traditionally masculine fields that relate to the design and upkeep of the home. She reiterates later in the text that '…all domestic utensils, ornaments, and the whole equipment, would be the better for feminine study…' (Haldane, 1927, p. 240). Haldane views the home as a problem to be solved via the fields of science and engineering and she views the mother-worker, with her intimate knowledge of and specific connection to the home, as the best suited technician.

It is not just in *Motherhood and its Enemies* that this presentation of the mother and home is found, however. Though in *Man's World* it is the male scientific elite that have overall control of infant production, it was in fact a mother who first pioneered the technique of sex-determination in humans. The reader is told that the technique, known as the 'Perrier' technique was first used on cattle, until Lady Anne Thomas became interested in the technique and produced by it a son, Humphrey, who became the foundation of what was to become the new scientific society. Haldane tells the reader,

> Women were mostly braver than men, but not many were as Anne was. She listened carefully to Simon. And though she could not understand all he explained she began to think. If she had been fearful this would have passed her by, and there would have been no Humphrey. When she got home, she sent for all the books she could on Perrier, and set to study them. After two weeks she wrote to him. Several letters passed between them, and then, when she had come to her decision, she told Sir Thomas what she proposed they should do. He was extremely angry at first. He was ignorant as all of his kind. He believed in what he called "Nature". (Haldane, 1926, p. 35)

Here Anne is the revolutionary scientist, not Perrier, not her husband, and not Simon, the cattle researcher. It is she who first conducts the technique on humans. This method of self-experimentation not only becomes a common scientific practice in the ensuing society but it

is also a method that Haldane's biochemist husband, J. B. S. Haldane was renowned for. Haldane imbues Anne with the qualities of the scientist, both fictional and real. In referring to Anne's 'bravery' in using her own body for pioneering research, Haldane equates her endeavors with those of the scientists in *Man's World*. Exemplified by Bruce's self-experiments, self-experimentation is shown to be a scientific process engaged in by the male scientists. In this way Anne is the pioneer of this scientific technique, no longer the permitted realm for mothers. Importantly, she utilised this technique within the private space of the home for entirely domestic purposes – the conceiving of a child. In doing so, Anne introduces science into the private, domestic sphere and therefore codes it public. This space becomes a centre of research because of the scientific activities undertaken in it and, as such, the home is redefined as having ramifications and relevance within the public sphere.

Defining Motherhood as a Vocation

Haldane redefines the home, then, as a space in need of modernisation via scientific research and practice. Inherent in both of these concepts of the 'modern' and 'science' is their connection to the masculine public sphere. In redefining the home within the realm of the public sphere Haldane is able to also redefine the mother as a vocational worker within it. In the following section I show how Haldane does this within her interwar literature, but first I consider how British interwar society was also framing motherhood as a pseudo-industry.

Motherhood in the UK

At the beginning of the twentieth century motherhood was being framed by industrial rhetoric. As Steven King notes,

In the late nineteenth-century motherhood and the production of infants for British society was an argument used by feminists to justify female citizenship and therefore the women's vote, leading to 'the language of family [being] elided with the languages of the labour market and citizenship. (King, 2006, p. 91)

However, this did not lead to the economic treatment of mothers as labourers but instead to their exploitation. As Jane Lewis notes, in this period the government, aided by the medical profession implemented,

> policies towards improving the welfare of mothers and children more out of regard for the national health than out of regard for the welfare of individual mothers. Thus, in the case of British national health insurance, introduced in 1911, coverage was extended to workers in insurable trades, but not to housewives and mothers and not to children. (Arnup, Lévesque, & Pierson, 1990, p. 7)

So, the two institutions that had a direct effect on the mothers - medical science and governmental law – were uninterested in the individual but rather in the wider, larger scale production of children and, despite this industrial approach to population production, mothers were not recognised as workers, as their lack of insurance indicates. Not only this but, as Haldane herself discusses, there was legal antagonism towards mothers working in productive roles. In *Motherhood and its Enemies* Haldane tells her reader, 'In April 1927 a bill was introduced into Parliament to 'prevent the refusal to employ women in the public service by reason only of their being married.' An almost empty House rejected it…' (Haldane, 1927, p. 215). Mothers, therefore were not being recognised as workers in a reproductive capacity, working in their homes to produce new members of the social body, but they were also being potentially blocked from being productive public workers. The government's dismissal of married women's worker's rights was an admission that the mother-worker was an unimportant, unrecognised figure in British society.

