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# Playing Italian: Cross-cultural Dress and Investigative Journalism at the Fin de Siècle

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# Playing Italian: Cross-Cultural Dress and Investigative Journalism at the Fin de Siècle

LAURA VORACHEK

In 1867, the year following his pioneering “A Night in a Workhouse,” James Greenwood again donned working-class attire—“a slouchy coat and a slouchy cap”—and set out to investigate another urban social issue: the Italian organ-grinders who populated the streets of London and drove many to distraction with their music.<sup>1</sup> Organ-grinders had been castigated in the periodical press throughout the century as thieves, extortionists, and public nuisances. Greenwood’s initial foray into the Italian colony in the neighborhood of Saffron Hill was followed in the 1890s by other investigators. Female journalists, in particular, improved upon Greenwood’s incognito investigative technique by costuming themselves not only as working class but also as Italian, living the lives of organ-grinders for a day or even, in one instance, a week.

Recent scholarship on incognito journalists and social investigators has focused on the cross-class and gendered aspects of undercover work among the poor. As Peter Keating, Seth Koven, Mark Freeman, and Gillian Nelson have noted, predominantly middle-class reporters “descended” into working-class neighborhoods in order to investigate this population for the edification of largely middle-class audiences.<sup>2</sup> Scholars have also examined the ways gender norms influenced female investigators, demonstrating how their inquiries tended to center on the “domestic sphere of working-class life,” to privilege aural instead of visual observations, to shy away from sexual subjects, or to reject in print the social and economic advancements that made their careers possible.<sup>3</sup> Gender shaped not only female investigators’ written reports but also their actual experiences since women were more vulnerable than their male counterparts during these cross-class forays. For example, social investigator Mary Higgs wrote of the improper overtures men made while she was dressed as a vagrant: “I

could not help contrasting the way in which men looked at us with the usual bearing of a man toward a *well-dressed* female. I had never realised before that a lady's dress, or even that of a respectable working-woman, was a *protection*. The bold, free look of a man at a destitute woman must be felt to be realised."<sup>4</sup> Higgs, unlike most investigators, called attention to the sexual threat homeless women and their impersonators regularly faced.

Despite Higgs's claim that a lady's dress provided protection from sexual advances, modern historians have found that well-dressed women were often subject to street harassment.<sup>5</sup> Judith Walkowitz argues that "entering a public space placed women of all classes [. . .] in a vulnerable position," whether that space was in the East End or in the West End.<sup>6</sup> The city was "traditionally imagined as the site of exchange and erotic activity [. . .] [and therefore] a negative environment for respectable women, one that threatened to erase the protective identity conferred on them by family, residence, and social distinctions."<sup>7</sup> Neither dress nor social status could fully guard middle- and upper-class women against unwanted male attention once they ventured beyond their homes.

However, my examination of late Victorian journalism reveals that one type of clothing did in fact offer middle-class women protection from street harassment—cross-cultural dress. Unlike working-class dress, which exposed Higgs to sexual attention, or ladies' dress, which proved equally inadequate, ethnic attire seems to have shielded undercover female reporters from sexual overtures. Little scholarly attention has been paid to those investigators who assumed the costumes of other races and ethnicities in order to gain first-hand experience of their subjects. In this essay, I show how reporters and social investigators ventured into the immigrant communities that made up a part of England's urban poor, exploring such trades as Jewish fur-puller or Italian organ-grinder. By examining articles by Eva Bright, T. (Anna Mary) Sparrow, Frances Bourne, and Olive Christian Malvery published in the *English Illustrated Magazine*, *Newbery House Magazine*, and *Pearson's Magazine*, I will demonstrate that incognito ethnic attire afforded women both the means and the authority to carry out their investigations into the Italian constituency of the Victorian working poor.

I will also examine how costumes enabled female investigators to manipulate class- and gender-based assumptions about who had broad access to the streets of London in the late nineteenth century. Spatial mobility was the principal attraction of the masquerade for some reporters, and their articles depict a female fantasy of free passage in the city, unmolested by male gazes or harassment and unrestricted to certain geographic areas. Thus, I argue that social investigation involving cross-cultural dress illuminates gender issues more than the plight of the urban poor, its ostensible purpose.

