



Anti-Socialist, Anti-Feminist, Public Intellectual: The Social Philosophy of Correa Moylan Walsh

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Renowned in his time as a polymath and public intellectual, Correa Moylan Walsh (1862–1936) made important contributions to economics and political science as well as other disciplines. In economics, his work on index numbers became the subject of commentaries by such notables as Irving Fisher and Francis Edgeworth, while in political science and history, his treatise of the life and philosophy of John Adams is even today regarded as the classic reference on the subject. Yet one facet of his thought has received scant attention, this being his three-volume explication of his political, economic, and social philosophy, *The Climax of Civilisation, Socialism, and Feminism*. In these volumes he expressed views in some ways counter to the prevailing Progressivism of the time and so put him at odds with many of the country's mainstream intellectuals. This essay will explore Walsh's perspectives on many of the pressing issues of the time, identifying commonalities with his work and aspects of Progressive-era social thought.



Introduction

Obituaries identified him as a sociologist.¹ His death certificate listed his occupation as “Writer.” The wide range of interests of Correa Moylan Walsh make it difficult to identify him with any specific intellectual field. A true polymath, he left behind a body of work in economics, political science, philosophy, and literature that challenged much of the accepted approaches to those subjects and called forth rebuttals as well as support from some of the leading authorities in those fields. His name is for the most part associated in economics with his writings on index numbers.² His two book-length treatments, *The Measurement of General Exchange-Value* (1901) and *The Fundamental Problem in Monetary Science* (1903),³ are of special interest as they called forth sympathetic if not glowing reviews from prominent academics, including Francis Y. Edgeworth (1901), Irving Fisher (1921), Herbert J. Davenport (1903), and Leonard Darwin (1904). Edgeworth, while doubtful as to the usefulness of Walsh’s contribution in *The Measurement of General Exchange-Value*, nonetheless concluded, “The capacity of taking boundless trouble, which is a characteristic of solid talent, distinguishes the work of Mr. Walsh. Whether he searches the writings of others or elaborates his original ideas, the thorough student and close thinker is manifest on every page” (Edgeworth 1901: 404). Walsh’s “philosophy is of a very high order. So subtle dialectic, such logical precision, supplemented by a diligence of literary research that is quite unrivalled, if brought to bear on other economic problems, may be expected to merit a less chequered encomium” (416). Irving Fisher in his 1921 “The Best Form of Index Number” praised *The Measurement of General Exchange-Value* as a “monumental and memorable book,” which “showed him many years ago to be a master in this field.”⁴ While “approaching the subject from an entirely different point of view [as Fisher],” Walsh had nonetheless “reached the same conclusion” (Fisher 1921: 536). Of the latter work, Herbert J. Davenport deemed the book “important, interesting, and serviceful,” even as he “abates no measure of praise for the critical side of the work as a whole, in expressing the wish that the constructive side were equally creditable” (Davenport 1903: 143). For his part, Leonard Darwin declared that “nowhere else, as far as I am aware, has the problem here dealt with been discussed in such a searching manner” (Darwin 1904: 75).

¹ *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* (1936: 15).

² His earliest writings were focused on problems of economics. The brutal review of W. A. Shaw’s *History of Currency, 1252-1894* (Walsh 1896) and “The Steadily Appreciating Standard,” a critique of John Bates Clark’s monetary theory (Walsh 1897), both appeared in the *Quarterly Journal of Economics*.

³ Victor Cruz-e-Silva and Felipe Almeida (2022) covers the reception of these works in some detail.

⁴ Fisher actually dedicated his 1922 *The Making of Index Numbers* “To F. Y. Edgeworth and Correa Moylan Walsh, Pioneers in the Exploration of Index Numbers.”

Walsh's attention shortly thereafter turned in another direction entirely, beginning with two essays on Immanuel Kant's transcendental idealism and empirical realism (Walsh 1903b, 1904) and another on the influence of Plato on Benjamin Franklin (Walsh 1906). These digressions into philosophy were followed by the publication of *Shakespeare's Complete Sonnets: A New Arrangement with Introduction and Notes* (1908), then later with *The Doctrine of Creation* (1910), in which he concluded, weighing arguments for and against the Biblical account, "The doctrine of creation from nothing is not a revelation, and has been taken for such only by a misinterpretation consequent upon faulty translations of the opening passage of *Genesis*. It is truly a philosophical doctrine..." (Walsh 1908: 159–160).

With the publication of his 1915 *The Political Science of John Adams: A Study in the Theory of Mixed Government and the Bicameral System*, Walsh gained acclaim as a historian and political scientist of the first order. The historian Charles Beard in his review of the book opined, "The volume is so well done that one may safely call it definitive. No other student of political science will be able to add anything fundamental to Mr. Walsh's analysis and commentary, so far as the works of Adams go" (Beard 1915: 522).

Lastly, Walsh presented what he claimed to be a proof of Fermat's Last Theorem, a problem which had eluded mathematicians for centuries. Suffice it to say, he ended his "proof" in his usual self-congratulatory aplomb: "The argument must have irresistible force with those mathematicians who consider mathematics a play with counters of our own invention according to our own rules of the game. Others may have some lingering doubts about its validity, until more experience of it may convince them of its sufficiency" (Walsh 1932: 41). (An earlier proof was published in the *Annals of Mathematics* (Walsh 1927–28).)

Despite the attention given to his early works in economics and history, little has been written on Walsh's life and career and scant notice has been taken of his other writings.⁵ This is especially the case with respect to the expression of his political, economic, and social philosophy as presented in his three-volume *The Climax of Civilisation, Socialism, and Feminism* (1917). The three volumes present a cautionary tale, what Walsh described as "the disagreeable task of cautioning against two things which are presented as good, and which on account of their pretensions seem to be good," these being Socialism and Feminism (Walsh 1917a: v–vi). His aim was to disabuse the public of such social panaceas and remind them of the evils he perceived in these pernicious philosophies, leading as they would inevitably to national and racial degeneration.

This essay begins with a few brief biographical details of the life of Correa Moylan Walsh, as little is known. This is followed by an examination of the major themes of the

⁵ Brief sketches by Allan Chaffe and Robert W. Dimand (2006) and Victor Cruz-e-Silva (nd), and the listing in *Who's Who* ("Walsh, Correa Moylan"), seem to be the totality of biographical references.

three volumes so as to provide the reader with at least an indication of his philosophical perspective, written at a time in American history of great social, political, and economic upheaval.

Biographical Details

There is very little information on the life of Correa Moylan Walsh, despite his recognition as a public intellectual and given the status of those who felt the need to respond to his published writings. He was born in Newburgh, New York, on 23 September 1862, the son of Joseph Correa Walsh and Anna Wood; his father, a naval officer in the service of the Union during the Civil War, had died in South Carolina three months before his birth. Correa Walsh attended Sellech's School in Norwalk, Connecticut prior to his matriculation at Harvard in 1880,⁶ where he received his AB (Literature) in 1884 with an Honors in Ancient Languages. He later studied at Balliol College, Oxford (1888–1889)⁷ and at universities in Paris, Berlin, and Rome. From 1891 until its dissolution he was a member of the Reform Club of New York, membership of which included such eminent personalities as Felix Adler, Grover Cleveland, Irving Fisher, Ernst Freund, Henry Morgenthau, Joseph Pulitzer, and William Graham Sumner.⁸ During the period of United States involvement in the First World War, he served from November 1917 to June 1918 as a reader in the Censorship Department of the U. S. Government in New York.⁹

While never holding an academic post Walsh nonetheless was a member of a number of professional associations, including the American Economic Association, American Academy of Political and Social Science, Royal Economic Society, Royal Statistical Society, Society for Psychical Research, and the American Mathematical Society, as well as the Harvard Union Club.

Walsh lived most of his life in Bellport, Long Island. He never married. He died 10 March 1936 at the Home for Incurables (now St. Barnabas Hospital) in the Bronx, New York, and is interred at Greenwood Cemetery in Brooklyn.¹⁰

The Climax of Civilisation

The Emergence of Civilization

Walsh's intention in writing *The Climax of Civilisation* was to introduce "a new exposition of the cyclical theory in the philosophy of history. It attempts to describe

⁶ *Class of 1884 Harvard College* (1909: 208).

⁷ Matriculated 18 October 1888; W. H. Fremantle served as tutor. See *Balliol College Register* (1934: 183).

⁸ *Reform Club* (1891, 1897).

⁹ *Class of 1884 Harvard College* (1919: 113).

¹⁰ New York death certificate of Correa M. Walsh.

the course which all civilisations naturally run, and to locate our position in the cycle of our civilisation.” Initially planned as part of a single volume, entitled *Socialism and Feminism, with an Introduction on the Climax of Civilisation*, the material was deemed better presented as three independent but interconnected volumes, the first dealing with the more general issues relating to the advance, culmination, and finally disintegration of civilizations, while the latter two treating of potential threats to the survival of nations and social order (Walsh 1917a: v). This was not meant to be an objective, dispassionate representation of the social, political, and historical record, but rather was decidedly idiosyncratic. At the outset Walsh declared his philosophical and political leanings: “in things broad and well-founded he is conservative, although he desires to be progressive in matters reasonable and unobjectionable for their results.” His intention was merely “to show that not all that glitters as new is new or golden, that not all reformation is melioration, and that not all advance or progress is forward or upward” (vii).

“The purpose of civilisation is right living and happy living.” It is characterized by civility, politeness, material prosperity, and moral progress, each being a consequence of social aggregation as well as an essential condition for the continued survival of society. Civilization may then be understood as “the condition of being civil, in both the senses of living in a crowded state and of living in a refined state” (Walsh 1917a: 3–4). Furthermore, the civilized state is “organic,” capable of continuous change and adaptation (5–6). Collaboration is an essential element to the formation and continued advancement of a civilized state, but, given the nature of mankind, competition, and strife, which may lead to “involuntary cooperation,” is equally necessary. “It serves the purpose of spurring on to greater effort not only by the sentiment of emulation, because of the dislike of being surpassed, but by the actual need of exerting all one’s energies to avoid being subdued. Also it kills off those who lag too far behind, sometimes directly, generally at least indirectly” (7–8). The survivors are those who have proven their fitness; their progeny are then more fit to the challenge of advancing the civilization.¹¹ While collaboration is absolutely essential to the emergence of civilization, such would not have possible without competition – conflict, discord, strife – the more base qualities of humanity. “It is therefore somewhat consolatory to know that the contention which these qualities arouse, itself contributes to the advancement of the race” (9).

Societal improvement, in Walsh’s estimation, is “almost always” the result either of a few innovators who conceive of new methods of production or means to the satisfaction of material wants, or of some of the more unscrupulous who gain advantage

¹¹ “And as those who have it in them to strive hard are more likely to produce offspring like them, this ‘survival of the fittest’ in the ‘struggle for existence’ brings about a ‘natural selection,’ whereby the fittest parents are left over to produce the fittest children. Strife is thus the weeder-out of the weak and unfit” (Walsh 1917a: 8).

through “force or fraud.” There are those who “have risen by climbing, perhaps being boosted, and have pulled others up after them; and others [who] have risen by mounting upon the shoulders of their fellow men, pushing them, or at least keeping them, down.” Such is the origination of social and economic classes. Those who succeed rise to rule, “found families, and oppress the others either by reducing them to slavery, which is subserviency entirely for the benefit of the rulers, or by making them into subjects, in a subserviency only partly for the benefit of the rulers and partly for the benefit of the ruled, – and sometimes pretending to be wholly for their benefit” (Walsh 1917a: 9). Paradoxically, such a situation reaffirms the condition of collaboration. “Collaboration is now not of equals, working every one under his own guidance, as wise as any other, – a kind of co-operation which can succeed only when all individuals become perfectly wise; it is of unequals, in which some lead and guide and others do what they are told, and some merely transmit orders” (10).

This order is in constant flux. Walsh saw the continuous reordering of societal relation as an organic, evolutionary development. Society, civilization, is not immune to change, sometimes convulsive; it may as well be susceptible to slow decay. “For everywhere growth involves a highest point or stage, which may be occupied for a shorter or longer period, but beyond which the internal principle of growth cannot carry; after which the opposite process of disintegration sets in.” The end result may be either resurgence, in which case the cycle begins anew, or disintegration and ultimate collapse (Walsh 1917a: 10).¹² In the ascent, production is more than sufficient to the needs and demands of the people; acquisitiveness provides the impetus to the advance. At the apex, wants have expanded to the point at which all output is consumed. Soon, consumption exceeds production and civilization begins its descent (15).¹³

Virtues

In the initial position, there is an instinctive, natural, “blind impulse” for personal security and “race-preservation,” from which develops a sense of communion, initially confined to relations within the family, later extended to members of the

¹² This theory, Walsh declared, did not apply “to all humanity in the course of the world,” as the whole of humanity “does not form an organism, and so cannot run the course of an organism.” It applies only to States, as “[o]nly states are organisms, and only the civilisation of states, individually or in groups, can have the regular evolution and involution that are peculiar to living beings” (Walsh 1917a: 11).

¹³ Walsh cited Adam Smith in *The Wealth of Nations* as having identified three states, “the progressive, the stationary, and the declining” (Walsh 1917a: 12). Smith: “[I]t is in the progressive state, while the society is advancing to the further acquisition, rather than when it has acquired its full complement of riches, that the condition of the labouring poor, of the great body of the people, seems to be the happiest and the most comfortable. It is hard in the stationary, and miserable in the declining state. The progressive state is in reality the cheerful and the hearty state to all the different orders of the society. The stationary is dull; the declining, melancholy” (Smith 1791: I:viii, 99).

tribe, and eventually encompassing larger agglomerations such as cities and states. As states combine or are absorbed, conditions make it necessary “to herd together in the closest union,” as if instinctively. In due course, this order begins to disintegrate and must be reintroduced (“cultivated”); cosmopolitanism takes the place of provincialism (patriotism, in Walsh’s view), from which, as each member seeks pursuit of his own personal interests, emerges individualism. Contractual relations replace mutual trust; this causes a change in morality, as “no obligations exist save those which are voluntarily assumed in contracts.” What had been understood as obligations (duties) of citizens *toward* the state had been transformed into individual rights and liberties *against the control of* the state (Walsh 1917a: 29–30).¹⁴

The former is a morality of situation, involving official functions, or duties ..., according to one’s position in the community, different therefore in the various divisions of the people, but imposed upon all by all. The latter is a morality of sentiment, the same for all, each one doing what is right in his own eyes, and letting others enjoy the same privilege, preventing only interference, avoiding everything unpleasant. (Walsh 1917a: 30)

This change in morality has an impact on the perception of virtuous behavior. Walsh contrasted the “stern,” masculine virtues – “fortitude, temperance, wisdom, and justice” – with the “mild,” feminine virtues – patience, purity, faith, and affection,¹⁵

¹⁴ Here Walsh cited Thomas Nixon Carver, from his Presidential Address to the American Economic Association: “[T]he concentration of attention upon subsistence and enjoyment rather than upon nation-building, leads to an exaggerated insistence upon the rights of the individual, whereas the concentration of attention upon nation-building leads to a strong emphasis upon the obligations of the individual. Therefore, there are two distinct types of leadership. One type tells the people a great deal about their rights, their wrongs, and their grievances, and very little about their obligations, except their obligations to themselves. The other type tells them very little about their rights, their wrongs, and their grievances, but a great deal about their obligations. The first type is a logical product of the habit of mind which lays emphasis upon the subsistence and enjoyment of the individual; the other of the habit of mind which lays emphasis upon the importance of building a strong, durable, and expanding nation” (Carver 1917: 6; quoted in Walsh 1917a: 30n12). Walsh, however, observed that Carver “does not seem to perceive that in the advance of civilisation the second point of view, as stated by him, and which he speaks of as ‘the new point of view,’ ... is the first and the old one, and the tendency of things is for it to be replaced by the one which he describes as the first. For the nationalist point of view is most likely to be adopted by a primitive people hard pressed by its neighbours. At all events, it is necessary for it to be adopted by a people that is going to ascend in civilisation and make its way in the world. But having ascended and made its way and reached the top, a people is likely to abandon it for the particularistic point of view – of the individual thinking most of enjoyment both for himself and for others. Then division takes place, consumption outruns production, children are brought forth in less numbers, so as to inherit more, or none at all, so that no inheritance need be left; and decline sets in” (Walsh 1917a: 30–31n12).

¹⁵ Deirdre McCloskey identified only seven virtues, “the ‘pagan’ virtues appropriate to a free male citizen of Athens (Courage, Temperance, Justice, and Prudence) and the ‘Christian’ virtues appropriate to a believer in Our Lord and Savior (Faith, Hope, and Love)” (McCloskey 2006: 66–67).

the latter having displaced the former as contention and conflict gave way to peace and sympathetic feelings, a “feminisation” of morals, marking the period of decline; “the old intuitive morality has given way before a rationalising science of ethics, which, rejecting the old stand-byes as too rough, experiments with all sorts of new theories, and even with many which experience has long ago disproved.” Reason displaces custom. Concern for individual welfare displaces concern for social welfare, “the welfare of the whole society or race.”¹⁶ No longer would the individual willingly “sacrifice himself for the good of the state.” This new morality questions the very nature of competition. As wars between States had come to be seen as anachronistic, so “competition between individuals should also cease” (Walsh 1917a: 32). This establishes fertile ground for the development of Socialism, “for the new point of view in morality sets the immediate welfare of the individual before the permanent welfare of the state.” While previously “it was required of all to contribute equally hard according to their ability; now it is required by all that they should enjoy equally according to their needs” (Walsh 1917a: 31–32). “The old virtues which prepared to meet danger and enjoined public spirit, the old masculine virtues, become mixed with the feminine, which are purely private, personal, and individualistic” (77). The result may be catastrophic, rending the moral fiber of the civilization and hastening the collapse of the social order:

For patience consists in waiting for others to act; faith in others offers opportunity for imposture; chastity, carried to excess because of revulsion from the excesses in immorality of others, helps on the tendency to celibacy and childlessness; and affection, subsisting only between individuals in immediate and intimate intercourse with one another, drops all concern for the public and for the future. (Walsh 1917a: 77)

Eugenics¹⁷

Walsh was especially concerned with the falling birth rate in the United States, viewing it as “avoidance of the struggle for existence.” For natural selection to be fully efficacious,

¹⁶ In the ascent, “the masculine virtues are most needed, and attain their highest development. But in the sense of ethics, or a rationalisation of right conduct, the highest teaching is reached at the top of the cycle, where prosperity renders it easy to theorise sagely. Then, too, the feminine virtues are added to the masculine, and for a time they all hold sway together. At last, in the declining period, the masculine virtues give way first, and their loss undermines the rest.” Walsh, however, acknowledged a positive outcome: “But in this period there is more occasion for the application of the highest precepts, and this is now achieved, exceptionally at least, when, under pressure of ever-increasing hard times, people learn to help one another and to endure. It would be a poor civilisation that did not end with a better religion than it began with” (Walsh 1917a: 46). Nonetheless, it appears as though we by that point will have arrived at the end!

