

From Friendless Women to Fancy Dress Balls:
William James Topley's Photographic Portraits

by

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Abstract

The Topley Studio fonds housed at Library and Archives Canada is one of the most widely consulted sources of late nineteenth and twentieth century photographs. Yet most existing literature on the photographer, William James Topley (1845-1930) and his Ottawa studio, has been framed within an approach that privileges style and the notion of artistic genius. This thesis instead examines photographs produced by the Topley Studio, while considering their broader socio-historical context. Focusing on photographic portraits of various ‘classes’ of Victorian women and men, and the spaces they occupied, this study reveals connections between identity formation, photographic practice and the politics of representation. From examinations of staged photographs of costumed participants in the Dufferin Grand Fancy Ball to images documenting female inmates of the Home for Friendless Women and the Carleton County Gaol, this thesis explores visual representations of gender, class and race in late nineteenth-century Ottawa.

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Introduction

One day in early March of 1876, Mr. and Mrs. Juchereau de St. Denis Lemoine took turns posing at the Topley Studio in Ottawa, Ontario, costumed in the elaborate outfits that they had worn a few weeks earlier at the Dufferin Grand Fancy Ball. Mr. St. Denis Lemoine, who served as Sergeant-At-Arms of the Senate, assumed three different attitudes before Topley's camera as a heroic "Jacques Cartier" (figure Intro.1). In turn, his wife, Mrs. Margaret de St. Denis Lemoine, dressed as an allegorical figure representing the "Dominion of Canada" with a wreath of embroidered maple leaves covering her *tablier* and a gold beaver resting on her shoulder, patiently stood still for the lengthy exposure times required for her three photographic portraits (figure Intro.2). After the young couple had finished, they changed out of their costumes in the dressing room and departed the studio, anxiously waiting for the development of their prints that they could paste into an album as memorable keepsakes, or mail to family or friends abroad.

These photographs, while initially read as entertaining visual documents of the types of men and women who were invited to this private costumed event, also raise broader questions about assuming a fictitious identity, in addition to the agency of the sitters and their visual representations. What does their choice of costumes reveal about Canadian nationalism in the early post-Confederation years? Did Topley yield to the specific demands of his clients when creating these staged images, or did he possess some directional sway when posing them? Furthermore, what can these contemporary

photographic representations communicate to us about gender roles and identities:
woman as submissive territory, man as active conqueror?

My thesis seeks to address these questions by exploring connections between gendered identity, photographic practice and the politics of representation in late nineteenth-century Canada. Rather than focusing solely on textual records in the archives to re-construct the lives of men and women at that time, visual material serves as the foundation upon which I build my arguments. While photographs have traditionally been used as visual accompaniments to historical texts, numerous scholars have argued that these visual sources are crucial to our understanding of social history, particularly the history of women who are often under-represented in conventional archival records.¹ Employing photographs as mere visual aids dismisses their importance as valuable and multivalent primary resources, and ignores the fact that they are representations created within a specific socio-historical context.

This study focuses on photographic imagery produced by the Topley Studio in Ottawa, owned and operated from 1875-1907 by William James Topley (1845-1930), and subsequently by his son, William de Courcy Topley, who took over the studio in 1907 until its closing in 1926. The Topley Studio extensively documented the nation's capital in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, leaving behind vivid graphic representations of the period. Throughout the years, the studio carefully documented and maintained thousands of individual and group studio portraits, views of Ottawa and its surrounding area, composite photographs, and even a series of immigration photographs commissioned by the Department of the Interior in 1910. These photographs, which

¹ See, for example, Diana Pedersen, "The Photographic Record of the YWCA." Although slightly outdated, this study illustrates a shift toward valuing photographic material as an important resource for re-constructing women's history in Canada.

cover a period of over fifty years, have been published in numerous historical texts, books and articles, as well as reproduced on currency and eleven postage stamps among other diverse formats.

The Public Archives of Canada (hereafter PAC, and now known as Library and Archives Canada, hereafter LAC) acquired the Topley Studio fonds in 1936, almost ten years after the studio officially closed.² William de Courcy Topley clearly understood the historical value of this collection, and made the decision to sell its entire contents to the Archives in 1926, four years before his father's death.³ On October 4th of that year, W. de C. Topley wrote a letter to the Acting Dominion Archivist to propose an offer: "I would like to give your Department the opportunity of acquiring the collection as a whole because I believe it would be a distinct loss to the country and to future generations if these negatives were not carefully preserved."⁴ Ten years later, an agreement was reached between the two parties, and the entire collection was passed on to the Archives for a sum of \$3,000. This collection comprised the first complete private fonds of a Canadian photographic studio to arrive at PAC, underscoring the "role of the Archives as a national portrait collection."⁵ In total, the Topley Studio collection contains over

² The Public Archives of Canada was renamed the National Archives of Canada in 1987, and then Library and Archives Canada, which united the National Archives of Canada and the National Library of Canada, in 2004.

³ Ralph Willsey suggests that this offer was a valiant effort on the part of William de Courcy Topley, who could have sold the glass plate negatives for cash instead of delivering them to the Archives. See Ralph Willsey, "Lord of the Lens," *The Ottawa Citizen*, The Citizen Weekly, January 2, 2000.

⁴ Letter from William de Courcy Topley to A. G. Doughty, October 4th, 1926. William James Topley collection acquisition files, volume 1. Library and Archives Canada.

William de Courcy Topley initially wanted to sell the collection for a sum of \$25,000 (approximately 200,000 negatives for ten cents each), however, this offer was apparently rejected by the Public Archives of Canada.

⁵ *Documentary Art and Photography Division*, compiled by Jim Burant with an introduction by Lilly Koltun (Ottawa: National Archives of Canada, 1992), 3, 27. It is significant to note that this large acquisition was made during the Great Depression of the 1930s, when the Division's acquisition budget was reduced and then eliminated altogether.

150,000 glass plate and nitrate negatives, 68 “counter books,” studio albums, daily assignment logs, and a small amount of textual material.

While the Topley collection remains one of Library and Archive Canada’s most widely consulted sources of late nineteenth and twentieth century photographs, there exists very little secondary literature addressing this vast body of photographic material. The secondary literature that has been produced to date has undoubtedly contributed to our understanding of Topley and his studio; however, it has also continuously framed his photographic practice and oeuvre within a traditional monographic approach that valorizes aesthetics and the notion of artistic genius. This thesis, which brings to light a small portion of this important and diverse photographic collection, aims to challenge those prevalent narratives, and instead considers new questions that emerge when exploring representations of gender, class and race. It also contributes to Photography Studies in Canada, a field that has “been a rare subject of consolidated scholarly analyses” according to scholars Carol Payne and Andrea Kunard.⁶ Inspired by the feminist scholarship of Canadian historians Diana Pedersen and Colleen Skidmore, my exploration of the Topley collection emphasizes the broader social history of photography, moving away from former approaches that have either dismissed or overlooked these types of questions.

To date, scholars have largely adopted formalist approaches to Topley’s work, which has shifted the focus away from alternative narratives. Researchers have continuously focused on either the artistic quality of his studio portraits, particularly those of historical Canadian men, or have completely ignored broader intersections

⁶ Carol Payne and Andrea Kunard, “Writing Photography in Canada: A Historiography,” *The Cultural Work of Photography in Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2011), 231.

between gender, class and race. With the exception of a significant amount of literature addressing his immigration series, there are very few analyses of the imagery produced by the Topley studio that draw on critical theory. Instead, most of the literature to date comprises factual information about the Topley family or the evolution of the studio. LAC photo-archivists, who have often been “engaged in recovering lost or forgotten photographic practices,” are some of the few people who have authored publications addressing Topley’s career and photographic oeuvre.⁷ They include retired LAC archivists Andrew Birrell, Andrew Rodger and Claude Minotto.

As I have indicated above, the critical work that has been written in the past has primarily focused on Topley’s immigration photographs, which have become iconic as a result of numerous reproductions. Claude Minotto published the first major article addressing these particular images in the late 1970s. “Le centre d’immigration de Québec (1908-1910): seuil de l’Amérique” explores photographs taken by John Woodruff and Topley, who were both commissioned by the Department of the Interior to take images of immigrants arriving in Quebec for promotional purposes. In this article, Minotto compares Topley’s work to that of his colleague’s: “More intimate [than Woodruff’s], the photographs that have been attributed to [Topley] show us immigrants who are posing, but who seem to know why.”⁸ A few years later, another brief discussion of these same photographs appears in Ralph Greenhill and Andrew Birrell’s *Canadian Photography, 1839-1920*.⁹ The authors compare “the excellent Topley pictures” with Woodruff’s

⁷ Ibid., 232.

⁸ “Plus intimes, les photographies qui lui sont attribuées nous font voir des immigrants qui posent, mais qui semblent savoir pourquoi” (My translation). Claude Minotto, “Le Centre d’immigration de Québec (1908-1910), seuil de l’Amérique,” *Archives* 9, no. 1 (June 1977), 16.

⁹ This monograph is an expanded version of its earlier edition, *Early Photography in Canada*, which was first published by Greenhill, a professional photographer and collector, in 1965. In this publication, Topley

“more ordinary photographs” of immigrants, therefore directing their focus on the aesthetic and documentary value of the photographs in question.¹⁰ A more recent article by Brian Osborne also assesses the aforementioned photographs, framing them within a larger historical narrative of Canadian immigration and national railways between 1925-30. Like Minotto, Osborne is interested in how Topley chose to represent his subjects in photographic form. As he reminds his readers, “[b]ehind the final image is a never-to-be-captured process of observing, selecting, interrogating, isolating and posing.”¹¹ While Greenhill and Birrell tend to focus on the formal qualities of these two photographers’ work, Minotto and Osborne both raise other difficult questions that delve into the politics of representation.

The formalist approach adopted by some of these researchers in the past is also reflected in the archival and research methodologies employed by LAC staff in the 1960s. Andrew Birrell was one of the first archivists to perform a major assessment of the Topley Collection when the PAC, as the institution was then known, hired him in 1965, shortly after the Historical Photographs Section had been established.¹² Birrell went through the majority of the negatives in the Topley collection during these years, and outlined the work he had completed in a report addressed to Richard Huyda, former head

is only mentioned in passing in regards to his stereographs. See Ralph Greenhill, *Early Photography in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1965), 48.

¹⁰ Ralph Greenhill and Andrew Birrell, *Canadian Photography: 1839-1920* (Toronto: The Coach House Press, 1979), 145. Kunard and Payne note that this monograph and its earlier version both emphasize technology and biography, and do not address representational strategies. See Payne and Kunard, “Writing Photography in Canada,” 232.

¹¹ Brian S. Osborne, “Constructing the State, Managing the Corporation, Transforming the Individual: Photography, Immigration and the Canadian National Railways, 1925-30,” in *Picturing Place: Photography and the Geographical Imagination*, edited by Joan M. Schwartz and James R. Ryan (London: I.B. Tauris, 2003), 179.

¹² The Historical Photographs Section was created within the Picture Division, which had been in existence since the turn of the century. In the mid-1970s, it was renamed the National Photography Collection and became a division in its own right. See Danielle Lacasse and Antonio Lechasseur, *National Archives of Canada, 1872-1997* (Ottawa: The Canadian Historical Association, 1997), 20.

of the Historical Photographs Section. In this report, Birrell indicates that he “evaluated the series and stamped an ‘R’ on the upper-left hand corner of the envelope for every negative to be considered historically valuable” and that he also assessed the collection “to eliminate unnecessary duplication, particularly among the portraits.”¹³ Furthermore, Birrell indicates that he was looking through the collection to find “important Canadian figures” for re-photographing, including Prime Ministers, Senators and Members of Parliament. His work on the collection is still reflected in individual descriptions of the Topley photographs on LAC’s online database today. Portraits of important (male) politicians are often accompanied by more detailed descriptions, including dates of birth and death, in addition to their position (as a Member of Parliament, Senator, etc.).

Birrell, one of the co-authors of *Canadian Photography, 1839-1920*, also published a brief article on Topley in the journal *Canadian Photography* in the early 1970s. In this short biographical sketch on Topley’s background and studio practice, Birrell is quite critical of the photographer’s work at times, again within an aesthetic framework. He writes that: “Topley cannot be said to have been an outstanding portraitist...” and omits a detailed analysis of Topley’s portraits altogether.¹⁴ In a recent interview I conducted with Birrell, he reflected on his earlier statement and noted that his opinion may have been coloured by the sheer number of photographs that he was going through at that time.¹⁵ He suggested that Topley never got “the same range of interesting people” that photographers like William Notman were able to attract, with the exception

¹³ Report by Andrew Birrell to Richard Huyda. No date. William James Topley collection acquisition files, volume 1. Library and Archives Canada.

¹⁴ Andrew J. Birrell, “19th century Canadian Photography,” *Canadian Photography* 4, no 1 (Feb 1973), 41.

¹⁵ Andrew J. Birrell, interview by Emma Hamilton-Hobbs, December 12, 2013.

of a few Prime Ministers including Sir John A. Macdonald and Wilfrid Laurier.¹⁶ Birrell emphasized that he did not feel as though Topley ranked among other canonical figures recognized within the history of photography.

Andrew Rodger, also a former LAC photo-archivist, specialized in the historical photographic collections throughout his lengthy career at the institution. During that time, Rodger became fascinated with the Topley Studio fonds, and has consequently studied and written on Topley's studio practice and collection. Over many years, he has focused on tracing the history of the Topley family and the studio, and has published both biographies and short articles on these subjects.¹⁷ Rodger is also responsible for the content of LAC's virtual exhibition, *William James Topley: Reflections on a Capital Photographer*, which has been online since September 4th, 2008. This exhibition is divided into sections that include more information on the vast array of photographs produced by his studio (portraits, composite photographs, immigration photographs, etc.), accompanied by a small amount of digitized images from the fonds itself.¹⁸

While there has not been a significant amount of literature addressing the Topley Studio, William James Topley's early mentor, William Notman (1826-1891), has been discussed in great depth. Notman owned and operated a successful photography studio in Montreal, along with a number of branch studios in North American cities including Ottawa, Toronto, Halifax and Boston. Stanley G. Triggs, Curator of the Notman

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ See Andrew Rodger, "The Topley Family and Photography," *The Archivist* 13, no. 2 (1986). This short illustrated article focuses on the male photographers of the Topley family, including Horatio Nelson Topley, John G. Topley, William James Topley and William DeCourcy Topley, with a particular focus on W.J. Topley. Like Birrell, Rodger indicates that his portraiture is typical of the nineteenth century. For other bibliographic entries on W.J. Topley by Rodger, see "Topley, William James (1845-1930)," *Encyclopedia of Nineteenth-Century Photography* 1, edited by John Hannavy (New York: Routledge, 2008) and "Topley, William James," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* 15 (University of Laval/Université de Laval, 2005), http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio.php?id_nbr=8390 (accessed February 22nd 2014).

¹⁸ *William James Topley: Reflections* (accessed April 2nd, 2014).

Photographic Archives at the McCord Museum from 1965 to 1994, has written extensively on the Notman studio and his photographic practice.¹⁹ In the mid-nineties, scholar Dr. Colleen Skidmore, currently an associate professor in the Department of Art and Design at the University of Alberta, contributed a feminist perspective to this Montreal photographer's studio practice in "Women Workers in Notman's Studio."²⁰ In a much longer dissertation on the subject, she briefly discusses a photographic portrait of the Topley family and the role that gender played in determining the sons' financial success in the photography business, from which the female family members were excluded. Martha Langford has also approached the Notman Photographic Archives from a critical perspective in *Suspended Conversations: The Afterlife of Memory in Photographic Albums*. This publication highlights the importance of the photographic album and its oral narrative, reading the album as a whole as opposed to its individual images.

One of the primary reasons for the dearth of scholarship on the Topley Studio collection to date is related to the small amount of textual materials that was transferred to the PAC after it acquired the collection in 1936. Appointment books, occasional correspondence and a cashbook are some of the few textual documents that can be found in the collection. This has undoubtedly posed a problem for researchers in the past, and has led people like Andrew Rodger to search for clues in other ways, including city directories, newspaper articles and other types of records (birth, marriage and death).

¹⁹ See Triggs, *William Notman: The Stamp of a Studio*; Triggs, *Composite Photographs of William Notman*; Harper and Triggs, *Portrait of a Period*; Hall, Dodds and Triggs, *The World of William Notman*.

²⁰ See Colleen Skidmore, "Women Workers in Notman's Studio, 'young ladies of the printing room,'" *History of Photography* 20, 2 (Summer 1996): 124-126. This short paper was turned into a longer dissertation the next year, see Colleen Skidmore, "Women in Photography at the Notman Studio, Montreal, 1856-1881" (PhD diss., University of Alberta, 1999).

Other Canadian photographic collections, including the Notman Photographic Archives at the McCord Museum, contain more textual documentation enabling scholars to approach studio practices from different perspectives. For example, Skidmore utilized Notman's employee wages books in the aforementioned research project to reconstruct the lives of the women who worked in his studio from 1856-1881.

As a result of these limitations, my research draws from a mixture of primary and secondary sources that have helped me paint a fuller picture of Topley's life and photographic oeuvre. Primary sources for this study include an assortment of newspaper and journal articles, diaries, annual reports, registers, city directories and other published and non-published materials that are located in various Canadian archives, including Library and Archives Canada,²¹ the Archives of Ontario in Toronto and the City of Ottawa Archives. Additionally, I accessed and consulted a variety of primary and secondary materials available at the MacOdrum Library (Carleton University), the Morisset Library (University of Ottawa), the Ottawa Room at the Ottawa Public Library, and the Library of the National Gallery of Canada.

Although the archival material held at LAC does not contain any personal journals or diaries, Topley did publish a few articles that provide insights into his photographic approach and techniques. In his first major article, titled "Posing," which appeared in an 1881 issue of *Photographic Mosaics: an Annual Record of Photographic Practice*, Topley talks quite candidly about his experience with sitters, and provides some photographic advice to both professionals and amateurs. Between 1889-1893, Topley

²¹ Most of the photographic and textual material is stored at the LAC Preservation Centre located in Gatineau, Québec, although the nitrate negatives are stored in the Nitrate Film Preservation Facility. The glass plate negatives do not travel and must be consulted at the Preservation Centre with the assistance of LAC personnel.

also published four articles in the *International Annual of Anthony's Photographic Bulletin and American Process Yearbook* in which he covers a variety of topics, including the challenges of producing a photographic portrait, hints for beginners, and copyright issues. These articles are crucial to our understanding of Topley's character and personality, as well as his artistic and business perspectives.

My own methodological framework for this research paper has been greatly influenced by the work of Dr. Colleen Skidmore. Skidmore's scholarly work attempts to reframe the way in which we engage with historical photographs by focusing on a socio-historical feminist approach that deconstructs traditional aesthetic values. Her essay "Photography in the Convent: Grey Nuns, Québec, 1861" explores an iconic mid-nineteenth century albumen print, titled *Grey Nuns*, by photographer George William Ellisson of Quebec. In this article, Skidmore challenges past readings of this photograph, particularly those by James Borcoman, founding curator of the photography collection at the National Gallery of Canada, and Ralph Greenhill. She is concerned that their writing has framed this photograph within a "modernist formalism" defined as "a traditional art history approach valorizing aesthetics and artistic genius."²² Skidmore argues that their assessment of the photograph focuses primarily on the photographer himself, and not on the actual female subjects of the work – questions about their identities and the role of agency were never addressed. Consequently, Skidmore's paper seeks to explore "new and difficult" questions that emerge when the focus is "shifted [away] from the male

²² Colleen Skidmore, "Photography in the Convent: Grey Nuns, Québec, 1861," in *Social History/Histoire Sociale* 35, no. 70 (2002), 282.

photographer” and placed back onto the female sitters as the “centre of inquiry.”²³ She uses a beautiful blend of primary and secondary sources to reconstruct these women’s lives and identities, building a larger narrative of this group of influential religious women and their photographic representations.

Like Skidmore, my own methodological approach is interdisciplinary, blending together feminist theory, women’s history, sociology, photography history and cultural studies. Based on the writing of feminist scholars such as Griselda Pollock and Judith Butler, this study explores the social construction of sexual difference, of ‘masculinity’ and ‘femininity,’ and how this is reinforced through cultural practices and highly-coded visual representations. In her seminal book *Vision and Difference: Feminism, Femininity and the Histories of Art*, Pollock suggested a paradigm shift that would ultimately challenge gender hierarchies and power relations within the discipline of art history. She emphasizes that an artistic practice must be situated within a broader context that considers “the social struggles between classes, races and genders,” in addition to the meaning that is being produced by that specific practice and for whom it is intended.²⁴ Pollock’s work is greatly influenced by Marxist theory, which stresses that the totality of social forces must be considered in relation to artistic production.

My thesis is equally engaged with social historical and Marxist critiques of photographic representations. The work produced by John Tagg, Allan Sekula and Abigail Solomon-Godeau has repeatedly illustrated that the camera is never neutral and

²³ Ibid. Skidmore builds on the writing of Abigail Solomon-Godeau and John Tagg for her own interdisciplinary approach, which combines the fields of sociology, women’s history, photography history, and cultural studies.

