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Around the World and across the Board: Nellie Bly and the Geography of Games

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IN THE WINTER OF 1889, AMERICAN JOURNALIST NELLIE BLY, the pseudonym of Elizabeth Jane Cochrane, embarked upon a sensational "round the world race" as she attempted to outpace Jules Verne's fictional record from *Around the World in 80 Days* for Joseph Pulitzer's New York *World* newspaper. The *World* endorsed the Nellie Bly Tour as a "magnificent object lesson" demonstrating how new modern technologies and globalizing English made world travel accessible to any "ordinary" American. Catering to the popular interest in travel, the newspaper adroitly recast the dynamic tensions between the familiar and foreign, home and away—the travelogue's narrative frame—in its novel marketing of Bly's circumnavigation. In an era of fierce circulation wars, it sought to captivate and grow its broad multi-ethnic and cross-class readership with an expansive vision of the globe at a time when the world's geographic scale seemed to grow ever smaller in the daily press reports as the speed of transnational travel threatened to exceed the creative power of the human imagination. The inconsistencies of this mass-mediated vision of the world undergoing simultaneous expansion and contraction found expression in its representations of Bly as the "New American Girl," a figure that at once emblemized an imperial womanhood and a uniquely *American* form of modernity. The *World's* "fair circumnavigator" became an immediate national sensation, and her triumphant transnational journey heralded a new phase in the meaning and form of travel writing and travel culture that radically remade notions of womanhood and perceptions of world geography in Gilded Age America.

As imagined and idealized in Gilded Age American literature, the trope of travel expressed both the desires and the fears of a modernizing society made rapidly mobile by ad-

vances in travel and communication technologies. Travel became unfixed from actual geography and turned into metaphor at the moment when its cultural significance began to shift under the twofold pressures of a burgeoning global tourism industry and overseas national expansion. By the end of the decade, the *World* was well aware that neither "globe trotting" nor its chronicles were particularly interesting or novel feats: "Since Cook's day the number of globe trotters would make a good sized army. Every now and again somebody becomes imbued with the idea that the surest road to fame is to run around the globe and then write books to crowd upon the shelves of libraries. Few of them are ever read."¹ In the newspaper's aggressive and deft marketing of the Nellie Bly Tour, it offered a novel form of travel writing that circulated Bly's transnational travels directly into American homes and imaginatively repositioned the reader within a global network of transit. Unlike the ossified travelogue gathering dust on library shelves, the *World* provided its readership with interactive daily accounts of Bly's travels bridging geographical distance through the immediacy of the modern periodical press form. The description of foreign peoples and places, the hallmark of the travelogue genre, likewise, was almost entirely given over to reports on the experience of transit: the speed, missed connections, delays, detours, timetables, and routes. *World* staff writers liberally enlarged upon Bly's international reports to suit public interests and generate copy. The *World* reading public began imagining itself as a coherent national community through Bly's transnational travels, which reconceived the world as an interconnected geography of imperial metropolises and colonial outposts and, which was perhaps not a coincidence, as U.S. imperial ventures in Asia, the Pacific, and the Caribbean began radically to expand the boundaries of the nation.

TOURING AT HOME: THE WORLD, BOARD GAME, AND GUESSING CONTEST

Joseph Pulitzer took over the *World* in 1883 and hired Bly in 1887 after she had gained moderate regional recognition as a foreign correspondent in Mexico for the *Pittsburgh Dispatch*. Bly's pioneering "investigative reporting" techniques,

which included feigning madness in 1887 to uncover the horrific conditions in the Blackwell's Island asylum, made her into a nationally recognized figure and helped sustain the *World* as the largest-circulation newspaper in the country. Verne's immensely successful novel depicting the globe-trotting travels of the eccentric Londoner Phileas Fogg captivated the American imagination when it was first translated from French in 1873 and inspired Bly's highly publicized challenge.² With the glib statement that it would be "only a matter of 28,000 miles, and seventy-five days and four hours, until I shall be back again," Bly departed on her record-breaking globe trot to return only *seventy-two* days later on January 25, 1890.³ Bly traveled without a chaperone and with only one piece of hand baggage on a route that took her through the major commercial cities of the late nineteenth-century Western and colonial world. The *World* emphasized the fact that Bly was to avail herself of only the "usual means of transportation" and travel without the benefit of "a single adventitious aid of any kind," allowing the press to record the state of the art in travel and communication technologies including the telegraph (1844), the transcontinental railroad (1869), the Suez Canal (1869), the established British Peninsular and Oriental and Occidental and Oriental Steamship lines, and even traveler's currency.⁴ On Bly's triumphant four-day transcontinental rail journey from San Francisco to New York, she told the *Topeka Daily Capital* that any "ordinary" person could make a trip like hers, "traveling simply for the sake of traveling" in seventy-five days for \$1,500, a more modest budget than the £19,000 (\$92,340 in 1890) Fogg expended in his journey.⁵

To generate sales in the long absences between Bly's cablegrams and letters, the *World* promoted "The Nellie Bly Guessing Match," a contest offering a free first-class trip to Europe (London, Paris, and Rome) for the guess nearest to the final travel time (in days, hours, minutes, and seconds).⁶ Bly was unaware of the guessing contest until her arrival in Yokohama made recent news copies available. The winner, according to the *World*, would also be "provided with a private cipher code, so that it will be possible to send cable messages from any part of Europe to any part of America" in the same manner as Bly during her tour.⁷ Cheque Bank of London and New York later agreed to award the winner £50 in checks (equivalent to \$250), which the *World* advertised

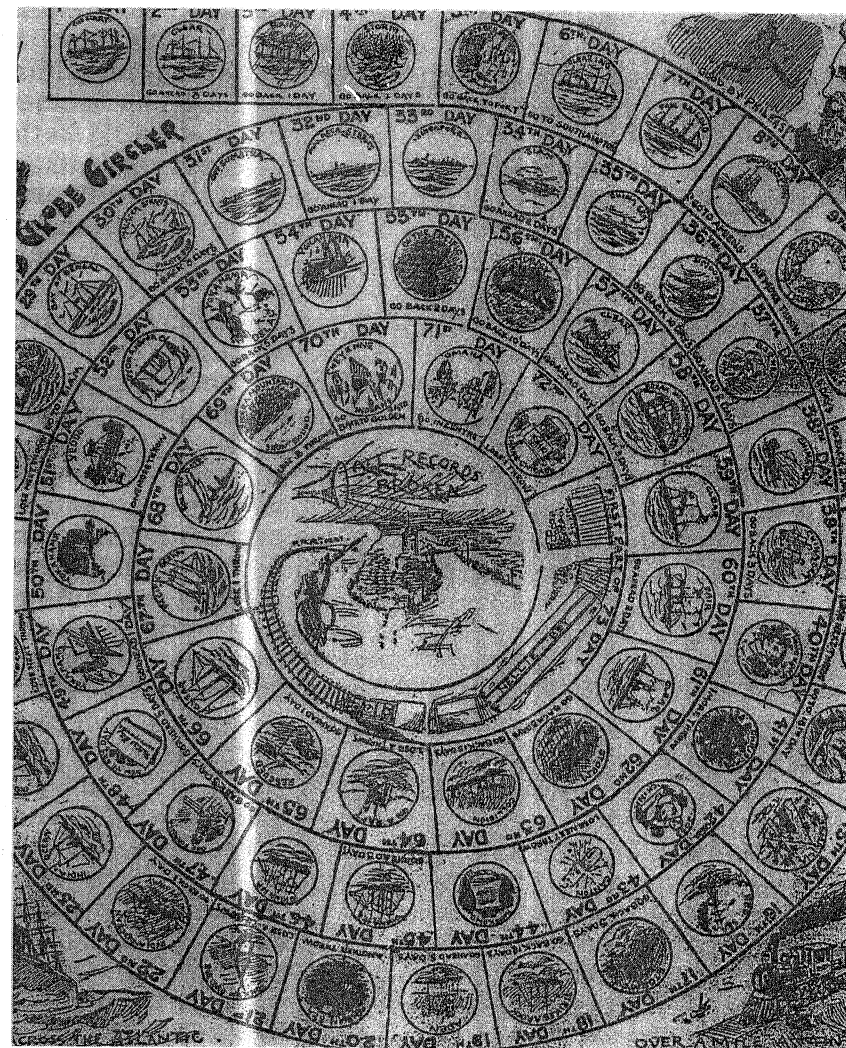
as "a miniature edition, as it were, of the book of checks Nellie Bly carried in her little gripsack."⁸

