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Richmond, Virginia's Every Monday Club, 1889-1919

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Abstract

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA'S EVERY MONDAY CLUB, 1889-1919

Maureen E. Salmon, M.A.

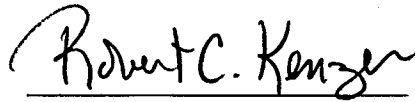
University of Richmond, 2005

Thesis Director: Dr. Robert C. Kenzer

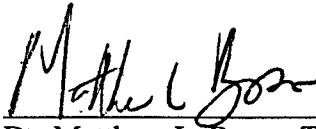
This thesis examines the formation and growth of the Every Monday Club, a woman's literary club in Richmond, Virginia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Since the group has never been researched before, most of the study concentrates on untouched archives. The study uses the extensive Every Monday Club papers which include club meeting minutes, letters, papers, pictures, yearbooks, and newspaper clippings. This information is also supplemented with obituaries, census, and other primary data. The records disclose issues of class, race and education.

The study concentrates on the ideas and opinions the women discussed in their meetings and what this dialogue infers about their lives as women in Richmond. It not only documents the lives of women at the turn of the century, but explicates the gradual change of the average upper-middle class, white woman. Their exploration into education and knowledge reveals a quiet openness to other peoples and places. At the same time, the study explains why the group was never able to commit to diversity. The progression from the introspective interest in self-education into the more community-based service that develops around the First World War reveals a change in the nature of members. This thesis analyzes the Every Monday Club as a microcosm of change occurring in Virginia and the South.

I certify that I have read this thesis and find that, in scope and quality, it satisfies the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Handwritten signature of Robert C. Kenzer in cursive script.

Dr. Robert C. Kenzer, Thesis Advisor

Handwritten signature of Matthew L. Basso in cursive script.

Dr. Matthew L. Basso, Thesis Advisor

Richmond, Virginia's Every Monday Club,
1889-1919

By

Maureen Elizabeth Salmon

B.A., Georgetown University, 2001

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty

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in Candidacy

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Table of Contents

Introduction: The Self-Educated Woman	1
Chapter One: Unity, 1889-1903	10
Chapter Two: Education, 1903-1912	33
Chapter Three: Social Service, 1912-1919	56
Conclusion: The Legacy	79
Appendix I: Resolutions, Nov. 19, 1889	82
Appendix II: The By-laws, October 1912	83
Appendix III: Every Monday Club Member List 1889-1912	84
Bibliography	86

INTRODUCTION:

The Self-Educated Woman

On January 16, 1893, the cold winter weather made few Richmonders want to venture outside of their homes, but Virginia Robinson did, as this was her last day to attend the club she helped create. The Every Monday Club secretary recorded, "Seven members of the club met with Miss Tupper on the cold afternoon of the sixteenth in spite of a deep snow and the severely cold weather; it was the coldest day of the longest spell of cold weather ever known in our city."¹ Robinson was attending the meeting to resign her membership to the very literary society she formed four years earlier. Although her reason is never explained within the club's meeting minutes, perhaps her social obligations prohibited her from attending the meetings. She was instrumental in the formation of two female societies, and she participated in the Ladies' Hollywood Memorial Association, a club that pursued preserving and educating the public about the Confederacy.² Because she was the daughter of the superintendent of the state penitentiary and the wife of a Civil War hero, Virginia Robinson led the life of a white woman of privilege in Richmond society. Her education and social position allowed her

¹ Minutes of the Every Monday Club, 1892-1893, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, Virginia. Note: That the mistakes of each secretary have been preserved for authenticity.

² Sandra Treadway, *Women of Mark: A History of The Woman's Club of Richmond, Virginia 1894-1994* (Richmond: The Library of Virginia, 1995), 7-8.

to begin the club, but these qualities also forced her to leave when her obligations became too many. She was one of many women of her era who used any means possible to expand her knowledge of the world within the boundaries society set for them.

In 1889, Richmond's "Every Monday Club" was formed by several women, including Virginia Robinson, in response to their desire to expand their education. The goal of the organization was for women to discuss literature, history, and topics of interest to the members. The mission of the club was to expand members' knowledge through their chosen theme of unity. Each Monday a member of the club would make a presentation on a topic which the group determined at the beginning of the year. Topics varied from poetry to astronomy, but the meeting format was consistent: a lecture preceded the discussion. Through these meetings, the club members from Richmond's elite worked within an acceptable structure of society to further their education.

Current research on women's groups in the nineteenth century concentrates on the suffrage movement in New England and New York, as well as the charity movements in the South. Several books about the influence of the charity club movement on the suffrage movement during the Progressive Era reveal that women's clubs were beginning to reach popularity at the turn of the century. The first clubs were located in New York and Massachusetts and resulted from women being excluded from male societies. S. J. Kleinberg's *Women in the United States 1830-1945* credits Jane Croly, a female journalist, in founding Sorosis. Croly started the club as a direct response to being

excluded from the New York Press Club.³ Due to the nature of the members of these clubs, the women were very focused on the development of charity to help the less fortunate in their cities. The industrial growth and high immigration in the North had increased poverty rates. The journalists used their clubs as forums to discuss issues of people in need within their neighborhoods. This early direction towards social activism developed into a full-fledged movement of “reform societies, benevolent groups and welfare organizations.”⁴ By the turn of the century the majority of women’s clubs filled their meetings with discussion of charitable issues or participating in solutions to the world’s problems. Kleinberg and other scholars argue that these clubs helped Northern women prepare for a suffrage movement.

Although these women’s organizations shared similar values on the surface, in practice they were very different from the club movement in Richmond. Most of the elite women in the city did not believe their private societies should have any connection to larger political agendas. Sandra Treadway’s *Women of Mark* is the only study that covers the women’s club movement in Virginia, by examining The Women’s Club of Richmond. This organization, founded in 1894 as a literary society, eventually turned its interests to cover greater social and charity issues in the twentieth century.⁵ Her book illustrates how these women consistently applied their interest in self-education to aid and

³ S.J. Kleinberg, *Women in the United States 1830-1945* (New Brunswick, N.J: Rutgers University Press, 1999), 163. Kleinberg explains that the National Press club’s exclusion of women also started several of the first clubs in Boston. The largest original club was Female College Alumni General Federation, established in 1881.

⁴ Kleinberg, *Women in the United States*, 184.

⁵ Treadway, *Women of Mark*, 3.

improve the society around them. Using meeting minutes, newspaper articles, as well as the club's extensive archive, Treadway provides a concise history of The Women's Club.

Although Treadway's work offers a detailed description that successfully tracks the history of The Women's Club, it does not explain the purpose and function of Southern women's clubs. In the book's acknowledgments, Treadway explains that she was approached by members to document the history of the club.⁶ Her research features the biographies of the women involved, but it does not ask why they were attracted to this group or interpret the story into a historical perspective. What propelled these women to educate each other? Why was the literary club movement stronger in Richmond than the other two most popular national movements, towards charity societies and suffrage organizations? Does the participation of men as occasional presenters in these clubs imply that these clubs were accepted or even encouraged by males? What were the social positions of these women and how did that affect the overall dynamic and interests of the groups? Did these groups offer educational opportunities to the women involved, or instead just attempt to reinforce kinship and friendship ties? The membership as well as the organization itself may reflect the issues and the larger attitude of the era. Exploration of these issues in Richmond is necessary for understanding the greater cultural history of the city in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Beyond Treadway's research there is little exploration of female literary societies.

Most scholarship covering literary societies discusses the relationship between women

⁶ Treadway, *Women of Mark*, xv, reveals, "I will always be grateful that despite my reservations about taking on such a complex project, I agreed in the summer of 1991 to accept the kind offer extended to me by The Woman's club Centennial Committee to write a comprehensive history." This is not to assert that Treadway's research was biased. Instead, the purpose of her book is not to analyze, but to document the club's history.

and reading, not the interest of the entire club. The history of reading and education is of interest to historians because of its effect on individual women as well as their participation in American society. Unfortunately, not much of this research includes exploration into the group dynamic. Mary Kelley's "Reading Women/Women Reading: The Making of Learned Women in Antebellum America" touches on this issue.⁷ Following the path of many historians interested in linguistics and texts, she looks at how reading affected women during the nineteenth century. Kelley makes several interesting observations about women and reading, but she never explores in much depth the relationship of women connected through a club. Her primary discussion examines the relationship between women and books: "Whether books led reading women outward to a public world or inclined them inward to a world of their own making, women relied upon the artifacts themselves to secure their identity in times of transition."⁸ Kelley's idea relates to the relationship of individuals to literature during times of change; this idea is applicable to Richmond's Every Monday Club (EMC). The club was formed at the end of the nineteenth century once Richmond had reestablished itself after Reconstruction, and women were gradually participating more in education. Because the academic trend in Richmond differed from the interest of national women's clubs or personal interactions with reading, most literature on the women's club movement does not apply to the Every Monday Club. The EMC reveals a different type of relationship in women's clubs, one that may have existed elsewhere, but has never been studied.

⁷ Mary Kelley, "Reading Women/ Women Reading: The Making of Learned Women in Antebellum America," *Journal of American History* 83 (September 1996), 401-424.

⁸ Kelley, "Reading Women," 413.

Research on literature, learning and club movements at the turn of the century reveals another trend in society, the Chautauqua Movement. Since most literature on women covers the charitable nature of club women, many scholars do not relate the two club trends together. Most likely, the Every Monday Club was influenced by a combination of the northern women's club movement and the educational Chautauqua Movement. After meeting with the present members of the Every Monday Club, it was discovered that this was most likely the case. The current president of the club, Gene Knoop, explained that to the best of her knowledge the club had sprung from the Chautauqua Movement in the 1880s.⁹ This speculation was passed down from a former president, Glennie Miller.

The Chautauqua Movement began in upstate New York in 1874 by a group of Methodist Sunday school teachers, John Vincent and Lewis Millar. The concept of the group was to encourage education of adults, especially in a group format. Still in existence today, the New York community held classes in the summer for people to expand their knowledge. Vincent's 1886 book on the movement received national attention. Although Vincent used his theory in the context of Protestant education, his emphasis on the importance of continuing education for adults permanently affected the opinions of Americans. The timeline of the Every Monday Club beginning in 1889 could certainly support the theory of their connection. This was considered "the first modern

⁹ According to Gene Knoop, Every Monday Club, interview July 13, 2004. Personal recording resides in the author's archive. Knoop describes the club as part of the trend that was occurring nationally, but recognizes that the club movement at the time was not necessarily following the same path, which is what makes the Every Monday Club unique for its time.

theory of adult education in the United States.”¹⁰ Vincent’s theory was especially important to the Every Monday Club because, according to John C. Scott, of its emphasis on the inclusion of women:

Vincent asserts that mature men and women are able to learn, educational opportunities should extend beyond formal schooling, life is education, agencies promoting adult learning should work together, and adult education should examine current social issues.¹¹

The classes at Chautauqua offered a wealth of topics from Hebrew to teaching kindergarten. This variety echoes the interests of the Every Monday Club as does the theory of the importance of education beyond formal schooling. The original members of the EMC wanted to use their own education from the Women’s College in a forum outside of the schools. They discussed real issues and refreshed their basic interests in society. Although there is no definitive proof that the club was connected to the Chautauqua movement, the theory is certainly plausible.

This thesis addresses the relationship of women, education, and the club movement by examining the Every Monday Club of Richmond. Unlike other studies of women’s clubs, this paper targets a group who had a much more moderate progression of thought. Their beginning was unusual, but their gradual change of ideas to a more liberal

¹⁰ Scott, “The Chautauqua Movement: Revolution in Popular Higher Education” *The Journal of Higher Education*, 70 (July 1999), 389-412. Scott argues that the Chautauqua movement was rooted in functional education for any person and that it spread across the country. He notes that traditionally the development of “Normal” schools is credited with this trend, but believes that the overwhelming popularity of Chautauqua shows alternative roots in the educational movements at the turn of the century.

¹¹ Scott, John C. “The Chautauqua Movement,” 391. Scott continues to mention that although the movement supported the “democratization of education for adults, regardless of social class, age, or gender.” Race was not a factor mentioned.

and open ideology was character of the time period. While in a modern context it is understandable that a woman would want an education, during the late nineteenth century the Every Monday Club must have appeared unusual to outsiders because it was one of the first organizations of its kind, in Richmond. What propelled these women to use their friendship to blend their individual interests to educate each other? What was society's effect on the character of the club? What was the member's effect on Richmond? It will also be interesting to see the other social groups these women associated with—were many of them related or did they know each other on a more superficial level as mutual members of the elite?

This thesis chiefly relies on the archive of the Every Monday Club, a virtually untouched collection held at the Virginia Historical Society in Richmond. The collection includes the minutes of the meetings from 1889-1990, the yearbooks, club member histories, essays and poetry written by the members, speeches made at meetings, photographs and sketches of the members, invitations and programs of club events, and even the club banner. Although the club still exists, this research concentrates on its first thirty years, 1889-1919. The meeting minutes include the rules and issues of the club as well as synopses of the discussions of each meeting. The archive lists not only who the members were, but to whom they were married and where they lived. These details allow for research beyond the Every Monday Club manuscripts. Since many of the members formed part of the Richmond elite, the Virginia Historical Society contains archives on various members and their families. Combining these excellent sources creates a sound portrait of the club, as well as the culture to which the women were

responding. Analysis involves comparing the Every Monday Club's discussions to their personal histories in order to reveal their motivations and interests. The progression of thought is also noted in the division of chapters. From 1889-1903, the women avoided conflict and studied topics that would support their idea of unity. The years 1903-1912 saw a progression in an interest in education. The women began to find ways to spread their knowledge. The final phase of the early club, 1912-1919, is described as a gradual interest in social service as a response to educational neglect elsewhere. To try and contextualize the bias and opinions of the club members, obituaries, biographies, and letters are also examined. Additionally, the 1900 and 1910 census identifies the economic status as well as marital status and family size of the members. These materials can explain membership, motivation, and ability to participate.

CHAPTER ONE:

Unity, 1889-1903

By most accounts, the Every Monday Club began in the fall of 1889 as the Every Tuesday Club. When the club voted to change the meeting day the following year, the name changed. The first club journal marked 1889-1890 includes a noteworthy inscription: "A unity of purpose and a loving deference for each other shall be a marked characteristic with a cordial support of its officers."¹² The cover of the journal has the word "unity" written on it as well. Not only were the women to be reminded of their combined purpose towards a single goal, but they were to respect each other under the order established by the group. The women chose to set the mood of their club through this opening statement.

The first journal does not illustrate meeting minutes in detail, as journals would in later years. Instead, the journal lists the procedures, members, resolutions, locations of meetings, and topics. What the club felt was important to include in the journal reveals a desire to maintain order within the club. The beginning of each meeting involved a roll call. Members were expected to be prompt or pay a twenty-five cent fine for tardiness. This was a rather high fee, considering that during this time period twenty-five cents

¹² Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1889-1890.

could purchase a book.¹³ Either this rule implies a heavy importance being placed on timeliness or the high class of its members.

