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# Peak Practices: Englishwomen's "Heroic" Adventures in the Nineteenth-Century American West

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# Peak Practices: Englishwomen's "Heroic" Adventures in the Nineteenth-Century American West

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Many Englishwomen explored the mountainous regions of the American West in the 1870s, 1880s, and 1890s, hiking and taking excursions into popular tourist destinations such as the Rocky Mountains and Yosemite Valley. This paper examines the writings of seven women who toured these regions and published accounts of their journeys. These elite international travelers produced a complex array of gendered subjectivities in their writings. They represented themselves as actively "conquering" mountain peaks as well as passively waiting for the men to do it, as fearing danger and fatigue but also ridiculing the incompetency of local male guides, and as "resisting" adventure, yet expressing female empowerment and abandonment in it. The paper problematizes "feminine" codes of behavior, first-wave feminism, and convergence of these within nineteenth-century British imperialism and narratives of adventure, to show how conventional as well as more transgressive discourses of Victorian womanhood worked with imperialist, nationalist, and class discourses. I examine what the women wrote about both the indoor spaces of mountainous landscapes and their outdoor mountaineering adventures. In many ways, the women reinscribed themselves as feminine domestic subjects in wilderness environments, yet they also explored and contested the powerful inscriptions of conventional Victorian womanhood. *Key Words:* British imperialism, feminism, mountaineering, travel writing, Victorian women.

How time has slipped by I do not know. This is a glorious region, and the air and life are intoxicating. I live mainly out of doors and on horseback, wear my half-threadbare Hawaiian dress, sleep sometimes under the stars on a bed of pine boughs, ride on a Mexican saddle, and hear once more the low music of my Mexican spurs. . . . [Estes Park] is surely one of the most entrancing spots on earth.

Isabella Bird, *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains* (1879:102, 116)

I was invited to go on the cow-catcher, with which every American engine is armed. It is a kind of nose of iron bars sharply pointed, which sweeps any obstacle from the track; and on the top there is just room for three people to sit with their feet hanging down close to the rails. But though in my secret heart I wished just to feel what it was like for once, M[aurice, her brother] told me that it was really such a risk that I resisted the temptation; and we settled ourselves comfortably on the back platform.

Rose Kingsley, *South by West or Winter in the Rocky Mountains and Spring in Mexico* (1874:106).

In the above epigraph, the renowned explorer Isabella L. Bird, during her first solo trip abroad at age forty, discovered, embraced, and eloquently described the rugged outdoor life of early 1870s Colorado.<sup>1</sup> In much of *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains* (1879), Bird represents herself as strengthened by the outdoors, overcoming or "conquering" her own frailty through arduous hiking or horseback riding in difficult mountainous terrain. By contrast, Rose Kingsley emphasizes a much different image of Victorian womanhood in her *South by West or Winter in the Rocky Mountains and Spring in Mexico* (1874). During a rail excursion into the Rocky Mountains just a few years after Isabella Bird, Kingsley, eldest daughter of the prominent English literary and clerical figure Charles Kingsley, recounts her repressed desire for risk and adventure. She presents herself as properly controlled and deferential to her male protector, a brother she was visiting in Colorado Springs.<sup>2</sup> Bird's and Kingsley's and other Englishwomen's narratives about hiking, horseback riding, taking rail or stage excursions, or in other

ways experiencing mountainous landscapes of the American West in the late nineteenth century exhibit highly complex, ambiguous, and often contradictory or paradoxical representations of themselves as gendered individuals.

The multifaceted and multipositioned figure of the Victorian "Englishwoman abroad"<sup>3</sup> has received considerable attention in recent years from geographers, historians, literary critics, and others (Callaway 1987; Birkett 1989; Foster 1990; Mills 1991, 1996; Strobel 1991; Chaudhuri and Strobel 1992; Ware 1992; Sharpe 1993; Blunt 1994; Blunt and Rose 1994; Burton 1994; McClinck 1995; McEwan 1996; Morin 1998b; Morin and Kay Guelke 1998; among others). As these scholars have shown, middle- and upper-class British women who traveled abroad in the late nineteenth century as missionaries, wives of colonial administrators or military men, professional travel writers, reporters, or leisure-class tourists, produced a complex array of discursive representations of self in their writings. These included images of the intrepid adventuress defying racial and sexual boundaries; the duty-bound domestic servant enacting self-sacrifice for family, community, and nation; the devoted Protestant missionary "saving" her benighted sisters in the colonies; the vulnerable "lady" upholding hegemonic versions of femininity associated with gentility and class privilege; and the suffragist advocating nineteenth-century liberal feminist social reforms (adapted from Ware 1992).

Much of this literature has focused on British women's uneasy relationships with British colonialism and imperialism, especially in the ways in which imperial discourses on race, class, and nation combined with Victorian domestic ideologies in both the maintenance of feminine codes of behavior and contestations of these codes in notions of female liberation. Little recent work, however, has focused on the complex intersections between British imperialism and gendered subjectivity for "Englishwomen abroad" in the mountainous landscapes in the late nineteenth-century American West. While Georgi-Findlay (1996) and Allen (1987) discuss the writings of Englishwomen in the West, they do not theorize them separately from the works of other visitors and settlers. Allen, for example, examines 143 book-length published accounts of women's travel in the West in the nineteenth century, but problematically conflates settlers' and visitors' views of the region, to form a generic "female" response that does not adequately take into con-

sideration differences among them. Foster (1990) discusses Englishwomen's writing about America, but her focus is primarily the East, and in the first half of the 1800s.

In this paper, I explore Englishwomen's travel writing about the Rocky Mountains and Yosemite Valley, two important side excursions off the transcontinental railroad journey from New York to San Francisco, during the 1870s, 1880s, and 1890s (see Figure 1). In an examination of narratives about both the indoor spaces of western tourism and the outdoor mountainous landscapes of the West, I problematize notions of "feminine" codes of behavior, early "first-wave" feminism, and their convergence with British imperialism outside the context of its formal empire. This paper is thus an extension of my earlier work (Morin 1995), wherein I argued that one English "female Columbus" foregrounded a feminist voice in her text about the American West because Britain's "tensions of empire" were absent in that extra-colonial context. My concern in this paper is to extend those arguments in highlighting the range of discursive complexities and tensions that appear in the travelogues of seven women, to examine the production of gendered subjectivity in the texts, and to show how discourses of gender worked alongside and through imperialist, nationalist, and class discourses. I will be concerned to show, for one example, that attention to geographical context unsettles what other scholars (such as Pratt 1992; Mills 1991) have identified as imperialist language in British Victorian women's travel writing about the "conquest" of mountain peaks. Women climbers claiming places as their "own," in the context of the American West, demonstrate not triumph or domination over place, but a particular kind of triumph over self and emotive attachment to place.

In the following discussion, I identify the main tropes of mountain adventure in the women's writing, which range from actively "conquering" mountain peaks to passively waiting for the men to do so, from fearing danger and fatigue to ridiculing the incompetency of local (male) guides, and from resisting adventure to expressing female empowerment and abandonment in it. I am not necessarily seeking common characteristics of all the travelogues (even though common characteristics do, in fact, appear), nor is my concern to demonstrate the individuality of each traveler by highlighting

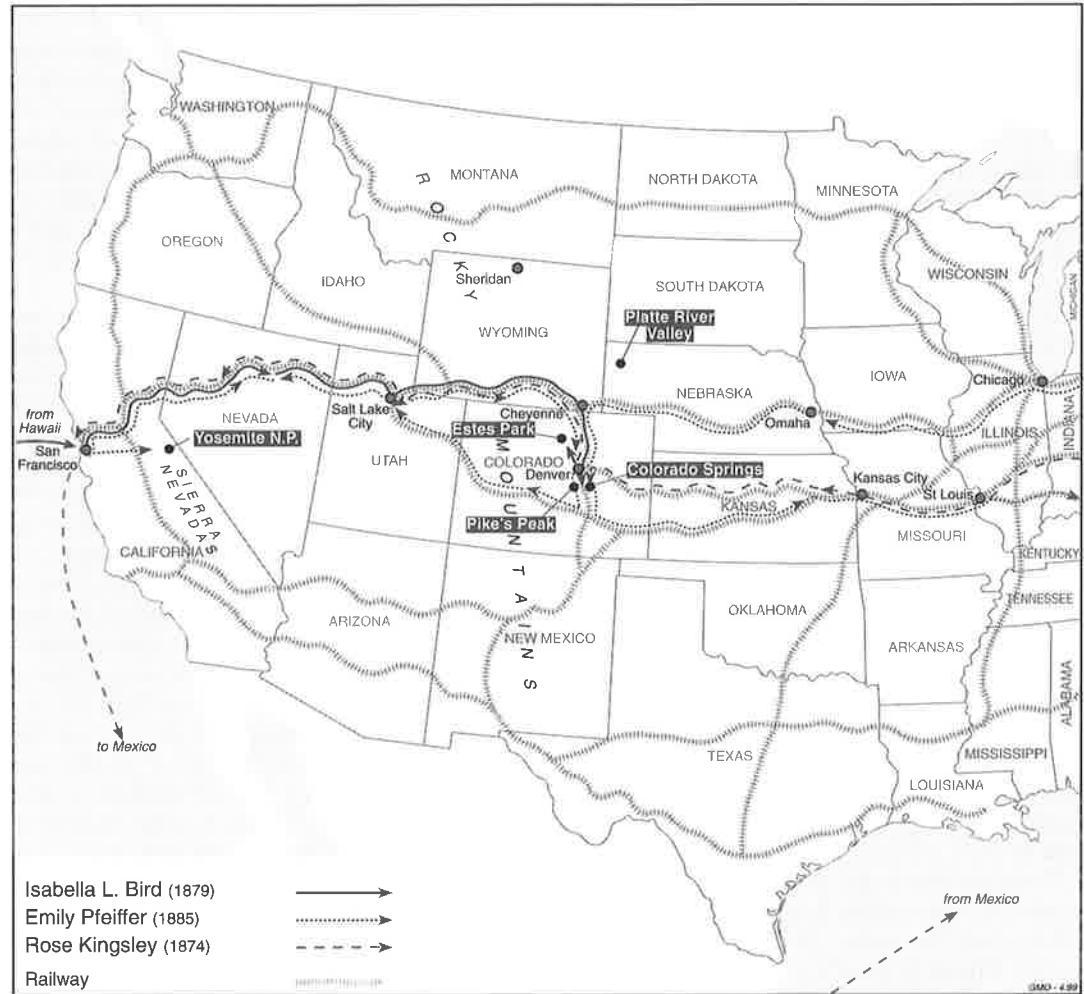


Figure 1. The American West of selected Victorian women travelers. Map by Max Oulton.

the contradictions inherent in treating them all as a homogenous group. My emphasis, rather, is on the production of gendered subjectivity emerging out of a particular nexus of British imperialism, discourses about gender, and early foreign travel in the American West. It will become clear that in many ways the women reinscribed themselves as feminine, domestic subjects in wilderness environments, yet they also explored and contested the powerful inscriptions of domesticity that arose out of hegemonic (masculinist) versions of Victorian femininity. In so doing, they articulated with, and thereby perhaps even can be seen to have reconstituted, hegemonic ideologies about femininity, domesticity, and more contestatory versions of Victorian womanhood.

