

CHAPTER 4

Suffragism

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The writing generated by the suffrage campaigns of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was unprecedented both in its quantity and generic diversity. Novelists, playwrights, poets, and, of course, polemicists, paid tribute to and parodied the first wave of the women's movement in print. The motivations behind writers' engagement with the campaign varied. Many nailed their colours to the mast. Sylvia Pankhurst remembers how 'Evelyn Sharp, May Sinclair, Violet Hunt and other women writers rattled collecting-boxes at street corners. John Galsworthy, E. V. Lucas, [Henry] Nevinson and others gave autographed copies of their books [to be auctioned].'¹

As well as rattling 'collecting-boxes', Sharp and Sinclair wrote short fiction and essays for suffrage periodicals, while Elizabeth Robins and Cicely Hamilton wrote novels, plays, and pageants for the stage celebrating the bravery of suffrage activists.² On the other hand, 'anti-suffragist' writers caricatured the 'shrieking sisterhood' in order to warn the public against votes for women. The founding president of the Women's National Anti-Suffrage League was none other than the novelist Mary Augusta Ward, whose works *The Testing of Diana Mallory* (1908) and *Delia Blanchflower* (1914) are stalwarts of the anti-suffrage canon.³ That the campaign roughly coincided with a revolution in print media and the development of new and more diverse reading publics is something that those on both sides of the debate capitalised upon.⁴ Moreover, some writers simply seized on the passion and drama of the cause as timely material that might help to sell books.⁵ The formal, generic, and ideological diversity of the writing inspired by the campaign makes it difficult to discuss suffrage literature in the singular.

The written word was an integral political tool for those fighting for the vote. The spectacular politics of the suffrage campaign utilised pageantry and choreographed processions, as well as the imagery of its posters and banners. Textual activism played a profound and related role. As Sowon

Park puts it, 'the suffrage movement prompted women to write, publish, and read'.⁶ Much of the work of women writers for the suffrage campaign was organised through the Women Writers' Suffrage League (WWSL), established in 1908 by Cicely Hamilton and Bessie Hatton, while suffrage periodicals offered new venues for publication.⁷ These were novel, in so far as they were frequently administered and edited by women.⁸ Reflecting upon the status of the woman writer in an essay originally published in just such a journal, Elizabeth Robins, first president of the WWSL, points out the pressures and inequities regularly experienced by women writing for male 'publishers', 'professional readers', and 'advisers':

Let us remember it is only yesterday that women in any number began to write for the public prints. But in taking up the pen, what did this new recruit conceive to be her task? To proclaim her own or other women's actual thoughts and feelings? Far from it. Her task, as she naturally and even inevitably conceived it, was to imitate as nearly as possible the method, but above all the point of view, of man.⁹

Robins's diagnosis of the strictures of a male-dominated culture industry and the withering effect this has on 'woman's art' closely anticipates the insights Virginia Woolf would offer years later in her essays *A Room of One's Own* (1929) and 'Professions for Women' (1931).¹⁰

Woolf, then Virginia Stephen, also engaged in what she called the 'humbler work' of grassroots activism in a suffrage office in 1910:

I spend hours writing names like Cowgill on envelopes. People say that Adult Suffrage is a bad thing; they will never get it owing to my efforts. The office, with its ardent but educated young women, and brotherly clerks is just like a Wells novel.¹¹

Stephen's account may not ring with enthusiasm, but it does remind us of the bread-and-butter work upon which the campaign depended. It also offers another slant on the relationship between the politics of the campaign and contemporary literature. Stephen imagines her experiences in the office through the prism of literature, 'a Wells novel', which suggests that perhaps it was not simply suffrage activism providing subject matter for fiction, but fiction itself shaping and even offering a model through which suffrage activists could imagine their work.

Just as recent suffrage historians have complicated and diversified narratives of the campaign, attention to its literary culture has also flourished.¹² Barbara Green's *Spectacular Confessions* draws attention to the generic range of the textual documents of the campaign – 'novels, letters, speeches and diaries' – and shows the dynamic relationship between this writing and

the spectacular political activism of the campaign.¹³ Suffrage theatre and the organisations that made possible its grand-scale productions and pageants are the subject of rich discussion.¹⁴ The rise of feminist periodical studies and the research of scholars including Green and Maria DiCenzo, among others, into suffrage print cultures has nuanced our understanding of the suffrage campaign as a literary movement, and one with a keen eye on the marketplace.¹⁵ The new availability of suffrage texts has had a powerful impact on the field, which had historically to contend with a scarcity of primary materials.¹⁶

