

Dorothy L. Sayers and the Woman Question

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by

Elizabeth A. Sander

Dr. Carolyn Malone

Dr. Carolyn Malone

Ball State University

Muncie, Indiana

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Purpose of Thesis

This thesis focuses upon Dorothy L. Sayers' views of the difficulties faced by educated women in England during the early decades of the twentieth century. It examines her personal experience as a university woman through letters written during her years at Oxford (1912-1915). Three of her later works, her best selling novel *Gaudy Night*, "Eros in Academe," and "Are Women Human?", are then analyzed to reveal her perspective on the place of intellectual women in society. Sayers was an advocate of higher education for women, but she opposed the contemporary belief that women who aspired to university life had to suppress their emotional being and become like men. Ultimately, Sayers aspired to a world in which intellectual and emotional qualities were integrated in both men and women.

In 1934 Dorothy Sayers was invited back to her Oxford alma mater, Somerville College, to propose the toast for that summer's gaudy, or reunion. According to Barbara Reynolds, Sayers' biographer, the feelings of nostalgia that this task stirred in Sayers spurred her to write *Gaudy Night*.¹ The portrait of Oxford that emerged in *Gaudy Night* was multifaceted; fond memories of a time and place that had had a great impact on Sayers were tempered with observations of the problems that women's colleges continued to face some fifteen years after Sayers had gone down from Somerville. *Gaudy Night* represented a synthesis of both Sayers' real world and intellectual experience. It was a vehicle for the expression of her philosophy and ideals about women and education. This philosophy, which was strengthened through her life experiences, seems to have come into full bloom during her Somerville years, 1912-1915. This work also represented the synthesis of two literary genres. For in it, she merged the traditional detective novel with the English novel of manners.² That is, Sayers integrated the elements of a detective problem with in-depth exploration of the psychological motivation of characters.

Upon completion of this highly personal and innovative mystery novel, Sayers admitted to worry that it might not be popular. She thought, "Male readers would probably not be interested in a bunch of middle-aged academic women, and would find Harriet unattractive."³ To her publisher, Victor Gollancz, she wrote:

It is the only book I've written which embodies any kind of a 'moral' and I do feel rather passionately about this business of the integrity of the mind...But there it is--it's the book I wanted to write and I've written it...It may be highly unpopular, but, though I wouldn't claim that it was in itself a work of great literary importance, it is important to me, and I can only hope it won't be a ghastly flop.⁴

Gaudy Night was anything but a ghastly flop. In fact, it would go on to become her best

selling novel.⁵

This paper will analyze *Gaudy Night* as well as Sayers' experiences as a student at Oxford and essays on the subject of the place of an intellectual women in society. It will illustrate that although Sayers was an advocate of higher education for women she opposed the contemporary belief that women who aspired to university life had to suppress their emotional being and become like men. Ultimately, Sayers aspired to a world in which intellectual and emotional qualities were integrated in both men and women.

Dorothy Sayers in Oxford

On October 11, 1912 Dorothy went up as a scholar at Somerville College in Oxford, intending to take a degree in French.⁶ During these formative university years Sayers seems to have devoted much of her energies to Oxford's social scene. Not only did Dorothy have family ties remaining in Oxford that provided social obligations⁷, but she was also involved in many University activities, such as the Oxford Bach Choir and the Mutual Admiration Society.⁸ Sayers's biographer, Barbara Reynolds, wrote, "She does very little work [during her time at Oxford] and that with extreme reluctance."⁹ During her second term at Somerville, Sayers wrote, "If college were not so jolly, I expect I should do more work."¹⁰ The social stimulation of the university town drew Dorothy in. In a letter to Catherine Godfrey, a friend from Somerville, Dorothy expressed homesickness for this aspect of Oxford life:

Do you know--you're the only person to whom I dare confess it--for a bit after I got home, I was simply home-sick for Oxford--not for college--but for that curve in the High and Radcliffe Square by moonlight, and for the people in the street and the stories about Varsity life.¹¹

To Sayers, a well rounded experience was of greater importance and benefit than a limited academic prowess. Shortly before she sat for her final exams in June of 1915, Sayers wrote to her parents, "Even if I came out with a fourth, I have learnt an enormous amount about people and things at Oxford--a lot which I should have left unlearned if I had done nothing but work."¹² In fact, Sayers received a first class ranking on her final exams and this earned her a "title to a degree."¹³ Thus, one portrait of Sayers that emerges during her years at Oxford is that of a naturally brilliant and vivacious scholar.