## (Post)colonial Studies and Women's Travel Writing

British women travelers to the American West negotiated, in a number of ways, their status as women writing within the context of both British and American imperialisms. My purpose here is to show how Victorian gender relations and imperial geographies worked together to produce many subject positions in women's writing about their mountain adventures in the American West—a place with very different historical exigencies from the colonial contexts under which much nineteenth-century British women's travel literature was produced. I will highlight how conventional as well as more transgressive discourses

of Victorian womanhood worked with (but also occasionally against) imperialist, nationalist, and class discourses in the women's texts, to examine their links and interconnections. These women negotiated "empire" and womanhood in a range of ways in Yosemite and the Rocky Mountain environs, resulting in many complex subject positionings, even within the same individual.

Pratt (1992), Said (1978), Hulme (1986), and scores of other colonial and postcolonial theorists have demonstrated links between Europe's political-economic-administrative goals for its colonies and their manifestations in cultural practices, such as in the writing of travel books. These scholars have identified ways that explorers and travelers served an important function in validating and justifying British control in the colonies, citing evidence of imperialist language that posits British ethnic and racial superiority and the vast quantities of raw materials available for extraction. To them, the hallmarks of imperial language were expressions of nationalism, ethnocentrism, and expansionism. MacKenzie (1984) further identifies late nineteenth-century British imperialism as an "ideological cluster" comprising renewed militarism, devotion to royalty, identification and worship of national heroes, and racial views consistent with Social Darwinism (as cited in Ware 1992:119; see also Jones 1980).

Feminists concerned with colonial and postcolonial discourses have been in the forefront of highlighting the extent to which nineteenth-century British imperialism took many diverse ideological and discursive forms. Callaway (1987), Strobel (1991), Chaudhuri and Strobel (1992), Blake (1990), Blunt (1994), Blunt and Rose (1994), McEwan (1996), Mills (1991, 1996), Morin (1996, 1998b), and many others have emphasized the tensions between discourses of white, Christian, bourgeois superiority and expansionism in the colonies with those surrounding British women's gendered subjectivity. By examining the texts of women travelers, administrators' wives, missionaries, reformers, nurses, and writers, these and other scholars have investigated ways that women were both "inside" and "outside" British and European imperial projects—inside them by virtue of their race/class/national identities, but sidelined by their gender. The sociospatial outcomes for this multipositionality took many forms. Works often cited in geography (such as Mills 1991; Blunt and Rose 1994) emphasize tensions between imperialism and a particular form of conventional, bour-

geois, Victorian femininity, which played out in many women's writings as an uneasy ambivalence toward imperialism and its bald expansionistic and nationalistic policies. Geographers and others sensitive to issues of spatiality have also shown how British women's whiteness aligned them with the ruling power and thus reconfigured their spatial frameworks in the colonies (see, for example, Blunt 1994; Blunt and Rose 1994; McEwan 1996; Mills 1996).

The rhetorics of women's domesticity and conventional femininity have been tied to British imperial projects by scholars across disciplines and geographical arenas (Davin 1978; Callaway 1987; Foster 1990; Mills 1991; Strobel 1991; Chaudhuri and Strobel 1992; Ware 1992; Blunt and Rose 1994; Burton 1994; McEwan 1994; McClintock 1995; Morgan 1996). Part of my project here is to examine British women's expressions of hegemonic femininity and enactments of domestic relations during their journeys to the American West, problematizing them in terms of class management, nation, and empire. Masculinist political, corporate, educational, and religious institutions produced a hegemonic version of upper- and middle-class womanhood in the late Victorian period that rested on an ideology of women as gifted with superior moral character. The idealization of motherhood in particular was tantamount to the social identity women presumably derived from their families and homes. In such hegemonic constructions of gender difference, bourgeois women were not only to be moral and innocent, but bound by duty and self-sacrifice to their families, and by extension, to society and nation. Ware (1992) and especially Davin (1978) have shown how the idealization of motherhood, in particular, came into the service of empire. McClintock (1995) demonstrates the power of the Victorian middle-class home and its domestic commodities in connecting the "cult of domesticity" to imperial race relations. Others have shown how women's domestic relations served to establish the class structure fundamental to British (inter)national identity and its "ideological clusters." Langland (1995), for instance, argues that bourgeois women performed extensive economic and political roles as household managers and employers of servants, and thus were instrumental in class management and in erecting class barriers.

Much of the recent scholarship specifically dealing with British women travelers abroad has emphasized women's participation in European

colonial and imperial exploitation of Asian and African people, land, and resources (e.g., Mills 1991, 1996; Blunt and Rose 1994). As such, it contrasts considerably with earlier scholarship on Victorian women travelers (e.g., Middleton 1965; Russell 1986) that valorized Victorian women for breaking out of repressive social norms through travel, but, in so doing, ignored their racism, classism, and sexism. Also problematical, however, is that works such as Mills (1991) and Blunt and Rose (1994) have paid little attention to emerging feminist discourses of the late nineteenth century that challenged and transgressed normative subject positions for traveling bourgeois women. Thus, needing further attention is a discussion of how British women travelers engaged with the tropes of early "first-wave" feminism and its interconnections with imperialist ideologies such as genteel-class chauvinism and worldwide expansionism.

The heterogeneous ways that colonial women's multipositionalities as white, middle- or upper-class Protestants have intersected with the rhetorics of female liberation and emerging feminism have been taken up by several authors not concerned specifically with travel writing or spatiality (see, for instance, Ware 1992; Burton 1994; Sharpe 1993). The mutual imbrication of early British feminist movements and imperial politics often found its outlet in rhetoric about saving women of the benighted nations, especially women of India (Burton 1994; Ware 1992; also see McClintock 1995). Burton argues that feminists claimed a place in empire by "enlisting empire" and its values in arguments over female emancipation, and as such, they should be counted among the "shapers of imperial rhetoric and imperial ideologies" (1994:5). British first-wave feminism, like its counterparts elsewhere, was a movement primarily focused on (white) women's suffrage, but it also engaged a number of other legislative and social reforms: improved educational and employment opportunities for women, marriage and property law reform, abolitionism, and more generally the uplift of the socially dispossessed both at home and throughout empire. As such it called for white women's inclusion in the imperial state, and in the service of a healthy imperial state. Feminists thus represented the success of their causes as bringing Britain itself to the apex of civilization, arguing that women's exclusion would threaten the superior status of Britain. As both Ware (1992:119–66) and Burton (1994:1–32) point

out, it was again women's moral authority that gave British feminists justification to speak against the "uncivilized" patriarchal practices of other countries, such as Indian *sati*.

Women travelers to the American West articulated with other British feminists in their desires to "save" their downtrodden Native American sisters. As I have written of such "representations of reform" elsewhere (Morin 1996, 1998b; Morin and Kay Guelke 1998; also see Pascoe 1990), I will not raise that subject here. What I do explore here are other resonances with female liberation in the women's texts, particularly those of self-empowerment. These women travelers were advancing into the public sphere, traveling, collecting ethnographic data, hiking and mountaineering, writing and publishing books, and so forth. The ways that such modalities of self-empowerment and self-improvement worked through the impulses of empire in the mountains is an important question, especially in the ways that such rhetoric articulated with class and national identity. Not surprisingly, the signifying practices of the Victorian bourgeoisie remain at the forefront of these narratives—writing, sketching, and embracing and taking pleasure in domestic tasks that servants normally performed at home—all helped align these women's mountain experiences with both a superior English identity and genteel femininity. And certainly mountain excursions lend themselves to an analysis of the gendering of British adventure stories and their specific relationships to empire, especially outside of the context of true British colonial settings. These women helped rewrite the terms of the Victorian adventure tale, but on their own terms; they at once asserted their genteel femininity by counterposing themselves against their more active and adventurous male partners, and at the same time reconstituted where white, British bourgeois women might feel at home in the American mountains—even to the extent of guiding the mountain guides out of dangerous situations. Such narratives of adventure, not incidentally, also articulated with a growing American tourism industry that catered to such wealthy international travelers.

This paper thus explores several ways in which the American West served these women travelers as a site for their discursive construction of conventional hegemonic femininities as well as more transgressive gendered subjectivities. In several ways, British women travelers collaborated in and reinforced the ideological work of imperialism,

and yet their expressions of self-empowerment are unlike the more familiar tropes of colonial and imperial discourses.

I begin untangling these sites of gendered subjectivity by first situating the women and their travels throughout the nineteenth-century West. My discussion of the women's narratives then proceeds with a discussion of appropriate styles of dress and other "domestic" concerns of travel, such as what the women wrote about their western accommodations. Following that, I problematize several tropes of women's mountaineering experiences, and conclude by asking whether and how anything these travelers wrote in the mountains might be construed as "liberatory politics" (after Ware 1992:163).

## The Mountainous West

The Rocky Mountains of Colorado and California's Yosemite Valley were important destinations on the itineraries of many British men and women who toured the western U.S. in the late nineteenth century. New and improved transportation and accommodations enabled unprecedented numbers of British travelers and tourists to experience for themselves these "monumental" natural wonders of the West. Tourist guidebooks on America, such as Croft's *Transcontinental Tourist Guide*, were important commercial influences on British popular opinion of these and other sites in western America. Widely available to British travelers, guidebooks provided practical and useful information about the transcontinental journey.

The main source of tourist information about western America, however, was provided by the major railroad companies. The Colorado Rockies and Yosemite Valley were among the best advertised destinations off the Union Pacific-Central Pacific Railroad's route from Chicago to San Francisco (Figure 1). The railroads not only enabled these forested mountain landscapes to become attractive destinations for wealthy tourists, but, in seeking passengers, actually promoted their use (White 1991:410–11; Milner et al. 1994:628–29). Advertisements praising the virtues and qualities of scenery and recommending preferred travel routes and points of interest were found in British newspapers and journals beginning in the 1840s and 1850s. Such promotional material was also available through the railroad land offices and private land companies (some

with offices in Britain), at depots across the West, as well as on board the trains (Davis 1975:182; Farrar-Hyde 1990:96–146).

Yosemite's reputation as a popular tourist attraction began as early as the 1850s. Congress set it aside and under the control of California with the 1864 Yosemite Act. Helped along by the completion of the transcontinental railroad, Yosemite grew into a "fashionable pleasure resort" in the 1870s and 1880s, for foreign and American visitors alike. The park finally came under federal control by 1890 (Demars 1991:10–27). After an arduous, sometimes several-day staging into the Valley from Raymond or other towns, tourist itineraries in the park followed established patterns, typically including day excursions into the Valley's principal attractions, such as Yosemite Falls, Bridal Veil Falls, Mirror Lake, and, for a panoramic view of the Valley, a trip to the top of Glacier Point (Demars 1991:35–36). Viscountess Maria Theresa Longworth, who traversed 20,000 miles of America in 1872–1873, wrote that Yosemite "has recently become quite the fashion," adding that "everyone in San Francisco says that Yosemite is 'the big thing in the world just now'" (1875:v2,58–60, her italics).<sup>4</sup>

American and British imperialisms reached a particular nexus at Yosemite during the period. As tumultuous Native American genocide and virtual enslavement proceeded apace throughout the region (Limerick 1987:256–57; Trigger and Washburn 1996:57–115; White 1991:337–40), the setting aside of wilderness areas such as Yosemite as a social space where the wealthy could distinguish themselves as arbiters of a leisure-class lifestyle likewise advanced. The creation of Yosemite Park, achieved by state and federal governments, well-spoken preservation-minded environmentalists such as John Muir, and landscape architects such as Frederick Law Olmsted among scores of other interested parties, ensured a place where the negative effects of American urbanization could be countered; Yosemite became a place of recreation and "rejuvenation" for those who had benefitted most from urban-industrial capitalism, among them eastern American bureaucrats and wealthy international travelers (Demars 1991:9–22; Milner et al. 1994:628; Cronon 1995:78).

