FEMALE “VAGABOND” OR STUNT REPORTER?

The Undercover Literary Journalism of Australian Colonial Journalist Catherine Hay Thomson

Kerrie M. Davies and Willa McDonald

The beginnings of Australian undercover journalism are usually associated with the men who wrote for newspapers in the latter part of the nineteenth century, including John Stanley James (The Vagabond), J. D. Melvin, and George (Chinese) Morrison. There was, however, an Australian woman who, as early as the mid-1880s, practiced undercover investigative journalism for The Argus newspaper in Melbourne. Catherine Hay Thomson, an educator and feminist, worked in a form of journalism that for many of its female practitioners was later problematically labeled as “stunt girl” journalism, with its practitioners known as “girl stunt reporters.” Thomson’s work was investigative, participatory journalism in the same vein as that of American journalists Nellie Bly (Elizabeth Jane Cochrane), Nell Nelson (Helen Cusack-Carvalho), and the London-based Elizabeth L. Banks.

In 1886, a year before Bly famously feigned hysteria to enter an asylum in New York, Thomson earned herself the nickname “the female vagabond” for a series of undercover reports on the conditions women endured in Melbourne’s public institutions. She immersed herself—usually as an employee—in the women’s wards of Melbourne Hospital, the Magdalene Asylum, the Infant Asylum, the Victorian Asylum and School for the Blind, and, most interestingly given Bly’s Ten Days in a Mad-House (1887) published the following year, the Kew Lunatic Asylum.

Thomson’s undercover efforts were exceptional at a time when women were largely excluded from employment as news or investigative journalists, not just in Australia but across the English-speaking world. Similar in approach to Stanley James’s well-known articles of undercover literary journalism written under the pseudonym “The Vagabond” and published by The Argus a decade earlier, Thomson’s were controversial, engaging and empathized with the women about whom she wrote. They also uncovered unacceptable practices that resulted in changes to policies in the institutions in question.
This chapter explores Thomson’s series, with special attention to her article “The Female Side of Kew Asylum,” to reclaim her work as investigative literary journalism of a standard at least equal to that being written by men in Australia and overseas. Escaping the tag “girl stunt reporter” belittlingly applied to the later journalism of women such as Bly, Thomson’s investigative articles contribute to the reassessment of much of the “stunt girls” and “sob sisters” who followed, demonstrating how such journalism could have been valued if it had not been contained and dismissed by a society struggling with the emergence of women into the public domain of news production.

Women in Journalism in Colonial Australia

It would take until the middle of the nineteenth century for a thriving free press to evolve in Australia, itself a remarkable achievement given that full government censorship in the penal colonies only ended in the 1820s, and Melbourne was founded by a handful of settlers only in 1835. Fifty years later, when Thomson wrote her series for the Melbourne Argus, Australia was experiencing an apotheosis of print culture with around 50 daily papers circulating in the Australian states. Lurline Stuart notes that in the 100 years from 1821, about 600 periodicals were published. But newspapers and magazines struggled to stay open, with many closing within their first year. While a small handful of women acted as proprietors and editors at that time, usually following the deaths of their husbands, writing for newspapers and periodicals was barely respectable, and women journalists were few. Those women who did write articles are hard to identify as by-lines were rare and they typically wrote under the names of men they knew, assumed pseudonyms, or wrote anonymously. Most, like Thomson, were engaged as freelancers, occasionally signing contracts for a series of articles but more usually writing as casual penny-a-liners.

Although some women were appointed to full-time journalism positions from the 1880s, it was not long before they were co-opted to work exclusively on women’s columns and sections being set up from that time in the newspapers and periodicals. While this led to an increased demand for women writers, and to an increased chance for some of permanent employment, it was overall a backward step for their professional development. Soon, nearly all women journalists were confined to “the deadly, dreary ruck of long dress reports and the lists of those who ‘also ran’ at miscellaneous functions,” with specialist women’s pages and sections designed to attract marketing to readers around the private sphere of hearth and home. The consequence, as Patricia Clarke notes, was that the broader society also lost out, with the work of the women journalists tending “to reinforce complacency in their women readers and to shield them from issues of some significance.” Nevertheless, before the women’s sections took hold, women journalists were able to write on general matters of importance, and The Argus engaged Thomson to go undercover and write a series of investigative articles on the conditions experienced by women in the Melbourne Hospital and the city’s asylums.