The seeming distaste for and fear of women scholars exhibited by the male dominated University was another aspect of Oxford life described by Sayers. This attitude continued to exist some twenty years after the first women had been admitted to the institution. Although two colleges existed for women during Sayers's time, Somerville and Lady Margaret Hall scholars were still not entitled to actual degrees upon the completion of their studies. Female students did not win the right to actual degrees from Oxford until 1920. Sayers returned to Oxford for the first ceremony in which degrees were awarded to women and was one of the first group of women to receive one.¹⁴

Female scholars realized the odd position they were in and, if Sayers is any indication, they dealt with it through a combination of acceptance and humor. In a letter to her parents during her first term at Oxford, Sayers wrote in a matter of fact manner about having to find a chaperon so that she and another female friend could attend a concert together:

I had to call on Mrs. Brabant...because Elsie wanted me to go to the Balliol

concert with her, and she had only 2 tickets and no chaperon was going--as a last resort I tried Mrs B., who luckily is going, so we shall have a good time.¹⁵

At that time, no female undergraduate could attend any social function, even in a group, unless chaperoned by an older woman. Such a regulation was in keeping with the University's view of the "probationary status" accorded to female undergraduates.¹⁶

Women were still treated as outsiders during Dorothy's time at Oxford and attempts were made to isolate them from the men in most academic settings. In one particular example, that shows the humor with which Sayers viewed this situation, she related taking an exam at schools:

I was the only woman taking it and sat, severely isolated like a leper, in one corner of the T-room...while the men occupied a quite different branch of it. The first day while looking for my desk, I wandered into the men's part of the room, whereupon the old chap who sees you settled...rushed at me with wildly waving arms and a terrified expression and shooed me away to my seclusion like an intrusive hen...¹⁷

In another instance, Sayers wrote home about needing to find an appropriate hat to wear to lectures: "I find one must be respectable when one's the only woman or almost the only woman there, because one's so conspicuous."¹⁸ As biographer Reynolds wrote about her, "the phrase 'my dress was much admired' occurs almost as frequently in her letters as references to her work."¹⁹ While such statements may be seen merely as examples of Sayers' enjoyment of fashion and society, they also illustrate the idea that women at Oxford had to pay special attention to their appearance. The common stereotype of the female scholar was one of an unattractive, asexual being.²⁰ Sayers wanted to distance not only herself, but all female scholars from this image. This idea--that of the sexually repressed academic

versus the sexually experienced woman of the world--would play a big part in the novel that Sayers would publish some twenty years later--*Gaudy Night*.

Gaudy Night

Harriet Vane, the protagonist of that novel, is the character whose psychological analysis is at the center of the work. Almost all of the events that occur in the work are viewed through Vane's eyes.²¹ In fact, the detective problem of the plot--the haunting of the Shrewsbury College women by a poison pen/ghost--is used primarily as a method of enhancing the reader's understanding of Vane's psyche.²² In the situations that she encounters in *Gaudy Night* and the manner in which she reacts to them, the character of Harriet Vane can be seen to serve as a mouthpiece for Sayers's own ideas on a variety of complex issues. Through the development of this character in this novel, Sayers allowed herself to tackle the complex issues of male/female relationships and the place of the intellectual female in society against a backdrop of mystery.

Five years prior to the gaudy that Vane attends in the novel, she had been accused of murdering her ex-lover, Philip Boyes.²³ Vane had been forced to endure a vicious public trial which generated violent attacks on her character. Although Vane's innocence was established with the help of Lord Peter Wimsey, her confidence was destroyed. Not only did an embittered Vane come out of the ordeal questioning her own place in society, but she also doubted the potential for any successful male/female relationship.

When Vane returns to Shrewsbury for the gaudy then, she is beginning to be ready to tackle the ideas and feelings that have been so painful to her in recent times.

In preparation for the event, Vane unpacks the scholar's gown that she wore when she received her M.A. degree from the Oxford institution. As she does so, she disturbs a butterfly that hides in the confines of the trunk:

As she beat the loose fluff from it, a tortoise-shell butterfly, disturbed from its hibernation beneath the flap of the trunk-lid, fluttered out into the brightness of the window, where it was caught and held in a cobweb.²⁴

Vane is like the butterfly in this image. She has been living in a sort of emotional hibernation for the past five years and is beginning to reawaken to the possibilities and choices that life holds for her.²⁵ She attends the reunion hoping that the quiet, secluded atmosphere of academia will allow her to clear her head and sort out some of her personal issues.

