I would like to thank you for reviewing this essay. This paper is an extension of a chapter entitled, "Gender and the Animal Experiments Controversy in the Nineteenth-Century America." I am thinking about developing this into a book and would love your thoughts about whether you believe this topic is worth a longer examination involving further research. I am also considering whether it should be a general study or if it would be preferable to center it around a biography of a particular subject, for example, Caroline Earle White. Due to the narrow focus of this study, I have concentrated on white, middle-class to upper-class, mostly protestant women during this limited period (although Caroline White converted to Catholicism-a controversial move at the time). Finally, I am not settled on the title and would appreciate any thoughts you may have.

Women, Madness, Physicians, and the Anti-Vivisection Controversy in America

Robyn Hederman

In March 1909, the *New York Times* reported, "Passion for Animals Really a Disease. Its Name is Zoophil-Psychosis, Dr. Dana Says, and it Attacks Morbid Lovers of Pets." This headline referred to an article published in the *Medical Times* by the neurologist Charles L. Dana, who diagnosed a "heightened concern for animals to be a form of mental illness." After the disease develops, "the individual becomes the victim of a psychosis and a source of distress to self and friends, or demoralization to family and of serious social injustice."[1] Advocates of animal experimentation embraced zoophil-psychosis to pathologize anti-vivisectionists. The *New York Times* concluded that women were especially susceptible to the affliction, "which like the

[1] Charles L. Dana, "The Zoophil-Psychosis: A Modern Malady," *Medical Record* 75, no.10 (March 1909): 381–83.

historic hysterias, 'phobias' and fanaticisms of history, is apt to sweep over whole communities."[2]

Gender was a powerful component of the nineteenth and early twentieth-century vivisection controversy in the United States. This battle over animal experimentation reflects changing attitudes toward middle-class social practices, the education of children, and the role of women in the public sphere. By situating this debate within nineteenth and early twentieth-century social history, we gain insight into the goals of anti-vivisectionists and the scientific and medical community's campaign to discredit them.

This study suggests that the medical profession's visceral opposition was not merely a reaction to the challenge against animal experimentation but also exemplified the gender conflicts of the era. When the anti-vivisection movement bourgeoned in the second half of the nineteenth century, the medical profession sought to discredit the movement in the eyes of the American public—labeling activists as fervent misanthropes.

Several medical historians have suggested that the medical establishment's unremitting hostility towards anti-vivisectionists was due to the profession's desire to elevate its status in American society. [3]Although this motive was significant, the medical lobby's efforts to demean the anti-vivisection movement, which became identified as a women's movement by the end of the century, also reveals the efforts of physicians and scientists to enforce women's traditional roles. By establishing a biological construction of femininity, the medical profession provided

[2] "Passion for Animals Really a Disease," *New York Times*, March 18, 1909; see Robyn Hederman, "Gender and the Animal Experiments Controversy," in *The Ethical Case against Animal Experiments*, ed. Andrew Linzey and Clair Linzey (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2018), 112-19.

[3] For example, W. Bruce Fye, *The Development of American Physiology: Scientific Medicine in the Nineteenth Century* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press,1987); Saul Benison, A. Clifford Barger, and Elin L. Woolfe, *Walter B. Cannon: The Life and Times of a Young Scientist* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1987).

scientific justification enforcing the already held belief that women should be relegated to the home and displayed contempt for women activists and those women who dared to deviate from their prescribed societal role.

The Cult of Domesticity

American women involved in the early anti-vivisectionist movement were rooted in the nineteenth-century concept of "true womanhood."[4] The True Woman's cherished values were religion, purity, deference, and domesticity. Domesticity adopted the conventions of gentility and Christian religion.[5] In *Pets in America: A History*, Katherine C. Grier makes the connection between nineteenth-century domesticity and the domestic ethic of kindness to animals. Grier explains that the humane treatment of animals became a symbol of bourgeois gentility. A mother's most important role in the home was to influence her children to be guided by good moral principles and to create self-disciplined adults. Mothers instructed their children to be kind to animals, believing that children would learn to express compassionate sentiments outside the family.[6]

A middle-class white woman, growing up in the decades prior to the Civil War, was socialized in the ideology of what historian Barbara Welter called "the cult of true womanhood"— an ideology promulgated by contemporary religious literature, advice manuals,

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[4] Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820–1860," in *Dimity Convictions: The American Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1976), 21–41.

[5] Several sources provide a detailed analysis of domesticity: Nancy F. Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: "Woman's Sphere" in New England, 1780–1835* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1977); Barbara Leslie Epstein, *The Politics of Domesticity: Women, Evangelism, and Temperance in Nineteenth Century America* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1981); Lori Ginzberg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence: Morality, Politics, and Class in the Nineteenth-Century United States* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990).

[6] Katherine C. Grier, *Pets in America: A History* (Orlando, FL: Harvest Book, 2006), 164, 166; Katherine C. Grier, "Childhood Socialization and Companion Animals: United States, 1820–1870," *Society and Animals* 7, no. 2 (1999): 95–96, 100. See also Ruth H. Bloch, "American Feminine Ideals in Transition: The Rise of the Moral Mother, 1785–1815," *Feminist Studies* 4, no. 2 (June 1978): 113–14. See, also, Robyn Hederman, "Gender and the Animal Experiments Controversy," 112.

and women's magazines. [7] The true woman's most important role or "vocation" was motherhood, where she was tasked with educating and socializing her children to become virtuous, self-disciplined adults.

The domestic ethic of kindness became an important socialization tool in Antebellum America. Kindness to animals became a Victorian ideal, helping to define middle-class Americans who believed that their children's treatment of non-human animals would predict how they, as adults, would treat other human beings. As a result, teaching children to treat non-human animals kindly became an important aspect of child rearing—a domestic duty performed by mothers. [8]

Popular culture, religious leaders, and the medical community sought to persuade women that their core feminine values of piety and purity made them the morally superior sex. Women drew on this concept of female moral superiority by expanding their sphere through charity or reform work. Consequently, the antebellum woman, influenced by protestant evangelism of the Second Great Awakening, came to believe that she could use her innate God-given virtues to morally reform American society. Thus, in the decades prior to the Civil War, women undertook reform work dealing with issues such as drunkenness, poverty, and abolition of slaves; thereby, transforming their traditional domestic role and extending their influence through benevolence work.

The true woman, influenced by the kindness-to-animals ethic, also spoke out against cruelty to non-human animals, setting the stage for the growth of animal protection societies in

[7] Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood," 21-41.

[8] Katherine C. Grier, *Pets in America,* 164, 166; Katherine C. Grier, "Childhood Socialization and Companion Animals," 100.

post-Civil War America. Many American women who came to dominate the anti-cruelty movement in the latter half of the nineteenth century embraced the ideology of true womanhood.

In her book *Disorderly Conduct*, the historian Carroll Smith-Rosenberg describes the arrival of the "New Woman" in the late nineteenth century. Smith-Rosenberg explains that women who had raised money and had worked in the field hospitals during the American Civil War continued their work after the war. [9]

With their work with organizations such as the male-dominated United States Sanitary Commission (USSC), women learned to work in the male political process and to use these skills to further women's concerns. The Woman's Central Association of relief (WCAR), originally organized by Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell in 1861 to be separate female institution, allowed women to extend the sphere of their antebellum work for women, children, and the poor by providing emotional and financial support.[10] However, Blackwell realized that the organization would require male endorsements and assistance and asked males to join the initiative so that they would have a better chance to reach political power structures, and thereby, find a "wider arena for women's local relief work."[11]

In *Civil War Sisterhood,* Judith Ann Geisberg argues that the alliance between the WCAR and the USSC constituted a shift in women's political culture, where "young women learned about political organization and public speaking and found a secular contemporary alternative to evangelical Protestantism.[12] Geisberg concludes that these young women were not

[9] See, Carroll Smith Rosenberg, "Bourgeois Discourse and the Progressive Era: An Introduction," in *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 1176-178.