“Stunt Girls” and “Sob Sisters”: Women in Nineteenth-century Journalism

The sugary humdrum of the women’s pages was a common and frustrating experience for women journalists in the United States in the late nineteenth century. In response, a group of women reporters, led by Nellie Bly, turned to risky immersions in asylums, hospitals, abortion clinics, and low-wage employment, investigating mistreatment and exploitation. Historian Jean Marie Lutes argues that while they “were often scorned by more traditional journalists
Female “Vagabond” or Stunt Reporter?

(包括著名的揭发者如伊达·塔贝尔) 他们是第一批从女报校内搬到头版的女记者，从社会新闻转向政治和犯罪新闻。”

在她的首次 assignments 给约瑟夫·普利策的《纽约世界报》，布里假装疯狂被送到著名的女精神病院（现罗素岛），以证实对医院的滥用指控。布里在精神病院忍受了10天，详细记录了她所目睹的滥用。她的系列作品引发了改革，以及愤怒，布里声称她的记者工作为她的作品筹集了重要的资金来帮助改善护理。7

布里的系列，以及她后续一系列调查婴儿贩卖，婚姻介绍所和公共卫生设施，工厂，家政服务和“在玛格达伦家”的故事，8 被《记者》杂志最初忽视了，这本杂志让记者们对他们的领域保持最新。9 布里的传记作者布鲁克·克鲁格尔建议，这种态度反映了布里男同事的普遍怨恨，这与他们的成功形成了悖论。10 帕特里夏·布雷德利同意，写下：“对于男记者，女记者进入新闻室进一步挑战了工作和男性身份的概念，因为女记者在那里是出于管理目标，这可能进一步加剧了 simmering 的阶级对立。”11

这些早期的“女孩记者”故事本意是为了制造轰动，但其调查性质导致了改革和公众讨论。芬妮·梅利尔也在《世界报》工作，那一年她潜入工厂，报道香烟工厂的情况，而1888年海伦·库萨克-卡瓦尔霍（奈尔·尼尔森）写了一系列“奴隶女孩”来揭露芝加哥工人的滥用。另一位未透露姓名的芝加哥“女孩记者”揭露了堕胎医生，12 而在1890年旧金山记者温妮弗烈·布莱克（阿尼·劳里）作为病人在一家医院接受治疗。伊丽莎白·L·班克斯将这种做法出口到伦敦，以1893年她的作品为基础。13 萨曼莎·佩科也观察到，“女孩记者特别盛传于那些刺激了对他们的主体的同情。”14

然而，这些记者，在美国，没有一个来自澳大利亚。布里的精神病院系列及其后续故事在澳大利亚被报道，15 她的环球旅行和婚姻也被当地报道。然而，澳大利亚的报纸没有鼓励女记者成为像布里和她的同事们的名人，尽管他们的故事为他们带来了利润和名声。少数人报道了女记者的身份，大部分都躲藏了起来。汤森德的工作可以识别，因为她被召到皇家委员会听证会，听证会是关于墨尔本精神病人院的 proceedings。16 一波类似的浸入式女性报道在十年后明显显现，由塔斯马尼亚记者和小说家海伦·戴维斯引领。她潜入女性工厂和其他工作场所，写了一系列“为工作努力”，以自己的名字于1903年在女性期刊《新理念》上发表。17 杂志显然受到了美国杂志的影响，戴维斯的第一篇文章关于在果酱工厂工作立即被一家合作杂志发表于《所有人》的杂志的 syndicated 版。第二年，作家梅尔斯·富兰克林在未经出版的情况下尝试获得发表了她在一年作为女工的个人回顾，结果只有一小部分《Bulletin》文章。18 在1905–06年，海伦·戴维斯写了另一个系列，“在表面之下”，为《新理念》撰稿，包括对凯文精神病院的访问。但这些文章，文学性地以日记体的风格，都是由一个观察记者撰写的，而不是一个潜入式女记者。”19

