‘The Streets Have Been Watched Regularly’: the York Penitentiary Society, young working-class women, and the regulation of behaviour in the public spaces of York, c. 1845-1919

Author

Laura Harrison

Abstract

The York Penitentiary Society, a charitable female reformatory in York, aimed to transform ‘fallen’ women in the city into useful citizens through institutionalisation, domestic training, and moral and religious instruction. The Penitentiary focused on isolating its ‘inmates’ from wider society, but its moral reach extended far beyond the high walls of the Refuge, and the young women confined within. This article examines the York Penitentiary Society, and considers how it acted to police the streets and public spaces of York, and the behaviour of young women who populated them. In addition to adding detail to our understanding of the operation of female reform institutions, this study also adds to our knowledge on the unofficial policing of women’s behaviour in public space, and has significant implications for histories of urban life.

Bio

Laura Harrison is a Senior Lecturer in Modern History at the University of the West of England, Bristol. She has previously published on urban poverty and the attempts made by reformers to understand and 'map' the slums of the Victorian and Edwardian city, and is currently revising her doctoral research on young working-class behaviour in public space for publication as her first monograph. Her next projects include a spatial history of youth culture in Britain, and a study of rural youth in the South West. Correspondence to: Dr Laura Harrison, Department of Arts and Creative Industries, University of the West of England, Frenchay Campus, Bristol, BS16 1QY. Email: laura2.harrison@uwe.ac.uk

Introduction

In February 1873, the Reverend J. C. Thompson, the chaplain of York Castle Prison, addressed the committee, subscribers and interested members of the public at the annual meeting of the York Penitentiary Society. Reverend Thompson spoke 'at some length' about the 'immoral tendency of the youth in the city', expressing particular concern over the 'deplorable' problem of 'allowing girls to wander about the streets at night', and the importance of the work done by the Penitentiary Society in rescuing those young women who followed 'evil courses'.[1] In 1902, the Society warned of the 'danger for young girls' that was to be found in the city, noting that 'a thirst for amusement and excitement out of doors' led many a young woman to ruin, and in 1907 they informed their subscribers that some young women who had gone astray or were in danger were 'watched for months'.[2]

The York Penitentiary Society was formed in 1822, and opened a long-term sheltering home, the Refuge, in Bishophill in 1845. Between 1845 and 1919, when the Society moved to new premises in Clifton and became known as the York Training Home for Girls, the Refuge, in common with other charitable female reformatories, was used to correct the behaviour of 'disorderly' women, particularly those defined as 'fallen'. The Society hoped to address what they saw as the culture of immorality in the city through institutionalisation, moral education and domestic training: 'a system of constant labour, discipline and pious instruction'.[3] This combination of education and domestic training aimed at producing young women who could be productive and morally non-threatening, and thus be returned to society. Following Foucault, historians have emphasised the totalizing nature of corrective institutions and reformatories like the Refuge, but the moral reach of the Penitentiary extended far beyond the walls of the institution.[4] Members of the Society observed the streets and thoroughfares of York, and the behaviour of the young men and women who populated them. The Society and its subscribers were particularly concerned with moral decency in the city, and they unofficially policed the streets and public spaces of York. In conjunction with the police, civic authorities, and other institutions concerned with the behaviour of 'disorderly' women, the Penitentiary Society played an important role in both defining and controlling the behaviour of young women in public space. The Society was concerned to protect young women from the physical and moral dangers inherent in the city, but also with the implications of the presence of 'disorderly' young, largely working-class, women on constructions of the city centre as a moral and civic space. They attempted to both 'rescue' young women, and police their movements across the urban landscape.

This article is interested in the social control of young women's use of public space in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, and uses the rich and previously under-utilised records of the York Penitentiary Society to explore attempts to control the street behaviour of young working-class women though unofficial surveillance. Less historical attention has been given to these semi-penal institutions than to the more formal punishment of the prison system,[5] and this article examines the operation of the Penitentiary Society and its rescue home, the Refuge, in some detail, before moving on to consider its efforts to define and regulate young women's behaviour in the streets, adding to our knowledge on the various ways in which city spaces have been regulated according to moral codes of respectability and order. The Penitentiary worked to maintain gendered meanings of the city's public spaces through their public pronouncements, their cooperation with the police and civic authorities, their surveillance and monitoring of the streets, and their direct interventions in behaviour, and a focused case study can provide more detail on the numerous ways women's use of public space was unofficially policed and morally constrained.[6] How did the York Penitentiary Society define young women's behaviour in public, and act to uphold moral understandings of urban public space? How did the young women who passed through the Penitentiary records interact with those who looked to control their behaviour, and negotiate with notions of respectability, urban moral danger and immorality? What implications might these interactions have had for *all* women's use of public space? This article seeks to address these questions by examining the relationship between the Penitentiary Society, the primarily young working-class women who feature in their records, and the streets and public spaces of the city. In doing so, the study adds additional detail to our understanding of the operation of female reform institutions like the Penitentiary Society, and enhances our knowledge of the various ways women's use of public space was morally circumscribed.

Young Women and the Control of Disorder

Expectations, concerns and ideas about public space both reflected and, at times, intensified the prevailing gender ideology. Gender and space are intricately related; 'spatial control, whether enforced through the power of convention or symbolism, or through the straightforward threat of violence' is a 'fundamental element in the constitution of gender in its (highly varied) forms'.[7] The position of women in the urban environment has been the subject of considerable historical interest, and feminist geographers and historians have

brought the subject of gender and its spatial connotations to the fore.[8] Interpretations of public space and 'public' are also the focus of an extensive literature,[9] and historical accounts of women and public space in the city consider both the opportunities and restrictions faced by women as users of public space.[10] The conduct of young women in the streets could act as a significant factor in the signals that indicated the public nature of space, and respectability could be dependent on space, time and occasion. The streets and public spaces of York were social spaces in which gender relations played out, and the image of the city invoked tensions around space, place and appropriate feminine behaviour.

Various agencies were concerned with controlling access to public space, and managing behaviour within it. How people dressed, moved, talked, gestured and interacted had an impact on the definition of space. The scrutiny of behaviour in public necessitated identifying deviations from the 'norm' in order that 'disorderly' practices might be condemned and prevented. 'Disorderly' behaviour could include a range of actions that took place in the streets, from riots associated with public protest, to public drunkenness, indecent language and playing football in the street.[11] In one instance, the residents of St Sampson's Square wrote to the chief constable of York to complain of the 'nuisance' caused daily by 'the uproarious and disorderly conduct of a number of boys engaged to sell evening newspapers', but the notion of disorder was also connected to reputation in particularly gendered ways, and young women's behaviour in public was often subject to the most intensive scrutiny.[12] Middle-class reformers, the police, and civic authorities looked to control who was using the streets, at what times and in what manner, and to exclude those people and actions not deemed appropriate. They were alert to the importance of maintaining the urban environment, and sought to manage the use of public space.

The attempts of the 'new police' to regulate behaviour in urban public space has received much attention from historians, and for Robert Storch, the policeman served as a 'domestic missionary'; a 'professional, bureaucratically organised lever of urban discipline'.[13] Although the language of 'missionary' has been objected to,[14] the enforcement of public order was certainly part of the role ascribed to the new police, and they actively sought to clear disorderly men and women from the busy central streets of the city. Young women were in the minority of those who appeared before the courts charged with 'disorderly' offences, yet their behaviour was closely monitored and regulated across public space. One Sunday evening in May 1885 three young women were standing on the footpath in a central city street and were asked to 'move on' by PC Hawkins. However, the girls 'only

laughed at him', and were subsequently taken to the police station and charged with obstruction. In court, the chief constable noted how such behaviour by young girls in the streets had become a 'fearful nuisance' which the magistrates must put down. The girls were fined 1s, but told if they appeared again before the Bench they would be dealt with more severely.[15] When later that year the magistrate dismissed the case of two girls of 'about fifteen years of age' for being 'disorderly' in the city centre on account of their age, the chief constable forcibly replied that 'the disorderly conduct complained of was caused chiefly by juveniles the age of the defendants'. The magistrate noted that in future 'all would have to be punished'.[16]