As Jane Lewis has indicated, the medical profession had their own involvement with the public perception of the mother as worker. Tania McIntosh, too, notes 'the growth of a motherhood 'industry'' (McIntosh, 2012, p. 54) during the early twentieth century, spawned from medical concerns surrounding maternal mortality, infant mortality, and new medical advances; though, as infant mortality was deemed most pressing, the 'quality of motherhood' (Arnup et al., 1990, p. 6) came under close scrutiny, in particular with regard to working-class mothers, 'in whose education was thought to lie the solution to the infant mortality problem' (Arnup et al., 1990, p. 6). However, as Jane Lewis notes, 'Educating mothers in infant care was a cheap solution, but amounted to little more than an exercise in blaming the victim (also a feature of the early ante-natal care provided between the wars)' (Arnup et al., 1990, p. 6). In line with Lewis's theory that motherhood was being effectively industrialised, the early twentieth century saw an explosion in pre and postnatal literature, informing mothers how best to rear their infants. This, as Katherine Arnup notes, was part of a move to increase the 'medicalisation of pregnancy, childbirth and child rearing' (Arnup et al., 1990, p. 193), encouraging women to choose government advice, through health publications, over that of other mothers, friends, and family (Arnup et al., 1990, p. 193). Motherhood, then, was being treated as an industry in that there were attempts to encourage some form of 'industry standards' through this increased interaction with medical and government advice, but mothers were not receiving any benefits as workers.

However, organisations of women were striving to improve working conditions for mothers. The idea of a family allowance that would 'provide women with a measure of economic independence and so to improve the material welfare of women and children' (Arnup et al., 1990, p. 13) was strongly supported by the Women's Co-Operative Guild and the Fabian Women's Group in the years leading up to the First World War (Arnup et al., 1990, p. 13). In other countries women's groups were successful in attaining some economic support for

mothers. In America, the General Federation of Women's Clubs, the National Congress of Mothers and the Women's Christian Temperance Union successfully attained mother's pensions in many states between 1911 and 1913 (Van de Klien, 2012, p. 39). In The Netherlands, maternity benefits were included in the 'Health Act of 1929, which provided insurance for workers and came into effect in 1930' (Van de Klien, 2012, p. 41) though it only covered married women workers (Van de Klien, 2012, p. 55). This kind of financial support for mothers was important to Haldane, and she notes the seemingly growing international trend in *Motherhood and its Enemies*, telling the reader that 'It has already been agreed in several countries that some sort of organised financial assistance for the breeding women of the nation seems to be required' (Haldane, 1927, p. 223). Haldane's interwar literature, then, is in part a response to a British undervaluing of the mother-worker. What is seen in her literature is an effort to frame motherhood as a vocation and the maternal woman as a capable worker.

Vocational Motherhood

Haldane's maternal characters transgress the expected boundaries of the maternal role, entering, either directly or indirectly (through their partners), the public sphere of work and politics. As well as this physical transgression, however, these characters are also presented as equally or more capable of filling masculine roles - 'protector', 'comrade', 'leader' - than their male counterparts.

Though not an 'actual mother' Michal, a maternal figure and therefore 'potential mother', is presented as equal in skill to men in the workplace and accepted within this masculine realm. In *I Bring Not Peace* Michal and Jean's romance is framed by their mutual experience of life. Breaking from the more common romantic trope of the innocent woman and knowing man, Haldane describes a scene between Michal and Jean in mature terms,

She looked, too, kind of scared beneath her bravery and competence, scared, not as a girl looks, of the untasted and untested: life, sex, man; hell, no, but as one who had tasted indeed, and found the fruits bitter. She knew. He knew. (Haldane, 1932, p. 73)

This description of Michal balances with Jean's as 'a man who had seen and tasted and tested life widely…' (Haldane, 1932, p. 100), and throughout the novel she is presented as having equal merit to the men around her. With regard to her work, Michal comments 'it was Tom, you know, who taught me to drink whisky. And Papa gave me a good head for alcohol, too good perhaps for a woman. But it was awfully useful in Fleet Street' (Haldane, 1932, p. 23). Alcohol functions as a conduit for masculine acceptance. The ability 'to drink whisky' becomes a coded action, a test that can be passed or failed in order to prove masculine worth. This can be cross-referenced with Haldane's admission in her autobiography that her acceptance amongst her male colleagues on Fleet Street was largely a result of her decision to join them in the nearby pubs rather than retire for tea in the female-coded space of a cafe. Like Haldane, then, Michal's presence in the male-coded space of both the pub and the newsroom is accepted. Michal goes beyond simply a successful transgression into this male-gendered space, however, as she notes, 'They never once let me down and it was most precious that comradeship of Fleet Street. I shall never forget it' (Haldane, 1932, p. 23). In defining Michal's relationship with her colleagues as 'comradeship', Haldane solidifies Michal's equal status. 'Comradeship', though not by definition, shares the same semantic field as fraternity. It was a masculine term of endearment but specifically one that was earned through shared, equal experience. By including Michal in the journalists' 'comradery' Haldane shows she has earned this special, equal status.