Although Vane looks to the gaudy as a time of refuge from the plight of her emotional life, she finds that there is no escaping her heart. Harriet is continually reminded of the dichotomy that she believes exists between a life focused on the intellect and one focused on the emotion. The women at the gaudy provide Vane with a variety of examples of lifestyles--both married and single. Vane just cannot abide by some of these examples, while others provide some small comfort and hope to her.

Miss Hillyard and Miss Lydgate provide Vane with different visions of a single life devoted to the intellect. Miss Hillyard is an uncompromising don whose harsh opinions on all issues regarding men, marriage and the place of emotion illustrate a deep bitterness and resentment. In her, Vane sees "an antagonism to herself."²⁶ She is afraid of becoming like Miss Hillyard, who sees every issue in shades of black and white. She seems to have no heart in her at all. Miss Lydgate, on the other hand, is a kindly and imminently moral scholar who provides Vane with a more hopeful vision of

what a single life devoted to the intellect might be.²⁷ Miss Lydgate is so wrapped up in her studies however, that she seems quite naive about the outside world. It is this naivete that Vane seems to want to reject in the example of Miss Lydgate.

Of the married students that Vane encounters, Phoebe Tucker-Bancroft and Catherine Freemantle-Bendick provide the opposing illustrations of what married life could be like. Bancroft, a historian who married an archaeologist, has managed to combine marriage and family with continued intellectual pursuits.²⁸ She seems to have achieved just the symbiosis of head and heart that Vane seeks. Bendick, on the other hand, is shockingly unrecognizable to Vane: "Very brilliant, very smart, very lively and the outstanding scholar of her year. What in Heaven's name had happened to her?"²⁹ Bendick had married a farmer and been dragged into a life of hardship. All of her intellectual impulses seem to have been deadened by years of demanding labor. Her identity has been consumed by that of her husband. She relates bitterly to Harriet:

You needn't think I don't envy you people your easy life; I do. I came to the Gaudy out of sentiment, and I wish I'd stopped away. I'm two years older than you, but I look twenty. None of you care in the least for my interests, and yours all seem to me to be mere beating the air. You don't seem to have anything to do with real life. You are going about in a dream...But it's a beautiful dream in its way. It seems queer to me now to think that once I was a scholar...³⁰

Bendick represents Vane's worst case scenario. She was a woman who could have contributed so much to the world through her intellect and instead gave up her whole being to the power of her emotions. Bendick's "traditional" life leaves Vane with the "depressed feeling that she had seen a Derby winner making shift with a coal-cart."³¹

The women Vane observes during the gaudy fuel her internal debate on the

merits of listening to one's head versus listening to one's heart. As she readjusts to the atmosphere of academia from which she has been so long absent, Vane observes how her former classmates have dealt with the transition to a life that combines the intellect of their school days with the emotion that real world experience adds to the mix. Seeing the current situation of Bendick and some of the other married women and remembering what happened when she let her own emotions take control of her, she ended up on trial for a murder that she did not commit, Harriet believes that there can never really be any reconciliation between the heart and the mind. Life must be lived all for one or for the other. By the time that she leaves the gaudy, Harriet seems to have decided that her life will be lived for the intellect.

This is not, however, the end of the story or her personal struggle. For Vane is called back to Shrewsbury by the dons when the College is terrorized by a malicious poison pen. The dons want to save Shrewsbury from outside publicity that would be detrimental not only to that institution but to women's colleges in general and realize that the problem must be dealt with internally. Vane, being an alumnus of the College, understands the problems and prejudices that Women's Colleges face from the outside world. Thus, she seems to be the perfect candidate to successfully treat the problem with the discretion and sensitivity that the situation requires. For much of the novel, Vane is left to complete the detective work on her own. The poison pen that she finally uncovers is Annie Wilson, a Shrewsbury scout.

Wilson is a widower who must support her two daughters on the salary that she obtains from her employment at Shrewsbury. Annie holds a bitter grudge against academic women. She believes that as a group they are ultimately responsible for the

suicide of her husband and the subsequent hardships that she faced as a result. Years ago, Miss de Vine, one of the Shrewsbury wardens, had destroyed Annie's husband's career in academia by pointing out his use of false evidence to support his research. The resulting loss of his career destroyed Annie's husband emotionally and psychologically. He eventually took his own life, leaving Annie to provide for and raise their two daughters on her own. Annie blames Miss de Vine, and intellectual women as a whole, for her misfortune.