Historians have also discussed the role played by citizens and the local press in monitoring, defining and publicising 'disorderly' behaviour, emphasizing their role in the 'civilizing' of urban public space. In his study of street behaviour in Merthyr Tydfil, Andy Croll has argued that newspapers were 'tireless promulgators of notions of urban civilization'.[17] 'Concerned citizens' and 'ratepayers' could publicise incidents of disorderly behaviour that had come to their attention, and through the reporting of the proceedings of the local police court, information about selected individual transgressors could be widely circulated. Margaret Riley appeared before the York magistrates in February 1877, aged twenty-four, charged with the theft of two shirts from a young man she met in a public house. She was presented firstly to the court, and then by local journalists to the population of the wider city, described as a prostitute who had been fourteen times previously before the Bench.[18] By October 1880 the *York Herald* described Riley as 'a frequent visitor', and in a statement to the Court in 1881, Chief Constable Haley declared that she 'was one of the worst characters the police had to deal with'.[19] By 1895 Riley had appeared before the Bench seventy three times, and over fifty of these appearances had been reported in the York press.[20] The local press not only reported on incidents of 'disorderly' behaviour, they also helped to structure readers' perceptions of society, and played an important role in stigmatising certain types of behaviour in public space. The magistrates also signified the importance of regulating urban public space, in this instance, by removing Riley from it entirely – in 1895 she was sent to prison for twelve months with hard labour.[21]

As Pamela Cox has highlighted, the 'disorderly' girl was defined 'within a number of spaces, by a number of agencies, and through a number of texts', and alongside the police, magistrates and press, the York Penitentiary Society played a vital role in both defining and controlling 'disorderly' women and their behaviour in public.[22] Sexual delinquency was

central to perceptions of gendered space, and the members of the Penitentiary Society were principally concerned with the sexual threat young women both faced and posed. The Society was troubled by the moral dangers to be found in the city for young women, warning in 1902 that 'many conditions of our modern life tend to accentuate the danger for young girls'.[23] But alongside other philanthropic and state agencies, the Society was also concerned with the potential of the behaviour of young working-class women to threaten the rigid ideal of urban order. After a close examination of the operation of the Refuge, the role of the Penitentiary Society in defining and controlling street behaviour, and in maintaining the moral geography of the city, shall be explored below in more detail.

The York Penitentiary Society

The first female penitentiaries began to appear in the late eighteenth century, with the London Magdalene Hospital opening its doors in 1758.[24] These institutions were focused on regulating and reforming 'disorderly' women, and returning them to appropriate standards of femininity. The York Female Penitentiary Society was formed in 1822, opening its long-term sheltering home, the Refuge, in 1845 to provide 'asylum for such women as, having followed vicious courses, are desirous of obtaining the means of reformation'.[25] The Society's premises in Bishophill were purchased with a bequest from local philanthropist Doctor Stephen Beckwith in December 1843, and the following year his house, No. 43 Bishophill, was purchased, along with two cottages. The Refuge was further extended in 1902 with the acquisition of 41 Bishophill – which was used as the temporary Shelter – and finally vacated in 1919 with a move to new premises in Clifton. The Refuge provided moral and religious instruction and training in domestic tasks in the hope that those admitted would find a position in service and thus reduce the number of 'fallen' women in the city: 'the main objective of this institution is to rescue the fallen from a life of sin, to bring them to a knowledge of their saviour, and to fit them to earn an honest living'.[26] The Refuge could house up to 30 inmates, and as a charitable institution, it relied on voluntary subscriptions and support from wealthy local donors, although some expenses were met by the laundry work undertaken by the young female residents. In 1856, the York press noted that 'there are few places in the country where an institution like the Female Penitentiary were more urgently required', and although the Refuge was just one of a number of institutions established in the

city to reform prostitutes in this period, it was the only long-term Home, and the only one with surviving detailed evidence.[27]

Frances Finnegan and Emma Hughes have used the records of the York Penitentiary to explore the 'problem' of prostitution in York. Finnegan in particular engages with these records far too uncritically, often exaggerating the deviant status of prostitutes in her presentation of evidence, and accepting the Penitentiary Society's own definition of 'fallen' women.[28] Though primarily intended for prostitutes, the Penitentiary Society actually targeted a number of women, and many of those admitted were not prostitutes. Some young women could find themselves confined without ever having committed a crime, or engaged in any sexual activity. In 1916 Emily Middlemas, aged fifteen, was admitted to the Penitentiary, though the notes record she had 'not fallen'.[29] Other 'inmates' were girls whose parents were concerned about their behaviour, like seventeen year old Martha Barker who was sent to the Refuge by her father after he suspected she was beginning to live an 'immoral life' due to her keeping 'late hours'. Sarah Jane Durston 'denied having fallen' but admitted 'having been troublesome at home'. She was admitted after promising 'to try and control her temper and language and to conform to the rules'.[30] Most of those admitted to the Refuge were young women who had engaged in sexual activity outside of marriage, but the Society often grouped prostitutes, promiscuous young women, those who engaged in pre-marital sex, and even some young women who simply enjoyed the commercial leisure amusements offered by the city, together as 'women of ill repute'. While a woman could engage in all of these activities, they were distinct identities, identities that were often obscured by the language used in the Penitentiary records, where women were referred to as 'fallen girls' or 'unfortunates', described as living a 'bad life', being 'led astray' or or associating with 'bad girls'.[31]

The records of the Penitentiary Society are most comprehensive over the years 1845-1919, the life of the Refuge at Bishophill. The Annual Reports published by the Society and distributed to subscribers, as well as reproduced in the local press, were used to gain support and monetary donations from potential benefactors, and as such recounted the success stories of the Refuge; girls who were rescued by the Society and, after receiving two years of training were returned, fully repentant, to their family and friends, or found a position in service. That there were some 'success' stories is demonstrated by letters from some of the young women who maintained contact with the matron after they left the institution, and the Society insisted that the Refuge produced good results, providing inmates persevered with the

regime.[32] However, the Reports were clearly compiled to show the institution in the best light and convince current and potential donors of the Refuge's merits.[33] These Reports tell very little about day-to-day life in the Refuge, or about the young women who applied for admittance, although disappointment with the results was apparent, and some tensions and quarrels were hinted at. 1858 appeared to be a particularly difficult year, with the Society reporting that 'ten of the inmates have been dismissed for insubordinate conduct during the past year … the trials and difficulties of the institution have been of unusual recurrence'.[34]

The documents that were not intended for public consumption are rather different in tone, and provide a more revealing picture of the day-to-day running of the Home, as well as including the admission notes for the young women who applied to the Refuge. Much of this detail comes from the Ladies' Committee Minute Books, Visitors' Books and Reports, although the minute book covering the years 1864-81 has not survived. These records give an insight into daily life in the institution, the circumstances that led to a young woman's 'fall', and the numerous ways in which the Penitentiary Society looked to control and define young women's behaviour both inside the Home and across wider public space. They also offer a glimpse into the various responses to these attempts by the young women who passed through the Refuge. However, the narratives from these records should not be taken at face value. As is the case with any reliance on the literature of young girls and sexual delinquency, how the working-class women in the Penitentiary interacted with the middle-class reformers, and how these reformers interpreted women's sexual agency must both be considered. The constructed testimony of these accounts helped to present these young women as 'prostitutes' and 'fallen woman' with a loss of agency, and offer only a reflection of the voice of those young women interviewed for admittance. As Philippa Levine found in her examination of nineteenth and early twentieth century texts on prostitution, there is a constant allusion to the external reasons for prostitution, most commonly parental neglect, insanitary and overcrowded housing conditions, and seduction, which enabled the category of feminine, helpless 'Woman' to stand firm.[35] In 1857, at the annual meeting, members of the Penitentiary Society agreed that 'many of these ignorant creatures [the women admitted] are more to be pitied than blamed'.[36] On the other hand, in the same texts these women were found to demonstrate the worst characteristics, such as laziness, 'bad' character and lust. Fifteen-year-old Lilian Gray was sent to the Penitentiary from the temporary sheltering home in April 1917. Her transgressions were: '[she] won't keep her places, stops out at night, swears, steals and won't work'.[37] The young women admitted to the Penitentiary were often

blamed for their own immorality, and in 1852 the Lord Mayor declared that Refuge inmates 'should be thankful' for the Penitentiary Society, which was the only 'helping hand to bring them out of sin'. Miss Briddon, matron of the Penitentiary between 1866 and 1897, referred to the young female inmates as 'sin-stained'.[38] From the applicant telling her story, the Ladies' Committee recording it, and the historian recounting it, there is little space for the voices of the inmates to be heard. The young women themselves often used passive language when describing their feelings about sex and the 'fall' that brought them to the Penitentiary; there is little admission of desire. One notable exception is Mary Jane Barnett, who told the Ladies' Committee that she was feeling quite reckless, and 'very deliberately' went wrong with a young man she had known for some time.[39] Once admitted to the Home, the voice of the female inmates is even harder to discern, with only fleeting glimpses into inmates' perceptions of the Refuge. Some young women wrote letters and returned to the Refuge for visits, but many others engaged in small acts of disobedience, or ran away.