At first there was a limitation on the number of members. The original members determined that only fifteen women could participate. An additional clause marked that size limits could be negotiated later. The small size was necessary because the club alternated meetings in different members homes. Change occurred in 1892 when the rules announced that new members must be voted on by the club. At this same time the membership limit was raised to twenty-five. Because the membership was limited and voted on by its members, the club could control which women were included. If a member brought a friend who others found undesirable, they could manipulate a majority vote to exclude the possible member. It is understandable that a club that relied on a discussion format would want to keep its membership limited, but the voting system implies a desire for exclusivity.

The original journal featured many other complicated rules. For example, "Every fourth reader shall devote her selection to a poet—first giving a short original sketch of the artist and then reading selections from their poem."¹⁴ Additionally, the fifteen resolutions should be read "the first Tuesday of every month before meeting by the president or secretary."¹⁵ Although the rules began as rigid instructions, their eventual exclusion from the list in later meeting books suggests the club eventually relaxed its approach.

¹³ "Acknowledgements" *Godey's Lady's Book* 53 (May 1885). Started by Louis Antoine Godey, this publication was targeted towards women. The entry lists the book, *The Witch's Head*, by H. Rider Haggard as costing 25 cents.

¹⁴ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1889-1890.

¹⁵ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1889-1890.

The origin of the club was never explained in complete detail in the early journals, but some answers are found in a much later entry in the minutes. On February 24, 1901, a member announced that she came across an old article in the magazine, *The Home-Maker*, that described the group as a magazine club:

Our Every Monday Club of Richmond, Virginia is now well into its second year and is an outcome of our magazine club two years older. Most of us had learned.....the pleasure and profit of our interchange of ideas and as no one could call all the good things from the first class magazines. We formed this club in which to discuss or review not only what comes to us in this way but, anything new or old in this literary world that struck the fancy of any of us.¹⁶

If this article is correct, the club may have started as early as 1887.¹⁷ Although the author of the article discussed the importance of literary magazines in this article, in reality members did not concentrate their interests on magazines. However, the article's author was appealing to the editors and audience of *The Home-maker*. By 1890, the club was no longer looking at magazines. Instead, the members chose such themes for discussion as Ancient Greece, Shakespeare, and astronomy. This development from a simple gathering of women to discuss magazines into a regulated group who presented papers on developed ideas reveals a sense of yearning to learn and to educate.

To understand the dynamic of the club and its subject matter, it is essential to identify these women. By examining the membership over the span of fourteen years, there seems to be three main connections between the members. The first connection

¹⁶ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1900-1901.

¹⁷ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1889-1890. This date is estimated from the fact that the official records of the Every Monday Club began in 1889. The mention of the earlier magazine club from two years before implies the club began in 1887.

was to the all-male Richmond College. Many of the members had fathers or husbands involved with the college. For example, Miss Daisy Winston was the daughter of C.H. Winston, the Chair of Natural Science at Richmond College. Miss Winston was a member of the club from 1900-1903 and the secretary from 1902-1903. She was also a Richmond public school teacher. Her father was an active member of the Richmond College community and is remembered as one of the most cherished faculty members of the school.¹⁸ Woodford Hackley described Winston as “one of the most learned and best loved men ever to serve on the Richmond College faculty.” In fact, Winston was an honorary member of the club in gratitude for the many talks he presented to the women. The endowment of honorary member was given to several husbands and fathers including Professor S.C. Mitchell, husband of Alice Virginia Broadas Mitchell. Alice Mitchell became a member only a few years after she was married, which suggests she learned of the club through her husband’s involvement as a guest lecturer. The involvement of Richmond College husbands and fathers in the club activities, as well as the other numerous connections, suggest that the women could have originally met through Richmond College circles.

The second connection many members shared was an association to the Women’s College. This institution, which began in 1853, was a Baptist school for the further education of women. The members of the board included H.A. Tupper, Dr. W.E.

¹⁸ Woodford Hackley. *Faces on the Wall* (Richmond: Virginia Baptist Historical Society, 1972), 120-22. This book gives brief autobiographical sketches of the lives of men and women whose portraits were displayed on campus in the 1950s.

Hatcher, and J.D. Crump.¹⁹ Each of these men had a daughter or wife in the club. There were alumnae of the Women's College in the Every Monday Club as well. An article in the Richmond newspaper named three women as successful graduates of the school: Miss Daisy Winston, Miss Mary Ella Thomas, and Miss Emma Whitfield.²⁰ It is also likely that Hatcher and Crump sent their daughters to the school since they were on the Board of Trustees. In 1900-1901, four members of the Women's College are mentioned within the meeting minutes as living at the school: Miss Laura Bacon, Miss Mary Anderson, Miss Mary Frazier, and Miss Sweeny. The 1900 census reveals that at least one member of the club, Orié Hatcher, also taught at the school.²¹ The membership of students and teachers reveals that the club was a resource for women at the college to discuss and further their education outside the classroom. Perhaps members welcomed students from the Woman's College because of their education, or many of the women were graduates and favored women from their alma mater. Regardless, there is a clear connection between the Women's College and the club.

The final common thread which members shared was a connection to the Baptist denomination. Although much of the information left in the written record discusses Richmond College, there were several wives of businessmen or lawyers in the club whose connection to the college was not strong.²² Mrs. Ellyson, Mrs. Benjamin Crump, Mrs. Garland Pollard and Mrs. Sye Pleasants all had husbands who were not faculty of

¹⁹ E.M "Memorial Room Preserves Records of Richmond Female Institute." *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, 20 June 1937. This article describes the history of the Women's College and its relationship Westhampton College.

²⁰ E.M "Female Institute."

²¹ U.S Manuscript Census, Population Schedule, 1900, Richmond, Virginia.

²² Richmond College also was affiliated with the Baptist faith.

Richmond College, but were prominent within Richmond society. Garland Pollard was a lawyer who dropped out of Richmond College after one year. He eventually graduated from Columbian University, the predecessor to George Washington University.²³ Pollard later became a professor and a Board Member of Richmond College and Governor of Virginia.²⁴ Pollard began as a lawyer working for the state and federal government. Garland Pollard had a later significant affiliation with the school, but not when his wife was a member of the club. However, Pollard was an active member of the Grove Avenue Baptist Church. Several of the women's fathers or husbands were ministers or theologians, including H.A. Tupper, George Hovey and William Ellyson.²⁵ Although the club appears to be comprised of members of the same denomination, the entire club did not belong to just one church. The First Baptist Church and the Grace Street Baptist Church were the most common churches for Every Monday Club members. The club was not affiliated with one church as a women's bible study; instead the women socialized in a circle comprised mostly of Baptists. Although discussion of religion does not seem to occur within the meetings, these women appear to be connected by a similar faith.

When the three aforementioned issues are intertwined with the club format, a character sketch of the average member becomes apparent. The club was comprised of

²³ Woodford Hackley. *Faces on the Wall*.

²⁴ Hackley. *Faces on the Wall*, 79. . . During the year of his wife's membership, Pollard was working as a public servant for Virginia which eventually led to his office as Virginia Attorney General in 1913.

²⁵ Virginia Biography (editor unknown). *Virginia: Rebirth of the Old Dominion*, Volume 5 (New York: Lewis Publishing, 1929), 202-3. It should be noted that Ellyson had a brother, James, who taught at Richmond College. Although James Ellyson participated heavily with the school, William Ellyson had little involvement. He attended Richmond as an undergraduate student, but he engulfed himself in the Baptist Mission Board after graduation. He has no recorded affiliation after his degree.

women who were all very similar in important ways. As almost entirely Baptist, the members shared a similar belief system, but these beliefs did not dominate their lives. Instead, the connections to Richmond College and the Woman's College reveal a familiarity with the pursuit of knowledge, which through their club activities, was clearly important to each of them.

These women's marital status is another important element in examining membership. A woman's position in society was illustrated by her marital position. The club included an interesting distribution of married and single women between 1889 and 1903; the ratio appears to be almost equal.²⁶ However there are some difficulties examining this data. The meeting minutes of the EMC refer to every married woman in her husband's name. For example, Nellie Boatwright was referred to as Mrs. F.W. Boatwright. Unmarried women are referred to by their own name, such as Miss Daisy Winston. Therefore, a single woman who was a member of the club for years may appear to resign when her name disappears and is replaced by a new married member's name in the records. Because some members did not leave a historic trail, it is difficult to discover if this shift in name happened. Only once in the first fourteen years was a marriage mentioned in the minutes. After the listing of Mrs. R.W. Craig in the 1897-1898 session, the secretary noted "formally Hartman," denoting the name change of Miss Lottie McGill Hartman, who joined the club for the 1894-1895 session.²⁷ Mrs. Craig

²⁶ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1889-1903. Of the recorded eighty members between these dates, thirty-four were single and forty-four were married. There was one obvious status change in the record.

²⁷ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1897-1898.

most likely was not the only member to wed, as many members were of marrying age.²⁸

The formal nature of the content of the minutes implies that there could have been more marriages, which were unrecorded. Personal matters never appear in the minutes.²⁹

The question of single members raises many research challenges. Since most single women lived with their fathers, researching census, newspapers, and other sources proves difficult. A woman who lived in a man's household was recorded under that man's name in the census. Since many of the women lived near each other, the only practical way to track some of the single women down was to look up a married woman who lived on their block. Since the 1900 census was compiled by locality rather than last name, searching through that area may uncover the households of single women. For example, Miss Orië Hatcher was found using this method. Miss Hatcher was an extraordinary member of the Every Monday Club. President of the club from 1892-1893, she resided with her father, William Hatcher, in 1900. Born in 1873, Miss Hatcher was twenty when she first presided over the Every Monday Club. The census also reveals that she "taught at Women's College."³⁰ That Orië Hatcher lived with William Hatcher confirms that she was the daughter of a Richmond College board member.

²⁸ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1889-1903; Hackley *Faces on the Wall*; Patrick G Wardell, *Virginia/West Virginia: Husbands and Wives*. (Bowie, Md: Heritage Books, 1994). Of the eight marriage dates found, the majority occurred between 1886 and 1891. These dates coincide with the beginning of the club. Additionally, information about the professors involved reveals that their daughters were between the ages of 18 and 27. It is also known that several members were students of the Women's College, which means they were most likely between 16 and 20 years of age.

²⁹ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1889-1903. Since the role of secretary changed almost every year, no specific minute format was established. The comment from one secretary reveals what she felt important, but it may not have been considered necessary information by other secretaries.

³⁰ U.S. Census, 1900. Although the method of the research is time consuming, it is important. Discovering the nature and lives of the single woman in the Every Monday Club can explain many elements of the group dynamic.

Orie Hatcher offers an interesting example of a single woman in the club because of the record left by her family. Her father was a prominent Baptist minister in Richmond. His son, Eldridge Hatcher wrote a detailed biography about his father which includes letters he wrote to his daughter that reveal the delicate position of a single woman in Richmond society at the turn of the twentieth century. Unfortunately, since the letters are from a father to a daughter and not the opposite, Orie's voice is never heard, though her personality is revealed. When Hatcher was in Washington D.C. for professional purposes he informed her:

There are three old maids, -sisters of Mrs. Dr----'s in the house and they are positively charming. I am about to decide that it is better for girls not to marry, but take care of themselves, and take care of their worthless old fathers as-well as a certain young Vassar woman of my acquaintance is doing.³¹

The humor in the comment is apparent. Orie, a graduate of Vassar, was known to take care of her father. He often made jokes about how her true calling was in making his lunches.

Neither of Orie's two sisters, Elizabeth and Edith, were members of the club, yet many of the members were related. There were several recorded mothers and daughters, sisters, and in-laws, such as: sisters-in-law Elizabeth Crump and Nannie Crump; Virginia Hill and her daughter Byrdie Hill; and Mrs. R.B. Lee and her daughters Juliette, Katherine, and Anna Mason. The reasons for the other two Hatcher daughters not participating may be revealed in a letter written to them by their father within the same year in which he seemed to push them to follow traditional paths: "Cultivate that quiet

³¹ Eldridge B. Hacher. *William E. Hatcher: A Biography*. (Richmond: W.C. Hill Printing, 1915), 394. Hatcher was attending a revival in the nation's capitol and was writing Orie about Washington.

and modest dignity without which no woman is ever truly respected. Be more anxious to say sensible than funny things. Men dread a funny woman and hate a critical woman.”³² Although these words of advice represent just the opposite of the previous set he gave his eldest daughter, they may indicate a father who knows his children interests. Orie’s educational pursuits made her an exceptional woman for her time. She held the same level of degree as her own father, a Ph.D.³³ Orie Hatcher’s unique education was honored at the Every Monday Club, as they elected her president and often encouraged her to give presentations.

Most members lived within several blocks of each other around Richmond College. The majority lived on Grace, Franklin, Lombardy and Third Streets. This close location was very practical for members who had no source of transportation and would have to walk to the meetings. When the club was allowed to expand to twenty-five members, more women from this neighborhood joined, as well as a few from nearby avenues. The proximity of members suggests this was a club created by friends and neighbors. Mrs. F.W. Boatwright, or Ellen “Nellie” Thomas Boatwright, the wife of the future president of Richmond College, Fredric Boatwright, joined the club in 1891. Mrs. Boatwright lived within a block of seven other members on Lombardy Street. Although most women were members of the Richmond College community, not all of the members near her were. Clearly membership was not limited to women living near the academic

³² Hatcher, *William E Hatcher*, 396.

³³ Hackley, *Faces on the Wall*, 50. Orie Hatcher received her Ph.D. in literature from the University of Chicago in 1903. Her dissertation was entitled *John Fletcher: A Study in Dramatic Method*.

community. Through the next few years Nellie resigned membership several times, but she managed to stay within high regard with the club's members, as she served as president for two terms, from 1899-1901. The 1900 census reveals that in the January of 1891, she gave birth to her son Fredric, which could explain her frequent absence over the next few years.³⁴ Although Nellie's membership was sporadic, her involvement brought in many of her neighbors through the years.

Perhaps the most remarkable discovery about the membership and location was its drastic expansion in 1900. This expansion was significant because only two years before, the sixteen members almost voted not to hold the Every Monday Club. It was cited at the first meeting of in the fall of 1898, that "many members had moved out of town and some find it inconvenient to come."³⁵ The women opted against temporarily closing, which was followed by a resurgence in membership in 1900. Because of various resignations throughout the year, the club included a total of 32 members in one year. It is unknown how many members participated in each meeting of the Every Monday Club that year, but the growing popularity indicates the club's purpose appealed to many women.

The membership expanded, yet the neighborhoods where the members resided did not. There was an even greater presence of women from Lombardy Street, where seven members resided, and Third Street where another six lived. Either more women moved with their families close to the colleges, or the club members began welcoming their longtime neighbors into the organization. Regardless of how women belonged to the

³⁴ U.S. Census, 1900.

³⁵ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1898.

club, the membership appeared controlled. The new members were familiar to the current members. Unlike other women's organizations at this point, such as the Woman's Club of Richmond, the EMC was not opening its doors to broader Richmond society. While other women's organizations advertised their achievements in the society pages of the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, the Every Monday Club opted not to advertise their interest in education even though they were aware of the option to submit to the newspaper. Since many of these women also belonged to other clubs, they knew the alternative.