The ways in which Annie terrorizes the college illustrate her anger at and fear of intellectual women. Initially, Annie's attacks on the women at the college take the form of poison pen letters. The theme of the letters follow a similar pattern: "that their sins would find them [the women under attack] out, that they were not fit for decent society and that unless they left men alone, various unpleasing things would occur to them."³² As the story progresses, the attacks become more personal and menacing. For example, she steals and destroys the work of Miss Lydgate, one of the dons. Upon recovery, Lydgate's proofs "had been defaced throughout with thick copying-ink...on certain pages offensive epithets had been written in rough block capitals."³³ Later Annie vandalizes New Library just before its opening ceremony is to occur:

All the books in the room had been dragged out and flung on the floor...The pictures has been thrown down. And the blank wall-space thus exposed had been adorned with a frieze of drawings, roughly executed in brown paint, and with inscriptions in letters a foot high, all of the most unseemly sort.³⁴

This act of destruction illustrates that Annie is intent on not only harassing the women of Shrewsbury, but making sure that this problem comes to public attention--a prospect that is more embarrassing and detrimental to the women's college than the actual

violence itself, as it would reinforce society's negative images of women scholars. Harriet also finds the effigy of a female student dressed in an M.A. cap and gown that Annie has suspended from the ceiling of the college chapel. A Latin quotation from Virgil is pinned to the dummy with a bread knife.³⁵ The quotation refers to Harpies, and in Harriet's mind this "seems to suggest a certain train of thought"--a negative attitude towards women that might explain why these acts of violence are being perpetrated.³⁶

The most disturbing incidents involve the actual attacks on students. In one incident, a young man is accosted by Annie as he tries to sneak over the wall in leaving the college late one night. Annie, disguised as a ghost, sinisterly attempts to convince the young man to stay away from the college by telling him, "We murder beautiful boys like you and eat their hearts out."³⁷ In her boldest act of violence, Annie stalks a particularly bright and sensitive student, driving the girl to attempt to drown herself in the river. When the student, Newland, turns up missing, Harriet and the Dean search her room. They find approximately thirty "menacing, abusive, insinuating letters" all attempting to wear down the girl's resistance and drive her to suicide.³⁸ The letters have a common, chilling theme:

You needn't think you will get away with it--What will you do when you fail schools?--You deserve to fail and I shall see that you do--Don't you feel your brain going?--If they see you are going mad they will send you down--Better dead than in the loony bin--In your place I should throw myself out of the window--Try the river...³⁹

Luckily, Vane and the Dean are able to find Newland in time to save her life. When Annie is finally confronted about her crimes she acts defiantly and proudly.

The discovery of Annie's motivation is the climax of the novel's discussion of the

strictly intellectual versus the strictly emotional woman. Sayers uses Miss de Vine and Annie Wilson to represent these extreme types. The former represents intellect untempered by emotion, while Annie represents emotion untempered by intellect. In solving the mystery of the poison pen and observing how these two personality extremes play out in real life, Sayers protagonist, Harriet Vane, is ultimately able to answer the questions that have dogged her for the past five years; finally she is able to resolve the conflict of her own head and heart as she accepts Lord Peter Wimsey's marriage proposal.

The character of Lord Peter is of vital importance both in himself and in his relationship with Harriet. According to Catherine Heilbrun, he was invented by Sayers as the man of her dreams--the man that she would never find in reality. Heilbrun states, "It would be more accurate to say that she created him as an ideal human being, with a feminine sensibility and the male chance for action."⁴⁰ Ironically, he is cast as one of the chief feminists in *Gaudy Night*.⁴¹ At various points in the novel his position as a champion of equality between males and females is made clear. For example, in a discussion that Lord Peter has with Shrewsbury's Warden he expresses shock that a woman's right to education is still considered a debatable issue: "I hope you are not going to ask me whether I approve of women's doing this and that...You should not imply that I have any right either to approve or disapprove."⁴² Also, his feminist views are couched in humor at times--the same type of humor that Sayers so often expressed during her years at Oxford as she dealt with awkward situations that arose because of her sex. According to Lord Peter, "a desire to have all the fun is nine-tenths of the law of chivalry."⁴³ Thus, in her depiction of Wimsey as a feminist

Sayers illustrates her own brand of feminism--one that champions the equality and acceptance of individuals as human beings without a focus on the category of sex, which is often too confining for women.

