BLOOMERS AND PLUCK - THE INTERSECTION OF JOURNALISM AND FEMININITY IN THE REPORTING OF THE KLONDIKE GOLD RUSH OF 1898

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ABSTRACT:
There are several biographical works which examine women journalists who took part in the Klondike Gold Rush of 1898. However, little has been written concerning the issues of post-colonialism, New Journalism and changing gender roles in relation to their effects on these women’s writing. Through a study of newspaper articles from both the time of the Gold Rush and shortly after some of these women returned from the Rush, it is apparent that these women were on the cusp of important changes in how the world viewed femininity and masculinity and these changing roles are reflected in their writing. A further investigation into journalistic trends of the era also help to understand the intersection of nationality, gender and social class and its effects upon these women.
These journalists also reflected many trends and beliefs associated with Victorian women’s travel writing.
While many viewed the use of women as ‘stunt’ journalism or sensationalism, and others as a method to attract female readership, these women became representatives of the New Woman. They allowed women to gain a foothold in being seen as journalists in their own right with voices to address relevant issues of the time.
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On July 17, 1897 the Seattle Intelligencer’s headline “Gold! Gold! Gold!” captured the imagination of men and women worldwide. Thus began the famous Klondike Gold Rush. As would-be miners scrambled to find their way aboard the next available form of transportation to the newest Eldorado, newspaper editors also began the race to report the gold rush in this far off frontier. Amongst these journalists, four women – Miss Flora Shaw, Miss Helen Dare, Miss Esther Lyons and Miss Faith Fenton - from three different countries – England, the United States and Canada - and four different newspapers- The London Times, The San Francisco Examiner, Leslie’s Weekly and The Toronto Globe - reported on their journey to the gold fields. In addition, other women with no journalistic training made the trip to the Klondike and became Special Correspondents and were given credit for their unique stories. The forces which led them there, the stories which were reported about and by them and the representations of women through these news stories would shape the world’s perception of the female self and its role in the Rush.

For a woman of the day, the profession of journalist was often subject to the prejudices of the time. One problem was that “‘objectivity’ and ‘impartiality’ were anchored within a partial, male-oriented construction of knowledge, reportage and ‘news’ which produced a patriarchal framework for the professionalization of the occupation” (Chambers Women in Journalism 7). The idea that ‘real’ news with any sort of depth and importance was relegated to the sphere of the male was one which female journalists were often forced to combat through disclaimers that their stories were authentic and they
too could be relied upon to provide reliable information to their audiences. Unfortunately, news about women’s issues was ignored or sensationalized and women readers were widely regarded as interested only in ‘gossip’” (Chambers 7). The reports of The Times’ Miss Flora Shaw and her achievement of having “graduated in journalism as a member of the brilliant staff of the Pall Mall Gazette under the editorship of Mr Stead” is found under the section “Ladies Gossip” with no other title to indicate the article’s nature (Otago Witness 69). Deborah Chambers claims that “The fact that femininity was associated with the domestic sphere assured women journalists’ prominence as curiosities and as suppliers of ‘women’s news’ to draw women readers” (Chambers Women in the News 7). For example, when Helen Dare left San Francisco for the Klondike, The Examiner described her assignment as “[describing] things as a woman sees them” (San Francisco Examiner “Examiner Expedition” 1). Dare’s name appears with the male journalists who were part of the expedition giving her an authenticity for the reader. Yet, her role is put into perspective as one which will be significantly different from the male correspondents and will be of interest to her female readership only.

The description of Dare’s role also brings about the fact that female correspondents were seen as somewhat of an oddity and meant to cause some sensation. In fact “Many male journalists endorsed the findings of Edward Bok, editor of the Ladies Home Journal, that ‘a girl cannot live in the free-and-easy atmosphere of the local room or do the work required of a reporter without undergoing a decline in the innate qualities of womanliness or suffering in health’ (quoted in Steiner 1992:10)” (Chambers 19). Such sentiments are echoed in an article describing Flora Shaw’s and her reporting of the Klondike. The article assures the reader that “it must not be assumed that Miss Shaw is of
a masculine character” (Gerson Canadian Women in Print 65) and that she is a true lady “quick in all the sympathies of her sex, but endowed by nature with the power of will, of observation, of expression” (65). The author of the article attempts to erase the connection between masculinity and news reporting.

Interestingly, those women who dared to enter the newsroom, such as Flora Shaw who became in 1892 the first woman on the permanent staff of The Times of London, were seen by female readers as “glamorous and the envy of middle-class British women typically confined to the domestic sphere” (Chambers 19). In 1892, when Shaw was assigned as the colonial correspondent to South Africa, her “reports, written in the form of letters, caused a sensation. The assistant manager of the paper, Moberly Bell, commented that in his two years at the paper, ‘I can honestly say that nothing of the sort…has created such comment’ (quoted in Sebba 1994:38)” (Chambers 19). Some critics such as Chambers claim that women journalists “faced a central paradox” in that “those who refused to accept restrictions on what they could write about and who were not suitably feminine at work were branded as personally deviant, while those who accepted the limitations imposed on them and allowed themselves to be treated as feminine were professionally marginalized.”(24). For the woman journalist, one could be seen as becoming masculine by straying away from the supposedly feminine sphere of news interests or as an amateur by writing ‘fluff’ for the female readership. It was a fine line to tread in order to remain a professional yet still report on the issues important to the readership.

Dealing with the delicate task of retaining a female readership without seeming too militant or too much of a feminist was a challenge for many female journalists. Faith
Fenton of the *Toronto Globe* circumvented this problem quite effectively. Prior to going to the Klondike, Fenton reported on a variety of subjects. Despite Miss Fenton's belief in women's rights "she also mixed her more political pieces in with descriptions of fashion, profiles of actresses, reviews of plays, and travel pieces on her vacations ... thereby reassuring readers by couching subjects still considered well beyond the domain of women with those that were firmly within their limited sphere" (Duncan *Frontier Spirit* 225). Through her careful reporting of those subjects deemed to be of interest to her female readership, she was able to continue to report on issues such as “discrimination, sexual harassment, child abuse and wage disparity” (Gunning “A Passionate Pen”).