Though the commonality of locality and religion remained consistent, many new women from a different academic background became involved. In 1900, six women who were involved with Virginia Union University, including Mrs. Malcolm Mac Vicar, the wife of the first official president of this university, joined the club.³⁶ Virginia Union University (VUU) was formed in 1865, with substantial support from The American Baptist Home Mission Society, with the aim to educate African-Americans.³⁷ Mrs. Mac Vicar most likely joined the club because of her acquaintance with Clara Hovey. George Hovey, Clara's husband, was a professor of Greek and Hebrew thought at the Theological Seminary when Clara first joined. In 1900, he became the vice president of VUU under Mac Vicar.³⁸ That Clara Hovey invited Mrs. Mac Vicar to join the club was

³⁶ Raymond P. Hylton, "University History," 20 October 2003
<http://www.vuu.edu/aboutvuu/history.htm>.

³⁷ Darlene Hine, ed. *African Americans: A Concise History*. (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education, 2004), 201.

³⁸ Allyn B. Tunis, *Press Reference Book of Prominent Virginians*. (Richmond: Virginia Newspaper Writers Association, 1916), 67.

certainly probable. Perhaps the other five new members were wives, daughters of professors, or even students. It should be noted that the Hovey's and the Mac Vicars were white, as the other women from VUU may have been.

The membership of these women did not necessarily mean that the members were forward-thinking on the matters of race. The interest in the education of African-Americans could have been entirely paternalistic.³⁹ Upper-class whites, including academics, often viewed blacks as intellectual inferiors needing guidance. Education was seen as a means to teach survival, not enrichment of the mind. Although these women could have their own personal paternalistic feelings toward African-Americans, VUU's connection to the American Baptist Home Missionary Society implies a slightly different attitude. The Baptist society was known to follow the philosophy of W.E.B. Du Bois and Henry Morehouse, who both believed the education of blacks should be used to expand the mind. They felt educating blacks and encouraging independent thought would help progress.⁴⁰ Because of the impersonal nature of the meeting minutes, the views of individual members remain unknown. Without an explicit documentation of the how the members viewed African-Americans, the interpretation of these new women must be left to the fact that they were willing to bring a new element into the club. If anything, this new element was the incorporation of a new academic institution, with which other members were less familiar.

³⁹ Hine, *African Americans*, 254-257. Hine discusses the issues of Social Darwinism connected to the education of blacks. The Hampton Normal and Agriculture Institute of Virginia is mentioned as an example of teaching blacks to follow white desires. Independent thinking and participation in politics was discouraged.

⁴⁰ Hine, *African Americans*, 259.

This diverse assembly of educated women went through three phases from 1889 to 1903. In the early years of the club, members would choose topics or books that were relatively eclectic, from French feudalism to Shakespeare, Greek history, and astronomy. From 1889-1892, the women were particularly fascinated with history and the unfamiliar. In this period, the members looked at book reviews and magazine articles to explain history and literature. Although the magazines were modern, their content focused on classic topics. Despite there not being a detailed record of subjects from these years, a trend does appear. The women discussed traditional topics such as the theories of Greek history and William Keats' poetry.

As their knowledge about the world expanded, the women began to look closely at their own heritage. From 1893-1889, the members mingled contemporary issues with larger classical theories. The traditional interests, such as the Thirty Years War, Shakespeare, and the Italian School of Painters, were discussed at a majority of the meetings. Yet the women began to have occasional meetings which explored Richmond history. On April 11, 1893 the women invited Dr. J.C. Hiden to discuss his days at the Virginia Military Institute and his teacher, General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson.⁴¹ The women were fascinated that Dr. Hiden described Jackson as a silent man,

who could fight better than he can teach, for no one ever learned anything from his teachings. He had great devoutness, extraordinary integrity, and military genius but withal was a fanatic.⁴²

⁴¹ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1892-1893. Rev. J.C. Hiden was a minister at the Grove Avenue Baptist Church.

⁴² Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1892-1893.

This meeting's record indicates that the members began to address life in Virginia for the prior seventy years. Hiden's intended topic was to discuss the course of his education starting with his mother to the completion of his doctorate at the University of Virginia. Although the lecture is entitled "My Teachers," Stonewall Jackson seemed to be of most interest to the women in the club. There was no discussion of opinion or personal interest associated with Jackson, but the secretary recorded notes of the lecture illustrating the attention paid to Jackson. This interest would have not been expressed in a meeting in New England, which reveals a difference about the opinions of these Virginians. This lecture was unique for the year, but over the course of the next four years, more and more guest speakers lectured the women on contemporary people and issues.

The two other topics of interest during this period were evolution and the 1893 World's Fair. Evolution was a controversial issue at the turn of the century, especially amongst the academic and religious members of society. The Every Monday Club's discussion of evolution could provide great insight to the character of the Club, but unfortunately no commentary about it is included in the records. The insertion of the 1893 World's Fair in the meeting minutes is important because the Fair's purpose was to significantly include women in the international event.⁴³ There were exhibits of women's contributions to society and an entire building dedicated to women. It is unknown if any member attended the exposition, or if the club just read the news coverage of the Chicago event. The inclusion of a contemporary event in the curriculum

⁴³ Treadway, *Women of Mark*, 13.

of the club suggests the women were beginning to change the direction of their interest towards complex modern issues.

The final transition occurred in 1900, when the choice of topics moved into a contemporary context. The members gradually began to address issues closer to their lives, such as education and the South. The first step was discussing southern writers from the past century. From 1900-1901, the members presented information on numerous poets including James Lane Allen of Kentucky, William Gilmore Simms of South Carolina, Edgar Allen Poe of Richmond and Baltimore, George Washington Cable of Louisiana, and Margaret Junkin Preston of Lexington, Virginia.⁴⁴ Although some of the southern authors did not write about modern politics or religion, James Lane Allen did. In fact, the year they discussed his writings he released a contentiously liberal book, *The Reign of Law*, about Darwinism and religion.⁴⁵ The members did not record the content of the specific discussion on Allen, but the simultaneous release of the book combined with their past interest in evolution, implies these women conversed about the new controversial literature.

Another controversial writer the Every Monday Club examined in 1900, George Washington Cable, was a New Orleans author who critiqued southern life. Although he wrote fiction, he made a name for himself by examining the relationship between southern whites and blacks. Cable disliked racial injustices, yet he maintained a desire

⁴⁴ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1900-1901.

⁴⁵ William K. Bottorff, *James Lane Allen*. (New Haven, Conn: Twayne Publishers, 1964), 72-73. Allen's book was considered highly controversial with religious conservatives.

for southern romance in his fiction.⁴⁶ Cable revealed the precarious nature of dealing with racism, but retained southern pride. As with the discussion of Allen, the women did not leave any commentary on the subject. The record only revealed that Cable was a topic at a meeting. Whether these women were able to analyze Cable's powerful messages will never be known. It is important, however, that these two male writers were selected as subjects of meetings, given their controversial natures.

At the same time they seemed to be stretching themselves and inviting controversial topics, the members also demonstrated a more accepting message. Regardless, there was a new attention paid to the culture and ideas of the South. On March 25, 1902, the poet James Barron Hope was a guest at the club meeting. Hope, a friend of Dr. Julian Chandler and a frequent guest speaker for the Every Monday Club, read his poem "Ode on the Unveiling of the Lee Monument."⁴⁷ The Robert E. Lee Monument had been built only ten years before this meeting and most of the members lived on Lombardy and Franklin Streets relatively close to the monument. Along with the presented poem, Hope, described as "one of Virginia's noble sons and favorite poet," wrote poetry for the commencement of The College of William and Mary and the University of Virginia.⁴⁸ Hope was not as controversial as George Washington Cable or William Gillmore Simms, but he was the local hero they could access and admire. Hope was similar to the other writers because he enforced a sense of pride, and especially

⁴⁶ Louis D. Rubin Jr, *George W. Cable: The Life and Times of a Southern Heretic*. (New York: Western Publishing, 1969), 108. Cable was considered the most severe critic of slavery and racism in southern literary circles.

⁴⁷ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1901-1902.

⁴⁸ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1901- 1902.

Virginian pride. The women were beginning to look outside their windows and examine the neighborhood around them.

The most remarkable change occurred in 1903, when the club decided to change the topic format and revert back to the older method of discussing magazine articles. Two issues seem to take prominence: education and the position of African-Americans in society. Although the theme for the year was Shakespeare, the second year the club chose this topic, the women seem to be distracted and the notes of each meeting reveal various non-classical topics. For example, on December 8, 1902, the women discussed articles in the magazine, *The Outlook*, and the following week they retreated to the Richmond College laboratory to listen to a talk on illuminating gas by Dr. Rufus Hunter. In January 1903, Dr. Albert Bushnell discussed the valleys of southern Switzerland, whereas by March 1903 these lectures of foreign history, geography, and culture were abandoned completely for discussion of local issues.⁴⁹ This disorganization is not acknowledged in the notes; instead the secretary reveals more about the dynamic nature of the meetings.

On March 9, 1903, one member reviewed articles such as "The Anti-Lottery Decision," "Child Labor Legislation in the US," "The Beecher Memorial," and "The Disadvantages of Education." Although the secretary did not include information about the week's discussion, the titles of these articles reveal a real concern with the political issues of the day. The Progressive Era issues being discussed at the national level were seeping into the Every Monday Club meeting minutes. Due to the race and class of these

⁴⁹ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1901-1902.

women, this change is not surprising. These women had begun to focus their search for education in a contemporary context.

This change in direction to focus on education led to political action. The following week, the women took a cohesive move in response to an idea recorded by the secretary:

On motion made and carried the secretary was instructed to write Mr. Wickham and express the desire of the Club that he do all in his power to secure the passage of the School Teacher's Pension Bill. It was decided to invite some of the members of the Educational Conference to appear before the Club during their stay in Richmond.⁵⁰

The desire to express their support for a bill in a public forum reveals a drastic change in the nature of the club. The reason for taking this action might not have seemed revolutionary for this group of women. Through the years many of them were teachers, or mothers of children in school, or wives of teachers. Besides the club's interest in self-education, the support of teachers was essential to their actual lives. Radical or not, this action created a landslide of activity for the next few weeks.

On the same day, a discussion of Dr. J. L. M. Curry's life created a stir. Curry, a native of Georgia, served in the Mexican-American war and later as a Confederate leader in the Civil War. After the war, Curry's politics changed and he concentrated his interests in law, history, and education. Moreover, Curry served briefly as professor at Richmond College as well as a member of the Board of Trustees.⁵¹ Towards the end of his career Curry became concerned with public education. He wrote and spoke about the

⁵⁰ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1902-1903.

⁵¹ Hackley, *Faces on the Wall*, 21-23.

importance of all Americans having access to education. Most importantly, Curry believed in the education of blacks. In October of 1883, Curry expressed his belief:

Slavery is but half abolished, emancipation is but half completed, while millions of freemen with votes in their hands are left without education. Justice to them, the welfare of the states in which they live, the safety of the whole Republic, the dignity of the elective franchise, alike demand that the strong remaining bonds of ignorance shall be unloosed and broken, and the minds as well as the bodies of the emancipated go free!⁵²

Curry's dramatic oratory skills made him an ideal candidate for convincing people that education of blacks was a valid cause. His national appeal, religious affiliation, and local association made him a pride of many Richmond Baptists. The discussion of his life at the March 16th meeting created quite a stir as the secretary remarked that "the negro question provoked much comment."⁵³ This marked the first time the secretary ever mentioned the issue of African-Americans. Previously, any discussion of blacks was only implied by the subject matter. The women would discuss a controversial author or public figure, but never mention the person's association with black/white politics. Although there were six women who lived on the campus of a school created for the education of freed blacks, this was the first mention of blacks as participants in the world around these Richmond women. In the context of education, these women were beginning to address complicated issues that were prevalent in turn-of-the-century Richmond.

⁵² Jessie Pearl Rice, *J.L.M. Curry: Southerner, Statesmen, and Educator*. (New York: Kings Crown Press, 1949), 118. Curry made this speech to the Peabody Board which targeted a grants to educate African-Americans.

⁵³ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1902-1903.

The following week they continued to discuss education: “how the public school system in Virginia came about, old and new theology and Dr. Curry’s Normal school system.”⁵⁴ These women placed Curry’s theories in the context of a history and precedent. They analyzed the information they learned. For the rest of the year, they explored the topic of education and put aside the assigned schedule. They were inspired.

The Every Monday Club continued for another century of meetings and discussions, but this early period marks a unique moment in the lives of a particular group of Richmond women. The women participating in the dialogue were members of the academic elite of the city. The post-Reconstruction era created an awkward moment for white Southern women. Not quite ready for the suffrage movement, but containing the knowledge and access to produce change, these particular women used the Every Monday Club as a method of expressing their interests. The club began in 1889 as a magazine group for a few educated women, but because more women were participating in higher education by 1903, the membership had doubled.⁵⁵ Kleinberg supplies statistics that suggest the rate of women in college doubled between 1870 and 1920 at a steady rate. To correlate with this national trend, the Women’s College at Richmond was also

⁵⁴ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1902-1903. Curry’s “Normal School” was a system set up in which teachers were educated at a university or college and then were hired by the public school system. Curry concentrated his interest in the education of blacks. The Peabody Fund gave money to southern universities and colleges to educate black teachers. These teachers would then educate black children. Curry’s theory was that this would give African-Americans eventual independence and empowerment. See Rice, *J.L.M. Curry*, 88-103

⁵⁵ Kleinberg, *Women in the United States*, 156-160.

growing, which created more interested and potential members.⁵⁶ During its first fourteen years, the club gradually progressed from one curious about issues unknown to its members to one whose members felt obligated to get involved with the education of those in their community and not simply their own education. The privilege and access to education of these women were unique. The expansion in membership proved their interest in knowledge was not.

There may never be an answer to the club's stance on race relations. Because the record leaves an objective description of meetings, no opinion is ever revealed. What can be taken from the membership are several points. The involvement of members from the VUU community, in conjunction with discussion of a diverse array of writers and critics, reveal the members of the club most likely had diverse viewpoints. Even though most participated in the Baptist church, that does not necessarily designate a unified opinion. In fact, the vague record and inaction by the club on race issues most likely point to a splintered voice. Ironically, their quest for knowledge with unity may have been fractured with the discussion of the relationship between whites and African-Americans.

The legacy of the Every Monday Club helps scholars analyze how interests of women living in Richmond, Virginia changed. How these women moved from wanting to learn about classical topics to an interest in the world that was affecting their lives can reveal the slow change within American society of women's education at the turn of the century. The members of the Every Monday Club expanded their knowledge through a

⁵⁶ Reuben Alley. *History of the University of Richmond 1830-1971*. (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1977), 116-118. In 1901, the movement towards accepting women into Richmond College became more official. President Fredrick Boatwright made a consistent effort over the next few years to make the education of women a part of Richmond College. The Women's Institute was being incorporated into the fabric of the College.

comfortable discussion format. Unlike the more vocal reform movements occurring nationally such as the settlement house movement and child reform, the Every Monday Club was only at a point where they could discuss these issues.⁵⁷ After over a decade of discussions, the group began slowly to focus their interest on education. Through their strong base of respect for each other and for knowledge earned, the group revealed a determination to reach knowledge through “unity.”