According to Dawson Gaillard, *Gaudy Night* is about evolution. Not only is it about the evolution of detective fiction, but also the evolution of male/female relationships: "The moment when Harriet slips her hand under Peter's arm represents the end of a long evolution of Sayers's art and the beginning of a new model for sexual relationships."⁴⁴ Harriet Vane is able to enter her relationship with Wimsey on equal footing. Through the course of the novel she has realized that neither the intellect nor the emotion can exist uncontrolled. A delicate balance of the two sides of the personality--the head and the heart--can and must be achieved. This is the best solution not only for Harriet, but for intellectual women as a group. Lives lived purely for the intellect or the emotions are ultimately too structured and closed off. Such lives are destructive not only to the individuals that live them, but to society as a whole. As Vane comes to these realizations and takes her place of equality beside Wimsey at the novel's end, *Gaudy Night* attains something of the quality of a "modern-day fairy tale."⁴⁵ With the novel's end Sayers's in-depth study of male/female relationships and sex roles in society reaches a completion as well. The ultimate hope for equality and fulfillment in relationships that is illustrated through the pairing of Vane and Wimsey allows for the fairy tale's "happy ending."⁴⁶

Dorothy Sayers and the Woman Question

In *Gaudy Night*, Harriet Vane first heard about the troubles at Shrewsbury through a story in one of the "more foolish London dailies."⁴⁷ Outraged by the story's

flippant tone regarding the incident, she wrote a “tart” letter to the paper’s editor, “pointing out that either ‘undergraduate’ or ‘woman student’ would be seemlier English than ‘undergraduette,’ and that the correct method of describing Dr. Baring was ‘the Warden’.” She went on to comment: “The only result of this was to provoke a correspondence headed ‘Lady Undergrads,’ and a reference to ‘sweet girl-graduates’.”⁴⁸ She bemoaned to Peter Wimsey the fact that “this kind of vulgarity was typical of the average man’s attitude to women’s intellectual interests.”⁴⁹ Like her main character, Sayers was sensitive to her society’s view of intellectual women. In discussing her choice of setting for the novel, Sayers described the university as an ideal selection for many reasons. Among them was the fact that the nature of the crime being committed was such that “the world in general would be ready enough to connect [them] with a community of celibate women.”⁵⁰ They reflected the perceived imbalanced mental state of odd women who were cloistered away from the world. While *Gaudy Night* was perhaps the most creative and complete expression of her feelings on the subject it was not her only writing to deal with the problems and issues faced by intellectual women. She also dealt with the topic in two essays--“Eros in Academe” and “Are Women Human?”--as well.

In 1919, four years after she had gone down from Somerville, Sayers wrote an article for the *Oxford Outlook* entitled, “Eros In Academe.” According to biographer Louis Brabazon, Sayers was still living in Oxford at this time and although her social life was quite active, she had no steady suitors. He believes that this article may have been Sayers’ way of working out the frustration that she felt about her continued single status. He argues that it is the only example of writing from that period of her life that

expresses any element of anxiety.⁵¹ In fact, the article does seem to point to some of the conflict that Sayers must have felt as she emerged from the world of academia into the realities of day to day life. The adjustment could not have been an easy one.

“Eros In Academe” deals with Sayers distaste for the easy way in which women are categorized. Dorothy complains that women are categorized as those who are “learned” and those who are “worldly.” The inability of women to combine these two very desirable and necessary traits poses a problem for all women because it allows the perpetuation of a “female” stereotype. According to Sayers it is the female teaching staff’s inability to deal with the subject of love and male/female relationships that allows this to continue. Female dons may prepare their girls to be brilliant academically, but they fail miserably at creating well rounded girls who are able to integrate their emotions with their intellectual pursuits. As role models in the area of life experience the female dons are no good, despite well meaning intentions.