In Haldane's interwar fiction mothers work to build security for their families by entering male-coded spaces and fulfilling male-coded roles. In *Brother to Bert* this is something the reader sees young Lil develop. After her marriage to Len Lil's maternal character begins to mature. In this process the reader is told, 'She was not at all afraid of him [Len] any more;

she had, in fact, begun to acquire a lot of influence over him in little things, and her power over him, which she intended to use to the utmost for his own good, secretly delighted her' (Haldane, 1930, p. 110). Lil cares for the twins, though not just in the traditional sense. As well as cooking and cleaning she also saves wages and plans for a future career for Len outside of the corrupting theatre. Lil therefore becomes a quiet architect of Len's life, though 'Neither Len nor Bert realized what Lil was doing to them' (Haldane, 1930, p. 111). Through Lil Haldane suggests that the maternal woman's true power is hidden, partially by her own design. The reader is told that '…Len liked to think he occasionally did some of the deciding, though actually, of course, Lil was boss' (Haldane, 1930, p. 206). Here Haldane unpicks patriarchal expectations of the family. As 'boss' Lil is 'in charge' of the family and its direction (hence why she manages the money, Len's career, and the household) but Len must still be seen to be 'in charge'. Lil orchestrates her own invisibility, then, so that when the two buy a business together (saved for by Lil) Len recalls that, 'No business can get along properly without a boss, and it takes a man to run it, as Lil had very rightly said, a woman's no good at that sort of thing' (Haldane, 1930, p. 210). Lil avoids transgressing the gendered barrier between work and home by persuading Len that he owns and runs the business. The irony, though lost on Len, is not missed by the reader who has been privy to Lil's machinations throughout their marriage. Len's ignorance is comical in this context yet it points to a serious message. Len, as the patriarchal 'head of the family', is unaware of the work his wife has done, and will continue to do, to allow their family to succeed.

Their relationship becomes a microcosm, then, of a wider cultural ignorance of women's reproductive labour, the skill inherent in it and the independence of character required.
In a reversal of the 'wife-as-child' trope critiqued in literature such as Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, Haldane depicts Len as the child who must be managed by the wife. When Lil persuades him to buy the small corner-shop business, using the money she'd saved, and leave the

theatre industry, Len is 'distracted by the novelty of this new game – it was fun setting out as a substantial capitalist to buy a business' (Haldane, 1930, p. 208). Of course, in one respect this is a 'game'. Len is a working-class man buying a small business and is therefore far from a 'substantial capitalist'. In critiquing the patriarchal structure in this manner, using a working-class couple, Haldane softens the impact of her argument but also makes it more palatable (and therefore less controversial) to a middle-class audience. The ability of a middle-class audience to other a working-class couple allows for the displacement of any anxiety surrounding potential power struggles in the family unit. In using Len and Lil Haldane can critique the patriarchal family structure and reveal the maternal woman as the actual power-centre of the family, without inviting too much criticism. Lil is clearly depicted as the driving force behind her family, skillfully shaping it, through Len and her plans, to ensure its success. The reader is aware that she is the real 'breadwinner' in this sense, though she avoids transgressing this boundary by 'working' through Len.

Lil is also shown to take on the male-coded role of 'protector' of the family, though rather than Haldane framing this as masculine, she specifically connects it to Lil's maternal nature. However, it is not being a physical mother that makes a maternal woman independent and driven, in fact, in the case of Lil, becoming a mother allows many of Len's actions to go unnoticed in the busy first months. However, in being a maternal character, a 'potential mother' as Haldane verbalises it in *Motherhood and its Enemies*, Lil is innately independent and driven – her role in looking after others (in this case Len) requires these skills. When she becomes pregnant these skills become even more refined, as is shown when the reader Is told that,

> She was striking [Len] into the shape she wanted him to be while he was hot, but the danger was that he might cool off before they had got any thing definite fixed up. Pregnancy had given Lil's purpose a fiery energy. The little baby kicking in her womb

spurred her on at top-speed to make a home and an assured future for it. It

increased her physical and mental powers so that she was able to go house and

shop hunting with a will. (Haldane, 1930, p. 208)

Now, as a physical mother, Lil has an increased sense of purpose, which, the reader is told,

increases 'her physical and mental powers'. The figure of the mother, then, appears as an

evolution of the maternal woman – her skills and purpose honed – to create a potentially

powerful and driven individual. This is shown clearly at the end of the novel when Bert's

body has been discovered in a Parisian flat, after taking an overdose to avoid being caught

and charged for murder. In order to free Len from the British prison in which he awaits trial,

falsely accused of Lottie's murder, Lil must identify Bert's body so that it can be returned to

London and used as evidence. Lil's morbid task is described in the following manner,

They were on the second landing now, and Lil was no longer afraid. The word 'home'

had got through to her mind. All of a sudden she thought of baby. Her fears

vanished. She had found a talisman to hold on to. (Haldane, 1930, p. 329)

In her role as mother Lil finds the strength to protect (or rather save) her family. Her

motivation is her baby and, by extension her family, and it is this that inspires her bravery. Lil

steps out of the domestic sphere of her home in order to travel internationally – engaging in

both criminology and detection with the help of the professor – in order to free Len from

prison. By the end of the novel Lil inhabits the masculine-coded role of 'hero' but Haldane

frames this as a maternal action.

As she held [Len] in her arms and listened to his soft regular breathing Lil felt how

utterly they were alone together in the silence of the night, just the two of them.