The "Guessing Match," as did the simultaneously produced board game, allowed contestants to "travel" by proxy and imaginatively identify with Bly during her journey. It also created an imagined community of contestants—a heterogeneous public joined voluntarily through participation in a "guessing tournament," which the Washington, D.C., correspondent described as a "perfect craze" with dignitaries such as "senators and judges" hazarding multiple guesses.⁹ The newspaper office received approximately 927,433 contest coupons and nearly 20,000 letters in the period between December 1, 1889, and January 23, 1890. The *World* exulted in the knowledge that "the guesses came from all parts of the country. Hardly a State or Territory is without representation. . . . *The World* readers are scattered all over the habitable globe and, as practically everybody is following Nellie Bly, a large proportion of everybody is sure to be in the great guessing match."¹⁰ Offering readers a personal stake in the outcome of Bly's "race against time," the *World* published an almost daily selection of these testimonials ranging from presumptuous claims of victory to helpful guessing formulas to sustain a tense yet dynamic balance of camaraderie and rivalry. With no limit to the number of individual guesses as long as the original blank was used, the *World* republished the contest coupon frequently with elaborate updates on Bly's progress that recalculated her ever-changing itinerary, introducing uncertainty to encourage a steady stream of guesses.¹¹ Interest in the contest was undistinguishable from interest in Bly's journey, and newsdealers had "difficulty in supplying copies of *The World* on the days when coupons have been printed."¹² When the *World* announced F. W. Stevens of New York City the winner on February 2, it also included an extensive list of the nearly 150 contestants who guessed within fifteen seconds of the correct time. The *World* used the results of the "Guessing Match" to sustain the collective identification with Bly in the effort to promote circulation.¹³

In 1890, coinciding with Bly's whirlwind tour, the McLoughlin Brothers released the hugely successful *Game of Round the World with Nellie Bly*, which invited players to follow Bly's recent "globe girdling" travels.¹⁴ The richly illustrated board game represented each day of Bly's spectacular seventy-two-

day world journey with a brightly colored square following a spiraling path concluding before an image of Lower Manhattan, Brooklyn Bridge, and the Statue of Liberty, a short distance from the Jersey City-Hoboken Pier where she began her record-breaking circumnavigation on November 17, 1889.¹⁵ The *World* offered a popular promotional black-and-white facsimile of *Game of Round the World* in its January 26, 1890, exhaustive multipage Sunday tribute to Bly, which ensured the success of the infinitely more durable board game.¹⁶ In the nineteenth century, geographical knowledge entered the American popular consciousness through mass-market cartography, school textbooks, the *National Geographic* magazine, travelogues, print journalism, photography, and, perhaps most informally, board games.¹⁷ Advances in chromolithography, a color-printing technology perfected by midcentury, permitted the low-cost reproduction of the bold and richly colored images used to illustrate board games.¹⁸ Ranging in price from modest twenty-five-cent card games to more lavish three- and four-dollar editions, these newer games were readily affordable to the average middle-class household. Fashionable games such as the “dissected map,” an early jigsaw puzzle, taught children the current geography of an ever-changing nation.¹⁹ Other map-based race games such as *The Amusing Game of Innocence Abroad* (1888), based upon Mark Twain’s best-selling novel, offered players the thrill of traveling across local, regional, national, and international geographies all from the comfort of home as they shared in the national ethos of expansionism.²⁰

The “Guessing Match” and *Game of Round the World* recreated the experience of Bly’s actual travels in a stationary medium that stripped the concept of travel of its cultural entitlements and made it accessible to the humblest of American homes. Such forms of “armchair traveling,” as the travelogue, afforded players the exciting pleasures of travel without the journey’s actual hardships or costs. Newspapers such as Bly’s former *Pittsburgh Dispatch* proclaimed, “Readers of the *Dispatch* can go round the world just as well and five times as comfortably as Miss Bly, and yet never quit their parlors.”²¹ Through reproduction technologies such as chromolithography and photography, it had become a commonplace, according to Miles Orvell, “to speak of the practical advantages and pleasures of ‘touring’ without having to leave home.”²² An 1885 promotional catalogue for the



“Game of Round the World.” *New York World*. January 26, 1890. Page 21. General Research Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundation.

McLoughlin Brothers advertised its board games as a form of "edu-tainment" that positively enforced stasis in its players: "They tend to make happy fireside, and keep children at home, instead of compelling them to seek amusement away from the family circle." Game play, according to this advertisement, serves an indispensable function in maintaining the order and social well-being of the nineteenth-century hearth threatened by the expansionist impulse toward otherness and difference. Map games such as *Game of Round the World* proposed that families remain at home and find fulfillment through imaginative travel and engagement with the foreign.

These games did not aspire to the authenticity of felt experience; rather, they reinvented the popular imaginings of foreign geography in a manner akin to what Mary Louise Pratt describes as the ideological work of the travelogue's description of place.²³ Map games projected social fantasies onto what had begun to be visually represented as a contained nonhuman world, and this tendency to "enclose reality in manageable forms," as Orvell argues, was a fundamental characteristic of late-nineteenth-century American popular culture.²⁴ *Game of Round the World* flattened geography into clearly demarcated, standardized playing spaces according to its own peculiarly fixed spatial and temporal logic of scale ("go ahead 3 days," "go back 10 days," "go back to port," "go to Amiens," "go in centre") free of social agents through which the world, in Bly's words, "lost its roundness and seemed a long distance with no end."²⁵ These games transformed three-dimensional geography into a two-dimensional playing space and offered the player's proxy an illusion of mastery over a highly mediated and graphically diminished world. Unlike the map or atlas, *Game of Round the World* made no attempt to represent the "real" geography of Bly's travel. It pictured the telos of travel in a curiously elliptical rather than linear fashion that cast national and international places into a jarring proximity where travel outward toward the foreign was visualized as an ever-constricting inward movement toward the nation's commercial center, New York City.