而这些女记者，然而，都是澳大利亚人。布里的精神病院系列和后续故事被报道在澳大利亚，15 而她的环球旅行和婚姻也在澳大利亚被报道。然而，澳大利亚报纸不鼓励女记者成为像布里和她的同事们的名人，尽管他们的故事为他们带来了利润和名声。少数人报道了女记者的身份，大部分都躲藏了起来。汤森德的工作可以识别，因为她被召到皇家委员会听证会，听证会是关于墨尔本精神病人院的 proceedings。16 一波类似的浸入式女性报道在十年后明显显现，由塔斯马尼亚记者和小说家海伦·戴维斯引领。她潜入女性工厂和其他工作场所，写了一系列“为工作努力”，以自己的名字于1903年在女性期刊《新理念》上发表。17 杂志显然受到了美国杂志的影响，戴维斯的第一篇文章关于在果酱工厂工作立即被一家合作杂志发表于《所有人》的杂志的 syndicated 版。第二年，作家梅尔斯·富兰克林在未经出版的情况下尝试获得发表了她在一年作为女工的个人回顾，结果只有一小部分《Bulletin》文章。18 在1905–06年，海伦·戴维斯写了另一个系列，“在表面之下”，为《新理念》撰稿，包括对凯文精神病院的访问。但这些文章，文学性地以日记体的风格，都是由一个观察记者撰写的，而不是一个潜入式女记者。”19

然而，在澳大利亚，这种类型的新闻实践只是挽救了记者免于在媒体上的贬低，而在美国，这些女记者则遭遇了更惨重的待遇。在澳大利亚，这种类型的新闻实践只是挽救了记者免于在媒体上的贬低，而在美国，这些女记者则遭遇了更惨重的待遇。
Their stories largely lost their social justice investigative edge and were rather larks, such as riding a horse bareback in a circus or staying in a haunted house. As Kroeger remarks, “It had gotten to the point that the Sunday female stunt slot had taken on the aspects of an assembly line.” Critics declared that the papers were endangering the young women reporters; within newsrooms, they were viewed as a replaceable commodity and, stingingy, they were derided rather than emulated by other women journalists in the following years. Early twentieth-century biographer Ishbel Ross described stunt girl reporters as “a wild outcropping of girls who freely risked their lives and reputations in order to crash the papers,” employing “dizzy self-exploitation” to get newspaper jobs.

As stunt journalism faded, women journalists moved to reportage of criminal trials and interviews with defendants, but despite investigative journalism generally carrying some prestige for its practitioners, their work became similarly devalued by the use of the disdainful tag “sob sisters.” The tag was coined by journalist Irwin Cob, and Bradley notes that, “There was no affection or respect in the term.” Lutes argues the nickname has had the historical impact of the work of women reporters being consistently undervalued: “Shrugging off the sob sisters has caused critics to miss a far more compelling story of gendered assumptions overturned, sexual violence unmasked, and narrative authority in flux.”

Bly and her imitators’ troubled legacy overshadows the important contribution to literary journalism of another earlier investigative women writer, Helen Stuart Campbell, who volunteered in a New York mission. She met with impoverished working women, leading to her powerful portrait series, “Studies in the Slums” (1880) and “Prisoners of Poverty” (1886–87), both of which became books. Bradley situates Campbell outside stunt girl reporting due to timing—she predates Bly—and to her distinctively different style: “Moreover, she [Campbell] was clearly addressing the systemic problems of women in poverty, in a compelling way but not in the wrenching, sensational style of the sob sisters.”

Akin to Stuart Campbell, Thomson was neither a girl stunt reporter nor a sob sister. Also predating Bly, and working as a freelancer in an era when jobs for women in Australian journalism were scarce, Thomson was motivated by social justice rather than ambition to break through the news ceiling. This helped to remove her as a threat to the newsroom, which was just as aggressively masculine in Melbourne in the late nineteenth century as it was in New York. The style of her journalism and her geographical location meant Thomson fell outside the hub of the first-person “new journalism” reportage characterized by stories in the New York World in the United States that propagated the “stunt girl” trend. Thomson, while writing in first person in the vein of Bly and her contemporaries, emphasized her subject matter over her undercover “exploits”—she was never the focus of her stories. In this way, her writing style echoes Stuart Campbell’s restrained, yet deeply detailed, empathetic, and observational voice as she brought the women’s asylums and hospitals to the printed page. Thomson’s Argus series can be viewed as a benchmark from which to consider other Anglophone women journalists’ compelling stories of the era, free from the “stunt girl” and “sob sister” labels.

**Thomson’s Undercover Series for The Argus**

Catherine Hay Thomson worked throughout her life for women’s suffrage, the rights of women to education, and social justice for women in need. These abiding concerns surfaced in her journalism. Her 1886 series for The Argus newspaper began with the one that was possibly the most controversial, “The Inner Life of the Melbourne Hospital.” It ran over two issues, dated March 12 and 18. To immerse herself in her subject, Thomson answered an
Female “Vagabond” or Stunt Reporter?

advertisement for an assistant nurse to work in the two women’s wards, using an “influential recommendation.” At the time, the hospital was already being called to answer why the costs of running the hospital were high, but also why there was an abnormally high death rate among patients. Thomson’s articles detail the conditions in the hospital, in the first on the wards and in the second as experienced by the nurses. Using literary techniques to enhance her prose, she demonstrated great empathy for the patients and female staff.