²⁴ Griselda Pollock, *Vision and Difference: Feminism, Femininity and the Histories of Art* (London and New York: Routledge, 1988), 9-10.

that “the power it wields is never its own.”²⁵ Focusing primarily on social documentary photography, these scholars challenge the ‘objective’ nature of these photographs and propose alternative ways of reading them. They suggest that these types of photographic representations are highly coded and are entrenched within social, gendered and racial power dynamics. As Solomon-Godeau has noted, referring specifically to the ideology of gender, photography and its “supposed transparency, truth, and naturalism has been an especially potent purveyor of cultural ideology.”²⁶ It is thus my intent to approach Topley’s photographic representations with these critical frameworks in mind, exploring the role of the (male) photographer and his production of imagery that both reaffirms and challenges our notions of Victorian ideology.

This thesis is divided into three major chapters, all of which explore “new and difficult” questions that emerge when we re-examine Topley’s life and work from a broader socio-historical context, and consider visual representations of gender, class and race. The first chapter explores the socio-historical context in which the Topley studio operated in Ottawa during the years after Confederation. Topley’s rise to fame, which has been repeatedly chronicled over the years, is inextricably tied to the success of his early mentor, William Notman, who decided to place the young photographer as manager of his first branch studio in Ottawa when it opened in January 1868. Eventually Topley severed his ties with Notman, and established his own grandiose studio in 1875. Forced to sell this studio only a few years later, Topley moved to a more modest space at 104 Sparks Street, then again to 132 Sparks Street in 1888. Despite these setbacks, Topley

²⁵ John Tagg, *The Burden of Representation: Essays on Photographies and Histories* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 1988), 63-4.

²⁶ Abigail Solomon-Godeau, “Sexual Difference” (1987) in *Photography on the Dock: Essays on Photographic History, Institutions and Practices* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), 257.

was able to maintain an impressive list of patrons throughout the years, including Governors-General, Prime Ministers, Senators, and Members of Parliament, in addition to hundreds of other loyal clients.

Chapter One simultaneously weaves a picture of women's evolving roles during the late nineteenth century into this narrative, and illustrates how these shifts are reflected in both Topley's photographic imagery and business strategies. Furthermore, it considers the photographer's philanthropic activities and roles outside of the studio, including his ties to various charitable and social reform organizations at the turn of the century. How did his involvement (in addition to his wife's) with these associations influence his photographic subject matter and the type of work for which he was occasionally commissioned? How did Topley interact with subjects who were not a part of his average paying clientele?

The answers to these questions are examined in the second chapter of the thesis, which explores seven photographs that were taken by W.J. Topley in February 1895. These seemingly disparate photographs, which feature both interior and exterior views of various Ottawa institutions including the Home for Friendless Women, the Carleton County Gaol, and the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) building, are in fact interconnected, and raise important questions about class, morality and crime in late nineteenth-century Ottawa. This chapter is based on extensive primary research, while also drawing from some of the existing secondary literature. For this chapter, I have examined archival materials including annual reports of the Ontario Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), YWCA and the Home for Friendless Women, in addition to

Ottawa jail records, including registers and daily count books. These crucial sources help to contextualize the photographic material in question.

Strategies of representation are considered in this chapter as well. Both John Tagg and Allan Sekula have explored visual strategies that were utilized by photographers to differentiate and control specific groups of people, including the working classes, colonized peoples, the criminal, poor, sick or insane. Topley's photographs of the female inmates within the Home and the Ottawa jail certainly raise some interesting questions about the photographer's own representational strategies, in addition to power relations, disciplinary spaces and moral cleanliness. While this chapter attempts to answer many of these questions, it also leaves room to contemplate other possible readings.

The third chapter in this thesis focuses on the photographic representations of costumed middle and upper class citizens of late nineteenth-century Ottawa. It centres on a single composite photograph that the Topley Studio created after the Dufferin Grand Fancy Ball, which took place on February 23, 1876 at Rideau Hall, in addition to individual and group costumed studio portraits that make up this fascinating constructed image. Like other Victorian sanctioned activities and events, both the hosts and their guests were expected to conduct themselves in a 'proper manner' that befitted their social status at fancy ball events. However, these rare occasions also allowed men and women to assume, albeit temporarily, a fictitious identity that subverted or transgressed conventional values and norms.

Building on Cynthia Cooper's research on the Canadian fancy dress balls in *Magnificent Entertainments: Fancy Dress Balls of Canada's Governors General, 1876-*

1898, my own approach draws from gender theory, as well as literature on portraiture and identity. I discuss how Topley and his staff utilized portraiture conventions and other formal elements to create an image that is at once unified and hierarchical, and that promotes an ideological framework that, in Althusser's terms, interpellates subjects who hold similar aristocratic values and beliefs. I also argue, using Judith's Butler's notion of gender performativity, that these portraits reveal to us the ways in which men and women could exercise certain liberties in the context of a fancy dress ball, and how the rigorous Victorian male/female dichotomy could be temporarily destabilized. Finally, I analyze a few portraits of individuals who assumed a highly romantic identity of the oriental or native Other, which mirrored nineteenth century imperial and colonial discourses.

These three chapters provide a new perspective on the nation's capital at the turn of the century, specifically in regards to intersections between gender, class and race. While John H. Taylor's *Ottawa, An Illustrated History* remains an important resource for understanding the region's history since its settlement in the late eighteenth century, it only briefly touches upon the roles of women during its formative years. Furthermore, Taylor employed historical photographs as mere illustrations to accompany his text, and added short captions that denude these images of their original contexts of creation, circulation and viewing. It is thus my intent to revisit the types of late nineteenth-century photographs that Taylor included in his book from a critical perspective, asking new questions about social and gendered identities, visual representation and the social history of women.

Chapter One: Portrait Of A Capital Photographer

His [William Topley's] works seem to appear in every book on Canada's history ever printed. He dominated his field to a greater extent than even Yousuf Karsh, but, like most photographers, he gets the back seat and writes the front...it takes considerable effort to find out anything about the photographer beyond a single paragraph in the Canadian Encyclopedia.²⁷

As Ralph Willsey laments in a 2000 article, it is difficult to find a great deal of information about the enigmatic William James Topley, despite the fact that “his works seem to appear in every book on Canada’s history ever printed.” While my introduction has illustrated that this statement isn’t entirely true, Topley’s private life does remain more or less a mystery. This is primarily due to the fact that LAC was unable to acquire any private diaries or personal correspondence when his son sold the collection in 1936. What little we can glean about his personal life and character can be found in scarce primary sources, including an interview conducted shortly before the photographer’s death, a few mentions in diary entries, and short articles that he penned for photography magazines in the 1880s and 1890s. This chapter thus seeks to expand upon the existing literature on Topley and the broader social context in which his studio operated. However, it departs from a conventional monographic approach by raising questions about class and gender. Specifically, I contextualize Topley’s life by raising questions about his upper-class patrons and his involvement with religious and philanthropic groups in Ottawa. By looking closely at Topley’s historical context, more can be said about Willsey’s well-respected “Lord of the Lens” and his photographic production.

²⁷ Ralph Willsey, “Lord of the Lens,” *The Ottawa Citizen*, *The Citizen Weekly*, January 2, 2000.

William James Topley's early life and professional career has been repeatedly documented over the years. He was the eldest child of John Topley, a saddler and harness maker, and Anna Delia Topley. In 1840, John emigrated from Dublin, Ireland, to Montreal, and moved to Aylmer (now in Western Quebec) in 1850.²⁸ He married Anna, who was born in St. John, Quebec and was also of Irish descent. She gave birth to William on February 13th, 1845 in Montreal. William spent his childhood in Aylmer, which at that time was part of Canada East. As the story goes, it was his mother who introduced him to the relatively new medium of photography. Mrs. Topley travelled to Montreal in 1858, when her son was thirteen years old, to buy him a melodeon. Her son had already expressed an interest in music; at that age, he played the flutina, an "improved accordion," and sang in children's concerts.²⁹ Upon arriving in the city, however, she made the decision to invest her money in a camera instead, and sought the advice of many photographers who apparently could do little to assist her.

Feeling rather defeatist at this point, Anna Topley walked into the studio of a celebrated local photographer, William Notman. Notman, after hearing about Mrs. Topley's recent "difficulties" with the other photographers, "evidently appreciated the situation" and promised to provide her with a photographic outfit for \$100.00 in addition to seventeen lessons that she could teach the young William upon her return home.³⁰ It

²⁸ Anson A. Gard, *Pioneers of the Upper Canada and the Humors of the Valley*, South Hull and Aylmer Edition (Ottawa: Emerson Press, 1906), 66. Gard describes John Topley as an individual who was "very active in the town's interest, and especially so in educational and church work."

²⁹ Edna Kells, "History Hos [sic] Been Made Before Eyes and Portrayed by Camera of Mr. W. J. Topley, Pioneer Photographer, Who Celebrates Eighty-Second Birthday on Sunday," *Edmonton Journal*, February 12, 1927.

³⁰ *Ibid.* While Mrs. Topley apparently did pass on these valuable lessons to her son, it is worthwhile to note that she also took up photography around that time. She was noted to have been an amateur photographer in Gard's biography of the Topley family, and is praised for her photograph of the triumphal arch in Aylmer, which is reproduced in Gard's book. However, Colleen Skidmore has suggested that Mrs. Topley's gender prevented her from obtaining employment at Notman's, or another photography studio. See Colleen

wasn't long before the young Topley embraced the medium, and both of his parents supported and encouraged this new passion. Mr. Topley even had a studio built for his son, who applied himself diligently to the task of mastering the new art."³¹ The young Topley traveled from town to town taking tintypes, positive images made cheaply on thin sheets of steel; a humble start, yet a start nonetheless.

This story was recounted in an interview conducted with Topley on February 12th 1927, a day before his eighty-second birthday. The interviewer, Edna Kells, frames the anecdote within a genius narrative by titling this section of her article "Providence or Fate," thus painting Topley as a man blessed with artistic talent and destined for greatness. Feminist scholars like Griselda Pollock have questioned this myth of the bourgeois male artist; insisting that we "expose and challenge the prevailing assumptions that this 'creativity' is an exclusive male prerogative."³² While Mrs. Topley may have been a gifted photographer herself, her "amateur" work is only acknowledged in passing, usually in connection with William's early years.

When John Topley died in 1863, the family relocated to Montreal. A year later, both William and John G. Topley, his younger brother, were hired as apprentices at the William Notman studio. At this time, there were thirty-five full-time employees listed in Notman's wages book, and competition among the beginners must have been fierce.³³ Notman hired many young apprentices to work at his studio throughout the years, and

Skidmore, "Women in Photography at the Notman Studio, Montreal, 1856-1881" (PhD diss., University of Alberta, 1999), 182.

³¹ Kells, *op. cit.*

³² Griselda Pollock, *Vision and Difference: Feminism, femininity and the histories of art* (London and New York: Routledge, 1988), 29.

³³ Stanley Triggs, *William Notman: The Stamp of a Studio* (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario and Coach House Press, 1985), 24. According to the wage books, W. J. Topley was earning \$6 biweekly, one of the lowest wage levels, from 10 October 1864, and \$16 biweekly by 11 January 1868. Skidmore, "Women in Photography," 181.

was eager to instruct them “in every phase of the art, from the rudimentary coating of the glass to the finer points of composition and positioning of the subject.”³⁴ The elder Topley sibling clearly impressed his mentor, for when it was time to open up his first branch studio in Ottawa in 1868, he sent William to act as his branch manager. This new studio was strategically located at 60 Wellington St., on the corner of Metcalfe and directly across from the Parliament buildings.

A few of the photographers working or apprenticing in Notman’s Montreal studio relocated to Ottawa to work for William Topley, or to set up independent studios of their own. William’s younger brother, John G. Topley, moved to Ottawa to work at the new Notman branch studio, and was an employee there until 1908, when he opened a studio of his own at 164 Rideau Street.³⁵ Horatio Nelson Topley, another one of William’s brothers and former employee at Notman’s Montreal studio, may have also worked at the Ottawa branch studio for William, or he may have had his own studio.³⁶ Notman’s own brother James came to Ottawa in 1870 to work at the studio for a brief period of time as well. George Arless (1841-1903) was most likely employed at the Notman Studio in Ottawa from 1870-1873, and then went into partnership with Samuel Jarvis, also a former Notman employee, for two years.³⁷ When their partnership dissolved, Jarvis opened his own studio at 140 Sparks Street and Arless moved back to Montreal by 1878, where he in turn opened a business of his own. Jarvis’ studio operated until 1892 when it fell into bankruptcy.

³⁴ Roger Hall, Gordon Dodds and Stanley Triggs, *The World of William Notman* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1993), 13.

³⁵ Andrew Rodger, “The Topley family and photography,” *The Archivist* 13, no. 2 (1986), 18.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ Triggs, *Stamp of a Studio*, 163.

When Topley arrived in Ottawa in 1868, the city already had a history of active photography studios.³⁸ The earliest-known daguerreotypist in Bytown was an “enigmatic” man named Henry E. Insley, an American photographer who briefly passed through the area in mid-March of 1844.³⁹ There were other itinerant photographers who arrived in Bytown/Ottawa over the next few years, including Mr. Carleton of Montreal and Robert Nixon of Albany in 1847; Mr. Desnoyers in 1848; O.B. Curtis in 1849; and Mr. Conger in 1850.⁴⁰ Joseph Lockwood settled in the area as a commercial photographer in late 1851 and established the first permanent studio in the city.⁴¹ He was responsible for introducing the ambrotype to Ottawa in 1856. Other photographers opened studios in the 1850s and 1860s, including the McComb brothers, Eastman & Tabor, the Stiff Brothers, and Elihu Spencer. When the Parliament buildings were under construction in the eighteen-sixties, Samuel McLaughlin (1826-1914) of Quebec City was sent to record the progress.⁴² Once the city had been established as the capital in 1857, many government and commercial photographers flocked to the city throughout the next ten years. The *Ottawa Directory of 1869-70* indicates that there were eight active “photographic artists” in the area, including the newly established W.J. Topley of the Notman Studio. While some of these names disappear and new names emerge in

³⁸ *Reflections on a Capital: 12 Ottawa photographers* was an exhibition organized by Richard Huyda, Andrew Birrell and Peter Robertson of the Public Archives of Canada in 1970. The introduction of the exhibition catalogue provides a brief history of Ottawa photographers, and there are short biographies of all twelve photographers whose work was selected for the exhibition. For a more recent and detailed history, see volumes 1 and 2 of Jim Burant, *History of Art and Artists of Ottawa and Surrounding Area, 1790-1970* (Ottawa: Ottawa Art Gallery, 1993).

³⁹ Jim Burant, *History of Art and Artists of Ottawa and Surrounding Area, 1790-1970, Part I* (Ottawa: Ottawa Art Gallery, 1993), 26. For more information on this early photographer, see Joan Schwartz, “The Enigmatic Henry E. Insley,” *History of Photography*, 16, 1, 1992: 70-72.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ Joseph Lockwood’s daughter, Alvira Lockwood (1845-1923), took over the studio after his death in 1859 and ran it until 1891.

⁴² *Reflections on a capital: 12 Ottawa photographers, selected from the National Photograph Collection* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1970), n.p. McLaughlin was also named the first “photographer” with the Department of Public Works.

subsequent Ottawa city directories, Topley's remained a fixture until the studio officially closed its doors in 1926.

The early success of the new Notman branch studio in Ottawa is closely related to its placement near the commercial heart of the city. Many notable photography firms operating in major Canadian cities in the nineteenth century, such as the Livernois studio in Québec, were strategically situated in order to successfully attract middle and upper class clients.⁴³ Shortly after its opening, Notman's branch studio became very popular among the city's elite class, who flocked to the studio to have their portrait, or "likeness," taken (figure 1.1). Although Topley was left to manage the studio on his own, Notman made sure that the young professional did not diverge from the established styles and prices that had been set by the Montreal studio.⁴⁴ Perhaps this lack of autonomy was one of the reasons that Topley decided to purchase the studio from Notman in 1872, henceforth acting as the sole proprietor.⁴⁵ By the early 1870s, after years of success, the studio had been attracting over 2,300 sitters a year.

In 1875, Topley moved to a new studio that he had specially built at the corner of Metcalfe and Queen Streets, two blocks away from his former premises (figure 1.2). An Italianate-style building designed by Mr. King Arnoldi, the studio was touted as "the finest and best studio in America" upon its grand opening. The *Canadian Illustrated News* provides a detailed description of its interior:

Passing through the spacious vestibule, we enter the extensive offices and showrooms of which there are five opening into each other. Here are on exhibition the celebrated composition pictures of the fancy dress ball and the

⁴³ Michel Lessard, *The Livernois Photographers* (Québec: Musée du Québec, 1987), 116.

⁴⁴ Hall et al., *The World of William Notman*, 25.

⁴⁵ Unfortunately, there do not seem to be any existing records at LAC or the Notman Photographic Archives that address the sale of the Notman branch in Ottawa. However, Andrew Rodger has suggested that this purchase could have been a result of Notman's own financial difficulties around that time.

tobogganing and curling scenes at Rideau Hall, together with a large number of portraits and landscapes of a very interesting nature, as well as of exceptionally good character. From here we ascend to the second floor, reaching the dressing, the operating and copying rooms; and in the third storey we find the printing department. In the basement are situated the mounting and finishing rooms, the toning and washing department and the laboratory, also the heating apparatus which warms the building by hot water.⁴⁶

An illustration of the new studio by Eugene Haberer accompanied this announcement, and shows a large arched window that would have illuminated the ‘operating room’ with natural lighting (figure 1.3). A skylight (not shown in the illustration) would have also helped to bring in more light; skylights were essential in photography studios before the advent of flash photography or electricity. Unfortunately, Topley could not afford to maintain this ornate studio for very long due to the economic depression in the 1870s, and was forced to move his studio, again, in 1878, to 104 Sparks Street (figure 1.4). He remained at that address until 1888, when he moved the Topley studio to its final location at 132 Sparks Street.⁴⁷

When Topley arrived in Ottawa in the late 1860s, the young capital of the newly formed Dominion of Canada was undergoing major economic, social and political developments. Prior to 1855, Ottawa was known as Bytown, and was described by historian John Taylor as a “small grubby, riot-ridden frontier town, with an unprepossessing name.”⁴⁸ This pioneering community was settled toward the end of the late eighteenth century on the banks of the Ottawa and Rideau Rivers. As a result of the region’s natural resources, including waterways and surrounding forests, Bytown emerged as an important square timber-exporting region in North America; sending

⁴⁶ “Topley’s New Studio, Ottawa,” *Canadian Illustrated News*, 11 November 1876.

⁴⁷ Andrew Rodger, “Topley, William James,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 15, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2005, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/topley_william_james_15E.html.

⁴⁸ John H. Taylor, *Ottawa, An Illustrated History* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, Publishers, and Canadian Museum of Civilization, National Museums of Canada, 1986), 56, 61.

timber down the Ottawa River and the St. Lawrence to Quebec, where it was then shipped to Britain.⁴⁹ The construction of the canal between 1826-1832 brought more people to the area, and Bytown expanded to accommodate this growing population of ethnically diverse backgrounds. In the 1840s, the square timber trade was replaced by the sawn lumber industry, which created more demand for labour.

In 1850, Bytown was established as a town and five years later it became known as Ottawa, thereby achieving city-status and a “more presentable calling card.”⁵⁰ A few years later, in 1857, Queen Victoria selected Ottawa as the capital of the Province of Canada, and the construction of the government buildings commenced soon thereafter. Between 1851 and 1861, the population of the city nearly doubled, primarily due to the arrival of parliamentarians, civil servants and their families beginning in October 1865, when the first civil servants made their way from Quebec City to Ottawa.⁵¹ John H. Taylor has noted that the rise of two new centres of economic activity, lumber and government, resulted in significant increases in the commercial and professional classes during this time.⁵² Notman was likely aware that his Ottawa branch would benefit from this substantial sector growth. According to Topley, his employer intended for him to “collect portraits to make a picture of confederation celebrities” when he was first sent to Ottawa; however, this was never accomplished.⁵³ While the young photographer may not have managed to complete this task, he did manage to photograph many important early

⁴⁹ Ibid., 13.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 56, 61.

⁵¹ Ibid., 61.

⁵² Taylor, *Ottawa*, Appendix, Table IV, 211. Between 1861-71, the commercial occupational group increased from 383 to 1,102 people, while the professional occupational group increased from 149 to 762 people.

⁵³ Kells, *op. cit.* In the interview, there is no explanation as to why this plan was never carried out by Topley.

Canadian political figures, including Canada's first Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald.

In the nineteenth century, Ottawa was a fragmented city, economically, politically, socially and culturally. These divisions emerged during the construction of the Rideau Canal in the 1820s, when Irish canal workers, French lumbermen and a small group of wealthy English and Scottish entrepreneurs and employees of the crown came to the small town of primarily farm-settlers.⁵⁴ When the sawn lumber industry emerged in the late 1840s, it created a high demand for labour and drew more workers into the area. The arrival of the civil service with the construction of the new government buildings heightened tensions with the local manual labourers, who still viewed the newly-formed capital as a "working-man's town."⁵⁵ Furthermore, the city was divided into different wards that reflected a hierarchy of social classes. These five wards had been established when Ottawa achieved city-status in 1855. Lower Town, composed of Roman Catholic workers and small entrepreneurs of French and Irish descent, was divided into By and Ottawa Wards.⁵⁶ The wealthy elite, predominantly Anglo-Protestant, occupied Upper Town, or Wellington Ward. Victoria Ward was created to encompass "the mixed population of Lebreton Flats, but with a curious panhandle through a heavily populated and wealthy portion of Upper Town."⁵⁷ Finally, St. George's Ward was created covering what is now the Sandy Hill neighbourhood, along with much of the Rideau Street business community.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ Taylor, *Ottawa*, 11-14.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 75.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 68.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* The "mixed population of Lebreton Flats" included working-class families of Irish and French descent.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

W. J. Topley and his family members inhabited the Wellington Ward in Ottawa, reflecting their elevated social status. The *Census of Canada, 1871* contains the records of W.J. Topley, in addition to four of his family members: his mother Anna, his brother John, and his two younger sisters, Anna and Esther. Under the column “Profession, Occupation or Trade,” many individuals on this same page are listed as government workers, including many clerks and civil servants, as well as other skilled tradespeople, including a tailor and jeweller.⁵⁹ With W.J. Topley as the primary wage earner in the family, it is likely that the female members of his family were not required to work outside of the home in order to maintain their standard of living. The Topley family lived a relatively comfortable bourgeois existence that befitted the area in which they resided.