Questions of literary value loom large in the critical reception of suffrage writing. Elaine Showalter suggests that despite the 'enormous quantity' of suffrage writing, 'relatively little of this work is distinguished as fiction', its value instead lying in its historical interest.¹⁷ As critics have noted, Showalter's pitting of aesthetic quality against historical content has influenced the terms of the debate around suffrage literature.¹⁸ Ann Ardis argues that the practice of literary scholars, principally concerned with 'the appreciation and evaluation of the individual text, and the individual great writer's work', has made suffrage writers easier to overlook as their 'texts are arguably less impressive individually than in the aggregate'.¹⁹ Park addresses the lack of formal experimentation in suffrage literature explicitly: 'In order for suffrage fiction to reach a wide audience, and remain intelligible, it had to use the form most familiar to the majority of readers. [...] Thus the novels were experimental and radical in content rather than in form.'²⁰ The experiments of 'high modernism' still appear to set the aesthetic standard in these arguments. Park's suggestion that the suspension of 'normative criticism of suffrage fictions' allows critics to see this material 'not only as literary *texts* but also as historically situated socio-cultural *acts*' retrenches this binary, even as it makes the case for recognising the politically motivated textual strategies at work in suffrage fiction.²¹ With the increased availability of suffrage literature and the integrity of literary categories less taken for granted by critics of modern literature, now may be a moment to revisit the question of the relationship between form and content in suffrage writing, and to consider whether the idea that one instrumentally serves the other is necessarily borne out by an encounter with suffrage texts.²²

Constance Maud's 1911 novel, *No Surrender*, conforms to many characteristics of suffrage fiction. It plays on romance conventions, uses tropes of conversion, and integrates only lightly fictionalised episodes from the real-world campaign in order to persuade the reader of the righteousness of the women's movement. But even as *No Surrender* is a campaigning novel that

propagandises to its audience, it is also a novel of a campaign that registers and reflects upon the tensions and disagreements that characterised the movement. The issue of social class was deeply contentious in the campaign. The degree to which suffragists and suffragettes could have been said to be fighting in the interests of women of all classes was fiercely debated, and the position of working women in the campaign was a vexed one. The following section will supply some of the context for these debates, which are central to my reading of Maud's novel.

Suffrage and Social Class

Virginia Stephen's desultory letter about her suffrage work offers insights into the class politics of the campaign. On first reading, it appears edged with snobbish detachment: her sniffiness about the Wellsian atmosphere of the office and her ironic amusement at 'names like Cowgill' – a name native to the North of England – hints at both a classist and regionalist strain in her thinking. Such attitudes were not particular to Stephen. A version of the suffrage movement as dominated by middle-class women campaigning in their own interest was widely accepted and resulted in the jibe 'Votes for Ladies'.²³

Class tensions were felt to varying degrees across the different wings of the movement. There is some justification for thinking of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS) as primarily a middle-class organisation, particularly in its early moment, while the role of working-class women in the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) and its leadership's (un)willingness to address social class as a political question were influenced by that organisation's roots in and subsequent break with the Labour movement.²⁴ During its early years based in Manchester after its formation in 1903, the WSPU 'coexisted quite peacefully' with a group of working-class radical suffragists who campaigned for the vote as part of a portfolio of social reform demands.²⁵ Central to the WSPU/Labour schism was the question of who exactly would get the vote if campaigners were successful. Most suffrage activists aimed to secure the vote on the same terms as were presently granted to men, accepting the 'accumulated variety of property-based qualification' that meant, in fact, not all men had the vote at this time.²⁶ The limited nature of the reform bills promoted by the WSPU and NUWSS was a source of anxiety for Labour, who feared their electoral chances would be damaged by the enfranchisement of only wealthy women. Efforts were made to prove that even limited

reform would result in the enfranchisement of a large proportion of working women. Investigations conducted by working-class suffragist Selina Cooper and Independent Labour Party (ILP) leader Keir Hardie in 1905, suggested that between 80 and 95 per cent of enfranchised women in a 'typical ward' would be 'working women'. As Jill Liddington notes, while these statistics gave 'comfort' to those already sympathetic to the cause, in fact 'the figures were of doubtful worth' and did little to quiet Labour concern.²⁷