In the first article, Thomson describes the plight of a young woman who was married at 17, abandoned at 19 with a baby and now at 21 lay on her deathbed, the baby having died nine weeks earlier. The woman had been living in dire poverty with a friend who was visiting her at the time the article was written. As Thomson comments, signposting the sexism women faced in their everyday lives:

when one thinks of these two women struggling to make a living out of the sewing machine, and of the drag the infant must have been on their resources, and of them clinging together through all fortunes, no man can say that friendship between women is an impossibility.

Thomson went on to make several controversial claims. She detailed that the assistant nurses received no training and worked largely as cleaners for poor pay in unsanitary conditions, sleeping in overcrowded dormitories and surviving on the same poor food as the patients. The hospital linen was returned dirty from the laundry, while dinner tins and jugs were washed in the patients’ bathroom where poultices were made, patients washed themselves and cleaning equipment was stored. She also describes the way one doctor failed to wash his hands as he went from patient to patient, at the same time claiming the doctors were out of touch with the real conditions on the wards.

The articles aroused the ire of the hospital, and a rejoinder was tabled at a meeting of the hospital committee by the medical superintendent Dr. A. M. Lewellin, who accused Thomson of exaggeration and sensationalism. This prompted a subsequent exchange of letters between him and Thomson in the pages of the paper from which she emerged the more credible. Meanwhile, The Argus backed her work, initially in an editorial calling for the setting up of a “ladies’ committee” to oversee the cooking and cleaning, then in running in full her answers to the hospital’s complaints.

Melbourne Hospital was not the only institution to fall under her scrutiny that year. Her story “‘Infant Asylum’—by a visitor” describes a type of orphanage where women could reside until their babies were weaned, then seek employment to pay half their wages for the children to stay in the asylum’s dormitories until placed in private homes. The children were usually adopted at ages four, five or six. Although Thomson praised the work of the asylum, among the detail she provided of its accommodations and routines, she described the relinquishing mothers as “[A]t best … an unhopeful, unhappy looking, seldom smiling group.” She reserved her opprobrium not for the women, who she noted were all domestic servants, but for their absent men: “These women … have to bear the burden unaided, all the weight of shame, remorse, and toil, the other partner in the sin goes scot free …” Her greatest sympathy lay with the children, “Happily unconscious now, [but] soon the cold breath of the world will awaken them.”

A month later, Thomson published “‘A penitent’s life in the Magdalen Asylum,’ by an amateur in sociology.” It describes the daily routines in the asylum, which was run by Roman Catholic nuns for women in need. The article rather melodramatically begins with the literary conceit of a hypothetical woman, “without a home, without a crust, without a penny, her past
full of evil, her future empty of hope.” Thomson addressed the issue of how she gathered her material with the lines, “The foregoing is an exact and, perhaps, too minute account of a penitent’s daily life. How that knowledge was obtained the curious need not ask.” Although not religious herself, she was supportive of the work done by the nuns to help the women who found themselves in the asylum, most of whom were not there because they were “fallen,” she was at pains to explain, but for a wide range of reasons including alcoholism, frail old age, or destitution.

Thomson followed that story up with another investigation: “‘Among the blind: Victorian Asylum and School’ by an assistant needlewoman.” As in her other stories, Thomson described the day-to-day routines in the asylum and school where the students learned Braille and the Moon System of embossed reading. After noting that blind people often showed musical ability, she argued for the music students at the school to be given opportunities to hear music performed and to be allowed to sit exams for teaching and performance, something from which they were excluded at the time. She said that by developing their musicianship, the residents would not only be encouraged to grow personally but also escape dependency on charity.

The year 1886 also saw the publication of “Yarra Bend Asylum—by a visitor from Kew,” which appears to have been written by Thomson as a companion piece to her two-part series on the Kew asylum. Thomson found, as the Royal Commission on Asylums for the Insane and Inebriate (1886) would also note, that Yarra Bend’s cottage and garden design was more likely to aid the healing of its inmates. Yet, when she visited, Thomson still found room for much improvement beyond the asylum’s façade. Her article movingly describes the children who were resident at Yarra Bend. Mostly kept clean, they were otherwise ignored. There was no attempt to educate them or improve their lot:

“The spectacle of a dozen or two adults and children, idiotic or imbecile gathered together, with nothing to do but amuse themselves—the heaviest task that can fall to any human being—unconscious of the lapse of time, their life scarcely above the level of the vegetable—is a sight never to be forgotten. It haunts one in dreams.”