Although it can be difficult to paint a picture of Ottawa society in the post-Confederation years, there are important primary sources that provide useful information on the everyday lives of middle and upper class citizens, who were initially the main clients of W.J. Topley. *My Canadian Journal, 1872-8* by Harriot Georgina Blackwood, more commonly known as Lady Dufferin (figure 1.5), was written first as a series of letters home to her mother while her husband, Frederick Temple Blackwood, the 1st Earl of Dufferin, served as Governor General of Canada (1872-8). These extracts provide us with important details about her social life and, by extension, that of the city’s elite. They list the guests whom she entertained, the balls that she hosted, and other activities in which she engaged. When the couple first arrived in Ottawa on June 27th, 1872, they were not impressed with the appearance of their new home. In a letter that he wrote back

⁵⁹ Interestingly, there are two unattached women whose occupation is listed as “servant.” The majority of Ottawa women who reported jobs in 1871 listed their occupation as “servant,” and that beyond domestic service there existed few prospects for women in the labour market at this time. See Lorna Ruth McLean, “Home, Yard and Neighbourhood: Women’s Work and the Urban Working-Class Family Economy, Ottawa, 1871” (MA thesis, University of Ottawa, 1990), 4.

home to Lady Dartrey on July 24th, 1872, Lord Dufferin described the city as “a very desolate place, consisting of a jumble of brand new houses and shops, built or building, and a wilderness of wooden shanties spread along either side of long, broad strips of mud, intersecting each other at right angles, which are to form the future streets of Canada’s capital.”⁶⁰ His wife later echoed his sentiments in her *Journal*, lamenting that her life would be filled with boredom in this “small town, with incongruously beautiful buildings crowned with insignificance.”⁶¹

These initial impressions, however, began to change when the Dufferins discovered ways of entertaining themselves, particularly throughout the cold winter months. They engaged in numerous winter activities, including tobogganing, skating, and curling; many of these activities were re-created and photographically recorded in the Topley studio with the use of artificial snow and painted backgrounds. Lady Dufferin filled much of her time with writing and rehearsing plays and tableaux in which she would have her five children perform. She also enjoyed attending amateur theatricals and *tableaux vivants* herself. On December 19th, 1873, Lady Dufferin attended an amateur performance for charity put on “by the beauties of Ottawa,” and praised them for their ability to remain still for “nearly half-an-hour at a time.”⁶² And although she did not have a great deal of confidence when it came to her own ice skating abilities, she took pleasure in watching others skate, particularly at costumed skating parties in Montreal.

Upon reading Lady Dufferin’s *Journal*, one is struck by the repetition of certain feminizing adjectives, including “beautiful” and “pretty.” These are frequently employed

⁶⁰ Cited in R.H. Hubbard, *Rideau Hall: An Illustrated History of Government House, Ottawa* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer and Controller of Secretary, 1967), 29.

⁶¹ Lady Dufferin, *My Canadian Journal, 1872-1878*, edited and annotated by Gladys Chantler Walker (Don Mills: Longmans Canada Limited, 1969), 37.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 97.

when she describes the appearance of an individual, particularly women. Lady Dufferin is also very conscious of her own physical appearance and dress. When a male reporter describes her dress as made from “plain blue silk” (when it was really “excessively smart”) in a newspaper, she writes that it caused her “infinite trouble and anxiety.”⁶³ She is reassured only after hearing that her female friends knew that it wasn’t true. At the same time, Lady Dufferin is not afraid to set fashion aside for the sake of practicality. On November 2nd, 1872, she writes that the following paragraph appeared in the evening paper: “It would astonish some of our fine ladies to see Lady Dufferin walking about the town. She dresses plainly and sensibly, wears thick boots, and does not shrink from the muddiest of crossings,” to which Lady Dufferin responds “This comes of my Irish training!”⁶⁴ This retort can either be read as boastful or defensive; either way, it is important to note that these types of public remarks clearly impacted her sense of self and the fashioning of her bourgeois female identity.

Topley was an astute businessman, and understood the needs and desires of the elite group to which he primarily catered. When the Dufferins announced that they were to host Ottawa’s first Grand Fancy Ball at Rideau Hall on February 23rd 1876, Topley was quick to offer his photographic services to the hosts and their esteemed guests. In addition to creating individual costumed photographs, he decided to embark on a lengthy project to provide his clients with “something worth looking at”: an impressive composite photograph.⁶⁵ Topley photographed the Dufferin party and their entourage two days after

⁶³ Ibid., 4.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 37.

⁶⁵ Cited in Cynthia Cooper, *Magnificent Entertainments: Fancy Dress Balls of Canada’s Governors General, 1876-1898* (Fredericton, NB: Goose Lane Editions, 1997), 40. Topley most likely learned this skill from his former Montreal employer, William Notman, who produced an impressive amount of composite images throughout his career; successfully turning composite making into a grand commercial

the event, and many groups followed suit in the next few months. In total, Topley had photographed over three hundred individual and group photographs of the costumed guests, cut out and pasted half of these portraits onto a painting of the ballroom, and then re-photographed the entire scene to create his finished product (figure 1.6).⁶⁶ Apparently there had been a great deal of excitement prior to the composite's completion, even among those who had not attended the event. Janet Anna Hall, daughter of hardware store owners Mary Workman Hall and Francis Gemmill Hall, although not invited to the ball, was eager to see a re-creation of the event in photographic form. On Thursday, April 20th, she wrote that in the afternoon she had walked to Topley's studio, only to find that the "large photograph of the Fancy Ball was not finished."⁶⁷ She was finally rewarded upon her return to the studio on June 3rd, and remarked that the photograph was indeed "very good."⁶⁸ These individual and group portraits, along with the composite photograph, were then sold to the guests, who could reminisce about and relive their fantastical evening whenever they pleased.

Topley continued to form and maintain significant relationships with the Governors-General and their families occupying Rideau Hall throughout the next decades. When Lord Dufferin's successor, the Marquis of Lorne, and his wife, Princess Louise, came to Ottawa in 1883, Topley was quick to establish a rapport with the new occupants of the viceroy's residence. Despite the fact that he had been forced to sell his grandiose studio on Metcalfe and Queen in 1878, Topley was named official

enterprise. For examples of his composite work, see Stanley Triggs, *The Composite Photographs of William Notman*, exhibition catalogue (Montreal: McCord Museum of Canadian History, 1994).

⁶⁶ Although the original glass plate negative is now lost, Library and Archives Canada possesses a small version of the composite that had been deposited for copyright purposes. This composite has been reproduced in many books and other publications.

⁶⁷ Library and Archives Canada, Janet Anna Hall fonds, MG 29-C70, "Diary" series, 9.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 15

photographer to the couple that same year.⁶⁹ Another guest at Rideau Hall with whom Topley developed a noteworthy connection was Ishbel Maria Gordon (1857-1939), commonly known as Lady Aberdeen (figure 1.7), who was married to the Earl of Aberdeen, Canada's former Governor General (1893-8). In her journal, there are numerous references to Topley, who she affectionately refers to as "faithful Topley" and, later on, as "dear little Topley the photographer," after he had given her youngest son, Archibald, an electric developing lamp as a present, an item that he had been "coveting for weeks."⁷⁰ Lady Aberdeen also sent Topley and his wife Christmas cards after the Aberdeens had moved back to Scotland.⁷¹

Lord Minto, the Earl of Aberdeen's successor, was equally impressed with Topley's work. When the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York (later King George V and Queen Mary) decided to embark on a cross-continental tour of the country, the Governor General asked Topley to accompany the party and photograph important social engagements and ceremonies throughout the tour (figure 1.8).⁷² Interestingly, Montreal photographer William McFarlane Notman, the son of Topley's former mentor, was also asked to join this party. William Topley was fifty-six years old at the time and, clearly, he was still deemed as a competent and reliable professional photographer.⁷³

⁶⁹ The Topley Studio stamp, located at the back of his prints, advertised the Governor-General's patronage. It reads, in elaborate script, "Photographer by Appointment To His Excellency the Marquis of Lorne and Her Royal Highness The Princess Louise."

⁷⁰ John T. Saywell (ed.), *The Canadian Journal of Lady Aberdeen, 1893-1898* (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1960), 87, 394.

⁷¹ Kells, *op. cit.*

⁷² The "Royal Tour" series in the Topley Studio fonds contains approximately 324 glass plate and nitrate negatives taken between September 20th and October 21st, 1901. Although the tour officially commenced in Quebec on September 16th, Topley began to photograph the royal couple after they arrived in Ottawa on September 20th. There are also five albums that contain the printed versions of these negatives. The Notman Photographic Archives at the McCord Museum archives contain the photographs that W.M. Notman took of the royal tour.

⁷³ Apparently this patronage was an amicable one: the Topley and the Minto families were still corresponding many years after the photographer had retired. In her 1927 interview with W.J. Topley,

Although none of Topley's personal journals or diaries are found in the studio collection held by LAC, it is possible to glean some of his thoughts on the art of photographic portraiture from the articles that he wrote for two photography magazines between 1881-1891, including *Photographic Mosaics: An Annual Record of Photographic Progress* and *International Annual of Anthony's Photographic Bulletin And American Process Yearbook*. These articles illustrate that Topley was a man devoted to his craft and that he was eager to provide advice to both professional and amateur photographers on the subject of portraiture. In the 1890-91 article "Hash," for example, he rebukes those who "polish [their sitters] off as quickly as possible" as opposed to taking the time to study his/her sitter; to seek out 'beauty' in their character.⁷⁴ Topley's notion of beauty is both concrete and abstract; not only does he refer to physical characteristics, a "striking figure, a beautiful hand, a lovely ear," but also to what he calls "that indefinite something that we call grace."⁷⁵ Topley promises the reader that both financial and personal success can be obtained if one is patient and truly endeavours to understand their sitter: "If I can see beauty in the human face, and can reproduce it, I can command at least three times the reward for my work that he can who simply shoots a plate at his patron. True, in a small city, such a course limits trade, but one-half of the business with three times the prices is much better for mind and body and pocket too."⁷⁶ This passage illustrates that Topley clearly valued the quality of a portrait over the total

Edna Kells notes that the Topleys' "warm personal friends" include Lady Minto, who had recently sent them a letter and photograph for Christmas.

⁷⁴ William James Topley, "Hash," *International Annual of Anthony's Photographic Bulletin And American Process Yearbook* 3 (1890-1891), 423.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 424.

quantity that his studio produced, which in turn enabled him to charge more for a better product.

Topley also provides advice to other aspiring photographers in these articles, and lists essential personality traits that one must possess in his profession. While he stresses that technical skills are certainly important, he also dwells on other qualities that an ‘operator’ must consistently maintain throughout the work day, including both self-control and confidence: “An operator may possess a correct taste, a trained eye, a perfect control of his light, but if he has not a perfect command of himself he will never rise above medium work.”⁷⁷ Topley is particularly critical of those who pursue the profession out of avarice and financial greed. After boasting about working twenty-hour days, he writes: “I am more convinced than ever, that no person should intrude himself among our fraternity from mercenary motives, not only because his entry is really an intrusion, but because, as a business, it does not pay dividends large enough to satisfy such an ‘artist.’”⁷⁸ In other articles, including one entitled “Copyright” (1889-90), he laments the fact that the photographer is often an underappreciated artist, and that their work is often dismissed as purely mechanical, rather than artistic in nature:

Even at this day we frequently are pestered by the criticisms of the ‘photographically ignorant,’ who treat our work as if the camera had been dropped by accident and suffered to ‘strike off’ the view, as they so accurately express themselves, never dreaming that the unfortunate camera-crank has been spent hours, perhaps days, in deciding the points that led up to a successful composition, and who has, perhaps by the sweat of his brow, brought together such objects as were necessary to the finish of an effective foreground.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ William James Topley, “Posing,” *Photographic Mosaics: An Annual Record of Photographic Progress*, edited by Edward Livingston Wilson (Philadelphia: Benerman & Wilson, 1881), 69.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 68.

⁷⁹ William James Topley, “Copyright,” *International Annual of Anthony’s Photographic Bulletin And American Process Yearbook* 2 (1889-1890), 250.

Topley's strongly worded defense of the professional photographer reflects and responds to the technological changes that were rapidly transforming the medium in the 1880s and 1890s. First, the invention of the gelatin dry plate in the early 1880s made photography more accessible to the amateur by cutting down costs and creating a less cumbersome product. Then the Kodak camera entered the scene, and permanently altered the world of commercial photography. This hand-held device was first mass-marketed by its inventor George Eastman in 1888, and allowed a large number of middle-class men and women to photograph family and friends during their leisure time.⁸⁰ The Kodak slogan itself emphasized the simplicity of this new product: "You press the button, we do the rest."⁸¹

While initially Topley may have been skeptical about the new gelatin dry plate process and the proliferation of hand-held, single lens cameras, he recognized the increasing popularity of these new photographic trends. His response to criticism aimed at professional photographers in "Copyright" was followed by a more accepting, indeed partly defeatist, tone one year later in "Hash" (1890-91). In this article, Topley proclaims that he indeed has "the greatest respect for amateurs," and has come to the conclusion that the "wheels of progress are so geared that they turn only one way; dry plates have come to stay."⁸² Topley, like other professional photographers of his time, was faced with the threat of lost business as a result of the growing accessibility of photography. In order to avoid financial ruin, many of these commercial photographers joined local

⁸⁰ Topley's own patroness, Lady Aberdeen, used the Kodak camera to capture "photographic views" of her travels throughout Canada. See Ishbel Gordon, Marchioness of Aberdeen and Temair, *Through Canada with a Kodak* (Edinburgh: W.H. White, 1893).

⁸¹ Elizabeth Brayer, "Eastman, George (1854-1932)," *Encyclopedia of Nineteenth-Century Photography*, edited by John Hannavy, vol. 1 (New York/London: Routledge, 2008), 463. The first Kodak cameras sold for about twenty-five dollars each, which would have been out of reach from working-class people.

⁸² Topley, "Hash," 424-5.

camera clubs enabling them to forge connections and influence events.⁸³ Many amateur clubs were formed in cities and towns across Canada in the late 1880s and 1890s, and Ottawa was home to the third major Ontario photography club (after those in Toronto and Montreal). W.J. Topley was one of the original founders of the club, which was established in 1894 with an aim to “study and promote the art of photography in all its branches.”⁸⁴ It attracted both public servants and local bourgeois who wanted to explore aspects of the medium in an organized setting. One of the earliest documents held by the Club from 1898-1899 records a lecture that Topley delivered to the members on the development of negatives, illustrating his continued interest in instructing less experienced amateurs in photographic techniques.

Andrew Rodger has noted that the Topley Studio began to sell photographic supplies and equipment during this time, and by the early twentieth century, Topley became the local dealer for the Eastman Kodak Company.⁸⁵ These products would have been sold to both men and women; Topley, like Eastman, targeted young women “amateurs” in his advertisements for developing and printing services offered by the company. As Diana Pedersen and Martha Phemister have noted, women “took up photography with a vengeance” during this time of modern mass marketing techniques, which attempted to align the cameras with idealized notions of contemporary young

⁸³ Peter Robertson, “The New Amateur/1885-1900,” *Private Realms of Light: Amateur Photography in Canada/1839-1940*, edited by Lilly Koltun (Markham: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1984), 18. Other well-established men who were members of camera clubs include George Gauvin and Adolph Gentzel of Halifax, Jules-Ernest Livernois of Quebec, Alexander Henderson and Amos Rice of Montreal and Alex Cunningham of Hamilton.

⁸⁴ Another important founding member was James Ballantyne. His daughter, May Ballantyne, was also involved, serving as Vice-President of the club in 1898-99. The Camera Club of Ottawa is still active today.

⁸⁵ “William James Topley: Reflections on a Capital Photographer,” *Library and Archives Canada*, 4 September 2008. LAC. <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/topley/index-e.html>. The Topley Company also sold lantern slides, field glasses, microscopes, barometers, thermometers, compasses, transits, levels, projection and chemical apparatus, and drawing materials. Topley was also the Canadian representative for Carl Zeiss and Bausch & Lomb, two renowned optical instrument companies.

womanhood: “modern, active, elegant, sophisticated, independent, but not so bold as to be thought unrespectable.”⁸⁶ Women’s active engagement with photography at the turn-of-the-century is reflected in a photograph taken by Topley of two unidentified women in Cantley, Quebec (figure 1.9). As the title suggests, one of these women appears to be examining a Folding Pocket Kodak Camera no. 1 in her hands, shaded by a parasol held by another, slightly older woman. Rodger’s caption of this photograph included in the online exhibition indicates that it is highly probable that the young woman had purchased her camera from Topley himself. Perhaps the professional photographer had accompanied the young amateur on her outdoors excursion, providing useful advice along the way.

Topley’s involvement with the visual arts in the Canadian capital was not limited to the Ottawa Camera Club. Toward the end of the century, for example, he served on the executive of the Fine Arts Association of Ottawa. This association was first proposed in late May 1879, when several prominent citizens in the city, including Supreme Court Judge the Honourable William Johnston Ritchie, lumber merchant Allan Gilmour, architect, painter, and designer John W. H. Watts, photographer William J. Topley, architect F.S. Checkley, engineer Sandford Fleming, Deputy Minister Edmund A. Meredith, and lawyer and author Mr. Leggo, met to discuss the possibility of forming an art union.⁸⁷ The next year, on March 6th, 1880, the first exhibition of the Canadian Academy of Arts (later the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts, or RCA), was opened in

⁸⁶ Diana Pedersen and Martha Phemister, “Women and Photography in Ontario, 1839-1929: A Case Study of the Interaction of Gender and Technology,” *Scientia Canadensis: Canadian Journal of the History of Science, Technology and Medicine*, vol. 9, n. 1 (1985), 40. For a more recent discussion of Kodak advertising from 1888 to 1932, see Nancy West, *Kodak and the Lens of Nostalgia* (Charlottesville, University Press of Virginia, 2000).

⁸⁷ Jim Burant, *History of Art and Artists of Ottawa and Surrounding Area, 1790-1970, Part 2, 1880-1945* (Ottawa: Ottawa Art Gallery, 1993), 12.

Ottawa, under the patronage of the Marquis of Lorne and Princess Louise.⁸⁸ The Canadian Academy oversaw the creation of the National Gallery of Canada and a School for Art and Design, as well as annual exhibitions held in Ottawa and in other cities across the country.

In addition to being involved with the Fine Arts Association of Ottawa and the Ottawa Camera Club, Topley was also active in Ottawa's religious and philanthropic communities. He was an influential member of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), which was founded in Ottawa in 1867. The photographer was the fourth president of this local branch, serving from 1871-1872, and again from 1880-1882.⁸⁹ Topley, a devout Methodist, had been involved in church life and organizations from a young age. Andrew Rodger has noted that by the mid-1870s, the photographer was the Sunday school superintendent at the Dominion Methodist Church in Ottawa, and was also active in the Ottawa Bible Society.⁹⁰ Topley's affiliation with these groups suggests his continued interest in religious education and social reform. Moreover, Rodger has argued that Topley's religious beliefs appear to have imbued the photographer's life "with an evangelical Christian sensibility."⁹¹ One of Topley's most important patrons, Lady Aberdeen, was also deeply evangelical, and extremely devoted to the women's social reform movement that swept the country in the 1890s.

The last third of the nineteenth century was marked by the rise of Canadian philanthropic organizations and societies, mostly Christian-based, that aimed to educate

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ E. J. Jenkins, *The History of the Ottawa Young Men's Christian Association 1876-1942* (Ottawa: N.P., 1943). Jenkins, a former General Secretary of the Ottawa YWCA, provides a list of the branch's past presidents from 1867- 1942 on the inside cover.

⁹⁰ "William James Topley: Reflections on a Capital Photographer," *Library and Archives Canada*, 4 September 2008. LAC. <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/topley/index-e.html>.