Newspapers also exploited the sensation caused by hiring female journalists. Some less scrupulous editors would have them “assigned …to perform investigative stunts precisely because these would be regarded as extraordinarily daring for women” (Chambers 21). Rather than a confidence in a woman’s ability to report the news, the ability to sell papers became the reason for some editors to give assignments out of the realm of domestic interests. One of the most well known examples is Miss Nelly Bly who was assigned the task of living out the journey of Verne’s Phineas Fogg of *Around the World in Eighty Days*. Although many condemn this stunt journalism as exploitive, to Brooke Kroeger, Bly’s biographer, “it was the advent of both the stunt girl” and “the large separate women’s sections” in newspapers “that created the first real place for women as regular members of the newspaper staff,” bringing “women, as a class, out of the journalistic sideshow and into the main arena” (Roggencamp *Narrating the News* 52). For those travelling to the Klondike, they became key players in an event which captured the world’s attention. These women, such as Esther Lyons, were given titles such as
“Heroine of the Alaska” (Bradley 7) and became sought after speakers not only on the subjects of fashion and women’s domestic interests, but also on their opinions of government and economic possibilities. Finally, although women’s news stories were often relegated to the weekend editions in the Women’s Pages, these women had caught the public’s eye, giving credence to their capabilities as journalists. Male journalists, albeit somewhat grudgingly, recognized these women as worthy of the title journalists, as one male’s article describing Miss Flora Shaw attests:

> “Her judgement may sometimes be questioned … her conclusions combated, but of her wide knowledge of men who are empire building … her enthusiasm, her courage, her intellectual ability … Miss Shaw is certainly one of the remarkable women of the age” (Gerson 65).

Although the writer questions Miss Shaw’s overall reporting of the Klondike and suggests by his comment that she is “a remarkable [woman]” and the exception to the rule when it comes to women, he does give her the praise he feels she deserves in her tackling of the issues.

Canadian women’s journalists were often an exception to their counterparts in England and the United States. According to Marjory Lang, oddity worked to their advantage in the English-Canadian press as “there were comparatively fewer male than female bylines in newspapers, and it was probably easier to win fame as a female rather than male newspaper personality” (Gerson 119). Fenton could garner more notoriety as a woman journalist due to her ability to have a byline meant to attract female readership. Lang also suggests that women were hired, not as stunt journalists which were associated with American journalism, but because “in the 1880s … they met an urgent need for advice of all kinds” (Fiamengo Women’s Page 136). Lang suggests the era of the 1880s was one in which the multi-generational family unit was disappearing and the world was
changing at so great a pace that “a mother’s advice no longer suited her daughter’s dilemma” (136). These changes caused both men and women to turn to the newspaper for advice. With this need for advice, women journalists were afforded a place that was ‘respectable, clean, a bit daring, and different’ and it afforded them ‘a public vehicle for their thoughts’” (Fiamengo 136).

Those going to the Klondike were in constant need of advice and *The Examiner* took full advantage of this trend. Helen Dare’s first news story about the Klondike was an interview with Mrs. Berry who had returned with her husband who had ‘struck it rich’ in the gold fields of the Klondike. The title, "Mrs. Berry Tells How She Dressed, Traveled, Kept House, Panned Gold and Gathered Nuggets in Alaska`` (July 21 2), suggests the type of advice which was often offered by female reporters and their subjects – primarily ones of respectable clothing, domesticity and a taste of ‘getting rich quick’. When Esther Lyons returned from the Klondike, she answered readers’ questions ranging from the amount of money one should take to whether a man should take his sweetheart along to the Klondike and run the risk of her leaving him for a miner who has struck it rich. She presents herself as the expert on both mining and advisor to "Anxious Willy [who] cannot leave his sweetheart behind, and is afraid to take her along, so he certainly cannot have very much confidence in her"(Lyons “Klondike: Where the Gold Is” 43). The sidebar which accompanies the article, “Doubt Solved by An Appeal to Experience”, outlines her role as an authentic expert.

The advent of penny papers, with their new target audience, also affected women journalists and their writing style. Keeping pace with this new audience, a new style of journalism emerged. It became known as New Journalism to those who saw its value and
Yellow Journalism to those who did not. Many believe that yellow journalism was all sensationalism and fraud, pseudo-science and scandal but Joseph Campbell argues that yellow journalism, with its new style of bold print, sensational headlines and use of illustrations and maps, was a perfect fit for the Gold Rush and its female reporters. Unlike its detractors, Campbell points out that in the age of the New Woman, newspapers who hired New Journalism editors also “hired talented women as [their] correspondents” (The Year that Defined American Journalism 1897 76). In what Campbell terms the “national anxieties about gender and femininity”(1897 103), he points out that true women upheld “four cardinal virtues”— “piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity”—that tied them to the home, seemingly the place where they longed to be, and left the public spaces of action and power to men” (104) yet at the same time the New Woman was "politely assertive, independent-minded, and increasingly educated"(1897 42). He points to the popularity of the bicycle as "a striking symbol of the push for gender equality"(1897 44).

The emergence of the New Woman and its characteristics can be found in many of the subjects of publications seen as Yellow Journalism. This New Woman image is reflected in an article, “Heroine of Alaska”, describing Esther Lyons as one who gained love of adventure from trips with her father. The writer also attests to Lyon's love of outdoor exercise including "wheel and horseback riding" (Bradley 7). Although Lyons gained her experience from a masculine source and undertook activities which were believed by some to be dangerous to the feminine body, the article ends with an affirmation of her feminine nature as she is described arranging flowers and commenting on the Yukon and its flowers as “our treasure box”(7). Interestingly, this article appears
next to several snippets of advice including one stating "We are wearing to death of hearing bigots dogmatize saying this or that occupation is not fitted to women or that women are not suited to a given task just because they are women" (Newark Daily Advocate 7). The Bradley article, the feminist advice snippets and the publication itself – Advocate – suggest the complexity of the image surrounding the New Woman.

Prior to 1897, women’s journalism had often been equated to travel writing, which associated itself with well-educated, upper class women who were privileged enough to travel and report on what they saw. During the 1880’s many middle class women including Esther Lyons, who claimed “unfortunately I am one of the army of breadwinners and my desires of course are stifled by my necessities” (Bradley 7), joined the ranks of women who wrote of their journeys. With the exception of the more affluent Flora Shaw, the female Klondike journalists were middle class women who wrote to finance themselves. Despite the class difference between typical female Victorian travel writers, many aspects of travel writing can be seen as having a commonality with the female journalists of the Klondike Gold Rush.