“The Female Side of Kew Asylum,’ by an Attendant”

One of Thomson’s most important series was her two-part reportage entitled “The Female Side of Kew Asylum” written “by an attendant.” Published only a year before Bly’s famous asylum series, the two can be read as parallel narratives, from different sides of the Anglophone world, of the routine institutionalizing of women in the Victorian era.

Thomson worked in the asylum for a fortnight, witnessing understaffing, a lack of training, and a need for female “physicians” who could help the patients. She described the sights and sounds of her surroundings—from clothing to daily routine—including the lack of medical treatment and the hard work the women inmates were required to do despite their illnesses, from laundry to sewing to picking oakum, the last regarded as hard labor even in the English male prisons of the era. Her assignment was a difficult one:

“I used to walk in a passion of loneliness, striving to throw off the weight of human misery that had oppressed me all day, endeavoring not to think of the young lives shattered at the beginning of the unrespected maturity, the unlovely old age, so nigh at hand; or of the ruined homes, desolate husbands, the little children in the outer world, vainly crying for their mother … the mind compelled to study such an awful subject as insanity does not easily release itself.”
Female “Vagabond” or Stunt Reporter?

The stunt tag that follows Bly, and her more flamboyant focus on her experiences in the medium of sensational journalistic papers such as the World, mutes the power of her observations, which personalize the institution and those who lived inside its walls. However, free of the stunt shackle, Thomson illuminates what Hartsock describes as “broader social portraiture.” In New York, Bly described meeting a fellow patient, Miss Tillie Maynard, who was frightened and desperately appealed to doctors to test her sanity. In Melbourne, Thomson described “the girl with the lovely hair” who endured chronic ear pain and was believed to be delusional, sadly noting “her pain is most probably real.” Observing another patient, Thomson writes, “She requires to be guarded—saved from herself; but at the same time, she requires treatment … I have no hesitation in saying that the kind of treatment she needs is unattainable in Kew Asylum.” Thomson spoke to another patient, a domestic servant who Thomson believed was sane: “Whatever she may have been, she is now apparently quite sane, no delusions discoverable by me.”

Thomson writes that she would often find an arm slipped through hers, belonging to one of the women patients, and together they would walk, seeking comfort in each other in the gardens. In her later, companion article, “‘Yarra Bend Asylum’—By a Visitor,” as noted above, she refers back to her time at Kew: “My thoughts fly to Miss M. in the refractory ward at Kew. She would think herself in Paradise with a share of one of these rooms.” Thomson’s portrayals of the characters she met give individual voice to the summary institutionalizing of women at the time, too often for reasons as little as a nervous disposition, poverty, or a lack of diagnosis.

Undercover journalism takes courage on the parts of both the writer and the publisher. Bly was asked to give evidence to a grand jury on her asylum observations. Likewise, the day before the first Kew asylum article was published, Thomson gave evidence to the final sitting of Victoria’s Royal Commission on Asylums for the Insane and Inebriate, flagging what was to come in her series in The Argus. According to reports of her evidence, Superintendent Dr. Thomas Thomson Dick, who oversaw Kew Asylum, was outraged and called her “a spy.” Nevertheless, the newspaper supported her, and the Commission took her evidence seriously. Among its final recommendations was that a new governing board should supervise appointments and training and appoint “lady physicians” for the female wards, just as Thomson had urged was necessary. It also found that the tedious work the women were required to do was potentially injurious to their health and recommended they should be trained in trades and occupations that would give them opportunities for employment after leaving the asylum.

At the time of their publication, Thomson’s asylum articles attracted some derision. The national periodical The Bulletin mistakenly said she posed as a patient, while somewhat snidely calling her “the female ‘Vagabond’ of Melbourne.” This was a reference to John Stanley James who, a decade earlier, had famously gone undercover as the Vagabond to expose conditions in some of Melbourne’s harshest institutions, including the Kew Asylum’s male quarters. Y et, other newspapers praised her courage. For example, The Sydney Mail noted that, “It was a courageous proceeding on her part, and enabled her to give some acceptable evidence to the Lunacy Commission at its final sitting. The treatment of the patients by the nurses and warders is evidently anything but what it ought to be.”