The question of adult suffrage was a flash point in disagreements between Labour and woman suffragists. Some Labour activists opposed limited electoral reform and felt all efforts should instead be directed into securing universal suffrage for all adult men and women. Margaret Llewelyn Davies, leader of the Women's Co-operative Guild, put the case for adult suffrage like this: 'The Limited Bill is [...] obnoxious to us [...] We feel that a personal, and not a property basis, is the only democratic one.'²⁸ Woman suffragists countered that 'universal suffrage was not yet practical politics'.²⁹ Writing in *The Englishwoman* in 1910, woman suffragist Clementina Black suggested that radical voting reform went against England's 'custom' of making 'political changes gradually' and risked complicating the position and alienating supporters.³⁰ There was the added complication that the concept of adult suffrage was ambiguous, as it could designate 'either universal franchise with both the property and sex disqualifications removed, or merely the extension of the existing sexually exclusive franchise to all adult males'.³¹ Radical suffragist Hannah Mitchell articulates a suspicion felt against adultist campaigners in her memoir:

We knew the Adult Suffragists [...], and paid little heed to their suggestions that we should work for the larger measure. 'Let those who want votes, work for them,' was our answer, having no mind to get our heads broken, as women did at Peterloo, in order to get more votes for men.³²

Virginia Stephen's statement, 'People say that Adult Suffrage is a bad thing; but they will never get it owing to my efforts', takes on a different complexion when read in the context of these debates. As I suggest elsewhere, her letter becomes not just an expression of personal boredom but a historically specific statement that casts light on political fault lines of the suffrage movement.³³ Stephen's experiences of volunteering for an adult suffrage organisation, the People's Suffrage Federation, will have left her in no doubt that class as well as sex justice were at stake in the campaign, and her letter has something to tell us about the work adult suffragists did to

keep a 'feminist-Labour alliance' alive, even when it made them unpopular with factions on both sides.³⁴

When the WSPU split with Labour in 1906, it was as a result of the thorny politics of adult suffrage. The WSPU leadership took steps to sever remaining ties between their activists and the Labour movement, insisting that its members sign the following pledge: 'I endorse the objects and methods of the Women's Social and Political Union and hereby undertake not to support the candidate of any political party at Parliamentary elections until women have the vote.'³⁵ The autocratic behaviour of Christabel and Emmeline Pankhurst, and their perceived lurch to the Right, led to disputes within the organisation which, in 1907, saw the departure of a number of former members, including socialist Charlotte Despard and working-class organiser Teresa Billington-Greig to establish the Women's Freedom League (WFL).³⁶ The move to London marked a shift in the position of working women in the organisation: 'the Pankhursts soon dropped their working class support, except for a few token speakers like Annie Kenney and her sisters, in favour of influential allies among upper-and-middle-class women'.³⁷ Suffragette propaganda and publicity looked different as a result. As art historian Lisa Tickner observes, while working women had always played a prominent role in suffrage demonstrations, Christabel Pankhurst increasingly felt it was bad tactics to rely on 'a stage army' of 'women of the East End' when 'the House of Commons, and even its Labour members, were more impressed by the demonstrations of the feminine bourgeoisie than of the feminine proletariat'.³⁸ While the practical political position of working-class women in the suffrage campaign oscillated, her image remained integral to suffrage imagery and 'iconography'.³⁹ Suffrage propaganda deployed the figure of the working woman to various ends: in the guise of the exploited sweated labourer she represents the need for womanly protection that votes for women would bring with it, while as the dignified clogged and shawled mill-worker she reminds the viewer of 'women's importance to the economic, material and moral life of the nation'.⁴⁰

The ethical problems raised by the use of the figure of the working woman by 'predominantly middle-class' suffrage artists points to broader questions about representation, authenticity, and appropriation, questions that have forever troubled feminist theory and practice.⁴¹ Suffrage literature made similar use of working-class figures. It is Maud's presentation of Lancashire mill-worker Jenny Clegg that will concern me for the rest of this chapter. I want to show how a fuller familiarity with the internal debates of the campaign – particularly those between adult and women

suffragists – results in a more precise sense of how the novel works as propaganda. We will see that a corollary of such a contextual approach is that more self-reflexive and self-questioning currents in *No Surrender* that run parallel to its primary propagandising ones are also made visible.