The *World*, according to the biographer Brooke Kroeger, went so far as to claim that Bly's "race against time" had "given new meaning to the study of geography."²⁶ The *World* published an itinerary of Bly's trip with a map of her "lines

of travel" the morning of her departure and continued to offer a variety of charts, diagrams, grids, and timetables delineating Bly's changing route, each depicting a different perspective upon the globe.²⁷ In explaining the significance of Bly's globe trot to a puzzled French public, the editor of the *Petit Journal* newspaper stated: "I have answered some, saying, 'It is an excellent demonstration of American independence and of the value of the American system of education.' Personally the idea of this daring journey around the globe fills my heart with great sadness at the thought of passing a thousand interesting places without visiting them."²⁸ Bly's journey, for this French editor, was the result of a uniquely "American" form of education at odds with a more European understanding of travel as means of cultural "instruction" and social gilding. In "A Boon for Geography," the *World* voiced a ringing endorsement of Bly's "great educational influence" upon an American public united in its geographical inquiry:

Her progress is followed on maps by thousands and thousands in all parts of the United States. For young and old it has awakened an interest in geography and in books of travel that could not have been called into existence by any other means than *The World's* enterprise in sending its little champion to girdle the globe in less than seventy-five days. The booksellers and the school teachers will tell all who have interest in the subject that there is now prevalent among children and grown people an absolute craze for geographical study. Boys and girls in the schools pore over their atlases with much deeper attention and interest than they did two months ago. Parents, too, call for these textbooks, and with ostensible desire to help the little folks out, poke around in the Java Sea and try to measure the distance from Hong Kong to San Francisco with the first joint of the thumb.²⁹

As the board game did, this *World* report fashioned Bly into the reader's imagined proxy to promote the didactic importance of the "great globe trot" even as it reduced the globe to the dimensions of the human body, the "joint . . . of the thumb," as the new measure of geographical scale.

In the days preceding Bly's arrival, the newspaper made the bolder assertion, "Everyone will be, to some extent, improved by the Nellie Bly Tour," which included both a domestic and a foreign audience.³⁰ On her transatlantic steamboat voyage to London, Bly discovers the "erroneous

impressions entertained by most foreigners about Americans and America," the majority of whom, to her surprise, were "not able to tell where the United States is."³¹ One passenger, according to Bly's humorous narration, received a letter from Germany addressed simply to "HOBOKEN, OPPOSITE THE UNITED STATES."³² The geographical benightedness of such "foreigners" demand that Bly through her globe-girdling journey give the world a much-needed corrective lesson in U.S. national geography.³³ While such pretensions aggrandize the unmistakable self-interest of the *World* editorial staff, American readers also confirmed the didactic value of Bly's "flying trip." Jared Barhite, a New York public school principal, wrote the following complimentary words to the editor praising Bly's trip for the advancement of geographical knowledge: "Perhaps no act of recent date has had a more potent influence in the development of geographical knowledge among the pupils of our public schools than the flying trip of Miss Nellie Bly around the earth. The rotundity, size, climate, products and people of the earth have all had a full share of discussion as the boys and girls of our schools have proceeded, in the mind's eye, with Miss Nellie."³⁴ The *World* regularly mentioned the interest of the "little folk" in Bly's journey to counter charges that the Nellie Bly Tour was little more than a well-managed publicity stunt.³⁵

Upon successfully completing her journey, Bly asserted, with the *World's* ever-ready amplification, that she had "established . . . a standard schedule" for circumnavigation, transforming, to the chagrin of critics, the "dignified leisure" of the "Grand Tour" into a form of rapid mass transit: the humorous conceit of Verne's novel.³⁶ While the *World* ostentatiously announced the "great globe trot" with the headliner "Nellie Bly to Make an Unequalled Rapid Transit Record," the European press expressed less salutary responses to what they perceived to be the impoverishment of "travel" as a cultural concept.³⁷ The former French prime minister Jules Simon admitted to the *World's* overseas correspondent that he "cannot be enthusiastic about this adventure, making the world too small, reducing what was once immense and the admiration of peoples into a little thing to hold in the palm of the hand. . . . Formerly great men's sons, having finished their education, made a grand tour of the world slowly. Now they travel faster, with, however, less profit. . . . We shall soon come to consider the jour-

ney trivial, seeing that a limit is imposed upon human peregrinations."³⁸ Bly's globe-girdling journey, for critics such as Simon, confirmed the fear that modern advancement was gained only at the expense of diminished human interactions, cultural exchange, and self-knowledge. What begins in Bly's travelogue as a fantasy of leisure from newspaper work becomes her most triumphant journalistic accomplishment.³⁹ She reformulates the idea of travel, "a most delightful and much needed rest," into work, discovering "the elixir of life" in a selection of steamship timetables that confirmed the plausibility of her new scheme.⁴⁰ The shifting axis of identification from work to leisure, according to Gail Bederman, coincided with the growth of consumer culture's ethos of pleasure in the 1890s, which undermined middle-class ideals of manliness and the "sexualized specialization of the Victorian doctrine of spheres."⁴¹ Bly renegotiates the masculine ethos of the workaday world to identify her unconventional travels as a form of labor antithetical to leisure.⁴² In Hong Kong, Bly assured her many would-be hostesses, "I was not on pleasure bent, but business, and I considered it my duty to refrain from social pleasures, devoting myself to things that lay more in the line of work."⁴³ Ever fearful "that Time would win the race," Bly confined her descriptions of places such as Calais to the commercial vicinities neighboring train stations where she found herself wandering impatiently waiting for delayed conveyances.⁴⁴ The few recorded moments where the leisured temporality of travel momentarily seduces Bly are quickly banished by the fact that "this is a work-a-day world and I am racing Time around it."⁴⁵ While Simon's criticisms of "modern racing" betray a nostalgia for the "old slow mode of locomotion" and the grand tours of the past century, they also indicate how the Nellie Bly Tour precipitated a change in late-nineteenth-century perceptions of travel. The very scale of the world seemed to diminish as Bly's "Rapid Transit Record" began to transform the vaunted cultural concept of travel into a uniquely "democratic" American form of transit.

THAT PLUCKY AMERICAN GIRL: GENDER, MODERNITY, AND TRAVELS IN ENGLISH

Bly's itinerary, modeled closely upon Fogg's imaginary route, took her through London, Calais, Brindisi, Port Said,

Ismailia, Suez, Aden, Colombo, Penang, Singapore, Hong Kong, Yokohama, San Francisco, and New York with a slight detour to Amiens, where she met Verne in a highly publicized encounter. Verne was curious to discover why the itinerary excluded Bombay, the only substantial deviation from the novel's fictional route, and reportedly questioned Bly only to receive the following pithy response: "Because I am more anxious to save time than a young widow."⁴⁶ At the end of Verne's novel, an astonished Passepartout exclaims to Fogg, "We might have made the tour of the world in only seventy-eight days . . . by not crossing India."⁴⁷ However, as Fogg coolly explains, the passage through India was essential to the novel's denouement, the sentimentalized arc of the protagonist's journey toward marriage and reintegration within the social fabric of Victorian England: "If I had not crossed India, I should not have saved Auoda; she would not have been my wife."⁴⁸ Whereas Verne's famously phlegmatic gentleman returns to England with an Indian maharaja admittedly "fair as a European" for a wife rescued from a "suttee" (the widow pyre), Bly's travel narrative repeatedly undercuts such romanticized and deeply colonial tropes of masculine power through mobility. Travel, as Pratt cautions, cannot be detached from its imperial history or prevailing masculine paradigms, which legitimized colonial expansion in the disinterested pursuit of knowledge and figured mobility as an unproblematic articulation of masculine freedoms. Bly's "globe-girdling" travels upset the established bourgeois separation of the spheres characterized by masculine mobility and feminine immurement within the home as she challenged both Verne's fictional record and masculine presumptions: "It was all very well for an Englishman like Mr. Fogg to make the tour of the world with a carpetbag; a lady could not be expected to travel comfortably under such conditions."⁴⁹