Likewise, a particular nexus of American and British imperialism was evident in the Rocky Mountain region of Colorado. The healthful climate and myriad sporting and recreational activities made the region an especially attractive

destination for health seekers and foreign tourists (Farrar-Hyde 1990:147–90). Many transcontinental travelers took side excursions from Denver to Colorado Springs and Manitou Springs, site of one of the principal tourist attractions of the region, the 14,000-foot Pike's Peak. Colorado was also home to many wealthy British investors, titled remittance men, and retired colonels, and the large numbers of Britishers who had settled in the Rockies provided focal points for some travelers' journeys (Rose Kingsley's, for instance). In addition, extensive investment opportunities, particularly in mining, cattle ranching, and railroad development attracted British visitors (Athearn 1953:116–25; Mulvey 1983, 1990; White 1991:260–63; Rico 1998). Athearn reports that Colorado "was almost an English reserve," with one of every three ranches in Colorado in the later nineteenth-century belonging to Englishmen. "Any capitalist could then come," continues Athearn, "enjoy the delightful climate, and live comfortably" off his invested income that returned ten to 18 percent on loans (1953:118, 120). British investments helped finance capitalist ventures such as the development of the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad (Beebe and Clegg 1958; Morin 1999), which facilitated Colorado's deepening entry into the global economy. And clearly such expansion into the region depended upon drastic reductions in the Native American populations by warfare, disease, near extinction of the buffalo, and nearly complete alienation from their former lands through the reservation and then allotment process imposed by the U.S. government, discussed in depth elsewhere (see, for instance, Limerick 1987; White 1991; Milner et al. 1994; Trigger and Washburn 1996).

### Traveling Women in the West

The women travelers whose narratives I examine here all journeyed to the American West in the last three decades of the nineteenth-century, and all published travelogues<sup>5</sup> published within the same time period. The seven writers typically visited Yosemite or the Colorado Rockies as part of a larger "grand tour" of North America. They began the western portions of their journeys at Chicago, and then followed a transect across the West through Kansas City or Omaha, Denver, the Rocky Mountains, Salt Lake City, and the Sierra Nevadas, finally reaching the Pacific at San Fran-

cisco. The women's travelogues typically followed the transect of the railroad, and chronologically, east to west. A northerly or southerly leg was typically added to their journeys either when going west or returning east.<sup>6</sup>

Table 1 outlines the types of journeys undertaken by the seven women and selected biographical details about each. These women were of wealthy aristocratic or professional-class society in England, and all were published authors, however dissimilar their professional and personal motivations for travel. Some were travelers and travel writers by profession, including Isabella L. Bird (1879) and Maria Theresa Longworth (1875). Rose Kingsley (1874) and Emily Pfeiffer (1885) were known for other types of writing such as poetry, essays, and other works of nonfiction. The others, whom I have identified as "traveler-tourists," presented themselves as wives traveling with their husbands or brothers on business or for pleasure, including Theodora Guest (1895), Rose Pender (1888), and Lady Howard (1897).<sup>7</sup>

Of these books, only Isabella Bird's *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains* (1879) has received extensive scholarly attention in the English-speaking world over the last hundred years (except in my own work; see Morin 1996, 1998a, 1998b, 1999; Morin and Kay Guelke 1998). Bird's book was originally written as letters to her sister, then appeared serially as "Letters from the Rocky Mountains" in the genteel English weekly *Leisure Hour* in 1878, and flourished through eight editions by 1912 (Boorstin 1969:xviii–xix). At least three of the volumes I discuss have been reissued for today's audiences: Bird's *A Lady's Life* by the University of Oklahoma Press in 1969; Rose Pender's 1888 *A Lady's Experiences in the Wild West* in 1883 by the University of Nebraska Press in 1978; and Theresa Longworth's 1875 *Teresina in America* by Arno Press, Inc. in 1974.

These books are quite similar in both form and itinerary. The subject matter of the narratives primarily reflects the route and destinations of railroad travel ca. 1880, though they do vary considerably in topics discussed. Generally, all of the women wrote to some extent about American society and culture, scenic attractions, and hotel and train accommodations, but they concentrated more or less on an extensive range of physical and cultural landscapes. Varying amounts of attention were devoted to their experiences in the mountains of Yosemite and Colorado, ranging from several pages to several chapters to entire volumes. And while Isabella



Table 1. Women Traveler/Writers and Book Titles in This Study

Writer (Birth-Death) and Book Title (Publication Date)	Professional "Status"	Focus of Journey	Mountains Discussed	Travel Companion
Isabella L. Bird (1831–1904) <i>A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains</i> (1879)	travel writer	Rocky Mts.	Colo. Rockies	none
Lady Theodora Guest (1840–?) <i>A Round Trip in North America</i> (1895)	traveler-tourist	North America	Yosemite/Colo.	husband
Lady Howard of Glossop (1861–1909) <i>Journal of a Tour in the United States, Canada, and Mexico</i> (1897)	traveler-tourist	North America	Yosemite/Colo.	brother
Rose Kingsley (1845–?) <i>South by West, or Winter, in the Rocky Mountains and Spring in Mexico</i> (1874)	writer/church rep.	North America	Colo. Rockies	brother
Theresa Longworth (1832?–1881) <i>Teresina in America</i> (1875)	travel writer	North America	Yosemite	secretary (male)
Rose Pender (d. 1932) <i>A Lady's Experiences in the Wild West in 1883</i> (1888)	traveler-tourist	Platte Valley	Yosemite/ Colo.	husband
Emily Pfeiffer (1827–1890) <i>Flying Leaves from East and West</i> (1885)	poet	Mediterranean North America	Yosemite/Colo.	husband

Bird's (1879) and Rose Kingsley's (1874:43–151) texts focus on the Colorado Rockies, Theresa Longworth's mountain experiences were primarily in Yosemite (1875:v2, 21–24, 58–90). The rest cover travel in both locations, including Lady Guest's (1895:59–77, 119–48); Emily Pfeiffer's (1885:120–37, 205–61); Rose Pender's (1888:23–35, 53–61); and Lady Howard's (1897:28–46, 76–100). Only Isabella Bird traveled alone; Lady Howard and Rose Kingsley were accompanied by their brothers, Theresa Longworth by her male secretary, and Emily Pfeiffer, Theodora Guest, and Rose Pender by their husbands.

### Setting Out: What to Wear?

Englishwomen's attention to western train travel, accommodations, food, and clothing during their mountain journeys were important factors in the production of their texts as gendered

individuals. These travelers paid considerable attention to the closed, intimate "home-like" interiors of trains as they journeyed westward (Morin 1998a). Their focus on social life aboard the trains, quality of food, lack of privacy, and complaints about American travelers and railroad personnel were consistent with a "feminine" voice of travelers who derived much of their textual authority from discussing appropriately domestic topics, and who aligned their femininity with their aristocratic class and superior English identity. Many of the women's representations of their own clothing in mountain environs achieved a similar discursive end, associating their ladylike behaviors and mores with the English upper classes, yet at the same time contesting dominant constructions of Victorian femininity.

Guidebooks such as Lili Campbell Davidson's *Hints to Lady Travellers* (1889) served as "conduct literature" or advice manuals on proper travel etiquette and behavior for privileged

women travelers. Davidson explained how to buy a railroad ticket, what to take on a journey, and why not to take one's maid along (they are "a great nuisance"). Davidson also suggested how to pack: "with 'liberal use of tissue paper,' each gown in a tray to itself and a monogrammed wrap for each pair of shoes" (as quoted in Middleton 1965:7; also see Mills 1991:100–02). To Davidson, appropriate travel apparel was necessary for safety reasons; dresses just above the ankle (for mountaineering) would help the traveler maintain an aura of respectability necessary to ward off men's unwanted sexual advances (Mills 1991:102). This advice appears in considerable contrast to the way Isabella Bird (1879) dressed and, as Middleton (1965:7–8) has observed, the way she packed her belongings in a luggage roll on the back of her saddle while trekking through the Rocky Mountains on horseback (Figure 2).

Figure 2 illustrates Bird's self-described "thoroughly serviceable riding costume." An experienced horsewoman, she preferred to ride astride,

arguing that she adopted the trousers and divided skirt for practical reasons, to allow more freedom of movement: "I could not ride any distance in the conventional mode," she wrote (1879:10). While apparently opposing the clothing conventions of her gendered class position, ignoring the Liliuokalani Davidsons of the time, Bird simultaneously emphasized the femininity of the outfit:

For the benefit of other lady travelers, I wish to explain that my "Hawaiian riding dress" is the "American Lady's Mountain Dress," a half-fitting jacket, a skirt reaching to the ankles, and full Turkish trousers gathered into frills falling over the boots,—a thoroughly serviceable and feminine costume for mountaineering and other rough traveling (1879:10, fn.3).

When *The London Times* described her as riding in the Rockies in "male habiliments," she reportedly told her publisher John Murray "that as she had neither father nor brother to defend her reputation, she expected him personally to horse-



**Figure 2.** Isabella Bird in her "thoroughly serviceable and feminine costume for mountaineering and other rough traveling." Quoted in Bird (1879:10, fn3). Reproduced courtesy of John Murray.

whip the *Times* correspondent" (Middleton 1965:8). Bird returns often in her text to the apparent ambivalences of her mode of riding and dress. While she claimed to "submit to the restraints of civilization" by riding side-saddle to meet Colorado's Governor Hunt in Denver, she stressed her forgetfulness in failing to remove her riding dress and spurs before making social calls (1879:139–51). In the riding dress, Bird "shrank" from the public eye, and from her own reputation for skilled equestrianism, upon leaving a hotel in Estes Park, yet was "exhilarated with delightful motion" on the ride that followed (1879:74). Thus, while Bird appears to contest convention in dress and behavior for women, her ambivalence effectively sustains her close tether to more proper and conventional dress for women of her social station. And in fact, Bird more explicitly positioned herself against clothing reform in a later book about her travels in Japan, in which she claimed not to be tempted by the clothing reformers (as discussed in Mills 1991:105). Western America served as a useful location for such an ambivalent gendered subjectivity. Bird portrayed western America as "blissful" in allowing her freedom to ride in her own fashion, yet its service to her unconventionality also proved it to be a place lacking in civilization: men were unastonished at her abilities or dresswear, for instance (1879:10–11).