Constance Maud's *No Surrender*

No Surrender was published in 1911, at a moment of sea change in suffrage campaigning. The first forcible feeding of a suffragette prisoner took place in Holloway Prison in 1909. The spectacle of this state-sanctioned torture and the failure of the second so-called 'Conciliation Bill' led to the WSPU's adoption of more militant tactics. Yet Maud's novel takes a historical view of the campaign, concluding with the establishment of the first 1910 Conciliation Committee – a moment of hope – stopping short of these tumultuous subsequent events. It tells the story of mill-worker Jenny Clegg and her 'call' to work for the 'Women's Union'. Although Maud protests in her Preface that while the events contained in the novel are 'historically real and true', 'there are no portraits of living people in this book', prominent figures from the campaign are recognisable in the characters of *No Surrender*. Jenny is loosely modelled on Annie Kenney, while charismatic Mrs Wilmot recalls the leader of the WFL, Charlotte Despard, to whom the novel is, in fact, dedicated.

Maud's own organisational affiliations are not known, although she contributed to suffrage papers, and her novel is diplomatic in its handling of suffrage factions.⁴² Jenny and other prominent characters are members of the Women's Union, but the passive resistance of the WFL also comes in for praise as does the work of erstwhile constitutionalists.⁴³ Given the novel's narrative dependence on real events and characters of the campaign, it might come as a surprise that the Pankhursts are barely mentioned; 'one of the leaders of the WSPU' makes just the briefest of appearances.⁴⁴ This narrative neglect, combined with Maud's earnest dedication of the novel to 'that inspired leader', Despard, invites a cautious approach to *No Surrender's* allegiances and its advocacy of a 'line' associated with one wing of the movement or another. The fact that the novel was published by, albeit a small, mainstream publisher, Duckworth & Co., rather than one of the suffrage presses that emerged in this period, bears out my sense that the propagandist politics of the novel are not to be taken for granted. The section above concerning class and suffrage shows the difficulty of seeing suffrage politics as monolithic, and the same is true of suffrage fiction. Here, I suggest that, when read in light

of the (often vexed) internal politics of the campaign, the picture becomes a great deal more mixed, and nowhere is this more apparent than in *No Surrender's* handling of social class.

No Surrender's interest in class as a political question is evident from its opening, which has the ring of a Victorian social reform novel. The narrator describes how industrial modernity – ‘the Juggernaut-car of so-called progress’ – ‘stunted and blighted’ a once green and pleasant land.⁴⁵ A move to ‘Walker’s great mill’ triggers a tonal shift, with the narrator switching from distant and grandiloquent to immediate and matter-of-fact:

Ventilation, in spite of inspectors and laws, is of the meagrest and most primitive description. The air, when dry, is moistened by steam lest the thread should suffer, but the lungs of the workers are not so carefully considered. There are always plenty of girls to fill a vacant place, for the textile worker is better paid than any other class of working woman.⁴⁶

Published in 1911, five years after the WSPU’s split with Labour and relocation to London, Maud’s emphasis on the movement’s roots in the industrial North of England and her focus on the lives of working women is significant. This becomes more apparent as the opening chapter moves from the factory where Jenny Clegg works to her family home. The narrative sustains its preoccupation with the iniquities of daily life for working people; we discover that Jenny’s brother’s invalid condition is the result of being hit by a shuttle in the factory weaving shed.⁴⁷ Grassroots Labour organisations are offered up as an ameliorative to an indifferent state when we discover Jenny’s mother has saved enough to send Peter to a convalescent home by shopping loyally at the ‘Co-op stores’.⁴⁸ The chapter concludes with the painful undercutting of this possibility when Mr Clegg discovers his wife’s saved ‘checks’ and claims them as his legal property as her husband.

The chapter features no direct reference to women’s suffrage, although the topic looms large. Chapter one accumulates examples of working women’s powerlessness – improper working conditions, mothers’ lack of rights over their own children and money, lack of access to divorce in the case of Jenny’s domestically abused sister – to illustrate the iniquitous position of a woman living under male laws with ‘no reets’ of her own.⁴⁹ The logic Maud presents leads irrevocably to the vote, as the only means by which working women can hope for their lot to be improved. The false promise of the cooperative store is revealing. As we have seen,

disagreements between Labour and suffragists hinged on women's status as a 'sex-class', and whether their interests were better served by socialist or feminist political agitation. Maud implies that Labour initiatives are of limited use to working women, who remain at the mercy of men. It is a narrative move that invites us to read the novel in the context of the debates about the position of working women in the campaign and the fractious relationship between Labour and woman suffragists.