The phenomenal commercial success of Bly's world tour suggests that it fulfilled an American longing for boundlessness and expansion characteristic of the geopolitical imaginary of the 1890s that would seem at first oddly misrepresented in this idiosyncratic *female* world traveler.⁵⁰ The "old-fashioned" editor of the "conservative" French periodical *Le Gaulois* condemned Bly for the indecency of her travels, emphatically stating, "Such a young person travelling to such a distance unaccompanied by a male relative

would be tabooed by society."⁵¹ John Cockerill, Pultizer's chief editor at the *World*, voiced similar objections to Bly's journey: "In the first place you are a woman and would need a protector, and even if it were possible for you to travel alone you would need to carry so much baggage that it would detain you from making rapid changes. Besides you speak nothing but English, so there is no use talking about it; no one but a man can do this."⁵² Bly's gender difference, the unseemliness of a woman's traveling without a male chaperone combined with her lack of cultural knowledge, her facility with only the English language in a not-too-subtle nod toward her "working girl" status, makes her unfit for the challenges of world travel.⁵³ Bly, in fact, had yet to travel abroad beyond continental North America or take a steamship passage before this journey. The gendered significance of Bly's traveling the world "alone and unprotected" was not lost upon the American public, and the *Kansas City Times* chose to interpret it as a direct challenge to male critics of female travel and issued the following directive upon Bly's successful venture: "If Nellie succeeds in making the circuit even in 100 days the man who has been paragraphing for these many years on woman's inability to travel should find it time to stop."⁵⁴ Reporting upon the momentous meeting between Bly and Verne, *Le Gaulois* offered a similar interpretation of the gendered significance of the voyage: "Miss Bly travels alone, and the object of her long journey is to prove that a woman, speaking no language but the English, can get around the world without anybody's help."⁵⁵ English metropolitan papers such as the *London Globe* and *London Telegraph* also concurred with these interpretations: "Her mission is to prove not only that she can put a girdle round the earth in seventy-seven days, but that a woman who speaks nothing but English—including, of course, American—can travel round the whole world unprotected alone."⁵⁶

These American and European newspapers were impressed not only with the novelty of a lone female circumnavigator, but with the fact that Bly's successful transnational journey would establish the viability of English as the language of world commerce and travel. The international reports on Bly's world travels publicly recognized the globalization of English. They confirmed the language as a deterritorialized form of imperial power no longer

contained within or contiguous with colonial boundaries, a defining characteristic, according to Amy Kaplan, of the discourse of American imperialism in the 1890s.⁵⁷ This linguistic conquest of the world aligns Bly's journey with the celebration of English colonialism abroad in a period when the United States, according to Kaplan, began "shifting from continental expansion to overseas empire, from absorbing new territories into the domestic space of the nation to acquiring foreign colonies and protectorates abroad."⁵⁸ This geopolitical imaginary is distinct from the territorialized worldview found in Verne's depiction of Detective Fix, an agent of the metropolitan police, who, suspecting Fogg to be a wanted criminal, also races against time, fearing that destinations in China, Japan, and the United States, will place him safely outside English colonial jurisdictions. Bly's sense of belonging in the world as an "American" is intimately tied to her intelligibility as an English-speaking subject. Bly feels safely "at home" while abroad, and her "conquest" of time, geography, and linguistic difference reactivated not-so-past images of American Manifest Destiny and millennialism, albeit in a contradictory *eastward* march. This figure of the "New American Girl" became an emblem of American modernity as Bly was praised for adding "another spark to the great beacon-light of American liberty that is leading the people of other nations in the grand march of civilization and progress."⁵⁹ These early representations of American modernity as youthfully feminine acknowledged Bly's successful deconstruction of the gendered meaning of travel and mobility, even as they reinvigorated masculine paradigms of imperial power and possession.

Travel for nineteenth-century Englishwomen, according to Inderpal Grewal, often implied "a mobility that was synonymous with freedom and rights for women" that aligned them with the larger imperial project represented as masculine phallic power penetrating the feminized space of the colonial territories.⁶⁰ The *World's* coverage of Bly's triumphant return was deeply invested in this contradictory narrative of a new imperial American womanhood. The newspaper even went so far as to represent this "original feminine trotter" as its proxy in the domination of national print culture: "It is evident that Miss Bly's feat had obtained a continent-wide reputation and that *The World* penetrates everywhere."⁶¹ As Bly neared the final stages of her itiner-

ary "homeward bound" across the Pacific Ocean, the *World* described her victory, again, through this masculine trope of conquest: "Her grit has been more than masculine. . . . She is coming home to dear old America with the scalps of the carpers and critics strung on her slender girdle, and about her head a monster wreath of laurel and forget-me-nots, as a tribute to American pluck, American womanhood and American perseverance."⁶² Such platitudes worked in tandem in the various illustrations that the pioneering *World* cartoonist Walt McDougall drew of Bly, including the one of her perched upon the prow of the *Oceanic* awaiting her welcome "back to American soil."⁶³ The morning after the triumphant return, the *World* splashed on its front page another McDougall illustration of Bly in her trademark blue plaid ulster coat creating "a little pardonable consternation" among an illustrious group of imperial explorers and globe circlers including Francis Drake, Ferdinand Magellan, Vasco de Gama, and Captain Cook with the caption "She's Broken Every Record."⁶⁴

These representations, I argue, sought to revitalize a white American manhood encoded in allusions to the frontier and imperial conquest, paradoxically, through Bly as the figure for a vital new white American *womanhood* whose modern record-breaking achievements are posed against those of a masculine European past. This new imperial American womanhood was not simply the counterpart to the exoticized native woman in a teleological spectrum of civilization and culture, the representational commonplace of nineteenth-century travel writing and ethnography. As Berman and Kaplan variously argue, the forces of industrialization and feminization "at home" forced the reconfiguration of white middle-class American masculinity in the 1890s, which had long been linked to ideas of nationhood and represented through the dynamic of territorial expansion.⁶⁵ Empire, according to Kaplan, became the theater for masculine refashioning in the decade of the 1890s, and the national press guided by the *World* resorted to this repertoire of images in their various representations of Bly's triumph. The reclamation of white American masculinity was curiously domesticated and inflected through the figure of that "plucky American girl," a youthful New Woman critical of patriarchal conventions both at home and abroad. Supporters and admirers attributed to Bly the very essence



"Always on Time!" *New York World*. January 22, 1890. Page 1. General Research Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundation.

of American womanhood that was, paradoxically, confirmed through her highly publicized performative transgression of the gendered conventions of travel. In the riotous celebrations welcoming Bly's return, she was toasted as "an American girl—a true type of womanhood" even as guest speakers expressed humorous surprise that she had "not brought home a husband."⁶⁶ She was touted as the representative "American Girl," who, in an allusion to Henry James's unfortunate Daisy Miller, "will no longer be misunderstood. She will be recognized as pushing, determined, independent, able to take care of herself alone and single-handed wherever she may go."⁶⁷