The Refuge was run by the Penitentiary Society, who appointed a President, Treasurer, Secretary and two committees, the Gentlemen's and Ladies' Committees. A number of senior Penitentiary figures were prominent in local government, and also had connections with other local and national rescue charities. Their reach thus extended into various organisations across the city, many of which took an explicit interest in the reformation and policing of 'disorderly' women. Ladies' Committee member Mrs. Richardson was a friend of Josephine Butler and also served as secretary of the York Association for the Care of Young Girls. Mrs Crabtree, the Ladies' Committee secretary in 1900, was also an associate of the York Association for the Care of Young Girls.[40] Both Joseph Rowntree (1801-1859) and his son Joseph (1836-1925) the cocoa manufacturer, social reformer and alderman of York, sat on the Gentlemen's Committee. The Gentlemen's and Ladies' Committees were in charge of managing the Refuge, with the Gentlemen acting as the management committee, in control of the financial and administrative aspects, and the Ladies tasked with overseeing the matron and the Home's day-to-day running, as well as being responsible for the moral and religious instruction of the young female inmates. The Ladies interviewed all the applicants to the Refuge, but could not formally admit women without the express consent of the Gentlemen's Committee. A matron and her assistant were required to live in the house, and both were responsible for keeping an account of the behaviour of the young women resident in the Home, and reporting on this conduct to the Ladies' Committee. With assistance from the Ladies' Committee, the matron was also tasked

with finding a suitable position for those young women who had successfully remained in the Refuge for two years.

The minute books reveal there were occasional clashes between the two committees over their roles in the management of the Refuge, and the responses of the Society to the 'fallen' women in their care. In 1861 the Ladies' Committee presented their resignations *en masse* in response to the Gentlemen dismissing a laundress without their consent.[41] Following this, the Ladies were given more control over the operation of the Refuge:

> The Ladies' Committee shall superintend the employment, diet and dress of the inmates, examine their work of whatever kind, and select the various articles of furniture required in the house. The Lades' Committee shall have the power to dismiss any inmate who has been guilty of misconduct. Should any difficulty arise in the house with regard to the matron, the laundress, or the young women, it must be brought in the first instance before the Ladies' Committee.[42]

However, in 1901 a significant number of the Ladies' Committee, including the secretary Mrs Crabtree, again offered their resignations over the refusal of the Gentlemen to listen to their concerns about the matron. One member of the Committee was particularly troubled about feeling she could not 'uphold a matron to the girls whom I thought unsuitable'.[43] The members of the Ladies' Committee continued to express discontent with some operational aspects of the Society and the running of the Refuge. At public meetings, Ladies' Committee members highlighted the absence of men in the Annual Reports, with one, in 1906, complaining that 'nothing was said … about the men – the hateful men who ruined so many girls', and suggesting that more should be done to find and punish those responsible for a woman's 'fall'.[44] At the annual meeting in 1912, Mrs Argles, a member of the Ladies' Committee, remarked 'it was all very well to talk of the women, but what of the men?'[45] In 1916, tensions once more came to a head when members of the Ladies' Committee resigned in protest as the Gentlemen's Committee refused to consider their request for equal representation. In a statement sent to members and subscribers, the Ladies' Committee noted 'it hardly seems necessary to point out to the public that the managing committee of a Rescue Home for girls should at least have equal representation of women in work, which for its very nature, should *mainly* be undertaken by women'.[46] These gendered tensions over the governance of the Refuge, and wider concerns over the responses to 'fallen' women,

complicate the narrative, and demonstrate that the Society's concerns over the protection and control of young women were not always uniform.

Female reformatories like the Penitentiary Society have been the subject of far less historical attention than the prison, though they acted as part of the wider disciplinary network, and used forms of coercive methods more commonly found in the prison. These methods of control, including defined periods of confinement, set timetables and compulsory labour, were combined with what Alana Barton has referred to as 'familial' forms of regulation; domestic training, religious instruction, supervision and guidance 'normally administered in the family home'.[47] The main front of No. 43 Bishophill looked over a secluded garden which helped to isolate its occupants from the outside world, and formed a physical boundary between the respectable women outside and the 'fallen' women within. The high wall around the garden served to emphasise this boundary, and in 1905 after a number of break-outs the matron was instructed, on the advice of the chief constable, to have the walls topped with broken glass.[48] Located on the fringes of the city, the location of the Bishophill premises further isolated the young female inmates from the rest of the urban population, but also served as a warning to others of behavioural transgressions.[49] Cissey Colley told the York Oral History Project how the Penitentiary building, and all that it represented, was used as a threat to control her behaviour:

> There was a place on Bishophill called "The Penitentiary" where fallen girls would have to be put … They shoved you in there … and if I'd been bad me grandma that lived in Victor Street used to take me by the hand and say: "That's going to happen to you, me lass, if anything happens to you".[50]

The Penitentiary records give a strong impression of the youth of most of the girls who passed through the institution, and also reveal that the women admitted were largely drawn from the working class. In the case of one young woman, whose friends were 'in a very respectable position in society', she was kept at the Refuge until arrangements were made for her to be 'received in an institution intended for the more educated class of fallen women'.[51] The Society did not intend to reform hardened street walkers with lengthy criminal records, but young female offenders who had not been 'on the streets' long enough to be intractable from their habits. The majority of women admitted were aged under twenty-five, and if found to be pregnant or diseased were immediately sent to the workhouse or hospital: 'no applicant shall be admitted or retained in the House who is found to be in a state of

pregnancy'.[52] The Penitentiary would only admit 'hopeful' women – which in practice meant mostly young women who would be most amenable to moral training. Women over a certain age were deemed to be beyond reclamation: 'the older the girls are when they come to us the more difficult they are, as a rule, to mould, as they have more to unlearn, and consequently more difficulty in learning what is good'.[53] However, even some of the younger girls had been living on the streets for some time. Lily Atkinson, admitted to the Penitentiary aged twenty three, told the Ladies' Committee that she had been in service since she was twelve years old, and 'got into bad ways' before she turned fifteen.[54] And even 'hopeful' cases could prove disappointing. In 1873 the Ladies were particularly saddened by the case of Sarah Agar, an inmate whom they had helped to find a respectable place in service, but once in her situation proved so poorly behaved she was forced to leave.[55]

The young women who applied to the Refuge were required to submit voluntarily to life in the Home, and while some applied for admittance, many young women were placed in the Home by parents or other family members, as well as the police and magistrates. The Society lacked the statutory power to detain young women against their will, but once admitted, it was difficult to leave. Those admitted were required to confess their 'fall' and sign a declaration stating:

> I am wishful to abandon my sinful and by God's grace to lead a letter life. I am willing to remain two years in the Home. I will do my best to conform to the rules and discipline of the Home.[56]