Several of the travelers reported that hotel personnel provided them divided skirts for mule or horseback excursions into Yosemite. The Baroness Lady Howard addressed the subject of "male habiliments" during her stay at Yosemite in 1894. While the "balloon-shaped divided skirt" that she was provided for a journey up to Glacier Point seemed "absurd," she acknowledged that it was the "universal fashion all over the west" because it was much safer for horseback riding (1897:86). Lady Theodora Guest similarly reported that the "divided . . . very much divided" skirt made her feel "ridiculous," even if it was the vogue on the city streets of San Francisco (1895:151–52, 134–35). Theresa Longworth, in her description of preparations for a two-day Yosemite excursion, took the trope further by ridiculing in detail her riding companions' "knickerbockers," and the determination of a group of unidentified fellow travelers to ride astride when they lacked the skills necessary to even mount their horses. Longworth mocked the foolish outfits and the ensuing theatrics: "Chairs, and stools,

and grooms, and high rails were all put in requisition. . . . More than one lady, in spite of all the assistance so rendered, mounted on the wrong side, . . . and found herself with her face tailwards!" (1874:v2,64–66). Guest, Howard, and Longworth all present images of the proper English lady appropriately above western, and feminist, clothing reform, yet they are willing to acknowledge its benefits. Longworth in particular, at the above scene's end, ultimately, if equivocally, "speaks for" feminist reform by recounting her traveling companions' position on the clothing issue:

I must do the ladies the justice to say that they rode astride on principle, being fully convinced that side-saddles were diabolical inventions of the tyrant man, to drag woman lop-sided through the world, and that the only reason why woman did not excel in equestrian feats was the simple one of the malicious awkwardness of her "fixings" (1874:v2,66).

Isabella Bird's and Theresa Longworth's equivocal statements about proper dress worked both with and against the hegemonic feminine ideal of genteel-class British chauvinism. To these writers, feminist challenges to appropriate dresswear were an American invention; thus travelers' alignments with such challenges also called into question Britain's role as a world leader in social reform (cf. Burton 1994). Yet while Isabella Bird may "go native" for a time in western America (see Mills 1991:98–99), she and the other travelers maintained and thus helped to reconstitute the association between more feminine styles of dress and the gentility.

## Western Fare and Domestic Class Relations

I never dreamt how really essential a piece of bread is to one's comfort before.

Rose Pender, *A Lady's Experiences in the Wild West in 1883* (1888:23).

We are all among the snowheads [in Colorado], eleven thousand feet above the level of the sea, and we have had our tea brought and laid out upon a table in our section of the car, and have laughed at our comfortable bourgeois attitude in the midst of such thrilling scenes.

Emily Pfeiffer, *Flying Leaves from East and West* (1885:137).

British women travelers to Colorado and Yosemite devoted considerable portions of their texts to detailing the quality of western hotels, inns, and other accommodations, what they ate and how it tasted, and their daily domestic routines—making toilet for special occasions, tidying up their rooms, and occasionally performing domestic tasks to which they were unaccustomed, such as washing their clothes.

All of the travelers to Yosemite commented upon the hotel accommodations throughout the region, which Demars (1991:27–54) describes in some detail. Travelers' responses were varied. Some described "excellent suppers" of venison cutlets and tea at Clerk's hotel (Pfeiffer 1885:216) and the occasional "capital" luncheon at stage stopping places (Guest 1895:122). But complaints about the deficiencies of hotels were more common. Rose Pender declared that all the hotels in the region were "bad," "dreadful," "fly-ridden places" (1888:34, 35). Emily Pfeiffer reported her "deepening disappointment" at opening the "disgusting" provisions, "this worse than Barmicide feast" supplied for a day's stage journey. The food at Bernard's hotel was "absolutely rebutting to a dainty palate," and her meal at a "vile" inn near Yosemite was "execrable" (1885:209, 246, 255). Stereotyped western violence (Limerick 1987:173) was bound to erupt over the food at the inn, as Pfeiffer's husband complained about it, and the cook, a "giant functionary," appeared, wielding a knife. Pfeiffer concludes the passage by asserting that "[t]hese things are among the chances of western travel" (1885:256).

Emily Pfeiffer further complained that lack of good service, and especially servants, were serious detractors from what might have otherwise been enjoyable western travel. At Clerk's hotel in Yosemite, she complained that she and her party:

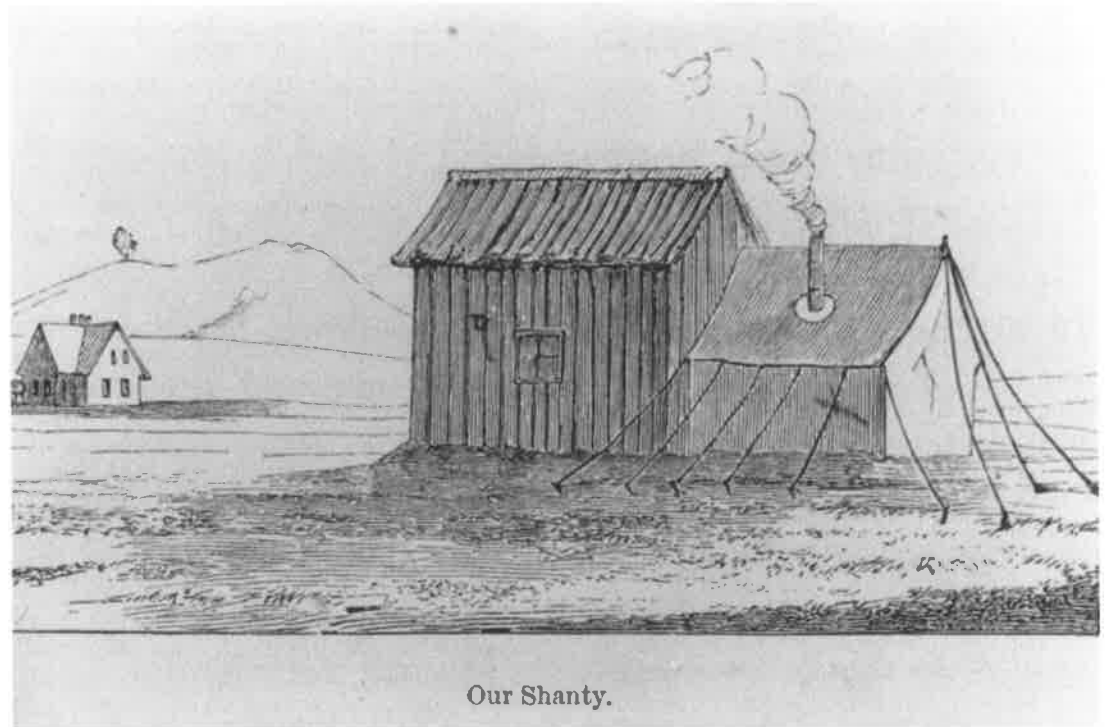
retired to the rest we had so well earned, after washing off the dust of the journey in a tedious, piecemeal cold bath, such as alone our means admitted of. For attendance is nil in America, and a tub an unknown contrivance; you and your baggage are committed to a room which is possibly very scantily supplied with the requirements of civilization, and there left, often, as in the present instance, without so much as a bell to bring aid in case of emergency (1885:216).

Pfeiffer's protestations over bad food and service clearly mark her as in need of servants to enact proper domesticity, which the apparently servantless West inhibited. While this trope was common in aristocratic British women's (and men's) travel

writing about the American West (also see Longworth 1875; Guest 1895; Athearn 1953; Allen 1987), more complicated ways in which gendered subjectivity intersected with domestic class relations can be read in the texts of women who established their own housekeeping in the mountainous West for longer periods of time, such as Rose Kingsley and Isabella Bird in Colorado, and in Wyoming and Nebraska, Rose Pender.

Kingsley, Bird, and Pender portrayed themselves as enjoying the "freedom" to perform domestic duties by themselves, often in outdoor settings. Pender describes her life in the Niobrara country of western Nebraska as she accompanied her husband in inspecting the family's cattle investments. "I hunted for wildflowers, helped Bury milk the cows, and washed all the clothes . . . in short, led the simplest and wildest lives, in the purest and most delicious air I ever breathed," she declared (1888:74; see Morin 1998a). Kingsley lived in a temporary wooden "shanty" with her brother in Colorado Springs while more permanent accommodations were being prepared for her. She depicted herself as thoroughly enjoying and taking pride in the primitive conditions and in the "fun" of improvising furniture and decorations.<sup>8</sup> The shanty, illustrated by Kingsley in Figure 3, became "quite habitable" after, for instance, her brother "found an old wooden stool, which had been used for mixing paints upon, tacked a bit of coloured calico over it, deposited upon it a tin basin, and there was an impromptu wash-hand-stand" (1874:48). Kingsley describes herself as turning into "quite a good laundress" under these conditions, and in fact she helped others, such as new English immigrants, learn about "the mysteries of soaping, boiling, rinsing, starching, and ironing" (1874:66, 117).

Early upon arrival in Colorado, Isabella Bird stayed with a family named Chalmers while trying to organize an expedition to Estes Park. Holes in the roof of the cabin, unchinked logs, the absence of tables, beds, basins, towels, windows, lamps, or candles in her room and a litany of other deficiencies of the dwelling and property proved to Bird that Mr. and Mrs. Chalmers were ignorant, inept, and inefficient, even after nine years of attempted homesteading on their 160 acres (1879:45). Chalmers frequently ridiculed the English, and Bird writes that her host trusted "to live to see the downfall of the British monarchy and the disintegration of the empire." Their lives were "moral, hard, unloving, unlovely, unrelieved, unbeautified,



**Figure 3.** Rose Kingsley enjoyed the pleasures of housekeeping in her temporary “shanty” in Colorado Springs. Her sketch appeared in *South by West or Winter in the Rocky Mountains and Spring in Mexico* (1874:49). Reproduced courtesy of Johns Hopkins University.