[10] Judith Ann Giesberg, *Civil War Sisterhood: The U.S Sanitary Commission and Women's Politics in Transition* (Boston: Northeastern University press, 2000), 32.

[11] Giesberg, *Civil War Sisterhood*, 34.

[12] Geisberg, *Civil War Sisterhood*, 59.

just studying male political activity, they were learning to establish a distinct women's agenda, and "how to introduce women's concerns collectively into the political debate." These experiences helped them to establish the settlement house movement and other female dominated organizations in the late nineteenth century.

Estelle Freedman, in her article "Separatism as Strategy," describes the nineteenth-century reform organizations as examples of "female institution building." Freedman claims that the creation of a separate, public sphere mobilized women to obtain political power in society.[13] By using "female institution building," women drew on the antebellum ideology of female moral superiority and separate spheres yet were willing to seek alliances with male leaders to facilitate the social and political change they sought.

These women became convinced that they could use their innate feminine values to solve the social evils of their society. They transformed the values of the True Woman to fit their new priorities. According to R. Muncy, because of the persistence of Victorian ideas about the proper role of females, "women succeeded best in winning professional positions and in influencing public bodies when they addressed issues that affected women, children, and the poor." [14]They became the "conscience and the housekeepers of America."[15] Women accented their roles as "guardians of private and public morality" and extended their proper spheres of influence

[13] Estelle Freedman, "Separatism as Strategy: Female Institution Building and American Feminism, 1870–1930," *Feminist Studies* (Fall 1979): 513, 517.

[14] Robyn Muncy, *Creating a Female Domain in American Reform: 1890-1935* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 35-36.

[15] Smith-Rosenberg, "Bourgeois Discourse and the Progressive Era," in *Disorderly Conduct*, 173–77; Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood," 41. The New Woman emerged in the 1880s and 1890s. The New Woman was considered confident and independent. Smith-Rosenberg describes these women as physicians, educational reformers, writers, and those involved in the settlement movement. See Smith-Rosenberg, "Bourgeois Discourse," 176–77.

through benevolence work.[16] Yet as the True Woman emerged into the New Woman, she challenged her traditional role in society.[17]

Caroline Earle White and the American Anti-Vivisection Society

Speaking at the triennial convention of the National Council of Women (NCW) in 1895, Carolyn Earle White appealed to the hundreds of women in the audience asking them to "[r]emember [their] moral accountability" and to help them in their fight against animal experimentation. Likewise, her colleague Mary F Lovell called on them to "side with the suffering and the helpless," by appealing to "the chivalry which belongs to good and true womanhood." [18]

The anti-vivisection movement obtained the support of American women by embracing these ideas and cultural values. For example, Caroline E. White, who organized the Woman's Branch of the Pennsylvania SPCA, and later established the American Anti-Vivisection Society (AAVS) with Mary Francis Lovell, cast the movement against animal experimentation as a women's issue—an issue for Christian women and mothers.

Caroline White was raised in an atmosphere of reform by a Quaker father who was a strong abolitionist. In 1883, Caroline Earle White established the first antivivisection organization in the United States, the American Anti-Vivisection Society (AAVS). In 1867, White was one of the founders of the Pennsylvania Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA). Being a woman, however, she was prevented from serving on the board of

[16] Epstein, *The Politics of Domesticity*, 1–9.

[17] See Smith-Rosenberg, "Bourgeois Discourse," 176; Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood," 41. Hederman, "Gender and the Animal Experiments Controversy in Nineteenth-Century America," 113.

[18] Craig Beuttinger, "Women and Antivivisection in Late Nineteenth-Century America," *Journal of Social History* 30, no. 4 (Summer 1997): 857, citing Mary F. Lovell, "The Worst Thing in the World," *Journal of Zoophilly* (hereafter *JZ*), 4 (April 1895): 47; Caroline E. White, "Is Vivisection Morally Justifiable?" *JZ*, 4 (May 1895): 56-57.

directors. White later became president of the Women's Branch of the Pennsylvania SPCA (WSPCA), in which capacity she first confronted the vivisection controversy.[19]

After founding the Women's Branch of the Pennsylvania SPCA, White received permission from the city of Philadelphia to create a temporary shelter for animals in 1869. In 1870, the neurologist Silas Weir Mitchell requested an order "enabling [him] to select from dogs before they are killed by [the pound's] agents, as such are needed for [his] studies."[20]

Mitchell was described as a "Philadelphia's Frustrated Physiologist," by medical historian W. Bruce Fye.[21] Mitchell was unable to win an academic position in physiology and later became known for his rest cure for neurasthenics and invalid women, most notably referenced by the feminist writer Charlotte Perkins Gilman in her polemic "The Yellow Wallpaper." [22] Mitchell's rest cure was developed for "fashionable ladies who could afford high fees and were eager to receive his personal attentions."[23] The treatment consisted of isolation, bed rest, overheating and sometimes forced feeding. It was devised for patients, mostly women, whose symptoms seemed to be of a hysterical nature.[24]

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[19] The Women's Pennsylvania Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was separately incorporated in 1897. Sydney H. Coleman, *Humane Society Leaders in America* (Albany, NY: American Humane Association, 1924), 180.

[20] Bernard Oreste Unti, "The Quality of Mercy: Organized Animal Protection in the United States, 1866–1930" (PhD diss., American University, 2002), 334–35. S. Weir Mitchell was an expert on neurology and the inventor of the rest cure for neurasthenics and invalid women.

[21] W. Bruce Fye, *The Development of American Physiology,* 54.

[22] He was most notably referenced in Charlotte Perkins Gilman's short story "The Yellow Wallpaper" (1892). Gilman later said that she sent a copy of the story to the physician who had so nearly driven her mad. Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *The Yellow Wallpaper*, Bedford Cultural Editions, ed. Dale M. Bauer (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1998), 41–58, 348–49.

[23] F.G. Gosling, *Before Freud: Neurasthenia and the American Medical Community, 1870-1910* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 37. A New York Neurologist, George M. Beard coined the term "neurasthenia" or "nervous exhaustion." Prior to Freud, the term was used to characterize every nonspecific emotional disorder. Patients complained of insomnia, headache, fatigue, depression and other symptoms that prevented them from engaging in life. See, *Before Freud*, 9.

[24] Gosling, 37.

White responded to Mitchell's request that if Mitchell's studies required the "cutting up and torture of live animals," I must decline to aid you in anyway" as "the object of the organization over which I preside being the prevention of cruelty to animals." [25] White's decision was supported by the SPCA, the Mayor, and the Philadelphia City Counsel who authorized the society to round up dogs for its shelter. The medical profession, however, derided the Women's Branch publicly, claiming that the cause of prevention of cruelty to animals had failed when "a number of women conceived the idea that a female branch was desirable."[26]

This confrontation strengthened White's resolve to create a society against animal experimentation in America. On a trip to London, White met with the British antivivisectionist Francis Power Cobbe, whom she described as "the apostle of anti-vivisection."[27] At one meeting, Cobbe suggested that White form an anti-vivisection society, stating, "There is not one in all the United States, and I think it is a disgrace to the country."[28]

Caroline Earle White's work demonstrates the power of creating female institution building. For example, although the original twenty-eight Executive Committee of the AAVS was made up by an even number of men and women, this changed as the organization increasingly moved to supporting the abolition of vivisection. Many physicians left the organization after the society adopted the policy of abolition, leaving women to fill the open positions. By 1895, the executive committee was composed of three men and seventeen women, and the AAVS soon became a women's society.[29]

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[25] Unti, "The Quality of Mercy," 338

[26] Unti, "The Quality of Mercy," 338.