⁵⁷ Kleinberg, *Women in the United States*, 159-161.

CHAPTER TWO:

Education, 1903-1912

Mrs. Eva Baker Gwathmey appeared to be an unlikely candidate for the Every Monday Club, but her death had the largest impact on the club in its initial eighteen years. Born in South Carolina, Gwathmey was not a native of Richmond. She also bore the unique characteristic of being Catholic. She joined the club in 1905, swiftly won the favor of members, and was elected president of the 1907-1908 session. The 1907-1908 session of the Every Monday Club began as all others had. The women discussed their summers and projects for the year. The topic chosen was a year of current events, as change in the world required the club's full attention. The members discussed women's suffrage in England as well as the need for and safety of playgrounds in Richmond.

The only peculiarity of Gwathmey's presidency was her absence from the club the first week of January. Although presidents of the club did miss meetings once in awhile, this was the first one after Christmas. The meeting minutes recorded that January 6, 1908, "Mrs. Gwathmey and Mrs. Craig were both absent from sickness and Mrs. Stratford presided."⁵⁸ Although Mrs. Craig recovered, Mrs. Gwathmey did not and she died on January 10th. Although past deaths of club members were noted with a line or two resolving to write a sympathy card to family, this death impacted the club more.

⁵⁸ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1907-1908

The club dedicated the January 13th meeting to their greatly missed president. A committee was gathered to write a tribute which would be sent to the newspaper and the family. Although the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* did not publish the remarks, her obituary reveals the same sentiment of the club.

Mrs. Gwathmey was a native of South Carolina, and possessed all the warmth of heart and nobility of soul characteristic of the sterling, gentle southern woman of the highest type...[She] was noted for her strong intellect, refined culture, and broad catholic spirit of love that embraced in tenderness all who suffered or were heavily laden.⁵⁹

Her obituary also describes how Gwathmey was introduced to this circle of women; she had attended the Woman's College of Richmond. The significance of Gwathmey's death marks a new period in the Every Monday Club history. The club had developed into a large, established social circle. The growth of the club created a need to establish a greater purpose than absorbing an education. The EMC became more public in the nature of their club and their purpose. This publicity was a distinct change in the club, as was the death of Gwathmey.

The obligation felt to mourn their president dutifully indicates an adjusted attitude. Not only was Gwathmey an important person in her own right, but the fact that she was the president of their club made her worthy of a proper mourning. Gwathmey was not a longtime member of the club. She had only attended meetings for two and half years, yet the tribute to her required a committee to create words of grace to describe her

⁵⁹ "In Memoriam- Gwathmey" *Richmond Times Dispatch* 12 January 1908. The brief obituary highlights Mrs. Eva Baker Gwathmey's dedication to her church as the superintendent of the infant class, which may refer to running its nursery program. Although Gwathmey's religion does not appear in the Meeting Minutes, it was noted in her obituary. That was at a time when Catholic participation in Richmond was growing as seen by the building of the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, four blocks from the Richmond College campus.

impact on the club. Although the tribute is beautifully written, it does not describe any aspects of Gwathmey that makes her different than any other member:

A woman of lofty character of fine intellect, of splendid social gifts having been appreciation of the aesthetic side of life and ardent love for the beautiful in all its forms, and herself possessing in rare degree grace and beauty of person and charm of manner, she was indeed an ornament to the Every Monday Club.⁶⁰

Although the words are sweet and kind, the committee described every woman in the club and not just this individual. The women were projecting their concept of a perfect EMC member on one woman. A persona of the club had been created through the tribute to Mrs. Eva Baker Gwathmey. Additionally, the last line reveals a conception of the importance of the EMC documentation. The tribute to the president is placed in the meeting minutes: “We direct our Secretary to spread the resolutions upon our minutes and to inscribe to her memory a page in the records of the Every Monday Club.” Not only are their words important, but the women were valuing their club and members as participants in history. This marks a change in the nature of the club; from 1903-1911 the groups began to see themselves as an important and cohesive participant in society.

Mrs. Eva Baker Gwathmey’s death and the club’s reaction represented a significant new phase within the membership that developed over several years. The membership, topics, and interaction with Richmond life all indicate a new attitude to the importance of the club. The Every Monday Club was no longer a small, unknown group discussing topics of personal interest. By the 1903-1904 session the club had begun to

⁶⁰ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1907-1908. The committee that wrote this passage included Mrs. R.C. Gaines, Mrs. A.L. Stratford, and Mrs. S.C. Mitchell.

take their position in Richmond society very seriously. The women understood that their interests and efforts were not only important to their personal lives, but also to the people who were observing from the outside. The members created a clear, conscious identity which was constructed into two realms: club members and non-club members. It helped carve an understanding of what their purpose was and what was needed to continue. The past thirteen years had been used for shaping and molding the identity; the next ten years was an age of strengthening that identity.

The Every Monday Club maintained a strong membership base after 1900. The club fluctuated between twenty to twenty-five members. In fact, the status of membership was a logistical discussion at many meetings between 1903 until 1907. In the beginning, potential members were nominated by a present member of the club. The club then voted on the nominee. Years of meeting minutes reveals the desire for change, since every nominee voted on was awarded membership. When the club began, a precise method of membership induction was not necessary. The club was originally thirteen women who were very familiar with each other; by 1906 nearly one hundred women had become members. The broad local appeal of the club required the members to become more exclusive. The first effort to curb this membership melee was at the start of the 1904-1905 year. At the October 17th meeting,

The by-laws were read and the advisability of revising them was discussed particularly of reviewing bylaw X which relates to the admission of new member[s]. The general opinion is that there ought to be more rigid laws about the admission of new members and various suggestions were made among others that we have a

nominating committee to pass on the names before putting them before the Club...it was decided to think the matter over a week and submit it at the next meeting.⁶¹

The curious use of the word "rigid" implies that some members were displeased with how easily members were being admitted into the club. Could there have been a disappointment with the level of interest the new club members took in the work the club required? Perhaps the type of women newer members were nominating was not acceptable. Regardless of the meaning behind the seeking of new methods, there was a desire to control the membership more precisely.

At the next meeting Mrs. Gardner added a new motion that not only should the committee take nominations, but also it would also have a waiting list. The nominating committee would require members to bring the nomination to the committee in private. The suggested member would be added to a list and would be presented to the club as a whole if she was an acceptable nominee. This method would eliminate members deciding against a prospective member in front of her sponsor, a polite, but practical, solution to limiting membership. However, this was not the final alteration of the by-law. In 1911, the election of the new member would occur by private ballot.⁶² Previously, members were to vote in front of other members. Although the nomination occurred in private, many of these women were nominating friends and family. Often, it was obvious which

⁶¹ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1904-1905. By-law X formally stated that a new member only needed to be nominated by a member of the club. These by-laws were created at the creation of the club in 1889. Previously, the only amending was in accordance with changing the time of day members met.

⁶² Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1911-1912. The motion was first put before the club by Miss Sublett and Mrs. Clarke December 5th, deferred December 9th, and decided January 4th.

member wanted the new member to join. To avoid this, the EMC adopted the system of a secret ballot. Members no longer had to worry if they offended another member.

A few weeks after the first major by-law change, there was an attempt to loosen the attendance by-law, which stated “an unexplained absence of three consecutive weeks shall be equivalent to a resignation, or to repeat it and place it before the club as a suggestion.”⁶³ It seemed some of the members wanted to relax the rule, which was a remarkable change from the original club interest. Occasionally, meeting minutes would remark on a member’s illness detaining them from the club, but there was no mention of a rampant lack of attendance by the secretary in 1903 or 1904. However, when the members began to have quite a different attitude about the absences, it became a problem. It was requested in 1911 to review this motion again. The rule was slightly altered: “If a member has been absent for three consecutive meetings she is requested to report the same to the president and be excused.”⁶⁴ Instead of bringing herself before the club, she only needed to meet with the president to discuss her membership status. Although this statement seems to be more relaxed, it was more serious. Issues in private can be discussed more in depth than in a club meeting. With the rise of interest in joining the club, the members desired to discourage women who did not think they would be able to attend the club meetings. Unlike the Women’s Club of Richmond and clubs of

⁶³ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1904-1905. On November 21st, the secretary wrote, “There was a discussion as to whether it would be best to retain the by-law which says that an unexplained absence of three consecutive weeks shall be equivalent to a resignation, or to repeat it and place it before the club as a suggestion.” The decision was deferred until the next meeting on November 28th where on, “a motion of Mrs. Stratford it was decided to retain it as a by-law.”

⁶⁴ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1911-1912. November 21st the motion was nominated by Mrs. Clarke, one of the only original members left in the EMC. The group decided to set it aside for a week, and the motion was carried November 28th.

philanthropy, the Every Monday Club required weekly attendance because members were interested in expanding knowledge through interesting papers and vivid discussion. The Every Monday Club was not a social club. A member missed more than where the next meeting would be; the point of the entire afternoon was to gain education on matters. Absence from meetings only undermined this purpose.

This new depth of interest and membership, reversed the diversity in membership that had been growing in previous years. More than ever, members were connected to Richmond College and the Women's College. Miss Julia Ryland, the daughter of Richmond College professor and Virginia Baptist Historical Society founder Charles H. Ryland, became a member in the fall of 1903. Ryland had known members of the Club for sometime. In *History at the University of Richmond*, W. Harrison Daniel reveals that Julia Ryland was one of the first students, let alone women, to take history classes at the University of Richmond. The history department started as an experiment. S.C. Mitchell taught one course in 1895. Daniel writes "that 'a fair number' attended this experimental history course...among the students were some townspeople and 'certain ladies.'"⁶⁵ Other members who attended this course were Miss Ella Thomas, Miss Caroline Gwathmey Holladay, Orié Hatcher's sister Elizabeth, and Alice Virginia Broadas Mitchell, the wife of S.C. Mitchell.⁶⁶ These women were members ten years before Ryland joined the

⁶⁵ Daniel, *History*, 17. Daniel refers to the beginning of history courses at the college as an experimental tract initiated by S.C. Mitchell, a Latin professor who had just arrived at Richmond College from the University of Virginia. Mitchell went to F.W. Boatwright and asked if this would be acceptable. It was approved as a non-credit course taken on a volunteer basis. The goal of the course was to "bring together 'the glimpses of history' which students encountered in the language courses and present them as a whole." (16)

⁶⁶ Daniel, *History*, 17. Ironically, Harrison comments that Alice Mitchell probably only attended the class to support her husband. Mrs. Mitchell was a member of the Every Monday Club for the majority

Every Monday Club, but it reveals many of the members had interaction long before they entered the club. Interestingly, Richmond College did not admit women to take classes until three years later.⁶⁷ Not only were these women meeting in classrooms, at Every Monday Club meetings, and socially, but they were seen as exceptions to the general rule. They were allowed into classrooms in which women were previously forbidden. The involvement of the same women in the Every Monday Club and the beginning of women at Richmond College reveals a specific pursuit of knowledge.

Upon examination of the member list, some newer members of the Every Monday Club do not appear to be directly connected to Richmond College. Mrs. George W. McDaniel, who joined the club in 1909, represented such a woman. She was married to the pastor at First Baptist Church in Richmond. McDaniel, in fact, did have a connection although a more subtle one. At the time Mrs. McDaniel joined the club, her husband was elected Chairman of the Board in charge of securing a new property for Richmond College. His positive and optimistic review of the donation of a farm in Westhampton aided the expedient move of the college over the next few years. In fact, due to George McDaniel's urging the purchase of the Westhampton property, two members of the Every Monday Club, Mrs. R.E. Gaines and Mrs. J.C. Metcalf, and their families, were among the first to live on the property five years later.

The connections between the women weave themselves throughout Richmond society, and more specifically college life. Other women who were connected to

of the ten years she lived in Richmond. It is more likely that she encouraged the other women to attend the class, not the other way around.

⁶⁷ Daniel, *History*, 17. It should be noted that women were not admitted as fulltime students in 1899, but they were allowed to take courses. At this time, women attended the Woman's College.

Richmond College during this period were the wife of history professor J.A.C. Chandler; president of the club Mrs. R.E. Gaines, who was also wife of a history professor who was later the Director of Graduate Studies at the college; Miss Caroline Gwathmey Holladay who was the daughter of a Richmond College graduate and influential judge, the Honorable Addison Lewis Holladay, and Mrs. William Smith, who was married to a history professor at the school. Developments of the club during this period emphasize that the men of Richmond College were not the only ones interested in education, as their daughters and wives were pursuing knowledge weekly as well.

Although the growth in membership from the Richmond College community is impressive and important, this may have created some membership diversity problems in the Every Monday Club. Fewer of the new members appear to come from different circles of Richmond society. Several of the members with Virginia Union University connections resigned from the club within four years of joining; by the end of the 1904 session only one woman remained. Mrs. J.M.P King, or Cornelia King, remained active in the club for the next couple of years. She hosted the club at VUU at least twice, as well as wrote several papers. Although she participated in the weekly activities of the club more than most members, she tried to resign several times from 1905-1911. Interestingly, each time she resigned the club wrote her a letter to rescind her resignation. Finally, in 1911, King permanently left the club.⁶⁸ There could be several reasons for the VUU members leaving the Every Monday Club. The heavy concentration of Richmond College

⁶⁸ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1902-1904, 1910-1911. The club met at King's home at VUU November 16, 1903, and was given a tour of the University. The EMC received a lecture by a chemistry professor by the name of Steer. Two more possible visits occurred over the years. She also led lectures on several occasions. Certainly not the member who participated the most, Mrs. King did manage to leave her mark on the club.

affiliates could have alienated the women who resided at a different university, or the VUU women could simply have had trouble traveling to meetings or had other obligations. Whatever the reason, the promising VUU connection was completely severed by 1911.

The question of limiting of types of members directly correlates the dramatic expansion of members only a few years earlier. Shortly after members from across the community had been admitted, a concern for membership procedure occurred. Only two years after the club hit twenty-five members, Mrs. Clarke suggested finding a more rigorous method of inducting members. By 1900, the club's popularity had spread and the members were extremely excited. After three years, the women realized that the success may have a downfall. Whether the influx of Richmond College members and departure of Virginia Union University members was in direct response to the tightening of admission procedure, the meeting minutes leave no record. However, the connection is probable

Another change in the membership was the admission of more married women. In 1906, only four out of twenty-five members were unmarried. This marked a dramatic change from 1892 when thirteen of the members were single – almost half the group. Unfortunately, due to difficulties of finding women in the census records and other documentation, it is unknown if the average age of the club member was older in 1906. Some members of the Every Monday Club had families who moved often due to professorship positions at other colleges. These women are hard to trace. Although an older membership could explain the change in type of members, many of the unmarried

women in the early years were now older, such as Miss Daisy Winston, Miss Emma Whitfield, and Miss Orié Hatcher.

