

The New Woman (recap)

- Well-educated
- Articulate
- Desires economic independence
- Marriage no longer sole objective
- Speak of sexual matters
- may be sexually active outside marriage or abstain from marriage or sex for political reasons
- Went to Girton college, hence a 'Girton Girl'
- Rode a bicycle
- 'Rational dress'

- Allen's essays:
- "Plain Words on the Woman Question" (1889 – Fortnightly Review)
- "The Girl of the Future" (1890 Universal Review)
- Believed women should marry and have at least 4 children to perpetuate the race
- Also believed in emancipation, but it couldn't interfere with female's ultimate objective which is reproduction
- Sign of civilization that men can provide for women during women's childbearing years

- “A woman ought to be ashamed to say she has no desire to become a wife and mother” (Plain Words 214)
- Education should train women how to “suckle strong and intelligent children, and to order well a wholesome, beautiful, reasonable household...” (215).
- “For being a man, I, of course, take it for granted that the first business of a girl is to be pretty” (216).
- Yet, he also wrote:
- “The position of women was not a position which could bear the test of nineteenth-century scrutiny. Their education was inadequate; their social status was humiliating; their political power was nil; their practical and personal grievances were innumerable: above all, their relations to the family – to their husbands, their children, their friends, their property – was simply insupportable” (217).

New Woman Literature

- Over 100 New Woman novels written 1883-1900
- Used by anti-feminists and male writers to discredit emancipatory behaviours
- Also “vibrant metaphor of transition” (Ann Heilmann 1) which challenged existing ideas about marriage, family, women’s roles
- Combines popular culture and high art; aimed for popular appeal
- Confused critics
- Proto-modernist
- Showed female subjectivities; often multiple subjectivities – undermined earlier male constructions of unified female character

- Confusion and shock at interest in focus on feelings of female characters
- Fear that such portrayals might produce physical sensations in readers
- Seen as feminization of fiction and of culture, which was considered dangerous and degenerative

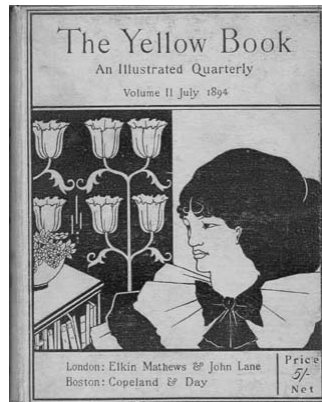
- Allen's book followed by:
 - The Woman Who Did Not (1895) by Victoria Cross (Vivian Cory)
 - The Woman Who Wouldn't (1895) by Lucas Cleeve (Adeline Kingscote)

Publishing

- Most readers obtained books from circulating libraries, such as Mudie's
- Members paid annual fee of 1 guinea to borrow
- Mudie's controlled publishing by demanding that novelist prepare novels in 3 volumes; sold for 1 ½ guineas
- Public began to demand hardcover, short fiction at cheaper prices
- Women authors found alternative publishers
- Made circulating library obsolete

- For example, The Yellow Book was published from 1894-1897
- Carried non-traditional writing and a number of works authored by women

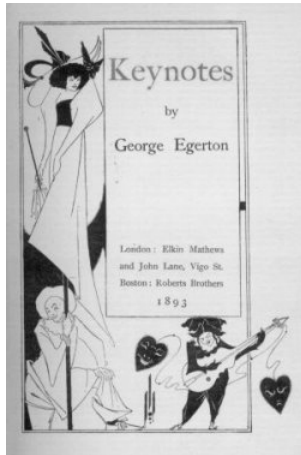
Cover art for Volume II, *The Yellow Book*, by
Aubrey Beardsley



Title page for Volume II, *The Yellow Book*,
by Aubrey Beardsely



***Keynotes* / by George Egerton.
(London : Elkin Mathews and John Lane ;
Boston : Roberts Brothers, 1893) “.**



- George Egerton a pseudonym of Mary Chavelita Bright,
- Took the first two names of her deceased husband as a pen name

- Series title from George Egerton's collection, *Keynotes* (1893)
- *The Woman Who Did* published in part of John Lane's 'Keynotes' series
- TWWD eighth Keynote volume