[27] Caroline Earle White, "The History of the Antivivisection Movement," *Proceedings of the International Anti-Vivisection and Animal Protection Congress* (New York: Tudor Press, 1914), 25.

[28] White, "The History of the Antivivisection Movement," 28.

[29] Craig Beuttinger, "Women and Antivivisection in Late Nineteenth-Century America," 859. Beuttinger cites the AAVS annual reports for the period from 1883 to 1895.

The Society further formed alliances with other women's groups, such as the Women's Christian Temperance Movement (WTCU) and the National Council of Women (NCW), a coalition of women's reform movements. Through these organizations, the AAVS reached a larger group of women, educating them about animal cruelty, specifically, the cruelty used in fashion and science. Thus, women involved in the nineteenth-century animal protection movement did not reject the concept of the female sphere but sought to expand it.

Although White did not fully embrace Frances Cobb's view of feminism, she did cast anti-vivisection as a woman's issue [30] Members of the AAVS reached larger audiences because of their connection with the WCTU in the 1890's. The president Frances Willard's "Do Everything" policy attracted women of all persuasions, and it became a place where women could find a forum for reform.[31]

Mary F. Lovell became the national director of the Department of Mercy for the WCTU. The Department of Mercy was devoted to the prevention of cruelty to animals and was associated with the growing anti-vivisection movement in Britain and the United States. The

[30] See Beuttinger, "Women and Antivivisection," 859. For an analysis of British antivivisection and feminism, see Coral Lansbury, *The Old Brown Dog: Women, Workers, and Vivisection in Edwardian England* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985); Coral Lansbury, "Gynaecology, Pornography, and the Antivivisection Movement," *Victorian Studies* 28, no. 3 (1985): 413–37; Hilda Keen, "'The Smooth Cool Men of Science': The Feminist and Socialist Response to Vivisection," *History Workshop Journal* 40 (1995): 16–38. Yet Susan E. Lederer notes that the theme of feminism and sexual surgery was not completely ignored by American writers. Susan E. Lederer, *Subjected to Science: Human Experimentation in America before the Second World War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 38; Lederer, "The Controversy over Animal Experimentation in America, 1880-1914," in *Vivisection in Historical Perspective*, ed. Nicolaas A. Rupke (London: Croom Helm, 1987), 236-258. See Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, *Though Life Us Do Part* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1908); Elizabeth Stuarts Phelps, *Trixie* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1904), 218.

[31] Ruth Bordin, *Women and Temperance: The Quest for Power and Liberty, 1873–1900* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1981), 97. Frances Willard was the president of the WCTU from 1879 until her death in 1898. She reshaped the organization with her "Do Everything" policy. The "Do Everything" campaign aimed at solving specific societal problems such as poverty, prison reform, and humane education. Bordin notes that it provided a way for all women to relate to the movement. By 1883, only three of the twenty departments dealt with promoting temperance. See also Ruth Bordin, *Frances Willard: A Biography* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 129–30.

Department of Mercy reached out to schools to teach children the importance of kindness to animals. Sydney H. Coleman, in *Humane Society Leaders in America*, notes that Lovell considered humane education to be "the real antidote to war and to all other cruelty and crime."[32]

The AAVS joined the National Council of Women (NCW) in 1894. The National Council of Women was a coalition of major women's reform movements of the time. It originated in 1888 when the National Women's Suffrage Association (NWSA) invited women's reform groups to the fortieth-anniversary commemoration of Seneca Falls. At this gathering, several reform organizations formed the National Council of Women. To the disappointment of the NWSA, the NCW did not consider suffrage a priority, and instead focused on more philanthropic causes.[33]

In 1895, Dr. William Keen of Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia attempted to obtain a dog from Mrs. White's facility to use in his experiments. Mrs. White refused the request and a heated exchange of letters ensued. Pursuant to *The Times,* Dr. Keen accused Mrs. White of being devoted to dogs at the expense of mankind. [34] Keen became the most prolific defender of animal experimentation stating that "if the sum total of suffering of all human beings is diminished by vivisection, not only is vivisection is a right, it is our duty to perform it."[35] Keen was adamantly opposed to any legislation restricting scientific experimentation and defended his position in both the medical and the popular press.

In 1885, Keen addressed the graduates of the Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania [acknowledging] that "intense feelings have been aroused…especially among women about the

[32] Coleman, *Humane Society Leaders in America,* 186.
[33] Beuttinger, "Women and Antivivisection," 861.
[34] "A Problem in Vivisection," *New York Times,* March 17, 1895, 15.
[35] William Williams Keen, "Our Recent Debts to Vivisection," in *Animal Experimentation and Medical Progress* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1914), Keen, 1.

question of animal experimentation."[36] In his address, published in the *Popular Science Monthly*, Keen claimed that "vivisection is as humane to animal life and suffering as it is to human."[37] He described the medical profession as "conspicuously humane" but concluded it would be cruel "both to man and animals—if we refused to pain or even to slay a few animals, that thousands, both of men and animals, might live."[38] In her published response to Keen, White described Keens's comments as "fallacious" while claiming that his description of a "few" animals really involved "millions."[39]

Keen's papers were often published in the popular press, specifically to promote advances in medicine made due to animal research and opining how lives "precious beyond rubies might have been saved" if medical advances had come sooner.[40]

He often pointed out in the press the lack of authority possessed by the anti-vivisectionists. Claiming in *Harper's Magazine* that "the antivivisectionists constantly parade the few physicians who are in accord with their views, and by frequent reappearances make an apparent army upon the stage."[41] In 1910, in the *Ladies Home Journal*, he complained that "the alleged atrocities so vividly described in the anti-vivisection literature are fine instances of 'yellow journalism', and the quotes from medical men are often misleading."[42]

William Keen spoke and wrote extensively on the benefits of vivisection, claiming that anti-vivisectionists fostered "a spirit of cruelty to human beings" and were the "enemies of

[36] Keen, "Our Recent Debts to Vivisection," 1.
[37] Keen, "Our Recent Debts to Vivisection," 20.
[38] Keen, "Our Recent Debts to Vivisection," 2–3.
[39] Caroline Earl White, *An Answer to Dr. Keen's Address Entitled "Our Recent Debts to Vivisection"* (1885; reprint, n.p.: Nabu Public Domain Reprints, n.d.), 3-4.
[40] Keen, WW, "What Vivisection has done for humanity," *Ladies Home Journal*, v.27, 1910.
[41] "Vivisection and Brain surgery," *Harper's Magazine* 87: 128, 1893.
[42] WW Keen, "What Vivisection has Done for Humanity," *Ladies Home Journal*, v.27, 1910.

animals and the whole human race."[43] Keen asserted that this question "aroused and fostered" "the most violent and vindictive passions … especially among women—the very flower of our modern civilization,"[44]

The American Medical Profession

The American Medical Association, the New York State Medical Society, and other state and county medical societies fought a relentless battle to cripple the antivivisection movement by lobbying and attempting to influence public opinion about the benefits of animal experimentation.

For much of the first half of the nineteenth century, American medicine trailed behind its European counterparts. By the 1840s and 1850s the profession was in disrepute— with medical education described to be in shambles. According to medical historian Ronald L. Numbers the nineteenth-century medical profession had "degenerated into little more than a trade, open to all who wished to try their hands at healing."[45] Medical schools were not accredited by the states, and few laws regulated the practice of medicine.[46] The length and quality of American medical schools — considered inferior to European schools—"virtually guaranteed mediocrity." [47] In 1846 the New York State Medical Society passed a resolution calling for delegates to form a

[43] WW Keen, "The Antivivisection Exhibition in Philadelphia in 1914," in Keen, *Animal Experimentation and Medical Progress* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1914), 290.