Recounting her own experience, she remarked:

When I lived in Academe I should never have thought of going to one of its guardians for advice in any social difficulty. I should have feared, not unkindness or unwillingness to help, but just blank want of knowledge. ‘This kind of thing never happened to me’ says the guide, philosopher and friend; ‘to a nice girl social difficulties do not occur.’ That is a cowardly lie. Things do happen; it is monstrous to pretend that they do not or ought not.⁵²

Sayers goes on to quote a twenty-six year old contemporary who bemoans the fact that she has realized too late that she doesn’t want a career. Her realization came too late because her university training has unsuited her for marriage. As she told Sayers, “Education has taught me to demand too much, and I do not know how to give men what they want.”⁵³

In 1938, two years after Sayers had explored the intellectual woman question in-depth in *Gaudy Night*, she published "Are Women Human?" In this essay, Sayers argued that society would deny women a university education because it does not see how a woman would put such knowledge to use. According to Sayers the desire for knowledge is only human. And women, as human beings, are just as entitled to have this need met as men are--even if they do not plan to put their knowledge to some specific use in society.⁵⁴ Women and men must recognize that "What is repugnant to every human being is to be reckoned always as a member of a class and not as an individual person."⁵⁵ Thus, Sayers made her final argument for the equality and acceptance of women as human beings.

This essay also illustrated her disagreement with what she perceived to be the current feminist position. Sayers made her own position on the role and place of women in society quite clear. She argued that the tendency of women's colleges to "copy the men," just to prove that they were able to do so was silly.⁵⁶ Only things which benefit the individual or the institution should be appropriated. Sayers used a specific example to illustrate what she termed, "the difference between the right and the wrong kind of feminism" and that was "this terrible business...of the women who go about in trousers."⁵⁷ Women who did so were often told that trousers are not attractive on them at all--the only reason that they could possibly be wearing them is to copy the men. Sayers argued that trousers, while admittedly unattractive, are practical and comfortable. Trousers are useful to women and that is why they wear them. On the other hand suspenders are worn by most men but are impractical and uncomfortable for women. Thus, she wrote:

We have to ask ourselves: is this trousers or is it braces [suspenders]? Is it something useful, convenient and suitable to a human being as such? Or is it merely something unnecessary to us, ugly, and adopted merely for the sake of collaring the other fellow's property?⁵⁸

She believed that copying men, just to show that it can be done, was probably more destructive to women than helpful. Such actions would make it seem that the individual woman is unable to think for herself. It would also suggest that she cannot be discerning and determine what is best for herself or the institution with which she is affiliated.⁵⁹ Rather, she can only associate herself with the female sex as a group-- thus, she was in the same old position.

Dorothy Sayers' Influence

When Dorothy L. Sayers died in December of 1957, obituaries hailed her numerous accomplishments. Not only was she praised for her wonderful detective fiction, but she was given credit for contributing to the evolution of that genre. According to The Times (London), "*Gaudy Night* took Lord Peter and Harriet Vane into the serene and serious life of a women's college at Oxford, and psychological problems deeper than those which belong to the detective convention arose."⁶⁰ She was also praised for her later work as both a Christian apologist and a translator of Dante and other medieval texts. The Times (London) wrote of Sayers, "She made a name in several diverse fields of creative work. But the diversity of her success was founded on an inner unity of character."⁶¹ She approached all aspects of her life with a great passion. She did what brought her joy--as the New York Times stated: "In her middle years she liked to drive a motorcycle."⁶² In turn, Sayers tried to share this sense of passion and joy with others through her creative works. As she illustrated

through the character of Harriet Vane, there could be an integration of the head and the heart. Sayers' "inner unity" was the living example of Harriet's realization.

What does not receive mention in these favorable reflections of Sayers' life and work are her important contributions to the cause of intellectual women and the advancement of feminism. Through an analysis of this novel and other Sayers' writings, "Eros in Academe" and "Are Women Human?", it becomes apparent that she had something important to say on the subject of the intellectual woman in society. Although she was primarily concerned with the problems of women in academia, Sayers ultimately expanded her focus to include women in all facets of society in "Are Women Human?" She desired a world in which men and women were viewed as human beings first, and secondarily as members of a sex. For only from this development could relationships between men and women be based upon true equality. To facilitate such relationships she believed a new type of social revolution was necessary; a revolution in which both women and men learned to merge the intellectual and emotional aspects of their personalities. These ideas were important in Sayers' time and they remain so today. Through these writings, Sayers' voice continues to speak to new generations of women who struggle with the questions that arise when attempting to combine intellectual or career pursuits with emotional needs.