Finally, I will consider the photographs and illustrations that accompanied female reporters' articles. Given the anonymity and protection female reporters enjoyed while incognito, it is perhaps surprising that many of their articles included images of them in costume. Rather than portray the harsh working conditions of the urban poor, these images bring attention to the reporters themselves, providing documentary evidence of their undercover exploits. While Deborah Nord argues that the "relationship of women to spectatorship [. . .] remained a vexed and nearly irresolvable one" in the nineteenth century,<sup>8</sup> I find that cross-cultural dressing offered women a means of negotiating the tension between spectator and spectacle. By donning ethnic costumes, women could ramble anonymously in urban environments without negative repercussions. However, these female reporters also embraced spectacle by publishing reports and illustrations of their escapades in middle-class family periodicals. By making a spectacle of themselves in print rather than in the street, these women to a certain extent controlled the gaze of others. They avoided the unwanted attention of men on the street, instead soliciting the interest of middle-class readers of the periodicals in which their articles appeared. These illustrated magazines were instrumental in the development and success of this type of undercover reporting because illustrations provided readers the frisson of seeing middle-class women in ethnic costumes and in East End slums. However, these glimpses of women thwarting middle-class conventions were found in the pages of periodicals that promised content that would instruct and amuse without offending public taste. By packaging their undercover experiences for this particular reading audience, female reporters attempted to enjoy unrestricted mobility in the city while still maintaining respectability.

### Italian Organ-Grinders in the English Imagination

Perhaps following Henry Mayhew's categorizations in *London Labour and the London Poor*, many social investigators in the late nineteenth century organized their inquiries according to working-class occupation or the experiences of the homeless. Occasionally their categorizations of the urban poor included ethnic groups, such as Russian and Polish Jews, who were perceived negatively for underselling British labor and, less often, other immigrant communities, such as gypsies and Germans. Italian immigrants, although they comprised a very small percentage of Britain's foreign population at this time, garnered unusual attention due to the unique profession many practiced—organ-grinding—and their consequent entanglement in debates about street music.<sup>9</sup> Complaints against street musicians in general and organ-grinders in particular coalesced in the middle decades of the century in public campaigns to legislate what many considered a public

nuisance. Organ-grinders became a topic of debate in Parliament and in a broad range of periodicals, where they were represented as merciless extortionists disturbing the quiet necessary for both invalids and middle-class professionals who worked at home.<sup>10</sup>

Hailing from “some of the more remote and impoverished villages of northern and southern Italy,” poor Italian immigrants were subsistence farmers in their home country who supplemented their meager incomes with seasonal migration to England and other areas of Europe to ply low-skilled trades like exhibiting animals or playing organs.<sup>11</sup> In the early nineteenth century, these migrants established a permanent community in Clerkenwell, a London slum. Despite the fact that organ-grinders lived in overcrowded, unsanitary conditions, many British critics believed that Italians earned an ample living playing music in the streets, and stories of organ-grinders buying lavish homes in Italy or England abounded.<sup>12</sup> Contemporary commentators estimated the income of an organ-grinder ranged from thirty shillings a week to a pound a day, the equivalent of many lower-middle-class and middle-class salaries.<sup>13</sup> These inflated figures inspired several undercover investigations, as we will see. In actuality, earnings were irregular but probably averaged between eight and twelve shillings a week.<sup>14</sup> Given the costs of lodging, board, and organ rental, however, it is unlikely that organ-grinders were getting rich at their profession. As Olive Christian Malvery, who earned four shillings and five pence in her nine-and-a-half-hour day as an organ-grinder, put it, organ-grinding is “not a lucrative day’s work, one must admit.”<sup>15</sup>

Organ-grinders did have supporters who argued that street musicians brought pleasure to members of the working classes unlikely to have access to music in any other way. Malvery, for example, argues that “those who have seen, as I have seen, the gladness these organs bring to the little slum children and the poor, will ever be tolerant of them and their owners.”<sup>16</sup> Fellow incognito social observer Jack London describes “children dancing in the street when the organ-grinder goes his round” as the “one beautiful sight in the East End.”<sup>17</sup> In her autobiography, Leah Manning likewise depicts the merriment organ-grinders bring to poor children: “The hurdy-gurdy man was greeted with whoops of joy and in a few seconds little girls were whirling madly in the road, tattered petticoats and tangled curls flying joyously.”<sup>18</sup> However, such scenes of delight provided by organ-grinders were outnumbered by frequent complaints.