[44] Keen, "The Influence of Antivivisection on Character," in *Animal Experimentation and Medical Progress*, 234.

[45] Ronald L. Numbers, "The Fall and Rise of the American Medical Profession," in *Sickness and Health in America: Readings in the History of Medicine and Public Health,* eds. Judith Walzer Leavitt and Ronald L. Numbers (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 185.

[46] Wirtschafter, "The Genesis and Impact of the Medical Lobby," 16

[47] Ronald L. Numbers and John Harley Warner, "The Maturation of American Medical Science," in *Sickness and Health in America*, 114-115. The authors note that European schools mandated attendance for four years with 37 to 41 weeks a year. In contrast, the University of Pennsylvania—considered to be one of the best at the time— required only 25 weeks a year for two years. Yet most American schools offered annual terms for 16 weeks.

national organization.[48] Dr. Nathan Smith Davis formed the AMA in 1847— dedicated to raising the standard of nineteenth-century medical education and practice. [49]

Vivisection was not widespread in the United States in the years following the American Civil War, but by the end of the century, medical practice began to focus on experimental science. Post bellum American medical reformers proposed creating a full-time faculty system with an emphasis on physiology—the science dealing with the functions of living organisms. The AMA created the Council on Medical Education in 1904, taking a more active role in medical training.[50]

Although not all physicians championed the cause of vivisection, many agreed that by adopting the European model of education—where animal research was the core component—they could achieve greater prestige in the eyes of the American public.[51]

In his essay "Divided We Stand," Gerald L. Geison looks at the division between American doctors and research physiologists in the late nineteenth century.[52] As late as the 1880s, clinicians doubted the "pragmatic value" of experimental medicine. Prominent medical schools—for example, Harvard Medical School and Columbia University—established laboratory physiology courses; however, until the turn of the century, these courses were not

[48] Mary L. Westermann-Cicio, "Of Mice and Medical Men: The Medical Profession's Response to the Vivisection Controversy at the Turn of the Century" (PhD diss., State University of New York at Stony Brook, 2001), 158; Morris Fishbein, M.D., *A History of the American Medical Association: 1847-1947* (Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders Company,1947) 7-8; James G. Burrow, *AMA: Voice of American Medicine (*Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1963), 1-2.

[49] Westerman-Cicio, *Ibid*.; Fishbein, *A History of the American Medical Association,* 7-8; Burrow, *AMA*, 1-2.

[50] Robert P. Hudson, "Abraham Flexner in Perspective: American Medical Education, 1865–1910," in *Sickness and Health in America*, 152.

[51] Westermann-Cicio, "Of Mice and Medical Men," 137. On the history of medicine in the United States, see Paul Starr, *The Social Transformation of American Medicine: The Rise of a Sovereign Profession and the Making of a Vast Industry* (New York: Basic Books, 1982).

[52] Gerald L. Geison, "Divided We Stand: Physiologists and Clinicians in the American Context," in *The Therapeutic Revolution: Essays in the Social History of American Medicine*, ed. Morris J. Vogel and Charles E. Rosenberg (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1979), 67–90.

mandated. Geison concludes that because American medical schools did not require courses in laboratory physiology, these schools shared the belief that "practicing doctors had little or no need of it."[53]

Some clinical physicians claimed that laboratory training might "actually *damage* the practitioner's ability to treat patients effectively."[54] Daniel Webster Cathell, the author of *The Physician Himself,* warned general practitioners that if they accepted "new and unsettled theories" too quickly, [55]their "usefulness as a physician will almost surely diminish."[56] The new sciences, including bacteriology, for example, provided tools to practicing physicians. Yet historian Russel C. Maulitz asserts that clinicians feared that incorporating science into medicine might "might remove them from the bedside to the bench"—causing them to pay less attention to their patients.[57]

Additionally, historians claim that American physicians were less interested in science than in clinical practice, valuing "wealth over scholarly reputation." As a result, this "American obsession" with success "deterred even scientifically inclined physicians from engaging in research."[58]

Elizabeth Blackwell, the first woman to receive a medical degree in the United States, also opposed vivisection. Blackwell believed in a holistic approach to medicine, stating that the

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[53] Geison, "Divided We Stand," 72.

[54] Geison, "Divided We Stand," 73–74.

[55] D. W. Cathell, *The Physician Himself and What He Should Add to His Scientific Acquirements,* 3d. ed. (Baltimore: Cushing and Bailey, 1883), 55, https://archive.org/details/physicianhimsel06cathgoog/page/n60/mode/2up.

[56] Cathell, *The Physician Himself, 56.*

[57] Russel C. Maulitz, "'Physician versus Bacteriologist': The Ideology of Science in Clinical Medicine," in *The Therapeutic Revolution: Essays in the Social History of American Medicine*, ed. Morris J. Vogel and Charles E. Rosenberg (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1979), 92; Robyn Hederman, "The Gallinger Bill, a Bill to Regulate Animal Experimentation in the District of Columbia: Forerunner of the 1966 Laboratory Animal Welfare Act," in *Animal Ethics and Animal Law*, ed. Andrew Linzey and Clair Linzey (Lanham: Lexington Books,2022), 28-30.

[58] Ronald L. Numbers and John Harley Warner, "The Maturation of American Medical Science," in *Sickness and Health in America*, 115.

"ministrations to the body and soul cannot be separated by a sharply-defined line," and that the "arbitrary distinction between the physician of the body and the physician of the soul … tends to disappear as science advances."[59] She asserted that "every branch of medicine involves moral consideration, both as regards to the practitioner and the patient."[60] In her article "Feminism, Professionalism, and Germs," historian Regina M. Morantz claims Blackwell distrusted bacteriology and experimental science because its "specific etiology" eroded her sense that right and wrong must govern the practice of medicine and medical research.[61]

Blackwell warned of the "moral danger" of training students to practice vivisection, this danger of "hardening their nature and injuring their future usefulness as good physicians."[62] She described vivisection as "an exercise of curiosity which inevitably tends to blunt the moral sense and injure that intelligent sympathy with suffering"—that is, harm fundamental qualities in a good physician.[63] This method of research, Blackwell claimed, "ignores the spiritual essence of Life and hopes to surprise its secrets by ruthless prying into the physical structure of the lower animals." Blackwell emphasized that the "basis of moral responsibility extends in kind, if not in degree, to all life" and that "we have no right, for any purpose whatever, to torture a living creature to death."[64]

Blackwell asked women physicians to discourage the practice of vivisection. In 1891 she contacted the Alumnae Association of the Women's Medical College of the New York Infirmary —which she had established in 1869—to oppose the endowment of a new experimental

[59] Elizabeth Blackwell, "The Influence of Women in the Profession of Medicine," in Blackwell, *Essays in Medical Sociology*, vol. 2 (London: Earnest Bell, 1902), 5–6; Regina Markell Morantz, "Feminism, Professionalism, and Germs: The Thought of Mary Putman Jacobi and Elizabeth Blackwell," *American Quarterly*, 34, no. 5 (1982): 465.

[60] Blackwell, "The Influence of Women in Medicine," 6.

[61] Morantz, "Feminism, Professionalism, and Germs," 465–66.

[62] Blackwell, "Erroneous Method in Medical Education," in *Essays in Medical Sociology*, 41.

[63] Blackwell, "Erroneous Method," 42–43.