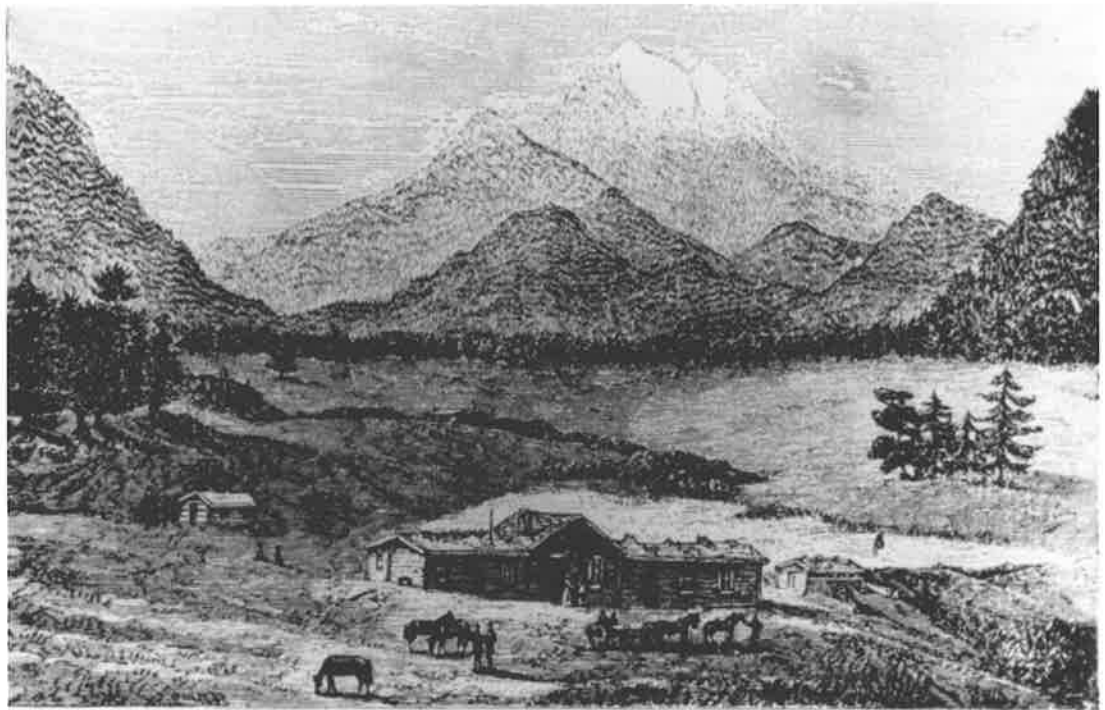
[and] grinding” (1879:46, 50). Bird’s daily routine at their place consisted of drawing water from the river, sweeping, washing garments by hand (“taking care that there [were] no witnesses” to her inexperience, however), knitting, writing, and “various odds and ends which arise when one has to do all for oneself” (1879:40–43).

Bird presents herself as equally at ease killing rattlesnakes outside the cabin or helping an emigrant who had just given birth (1879:42–43). And in fact, later in the text, while at the home of her more refined neighbors, the Hugheses, she writes of helping out by baking bread, washing dishes, and working in the fields, though preferring “field work to the scouring of greasy pans and to the wash tub, and both to either sewing or writing” (1879:69). Bird was pleased with the log cabin she finally moved into alone, which she illustrated as her “home in the Rocky Mountains” (Figure 4). She claimed that “it is quite comfortable—in the fashion I like,” and takes only “about five minutes to ‘do,’ and you could eat off the floor” (1879:73, 124).

A complex nexus of gendered subjectivities seem to be operating in these narratives. King-

sley’s and Bird’s western displacement, on one hand, appears to offer the women a sense of prideful self-sufficiency in the simple circumstances of the shanty or log cabin. Bird distances herself from the domestic realm in her narratives about killing rattlesnakes and performing hard physical labor in the fields. But rather than casting off their domestic selves altogether, to become heroic adventurers (Middleton 1965; Birkett 1989; Foster 1990), Bird and Kingsley here represent themselves as embracing the domestic tasks, which presumably their own servants normally performed at home, and becoming empowered by them. They are, for perhaps the first time in their lives, taking care of themselves. Bird declared that, “I *really* need nothing more than this log cabin offers” (1879:124, her italics). Bird’s discovery of self here, though, must be considered in light of her privileged social status, and the fact that her survival in the cabin was never in question. Kingsley especially tends to represent herself in an almost childlike role, “playing house” as it were, and both narratives start to resemble tours of the working class.

Both Kingsley and Bird represent themselves as unfamiliar with and unaccustomed to unpleasant



MY HOME IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

**Figure 4.** While elsewhere one needed servants, in the Rocky Mountains, Isabella Bird needed “nothing more than this log cabin offers.” This sketch of her home appeared in *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains* (1879:103). Reproduced courtesy of Oklahoma University Press.

domestic work. When Bird offered to wash some plates, Mrs. Chalmers replied that her hands “aint no good; never done nothing, I guess. Then to her awkward daughter: ‘This woman says she’ll wash up! Ha! ha! look at her arms and hands!’” (1879:44–45). Thus while Bird enacts domesticity, she simultaneously maintains her own version of true femininity by presenting herself ill-prepared and too delicate for work other than knitting and sewing. While she claims that her own hands are “very brown and coarse” (1879:45), it is Mrs. Chalmers who frequently appears manly and with whom Bird contrasts herself: Mrs. C. (as she refers to her) “is never idle for one minute, is severe and hard, and despises everything but work,” she reports (1879:47). Mrs. Chalmers’s unceasing work and heavy manual labor does not approximate the role of the proper bourgeois woman embedded in English Victorian patriarchal discourse: while bourgeois men were judged by their success at entering and competing in the commercial sphere, the women “proved” the success of their men by their idleness and leisure-time activities—enabled through the do-

mestic labor that servants performed—and which Bird herself carefully maintained by activities such as writing (but see Langland’s 1995 view of bourgeois women as influential household employers).

Rhetorically distanced from the manliness and hard labor of working women (McClintock 1995:101; also see Davidoff 1983), both Kingsley and Bird assert that class distinctions, and servants, do not inhere in uncivilized places like Colorado. Though, as noted, Bird submits that “I really need nothing more than this log cabin offers,” she also contends that “elsewhere one must have a house and servants” (1879:124). Kingsley similarly complains about the lack of servants in Colorado. It is a “very serious difficulty,” she submits, “one it seems almost impossible to overcome. They are simply not to be had, whatever you pay them” (1874:126–27). According to Kingsley, the only “hope” for places like Colorado was “importations of Chinese from California” (1874:127). Thus, while these travelers may represent themselves as empowered by their new-found self-sufficiency and the pleasures

that domestic works brings, the gendered subjectivity of Bird and Kingsley also does not stray too far afield from the "helpless" femininity of Emily Pfeiffer. For these writers, the mountainous dwellings of the American West provide a venue for the testing of new forms of gendered subjectivity, which rest on highlighting national differences in the employment of proper class relations. And it must be noted that both writers ignore the extent to which the class structure and labor relations of the West, particularly in regard to the domestic labor of Chicanas in the mountainous West, differed little from their "ideal" (see Deutsch 1987:33, 87-106, 127-61; Glenn 1994:409-11).

### Heroic Adventurers and Incompetent Local Guides

As British women narrate their outdoor excursions into the mountains, by foot, horse, mule, stage, or train, interesting connections can be detected among the rhetorics of emergent feminist empowerment, more hegemonic modalities of femininity, and British nationalism and imperialism. One common literary device obvious in these women's travel writing is the signifying of local guides on mountain excursions as incompetent, and the woman traveler, through the prized Victorian values of resourcefulness, perseverance, and intelligence, in some way saving herself and other travelers from indeterminate ends. This trope resonated well with the Victorian literary heroine who, as long as she retained her purity and proper manners, could be admired for her fortitude in the face of adversity (Thomson 1956; Reynolds and Humble 1993; Phillips 1997).

Rose Pender (1888) and an international party of travelers rode mules and hiked to the top of Pike's Peak during her trip to Colorado in 1883. When the party reached the snow line, Pender reported that the "guides were loud in their protests that we should not be able to get to the top, the snow was so deep," yet she and the others were determined to continue (1888:58). "Our first climb," she writes,

was very severe, and nearly stopped our breath; but after a bit we got better, and went along at a good pace, till we reached the last crown of the Peak. The snow was very deep and not hard, and often I slipped through up to my waist, struggling out as best I could (1888:58).

At this stage, their guide became exhausted, and as Pender reported, he was "no help to anyone, and at last threw himself down and declared he was done" (1888:58). Only biscuits and brandy from Pender's satchel helped revive him and several of the others, and eventually the party made it to the lookout tower at the top, but not without repeatedly sinking waist-deep into snow and suffering excruciating headaches from the 14,000-foot altitude. In describing their return to their hotel, Pender wrote that,

Great was the excitement at the little hotel to know how we had got on, and great was the surprise expressed when, after a good hot bath and fresh apparel, I took my place at the *table d'hôte* as fresh as if I had done nothing out of the way. Poor Mr. B——— suffered terribly from sun-scorching. His face and neck were severely blistered, and he was burnt a real scarlet; glycerine and rose-water gave him a little relief, but it was many days before he recovered from the effects of the sun and snow combined. The poor guide was snow-blind for some days, and the two Americans went about wearing dark glasses, and declared themselves quite knocked up. Thanks to the precaution of wearing a thick veil and neckerchief, I did not suffer in the least; indeed, I enjoyed the whole thing thoroughly, and like to shut my eyes now to recall the grand view and the marvellous colouring (1888:61).

In other words, Pender was the only one to come out of the ordeal unscathed. One might read a feminist discourse of female empowerment intersecting with Pender's nationalism in this passage. Pender succeeded in ways that the guide, her husband, and the other men did not, and she further claimed her English superiority at the expense of the Americans (one from New York and the other Brazil). Pender appears to claim mastery over the event (and view) with little effort.

When Lady Howard (1897) and Lady Guest (1895) toured the Pike's Peak area, they described experiences matching Pender's. Howard rode a cog-wheel train up to the summit, and once there, announced that, "[h]ere we alight; one or two fainting dead away, unable to bear the rarefaction of the air. Fortunately there was a doctor among the passengers who at once attended to them" (1897:34-35). She then described recommending to her fellow travelers (and readers) Peru's coca leaves for endurance against the bitter cold and rarefied air, asserting that "travellers and particularly mountain climbers would do well to provide themselves with this easily-carried and

most efficient specific" (Howard 1897:34-35). (She does not say whether she herself took some.) The aristocratic Theodora Guest, a sister of the Duke of Westminster, took a short trip to America in the spring of 1894 with her husband, another male companion, and her maid, and likewise took the train to the summit of Pike's Peak. On arrival at the top, Guest noted that she was 7,000 feet above Manitou Springs, Colorado, and 14,147 feet above the sea. She exclaimed that,

The effect of the rarefied atmosphere was such that on getting out of the train one man fainted dead away, and was only revived by his companions rubbing snow on his face. M., expecting to feel very bad also, watched all his symptoms, and considered himself giddy. H.N. looked very bad, and felt so; so did most of the fellow travellers, some twenty-four in number.

I could not discover any sensations whatever, so at once sat down on a structure of old sleepers, which lifted me out of the snow, and in a small sketch-book tried to convey a reminiscence of the most enormous landscape I ever saw in my life (1895:68).

As these women represent themselves as the only ones successfully enduring the hardships of travel, their texts point toward a particularly exaggerated version of the heroic Victorian adventure tale.

The Victorian adventure tale was a deeply gendered myth about a male hero who was courageous, strong, and persistent, in search of gold, land, or other "imperial dreams," and who, directly or indirectly, promoted British overseas investment or immigration (Phillips 1997:68-69; Kearns 1997). Given the particular educational, religious, and administrative context of masculinities in Victorian Britain, colonial work itself was often constructed as an adventure for male colonial administrators, travelers, capitalist developers, or imperial military officers. While the identity politics of colonialism often involved adventure for men, it was not as available to colonial women, who were often discursively and materially placed within the domestic sphere and whose jobs were to articulate with and maintain proper British households in the colonies (Callaway 1987; Strobel 1991; Chaudhuri and Strobel 1992).