Everything was all right now. She's got him back and she was going to look after him

til the end of his days and he'd never be taken away from her again. (Haldane, 1930,

p. 334)

By holding Len in her arms, listening to his 'soft regular breathing' Haldane presents the image of mother and child. Lil is Len's protecto; she promises 'to look after him til the end of his days', a promise that, in the context of all she has done, carries particular weight. Lil shows that in the interest of protecting her family, the maternal woman is capable of going well beyond the gendered expectations of the private sphere, both physically and mentally. Whilst maintaining her codification as both 'maternal' and 'feminine', Lil engages in work to provide for her family and proves herself capable of engaging in the public sphere in order to protect them.

Melusine is another maternal woman who proves herself as equal to the traditional paternal figurehead in her ability to guide and protect not only her family but the nation as well. When starting the novel the reader is immediately met with an ambitious woman. The text states in a short, direct statement, that, 'Her will was for power' (Haldane, 2003, p. 35). Drawing on the Nietzschean concept of the human drive known as the will to power, Haldane immediately quashes any expectations traditionally associated with feminine youth by presenting Melusine in this philosophic and masculine light. Her power and influence are equally clear from the start of the narrative. The reader is told that she and her partner Raymond, the future ruler of Poitou,

> would be a handsome pair: she hardly less tall than himself, and so much stronger in knowledge and will. Oh, yes, she would always be able to lead him, and he would be her slave very soon and do her bidding in all things. (Haldane, 2003, p. 68)

The power dynamics of this relationship are made visibly obvious by the pair's equal height, indicating that Melusine literally does not have to 'look up' to her husband. Melusine, though a woman in a novel with many fairy-tale tropes (which is associated with a traditional patriarchal structure) is superior to her partner in intellect and will power – two important

skills for the ruling of a country. Before their marriage Raymond tells her, 'I would trust you absolutely, to the ends of the earth.' To which she responds,

> It would not be as far as that, dear Raymond. It is but a small matter, really; not of
>
> any importance to you, only to myself. I have certain responsibilities, you see' – and
>
> as she said this she drew herself up proudly and looked every inch a Princess.
>
> (Haldane, 2003, p. 64)

Invoked here is Melusine's royalty – her 'right' to rule. The role of princess, in this context, is both a physical and conceptual role that is coded masculine by its inhabiting of the public sphere. Melusine is a political figure with public responsibilities.

In *Melusine* motherhood is defined by issues found within the public sphere. In her depiction of Melusine's second-youngest son, Geffray, Haldane draws on the grand narrative of politics and religion, inspired by the political turmoil found across Europe in the mid thirties. In her mothering of Geffray, Melusine breaks from the expected actions of one of Haldane's 'good' mothers. As the boys grow up and begin military campaigns to build the House of Lusignan, Melusine awards each a talisman to ensure their protection, however, the reader is told, 'Was it due to forgetfulness on her part that [Geffray] received no magic ring either, such as had served Raymond so well in the past, and the four elder boys also?' (Haldane, 2003, p. 180). The third person narrative questions Melusine's motives for leaving her son vulnerable to attack and, therefore, implies that the decision was made purposefully. As may be expected, nowhere else in Haldane's interwar fiction is a 'good' mother presented as one willing to kill her child but in many ways, Geffray is not really depicted as *her* child. The child of Owain, not Melusine's husband Raymond, Geffray was conceived via ritualistic rape after Melusine refuses to conduct mass with the Church of the Serpent. From his moment of conception the narrative places him outside of the family unit. He is described, via a chapter title, as a 'Cuckoo in the Nest' (Haldane, 2003, p. 185), referring to the practice of certain

members of the cuckoo family that lay their eggs in other species' nests. Here the narrative directly marks him as 'different' and even threatening. Parasitic brooding amongst birds can result in the death of the host's chicks. Indeed, this happens in *Melusine* when Geffray kills his youngest brother, Froimond, as well as his fellow monks at their monastery, in a chapter titled 'Holocaust' (Haldane, 2003, p. 214). The chapter title – referring to mass death by fire (the manner by which the monks are killed) – communicates the scale of Geffray's destruction, as well as the inhumanity. He is monstrous; realising this early in his life – relying on her mother's intuition – it is not surprising, then, that Melusine does not want to protect him.

This struggle – the realisation that one's children were no longer actually one's own – was a real predicament for many mothers as the nineteen thirties progressed. Founded in the nineteen twenties the Hitler Youth, in Nazi Germany, had successfully infiltrated family life by the nineteen thirties. Michael Kater draws on the experiences of Hermann Graml, a German historian who had been a part of the youth organisation. Kater tells us that, 'In the struggle for ultimate authority over children that sometimes took place among the church, schools, parents, and Hitler Youth, Graml and his friends…tended to side with the Hitler Youth more often than not because it seemed to be "more modern" and forward looking than other institutions' (Kater, 2006, p. 1). Children's allegiance to the fatherland, via the Hitler Youth, then, largely outweighed that to their family. The Nazi Party claimed to respect the importance of the German mother, with the implementation of the Lebensborn in 1935, which supported mothers and their children, financially and practically[11]. This support, of course, came with a racial caveat, and those that could not prove their racial 'suitability' could not be helped. Haldane, herself the daughter of a German-Jewish immigrant, draws on this maternal anxiety in her presentation of Melusine and Geffray's relationship. Like many

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[11] For a discussion of the Nazi treatment of mothers see (Albanese, 2006, pp.25-44).