Endnotes

1. Pauline Adams, *Somerville for Women: an Oxford College, 1879-1993* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 85.
2. Catherine Kenney, *The Remarkable Case of Dorothy L. Sayers* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1990), 24.
3. Dorothy Sayers, "Gaudy Night," in *The Art of the Mystery Story*, ed. Howard Haycraft (New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, 1983), 208-221.
4. Barbara Reynolds, ed., *The Letters of Dorothy L. Sayers*, with a forward by P.D. James (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 357. See also letters to Murial Jager in the same volume, 352, 360.
5. Kenney, *Remarkable Case*, 15.
6. Reynolds, *Letters*, 65.
7. Ibid.
8. Barbara Reynolds, *Dorothy L. Sayers: Her Life and Soul*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 53. According to one Sayer's biographer the Bach Choir was Dorothy's most fulfilling social experience during her Oxford years, giving "a new dimension to her response to creativity and art." References to the Bach Choir can also be found in Reynolds, *Letters*, 66-68.
9. Reynolds, *Her Life and Soul*, 53.
10. Reynolds, *Letters*, 69.
11. Ibid., 76.
12. James Brabazon, *Dorothy L. Sayers* (New York: Charles Scribners, 1981), 54.
13. Reynolds, *Letters*, 107.
14. Ibid. See also: Pauline Adams, *Somerville for Women*, Susan J. Leonardi, *Dangerous By Degrees: Women at Oxford and the Somerville College Novelists*, (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1989), 13-62, and Martha Vicinus, *Independent Women, Work and Community for Single Women 1850-1920*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985), 121-162.

15. Reynolds, *Letters*, 74.
16. Ibid.
17. Reynolds, *Letters*, 76-77.
18. Ibid.
19. Reynolds, *Her Life and Soul*, 45.
20. Sayers, "Gaudy Night," 208-221.
21. Kenney, *Remarkable Case*, 163-164. Kenney cautions against viewing Vane as a direct representation of Dorothy L. Sayers by pointing out that there is more going on around Vane than Vane chooses to take notice of. Not everything that occurs in the novel is viewed by Vane directly.
22. This point has been made in Kenney, *Remarkable Case*, and Leonardi, *Dangerous By Degrees*.
23. A possible parallel between the relationship of Harriet Vane and Philip Boyes in *Strong Poison* and the real life relationship between Dorothy L. Sayers and novelist John Courton is touched on by Sayers' biographers. See Brabazon, *Dorothy L. Sayers*, 89-96 and Reynolds, *Letters*, 173.
24. Dorothy L. Sayers, *Gaudy Night* (New York: Harper Paperbacks, 1995), 4.
25. Dawson Gaillard, *Dorothy L. Sayers* (Frederick Ungar Publishing Company, 1981), 73.
26. Sayers, *Gaudy Night*, 357.
27. Ibid., 15.
28. Ibid., 14.
29. Ibid., 46.
30. Ibid., 48.
31. Ibid., 50.

32. Ibid., 85.
33. Ibid., 87.
34. Ibid., 120.
35. Ibid., 152.
36. Ibid., 163.
37. Ibid., 223.
38. Ibid., 274.
39. Ibid.
40. Carolyn G. Heilbrun, "Dorothy L. Sayers: Biography Between the Lines," in *Dorothy L. Sayers: The Centenary Celebration*, ed. Alzina Stone Dale (New York: Walker & Company, 1993), 9.
41. Kenney, *Remarkable Case*, 144.
42. Sayers, *Gaudy Night*, 359.
43. Catherine Kenney, "The Comedy of Dorothy L. Sayers," in *Dorothy L. Sayers: The Centenary Celebration*, ed. Alzina Stone Dale (New York: Walker & Company, 1993), 144.
44. Gaillard, *Dorothy L. Sayers*, 82.
45. Ibid., 74.
46. Ibid.
47. Sayers, *Gaudy Night*, 73.
48. Ibid., 74.
49. Ibid.
50. Sayers, "Gaudy Night," 208-221.
51. Brabazon, *Dorothy L. Sayers*, 74.

52. Ibid.
53. Ibid.
54. Ibid, 131.
55. Ibid, 130.
56. Dorothy L. Sayers, "Are Women Human?" chap. in *Unpopular Opinions* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1947), 131.
57. Ibid., 132.
58. Ibid., 131.
59. Ibid.
60. *Times* (London), 19 December 1957.
61. Ibid.
62. *New York Times*, 19 December 1957.

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