A final interesting aspect of the membership during the 1902-1911 years is the lack of change in the leadership. Previously, new presidents and officers were picked each year. This dramatically changed as a hierarchy developed within the club. Mrs. Benjamin Crump was not only president of the Every Monday Club from 1902-1904, but she was also Vice President from 1906-1907, and Secretary from 1908-1909. Mrs. J. Booten Hill was Vice President from 1903-1904, 1905-1906, 1908-1910. Mrs. R.W. Craig was perceived as an excellent Secretary, as the club elected her from 1906-1908 and 1909-1911. Mrs. C.S. Gardner was President from 1906-1907. She was elected for the 1907-1908 session, but unfortunately moved out of town, so Mrs. Basil Gwathmey was elected. When others were not presiding as Secretary and Vice President, Miss Ruth Sublett took the positions for a total of six years.⁶⁹ The business and leadership of the Every Monday Club, which originally circulated among thirteen women, was now held the majority of the time by four women.⁷⁰ Not only was each of these members re-elected often, but they were perceived as suitable for any leadership positions. Additionally, all women mentioned served on committees for programs, memberships, bird conservation, and, ironically, elections. Several of the women joined the club during the first few years of the Every Monday Club. Perhaps their experience and leadership over the years had solidified their positions as officers. Importantly, the perception of these women as

⁶⁹ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes 1903-1912. Data was collected as announced at the commencement of the session each Fall.

⁷⁰ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes 1903-1912. Mrs. Gwathmey and Mrs. Gardner are not included in this estimate because they did not serve more than one year. The example was used to reveal the desire to re-elect Mrs. Gardner.

leaders strengthens the club's confidence of their identity. Not only did the club see itself as a consistent, long-lasting institution, but there was a definite perception of what type of women will lead them to their future.

Although membership can reveal many issues related to the club, members' topic choices provide even more valuable perception. The topics chosen for the early portion of the first decade of the twentieth century seem to be on track with the direction the women were previously going. The women moved away from discussing Roman and Shakespearean times, instead concentrating on studying current events, as well as the cultures of countries involved in current events such as Russia, Germany, and Japan. Between 1904-1911, these three countries were experiencing political and military unrest, which later were contributing factors to World War I. The secretary refers to discussion of these problems in the meeting minutes of November 9th: "Mrs. Crump being the leader for the evening, she gave a list of items of great interest including...the existing relations between Russia and China."⁷¹ The women were not only paying close attention to the world news, but by incorporating the world news into their private meetings in Richmond they became participants in an international conversation. The women were seeing their discussions as important contributions to analysis of world occurrences.

During the first ten years of the twentieth century the issue of discussing current events was a popular one for the Every Monday Club. Almost every other week, the club

⁷¹ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1903-1904. This was discussed during a Current Events year. Although the year's program was not on Japan or Russia, these countries were mentioned three times and nominated for the following year's discussion. German history was discussed in 1908.

puts aside the discussion of their yearly theme for current events. In fact the years 1905-1907 were specifically designated for Current Events with the topics ranging from the dilemma of the endangerment of birds to Catholic students at Cornell.⁷² These meetings read like the daily newspaper. On March 18, 1905, the members of the Every Monday Club discussed,

The Presidents Inauguration, the return of southern Battle Flags, the present condition as an inmate of an old ladies house in NY, of Ms. Virginia Henry Beasley the only surviving grandchild of Patrick Henry, the consolidation of railroad systems of the US, Compulsory life insurance in Europe, and the recent appropriation of \$80,000 made by South Carolina legislature to the Jamestown Exposition.⁷³

These items were listed after the discussion of evangelism and “the Negro Question.” Race and religion were rarely discussed in previous years, probably because these topics were weighty and controversial. Some of the subjects, such as the inauguration and “the Negro Question,” would have been discussed in newspapers and social circles across Richmond. The interest in these areas would not have been limited to the region. These were issues that all Americans were discussing. The significance of this topic listing is that the women were continuing their dialogue on being Americans. They were reviewing issues that were affecting people all over the country, not just their hometown. This theme began around 1900, and continued through the first decade of the twentieth century. The frequency of discussing national issues intensified as the international realm became more unstable. The discussion of the German state and Russian instability had

⁷² Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1903-1904. Catholic students were discussed in the December 7th meeting with no comment. However, the endangerment of birds in Virginia created quite a stir.

⁷³ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1904-1905.

affected the discussion of more local politics. Perhaps the controversy abroad had alerted the women to their educational responsibilities on the national front.

The intense interest for national concerns created a stronger interest in politics. The women took a great interest in local, presidential, and, surprisingly, New York politics. The frequent mentioning of political issues in New York is an interesting one. In the decade before, the Every Monday Club usually referred to Virginia political issues, if any, in the meeting minutes. They were uninterested in the politics that did not affect them. As time progressed and the women showed more interest in politics, their conversations expanded to include those of different states and cities. The women rarely refer to exactly who or what they are discussing, but they were interested in the issues surrounding the mayor of New York. The women of the Every Monday Club seemed fascinated by Mayor George Brinton McClellan whose father, the Union general, had run for President against Abraham Lincoln.⁷⁴ Mayor McClellan began his political career at a young age, becoming a congressman by twenty-seven. Why this election intrigued the Every Monday Club is not stated. Perhaps some of the issues that were occurring in New York, like labor laws and immigration, were seen as problems they could relate to Richmond.

In the period between the start of the 1903 season and the middle of 1905, the United States President and the election were mentioned ten times.⁷⁵ The group went from never discussing national politics to mentioning the President at the majority of the

⁷⁴ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1903-1905. McClellan and his election was mentioned November 2, 1903 and January 11, 1904,

⁷⁵ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1903-1905. The president was mentioned in 1903, October 6. In 1904, he was mentioned January 11, March 7, October 24, November 7 and 14. In 1905 Roosevelt was mentioned on January 16, February 20, March 18, and April 17.

meetings. Most often the secretary noted under Current Events that the presidential election was discussed. In 1905, the upcoming exposition to honor Jamestown was of great interest to the Every Monday Club. A local event that was of national importance flooded the meeting minutes. Besides regular mentioning of the exhibition or Roosevelt, the two intersect on January 16th and February 20th. On the former, the minutes mention "Roosevelt's attitude towards the Jamestown Exhibition."⁷⁶ The second mentioning seems to place Roosevelt's interest in the Jamestown Exhibition into a context of other issues at the time: "The President's desire to propitiate the South as induced by his recent utterances about the negro, his appointment of southerners and his approval of Jamestown appropriation and the Proposed canal."⁷⁷ This statement most likely refers to a speech he made at the Republican club the week before this meeting.⁷⁸ Roosevelt's speech was directed towards what the South needed to do to improve the situation of racial conflicts in their region. Roosevelt proposed a gradual agreement and assistance from neighbors, rather than aid from the northern region of the country. Roosevelt's view of the South and his celebration of the Jamestown Expedition reveal a careful politicking around Southern issues.

The women were greatly interested in national politics and Roosevelt's view of their region, realizing that what occurred on the national spectrum would affect their home life. By connecting the greater issues of the country and the President, they would

⁷⁶ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1904-1905.

⁷⁷ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1904-1905.

⁷⁸ "The Negro and His Neighbor", *New York Times*, 14 February 1905. He declared, "The best white men of the South should have frequent conferences with the best colored men, where in frank, earnest and sympathetic discussion they might understand each other better." By involving the leaders of the South in this problem, he allows the national government to avoid the race relations problems in the South.

understand how the country viewed the South, and more importantly Virginia. The great attention towards the Jamestown Expedition was an awareness of the dialogue Virginia carried with the country. The Presidents "utterance about the negro" and the South directly reflected the country's view of women in Virginia.⁷⁹ Later, Theodore Roosevelt continued to make an impression on the women. Buried in the seemingly random list of current events on the 22nd day of February 1909 the secretary wrote, "Is Roosevelt crazy?" The comment is sandwiched between the suppression of theater and the "picture shows cause of failure in lessons among children." Unfortunately, no other statement seems to reveal why the women felt he was crazy, and the *New York Times* indicates that, at that time Roosevelt was on an uneventful trip to Hampton Roads. Incidentally, it was also the same day Roosevelt's nephew fell out of a Harvard dormitory window, but Roosevelt did not yet know this.⁸⁰ Another possibility of why Roosevelt could have been called crazy was that it was the same year that he lived in the wilderness.⁸¹ The statement in the meeting minutes appears to be a less than serious comment.

⁷⁹ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1904-1905. Although trace of this comment is not found, Roosevelt seemed to change. He was known for degrading comments about African-Americans, but was also considered a proponent of their education. Regardless of the precise comment Roosevelt uttered, it was perceived to be a commentary on Southern life that was not appreciated by the women. The personal reaction could reveal a sense of personal identity in context with a greater nation. The Every Monday Club was a part of a southern identity.

⁸⁰ "President Not Yet Notified" *New York Times*, 22 February 1909. The *Times* reports that Roosevelt was not notified before he boarded the ship to Hampton Roads, and would learn the news the next day.

⁸¹ George Mowry, "Theodore Roosevelt and the Election of 1910." *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 25 (March 1939), 523-534. After the election of President Taft, Roosevelt retreated from public life, hunting and camping out West for a full year. His long reign of presidency had taken a toll on his mental state and he needed a break from the stress.

The loss of birds in Virginia's landscape became an issue at the January 8, 1906 meeting. Mrs. Winfree read a paper on "Birds in Song and Story." In response, Mrs. King,

suggested that as the legislature is now in session that the Club should take some steps towards the protection of robins as Virginia is one of a few states which has not such a law. Mrs. King, Mrs. Hill and Mrs. Craig were appointed a committee to investigate the matter.⁸²

The issue of the birds was addressed by writing to the local papers. Interestingly, the secretary recorded the articles found in the January and March papers. Unfortunately the dates recorded do not appear to be accurate, as the letters to the editor have not been found.⁸³ Regardless of when the articles were published, they seem to have some affect as hunting robins could not occur from March 1 to December 15 each year, which is when the birds are in Virginia. Even if these women did not directly affect the creation of the law, as women who used their voice towards a cause, they must have been proud of the results.

The numerous meetings discussing current events reveal an appreciation for importance of the world around them. The Every Monday Club members were beginning to appreciate the national and international dialogue, and were becoming a part of local politics. Perhaps the education gained by them through their research presentations propelled them to use their knowledge for the present issues.

⁸² Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1905-1906.

⁸³ The Secretary wrote the articles appear in the *Time-Dispatch* 13 January 1906 and the *NewsLeader* March 1906. It is possible that the letter from the club only appears in the early or late addition of the newspapers, which appears not to have been kept on microfilm.

The meetings that were of even more interest during this time period were the ones where comments were made about women's suffrage and temperance. Both issues were more political than the women normally discussed. Additionally, the secretary reveals the group attitudes towards both subjects. This commentary is unusual, and shows how important both topics were to the women. These issues affected their lives more than other areas of politics, but also did not really reach their peak attention for another two decades. Although the women do not take action on either topic, their consistent recurrence in their discussion reveals a real concern for the problems of alcohol and the interest in the women's vote.

The women in the Every Monday Club agreed on the issue of temperance. The consistent positive commentary shows they were very concerned about drinking, and the problems that occurred around it. Drinking was blamed as the root cause of spousal abuse and the demise of morals. Nationally, women formed the majority in the movement. The Progressive Era marked an escalated interest in temperance among women. Many historians feel that the increased interest of women in education and philanthropy correlated with the interest in temperance. Movements like the settlement house movement, revealed an extreme issue to upper and middle class women that alcohol was prevalent amongst the impoverished and immigrants.⁸⁴ The movement did not reach its peak until the 1920s, when the goal of prohibition was achieved, but it had started long

⁸⁴ Kleinberg, *Women in the United States, 184-189*. The settlement house movement was a national movement where several single women would live together in a home in a poor urban area. These women would help the people around them. It exposed white, upper and middle class women to cultural, economic and social problems.

before.⁸⁵ The drinking issue did not start to appear in the minutes until 1908, but thereafter it was mentioned five times.⁸⁶ The first mention was of the dying interest in prohibition. The meeting minutes note, "Spread of Prohibition wane, six of 48 states having absolute prohibition."⁸⁷ This brief note does not reveal the exact attitude of the club, but a later mentioning gives an indication. After many brief discussions comments became more descriptive and the secretary, Mrs. Duke, wrote details of one conversation.

Mrs. James gave some informing facts on temperance legislation in Richmond, showing a decrease in arrests + drunkenness almost one third, due to the reduction of saloons. Mrs. James also gave facts regarding regulation selling to students, holiday drinking + licenses, + also facts to prove that laws are not enforced.⁸⁸

After several different meetings on prohibition the women discussed the evils within their own community. The women saw alcohol as a definite problem in Richmond. What is especially interesting is the notation of the problem amongst students and holiday drinking. The women were not just targeting the socially outcast alcoholic. They were identifying the community in which they lived, the members of Richmond College. In discussing the reduction of saloons, Mrs. James gives a positive spin on the temperance movement in the city, but also shows that not enough is done to stop the drinking. The club clearly desired the consumption of alcohol to cease. As the club was no longer

⁸⁵ Anne-Marie E. Szymanski, *Pathways to Prohibition: Radicals, Moderates and Social Movement Outcomes*. (Durham, NC: Duke University, 2003), 199-200.

⁸⁶ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1908-1912. Prohibition is mentioned February 3 and March 2, 1908; January 30, 1910; April 1, 1912.

⁸⁷ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1907-1908. This is mentioned in the context of current events.

⁸⁸ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1911-1912. April 1st the club was discussing many social issues such as prohibition, charity, and public health. The announced subject was "Richmond and its civic needs."

composed of just Baptist members, the group showed that within this economic class, women in Richmond desired the prohibition of alcohol.⁸⁹

The issue of suffrage was not as clear. In two years the subject was mentioned at least four times. The first reference was to female suffragists in Great Britain on March 2, 1908. Like temperance, the first notation was brief and unremarkable. The note was placed within a larger lists of current events discussed.⁹⁰ The issued began to receive greater importance and dominance in the meeting minutes over time. On January 3, 1910, Mrs. Metcalf discussed women's suffrage at length with the Every Monday Club. She began delineating the situation of women in China, and moved on to the suffrage movements in Britain and the United States. For the first time in the recorded history of the Every Monday Club an estimated opinion was expressed by the secretary:

The discussion called forth expressions of opinion on this current topic, and while the conservative spin was evidently prevailing, there were signs of open-mindedness on this subject from some of our members.⁹¹

The comment is interesting because it gives a clear opinion of the secretary. The writer was "M.P.C. Acting Sect'y," which was most likely Mrs. Harvey Clarke. By referring to "signs of open-mindedness," Clarke was implying the opposite of the conservative

⁸⁹ Kleinberg, *Women in the United States*, 178-179. Traditionally, the temperance movement was associated with Protestants. Because many Irish, Italian, and German Catholic immigrants consumed alcohol, the majority of them did not participate in the temperance movement. Although it is unknown what each individual Catholic or Protestant in the Every Monday Club felt about the temperance movement, it could be argued that the frequency of the discussion aligned with the tone set by the secretary would imply that the majority of the group believed in the movement.

⁹⁰ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1907-1908. In between diminution of crime in New York and education in India, the secretary writes of "further unrest of suffragists in England." This is a side comment that is not addressed further, most likely due to the very large list of topics. The women discussed eleven events around the world and several books. The general theme, "unrest," also alludes to the change the members were feeling around them.