¹⁷ Daniel Kevles’ *In the Name of Eugenics* is perhaps the most comprehensive account of the eugenics movement (Kevles 1995). Thomas C. Leonard’s *Illiberal Reformers* (Leonard 2016) traces the eugenics movement among American Progressive economists of the early twentieth century.

large families are essential, so “that the weak may be weeded out and the strong alone survive.” Yet, as so often occurs, it is “those who are most serviceable to society that are most likely to have the fewest or no children, leaving the propagation of the race to the less fit: in fact, it is observed that the feeble-minded and the unintelligent are the most prolific” (Walsh 1917a: 80).¹⁸

At the root of this “tendency to degeneration” is a misplaced compassion, “the humanitarian spirit,” the proponents of which refuse to accept or even to acknowledge the negative consequences of their efforts. The humanitarian “refuses to punish the criminal severely, and befriends and supports the weak and incompetent, establishing charitable institutions for the purpose, while improved medicine and hygiene keep the sickly and defective in existence.” Instead, “they coddle and perseveringly preserve the infirm, the incompetent, the imbecile; and then they rely on the consequent falling death-rate to make up for the falling birth-rate...” (Walsh 1917a: 80–81).¹⁹

As the civilization continues to degenerate, the weakened state leaves it vulnerable to attack; military conflict in a decaying society may prove to be dysgenic, and may even lead to the eradication of the population as a whole. Walsh concluded from his review of the historical evidence that warfare in the period of ascendancy (in which the masculine virtues dominated) was race-improving, as “all were sent out and the strongest and hardiest came back,” while in the decline (the feminine virtues having overwhelmed the masculine), “only the strongest and bravest are admitted into the

¹⁸ Cf. Alfred Marshall and Mary Paley Marshall: “A check to the growth of population would do great harm if it affected only the more intelligent races, and particularly the more intelligent classes of these races. There does indeed appear some danger of this evil. For instance, if the lower classes of Englishmen multiply more rapidly than those which are morally and physically superior, not only will the population of England deteriorate, but also that part of the population of America and Australia which descends from Englishmen will be less intelligent than it otherwise would be. Again, if Englishmen multiply less rapidly than the Chinese, this spiritless race will overrun portions of the earth that otherwise would have been peopled by English vigour” (Marshall and Marshall 1879:31).

¹⁹ These humanitarians “fail to see that as more than a sixth of the annual death-list is of babies under one year of age, and nearly a quarter under the age of five, a falling birth-rate cannot but be attended by a falling death-rate, especially if medical and sanitary methods of saving and prolonging life are being improved and applied the while; in which case it is principally the lives of weaklings that are preserved, and the result means precisely the maintenance of the less fit” (Walsh 1917a: 81). In this Walsh appears to have acknowledged without attribution the position of W. R. Greg: “The tendencies of the age are three especially; and all three run counter to the operation of the wholesome law of ‘natural selection.’ We are learning to insist more and more on the freedom of the individual will, the right of every one to judge and act for himself. We are growing daily more foolishly and criminally lenient to every natural propensity, less and less inclined to resent, or control, or punish its indulgence. We absolutely refuse to let the poor, the incapable, or the diseased die; we enable or allow them, if we do not actually encourage them, to propagate their incapacity, poverty, and constitutional disorders. And, lastly, democracy is every year advancing in power, and claiming the supreme right to govern and to guide:– and democracy means the management and control of social arrangements by the least educated classes, – by those least trained to foresee or measure consequences, – least acquainted with the fearfully rigid laws of hereditary transmission, – least habituated to repress desires, or to forego immediate enjoyment for future and remote good” (Greg 1868: 362).

armies, and these are destroyed,” leaving the weak and less fit to continue the race (Walsh 1917a: 81–82). War he saw not as a moral evil, which only succeeds in “retarding progress in civilisation,” but rather the opposite, as a means by which such decay may be delayed; war “retard[s] progress in decay: it is a moral purgative” (141).²⁰

If the prevention of over-population be left to natural death, especially if this be artificially delayed, the increase must be checked at its source, at birth; and this means an interference with nature’s way of selecting the fittest. Eugenics will give little aid, if those who practise it have but one or two children. Female athletics will do no good, if athletic females be mostly barren. In our modern militarism, however, care needs to be taken not to draft into the army only the ablebodied. Even to weak men, in an army as in society, may work be assigned suitable to their capacities. Conscription should cover all who can be fathers, and if under the hardships the unsound perish, the world can get along without them. (Walsh 1917a: 141)

As for those rejected as unfit for military duty due to “some inherited and transmissible deficiency (and not a mere acquired incapacity),” Walsh proposed they

should be segregated or sterilised. No one, unfit himself to be a soldier, and incapable of begetting a soldier, should be permitted to be a father, at a time when those who are fit to be soldiers and fathers are exposed to being cut off. But we may already be too humanitarian (or too degenerate, which amounts to almost the same thing) to adopt such a harsh system, with all the pain it might entail on individuals. (Walsh 1917a: 141n.3)

²⁰ Cf. the position of David Starr Jordan, then Chancellor of Stanford University: “We may close our eyes to history and refuse to listen to its teachings, but the fact is and always has been that war deprives a nation of the most fitted to maintain its existence, and a succession of wars ruins the stamina of a nation, no matter by what sophistry we may disguise the fact or explain the consequence” (Jordan 1915: 48). Also sociologist Edward Alsworth Ross: “The Great War has caused a vast destruction of the sounder portion of the belligerent peoples and it is certain that in the next generation the progeny of their weaker members will constitute a much larger proportion of the whole than would have been the case if the War had not occurred. Owing to this immeasurable calamity that has befallen the white race, the question of eugenics has ceased to be merely academic. It looms large whenever we consider the means of avoiding a stagnation or even decline of our civilization in consequence of the losses the War has inflicted upon the more valuable stocks” (Ross 1918: xi). Finally, the opinion of evolutionary biologist Vernon L. Kellogg: “They who point to the advantage of military selection as certain to issue from the selective struggle between the opposing armies and from the selective results of the varying endurance and resistance to exposure, disease and wounds, of the individuals in each army, do not sufficiently consider the fact that the whole of each army consists of a group of individuals not chosen at random from the population and representing both sexes, all ages, and weak and strong alike, and is already, by the very conditions of its organization, a part of the population selected first for sex and then for ripe youth, full stature and strength, and freedom from infirmity and disease. So that practically every individual lost from an army means the loss of a man of better physical condition than that possessed by some other one man left behind in the civil population” (Kellogg 1913: 101).

Walsh quoted Francis Galton approvingly regarding his theory of racial decay as presented in *Hereditary Genius*: “‘The wisest policy,’ he concluded, ‘is that which results in retarding the average age of marriage among the weak, and in hastening it among the vigorous classes; whereas, most unhappily for us, the influence of numerous social agencies has been strongly and banefully exerted in the precisely opposite direction’” (Walsh 1917a: 83; quoting Galton 1869: 352–353). Walsh alluded to the followers of Galton, specifically the eugenicist Caleb Williams Saleeby,²¹ as insisting that the situation at the time portended a “reversal of natural selection,” and so the current state of affairs “must itself be reversed” (84–85). To the acolytes of Galton,

[t]he unfit whose unfitness is hereditary and transmissible must be taken care of, indeed, charitably, by society; but society must see to it that they do not breed further, – the return for state aid must be renunciation of parenthood (not necessarily, by abstinence, say those who incline to Neo-Malthusianism, but by preventive measures, and if necessary by sterilisation). Also those of the unfit who are provided for by their own families, or who inherit fortunes, as well as those who live precariously or predatorily, must be impressed by public opinion, or checked by positive regulation, likewise to avoid propagating their incapacity. There must be no killing of the weak, which is nature’s way of selecting; but there must be prevention of their propagation. Some would go so far as to recommend state aid and encouragement for the continuation of the species by those who are fit. Society, if not government itself, must show some concern about marriages. For all this the study of heredity must be prosecuted, much assistance having already come from the labours of Mendel. (Walsh 1917a: 85)

Walsh’s chronicle of the historical development of civilization demonstrates a belief in the reversal of natural selection hypothesis. In the initial state, there is a need for large families, as they are seen as “useful members of the family, of little initial expense, ... yielding a return and ultimately an indispensable prop.” Yet, while the upper-class families tend to be “fair-sized,” the lower classes “are prolific like animals.” Beyond the need for support, Walsh added another motive for the production of large families: given “the dearth of other kinds of amusement ... the pleasure of intercourse between the sexes holds a prominent place among the sources of happiness,” and so “more

²¹ “Directly the conditions become too easy, selection ceases, and it is as successful to be incompetent or lazy or vicious as to be worthy. The hard conditions that kept weeding out the unworthy are now relaxed and the fine race they made goes back again. Finally there occurs the phenomenon of *reversed selection*, when it is fitter to be bad than good, cowardly than brave – as when religious persecution murders all who are true to themselves and spares hypocrites and apostates: or when healthy children are killed in factories whilst feeble-minded children or deaf-mutes are carefully tended until maturity and then sent into the world to reproduce their maladies” (Saleeby 1909: 306; quoted in Walsh 1917a: 84n14).

children are born than are needed, and the defective and superfluous are allowed to perish” (Walsh 1917a: 24–25). Population soon overtakes the means to its subsistence, increasing the need for territorial expansion, which leads to conflict with neighboring states. “Thus during this period, there is overproduction of population, destruction of the unfit, and survival of the fittest, giving full play to natural selection both between individuals within each community or race and between communities or races” (25). With the advance of civilization, as evidenced by the emergence of cities and states, the strain brought about by population increase is lessened. As the state now acts as guarantor of property and personal liberties, women become more independent, as are men of women, marriage becomes less desirable, and children are seen more as a burden than a necessity.²² As civilization advances, there are increasing demands for luxuries, which “weakens the constitution and not only makes people more sensitive to pain but also less able and willing to undergo it.” Even such “refinements” as an obsession with personal hygiene Walsh viewed with alarm, as it may reduce the ability of the body to ward off infectious diseases, leading to “debilitation” which “lessens the strength to bear the burden of a family” (27–28).

This decline appears first in the upper classes of society, those who can best afford the luxury of smaller families. So long as the lower classes continue to procreate while the upper and middle classes practice restraint, social and economic inequalities will persist and become exacerbated. However, as the state continues to provide such remedies as social insurance and old age pensions, even the lower classes come to believe that the rearing of children is more a burden than an obligation or a necessity. At this juncture, Walsh’s “highest point of a civilisation,” natural selection ceases to act as a check, and efforts are made even to tend to the survival of the unfit. The result is the reversal of natural selection, “for the fit are exposed to hardships and to early death, or they shun the responsibility of giving birth, while the unfit are spared and indulge in irresponsible procreation.” Civilization begins to decay, as the quality and quantity of the population are affected, “which goes on till the decay of the civilisation lets in outsiders who have not been subject to these influences, and a new period of insecurity and turbulence brings back the former relation between the sexes and between parents and children” (Walsh 1917a: 28).

Yet Walsh expressed disagreement with those eugenicists who held that the decay of civilization is *solely* the result of the reversal of natural selection. History provides ample evidence that “traditional civilisation does run on, through its own momentum, even

²² “Children are by consequence not needed as a future support. Instead, they become a drag, requiring a much longer education, and among the rich often calling for support all through the lifetime of the parents. In fact, children become little more than an *agrément* of life, a luxury, so to speak, yet in rivalry with other luxuries, from which they detract” (Walsh 1917a: 27).

after the people are decayed.” On the other hand, when a civilization has succumbed to institutional decay, “even a revival of a good breed might not be sufficient to restore it to health.” It would be for the “new superior race” to possess not merely the knowledge of what should be done but more importantly the will to undertake the measures necessary. In the end, “no one can doubt but that eugenics will be a powerful aid to prevent further decay, if we still have the wisdom and the will-power to apply it. If we do not, and if it be as Utopian as Darwin believed it, perhaps a future cycle will be able to do what we cannot” (Walsh 1917a: 85–86).²³

Symptoms of Social Decay and Societal Retardation

Although Walsh believed that the advanced societies had “already entered the culminating period of our western, white men’s cycle of civilisation,” surprisingly they had “not yet reached the period of decline.” There were many reasons for this expression of cautious optimism. To mention but a few: the sciences and the arts were still in ascendance, the military had not yet been reduced to a mere defensive force, money had not yet “become our only god,” monopolies had not yet begun to dominate American business and society, the middle class had not yet disappeared, the poor had not yet begun to demand a share in the wealth of the rich, women had not yet been “wholly emancipated and held up to economic and political equality with men,” men had not yet become “wholly sunk to such equality with women,” science had not yet become a victim of the “plutocracy, which already owns the law, the clergy, the army, and the press” (Walsh 1917a: 123).

Still, there was much about which one need have been concerned. A long period of peace had led to complacency, its “evils” being “insidious, slow-working, and long lasting.” The gold standard had become a “fetich,” placing it “in the power of financiers to produce fluctuations while waiting for the inseting appreciation that is sure to come.” The public debt had come to be seen by business men as “a convenient fund for investing their idle capital,” without due concern that the interest on the debt would result in increasing levels of taxation. Immigrant labor had begun to displace American workers. Gun control legislation “would make women of men by disarming them.” Soldiers, while well-paid, nonetheless “demand all sorts of dainties, and the same are demanded for them” (Walsh 1917a: 124–125).²⁴ The social fabric was beginning to unravel; the era of American exceptionalism was rapidly coming to a close. Worse yet,

²³ “It may be said, in a general way, that one of the important means for keeping down population (with some tendency to weeding) in antiquity was infanticide; in modern times a corresponding means is abortion; and in the future it may be contraception. But abortion does little weeding; and contraception of itself will not do any, but rather the opposite, unless wisdom guide it” (Walsh 1917a: 86n19).

²⁴ To the last point, “In our late tiny war with Spain it was thought by some a great hardship if they did not have hot coffee every day for breakfast; while the English officers, in their war with the Boers, at least at the beginning, considered indispensable their morning tub; from which, however, it is to be hoped, the present war has weaned them” (Walsh 1917a: 125).

the moral character of the nation was rapidly becoming imperiled, as virtuousness and morality were increasingly seen as *passé*:²⁵

Our morality is sentimental, having to do with present feelings, cherishing sympathy, but caring little for consequences or for justice. Everywhere is relaxation of discipline, of punishment, even of permission that the natural bad consequences of wrong commission and careless omission should fall upon the doers or non-doers. Humanitarianism is showing signs of becoming maudlin. New religions are invading us from the East, or are being invented around us every day. Labour is decreasing; amusement is increasing; and the number of legal holidays has begun to grow. (Walsh 1917a: 125–126)

Walsh identified, alongside the “two actual accomplishments of democracy and humanitarianism,” the appearance of two potential evils: Socialism and Feminism. Socialism he perceived as being an outgrowth of the very success (and more so the excesses) of Capitalism. With the advent of increased productivity of both capital and labor, workers had been able to gain shorter working hours and greater leisure time. These advances were often the result of industrial combinations, monopolies and trusts, as well as more powerful labor associations, leading to the perception “that competition is an evil and a thing of the past.” While the employers, the owners of capital, “lie low and do not formulate their plans,” the workers, seeking to dominate, offer assurances “that all shall be admitted to their ranks, that is, all may become labourers, all owners of the means of production with which they labour” (Walsh 1917a: 130–131). This Walsh perceived as one of the evils destined to lead to the decay of civilization:

It flatters by a picture of future peace and happiness in a millennium and more of plenty, bountiful nature continuing to supply mankind in return for less and less labour with all the good things of life, so that strife for them will no longer be necessary, and with the triumph of man over nature the struggle of man with man will cease, and mankind will live in a Christ-like brotherhood [sic] and become perfect on earth without waiting for translation to heaven. (Walsh 1917a: 131)

²⁵ Walsh offered as evidence the policies of the French municipal Socialists: “Socialists, when elected to office, have at Roubaix, in France, distributed bread freely to the poor, and at Lille they have given to working people free tickets to the municipal theatre. Is this the beginning again of ‘panem et circenses’? And even without thinking ourselves socialists, we Americans, in many of our cities, give free breakfasts to our public-school children” (Walsh 1917a: 126n3). Consider also the following from the *International Socialist Review*: “Before the Socialists obtained the municipal powers, the children bought their supplies, and if they could not buy them used such as they could borrow from their more fortunate playmates. The Socialists changed this state of things. Everywhere they give free text-books, free copy-books, free materials. Marsillargues, La Crotat, Cette, Avion, Auchel, Vieur, Conde, Marseilles, Fourmies, Wignehier, Lille, Roubaix, Croix, in a word, all the towns held by our party distribute school supplies free” (Verecque 1901: 173).

Feminism, the second of the two evils, is also the result of advances in the Capitalist production process, as such “has permitted women and even children to be employed in tending the lighter movements of machines and performing the more delicate operations of manufacturing, opening new opportunities of self support to spinsters and orphans and even of extra gain to those who are already provided for” (Walsh 1917a: 130–131). The impact on society he held had already become manifest, as it

is already beginning to have the effect of taking women out of the homes, putting them in rivalry with men, and breaking down that mutual dependence of men and women on each other and that dependence of children on their parents which are the basis of marriage; while the diminution and even the destruction of the old household employments by the new manufacturing industries is bringing idleness into the well-to-do homes where the women have remained, and thereby tends to drive these women out in pursuit of amusement and distraction, which, indeed, are being more and more provided for them. The eventual result may be the placing of all women outside the home alongside of men both in work and in play, with the consequence that women will hardly have more time than men have for the care of children, who, in the well-to-do classes, and in the lower also if the children be kept from employment, will become a nuisance. (Walsh 1917a: 131–132)

Walsh feared “an aspiration after equality of the sexes in all things, and a demand that every one, man or woman, shall be recognised only as an individual, as ‘a human’.” As a result, “in the present industrial conditions, so long as they last, women are to be admitted into rivalry and competition with men, and in the coming régime of socialism into complete coadjuvancy, copartnership, and companionship” (Walsh 1917a: 132).