⁹¹ Ibid.

and improve the lives of lower-class men and women, and unite members over a common cause. The 1890s and early 1900s saw a rapid growth of social and welfare services in the city of Ottawa, including the Children's Aid Society, YWCA, Perley Home for Incurables, Victorian Order of Nurses, Ottawa Day Nursery, May Court Club, Hebrew Benevolent Society, Union Mission for Men, and Home for the Blind.⁹² Many of these groups and societies were segregated by gender, which allowed middle and upper class women an opportunity to openly discuss social issues that were important to them. Diana Pedersen, a historian of women in Canada, has remarked that the 1870s and 1880s were an important transitional period during which "the Victorian cult of domesticity was increasingly challenged by the phenomenon of organized womanhood."⁹³ Although these societies and organizations were not necessarily representative of *all* women, their accomplishments are certainly worth acknowledging today. One of the most important organizations was the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC). Lady Aberdeen, who was already president of the International Council of Women, founded the NCWC in October of 1893 (figure 1.10). The NCWC's main goal was to unite Canadian women from one end of the country to the other. In his introduction to Lady Aberdeen's *Canadian Journal*, John T. Saywell remarks that the 1890s were critical years in Canadian history, during which division among both cultural and religious groups was a major national concern.⁹⁴ Lady Aberdeen's NCWC fits into a broader political and

⁹² Lucien Brault, *Ottawa Old and New* (Ottawa: Ottawa Historical Information Institute, 1946), 242.

⁹³ Diana Pedersen, "'The Power of True Christian Women': The YWCA and Evangelical Womanhood in the Late Nineteenth Century," in *Changing roles of women within the Christian church in Canada*, edited by Elizabeth Gillan Muir and Marilyn Färdig Whiteley (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 322. Pedersen laments that this period remains neglected by historians of Canadian feminism.

⁹⁴ Saywell, *Canadian Journal*, xxiii, xxiv.

imperial vision that she and her husband shared: to unite people from coast to coast as Canadians loyal to the British Empire.⁹⁵

The NCWC served as an umbrella group that was affiliated with Provincial and Local Councils of Women (LCWs). These LCWs oversaw organizations operating within their communities, including branches of women's groups, such as the Young Women Christian's Association (YWCA), as well as local societies, such as women's teachers' associations. The Ottawa Local Council of Women (OLCW) was founded in 1894 under the guidance of Lady Aberdeen, and was the fourth Canadian city to organize a local council.⁹⁶ The OLCW offered upper and middle class women a means to unite in their reform-minded efforts, as their resolution read:

That a Local Council of Women in connection with the National Council of Women of Canada be formed in Ottawa, believing that by its means a more intimate knowledge of one another's work will be gained by women of this community, which will result in larger mutual sympathy, greater unity and charity, and more effective action for a common good.⁹⁷

Although the OLCW claimed that it was not discriminatory against different races, religious denominations or political affiliations, there were many groups of women not represented on the Council. For instance, Jewish women and French Canadian women were noticeably absent from the Council.⁹⁸ A similar observation can be made at the national level. Val McLeish has observed that while in theory any woman could join one of Lady Aberdeen's organizations, such as the NCWC and the Victorian Order of Nurses (VON), in practice they were composed of predominantly white upper and middle-class

⁹⁵ For more information on Lady Aberdeen and the NCWC, see Joanna Dean, "Lady Aberdeen's Vision for Canadian Women: A Study of Evangelism, Liberalism and the Woman Question" (MA Thesis, Carleton University, 1989).

⁹⁶ Lauren Jeffs, *Rushing Forth: An Introductory Examination of the Ottawa Local Council of Women 1894-1904*, The Historical Society of Ottawa, Bytown Pamphlet Series, September 1994, 6.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 12.

Protestants.⁹⁹ At other times, divergences in religious thought erupted and caused dissent between different, yet affiliated women's groups. For instance, the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) refused to officially join the NCWC due to their custom of Silent Prayer, which opposed the Protestant prayer favoured by more conservative evangelical groups.¹⁰⁰ William Topley's wife, Helena de Courcy Topley, along with Mrs. McLean and Mrs. Whelan, came to speak with Lady Aberdeen about feeling "persecuted by their Presbyterian friends" because they supported the Silent Prayer system.¹⁰¹ Despite these occasional rifts between and amongst members of women's associations, they were often comprised of highly dedicated individuals who attempted, through various means, to instruct and reform the 'fallen' members of their local communities.

In conclusion, Ottawa witnessed significant cultural and social developments in the first three decades after Topley arrived in the city, which are reflected in both his studio practice and artistic output. The photographer was quick to establish a name for himself within elite social circles, and his reputation grew with each subsequent viceregal patron. Topley's philanthropic work and involvement with various local clubs and associations further enhanced his image as a well-respected, evangelical member of the bourgeois middle-class. It also paints him as a compassionate individual concerned about the spiritual and social well being of others. At the same time, the photographer embraced change when he deemed it necessary, particularly in regards to his business

⁹⁹ Val McLeish, "Sunshine and sorrows: Canada, Ireland and Lady Aberdeen," *Colonial Lives Across The British Empire: Imperial Career in the Long Nineteenth Century*, edited by David Lambert and Alan Lester (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 273.

¹⁰⁰ Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap and Water: Social Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 62. Lady Aberdeen supported the Silent Prayer as a means of encouraging more non-Protestants to join the NCWC. It was a significant statement on her part.

¹⁰¹ Saywell, *Canadian Journal*, 221.

model, which he adapted in response to the introduction of Kodak cameras toward the end of the century. Topley also overcame many financial setbacks throughout the years, which ensured the longevity of his studio and his enduring status as Ottawa's nineteenth-century reigning "Lord of the Lens."

While Topley mainly photographed the upper and middle class women of Ottawa and beyond throughout this career, he also produced a few images of the city's less 'glamorous' women, including female prisoners and "friendless women" in the mid-1890s, and again in 1916. These portraits of mainly unidentified women and the spaces in which they inhabited, whether in prison or in a halfway home, raise some interesting questions: Why did Topley photograph these 'types' of women? What role, if any, did agency play in their photographic representations? Finally, how do these images fit into the broader narrative of social purity and reform movements in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century?

Chapter Two: The Friendly, Friendless and Fallen Women of Late Nineteenth-Century Ottawa

One day in February of 1895, William James Topley entered Ottawa's Home for Friendless Women, formerly located at 412 Wellington Street, and proceeded to photograph both the ironing and washing rooms at the Home. Later, he paid a visit to the women's corridor at the Carleton County Gaol and photographed both female prisoners and the interior of a jail cell. Finally, Topley made his way over to the Ottawa YWCA, previously located at the corner of Metcalfe and Maria (now Laurier) Street, to capture images of the building's cornerstone and an interior view of its dining room.¹⁰² Although the seven photographs appear seemingly unrelated at first glance, together they reconstruct a narrative about women's evolving roles and shifting identities in late nineteenth-century Ottawa, while prompting us to look beyond their surface to explore middle-class attitudes toward the 'unfortunate' members of the working, and even criminal, classes of society.

These seven photographs stand in stark contrast to the majority of Topley's work, which encompasses formal studio portraits of middle and upper class individuals, families and friends. In fact, these rare images appear quite out of place in his studio album from January 1895-June 1896.¹⁰³ Placed amid more formal portraits of men and women, they rupture the overall homogeneity of this particular album. Interestingly, while the negative number, title and size of the photographs in question were written down in ink within the preformatted individual grids, many of their prints are missing.

¹⁰² These photographs were all taken sometime in February 1895, the exact dates are not indicated.

¹⁰³ LAC currently possesses sixty-six albums of contact prints that serve as indexes to the Topley Studio collection. Most of the prints are accompanied by their negative number, title and size (i.e. cab for cabinet card). They do not, however, represent a complete index to the Topley Studio fonds as many photographs do not appear in these albums.

Was Topley afraid of tainting his album with visual documents of female inmates of the Home for Friendless Women and the female convicts of the Carleton County Gaol? This chapter aims to understand why these atypical, yet frequently reproduced photographs were made by Topley, and to consider what these women's visual representations can tell us about gender, class and ethnicity at the turn of the century in Ottawa.

During the last decade of the nineteenth century, a growing middle class anxiety developed over the moral, spiritual and physical state of the nation's citizens. Intemperance, prostitution, and gambling were treated as 'social ills' that were negatively impacting respectable society. Economically, this was also a difficult period in Ottawa's history; the depression of the early 1890s had left many unemployed and homeless.¹⁰⁴ As a result of this widespread poverty, a number of local charity groups sprang up that were willing to help out those in need. On February 7, 1895, *The Ottawa Daily Citizen* reported that a group of men and women involved in charitable work met with Ottawa Mayor Borthwick to discuss the formation of an organization called "The Associated Charities of Ottawa."¹⁰⁵ The goal of this organization was to obtain the names of all 'deserving' cases of destitution and then to subsequently secure employment for these individuals. Alan Hunt, a Professor of Sociology and Law, has noted that a crucial aspect of moralisation involved what Foucault has called "dividing practices," that is, the categorical construction of the "deserving" and the "undeserving" poor.¹⁰⁶ This, according to Hunt, has two immediate consequences: "first it moralises the categories, delineates between good and bad; second, it operates as a legitimization of the differential

¹⁰⁴ John H. Taylor, *Ottawa, An Illustrated History* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1986), 77. A similar economic depression struck the city in the 1870s.

¹⁰⁵ *The Ottawa Daily Citizen*, February 7 1895.

¹⁰⁶ Alan Hunt, *Governing Morals: A Social History of Social Regulation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 8.

treatment of the divided categories – for example, the deserving cases are granted relief that is denied to the underserving poor.”¹⁰⁷ These divisions are important to consider in examining the work of specific social reform organizations, like the Ottawa Young Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (YWCTU), during this time.

The YWCTU was a daughter organization of the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) and originally comprised young women between fifteen and thirty years of age. Although it is not known exactly when the Ottawa union was formed, by 1888 there were 119 enrolled members, although only eighteen names were regularly documented in the minute book.¹⁰⁸ One of the most significant and ambitious projects that the Ottawa YWCTU undertook was the establishment of the Home for Friendless Women, which officially opened its doors on January 9th, 1888. Bertha Wright, a deeply evangelical and devoted member of the YWCTU, founded and managed the Home for eight years.¹⁰⁹ Wright, who had acted as head of the Evangelical Department, or “Friendly Branch,” of the YWCTU, supervised a number of projects that aimed to reform the ‘fallen’ woman.¹¹⁰ In addition to other members of the Union, she supported the establishment of a Home where “a helping hand and shelter could be offered to any sinful, friendless woman without regard to creed, nationality, age or condition, at any

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Sharon Anne Cook, “The Ontario Young Woman’s Christian Temperance Union: A Study in Female Evangelicalism, 1874-1930,” in *Changing Roles of Women within the Christian Church in Canada*, edited by Elizabeth Gillan Muir and Marilyn Färdig Whiteley (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 304-5.

¹⁰⁹ Bertha Wright was a descendent of Philemon Wright (1760-1839), an early settler responsible for the founding of Wrightstown (present-day Gatineau, Quebec).

¹¹⁰ In this context, the word “fallen” refers to women who were “suspected or guilty of sexual delinquency,” such as prostitutes, however this definition was also expanded to include “other kinds of deviance from middle-class norms, including poverty, dependence, transience, illness, and out-of-wedlock pregnancy.” Marian J. Morton, “Seduced and Abandoned in an American City: Cleveland and Its Fallen Women, 1869-1936,” *Journal of Urban History* 11, no. 4 (1985): 447.

time, night or day; the only requisite being a desire to lead a better life.”¹¹¹ Before being admitted to the Home, a prospective inmate had to sign off on the Home’s Rules, agreeing to the following conditions: “Not to leave the Home without a matron or assistant, until a situation or another home is obtained. To live quietly and peaceably with the inmates. To obey implicitly the orders of the matron.”¹¹² During their stay at the Home, the inmates were kept busy in accordance with the evangelical creed that demanded hard work and moral rigour. Shortly after its opening, laundry and ironing services were established and regularly advertised in the Ottawa papers. Historian Sharon Anne Cook describes the conditions in which these women worked as “reminiscent of a Dickens novel,” writing:

The furnace and the boiler were found in the basement through which the yard water ran so that the foundations of the engine were undermined. The ceiling was so low that a tall woman could not stand upright. A horizontal smoke pipe from the furnace ran so close to the beams that care was constantly needed to prevent a fire. The washing room itself was so laden with moisture that one could barely see the other figures in the room; the windows were so warped that none closed tightly; the floor was slippery, and the machinery was soon covered with rust from the condensation.¹¹³

In March 1890, as a result of cramped conditions and an overwhelming number of new applicants, the laundry was moved to a larger building with brand-new machinery. In her memoir *Lights and Shades of Mission Work*, Wright remarks that the women were full of joy as they moved from the “dark, cold crowded wash-room, into the large, airy rooms where the work of the Home Steam Laundry is now carried on.”¹¹⁴ However,

¹¹¹ Bertha (Wright) Carr-Harris, *Lights and Shade of Mission Work or Leave from a Worker’s Note Book; Being Reminiscences of Seven Years Service at the Capital, 1885-1892* (Ottawa, 1892), 37-8. Apparently the idea for the Home came from Mayor Howland of Toronto who addressed the WCTU in 1885. He suggested that a home or refuge for released female prisoners should be established in the city. Interestingly, it was the YWCTU, and not the WCTU, who took on the project.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 55.

¹¹³ Sharon Anne Cook, “The Ontario Young Woman’s Christian Temperance Union,” 308-9.

¹¹⁴ Carr-Harris, *Lights and Shades of Mission Work*, 54.

when Lady Aberdeen visited the Home on a “mild” day in early March 1894, four years after it had moved to larger facilities, she was not overly impressed with the improvements that Wright had celebrated. Lady Aberdeen observed that “[a]n air of squalor & closeness pervaded the establishment – about 26 women & 20 infants.”¹¹⁵ Before leaving, she made sure to say a few words to the “poor girls” confined to the Home. It was this new laundry building that Topley first photographed almost a year after Lady Aberdeen had made these scathing remarks.

William J. Topley’s wife, Helena de Courcy Topley, appears to have been heavily involved with the Home from its early beginning. She was one of the First Trustees or Managing Officers of the Home, and is regularly listed as one of the “Directresses” on the Board of Management in the Home’s published *Annual Reports*.¹¹⁶ In addition to occupying executive positions on the Board, Mrs. Topley served on several committees that were formed throughout the years, including the Building and Dress Committees.¹¹⁷ She, like many of the women who volunteered their time with the Home, donated food items during the Christmas season, and sent prints for dresses to the inmates. In 1899, Mrs. Topley donated ten dollars to the Building Fund, which presumably went toward the new Home that officially opened on January 18th, 1900.¹¹⁸ It would be fair to assume that

¹¹⁵ John T. Saywell (ed.), *The Canadian Journal of Lady Aberdeen, 1893-1898* (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1960), 84.

¹¹⁶ Mrs. Topley’s involvement with the board of management reflects a shift in administrative control that occurred in 1891 when the Home became incorporated and established as a charitable institution under the provincial government. At this point, middle class married women began to take over the board of management, whereas before this juncture, the Home was supported and run primarily by young single women of the YWCTU.

¹¹⁷ *Fourteenth Annual Report of the Home for Friendless Women*, 1901, Annual Reports for the Home for Friendless Women file, Health and Welfare Series, Historical Society of Ottawa fonds, A2009-0166, City of Ottawa Archives.

¹¹⁸ The location of the new Home at 403 Wellington St. was directly across from its original location.

it was Helena who first asked her husband to photograph the Home and its occupants that winter day in February 1895.

The two extant photographs that Topley took of the Home that year were of the washing and ironing rooms, located on the first and second levels of the building respectively. The photograph of the ironing room captures a seemingly candid moment of flurried activity with more than a dozen women at work surrounded by young children and infants (figure 2.1). Evidently the ironing room also served as the nursery; while two young children sit semi-restrained in a wicker basket, other infants appear scattered on ironing tables.¹¹⁹ The Home often accepted young mothers and their children; many had either been abandoned by their husbands or become pregnant out of wedlock. These “maternity cases” were admitted on the condition that the mothers stay in the Home for a full year and that they care for their children during their temporary residency. Wright believed that the presence of children “pressed upon the women the recognition that they had sinned, and such recognition was the evangelical precondition of the conversion experience and eventual salvation.”¹²⁰ In the foreground of Topley’s photograph, an older woman sits in a rocking chair with her hands resting in her lap, perhaps taking a break from the arduous work. Destitute old women were also accepted into the Home:

One cold January morning, an aged woman, clad in a thin calico dress, without a shawl, cloak or warm wrap of any kind, appeared at the gate. She was homeless and friendless, having been arrested the previous August for vagrancy, and so frail and feeble was she that it was with great difficulty that she was led to the streetcars, in which she was conveyed to the Home.¹²¹

The other photograph that Topley took of the Home shows an image of the washing room located on the Home’s main floor (figure 2.2). Entirely unoccupied, the

¹¹⁹ Cook, “The Ontario Young Woman’s Christian Temperance Union,” 309.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 307.

¹²¹ Carr-Harris, *Lights and Shades of Mission Work*, 52-3.

emphasis appears to be on the machinery itself, which included a “large hydraulic washer, a centrifugal wringer, starch dipper, starch kettle, soap boiler, and stationary tubs.”¹²² Although these various cleaning devices remain idle in this image, they connote a continuous and vigilant process of moral cleanliness occurring within the Home. As Mariana Valverde, a Professor of Criminology, has pointed out, “clean bodies and clean minds are not just clean in the sense of having no dirt; they are portrayed as having been produced through the active and constant scouring that was a central metaphor of social purity.”¹²³ Wright clearly supported the transformative notion of “active and constant scouring,” emphasizing that “the Home is not a place for the maintenance of the idle, as will be seen from the fact that hundreds of family washings pass through the laundry each month.”¹²⁴ It is important to remember that the dirt of which Valverde speaks is entirely a social construction. British anthropologist Mary Douglas points to this fabrication in her influential book *Purity and Danger* (1966), suggesting that “dirt is essentially disorder.”¹²⁵ She writes: “There is no such thing as absolute dirt: it exists in the eye of the beholder,” in other words, the definition of dirt is often culturally relative.¹²⁶ In this case, the women who occupied the Home were morally and spiritually unclean in the eyes of the supposedly more spiritually pure members of the YWCTU, therefore in need of moral sanitization.

The Register of Inmates from 1888 to 1894 paints a portrait of what ‘types’ of women in need of moral cleansing were occupying the Home during its first six years.

¹²² Ibid., 54.

¹²³ Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap and Water: Social Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 28.

¹²⁴ Carr-Harris, *Lights and Shades of Mission Work*, 55.

¹²⁵ Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge, 1966; reprint, 2006), 2.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

Between January 1888 and September 1889, the majority of the inmates came from the women's corridor of the Ottawa jail, from the street, and from the railway station.¹²⁷ After October 1890, as the Home became more settled, there is a noticeable decline in the number of released female prisoners in the Register. This decrease in part reflects Wright's belief that these women had become "hardened criminals" over the years and were subsequently beyond rehabilitation. She wanted to keep them apart from other inmates "just entering upon a life of sin," in other words, those who could still be fashioned into good Christian women.¹²⁸ The Register also divides the inmates into somewhat loose classifications, including the "unfortunate," "intemperate," and "abandoned." Although the record does not provide explicit definitions of these categories, Cook has suggested that "unfortunate" most likely referred to a woman living by prostitution, "intemperate" denoted alcohol usage, and "abandoned" mothers had been left by their husbands, or were single destitute women.¹²⁹ Irish women outnumbered those of other ethnicities, which was likely due to the widespread poverty and large size of that community in Ottawa during this time.¹³⁰ It is worthwhile to note that Topley's photograph does not distinguish between these different 'types' of women; instead, he frames them as one unified workforce occupied with the same task.

¹²⁷ The rest of the inmates were brought in by the Ottawa police, from a brothel, or from the hospital (including illness and childbirth cases). For the origins of the inmates between January 1888 and June 1894, see Sharon Anne Cook, "A Helping Hand and Shelter": Anglo-Protestant Social Service Agencies in Ottawa, 1880-1910" (MA thesis, Carleton University, 1987), 128-9.

¹²⁸ Carr-Harris, *Lights and Shades of Mission Work*, 54.

¹²⁹ Cook, "A Helping Hand and Shelter," 90.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 91. Other major groups included English, Scottish, French, American, German, and Canadian women. For the nationalities of the inmates between January 1888 and June 1894, see Cook, "A Helping Hand and Shelter," Appendix 5, 134.

Interestingly, Topley returned to the Home with his camera over twenty years later, around 1916.¹³¹ At this point, both the Home and the Laundry had been moved to a more spacious building at 37-39 Turner Street (now 327-329 Cambridge Street).¹³² Some of the photographs that he took of these new working quarters appeared in the 29th *Annual Report of the Home for Friendless Women*, which was published in 1917. The cover photograph by Topley shows a view of the front of the building with the side entrance (figure 2.3) and two captioned Topley photographs were printed on the middle pages of the report. The first one of these images, *Steam Mangle and Wash Room* (figure 2.4), shows half a dozen unidentified young women at work, and the other, *The Ironing Room* (figure 2.5), also illustrates a small group of women actively engaged in the ironing room. It is nearly impossible to identify any of the women in these photographs because their faces have either blurred during the exposure, or are turned-away from the camera altogether: Topley is not interested in capturing his subjects' individuality in these images. The young children and infants in his 1895 photograph are nowhere to be seen, perhaps as a result of a separate Infant's Home established that year.¹³³ Unlike his earlier photographs of the Home, these social documents portray the inmates as efficient assembly line workers. The visibly hectic, cramped ironing room on Wellington Street has been transformed into a more organized and spacious workspace, in which these women of various social and cultural backgrounds appear to living "quietly and peaceably" together.