German women's experience, Melusine finds herself with a son that she birthed who does not belong to her, but he remains as a threatening presence, having killed one of his siblings.

If the characterisation of Geffray draws upon maternal anxieties under the impending threat of fascism, the Church he will take from his mother, the Church his father founded, conversely, draws upon the political philosophy and practice of the left: communism and anarchism. Though Geffray's motivation for killing his brother and the other monks is simply that 'He is possessed of the Devil' (Haldane, 2003, p. 232) (indicating his cruelty but also referring to his real paternity), his actions mimic a period of killings conducted in Spain in the mid-nineteen thirties by leftist groups. As part of an escalated strike in the autonomous community Asturias, in 1934, anarchist and communist groups publicly executed a number of priests and destroyed churches; this action was later repeated during the Spanish Civil War[12], starting the same year as the publication of *Melusine*. Paul Preston notes the Catholic Church's official support of Franco throughout the Civil War (Preston, 2006, p. 222). In this period in Spain, then, the Church became effectively synonymous with Franco's power and the rise of fascism. In *Melusine* there is a distrust of the Church shown through allegations of corruption. Whilst Geffray's troops are horrified by his actions, the members of the community are not. The reader is told,

> In the less civilized places the priests of Christ were not loved; on the contrary, they
> were hated with a sullen resentment, all the deeper because it could not be
> expressed openly. Their misdeeds were many: lechery, gluttony, avarice, most of the
> seven deadly sins, in fact, were held against them. (Haldane, 2003, p. 243)

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[12] For a discussion of the Spanish Civil War and women's involvement in it via Mujeres Libres see (Ackelsberg, 1991, pp 115-146)

Haldane connects the Church with corruption, then, and by extension depicts Geffray as a defender of the people. (Poor Froimond, innocent and moral in comparison to his fellow monks, appears to be unfortunate collateral damage in this respect). There is intentional crossover here too with the real historical figure that Haldane records in the novels Afterward. She notes that the real Geffray of Lusignan would cry in battle 'NON EST DEUS' (Haldane, 2003, p. 315), or 'there is no God', and was a popular figure in Medieval France 'because he was the defender of their freedom against the Crown' (Haldane, 2003, p. 315). Geffray's destruction of a corrupt church reflects, then, the politicised actions of Spanish communist and anarchist groups in the lead-up to the 1936-39 Spanish Civil War. Indeed, Owain's Church of the Serpent draws significantly on leftist rhetoric. The phrase 'No Gods; No Masters', coined by socialist Louis Auguste Blanqui, referred to by Nietzsche, and famously used by the feminist paper, *The Woman Rebel*, refers to the desire commonly found in leftist politics for worker autonomy. In *Melusine* this sentiment is repeated both in Geffray's burning of the church and Owain's reaction to it. Owain tells Geffray that he has 'no faith, only an unusual capacity for taking wise action in good time' (Haldane, 2003, p. 290) but he warns him, 'I do not love the priests and the lazy monks any more than you do. But our first thought must always be for the welfare of the people. Internecine war is horrible, and will not help them' (Haldane, 2003, p. 296). Owain warns Geffray against civil war from the perspective of the human cost. Haldane explains this as, 'the leaders of the covens, those who were battling with and for the people against the advancing and increasingly powerful organisation of an alien religion, were frequently both intelligent and humane men' (Haldane, 2003, p. 316). The 'alien religion' here of course is Christianity. In this context, then, Haldane depicts Owain's Church as a defender of 'the people' against the advancing power of the Christian Church. The communists and anarchists preparing to fight in Spain argued the same in respect of Franco's fascism, and this is also true of the troops of the

International Brigades (founded the same year *Melusine* was published, and for whom Haldane campaigned for and later worked).

In this respect, too, Owain can be seen in direct opposition to Raymond who funds the spreading of the Christian faith and whose use of his people's labour is opposed to Owain's 'humane', personal respect for his congregation. Haldane presents a scene in which Raymond watches his new home being built 'from the top of the hill above Coulombiers, where, on his way back, he had paused to enjoy the sight of his new domain, [and] had seen hundreds of workmen, like ants at this height and distance' (Haldane, 2003, p. 116). The physical difference here highlights his disconnection from his subjects, as well as his social perception of them as 'beneath him', whilst his description of them as 'ants' indicates his view of them as a mass force; labourers whose individuality is irrelevant.

Haldane's presentation of Geffray is contradictory, then. His character and his relationship with Melusine draw on anxieties surrounding the figure of the mother under fascism, yet the Church he is to inherit has clear connections with the communist and anarchist movements in the early twentieth century. Haldane therefore places the central figure of the mother – Melusine – within the two most prevalent political concerns of the nineteen thirties – the rise of both communism and fascism. Geffray, as a dualist figure, enables Haldane to depict the fraught condition of maternity in the modern political climate, whilst also enabling her to express her own leftist agenda. In placing motherhood at the centre of the defining contemporary political debates she transgresses the gendered boundaries of the public and private spheres. In framing Melusine as a political figure Haldane defines maternity within the public, masculine realm.