When elite British women traveled to the American West, however, the context was quite different. British women traveled to the West as professional writers, tourists, and/or with husbands or male relatives who were involved in capitalistic ventures with American entrepre-

neurs (the obvious cases including Kingsley and Pender; Morin 1999). This requires then a much different reading of the relationships between gendered subjectivities, adventure, and empire, specifically in the ways that transgressive feminist empowerment can be read as uniquely intersecting with other modalities of British imperialism.

Isabella Bird took the trope of the incompetent (male) guide to the extreme as she described a failed attempt to reach Estes Park guided by the "useless" Mr. Chalmers. An accomplished horse-woman, Bird wrote much of her text as a heroic adventure tale, as she trail-blazed to mountaintops and other destinations despite blizzards, incompetent guides such as Chalmers, and logistical obstacles. In one section of *Letter V* titled, "Nameless Region, Rocky Mountains" (1879:53-60), Bird described her couple of days' frustration near the beginning of her stay in Colorado, following Chalmers through the St. Vrain Canyon in search of Estes Park. She complained, after immediately getting lost after lunch on the first day, that:

For four weary hours we searched hither and thither along every indentation of the ground which might be supposed to slope towards the Big Thompson River, which we knew had to be forded. Still, as the quest grew more tedious, Long's Peak stood before us as a landmark in purple glory . . . Chalmers, who had started confident, bumptious, blatant, was ever becoming more bewildered, and his wife's thin voice more piping and disconcerted, and my stumbling horse more insecure, and I more determined (as I am at this moment) that somehow or other I would reach that blue hollow, and even stand on Long's Peak where the snow was glittering. Affairs were becoming serious, and Chalmers's incompetence a source of real peril (1879:58).

They and their horses and mules eventually fell into a gulch, mistakenly having followed a bear trail. Recovering from that, and with no remaining provisions, Chalmers, his wife, and Bird camped out the night. In the morning, to her horror, all the horses had escaped, because, according to Bird, they had been improperly secured by Chalmers the night before. In resignation, Bird reported that they finally decided to return home, and dejected, wrote that "we never reached Estes Park" (1879:60). In what she represented as a "last resort," Bird demanded control of the doomed expedition:

Vainly I pointed out to him that we were going north-east when we should have gone south-west, and that we were ascending instead of descending . . . He then



confessed that he was lost, and that he could not find his way back. His wife sat down on the ground and cried bitterly. We ate some dry bread, and then I said I had had much experience in traveling, and would take the control of the party, which was agreed to, and began the long descent (1879:62).

Bird probably did have more traveling experience at this stage of her life than Chalmers, and it might also be argued that travelers had access to some resources that local people did not, such as maps, but Bird would not likely have depended upon Chalmers had she known the route to Estes Park. In the end, she compares her own (superior) knowledge of mountaineering to that of a local (man), and by stressing the failings of others (Chalmers and his wife) in comparison to her own leadership abilities and mental toughness, she guarantees her own heroine status in the narrative.

Many scholars of British women's travel writing have noted the extent to which many women travelers represented themselves as *women* undertaking particular activities, especially transgressive ones (see, for instance, Russell 1986; Birkett 1989). The trope of women's heroic adventures challenged and transgressed dominant ideologies of gender roles and relations. Privileged women, emphasizing attributes of courage, strength, and persistence, directly challenged ideologies of self-sacrificing, duty-bound Victorian mothers and wives. In that sense, they helped rewrite the terms of the Victorian adventure tale itself, and without relinquishing their femininity to do so (after Phillips 1997:103). These are strong women, yet women who apply their "feminine" knowledge and skills to their activities, such as their knowledge about proper attire and supplies needed for mountaineering (e.g., Pender's veil and neckerchief). These women's adventure tales, then, can be read as confirming hegemonic ideologies of gender roles and relations but also challenging and transgressing them, as Phillips (1997:98–110) has shown in another context.

These travelers actively created space for women outside the domestic sphere, in this case, in the mountains of Colorado, reconstituting where bourgeois women might feel "at home." As outdoor Rocky Mountain landscapes were portrayed as a plausible destination for women, one might also read their narratives as extending British influence—a particularly progressive form of women's advancement—in Colorado. These women's texts might thus be read as extending both American and British imperialisms in the

region—most important perhaps in encouraging further British tourism there (the extent of which is discussed by Ahearn 1953; Pomeroy 1957; and Rapson 1971). And Colorado was already home to many British immigrants and investors; these additional "mappings," particularly in successful and "heroic" narratives, may have reinscribed it as an appropriate place for British assistance in American empire-building, especially in mining, cattle, and railroad enterprises (White 1991:260–63).

## Women Travelers as Resistant Adventurers

The multiplicity of gendered subjectivities written into these travelers' texts cannot be overstated. In contrast to the heroic narratives of Isabella Bird and Theresa Longworth (below), women traveling with their husbands or male relatives often represented themselves as content to engage in more "feminine" pursuits or passively watch the men's mountaineering adventures. They typically represented their men as protective, keeping them out of harm's way (as in Kingsley's excerpt in the epigraph to this paper). Lady Guest, for instance, referred to the men of her party as her "protectors," whose duties safeguarding her in Yosemite included holding an umbrella over her to keep the sun off (1895:131).

Many of the women described themselves as preferring their rooms and the local environs of the hotels, and activities associated with them, to mountains and forests. Lady Howard wrote that one day in Glenwood Springs, Colorado, while her brother climbed a mountain, she sat "out in the sunny garden for the delightful luxury of a whole afternoon of quiet sketching and reading" (1897:43). Similarly, Emily Pfeiffer reported that, rather than explore the area in Yosemite, she saw her "better part in remaining among the satisfying surroundings of the Hotel Bernard, and letting the lovely environment soak into me" (1885:242). While these women were active sewing, sketching, collecting flowers, and especially writing at the hotels—all which may be considered signifying practices of the Victorian bourgeoisie—they also explicitly located themselves in their narratives as passive, and sometimes distressed, observers of men's more "dangerous" activities in the mountains. During her stay at the Cliff House hotel in Manitou Springs, Colorado, Emily Pfeiffer describes her efforts at writing in her

sitting room, yet distractedly absorbed with the whereabouts of her husband, who was making an ascent of Pike's Peak. In her account, Pfeiffer anxiously and continually watched the clouding over of the Peak from her room, noting when her husband should have reached the top (1885:123–24). A few pages on, she announced that, "By this time, half past three, E\_\_\_ should be well on his way down from the peak, which for the last hour and a half has been clear of clouds. I am going to the Iron Springs, there to sit and wait until he comes" (1885:126). As Pfeiffer took her "lonely walk" up the glen to wait with "anxious expectancy of E\_\_\_'s return," she wrote of her thoughts returning to home, especially to the birthday of a loved one (1885:126).

Pfeiffer's narrative here appears in considerable contrast to the heroic adventuring of other women who themselves took the excursion to Pike's Peak (Guest, Howard, Pender). Her account of a trip to see a waterfall near Cheyenne Canyon reaches the same rhetorical conclusion (1885:133). In these excerpts, Pfeiffer "domesticates" the Colorado wilderness by demonstrating her feminine concern for her husband and, presumably, the child left behind at home. Sara Mills (1991:94–107) argues that such "discourses of femininity" served to socialize women into domestic roles as caregivers and helpmeets who were primarily concerned with family and relationships. In that sense, Pfeiffer's text complicates the gendered subjectivities of British women in mountains. Her engagement with the scenery appears detached and primarily visual, witnessed from the confines of her room. She is most "at home" in the interior (and indoor) spaces of travel, what Mary Louise Pratt has referred to as women's "room sized empires" (1992:159–60), even if she is also "at home" very publicly traveling and writing as a member of the international elite.

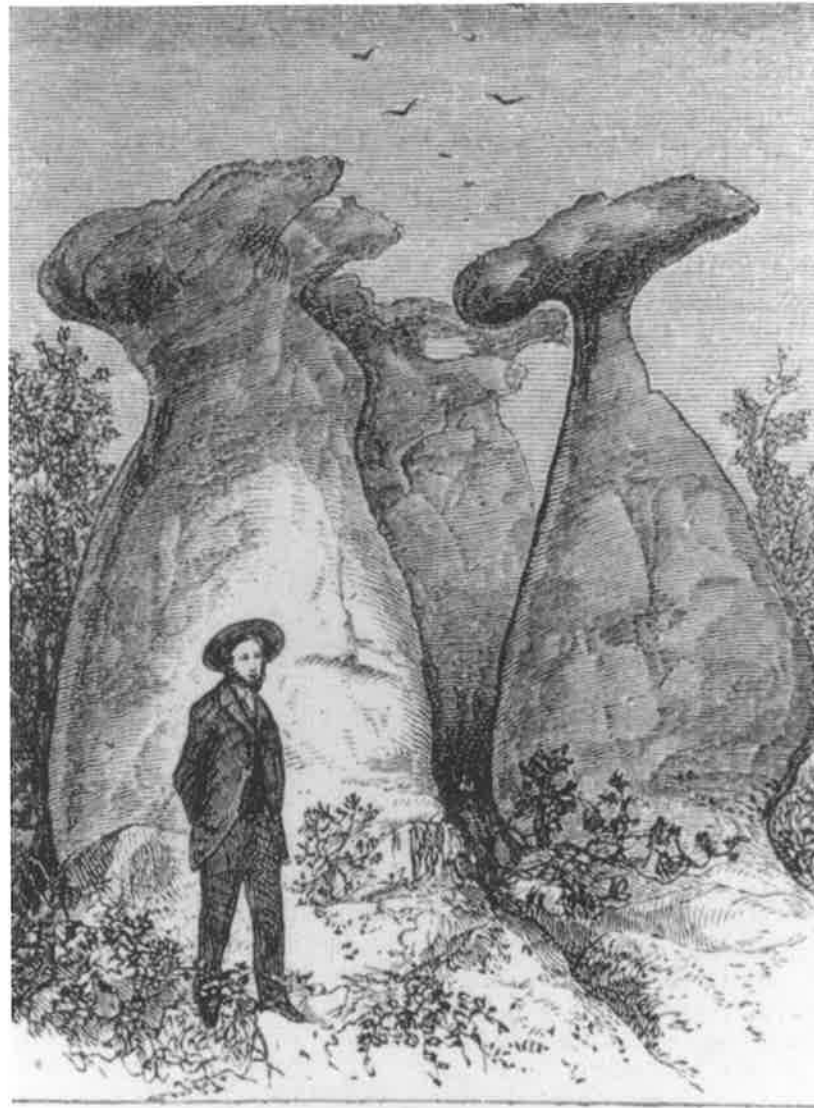
Many of the women were not quite as "resistant" adventurers as Emily Pfeiffer; they hiked in the mountains, but only with the help of men. Rose Kingsley chronicles many mountain excursions with her brother, further inscribing him in her text by drawing him standing near some rocks in Monument Park, Colorado (Figure 5). She explains how he helped her across streams and other dangerous spots on several mountain excursions (e.g., 1874:71). On one "great 'exploring expedition'" with her brother (1874:120), in search of a route from Manitou to Glen Eyrie, Colorado, a distance of about four miles, she

reported that "the sides [of the hill] were so steep that M. had to slide down to the bottom, and catch me in his arms as I came down after him" (1874:121). Also with her brother, Lady Howard took a five-mile hike through the redwood forests near Yosemite, succeeding in maneuvering along a railroad track at a "dizzying height" and a trestle bridge over a deep ravine only by holding on to her brother's umbrella and following him (1897:77, 78).