Scholars who analyze travel writing focus on the importance of the intersection of genre and other relevant factors. Sara Mills comments that "[w]ithout sufficient attention to determinants such as race, class, location, historical circumstances and power … conclusions drawn about women’s travel would be meaningless” (Seigel Gender, Genre, and Travel Writing 1). During their travels to the Klondike, all four women journalists’ class and nationality come into play. For example, Miss Flora Shaw, a journalist from the London Times was greatly affected by her British imperialist upper class background. Prior to going to the Klondike in 1898, Shaw was “steeped in unquestioned traditions of
Empire” (Clarke Colonial Connections 69). In writing of the Klondike, the simple fact that her title was Colonial Correspondent indicates her journalistic biases. In an article entitled “She is the Power - Miss Shaw is the Hetty Green of British Colonial Politics”, she is referred to as a “charming melange of femininity, imperialism and journalism” (Logansport Pharos 8) whose mission it was to “[investigate] the corrupt management of the Klondike by the colonial government”(8). She was to be the imperial gaze through which her British readers could judge the actions of Britain’s subjects in far off lands, the assumption being that those who were Other, in this case the newly formed Dominion of Canada, were morally and socially deficient. Her letters from Dawson City itself centre on factual information but do reveal her imperial bias. She complains that “[i]t is a painful experience for Englishmen proud of the purity of the British system of government to be compelled to listen to the plain-spoken comments of Americans and foreigners” (Shaw “Letters from Canada IV” 10). During this time in Dawson City, the influence of the Americans was so predominant that the city celebrated both Dominion Day and the Fourth of July. Such influence by non-British subjects clearly irritated Miss Shaw. She complains “not only that the laws are bad, but that the officers through which they are administered are corrupt” (10). In addition she claims that “bribery is rampant” (10) and the only cure is “communication with the world” including a telegraph to Ottawa and “proper” (10) mail service. Her only hope is that with the appointment of Mr. Ogilvie as Commissioner of the Yukon, proper British law and order would come to the territory. She hopes there will be changes to how the mining industry operates and that Ogilvie would address the law which required men to bring the equivalent of one year’s
provisions to Dawson. For Shaw, law and order comes from the outside world, from a system of government based on England’s own.

Her imperial gaze can also be seen in her description of the landscape of the Yukon. In David Spurr’s *Rhetoric of Empire*, he describes Pratt’s three stages of description of landscape and flora: “the landscape is first aestheticized, then it is invested with a density of meaning intended to convey its material and symbolic richness, and finally it is described as to subordinate it to the power of the speaker” (18). Shaw equates the flora she encounters with those found in England, describing the wild lavender, columbine and spirea, scarlet lilies and cactus which grow like ‘English buttercups’" (Shaw “Letters from Canada I” 6). Shaw first paints a picture of natural beauty then portrays it as an extension of the British countryside into a foreign land. It is Faith Fenton who exemplifies Pratt’s final stage in her description of her journey up the Yukon. She notes that river boats have as many accommodations as they would find in the East including "electric lights" and "fresh fruit for breakfast" (Fenton “Tie-Up On the Stikine” 5). She observes "Civilization follows trade and trade follows the gold rush at a feverish speed" (5). She sees the arrival of so many civilized people into the territory as a taming of the savage land. Despite the civility of the boat, Fenton describes what she terms as "primitive" scenery including the grandeur of the mountains where "the snow clings thicker to its sides and lies a heavy white tracery in the deep fissures"(5). During this journey Fenton reports on the town of Wrangell. She notes "To lovers of civic order and wholesomeness Wrangel is offensive" (5) and goes on to say that Canada would not be proud of such a town and Americans have yet to learn how to govern their territories. While Fenton criticizes the town’s lack of civilization, she does however appreciate the
crowd singing "God Save the Queen". She equates the wilderness with savagery and their arrival bringing order and civilization to such a disordered landscape.

Fenton also embodies what Spurr terms “The rhetorical convention based on the sweeping visual mastery of a scene” (Spurr Rhetoric of Empire 17) in which a description from a point of vantage allows the writer to “combine spatial arrangements with strategic, aesthetic, or economic valorization” (17). In “Sunday Ramble”, Fenton describes accompanying Commissioner Ogilvie on a hike, making the observations of tiny bluebells and a bit of golden rod, or a spray of wild sage, such as we have often found ... rambling through Toronto suburbs"(1) on the bluffs over Dawson. Interestingly, although she employs the same cataloguing of flora as other female journalists, she has moved the centre of comparison from Shaw’s England to her own native Toronto. The article concludes with Ogilvie at the height of the bluffs overlooking the town: "The Commissioner, who enjoyed the tramp as well as any boy could do, shut his telescope"(2) evoking the stereotype of the intrepid British explorer, full of boyhood vigour and adventure, with his spyglass, master of all he surveys. In Spurr’s view, his position of master signifies Fenton’s belief in his power over the land. This belief also reflects the fact that she, as a female companion, is secondary in power.

The female journalist’s view of herself in relation to those she describes is evident in the work of David Spurr. Spurr believes whether the description by a journalist of the non-Western people is colonial or sympathetic, the description still confirms that the journalist sees herself as better than those she surveys. He claims “The sympathetic humanitarian eye is not less a product of deeply held colonialist values and no less authoritative in the master of its object than the surveying the policing eye” (Spurr 20).
Judgmental perspectives are seen clearly in the journalism of Esther Lyons, a working class actress-turned-journalist, who provides many descriptions of the Native people of the Klondike. Her own feelings of superiority surface in her descriptions of the dwellings of the “Takish (sic) people as Takish (sic) House on Lake Marsh”(Lyons “Bennett Lake to Lake Leberge” 37) and states “Although I have given them the dignified name of buildings, they are really only enclosures”(39). She also notes that the Tagish will leave travelers on the trail the minute they receive word of a death in the group and “you will have to wait for days with all the patience you can summon” (37). Once again, she divides the power racially, suggesting that it is the Native people’s duty to guide them and these people dare to inconvenience the white traveler with their attendance at a family funeral.

Ethnocentric beliefs are prevalent in many female journalists’ work. Dare’s "Wards of the Holy Sisters" outlines her visit to Holy Cross Mission. She notes that the Sisters of St. Anne were "[l]aboring to lift little children out of the wretched conditions of their wild life and mold them into something more human" (Dare 23). Her criticism includes statements such as "The wildest flight of fancy couldn't evolve creatures more filthy in person and habitation, more unspeakably revolting in habit”(23), "they are afflicted with the most loathsome diseases deformities and disfigurements”(23), "they reek"(23), and "They are covered, head, body and all their belongings, with vermin"(23). In addition to their loathsome physical characteristics, Dare refers to them as “cheerfully, frankly, innately, incurably immoral”(23). On the other hand, she notes their love of children, gentleness, amiability, industriousness and "infinite patience" as well as their "ingenuity in utilizing the resources of this ungenerous country for their needs"(23).
Dare also notes that when the children make mistakes in school, they giggle like any other children whose "ancestors did not wear rings in their noses, tattoo their chins, squat on their heels, eat blubber, drink seal oil and paddle the waters in birch canoes"(23). She seems unable to reconcile her accepted stereotype of the Native with the fact that these children are much like white children, once again exemplifying the complex relationship between the colonizer and the colonized.