Though not formally incarcerated, their liberty was restricted, and life in the Penitentiary did bear some resemblances to prison, with the girls being forced to wear 'Penitentiary dresses' and referred to as 'inmates'. The young women were constantly supervised, and the matron had the power to punish them as she saw fit: 'the direction and orders of the matron shall at all times be promptly obeyed'.[57] In May 1846 after an outbreak of 'bad temper' amongst the inmates, two young women, 'Carter and Todd', were 'sentenced to keep entire silence til Monday'.[58] A conduct rules poster was displayed in all rooms in the Refuge, instructing the women that they should 'preserve a decent deportment, and a becoming silence, especially while at work', and 'lying, swearing, dishonesty, repeated disobedience and gross misconduct shall be punished by the Committee with expulsion'. Inmates were not generally allowed out of the Home, unless it was to attend the public church service at St Martin's cum Gregory in Micklegate with the matron, and visitors were discouraged.[59] This policy was not always

successful, and in May 1893 the Ladies' Committee reported that 'some men from Skeldergate have been getting on the wall and talking to girls in the garden … it has been going on for some time, but has only just been discovered'.[60] The daily routine in the Home was monotonous, and the laundry work hard. Even recreation time was often filled with domestic tasks like sewing and making clothes. Mr Richardson made it known at the annual meeting in 1874 that he felt the young women 'were kept too much like the inmates of a prison or a nunnery', and in 1899 a correspondent to the *Yorkshire Gazette* argued that 'life in the Refuge is too restrained'.[61] The rules of the Refuge did not change significantly over the period, though there is evidence of greater concern over the welfare of the female inmates, with attempts to make the interior of the Home much more 'cheery', and provide outings and additional recreational activities for the young women.[62] However, the high wall which surrounded the building, lack of contact with those outside, and stifling daily conditions all continued to emphasize a focus on punishment, something which concerned 'A Lover of Truth and Justice' who wrote an anonymous letter to the Ladies' Committee: 'your Committee reports everything very bright, they say nothing of a dark side and a dark side I feel sure there is by so many of the inmates running away'.[63]

Beyond the Boundary Walls: regulating behaviour in the public spaces of the city

The Penitentiary regime, geographical location, and high boundary wall isolated the young female inmates of the Refuge from the corrupting urban environment and dangerous associates, and the Penitentiary Society was concerned to protect young women from the moral dangers of the city. Opening their temporary sheltering home in 1902, the Society noted the shelter was for 'the immediate reception of any girls or woman in need of *protection* and Christian care' [emphasis added].[64] But, young women could be both *in danger* and *dangerous.* Young inmates in the Penitentiary were isolated from the dangers of the city, but these potentially dangerous women were also removed from wider respectable society, and the moral reach of the Refuge extended far beyond the institution's own walls, and those young women who resided within them. Members of the Penitentiary Society regularly co-operated with other agencies in the removal of young women from the public spaces of the city, and played a key role in shaping debates about access to and use of public space; debates that involved anxieties about who was using public space and acceptable

behaviour within it. The Society also monitored and observed the streets, and at times directly attempted to control behaviour.

The intention of the Penitentiary was to *rescue* rather than *punish,* and as discussed above, the Refuge was distinct from formal penal institutions like the prison. However, the Society undoubtedly did act as part of a wider disciplinary network in the city, and worked alongside both state and voluntary agencies to police the behaviour of young women. The Refuge was often seen as an alternative to other forms of punishment, with some young women petitioning to be sent there rather than to prison, while others went on the recommendation of the magistrates. Twenty-one-year-old Kate Newberry was brought before the magistrates for being 'helplessly drunk' with two soldiers in St George's Fields, and would have been sent to prison, but 'pleaded to be sent to the Penitentiary'. Elizabeth Gardener, seventeen, was taken by the police for 'misconduct' on the New Walk and the magistrates gave her the option of going to prison or the Refuge.[65] The police provided a number of the female inmates, many others had previous or subsequent contact with the law, and by 1904 the police provided a contribution of 1s a day for girls sent to the Home as remand cases.[66] In 1915 the Penitentiary sheltering home noted 'by far the greater number of those being dealt with have been brought by the police having been found wandering about late at night.[67] The Society also regularly enlisted the help of the police to return those young women who ran away from the Refuge. If they made their escape while wearing Penitentiary clothing, these young women could also find themselves being prosecuted for theft, as in the case of three girls who ran away in May 1905. Two of the runaways were found by the police, and one of these girls was sentenced to one month's hard labour.[68] This cooperation also extended to other state and voluntary organisations, as well as other rescue homes in York and across the country. Elizabeth Ann Foster was 'persuaded' by the York Castle Prison Chaplain to apply to the Refuge for admission, and Annie Rhodes was directed to the Penitentiary by Miss Chapman of the York Workhouse.[69] The Ladies' Committee and matron were regularly petitioned by various Homes to receive girls from other areas, most commonly Scarborough and Hull, but also as far afield as Peterborough and London.[70] York's magistrates, police and voluntary institutions co-operated to control young working-class women. Members of the Gentlemen's and Ladies' Committee were represented in the city's legal, charitable and civic organisations; young women were sent to the Penitentiary by the police, the magistrates, and the chaplain of York Castle Prison; suitable applicants were advised at the York Workhouse to apply to the Refuge; and other young women were sent

from rescue Homes across the country. The Penitentiary Society formed part of a wider network of moral surveillance in the city, a network which increasingly developed knowledge about the 'disorderly' woman and how to police her behaviour in public.

In their published annual reports and during their meetings, the Society regularly turned their attentions to behaviour on the streets of the city. They repeatedly noted their concerns about immorality, discussing, defining and publicising 'disorderly' behaviour in the city. At the annual meeting of the Society in 1904, one Gentlemen's Committee member reported that the conduct of boys and girls in the streets was 'sapping the vitals of the city'. He went on the urge the meeting that they 'must try to correct it some way or another'.[71] The Society were clearly concerned with the behaviour of both men and women, but the moral consequences of public behaviour were more greatly emphasized when talking about young women, something which members of the Ladies' Committee intermittently took steps to highlight, asking 'what of the men?'[72] In 1851 the Lord Mayor addressed the annual meeting of the Penitentiary Society, arguing that young women should be prevented from associating with young men 'in the manner, he believed, they were permitted to do', as this was the cause of much corruption. In response, the Society agreed that the 'responsibility which lies upon all' was to 'exercise a greater degree of watchfulness' over young women, and the Society continued to monitor and define behaviour.[73] References were frequently made to watching the streets and particular young women they believed to be in danger, or dangerous: 'Girls who have gone astray, or are in danger, are watched for months until an opportunity arises of gaining their confidence and bringing them in'.[74] Particular sites and spaces were the focus of attention, and in 1912 the Committee reported how work had been found 'in the City Court, Assize Court, the Railway Station and in the houses and streets of the city'. In 1917 the Society reported that 'the streets have been watched regularly; cinemas and the railway station visited'.[75] Certain sites could clearly compromise respectability, but 'disorder' was also based on other factors, including appearance, time, and season. A printed tract included in the Penitentiary files and distributed by the York Society for the Prevention of Youthful Depravity, titled 'An Address to Mothers and Fathers in York' warned; 'Parents! Never allow your young women to go out after dark, nor to display themselves in a dressy manner, nor to stroll about on Sundays.'[76] As well as watching the streets, the Penitentiary Society also encouraged others to monitor the behaviour of young working-class women in public, and regularly appealed to parents to better restrain their daughters. Reflecting on the case of one young woman who had been 'ruined' by a man met while walking the streets on a Sunday

evening, at the 1859 annual meeting the Lord Mayor addressed the Society, declaring that he 'hoped that mothers would weigh well the license they were allowing their daughters on Sunday evenings'.[77] 'Disorderly' behaviour identified by members of the Penitentiary Society often reflected concerns about the independence of young working-class women. One visitor noted in October 1914 that it was 'impossible' to get girls to commit to two years in the home and 'away from the attractions of the streets', and the following year at the annual meeting it was claimed that 'girls nowadays claimed freedom of action, and they often, as a result, fell into temptation'.[78] In 1920, at an appeal for financial assistance, the Reverend Chancellor Austen addressed the gathered meeting noting how:

> some conditions of public amusement today involve great risks ... when one heard of girls going out three nights a week and even more often, and when they went for dances that were not according ... when one heard of girls going home at midnight and after in the darkness – well, it opened the door.[79]