The society of the future is to be one free of contention, the cause, declare the reformers, of the present state of inequality. It will usher in “an era of peace and good will, in which nothing shall be permitted to be gained by fraud, and force shall no longer be employed, but over all justice shall reign, which gives to every one his due.” As it will be accepted on faith that “no one is responsible for the virtues or defects with which nature endows him,” the only distinguishing attribute will be one’s intellect or level of intelligence, “in which, it is claimed, women are by nature equal to men,” and so “will have as much to say about the management of the world as men, and weak men as much as strong men” (Walsh 1917a: 132). This fantasy will only succeed in hastening the decay of civilization, as

[t]hose countries where the moral decay shall have gone deepest, where the proved stock shall have died out and given way to poor stock, where the greatest effeminisation of men shall have taken place (for the masculinisation of women will be no compensation), where the strong and the wise and the shrewd shall gain no more of

wealth, power, and influence than the weak, silly, and incompetent, all being equal, – those will go to the wall. And when this fate shall have overtaken most of our western white men’s countries, our cycle of civilisation will be completed. (Walsh 1917a: 136)

With such an understanding of the impending “retardation” of civilization brought about by the emergence of these twin “evils,” Walsh’s recommendation was that each be shunned: Socialism, “the great equalisation of all,” and Feminism, “the equalisation at least of women with men, a particular form of which, and an entering wedge for the rest, is female suffrage” (Walsh 1917a: 142). Again, he addressed the societal repercussions should we refuse to understand the coming threat to civilization and the continuance of the race:²⁶

Socialism is a general and all-embracing system that seeks to level out natural distinctions, denounced as artificial, by pulling down the high and raising the low without regard to merit any more than to chance, and it includes the so-called emancipation of women, or the putting of them on the same plane with men. Both it and feminism, which is contained within it, would give equal support and equal control to weak men as to strong men, and to women as to men. They would take away from men their principal incentive to labour, and they would break down marriage and the family, substituting a friendly collaboration and partnership, leaving little room for children, and enhancing the tendency to race-suicide. (Walsh 1917a: 142)

Walsh saw as his “humble task” that of enlightening the people as to the disruptive effects of these “deceptive schemes,” a mission critical to the preservation of civilization itself (Walsh 1917a: 144).

Socialism

Conditions necessary for Socialism to flourish

Walsh firmly believed that the political and social conditions of a nation determined the prospects for the establishment of a Socialist order. For Socialism to have a chance of realization, there must exist in the society a period of peace and prosperity, as it is only

²⁶ The term “race-suicide,” which Walsh employed here and in the volume on *Feminism*, is from Edward Alsworth Ross’ 1901 essay, “The Causes of Race Superiority.” “The higher race quietly and unobtrusively eliminates itself rather than endure individually the bitter competition it has failed to ward off from itself by collective action. The working classes gradually delay marriage and restrict the size of the family as the opportunities hitherto reserved for their children are eagerly snapped up by the numerous progeny of the foreigner. The prudent, self-respecting natives first cease to expand, and then, as the struggle for existence grows sterner and the outlook for their children darker, they fail even to recruit their own numbers” (Ross 1901: 88). Then-President Theodore Roosevelt used the term in a “Prefatory Letter” dated October 18, 1902, appended to *The Woman Who Toils* (Van Vorst and Van Vorst 1903: vii).

then that the people will be receptive of the Socialists demands for complete economic and political equality:

Socialism, so far as it has any pretension to be put into practise, is an outcome of peace and plenty. As a mere aspiration after equality, it may appear at any time, and perhaps most longingly in the midst of strife. But it is only in the piping times of peace that anybody can seriously entertain a hope of its realisation. (Walsh 1917b: 3)

Conflict and discord disrupt the social order and alter relations among the citizenry; conditions are such that demands for equality are thwarted by institutions that promote and perpetuate artificial class distinctions, “distinctions of rank” and privilege. In times of peace, such distinctions are less likely to be tolerated. In periods of plenty, the people appear content with the status quo, understanding that the conditions they perceive of peace and prosperity have been brought about as a result of the existing institutional arrangements, but may well become sympathetic to the promises of the Socialists to *maintain* the peace while advancing social equality and an ever-more just society; otherwise, despite the *appearance* of tranquility, “there is temptation to fault-finding, quarrelsomeness, and discord,” again disturbing the harmonious social order (Walsh 1917b: 3).

From the historical record, Walsh inferred that early attempts at establishing Socialism occurred among the upper classes in Greece (“idealised by Plato”) and among the middle classes in Imperial Rome. Each failed in the end, suggesting, according to Walsh, “that the lower classes will be still less capable of doing it” (Walsh 1917b: 3). He identified four distinct periods in the history of modern Socialism, the first beginning with Thomas More’s novel *Utopia* (1516) and culminating in the Anabaptist Communism movement led by Thomas Müntzer in Germany (chronicled by Friedrich Engels in *The Peasant War in Germany*, 1850); the second, associated with Étienne-Gabriel Morelly’s *Code de la Nature, ou le Véritable Esprit de ses Lois* (1755) and culminating in the failed coup led by François-Noël Babeuf in France (1796); the third, associated with the writings of Robert Owen (*A New View of Society*, 1813), Étienne Cabet (*Voyage en Icarie*, 1839), and Charles Fourier (primarily *La Fausse Industrie Morcelée, Répugnante, Mensongère, et L’Antidote, L’Industrie Naturelle, Combinée, Attrayante, Vérdique, donnant quadruple produit*, 1835), “philanthropists of the upper classes,” culminating in the failure of the Paris Commune (1848); and the fourth, a movement among the working class in Germany under the nationalist Ferdinand Lassalle and the internationalist Karl Marx, the latter “faction” having “ultimately triumphed” (Walsh 1917b: 4).

Yet the Socialism of Walsh’s time, he concluded, “is a revulsion from plutocracy, and a threatened uprising of the lower classes.” In Europe, prior to the events of 1789, the lower class was for all intents and purposes ignored, the middle class being

regarded as the “third estate” or bourgeoisie (the first being the clergy, the second the nobility). With the end of the Revolution in France, the lower class, the proletariat (“the manufacturing laborers”) or the fourth estate²⁷ demanded a share of political power, while in the United States they had in the early decades of the nineteenth century already achieved a modicum of power (in the latter part of the century in Europe, as the political situation remained one of conflict and social convulsion), becoming a political force as the middle class rose to positions of wealth and power and strove to enlarge their positions through corruption (Walsh 1917b: 5–6).

Against the abusive oppression of wealth everywhere, or of capitalism mistaken for the essential factor, socialism is the system which the lower classes and their advocates, organised into a party which fosters the “class-consciousness” of the newly adolescent fourth estate, would by revolution or otherwise substitute for the present system which permits the evil of oppression. Instead of correction, reconstruction is proposed. (Walsh 1917b: 6)

Revolutions, in Walsh’s judgment, are the result of class conflict and the means by which civilizations advance. “In all revolutions a class below seeks liberation from the domination, become oppressive, of a class above, and equality with that class, whose eminence it disputes” (Walsh 1917b: 6). Equality and independence result when the lower classes achieve their emancipation and are able to participate as equals in the political process. Yet such a state is likely to be short-lived, as “economic liberation and economic equalisation” soon emerge as more compelling demands than political equality; the “natural differences and subordinations” that had been accepted for the sake of social order are viewed as “incompatible with personal liberty,” which itself “has not brought much appreciable enjoyment to the lower classes.” They become “fanatics of equality,” social reformers, seeing themselves at odds with those of the middle class “who desire freedom from interference by the upper classes, and do not care for equality with themselves of the lower classes.” The demands of these reformers are consistent with “democracy proper,” the rule of the people, “and because it affects society as well as government, it has received the name of ‘socialism’,” or, as the term Socialism is itself “utterly vague,” perhaps more correctly “‘social democracy’,”²⁸ or

²⁷ Walsh cited Rudolf Meyer, *Die Emancipationskampf des vierten Standes*, for this designation. Today, the fourth estate is the name given the press.

²⁸ Social democracy as advanced by Eduard Bernstein was focused on gradual, evolutionary change, “directed towards creating circumstances and conditions which shall render possible and secure a transition (free from convulsive outbursts) of the modern social order into a higher one. From the consciousness of being the pioneers of a higher civilisation, its adherents are ever creating fresh inspiration and zeal. In this rests also, finally, the moral justification of the socialist expropriation towards which they desire” (Bernstein 1909: 146). Social democracy is more gradual than democratic socialism, with the former accepting reform of capitalism on the road to socialism, while the latter advocates a wholesale transformation.

“‘democratic socialism’,” so as not to be confused with “‘purely political democracy’” (7). Furthermore, this revolt, such as it is, will be the last, as it “will leave no one out, but will be for the benefit of all”; while the laboring class will be in control, as everyone will be a laborer, women as well as men, “all are to be in control” (8). Therefore, what we will witness is “the final fight for the complete liberation and equalisation of all mankind by the abolition of all classes” (9).²⁹

This Walsh declared to be a glimpse of the future evolution of society as perceived by the Socialists reformers. But they were deluding themselves, living in a fantasy. “The promises about this termination of history remind us too forcibly of the old-fashioned ending of nursery tales, which told that the hero and the heroine lived in happiness forever afterward; wherefore no details were called for, because such a continuation arouses no interest” (Walsh 1917b: 10). Even were the Socialist plan to be enacted, in the cycle of civilization it “brings with it only the germs of dissolution.” The Socialists ignore the possibility of still further conflict, as they cannot foresee “new classes forming within the homogeneous mass to which they would reduce all people, the leaven of natural distinctions therein fermenting and starting again the course toward heterogeneity by raising some above the common level, who will find allies in those who have fallen below it; after which may take place another series of revolutions” (11).³⁰

Another flaw is the belief that those of the lower classes will somehow advance so as to achieve equality with the upper classes. Yet all that may be achieved by a redistribution of wealth, “equal distribution of products,” would be “to reduce all levels to one level, which is at the general average.” As the members of the lower classes vastly outnumber those of the upper classes – the poor are greater in number than the rich – it will be the upper classes that are reduced to the level of the lower; “the raising of the many ‘plain people’ might be hardly appreciable, while the destruction of the few eminences and summits would leave a glaring void,” resulting in “a blow to civilisation itself”. (Walsh 1917b: 12)

²⁹ Walsh cited Morris Hillquit: “Behind the socialist theory of the existing class struggle lies the conception of a classless, harmonious society; behind the conception of the international solidarity of the working class lies the ideal of the world-wide solidarity of the human race” (Hillquit 1909: 63; cited in Walsh 1917b: 8n12). Also Karl Pearson: “We have now reached what I conceive to be the fundamental axiom of Socialism. *Society must be organized on the basis of labour*, and therefore political power, the power of organizing, must be in the hands of labour” (Pearson 1888: 355; emphasis in original. Cited in Walsh 1917b: 8n13).

³⁰ Should any nation attempt to pursue the Socialist road alone, the result will be even more disastrous: “If ever socialism is to be attempted, it should be when the power of defence is superior to the power of attack, and not when, as now, the power of attack is immensely greater. The nation which first accepts socialism and introduces equality among its citizens, will be at a disadvantage in maintaining a disciplined army, with its gradation of ranks, and if it really fulfils the expectations of its reorganisers, its wealth and its weakness would but expose it all the more to attack from the un-socialised and evil-minded nations by which it is surrounded. Wars can never be stopped by one set of men incapacitating themselves from fighting; and peace will not be on earth till the whole world be moralised; which may take ages yet to achieve” (Walsh 1917b: 11).

In the end, Socialism manifests as “a germination of the seeds of decay,” an “outgrowth of the excessive individualism which results upon the removal of the binding pressure from the outside.” Socialism is the very antithesis of individualism.

There is the spirit of combination always, and always the spirit of individualism. In the rising period of civilisation it is combination of individuals for the common good of all, for their safety against others. In the culminating period combination is less important, except for private ends, and individualism comes to the front. The evils of this tend to lead, in the descending period, to combination of all for the separate good of each. (Walsh 1917b: 12)

Social welfare is no longer the objective: “In reorganising society every one seems to think not so much of contributing as of receiving, of being supported by the government rather than of supporting the government, and instead of fighting and working for others, of fighting not at all and working as little as possible” (Walsh 1917b: 13).

Socialism and Equality

“The beginning, middle, and end of socialism is equality,” and so, “the object sought being the completest social and economic equality possible, systems of socialism are distinguished by the amount of equality they allege to be attainable and by the means whereby they would attain it” (Walsh 1917b: 14).³¹ The Socialist revels in the fact that, in his utopia, competition, “the bane of the present arrangement of things,” will be but a remnant of the late, failed social order, being as they see it as “the cause of the depression and misery of the many and of the exaltation and exultation of the few,” while for them, “all ought to be equally fortunate or unfortunate.” Socialism, however, mischaracterizes the nature of competition, ignoring the fact, argued Walsh, “that competition is the only means by which natural differences effectuate themselves in social differences, and if they do so unduly or perversely, this artificial inequality needs correction, but not that which is owing to nature’s arrangement.” Instead of accepting that inequality is a natural state, Socialists openly attempt “to reform nature itself,” which reform “we may be sure nature will not permit.” Since such reform cannot be achieved, “socialism will never be practicable” (17–18).³²

³¹ Note the position of the Wisconsin Institutional economist Richard T. Ely: “Socialism compels us to agree upon a standard of distributive justice which would be generally acceptable, and which would enlist the services of the most gifted and talented members of the community. If we depart from the principle of equality, it is difficult in the extreme to establish any standard in accordance with fixed principles, calculated to settle controversy” (Ely 1899: 233).

³² “The abolition of competition, by which worth may make its way in the world, though it is the boast of the socialists, is the very worst feature of their system, violative of nature’s law for the improvement of the race. Try as they will, we may be sure they will never succeed in bringing it into complete and lasting execution” (Walsh 1917b: 18).

For Walsh, the “great evil” is not inequality itself, but rather “excessive inequality of men and their conditions,” leading as it might to “evil results” and to a condition of “political injustice.” What he identified as “ordinary equality” is due not to the actions of man, but rather is a consequence of the actions of nature. “The mistake of the socialists is that they wish, not so much to correct man’s aberrations from nature, as to correct nature itself.”³³ The concern of society should not be “to interfere with the award of nature in distributing more to superior and less to inferior capacity.” On the contrary, the concern of society should be “to see that this award itself be not interfered with. Society ought to be just, and justice requires that to each should be given his due, which can be measured only according to one’s work, which varies with one’s ability” (Walsh 1917b: 130).

Society has the responsibility to safeguard only “the equality of rights and, as far as possible, the equality of opportunities,” the latter “desirable for the very purpose that it may lead to inequality of conditions proportioned to deserts.” What is objectionable “is the winning of advantages not deserved, with injustice to others, and the misuse of advantages won” (Walsh 1917b: 131).³⁴

The Socialist, however, will readily sacrifice liberty for the sake of his perception of equality. The achievement of greater equality can only be had at the expense of a lesser degree of liberty, as equality can only be maintained by force; likewise, liberty itself requires the acceptance of some measure of inequality, which “should be welcome.” What in Walsh’s view was undesirable was a condition of “undue inequality – inequality of fortune greater than the inequality of capacity nature has placed in men, and greater than the fortune that can be accumulated by honest thrift.” This is not the consequence of too great a degree of liberty, but is rather “brought about by the misuse of their superiority by the superior ones, and is fostered by the laws they make or prevail upon the rest to concede – by privileges or private laws, or what amounts to private laws, devised directly or indirectly for their advantage” (Walsh 1917b: 132–133).

³³ Such was the conclusion of August Bebel: “If any one has been treated so step-motherly by Nature that with the best will he can not do what others can, *Society has no right to punish him for the shortcomings of Nature*. If, on the contrary, a person has received from Nature gifts that raise him above others, *Society is not obliged to reward what is not his personal desert*. In Socialist society all enjoy equal conditions of life and opportunities for education; all are furnished the same opportunities to develop their knowledge and powers according to their respective capacities and inclinations. In this lies a further guarantee that not only will the standard of culture and powers be higher in Socialist than in bourgeois society, but also that both will be more equally distributed and yet be much more manifold” (Bebel 1904: 294; emphasis in original. Cited in Walsh 1917b: 130n3).

³⁴ To clarify: “To give to one more than his due is unjust if it involves taking from others so that they receive less than their due, as may happen in the division of a common product among its producers. But when more is given to one than is his due (in the sense of his not having earned it) without taking from others what is their due, as when the share of a producer is by him given or left to another, there is no injustice” (Walsh 1917b: 131n7).

Far from succeeding in eliminating inequalities, Socialism, as viewed by Walsh, actually perpetuates it. For instance, the young, the old, the weak, the infirmed, and the lazy may each enjoy the privileges of being cared for by the State, “of sharing in the produce of those who are diligent” (Walsh 1917b: 18). While it may be that, under Socialism, those who refuse to work would suffer the consequences – to punish the malcontent, “socialism would simply leave him out, excommunicate him, let him go away or starve, unless he gives in and pleads to be allowed to take his part,”³⁵ or perhaps place him “on a shortened allowance” or even a workhouse – worse yet are those who shirk their duty, ranging from the incompetent to the listless and indolent. The solution for the latter may be to institute rewards for increased production, but then the result is “the restoration of inequality.”³⁶ If one seeks equality, one must be willing to accept that “want of energy will be common” (19).

If the distribution of the common produce be absolutely equal to all, so that incomes are exactly the same whatever the position one occupies and whatever the quality of the work one performs, there is certainty that the labour of production will be badly guided and badly rendered, and that production will fall off and poverty increase. (Walsh 1917b: 19)

Socialists, in Walsh’s estimation, answer the objections by insisting that, with the change in economic conditions and social relations brought about by the institution of Socialism, human nature itself will be altered. Under Socialism, “when all will be treated as equals, to none being allowed more consumption than to others, and from none being exacted more production than from others,” such a constitution of society

will so improve human nature that all will work diligently, and apply themselves to study and to healthful recreation in their leisure hours, and nobody will try to get the better of others either by taking more or by giving less than everybody else, or at least by taking more than he needs or giving less than he is able; and when all strive equally to do their best, they are all equally deserving, though their best be different. (Walsh 1917b: 24–25)

³⁵ This, Walsh noted, was the position of Karl Pearson in his *Ethic of Freethought* (1888). “You must either be working for the community, or leave it, is the ultimatum of the socialistic more code to each and to all. No amount of conscience-money spent on the most ‘philanthropic object’ can atone for individual idleness” (Pearson 1888: 326; cited in Walsh 1917b: 19n8).