No Surrender's dialogue with these debates becomes starker later in the novel when Jenny narrates her conversion to suffragism to a group of fellow prisoners. She frames this squarely in terms of disenchantment with socialism:

It was my father made me a Suffragette – not as he meant to – but first he turned me a Socialist, hearin' him talk at home an' then goin' to the meetin's. All that talk about human rights and liberty set me thinkin' about women, the poor women – but my father an' my brothers they shut me up if I talked of liberty. 'Women ain't the same,' they said.⁵⁰

Here, Jenny rehearses the suffragette criticisms of Labour's hypocritical failure to support women's suffrage bills. Such gestures appear elsewhere in the novel, too. A sympathetic policeman, for instance, tellingly ventriloquises Keir Hardie when he accepts a suffrage paper from Jenny: 'he took one, saying his "missus" was all for the women gettin' their vote, and he "couldn't see why any but dogs-in-the-manger was against it"'.⁵¹ Criticising adult suffrage opposition to the Women's Enfranchisement Bill, Hardie wrote: 'Its policy is that of the dog in the manger.'⁵²

The novel also stages extended exchanges between socialists and feminists: Jack Wilmot is modelled as a sympathetic man of the Left, and a conversation with his mother explicitly establishes the hierarchy of 'causes' that was so contentious to the relationship between these groups:

'I envy you women – yours is the only cause on earth I feel to be even a bigger one than ours!'

'Ah, my son,' she answered, 'the best and truest kind of Socialism will follow in the wake of the freedom of women – I am convinced of it. All true progress will be made easier.'⁵³

Maud's decision to have a committed socialist character identify the suffrage as the more significant cause is obviously provocative. But Maud is, if anything, more interested in the arguments of her *opponents* on the Left; indeed, the romance plot of the novel hinges upon them. Jenny's love interest, Joe Hopton, a Labour MP, starts the novel aggressively opposed to women's suffrage, and his rapprochement with Jenny only takes place after

his own conversion to the 'bigger' cause in a chapter whose title, 'Joe's Surrender', tellingly reworks romance conventions.⁵⁴ The novel's sustained interest in arguments between suffrage activists and their socialist counterparts indicates the degree to which the politics of the novel is embedded in arguments with Labour about women's suffrage. At the heart of Maud's position is Mrs Wilmot's response to her son that 'the best and truest kind of Socialism will follow in the wake of the freedom of women'. The idea that 'true progress' would be made easier if even some women were given the vote is an argument that was rehearsed throughout the campaign.

The novel reveals comparatively little interest in other political estates, who are the subject of ridicule and caricature.⁵⁵ Maud's decision to offer space to the arguments between Labour and women suffrage campaigners is significant given the fact that by 1911, the WSPU leadership were actively anti-Labour and uninterested in courting the support of working women.⁵⁶ The novel draws close attention to the links between suffrage and Labour, not just through its working-class heroine, but also through gestures to the Peterloo massacre and the politics of cooperation and trade unionism.⁵⁷ The result is a novel that reads as though directed to the Left, and in which the suffrage campaign is positioned squarely as part of a wider campaign for the reform of British society. The generic conventions of the romance do a service in this regard: *No Surrender* aims to romance a certain faction of the Labour movement represented by Joe Hopton. The union of Jenny and Joe has a proleptic quality and there is a sort of wish fulfilment at work in a novel that enacts a fantasy reunion between Labour and suffrage.

And yet it is difficult to square the confident vision of a reunion between the forces of suffrage and Labour at the end of the novel with the author's eliding of the question of how many working women will actually get votes. Mrs Wilmot reassures her anti-suffragist niece: 'For if we obtain the suffrage on the same basis as men, which is all we ask or want, only one million and a quarter women would be enfranchised as against seven million and a half men.'⁵⁸ The novel's radicalism only goes so far. As this passage illustrates, the text appears to endorse the gradualism and pragmatic necessity of a limited bill. In spite of Mrs Wilmot's concession – 'all we ask or want' – the novel insists upon the working-class credentials of the campaign: 'We are a great army of working women', Mary O'Neil insists to a conservative dinner companion.⁵⁹ Jack Wilmot also repeats the dubious statistics that caused such contention on the Left: 'This is a working women's movement [...] of the women who would be enfranchised eighty-two per cent are earning their own living.'⁶⁰

The novel is not without an awareness of the limitations of the campaign's political imagination, and there are moments of palpable anxiety surrounding the role of working-class suffragettes. Take the comments of 'one of the leaders of the W.S.P.U' when she makes her momentary appearance in the prison courtyard. Singling out Jenny, she says to her companion:

We shall have plenty of use for such a girl as that when she comes out – mustn't let her go back to the mill, we need that kind up here – they are worth their weight in gold to us. She shall speak at the Albert Hall meeting in October, and do some more converting.⁶¹