These texts suggest highly ambivalent subject positions for women travelers; they at once locate the women in the domestic environments of the hotels and rooms as well as in the outdoors (Howard 1897:43; also see the previous discussion of Kingsley 1874:46–48). These texts, moreover, suggest a particular rhetorical "duty" to their male relatives. In these excerpts, the women's resistance to adventure serves as a feminine standard against which their husband's or brother's active and adventurous male identities can be counterposed. Their articulations with motherhood, femininity, and bourgeois pastimes coincide with those discussed by Ware (1992) and Davin (1978) as conducted in the service of empire. Inscribing themselves as conventional bourgeois subjects with appropriate leisure-class interests exists alongside other, more transgressive modalities of female gendered subjectivity in the promotion of tourism, for instance. After all, expansive hotels were built to cater to such "refined" foreign clientele (Farrar-Hyde 1990:147–90, 244–95; Demars 1991). Western America serves here, then, as the scene for extending a particularly conventional, masculinist version of gendered subjectivities for both women and men, realigning British men with the spaces of adventure, and in so doing demonstrating the heterogeneity of imperial discourse.

## The Ambivalence of "Imperial" Conquest

Many of the travel writers whose texts I examine here seem to have been concerned to defy Victorian femininity by portraying themselves as strengthened by rugged western environments, as independent, adventurous women heroically "conquering" the destinations of their travels, even becoming protective of other females. And yet, they also, paradoxically perhaps, emphasized what some scholars have recognized as specifically feminine



The Monument Rocks.

**Figure 5.** Englishwomen in the West often portrayed themselves as resistant adventurers counterposed against their active male partners. Here Rose Kingsley depicts her brother near "The Monument Rocks," Colorado. *South by West or Winter in the Rocky Mountains and Spring in Mexico* (1874:90). Reproduced courtesy of Johns Hopkins University.

aspects of travel writing, (such as Mills 1991) such as in downplaying the adventurousness of their journeys, complaining about how emotionally or physically difficult they had become, and in representing themselves as passive, weak, and in need of men's help. This ambivalence is played out most significantly within the narrative trope of "conquest" of mountain peaks, which also often serves as the peak literary moments in the narratives more generally. Therefore, in this last section of the paper, I turn in some

detail to a discussion of some intersections among gendered subjectivities, imperialism, and mountain peaks.

Isabella Bird's narrative about her four-month stay in the Estes Park region of Colorado in the autumn and early winter of 1873 seems to offer, again, an opportunity for interrogating the tensions and ambivalences between women's gendered subjectivities and mountainous landscapes. Writing about Estes Park for the first time, Bird exclaimed that,

Such as it is, Estes Park is mine. It is unsurveyed, "no man's land," and mine by right of love, appropriation, and appreciation; by the seizure of its peerless sunrises and sunsets, its glorious afterglow, its blazing noons, its hurricanes sharp and furious, its wild aroras, its glories of mountain and forest, of canyon, lake, and river; and the stereotyping them all in my memory (1879:104).

One of the principal excursions Bird describes in her *A Lady's Life* is of her ascent of Long's Peak (the summit of which is along the North American continental divide), with "Rocky Mountain Jim" and two student trappers (1879:83–101).<sup>9</sup> Her description of the panoramic view from the top contains many of the markers of heroic achievement:

at last the Peak was won . . . From the summit were seen in unrivalled combination all the views which had rejoiced our eyes during the ascent. It was something at last to stand upon . . . this lonely sentinel of the Rocky Range, on one of the mightiest of the vertebrae of the backbone of the North American continent, and to see the waters start for both oceans (1879:98).

Much of Theresa Longworth's descriptions of horseback riding in Yosemite reads comparably. Longworth claimed she was the "first white woman who scaled [the] rugged fastnesses" of the Little Yosemite Valley, 6000 feet above the great Yosemite Valley (itself 4060 feet above sea level). In a peak literary moment, Longworth described going through "the necessary formula of planting my stick and throwing up my hat, which gives me a claim to several hundred acres of land" (1875:v2,81). The mood set by Longworth's narrative is not unlike the victorious moment recorded in Figure 6, which depicts women of the period atop Glacier Point, Yosemite. All the authors at some point describe their rapture and amazement over similar peak experiences. Kingsley describes "the whole panorama . . . stretched beneath us" on the top of Mount Washington in Colorado (1874:46), and Howard exclaims that the "whole panorama" at the top of Pike's Peak was "indescribably grand" (1897:35).

These excerpts seem to illustrate what Pratt (1992) argues is one of the most distinguishing features of "imperialistic" Victorian travel writing, that is, what she terms the "monarch-of-all-I-survey" trope. To Pratt, this trope described peak moments at which geographical "discoveries" were "won" for England (1992:201). In this "discourse of discovery," the imperial travel writer conquered the landscape and heroically claimed dominance and



**Figure 6.** Peak practices of Victorian women (Kitty Tatch and Katherine Hazelstine), on Overhanging Rock, Glacier Point, Yosemite. Photograph by George Fiske (ca. 1890), reproduced courtesy of the Yosemite Research Library, Yosemite National Park.

authority over it. Pratt characterizes the monarch-of-all-I-survey genre as deeply gendered masculine, whereby male explorers were able to render "momentously significant what is, especially from a narrative point of view, practically a non-event"—with the help of local guides "you pretend to conquer" what they already knew, and thus convert local knowledge into "European national and continental knowledges . . . and relations of power" (1992:201–02). Following Pratt, Mills adds that the very act of describing a panoramic scene is also mastering or colonizing it (1991:78–79; also see Kearns 1997:457–59). What is actually just a passive experience of "seeing" becomes momentous when the traveler brings the

information home, puts it on a map, and lectures to Sunday afternoon geographical society meetings.

While Pratt claims that promontory descriptions are very common in romantic and Victorian writing of all kinds, she notes that women do not spend a lot of time on promontories "nor are they entitled to" (1992:213) because the masculine heroic discourse of discovery is not readily available to women. Evidence that women often remained near hotels and places "below" does seem evident in these texts. For example, Lady Howard reported that, in Yosemite, her brother set off for the "difficult climb to the top of Eagle Peak," while she spent "the most enchanting of days wandering in the happy valley" (1897:93). Similar to Pratt's contention that Mary Kingsley more comfortably inhabited swamps than mountain peaks during her explorations of West Africa (1992:213–14), Howard remains below, viewing the beauty and glory of Yosemite "from within," in contrast to the summits above.

Nevertheless, Bird and Longworth do seem to have recreated such peak "imperial" moments—claiming mastery and ownership of Estes Park and Yosemite—for home audiences in much the same way as male travel writers did, and in a context very unlike the colonial settings of much British travel writing. With greater attention to gendered subjectivity than Pratt (1992), Mills (1991) and Alison Blunt (1994) argue that peak imperial moments do occur in women's travel writing, but because particular kinds of ambivalences inhere in them, ambivalence toward imperialism itself is produced in the narratives. Blunt's very different reading of Mary Kingsley's landscape descriptions of West Africa serve as a useful example (1994:63–67). Blunt reads Mary Kingsley's ascent of Mount Cameroon as marking her within the patriarchal and imperial tradition of exploration, but also outside of it. Because Kingsley could appreciate the value of a view obstructed by mist, her position relative to the landscape ultimately is aesthetic, not "strategic" or resting on a relationship of domination.

That women's "heroic" voices could be undermined by a feminine discourse simultaneously available to them seems evident. Bird's text turns out to be much like those of the "resistant adventurers" already discussed. She made her way to the top of Long's Peak guided by Jim Nugent and in fact roped to him, and on the way down followed him, so that his "powerful shoulders" could help steady her (1879:99). In contrast to Mr.

Chalmers, Jim is an intelligent and necessary guide to Bird's discoveries and achievements. And while her description of her ascent to the continental divide emphasized heroic achievement, on her descent of the mountain, her narrative voice became uncertain as she admitted to experiencing fear, danger, and especially fatigue and exhaustion. She wrote about *crawling* most of the way down the mountain, losing courage and strength and finally on approach of the horses, wrote that "With great difficulty and much assistance I recrossed the lava beds, was carried to the horse and lifted upon him, and when we reached the camping ground I was lifted off him, and laid on the ground wrapped up in blankets, a humiliating termination of a great exploit" (1879:100). While travelers are much less likely to be as enthusiastic on the return journey (it is inevitably more monotonous), Bird's admissions of frailty clearly do not fit within the heroic discourse of discovery or adventure.

Nevertheless, while Mills (1991) might argue that women writers had special access to the "feminine" discursive spaces of cowardice, mistakes, and defeat in the face of danger, it must be noted that men, too, described the suffering, fatigue, danger, and even death involved in exploration and adventure (Martin and James 1993; Phillips 1997). Both women and men, by accentuating the difficulties connected with their achievements, in a sense, improved upon them. Overcoming obstacles made the achievement that much more heroic, and proved how much personal credit was due them in managing the ascent or discovery. All the writers discussed here emphasized the dangers of western mountainous regions, particularly emphasizing the danger of travel itself, such as in the staging into Yosemite (Kingsley 1874:96; Pender 1888:33, 34; Guest 1895:120–24, 145; Howard 1897:32, 84). Thus, in addition to the stock requisite features of western travel narratives—evidence of dramatic feats of engineering and "exotic" animals and people (Farrar-Hyde 1990:120–30)—one might include imaginings of the West itself as a place of danger for women. Even if travelers also assured their readers that the rough trips are "also quite practicable for ladies" (e.g., Kingsley 1874:57)—because after all, to admit otherwise would be to compromise their "rationality"—their emphasis on danger shores up the women's courage, strength, and toughness in addition to creating points of interest in the narratives.

For women especially, though, mountaineering permitted a particular form of mental control over the body, while collapsing on the way down illustrated the physical demands of the ascent. This might be especially true of Isabella Bird, who traveled to escape her spinal complaints (which only seemed to surface when she was at home). This type of willed control of the body to perform exceptional deeds contrasts with a more traditionally feminine way of controlling the body, through sickness, anorexia, neurasthenia, or even wearing corsets. The medical discourses of the Victorian period, which "proved" women's weaker bodily structure and their resulting limited intellectual capacities (Vicinus 1972; Callaway 1987), feminized suffering itself, to the extent that overcoming suffering through arduous mountaineering might have had more discursive purchase for women climbers than men.