Conclusion

Although literary journalism has a long history, it has only recently been recognized as a field in its own right. It is most simply defined as factual reporting written using the techniques usually associated with fictional storytelling, but scholars in recent years have refined that definition to include factors such as empathy for the subjects written about, a focus on ordinary
people rather than celebrities, immersion and time spent to convey a close sense of the subject’s world. Thomson’s work clearly fits this extended definition. She used literary techniques including dialogue, figures of speech, detail, reflection, and a distinctive narrative voice to make her immersive and empathetic investigations into the Melbourne asylums and institutions vivid and engaging.

The value of Thomson’s articles for *The Argus* speaks for itself. Engagingly written, the articles demonstrate her abiding passions—education for the betterment of the individual and society, women’s rights, and the independence of the individual, notably from government charity. They also show her willingness to side with the disadvantaged and powerless, her determination “to speak truth to power,” and her courage in campaigning for social justice, especially for women and children. These are all characteristics Bly demonstrated in her *Ten Days in a Mad-House*, and indeed Thomson’s asylum series can be viewed as a companion work to Bly’s. Although written from different perspectives, together their writing shows the mistreatment of women in asylums, on opposite sides of the world, using immersion and their subjective experiences as material for their narratives.

That Australian stunt girl reporters were not visible or exploited in the local press, and then only published by magazines at the turn of the twentieth century, explains why Thomson’s series was not hailed as a pre-cursor to *Ten Days in a Mad-House* at the time Bly’s asylum immersion was reported in Australia. Thomson’s background as a teacher and her social justice focus also ostensibly separated her from the American female reporters trying to break out of women’s pages, like Bly, who identified as career journalists and threatened the gendered dominance of the male newsroom. Separated from the stunt girl reporter phenomenon, it is to Thomson’s enduring benefit that she escaped the tag that would otherwise have tarred the reception of her first-person undercover literary journalism. The fairness and foresight of *The Argus* in publishing her undercover work in the same way it published that of male journalists, and its support of her in the subsequent controversies aroused by her stories, underline her work’s value as investigative literary journalism deserving of recognition.

Notes

5. Clarke, 4.

296
Female “Vagabond” or Stunt Reporter?

21 Todd, “These Women Reporters Went Undercover.”
22 Kroeger, Nellie Bly, 224.
23 Bradley, Women and the Press, 125; Kroeger, 206.
24 Ross, Ladies of the Press, 17.
25 Ross, 14.
27 Lutes, Front Page Girls, 33.
28 Bradley, Women and the Press, 123.
29 Lutes, Front Page Girls, 66.
31 Bradley, Women and the Press, 143.
33 Thomson, 9.
35 Anon., “Friday, April 9, 1886,” 4.
37 Thomson, “‘Infant Asylum’—By a Visitor,” 4.
38 Thomson, 4.
39 Thomson, 4.
41 Thomson, 13.
42 Thomson, “‘Yarra Bend Asylum’—by a Visitor,” 9.
44 Thomson, 6 (March 26).
46 Bly [Cochrane], “Inside the Madhouse,” 25.
47 Thomson, “‘The Female Side of Kew Asylum,’ by an Attendant,” 6 (March 26).
48 Thomson, 9 (March 31).
49 Thomson, (March 26).
50 Thomson, “‘Yarra Bend Asylum’—by a Visitor,” 9.
51 Bly [Cochrane], Ten Days in a Mad-House, 70.
52 Anon., “‘Victorian Lunacy Commission,’’ 3.
53 Thomson, “‘The Female Side of Kew Asylum,’ by an Attendant,” 9 (March 31).
54 Giese, The Maddest Place on Earth, 78.

Bibliography

Kerrie M. Davies and Willa McDonald


Thomson, Catherine Hay. “‘Among the Blind: Victorian Asylum and School,’ by an Assistant Needlewomen.” *The Argus*, June 26, 1886, 4.

———. “‘The Female Side of Kew Asylum,’ by an Attendant.” *The Argus*, March 26, 1886, 6; March 31, 1886, 9.

Female “Vagabond” or Stunt Reporter?

——. “The Inner Life of the Melbourne Hospital.” The Argus, March 12, 1886, 9; March 18, 1886, 8.
——. ‘‘Yarra Bend Asylum’—by A Visitor.” The Argus, April 16, 1886, 9.