⁹¹ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1909-1910. The conversation was described as short, and followed by a discussion of Telemachus.

opinion was preferable. More notable was the idea that the majority of the club was conservative about the topic on Women's Suffrage. This seems to go against the concept of the Every Monday Club, which was to educate each other on an unlimited range of topics. The women were feeding themselves with the education that their male peers used for politics, but not utilizing the benefits of such knowledge. Perhaps they were not ready for such a change. The first decade of the twentieth century seemed to expose the women of the Every Monday Club to numerous political and social issues, but they were not ready to digest them. Additionally, the radical actions of suffragettes, like Alice Paul, may have left the Every Monday Club uncomfortable with the concept of women's suffrage.⁹² Even the conservative suffragists may not have sat well with everyone in the Every Monday Club, who as a group remained neutral about many issues. An action that reflected the history of the EMC would be a more gradual understanding of the right to vote, and a slow consumption of the ideas was probably a more comfortable approach for these distinguished women of Richmond.

The next notable meeting where suffrage was mentioned was on February 22, 1910, when the founding president of the Every Monday Club came back for a visit. Mrs. Virginia Robinson gave a special speech about suffrage. At this point, Mrs. Robinson was an active member of the Women's Club of Richmond. As Sandra Treadway explored, the Women's Club was involved in more social issues of the time than the Every Monday Club. Robinson had returned to the EMC to ask for the club's backing on suffrage. The

⁹²Doris Weatherford, *A History of the American Suffragist Movement*. (Santa Barbara, CA: The Moschovitis Group, 1998), 217. Alice Paul was a dynamic and outspoken suffragette. Her protests were considered unconventional, aggressive, and even militant. Instead of winning over the American public, she perhaps alienated her cause.

entry reads, "There were more visitors than usual among them Mrs. Enders Robinson, the first president of the club. Who led an interesting discussion on the subject of Woman's Suffrage."⁹³ The comment is almost an after-thought in the long entry for the day. The topic was Mrs. Hill's paper on the "Evolution of the Greek Drama." Despite the special visit by Robinson, the minutes did not treat the discussion as remarkable. If the impromptu speech by Virginia Robinson was of importance to the club, she would have been given the floor for the entire meeting. Instead, her comments are buried at the bottom of the entry, normally reserved for the mundane mentioning of where the next meeting will reside. The issue of suffrage started as a quiet mentioning at the bottom of the meeting minutes.

Former members, such as Orie Hatcher, continued to contact the club about the importance of women's suffrage. Still, the Every Monday Club avoided the discussion. The reasons for this stance could be numerous. For each step towards becoming a proactive cohesive group, the women fractured during this period. For every example of a group working towards political and social justice, the group also revealed a desire not to step in that direction. Perhaps in forming a cohesive identity in the Richmond community, the group sacrificed taking a position on controversial issues. Due to the nature of the club, the women had learned many things and gained different viewpoints. Although the women were armed with an incredible amount of knowledge, they avoided taking a position on suffrage in order to keep their group together. The women did not know what advantages voting rights would give women ten years later, such as having

⁹³ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1909-1910. The secretary, Mrs. Murrell, wrote this entry at the end of the day's entry.

more voice in making change in their society or being able to have more agency in their lives. They were unwilling to take the risk of losing the stability of the group by becoming a group for women's rights. Instead they chose to make their small meetings consumed with research, writing, and presenting into a small and clearly less activist effort towards the advancement of women.

CHAPTER THREE:

Social Service, 1912-1919

The autumn of 1918 marked a difficult season for the Every Monday Club. The strain of the Great War was compounded by the national influenza epidemic. The club began a month later than usual, on November 4th. The season was also initiated on a solemn note as the Every Monday Club President proposed a prayer for the health of the families of members of the club. A six-year trend towards a concern for social service culminated in a stressful Fall of trying to solve the many poverty and peace issues surrounding the members. Perhaps to change the mood dramatically, the club decided to have a New Year's celebration. With fluid language Secretary Mrs. W. Cammack elaborated more than usual on the atmosphere of the meeting:

Silver candelabra with shaded lights of red and holly and other Christmas greens lent an air of charm to the table and palm room at the Jefferson Hotel on Monday afternoon Dec. 30, where Mrs. Benj. T. Crump was hostess at the meeting of the Every Monday Club. The presidents of the Clubs of this city and other friends of the city were guests at this time. The special guest of honor was the writer, Miss Margaret Prescott Montague...who gave a very charming and illuminating address on "The Challenge of Peace" or "What the War has Taught Us."⁹⁴

⁹⁴ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1918-1919. The guest speaker was secured by a committee created only two weeks before, by Mrs. Worsham, Miss Winston, and Mrs. Crump as Chairman. That the club was able to secure Miss. Margaret Prescott Montague so quickly suggests one of the

This entry reveals a dramatic change in the club in its third decade. The women held a position on politics, change and World War I. The much planned for late December meeting had an incredibly important topic, but it had nothing to do with the club's original mission. The club's past interest in books, research, history, and literature, was cast aside for the issues of the present. Margaret Prescott Montague offered a discussion on events that were affecting the club's daily lives, food rations. Although Montague was known as a fiction writer to many Americans, she wrote non-fiction as well. By the time of this meeting, she had just received the first O. Henry Prize for short stories ever awarded. She was from the EMC's old format of interest in literature, but carried a new message with her—war.⁹⁵

Not only were they inviting Margaret Montague to speak to them about the war in Europe, but they made a statement to the city by inviting guests from the other major women's clubs in the area. In this vain, the women begin to incorporate other women and clubs to advance their interests and causes. The original isolationist nature of the EMC had altered to become part of the cohesive club movement throughout Virginia and the nation. The women of the originally small club realized they could learn from their peers

committee members, who were all older and prominent society members in Richmond, were acquaintances with Miss Montague.

⁹⁵ "Margaret Montague, 76," *New York Times*, 27 September, 1955. Margaret Prescott Montague was the first recipient of the O. Henry prize for Short Stories for her story, "England to America." She also wrote three screenplays for Hollywood, including one based on her book, *Uncle Sam of Freedom Ridge* about World War I. Her obituary in the *New York Times* quotes President Woodrow Wilson, "That lady has written a story which breathes patriotism so pure and wholesome as to make the other things of life seem of little consequence. I wish that every person that questions the benefits to humanity that will be guaranteed by the League of Nations might read it. Don't forget to read it." This comment reveals that Montague's speech to the Every Monday Club at the Jefferson was most likely not a subversive message on war. Regardless, the discussion of such an important topic in a public forum, reveals the club's movement towards becoming a group of service towards a present problem rather than a past philosophy.

and perhaps achieve their new goals in numbers. Through a slow evolution, the women began to strip the Every Monday Club unique format to accommodate the changing society around them.

The final phase of the first thirty years of the club involves the issues of social service to the Richmond community, the Great War, and finally, how the previous problems affected women. To say poverty and war interested these women is an understatement. Their desire to participate in charities, such as orphanages and children's playgrounds, began as an occasional meeting topic starting in 1909. By 1916, charity was on the forefront of these women's minds. They were spending the majority of the meeting time raising various matters of business related to community work across the city and state. The American involvement in World War I solidified this involvement. The women saw it as their duty to participate in the war effort. This sense of duty and responsibility translated into an understanding of the ability of women. The conversations started to circle around women as professionals. By 1918, The Every Monday Club evolved into a group who saw their obligation to society needed to be brought outside the home into the public arena. Not quite feminists and not really conservatives, these various women approached the walls of the male sphere with a sense of duty.

Previously, membership statistics were the most essential aspect to understanding the club and its purpose. When researching this phase of the club, this form of examination creates less of an understanding of the Every Monday Club. The first reason is the lack of documentation. The club no longer listed the members, addresses, dues and individual attendance record in the meeting minutes. A decade later, this information was

written in “yearbooks,” or small brochures, that stated the club purpose and topics.⁹⁶

Although no membership clues are given, luckily the style of the meeting minutes changed. Mrs. J.W. Cammack was the club secretary from 1915-1920. Her notes on each meeting were detailed. Although she did not list the current events discussed in each meeting, she included more details on “club business” than was written in the past. Despite the loss in membership and news, the EMC reveals their social concerns through the business aspect of the minutes.

Attendance was another issue which seemed to be a former problem. Between 1912 and 1920 there were two references to attendance problems. The first reference was not seen until the beginning of 1917 when the secretary wrote, “Miss Sublett also announced that hereafter every member notify the hostess if unable to attend the meeting of the club on that particular occasion.”⁹⁷ This request by the club president to be more respectful of the hostess is an interesting statement. It does not reflect an annoyance by club members of frequent absences. Although the statement reveals an understanding for the occasional absence, a reminder was issued that the hostess needed a number count for refreshments. This casual mentioning occurred six years after past attendance problems, which required frequent restructuring of rules. No such problem existed in the club during this period. Perhaps in a time of international turmoil, the haven of the Every Monday Club helped its members relax in an intellectual environment.

⁹⁶ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1919-1920, 1929-1930. The yearbooks are seen regularly attached to the later records of the archive and discussed in 1929. In late 1919, the club mentioned ordering yearbooks in the meeting minutes, but no copy is left in the archive. It may have, in fact, existed earlier, but material may not be with the archive.

⁹⁷ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1916-1917. The announcement was placed at the end of this day’s meeting minutes implying the lack of gravity the situation required. The secretary continued to describe the refreshments and social hour that followed a usual ending.

Although attendance was high, the club did stop meeting for two extended periods between 1912-1920. The first gap in meeting minutes is a mystery. In the 1915-1916 season of the EMC, the meeting minutes cease after December 13th. The meeting minutes do not mention specific reasons for why the club did not meet. The following autumn, the club's minutes resume with no mention of the extended break. Historical books and newspapers provide no compelling reason for such a disruption. It seems the women either did not meet for personal reasons that season, or the meeting minute journal was temporarily lost. Usually when either happened, a notation was made in the book. The only unusual aspect of the minutes is that the beginning of the 1915-1916 season saw an absence of the President six times. The President, Mrs. Anderson tried to resign, but it was refused.⁹⁸ In fact the meeting minutes indicate that the women would not even consider her resignation. The club's generosity with her attendance could reveal that she had an illness in the family, or other problems with which the club sympathized. This year seems to have left many historical questions, but no answers. Perhaps there were several illnesses in the club, attendance was so low that they decided not to meet until the following fall, or the secretary misplaced the notebook and never had time to address the problem in the minutes. This aspect of the Every Monday club remains a historical mystery.

⁹⁸ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, November 29, 1915. "Mrs. DeJarnette presided and after the minutes were read the resignation of Mrs. Anderson as President was presented. Motion was made and carried not to accept. Mrs. Anderson's resignation, the secretary to notify her of the action."

The second major closure clearly occurred when the influenza epidemic hit Richmond in the fall of 1918. The club delayed their meetings until November. Unlike the previous absence, the minutes do remark on the late start:

The Every Monday Club met with Miss Sublett November 4th after a delay of three weeks on account of the influenza epidemic. At the suggestion of Mrs. Hill, Mrs. Thomas offered a prayer of Thanksgiving for the safety of the members during the months since the last meeting.⁹⁹

The influenza epidemic seemed to paralyze the club temporarily. The membership was down due to many of the women needing to stay home and care for their families. Some women, like Mrs. McVey, Mrs. Burnett, and Mrs. Haden, requested a short-term resignation of a year.¹⁰⁰ The minutes also indicate that several members moved out of Richmond for the year due to the influenza. Leaving the city for their country home would have been a perfect solution to the rapid spread of a virus in a crowded city. It also shows an interesting response by women who seemed to be moving down the philanthropic route. They escaped for their own health, a luxury that reveals their middle to upper class status. Although several women were not able to attend the meetings, the previous few years had marked the height of participation. The constant complaints about attendance were gone, and the club discussions appear to have been passionate. They did not want the momentum to cease.

The Every Monday Club created a solution to the dwindling membership by creating a “visiting” membership. These women would be able to come to meetings, but

⁹⁹ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1918.

¹⁰⁰ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1918. The resignations were accepted “with regret.”

their membership would cease when the absent member returned. As “visiting” members they were held to the same rules as permanent members. In the business portion of the November 4th meeting the secretary wrote,

The question of asking visiting members to take the places of several members who are out of town was discussed and it was decided to ask three ladies to attend the meeting regularly this winter as visiting members.

This solution gave the club several advantages. They were able to keep the positive movement the club had made over the last few years without sacrificing the nature of the club. Instead of opening the club up to all and potentially overcrowding the group, they allowed several women to come as semi-permanent guests. These guests were still required to participate in the meetings through presenting papers and hosting. There was also the potential that if a member permanently left, these guest members would be able to join the club because they were already approved and accustomed to the meetings. This exception was only used in the 1918-1919 season as a solution to a temporary problem, but it did lead to the later inclusion of guests at meetings.

The Every Monday Club had fewer by-law issues in the meetings. In fact, after numerous mentions in the past, the by-laws were only mentioned three times in this period. The full by-laws were listed at the beginning of the 1912 meeting minutes. The club revealed rules that have been altered since the first official listing of the by-laws in 1889. Not only are the by-laws listed to include fifteen rules and regulations, a “Constitution” is listed above the by-laws,

Article I: the name of the Club shall be the Every Monday Club; Article II: the object of the Club shall be intellectual

advancement; Article III: The officers shall consist of a President, Vice President, and Secretary.¹⁰¹

This statement is important because the women were creating a statement of purpose for the club, which previously had never been mentioned. This marked a change of self-perception in the club. They realized that their club was significant enough to have an effect on the society around them, so they needed to create a motto or understanding of their goals. Article II included the most significant aspect about the new constitution. A clear objective was set by the club members, which was not present of the early years. Since the inception of the club, the women seemed to have differing opinions about the club's goals. The ideas varied from book reviews, magazine reviews, to papers, or possible community service. The reality was that all these ideas could be filed under the concept of intellectual advancement. It took the club almost twenty years to recognize officially this as their overarching goal. The irony is that only a few years later, they would alter this statement.

Because of the influence of the Great War, an influenza outbreak, and a general progression towards community action, the Every Monday Club members altered its constitution changing Article II and Article III to include the issue of social service. The meeting minutes document,

Motion made and carried that Articles II and III of the Constitution be changed to read: II The object of the Club shall be intellectual advancement and social and civic

¹⁰¹ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1912. The Constitution and By-Laws are listed after the listing of the officers and theme of the year. There is no mention of the minutes of a motion to rewrite the laws into the meeting minutes, although that mostly likely occurred. This assumption is made on the nature of the club's decision making process witnessed over thirty years of meeting minutes. The president and members of the club mostly likely decided to list the rules in order to remind the members and refresh the document. Refer to Appendix II.

betterment. III The officers shall consist of a President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, and Treasurer combined and a Corresponding Secretary. Moved and carried that the dues be changed from \$1.00 to \$1.50.¹⁰²

Finally the women were making an official and dynamic change towards social service.

The change in the by-laws represented the final expression of the change that occurred in the club during this period. It was most definitely not the only change.