This may seem innocuous enough, but something about the leader's keen eye for that 'kind' of girl and the blunt language of utility – 'use' and 'worth' – she falls back upon stand out. They are at odds with the strong seam of spiritualism stitched through the novel, and the mystical, semi-religious language regularly used to describe people's conversion to the cause. We know the question of the 'use' being made of working women by middle-class suffragettes was an exceptionally fraught one, and Maud's choice of words here probes this problem. Elsewhere, Maud demonstrates self-awareness about the importance of the symbolism of the working woman to suffragette performative politics. During chapter ten, Jenny casts off her maid's disguise in order to present unsuspecting cabinet ministers Boulder and Weir-Kemp with a suffrage petition in 'the shawl and clogs of the mill'.⁶² The chapter that follows opens with Jenny changing out of 'her mill-clothes for the ubiquitous coat and skirt', a detail that draws attention to the 'mill-clothes' as costume, and which also hints at what Morag Shiach describes as the element of 'masquerade or forced identification, in some of the ways in which the suffrage movement drew on the figure of the "working woman"'.⁶³ Like Annie Kenney, who 'appeared dressed in clogs and shawl long after she had ceased to earn her living in the mills', it had been some time since Jenny worked in the mill and she donned her 'mill-clothes' only for symbolic purposes.⁶⁴

No Surrender demonstrates more awareness of class as both a political and aesthetic problem for the suffrage movement than might first appear. Jenny's rejection of Jack Wilmot's proposal is presented as an act of class-consciousness:

'To leave the mill, yes,' Jenny agreed, 'but not my own people or my own class. I am one with them – I belong to them and they belong to me. I suffer with them – I feel as they do, Mr. Wilmot, not as you do.'

[. . .]

He followed her every word with his quick sympathy and artist's ready imagination:

'I can picture it,' he assured her, 'it is not necessary to have lived through it.'

'Oh yes, it is,' said Jenny. 'It's only what we've lived through as we can feel – that's what shapes our thoughts and shapes our souls. You must work in your class, God knows you're needed there, and I must work in mine.'⁶⁵

Jenny's assertion of class in this episode can be read in two ways. On the one hand, her unwillingness to leave her 'station' by marrying into a different class appears to be a narrative reinforcement of the conservative status quo. On the other hand, Jenny's positive claim on her class identity and the importance of 'working' as a class means this scene feels charged with class solidarity rather than class hatred. The slipperiness of the treatment of class in the novel and its character in the campaign mean that both impulses – the progressive and the reactionary – may coexist in this scene. What is also striking is the way in which the artist and their imaginative powers are held up for questioning in this passage. The narrative is sympathetic to Wilmot's eagerness, but, ultimately, we are left unconvinced by his belief in his own power to 'picture' the lives of working people. This episode may gesture to Maud's own concerns as a writer of a novel about a class that was not her own, as well as reflecting on the more specific question of suffrage fiction's representation of working women.

Conclusion

No Surrender is about the promotion of the 'cause', but it is also a site for reflection on the efficacy of certain strategies and anxiety about claims and counter-claims being made within the campaign. The openly propagandist nature of much suffrage literature means it is easy to imagine the relationship between art and politics in its case as straightforward, with one being drawn simply into the service of the other. However, the relationship between literature and politics is rarely straightforward, and this is certainly the case when it comes to the suffrage campaign, a movement fraught with internal disputes: not only the well-known arguments relating to militant tactics that divided the suffragettes from the suffragists, but more profound disagreements about the relationship of the campaign to other contemporary struggles.