Destabilising Gender

What I have shown so far in this chapter then, is that Haldane redefines how mothers interact with the gender-coded spaces of the home and work. Her maternal characters transgress the gendered boundaries of the public and private spheres in order to suggest a future motherhood that engages in the public sphere as a scientific worker, building the modern home. However, whilst this utopic vision allows female bodies to inhabit male-coded public spaces, in the contemporary reality, as I have discussed at the beginning of this chapter, this was not the case. There is, therefore, a different depiction of gendered transgression that communicates a dissatisfaction with the boundaries of femininity running parallel to Haldane's utopic vision of vocational motherhood. In this alternative depiction the transgression of the corporeal boundaries of the gendered body is a method of escaping the limitations of femininity.

Haldane's interwar fiction acknowledges that women's lives would be more fulfilling if they were valued as masculine. This is made especially evident through the thoughts of Elizabeth, who is presented as one of Haldane's physically and psychologically 'normal' women, discussed in *Motherhood and its Enemies*, in that she is feminine (signified by her appearance) and maternal (signified by her actions towards others). However, early on in the novel the reader is informed that Elizabeth,

> had realized pretty early in life the two main defects in her existence: the first was
> that she was a girl, and the second that she had no brothers. She hoped for many
> years her mother would provide the brother; but a change of sex seemed impossible
> of attainment. There was not a single activity appertaining to femininity which she did
> not detest. (Haldane, 1934, pp. 15–16)

Elizabeth expresses dissatisfaction with her gender. In identifying a brother as a sufficient consolation, however, Haldane suggests that Elizabeth is not dissatisfied with the physicality

of her gender but rather with the expectations and opportunities afforded to it. In this respect a brother would allow Elizabeth to vicariously enjoy what opportunities would be afforded to him as a male. This is best communicated when Elizabeth moves from Frau Müller's, a Belgian girls' school, to a new, mixed-gender, German gymnasium,

> The first day at the Allgemeine Deutsche Schule was the happiest she had spent since Highgate had been left behind. Here there was no sentimental young ladylike nonsense, but a hard code and a high standard, the challenge of which her ambition accepted gladly. (Haldane, 1934, p. 46)

Moving from a school that values training its girls to be 'ladylike' over formal education, Elizabeth is invigorated by a school that requires 'high standards' and hard work. In moving to a mixed-gender school, Elizabeth is able to experience a male-coded space, with the accompanying expectations and ambitions. She notes, 'Even more tonic was the knowledge that all the time in your lessons you were competing with boys. The fact they went in at a separate door from yours did not mean that you ever forget their presence' (Haldane, 1934, p. 46). By inhabiting this male-coded space Elizabeth can frame herself within masculinity, hence she sees herself as directly competing with the boys she is kept separate from. Whilst this male-coded space is a physical one it is also psychical in that Elizabeth carries the presence of her male competitors with her – she never 'forget[s] their presence'. In experiencing this space – in body and mind – Elizabeth can exist as a boy and be afforded the same opportunities. As she tells the reader,

> You'd show them that even if you had the misfortune to have been born a girl, you were as clever as they. No feminist could start her career in a more gratifying manner than in perfectly fair competition with males: given a chance to show what she could do. (Haldane, 1934, pp. 46–7)

Here is the crux of Haldane's point. Elizabeth is 'given a chance to show what she could do'. In being given equal access to education Elizabeth has the chance to unlock her potential,

outside of the limitation placed on femininity. It is clear, then, that her previous dislike for 'feminine' things relates to society's undermining of the feminine body and mind. Even in this new school environment, however, Elizabeth still verbalises her gender as a 'misfortune', suggesting that even in this male-coded space she is still aware of her gender as a handicap to ambition.

This dissatisfaction with the overall societal treatment of women creates in Haldane's fiction an interest in both 'intersexuality' and gender-swapping. Whilst the 'intersex' woman – a term used by Haldane that covers both the modern understanding of gender non-binary and homosexuality – posed an economic threat to the mother, Haldane's draw to literary depictions of non-binary gender is evident. Male and female attributes are mixed in Haldane's novels, particularly in those that centre primarily on adolescence and young adulthood, such as *Youth is a Crime*.

In this novel Elizabeth shares a classroom with another girl, Erna, whose,

> distribution of human attributes had somehow gone wrong. She was about sixteen years of age, and towered, with an ample, fully-ripened body, over all the rest. She had overshot even the feminine mark, for in addition to round breasts and belly, she boasted on her face a quite well-developed, soft, dark moustache. (Haldane, 1934, p. 35)

She is described as 'physically…in excess of her fellows, and indeed of all normal femininity' (Haldane, 1934, p. 35). Here Haldane presents gender not as a binary but as a circular continuum, or a scale on which Erna has tipped the balance. In presenting a body both hyper-feminine and simultaneously masculine, Haldane destabilises both gender boundaries. Erna is not described as lacking gender but as being 'in excess' of it. She is the sorry figure of a body pulled in every direction, towards every expectation of the gendered

body, and the effect is overwhelming. Inherent in the figure of Erna, then, is a wish to escape the expectations of gender placed on the body.