The last substantial change in the format of the club was their interaction with the National Federation of Women's Clubs. After voting several times not to join the Federation, at the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, the Every Monday Club paid their dues and joined. It took awhile for the women to become comfortable with the concept. They refused to participate in different activities and program requests. This dramatically changed after the President of the Every Monday Club, Mrs. D.R. Anderson, attended the 8th Annual Coronation of the State Federation of Women's Clubs in Fairfax, Virginia.¹⁰³ The president's summary of the meetings was included in the meeting minutes. The descriptions of the meeting were upbeat and positive, perhaps influencing the club's later involvement with the organization. Mrs. Anderson wrote,

In closing, I wish to say that I cannot transmit to paper, the spirit of this meeting, I cannot pass on to you the inspiration one receives from being in a body of intelligent, alert, forward-moving women, organized to be good and do good. It is my earnest desire that every woman in the Every Monday Club attend one or more of these meetings. Get

¹⁰² Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1917-1918. The change was only documented in the meeting minute entry of April 8, 1918. The secretary did not rewrite the by-laws directly after the meeting. A later listing of the by-laws would state the change.

¹⁰³ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1915-1916. The Virginia meeting of the Federation of Women's clubs was in the Spring of 1915, but did not appear in the meeting minutes until the Autumn of 1915. Mrs. Anderson wrote a three page summary which was transcribed by the secretary, Mrs. J.W. Cammack.

elected president so you can go. Go if you are not a delegate you will want to go again. To realize what Federation means attend the Annual Convention of the State Federation.¹⁰⁴

This enthusiasm and fervor illustrates the change in the club. They now observed the actions of other clubs and women. They realized that to obtain intellectual advancement was not enough; to use this knowledge to “do good” was an admirable achievement. This enthusiasm carried over to writing articles for the Federation’s newspapers about club interests, attending meetings, and conducting presentations. Over all, the Every Monday Club mentioned the Federation eight times from 1915-1919. While reluctant to join the Federation, once the EMC joined they became enthusiastic members.

The topic choice of the Every Monday Club became more consistent from 1912-1920. Instead of dropping the theme for the year and doing current events, the women slotted the end of each meeting for current events or noteworthy news. This format allowed them to return to treating topics of interest. They covered writers, myths, American history, dramatists, short stories, American art, Russian culture, distinguished women, American humorists, and in 1919-1920 they discussed current events.¹⁰⁵ The members managed to turn all the topics into discussions that related to world turmoil. Russia, Germany, and cultural exploration seemed to be the major concentration of the literary and historical studies.

¹⁰⁴ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1915-1916. Signed Ada Ash Anderson, Pres. E.M.C. This conclusion was written in a separate entry, which was the first mentioned of the Federation meeting.

¹⁰⁵ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1912-1920.

The topic discussions clearly reveal where the women stood on understanding cultures outside of the United States. Perhaps the most important year for this exploration was 1913-1914, when the women discussed myths and folklore. Each member picked a culture and discussed its myths. Interestingly, instead of picking stories, traditional myths, or songs that described morals or lessons, the members sometimes selected the culture's religion as an example of myths. For example when discussing the folklore of India the secretary wrote,

Miss Sublett gave a lucid explanation of the religion of the hindus which might really be called their folk-lore as they live in the illusion and supernatural and do not concede the existence of the material, everything to them being illusion. In we are told of the several developments of the hindu religion, from the monotheistic to the pantheistic, then to the polytheistic, the most degraded form of idolatry. The doctrine that 'sin is an impossibility since all is God,' sounds strangely like the statement of one of our modern cults.¹⁰⁶

This statement has many layers. First, the presenter, Miss Sublett, discounted the religion of Hinduism by describing it as folklore; then she continued by calling the polytheistic structure of the religion idolatry. Finally, Miss Sublett finished explaining the religion by announcing that Hinduism is akin to a Christian cult.

Read with a modern eye, these statements by the Every Monday Club would seem close-minded. In reality, the women were taking a major step by actually learning about world cultures. The problem in the discussion was that the women shut out the ideas of the group before even getting the chance to digest them. This is the running theme throughout the year of myths. The majority of the cultures they discussed were ones that

¹⁰⁶ Every Monday Meeting Minutes, October 27, 1913. The research paper was described as being read in a "clear and entertaining way."

were traditionally not considered preferable, such as Africa, Ireland, Native Americans, and Eastern Europe. In the case of the widely disliked Irish, the women described St. Patrick's use of the shamrock to explain the Holy Trinity as a magical myth. St. Patrick's use of a plant as a tool to educate was not magical, but practical. They also discussed how Native American stories revealed the Indian gods crying for the crucifixion of Christ. There seemed to be a consistent misunderstanding of each culture's religion and myths, and the fact that they did not understand the differences between myth and religion is not unusual for this time period. The field of anthropology was just in its infancy, and the separation of these ideas did not occur for several decades.

Although the club stayed true to its format for the most part, there were several meetings where the guest speaker or chosen topic was different than what was originally prescribed for the year. The most notable example was when they had a guest speaker who discussed home economics. On April 3, 1916, Mrs. W.W. Robertson spoke to the club on "Home Economics." Mrs. Robertson was the chairman of the Home Economic committee in the Federation of Women's Clubs. Not only did she emphasize the importance of Home Economics, but her lecture led to another meeting to discuss the topic. The discussion was in support of housewives, and also discussed their importance to the family structure. Most importantly, she also emphasized the relationship of clubs to the housewife:

Clubs are not for exclusive women, but for those who would uplift their fellow men, for those who would work for the good of humanity. They who have the ability and see their opportunity have a great responsibility. Home

economics is large in meaning and embraces many things.¹⁰⁷

Their guest was speaking to the women about a club identity that was evolving with the EMC. Originally, the women would have shied away from such a club definition. This would be because of the concept that a purpose of a club was to work for the good of humanity. As individual women, they cared for the good of humanity, but as Every Monday Club members, they had always preferred the pursuit of knowledge over the desire to proliferate the good of man. Instead, the women “upon suggestion decided to make some effort to bring about the organization of a housewives league in our city.”¹⁰⁸ Robertson was helping the women understand that as wise women, who were also supporting housewives, their obligation was towards helping society and their families. This realization stood in line with the national trend towards women uniting under the interest of philanthropy. This influence of the Virginia Federation and the concept of female social obligation impacted the members as it led them to social service. The base of education and understanding seemed to aid the EMC in achieving a great understanding of the benefit of helping others.

Gradually, the various guest speakers who came to speak about local issues influenced the Every Monday Club. The women were using the information given to them towards a common goal of helping Richmond. In two years, the club mentioned helping their city six times. The topics ranged from “know your city” to issues occurring

¹⁰⁷ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1915-1916. Robertson went on to assert that because of these issues that the women should push to have domestic science taught to girls in school.

¹⁰⁸ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1915-1916.

in the legislature.¹⁰⁹ The group was even sending representatives of the club to attend city wide meetings. On March 26, 1917, the women dispatched Mrs. Crump and Mrs. Anderson to attend a meeting on the Civil Survey. The meeting minutes reveal the women felt their importance and the necessity of fulfilling their desires by participating in local issues.¹¹⁰ The women leaning towards participation in their local government reveals a dramatic difference in their opinions of the place of women. Only ten years before not only did they not participate directly in the discussion of government, but many objected to suffrage. On April 14, 1919, they discussed Susan B. Anthony, a year before the Nineteenth Amendment was passed. This was the same year that they discussed women from all backgrounds who were successful and internationally admired. Anthony was no exception.

The subject for the afternoon was a study of the life of Susan B. Anthony-- reformer and was ably and intelligently discussed by Mrs. Clarke who dwelled on the things that Miss Anthony stood for and the results of her endeavors.¹¹¹

The commentary is routine as seen in any other entry. Although the secretary does not express the opinions of the women in the club, Susan B. Anthony's efforts as a suffragist and the subject of women's suffrage was no longer a topic of debate. This feeling coincides with the greater trend in American society, where women's suffrage was

¹⁰⁹ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1916-1919. Guest Speaker Dr. D.R. Anderson from the Civic Association spoke at the EMC February 19, 1917. He discussed "Know your City" through comparing Richmond to other cities. He also discussed local government as a necessity.

¹¹⁰ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1916-1917. The Secretary recorded, "The president appointed Mrs. Crump and Mrs. Anderson as representatives of the club to attend a meeting on March 29 when the council committee had agreed to a hearing on the proposed civic survey." The follow up on April 2nd is not very informative, but does indicate an interest.

¹¹¹ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1918-1919.

becoming more of an acceptable idea. The Every Monday Club was not ready to protest for suffrage, but they could discuss and understand the efforts of women who did.

The discussion of women's issues as a topic choices blended naturally with the other social issues the women began discussing. The welfare of children became a common theme to be raised in club meetings. The most prevalent conversations included the education and entertainment of children. The group seemed to be interested in the building of playgrounds for children.¹¹² This topic has absolutely nothing to do with their discussion of literary and historical issues, but was raised numerous times over the course of nine years.

On February 3, 1913, Mr. Tansey of the Church Civic Association came to discuss "The amusements of the City- What was Richmond doing with this problem?" The phrasing of the topic matter implied a serious discussion over the growing problems of city life. Instead, the guest speaker was presenting information on playgrounds and forms of amusements for children, such as an amateur athletic association for girls and supervised playgrounds. The guest argued that "in time the libraries would supersede the moving picture shows."¹¹³ These issues were essential to this group of mothers. As the membership steadied, the age of the members of the Every Monday Club was rising. Mr. Tansey's ideas would appeal to these women because of their familial interests. The "amusements of children" were mentioned three more times 1913. Mr. Tansey reignited an interest in this topic for the women's club. In 1913, under the president's

¹¹² Catherine C. Reynolds and Susan L. Schramm, *Separate Sisterhood: Women Who Shaped Southern Education in the Progressive Era* (New York: Peter Lang, 2002), 155-156. Reynolds and Schramm describe this as a traditional avenue for women in the Progressive Era, especially Southern women.

¹¹³ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1912-1913

encouragement the club discussed the issue of children several times. The first meeting seemed to mark a precedent as the President, Mrs. T.W. Murrell, stressed,

This was to be a story filling year for the members of the Club and urged that they share the stories heard and share already known with others, preferably with the children of the hospitals and parks who are (?) with that form of entertainment.¹¹⁴

She had given her club an initiative. They were to include children in their concerns and actions. For the first time the President was encouraging her members to share children issues that were off the topic.

This obligation culminated in the final mentioning of children and motherhood on December 7, 1914. Mrs. Clarke read a paper on Ellen Key, a Swedish writer. The meeting minutes described Key as a woman concerned with the importance of the relationship between a mother, her child, and man. Mrs. Clarke reveals that not only did Key explore these relationships, but felt women could be instrumental in participating in all kinds of work. Key's motto was described as "Remember to live." Mrs. Clarke explains her essays,

she preaches the doctrine of complete freedom of development the power to exercise all human rights not in order to do man's work, but to enable her to do all her work and especially to exercise the function of motherhood in a noble sense. The child she teaches is the center of the universe and the mother care the most important work of women. Consequently, all girls should be taught mothercraft which includes the exercise of her duty as a citizen. Not to fear this responsibility is a lack of honor as service as the loss of virtue.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1913-1914

¹¹⁵ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1914-1915.

Ellen Key's exploration into the relationship of motherhood gave two clear goals to the members of the Every Monday Club. First, there was a definite value of being a mother and caring for children. This had long been valued in society, but it implied that the tremendous honor attached to being a mother made it a noble occupation. When motherhood was brought up to this standard, the care for all children was as well. The women of the Every Monday Club applied this statement not only in their discussion of their own parenting skills, but also when discussing children without mothers who have great care. The second purpose was discussing motherhood as a job with social responsibility. It was a more subtle message that was revealed in the statement discussing the loss of virtue. If women become effective and essential mothers, then they served their country and society. Her concern with the loss of virtue was directly related to the problems of social welfare. Key believed in state-sponsored child welfare programs for single mothers. She also continued a concept that was supported by Elizabeth Cady Stanton that families headed by mothers were not contrary to nature. Key participated in a group called 'The League for the Protection of Mothers.'¹¹⁶ These significant concepts were radical for the Every Monday Club, but in line with their discussions about child welfare and families.

¹¹⁶ Ann Taylor Allen. "Feminism, Social Science, and the Meanings of Modernity: The Debate on the Origin of the Family in Europe and the United States, 1860-1914" *The American Historical Review* 104 (October 1999): 1103-1104. Allen argues that Ellen Key may not have been as radical as some of her contemporaries in the League for the Protection of Mothers (LPM), but her views were progressive. The LPM included many who believed in the availability of abortion to help unwed mothers. Key never fully supported this notion. Instead, her core beliefs centered in the idea that motherhood was the supreme and most natural of all occupations. In a sense, Key discussed motherhood in feminist language. Because of the importance of motherhood on society and families, women did not necessarily need men to head the household.

Another trend was the discussion of the Vocation Bureau. The first mention of the Bureau took place in April 16, 1917. Dr. Orie Hatcher, a former member of the club, was the guest speaker. Although Hatcher left the club for several years, she remained close to the members and its causes. She also became a driving force behind the change towards social issues for the club. Over the years she was a guest at the homes of the club members discussing the latest issues in the community. In her obituary in the *New York Times*, Dr. Hatcher was described as an instrumental figure in the development of vocational organizations on the East Coast.

Hatcher's interest in literary and self-education had evolved to functional purposes. She encouraged women into the working place to help them and their families financially.

Dr. Hatcher found that more than 12,000,000 of the nation's youth lived in rural districts and 9,000,000 of these on farms, so she stressed the need for community guidance councils to act as educational and occupational advisors to underprivileged children of rural districts. After the educational alliance had been functioning for ten years, Dr. Hatcher gained the support of educators in the South to help her apply scientific research for the benefit "the rural girl in her home and in her school."¹¹⁷

Dr. Hatcher's degrees were from Bryn Mawr and the University of Chicago, but she returned to Richmond and Petersburg to address the local issues that affected her

¹¹⁷ *New York Times*, "Dr. Orie Hatcher, Educator, Author." 3 April 1946. The obituary includes information of Hatcher's connection to several different organizations including: Southern Women's Educational Alliance, Konnorock Training School, National Federation of Business and Professional Women's clubs, National Vocational Guidance Association, Richmond School of Social Work and Public Health, National Council of Women, Youth Conference of the Department of the Interior, White House Conference on Children in Democracy, Institute for Rural Youth Guidance in Washington, Washington Youth Service Agencies. One wonders how she had any free time, but her participation in the Every Monday Club reveals even more how important these causes were to her.

childhood. Hatcher's interest in education was useful in her later pursuits of giving impoverished children vocational education. Her interests were in improving a child's future. The obituary mentions Hatcher's work on the board of the Richmond School of Social Work and Public Health. This early interest moved her on to be one of the trustees of the National Vocational Guidance Association and the National Council of Women. Orië Hatcher's interests and accomplishments are significant to the history of the EMC because they reveal the progression of the club's most successful member. When Orië Hatcher was interested in something, the club usually followed suit.