¹³¹ At this point it could have been Topley's son, William de Courcy Topley, who photographed the Home at this time, considering that he took over the studio in 1907. However, W.J. Topley remained actively involved with the studio even after this time.

¹³² Barbara Tunis, "A Day in the Life..." *Heritage Ottawa* 1, no. 10 (November 1979). This move occurred in 1914.

¹³³ *Twenty-Ninth Annual Report of the Home for Friendless Women*, 1917, City of Ottawa Archives.

Many of the ‘sinful’ women who were admitted to the Home for Friendless Women over the years were those who had been released from the former local jail, the Carleton County Gaol. During these years, the jail housed both male and female prisoners who had been convicted for a variety of different crimes, notably lunacy, larceny, or drunkenness and disorderly conduct. Vagrancy was often high on that list as well. *The Carleton County Gaol Inspection Register, 1874- 1907* provides a portrait of the different types of crimes that had been committed by female and male inmates respectively during this time period (table 1 and 2).¹³⁴ Although the entries are often incomplete and vague on certain days, it does permit us to draw some important conclusions about the most common offenses committed by each gender. For instance, the register shows that women were convicted for a much smaller range of crimes than their male counterparts; however, their offenses were more frequently associated with moral misconduct. While men were convicted for a broad array of offenses including assault and ‘furious driving,’ women were more likely to be incarcerated for a crime associated with prostitution (i.e. for keeping a ‘disorderly house’ or ‘house of ill fame’), or with alcohol (i.e. for selling liquor without a license).¹³⁵

From 1885 to 1894, Ottawa’s by-laws reflected the full force of the social purity movement. One series of bylaws instituted in October 1890 made throwing snowballs, playing ball games or tobogganing on the street or sidewalks illegal.¹³⁶ Another, entitled “By-Law to Preserve Order and Public Morals in the City of Ottawa,” forbade people to

¹³⁴ *Carleton County Gaol Inspection Register, 1874-1907*, MG274, box A2013-0449, City of Ottawa Archives.

¹³⁵ Many of them were also charged with ‘vagrancy.’ Apparently the charge of vagrancy was broad enough to arrest women who were suspected prostitutes. See Carolyn Strange, *Toronto’s girl problem: the perils and pleasures of the city, 1880-1930* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1995), 56.

¹³⁶ *Revised By-Laws of the City of Ottawa* (Ottawa: J.D. Taylor, 1890), 86-7.

be either “drunk” or “disorderly” in a public context: “No person shall be drunk or disorderly in any street, lane or public place within the said City, and any person found drunk or disorderly in any street, highway or public place in the said City shall be liable to the penalties of this By-Law.”¹³⁷ The penalties for breaking one of these laws were quite harsh. A fine levied at between one and fifty dollars would be charged, and if that fine could not be collected, the convict would be imprisoned at the county jail “with or without labour” for up to six months, or until said fine was paid.¹³⁸ These rigorous by-laws illustrate what kind of public conduct was considered socially permissible, and what sort of behaviour was not, though enforcement would vary by class.

Members of prominent local Christian organizations actively targeted both male and female offenders within the jail in the hopes of reforming them into good Christian citizens. In Ottawa, members of both the YMCA and WCTU paid regular weekly visits to the men and women’s corridors of the Carleton County Gaol respectively.¹³⁹ Although members of the Ottawa WCTU did not always feel as though they had succeeded in reaching these ‘fallen souls,’ they were hopeful that their efforts would impact at least a few: “our workers sang and prayed and pleaded with the lost ones in that dark place, the words must have resounded not only through the cells where some women were hidden from view, but through the dark recesses of more than one heart...”¹⁴⁰ The Ontario WCTU even had its own department whose primary responsibility was to ensure that the

¹³⁷ Ibid., 71.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 77-8.

¹³⁹ *Ottawa jail daily count and records books, 1882-1894*, Administrative records of the Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre, RG-84-3, Archives of Ontario. These records show that these visits usually occurred on Sunday mornings around 10:00am. The nuns usually visited the prisoners around 1:30pm.

¹⁴⁰ *Thirteenth Annual Report of the Ontario WCTU*, 1891, MU 8407.1, Canadian WCTU fonds, Archives of Ontario. According to a law in jail management, attendance at these religious meetings was not compulsory for the female prisoners. Prisoners were permitted to leave the corridor should they not wish to attend the meeting.

Gospel Temperance was being routinely delivered to inmates. They believed that this could be accomplished through regular “evangelistic services” and personal conversations, in addition to the distribution of religious literature and establishment of libraries in the jails.¹⁴¹

Throughout the last decade of the nineteenth century, the Ontario WCTU was actively engaged in the prison reform movement. The Union was particularly attentive to certain disadvantaged groups of prisoners, including the elderly and the homeless, stating in its annual report: “the practice still continues of placing in the jail old people unable to work, and who have no home or friends who are willing to care for or look after them. We would urge our Superintendents, and all who are interested in our work, to be more diligent in promoting the welfare of these aged and homeless ones.”¹⁴² Ontario WCTU members were also concerned about different classes of prisoners placed together within the county jails: the first-time with the habitual offenders, in addition to the insane, sick and aged. In the 1898 annual report, Mrs. Mary Brownell, Superintendent of the Ontario WCTU’s Prisons and Police Department, urged members to “look after these poor people and try and have them arranged in suitable wards, and see that they have proper food and clothing.”¹⁴³ Furthermore, the Ontario WCTU frequently collaborated with the Prisoners’ Aid Association of Canada (PAA), a group of wealthy and socially prominent Torontonians who also advocated for prison reform. This association carried out many of the same activities as the WCTU, including personal visiting, Sunday school classes for

¹⁴¹ *Nineteenth Annual Report of the Ontario WCTU*, 1896, MU 8407.7, Canadian WCTU fonds, Archives of Ontario, 90.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 91.

¹⁴³ *Twenty-First Annual Report of the Ontario WCTU*, 1898, MU 8407.9, Canadian WCTU fonds, Archives of Ontario, 99.

convicts, and aftercare work.¹⁴⁴ The Ontario WCTU would often include reproduced PAA reports and correspondence in their own annual reports, and vice versa.

Considering that both W.J. Topley and his wife served as members of the YMCA and YWCTU respectively, it is quite possible that they were among those who paid regular visits to the jail. It is also possible that they had interacted with individual prisoners during these visits, perhaps hoping to establish a rapport with them - bringing them out of darkness and closer to the light. Unfortunately, these ephemeral moments were never documented, thus leaving us to ponder upon the conversations that undoubtedly occurred between members of Ottawa's evangelical middle-class and the troubled prisoners of the jail. As one WCTU member points out:

The reports which are given below are but a faint index to the real personal work done by the Christian women who visit these prisoners. How can a report tell of a kindly look and tone of sympathy and love, the pitying glance, the cheering encouraging words of hope which are so freely bestowed on those who are so much in need of all of these. But He who counts the hairs of our heads does not let a single act, thought or glance go unnoticed, and by and by it shall be found that truly a record has been kept and of many things perhaps by us forgotten long since.¹⁴⁵

While it remains uncertain as to why a professional portrait photographer like Topley decided to photograph female inmates and their confined spaces at the Carleton County Gaol in February 1895, it is interesting to consider how these atypical portraits fit into Topley's oeuvre as a whole. Furthermore, it is instructive to juxtapose them with other photographic representations of female prisoners that served as anthropological studies

¹⁴⁴ For more information on the PAA and their effect on nineteenth-century Ontario prison life, see Peter Oliver, *Terror to Evil-Doers': Prisons and Punishments in Nineteenth Century Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 464-499.

¹⁴⁵ *Fourteenth Annual Report of the Ontario WCTU*, 1891, MU 8407.1, Canadian WCTU fonds, Archives of Ontario, 39.

for early criminologists, including Alphonse Bertillon (1853-1914) and Cesare Lombroso (1835-1909), toward the end of the century.

Alphonse Bertillon was the director of the Identification Bureau of the Paris Prefecture of Police from 1880 onward. He was responsible for the development of an identification system, known as “signaletic notice” or “Bertillonage,” which was designed to measure and record the criminal body. In doing so, Bertillon was attempting to identify ‘repeat’ or ‘habitual’ offenders, to break the professional criminal’s “mastery of disguises, false identities, multiple biographies and alibis” upon their release from prison.¹⁴⁶ Bertillon used photographs extensively as part of this system; developing the mug shot as a means of visually recording physical characteristics and cataloguing them within large archives that ultimately “strengthened governmental control over the populace.”¹⁴⁷ These anthropometric studies would feature a person’s face frontally and in profile using a process that standardized focal length, lighting, and distance from the unwilling sitter. As Allan Sekula has observed, capturing the criminal’s profile view was effective in that it eliminated the “contingency of expression,” and the frontal view presented “a face that was more likely to be recognizable within the other, less systematized departments of police work.”¹⁴⁸ Bertillon would also photograph a person’s ears, mouth, chin, forehead and eyes as a way of breaking down an appearance into smaller recognizable units. Aligning himself with popular late nineteenth-century French criminology theory, Bertillon resisted the notion of the innate criminal type, believing that “no characterological secrets were hidden” beneath the surface of this

¹⁴⁶ Allan Sekula, “The Body and the Archive” in *The Contest of Meaning: Critical histories of photography*, edited by Richard Bolton (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989), 357-8.

¹⁴⁷ Jae Emerling, *Photography: History and Theory* (London: Routledge, 2012), 140.

¹⁴⁸ Sekula, “The Body and the Archive,” 360.

body.¹⁴⁹ Alternately, there were those who did support this ‘biological determinism’ during this period, including the ‘Italian school’ of criminal anthropology, which was based on Cesare Lombroso’s theory of the criminal.

Like Bertillon, Italian criminologist and physicist Lombroso was interested in studying the criminal body as a means of identification; making anthropometric measurements and collecting physiognomic data to describe the general appearance of criminals. He firmly believed in the notion of innate criminality, positing that the criminal class was a primitive, subspecies of the human race. In his seminal book *The Female Offender* (1895), Lombroso focuses exclusively on different ‘types’ of the female offender, including the fallen woman, the prostitute and the criminal among others.¹⁵⁰ In this book, Lombroso frames these ‘inferior’ classes of women as abnormal by contrasting them with their ‘normal’ counterparts by comparing cranial measurements and other physical characteristics, including height and weight, arm length, feet, hair, eye colour, moles, and even tattoos. To support his detailed statistical analysis, Lombroso included an illustrated chapter with a sample of photographs of “French and Russian prostitutes and delinquents.”¹⁵¹ Many of these women are represented as double portraits featuring both a side and frontal view of their faces, which is consistent with Bertillon’s mugshots. In doing so, Lombroso treats his photographic subjects like anthropometric studies; drawing visual comparisons as a means of grouping them into one singular “type” of deviant Woman.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 362.

¹⁵⁰ His earlier book, *The Criminal Man*, remains one of the most important criminological treatises ever written. It was originally published in 1876 and went through five editions during his lifetime.

¹⁵¹ Caesar Lombroso and William Ferrero, *The Female Offender* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1895), 88. Lombroso explains that these photographs of women from “distant countries” were selected due to the fact that the Italian bureaucratic system made it “impossible” to measure, study or photograph criminals from his own country once they have been condemned.

Interestingly, Lombroso identifies many of his offenders' physical features as 'masculine' or 'virile' in his descriptions. For example, he claims that an unidentified Italian female brigand "betrays the type [virile] not so much in her oblique glance and heavy jaw, as in her long face and masculine physiognomy, so that if she had dressed as a man she could have been taken for one..."¹⁵² Lombroso also observes that some women are also capable of passing for the opposite sex even when appropriately attired. He highlights five "striking" examples who possess "the bodies of women, but all the air of brutal men: whom they resemble sometimes, even in their dress."¹⁵³ Not only does this transgression allow the female offender to assume an alternate gendered identity outside of the prison walls, but also it paints her as a type of hybrid with both 'female' and 'male' characteristics.

Topley's photographs of female inmates do not entirely conform to these types of anthropometric portraits used by his medical contemporaries; in some ways, they disrupt these pseudo-scientific renderings. The first photograph Topley made at the jail features two unidentified female inmates standing in front of their cells in the woman's corridor (figure 2.6). The prisoner closest to the photographer is holding what appears to be a food bowl in her hand. The overexposed side of her face is nearly unreadable, and the overall grainy quality of the image obscures many details. Topley's role as surveyor is evident here; like his photographs taken of other female 'inmates' in the Home, these two women are represented as typologies. John Tagg has observed that the growth of new social sciences throughout the nineteenth century introduced the rhetoric of photographic documentation to study and control certain groups of people. The working classes,

¹⁵² Ibid., 96

¹⁵³ Ibid., 95

colonised peoples, the criminal, poor, ill-housed, sick or insane were frequently “subjected to a scrutinizing gaze, forced to emit signs, yet cut off from command of meaning, such groups were represented as, and wishfully rendered, incapable of speaking, acting or organising for themselves.”¹⁵⁴ In this case, these female prisoners are certainly subjected to a scrutinizing gaze, represented as passive, ‘feminised’ objects at the mercy of a disciplinary power structure there within.

On the other hand, Topley’s portrait of a prisoner identified simply as “Polly” presents an entirely different mode of representation and implies an alternative narrative (figure 2.7).¹⁵⁵ In this photograph, Polly has assumed the archetypical position of the “fallen woman.” She kneels on a wooden floor, with her right elbow resting on a chair and her right hand supporting the weight of her head. Her other hand rests in her lap. Her head is bent downward, and her gaze is directed toward the ground, seemingly unaware of the photographer’s presence. A window outside of the photographic frame highlights Polly’s left side; casting one half of her disheartened face with light and the other in dark shadow. Her androgyny is undeniable: with short-cropped hair and loose plain dress, she is far from the Victorian feminine ideal. Unlike the other pair of female inmates, Topley has removed his subject from the prison corridor and placed her in a dramatically lit, unidentified room. Furthermore, the carefully arranged composition (lighting, framing) and calculated pose of this photographic study emphasize its performative nature, separating it even further from the seemingly ‘documentary’ tone of his previous photograph.

¹⁵⁴ John Tagg, *The Burden of Representation: Essays on Photographies and Histories* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 1988), 11. For more on disciplinary power and control within the penal system, see Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1977).

¹⁵⁵ This photograph was recently exhibited in *Identities: Canadian Portraits* at the McMichael Canadian Art Collection (Kleinburg, Ontario) from 28 February - 13 June 13, 2013.

Andrew Rodger has suggested that this portrait is particularly affecting because it evokes Topley's "sense of compassion."¹⁵⁶ Whether or not this photograph can be interpreted as such, it is worthwhile to analyse this sentimental reading. Did Topley photograph this woman because he pitied her? Did he wish to illustrate that "Polly" was a unique case, a repentant sinner who did not deserve her current predicament? How much agency did "Polly" have in determining her own photographic representation? Did Topley, in his own words, "see a soul behind the outward clay" of this weary prisoner, and "strive to bring an expression of it to the surface"?¹⁵⁷ Unfortunately, many of these questions remain unanswered, as we have no information on this particular female prisoner or on the crime for which she had been committed. I would like to suggest, however, that this photographic representation is evidence that Topley did group "Polly" among the "deserving poor," and that he sought to construct a portrait that brings to the surface her troubled, yet remorseful, emotional state.

Interestingly, Topley's photographs of pre-World War I immigrants offer a similar juxtaposition of photographic representations: while some of them are portrayed as mere 'typologies,' others are rendered as true photographic portraits. In 1910, Topley and fellow photographer John Woodruff, were commissioned by the Department of the Interior to capture images of immigrants arriving at the Quebec Immigration Centre. These photographs of new arrivals were to be transformed into lantern slides and

¹⁵⁶ "William James Topley: Reflections on a Capital Photographer," *Library and Archives Canada*, 4 September 2008. LAC. <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/topley/index-e.html>. This observation can be found in the section titled "The Photographer."

¹⁵⁷ William James Topley, "Posing," *Photographic Mosaics: An Annual Record of Photographic Progress*, edited by Edward Livingston Wilson (Philadelphia: Benerman & Wilson, 1881), 70.

circulated throughout Europe to promote immigration to Canada.¹⁵⁸ The mandate of their project was made clear by W.D. Scott, superintendent of immigration: “I want [J. Woodruff] to get some good photographs of immigrants while at Quebec... I do want a line of immigrants of various nationalities with Immigration officers interspersed, but what is wanted is individual types taken for the most part singly.”¹⁵⁹ While many of Topley’s photographs of these groups are indeed arranged into ethnographic types, as “scientific specimens arrayed for scrutiny,”¹⁶⁰ others are reminiscent of his studio portraits of individuals and families, in which there is a sense of empathic understanding between photographer and subject.

Topley’s photograph of a young boy named Chadwick Sandles, one of the thousands of English “Home Children”¹⁶¹ who travelled across the Atlantic to Canada, is strangely reminiscent of Polly’s portrait in terms of its aesthetic qualities and careful posing (figure 2.8). Like Polly, this lone traveller has been removed from the sea of immigrants milling about outside the building, and placed in an unidentifiable room. He props his right elbow upon a windowsill, the sunlight gently illuminating the soft creases of his jacket. Although Chadwick’s expression is difficult to read, it is noticeably softer and more relaxed than many of the photographer’s other immigrant subjects. Perhaps Topley, a father of two, felt a particular attachment to this young boy who was

¹⁵⁸ For more information on the making of lantern slides, see “Lantern Slides: History and Manufacture,” *The Library of Congress*, <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/landscape/lanternhistory.html> (accessed April 5, 2014).

¹⁵⁹ Cited in Brian S. Osborne, “Constructing the State, Managing the Corporation, Transforming the Individual: Photography, Immigration and the Canadian National Railways, 1925-30,” in *Picturing Place: Photography and the Geographical Imagination*, edited by Joan M. Schwartz and James R. Ryan (London: I.B. Tauris, 2003), 179-80.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 179.

¹⁶¹ Between 1869 and 1939, more than 100,000 orphaned or abandoned children from Britain were sent to Canada and other former British colonies. Many were abused mentally and physically or put to work as child labourers.

commencing a new life in an unfamiliar country. Being able to communicate in the same language undoubtedly strengthened this bond, whereas Topley's inability to speak with his other sitters of Russian, Polish and German origins likely fostered emotional distance.

Topley's emotional connection, or lack thereof, with the female inmates is equally reflected in photographs of their living spaces in the jail. One of his photographs shows the interior of a (presumably) female prisoner's jail cell (Figure 2.9). The scene is grim: narrow, cramped quarters with a worn wooden floor, dishevelled bed and limited natural lighting. Topley photographs this intimate feminine living space from a distance back, perhaps because he was afraid of encroaching upon forbidden territory. This space, which is traditionally found within the domestic realm, blurs boundaries between public and private spheres. The unmade bed could connote recent sexual acts between individuals; furthermore, by placing the bed in this intermediary space of private/public, it also evokes the idea of prostitution.¹⁶² As viewers, we are invited to assume a slightly perverse, voyeuristic male gaze that invades and intrudes upon a woman's traditionally restrictive space.

Sometime after Topley had finished his small, but significant, series of jail images, he captured both interior and exterior views of the local YWCA building, formerly located at the southwest corner of Metcalfe and Maria (now Laurier) Street. These photographs include two images of the building's cornerstone, and two images of the dining room. As Diana Pedersen has observed, respected local photographers were often commissioned by YWCA boards of directors and campaign managers to construct

¹⁶² Mariana Valverde explains that one of the reasons why prostitution was considered the social evil is because it is "notoriously public," and that since sexuality has been "constructed as belonging exclusively within the familial sphere, both the state and private citizens feel entitled to comment on, judge, and police the participants in prostitution." Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water*, 77-8.

images of their new buildings with the intent of presenting their facilities in “the best possible light.”¹⁶³ As a result of the introduction of the new half-tone process for the reproduction of photography, the YWCA would print these photographs in their annual reports or local newspapers to illustrate the progressiveness of their community, and in hopes of raising funds for their expensive new facilities. Perhaps it comes as little surprise that a prominent businessman and photographer like W.J. Topley was chosen to photograph views of the newly opened Ottawa YWCA building between 1894-95. He may have been recommended for the commission by his wife considering that she served as one of the YWCA’s founding “directresses,” contributing twenty-five dollars to the launching of its building fund in 1892.¹⁶⁴ Topley was even paid the then-significant sum of nine dollars to photograph the interior of the YWCA.¹⁶⁵

Topley’s photograph of the YWCA dining room would have undoubtedly pleased his patrons (figure 2.10). The neatly organized, spacious room appears adequately well lit by natural light, and no fork, knife or napkin is visibly out of place. The juxtaposition of this proper sanitized space and the previous condemned space of the prison cell presents a stunning contrast. Tagg reminds us that undesirable spaces, like bodies, can be probed with a camera’s lens, and juxtaposed against other exemplary spaces:

The spaces, too – uncharted territories, frontier lands, urban ghettos, working-class slums, scenes of crime – are confronted with the same frontality and measured against an ideal space, a healthy space, a space of unobstructed lines of sight, open to vision and supervision; a desirable space in which bodies will be

¹⁶³ Diana Pedersen, “The Photographic Record of the Canadian YWCA, 1890-1930: A Visual Source of History,” *Archivaria* 24 (Summer 1987), 26.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 27. Topley’s involvement with the project could have also been related to the fact that he served as president of the Ottawa YMCA branch for separate two terms.