Along with publicly discussing 'unruly' street behaviour, and monitoring the streets and particular young women, the Penitentiary Society also took steps to directly intervene in street life, and control those young women they defined as 'disorderly'. In 1871 the Committee expressed their desire to secure the services of an 'earnest and Christian woman' who would actively 'seek out the fallen' and bring them to the Refuge, and in 1873 they reported how 'great efforts' had been made to seek the lost through the work of a 'Bible-woman' engaged to visit the streets and working-class districts of the city. The Society stressed to their subscribers that 'at no former period in the history of this institution have greater efforts been made' in this type of rescue work, 'although no great success attended her efforts'.[80] The Society habitually discussed street patrol work, but by the turn of the twentieth century they had become increasingly focused on this type of outside work. In 1902 the Society noted that the matron of the Refuge, along with members of the Ladies' Committee, regularly went 'out into the streets and slums of the city', and consistent notes of thanks were given to those Ladies who worked with young women out on the streets.[81] Commenting on the number of girls helped at the Refuge in 1903, the Society was keen to highlight that this did not 'by any measure' cover the work done, noting that the matron and 'her friend, Miss Edwards, are not content to deal with only those brought into the Penitentiary and Shelter, but they go into the streets'.[82] Miss Edwards, a voluntary worker at

the Refuge until 1920, regularly patrolled the streets and public spaces of the city, and in 1907 became a probation officer for the York branch of the Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society. When she resigned as a voluntary worker in 1920, the Society recognised the 'importance' of her outside work.[83] In 1908 a letter was printed in the *York Herald,* signed anonymously, which praised the interventions of the Society:

> Has anyone seen – I have – a wretched, miserable, wild-looking girl, arriving on York platform and being met by a lady with a hand out and such a tender "come with me, we will take care of you" … This, and much more, goes on quietly day by day.[84]

The 1913 Annual Report signaled the Penitentiary Society's increasing work in this area, and in 1914 they appointed a trained rescue worker; 'a great deal of work has been done at night, revealing the deplorable conditions consequent on the low moral standard which prevails amongst many of our young men and women'.[85]

As they used the streets and public spaces of the city, young working-class women were watched, and their behaviour noted. However, the Penitentiary Society's work monitoring the streets and controlling behaviour owed as much to the desire for urban order as principles of charity and Christian morality. The Society was concerned with rescue, but they were also preoccupied with the reasons for a young woman's fall, and the street relations of the city. Emma Cartwright was interviewed by the Ladies' Committee in 1884 because of her habit of 'talking to soldiers in the streets at night', and in 1902 the secretary of the Ladies' Committee wrote to the Watch Committee regarding immorality between young women and soldiers on Fulford Road, the site of the Cavalry barracks.[86] Women in the company of soldiers, or those who loitered in the streets around Fulford Road were increasingly vulnerable to accusations of immoral conduct. For some young women, their presence in this space was enough to compromise their respectability, and the Penitentiary Society played a role in establishing and maintaining the moral geography of the city. Elizabeth Ann Foster, aged seventeen, was taken into custody for talking to soldiers on Fulford Road, before being interviewed for admittance to the Penitentiary, and the Ladies' Committee also heard the case of Louisa Watson, aged twenty two, who was found at night near the barracks.[87] Nineteen-year-old Hilda Frost 'had been a respectable girl' but was admitted to the Penitentiary shelter in 1918 after she began to walk out with a soldier on Fulford Road, and during the war the Penitentiary Society increased their efforts in patrol work.[88] Although the Society regularly warned young women about keeping company with

soldiers, after 1914 higher troop concentrations in the city facilitated greater sociability between young men and women, and the concerns of the Penitentiary Society intensified. A garrison town throughout the life of the Refuge, though never subject to the Contagious Diseases Acts, the war saw York become even more crowded with servicemen, and fears about moral conduct in the city grew. Much of this attention was focused on the soldiers and recruits themselves, and in 1914 the Archbishop preached to soldiers at the York Garrison chapel with a plea to 'keep their hands off the young ladies of York'.[89] However, young women also came in for increased scrutiny, from the Penitentiary Society and other philanthropic and state organisations. Edith Milner, the leader of two Girls' Clubs in the city, with connections to the Penitentiary, wrote to the *York Herald* expressing her hope that the 'girls of York [will] do their part and not lower the standards of our common womanhood by interfering with the soldiers' emulating the 'unseemly conduct of too many girls and women on the streets'.[90] At the 1916 annual meeting, the Lord Mayor commented on the 'open flaunting of vice in the public streets', and the Society noted the importance of vigilance work on the streets, particularly in the evenings and after dark, work which 'revealed conditions of life which the lighting restrictions had not improved'.[91] These efforts reflected fears over the greater presence of young women on the streets in the evenings, and wider concerns about standards of female moral behaviour during the war, as highlighted by Penny Summerfield and Philippa Levine, among others.[92]

The streets and public spaces of the city could provide opportunities for young women, allowing them to utilise a certain freedom away from the constraints of family supervision they may have had closer to home. Nell Fearns recalled that within the working-class district of Hungate 'everyone knew who you were … you were watched over by every family'.[93] For some young women, movement away from residential spaces meant they could be unrestrained as they laughed and joked with friends and young men, but it was precisely this type of behaviour that could make their presence in the street appear so threatening to reformers. The apparent eagerness of young women to contribute to ribald jests in their interactions with young men were a particular worry to middle-class moralists. Concerns were expressed about girls gleefully embracing the bad language of boys; Henriette Fogg was admitted to the Penitentiary in July 1892 after another reform home refused to house her because of her bad language. Henriette, who was 15, told the Ladies' Committee she learnt such language on Sunday evenings in Coney Street.[94] Some working-class parents brought their daughters to the Refuge as a way of asserting authority over girls and their economic and sexual behaviour, turning to the Penitentiary when girls stayed out late, participated in

popular leisure, or had inappropriate boyfriends. Mary Ann Curtis' father would not allow her to remain at home because she went out in the evenings, and she was dismissed from her position for staying out at night. She was admitted to the Penitentiary in 1896.[95] Fifteen-year-old Daisy White was brought to the shelter by her mother because she had 'been out at night with soldiers' and was a 'wild and tiresome girl'.[96]

The definitions of 'disorderly' or 'unruly' behaviour was often dependent on space, and the Penitentiary Society played an important role in promoting and maintaining gendered meanings of the city. The railway station, main streets, parks, fairs, public houses, music halls, and later, the cinema, were key sites in the topography of 'disorder'. Any young working-class woman socialising in the main streets of the city could be at risk of being identified as a prostitute, or accused of behaving in a 'disorderly' manner, and as Judith Walkowitz's seminal work on Victorian London has demonstrated, female respectability was historically defined against prostitution.[97] Minnie Carr, aged seventeen, was brought to the Penitentiary after being taken up by the police on charges of soliciting on a Saturday night in Parliament Street. While no evidence was presented regarding her sexual conduct, Carr was described as a girl who '"knock[ed] about" at music halls and public houses at night' and had been talking to a known 'bad girl' in the street, and this behaviour, coupled with being in a public space with a public woman, was sufficient to call into question Carr's own sexual morality.[98] Carr had no previous contact with the police and does not appear in the records again. Another seventeen-year-old girl was admitted to the Penitentiary after being persuaded by some 'bad girls' to 'walk with them in the dark' on the New Walk.[99] Annie Brown, aged twenty, was dismissed from her position as a servant for going out and socialising in the streets in the evenings, and told the Ladies' Committee that she walked out with soldiers in return for small gifts and nights at the music hall. She was especially concerned to stress to the Committee that she was not a prostitute and had never worked on the streets, but admitted having sexual relations with some of the soldiers she had accompanied. The Ladies' Committee labelled her a prostitute and she was admitted to the Penitentiary.[100] Annie Armitage was brought to the Refuge and admitted as a prostitute in 1892. Armitage told the Ladies' Committee she enjoyed going out in the evenings and often stayed out late at night, although she denied 'living an immoral life or having fallen'. However, her association with young men and participation in popular leisure suggested to the Committee that her moral behaviour was questionable, despite there being no evidence she was a prostitute.[101] The Penitentiary Society made very little attempt to distinguish between the young woman

laughing and gossiping in the streets with a potential suitor, and the prostitute larking about with prospective clients. These problems of identification demonstrate the importance of controlling behaviour in public space – 'disorderly' behaviour was a clear threat to notions of moral public space, and could compromise the respectability of all women.