As the large number of negative portrayals suggests, the Italian organ-grinder was a highly transgressive figure in the English imagination. The organ-grinder undermined the demarcation between private and public space with his music, a sound which could not be contained in the street.<sup>19</sup> Carried into the homes of those who did not want to hear it, his music and his foreignness encroached on English domains.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, organ-grind-

ers travelled from East End slums to wealthy West End neighborhoods on a daily basis, freely traversing class-coded terrain. The street musician's ease of movement and threat to private space dovetails with another popular representation of the organ-grinder: that of extortionist and thief. Many felt organ-grinders obtained money by dishonest or underhanded means, such as demanding payment to stop playing their organs, thus ransoming peace and quiet. There were also reports that organ-grinders used their profession as cover for scouting English homes for robbery.<sup>21</sup> Additionally, organ-grinders were associated with contravening English parental authority, in particular by helping facilitate unsanctioned romances. In numerous fictional periodical stories in the second half of the century, an Englishman adopts the disguise of an organ-grinder in order to contact or elope with the woman he loves.<sup>22</sup> The organ-grinder's social marginality and ability to move freely in a variety of public and private spaces makes his an ideal costume for the lover to adopt. Ubiquitous and of low social status, the organ-grinder eludes the vigilant eyes of parents and guardians, allowing the young man access to his beloved. Thus, Italian organ-grinders were portrayed as a threat to English ears, homes, and the social hierarchies that were maintained by marriage.

John Picker observes that the antagonism of the 1850s and 1860s was replaced in the 1880s and 1890s by nostalgia for street music.<sup>23</sup> In the intervening years, protests against organ-grinders and street music diminished due to a middle-class exodus to the suburbs of London and because public attention shifted to other aspects of the Italian community, such as overcrowding, violence, and the exploitation of child workers.<sup>24</sup> However, Italian organ-grinders did not become "quaint curiosities," as Picker argues, but actually increased two and a half times between 1861 and 1901.<sup>25</sup> This growth may have been due to an upsurge in the number of female Italian immigrants in the second half of the century, many of whom took up organ-grinding.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, the last two decades of the nineteenth century saw an influx of Jewish immigrants to England, and according to historian Lucio Sponza, anxiety about this other "alien invasion" led to renewed agitation against organ-grinders and attempts to legislate against street music.<sup>27</sup>

### Investigating Italians: Authority, Costuming, and Sympathetic Identification

Reawakened interest in the Italian organ-grinder coincided with increasing numbers of female journalists, public fascination with incognito social investigation, and the fashion for slumming. This confluence resulted in a spate of investigative reports on Italian organ-grinding appearing in the periodical press in the 1890s. The men and women who investigated the

Italian colony and Italian organ-grinders ranged from the notable to the obscure. The most well known were Horace Annesley Vachell, who was beginning his career as a prolific novelist and playwright, and Olive Christian Malvery, Anglo-Indian social commentator and philanthropist. Malvery reported on her organ-grinding experience in a seven-part series on London's female poor, in which she also posed as a vagrant, costermonger, factory worker, street peddler, waitress, and shopgirl, for *Pearson's Magazine*, 1904–5. These articles were later collected and revised for *The Soul Market* (1906), which has been called the “most commercially popular work of Edwardian social investigation.”<sup>28</sup>

Other investigators included professional journalists such as James D. Symon and T. (Anna Mary) Sparrow. Symon contributed articles, reviews, and fiction to several periodicals, including the *English Review*, *English Illustrated Magazine*, and *Bookman*. Sparrow, originally from Lancashire, was a featured writer for the *Quiver* from 1895 to 1900 who specialized in investigating the working poor and life in the slums. Her article on organ-grinders appeared in the September 1894 issue of the *Newbery House Magazine: A Monthly Review for Churchmen and Churchwomen*, a journal focused on Anglican church-related topics, religious history, fiction, and social issues. “London Street Toilers,” the first of a two-part series (the second was on water-cress sellers), is a rare example of investigative journalism in this periodical.