[64] Blackwell, "Scientific Method in Biology," in *Essays in Medical Sociology*, 99–100.

laboratory. Blackwell counseled women physicians that "it is not blind imitation of men, nor thoughtless acceptance of whatever may be taught by them that is required."[65] She urged "the necessity of cherishing a mild skepticism respecting the dicta of so-called medical science," stating that "the worship of the intellect, or so-called knowledge, as an end in itself, entirely regardless of the character of the means by which we seek to gain it, is the most dangerous error that science can make."[66]

Nonetheless, by the end of the century, experimental science played a pivotal role in the practice of medicine.[67] In the 1870s Henry P. Bowditch at Harvard and Henry Newell Martin at Johns Hopkins opened small physiological labs where they performed animal experiments and classroom demonstrations.[68] By the 1890s medical schools incorporated classroom courses with animal research.[69] Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, opened in 1893, "combined laboratory science with bedside training."[70] Bacteriology and immunology became significant sources of inquiry. After another outbreak of cholera, the New York City Board of Health opened the first municipal bacteriology laboratory in 1892.[71] In *Reckoning with the Beas*t, historian James Turner claims that the United States became a "major center of animal experimentation" after 1890.[72]

Perceiving the anti-vivisectionist movement to be a serious threat, scientists and the medical community forcefully combatted this movement utilizing lobbying and legislative

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[65] Blackwell, "The Influence of Women in the Medical Profession" in *Essays in Medical Society*, 8–9.
[66] Blackwell, "The Influence of Women," 20–22.
[67] Lederer, *Subjected to Science*, 54.
[68] Patricia Peck Gossel, "William Henry Welch and the Antivivisection Legislation in the District of Columbia, 1896–1900," *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Science* 40, no. 4 (1985): 399.
[69] Gossel, "Welch and the Antivivisection Legislation," 401n11.
[70] Gossel, "Welch and the Antivivisection Legislation," 401; Simon Flexner and James Thomas Flexner, *William Henry Welch and the Heroic Age of Modern Medicine* (New York: Viking Press, 1942), 211–13.
[71] John Duffy, "Social Impact of Disease in the Late 19th Century," in *Sickness and Health in America,*, 419; Gossel, "Welch and the Antivivisection Legislation," 401n11.
[72] James Turner, *Reckoning with the Beast: Animals, Pain, and Humanity in the Victorian Mind* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), 92; Deborah Ruacille, *The Scalpel and the Butterfly: The Conflict between Animal Research and Animal Protection* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 50, Robyn Hederman, "The Gallingher Bill," 27-28.

efforts, lectures, journals, popular newspapers, and magazines to influence the public about the necessity of animal experimentation. [73]

The medical profession used these forums to discredit the movement in the eyes of the American public. By the late nineteenth century both men and women could be found to either support or oppose vivisection. Nonetheless, the anti-vivisection movement continued to be seen as a women's movement.

By establishing a biological construction of femininity, the medical profession provided scientific justification enforcing the already held belief that women should be relegated to the home and displayed contempt for women activists and those women who dared to deviate from their prescribed societal role.

Invalid Women

Female anti-vivisectionists responded to the expansion of animal testing in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, exploring their campaigns within the context of other institutional reform movements initiated by women in the Progressive Era— such as those in education and public health. As women's roles expanded within the domestic sphere, they threatened to achieve new forms of power and influence first in the family and then in the public sphere.

Bourgeois American women entered public life attending colleges and professional schools, spearheading women's organizations, and reform movements, becoming educators,

[73] Robert P. Hudson, "Abraham Flexner in Perspective: American Medical Education, 1865–1910," in *Sickness and Health in America,* 152.

social workers, nurses, physicians, and even lawyers. Some women demanded the right to higher education and more women asserted their intention to practice law and medicine.

As women's public roles expanded, "conservative social commentators," became more anxious "to reassert the boundaries between men and women's spheres."[74] Although women 's social role was long dictated by her sexuality, by the late nineteenth- century physicians and scientists provided biological justifications to enforce the view that women should be restricted to more traditional domestic roles.

Historians have examined and revealed the nineteenth-century medical and biological views of women justifying maintaining traditional sex roles.[75] As stated by Regina Markell Morantz-Sanchez, many male physicians played a central role in the debate over women's nature by giving voice "to traditional definitions of femininity which limited women's social role to domesticity,"[76] In her essay "Gender and Medical Treatment in Nineteenth-Century America," Regina Morantz-Sanchez notes that as traditional religious beliefs declined in the late nineteenth century, society looked to the medical community to define "traditional definitions of femininity which limited women's social role to domesticity."[77]

The traditional nineteenth-century physician believed that a woman's nature, her social role, and her health were defined by her uterus and ovaries, which controlled her from puberty

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[74] Regina Morantz-Sanchez, *Sympathy and Science: Women Physicians in American Medicine* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 207.

[75] See for example, Ann Douglas Wood, "`The Fashionable Diseases': Woman's Complaints and Their Treatment in Nineteenth-Century America," in *Women and Health in America: Historical Readings*, ed. Judith Walzer Leavitt (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984), 222-38; Carroll Smith-Rosenberg and Charles Rosenberg, "The Female Animal: Medical and Biological Views of Women and Her Role in Nineteenth-Century America," in *Women and Health in America*, 1984), 12-37; Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Hysterical Woman: Sex Roles and Role Conflict in Nineteenth-Century America," in *Disorderly Conduct*, 197-216; For a full discussion of the subject of the medical profession's attitude toward women in the nineteenth century, see Cynthia E. Russet, *Sexual Science: The Victorian Construction of Womanhood* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989).

[76] Regina Morantz-Sanchez*, Sympathy and Science,* 207.

[77] Regina Morantz-Sanchez, 207.

through menopause.[78] In 1860, one physician commented that "[t]he nerves themselves are smaller, and of a more delicate structure. They are endowed with greater sensibility, and, of course, are liable to more frequent and stronger impressions from external agents on mental influences."[79] Another physician later explained that it was "as if the Almighty, in creating the female sex, had taken the uterus and built up a woman around it."[80]

Popular medical books emphasized that "ladies get sick because they are unfeminine—in other words, sexually aggressive, intellectually ambitious, and defective in proper womanly submission and selfishness."[81] Many physicians proposed that women's medical problems resulted from their lack of femininity and that these women could restore their health by returning to housework and childbearing.[82]

Many nineteenth-century physicians warned that education would have deleterious effect on women, especially during puberty and adolescence arguing that a young woman who "who consumed her vital force in intellectual activities," lessoned her ability to achieve true womanhood.[83] And the effects were more dire for those women who undertook higher education. Higher education of women in universities was a threat to their health and especially their reproductive capacities. Edward H. Clarke, a professor at Harvard and a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences proposed that women who did not concentrate on their

[78] Carroll Smith-Rosenberg and Charles Rosenberg, "The Female Animal," 12-13, Regina Markell Morantz-Sanchez, *Sympathy and Science*, 206.

[79] Carroll Smith-Rosenberg and Charles Rosenberg, "The Female Animal," 13, *citing*, Stephen Tracy, *The Mother and Her Offspring* (New York, 1860, xv.

[80] Carrol Smith-Rosenberg and Charles Rosenberg, "The Female Animal*"* 13*, citing*, M.L Holbrook, *Parturition without Pain: A Code of Directions for Escaping from the Primal Curse* (New York, 1882), 14-15.

[81] Wood, "Fashionable Diseases," 226-27.

[82] Wood, "Fashionable Diseases," 226-27.