Notes

- 1 Sylvia Pankhurst, *The Suffragette Movement: An Intimate Account of Persons and Ideas* (London: Longmans & Co., 1931), p. 279.
- 2 For Sharp and Sinclair's suffrage writing, see Angela V. John, *Rebel Woman, 1869–1955* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009), pp. 52–75, and Suzanne Raitt, *May Sinclair: A Modern Victorian* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000). For more on suffrage drama, see Leslie Hill, *Sex, Suffrage and the Stage: First Wave Feminism in the British Theatre* (London: Red Globe Press, 2018); Sheila Stowell, *A Stage of Their Own: Feminist Playwrights of the Suffrage Era* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002); and Katharine Cockin, *Women and the Theatre in the Age of Suffrage: The Pioneer Players, 1911–1925* (New York: St Martin's Press, 2000).
- 3 See Maroula Joannou's 'Mary Augusta Ward (Mrs Humphrey) and the Opposition to Women's Suffrage', *Women's History Review* 14 (2005), pp. 561–80. For further examples of anti-suffrage literature, see Lucy Delap and Ann Heilmann, eds., *Anti-feminism in Edwardian Literature* (London: Thoemmes Continuum, 2006).
- 4 See Patrick Collier and Ann Ardis's 'Introduction' to *Transatlantic Print Culture, 1880–1940: Emerging Media, Emerging Modernism*, ed. Collier and Ardis (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp. 1–13.
- 5 'General Introduction' to *Women's Suffrage Literature*, ed. Katharine Cockin, Glenda Norquay, and Sowon S. Park (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), p. xix.
- 6 Sowon S. Park, 'The First Professional: The Women Writers' Suffrage League', *Modern Language Quarterly* 58.2 (1997), pp. 185–200 (p. 186).
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 For more on the official organs of the suffrage campaign, see Maria DiCenzo, Leila Ryan, and Lucy Delap, *Feminist Media History: Suffrage, Periodicals and the Public Sphere* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), and Maria DiCenzo, 'Militant Distribution: *Votes for Women* and the Public Sphere', *Media History* 6.2 (2000), pp. 115–28.
- 9 Elizabeth Robins, *Way Stations* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1913), p. 5.
- 10 Park suggests that 'all the strands of feminist literary theory found in *A Room of One's Own* or [...] *Three Guineas* (1938) are readily found in the suffrage writings of the decades before' (Park, 'The First Professional', p. 197).
- 11 Letter of 27 February 1910, *The Letters of Virginia Woolf*, Vol. 1, ed. Nigel Nicolson and Joanne Trautmann Banks (London: Hogarth Press, 1975), p. 422.
- 12 Sandra Stanley Holton and Jo Vellacott consider the work of democratic suffragists in Holton, *Feminism and Democracy: Women's Suffrage and Reform Politics in Britain, 1900–1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986) and Vellacott, *Pacifists, Patriots and the Vote: The Erosion of Democratic Suffragism in Britain During the First World War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), respectively. Angela V. John and Claire Eustance

- explore the contributions of male suffragists in *The Men's Share? Masculinities, Male Support and Women's Suffrage in Britain, 1890–1920* (London: Routledge, 1997).
- 13 Barbara Green, *Spectacular Confessions: Autobiography, Performative Activism, and the Sites of Suffrage, 1905–1938* (London: Macmillan, 1997), p. 5.
 - 14 See Park, 'The First Professional' and Cockin, *Women and Theatre in the Age of Suffrage*.
 - 15 See Barbara Green, 'Complaints of Everyday Life: Feminist Periodical Culture and Correspondence Columns in the *Woman Worker* and the *Freewoman*', *Modernism/modernity* 19.3 (September 2012), pp. 461–85, and Maria DiCenzo, 'Gutter Politics: Women Newsies and the Suffrage Press', *Women's History Review* 12.1 (2003), pp. 15–33. See also David Doughan and Denise Sanchez, *Feminist Periodicals, 1855–1944: An Annotated Critical Bibliography of British, Irish, Commonwealth, and International Titles* (Brighton: Harvester, 1987).
 - 16 See, for instance, Glenda Norquay, *Voices and Votes: A Literary Anthology of the Women's Suffrage Campaign* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995); Carolyn Christensen Nelson, ed., *Literature of the Women's Suffrage Campaign in England* (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 2004); and Cockin, Norquay, and Park, eds., *Women's Suffrage Literature*.
 - 17 Elaine Showalter, *A Literature of Their Own: British Women Novelists from Brönte to Lessing* (London: Virago, 1982), p. 218.
 - 18 Cockin, Norquay, and Park, 'General Introduction', *Women's Suffrage Literature*, p. xxiv.
 - 19 Ann Ardis, 'The Gender of Modernity', in *The Cambridge History of Twentieth-Century English Literature*, ed. Laura Marcus and Peter Nicholls (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 61–80 (p. 78).
 - 20 Sowon Park, 'Suffrage Fiction: A Political Discourse in the Marketplace', *English Literature in Transition* 39.4 (1996), pp. 450–61 (p. 456).
 - 21 *Ibid.*, p. 459; emphasis in original.
 - 22 DiCenzo suggests as much, in her article comparing literary representations of suffrage 'newsies'. See DiCenzo, 'Gutter Politics', p. 17.
 - 23 Alison Lee, 'Introduction' to Gertrude Colmore, *Suffragette Sally*, ed. Lee (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 2007), p. 23.
 - 24 Its character changed later in the campaign when a strategic pact with the Labour Party resulted in well-known democratic suffragists allying themselves with the NUWSS. See Holton, *Feminism and Democracy*, and Sandra Stanley Holton, *Suffrage Days: Stories from the Women's Suffrage Movement* (London: Routledge, 1996).
 - 25 Jill Liddington and Jill Norris, *One Hand Tied Behind Us: The Rise of the Women's Suffrage Movement* (London: Rivers Oram, 2000), p. 28.
 - 26 Writing about the introduction of adult male suffrage after the Representation of the Peoples Act (1918), Stuart Ball notes that the 'proportion of men enfranchised under the previous system varied greatly between different types of constituency', with 'the working class of industrial towns' affected