Some young women more actively resisted attempts by the Penitentiary Society to define and regulate their behaviour. Annie Wainwright was interviewed by the Ladies' Committee in November 1899 but refused to stay in the Refuge. She admitted 'allowing a young man to do wrong to her' but rejected the claim that this was unacceptable behaviour.[102] Charlotte Ann Metcalf, aged twenty, was brought to the Refuge by a police constable, and while she admitted to having 'gone with men and being a bad girl', she 'emphatically denie[d] having been guilty of immorality at any time'.[103] Fifteen-year-old Ellen Dinsdale, whose father was angry with her for going to music halls, denied having fallen, although admitted to associating with 'bad girls'.[104] These distinctions in behaviour mattered a great deal to the young women accused. Alice Clifton, aged eighteen, told the Ladies' Committee that she had been 'irregular' in her life, and enjoyed going for walks with young men, but refused to accept that she had done anything wrong. The Committee noted she would only 'admit' to having 'gone wrong' with the young man that she had been seriously walking out with.[105]

A young woman's entry to the Refuge did not mean that she acknowledged the Society's definition of her behaviour, and some young women refused to accept the moral authority of the Refuge, or protested by running away from the Home, or causing trouble. Ethel Wellerton, brought before the Ladies' Committee in 1901 and described by the Ladies as 'very wild and untruthful' protested that she had been brought to the Refuge against her will, and that she would not stay. The Ladies admitted her on probation.[106] Emily Whitwell was charged at the police court for absconding from the Penitentiary with clothing and boots. When the magistrate offered her the option between prison or the Penitentiary, she declared 'I don't want to go back to the Home, I don't wish to go into anymore homes'.[107] Annie Rhodes preferred the option of the Workhouse after refusing to stay at the Refuge.[108] Another unnamed girl fled out the committee room window, smashed the skylight and escaped. She was returned to the Home by the police, but just a few days later 'took a square out of the ward window and went through it'.[109] Susie Bell was described as a 'thoroughly naughty girl' who was 'proud of being so!' and Annie Cronin was punished for 'dancing in her bedroom' after being 'forbidden to do so'.[110] Alice Pearson, Mary Cherry and Florence Dinsdale used a

ladder left by a workman to scale the high garden wall, escaping because they wanted to attend a dance being held at the barracks.[111] Hester C, a twenty year old domestic servant admitted to the Penitentiary shelter in 1914 after attending the theatre with a young army officer, argued that the blame should be shared with young men, and particularly soldiers:

> They have a fascinating way with them, these officers, and as soon as they have got all they can out of a girl, they have done with you and that's the end of it. They pick you up in the street. They won't speak to you in town in the day time, but when they get you in the dark they are quite all right.[112]

These young women did not see their street behaviour - from going out with friends, to meting and even having sex with boyfriends - as particularly disorderly or transgressive, and resisted attempts by the Penitentiary Society to define their behaviour, or regulate their use of the streets and public spaces of the city.

Conclusion

Young working-class women's use of the city streets fed into debates about both the nature of public space, and the duality of woman; they were to be protected, but their ability to compromise public space was also to be feared, and their behaviour controlled. Young women behaving in an 'indecent' manner in these public spaces could threaten the moral integrity of that space, and by extension, the city. Language was rife with words and phrases that sexualised women's presence in public; with terms for prostitutes like street-walkers, women of the streets and public women. As Rebecca Solnit has noted, phrases such as man of the streets, man about town, and public man had very different meanings.[113] Women in cities were often 'perceived as the objects of both regulation and banishment',[114] and young working-class women behaving in a 'disorderly' manner were seen as a significant threat, something which is evident in the records of the York Penitentiary Society who saw it as their duty to regulate the behaviour of young women; admitting them to the Home where they could be reformed, before being returned to society and appropriate feminine duties. Reformatories like the Penitentiary were used to correct the behaviour of 'disorderly' women, but its reach extended far beyond the walls of the institution: 'in supporting such an institution the public were helping to benefit not the inmates alone, but society at large'.[115] The Society cast a wider net of control over young women, and their surveillance and direct interreference had an impact not only on those young women who passed through its doors,

but also on the social lives of other young women in the city. The concerns of the Penitentiary Society to remove 'disorderly' young women from public spaces demonstrates an awareness on their part of female bodies as markers of space. The presence of prostitutes in city centre spaces was seen as particularly destabilizing; they openly flouted codes of femininity and clearly compromised the meaning of civic and moral space. Yet some young women found themselves observed, or even confined in the Refuge without ever having engaged in any sexual activity, and working women's use of the streets – particularly after dark, or if they had been drinking or participating in popular leisure – left them susceptible to accusations of immoral conduct.

This article has used the records of the York Penitentiary Society to examine one of the ways reformers were concerned with the moral mapping of urban space, and their attempts to regulate the behaviour of those 'unruly' women who might challenge the ideal of urban order. The York Penitentiary has not in any way been chosen because it is representative of other institutions, or York of other urban spaces – experience was not uniform in the city, let alone further afield. A number of organisations were concerned with saving 'disorderly' girls, and efforts to rescue, reform and police these young women could be varied. From regular rescue patrols, to homes for young victims of abuse, larger homes like the Refuge to smaller institutions based in family homes, the approaches and methods of institutions could vary widely. Some Homes offered short periods of voluntary confinement, while others preferred lengthy periods of incarceration. Institutions could have relaxed entry and exit policies, while others operated with strict discipline and a restrictive daily routine, though often their intentions – to protect young women from the moral dangers of the city, reform those young women who succumbed to temptation, and remove those whose behaviour could pollute public space – were the same.[116] The significance of this focused case study is twofold; in addition to adding detail to our understanding of the operation of female reformatories, the article also has implications for histories of public space. Simply by being out in public, young women were subject to the disciplinary gaze; they were watched, and their activities noted, by the policeman walking his beat, by the local press reporting on 'disorderly' behaviour, and by the Ladies' Committee member visiting the streets, addressing the annual meeting of the Penitentiary Society, or interviewing for admittance to the Refuge. The young women who socialised in the city centre streets, or walked out with soldiers around the barracks were liable to see their sexual behaviour called into question, and such

spaces could hold uncertainties for women. Other young women resisted controls and definitions that gendered their behaviour and separated them from men.

As Philippa Levine has argued, the moral policing of women is a central aspect of women's history, and it is it is important to understand the operation of this type of moral regulation outside of the larger urban landscapes of, for example, London or Manchester.[117] This study has only touched upon one context in which women's behaviour was regulated, how ideas about gender influenced the way urban spaces were experienced, imagined and constructed might be explored in greater detail. In particular, how young working-class women themselves engaged with public space, and perceived their everyday spatial practices warrants further attention. Young working-class women clearly did move through the city, their presence in public was an everyday experience; they utilised the streets and public spaces of their towns and cities for work, leisure, and courtship activities, moving through the city alone, or with friends and boyfriends. Members of the Penitentiary Society could not ignore the presence of large numbers of young women in the streets, and their responses to them were located within much wider concerns about public space and changing urban life.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to attendees of the Western Association of Women Historians Conference in Denver in 2016, whose comments on an early version of this paper were invaluable. I also wish to thank Alistair Hay, Nick Parker, Claire Marie Rennie and the two anonymous reviewers for their constructive feedback.

Funding

This work was supported by the US-UK Fulbright Commission under the Fulbright-Robertson Award.