[83] Smith-Rosenberg and Rosenberg, "Female Animal,"15.

reproductive system, but instead pursued education underwent negative mental changes. He concluded:

> "A girl cannot spend more than four, or in occasional instances, five hours of force daily upon her studies, and leave sufficient margin for the general physical growth that she must make…If she puts as much force into her brain education as a boy, the brain or the special apparatus (i.e., the reproductive system) will suffer."[84]

Clarke concluded that higher education would destroy women's maternal instincts and would leave many women in poor health for life. He stated that women were ill because they were destroying their wombs and childbearing abilities by pursuing a course of higher education. Similarly, a gynecologist in 1901 complained that such a woman "may be highly cultured and shine in society, but her future husband will discover too late that he has married a large outfit of headaches, backaches and spine aches, instead of a woman fitted to take up the duties of life."[85]

As the women's rights movement grew in the latter part of the nineteenth century, physicians used biological arguments to keep women in the home. For example, in 1895, the physician James Weir Jr., in his article, "The Effects of Female Suffrage on Posterity," described the feminist movement as an example of hermaphroditism, predicting American feminists to become "uninhibited libertines" or "an anomalous phalanx of barrel-chested women."[86]

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[84] , Edward H. Clarke, *Sex in Education, or, a Fair Chance for Girls* (Boston: J. R. Osgood, 1873), 156-157. Edward H. Clarke warned that education would cause young woman to become weak, nervous, and perhaps sterile. More importantly, such a practice could result in children "with monstrous brains and puny bodies; abnormally active cerebration, and abnormally weak digestion; flowing thought and constipated bowels; lofty aspirations and neuralgic sensations." See Clarke, *Sex in Education; or, A Fair Chance for Girls*, 41.

[85] *Ibid.*, 16, citing William Edgar Darnall, "The pubescent schoolgirl," *American Gynecological and Obstetrical Journal* 18 (June 1901): 490.

[86] John S. and Robin M. Haller, *The Physician and Sexuality in Victorian America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1974), 76-77; citing James Weir Jr., "The Effects of Female Suffrage on Posterity," *American Naturalist, XXXIX* (1895), 818-819.

Neurasthenia as a specific disorder was described in 1869 by a New York neurologist, George M. Beard. [87]It was a term that was used prior to the psychological terms developed by Freud in the early twentieth century. The term was used to describe every emotional disorder- except insanity- and symptoms included insomnia, headaches, depression, and any ailments that prevented the patient from carrying on a normal life. [88] According to historian Elaine Showalter, Beard described neurasthenia in terms of a masculine illness, and believed it to be caused by the excesses of capitalism, and competitive business and social environments.[89] Beard argued that neurasthenia was increasing among business and professional men, although it also affected "[w]omen of the better class."[90]

Nonetheless, the hysterical forms of neurasthenia, like hysteria itself, were most associated with women. The term "hysteria" came from the ancient Greek word for "uterus."[91] In the late nineteenth century, hysteria was considered a peculiarly female disease characterized by moral weakness, lack of willpower, and what physician S. Weir Mitchell claimed occurred in women who lacked rational endurance, and who had lost their power of self-rule.

In *Beyond Freud*, F.G.Gosling claims that Mitchell's rest cure was based upon his belief that neurasthenia in women was self-induced.[92] Mitchell stated that "[t]he women's desire to be on a level of competition with man and to assume his duties is, I am sure, making mischief…as

[87] See George M. Beard, *American Nervousness: Its Causes and Consequences*, 1881; reprint (New York: Arno Press, 1972).

[88] F.G. Gosling, *Before Freud*, 9. According to Gosling, the neurologists of the late nineteenth century were much nearer to being the forerunners of twentieth-Century psychiatrists than that of modern neurologists because their emphasis was on the emotions and social origins of stress. See Gosling, *Before Fraud*, 17.

[89] Elaine Showalter, "Hysteria, Feminism and Gender," in *Hysteria Beyond Freud,* Sander L. Gilman, Helen King, Roy Porter, G.S. Rousseau, Elain Showalter (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 294-295

[90] F.G. Gosling*, Before Fraud*, 10-11

[91] Elinor Cleghorn, *Unwell Women: Misdiagnosis and Myth in a Man-Made World* (New York: Dutton, Random House LLC, 2021), 44.

[92] Gosling, *Before Fraud,* 111

no length of generations of change in her education and modes of activity will ever alter her characteristics. She is physiologically other than man."[93] He further stated that he only desired to help her "to be in wiser and more healthful fashion of what I believe her maker meant her to be…"[94]

Like other physicians of his day, he opposed higher education for women, especially coeducation. He went on to state that he did not believe that "any education change in generations of women will ever set her, as to certain mental and moral qualifications, as an equal beside the man."[95] As to seeking certain careers, Mitchell warned women "that there are careers now sought and won and followed by her which for him inevitably lesson her true attractiveness…and make her less fit to be the 'friendly lover and the loving friend."[96]

In his treatise, *Diseases of the Nervous System, Especially in Women,* Mitchell described so-called hysterical women as "the pests of many households, who constitute the despair of physicians…and in unconscious or half-conscious self-indulgence destroy the comfort of everyone about them."[97] Mitchell continued by quoting Oliver Wendell Homes who described "a hysterical girl is a vampire who sucks the blood of the healthy people about her."[98]

During Mitchell's rest cure, the patient was confined to bed for a month or more. The patient was neither allowed intellectual nor physical activity. Mitchell observed "[The] rest becomes for some women a rather bitter medicine," and "they are glad enough to accept the

[93] Silas Weir Mitchell, *Doctor and Patient* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1888), 48.
[94] Mitchell, *Doctor and Patient*, 48.
[95] Mitchell, *Doctor and Patient*, 46.
[96] Mitchell, *Doctor and Patient*, 46.
[97] Carrol Smith-Rosenberg, "The Hysterical Woman," in *Disorderly Conduct,* 207*,* citing Mitchell, *Diseases of the Nervous System*, 266.
[98] Smith-Rosenberg, "The Hysterical Woman," 207.

order to rise and go about when the doctor issues a mandate which has become pleasantly welcome and eagerly looked for."[99]

The feminist writer Charlotte Perkins Gilman became one of Mitchell's patients after she suffered from extreme depression after the birth of her daughter. Mitchell advised her to give up her writing career and to "[l]ive as domestic a life as possible" and to "never touch pen, brush or pencil as long as you live."[100] After following Mitchell's directions "rigidly for months," Gilman "came perilously near" to losing her mind. According to Gilman

> "The mental agony grew so unbearable that I would sit blankly moving my head from side to side—to get out from under the pain. Not physical pain, not the least 'headache' even, just mental torment, and so heavy in its nightmare gloom that it seemed real enough to dodge."[101]

As a result of this cure, Gilman and her husband divorced, and she continued her writing career. In her short story "The Yellow Wallpaper," published in 1892, Gilman describes a woman suffering from a nervous condition who is subject to the rest cure by her doctor-husband and is confined to a room decorated in yellow wallpaper. Describing her anguish in a hidden diary, she documents her descent into madness during her enforced isolation.[102]

Historian Carroll Smith-Rosenberg points out that nineteenth-century medical literature described the hysterical female as a "child- woman" who was highly impressionable and had strong dependency needs, and a weak ego.[103] Physicians accepted a certain amount of

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[99] Silas Weir Mitchell, M. D., *Fat and Blood: And How to Make Them* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott and Company, 1935), 36.

[100] Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *The Living of Charlotte Perkins Gilman: An Autobiography* (New York: Harper & Row, 1935), 96.

[101] Gillman, *The Living of Charlotte Perkins Gilman*, 96.

[102] Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *The Yellow Wallpaper*, Bedford Cultural Editions, ed. Dale M. Bauer (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1998); see, Sara Stage, *Female Complaints: Lydia Pinkham and the Business of Women's Medicin*e (New York: W.W. Norton &Company, 1979),86-87.