The judgemental nature of the female journalist is not reserved for Natives only. The surveying gaze is particularly harsh when observing other women. Jenkins in "The Gaze of the Victorian Woman Traveler" says that Victorian women "[distance themselves] and [their] actions from those of this eccentric other and [position themselves] in the symbolic; that is ... author [themselves] as subject, ironically by judging female behavior [in which she is an active participant] as unconventional"(22).

For example, Alice Rix, Helen Dare’s replacement while Dare was in the Klondike, interviewed Miss La More in “The Girl Who Danced at Dawson Tells Alice Rix All About the Time She Had There". Rix begins by describing what appears to be Miss La More’s crass nouveau riche lifestyle reporting that La More leaned back on her "divan in a very rococo apartment", wearing " a negligee of blue foulard cut in the sweet, seductive shape known to the frank French as a hop-from-bed" (6). The mere mention of hop-from-bed brings La More’s morality into question and is later developed when Rix quotes La More as saying that, when miners threw their nuggets on stage, “Their wives … went wild”(6). During Rix’s interview with La More, La More explained that crossing the Summit with extreme wind often caused windburn and peeling amongst the “girls” of the expedition. "Did you peel?"(6) Rix snidely asks, reflecting the belief that true ladies did
not tan or peel and questioning whether La More is a true lady. Rix seems even less
generous when La More, at her sister’s insistence, brings out the nuggets which she had
received from miners in the Yukon. Rix suggests La More’s cold calculating nature,
commenting "There were fifty-two [nuggets], solid chunks of rich, rough yellow metal
that men are struggling and starving for in the Alaska snow fields. Miss la More gathered
them up indifferently" (6). While Rix attempts to suggest through her article’s title that
she is the sisterly confidante to La More, she takes the opportunity to distance herself
from La More and her perceived lack of taste and virtue. Rix’s judgmental position is
reflective of what McColley calls the female travel writer’s tendency to "simultaneously
[ally] herself with ‘... women and [distance] herself from them"("Home in the
Himalayas” 146).

Rix was not the only female journalist to provide this perspective. In explaining
the hardships of the trail, Helen Dare asks her readers “Madam are you covertly or openly
egging on your men folk toward Alaskan gold fields, your husband, your sweetheart,
your brother, your son?” (Dare “Gold is A Mocking Devil” 14). She suggests a woman’s
tendency is "to do that and weep and pray for safety and success of the adventurer when
she has him well-started, you know. Perhaps, however, you're a man and you don't
know, but it’s a lamentable fact, nevertheless” (14). In addition to the woman’s sly
nature, Dare, in her next article, continues her address to her female audience criticizing
their love of romanticized adventure where their men "go out armed with courage and
confidence, a pick and shovel and a pack of provisions and come home loaded down with
gold”(14). She concurs “There's a charm, even romance, in the situation, viewing it from
a distance "(14). Her sarcasm is apparent at she describes how the miner spends the
winter in "his romantic little log cabin" with the "pretty, little, useful knickknacks you made for him"(14). Her view of the female sex is nothing short of scathing as she chides her female readers for their husbands’ misfortunes and "back breaking labor" and a "monotonous menu" of bacon and beans which causes him to go to town once he can no longer stand it and get "uproariously drunk ... as [he] just can't help it"(14). Dare’s last article, "An Innocent Abroad", in the same edition reinforces her portrayal of women, telling the story of a bookish innocent young man who fell in love with a dancehall girl whom he believed in "as some folks do their mother"(14). He foolishly made her his manager and gave her thousands of his dollars which he got from his mine. Once more women are portrayed as greedy and manipulative.

Besides the fact that both female travel writers and female journalists often position themselves above or away from their subjects, women from both these genres are subject to the same types of rhetoric. In all four female journalist’s accounts, "the rhetoric of departure and return" (Cheng “Francis Trollope” 130), a common aspect of travel writing, is prominent. In Shaw’s case, she was on a fact finding mission, departing from London to the Klondike to investigate corruption, and returning to London to reveal her findings. Although her departure was not a major focus of the news of the day, her return and subsequent celebrity status as a woman who had been to the Klondike, made her an expert, garnering her many speaking tours where she lectured about the Klondike and its mining practices. She became known as “the clever lady who ‘used to do the colonies’” (Otago Witness “Ladies Gossip” 69). Her safe return with a raft of knowledge from far off members of the Commonwealth gave her celebrity status also. Lyons also emphasizes her journey and return as an expert. In the 1898, Lyons took up answering
questions posed by readers in “Klondike: Where the Gold Is; How to Find It” (Lyons 43). Perhaps the most publicized departure was that of the Examiner’s Helen Dare where her name appears on the front page story “The Examiner’s Expedition to Famous Klondike” (1). Yet, her return was no less sensational with her column from British Columbia beginning with “Homeward Bound on the Bosom of the Golden Yukon” (3).

The fanfare accompanying the return ‘home’ of the journalists shows the belief that these female journalists are back where they belong, ‘home’, where they are most suited to live. In his essay “Alexandra David-Neel's Home in the Himalayas”, McColley comments that in addition to referring to being in one's mother country, home also refers to being back "in one's element" (281). For the female Klondike journalists, they are back to the domesticity many see them best suited to. McColley also suggests that the word 'home' is synonymous with 'civilized' (285). In “Homeward Bound”, Dare begins by praising civilization with its "cleanliness, and above all, its fresh white napkins and tablecloths" (3). She points out that these amenities seem unimportant unless one has just returned from the "wastes and wilds of Alaska"(3). For Dare, Lyons and Shaw, their return home can be interpreted as not just a return from an assignment, but as being back where they feel comfortable and away from the less civilized Klondike. Faith Fenton’s experience, however, is quite different. Fenton’s departure was highly publicized as she was leaving with four nurses on a mission of mercy and expected to return to Toronto with news of the conditions of the Klondike. Fenton is the exception to the rule in this case, as she did not return until several years later, after having clearly made the Klondike her home, marrying a local doctor and continuing her journalism as editor of a local paper.
One of the most significant commonalities between travel writing and the women journalists of the Klondike is the “Rhetoric of Peril” (Seigel “Women’s Travel” 55). Kristi Seigel explains this rhetoric in terms of the Grimm's version of Little Red Riding Hood which teaches women that "We are easily distracted and disobedient, we are not safe alone in the woods (traveling off the beaten path); we are fairly stupid; we get ourselves into trouble; and we need to be rescued by a man."(55). This rhetoric is both affirmed and denied in the writing of the women journalists of the Klondike. The rhetoric suggests that women, traveling alone, are in danger. A prime example is the articles describing Faith Fenton before her journey northward. The *Lewiston Evening Journal* reported on that fact that supplies will be “liberally provided for the women” (“New Order of Nurses” 3) and assures the reader the women will have the protection of males and the nurses will work in groups no smaller than two for their own safety. Many felt that with the Yukon Field Force accompanying the five unmarried females, all would be well. Fenton herself reports that because she and the nurses are traveling with the detachment, they feel "safer and surer" (Greenhous *Guarding the Goldfields* 113).