Bly's public inscription as a figure for a new imperial American womanhood was forged as much through an intimate engagement with the domestic history of U.S. domination "at home" as it was through her travels abroad. These images of "globe-girdling" Bly did not directly reference the legacies of African enslavement in the United States and westward colonial expansion into Mexico, yet her construction in the popular press was implicitly routed through these recent and ongoing domestic histories. According to general biographies, George Madden, the managing editor of the *Pittsburgh Dispatch*, selected Elizabeth Cochrane's pseudonym from a popular black dialect minstrel song, "Nelly Bly," that Stephen Collins Foster composed for the Christy Minstrels in 1850. When read within this supplementary frame of reference, "Nellie Bly" represents a *new* imperial American womanhood that bears the historical past of U.S. slavery in a period that continued to find blackface performance immensely popular and profitable. In fact, Bly's travelogue of her circumnavigation notes with pleasure the blackface minstrel shows performed by "a number of young men" aboard the *Victoria* to wile away the tedium of the passage through Africa by way of the Suez Canal.⁶⁸ Bly, moreover, first began using print journalism to reshape her public persona as a self-professed representative "New American Girl" in her earlier experiences as a foreign correspondent in Mexico.⁶⁹ In 1886 with her mother as escort, Bly traveled to a country recently opened to U.S. travel, investment, and economic expansion under the second presidential term of Porfirio Díaz and returned five months later under fear of imprisonment for voicing views critical of the Mexican government.⁷⁰ In her travelogues of the Mexican

countryside, which were later collected into a book and published in 1888 as *Six Months in Mexico*, Bly defied conventions of gender and travel while abroad to present herself as a "free American girl" who could "accommodate herself to circumstances without the aid of a man."⁷¹

The *World's* highly publicized tour was not publicly unchallenged as another female journalist, Elizabeth Bisland from John Brisben Walker's infinitely more "genteel" *Cosmopolitan* magazine, set off unsuccessfully to best Bly by circling the globe in the opposite westward direction. The *World*, understandably, paid little attention to Walker's challenge other than a brief mention of how the excitement over Bly's journey provoked "plans for imitation."⁷² While Bisland also broke Fogg's fictional record by completing her journey in seventy-six days, Bly's success easily overshadowed hers. The *World* began serializing Bly's account of travels, what would later become the travelogue *Nellie Bly's Book: Around the World in 72 Days*, in its Sunday issue immediately upon her return. Likewise, Bisland wrote a series of articles describing her circumnavigation for the *Cosmopolitan* magazine that she later published in 1891 as *In Seven Stages: A Flying Trip around the World*. Although Bisland's travelogue delights in a languid temporality and self-indulgent recollections of her New Orleans plantation home and was thus quite distinct from Bly's trademark candidness and humor, it also aligns nascent American imperialist interest abroad with the global reach of the English language. In Bisland's narrative, English functions as a spatially unbounded form of imperialism, which nevertheless seeks to reconstitute American national uniqueness through a mythic Anglo-Saxonism: "Starting two months ago from a vast continent which the English race have made their own, where the English tongue, English laws, customs, and manners reign from sea to sea, in my whole course around the globe I have heard that same tongue, seen the same laws and manners, found the same race. . . . It fills my soul with a passion of pride that I, too, am an Anglo-Saxon."⁷³ Bisland's westward route, in this imagined identification, returns her symbolically to the wellspring of an Anglo-Saxon past as she experienced English dominion through the disembodied reach of the "English tongue," the necessary "proof" of the "the splendor of their empire, of their power, their wealth, of their dominance."⁷⁴ Bly likewise marveled at the breadth

and scope of the British empire at every destination, which bore the unmistakable marks of colonial possession whether in the shape of "a native policeman, in the Queen uniform"; the English man-of-war docked in the harbor of Aden; or the "Union Jack . . . floating over the English Consulate" in Canton.⁷⁵ As Bly arrived in one colonial harbor after another in her English-speaking routes of travel, she anxiously considers the belatedness of American expansionism, betraying the fear that perhaps the world had indeed become too small: "As I traveled on and realized more than ever before how the English have stolen almost all, if not all, desirable sea-ports."⁷⁶

UNPROTECTED WOMEN ABROAD: THE FEMALE TRAVEL NOVEL IN THE WAKE OF NELLIE BLY

In the months immediately after the well-publicized circumnavigations of Bly and Bisland, the *New York Times* published a review of a new novel, *A Social Departure: How Orthodocia and I Went around the World*, by the then relatively unknown writer Sara Jeannette Duncan.⁷⁷ Initially published in 1890, the novel was popular enough to warrant a more richly illustrated second edition in 1893. A journalist with the *Toronto Globe* and *Washington Post*, Duncan penned *A Social Departure* as the first of five novels that traced the gendered transnational circuits of travel and exchange, particularly those between and among what Duncan's narrator described as the "European East," British colonial territories in India and China, and Canada, England, and the United States at the turn of the century.⁷⁸ The aptly titled *New York Times* book review "Two Women around the World" seized upon the recent memory of Bly's and Bisland's spectacular journeys to herald the emergence of a new and commercial form of travel writing: the female "travel novel." The travel novel, according to this reviewer, did not espouse the utilitarian didacticism of a Baedeker's or Murray's travel guide, but rather chose to embellish the travelogue's account of autobiographical experiences with the "little ravelings of fiction," refusing, as it did so, to distinguish critically "fact" from "fiction."⁷⁹ The new travel novel was really no different from the travelogues, map games, or *World* reports eagerly consumed in middle-class American parlors: for those

uninitiated to the adventures of "Round the World" travel, they were both equally the stuff of imagination.⁸⁰

The travel novel's "pleasurable" ambiguity, as in the case of *A Social Departure*, only serves to accentuate, inadvertently, the tenuous distinctions between real and imagined geographies of travel. Duncan's novel is a multiply mediated text written in the marketing spirit of the *World's* reconstruction of the travel genre. The unnamed American narrator cheekily admonishes those readers who prefer to "stay at home," declaring, "You delightful English people who stay at home haven't a conception of how much more delightful you sometimes become when you leave your leaky little island and get thoroughly warmed and dried abroad."⁸¹ Duncan returns Bly's feat to the realm of the imaginary as the reader follows the adventures of two self-described "planet pilgrims" on a journey around the world revealing what would have been received as humorous glimpses into the "progress of Western civilization in the Orient."⁸² The novel is a study in contrasts between the American narrator, a Bly-like character determined to travel only with the "ideal minimum of an umbrella and a waterproof," and the fashionable English Orthodoxia, who, burdened with "vagrant fancies" and astonishing baggage requirements, bears a remarkable resemblance to Bisland.⁸³ Rather than pairing prose with photographic plates as in *Nellie Bly's Book* (obtained from commercial sources since Bly forgot her Kodak in her rushed departure), Duncan collaborated with the popular British illustrator Frederick Henry Townsend (an illustrator for *Punch Magazine*), who created, as advertised on the book cover, 111 original images for the novel. *A Social Departure* reads as a "realistic" account of middle-class travels and offers the reader not only detailed and accurate descriptions of peoples and places, but useful advice for future travelers, references gleaned from Murray and Baedeker, and excerpts supposedly reproduced verbatim from Orthodoxia's travel notebook.⁸⁴

The *World*, likewise, framed Bly's stunt in terms of this novel blending of fact with fiction when it introduced her journey as "the task of turning a dream into a reality" with the headlining query: "Can Jules Verne's Great Dream Be Reduced to Actual Feat?"⁸⁵ While "thousands upon thousands have been content to stop with the reading" of Verne's imaginary travels, the newspaper congratulated itself on be-

ing the first actually to implement the idea.⁸⁶ It even advertised Bly's arranged meeting with Verne as an opportunity for her to "shake the hand of the man whose interesting romance was not so very far in advance of sober, solid fact after all."⁸⁷ The chief editor, Cockerill, also aggressively countered all suspicions of fraud, which only gave added significance to the rhetorical dialectic of fact and fiction as the newspaper relentlessly promoted Bly's "reality" over Verne's "imagination."⁸⁸ This late-nineteenth-century obsession with the "real," according to Orvell, placed American "newness" against European culture and civilization. The *World* was no different in representing Bly's race as an "authentic" experience of modernity through new technologies of travel, and the reading public enthusiastically embraced Bly's successful race as a distinctly *American* cultural accomplishment. The *Atlantic Constitution* remarked, "It [Verne's novel] was a tremendous yarn, but in these days fact knocks out fiction every time."⁸⁹ Human imagination diminishes before modernity's technological progress with the *World* as its representative vehicle; Memphis, moreover, according to the Tennessee correspondent, "views Nellie Bly's tour around the globe as one of this century's grandest achievements, reducing to reality . . . a fiction hitherto regarded as wild."⁹⁰ In the Sunday edition printed immediately upon Bly's celebrated New York arrival, the *World* confirmed its victory over the "imagination" with the following self-congratulatory front-page banner: "Even Imagination's Record Pales Before the Performance of 'The World's' Globe-Circler."⁹¹