Another investigative reporter of the period was Eva Bright, whose July 1894 article on organ-grinders was the third in an intermittent series investigating “How the Other Half Lives” that ran from May 1894 to September 1897 in the *English Illustrated Magazine*. This series began two months earlier with an account of Elizabeth Banks's undercover experience as a crossing sweeper. It included male and female journalists interviewing or impersonating a variety of working-class roles, including cabby, sewer rat, steeplejack, poacher, sandwich-board man, and street peddler. Another investigator for the *English Illustrated Magazine*, Frances Bourne, contributed “A Lady's Experiences as an Organ-Grinder,” which appeared in 1900. Although this article was not a part of the “How the Other Half Lives” series, it did follow many of the undercover investigative conventions established by her precursors—Bright and Banks in particular. Whether career journalists or dabblers, all were from the middle and upper classes, and their first-person articles appeared in periodicals targeting middle-class readers.

Reporters' motives for investigating Italian organ-grinders varied. Male reporters uniformly presented themselves as investigating a “grave social problem.”<sup>29</sup> Anna Mary Sparrow and Olive Christian Malvery, however, tried to dispel misconceptions about the lives of Italian organ-grinders and to generate sympathy for this particular segment of the urban poor. Eva

Bright purported to have the same purpose, claiming that her investigation was prompted by a “recent article in a popular daily [that] startled the public by visions of Alnaschar-like splendour in the profession of organ-grinding.”<sup>30</sup> However, her main focus was actually the “adventure and novelty” of her incognito experience.<sup>31</sup> Frances Bourne, on the other hand, made no pretence to sociological discovery, opening her article with the statement, “It occurred to me one day that to go round the streets of London with a barrel-organ, in an Italian costume, with stained face, clumsy boots, red-handkerchief, and earrings, would form an experience at once exciting, adventurous, novel, and attractive.”<sup>32</sup> Unlike Sparrow and Malvery, Bourne and Bright were primarily interested in the thrills cross-cultural masquerade offered.

Male and female reporters assumed different subject positions in terms of social prerogative, respectability, and spatial mobility. For example, many male reporters signaled their authority to investigate Italian organ-grinders. James Greenwood implicitly contrasts his productive work with that of the organ-grinders, which many deemed no more than glorified begging, and claims authorization for conducting an inquiry into the Italian colony by establishing that he is a responsible father and citizen forced by organ-grinders to turn this disturbance into a subject for his pen. In contrast, the only identifying detail Horace Annesley Vachell gives about himself is that he and his friend walk to the Italian colony from a “fashionable West-end club.”<sup>33</sup> But his prose style and his imaginative speculations about Queen Elizabeth and Sir Christopher Hatton mark him as an educated man. James Symon presents himself as a social scientist, recording his observations “for the benefit [. . .] of the curious antiquary of tomorrow, but with keener regard to the earnest sociologist of today.”<sup>34</sup> As tax-paying citizens, historians, or sociologists, these men have the license and the responsibility to survey this population of the underclass and illuminate attendant social problems.

Male reporters also often assert the danger of their investigative enterprises. Greenwood brings along a friend, a “man of extraordinary size and muscular development,” for protection when he goes to Saffron Hill.<sup>35</sup> Likewise, Symon has a guide to the Italian colony because “to venture alone would be to court a certain dagger-stroke.”<sup>36</sup> In highlighting the potential perils of a trip to the Italian colony, these men both reinforce stereotypes of Italians’ propensity for violence and imply that masculine bravery as well as social authority is required for this kind of investigative journalism.