The protection of the stronger male is a theme found within this Rhetoric of Peril. Helen Dare suggests the importance of the protection of powerful males in her article "Gambled But Not Saved By Their Coin "(Dare 3). Written on her arrival to Dutch Harbor, Alaska, she begins by describing the record trip of the *Excelsior* in nine days and seventeen hours and her early morning view of the harbour "on the bridge beside the Captain, wearing his big coat over my wraps, drinking hot tea" (3). The captain is portrayed as the gallant figure protecting the ‘weaker sex’ from the elements. Fenton echoes this chivalrous protection of men, describing “Joe, the pack train cook, who had
gallantly placed his white horse at [my] service” (“Packing on the Trail” 11). Greenhaus asserts that since "Fenton tended to gush a good deal over sunrises, sunsets, scenery and 'our gallant boys' to avoid boring the reader, some material of that kind has been excised" from her articles within his book Guarding the Goldfields (68). Some truth can be found in Greenhaus’ criticism, with Miss Fenton’s clear admiration of the protection of the Mounted Police and Col. Sam Steele, "as fine a man as could be desired" (“Winter Days” 6). Later in her career, Fenton portrays these specimens of protection and manhood differently, poking gentle fun at them. In one edition of The Paysteak she relates a story of how a local Mountie who had been in the Battlefords during the Riel Rebellion mistakenly shot a cow thinking it to be a Metis sneaking into the tents of the North West Mounted Police (Vol. 1 3). Her experiences in Dawson seem to have eliminated her belief in the Rhetoric of Peril.

Other women did their best to discredit the Rhetoric of Peril. In a San Francisco Examiner story, fraught with danger in its title, "A Woman's Ride in Mad Waters: Swept Toward Death by the Swift Current of the Treacherous River”, the female reporter, Mrs. Mary Holmes, Special Commissioner of the Examiner, describes her adventure. Her article begins:

"This thing began by wading in gum boots over a mile, through icy water up to my waist, clinging to a rope lest I lose my footing in the swift stream, and this experience was followed a little later by imminent peril of drowning in a helpless scow on the sweeping water of the treacherous Chilcoot, but sink or swim, here I am in camp, two and one-half miles above Dyea.” (Holmes 14).

Despite the gripping headline and introduction created by a male editor, Mrs. Holmes writes realistically of the danger of the quick water where her scow, containing herself and two men, was cut adrift and careened towards an old overgrown bridge. "I will not
deny that, like the Scotchman, I was frightened just a 'wee bit'. Of course, I did not let my companions know my innermost feelings because it was plain to see that they, too, were anything but comfortable over the situation" (14). The Rhetoric of Peril is based on the idea which began in the eighteenth century that the activities and structures of female bodies such as ovulation and menstruation made their bodies weak and inferior and thus they needed the safety of their homes to protect the frail body (Seigel “Women’s Travel of Peril” 61). As late as 1855, doctors believed that the condition of hysteria, “a species of neurosis” (Duglinson Medical Lexicon 25) was found to “have its seat in the uterus” (25) and was known to cause “alternate fits of laughing and crying … and if the attack be violent, there is, sometimes, a loss of consciousness” (25). The treatment for such a neurosis was “exercise, tranquility of mind, amusing and agreeable occupations” (25). Interestingly enough, the entry for this condition ends with “See Mania, dancing” (25). Clearly, medical experts of the time saw a clear connection between the weak female body and hysteria, a condition only associated with women. Later, in telling of her tale to others downstream, Mrs. Holmes reflects "The most embarrassing part of my adventure is that people will insist I am a heroine, because I neither fainted nor cried out when apparently about to lose my life"(14). Mrs. Holmes defuses all of the Rhetoric of Peril, being neither rescued by men or reacting with the expected hysteria of the stereotypical ‘damsel in distress’. She shows the strength of her body and mind even in times which were neither tranquil nor agreeable.

The marital status of female travelers is also key to the Rhetoric of Peril where [a] woman traveling alone is vulnerable, disobedient, and, quite possibly, immoral" (Seigel “Women’s Travel and the Rhetoric of Peril” 56). Although Flora Shaw made no mention
of such conditions in her correspondence from the Klondike, in her subsequent speaking
tours about her experiences, she frequently attacked the myths of the dangers of a women
traveling alone.

“I had been warned before I went of terrific hardships, of hunger, thirst,
perpetual fatigue, sickness which hardly could be avoided, and dangers
resulting from an undisciplined society, in which it was necessary not
only to carry a revolver, but to be prepared on occasion to ‘shoot quick’,
I found none of these things . . . I had not been three days in the country
before I realised that a revolver was about as likely to be useful as it
would be in Piccadilly” (Wanganui Chronicle “A Woman’s Trip to the
Klondike” 2).

While it is highly doubtful that Shaw traveled completely alone considering the number
of stampeders on the trail, she does clearly defuse the myths of danger to single women
traveling to the Klondike.

Lyons, on the other hand, says very little about the dangers of a single woman
traveling alone, but does touch on the issue of morality. Upon her return to the United
States, Lyons responded to questions from readers of The World. One reader requests
knowledge of how many women are in Dawson City and what they are like. Lyons
replies with "Last summer there were about seventy five women in Dawson City. Not
knowing all of them personally, I can scarcely answer your question, but about forty of
them are wives of miners and settlers, some are in the dance halls, and some are pursuing
various occupations” (Lyons “Klondike: Where the Gold Is” 43). Lyons, a former actress
who claims to have taken on the occupation of journalist out of necessity rather than
adventure, seems rather non-judgmental of the women of Dawson. Another reader asks
"if a respectable woman in all propriety can live in the Klondike? How do the miners
treat women?” (43). Lyons again answers sensibly that "A respectable woman can live
anywhere with propriety” (43). She divorces the concept of single women from the concept of morality.