Notes

[1] 'Annual meeting of the York Penitentiary Society', *York Herald,* 8 February 1873.
[2] York City Archives (YCA), York Penitentiary Society, PEN/3/3 Annual Reports 1886-1906, 1902 and PEN/3/4 Loose Annual Reports, 1907.
[3] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/3/2 Annual Reports 1845-1863, 1845.
[4] Michel Foucault (1991) *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison,* trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Penguin). For further discussion, see Jane Hamlett, Lesley Hoskins and Rebecca Preston (Eds) (2014) *Residential Institutions in Britain, 1725-1970: Inmates and Environments* (London: Pickering and Chatto).
[5] For noteworthy exceptions, see Alana Barton (2000) '"Wayward Girls and Wicked Women": Two Centuries of "Semi-Penal" Control', *Liverpool Law Review,* 22: 2-3, pp. 157-171; Barton (2005) *Fragile Moralities and Dangerous Sexualities: Two Centuries of Semi-Penal Institutionalisation for Women* (Aldershot: Ashgate) and Barton (2011) 'A Woman's Place : Uncovering Maternalistic Forms of Governance in the 19th Century Reformatory', *Family & Community History,* 14: 2, pp. 89-104; Pamela Cox (2003) *Gender, Justice and Welfare in Britain,1900-1950: Bad Girls in Britain, 1900-1950* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan); Frances Finnegan (1979) *Poverty and Prostitution: A Study of Victorian Prostitutes in York* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) and Finnegan (2004) *Do Penance or Perish: A Study of Magdalen Asylums in Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press); Jane Hamlett (2015)*At Home in the Institution: Material Life in Asylums, Lodging Houses and Schools in Victorian and Edwardian England* (London: Palgrave MacMillan)*;* Maria Luddy (1995) *Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth Century Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) and Linda Mahood (1990) *The Magdalenes: Prostitution in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Routledge).
[6] In her article on the Liverpool Vigilance Association in early to mid twentieth century Liverpool, Samatha Caslin argued for the importance of further studies to offer locally nuanced understandings of the ways in which anxieties about female sexual morality manifested outside of London. Samantha Caslin (2016) '"One Can Only Guess What Might Have Happened if the Worker Had Not Intervened in Time": the Liverpool Vigilance Association, moral vulnerability and Irish girls in early- to mid-twentieth-century Liverpool', *Women's History Review* 25: 2, pp. 254-273.
[7] Doreen Massey (1994) *Space, Place and Gender* (Cambridge: Polity), p. 180.
[8] For example, Henrietta Moore analysed the way men and women, as well as conventions of masculinity and femininity, were defined across time and space. Henrietta L. Moore (1988) *Feminism and Anthropology* (Cambridge: Polity Press) and Moore (1999) *Space, Text and Gender: An Anthropological Study of the Marakwet of Kenya* (London: Guilford). For Doreen Massey, 'space and place, spaces and places, and our senses of them … are gendered through and through'. Massey, *Space, Place and Gender,* p. 3.
[9] See for example, Jeff Weintraub and Krishan Kumar (Eds.) (1997) *Public and Private in Thought and Practice: Perspectives on a Grand Dichotomy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press) for a range of articles exploring the mutable character of the public/private dichotomy.
[10] See in particular: Elizabeth Wilson (1991) *The Sphinx in the City: Urban Life, the Control of Disorder, and Women* (London: Virago Press); Judith R. Walkowitz (1992) *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London* (London: Virago Press); Lynda Nead (1997) 'Mapping the Self: Gender, Space and Modernity in mid-Victorian London', *Environment and Planning,* 29, pp. 659-672 and Nead (2000) *Victorian Babylon: People, Streets and Images in Nineteenth-Century London* (London: Yale University Press).
[11] *York Herald,* 21 August 1886, 21 September 1886 and 28 April 1898. For an analysis of disorder stemming from industrial unrest see Jane Morgan (1987) *Conflict and Order: The Police and Labour Disputes in England and Wales, 1900-1939* (Oxford: Clarendon). Stefan Slater has examined patterns of street disorder in London in the first half of the twentieth century; Stefan Slater (2012) 'Street Disorder in the Metropolis', *Law, Crime and History,* 1, pp. 59-91.
[12] YCA, Watch Committee Minutes, Y/COU/5/8/3, vol. 5, 27 February 1884.
[13] Robert Storch (1976) 'The Policeman as Domestic Missionary: Urban Discipline and Popular Culture in Northern England, 1850-1880', *Journal of Social History,* 9:4, pp. 481-509 and Robert Storch (1975) 'The Plague of Blue Locusts: Police Reform and Popular Resistance in Northern

England, 1840-57' *International Review of Social History,* 20:1, pp. 61-90. See also Miles Ogborn (1993) 'Ordering the city: surveillance, public space and the reform of urban policing in England, 1835-56', *Political Geography,* XII: 6, pp. 505-521.
[14] For example: Stephen Inwood (1990) 'Policing London's morals: the metropolitan police and popular culture, 1829-1850', *The London Journal,* 15, pp. 129-146. Andy Croll has also argued that the surveillance of public behaviour in the streets was more than just a 'class project'. Andy Croll (1999) 'Street Disorder, Surveillance and Shame: Regulating Behaviour in the Public Spaces of the Late Victorian British Town', *Social History,* 24:3, pp. 250-268.
[15] *York Herald,* 9 May 1885.
[16] *York Herald,* 3 October 1885.
[17] Andy Croll (2000) *Civilising the Urban: Popular Culture and Public Space in Merthyr, c.1870-1914* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press). See also Andy Croll (1999) 'Street Disorder, Surveillance and Shame, pp. 250-268.
[18] *York Herald,* 17 February 1877.
[19] *York Herald,* 26 October 1880.
[20] For example: *York Herald,* 26 October 1880; 2 December 1881 and 11 September 1883, 1 August 1890, 14 July 1891, 28 March 1893, 31 May 1895. *Yorkshire Gazette,* 30 October 1880, 27 May 1893, 1 June 1895. *Yorkshire Evening Press,* 25 August 1890.
[21] *York Herald,* 31 May 1895, *Yorkshire Gazette,* 1 June 1895.
[22] Cox (2003) *Gender, Justice and Welfare in Britain,* p. 9.
[23] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/3/5 Annual Reports 1886-1906, 1902.
[24] Mahood (1990) *The Magdalenes: Prostitution in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 75.
[25] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/3/2 Annual Reports 1845-1863, 1845.
[26] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/3/2 Annual Reports 1845-1863, 1845 and PEN/3/3 Annual Reports 1864-1885, 1872.
[27] *Yorkshire Gazette,* 7 February 1856. The York Home for Friendless Girls was established in 1868, setting up a rescue home in Skeldergate in the same year. The York Association for the Care of Young Girls opened a sheltering home in Petergate in 1881, focusing largely on preventive work, and the Grove House Rescue Home in Monkgate as a short-term home.
[28] Finnegan (1979) *Poverty and Prostitution: A Study of Victorian Prostitutes in York* and Emma Hughes (2011) 'The York Penitentiary Society in context, 1845-1919 - how did it fit into York's "Penal welfare complex"?', *York Historian,* 28, pp. 49-71.
[29] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/4/1 Ladies Committee, Legal and Operational, Shelter Case Book 1914-1918: Emily Middlemas.
[30] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/1/5 Minute Books 1890-1900, 25 August 1893 and PEN/1/4 Minute Books, 1883-1890, 26 September 1887.
[31] For example, see York Penitentiary Society PEN/4/1/3 Ladies Committee Minute Book 1881-1901, 30 January 1896 and 27 July 1888, PEN/1/4 Minute Book 1883-1890, 30 July 1888.
[32] For instance, the Society noted in their 1872 Report that 'A. J. (a very unpromising case when received) was sent to a very good situation, where she remained some years – she is now most comfortably married'. York Penitentiary Society, PEN/3/3 Annual Reports 1864-1885, 1872. In 1909 the Society reported 'of the letters received by Miss Bennington from girls in service some may raise a smile, as that in which one girl tells of her happiness in becoming "engaged to her boy, and a good boy TWO"'. York Penitentiary Society, PEN/3/4 Loose Annual Reports, 1909.
[33] These attempts were not always successful. In 1864 a letter was printed in the *York Herald* declaring 'the public of this city … have a right to know why it is that their own Penitentiary achieved so little success'. *York Herald,* 16 January 1864.
[34] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/3/2 Annual Reports 1845-1863, 1858.
[35] Philippa Levine (1993) 'Rough Usage: prostitution, law and the social historian' in Adrian Wilson (Ed.) *Rethinking Social History: English society 1570 – 1920 and its interpretation,* (Manchester: Manchester University Press), p. 270.
[36] *York Herald,* 7 February 1857.
[37] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/4/1 Ladies Committee, Legal and Operational, Shelter Case Book 1914-1918, Lilian Gray.