While the New Woman figure is commonly depicted as self-reliant, adventurous, and associated with social questions such as coeducation and suffrage usually isomorphic with the Anglo-American nation, Orthodoxia and her traveling companion, in the wake of the Nellie Bly Tour, constitute themselves as "modern" Western women through complex circuits of transnational commerce and exchange. In the "Asian tropics," Orthodoxia and her American companion discover after being seduced into purchasing "cheap native silk . . . that the better 'Indian' fabrics are chiefly made in Manchester for this particular trade."⁹² As in Bly's account of travels, Duncan resolutely refuses to sentimentalize cross-cultural encounters and situates them within a nexus of economic exchange as her protagonists barter for goods and

engage servants in their travels. The novel humorously recasts the New Woman as both the harbinger of modernity and the ultimate global consumer, who facilitates the incorporation of the foreign within the domestic empire through an acquisitive femininity. Duncan playfully uses the image of "modernity in petticoats" to describe the uneven, and to the protagonists, paradoxical industrialization of Japan, with the New Woman representing, as in the Nellie Bly Tour, the progress of Western nations. In the words of the American narrator: "If you want to see the Land of the Rising Sun in anything like pristine simplicity, to travel eastward soon, for already she is girt about with a petticoat, and presently she will want to vote."⁹³ World travel, for the protagonists of *A Social Departure*, becomes a mode of acquiring foreignness, objects, and commodities (negotiated down to the "amazingly cheap") that eventually will be assimilated into the domestic space of empire, what the American narrator humorously describes as Orthodocia's provincial, yet expectant Wigginton, Devon. The Indian saris consigned to the bottom of Orthodocia's trunk will be made later "into window curtains or twisted over the backs of Wigginton sofas in the manner that Wigginton approves of."⁹⁴

Unlike Kaplan's analysis of the popular masculine historical romance, Duncan's travel novel refuses to escape from the contemporary geopolitics of the 1890s and participates openly in remapping the conceptual borders of the American nation in a gendered idiom of global commerce.⁹⁵ Rather than escape from the household and nation, the protagonists entertain the idea of reinventing Anglo-American domesticity through "foreign" importation. Orthodocia and her companion momentarily suspend their travels for six weeks in "Tokio," where they decide to indulge, according to the narrator, in their "feminine instinct" and "keep house." The two women identify this gendered "instinct" with the spirit of modernity, claiming, "We might even make it valuable to other people by starting a domestic reform movement, when we went home, based on the Japanese idea. Life amounts to very little in this age if one cannot institute a reform of some sort, and we were glad of the opportunity to identify ourselves with the spirit of the times."⁹⁶ While Duncan's narrator playfully toys with the idea of an American domestic reformation based upon the "Japanese idea," the reverse effects of "Western" modernization upon

Japan are comically figured in the mismatched dress and vocabulary of her Japanese hosts as hybrid "specimens of progress." While such textual moments illustrate the uneven and asymmetrical processes of modernization and globalization, they also conceive of the Western nations as powerfully borderless in their ability to expand, assimilate, and "domesticate" the foreign.

Public interest in Nellie Bly intensified in the days following her return to New York, and the newspaper attempted to satisfy the curious by publishing her portrait and biography in the following *Sunday World*. The demand for Bly's picture was so great that newsdealers sold out of copies by 10 A.M. while, according to the special dispatch, "Strings of customers made the rounds of the news stores, only to be disappointed."⁹⁷ Bly's publicity stunt quickly generated a commercial market of collectibles including the board game, trading cards, figurines, advertisements, and a clothing line all sporting various images of Bly as the winged "feminine Mercury" atop miniature replicas of the globe or gamely "girdling" the Earth as the "around-the-world tourist." One Bly supporter wrote to the *World* asking whether Bly would consent to the auction of her "little fore-and-aft cap" and began the bidding at ten dollars.⁹⁸ By mid-December, illustrator McDougall had already augured the commercial prospects of Bly's journey with a front-page cartoon entitled "Will It Come to This?" which depicted an ulster-clad Bly besieged with offers of "Nellie Bly" commercial goods.⁹⁹ In the days immediately after her return, the *World* indeed began printing advertisements using Bly's name, which had become synonymous with speed and technological advancement, to promote various products.

After her celebrated return, Bly took a rest from her work on *The World* and entered the lecture field, making her first local appearance before a sold-out audience on February 9.¹⁰⁰ After two more appearances at the Union Square Theatre, Bly fulfilled forty more lecturing engagements in "every large city of this continent . . . from New York to California" as she completed her travel account for her *World* editor.¹⁰¹ It would be an understatement to claim that the Nellie Bly Tour was a commercial product of an industrializing America heralding a new form of travel writing and a gendered market for mass tourism. Competing advertisements for life insurance, medicinal restoratives,



"Will It Come to This?" *New York World*. December 15, 1889. Page 1. General Research Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundation.

Kodak Cameras, Cheque Bank Checks, and Pears' Soap (not to miss a well-placed promotion) literally preface and frame Bly's "around-the-world story," and these various appeals to the savvy and specifically *female* world traveler constitute her as a modern, global consumer. Nellie Bly's globe-circling journey was quite simply a national sensation as the wide dissemination of Bly-inspired images and cultural artifacts occasioned a popularly recognized reorganization of world geography that commenced the 1890s, a decade that oversaw the rapid expansion of the U.S. nation through imperial annexation abroad.

NOTES

My thanks to Tom Glynn at the Archibald S. Alexander Library for his invaluable research assistance.

1. "Around the World," 1.

2. In 1886, the New York Free Circulating Library, the largest one of its kind, reported that *Around the World in Eighty Days* was its fifth most frequently borrowed title, having gone out 121 times in 1885–86 (New York Free Circulating Library, 29). Well after the Nellie Bly Tour in 1895, Verne's novel was still the second most borrowed title (behind Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*) in the Lower Manhattan branch of the Aguilar Free Library, which had eleven copies that went out 282 times (Aguilar Free Library, 26). The American George Makepeace Towle, former U.S. consul at Nantes, France (1866–68) and later at Bradford, England, translated the original French edition *Le Tour du Monde en Quatre-vingts Jours* into English in 1873. Verne's novel was serialized in *Le Temps* from November 6 to December 22, 1872, and then published in novel form on January 30, 1873. Among a number of historical books and periodical publications, Towle followed his translation of Verne's novel with a six-volume series of children's historical novels entitled the *Young Folks' Heroes of History* (1878–82), which included such circumnavigators as Vasco de Gama, Pizarro, Magellan, Marco Polo, Raleigh, and Drake. Bly's journey generated so much renewed interest in Verne's novel, which was already a clever hybrid of the most popular genres of the period (colonial adventure narrative, detective fiction, travelogue, sentimental romance), that ten new editions were reissued in France alone including the Parisian revival of a play based upon the novel.