The idea of single women both in physical and moral danger was perpetuated by many newspaper accounts written by both men and women, especially those of the San Francisco Examiner. In his first dispatch to the Examiner, E. J. Livernash comments “in steerage there are five women, two of whom are traveling without escorts. They all seem respectable" (Livernash “Expedition” 1). Mrs. Ethel Berry advises “[The Klondyke] is no place for women, single women, I mean, for, of course, a married woman is always a help to her husband” (Berry “How I Mined For Gold” 1). Berry’s response reflects the special circumstances including "traveling as a colonial wife, recovering from illness, or completing work left unfinished by a man, especially a father" (Jenkins “Victorian Gaze” 17) under which women could travel alone without a question to their morality. Such views are reflected in the Examiner’s "A Woman's Bonanza" (3). The article describes Mrs. J. Willis who, in a letter to Mrs. Frank P. Hicks, discusses her gold strike. The article’s reporter writes favorably of "a woman of iron will" (3) and explains that she "went for [her husband] who was unable to go to the Klondike due to his rheumatism” (3). Such women were seen as having legitimate claims to traveling as they were representatives of their male counterparts. However, in exchange for the right to act in the man’s sphere, the woman’s femininity was often challenged, in the case of Mrs. Willis whom the journalist notes "parts her hair on the side like a man . . . and attends strictly to business"(3).

Nowhere is the importance of being a married woman more evident that in the Examiner’s publishing of a young man’s request to find a wife and the resulting letters
published as "These Women Want to Marry a Man Bound Klondykeward"(2). The young man’s ad stated that he was off to the Klondike and required a wife with the following qualities:

"young lady, or widow, not over 30, unincumbered (sic), and matrimonially inclined ... must have a good figure, refined, some accomplishments, in good health, of amiable disposition and willing to take chance on such short acquaintance... inclose (sic) photo"(2)

In response he received many replies, of which "twelve claimed to be between twenty five and thirty"(2). The article contains many desperate letters including one writer who says she has only one encumbrance, a large dog, but she offers that "We could kill him"(2). Despite the article’s humourous tone, it reveals the importance to some women to be accompanied by a husband in order to be seen as respectable.

*The Examiner’s* Helen Dare also commented upon the connection between traveling alone and morality in her observations of the occupants on board the *Excelsior*. She notes how all the female passengers share the same sleeping space with "The promised brides and truly wedded wives on their way to joining the fortunate Klondykers [lying] sandwiched in with the prospective Delilahs of the camp, whose ultimate aim is to shear the modern Samson of their golden fleece"(Dare “Gambled But Not Saved” 3). Whether her assumption, that the single women on board are all prostitutes, is correct is not clear.

Siegel asserts that "the rhetoric of peril leveled at women traveling alone proves myopic in scope and riddled with issues of race and class" (“Women’s Travel”69) and links to the previously mentioned issue of morality. It becomes increasingly apparent that all four women journalists stress the importance of the concept of being a ‘lady’ as did many readers. In 1898 *The Sunday World* ran a contest concerning "What is a
Gentleman? What is a Lady?" (43) and published the winners of this contest directly under Esther Lyons’s responses to a number of questions about the Klondike. First prize was awarded to "the best word for a woman of most perfect mould . . . with a love for humanity both great and small" (43) and "educated in the usages of polite society both in manners and custom" (43). Among other opinions, another submission suggested a lady is defined by "Mind, Money and Manners" and "will avoid everything in the shape of vulgarity, meanness, and bad taste, whether in connection to her action, speech, or attire” (43) and another puts an emphasis on her being a “lover of home, a lover of God, a lover of children” (43). These popular conceptions of a lady are reflected in the descriptions of those four journalists who traveled to the Klondike.

Although Miss Shaw does not directly refer to her experiences in her letters to The Times, in her speaking tours she reports that the kindness she received along the trail was not just material.

“There was an habitual recognition, that ‘the lady’ would gladly be spared any unnecessary acquaintance with the coarser side of life. Nothing of the sort that was disagreeable was forced upon my knowledge. Though there were of necessity many physical discomforts to be endured, I never had a moment of moral discomfort on my journey” (Wanganui Chronicle “A Woman’s Trip” 2).

She suggests that the mere recognition of her state as a lady caused her to receive excellent treatment by the men who judged her as such. They did nothing to offend her and were on their best behaviour. In later accounts of her speaking tours she is often referred to as “A Lady Journalist [of the] Klondike” (Mataura Ensign 4) signifying her upper class status, her gender, and her morality.

Those who presented themselves as ‘ladies’ were often attacked by those who felt they were not. Helen Dare, in her assessment of the women on board the Hamilton, notes
there are twelve on board, nine traveling alone, "[and] but four of them have any definite prospects before them" (Dare “Gambled But Not” 3). She refers to the other five as "'ladies of fortune' if one may effeminize the titles as they have effeminized the title. How is that for a new women's movement? Who cares for suffrage and Susan B. now?"(3). Such a mocking comment clearly outlines that ladies must conduct themselves in a moral fashion and that the adoption of the term ladies by those of clearly questionable morality is an affront to all those who promote suffrage.

Helen Dare’s opinion of who could rightfully call herself lady is clear. On her way back from the Klondike, Dare describes Rampart City as "essentially a man's camp. There are seven or eight white women there to be sure five of whom are ladies. They are sweet women, too, and not one of them has ever known before what roughing it means” (Dare “The Real Life” 4) For Dare, a lady is not accustomed to rustic conditions. This belief that only middle and lower class women are suited to travel and portrayed as "sturdy" and "able to withstand hardships more easily” (Seigel “Women’s Travel” 61) is also echoed by Dare’s “The Child of the Chilcoot”. This human interest story of Vera Barnes, the first white child born in Juneau, who was on the steamer with Dare and had the distinction of having already gone to the Klondike via the Chilkoot Trail, begins with a description of the girl's mother, Mrs. Barnes, as "a merry, practical, pretty little Irish woman" (5). Unlike her hysterical ‘lady’ counterparts, Barnes was “a sensible little woman [who] didn’t magnify the undertaking nor spend sleepless nights anticipating disasters. Instead, she got everything together to make the little family comfortable” (5). Dare’s description of Vera’s descent from the summit of the Chilkoot Pass and into Lake Lindeman by sliding down on the snow, her mother carrying her on her back through the
snow as long as she could and finally Vera "pluckily [trudging] along with her mother to camp" (5) attests to the supposed hardy stock of the lower class who could endure such hardship without difficulty.