Female reporters writing in the 1890s, lacking similar institutional or gendered authority, compensate with cross-cultural dressing or immersion in their subject via costuming. As Olive Christian Malvery notes in the preface to her *Pearson’s Magazine* series, it is only by undertaking the occupa-



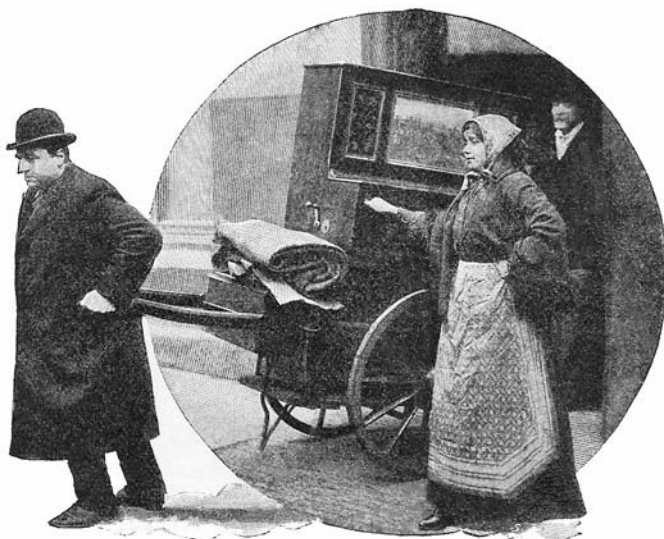
tions of the working poor, only by being “one of them [. . .] that I am able to speak with authority of the conditions that surround the lives of girls who toil in such places.”<sup>37</sup> Other than Greenwood’s “slouchy coat” and “slouchy cap,” male journalists did not attempt to disguise themselves for their adventures in the Italian colony. This could be because men’s clothing styles made it easier for middle- and upper-class men to pass unnoticed in slum areas.<sup>38</sup> According to Ellen Ross, women’s elaborate fashions made them “far more conspicuous as classed bodies than were their male counterparts” in the slums.<sup>39</sup> To counter the attention to class status that their clothes drew, “women doing serious social work wore their skirts on the short side and chose dark colors, washable fabrics, and simple styles.”<sup>40</sup> In addition to being practical, Ross argues this outfit conveyed “virtue, self-discipline, respectability, and sexual propriety.”<sup>41</sup> This plain style made female social workers less conspicuous, not only distinguishing them from amateur slummers but also from factory girls who often wore brightly colored clothing.<sup>42</sup> Female reporters in the slums often went one step further by adopting the apparel of their subjects, whether flower girl, factory worker, or organ-grinder. In addition to lending women authority, costumes enabled them to blend into the environment, releasing them from both the class signification of high fashion and the respectability conveyed by the social worker’s simple outfit.

To pass as an Italian organ-grinder, a reporter wore neither fashionable nor sober styles. For example, for her exposé of “How the Other Half Lives,” Eva Bright wore a velvet bodice, a muslin chemisette, a bead necklace, and a “couple of gaudy shawls for my head and neck.”<sup>43</sup> Frances Bourne reports in “A Lady’s Experiences as an Organ-Grinder” that her costume “consisted of a blue cotton check shirt, a very worn-out red handkerchief for my head, an old cotton blouse with a piece of bright, red material to tie round the waist, many pairs of stockings, and old boots several times too large for me.”<sup>44</sup> Anna Mary Sparrow and Olive Christian Malvery do not describe their attire in the text of their articles, but the accompanying illustrations exhibit their costumes. In “London Street Toilers,” the woman at the organ, presumably Sparrow, wears a striped skirt, blouse, bodice, chemisette, and kerchief, an outfit markedly different from the sober black dresses and stylish hats worn by the other women (figure 1). “The Heart of Things. IV—Music in the Byways” includes a photograph of Malvery appareled in a dark blouse and skirt with a brightly patterned kerchief and apron, in contrast to the tailored jackets and boater hats she and other women wear in the rest of the article’s photographs (figure 2). Sparrow and Malvery emulate the dress of women in the Italian colony, whom Malvery describes as “looking picturesque in print bodices and gay-coloured skirts, and the usual gaudy kerchief thrown over the head and tied with careless grace in front.”<sup>45</sup> Female reporters mask



ORGAN-GRINDERS AT WORK.