3. Bly, 16.

4. "Around the World," 1, and Kroeger, 148.

5. Bly, 14. Bly further reduced this estimate in the travelogue: "Not counting the extra train, if first-class tickets had been bought from New York to New York it would only have cost \$805. By using economy, outside expenses should not exceed \$300" (Bly, 284–85).

6. The *World* printed numerous announcements reminding its readership to "order your Sunday World at once" for the "Nellie Bly Guessing Match" and advertised the contest in explanatory columns in the days before its December 1 appearance ("That Trip to Europe," 8, and "A Guess That Will Pay," 7).

7. "That European Trip," 2.

8. "Worth a Thousand Dollars," 2.

9. "Washingtonians Excited," 2.

10. "That Guessing Bee," 21. The *World* reported over 100,000 guesses received in the two days after the publication of the contest coupon ("The Guessing Match," 1). This number tripled over the next two days with the *World* reporting nearly 300,000 guesses on December 5 ("Nellie Bly's Guessers," 10). That number climbed to 864,000 guesses by December 8 ("That Guessing Bee," 21).

11. "Nellie Bly on the Wing," 2. The final coupon blank was printed on January 23, and Bly's arrival in Chicago marked the end of eligible guesses ("The Last Chance to Guess about Nellie Bly," 2). Oddly mirroring the novel's betting craze in which Phileas Fogg was "set down in the betting books as if he were a racehorse," Bly's journey was likewise the subject of "a good deal of quiet betting in the New York clubs (Verne, 29, and "Wagers on Nellie Bly," 1). The betting on Bly began in earnest as she entered the final oceanic segment of her voyage from Hong Kong to San

Francisco. The *World* reported, "Several wagers have been made by brokers, and in the hotels or wherever men congregate and gossip the Nellie Bly tour is soon the subject of discussion, and the debate usually drifts along until it assumes the shape of a betting match" ("Nellie Will Sail To-day," 2).

12. Nellie Bly's trip, according to this Buffalo, New York, dispatch, established the preeminence of the *World*: "The World's circulation for a long time has been larger than that of the other New York papers, but it has never been in such great demand before. When the newsdealers close at night now there are never any left over copies of *The World*, while piles of *Suns*, *Heralds*, and other papers are on the tables to supply late comers" ("She Is a Guesser," 2).

13. "The Winner," 9.

14. McLoughlin Brothers was a New York publishing firm that pioneered the systematic use of color printing technologies in children's books and then expanded to include nonbook toys such as games, blocks, and paper dolls. The firm was acknowledged as the leading manufacturer of the nation's board games and its name synonymous with educational family entertainment from 1858 until 1920, when the Massachusetts-based Milton Bradley acquired it (Hofer, 16-17).

15. The McLoughlin Bros. reissued three more editions of the game, two in 1890 and another in 1910, and produced two variations upon Bly's original theme, *Game of Trip 'Round the World* (1897) and *Game of Race Around the World* (1898).

16. "Game of Round the World with Nellie Bly," *New York World*, January 26, 1890, p. 21. The Sunday issue covering Bly's successful return sold 280,340 copies. Special dispatches from around the country reported matchless demands, and in the words of the Syracuse, New York, correspondent, "The demand for the *Sunday World* in this city to-day has been unprecedented in the history of the newsdealers here. Almost as soon as the newspaper train arrived the *Sunday Worlds* were all sold" ("Congratulations Galore," 2). By February 2, the *World* had already published readers' correspondence discussing their experiences playing the "Round the World with Nellie Bly" board game ("Nellie Wins Three Times in Three," 10).

17. Lithography and cerography or wax engraving gradually replaced the costlier copperplate engraving techniques of earlier map production and, according to Schulten, "facilitated the spread of inexpensive atlases through American culture" and the development of commercial cartography and the map as commodity (21-24, 44).

18. Hofer, 14.

19. The 1822 *Traveller's Tour through the United States* is the earliest known map game to be produced in America. These earlier games, according to Hofer, were beyond the means of most American households because they required an expensive labor-intensive process of hand-coloring monochrome prints (Hofer, 15).

20. George S. Parker first copyrighted this map board game, which was based upon Twain 1869 *Innocents Abroad* or the *New Pilgrims' Progress*, an account of his foreign travels to Europe and the Holy Land on one of the first organized middle-class tours, in 1888.

21. "Flitting around the Globe," 5.

22. Orvell, 73-74.

23. See Pratt, 51-52, 59-60.

24. Orvell, 34.

25. Bly, 17.

26. Kroeger, 162.

27. These various graphic representations of Bly's journey can be found in "Around the World," 1; "Success to Nellie Bly," 15; and "Nellie Bly on Her Journey 'Round the World," 2.

28. "Verne's 'Bravo,'" 1.

29. "A Boon for Geography," 2.

30. Kroeger, 162.

31. Bly, 26.

32. *Ibid.*, 27.

33. Some French readers of the *World* and Bly supporters including Madame Verne responded positively to the didactic dimensions of the journey: "I learned more of geography and the use of the globe since Miss Bly's visit than ever in my life before." In an interview with an overseas *World* correspondent, Madame Verne described their nightly geographical ritual following Bly's journey around the globe: "Often in the evenings he [Verne] would fetch out the map of the world or the globe and show me the place where Miss Bly probably was at that moment, and marked her progress on a large map upstairs with little flags every day" ("Verne's 'Bravo,'" 1).

34. "Echoes from the People," 4. As a measure of its adolescent appeal, the *World* included among its many published correspondences a letter from a North Carolina teacher who described how "forty-three pupils of the eighth and ninth grades of the Winston city schools, who are deeply interested in Miss Bly's trip around the world, made guesses as to the exact time it would take her to accomplish the journey" ("The Nellie Bly Tour," 2).

35. The *Memphis Sunday Times* described it as "the most thoroughly modern and American exhibition of unique advertising in the history of the art" ("The Little World-Girdler," 2).

36. Kroeger, 171. Various newspapers across the nation also speculated upon the incongruity of such "travels," remarking in the words of the *St. Paul Globe*, "This itinerary will give Miss Bly very little time to linger at the lunch counters en route, nor will she have much opportunity to inform herself concerning the customs of the Old World" ("The Great Globe Trot," 4).

37. "Nellie in Hong Kong," 1.

38. "Verne's 'Bravo,'" 1.

39. *Ibid.*, 4.

40. Bly, 10, 4.

41. Bederman, 13, 28.

42. *Ibid.*, 28.

43. Bly, 197.

44. *Ibid.*, 9-10.

45. *Ibid.*, 214. Time, in the *World's* promotion of the "Nellie Bly Guessing Match," often became a central character in Bly's journey as the newspaper struggled to find a way of documenting Bly's "new record" and satisfying its contestants with objectively accurate measurements. In the

last contest coupon printed for the "Guessing Match," the *World* announced that it had engaged the services of three timekeepers from local athletic clubs, who were all "well known in the world of amateur athletics and . . . thoroughly experienced in timing all sorts of events." These three men, supplied with synchronized stopwatches, would time Bly's arrival "strictly in accordance with the rules laid down by the Amateur Athletic Union of the United States, which are conceded to be eminently just and fair" ("The Last Chance to Guess about Nellie Bly," 2).

46. Bly, 52. The *World* correspondent covering the meeting between Bly and Verne records a slightly different worded response: "Besides, you know, people who cross India in these expeditions . . . come back married and that is just what I do not want to do" ("Nellie Meets Verne," 1).