Travel writing theorists feel that the title of lady was conferred only on those of the upper class. Siegel asserts, a lower class women's suffering "would not be the same as that of a lady"("Women’s Travel” 58) and that "society considered upper-class women a more valuable commodity, which, in turn, made their safety and purity of critical concern"(60). Some news reports do, however, contradict Siegel’s theory. Mrs. Ethel Berry, while on her journey over the Chilkoot Pass claims "It was not hard work for me, though. The men pitched the tent at night, made the fires, cooked the meals and washed the dishes. I had only to hold my hands and play lady" (Berry “How I Mined” 1). Such a report suggests that all classes of women might be afforded the luxury of less work on the trail than they had undertaken at home. The men, many of whom were also not upper class, recognized the hardships of the trail and the need for them to assist women, regardless of social standing. Mrs. Berry’s reflection of ‘playing lady’ merely suggests that she herself did not consider herself a lady at the time, but was merely taking on what she saw as the role of lady - doing nothing and having the men do the work. Mrs. Mary Holmes, a special correspondent for the San Francisco Examiner echoes Berry’s sentiments claiming "The men are simply lovely. No less than three offered to cook dinner for me" (Holmes “A Woman’s Ride” 14). She noted that others offered her coffee, apples, the use of their tents. She further emphasizes her treatment as a ‘lady’ as "One big miner removed my oil coat, another pulled up a box to the stove, while a third piled on wood"(14). Neither woman would have been termed a lady by her social standing,
but with the assumption of their need for assistance and protection by the men, they easily fell into the stereotype of a lady.

Fenton, with all of her feminist opinions, still uses ‘ladies’ in some of her reports. In her initial news story of the group’s departure she lists the passengers of their journey including four Victorian Order nurses and "one little lady who goes to her husband, an officer in the Mounted Police in Dawson"("Tie-Up on the Stikine” 69). The adjective ‘little’ further adds to her need of the protection of males. Later, in describing the "pepperpot sprinkle" (71) of the residents of Wrangell, she makes note of the "lady doctor … with professional bag in hand" who "steps blithely out of her tent quarters to visit a sick patient"(71). The fact that she adds the word lady in front of the occupation of doctor is interesting in itself and Fenton continues to paint a curious picture as she states the doctor is carrying her ‘professional bag’ in case her readers might assume she is holding a purse! The doctor’s dainty steps further cement the image of a feminine ‘lady’.

Fenton continues to promote the concept of lady in her writings after the height of the Gold Rush. In her later writing for The Paystreak, a local Dawson publication, in her description of the festivities surrounding the Christmas Bazaar, she thanks those who have "responded to [the hospital's] need for assistance” particularly "the ladies who have worked so indefatigably, the gentlemen who have advised and aided them; and the merchants who have contributed not once but repeatedly (Vol. 2 1). In the previous volume, she comments that “Ladies are requested to forward to the editors any information or interest concerning their departments which they wish to have published" and " a full list of names of the ladies assisting and of the programme (sic) details will be published in our Tuesday issue"(Vol 1 1). Fenton suggests a lady is one who acts in the
interests of the public and takes advice and help from gentlemen. She puts forth the image of the lady, not as an upper class socialite, but as a respectable and serviceable member of the community. Once again, this definition suggests the alliance between morality and being a ‘lady’ by public opinion and a little help from the press who will publish the names of those who have volunteered. Fenton further extends this definition with "A little bird says there is going to be a voting contest as to which is the most popular lady among the charming Bazaar Mesdames (sic)"(The Paystreak Vol. 1 6). In addition to public service in the cause of the common good, in this case a fundraiser for the St. Mary’s Hospital, a lady appears to garner the attention of the men through ‘charming’ behavior.

The entire issue of morality and femininity can be best examined in the reporting of fashion of both the female journalists and their subjects. Lindsay Tucker proposes that "women's clothing has historically acted as a metaphor for women's bounded behavior"(cited in Siegel “The Politics of Location” 194). The issues surrounding what to wear to the Klondike were of great interest to the point that entire articles such as “An Outfit A Woman Should Take North - One who Has Roughed It in the Klondyke Makes Out a List of Necessary Articles”(2) appeared on front page of the San Francisco Examiner. Alice Rix’s article on the departure of the Examiner staff on their way to the Klondike is full of descriptions of fashion, describing “trim skiffs manned by bare-armed, sun-browned youth, in ducks and sweaters, with a cargo of pretty girls under red parasols to make a regatta gladness” (“Examiner’s Expedition Sails” 1). Miss Rix describes Dare as "[s]mall and trim with a summery white sailor and a tan covert coat and neat little tweeds under it, dressed for two teas and lemonade as if there were no such
thing as ice and snow the green earth over"(1). Miss Dare is not portrayed as a daring journalist, but as a giddy woman, who replies to the question of whether she was nervous with "Oh, I don't care, if my hat's on straight"(1). Rix continues to portray the women leaving for the Klondike as mindless creatures of fashion with “leather belts of one and all dangled the burdensome unnecessaries that women, even experienced women, are wont to take on their travels - vinaigretes, slippery little metal purses, silver pencils, and bonbonneires "(1).

Practicality and morality came into conflict with the clothing which women wore to cross the Chilcoot Pass. Bloomers were popularized by Amelia Jenks Bloomers who advocated for their use in Lily, a feminist magazine of the 1850’s. Forty years later, women who wore bloomers still caused a sensation. Women were advised by experienced Klondikers such as Mrs. Berry to take a short skirt “just below the knee” (Dare “Mrs Berry”’ 2) but the proper Mrs. Berry makes no mention of bloomers. The Examiner also published "Crossed Chilcoot in Bloomers", the story of Mrs. Lulu Ash who "wore bloomers during the trip from Dyea to Dawson" (2). Mrs. Ash advises that “No woman should attempt the trip over the pass unless she wears bloomers. Long dresses are dangerous. However, she can with comfort wear a short skirt over her bloomers if she so desires"(2), ensuring her readers that they can remain within the bounds of modesty and still have the practical advantage of bloomers.