[103] Carrol Smith-Rosenberg, "The Hysterical Woman," in *Disorderly Conduct*, 212. The term "hysteria" is derived from the Greek and means "uterus." It was thought to be a disorder of women, caused by alterations in the womb. Ilza Veith, *Hysteria: The History of a Disease* (Chicago; The University of Chicago Press, 1965), 1.

nervousness in women as natural, persuaded that neurasthenia in women was caused by female biology. According to Smith Rosenberg, physicians "excused the woman only in the belief that she was ill and that she would make every effort to get well and resume her domestic role.[104]

Physicians Elizabeth Blackwell and Anna Bonus Kingsford were both deeply affected by the medical procedures conducted on poor women in the public hospitals. In her article, Gynaecology, Pornography, and the Antivivisection Movement," Coral Lansbury describes the indignities faced by these women, who were examined in view of male doctors who often told crude jokes while examining their organs.[105]

Blackwell and Kingsford were specifically appalled by the number of unnecessary sexual surgeries performed on women for minor complaints. "Battey's Operation," a bilateral ovariotomy, originated by Robert Battey in in the latter part of the nineteenth century became popular in both England and the United States. These operations were generally performed on young women who often had no overt pathology in their ovaries. According to Lansbury, Dr. Battey urged the removal of healthy ovaries for various ailments grouped under the heading of "mania."[106] By the latter part of the 1870s and the 1880s, Battey's operation was recommended for a variety of conditions including "nymphomania and moral insanity." [107]

Lansbury argues that both Blackwell and Kingsford saw these surgeries as an extension of vivisection with doctors using women instead of cats and dogs. In *Essays in Medical Sociology*, Blackwell attributes the increase in "audacious human surgery," specifically "[t]he

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[104] Carrol Smith-Rosenberg, "The Hysterical Woman," 209.

[105] *Ibid*., 85-86; Coral Lansbury, "Gynaecology, Pornography, and the Antivivisection Movement," 415-416.

[106] Lansbury, *The Old Brown Dog*, 89

[107] Lawrence D. Longo, "The Rise and Fall of Battey's Operation: A Fashion in Surgery," in *Women and Health in America: Historical Readings*, 272-273.

great increase in ovariotomy, and its extension to the insane," a procedure she describes as the "castration of women," to the growth in unrestrained animal experimentation [108]

Hysteria and Zoophil-Psychosis

Federal and state legislation to regulate or prohibit vivisection was introduced in the early twentieth century. Some of this legislation was in response to the Rockefeller Institute, which was founded in New York State as an institution dedicated to animal research. The Davis-Lee Bill to restrict vivisection was introduced into the 1908–09 New York State legislative session. Although the bill was initially favored by the New York Senate Judiciary Committee, its support diminished after Diana Belais of the New York Anti-Vivisection Society introduced a competing bill.[109]

Within this social context, the medical establishment criticized their opponents as unstable fanatics. Although the use of disparaging terms to describe antivivisection agitation was common, the language became vituperative when it pertained to the women activists, who were described as unnatural because they did not fulfill their womanly duties. Press coverage often took an offensive tone. An article discussing the challenge to the Rockefeller Institute described

[108] Elizabeth Blackwell, *Essays in Medical Sociology*, 119-120. Regina Morantz-Sanchez provides a different perspective in her study of the nineteenth century female gynecologist surgeon Mary Dixon Jones. In 1892, the female surgeon was tried for manslaughter for an alleged botched laparotomy. Although Jones was acquitted, she later lost her libel suit against the *Brooklyn Eagle* for their inflammatory articles. Sanchez claims that Dixon's patients belong to a larger narrative, and questions the view that women were merely victims of the medical profession. See Regina Morantz-Sanchez, *Conduct Unbecoming A Woman: Medicine on Trial in Turn-Of –The-Century Brooklyn* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); Regina Morantz- Sanchez "Negotiating Power at the Bedside: Historical Perspectives on Nineteenth-Century Patients and Their Gynecologists," *Feminist Studies* 26, no. 2 (Summer 2000): 287-309.

[109] Unti, "The Quality of Mercy," 636–41; Leffingwell, *An Ethical Problem*, 218–19; Walter B. Cannon, *Antivivisection Legislation: Its History, Aims and Menace* (Chicago: American Medical Association, 1913), 4–6.

the antivivisectionists as "ignorant scrub women [who] set themselves up as authorities on scientific work."[110]

During these legislative battles, the New York neurologist Charles Loomis Dana published an article in the *Medical Record* diagnosing a psychological disease called "zoophil-psychosis."[111] Dana, described as the "dean of American neurologists," had become a professor of Nervous Diseases at Cornell Medical college in 1898. His *Text-Book of Nervous Diseases*, first published in 1893, reached its tenth edition in 1925.[112] Dana was a strong advocate of vivisection, and believed that animal experimentation could validate the concept of neuresthenia in a time when the emergence of Freudian psychology threatened to undermine neurology's theories.[113] He concluded "[a]nimal experimentation…is a most beneficit instrument in human progress" and the anti-vivisectionists "have a kind of morality not preached by holy men."[114]

Zoophil-psychosis was described as an excessive concern for animals. Dana described this illness as one of the "obsessive insanities."[115] In the *Medical Record*, Dana claims animal activists suffered from zoophil-psychosis. He cites studies demonstrating the "indifference" of zoophilists "for their own relatives and friends and for human suffering generally —to which indifference there is sometimes added a veritable cruelty."[116] He cites to another study where the

[110] Westermann-Cicio, *Of Mice and Medical Men*, 148.

[111]Charles L. Dana, "The Zoophil-Psychosis: A Modern Malady," *Medical Record* 75, no. 10 (March 1909): 381–83

[112] Craig Beuttinger, "Antivivisection and the Charge of Zoophil-Psychosis," *Historian* 55, no. 2 (Winter 1993): 277–88 (278-279), *New York Times*, 13 December 1935, 25.

[113] Craig Beuttinger, "Antivivisection and the Charge of Zoophil-Psychosis," 281. In the late nineteenth century, neurologists proposed that "nervous exhaustion, or neurasthenia, manifested itself in a plethora of physical and mental woes."

[114] Craig Beuttinger, "Antivivisection and the Charge of Zoophil-Psychosis," 281, citing Charles L. Dana, *The Service of Animal Experimentation to the Knowledge and Treatment of Nervous Diseases* (n.p. 1909).

[115] Dana, "The Zoophil-Psychosis," 381.

[116] Dana, "The Zoophil-Psychosis," 381.

patient who would faint at the sight of a sick animal, "did not fail to rent his windows on the days of executions and force his domestics to go and see them."[117]

Dana describes one of his patients, a woman, "married but childless and not desirous of children," who lives with her sister and husband, but her interest was mostly in sick cats. She made her residence a hospital for stray cats and her husband's "life was made utterly wretched by this condition of affairs…" The wife had no "appreciation of her lack of consideration for the human side of her household…" Because she became a "chronic victim of the cat obsession," treatment was advised by a gynecologist "for there was some absence or perversion of instinct in her case."[118]

According to Dana, the patient who suffers from zoophile-psychosis has "a mental constitution in which there is a constant tendency to a morbid misdirection of thought, feeling and will."[119] These "morbid fears and worries" usually takes the form "of a kind of quasi delusion that the animal world is constantly suffering from or in danger of the brutality of man."[120] Thus, he concludes that:

> "the kindly feeling of the indolent and unintelligent often take this line of least resistance; and then the feelings and interests grow, until the care of the pets vastly exceeds that in any other unselfish work. The dog is plump and over-cared for; and the cat is more happy than the husband."[121]

[117] Dana, "The Zoophil-Psychosis," 381.
[118] Dana, "The Zoophil-Psychosis," 382.
[119] Dana, "The Zoophil-Psychosis," 383.
[120] Dana, "The Zoophil-Psychosis," 383.
[121] Dana, "The Zoophil-Psychosis," 383.