³⁶ Walsh cited, in particular, Edward Bellamy and Charles Fourier, the former advocating fewer hours demanded of those involved in industries such as mining, and greater effort from those in agriculture, while the latter advocated higher remuneration for certain professions. Louis Blanc and Karl Marx, by contrast, called for distribution according to need, while Henri de Saint-Simon and Ferdinand Lassalle, among others, advocated “From each according to their ability, to all according to their work” (Walsh 1917b: 19–20).

This gradual alteration of human nature, from the baser instincts characteristic of competition to the perfectibility of the Socialist man Walsh identified with William Godwin, Robert Owen, and August Bebel, each of whom believed in “the omnipotence of reason and the perfectibility of man” (Walsh 1917b: 25). To Walsh, such is “pure imagination.” Human nature is not, he insisted, the *product* of economic conditions, but rather the *initiator*; economic conditions are the “product of human nature re-acting on its environment.” Under Socialism, far from providing the means to moral improvement, the result may well be moral decay (26).

Under socialism no doubt some persons will be improved; but others will deteriorate. There is likelihood even of greater deterioration than improvement. It is true that, if socialism be fully established, much of the old temptation to grab more than is one’s due will be removed; which the socialists exaggerate into believing it will obliterate most crime. But it is not true that it will not be replaced by the new temptation to give less than one owes. This will be the besetting temptation, as great as is the other under the present régime. (Walsh 1917b: 26–27)

Marriage and Family

One may argue that the “weakening” of society may be accelerated in a Socialist order as a result of its perspective on the nature of marriage and the family. Under Socialism, women are to be granted a status of equality with men; to some proponents, they are “to have the same income derived from the public owner, whatever be their work, with the men” while to others, “their retribution will be in proportion to their contribution.”³⁷ Equality applies not only to those employed as wage-earners, but, more generally, “all women are to be rendered independent of man as their masters. Only children and imbeciles are to be left in any sort of tutelage, wardship, service, or dependence.” Having achieved complete equality with her husband, a wife would no longer be in a subordinate position (Walsh 1917b: 31).³⁸ “Marriage, being of equals, will be mere friendly partnerships for sexual enjoyment, and will be terminable at the pleasure of either party.” The “one great fact” of Socialism is

³⁷ In the “Cooperative Commonwealth,” the economy of Socialism, “woman will become a functionary, she will have suitable employment given her, and be rewarded according to results, just the same as man” (Gronlund 1884: 204).

³⁸ Note Emma Goldman: Marriage is primarily an economic arrangement, an insurance pact. It differs from the ordinary life insurance agreement only in that it is more binding, more exacting. Its returns are insignificantly small compared with the investments. In taking out an insurance policy one pays for it in dollars and cents, always at liberty to discontinue payments. If, however, woman’s premium is a husband, she pays for it with her name, her privacy, her self-respect, her very life, ‘until death doth part.’ Moreover, the marriage insurance condemns her to life-long dependency, to parasitism, to complete uselessness, individual as well as social. Man, too, pays his toll, but as his sphere is wider, marriage does not limit him as much as woman. He feels his chains more in an economic sense” (Goldman 1911: 4).

that women, in spite of their mental and bodily inferiority, are to be as independent as men, and hence it will necessarily follow that not only the wife will not look up to the husband for their common status in the world, but the husband will have no responsibility for his wife, and neither will feel any duty toward the other except the good will of friends while they remain friends. ... Here be it noted, that socialism or communism of property has almost always in fact, and with consistency has always been, because it necessarily is, connected with socialism or communism of women. (Walsh 1917b: 31–32)

The care and support of children is, under Socialism, to be the province of the State, “the public owner of all property” (Walsh 1917b: 32). Walsh cited “the American communist” John Humphrey Noyes and the Marxist political activist and lawyer Laurence Gronlund in support. Noyes, a founder of the Oneida Community, a Perfectionist communal society,³⁹ proclaimed,⁴⁰

Admitting that the Community principle of the day of Pentecost, in its actual operation at that time, extended only to material goods, yet we affirm that there is no intrinsic difference between property in persons and property in things; and that the same spirit which abolished exclusiveness in regard to money, would abolish, if circumstances allowed full scope to it, exclusiveness in regard to women and children. (Noyes 1870: 625; quoted in Walsh 1917b: 32n5)

In *The Coöperative Commonwealth*, Gronlund wrote, “the first object of education must be to establish in the minds of the children an indissoluble association between their individual happiness and the good of all. To that end family exclusiveness must be broken down, first of all” (Gronlund 1884: 224). This task is to be accomplished through compulsory State-controlled education. “Children do not belong to their parents: they belong to Society.” As “we are more the children of Society than of our several families,” it follows that “the education of children is of far more importance to the State than to parents, since the effects of it will be felt by Society, and principally *after* these parents are dead and gone. It is because through it Society accomplishes the end of its being, that all education is a public *trust*” (224–225; emphasis in original).

With respect to the family unit, Socialism appears to Walsh as a destructive force, as it “takes away the connection between the individual and his family,” allowing “the

³⁹ The Oneida Community was established at Oneida, New York, in 1848 and lasted until it officially disbanded in 1881. The origin and development of the Community and its practices may be found in Nordhoff (1875) and Hinds (1908). Noyes was also involved in the founding and development of the Putney and Wallingford Communities.

⁴⁰ This passage originally appeared in *Bible Communism* (1853, Part II, Chapter II, Proposition VII, p.29), authorship generally attributed to Noyes.

other members to be left in no sort of dependence on him, but only on society.” For some Socialists (mention made of the schemes for the transformation of domestic life in the writings of August Bebel⁴¹ and Edward Bellamy⁴²), society must be wholly reconstituted, being understood to be “one great family,” one that “is to be the only saver, the only accumulator, the only owner of capital” (Walsh 1917b: 41).

The wife will have no domestic labours, woman’s work being undistinguished from man’s. The wife as well as the husband will labour in the occupations which she has chosen or which have been assigned her. Each will retain his and her own individual interests, as well together as apart. The family will not be the serious combination it has hitherto been. It will be merely a union for pleasure. (Walsh 1917b: 41–42)

(Walsh did acknowledge, however, that some Socialists, e.g., John Spargo, believed that the role of the State would be merely to supplement that of the parents.⁴³) (Walsh 1917b: 41).

Marriage under Socialism, according to Walsh, on the authority of Bebel (not really representative of the Socialists of the age), is taken to be “only a temporary affair,” a form of contract, which “might almost as well be dispensed with altogether” (Walsh 1917b: 42).⁴⁴ Marriage has been for centuries associated with private property and the

⁴¹ “The object aimed at must be to obtain the best results with the smallest expenditure of power, time and material. *The small private kitchen is, just like the workshop of the small master mechanic, a transition stage, an arrangement by which time, power and material are senselessly squandered and wasted.* The preparation of food also will in future society be a social establishment, conducted on the most improved plane, in proper and advantageous manner. The private kitchen disappears, as it has now disappeared in the instance of those families who, although they generally provide themselves through their own kitchen, always resort to hotel kitchens or to those of caterers, the moment the question is to provide for banquets or to procure dishes a knowledge of which both they and their domestics lack” (Bebel 1904: 338–339; emphasis in original). “As in the kitchen, the revolution will be accomplished throughout domestic life: it will remove numberless details of work that must be attended to to-day. As in the future the domestic kitchen is rendered wholly superfluous by the central institutions for the preparation of food, so likewise are all the former troubles of keeping ranges, lamps, etc., in working order, removed by the central heating and electric apparatuses for lighting. Warm and cold water supplies place bathing within the reach of all at pleasure, and without the aid of any person. The central laundries assume the washing, drying, etc., of clothes; the central cleaning establishments see to the dusting, etc., of clothing and carpets” (340).

⁴² “Our washing is all done at public laundries at excessively cheap rates, and our cooking at public kitchens. The making and repairing of all we wear are done outside in public shops. ... We choose houses no larger than we need, and furnish them so as to involve the minimum of trouble to keep them in order” (Bellamy 1888: 165).

⁴³ “The true Socialist conceives of society as a great Over-Parent, not supplanting the protection and responsibility of the natural parents, but supplementing them by other and more far-reaching protection and responsibility. He would have society, like a great, universal mother, with all the wisdom and power of all the ages, protect all children from harm and tenderly lead them in the ways of Righteousness and Fellowship and Peace” (Spargo 1914: 62). Spargo eventually joined the Republican Party, supporting the candidacy of Calvin Coolidge in 1924.

⁴⁴ “In the choice of love, she is, like man, free and unhampered. She woos or is wooed, and closes the bond from no considerations other than her own inclinations. This bond is a private contract, celebrated without the intervention of any

laws regulating inheritance; as the latter has no basis under Socialism, the former has no justification. The family as a unit must therefore also be altered: “fatherhood will no longer be a relationship to be respected, and children will have only mothers for recognisable parents” (43).⁴⁵ Walsh saw in the decline of the institution of marriage a “sanction” of “dissolute” behaviors, including homosexuality and pedophilia, which would then be accepted as “normal” or, at the very least, tolerated (43–44).⁴⁶ That such would not be carried to “excess” would depend upon the perfection of the human race; their insistence that such excess will not occur “lies in their belief in the perfected character which will suddenly be induced in all people when they are made equal and are freed from struggling with one another for existence. No longer needing to injure others, nobody, it is believed, will injure himself.” Should the perfectibility of the human race fail to transpire, it may become necessary to enact “regulations to check excessive indulgences that amount to vices.” These outcomes Walsh perceived as obvious. “Only the socialists fail to see that with these changed conditions new temptations would arise, which may overpower all their resistance, as much as the old temptations defeat our present-day efforts” (44). While Walsh acknowledged that the vices, or evils, against which he railed, “are the outcroppings of advanced civilisation,” nonetheless it is the duty of an advanced and civilized society to take measures to counter their influence. This Socialism will not do; in fact, it actively promotes them. The “ideal life” of Socialism is “the life of sterile, ease-loving senility, rendered worse by retaining some of the ardors of youth, and incapable of holding back from the descent into the grave” (44).

functionary – just as marriage was a private contract until deep in the Middle Ages. Socialism creates in this nothing new: it merely restores, at a higher level of civilization and under new social forms, that which prevailed at a more primitive social stage, and before private property began to rule society” (Bebel 1904: 343). “Compulsory marriage is the normal marriage of bourgeois society: it is the only ‘moral’ union of the sexes: all other sexual union, by whomsoever entered into, is immoral. Bourgeois marriage – we have proved the point beyond cavil – is the result of bourgeois property relations. This marriage, which is intimately related with private property and the right of inheritance – demands ‘legitimate’ children as heirs: it is entered into for the purpose of acquiring these: under the pressure of social conditions, it is forced even upon those who have nothing to bequeath: it becomes a social law, the violation of which the State punishes by imprisoning for a term of years the men or women who live in adultery and have been divorced.

“In future society there is nothing to bequeath, unless the domestic equipment and personal inventory be regarded as inheritance: the modern form of marriage is thus devoid of foundation and collapses. The question of inheritance is thereby solved, and Socialism need not concern itself about abolishing the same. No right of inheritance can arise where there is no private property” (346–347).

⁴⁵ A decidedly different conclusion was offered by Richard Ely. In his discussion of the moral strengths of Socialism, Ely opined: “It is also a part of this idea of brotherhood, that it contemplates a better future for women and children, providing for their ample support, making marriage a matter of affection and inclination for women, and not a matter of economic necessity, and providing for all children the opportunities for a happy childhood and a full development of all their powers” (Ely 1899: 149).

⁴⁶ Walsh cited the work of the German myrmecologist and psychiatrist August Forel: “I am, therefore, of the same opinion as those who demand the suppression of all laws which punish or prosecute sexual inversion and pederasty committed between adults and in common agreement. So long as pederasts do not harm normal individuals, and so long as they do not seduce minors, they should be left alone, the same as all other sexually perverted individuals who are not dangerous” (Forel 1908: 442; quoted in Walsh 1917b: 43n45).

Socialism and Eugenics

Eugenics has a long history among the advocates of Socialism and Communism, as a means by which to create a more improved race. To take an early statement of such, in an unsigned front-page article in *The Circular*, a publication of the Oneida and Wallingford Communities, attributed to John Humphrey Noyes, the author proposed a means to the improvement of the race “by attention to the principles of *breeding*,” which he termed stirpiculture, by which, “through truthful, scientific propagation, must lead the race up to its ideal development and destiny.” This he asserted had, in fact, “been at work on the race from the beginning, tending to raise it by weeding out its poorest stock,” a process that “the Lord himself has exercised” in carrying forward “in a more direct manner” the selection mechanism employed by herdsmen, “a course of scientific breeding with reference to the production of a specific result.”⁴⁷ Yet Noyes believed that more needed to be done, that the race “may be raised to the standard of his [Jesus Christ’s] obedience and inspiration.” His aspiration was to develop a means “of scientific procreation” so as “to develop every child that is born into the Godlike symmetry of an immortal.” To Noyes, “Communism, which is the flower of Christianity, has just brought mankind to the point where a scientific use may be made of the sexual passions and faculties,” and so “[i]t will be the business of Communistic Societies to find out these laws and apply them” ([Noyes] 1865: 1).

In their 1897 *Industrial Democracy*, the British Fabian Socialists Sidney and Beatrice Webb acknowledged the inevitability of a class of unemployables in society, which they accepted as a mark of “social health.” After all, among the class of the unemployable were “children, the aged, and the child-bearing women” who “should not be compelled by their necessities to earn their own maintenance in the labor market.” Then there are those whose “incapacity or refusal to produce a livelihood is a symptom of ill-health or disease, physical or mental.” However, this class of the “Unemployable” contained also “the sick and the crippled, the idiots and lunatics, the epileptic, the blind and the deaf and dumb, the criminals and the incorrigibly idle, and all who are actually ‘morally deficient’,” their “incapacity” being “the result of individual disease from which no society can expect to be completely free.” This class, as well as those “who, without suffering from apparent disease of body or mind, are incapable of steady or continuous application, or who are so deficient in strength, speed, or skill that they are incapable, in the industrial order in which they find themselves, of producing their maintenance at any occupation whatsoever ... may, in all their several subdivisions, either be increased or diminished in numbers according to the wisdom of our social arrangements.” This requires that either we as a society “arrange our social organisation in such a way that the smallest possible amount of such degeneracy, whether physical or mental, is produced,”

⁴⁷ “The highest attainments of civilization, society, science and art exhibited in the world to-day, may be traced to the direct influence of the divine manipulation in the breeding of a certain stock of mankind in the past” ([Noyes] 1865: 1).

or that we “treat the cases that are produced in such a way as to arrest the progress of the malady, and as far as possible restore the patient to health” (Webb and Webb 1897: 785).

Walsh, for his part, seems to have been in agreement with the argument of the Webbs, for while Socialism may in fact be capable of providing employment for all, he doubted whether it could achieve “effective labor from all,” as many of those in the category “of the unemployed are innately slothful, as are most of the depredatory class; and these will never give honest labour.” The desire to refrain from competition so as to attain equality of result even for those who are inherently lazy or slothful or congenitally unfit may have negative consequences – “if they are raised to as good a living as everybody else, they will probably live longer and beget their kind more abundantly than they do now. There will be survival of the unfit as well as of the fit.” This Walsh regarded as “the great evil of giving up competition and the struggle for existence” (Walsh 1917b: 24).

Attention was given by Walsh to Thomas Robert Malthus’ *Essay on the Principle of Population*, Malthus credited with having been an early critic of Socialism, “the system of equality.” The policies of the Socialists would have devastating consequences, as they would tend to “loosen the check to population, which would immediately increase with unusual rapidity and very soon outstrip the means of subsistence, reducing all to misery.” For his part, Malthus, “[b]eing a moralising clergyman, steeped in middle-class English puritanism,” advocated moral restraint as a check on population, regarding “all other possible restraints or preventives as immoral or vicious.” He as well allowed a “social check”: the more affluent tend to have fewer children than those of the lower classes, so as society as a whole becomes wealthier with the advance of civilization (with the proviso that the institution of private property and the sanctity of the family be preserved), the rate of population increase would gradually decline. However, as under Socialism (in the view of Walsh) “the upper classes will be reduced nearly to the level of our lower classes,” the result may very well be in the opposite direction, “toward increase of prolificness.” Combined with the Socialist promotion of “communal support of everybody,” the outcome will “certainly lead to the bringing up to maturity of a great many more children, and among them the weak and the sickly” (Walsh 1917b: 33–34).⁴⁸

As mentioned above, Walsh had serious reservations as to the Socialist position regarding marriage. Socialism “will throw open marriage to all the weaklings, unless positive measures be taken against their marrying.” Sexual selection is not a panacea, as

⁴⁸ “If every man were sure of a comfortable provision for a family, almost every man would have one; and if the rising generation were free from the fear of poverty, population must increase with unusual rapidity” (Malthus 1888: 265). “[T]he encouragement and motive to moral restraint are at once destroyed in a system of equality and community of goods” (285).

it “alone cannot improve any species as a whole” (Walsh 1917b: 46).⁴⁹ Yet he remained somewhat optimistic that, by allowing free choice, it may “introduce sexual selection for the improvement of the race.” In this way, “[t]he pleasant process of sexual selection is henceforth to take the place of the painful process of natural selection, and is to carry the work of improvement to a far higher level” (44).⁵⁰

Women will no longer have to choose their supporters, or take the first one that offers, as of old from among the brutally strong, or as of late from among the fraudulently rich, – from the energetic or the idle; but, being independent, they will wait till they are courted by, or will themselves court, the man of fine physique or intellect whom they admire. (Walsh 1917b: 44)

The old saying is forgotten, that every man and woman can find his or her mate. If bad, faithless, and ugly men cannot find good, true, and beautiful women to marry them, they will at least find women of their own type, who, being rejected by the good, true, and handsome men, will only be too willing to marry the left-over men like themselves, if indeed they do not prefer them in the first place, since like likes like. (45)

Walsh feared, however, that sexual selection, as fostered by some Socialist writers, would in the end replace natural selection.⁵¹ It would have the same effect on the human

⁴⁹ “The best specimens mating with the best, and the worst with the worst, or those endowed with some peculiarity choosing their similars, and those endowed with some other peculiarity choosing theirs, in the course of ages the divergence of the sections may become so great that they constitute two species, only one of which will be on a higher plane, but counterbalanced by the other on a lower, if that continues to exist” (Walsh 1917b: 46–47).