Faith Fenton further exemplifies this debate over fashion, practicality and morality. Prior to leaving for the Klondike, in an article for the Regina Leader Post, Fenton is described as having two suits and using the same fabric but of “a dark green colour” ( “Five Brave Girls” 5) for matching bloomers. The article notes she will also
wear a “knee length skirt” and a blouse of the same material “of a Norfolk coat style, coming half way to the knee and having as many pockets as a man would require in the outside wrap”(5). A long overcoat of “heavy brown duck” is to be worn “to protect the wearer from those annoying briars” (5). Clearly, although she has needs for as many pockets as a man would, the intention of the clothing was to match attractively and protect her. Fenton’s shorter walking skirt which "came down well past her knees but … did not hide her lower legs with bloomers and gaiters" (Backhouse Women of the Klondike 144) would later cause her grief. The officer in charge, a bachelor and too embarrassed to speak to Fenton on the matter, asked a married woman on the trip to address the issue with Miss Fenton and a band of material was sewn to the lower hem of her skirt to alleviate the officer’s discomfort in seeing Miss Fenton’s bloomers. Fenton portrayed herself quite differently when discussing her clothing. In “Packing on the Trail” (11) she describes herself as "a woman in short walking skirt, high top boots and mosquito veil for rider [carrying] a small cat and occasionally a gun belonging to the scarlet-coated orderly who walked beside [me]”. Veil and cat suggest her frail and gentle nature, while the gun, although a masculine symbol, is carried on behalf of its owner, a man.

Questions of femininity also gave rise to the questions of masculinity in relation to the feminine. Women were seen as angels of mercy, as in the case of Fenton’s Victorian Order of Nurses, or companions who eased their husbands’ burdens. Because many women on the trail were treated like ladies and relieved of the duties which they were used to, men then took on these duties. Men who took on typically feminine roles, such as nurse or comforting partner, caused others to question at what point femininity
becomes imposed on masculinity. The terminology which journalists use to refer to men and women reflects this conflict. The word plucky was originally boxing slang from the 1800s, from the meaning "heart, viscera" as that which is "plucked" from slaughtered livestock ("Word of the Day"). Dare described miners who "have buckled down to the new like pluckily whistling to keep their courage up" (Dare “Child of the Chilcoot” 5) and the “pluckiness” of Hank Gale, "a typical prospector and a typical American too, of the old-fashioned Uncle Sam type - talk spare and wiry, with keen and kindly eye, vast shrewdness, native wit, plenty of horse sense” (Dare “Homeward Bound” 3). Dare suggests a masculine demeanor full of heart and common sense in the face of hardship. Yet, Dare applies the term to young Vera, the child who climbed the Chilcoot, “pluckily trudging” (Child of the Chilcoot 5) beside her mother through the snow. Fenton describes the “plucky little triad” of nurses who travel with her” (Greenhous Guarding the Goldfields 106). Those females who persevered were credited with having the spirits of men and having lost the hysteria thought common to women. Terminology and its relationship between masculine and feminine also extended to racial issues. Lyons ends one of her articles with “There are many white men in Alaska married to the Indians. They call them squaw men” (“Leberge to Dawson City” 53), associating the crossing of racial boundaries with the feminization of men.

The changing roles of men and women became the subject of discussion for many journalists. Helen Dare’s “The Real Life at Minook”, published after her return from the Klondike, explores these roles. She notes men do their best "which isn't much to be sure, from the feminine point of view and that pleasant fiction about the human masculine being able to make himself comfortable under any conditions is exploded for me" (4).
Doubting that men can competently undertake typically female tasks, she notes "Lawyers cook, doctors cook, clubmen cook, men of politics and sons of mars daily with the frying-pan and coffee-pot, clerks, mechanics and men of science stir beans and scorch apple-sauce" (4). She seems to resent that "[t]he respective merits of baking-powder, bread and yeast bread are discussed in camp as gravely as the affairs of state" as though the men are invading her sphere of expertise although she admits “well-intentioned misinformation [she] gave them about the cooking of canned and dried things” (4). She seems surprised that "When left to their own devices, free from the captious critic, men are surprisingly kind to one another"(4), kindness being a quality she equates with females. She recounts:

"things are made comfortable for a returning miner in the offhand masculine fashion that is very effective in its way. Some one helps him off with his pack and gives him a welcome to camp, another lends him dry socks and gets out perhaps a stimulating nip. If it is near meal time the best dinner is shared with him and if it isn't hot tea and a plateful of something or other appears opportunely." (4)

Although portraying the men of the camp like wives who ease their partner’s burden at the end of a long work day, she attempts to balance this ‘feminine’ image with the insistence that these men still "whoop things up"(4), alcohol being synonymous with masculinity. She struggles to define what is feminine by examining the masculine.

The Klondike Gold Rush can be seen as a turning point for women journalists. Although portraying the men of the camp like wives who ease their partner’s burden at the end of a long work day, she attempts to balance this ‘feminine’ image with the insistence that these men still "whoop things up"(4), alcohol being synonymous with masculinity. She struggles to define what is feminine by examining the masculine.

The Klondike Gold Rush can be seen as a turning point for women journalists. Despite the fact that many editors saw these journalists as a novelty or sought to exploit their gender to increase readership, the Klondike Gold Rush provided an opportunity for women to be seen as journalists in their own right. While reporting on the characters they met, these women also discussed important issues such as the alleged corruption of the mining industry, the unfair conditions many miners were subjected to, the importance
of gaining reliable telegraph communication in the Yukon, and the hardships of the journey and the winters in Dawson City. When Shaw and Lyons returned, they were sought after as speakers and experts on the conditions they experienced in the Klondike. Fenton, who remained in the Klondike for several years, continued to write for her readers in Toronto, often citing many of the inaccuracies of the more sensational stories to emerge during the height of the gold rush. Only Dare seems to return to the world of ‘soft’ journalism, writing for the Sunday edition of the Examiners, as a theatre critic.

In addition, these four women brought into focus the struggle by both men and women to understand and accept the New Woman as well as the roles of masculinity and femininity as a new century was dawning. While often praising the chivalry of the men they encountered on the trail, they also exposed these characters’ sensitive natures. They challenged the nature of femininity both through their clothing choices and their chosen occupation. Although often they fell into representing themselves and other women in terms of their supposed frailty, they also promoted women as able-bodied and strong. While still being influenced by the trends associated with Victorian travel writers, they expanded the boundaries of women writers beyond the upper class socialites on world tours, and the readership of their writing to both genders and a variety of social classes. They helped lay the foundation for future generations of women journalists to be accepted and valued within their profession.
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