47. Verne, 200.

48. Ibid., 200.

49. Ibid., 102.

50. Amy Kaplan, 103. The U.S. geopolitical imaginary in the 1890s, as Kaplan argues, was structured by a dialectical relationship between expansion and contraction. While delayed in "British China" for a few days, Bly recast this expansion and contraction dynamic in terms of U.S. domestic and foreign policy: "I knew we were trying to keep the Chinamen out of America, so I decided to see all of them I could while in their land" (Bly, 211). The passage of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act made it illegal for "Chinese laborers" to enter or remain in the United States, closing the national borders to the incorporation of this class of "foreign" aliens, even as it began to expand its imperial "foothold" in the populous markets of Asia through colonization of the Philippines and Hawaii in the following decade.

51. "Verne's 'Bravo,'" 1.

52. Bly, 5.

53. Financial predicaments forced Bly to end her formal schooling at Indiana State Normal School after only one term, although she chose to hide this fact in later authorized biographical accounts (Kroeger, 26).

54. "Nellie Bly's Rush," 4. The *Sioux City Tribune* gleaned a more humorous lesson for future women travelers from Bly's journey: "Her trip will have one good result. It will show women that it is not necessary to take seven trunks, four bandboxes, two satchels, a package of lunch, a shawl strap and a bird cage on a railway or steamship trip" ("That Flying Journey," 4).

55. "Paris Interested in Miss Bly," 1.

56. "How It Looks Abroad," 12.

57. Amy Kaplan, 20.

58. Ibid., 2.

59. "Father Time Outdone," 1-3.

60. Grewal, 65, 68-69.

61. "All Praise Nellie Bly," 2, and "Girdling the Globe," 2.

62. "Now for Dear Old Home," 2.

63. "Always on Time!" 1.

64. "She's Broken Every Record!" 1.

65. Bederman, 11, and Amy Kaplan, 92-93, 95.

66. "Father Time Outdone," 1-3.

67. "At the Finish," 1.

68. Bly, 104.

69. Through newswriting, female stunt reporters such as Bly laid claim to an American public sphere where they inhabited, according to Jean Marie Lutes, a "dual role in which women acted simultaneously as both objects and agents" of publicity (Lutes, 219).

70. She openly denounced Díaz's administration as an authoritarian regime upon her return to the Pittsburgh *Dispatch* (Kroeger, 63, 69).

71. Ibid., 68.

72. "Nellie Bly Is Off," 1-2. Few newspapers from the national press with the exception of the openly partisan New York *Times* and the *Journalist* seriously considered Bisland's challenge and more often than not referred to her simply as "a magazine writer" rather than directly naming her in the race ("Flying Trips of Two Young Women," 5). Cut off from regular communication with the *World*, Bly was not informed about the "supposed arranged race" until she reached Hong Kong, three days after Bisland had embarked on an English mail ship for Ceylon. Unlike Bly, Bisland represented herself as a reluctant traveler and, in a not too subtle jab at the *World*, objected to the unwonted publicity that her journey would produce: "I foresaw the notoriety that an effort to outdo the feat of Jules Verne's hero was likely to bring upon me, and to this notoriety I most earnestly objected" (Bisland, 4). Walker graciously acknowledged his defeat with a basket of roses and his congratulations upon Bly's arrival ("Editor Walker's Compliment," 5).

73. Bisland, 192-93.

74. Ibid., 193.

75. Bly, 113, 133, 217.

76. Bly, 114, and Amy Kaplan, 103.

77. Duncan, however, was not the only writer inspired by Bly's circumnavigation; the semimonthly story paper *Old Cap Colliers Library* published "Neck in Neck, or, Tom Pinkney's Race Around the World with Nellie Bly" immediately after Bly's successful return.

78. Duncan's later novels include *An American Girl in London* (1891), *The Simple Adventures of Mem-sahib* (1893), *The Imperialist* (1904), and *Cousin Cinderella, or a Canadian Girl in London* (1908).

79. "Two Women around the World," 11.

80. During Bly's circumnavigation a Boston correspondent informed the *World* readership of a "Tourists' Club" in a neighboring city, which was "composed of people who take imaginary trips to various parts of the world every time they meet. This they do in stories and essays descriptive of travel contributed by the members" ("Complimenting Nellie Bly," 2). The Tourist Club, according to this correspondent, had enthusiastically chosen "The *World's* enterprising correspondent, Miss Nellie Bly" as the subject of its next meeting.

81. Duncan, 270-71.

82. Ibid., 183, 221, 7.

83. Responding to Bly's much touted "little gripsack" and single change of dress, the genteel Bisland catalogued her accouterments: "I finally managed to get all absolutely necessities of travel into a good-sized steamer trunk, a large Gladstone bag and a shawlstrap, but found, by experience, that my progress would have been in no degree retarded, and my comfort and happiness far better served, by carrying a second and

larger box with everything I could possibly have required" (Bisland, 6). Duncan's protagonists also resemble Henrietta Stackpole, an early "reporter in petticoats," and Isabel Archer, the two Americans from Henry James's *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881).

84. Well aware of the "responsibilities resting upon everybody who writes experiences of travel," the narrator remarks upon the intrinsic relativity of the travelogue's chronicles of things experienced, recording these impressions of their "North-West" journey on the Canadian Pacific Railway: "One has no sensation of the absolute flatness of the prairies until one reaches Corona. Before that there seems always an unrest about it, a vague undulation of line along the sky, the contour of the country never broken, but always gently changing with the point of view, like the bounds of truth as we know them" (Duncan, 7). Duncan subtly, yet firmly unsettles what would appear, at first, to be the travelogue's commonplace description of something as physically solid and unchanging as geography. "Truth," according to the narrator, is contingent upon a perspective that is ceaselessly mobile and malleable, and what would appear "fact" in one traveler's account may be a mere "fiction" in another.

85. "Around the World," 1.

86. *Ibid.*, 1.

87. "On the Other Side," 1.

88. "Echoes from the People," 4.

89. "Nellie Bly's Rush," 4. The *World's* exhaustive coverage of Bly's journey also displaced what had begun on November 12 as a prominent front-page serialization of Robert Louis Stevenson's adventure narrative "The Master of Ballantrae: A Winter's Tale." The *World* also favored publishing short adventure narratives of the popular writer H. Rider Haggard, whose "The Strange Story of Allan Quartermain's Wife: A New African Romance" and "Beatrice" were serialized during the period of Bly's journey. The *World* also published Verne's newest romance, "Topsy Turvy," in its January 19 Sunday copy as Bly neared her final destination.

90. "Praise for Nellie Bly," 5.

91. "Father Time Outdone," 1-3.

92. Duncan, 209.

93. *Ibid.*, 120.

94. *Ibid.*, 210. Orthodocia even speculates in the then-two-year-old frontier town of Vancouver, making a net profit of £40 in the purchase and sale of real estate to be transformed after their trans-Pacific passage into "such a quantity of tea-cups in Japan" (*ibid.*, 55).

95. Amy Kaplan, 104.

96. Duncan, 76.

97. "Nellie's Picture in Demand," 6.

98. While the editor declined the auction of Bly's cap, he did, however, offer the sale of the five copies of *The World* of November 14, the date of departure, which Bly carried around the world in her grip-sack ("The Free Trip to Europe," 3).

99. "Will It Come to This?" 1.

100. "Free Trip to Europe," 5.

101. "A Charming Story," 15.