¹⁶⁵ *Ottawa YWCA Annual Report*, 1895-96, microform, Library and Archives Canada, 33. It appears as though Topley photographed the reading room first in December 1894, and then both the building’s cornerstone and dining room several months later in February 1895.

changed into disease-free, orderly, docile and disciplined subjects; a space, in Foucault's sense, of a new strategy of power-knowledge.¹⁶⁶

These supervised public spaces of the new YWCA were metaphorically where its members strove to remedy the city's growing "girl problem" at the end of the nineteenth century, which they understood as threatening to the moral fabric of respectable society. This "problem" was, in the minds of YWCA directors, tied to the increasing number of young women who were leaving their parental homes to seek out employment and educational opportunities in major urban centres, leaving them vulnerable to temptation and unsupervised by family, community and the church.¹⁶⁷ The YWCA building thus served as a sanctuary for women, a safe environment removed from the social ills of the exterior world. Little "homey" touches, including lace curtains and plants, helped to re-create a cosy familial setting in which members would feel at ease. The public reading room would have been stocked with literature, mostly religious, deemed appropriate for leisurely perusal (figure 2.11).¹⁶⁸ There is seemingly nothing threatening, nothing out of place in this interior.

Topley photographs of the inscription of the YWCA building's cornerstone reinforce the solid foundation and ideals upon which the building rests (figure 2.12).

This inscription reads as follows:

Young Women's Christian Association
Asked of God 1892 – Given of God 1894
2, Sam. VII, 27-29
This Stone was Laid by Her Excellency
The Countess of Aberdeen

¹⁶⁶ Tagg, *The burden of representation*, 64.

¹⁶⁷ For more information on the YWCA and the "girl problem," see Chapter Three of Diana Pedersen, "The Young Women's Christian Association in Canada, 1870-1920: 'A Movement to Meet a Spiritual, Civic and National Need'" (PhD diss., Carleton University, 1987), 106-194.

¹⁶⁸ Religious works comprised the second highest volume of books on these shelves, with 107 books. Travel was at the top of the list with 151 volumes. *Ottawa YWCA Annual Report*, 1895-96, p. 8.

May 11, 1894.

In her journal, Lady Aberdeen wrote that she laid the YWCA cornerstone on Arbor Day in 1894, and that there was “quite a crowd” present at the event.¹⁶⁹ This would have been a very proud moment for members of the Ottawa YWCA and the middle-class community at large, and undoubtedly Topley wanted to commemorate its significance in photographic form. It is also significant to note that Topley took this photograph shortly after a notable event that occurred in the Canadian YWCA’s history: from January 22nd to 23rd, 1895, the first meeting of the Dominion Association took place in Ottawa, which marked the birth of the YWCA as a distinctly Canadian organization. This allowed members to join forces with the World YWCA, which had been established for “the purpose of comparing and coordinating existing national organizations as well as extending and promoting the YWCA as a missionary movement in the foreign field.”¹⁷⁰

The images of the YWCA cornerstone complete Topley’s atypical series of rarely photographed people and places, and a return to his more conventional individual and group studio portraits. Framing these images within specific socio-historical contexts illuminates how they reflect certain nineteenth-century ideological discourses surrounding morality and crime. Topley’s photographs of the Home for Friendless Women’s female occupants portray the women as industrious and hardworking, essentially washing away the sins of their past. Living under the strict rules of their matronly superiors, they were essentially rendered as powerless, “incapable of speaking, acting or organising for themselves.” Topley’s photographs of the female prisoners offer an interesting contrast; while some are represented as mere typologies, another is

¹⁶⁹ Saywell, *The Canadian Journal of Lady Aberdeen*, 98.

¹⁷⁰ Pedersen, “The Young Women’s Christian Association in Canada,” 80-83. Members of the Ottawa YWCA had been very supportive of this nationalistic push since the early 1890s.

captured in the form of a true photographic portrait, depicted with care and consideration. This *identified* female prisoner undoubtedly had some sort of an impact on this successful local businessman who was more familiar with photographing the cream of Ottawa society. Topley's subsequent photographs of the YWCA portray an ideal, desirable space free from the contaminations and evils of industrialized and immoral working-class urban life. Unlike the other surveyed and disciplined spaces of the Home and jail, this is a comfortable space into which viewers could wishfully project themselves.

Here I have suggested that Topley's aesthetic choices reveal the relationships that he developed, or failed to develop, with his female sitters. Are they treated as ethnographic subjects or human beings who possess a 'soul'? Did he believe that some of these women were beyond redemption, while others could be saved and reformed into good Christians? Unfortunately, there are no easy answers to these queries considering that there is no known personal journal or diary written by Topley in existence. It is, however, possible to glean from these photographs late nineteenth-century gendered and social power structures, evolving identities, and photographic practices.

Chapter Three: The Dufferin Fancy Ball Portraits: Fabricating Identity in Victorian Canada

“Yet it is not (it seems to me) by Painting that Photography touches art, but by Theater.”

-Roland Barthes¹⁷¹

There has always been a strong correlation between photography and the practice of staging. Unfortunately, the study of the latter has more often been confined to an examination of painting and sculpture.¹⁷² Many photographers, both early and contemporary, have played with theatricality and narrative in their work, creating ‘staged’ photographs that invariably place the ‘actors’ in a fabricated, illusionary space. Nineteenth-century photography studios aided in creating a constructed world for their clients, who were essentially transported from their exterior world into a mysterious world of representations. Inside the Topley Studio, patrons were presented with an opportunity to mould and manipulate their own photographic image within certain technical and social constraints. This is especially true for those who dressed up in costume in front of the camera, either recreating a moment from an amateur theatrical production or reliving their time at a fancy dress ball event. While these portraits may be read initially as entertaining visual documents of the men and women who were invited to these prestigious functions, they also shed light on the social, political and economic contexts that frame these events.

The Topley Studio, like the Notman Studio in Montreal, produced some imaginative composite photographs over the years, which included both tobogganing and

¹⁷¹ Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1980), 31.

¹⁷² Lori Pauli, “Setting the Scene,” in *Acting the Part: Photography as Theater*, ed. Lori Pauli (New York: Merrell Publishers Limited, 2006), 15.

curling scenes, in addition to the re-creation of more formal social affairs.¹⁷³ One of these composite photographs, titled *Fancy Ball given by the Governor General Lord Dufferin at Rideau Hall on February 23, 1876* (figure 1.7), recreates a moment from the widely reported fancy dress ball hosted by the former Governor General of Canada, Frederick Temple Blackwood (1826-1902), 1st Earl of Dufferin, and his wife, Harriot Rowan Hamilton.¹⁷⁴ As I have indicated in Chapter One, over three hundred individual and group portraits depicting the hosts and their guests were taken in the months following the Grand Fancy Dress Ball, from which half were then cut out and pasted onto a painting of the ballroom scene.¹⁷⁵ This image was then re-photographed to create the finished product, which was most likely first displayed at the Topley Studio in early June.¹⁷⁶ While the original glass plate negative has now been lost, LAC possesses a small copy deposited for copyright purposes, and there are presumably other copies located in different archival fonds.

This photograph illustrates how the event allowed guests to assume, albeit temporarily, fictitious identities, and although their personae often confirmed and subsequently perpetuated Victorian values and norms relating to class, gender, and race, it also permitted them a certain degree of transgression and freedom in a rigidly controlled heteronormative society. In this chapter, I will explore notions of class

¹⁷³ Another one of his composites, titled *Old Guard Dinner*, recreates a dinner given in honour of Sir John A. Macdonald on May 4, 1882. According to Kells, it took Topley “two or three years” to complete this composite image because it had been difficult to get all of the sitters into his studio. By the time the composite had been completed, some of the party had already “passed to the Beyond,” which apparently brought tears to the eyes of the prime minister upon viewing it for the first time.

¹⁷⁴ While these are the official titles, I will be referring to the former Governor-General henceforth as either the ‘Earl of Dufferin’ or ‘Lord Dufferin,’ and his wife as the ‘Countess of Dufferin’ or ‘Lady Dufferin.’

¹⁷⁵ Andrew Rodger has suggested that the painted backdrop could have been done by Canadian artist and photographer Frederic Marlett Bell-Smith, who was a friend of Topley’s.

¹⁷⁶ In her diary, Janet Anna Hall, daughter of hardware store owners Mary Workman Hall and Francis Gemmill Hall, wrote that she had first seen the composite displayed at the Topley Studio on June 3rd, 1876. Library and Archives Canada, Janet Anna Hall fonds, MG 29-C70, “Diary” series, 9.

structure and unity within this composite image, and the ways in which it constructs an ideal realm removed from everyday life during the post-Confederation era. I will also discuss the role of gender in the individual and group portraits of both women and men produced by the Topley Studio, exploring how the fancy dress costumes both reinforced and subverted Victorian gendered dichotomies. Finally, I will analyze a few portraits of individuals who assumed the identity of the Other at the fancy dress ball and whose representations often reflect nineteenth-century imperialist views held by Victorian Canadians.

This chapter is informed by the work of Canadian fashion historian Cynthia Cooper and her extensive research on four major Canadian fancy dress balls in the late nineteenth-century. Her book, *Magnificent Entertainments: Fancy Dress Ball of Canada's Governors General, 1876-1898*, is illustrated with many of the photographs taken by Topley of the first two major fancy dress balls, which occurred in 1876 and 1896 respectively.¹⁷⁷ While Cooper does an excellent job of re-creating these events with the use of primary archival materials, including newspaper articles and other memorabilia, her analyses of the Topley photographs themselves are less detailed. Therefore, my chapter will have a particular focus on the extant graphic material in an attempt to answer questions about self-representation, agency and identity. My analysis will draw upon gender theory, particularly Judith Butler's notion of gender performativity, in addition to literature about portraiture and identity. Throughout the chapter, I include close readings of photographs that have not been analyzed in great

¹⁷⁷ There are also photographs from the William Notman studio in Montreal and Samuel Jarvis in Ottawa. The research for this book resulted in *Dressing Up Canada: Late Victorian Fancy Dress Balls*, an exhibition displayed at the Canadian Museum of History (formerly the Canadian Museum of Civilization) from October 24, 1997-January 3, 1999. Photographs from this exhibition illustrate how original costumes were displayed along with historical photographs of the hosts and their guests.

detail to date, including some that only exist as glass plate negatives within the Topley Studio fonds.

When looking at these costumed studio photographs, it is interesting to consider the never-to-be-captured process of observing, selecting and posing in which Topley, his staff and sitters all played a part. In her catalogue essay “Staged Photograph in the Victorian album,” Marta Weiss explores the nature of deliberately posed photographs and the Victorian photographer’s role in the creation of these images. She challenges A.D. Coleman’s concept of the “directional mode” in which “the photographer consciously and intentionally creates events for the express purpose of making images thereof,” which he claims is separate from more documentary style photographs, or “raw material.”¹⁷⁸ Weiss also argues that Coleman’s “directional mode” is a unidirectional flow of power that denies the sitter a sense of agency. Instead, she supports the notion that staged photographs should not be confined to one of these two categories:

It therefore seems more useful to consider Victorian staged photographs along a spectrum of directional control, ranging from those in which the photographer poses a hired model in accordance with his or her vision, to those in which the subject initiates the sitting, as in the case of a guest at a fancy-dress ball who commissions a photographer to document his or her costume. In the staged photographs that fall in the middle of this spectrum, the relationship between the photographer and sitter is the most fluid, allowing for a shifting, complex collaboration in which neither the photographer nor the subject has sole control.¹⁷⁹

Topley’s own approach can be seen along a spectrum as Weiss recommends. Indeed, the archival record indicates a reciprocal relationship between the photographer and his clients. We can, for example, glean some information about Topley’s relationships with clients in the series of short articles that he wrote for photography

¹⁷⁸ A.D. Coleman, “The Directional Mode: Notes toward a Definition,” in *Light Readings: A Photography Critic’s Writings, 1968-1978* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 250-2.

¹⁷⁹ Marta Weiss, “Staged Photography in the Victorian Album,” in *Acting the Part: Photography as Theater*, edited by Lori Pauli (London/New York: Merrell Publishers Limited, 2006), 82-3.

magazines. Topley encourages certain favourable poses and expressions through various means, including the use of props. In “Posing,” which appeared in the 1881 issue of *Photographic Mosaics: An Annual Record of Photographic Progress*, he suggests the following strategy to his readers:

It is a favorite plan of ours to place an inviting book or portfolio where it will require the sitter to walk across the room to inspect; and, under the plea of arranging the light, etc., we study the figure. Or, again, we leave a chair in a very tempting place, which nearly always takes, and retiring from the dark-room, we often secure something new, and always very characteristic.¹⁸⁰

In the same article, Topley articulates his role as stage director in certain cases. He claims that convincing his/her client that “the work of the day before was, in stage language, only a rehearsal” allowed him to obtain more successful results the following day. At the same time, Topley is well aware of the camera’s limitations in terms of manipulating and ‘directing’ his subjects. He expresses his frustration in not being able to manipulate Nature to the same extent as a painter in the following short anecdote:

Recently I made a few negatives in a romantic part of the country within a hundred miles of our city. How often the lines of the pictures were perfect, the foreground everything desirable, but Nature was in the sulks; she would not smile – no sun shone... Another time wind and weather were favourable, but the foreground was bad- a great bank of sand hiding a choice piece of middle distance. Yet, determined to succeed, I changed point, and carried boulders and mossy logs to make a presentable foreground, when a dense smoke from bush fires settled down and spoiled everything. I waited around for eight days, but had to leave without my picture.¹⁸¹

In this case, neither Topley nor “Nature” has full control of the situation: no matter what Topley does to try and manipulate the natural surroundings in the hopes of capturing a beautiful picture, his subject proves most uncooperative. Despite his perseverance and patience, he ends up abandoning the project altogether.

¹⁸⁰ Topley, “Posing,” 71.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 72-3.

One project that Topley did not abandon, however, was the creation of a composite image featuring those who had attended the Grand Fancy Ball. As I outlined in Chapter One, the photographer had a good understanding of the elite crowd to whom he catered, and wanted to fulfill their fantastical desires to the best of his technical and artistic abilities. While he must have exuded a certain degree of control when posing the various guests in his studio, especially considering certain technical limitations such as long exposure times, his patrons also had some directional sway. This is evident, for example, by the fact that Topley would often take two or more photographs of his costumed clients, who often altered their full-length poses from one to the other, or posed with another individual in one of their portraits, such as a spouse or friend. It is possible that Topley hoped to utilize at least one portrait of each individual to construct the composite image, while the other individual and group portraits were sold to the guests and their friends to be pasted in albums or mailed to friends and family.

In his extensive research on the Notman collection, curator Stanley Triggs has explained that the composite photograph solved many problems that were inherent in early photographic group portraits. For instance, group portraits were often unsuccessful due to long exposures and slow emulsion speeds. There were often several people who moved during the exposure, had an unpleasant expression on their face, or were partially hidden behind the person in front of them.¹⁸² With the introduction of composite photography, portraits could be taken indoors in the photographer's studio at one's own

¹⁸² Triggs, *The Composite Photographs of William Notman*, 19.

convenience.¹⁸³ It also ensured that each individual in the composite was in sharp focus, even those located further in the background.

The process of creating a composite image was both laborious and lengthy. Once the individual portrait had been taken, it was developed, washed and dried, then passed on to the art department where figures were cut out with fine scissors and pasted onto a painted background. Close co-operation between the photographer and artists creating the scene was essential. The photographer had to make sure that the individual was positioned correctly in relation to the camera; if the camera distance were even slightly off, the figure in the composite would look too big or too large.¹⁸⁴ The artist could then add elements to the scene to make it appear more realistic – for example, by adding shadows to the figures and furniture, by applying colour, or by placing a few highlights on chandeliers, mirrors, and polished surfaces. The final framed image would have made quite an impression on its Victorian viewer, and its convincing illusionism would have undoubtedly tricked quite a few.

The Victorians had a passion for different forms of the performing arts, most notably amateur theater and *tableaux vivants*. Emma Hamilton is often credited with introducing European society in the late eighteenth century to the *tableau vivant*, which requires “performers to arrange themselves into a picture, sometimes after a well-known

¹⁸³ The earliest composite image was a combination print of an allegorical scene, titled *Two Ways of Life*, which was created by Oscar Gustav Rejlander in 1857. This print was assembled from thirty-odd separate negatives and is loosely based on Raphael’s *School of Athens* fresco. A year later, Henry Robinson Peach created his well-known combination print *Fading Away*, which combined four different negatives and depicts a girl dying of consumption.

¹⁸⁴ Triggs, *The Composite Photographs of William Notman*, 21. He adds that figures in the foreground would normally be taken on an 8 x 10 glass plate while background figures were taken on 5 x 7 or 4 x 5 glass plates. This could explain why Topley’s negatives of costumed guests at the Dufferin Fancy Ball can be found invariably in one of two formats (either approximately 6.5 x 8.5 or 4.5 x 6.5).

work of art, and hold their positions for several minutes.”¹⁸⁵ During her performances, she would imitate figures in Classical sculpture and vases that her husband, Lord Hamilton, had collected while he was the British ambassador in Naples.¹⁸⁶ These *tableaux vivants* allowed the participants, especially women, to display their physical beauty and to temporarily disregard convention. While bare feet, loose hair and slightly revealing clothing would have been frowned upon in a conventional Victorian context, they were overlooked by the spectators due to the “artistic nature of such performances.”¹⁸⁷ We will see similar allowances with the development of the fancy-dress balls in the nineteenth century.

Amateur theater also provided both men and women an opportunity to assume new personae. According to Cooper, Lady Dufferin, with her reserved nature and plain, sensible dress, generally embodied the “Victorian ideal of True Womanhood.”¹⁸⁸ However, this viceroy’s wife, like many of her contemporaries, also enjoyed watching amateur theatricals and *tableaux vivants*, and had a theatrical bent herself having performed lead roles in many plays. Her nephew, Harold Nicolson, once commented on his aunt’s transformation in a performance context: “she would discard her stateliness and appear wholly different...such moments were always connected with some form of travesty, whether charades, dumbo-crambo, or merely dressing up.”¹⁸⁹ These contexts allowed Lady Dufferin to shed her exemplary Victorian exterior, and to temporarily

¹⁸⁵ Weiss, “Staged Photography in the Victorian Album,” 84.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Cynthia Cooper, *Magnificent Entertainments: Fancy Dress Balls of Canada’s Governors General, 1876-1898* (Fredericton, NB: Goose Lane Editions, 1997), 40.

¹⁸⁹ Cited in *ibid.*, 41. Lady Dufferin’s album contains many staged photographs of theatrical productions, which often feature other members of her family, including her three eldest children: Archie, Nellie and Terence. In one photograph, Archie and Terence are dressed as schoolgirls in “School,” with their costumed sister sitting in between them.

break the repetitive acts of respectable femininity.

By the time that photography was first introduced by Daguerre in 1839, the *tableau vivant* had already been well established in Europe, and quickly became a photographic subject in its own right. Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, more commonly known as Lewis Carroll, author of the popular children's book *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and its sequel *Through the Looking-Glass*, was an amateur photographer who, inspired by *tableaux vivants* performances, decided to create and photograph his own narrative scenes using children as his actors. In one of these photographs, titled *Saint George and the Dragon* (1875), Xie Kitchin and her brothers stage an allegory of the triumph of good over evil, however, there is no real sense of movement in the image – the staged photograph has restored stillness to a picture that had once been animated by living models.¹⁹⁰ It was not until the invention of the movie camera in the late 1890s that a medium was capable of recording a narrative in a more fluid, believable manner.

Those fortunate enough to attend a costumed event during the nineteenth century, including skating carnivals and fancy dress balls, were also eager to have their experience memorialized in the form of a staged photograph. The fancy dress ball was a private costumed party, where no masks were worn, that grew over the course of the nineteenth century after a social shift at the end of the previous century had made masquerades and parties seem immoral.¹⁹¹ Popular ideas for costumes at these lavish events included characters from: literature (especially those from the work of Sir Walter Scott); Shakespearean plays; mythology, legends, nursery rhymes and fairy tales; and finally, figures from what were deemed to be 'exotic' lands (these costumes were sometimes

¹⁹⁰ Weiss, 86.

¹⁹¹ Cooper, 21.

collected or acquired from world travels). The first fancy dress ball in Canada was held in Toronto in 1838 at Rosedale, the home of Sherriff William Botsford Jarvis. More than thirty years later, in 1869, the Desbarats family hosted the first in Ottawa.¹⁹² Fancy dress balls, like other popular Victorian entertainments, followed a specific etiquette, and both the hosts and their attendees were expected to conduct themselves accordingly. At the same time, these social occasions did provide Victorians with a sense of “ephemeral freedom” that allowed them a fleeting escape from their rigidly conventional lives.¹⁹³ In fact, many guests dreaded returning home once their evening had come to an end as they were forced to return to the monotony of their daily nineteenth century lives. This is likely why many of them wanted to preserve a moment of this fantastical experience in the form of a portrait photograph; serving as a fetish object that substituted for their transient escapade. Topley’s portrait of architect Walter Chesterton as “Lyconides, an Athenian” was apparently one of Chesterton’s most prized possessions when he died half a century later.¹⁹⁴

On February 23rd, 1876, the Earl of Dufferin and his wife hosted their Grand Fancy Ball, which was widely reported all over North America and Europe, and became the paradigm of all subsequent fancy dress balls held in Canada. The viceregal family arrived at Rideau Hall in June of 1872, shortly after Lord Dufferin had been appointed the new Governor General of Canada. The Earl had come into power following Confederation in 1867, when Canada was still a very young nation and facing some very

¹⁹² Ibid., 23-4.