By destabilising the gendered spaces of the public and private, the modern scientific and the traditional domestic, Haldane can change how mothers, as gendered figures, are understood. By transgressing gendered expectations of the maternal women Haldane is able to present the mother as a skilled worker akin to the scientist. In this way the mother can inhabit the masculine public sphere and as such be understood in vocational terms without having to sacrifice her femininity and by extension her maternity. However, this is revealed as a utopic aim in Haldane's writing when the destabilisation of gendered space and the destabilisation of gendered bodies are compared. By destabilising gendered bodies Haldane questions the gendered values society places upon the bodies of 'man' and 'woman'. These values, however, are fundamental to the social structure and, as a result, the destabilised gendered body becomes a tragic figure.

Conclusion

In her ambition to not only legitimise maternal work but to highlight its inherent social function, to defend the mother as a worker and to highlight her potential within a social and industrial workforce, Haldane utilises the respected powerful discourse of the sciences to lend authority to her arguments. However, whilst science equated to modernity it also equated to masculinity and masculine interests. The scientific community alienated the feminine or maternal perspective. As Jane Lewis notes, 'the framework of Darwinistic science and particularly eugenics, offered women a positive role as mothers... But the result was arguably not so much an alliance between doctors and mothers as an increasing domination by the medical profession' (Arnup, Lévesque, & Pierson, 1990, pp. 5–6). This was seen at the World Population Conference, attended by Haldane and J. B. S. in Geneva in 1927. The conference was male-dominated, in both attendees and speakers, yet, as may be imagined given the subject, many of the panels focused on female and maternal issues. The pamphlet for the conference promised attendees that,

> A further session will deal with the physiological approaches to the study of population – the problem of fertility, fecundity and sterility. In addition, an account of some of the official bureaus in existence which deal with race biology and population is promised. ('World Population Conference: Pamphlet', 1927, p. 3)

Here it is implied that the female body will be dissected, as it were, and its reproductive qualities discussed and, possibly, blamed. As the carrier of the foetus and socially-expected carer of the child, the mother was vulnerable to criticism, whether it was veiled by scientific objectivism or not. Conferences such as this, and the research therein, were not intended for a maternal audience. Proscriptive books written by doctors were the intended extent of mothers' engagement with the social significance of infant production.

This did not prevent groups of women from becoming engaged in debates that involved their own bodies, however, as seen through campaign groups such as The Women's Co-Operative Guild, though they focused on more practical issues of birth. This group campaigned strongly for the increased use of anaesthetic during births (Arnup et al., 1990, p. 12) as well as the standard use of doctors and the availability of hospital beds (Arnup et al., 1990, p. 14), especially for women who would otherwise have to give birth in unsuitable situations (Arnup et al., 1990, pp. 11–12). Though largely excluded from science, through activism women found space to engage in the debates of fertility, birth, and population control. Like Haldane, however, this meant working with the patriarchal establishment of medicine in order to make direct, immediate changes for mothers.

Susan Squier notes that this relationship has created a 'double bind' (Squier, 1994, p. 118) within *Man's World*, the root of which emanates from 'collaborat[ing] with the scientific construction of woman-as-mother' (Squier, 1994, p. 129), using a scientific rhetoric that 'like modernism, has historically shaped itself thus in reaction against the anxieties aroused by the discursively, epistemologically, and ontologically feminine' (Squier, 1994, p. 116). Effectively, Haldane was trying to frame mothers in a rhetoric that was anti-feminine. For Squier this means that Haldane's writing 'sees a puzzling mix of complex, even frustratingly inconsistent, ways of defining and responding to social injustice' (Squier, 1994, p. 129). By looking at Haldane's work more widely, incorporating books she wrote throughout her interactions with the scientific elite during her marriage with J. B. S. Haldane, this thesis has aimed to unpack these complexities.

I have revealed how, as a reaction to the perceived threat to maternity in the early twentieth century, Haldane aligns the maternal with the scientific in order frame motherhood as a modern vocation. In doing so she redefines the private sphere of the home as public by

framing it as a space to be modernised through the introduction of science and the mother-worker. In this light motherhood has an industrial relevance in modern society.