⁵⁰ Walsh cited Edward Bellamy in support of this view: “The fact that all marriages will be love affairs, says Bellamy, ‘means that for the first time in human history the principle of sexual selection, with its tendency to preserve and transmit the better types of the race, and let the inferior types drop out, has unhindered operation’” (Bellamy 1888: 374; quoted in Walsh 1917b: 45;). Bellamy continued: “Perhaps more important than any of the causes I mentioned then as tending to race purification, has been the effect of untrammled sexual selection upon the quality of two or three successive generations. I believe that when you have made a fuller study of our people you will find in them not only a physical, but a mental and moral improvement. It would be strange if it were not so, for not only is one of the great laws of nature now freely working out the salvation of the race, but a profound moral sentiment has come to its support” (Bellamy 1888: 375).

⁵¹ Karl Marx, for his part, rejected Malthusianism. “[E]very special historic mode of production has its own special laws of population, historically valid within its limits alone. An abstract law of population exists for plants and animals only, and only in so far as man has not interfered with them” (Marx 1887: 645; Walsh 1917b: 34n16. Walsh quoted from the 1906 edition). As birth-control advocate and eugenicist Margaret Sanger wrote, “Every shade of Socialist thought and philosophy acknowledges its indebtedness to the vision of Karl Marx and his conception of the class struggle. Yet the relation of Marxian Socialism to the philosophy of Birth Control, especially in the minds of most Socialists, remains hazy and confused. No thorough understanding of Birth Control, its aims and purposes, is possible until this confusion has been cleared away, and we come to a realization that Birth Control is not merely independent of, but even antagonistic to the Marxian dogma” (Sanger 1922: 146). “Many Socialists to-day remain ignorant of the inherent conflict between the idea of Birth Control and the philosophy of Marx. The earlier Marxians, including Karl Marx himself, expressed the bitterest antagonism to Malthusian and neo-Malthusian theories. A remarkable feature of early Marxian propaganda has been the almost complete unanimity with which the implications of the Malthusian doctrine have been derided, denounced

population as selective breeding has on animals, leading in the end “to a gradual differentiation of mankind into a superior type and into an inferior type, which in a million years or so might constitute two species.” Should the Socialists feel compelled to reject natural selection, “the tendency of an untrammelled sexual selection will be toward a condition in which democratic socialism will no longer be possible.” The inferior type, likely being far more prolific than the superior, will be the cause of its downfall. The solution, then, will be reliance on artificial methods, such as those employed by animal breeders: the State would in this case be obligated to issue regulations “to prevent the inferior men and women from procreating children, or to do away with their offspring after being conceived or born, while the superior are encouraged, or required, to bring forth children for the state to rear,” consistent with the program of the eugenicists, “with their plans for the segregation or the sterilisation of the unfit.”⁵² But they have the choice: “either they must, by stringent regulations, employ artificial selection, or they must give up socialism as utterly hopeless” (Walsh 1917b: 47–48).⁵³ If it were possible to use moral persuasion to convince the lower classes to abstain from procreation until they were financially able to provide support for a family, “only the most competent workers would attain the ability to propagate their line of descent, while the indolent and incompetent would be cut off without offspring” (48). Malthus’ own solution, noted Walsh, was, first, abstention on the part of the poor and propagation solely on the part of the wealthy, and, if impractical, limiting government assistance to the poor. The result of the latter would be that “[s]ome of the incompetent would suffer from their improvidence, and much of their progeny perish; and others of the incompetent would be frightened by

and repudiated. Any defense of the so-called ‘law of population’ was enough to stamp one, in the eyes of the orthodox Marxians, as a ‘tool of the capitalistic class,’ seeking to dampen the ardor of those who expressed the belief that men might create a better world for themselves. Malthus, they claimed, was actuated by selfish class motives. He was not merely a hidebound aristocrat, but a pessimist who was trying to kill all hope of human progress. By Marx, Engels, Bebel, Karl Kautsky, and all the celebrated leaders and interpreters of Marx’s great ‘Bible of the working class,’ down to the martyred Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, Birth Control has been looked upon as a subtle, Machiavellian sophistry created for the purpose of placing the blame for human misery elsewhere than at the door of the capitalist class. Upon this point the orthodox Marxian mind has been universally and sternly uncompromising” (147–148). On the connection between Marx and the Socialists on the topic of birth control, see Christine Holden and David M. Levy, 1993.

⁵² Walsh cited Spargo, again: “There is a demand, too, for the adoption of a sane and humane policy of permanently segregating the victims of mental defects and diseases believed to be transmissible. These provide an enormous proportion of the recruits to the ranks of the degenerate classes – the habitual drunkards, the prostitutes, the purveyors of venereal contagion, the criminal and vicious classes in general. It is probable that, long before the Socialist goal is attained, measures will be taken to segregate permanently all known victims of mental or physical evils known to be incurable and transmissible, and to prevent them from burdening society with their undesirable offspring” (Spargo 1914: 122; cited in Walsh 1917b: 48n56).

⁵³ Cf. the statement of Victor Berger, a delegate to the National Congress of the Socialist Party in 1910 and the first Socialist elected to the U. S. House of Representatives: “We want to help the Chinese and the Japanese and everybody else as much as we can, but if they come in here they will prevent us getting Socialism for the next ten thousand years and then we would not get it. It would be a new yellow race that would get it and our descendants would never have a chance to get Socialism” (Berger 1910: 121).

their example and abstain, leaving none of their kind.” Later Neo-Malthusians such as Charles Bradlaugh and Annie Besant preached a much less drastic solution, prevention of pregnancy through the use of contraception.⁵⁴ Yet even measures such as this were more often employed by the upper classes and the “superior races,” with the unintended result that “those of poorest stock shall inherit the earth” (49).

To achieve the promise of Socialism requires the employment of the methods of eugenic control; one cannot rely on passive measure such as moral persuasion alone. Those deemed unfit or “incapable” must be prevented

from obtaining by inheritance, or at least from transmitting to still more incapable descendants, the reward of the capable, and at the same time not take away from the capable the incentive to provide for their presumably capable offspring without spoiling them. It must go even further, and foster the advent into society of the capable and discountenance that of the incapable. In other words, it must see to it that the upper and the best classes be rendered as prolific and the lower or the worst classes as sterile as they possibly can be made. They cannot be made so directly by law. They can be made so only indirectly by making the environment such that only the capable are fit to survive. (Walsh 1917b: 160)

In this may be seen a qualified concurrence with the view of S. Herbert, member of the Royal College of Surgeons and Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians, in his essay “Eugenics and Socialism,” which gave credence to Walsh’s characterizations of the Socialist position while bolstering his own:

The socialist position ... provides not only a vantage-ground for the endeavours of the Eugenist, but it can be shown to form a real adjunct to the eugenic ideal. The Eugenist, aiming at the propagation of certain types of individuals, who try to imitate the breeder’s art by carefully selecting his stock. But in addition to this artificial selection, which after all is very cumbersome and limited in its action, we have the possibility of another method, which is more in accordance with the process of selection, as we see it in nature. Here we have the environment acting, as it were, like a sieve, separating the fit from the unfit and selecting those who are best adapted to their surroundings. ... The whole trend of civilisation has been in this direction, and the Socialist is only following up this line of progress to its logical conclusion. Indeed, the grand ideal of the Eugenist himself is to create a moral atmosphere, new

⁵⁴ Bradlaugh and Besant founded the Malthusian League, an organization dedicated to the promotion of contraceptive practices, in 1877. See F. D’arcy (1977). On the position of Bradlaugh and Besant and the trial on a charge of obscenity, see Sandra J. Peart and David M. Levy (2008).

ethical conditions, such as would prevent the undesirables from finding mates and leaving progeny. In this task Socialism is its most natural and powerful ally. For Socialism, by changing the economic conditions of life, would abolish the present-day capitalistic valuation, which measures success in terms of money, crushing out the studious and the moral man, who does not know how “to get on.” It would, by removing the material handicap of the masses and by giving equal opportunities to all, create such social conditions as would lead to the automatic and natural survival of the types most desired. (Herbert 1910: 122–123)

Epilogue

In the end, Walsh, while accepting the validity of some of the positions of the Socialists, specifically with regard to the need to maintain a fit and healthy population, concluded that Socialism where tried had proven itself to have been a dismal failure. “Everywhere it has either been abandoned or it has given occasion, not only to slothfulness and backwardness, but to oppression and anarchy. Rarely was this condition peaceful” (Walsh 1917b: 66). Should its adherents endeavor under the political, social, and economic conditions as they existed at the time, even acknowledging the avaricious nature of human behavior, to introduce a socio-political order along Socialist lines, concluded Walsh, “it is certain there will be such corruption at first, and there may very well be so much of it as to frustrate the effort to carry the scheme through. ... In all probability socialism will go to pieces in the attempt to introduce it” (75).

Socialists insist that their ideal society would finally establish the conditions through which mankind will flourish. They “maintain that their system will take away all inducement to evil-mindedness, all incitement to strife, all temptation to fraud, and driving out competition will introduce co-operation, and excluding hatred will leave nothing but brotherly love” (Walsh 1917b: 75). Yet the means through which this was to occur are anything but conducive to the improvement of the moral fiber of the people:

Their means, their first act, is to expropriate present owners and to hand over their land and capital into the control of the working people. Certainly this is not a proper method to improve these people’s morals. Perhaps, then, they think that good morals may come at least in the next generation, after socialism has been well established. But socialism cannot be well established without good morals in the first place. Here is an impassable dilemma for the advocates of revolution. Admit, as some moderate socialists do, that “without a great moral advance socialism may be regarded as impracticable,” and you must allow that socialism is not for our time. To avoid this conclusion you must hold that socialism itself will bring about this improvement in morals. (Walsh 1917b: 76)

One cannot alter the morals of society simply by changing the economic arrangements. Socialism, in the attempt, “does not take out of the world the power of acting unjustly. At best it merely takes this power from the private capitalists, by abolishing them; but it leaves it in the new owners, who are the people at large.” As the new owners, the people, have little knowledge of the management of industry, they must delegate; the new managers, officials of the State, “endowed with the political power of the state,” will be no better than were the capitalist managers who preceded them, “[t]heir power for good will be increased, and their power for evil also,” as “the morals of our working classes are in no wise better than the morals of our capitalists.” Nothing has changed; no real efforts have been made to transform man to a more moral being. “The people would again, as in former revolutions, change masters; and their own mastery of the new masters there is no reason to believe would be better than it has been in the past” (Walsh 1917b: 77).

As he opposed Socialism as a doctrine opposing competition while increasing the regulative power of government, he as well expressed opposition to “unrestrained corporationism at least in production.” The system of monopolistic capitalism, which stifles competition in production, “is as socialistic as the one offered in its place.”

If you fear a system that would restrict corporationism because it is socialistic as increasing governmental management, much more ought you to dread unrestricted corporationism because it is socialistic as suppressing competition between producers. Really the essence of the socialism that deserves to be condemned, is equalism. (Walsh 1917b: 153)

The form of Socialism that Walsh found “reprehensible” was that which sought to establish of society of “utmost equality.” Yet he appreciated the possibility of other forms, some of which may in fact be “reasonable,” as “the present condition of society is far from perfect, and some scheme therefore may improve it.” An example of such a scheme is one

which, while leaving complete freedom of action, compatible with similar freedom of action in others, to every one that does not ask state aid for special privileges, does restrict freedom of action of those who do ask state aid for special privileges, and guards the interest of the public from being granted away to, or invaded by, individuals. This scheme would destroy all monopoly in private hands; and only because nothing can ever destroy all monopolies, since some are natural, and because we cannot immediately do away with others that have been permitted an unhealthy growth, does it recommend the assumption of the former by the state (or by the

municipality under it), or at least its strict supervision of them, and certainly its strict supervision over the latter, in the interest of all, including both the workers and the consumers. (Walsh 1917b: 153–154)

In sum, Socialism represented little more to Walsh than “applied sociology.”⁵⁵ Socialism, “true socialism,” remained as yet undiscovered:

We are only beginning to know some of the constituent problems themselves, not their solutions. Of these we have as yet in but few cases hardly a presentiment, though in some cases we know very well what they cannot be. True socialism cannot be egalitarianism. It must take natural inequalities into account: it must seek to give unequal reward to unequal merit. Equality of opportunity is the desideratum, but how it is to be effected nobody (except to some extent Henry George) has yet been able to tell. (Walsh 1917b: 160)

Feminism

Feminism, the third volume in Walsh’s trilogy, at 393 pages is longer than both previous volumes combined. Walsh justified his choice by suggesting that, at that juncture in American history, Feminism “is the more obtrusive and menacing. Especially is its entering wedge, woman suffrage, an impending danger” (Walsh 1917a: v). In support of his contention this volume proceeds with a history of the women’s movement as well as a review of the suffrage question, with arguments for and against. For our purposes, focus will be on the connections between Feminism and Socialism, Marriage, and Eugenics, issues upon which Walsh had deeply held convictions.

Feminism Defined

Throughout his book, Walsh never really formally defined Feminism, choosing instead to identify it with certain attributes, especially those coincident with the philosophy of Socialism. Instead he offered several definitions proposed by others, including those of British author and feminist Walter Lionel George⁵⁶ and British actress and suffragette

⁵⁵ Cf. John Spargo in his *Applied Socialism*: “‘Applied Socialism’ at once suggests the more familiar term, ‘Applied Sociology,’ and advantage may be taken of that fact by making our definition a comparative one. This is the more desirable because of the fact that it was the use of the adjective ‘applied’ to distinguish a branch, or department, of sociology which suggested the desirability of its similar use in connection with the study of Socialism” (Spargo 1912: 17). “Applied Socialism” as defined by Spargo “has to do, not with that unconscious, genetic, irresistible evolutionary process which we can trace in the strata of economic ideas and institutions [as does “Applied Sociology”], but with the exercise of human directive energies; not with abstract philosophy, but with the concrete problems of directing social movement. Its sphere is the telic, not the genetic, factor of the social evolution” (19–20).

⁵⁶ “[T]he Feminists argue that there are no men and that there are no women; there are only sexual majorities. To put the matter less obscurely, the Feminists base themselves on Weininger’s theory, according to which the male principle may

Beatrice Forbes-Robertson Hale.⁵⁷ Yet for his part Walsh relied more on a definition supplied by the British suffragette Teresa Billington-Greig, itself “based upon those classics of the movement which, like Mary Wollstonecraft’s *Rights of Women* and John Stuart Mill’s *Subjection of Women*, were produced before the broad feminist demands came to be sacrificed to politics” (Billington-Greig 1911: 694). Feminism, then, may be understood as

a movement seeking the reorganisation of the world upon a basis of sex-equality in all human relations; a movement which would reject every differentiation between individuals upon the ground of sex, would abolish all sex privileges and sex burdens, and would strive to set up the recognition of the common humanity of woman and man as the foundation of law and custom. (Billington-Greig 1911: 694; quoted in Walsh 1917c: 3n3)

Upon this foundation, Walsh began his disquisition on the topic of Feminism.⁵⁸

Feminism and Socialism

Walsh asserted that Socialists and the Socialist movement *always* include in the canon Feminism, “the woman movement.”⁵⁹ He perceived Feminism to be in some ways *analogous* with Socialism, “an offshoot – branch or twig – that is growing by itself,” although it is true that some Feminists and Suffragists identified as anti-

be found in woman, and the female principle in man. It follows that they recognize no masculine or feminine ‘spheres,’ and that they propose to identify absolutely the conditions of the sexes.” Furthermore, “Feminism purports to alter radically the mental attitudes of men and women. The sexes are to be induced to recognize each other’s status, and to bring this recognition to such a point that equality will not even be challenged” (George 1913: 721; cited in Walsh 1917c:3n.3).

⁵⁷ “Feminism is that part of the progress of democratic freedom which applies to women. It is a century-old struggle conducted by large groups of people in different parts of the world to bring about the removal of all artificial barriers to the physical, mental, moral and economic development of the female half of the race” (Hale 1914: 3; cited in Walsh 1917c: 4n.5). It is “the child of the few, a product of that minority which has had the leisure and training that make thought and aspiration possible” (6).

⁵⁸ One wonders, given the tenor of the book, whether Walsh may rather have begun his tome not with the quite simple and straightforward definition of Billington-Greig but rather with that of Benjamin Vestal Hubbard: “Feminism is exhibited by a spirit of unrest among a comparatively small number of dissatisfied women. They preach the gospel of unholy discontent. They are born agitators, and ‘dearly love a fight.’ They prefer war to peace; turmoil to tranquility; contention to concord; pride to humility; sophistry to truth; agnosticism to belief, and prefer to assert their own wills, ‘live their own lives’ as against the precepts of all conventional morality, being moral anarchists” (Hubbard 1915: 141).

⁵⁹ One of the few exceptions named by Walsh was the British barrister Ernest Belfort Bax (Walsh 1917c: 3n21). In his 1908 *The Legal Subjection of Men* Bax wrote, “The highest development of modern capitalism, as exemplified in the English-speaking countries, has placed man to all intents and purposes, legally under the heel of woman. So far as the relations of the sexes are concerned, it would be the task of Socialism to emancipate *man* from this position, if sex-equality be the goal aimed at. The first step on the road towards such equality would necessarily consist in the abolition of modern female privilege” (Bax 1908: 63). This a revised edition of a pamphlet of the same title, authored by “Two Barristers.” Walsh also referenced Bax’s 1906 *Essays in Socialism New and Old* and his 1913 *The Fraud of Feminism*.

Socialist.⁶⁰ Similarly, among the Socialists there was near unanimous acceptance of woman suffrage, “one of the necessary implications of feminism” (Walsh 1917c: 3).⁶¹ Consider in support of the proposition the following:

As socialism is a demand for equality of the poor with the rich, so feminism is a demand for equality of women with men. They have in common that they both seek excessive equality, with the difference that the one reaches out for complete equality of property, the other for complete equality of the sexes. They both violate nature; for the one is contrary to the natural constitution of society, and the other to the natural constitution of the human body. They both aim at emancipation, as it is termed, or the freeing from bondage, – the one of working people, the other of women, these latter desiring to break down all discriminations and barriers that hem in the female sex; and while socialism excites class-consciousness and stirs up class-antagonism, feminism excites sex-consciousness and stirs up sex-antagonism, and places reliance on sex-loyalty. Their advocates have a confused notion of justice, in whose name they demand their “rights,” and because of which they think their claims so self-evident that they must speedily be achieved in this age of enlightenment, the feminists, as well as the socialists having at first had great expectations. (Walsh 1917c: 3–4)

Both Socialism and Feminism owe much of their appeal to economic conditions inherent in modern civilization, including lack of employment opportunities and homelessness. As Socialism proposes as a solution to the problems impacting labor, “the equalisation of weak men with strong men,” Feminism proposes as a solution to the “sex problem” freedom and independence of women, equality with men, and

⁶⁰ “If full socialism should ever come, feminism, it is true, must come too, as it is an integral part of such socialism. But feminism might come without any further amount of socialism” (Walsh 1917c: 36).