Thus I would argue that women's exaltations over achieving a grand view, such as Isabella Bird's claiming Estes Park as her "own," may be best analyzed as a mastering of the *self* rather than Estes Park. In the context of travel in the American empire, Bird's claim that "Estes Park is mine . . . by love, appropriation, and appreciation" (1879:104) more than anything else seems to mark Bird's emotional attachment to place and conquest of her own frailty. Bird frequently located herself emotionally within Rocky Mountain landscapes. She wrote about horseback riding from the St. Vrain Canyon to Longmont, Colorado, through a snowstorm:

It was simply fearful. It was twilight from the thick snow, and I faced a furious east wind loaded with fine, hard-frozen crystals, which literally made my face bleed. I could only see a very short distance anywhere; the drifts were often two feet deep . . . I had wrapped up my face, but the sharp, hard snow beat on my eyes—the only exposed part—bringing tears into them, which froze and closed up my eyelids at once. You cannot imagine what that was, I had to take off one glove to pick one eye open, for as the other, the storm beat so savagely against it that I left it frozen, and drew over it the double piece of flannel which protected my face. I could hardly keep the other open by picking the ice from it constantly with my numb fingers. . . . It was truly awful at the time (1879:233–34).

Bird's triumph over adversity seems to constitute a position of self-empowerment here, which contrasts greatly with both imperial conquest of place and the image of the "angel in the house" Victo-

rian matron. In this passage Bird emphasized her pain and suffering but most of all her own endurance. It is *her* eye that she is picking open, which again calls to mind Bird's health problems and a new-found sense of self control over her body in the mountains.

Women travelers seem to have emphasized the dangers and fatigues of travel for quite distinctive purposes. Theresa Longworth devoted several pages of her *Teresina in America* (1875) to a night spent alone in Yosemite—in a hollow tree. Intending on catching up with a group of fellow travelers on horseback, Longworth found herself caught in rain, then hail, then a blinding snowstorm. She reported that finally the snow enveloped her "like the white pall thrown over an infant corpse. I could not see my horse's head or my own hand a yard before me" (1875:v2,84). Completely lost and disoriented, Longworth detailed how she spent the night in a hollow tree, "with the horse's head close to me, so as to profit by the warmth of his nostrils." The next morning, as she attempted to maneuver out of three feet of snow, Longworth heard the sound of panting, which she thought indicated the presence of another horse. Raising her voice "in delirium," she cried out for help:

[The noise] came from the other side of a high granite crag. . . . I rounded the corner with a beating heart and exultant hope, and found myself face to face with a—grizzly bear—so near that our eyes actually met; and I shall carry the memory of his expression to my dying day. I do believe that the beast saw the agony of my soul when this horrible crisis of my fate assailed me. He never attempted to touch me. He never moved the almost pitying eyes with which he regarded me (1875:v2,89).

Longworth reported that she ran from the bear, lost consciousness, and finally was found the following day by a hunter, "frozen and insensible" (1875:v2,86–90). In this passage, Longworth's achievement is rather ambiguous. Like Bird on Long's Peak, she does not conclude her story by discovering a grand view or even by saving herself. Rather, her achievement was simply in surviving a dangerous ordeal. Her final exaltations were about surviving two days in the wilderness and overcoming the "spectre of death" (1875:v2,87). The climax of her text, then, is a scene of conquest: not conquest of a mountain peak but conquest over herself.

Englishwomen's "peak practices" in the American West, then, might be read as signifying an emotive attachment to place and/or personal

empowerment through rugged physical exercise and the overcoming of fear. The tropes of imperial conquest may be present in the texts, but they are not largely cast in the empire-building terms of "domination over" the land (or people). In fact, many of the writers describe monumental views as enabled only through crawling to "peek" over precipices, rather than viewing them from a standing position, as in Figure 6 (e.g., Longworth 1875:v2,75). It seems important, then, to acknowledge that the mountainous West provided a particular kind of relationship to the landscape for British women travelers, perhaps in some way complementary to those described by Annette Kolodny (1975, 1984).<sup>10</sup> I have not been concerned here with landscape description per se, but it seems clear that a study of gendered subjectivity appearing in "colonial discourse," through or outside of landscape description, obviously cannot proceed without close attention to geographical context.

A much different reading of the imperial tropes of adventure and empire emerges from women's travel literature about peak experiences in the American West. The West appears in these narratives as a dangerous place for women, lacking in more civilized modes of behavior and transport, tropes that are nonetheless necessary for travelers to enact transgressive modes of gendered subjectivity. "There's nothing Western folk admire so much as pluck in a woman," claimed Isabella Bird (1879:19). At the close of her book, Emily Pfeiffer comes to the same conclusion when she writes that "the assumption that a woman was not sufficient to herself would here be considered the reverse of a compliment" (1885:258). The West serves for these travelers as the site of expansive roles for women, usurping, perhaps, Britain's hegemonic role in advancing feminist causes (Burton 1994), and yet again proves its own lack of civilization in the process. The figure of the British imperialist-feminist amid the lesser "empire" emerges in the last analysis.

## Conclusion

"This is no region for tourists and women."

Isabella Bird, *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains* (1879:54).

Vron Ware, in her work on the early feminist reformer Josephine Butler, questions whether it was possible in the nineteenth-century "to be a

feminist and simultaneously to have an alternative view of popular imperialism" (1992:163). While she basically concludes it was not—British feminists did not contribute to the downfall of empire and the liberation of colonized people—there was a "glimmer of light" on the question at the turn of century, in women who connected women's status with the emerging (Indian) nationalist movement. Ware goes on to say that "it was not until the issue of women's suffrage had transformed feminism in the Mother Country that women there could really begin to take part in the political emancipation of the colonies" (1992:164).

I find Ware's comments useful for situating imperial women's travel writing within discourses of early (western) feminism, and within historical geography of the American West more generally. The authors of the texts examined here did not explicitly align themselves on either side of the debates about "first-wave" feminist reforms. (Though Theresa Longworth did positively portray the benefits of women's suffrage [1875:v2,28–29] during her visit to Wyoming, the first territory to grant women the vote in the U.S., in 1869.) While Dea Birkett (1989:197) and others assert that Victorian women travelers such as Isabella Bird were mostly concerned to present themselves as vehemently against the "new woman" image, many seemed to implicitly embrace it. Theresa Longworth refers to herself as a "subject of scandal" (1875:v2,68) for her risky and audacious activities in Yosemite. Thus, while these women did not explicitly position themselves as feminists, all of them in one sense or another created new social spaces for traveling bourgeois women, marking in personal ways the transformative effects of travel and mountaineering.

Not incidentally of course, they meanwhile inserted more conventional discourses of femininity into their texts, weaving both gendered subjectivities, through multiple individual interpretations of their class and national identities. Class privilege allowed these women access to travel, and the travel narrative in turn gave them a venue for disclosing proper lady-like behaviors in a foreign context. Ultimately the travel narrative provided a forum for them to consolidate their positions as members of the ruling classes of the world's most powerful empire. Important relationships appear here among the women's feminisms, imperialist proclivities, and class positions as they discussed proper dress for women, proper domestic relations, their heroic adventures, and

their "conquest" of their own personal physical limitations.

From the perspective of late twentieth-century feminism(s), which defines itself as concerned with multiple forms of oppression, Englishwomen such as these made good imperialists more than anything else, as many theorists of women's travel writing have been (rightly) concerned to show (Mills 1991, 1996; Blunt 1994; Blunt and Rose 1994; McEwan 1994, 1996). And yet, it seems important also to remember with Ware (1992:164) that it was only through the passage of political reforms advocated by first-wave feminism, with which these women's texts must be aligned, that a critique of empire from women within it would eventually emerge.

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### Notes

1. Isabella Bird is one of the most popularized of all British Victorian women travelers, and, with two books on the subject, she is certainly among the best known and most studied of women travelers to North America. (She also wrote *An Englishwoman in America*, 1856.) Bird was the first woman elected to the Royal Geographical Society, in 1892. She traveled and wrote widely on Japan, the Middle East, Tibet, and China. For biographical background, see Birkett (1989); Middleton (1965); Boorstin (1969); and Barr (1970).
2. Rose Kingsley was also cousin to the more famous Victorian travel writer Mary Kingsley. Rose came to North America in the autumn of 1871, unmarried and twenty-six years old, accompanying the Dean of Chester as representative of the Episcopal Church of England to a convention in Baltimore.

After the convention, Rose rode the transcontinental railway across the U.S. to Colorado Springs, Colorado, to visit her brother Maurice, who was working as secretary for the Denver & Rio Grande Railway Company. She spent four months with him there, and later traveled on to Mexico as part of a reconnaissance team for the Denver and Rio Grande (Morin 1999).

3. While I will refer to the women travelers in this study as both English and British, they were in fact Englishwomen, though Scotland became Isabella Bird's adopted homeland. The terms English and British were often used interchangeably during the period, with "British" often referring culturally to English, and thus privileging English identity over Welsh, Scots, or Irish. (See Sharpe 1993 for a further discussion.) I also use British here because it was the British empire the women travelers represented, and because the feminist movement was also primarily a British phenomenon (Burton 1994:5).
4. Brief biographical sketches are available on most of these authors in Robinson (1990), Athearn (1953), and Rapson (1971), as well as from the travelogues themselves. Longworth published the extensive two-volume set *Teresina in America* (1875), and wrote three other travel books (Rapson 1971:240; Athearn 1953:195).
5. After Pratt (1992:171) and Mills (1991:74), I distinguish the eighteenth and nineteenth century bourgeois era travelogue as an "autobiographical narrative" with a dualistic nature. Texts in this form combined events surrounding the protagonist with observational detail.
6. Lady Guest, for instance, as part of her 11,000 mile, seven-week journey throughout North America, which she chronicled in her *A Round Trip in North America* (1895), traveled on to Vancouver Island and Victoria, and then took the Northern Pacific railroad across Montana, to Yellowstone Park and the northern Plains states, before returning to the East. This transect identifies a typical journey and book structure, although two of the travelogues primarily cover only a particular region of the West rather than a transect. Pender (1888) devoted nearly her entire text to the Platte River valley of Wyoming, and Bird (1879) concentrated on the Estes Park region of Colorado. Kingsley (1874) and Lady Howard (1897) continued to Mexico.
7. Emily (Davis) Pfeiffer, listed in the *Dictionary of National Biography* as a "poetess" (Athearn 1953:198) discussed her travels throughout the Mediterranean region and America in her book, *Flying Leaves from East and West* (1885). Lady Pender, along with her husband, the Baronet Sir James Pender, director of a telegraph company, spent the spring and summer of 1881 inspecting the telegraph cable business as well as their personal investments in the cattle industry in



- America. Rose Pender wrote *A Lady's Experiences in the Wild West in 1883* (1888), a narrative framed around "a search for a round-up" on the Platte River valley in Wyoming (1888:2). Baroness Winifred Howard of Glossop traveled extensively in continental Europe, the Middle East, India, and Burma. She set out on a pleasure trip with her brother in the autumn of 1894 (Robinson 1990:115), at age thirty-three, and spent four months traveling throughout the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. In 1897, she published *Journal of a Tour in the United States, Canada, and Mexico*.
8. Kingsley also may have not complained about the arrangements so as to not offend her hosts, the owners of the railroad company whom she would later accompany on a reconnaissance mission in Mexico (Morin 1999).
  9. Much has been made of Bird's romantic associations with the "notorious" Jim Nugent. See Birkett (1989:55–58), Robinson (1990:81–82), and Barr (1970:60–99).
  10. Kolodny's often-cited work (1975, 1984) demonstrates that men gendered the American landscape as passively feminine and awaiting transformation and domination, while women writers imagined it as place of idealized domesticity and other female archetypes.
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