However, this recasting of the mother in this modern light and the relocation of her into the modern, scientific space of the 'new' home was risky. Fifteen years after the publication of her keystone paper, 'The Invisible Flâneuse. Women and the Literature of Modernity', Janet Wolff built on her theory about femininity, space, and modernity in a second paper. Referring to her previous article she tells the reader,

> My title was 'The Invisible Flâneuse', and that is the phrase that is still taken up. But I would have done better to call her 'The Impossible Flâneuse' since, far from being invisible, any such person would have been hyper-visible. (Wolff, 2010, pp. 6–7)

Whilst Wolff applies this to the strolling woman in the city as a literary figure, the inherent gendered structure of this interaction is equally applicable to Haldane's vocational mothers and the modern home. To inhabit, as a woman, the male domain of the public sphere means drawing attention to herself, to her presence and her actions. For Haldane's mothers this is applicable both metaphorically and physically, in that both the conceptual space of 'work' and the physical space of the modern home, framed by science, are gendered male through their connection to the public sphere. In drawing attention to the figure of the mother by placing her in a masculine space, Haldane risked robbing her of the little social power that was being afforded to her in the early twentieth century. With dominant sexological and psychological models being used to frame 'healthy' women as heterosexual and feminine, being understood as masculine risked the individual being understood as an 'invert'. This would not only connect them to an atypical expression of sex, thereby defeminising them, but would also risk them being understood as homosexual and therefore 'unhealthy'. In both instances this would undermine a woman's suitability to be a mother from a eugenic perspective.

What is seen in Haldane's interwar work, then, is the destabilisation of gender, via the gender binary's power centre: masculinity. Raewyn Cornell notes that in society is found an 'emphasized femininity' (Connell, 1987, p. 188) that is 'organized as an adaptation to men's power…emphasizing compliance, nurturance and empathy as womanly virtues' (Connell, 1987, p. 188) and it is this performance of femininity that is found in traditional understandings of maternity. Whilst 'All forms of femininity in this society are constructed in the context of the overall subordination of women to men' (Connell, 1987, p. 186), and therefore there cannot be a hegemonic femininity, this performance of femininity *is given* cultural significance via male dominated institutions such as the media and advertising (Connell, 1987, pp. 187–8). Haldane's mothers, then, risked losing this cultural significance while ever their femininity was being framed by hegemonic masculinity. What I demonstrated in Part One of this thesis was the process by which Haldane undermined masculinities, especially those related to a scientific intellectual elite that for Haldane, inhabiting the world of the Oxford and Cambridge scientists, constituted hegemonic masculinity. Placing hegemonic performances of masculinity against each other, allowing them to undermine one another, Haldane destabilised the hierarchical gendered system. This allowed her to assert the mother and place her in a masculine-coded space without problematising her femininity.

Whilst in order to see this destabilisation of gender clearly it was necessary to view the gender politics of all of Haldane's interwar fiction, it is also significant that she started this process in the genre of science fiction. In trying to write a conception of motherhood outside of gender-policed space, Haldane had to write outside of the gendered expectations of the early twentieth century. Lucie Armitt discusses science fiction's suitability for writing outside of this patriarchal structure,

> trapped as we are within a patriarchal linguistic and social framework, it is very difficult for any writer to distance herself from that framework and write about alternative structures whilst still aiming to depict reality as it is lived and experienced. . . Because of its ability to provide the writer with this much-needed distancing from lived reality, science fiction is an obvious choice for the writer intent on such exploration. (Armitt, 1991, p. 123)

In writing science fiction, then, the author is able to write her own reality. It has the potential to be an ungendered space and therefore it allows the writer to explore ideas outside the confines of a gendered structure of reality. This is used by writers such as Charlotte Perkins Gilman in her creation of a matriarchal world in *Herland*, or Katharine Burdekin who, according to Elizabeth English in her chapter on 'Lesbian Modernism and Utopia', imagines in the 'invert' the promise of utopia in texts such as *Proud Man* (English, 2013, p. 95). Whilst *Man's World* is far from the promise of utopia in that it is a problematic depiction of gendered relations, it does have utopic elements for Haldane in that it depicts the mother as a socially and politically recognised worker. It was in this book, devoid of the expectations of 'reality', that Haldane was able to develop her ideas about gender and scientific elitism that are then teased out in various forms across her interwar fictions. In allowing mothers to inhabit the male space of industry in a paradigm outside of the gendered expectations of the early twentieth century, Haldane was able to develop a vocational model of motherhood that she then expressed throughout her interwar work. Similarly, there are authors whose works are not usually considered within the genre of science fiction who use its ability to change the constructs of reality to explore new relations of gender. Virginia Woolf, for instance uses the speculative fiction model to explore gender in *Orlando*. By breaking from the constraints of reality Woolf is able to create in fiction the non-binary gendered figure of Orlando who unifies the 'two sexes in the mind' (Woolf, 2004, p. 63) which she envisions in *A Room of One's Own*.

Science fiction, and speculative fiction as a whole, is valuable to the woman-writer and the feminist scholar alike, then, in its ability to free the writer from the constraints of a patriarchal reality. This points to the need for increased scholarship into female-science fiction, an area that is still under-researched, particularly in the early years of science fiction and scientific romance fiction of the nineteenth century. It also, however, indicates the use of re-examining women writers of other genres to seek out the speculative elements within their work. As is the case with Charlotte Haldane, it is in the science fiction text that is found the germ of radical conceptions of gender that are then grown elsewhere under the conditions of a patriarchal reality.

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