⁶¹ Note Rosa Luxemburg: “The current mass struggle for women’s political rights is only an expression and a part of the proletariat’s general struggle for liberation. In this lies its strength and its future. Because of the female proletariat, general, equal, direct suffrage for women would immensely advance and intensify the proletarian class struggle. This is why bourgeois society abhors and fears women’s suffrage. And this is why we want and will achieve it. Fighting for women’s suffrage, we will also hasten the coming of the hour when the present society falls in ruins under the hammer strokes of the revolutionary proletariat” (Luxemburg 1912: 242). Also the anarchist Emma Goldman: “In her blind devotion woman does not see what people of intellect perceived fifty years ago: that suffrage is an evil, that it has only helped to enslave people, that it has but closed their eyes that they may not see how craftily they were made to submit” (Goldman 1910: 203). A different rationale was offered by Saleeby: “I believe in the vote because I believe it will be eugenic, will reform the conditions of marriage and divorce in the eugenic sense, and will serve the cause of what I have elsewhere called ‘preventive eugenics,’ which strives to protect healthy stocks from the ‘racial poisons,’ such as venereal disease, alcohol, and, in a relatively infinitesimal degree, lead. These are ends good and necessary in themselves, whether attained by a special dispensation from on high, or by decree of an earthly autocrat or a democracy of either sex or both. For these ends we must work, and for all the means whereby to attain them; but never for the means in despite of the ends” (Saleeby 1911: 24).

the elimination of all discriminations (Walsh 1917c: 4–5).⁶² To Walsh, neither solution seemed practical, as

the advocates of these solutions resemble each other in their lack of seriousness in adapting means to ends and of foresight as to consequences, like children playing with fire – and both expect, with equal light-hearted optimism, to reduce work to play in a happy world of calm and concord, with “equality of enjoyment.” (Walsh 1917c: 5)

In the end, “the remedies offered in both cases are exactly the opposite of what they ought to be, having the tendency to increase the evils they are intended to cure” (Walsh 1917c: 5).

Feminism, in theory, “is based on the false belief in future peace, prosperity, and plenty” (Walsh 1917c: 21). In the new Age of Reason, the Feminist envisions a transition, truly a revolution in thought, from the semi-barbarism of the past to a new millennium (21–22); in the words of Vida Scudder, “The Woman’s Century has dawned” (22n7).⁶³ Walsh opined that this belief in a Feminist utopia of peace and harmony, made possible as reason and intellect would overcome militarism and conflict, confronted a sobering reality at the outbreak of hostilities in 1914. In his view, “intelligence, such as it was, has always ruled (in the sense of guiding), and it has ruled through force (which performs), and always will, and cannot otherwise. More intelligence is being displayed in this war than in any previous one, and also more force” (22n8).⁶⁴

The new epoch of reason and enlightenment had, for Walsh, instead resulted in a decline in social morality and decorum and a debasement of the culture:

Culture is being diluted; philanthropy is taking the form of leaving endowments to charitable institutions; art is degenerating into “cubism,” and women’s share in it

⁶² Walsh cited in support, among others, Annie Besant (*On the Political Status of Women*), Lily Braun (*Die Frauenfrage: ihre geschichtliche Entwicklung und wirtschaftliche Seite*), Ethel Snowden, Viscountess Snowden (*The Feminist Movement*), and Maurice Parmelee (“The Economic Basis of Feminism”) (Walsh 1917c: 4nn.4,5).

⁶³ “Order, comfort, loveliness! Women are not waiting for the arrival of the socialist state to begin consecrating themselves to the realization of these ideals in the common life of the state. Their emerging into public life keeps exact pace with the gradual socializing of our conception of public duty. The countless organizations for social service and reform in which more and more they take the lead, are the growing points of that new democracy in which it will one day be granted that the protective and creative functions are as fundamental as the defensive” (Scudder 1914: 467).

⁶⁴ This was in response to the statement of Beatrice Hale that “We stand at the beginning of the end of the rule of force, and on the threshold of the rule of intelligence” (Walsh 1917c: 22n8; quoting Hale 1914: 300). Hale continued: “The part of women in evolution is to try and hasten humanity beyond the rule of force, through the rule of intelligence to the distant day when the spiritual values of life shall at last attain prime importance. Men have hitherto been the priests of intellect and women the priestesses of love. Each much learn much from the other, for the spirit cannot emerge triumphant until all knowledge has been attained, and of knowledge love is the ultimate goal” (Hale 1914: 300).

into “hobble skirts” and the “slouch”; while morals are becoming so lax that mothers allow their daughters to discuss prostitution with young men under the euphuism of “white slavery,” and, setting the example themselves, to be promiscuously hugged in public, breast to breast, belly to belly, legs to legs, on the pretext of dancing; and in some countries the “higher work” ready for women is leading them still more into factories and behind the desk and the counter and into the lower ranks of some of the professions. Some women, indeed, have become freer to do what they please, and what they please seems to be to earn pin-money and have a good time, or be sporty. New eras, at least higher ones, do not make their advent in this way. (Walsh 1917c: 23–24)

Two additional parallels with respect to Socialism and Feminism may be made. First, while Socialism purports to raise the condition of the poor to that of the rich, in point of fact the opposite has been shown to be the case: the rich, in the name of equality, have been reduced to level of the poor; while Feminism seeks equality of men and women by promoting independence and greater self-sufficiency, in the end it merely succeeds in feminizing men, diminishing “the totality of men to a subordination and even subjection in the nexus and complexus of a highly developed society and state” (Walsh 1917c: 25–26).⁶⁵ Second, as Socialism seeks the elimination of class differences, Feminism seeks “to treat all grown-up individuals ... as specimens of only one kind of entity – as human beings” (28).⁶⁶ Walsh argued that this apparent denial of differences between men and women can succeed only if women renounce “what is distinctly womanly” and instead assume “what is distinctively manly – by becoming ‘virile,’” a statement he attributed to an unnamed but “prominent feminist” (30). As there are manifest differences between

⁶⁵ Cf. Bertrand Russell: The early advocates of women’s rights “were for the most part very rigid moralists, whose hope was to impose upon men the moral fetters which hitherto had only been endured by women” (Russell 1929: 83).

⁶⁶ In support of this contention, Walsh elicited the opinion of John Stuart Mill from *The Subjection of Women*: “The mere getting rid of the idea that all the wider subjects of thought and action, all the things which are of general and not solely of private interest, are men’s business, from which women are to be warned off – positively interdicted from most of it, coldly tolerated in the little which is allowed them – the mere consciousness a woman would then have of being a human being like any other, entitled to choose her pursuits, urged or invited by the same inducements as any one else to interest herself in whatever is interesting to human beings, entitled to exert the share of influence on all human concerns which belongs to an individual opinion, whether she attempted actual participation in them or not – this alone would effect an immense expansion of the faculties of women, as well as enlargement of the range of their moral sentiments” (Mill 1869: 155–156; cited in Walsh 1917c: 29). Of Mill, Ernest Bax wrote, “John Stuart Mill is dead! but his eloquent wail of the subjection of women is never let die – it rings in our ears every day. It is solemn, it is pathetic; it overflows with the chivalric sentiment which Mill professes to repudiate as out of date, like the clanship and hospitality of the wandering Arab, but which nevertheless, is so strongly developed in the average male. It has become the gospel of women’s pretended wrongs, and has caused the ingenuous youth of Oxford and Cambridge to blush for their fellow males. The only objection that the lawyers of the present year of grace can raise to it is that it is really the reverse of legal truth” (Bax 1908: 1).

the sexes, it must also be true that the rights and work of women and the rights and work of men must be understood to be two separate and distinct things (31).⁶⁷

The blame for what Walsh perceived as the “masculinasation of women” lay with the rise of industrialism, “which has taken women from the home, where they worked by themselves, into the factory, where they work side by side with men, and whence they return to the home as money-earners like men.” In like manner, industrialism and the individualism it spawned were responsible for the feminization of men, as well as the dissolution of the family and the State; while for Socialism, individualism may have arrived “only through collectivism,” for Feminism, the move would be direct (Walsh 1917c: 33–34).

Feminism aspires to the equality of women and men – for each sex “to be admitted to all the rights, privileges, powers, and emoluments that are possessed and enjoyed by the other sex.” Walsh identified two forms: *full feminism*, which holds that the only difference between the sexes is that women bear children,⁶⁸ and *semi-feminism*, which is concerned more with the extension of the suffrage and the acknowledgment of political equality with men. Full Feminism has much in common with Socialism: it aims at the elimination of all social, economic, and political distinctions between the sexes, an aim Socialism wishes to achieve for *classes*.⁶⁹ Yet while the aspiration of the Socialist is the elimination of competition, that of the Feminist is its promotion, seeking as little differentiation between the sexes as possible; to Walsh, this evolution had already begun!⁷⁰ With “complete equality” must come “complete independence,” which necessitates not merely *political* equality but *economic* equality as well, an

⁶⁷ “For what is distinctively woman’s work, and what are distinctively women’s rights, are not the human work and rights common to men also, but that work and those rights which are not held in common with men. And so men’s work and men’s rights, distinctively, are not the work and the rights held in common with women” (Walsh 1917c: 31).

⁶⁸ “Full feminism demands that practically all differences between the male and the female of the human species shall be obliterated except the one big difference of begetting and of bearing children (of being fathers and mothers), which belongs to all but the lowest species of living beings. In physiological language, they recognise only the primary sexual differentia and would ignore all the secondary” (Walsh 1917c: 36). As justification for this statement he offered an essay by Thomas Wentworth Higginson, “Ought Women to Learn the Alphabet?” (1859), an essay that was reprinted in *Woman’s Suffrage Tracts No.4* (1871). Walsh considered Higginson to have written the essay “in sheer ignorance of physiology” (Walsh 1917c: 36n1).

⁶⁹ Cf. the following from an unsigned (likely the editor, Minnie Bronson) essay in *The Woman Patriot*: “Socialism ordinarily attacks private **property** first. Feminism attacks the private **family** first. Feminism is the greater menace, not only because it **has more political power, better concealed**, but because, after the Government has been persuaded to take over the **private family**, no argument whatever remains against its taking over private **property**” ([Bronson]1921: 6; emphasis in original).

⁷⁰ “Men have now invaded the upper ranks of women’s work, and women have been invited into the lower ranks of men’s work. This process, already begun, the feminists wish to carry on till the work of men and women no longer be differentiated. Competition is to be free not only between men and men, and between women and women, but also between men and women and between women and men” (Walsh 1917c: 37).

assumption that men and women produce and earn in equal measure. While this would be possible under Socialism, a system that “distributes equal incomes to all without discrimination between strength and weakness, and consequently without discrimination between the sexes,” it is absurd to believe such would be possible under conditions of free competition, to believe that indeed men and women would be seen as equally productive and hence worthy of equal earnings.⁷¹ In the absence of Socialism, full Feminism “simply runs against nature” as it requires one to assume “that if women were admitted to free competition with men, they would produce and earn as much as men do, and gain economic equality, by their own efforts.” This assumption of equality, “[t]he first principle of full feminism,” Walsh considered “an erroneous principle,” as “nature steps in and forbids its achievement” (Walsh 1917c: 36–37).⁷²

Women have not the same strength as men, and consequently not the same earning capacity. Their child-bearing function stands in the way. Then the feminists say: this itself is labour, and must be allowed for: the woman who bears must be paid. But if she is to be paid by the state, here is quasi socialism; or if she is paid by the father, here is a remnant of present conditions, with dependence on the male. The scheme is unworkable without socialism, and it is unworkable as socialism. (Walsh 1917c: 37)

In respect of the physical constitution of women, Walsh firmly believed they lacked the “capacity for self-support or independence, not being able to stand the same stress and strain [as men]”. While women may indeed work “as much as, if not more than, men,” their labor “must be varied, intermittent, interruptible,” in contrast to the “incessant” labor of men. This is due, in his view, not to the influence of custom or the conditions of economic life, but rather is “physiological,” women being both physically and mentally different from men (Walsh 1917c: 38–39). This, he suggested, is obviously the case, as we observe that

⁷¹ A contrary view was expressed in a column in *Voice of Industry* attributed to “Pro Bono.” “A female generally receives but about one-half as much as is paid to a man for doing the same amount of labor. It has been urged that they are the weaker sex, and are dependent upon us for assistance, and per consequence this difference in the price of labor should be made. But this very dependence is the result of inequality, and would not exist were the proper remedy applied” (“Pro Bono” 1847: 4).

⁷² Cf. the position of economist/sociologist Maurice Parmelee: “The more extreme type of feminist seems to assume that woman can, will and should be on an absolute equality with man in every respect. The tendency of this type of feminism is to minimize almost to the point of nullity the differences between man and woman and between the human and social functions of the two sexes. Economically, then, this would mean that woman can, will and should enter every occupation along with man and that she should become economically as independent as man is or is supposed to be. But it is not safe to assume this without careful study of the subject, and such study may indicate that the two sexes cannot be nearly as equal, or, to use a more correct term (for the term equal is question-begging), as nearly alike as this type of feminist seems to assume” (Parmelee 1914: 18).

men do much work that women cannot do, and in much work that both can do, men do it better; and much work that is left to women as properly woman's work, is left to them not because they do it better (tending of children, of course, is an exception), but because men are fully occupied with other more important work. All this is due to the greater bodily strength of men, and their greater staying power in continuous and monotonous activity; to which is to be added their greater willingness to go ahead, run risks, and experiment, and their greater mental aptitude for combining, organising, and systematising. (Walsh 1917c: 40–41)

Here Walsh provided to the reader “details essential to all the questions involved in the woman movement,” such inequalities demonstrating that, “for economic and political independence, they fail in possessing equality with men” (41).

Having addressed the physical distinctions between men and women, and allowing that “[w]omen may be superior in some moral qualities or virtues, and in certain aptitudes where delicacy and nimbleness of thought, feeling, or touch are important” (Walsh 1917c: 40), Walsh proceeded to address differences in psychology and intellect, enlisting the authority of the psychologist William James,⁷³ economist and philosopher John Stuart Mill,⁷⁴ and jurist and historian Frederic Harrison.⁷⁵

Girls are more precocious than boys, as are also the children of low races compared with the highly civilised. Women read and think more rapidly, men more deliberately. Men are more taciturn, women more loquacious. Women are more receptive of opinions from others, less originative of ideas, and less tenacious of tenets, of their own; less able to stand alone, craving sympathy more, not having the same sturdy independence as men. (Walsh 1917c: 43)

⁷³ “Women in general train their peripheral visual attention more than men” (James 1890: 437).

⁷⁴ “[T]he predominant place which quickness of observation holds among a woman's faculties, makes her particularly apt to build over-hasty generalizations upon her own observation; though at the same time no less ready in rectifying those generalizations, as her observation takes a wider range” (Mill 1869:107); “Let us now consider another of the admitted superiorities of clever women, greater quickness of apprehension” (110); “A woman's brain is sooner fatigued, sooner exhausted; but given the degree of exhaustion, we should expect to find that it would recover itself sooner” (122).

⁷⁵ “The ancient judgment of civilised mankind is simply that *men* are fitter for the laborious, rougher, dangerous, exhausting, and outdoor forms of industry; *women* fitter for the more delicate, subtle, artistic, domestic forms of industry; that men have more energy, courage, coolness, and stability; women more affection, tenderness, mercy, and self devotion; that the intellect of men is more capable of prolonged and intense abstraction, is a drier light, as Bacon says, and can be kept longer in extreme tension at a steadier glow; that the intellect of women is more alert, in quicker correspondence with the external world and the internal world of emotion, is altogether more delicate, more subtle, rapid, and versatile. All this is the A B C of human nature, embodied in a thousand institutions, customs, and maxims, idealised in a thousand types of art from Pheidias and Sophocles to Raphael and Shakespeare, Fielding, Scott, Miss Austin, and George Eliot” (Harrison 1908: 94; emphasis in original).

Women are instinctively more intuitive than men, “more suggestive of ideas,” a conclusion Walsh credited to John Stuart Mill, ideas upon which men later “elaborate” (Walsh 1917c: 44). Continuing his litany of distinctions between the sexes, Walsh concluded (on the authority of the Irish historian and political theorist William Edward Hartpole Lecky),⁷⁶

Women ... are more emotional, irritable, or “affectable,” more hypnotic, more subject to hysteria, ecstasy, and suggestibility; more impulsive, more vindictive, also more forgiving, and therefore, in the magnifying spectacles of men, more diabolic as well as more angelic; in general, more subject to fanaticism.... (Walsh 1917c: 45)

Walsh accepted that reforms were indeed necessary to correct the more egregious inequities, but such reforms must take into account the real distinctions between the sexes and not simply assert equality as a first principle. Yet the reforms of the Feminists are such “that spring from the idea of the sexes being equal,” acknowledging “no difference of function beyond that of child-bearing.” Reforms they advocate “would be possible only under socialism, or an equal economic status of the two sexes artificially produced.” But then as women would be dependent on the State, they would at the same time become independent of men (“fathers and husbands”). Ironically, such dependence on the State would still result in women being dependent on men, as “the state’s ability to support and defend all its members would still be principally the work of the men,” although the collective dependence of the women on the men would be kept out of sight – gallantly denied by the men, and ungratefully unrecognised by the women. Such at least would be the feminist contribution to socialism. As far as, and as long as, socialism is possible, men and women may be economically equal. On this possibility – and some of them think it possible even without reference to socialism – the feminists build; to this end they direct their efforts (Walsh 1917c: 118).