Figure 1. "Organ-Grinders at Work." Sparrow, "London Street Toilers," 249.  
Courtesy of the University of Michigan Libraries.



Miss Malvery starting out on an organ-grinding expedition. She found that it is not a very lucrative profession—her day's takings only realised 4s. 5d., out of which the hire of the organ had to be paid.

Figure 2. "Miss Malvery starting out on an organ-grinding expedition."  
Malvery, "The Heart of Things. IV.—Music in the Byways," 155.  
Courtesy of the Ohio State University Libraries.

their class status and signify Italian ethnicity with beads, brightly colored shawls, kerchiefs, and old and ill-fitting clothing, thereby becoming anonymous and protected on the streets. By locating ethnicity in apparel, female reporters are able to shed the “respectable” identities that limit their access to public spaces.

This costume protected women from street harassment for two reasons. First, as we have seen, organ-grinders were welcomed in working-class neighborhoods because they provided music to those who otherwise had little access to it. As an asset to the community, organ-grinders were unlikely to be harassed. Second, Italian immigrants had a reputation for being violent and quick to settle disputes with a knife.<sup>46</sup> Thus, fear of harm may have prevented harassers from giving female organ-grinders unwanted attention in both the East and West End.

While Italian clothing could be readily adopted, an ethnic difference more difficult to emulate was skin color. In fact, this detail threatened to derail Frances Bourne’s masquerade. After obtaining her costume, she wonders, “But my face—how should I disguise my fair English complexion and assume the well-known olive tint so necessary if I wished to pass as an Italian woman?”<sup>47</sup> She tries “cosmetics, stains, dyes, powders, and nostrums innumerable,” but all fail to give the desired hue.<sup>48</sup> On the verge of giving up her plan, she finds a grimy shop where she confesses to the proprietor why she wants the dye. He provides her with a mixture which works: “I was transformed; and the glass reflected back the vision of a regular nut-brown maiden, who might pass muster, even in broad daylight, as an Italian organ-grinder.”<sup>49</sup> The more savvy Eva Bright dispenses with this drama by going straight to a “well-known theatrical costumier for a hair dye and a preparation to stain my face and arms the requisite sun-burnt hue.”<sup>50</sup> Bourne and Bright were not alone in feeling that tinted skin was essential to the charade. In 1892, the *Strand Magazine* noted that the financial success of female Italian organ-grinders in the city “has prompted several English and Irish girls to imitate them by colouring their skins with walnut juice.”<sup>51</sup> The insistence on darkening one’s skin in order to pass as Italian suggests that these reporters felt their fair complexions identified them as upper-class Englishwomen. Darker coloring, whether due to ethnicity or outdoor labor that would render one “sun-burnt,” provides a level of invisibility, helping these women blend in with Italian and English working classes. Indeed, Olive Christian Malvery, of mixed European and Indian ancestry, found that her “foreign appearance” helped her pass among the “labouring and poorer classes.”<sup>52</sup>

Thus attired, these women were in a position to explore other class and ethnic identities in a way that uncostumed male reporters, who maintained their outsider status and position of authority, chose not to. Eva Bright, for example, reflects that “mankind is composed of much the same elements,

whether clad in broad-cloth or fustian, and that police and hall-porters treated me with the same condescension, dashed with a tinge of hauteur, that I possibly also extend to my washer-woman.”<sup>53</sup> Her insight, that class distinctions are superficial and constituted largely by clothing, suggests the possibilities for establishing commonality that undercover social explorations offered—such as her momentary feeling of kinship with her washer-woman. However, both Bright and Bourne reduce class difference to external markers such as clothing and pigment at the expense of other signifiers, such as accent, education, or nutrition, and thus only accomplish a cursory examination of working-class identity.