- particularly negatively: ‘the average level of adult male enfranchisement in England and Wales was 59.8% in the boroughs and 69.9% in the counties’. See Stuart Ball, ‘The Reform Act of 1918 – the Advent of Democracy’, in *The Advent of Democracy: The Impact of the 1918 Reform Act on British Politics*, ed. Ball (Chichester: Parliamentary History Yearbook Trust, 2018), pp. 1–22 (p. 3).
- 27 Jill Liddington, *The Life and Times of a Respectable Rebel: Selina Cooper, 1864–1946* (London: Virago, 1984), pp. 144–5.
 - 28 Georgia Pearce, ‘Miss Llewelyn Davies and the People’s Suffrage Federation’, *The Woman Worker* (10 November 1909), p. 437.
 - 29 Holton, *Feminism and Democracy*, p. 58.
 - 30 Clementina Black, ‘The Year’s Progress in the Women’s Suffrage Movement’, *The Englishwoman* (January 1910), p. 258.
 - 31 Holton, *Feminism and Democracy*, p. 54.
 - 32 Hannah Mitchell, *The Hard Way Up* (London: Virago, 2000), p. 139.
 - 33 Clara Jones, *Virginia Woolf: Ambivalent Activist* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017).
 - 34 Holton, *Feminism and Democracy*, p. 6.
 - 35 Pankhurst, *The Suffragette Movement*, p. 265.
 - 36 Hilary Frances, ‘“Dare to be Free!”: The Women’s Freedom League and Its Legacy’, in *Votes for Women!*, ed. June Purvis and Sandra Stanley Holton (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 181–202 (pp. 182–3).
 - 37 Liddington and Norris, *One Hand Tied Behind Us*, p. 28.
 - 38 Lisa Tickner, *The Spectacle of Women* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1987), p. 57.
 - 39 Morag Shiach, *Modernism, Labour and Selfhood in British Literature and Culture, 1890–1930* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 104.
 - 40 Tickner, *The Spectacle of Women*, p. 182; Shiach, *Modernism, Labour and Selfhood*, p. 104.
 - 41 Tickner, *The Spectacle of Women*, p. 181.
 - 42 Lydia Fellgett, ‘Introduction’ to Constance Maud, *No Surrender* [1911] (London: Persephone, 2011), p. xiii.
 - 43 Maud, *No Surrender*, pp. 156, 318.
 - 44 *Ibid.*, p. 88.
 - 45 *Ibid.*, p. 1.
 - 46 *Ibid.*, p. 3.
 - 47 *Ibid.*, p. 6.
 - 48 *Ibid.*, p. 17.
 - 49 *Ibid.*, p. 18.
 - 50 *Ibid.*, p. 112.
 - 51 *Ibid.*, p. 127.
 - 52 Pankhurst, *The Suffragette Movement*, p. 232.
 - 53 Maud, *No Surrender*, p. 151.
 - 54 *Ibid.*, pp. 65–77.
 - 55 *Ibid.*, pp. 38–9, 201–7.
 - 56 Liddington and Norris, *One Hand Tied Behind Us*, p. 18.

- 57 Jenny reminds Joe of women's involvement at Peterloo: 'If you would stand by us now as we women stood by you men when you came out to fight for your vote at the battle of Peterloo.' Maud, *No Surrender*, p. 134.
- 58 Ibid. p. 162.
- 59 Ibid., p. 225.
- 60 Ibid., p. 160.
- 61 Ibid., p. 89.
- 62 Ibid., p. 238.
- 63 Ibid., p. 245; Shiach, *Modernism, Labour and Selfhood*, p. 104.
- 64 Shiach, *Modernism, Labour and Selfhood*, p. 105.
- 65 Maud, *No Surrender*, pp. 171–2.