At the April meeting of the club, Dr. Hatcher spoke about the importance of vocation and what the club could do to help. The secretary, Bessie Cammack, described the meeting,

Miss Orië Hatcher was the speaker on this occasion and was presented to the Club in graceful manner by Miss Willingham. She gave a most instructive talk taking as her subject the Vocations for Women. She made reference to the Bureau of Vocations for Women located in our city telling us just what the Bureau stands for and what it hopes to accomplish. She said our Club could cooperate in many ways with the Bureau.¹¹⁸

Dr. Hatcher was a woman with a social interest who was looking to her old friends to help the organization. A businesswoman at heart, Hatcher convinced her club friends to help her cause; her interest and encouragement sparked eight more discussions in the meeting minutes. This discussion culminated in the discussion of donating money to the Vocation Bureau. The club decided on giving ten dollars.¹¹⁹ This represented a large sum

¹¹⁸ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 16 April 1917.

¹¹⁹ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 8 April 1918.

of money for the time period, especially in the midst of the First World War. The week before several women volunteered to gather statistics for the Vocation Bureau.

The time and effort put into the Vocation Bureau are remarkable considering all the other goals the club was trying to accomplish at the time. The women were donating to several different causes, such as child welfare, women's vocation, education, libraries, and the military. Military charity was a new form of charity. As the war overseas developed, the women found new methods of supporting the soldiers and cause.

The issues of the Vocation Bureau were not the only topic to dominate the conversation in 1918, as World War I sparked much interest. Although the issues in Europe were described abstractly at first, by 1917 they dominated meeting discussions. The first mention of the war and club involvement happens in October 15th, 1917. The secretary briefly noted, "A letter from Miss Hanes about the war interests of the club was read and the secretary instructed to answer it."¹²⁰ Thus began an effort by the club members to put the needs of the soldiers and the war on the club agenda.

In January, guest speaker, Mrs. Henry Sampson, spoke on food conservation. The members of the club were "urged to cooperate in every possible way with the government."¹²¹ The members were invited to a meeting the following week that would demonstrate how to conserve the food and where the food would be used in the war. The women seemed to think this was an excellent idea. Additionally, Mrs. Harvey Clarke, a longtime member of the EMC, asked to resign her membership due to the war effort. The manner of the secretary's note seems to connect the two events. Mrs. Clarke wanted to

¹²⁰ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes 1917-1918.

¹²¹ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes 1917-1918.

join the efforts of Mrs. Sampson and the like. Instead, the members begged her to stay. After this meeting, there were five more meetings discussing food conservation efforts. To the members of the club, this could be the most effective method of support for the soldiers in Europe.

Over the next few months the women had discussions on the war and the prospect of peace. They would also donate books to the soldiers and consider the possible building of a memorial at the library. They looked at the format of their very own club to see if they could change anything to help the war movement. Interestingly, their outer war efforts stopped short in the context of the meeting traditions. For the past thirty years the women had served refreshments at the end of each meeting. On November 18, 1918, the members motioned to stop the refreshments: "The question of refreshments was fully discussed and by unanimous vote it was decided to continue the serving of light refreshments." Perhaps the motion, which was proposed the week before, was not carried because the war was now officially over. Although the refreshments were not discontinued, the book reviews were officially discarded the next week. The effort toward benevolently helping others had its limits, but there was an endeavor that should be noted.

Obviously the war had an affect on the Americans at home. What is interesting about the Every Monday Club is that previously, the war would not have been mentioned in the meeting minutes. It would This could be assumed due to the lack of international events included in the meeting minutes. The women witnessed the evolution of their club from an educational book review and history discussion format to be an organization

employed their education for the betterment of the community. Unlike children's education and women's vocation, the war aid movement would not have seemed as an obvious connection to the Every Monday Club's mission statement. However, the previously mentioned change in by-laws in April 1918 revealed the ultimate change in the club's goals. The notation in the meeting minutes is a pretty remarkable sign of the evolution of the Every Monday Club. The aspect that made this club so unique from the other women's clubs in Richmond, the sole mission towards self-education, had been altered in response to a changing membership and a changing world. The women added the social and civic aspects to justify the change that had been developing in the previous three years and to allow further movement towards helping the soldiers. The change in the number of officers is also significant. The needs of correspondence with people outside the club had become so great that another secretary was added to the roster. Finally, the increase in dues was intended to help alleviate the club of giving donations. The club was asked not only by the war effort, but also by the Vocation Bureau and children's organizations, to donate their time and money. The escalation in dues covered these additional costs.

The changes in the club reveal a finite, final phase of the first thirty years of the Every Monday Club. The members developed into a new and important body of women who were using their knowledge and feelings of obligation to aid their society. The change in the by-laws represented the most deliberate action these women could take to express their acknowledgement and approval of this change. This era of the club is of historical importance because it reflected the national movements that were occurring

with women's groups. These women who defied the national trend by being a small group of women whose sole interest was literature had become the every woman's club.

CONCLUSION:

The Legacy

The Every Monday Club began in 1889 as a club for literary and educational discussions by Richmond, Virginia women. Their various connections to the University of Richmond most likely influenced their original goals and orientation. Over its first thirty years the club evolved into a group who applied knowledge of the world and environment around them. In a time of need, this club evolved from being largely homogeneous to a more diverse group. Although the club never achieved racial diversity, the group expanded to include women of different religions, areas of the city, and newcomers to Richmond. This trend continued for the next one hundred years.

The club still exists today. The present day members attend meetings once a month; they write lengthy papers on topics about everything from the senses to discussing different regions. Moreover, the club seems to have returned to its original format. The community outreach trend, which saw its peak during World War I, died when the women saw the loss of the original purpose of the club. In fact, the women still discuss and debate the elements of the by-laws, another return to the original format. Recently, member Gladys Applegate emphasized that the Every Monday Club was different than the Woman's Club of Virginia in that they were not interested in service or

discussing books. Instead, they were a club based on research papers.¹²² When discussing the history of the club in an interview, the present members of the Every Monday Club remember some of the basic beginnings of the club. They argue that their club was the first of its kind in the South. There is some debate among the members if it was the first in the country, but that suggestion would be very difficult to prove.

Besides the theories on the commencement of the Every Monday Club, the members were surprised to learn that the early club was mostly comprised of Baptist members. Today, the women of the club are diverse in religion, personal histories, and even from different parts of the country. Many of the women became members after they retired from the workplace and were introduced to the club through friends. Member Gene Knoop refers to a present problem in the club of being unable to find younger women to join because most women work and are not interested fulfilling the requirement of writing a paper. Sadly for this reason, the future of the Every Monday Club lays in doubt.

The Every Monday Club represents an important piece of American history because it reveals the trends that were occurring in the female sphere at the turn of the century. The interests of the women of the Every Monday Club were varied and their goals high. They were able to expand their knowledge to understand the world in a context with personal meaning. The club offered a microcosm of the lives of women in America at the turn of the century. Although some of the connections of the Every

¹²² According to Gladys Applegate, Every Monday Club interview July 13, 2004. Personal recording resides in the author's archive. In an aside, Applegate noted the extended length the papers of the club members. She emphasized the academic nature of the club.

Monday Club were unique to their situation, the matters of interest and approach to life were similar throughout the country.

What is important to recognize is that the women in the EMC were by no means feminists or part of the women's movement. They were not part of the more commonly referred to women's progressive movement. They were not recognized for tremendous statements and revolutionary desires. These white upper and middle class women led pretty regular lives compared to their activist contemporaries in the North. Their personal statements were made through discreet methods. The exploration of an idea with an open mind at a meeting showed that although they were not radicals, they considered the world around them and a variety of opinions. The history of the Every Monday Club proves that women's lives from 1890-1920 was not static, nor uniform. Nor were these women extreme conservatives reacting against the movement towards reform. Instead, the Every Monday Club was a representation of women who were exploring their options in society. They saw the need for the education of women, but it took them some time to decide what the final result of this education would be. In the beginning, they were not advocates of suffrage, but gradually saw the importance of the right to vote. They were following the tide of the country rather than being leaders of change. Yet, these women experienced a unique circumstance. They were surrounded by two colleges that welcomed their presence. They were all educated and were not weighed down by difficult lives and challenges. Their interests, positions, and ability to express themselves reveal much about Richmond, Virginia, the South, and the country.

Appendix I: Resolutions, Nov. 19, 1889
 From Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes 1889-1890

Procedure

Roll Call

Appoint next place of meeting

Appoint next reader

Give meanings of words from last reading

Distribute magazines

Read Resolutions- January, April, October

Read minutes if there is time after the regular meeting

Resolutions

1. Location will be changed at discretion
2. Meeting will open at 4:15 and close at 5:45
3. Meeting will open with Roll Call
4. Officers must be especially prompt
5. If President is late, Secretary will take over. If both President and Secretary are late the Treasurer will open meeting. If all officers are late, a member will open the meeting.
6. There will be a five cent penalty for lateness
7. Three persons shall be appointed in advance to follow each other as readers, so that ample time will be given for well-developed work.
8. Each member shall make her own selections.
9. Every fourth reader shall devote her selection to a poet—First giving a short original sketch of the man and then reading selections from his poem.
10. That only those persons shall be appointed to read poetry who care for it. There will be a 25 cent penalty for declination.
11. The President and officers shall neither applaud nor denounced any work presented , but any member may offer resolutions in regard to any work liked or disliked.
12. That the resolutions shall be read the first Tuesday of every 3 months before meeting by the President or secretary; October, January, and April.
13. That each member on entrance into the Club may call for a reading of these resolutions if she does not desire to wait for the regular meetings
14. There will be a member limit of 15
15. Officers shall be elected annually

Appendix II: The By-laws, October 1912

Constitution

Article I: The name of the Club shall be the Every Monday Club.

Article II: The object of the Club shall be intellectual advancement.

Article III: The officers shall consist of a President, Vice President, and Secretary.

By-Laws

Article I: The president shall appoint all committees and assign all work.

Article II: The Secretary shall keep a record of all proceedings of the Club and shall perform all duties of a corresponding secretary and treasurer.

Article III: The Club shall meet every Monday afternoon in the home of one of its members.

Article IV: The members shall be limited to 25.

Article V: The programs of work shall be made out of each year by a committee of three.

Article VI: There shall be a nominating committee for membership to which all names shall be referred before being voted on by the Club.

Article VII: The name of each proposed member shall be voted on by the Club and a unanimous vote shall be necessary for election.

Article VIII: Names of candidates for membership shall be presented at a meeting in advance of election.

Article IV: The officers shall be elected by ballot at the first meeting in April.

Article X: Members shall be elected by ballot.

Article XI: Should the member to whom work has been assigned find that they cannot attend the meeting she must notify the president in due time and offer a substitute to read her paper.

Article XII: Eleven shall constitute a quorum.

Article XIII: Membership fee shall be one dollar to be paid in October.

Article XIV: The Constitution and By-Laws shall be read at the second meeting in October in January, in March, and in May.

Article XV: If a member has been absent at three consecutive meetings she is requested to report **the same to the President and is excused.**¹²³

¹²³ Every Monday Club Meeting Minutes, 1912-1913. This last statement in bold appears to be in a different font and darker. Someone must have added this to by-laws after they were written by the secretary. This indicates an attendance problem as high up as the elected president.

Appendix III: Every Monday Club Member List 1889-1912

After 1912, the membership is not recorded in the meeting minute books. For accuracy, the membership noted here is only from the first twenty three years.

Anderson, Miss Mary	Duke, Mrs. William G.
Auguch, Mrs. Albert	Ellyson, Mrs. William (Mollie Johnson)
Bacon, Miss Laura	Foster, Mrs. Mary
Baldy, Mrs. E.	Frayser, Miss Mary
Bingham, Mrs. Eugene C.	Frenillian, Mrs. Josephine
Blankenship, Miss Annie	Gaines, Mrs. R.E.
Boatwright, Mrs. F.W. (Ellen Moore Thomas)	Gardner, Mrs. C.S.
Bomar, Mrs. E.E.	Garnett, Miss Ella
Brasher, Mrs. Chas G.	Gay, Miss Ware
Brock, Mrs. C.W.R.	Gooch, Mrs. William
Butler, Mrs. John T.	Gwathmey, Mrs. Ryland R.
Cammack, Miss Bessie	Gwathmey, Mrs. Basil (Eva Baker)
Carroll, Ms. Gillie (Mrs. Gordon McCabe)	Hall, Miss Jessie
Chandler, Mrs. J.A.C.	Harris, Mrs. William Asbury (Effie Park Dawson)
Clarke, Mrs. Harvey	Hatcher, Miss Orië
Cooper, Mrs. Leo	Hill, Mrs. John Booten (Virginia Byrd)
Craig, Mrs. R.W. (Lottie Hartman McGill)	Hodges, Mrs. Allison
Crawford, Mrs. W.E.	Holladay, Miss Caroline Gwathmey
Crump, Mrs. Benjamin (Elizabeth)	Hovey, Mrs. George (Clara Brewer)
Crump, Mrs. James (Nannie Palmore Armistead)	Howells, Mrs. Bascom
Cox, Mrs. Gilbert	James, Mrs. Dr.
Cox Mrs. M.F.	James, Miss Tillie
Dew, Mrs. John	James, Mrs. W.C.
Dew, Miss Mary Sue	Johnson, Mrs. Cameron
Dickinson, Mrs. H.E.	
Dill, Mrs. J.S.	

Johnston Miss Coralie
 Jones, Mrs. Ashby
 King, Mrs. J.M. P (Cornelia Ward)
 Kinnard, Miss
 Knox, Miss
 Lee, Miss Anna Mason
 Lee, Miss Juliette
 Lee, Miss Katherine
 Lee, Mrs. R.B.
 Loving, Mrs. R.L.
 MacVickar, Mrs. Malcolm
 McCarricky, Miss Jane
 McDaniel, Mrs. George W.
 McCartney, Mrs. Dan
 Metcalf, Mrs. J.C.
 Mitchell, Mrs. S.C. (Alice Virginia Broadas)
 Moore, Mrs. Thomas
 Morgan, Miss Alice
 Murrill, Mrs. Thomas W.
 Neirmeyer, Mrs. Sarah
 Nunn, Mrs. Chas
 Patterson, Mrs. A.W.
 Patterson, Mrs. R.A.
 Parker, Miss Ellie
 Pleasants, Mrs. Sye
 Pollard, Miss Bessie
 Pollard, Mrs. Garland (Grace Philips)
 Pollard, Miss Mace
 Ramsay, Mrs.
 Robinson, Mrs. Enders (Virginia Morgan)
 Ryland, Miss Julia
 Shelton, Miss Witkon
 Shelton, Miss French
 Smith, Mrs. Harry Howell
 Smith, Mrs. William
 Spotts, Miss eva
 Stars, Miss Margaret
 Stratford, Mrs. A.L.
 Sublett, Miss Ruth
 Sweeney, Miss
 Taliaferro, Mrs. Philip Pope
 Thomas, Miss Ella M.
 Thomas, Mrs. Julian
 Trevillian, Mrs. Josephine
 Tupper, Miss Mamie
 Warwick, Miss Florence
 Whitfield, Miss Emma
 Whitfield, Mrs. Theo
 Willingham, Miss Camille
 Willingham, Mrs. R.J.
 Wills, Mrs. J.N. (Juliette Pollard)
 Winn, Mrs. Chas
 Winfree, Miss E.G.
 Winston, Miss Daisy
 Woodson, Mrs. Frank
 Worsham, Mrs. Gibson

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