¹⁹³ Ibid., 37. Other popular entertainments throughout the ages, such as the medieval carnival and the eighteenth-century masquerade, also allowed individuals an opportunity to escape the status quo and to transgress the limits of acceptable behaviour. Russian philosopher and literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin’s notion of the “carnavalesque” is particularly useful in thinking about the subversion of norms during these events. Also see Terry Castle, “The Carnivalization of Eighteenth-Century English Narrative,” *PMLA* 99, no. 5 (October 1984): 903-916.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 63.

serious problems, particularly national division and a deteriorating economy. Lord Dufferin sought to unite Canadians who were separated geographically, linguistically and ideologically; he and his wife travelled extensively all over the country to try and meet as many Canadians as possible.¹⁹⁵ However, the couple also indulged in various pursuits, and spent copiously to reflect both their elevated social status and their national prestige. Shortly after arriving in Ottawa, they began to transform their residence bit by bit to reflect the newly appointed Governor General's viceregal role. To add lustre to their personal and social lives, they added a tennis court, new ballroom, indoor curling rink and a monumental toboggan slide, using both public and private funds to finance these costly renovations.¹⁹⁶ They hosted and attended many social events in the city, hoping to bolster its appeal and to prove that life in Ottawa could be as attractive as life in any other capital city.

The Grand Fancy Ball that the couple hosted in 1876, along with the aforementioned composite photograph that Topley made to commemorate this event, helped to affirm their viceregal status in Canadian society. The composite itself successfully establishes the hosts and their guests as an elite and exclusive group of individuals, while also constructing an internal hierarchy that is signified by a number of art historical and portrait conventions. Richard Brilliant has astutely noted that:

Group portraits are not random collections of persons but deliberate constructions of the significant relations among them...[they] make ideological statements about the values, attitudes, and practices shared by their members, and by the portrait painter as well...that shared ideology binds the individuals together in some transcendent association, while also constituting each of them as the 'concrete subject' – in Althusser's sense – who holds these values and attitudes.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., 39.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., 39-40.

¹⁹⁷ Richard Brilliant, *Portraiture* (London : Reaktion Books, 1991), 92-3, 96.

Brilliant thus emphasizes the powerful nature of group portraits in that they intentionally link subjects together in a shared ideology, and implicate the portraitist as well. The composite image, acting as a very large and deliberately constructed group portrait, interpellates subjects who hold similar values and attitudes. It served to confirm the Earl of Dufferin's political and social mandates: on the one hand, to construct a representation of national unity and pride, and on the other, to distinguish himself and his guests as those who possessed the time, means and intellect to attend such a prestigious event. Once invited to a fancy dress ball, guests would begin to prepare for the grand event by arranging costumes, practicing dances, and conducting research; all of which required a significant amount of time and energy. Magazine and book publications featuring fancy dress designs and articles provided advice on costume selection to avoid minor discrepancies and potential ridicule if one were to choose unwisely.¹⁹⁸ The most prolific writer on fancy dress costumes was Arden Holt, a British authority on the subject, who published six editions of *Fancy Dresses Described, or What to Wear at Fancy Balls* between 1879 and 1896 for women, and another six editions of her companion book for men titled *Gentleman's Fancy Dress: How to Choose It*, between 1882-1905. These books provided very specific guidelines for men and women, and thus encouraged conformity and a shared ideology. Although there were a few exceptions to the rules, the majority of Dufferin's guests selected then-conventional costumes that create an overarching cohesiveness and solidarity in the composite image.

Topley's *Fancy Ball* composite image and the accompanying portrait photographs reflect certain art historical conventions that have been continuously employed to establish social hierarchies. For instance, there is one portrait in particular that stands out

¹⁹⁸ Cooper, 28.

from the crowd, that of William Campbell, who was Lord Dufferin's private secretary and a "favourite member of the Staff."¹⁹⁹ Campbell, who dressed as a "Court Jester" (figure 3.1) for the fancy dress ball, provides a sharp contrast with the Dufferin group (figure 3.2), who came dressed as the Court of King James V of Scotland, a conscious choice that re-asserts their power, authority and esteem. Topley photographed Campbell as a slightly hunched figure holding a puppet on a stick and wearing a comical jester's hat. He faces the camera in a frontal pose with a full, open-mouthed grin. Whereas the reserved portraits of Lord and Lady Dufferin with their children are highly conventional, Campbell's lower social status allowed him to display a greater degree of personal expression and emotion in his own photographic portrait.²⁰⁰ In the composite photograph, Campbell is actually sitting in a child-like pose at the base of the platform upon which Lord and Lady Dufferin are seated. Even the Dufferin children, all three, are elevated in relation to Campbell; they appear either seated above him, or standing slightly behind him. Interestingly, Joanna Woodall has commented on the positioning of figures within group portraits and has observed the following: "subordinate figures such as dogs, dwarfs, servants, jesters and black attendants were strategically placed to render the sitter's elevated status and natural authority clearly apparent."²⁰¹ Here, the arrangement of the figures was no accident on Topley's part. As previously discussed, all of the figures in a composite image are carefully positioned well in advance.

The elevated status of Lord and Lady Dufferin's family is echoed in their elevated

¹⁹⁹ Saywell, 47.

²⁰⁰ Apparently he also played the jester's role on other occasions. In her *Canadian Journal*, Lady Dufferin recounts a Curling Match between married men and bachelors in which "little Campbell" (her affectionate name for him) played. She notes that he was "a great element of amusement; for, in the first place, he made by accident two most beautiful shots, then he fell in front of a stone while sweeping, etc." See Saywell, 220.

²⁰¹ Joanna Woodall, "Introduction: facing the subject," in *Portraiture: Facing the Subject*, ed. Joanna Woodall (Manchester/New York: Manchester University Press, 1997), 2.

position on their throne chairs in relation to the guests below them, again to signify their majesty and power. This is emphasized by the physical separation between them and their guests indicated by the empty space at the platform's base. Additionally, Topley has organized his figures to create the illusion of linear perspective, leading one's eye to the focal point of the photograph: the Dufferins. In the foreground of the photograph, a female figure stands out quite independently from the crowded group, and the diagonal flow of her gown both draws our attention upward and echoes the staircase leading up to the main platform where the Dufferin family is seated. Topley and his artistic team thus utilized conventional formal devices, including perspective and proportion, in order to arrange an image that communicates a sense of unity, but a unity that is also divided in order to emphasize the ultimate authority: the viceregal party.

While I have indicated that most of Topley's individual fancy dress ball portraits show both women and men adopting fairly conventional costumes, many of them illustrate how dressing up could allow one to temporarily subvert Victorian gender norms and identities. Judith Butler has demonstrated that gender is not a stable identity, nor is it essential or innate; rather, gender identity is a social performance, a "stylized repetition of acts" over time. Consequently, she has proposed that gender transformation is possible through the breaking or subversion of such acts. She argues that social context can determine the degree to which one may safely bend or subvert these acts:

...it seems clear that, although theatrical performances can meet with political censorship and scathing criticism, gender performances in non-theatrical contexts are governed by more clearly punitive and regulatory conventions...in the theatre, one can say 'this is just an act,' and de-realize the act...[whereas] on the street or on the bus, this act becomes dangerous...precisely because there are no theatrical conventions to delimit the purely imaginary character of the act...²⁰²

²⁰² Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," *Theater Journal* 40, no. 1 (1988): 527.

Although Butler is referring to lived performances of gendered acts, her argument can be applied to visual representations of gender as well. In the case of the fancy dress ball portraits, women were provided with an opportunity to “perform their gender” in a slightly less conventional manner that would have been considered unacceptable in an ordinary social context. Cooper has stressed that for women, loose flowing hair and shortened hemlines (that revealed more of one’s legs than a typical ball gown of the day) were tolerated in the context of a fancy dress ball, and that consequently many women used these temporary suspensions of convention to their advantage.²⁰³

For example, Miss Zaidee Cockburn and Miss Maggie Jones, each dressed as a “Bonnie Fishwife from New Haven,” were apparently almost as popular as the “royals,” and this is undoubtedly due to their short hemlines, which would have normally signified sexual permissiveness (figure 3.3).²⁰⁴ In Topley’s double portrait of Cockburn and Jones, there is a sense of genuine intimacy between these two young women, who were undoubtedly united in a close friendship.²⁰⁵ Their poses are somewhat less refined, and arguably more casual, than some of the other costumed women. Their individual portraits are also quite provocative. An individual full body portrait of Miss Jones shows the young woman standing with her left hand resting on her hip, and the other hand holding a *papier maché* fish (figure 3.4). Her right foot rests on a wooden barrel, which results in the spreading of her legs and revealing a fair amount of blue stockings under

²⁰³ Cynthia Cooper, “Dressing Up: A Consuming Passion,” in *Fashion: A Canadian Perspective*, edited by Alexandra Palmer (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 44.

²⁰⁴ Cooper, *Magnificent Entertainments*, 55.

²⁰⁵ For more information on intimate female relationships during this time, see Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, “The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations between Women in Nineteenth-Century America,” in *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), 53-76.

her pale blue skirt. Miss Cockburn assumes a similar pose in her individual portrait, using the same wooden barrel as a prop upon which she rests her right foot (figure 3.5). These photographs illustrate the degree to which young women could play with their identity and sexuality in the Topley's studio, pushing the limits of acceptable behaviour. It is likely that they are assuming a "peasant girl" identity that they consider less elegant and polished. According to Cooper, women in particular loved peasant or pastoral dress, particularly Italian and French peasant dress, and these costumes, usually based on imagery of Dresden china shepherdesses, were often highly romanticized.²⁰⁶

The fancy dress ball also provided men with an occasion to break out from their standard sombre Victorian dress. Wearing period costumes often brought them closer to the 'feminine realm' for many of these outfits were brightly coloured and richly textured with fine materials such as ribbons, satin and lace. While some men embraced these new possibilities, others believed that this 'act' was overstepping a boundary, and that taking time and effort on one's dress and feeling enjoyment in one's own appearance was a woman's prerogative.²⁰⁷ Cooper has commented on this strange predicament that men found themselves in: "under ordinary circumstances, dress enforced the ideology of separate spheres through the sober colours and straight lines worn by men, juxtaposed with the rich colours, texture, and elaborate details of women's clothing...yet at a fancy ball, for once men were called on to embrace sartorial magnificence."²⁰⁸ Joanna Woodall has also commented on the relationship between colour and gender in nineteenth-century painted portraiture, which ties into essentialist views on gender dichotomies. She notes that:

²⁰⁶ Cooper, *Magnificent Entertainments*, 26.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 30.

²⁰⁸ Cooper, "Dressing Up: A Consuming Passion," 44.

Except for ceremonial and unorthodox figures, an authoritative palette of black, white and neutral shades dominated masculine imagery. The shimmering colour which had previously become associated with aristocratic portrayal was now largely restricted to images of women...it can be associated with the authority of *disegno* over *colore* in academic art theory, which was in turn based upon a distinction between the certain, immutable qualities attributed to the mind and the deceptive, transient, changeable body.²⁰⁹

Cooper has also observed that a fancy ball would have brought men “a new consciousness of their bodies,” for many of their pieces required tight leggings, which could expose unattractive ‘slender calves,’ and some costumes drew unwanted attention to rotund midriffs, which were normally hidden by the conventional dark suit.²¹⁰ In the past, an artist might have chosen to conceal some of his patron’s apparent physical “flaws” in a conventional painted portrait; however, early photographers had more difficulty in altering certain aspects of his sitter’s appearance, especially in a full-body format.

While the fancy dress ball context allowed for a certain degree of transgression for both men and women, there were a few areas that could not be breached. For instance, dressing as the opposite sex was taboo in a formal ballroom setting. Miss White, who came dressed in uniform as a “Daughter of the Regiment,” was indeed one of the few guests who dared to subvert gender boundaries at the Dufferins’ Grand Fancy Ball. However, while her costume did include scarlet trousers, they were well hidden under her skirt.²¹¹ Additionally, Miss Minnie Smart came dressed in uniform as a heroic “Vivandiere” (figure 3.6). A *vivandière* (later known as *cantinière*) was originally a type

²⁰⁹ Woodall, 3.

²¹⁰ Cooper, *Magnificent Entertainments*, 31.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, 51. A “Daughter of the Regiment” referred to a woman, usually a wife or daughter of a soldier in the American Civil War, who performed a number of important activities within the regiment; acting as mascots, sutlers and nurses. See James McIntyre, “Vivandieres,” in *An Encyclopedia of American Women at War: From the Home Front to the Battlefields*, volume 1, ed. Lisa Tendrich Frank (ABC-CLIO: 2013), 579-580.

of female auxiliary in the French army who sold food and drink to the soldiers starting in the mid-eighteenth century. During the Second Empire of Napoleon III (1852-1870), these “intrepid” women of low birth became objects of public interest, and their image was often ideally represented and circulated in different forms, including colour lithographs, books of illustrations, toy figurines and advertisements. Additionally, their full-dress uniforms became more ornate throughout this period, “having more in common with fine dresses of the upper classes than with the rough peasant outfits of eighteenth-century *vivandières*.”²¹² It appears as though Miss Smart is conforming to an idealized version of the French *vivandière/cantinière* at the Grand Fancy Ball. Her costume was described as: “short scarlet cloth skirt, blue black shell jacket, trimmings gold lace; forage cap, blue and gold lace; spirit keg supported by cross belt, gold and silver cord; black and scarlet stockings of high boots.”²¹³ While the costume in itself is slightly subversive with revealing stockings and forage cap, it has little connection with the day-to-day reality of the contemporary *cantinières*’ existence.

On the other hand, Cooper indicates that men were at least tempted to dress up as women at these types of occasions. At an Ottawa skating carnival in 1894, Lady Aberdeen’s male staff dressed up as “village schoolgirls” and were photographed by Topley with their employer’s approval. Normally skating carnival invitations would have carried warnings such as: “No gentleman to appear in Female Attire,” or “No gentleman will be allowed to personate a female character” (interestingly these cautions were

²¹² Thomas Cardoza, *Intrepid Women: Cantinières and Vivandières of the French Army* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 137. These uniforms, however, were generally reserved for campaigning, parades, and public appearances; the *cantinière*’s daily dress was much more humbler.

²¹³ *The Toronto Globe*, 24 February 1876.

directed toward men only).²¹⁴ Lady Aberdeen described the costumed group as follows:

All of our staff & Lord Ava dressed themselves as schoolgirls, in green Kate Greenaway dresses & poke bonnets with pink sashes & ribbons & muslin pinafores & fans...The effect was comical – Dr. Shirres made a very good huge girl. Actually he & Mr. Ferguson shaved off their moustaches for the occasion.²¹⁵

Topley's photographs of the group, which included seven men, show them posing in front of Rideau Hall (figures 3.7 and 3.8). Some of the men feign feminine modesty by covering the lower half of their faces with fans, while others are less enthusiastic about playing their part (including one who blatantly displays his unshaven facial hair). The relaxed 'snapshot' quality of these photographs presents a sharp contrast from Topley's more reserved costumed studio portraits. However, this striking group is the exception, not the rule, for costumed events in the late Victorian era, for men never dressed as women for any of Lady Aberdeen's fancy dress ball events.²¹⁶

As I have previously indicated, some guests at fancy dress balls enjoyed assuming identities very different from the conventional: these included dressing up as highly romanticized Aboriginal or Oriental characters. Dr. Edward Malloch, for example, was one of two guests to represent Aboriginal characters at the Dufferin Grand Fancy Ball. In his portrait, he is dressed as a "North American Trapper" (figure 3.9) who wore a "long black wig and a caribou skin garment of Native manufacture, and he carried a fire bag, a knife, a tomahawk, a short rifle and some pelts."²¹⁷ Dr. Malloch's individual portrait emphasizes his rugged appearance with his straggly, dishevelled hair (a western artistic device that was often employed to signify the 'barbaric other'). Additionally, Dr. Malloch is represented as the 'noble savage' in his portrait with his arms crossed in a

²¹⁴ Cooper, *Magnificent Entertainments*, 33.

²¹⁵ Saywell, 73.

²¹⁶ Cooper, *Magnificent Entertainments*, 33.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 58.

defiant stance and his gaze looking heroically into the distance. This type of imagery was later popularized and circulated by Euro-American photographers, like Edward Curtis, whose pictorial style aided in perpetuating this romantic myth within a salvage paradigm.

At the Aberdeens' Historical Fancy Dress Ball, which took place on February 17, 1896, guests costumed as Aboriginal peoples did not play a prominent role in the historical sets, and a minority who did assume a 'native' identity often acted out their roles in very stereotypical and degrading ways.²¹⁸ In the earliest sets, guests dressed as native characters were placed at the very back of group portraits, as in the second historic group, *Discovery of Continent of North America by John Cabot*, or pushed to the margins, as in the sixth historic group, *Days of Settlement and Exploration: from Tracy to Frontenac*. One striking group portrait taken by Topley of the 1896 ball, simply titled *Indian Group*, features all of the guests costumed as native characters (figure 3.10).²¹⁹ Although this group did not officially represent one of the historic sets at the ball, they did perform an impromptu set at the very end of the night led by Hayter Reed, who was the Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs at the time. Reed, dressed in a full floor-length feather headdress, guided those in Indian costume to the foot of the viceregal party's platform, all emitting war cries and waving tomahawks. He then proceeded to address the Governor General in Cree, "with all the guttural articulations appropriate on

²¹⁸ There were nine historic periods represented at the ball and members from each of these groups performed a dance throughout the night. Topley photographed all of these groups with the exception of the fifth historic group, which was photographed by another local photographer, Samuel Jarvis. See Cooper, *Magnificent Entertainments*, 94. "Fifth Historic Group: Foundation of Montreal and Settlement of Surrounding District," ca. 17 February 1896, Ottawa, photograph by Samuel Jarvis, Library and Archives Canada, accession number 1986-78-8, reproduction copy number c-143405.

²¹⁹ The Canadian Museum of History addresses the group photograph of the Indian Group on their website, which includes a sample of contemporary responses to the image made by both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. While most of the Aboriginal individuals lament the photograph's offensiveness and the participants' ignorance, Jane Stewart, former Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development viewed the photograph as an educational tool. "The Historical Fancy Dress Ball, Ottawa, February 17, 1896," *Canadian Museum of History*, <http://www.historymuseum.ca/cmhc/exhibitions/hist/balls/o-6eng.shtml>.

such occasions,” with William Campbell, a poet, acting as interpreter.²²⁰

Many people photographed in the Indian Group had first-hand experience with Aboriginal groups in Canada. Reed, as I have mentioned, was the Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs and spent a considerable amount of time among Canadian Aboriginal peoples, Duncan Campbell Scott worked as an accountant for the same department, and Emily Cummings had made extensive tours of reserves in Manitoba, the Northwest Territories and British Columbia.²²¹ Despite their real life interactions with Aboriginal peoples, they seem to be basing their representations on widely held, yet highly inaccurate European beliefs about Aboriginal cultural practices, dress and behaviour. Furthermore, their choice of costumes illustrate that they did not particularly care to create ‘authentic’ representations either; often juxtaposing native wear from different periods, or creating costumes out of paper. For example, Reed’s contemporary Plains headdress and Blackfoot shirt had no connection with the sixteenth-century Iroquois dress of his character “Donnaconna.”²²² Likewise, Topley’s portrait of Jim Smellie and Julius Lay as “Micmac Chief” and “Micmac Medicine Man” show the two men wearing generalized Plains costumes instead of traditional Micmac ones (figure 3.11). In this photograph, they have adapted ‘savage’ poses with hunched shoulders and vacant, primitive stares. Julius Lay emphasized the savagery and goriness of his character by claiming to be wearing moccasins made of human scalps and headdress of polar bear claws.²²³

In *Photography and Anthropology*, Christopher Pinney traces the history of

²²⁰ *Illustrations of the Historical Ball Given by Their Excellencies the Earl and Countess of Aberdeen – Ottawa, 1896*, with an introduction by Sir John George Bourinot (Ottawa: John Durie and Son, 1896), 44.

²²¹ Cooper, *Magnificent Entertainments*, 87-88.

²²² *Ibid.*, 88-9.

²²³ *Ibid.*, 91.

anthropological photography and outlines some of the primary reasons why the usage of photographs as a means of procuring and establishing anthropological data has been problematic from the very beginning. He notes that:

The camera records what is placed in front of it and on its own is incapable of making distinctions about the relationship of its visual trace to the psychic, social or historical normativity. It never knows and can never judge whether what it records is 'typical,' 'normal' or 'true.'²²⁴

Pinney adds to his argument by pointing out that ethnographic photographs provide the viewer with what Barthes called the 'body' (*corps*), or content, but do not address the more general '*corpus*,' or the contextual framework in which they were created. While Topley's costumed studio portraits are not 'anthropological studies' per se, especially since they portray individuals masquerading as Aboriginal peoples; nonetheless, contemporary viewers would have believed in the authenticity of their visual representations. Today, as a result of the information that we can glean regarding the *corpus* of these photographs, it is possible to deduce that what they depict is neither 'typical,' 'normal,' nor 'true' of Aboriginal peoples and cultural practices.