Dana predicted that those suffering from zoophil-psychosis could develop more "psychopathic states."[122] Zoophil-psychosis, a form of neurasthenia, was said to affect both sexes, yet Dana claimed that women were particularly susceptible to the disease because "the nervous system of women is naturally less stable and less under volitional control."[123]

With respect to the anti-vivisection movement, the claim that the anti-vivisectionists were unstable was now supported by a distinct diagnosis.[124] The science and medical community explicitly targeted women, claiming they were hysterical and suffering from zoophil-psychosis. Specifically, women anti-vivisectionists were described as unnatural because they did not fulfill their womanly duties.

The historian Craig Beuttinger claims that the charge had become so common by 1914 that the physiologist Frederic S. Lee proposed that "the antivivisection mania" be "recognized as a well-developed form of mental disease."[125] Critics of anti-vivisection pointed out that few of the activists had children. They claimed that the affliction usually appeared "after the usual age of parenthood and in many instances can be explained as replacing the normal 'psychoses' which we call maternal love."[126]

In Dr. James Warbasse's *The Conquest of Disease through Animal Experimentation*, the author observed that zoophil-psychosis cases usually afflicted "antivivisectionists" and "kindred

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[122] See Charles L. Dana, *The Text-Book of Nervous Diseases: For the Use of Students and Practitioners of Medicine*, 8th ed. (New York: William Wood, 1915), 509.

[123]Gosling, *Before Freud*, 98, citing Charles L. Dana "Neurasthenia," *Post-Graduate*, 6 (1890-1891), 26.

[124] Dana, "The Zoophil-Psychosis," 381–83; Beuttinger, "Antivivisection and the Charge of Zoophil-Psychosis," 285-286. In the late nineteenth century, neurologists proposed that "nervous exhaustion, or neurasthenia, manifested itself in a plethora of physical and mental woes." By the 1890s, the neurologists were focused upon mental disturbances such as depression and anxiety and believed that the physical problems were imaginary.

[125] Beuttinger, "Antivivisection and the Charge of Zoophil-Psychosis," 285; "Passion for Animals Really a Disease," *New York Times*, March 18, 1909; "Topic of the Time," *New York Times*, March 9, 1909.

[126] "Explains Methods of Medical Experiment: Prof. Murlin of Cornell," *New York Times*, February 10, 1911; "The Zoophil-Psychosis," *New York Times*, July 11, 1909.

cults," where "these cases display a sympathy for suffering in animals while they show decidedly less concern for human suffering." Warbasse referred to an unnamed German scientist who had "divided women into two classes—the mother-type and the prostitute type. Women displaying a fondness for fondling dogs, [the German scientist] explicitly explains, do not belong to the mother type."[127]

Conclusion

The medical profession marginalized the anti-vivisection movement, specifically women activists, portraying them as unstable. In *The Old Brown Dog,* Coral Lansbury analyzes why so many women were passionately drawn to the cause of anti-vivisection. She argues that many nineteenth-century women and feminists in Britain identified with the plight of suffering animals with their own helplessness, and often wept when the anti-vivisectionist Frances Cobbe described experiments performed upon dogs.[128]

American writers used the novel to highlight the horrors involved in vivisection. In her later novels, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps linked women's issues and anti-vivisection. Phelps's anti-vivisection writings draw parallels between animal experimentation, women's legal status, and nineteenth-century marriage. She saw a direct connection between animal experimentation and the medical treatment of women. [129]At a 1902 address before a committee of the Massachusetts

[127] James Peter Warbasse, *The Conquest of Disease through Animal Experimentation* (New York: D. Appleton, 1910), 158–61; William W. Keen, *The Influence of Antivivisection on Character*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: American Medical Association, 1920).

[128] Coral Lansbury, *The Old Brown Dog,* 84.

[129] See, Beuttinger, "Women and the Antivivisection in Late Nineteenth-Century America;" Susan Hamilton, "Gender and the Literature of the Victorian Vivisection Controversy," *Victorian Review* 17, no. 2 (Winter 1991): 21-34; Hilda Keen, "The 'Smooth Cool Men of Science': The Feminist and Socialist Response to Vivisection,"16-38; Robyn Hederman, "Elizabeth Stuart Phelps (1844-1911): Writer and Reformer," *in Animal Theologians*, ed. Andrew Linzey and Clair Linzey (New York: Oxford University Press, 2023), 224-227.

legislature, Phelps indicated that her interest in vivisection dated back to 1896.[130] Phelps described vivisection as the "the infliction of avoidable torture by the powerful upon the weak, by the human intellect and the human hand upon the helpless body and the dumb soul." [131] Her 1896 short story, "Loveliness: A Story" appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*. "Loveliness," focused on the theft of pets from their owners and made a plea for legislation eradicating vivisection.[132]

In her novel *Trixie* (1904), Miriam Lauriet is pursued by two men, the lawyer Phillip Surbridge and the medical researcher Olin Steele. Although Steele is originally repulsed by experimentation on animals, he gradually adapts to the practice. The story focuses on the recovery of Lauriet's spaniel Caro, and her friend's dog, Trixie, who have been stolen and taken to a research laboratory. Caro and Trixie are rescued from Galen Laboratory and Lauriet confronts Steele who works at the lab. He tries to justify his practice by telling her that she takes a "very feminine view of the circumstances."[133] Lauriet later writes to Steele telling him that she cannot see "how any true woman can take a vivisector's hand."[134]

Phelps directly linked feminism and anti-vivisection in her 1908 novel, *Though Life Us Do Part.* Carol Farley Kessler, in *Elizabeth Stuart Phelps,* points out that Phelps linked the fate of women in marriage with the vivisection of animals. Phelps wrote, "A man may vivisect a woman nerve by nerve, anguish by anguish; nobody knows it. She never cries out." Later in the novel, Phelps described the world as being "full of women enduring the lives that men inflict."[135]

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[130] Mary Angela Bennet, *Elizabeth Stuart Phelps* (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1939), 114.

[131] Kessler, *Elizabeth Stuart Phelps*, (Boston: Twayne, 1982), 111-112; Kessler cites "Address," March 16, 1903, p. 8.

[132] Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, *Loveliness: A Story*, (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1899), Kindle.

[133] Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, *Trixie* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1904), 218

[134] Phelps, *Trixie*, 274.

[135] Carol Farley Kessler, *Elizabeth Stuart Phelps* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1982), 111*;* Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, *Though Life Us Do Part* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1908), 56, 165.

Zoophil-psychosis provided an effective attack against the anti-vivisectionists, providing a medical determination that those criticizing animal experimentation were suffering from a mental disorder. Moreover, in the early decades of the twentieth century, scientists attributed medical discoveries to animal research and convinced many Americans of the necessity of vivisection. According to historian Diane Beers, the medical profession "positioned themselves as modern heroes and fostered public acceptance of experimentation."[136] Yet anti-vivisectionists persisted in their campaigns to restrict research through the mid-twentieth century. In the 1950s and 1960s, the Animal Welfare Institute and the Humane Society of the United States exposed abuse of animals in laboratories. Further, these organizations exposed unscrupulous dog dealers who stole companion animals to sell to laboratories. According to Beers, the anti-vivisectionists "attacked rather than retreated"—challenging the public's attitudes toward nonhumans.

[136] Beers, *For the Prevention of Cruelty*, 120.