Feminism and Marriage

Walsh made abundantly clear his views of the equality of the sexes and marriage: “Men and women can no more be made absolutely equal in the married state, than they can be in any other state. Yet this is now the feminist ideal, with inclination, when equilibrium cannot be maintained, in favour of the women” (Walsh 1917c: 110). In Walsh’s telling,

⁷⁶ “Women, and especially unmarried women, are on the whole more impulsive and emotional than men; more easily induced to gratify an undisciplined or misplaced compassion, to the neglect of the larger and more permanent interests of society; more apt to dwell upon the proximate than the more distant results; more subject to fanaticisms, which often acquire almost the intensity of monomania” (Lecky 1899: 556).

the institution of marriage ... was originally made by men for the benefit of the race, when men found themselves in the spiritual and economic lead. Then they organised themselves as protectors of their children, including their daughters, and of their wives, even of their mothers. It may be that originally, under a mistaken theory of generation, the institution of marriage was bent too much in favour of men; but that is not a reason why now it should be bent too much in favour of women or be unbent altogether. Physiological and economic facts of nature still remain, which require men to keep the leadership. (Walsh 1917c: 113)

While laws had been passed respecting equal rights, Feminists continue to maintain that they remain “in a subordinate position, in subjection, in dependence,” and take umbrage at the thought of “being owned.”⁷⁷ To escape the perceived subjection, they demand equality with men; they demand, “[i]f nature does not make them equal, men must,” while insisting that, in fact, “nature does make them equal.” Yet, in Walsh’s view, “as nature has not made them equal, men cannot.” Here the Feminists remain resolute: “women must be men’s equal not only in the state, but in the home – not only politically, but domestically – not only as citizens, but as conjoints and as parents” (Walsh 1917c: 113–114).⁷⁸

The Feminist demands “go against the very essence of marriage.” Marriage, Walsh affirmed, “having been instituted either by custom or by law, is, when once entered upon, an obligatory and as far as possible permanent association, forming the smallest society of only two, with prospect of more, who are bound together by mutual rights and duties.” In the formation, each party gains and loses certain rights, “the man loses his right to spend all his income on himself and gains rights (now almost reduced, before the law, to nothing) over his wife and his children, while the woman loses certain rights over herself, her property, and her children (or rather lost them, for now it is difficult to say what she loses, except her father’s name), and gains rights over her husband and his property.” Walsh, however, perceived a distinction between the relative gains and losses of the parties, seeing in marriage a similarity to the relationship in any other type of association. Thus, “in marriage the one party must preferably be superior, since otherwise it would rarely be lasting, and as by nature the man generally is, in the

⁷⁷ Walsh quoted in support author and abolitionist Harriet Beecher Stowe: “We have heard much talk, of late, on the husband’s ownership of the wife. But, dear ladies, is that any more pronounced a fact than every wife’s ownership of her husband? an ownership so intense and pervading that it may be said to be the controlling nerve of womanhood. Let any one touch your right to the first place in your husband’s regard, and see!” (Stowe 1871: 54; quoted in Walsh 1917c: 113n43).

⁷⁸ Citing Mary Wollstonecraft – “[W]hen morality shall be settled on a more solid basis, then, without being gifted with a prophetic spirit, I will venture to predict that woman will be either the friend or slave of man” (Wollstonecraft 1792: 66–67) – and Thomas Higginson – “Woman must be a subject or an equal; there is no middle ground” (Higginson 1859: 137–138). Both quoted in Walsh (1917c: 114n46).

relevant respects, the superior, he is almost everywhere so recognised by law” (Walsh 1917c: 119). On this interpretation, of course, the Feminists disagree:

Against this natural condition of inequality within the body marital, especially against the requirement of obedience on the part of the wife, objections are now being raised by our advanced women, to whom marriage as a “man-made” institution no longer appears worthy of respect... But as it is impossible for marriage to be otherwise, these women and their male abettors practically wish to make marriage over into something which is no longer marriage at all. (Walsh 1917c: 120)

This “ideal” is “friendship or comradeship,” in other words, “a union of friends. Women as wives are to be, not the consorts of men for the perpetuation of the family and the race, but their companions, or *hetairae*, for the pleasure of close association and sexual intercourse” (Walsh 1917c: 120).⁷⁹ For Walsh, friendship is a relation among equals, love a relationship between unequals. “Therefore, the opinion of the feminists being that men and women are equal, it is right for them to set up friendship as their ideal.” The desire of the Feminists, “carrying out the idea more logically,” is the elimination of marriage, substituting in its place “the pure love of free lovers or friends” (121–122).⁸⁰

The advocacy of equality of the sexes thus promotes a sense of independence of women, as they are to be granted access to the same opportunities as men. For Walsh, the result can only be catastrophic for the family as a unit and the race as a whole, as it delegitimizes the very institution of marriage:

People prepare their sons to make their way in the world that they may be able to marry; and now people are advised to prepare their daughters to make their way in the world, equally dependent, that they may not need to marry! To educate boys to be men, is to help perpetuate the race; to educate girls to be like men, is to help bring it to a stop. (Walsh 1917c: 216)

⁷⁹ Walsh quoted Mill: “The highest order of durable and happy attachments would be a hundred times more frequent than they are, if the affection which the two sexes sought from one another were that genuine friendship, which only exists between equals in privileges as in faculties” (Mill 1851: 307; reprinted in *Dissertations and Discussions* 1874). Walsh erroneously cited *Subjection of Women* as the source (Walsh 1917c: 122n13).

⁸⁰ Consider the position of the American anarchist Voltairine de Cleyre: “Nothing is more disgustingly vulgar to me than the so-called sacrament of marriage; outraging all delicacy with the trumpeting of private matters in the general ear. ... But it is neither a religious nor a civil ceremony that I refer to now, when I say that ‘those who marry do ill.’ The ceremony is only a form, a ghost, a meatless shell. By marriage I mean the real thing, the permanent relation of a man and a woman, sexual and economical, whereby the present home and family life is maintained. It is of no importance to me whether this is a polygamous, polyandric, or monogamous marriage, nor whether it was blessed by a priest, permitted by a magistrate, contracted publicly or privately, or not contracted at all. It is the permanent dependent relationship which, I affirm, is detrimental to the growth of individual character, and to which I am unequivocally opposed. Now my opponents know where to find me” (de Cleyre 1908: 502).

To prevent such an outcome is justification enough for “discrimination in the preparation of the young for their life–work,” with education being different for men and women, appropriate to their respective roles in society (Walsh 1917c: 216).⁸¹

Assist young men to advance themselves in the world, and in all probability you are leading them to marriage and the rearing of a family: help a boy and you are helping a girl, and are providing for the future. Assist young women to advance themselves in the world, and in all probability you are leading them away from marriage and from the rearing a family: help a girl and you help her alone, and are shutting your eyes to the future. Found a college for males, and you are aiding the advancement of the race. Found a college for females, and you are abetting race–suicide. (Walsh 1917c: 216–217)

In Walsh’s mind, then, Socialism and Feminism, as we have seen, in redefining social morality and encouraging the transformation of marriage and family relations, actively promote the reconstitution of societal relations and hasten the collapse of civilization. Should the “twin evils” prove ineffective, then the education of women will lead society to the same inevitable end.

Feminism and Eugenics

One additional consideration involves the very continuation of the human species. It may be possible to achieve an equality of men and women were it not for the fact that women “are organized for producing children,” and, as a result, “are periodically enfeebled, especially in the years of education and apprenticeship.” In those instances in which women undergo training equivalent to that of men, they may become “either broken in health or stunted in child–bearing capacity, let alone child–rearing aptitude.” Procreation and child–rearing Walsh argued are a woman’s “own proper work,” so to insist that

⁸¹ Walsh cited as justification for his assertion the physician and otologist Edward H. Clarke’s *Sex in Education*. Clarke’s stated objective was “to show how faulty and pregnant of ill the education of American girls has been and is, and to demonstrate the truth, that the progress and development of the race depend upon the appropriate, and not upon the identical education of the sexes. Little good will be done in this direction, however, by any advice or argument, by whatever facts supported, or by whatever authority presented, unless the women of our country are themselves convinced of the evils that they have been educated into, and out of which they are determined to educate their daughters” (Clarke 1873: 161). Julia Ward Howe the following year (1874) edited a volume dedicated to a critique of Clarke’s book. In her essay, “Sex and Education,” she wrote: “Much in Dr. Clarke’s treatment of his subject is objectionable. We are left in doubt whether his book was written for men or for women, and we conclude that his method of statement is not good for either. Much of his remarking upon sex is justly offensive, and his statements concerning those single women of culture whom he terms *agenes* would scarcely be endured in any household in which these single saints bear the burthens of all the others, and lead lives divinely wedded to duty. The odious expression which completes his picture of ‘the girls tied to their dictionaries,’ &c., would exclude the book, and the writer too, from some pure and polite circles” (Howe 1874: 29–30). Walsh, of course, failed to mention Howe’s volume.

women are capable of anything more than their “special work,” that being work suitable to their constitution, is contrary to the nature of the sexes. Further, men, “brought up with the idea that they are to be no better than women as providers for the home,” become so, and as a result “do not care to be burdened with children” or leave the decision to their wives. In the end, “the middle or upper classes of the nation that takes up this new system, are doomed to ultimate extinction, leaving the country to the lower classes – to the less fit, and consequently abandoning it to decline” (Walsh 1917c: 224–225).⁸² The path to decline is clear. “Feminism,” he asserted, “begun among the asexual, is spreading to those with normal sexual instincts, who, in a false imitation of the others, repress them.” Those possessed of “normal sexual instincts” – “virile men and feminine women of the upper or leading classes or races” – are not immune to “the anti-child-bearing mania” of the Feminists, and so “their progeny also will die off, leaving the world in the hands of inferior classes or races.”⁸³ The collapse of civilization will then be complete (372).⁸⁴ Thus, “[a]s the socialists would sacrifice liberty to equality, so the feminists would sacrifice the lasting interests of humanity to their transient whims” (353).

The actions of the State in the enactment of laws cannot escape responsibility for the decline; laws prohibiting abortion “on the part of raped or deceived women” should be overturned.⁸⁵ “Perhaps,” Walsh opined, “the foolishness law we have in this matter is the

⁸² Walsh enlisted the authority of Herbert Spencer in his *Study of Sociology* and *Principles of Sociology*: “Just as occasional gynæcomasty in men, which can be exercised only at the cost of masculine strength, is not counted among masculine attributes, so exceptionally high intellectual production by women, under special discipline, should not be counted ‘as truly feminine, if it entails decreased fulfillment of the maternal functions. Only that mental energy is normally feminine which can co-exist with the production and nursing of the due number of children. Obviously a power of mind which, if general among the women of a society, would entail disappearance of the society, is a power not to be included in an estimate of the feminine nature as a social factor” (Walsh 1917c: 225).

⁸³ Cf. Saleeby: “Woman is half the race; and the leaders of the woman’s movement must recognize the importance of their sex in this fundamental question of eugenics. At present they do not do so; indeed, no one does.” And: “The eugenics which ignores the natural differences between women as individuals, and their still greater natural differences as potential parents, is only half eugenics; the leading women who in any way countenance such measures as deprive the blood of the future of its due contribution from the best women of the present, are leading not only one sex but the race as a whole to ruin” (Saleeby 1911: 5). He declared “the most valuable end which this book might possibly achieve ... is that the best women, those favoured by Nature in physique and intelligence, in character and their emotional nature, the women who are increasingly to be found enlisted in the ranks of Feminism, and fighting the great fight for the Women’s Cause, shall be convinced by the unchangeable and beneficent facts of biology, seen in the bodies and minds of women, and shall direct their efforts accordingly; so that they and those of their sisters who are of the same natural rank, instead of increasingly deserting the ranks of motherhood and leaving the blood of inferior women to constitute half of all future generations, shall on the contrary furnish an ever-increasing proportion of our wives and mothers, to the great gain of themselves, and of men, and of the future” (14). Saleeby actually coined the term “Eugenic Feminism” (7).

⁸⁴ Walsh believed that the Feminist movement had begun with upper-class women, who “have been so fed on the fat of the land and pampered, that they think themselves entitled to everything their sickly fancy may care for” (Walsh 1917c: 373).

⁸⁵ Here he cited Forel: “I have already said that in cases of rape, and forced pregnancy in general, the right to artificial abortion should be conceded to the woman. On the other hand, I think it should be prohibited on principle when

one forbidding contraception.”⁸⁶ It is but another example of the government intrusion into the lives of the people, in essence infringing on the right of free speech, limiting the transfer of useful knowledge. “Knowledge of contraception is only an extension of our knowledge of conception,” such knowledge being “one of the things which distinguish men from brutes.” Moralists have preached against it, adamant that its allowance can only lead to moral depravity and social decay. Walsh’s counterargument rested on the gains to be had from the diffusion of knowledge of contraceptive practices, especially in respect of “means of preventing and curing infection.” Such knowledge may in fact promote moral behavior, as it may serve as “a positive moral injunction upon all married people afflicted with hereditary defects.” As the law is applied, however, knowledge of the benefits of contraception seemed only to have been had by those of the upper classes who practice restraint, while the lower classes “go on breeding more or less lavishly.”⁸⁷

the fecundating coitus has been voluntary on both sides, and when there is no medical reason for such a measure. In principle, the human embryo, when once conceived, should have the right to live. Birth is only an episode in life. This generally takes place at the end of the ninth lunar month of pregnancy, but a child born at the seventh month is often viable. It is, therefore, arbitrary not to recognize the right of the embryo to live. On the contrary, the right that a woman has to dispose of her body would seem to outweigh this, when conception has been imposed on her by stratagem or violence. In fact, the right of the embryo to life should depend on the wish of the bearers of each of the two germs by which it is formed, at the moment of conception” (Forel 1908: 409). He then allowed of exceptions to his rule: “Some pregnancies are a veritable misfortune for the parents and offspring, when the bodily and mental health of the mother or child, or both of them, is in danger. When a lunatic or an idiot, married or not, makes a woman pregnant, artificial abortion should be allowed; also in all cases when an insane or epileptic woman becomes pregnant” (409). “An analogous case is that where a drunkard renders his wife pregnant against her will, especially when he is intoxicated at the moment; for the offspring runs a great risk of blastophthoria” (410).

⁸⁶ An example of such a law is “Act of the Suppression of Trade in, and Circulation of, obscene Literature and Articles of immoral Use,” Forty-second Congress, Session III, Chapter 258, 3 March 1873, known as the Comstock Act. The Act reads:

“Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That whoever, with the District of Columbia or any of the Territories of the United States, or other place within the exclusive jurisdiction of the United States, shall sell, or lend, or give away, or in any manner exhibit, or shall offer to sell, or to lend, or to give away, or in any manner to exhibit, or shall otherwise publish or offer to publish in any manner, or shall have in his possession, for any such purpose or purposes, any obscene book, pamphlet, paper, writing, advertisement, circular, print, picture, drawing or other representation, figure, or image on or of paper or other material, or any cast, instrument, or other article of an immoral nature, or any drug or medicine, or any article whatever, for the prevention of conception, or for causing unlawful abortion, or shall advertize the same for sale, or shall write or print, or cause to be written or printed, any card, circular, book, pamphlet, advertisement, or notice of any kind, stating when, where, how, or of whom, or by what means, any of the articles in this section hereinbefore mentioned, can be purchased or obtained, or shall manufacture, draw, or print, or in any wise make any of such articles, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and, on conviction thereof in any court of the United States having criminal jurisdiction in the District of Columbia, or in any Territory or place within the exclusive jurisdiction of the United States, where such misdemeanor shall have been committed; and on conviction thereof, he shall be imprisoned at hard labor in the penitentiary for not less than six months nor more than five years for each offense, or fined not less than one hundred dollars nor more than two thousand dollars, with costs of court” *Statutes at Large* (1873).

⁸⁷ Walsh cited the American physician, eugenicist, and sexologist William Josephus Robinson in support: “[T]hose best fit to

The law thus “unbalances Malthusianism, permitting it above, and preventing it below; which is just the reverse of what should be.” Feminists to their credit opposed the laws restricting access to contraception; in this “[t]hey recognise, with the eugenists, that to some persons contraception should be actually recommended” (Walsh 1917c: 116–117).

One of those upon whom Walsh relied in support of his conclusions regarding eugenics and Feminism was C. Gasquoine Hartley (Mrs. Walter M. Gallichan).⁸⁸ He actually devoted six pages of *Feminism* (193–198) to quotations from her work, with which he quite wholeheartedly disagreed. Still, here views on eugenics and the need to preserve the race are worth review. In her 1913 *The Truth About Woman*, Hartley wrote of the responsibility, the obligation, of the woman to “capture her mate because the race must perish without her travail; she is fulfilling Nature’s ends, as well as her own, whatever means she uses.” With the return of the “woman’s right of selection,” calling forth “a freer and more beautiful mating,” she will be in a much better position “to demand a finer quality in her lovers.” Selection will then be based on the need to perpetuate the race: “Her unborn children importuning her, her choice will be guided by the man’s fitness alone, not, as now it is, by his capacity and power for work and protection.” What she defined as “the true Female Franchise” (“The free power of Selection in Love!”) must “be used by her to ennoble the sex relations and thereby to cleanse society of the unfit,” the attainment of which “will be brought about by giving women such training and education and civic rights, as well as the framing of such laws and changes in the rights of property inheritance, as shall render her economically independent” (Hartley 1913: 255–256).

“Mating” under these conditions will be “more directly in harmony with the welfare of the race.”

A recognition of the pre-natal claims of the child is the new Ethic that is slowly but surely dawning on womankind and on man. He who destroys human life, however unfit that life may be, is remorselessly punished by society, but the woman and man who beget diseased and imbecile children – the necessarily unfit – are not only exonerated from sin, but applauded by both Church and State. Could moral inconstancy go further than this? It is only in the begetting of men that breeding from the worst stocks may be said to be the rule. As long as in our ideas on these questions

breed children, those most likely to transmit a desirable heredity, and those most able to bring up children, are breeding less and less, while those least able to and least capable of bringing up children and giving them a decent education and a decent start in life, and those most tainted with disease, with alcoholism, mental instability, epilepsy, insanity, moronism, etc., keep on breeding unrestrainedly. What that means for the future of a nation the most sluggish thinker can easily perceive. It means that, if no check be put to this state of affairs, eventually the mental and physical standard of the race will be lowered, that the race will begin to degenerate” (Robinson 1915: 53; cited in Walsh 1917c: 117n50).

⁸⁸ As she used the name C. Gasquoine Hartley on the title page of the book, placing her married name in parentheses beneath, we shall refer to Hartley as the accepted name.

superstition remains the guide there is nothing to hope for and much to fear. The new ideal is only beginning, and beginning with a tardiness that is a reproach to human foresight. But herein lies the glad hope of the future. I place my trust in the enlightened conscience of the economically emancipated mothers, and in the awakened fathers, to work out some scheme of sexual salvation as will ensure a race of sounder limb and saner intelligence than any that has yet appeared in our civilisation. (Hartley 1913: 256–257)

It is the responsibility of the woman, then, to “fix the standard in sex,” as “problems of love are linked on to the needs of the race.” It is the mother “who has to play the chief part in the racial life”; the woman’s body “is the sanctuary of the race” (Hartley 1913: 257–258).