There were other fanciful 'exotics' at the Dufferin Grand Fancy Ball. These included "Ali Buck of the Dhurumtollah Bazaar, Calcutta" and "Nourshadene, a Cabul Woman." Mr. Cowper Cox of the Department of the Interior appeared as "A Mohammedan Zemindar" accompanied by his wife, who took on the identity of "A Madrassee Ayah," while Mrs. R.E. O'Connor was garbed in an exquisite costume as "A Turkish Lady." One of the fanciful 'exotics' from a different land that stood out is Mr. William Allan, the owner of a mining company, who came dressed in a "Chinese costume" (figure 3.12). Although Mr. Allan claimed that his attire was a "real Chinese

²²⁴ Christopher Pinney, *Photography and Anthropology* (London: Reaktion Books, 2011), 81.

nobleman's costume imported from that country," Cooper has brought to light that it is, in fact, a Cantonese theater costume associated with female roles.²²⁵ Indeed, Allan's costume is very feminine in nature with its green satin robe and embroidered flowers. In his portrait he holds a parasol over his head and an open fan by his side. The fact that he is wearing an 'inauthentic costume' reflects the Victorian fascination with all things 'oriental,' whether they are 'true' or not. Edward Said's influential discussions of Orientalism, although referencing the Middle East and northern Africa, are nevertheless instructive here. Said explores the development of an Orientalist discourse that has perpetuated stereotypical visions of the Orient by circulating supposedly 'truthful' representations of its exotic and mysterious nature. According to Said:

the imaginative examination of things Oriental was based more or less exclusively upon a sovereign Western consciousness out of whose unchallenged centrality an Oriental world emerged, first according to general ideas about who or what was an Oriental, then according to a detailed logic governed not simply by empirical reality but by a battery of desires, repressions, investments, and projections.²²⁶

In this case, Mr. Allan's portrait may be simply a projection of his own private fantasy, that is, to temporarily assume the identity of an 'exotic,' feminized Other.

Topley's composite photograph, *Fancy Ball given by the Governor General Lord Dufferin at Rideau Hall on February 23, 1876*, and the individual fancy ball portraits that were photographed to create the composite, provide us with rich visual material reflecting many facets of Victorian values and norms during the post-Confederation era in Canada. The composite image is an ideological construction that, in Althusser's words, interpellates subjects who hold similar aristocratic beliefs and values. Topley and his artistic team utilized formal elements including juxtaposition, space, and scale to

²²⁵ Cooper, *Magnificent Entertainments*, 48.

²²⁶ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Random House, 1978), 8.

emphasize a hierarchical formation in place. These portraits also reveal to us the ways in which men and women could exercise certain liberties in the context of the fancy dress ball, and how the rigorous Victorian male/female dichotomy could be temporarily destabilized. Both sexes also had the option to assume an identity of the Oriental or Native Other, which often mirrored an imperialist and racist nineteenth-century discourse of ethnic superiority. At the same time, those who selected a fantasy persona radically different from their own, or wore a costume that did not complement their figure, were often ridiculed and judged rather cruelly by the press.²²⁷ Therefore, there were always certain boundaries that could not be overstepped.

The composite photograph and accompanying individual portraits allowed the hosts and their guests to relive the fancy dress ball experience again and again long after it had ended. For many, it probably served as proof of a shared experience, one that would have been very far removed from their everyday lives. Today, the existing studio portraits continue to fascinate and entertain us as we contemplate the guests' choice of costumes and photographic representations. With the recent digitization and wider circulation of these particular images, there is great potential for other researchers to compare and contrast them in new and exciting ways, and to draw connections with similar photographic material located in other Canadian archival collections.

²²⁷ Cooper, *Magnificent Entertainments*, 30.

Conclusion

This thesis shifts Topley's work away from a traditional aesthetic framework, or one that focuses exclusively on the "male genius" behind the camera's lens. The first chapter reiterates some of the past research that has been conducted on Topley's studio practice and oeuvre by reporters, scholars and archivists, however it also moves away from painting him in this heroic manner. Reflecting on his own personal thoughts on photography published in different magazines, this chapter explores how Topley viewed his role as a photographer in the nation's capital during the post-Confederation years, and considers the relationships that he fostered with his clients. Furthermore, this section frames Topley's practice within the social reform movement of the late nineteenth-century and considers how his own philanthropic activities in the Ottawa area may have imbued the photographer with an "evangelic Christian sensibility" that is reflected in his work.

The second and third chapters ask new and difficult questions about nineteenth-century photographic representations of gender, class and race. Exploring a series of atypical photographs in the Topley Studio fonds in the second chapter, I attempt to reconstruct the lives of the 'friendless' and 'fallen' women portrayed in these images using a variety of primary and secondary sources. I also provide critical readings of the photographs themselves to consider how these women's visual representations, and the spaces in which they inhabited, are portrayed through Topley's probing camera. This chapter frames the images in question within a specific socio-historical context, reflecting on intersections between morality, crime and women's evolving roles.

The third chapter explores staged photographs of the Ottawa bourgeois that were taken in Topley's studio after the Dufferin Grand Fancy Ball in 1876. I argue that while these costumed photographic portraits are coded with Victorian social and gendered norms, they also reveal the degree to which the elite guests could play with identity in this particular social context. The creation of the composite photograph by the Topley Studio in the months after the ball helped to solidify the elevated status of the hosts and their guests, while also adding to the prestige of the studio. Individual portraits illustrate that the guests could temporarily subvert and destabilize gender norms, while also playing out stereotypical characters of a different class or race.

While this research has been challenging at times due to the lack of textual materials in the Topley Studio fonds, my research draws from a blend of both primary and secondary sources in various archives and libraries to re-construct the socio-historical contexts in these images were created. Focusing on visual representations of various 'classes' of women and men in late nineteenth-century Ottawa, the three chapters consider questions of power relations and gendered identities, in addition to relationships between the (male) photographer and his subjects. Collectively, they serve as a valuable contribution to the study of photography in Canada and encourage scholars to explore other aspects of the vast Topley Studio fonds.

The sheer size and scope of the Topley collection has arguably hindered its accessibility in the past. Even today, while it is common knowledge that there are approximately 150,000 glass plate and nitrate negatives in the collection, LAC's online database currently contains descriptions of only two-thirds of this total amount. The rest of this material remains stored in the vaults at LAC's Preservation Centre located in

Gatineau, Québec, or in the Nitrate Film Preservation Facility situated in the west end of Ottawa. A researcher who would like to view a box, or multiple boxes, of negatives must order the material well in advance, which can only be consulted under the supervision of LAC personnel at the Preservation Centre. All of these factors contribute to the reduced accessibility of the photographs to this day.

There are, however, exciting new possibilities for this large archival fonds, and others like it, in the digital age. The digitization of over 10,000 records²²⁸ in the Topley Studio fonds, including copies of individual photographs and album pages, has made the collection more accessible than it has been in the past, when LAC photo-archivists were some of the few people engaging with the material. LAC's modernization initiative includes a strong digital component that reflects a key part of their legislated mandate, which emphasizes that documentary heritage be accessible to all.²²⁹ This digital trend in the archival world has often been praised as one that increases both accessibility and intellectual control, and aids in the preservation of materials that are too delicate or fragile to handle in their analogue format. While some scholars have argued that researchers should be wary of these digitization projects and online access tools, especially when dealing with photographic material,²³⁰ these types of initiatives should

²²⁸ This figure was retrieved from LAC's virtual exhibition, *William James Topley: Reflections on a Capital Photographer*, under "Search Topley Records" (last modified on November 3rd, 2008). Presumably more records have been digitized since that time, however, I was unable to obtain the exact number at this time.

²²⁹ "Our Mandate," *Library and Archives Canada*, last modified March 28, 2012, <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/about-us/Pages/our-mandate.aspx>. The part to which I am referring is the second point: "to be a source of enduring knowledge accessible to all..."

²³⁰ See Joan M. Schwartz, "Coming to Terms with Photographs: Descriptive Standards, Linguistic 'Othering,' and the Margins of Archivry," *Archivaria* 65 (Fall 2002): 142-171; James Opp, "'The Colonial Legacies of the Digital Archive: The Arnold Lupson Photographic Collection,'" *Archivaria* 54 (Spring 2008): 3-19.

still be praised for preserving and circulating records among a broader group of people, both nationally and internationally.

Recently, I have noticed that digitized records of the Topley Studio fonds are being posted and shared through various social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and Pinterest, which often invite users to leave comments on individual photographs and/or share them with others. Furthermore, the online bilingual exhibition created by LAC in 2008 provides users with an opportunity to engage with a portion of the photographic content contained within the fonds, in addition to providing information and tips on how to search for Topley records using the online database. Increasing the accessibility of the Topley Studio fonds, and other Canadian historical photograph collections like it, will undoubtedly result in a renewed interest in these visual remnants of the past, thus provoking new ways of looking and thinking about them.

Appendix A

Table 1: Men in Custody at the Carleton County Gaol from 1890-99

Date	Murder	Larceny	Vagrancy	Assault	Drunkenness/ Disorderly Conduct	Lunacy	Indecent Exposure	Other*	Total
04/90	--	9	--	4	--	4	--	8	25
08/91									
10/91									
02/92	1	1	2	2	7	--	1	2	16
09/92	1	1	--	3	--	--	1	6**	12
01/93	--	2	--	--	3	1	--	1	7
07/93	--	4	1	--	--	2	1	6	14
02/94	--	7	1	--	2	1	--	3	14
10/94	--	4	--	3	3	9	--	5	24
01/95	--	--	--	--	--	2	--	14***	16
09/95									
01/96	--	4	--	2	2	--	--	1	9
09/96	--	11	--	2	10	2	--	1	26
01/97	1	9	2	--	2	2	--	3	19
09/97	--	3	1	1	--	4	--	4	13
03/98	--	11	--	--	10	4	--	4	29
12/98	--	7	1	--	6	2	--	2	18
05/99	--	6	4	--	8	3	--	1	22
Total Numbers	3	79	12	17	53	36	3	61	264
Total Percentage	1.1	29.9	4.5	6.4	20.1	13.6	1.1	23.1	100

*Includes rape or attempted rape, breach of the peace, perjury, contempt of court, embezzlement, conspiracy, keeping a house of ill fame, malfeasance, furious driving, obstructing railways, damage in property, keeping an illicit still, illicit intercourse with an imbecile, arson and other unnamed minor offences.

** The others were under sentence for theft and vagrancy, however the specific numbers are not given.

***The others were undergoing short sentences for minor offences.

Source: *Carleton County Gaol Inspection Register, 1874-1907*, MG274, box A2013-0449, City of Ottawa Archives.

Table 2: Women in Custody at the Carleton County Gaol from 1890-99

Date	Larceny	Vagrancy	Drunkenness/ Disorderly Conduct	Lunacy	Keeping A Disorderly House/ House of Ill Fame	Selling Liquor Without a License	Other*	Total
04/90	--	--	--	1	1	--	4	6
08/91								
10/91								
02/92	1	--	2	--	2	--	--	5
09/92	1	--	--	--	--	2	3**	6
01/93	3	--	1	1	--	--	--	5
07/93	2	2	--	--	--	--	--	4
02/94	3	3	1	--	3	--	--	10
10/94	2	--	2	1	--	1	2	8
01/95	--	--	--	2	--	--	3***	5
09/95								
01/96	2	--	--	2	1	--	--	5
09/96	--	--	4	2	--	--	--	6
01/97	1	2	--	3	--	--	--	6
09/97	--	2	4	--	1	--	3	10
03/98	--	--	--	4	4	--	--	8
12/98	2	--	2	4	--	1	--	9
05/99	2	--	4	4	--	--	--	10
Total Numbers	19	9	18	24	12	4	15	103
Total Percentage	18.4	8.7	17.5	23.3	11.7	3.9	14.6	100

*Other includes assault and other minor offences.

**The others were committed for vagrancy and drunkenness, however specific numbers are not given.

***The others were undergoing short sentences for minor offences.

Source: *Carleton County Gaol Inspection Register, 1874-1907*, MG274, box A2013-0449, City of Ottawa Archives.

Illustrations



Figure Intro.1 William James Topley, *Mr. Juchereau de St. Denis Lemoine in costume*, March 1876, Ottawa (Ont.), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC, item number 26020.



Figure Intro.2 William James Topley, *Mrs. Juchereau de St. Denis Le Moine in costume*, March 1876, Ottawa (Ont.), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC, item number 26018. Credit: Topley Studio Fonds / Library and Archives Canada / PA-138392



Figure 1.1 William James Topley, *Interior view of the Notman Studio in Ottawa, Ontario*, between 1868 and 1872, Ottawa (Ont.), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC. Credit: William James Topley / Library and Archives Canada / PA-009273



Figure 1.2 William James Topley, *The first Topley studio at the corner of Metcalfe and Queen Streets*, ca. 1875, Ottawa (Ont.), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC. Credit: William James Topley / Library and Archives Canada / PA-012361



OTTAWA.—W. J. TOPLEY'S NEW PHOTOGRAPHIC STUDIO.

Figure 1.3 Reproduction of the new Topley Studio by Eugene Haberer, published in the *Canadian Illustrated News*, vol. XIV, no. 18, November 11, 1876, page 277. Source: *Canadian illustrated news*, Montreal, Burland Lithographic Co. [etc.]. -- 28 v. ill. 40 cm. -- Vol. XIV, no. 18 (November 11, 1876). -- ISSN 0383-0322. -- P. 277 © Public Domain nlc-14834



Figure 1.4 William James Topley, *The public reception area of the Topley Studio at 104 Sparks Street*, between 1878-1888, Ottawa (Ont.), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC. Credit: William James Topley / Library and Archives Canada / PA-009278



Figure 1.5 William James Topley, *Lady Dufferin*, April 1874, Ottawa (Ont.), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC. Credit: Topley Studio / Library and Archives Canada / PA-025605



Figure 1.6 William James Topley, *Fancy Ball given by the Governor General Lord Dufferin at Rideau Hall on February 23, 1876, May or June 1876, Ottawa (Ont.)*, silver salts on paper, accession number 1966-094 NPC. Credit: William James Topley / Library and Archives Canada / C-006865



Figure 1.7 William James Topley, *Lady Aberdeen*, January 1897, Ottawa (Ont.), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC. Credit: Topley Studio / Library and Archives Canada / PA-027856



Figure 1.8 William James Topley, *The Royal Party in Rockcliffe Woods*, September 23, 1901, Ottawa (Ont.), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC. Credit: William James Topley / Library and Archives Canada / PA-011870



Figure 1.9 William James Topley, *Two unidentified women, one of whom is holding a Folding Pocket Kodak No. 1 camera*, between 1899-1905, Cantley (QC), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270. Credit: William James Topley / Library and Archives Canada / PA-012938



Figure 1.10 William James Topley, *National Council of Women group at Rideau Hall*, October 1898, Ottawa, glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC. Credit: Topley Studio / Library and Archives Canada / PA-028034



Figure 2.1 William James Topley, *Ironing Room, Home For Friendless Women (412 Wellington St., between Bay and Concession Street)*, February 1895, Ottawa, glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC. Credit: Topley Studio / Library and Archives Canada / PA-027434.

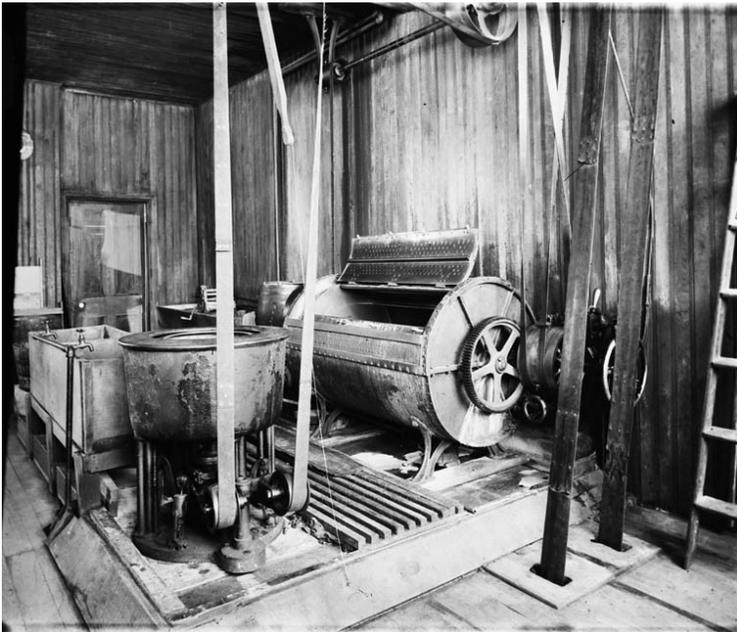


Figure 2.2 William James Topley, *Washing Room, Home For Friendless Women (412 Wellington St., between Bay and Concession Street)*, February 1895, Ottawa (Ont.), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC. Credit: Topley Studio / Library and Archives Canada / PA-027435.



Figure 2.3 William James Topley, *Home for Friendless Women, showing side entrance*, ca. 1916, Ottawa (Ont.), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC. Credit: William James Topley / Library and Archives Canada / PA-011253



Figure 2.4 William James Topley, *Laundry Room, Home for Friendless Women*, ca. 1916, Ottawa (Ont.), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC. Credit: William James Topley / Library and Archives Canada / PA-011262



Figure 2.5 William James Topley, *Ironing Room, Home for Friendless Women*, ca. 1916, Ottawa (Ont.), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC. Credit: William James Topley / Library and Archives Canada / PA-011264



Figure 2.6 William James Topley, *Female inmates standing in front of their cells, Carleton County Gaol*, February 1895, Ottawa (Ont.), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC. Credit: Topley Studio / Library and Archives Canada / PA-027437



Figure 2.7 William James Topley, *Polly, an inmate at the Carleton County Gaol*, February 1895, Ottawa (Ont.), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC. Credit: William James Topley / Library and Archives Canada / PA-027436



Figure 2.8 William James Topley, *Chadwick Sandles, an English immigrant travelling alone*, 1911, Quebec (QC), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC. Credit: William James Topley / Library and Archives Canada / PA-010234



Figure 2.9 William James Topley, *Jail*, February 1895, Ottawa (Ont.), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC. Credit: Topley Studio / Library and Archives Canada / PA-027438



Figure 2.10 William James Topley, *Dining Room at the Y.W.C.A. (South-East corner of Metcalfe and Maria Streets)*, February 1895, Ottawa (Ont.), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC. Credit: Topley Studio / Library and Archives Canada / PA-027440



Figure 2.11 William James Topley, *The Reading Room at the Y.W.C.A. (South-East corner of Metcalfe and Maria Streets)*, December 1894, Ottawa (Ont.), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC. Credit: Topley Studio / Library and Archives Canada / PA-027406



Figure 2.12 William James Topley, *Corner Stone, Y.W.C.A Building (South-East corner of Metcalfe and Maria Streets)*, February 1895, Ottawa (Ont.), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC. Credit: Topley Studio / Library and Archives Canada / PA-027439



Figure 3.1 William James Topley, *Mr. Campbell in court jester costume worn at the fancy dress ball given by Governor General Lord Dufferin, March 1876, Ottawa (Ont.), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC. Credit: The Topley Studio / Library and Archives Canada / PA-138393*



Figure 3.2 William James Topley, *Lord and Lady Dufferin and their children dressed as the Court of King James V of Scotland, March 1876, Ottawa (Ont.), album page with five prints, accession number 1969-195 NPC. The Topley Studio / Library and Archives Canada / e008311399*



Figure 3.3 William James Topley, *Misses Jones and Cockburn dressed as bonnie fishwives from New Haven*, March 1876, Ottawa (Ont.), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC. Credit: Topley Studio / Library and Archives Canada / PA-193681



Figure 3.4 William James Topley, *Miss Jones*, March 1876, Ottawa (Ont.), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC, item number 26044.



Figure 3.5 William James Topley, *Miss Cockburn*, March 1876, Ottawa (Ont.), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC, item number 26047.



Figure 3.6 William James Topley, *Miss Smart*, March 1876, Ottawa (Ont.), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC, item number 26431.



Figure 3.7 William James Topley, *Lord Aberdeen's staff dressed as schoolgirls for a masquerade skating party at the Government House, 1894, February 1894, Ottawa (Ont.), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC. Credit: William James Topley / Library and Archives Canada / PA-027373.*



Figure 3.8 William James Topley, *Lord Aberdeen's staff dressed as Schoolgirls for a masquerade skating party at Rideau Hall, called "Dame Marjorie School," February 1894, Ottawa (Ont.), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC. Credit: Topley Studio / Library and Archives Canada / PA-027372*



Figure 3.9 William James Topley, *Dr. Malloch dressed as a North American Trapper*, March 1876, Ottawa (Ont.), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC. Credit: Topley Studio Fonds / Library and Archives Canada / PA-139846



Figure 3.10 William James Topley, *Tenth Historic Group: Indian Group*, ca. February 17 1896, Ottawa (Ont.), photomechanical process print on prepared wove paper, accession number 1986-78-13. Credit: Topley Studio / Library and Archives Canada / C-143408



Figure 3.11 William James Topley, *Messrs Smellie and Lay*, 1896, Ottawa (Ont.), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC. Credit: William James Topley / Library and Archives Canada / PA-189665.



Figure 3.12 William James Topley, *Mr. William Allan dressed in a Chinese costume*, February 1876, Ottawa (Ont.), glass plate negative, accession number 1936-270 NPC. Credit: William James Topley / Library and Archives Canada / PA-189667

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