[38] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/3/3 Annual Reports 1864-1885, 1882 and PEN/3/3 Annual Reports 1886-1906, 1897.
[39] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/1 Ladies Committee Minutes, 1845-1928, 28 March 1887.
[40] YCA, Records of the York Association for the Care of Young Girls and York Training Home, CYG/2 Annual Reports 1890-1962, 1890, 1891, 1894 and 1895.
[41] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/1/2 Ladies Committee Minutes 1845-1864.
[42] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/3/2 Annual Reports 1845-1863, 1862.
[43] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/3/5 Ladies Committee Reports and Correspondence, 1900-1901, 22 February 1901.
[44] *York Herald,* 24 February 1906.
[45] *York Herald,* 13 February 1912.
[46] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/1/7 Minute Book 1914-1929, February 1916.
[47] Barton, 'A Woman's Place', p. 89.
[48] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/1 Minute Books 1844-1950, 30 May 1905.
[49] Simon Gunn (2000) *The Public Culture of the Victorian Middle Class: Ritual and Authority in the English Industrial City, 1840-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press), p. 44.
[50] YCA, Interview with Cissey Colley, born 1910, York Oral History Project, 1983.
[51] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/3/3 Annual Reports 1864-1885, 1875.
[52] Ibid., 1870.
[53] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/3/5 Annual Reports 1886-1906, 1906.
[54] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/1/3 Ladies' Committee Minute Book 1881-1901, 25 July 1884.
[55] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/1/3 Minute Book 1866-1883, 1873.
[56] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/4/10 Ladies' Committee, Legal and Operational, Agreement to Enter Penitentiary.
[57] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/4/8 Ladies' Committee, Legal and Operational, Conduct Rules Poster.
[58] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/4/1 Ladies' Committee Minute Book 1845-1852, May 1846.
[59] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/4/8 Ladies' Committee, Legal and Operational, Conduct Rules Poster.
[60] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/1/3 Ladies' Committee Minute Book 1881-1901, May 1893.
[61] *York Herald,* 3 February 1874 and *Yorkshire Gazette,* 3 July 1899.
[62] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/2/7, Visiting Books 1911-1949, 3 April 1911 and *York Herald,* 13 February 1912.
[63] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/3/4 Ladies' Committee, Reports and Correspondence 1822-1845, letter dated 1 March 1900.
[64] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/3/5 Annual Reports 1886-1906, 1902.
[65] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/1/3 Ladies Committee Minute Book 1881-1901, 27 June 1887 and 29 June 1892.
[66] Watch Committee Minutes, Y/COU/5/8/3, vol. 8, 24 May 1904.
[67] York Penitentiary Society, Annual Reports, 1915.
[68] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/2/3 Visiting Books 1902-1909, December 1903.
[69] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/1/3 Ladies' Committee Minute Book 1881-1901, 25 August 1884 and 25 September 1894.
[70] For example, see York Penitentiary Society, York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/1/3 Ladies' Committee Minute Book 1881-1901, February 1888.
[71] *York Herald,* 24 February 1904.
[72] *York Herald,* 13 February 1912.
[73] *York Herald,* 8 February 1851.
[74] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/3/5 Annual Reports 1886-1906, 1903
[75] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/3/4 Loose Annual Reports, 1912 and 1917.
[76] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/5/2/2 Printed Tract and Poster, "Address to Mothers and Fathers in York", 1860.
[77] *York Herald,* 12 February 1859.

[78] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/2/4 Visiting Book 1910-1916, October 1914 and *York Herald,* press cutting included in PEN/1/7 Minute Book 1914-1929, 1915.
[79] *Yorkshire Gazette,* 25 February 1920.
[80] *York Herald,* 10 February 1871; York Penitentiary Society, PEN/3/3 Annual Reports 1864-1885, 1873.
[81] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/3/3 Annual Reports 1886-1906, 1902.
[82] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/3/3 Annual Reports 1886-1906, 1903.
[83] York Penitentiary Society, PEN1/6 Minute Books 1900-1914, 29 January 1907 and PEN3/4 Annual Reports 1888 – 1951, 1920.
[84] *York Herald,* press cutting included in PEN/1/6 Minute Book 1900-1914, February 1908.
[85] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/3/4 Loose Annual Reports, 1913 and 1914.
[86] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/1/3 Ladies Committee Minute Book 1881-1901, 25 August 1884 and Watch Committee Minutes, Y/COU/5/8/3, vol. 8, 24 June 1902.
[87] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/1/3 Ladies Committee Minute Book 1881-1901, 27 April 1897.
[88] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/4/1 Ladies Committee, Legal and Operational, Shelter Case Book 1914-1918: Hilda Frost, September 1918.
[89] *York Herald,* 19 October 1914.
[90] *York Herald,* 12 September 1914.
[91] *York Herald* press cutting included in PEN/1/7 Minute Book 1914-1929, 1916.
[92] Penny Summerfield (1995) 'Women and War in the Twentieth Century' in June Purvis (Ed.) *Women's History in Britain 1850-1945* (London: UCL Press), p. 315 and Philippa Levine (1994) '"Walking the Streets in a Way No Decent Woman Should": Women Police in World War I', *The Journal of Modern History,* 66: 1, pp. 34-78.
[93] Interview with Nell Fearns, born 1918, York Oral History Project, 1993.
[94] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/1/3 Ladies Committee Minute Book 1881-1901, 27 July 1892.
[95] Ibid., 30 January 1896.
[96] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/4/1 Ladies Committee, Legal and Operational, Shelter Case Book 1914-1918: Daisy White, 30 September 1916.
[97] Judith Walkowitz (1992) *City of Dreadful Delight*.
[98] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/1/3 Ladies Committee Minute Book 1881-1901, 29 December 1896.
[99] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/5/2/2 Printed Tract and Poster, "Address to Mothers and Fathers in York", 1860.
[100] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/1/3 Ladies Committee Minute Book 1881-1901, 29 July 1889.
[101] Ibid., 29 June 1892.
[102] Ibid., 24 November 1899.
[103] Ibid., 30 January 1888.
[104] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/1/5 Minute Book 1890-1900, 25 March 1891.
[105] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/1//3 Ladies Committee Minute Book 1881-1901, 17 May 1889.
[106] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/1/3 Ladies Committee Minute Book 1881-1901, 29 October 1901.
[107] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/4/1 Ladies Committee, Legal and Operational, Shelter Case Book 1914-1918: Emily Whitwell, 10 June 1915-29 June 1915.
[108] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/1/3 Ladies Committee Minute Book 1881-1901, 25 September 1894.
[109] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/1/3 Ladies Committee Monthly Reports, Miscellaneous Papers, 1891.
[110] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/2/3 Visiting Book 1902-1909, October 1906; PEN/4/1/3 Ladies Committee Minute Book 1881-1901, 31 October 1893.
[111] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/1/3 Ladies Committee Minute Book 1881-1901, 25 November 1891.
[112] York Penitentiary Society, PEN/4/4/1 Ladies Committee, Legal and Operational, Shelter Case Book 1914-1918: Hester C, 18 June 1914 – 20 June 1914.
[113] Rebecca Solnit (2001) *Wanderlust: A History of Walking* (London: Verso), p. 234.

[114] Wilson, *The Sphinx in the City,* p. 46.
[115] 'Annual meeting of the York Penitentiary Society', *York Herald,* 10 February 1880.
[116] Grace Pailthorpe's study of English rescue homes in the early 1920s demonstrates the variety of homes operating. Grace W. Pailthorpe (1932) *What We Put in Prison, and in Preventive and Rescue Homes* (London: Williams and Norgate).
[117] Levine (1994) '"Walking the Streets in a Way No Decent Woman Should"', pp. 34-78.