With respect to legal regulation, Hartley considered that, prior to marriage, a certificate of health must be obtained, as “[p]arentage on the part of degenerate human beings is a crime, and as such it ought to be prevented.” This she saw not as an infringement on individual rights, but rather as a means of protecting against “the sin of irresponsible parentage,” a sin of greater evil than others one may be inclined to commit. “For if this unceasing crime against the unborn could somehow be stopped there would be so great a reduction of all other sins that we might well be freed from many laws” (Hartley 1913: 345–346). The protection of the race she saw as of paramount importance: “Thus I accept marriage: I believe that its form must be regulated and cannot be left to the development of individual desires against the needs of the race” (349).⁸⁹

For his part, Walsh considered Hartley (Mrs. Gallichan, as he preferred) to be “the most recent and extreme advocate of the new ideas [of the Feminists]” (Walsh 1917c: 150).

Walsh spent considerably more space reviewing the work of Charlotte Perkins Gilman, specifically her *Women and Economics* (1898), to which he devoted thirteen consecutive pages (170–182) and numerous references scattered throughout. Here the emphasis was on the “two great subjects of her discourse – the sex–relation and the economic relation,” and very little if any on her later, more explicit eugenic writings (Walsh 1917c: 171). Nonetheless, in this work as well her views on the subject may be found, in the context of the perverse effect of gender roles on the constitution of the race. The human excessive preoccupation with “sex–attraction,” “urges us to a degree of indulgence which bears no relation to the original needs of the organism, ... an excess which tends to pervert and exhaust desire as well as to injure reproduction.” This excess “not only injures the race

⁸⁹ “Take, for instance, the case of the drunkard, the insane, the syphilitic, the consumptive, parent bound in marriage. On biological and economic grounds it is folly to leave in such hands the protection of the race. It is the business of the State, as I believe, to regulate the law to prevent, as far as possible, the birth of unfit children; at least we may demand that Church and State cease to grant their sanction to this flagrant sin” (Hartley 1913: 355).

through its morbid action on the natural processes of reproduction,” but as well “injures the happiness of the individual through its morbid reaction on his own desires.” The cause of “excessive sex-attraction” she found in “sex-distinction” – the greater the degree of differentiation, “the more forcibly they are attracted to each other.” This distinction had become “so marked as to retard and confuse race-distinction, to check individual distinction, seriously to injure the race.” While “it seems strange at first to differentiate between familiar manifestations of sex-distinction, and to say: ‘This is normal, and should not be disturbed. This is abnormal, and should be removed’,” nonetheless she concluded that it “is precisely what must be done” (Gilman 1898: 31–32).⁹⁰

“Natural selection develops race. Sexual selection develops sex. Sex-development is one throughout its varied forms, tending only to reproduce what is. But race-development rises ever in higher and higher manifestation of energy.” An excessive attention on the sex-distinction may actually become destructive, as it may “check and pervert the progress of the race,” an outcome Gilman saw as “a matter for most serious consideration.” As women become more and more dependent upon men, “the balance of forces is altered” and the process of natural selection “co-operates with” rather than “checks the action of sexual selection” (Gilman 1898: 37). This dependence is transformative: man becomes the “economic environment” of woman, “the strongest modifying force in her economic condition.” The combination of “economic necessity” and “sex-attraction” promote “sex-distinction” in the woman, “not only a means of attracting a mate, as with all creatures, but a means of getting her livelihood, as is the case with no other creature under heaven.” This dependence is transmitted generationally, “and so is steadily implanted in the human constitution the morbid tendency to excess in this relation, which has acted so universally upon us in all ages, in spite of our best efforts to restrain it.” It is “an abnormal sex-tendency, produced and maintained by the abnormal economic relation which makes one sex get its living from the other by the exercise of sex-functions” (38–39). The sex-distinction, however, is not without consequences:

With the human race, whose chief activities are social, the initial tendency to sex-distinction is carried out in many varied functions. We have differentiated our industries, our responsibilities, our very virtues, along sex lines. It will therefore be clear

⁹⁰ “Normal sex-distinction manifests itself in all species in what are called primary and secondary sex-characteristics. The primary are those organs and functions essential to reproduction; the secondary, those modifications of structure and function which subserve the uses of reproduction ultimately, but are not directly essential, – such as the horns of the stag, of use in sex-combat; the plumage of the peacock, of use in sex-competition. All the minor characteristics of beard or mane, comb, wattles, spurs, gorgeous color or superior size, which distinguish the male from the female, – these are distinctions of sex. These distinctions are of use to the species through reproduction only, the processes of race-preservation. They are not of use in self-preservation” (Gilman 1898: 32–33).

that the claim of excessive sex-distinction in humanity, and especially in woman, does not carry with it any specific “moral” reproach, though it does in the larger sense prove a decided evil in its effect on human progress. (Gilman 1898: 41–42)

According to Gilman, a woman’s “weakness,” her “degree of feebleness and clumsiness” manifesting in a “comparative inability to stand, walk, run, jump, climb, and perform other race-functions common to both sexes, is an excessive sex-distinction,” being such as, transmitted to offspring, “retards human development.” This “feminine delicacy” Gilman associated with “an expression of sexuality in excess,” The “relative weakness of women ... is apparent in her to a degree that injures motherhood, that injures wifeness, that injures the individual” and diminishes her usefulness. “In every way the over-sexed condition of the human female reacts unfavorably upon herself, her husband, her children, and the race” (Gilman 1898: 46–47).⁹¹

“Human motherhood is more pathological than any other, more morbid, defective, irregular, diseased. Human childhood is similarly pathological.” As women become more “wholly dependent on the sex-relation as means of livelihood, the more pathological does her motherhood become.” What Gilman perceived to be “excessive specialization in the secondary sexual characteristics” had become “a detrimental element in heredity” (Gilman 1898: 181–182).⁹²

The female segregated to the uses of sex alone naturally deteriorates in racial development, and naturally transmits that deterioration to her offspring. The human mother, in the processes of reproduction, shows no gain in efficiency over the lower animals, but rather a loss, and so far presents no evidence to prove that her specialization to sex is of any advantage to her young. The mother of a dead baby or the baby

⁹¹ “It is good for the individual and for the race to have developed such a degree of passionate and permanent love as shall best promote the happiness of individuals and the reproduction of species. It is not good for the race or for the individual that this feeling should have become so intense as to override all other human faculties, to make a mock of the accumulated wisdom of the ages, the stored power of the will; to drive the individual – against his own plain conviction – into a union sure to result in evil, or to hold the individual helpless in such an evil union, when made” (Gilman 1898: 47–48).

⁹² “Now, if the differentiation of the sexes, larger in the human species than in other animals, and necessary for lifting mankind into its position of superiority over other animals, has at times become excessive and consequently injurious, the correction would seem to be to lessen that excess and bring it back to a useful degree, not to abolish the difference altogether, which would bring mankind back to the condition of the other animals. Mrs. Gilman confuses us. She treats all the human differentiation of the sexes, so different from their status in other animals, as peculiar, abnormal, and excessive, merely in comparison with other animals, in spite of its serviceability in lifting the human species above other animals; and then again she finds an excessive, because injurious, amount of it in comparing mankind at one time and in one place with mankind at other times or in other places. This last excess is the only one that, according to her own principles, would need to be corrected, since it alone has done harm; whereas the other, which has raised mankind above the brutes, has done good, and therefore would seem to call for preservation” (Walsh 1917c: 175).

of a dead mother; the sick baby, the crooked baby, the idiot baby; the exhausted, nervous, prematurely aged mother, – these are not uncommon among us; and they do not show much progress in our motherhood. (Gilman 1898: 183)

Gilman perceived the differentiation of the sexes as having gone too far, a fact that must be accepted if the race is to survive. “The period of women’s economic dependence is drawing to a close, because its racial usefulness is wearing out.”⁹³ The time had come when the duty to society had finally been acknowledged to be of far greater value than the “sex-ties that have been for so long the only ties that we have recognized” (Gilman 1898: 137–138).

The common consciousness of humanity, the sense of social need and social duty, is making itself felt in both men and women. The time has come when we are open to deeper and wider impulses than the sex-instinct; the social instincts are strong enough to come into full use at last. (Gilman 1898: 138)

In the end, “excessive masculinity, in its fierce competition and primitive individualism; and excessive femininity, in its inordinate consumption and hindering conservatism; have reached a stage where they work more evil than good” (Gilman 1898: 139–140). While it may have been true that the “sexuo-economic relation” was instrumental in the development of society up to a point, it had become apparent that, to continue to develop, “a higher relation must be adopted,” else, “either the race succumbs to the morbid action of its own forces or some fresher race comes in, and begins the course of social evolution anew” (142).

Gilman’s writings on eugenic policy were more fully developed in her later writings, including those in professional journals and in her own outlet, *The Forerunner*, published from 1909 to 1916, to which Walsh made no reference. Two examples should suffice to make the point. In “A Suggestion on the Negro Problem,” an essay contributed to the *American Journal of Sociology*, Gilman declared, “We have to consider the unavoidable presence of a large body of aliens, of a race widely dissimilar and in many respects inferior, whose present status is to us a social injury. If we had left them alone in their own country this dissimilarity and inferiority would be, so to speak, none of our business” (Gilman 1908: 78). Her solution, “to promote the development of the backward race so that it may become an advantageous element in the community,” was for each state to organize “the whole body of negroes who do not progress, who are not self-supporting, who are degenerating into an increasing percentage of social burdens

⁹³ Walsh responded: “She thus attributes the need of a change to the process having gone too far: the differentiation of the sexes has become excessive, wherefore it must be exchanged for another relation, of equality and independence, or the race will end” (Walsh 1917c: 174–175).

or actual criminals” into an “army,” each unit having “its uniforms, its decorations, its titles, its careful system of grading, its music and banners and impressive ceremonies” (79, 81). This organization, “enlistment” into which would be compulsory, would be responsible for the construction of essential infrastructure, and would, as well, result in “the improvement in the negroes themselves [and] would add steadily to their value as constituents of the body politic” (83).

In a later essay, “The Sanctity of Human Life,” Gilman wrote: “Human Life is sacred, far too sacred to be allowed to fall into hideous degeneracy. If we had a proper regard for human life we should take instant measures to check the supply of feeble-minded and defective persons, and further measures to prevent the reproduction of such unfortunates” (Gilman 1916: 136; Ziegler 2008: 227). But a full examination of these writings is beyond the scope of the present essay.⁹⁴

Epilogue

Walsh’s *Feminism* thus tied together the themes of the previous two volumes, associating Feminism with Socialism and the Climax (and eventual decay) of Civilization. Replete with citations documenting each of his assertions, and presenting arguments for and against, the book was for its time received as a comprehensive and definitive analysis of the subject. Yet it is a book very much of its time, a commentary on a particularly divisive national (and international) issue, clearly meant to influence discussion on the causes of the moral decay of society, as well as such matters as the extension of the suffrage and the place of women in the workplace and in politics.

A decade later Walsh revisited the issue, this time in newspaper interviews published in the Wilkes-Barre *Evening News*. In the first, entitled “Making the Feminist Holler,” he was identified as a “Great Authority on Feminism” and offered his opinion on the “mental differences between the sexes”:

Women read and think more rapidly – men more deliberately.

Men are more taciturn – women more loquacious. Women are more receptive of opinions from others, less originative of ideas, less tenacious of tenets, less able to stand alone, not having the sturdy independence of men. ...

Women are more personal in their emotions – men more impersonal. Men hold more to justice, and women incline more to mercy. Women are more utilitarian, men more aesthetic. Women are more practical in little things, men better managers in the larger concerns of life. Women’s minds run to particulars, man’s to generalities.

⁹⁴ See Mary Ziegler (2008) for a more thorough review of Gilman’s writings on eugenic feminism.

Advance into the unknown has been mostly by men. On the whole, women are reposeful, passive, yielding, submissive, receptive. Man is active, aggressive, wild, erratic, divergent, extravagant. Leadership is his. He seeks expansion. Accordingly, he has always been the inventor and improver. Genius is incompatible with the particularistic tendency of woman's mind. The greater range of the male mind, its grasp of the abstract, account for its greater genius.

But males are shorter lived than females because they use themselves up faster. (*Evening News* 1927a: 6)

The second, entitled "Has Man Stunted Woman's Genius," identified Walsh as "The Noted Authority on Feminism" (*Evening News* 1927b: 6), and continued along the same lines as the first. Evidently Walsh, after witnessing a decade of social, economic, and political advances in women's rights, felt little need to reconsider his earlier positions, if anything becoming even more strident.

Reviews

The trilogy called forth three important reviews, the first, a lengthy piece by the philosopher F. C. S. Schiller in the *Eugenics Review*, the second by economist Ernest L. Bogart in *The American Political Science Review*, and the third by economist Thomas Nixon Carver in *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*.

Schiller began by heaping praise on Walsh's work: "it is a rare pleasure to come across a work so well thought out, informed and documented as are the three volumes which make up Mr. Walsh's treatise." Readers will his views "very definite and set forth with uncompromising candour," and, while some may disagree, "all will find them mentally bracing, instructive, and provocative of thought, while they will not find it easy to confute him or to pick holes in his serried argument." Walsh is further

a *Real-politicker* of a rather grim sort, who has pretty completely emancipated himself from the cant and catchwords of popular politics. He has no belief in pacifism, in the universal brotherhood of man, in the beneficent influence of women, and is not in the least disposed to a facile optimism about the prospects of the human race. He holds rather that a life worth living must be fought for, that men are born fighters, and that women are an encumbrance for a fighting man, who should therefore be taught to know their place and keep out of the way. Yet he, too, realises that in some directions, *e.g.*, in contending with feminism, he may be fighting a losing battle. (Schiller 1918: 97)

Schiller, in addition, identified Walsh as "a Darwinian and a militarist," "a eugenicist," and "a strong anti-Socialist and anti-feminist," who, on account of the

growing influence of Socialism and Feminism, despaired for the fate of civilization (Schiller 1918: 97). Having highlighted the major points of the three volumes, Schiller concluded that Walsh “has the courage of his convictions, and is not afraid of the rebuke that his spiritual home is in modern Germany,” in the sense that “he marshals the arguments for the militant interpretation of life far more lucidly, forcibly and weightily than its German exponents from Treitschke to Bernhardt.” The three volumes “should therefore become a standard work” (99).

Still, Schiller was not without objections. The “militant struggle for existence...is only a racial habit,” which, as such, “can be changed if we set ourselves intelligently to supersede it by a better, institute a new order, and adjust ourselves to it.” Humanity is not predestined to discord and conflict; “there is no natural absurdity about the notion of a human kind that has become enlightened enough to discard and abhor *all* the catchwords which the stirrers-up of strife have used from time to time to turn the earth into a hell” (Schiller 1918: 100). Second, while “scientific, unpolitical Darwinism” allows the continual survival of “the meek and the weak,” testifying to their fitness, Schiller opined that Walsh may find this, nevertheless, to be “a serious bar to progress,” to which eugenists may likely agree. Yet one cannot rely on coercion “to make the worthy breed, or to check the multiplication of the unworthy.” Nothing short of the “remoulding of the conditions of life until it once more seems worth living to the best, and more so to the better than the worse” will remedy the situation (100). Third, the transmission of knowledge through education and tradition provides the means by which humanity can progress. Still, “it is entirely conceivable that the human race should commit suicide in a variety of ways, of which the persistence in militarist habits may be one of the most effective.” The solution lies in our ability to alter “the moral instincts and habits we have inherited from savage ancestors.” Such may yet fail unless we can succeed in developing “a system of artificial selection which is more effective and less demoralising” than natural selection. In this he expressed agreement with Walsh, while acknowledging that Walsh seems “unduly obsessed by the idea that quantity, without regard for quality, is a military necessity,” as he seems also to be unaware of the work being done on the subject, particularly among English eugenists. Fourth, Schiller seemed puzzled by what he sensed was the “exaggerated importance” Walsh placed on woman suffrage, holding Walsh’s argument against greater democracy to be “unsound” (101).

Bogart observed that, for Walsh, “the real canker in the flower of our present civilization, which is hastening its demise, is feminism,” which “is the logical consummation of socialism.” Both Socialism and Feminism share a morality “which strives to replace the Puritan ideal of duty, substituting selfishness and ease for the spirit of self-sacrifice and willingness to assume obligations.” Bogart opined that Walsh proceeded with his project after having first arrived at his conclusion, demonstrating

“a degree of prevision which few have shown since the days of the Old Testament prophets,” allying him with Jeremiah “as a prophet of evil” (Bogart 1918: 739–740).

Carver found the significance of Walsh’s three volumes “not to be found in the views they set forth, but in the wealth of learning and the discriminating judgment which they display.” Walsh is “a real student, with a penetrating mind which can see through the ordinary claptrap of popular philosophy which has, unfortunately, sometimes been imported in the proceedings of learned societies.” Avarice and greed, the coveting of the accomplishments of those who have succeeded, call forth attempts “to defy the laws of the land and make incursions over the class border.” Failure to acknowledge “this tendency in human nature” may have dire consequences. Walsh’s work, then, offers the readers a means to understand the problems besetting society as it clarifies the nature of this propensity in mankind (Carver 1919: 715–716).

Conclusion

Correa Moylan Walsh’s political and social philosophy as represented in his three-volume polemic (for what better term is there) may be viewed as a reaction to the Progressive challenge to the status quo, a looming threat to the institutions and the very moral structure of American society. Socialism and Feminism he believed were becoming more and more acceptable, or were at least being packaged in such a way as to offer a reasonable, viable alternative to the existing order which appeared to have fundamental flaws too numerous and ingrained to be resolved. This acceptance was especially noticeable among the upper classes, who seemed willfully and blissfully ignorant of the consequences should the stated goals of either come to be realized. Yet, in all, Socialism never did capture the imagination of the American people, no matter the socioeconomic realities or the efforts of its supporters in marketing the product. Feminism fared much better, in that the movement eventually led to the acknowledgment of the equal rights of women and the extension of the suffrage.

Walsh’s arguments were presented in such a way as to lend an air of authority, his assertions quite thoroughly documented, justifying in most instances his summaries of the views of those with whom he disagreed. In many cases he may well have been accused of excess and heavy-handedness, making of a few examples a case against an entire group. Often his arguments had the character of straw men. Bogart characterized him as a Jeremiah, sounding a warning as to the end of civilization. Others may see him as a Cassandra, whose prophecies were not to be believed. Or perhaps he was a quixotic figure, tilting at windmills, seeing dangers where none existed.

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