Anna Mary Sparrow and Olive Christian Malvery enter into the working conditions of street musicians to a greater degree, providing a glimpse of what life was like for organ-grinders. After detailing the hardships of the organ-grinder experiences, including standing for ten to twelve hours a day, “moving your arms all the time,” remaining constantly alert to one’s surroundings, and enduring inclement weather, Sparrow concludes, “To call an organ-grinder’s life an idle life or a lazy one is to show you know nothing at all about it.”<sup>54</sup> Her description of the organ-grinder’s living conditions—a two-room tenement with a communal outhouse, meager meals, and a heavy reliance on alcohol—completes the bleak picture of poverty and privation she uncovers. Malvery comes to a similar conclusion: “After tramping and playing in almost every class of street from Clerkenwell to Chelsea, from 9 a.m. to 8.30 p.m., with only two hours for rest, our earnings amounted to 4s. 5d., not a lucrative day’s work, one must admit, for two people with the hire of the organ to be paid out of the takings.”<sup>55</sup> Both Sparrow and Malvery detail long days of hard work poorly remunerated, exposing the popular misconception that organ-grinding was a profitable profession and generating sympathy for these street musicians in the process. By “liv[ing] their life,” Sparrow and Malvery highlight the disparity between the comfortable middle-class reader and the “poorest of the poor.”<sup>56</sup>

However, while Sparrow and Malvery experience the realities of working-class life, neither they nor Bright nor Bourne considers what it means to be Italian in England. Sparrow avoids the question by remaining vague about the nationality of the organ-grinders she investigates, whereas the others indulge in cultural stereotyping. Bright finds the Italians she meets to be dirty and “cut-throat-looking,” while Bourne is warned that they are “jealous and excitable.”<sup>57</sup> Malvery describes Italians’ “gaudy” clothes and wheelbarrows, their “lazy indifference,” and their propensity for violence, characterizing an organ-grinder as an “unarmed bandit” engaged in a “more peaceable, though nevertheless as cruel a method of mulcting the personal property of his victims as when on his sunny mountains he ear-lopped for ransom.”<sup>58</sup> For Malvery, whether engaged in kidnapping

or making music, the Italian takes English money while hurting English ears. Nevertheless, she (and she alone) admits to a “very kindly feeling for these children of the sunny South” for the joy they bring to poor children and working people.<sup>59</sup> By referring to Italian immigrants as “children,” she implies that they are less mature and sophisticated than English adults. While it might seem strange that a fellow immigrant to England would view Italians this way, Walkowitz notes that Malvery often “promoted herself as the embodiment of the British nation and Empire.”<sup>60</sup> Thus, while Sparrow and Malvery respond sympathetically to the working classes, they are not able to extend this identification to another non-Empire nationality.

Furthermore, the possibilities for sympathetic identification with working-class Italian immigrants are limited in that actual organ-grinders’ experiences are replaced by the reporter’s experiences. Mark Freeman argues that social explorers were legitimate investigators using the complete-participation method of investigation.<sup>61</sup> However, in periodical articles like these, the reporter, rather than the social problem, becomes the focus. Attention paid to the reporter’s efforts at disguise, daring exploits, and subjective experiences frequently overshadows the people and working conditions they are meant to illuminate, thereby calling into question the validity of incognito social explorations as a means of uncovering information about the urban poor.

### Cross-Cultural Dress and Spatial Mobility

Female reporters disguised as Italian organ-grinders often address the thrill of being incognito rather than any cross-class or cross-cultural understanding, suggesting that for some women the primary attraction of undercover investigative reporting was freedom from gender and class constrictions rather than sociological discovery. When no one notices Eva Bright “as [she] tramped along the muddy roads,” she “conclude[s] [that her] costume was a success.”<sup>62</sup> Emboldened by her ability to pass unnoticed, she risks detection by playing in front of a friend’s house “so persistently” that the friend tosses her a penny “to get rid of me, without in the least penetrating my disguise.”<sup>63</sup> Bright’s costume relieves her of her social identity and provides her access to public spaces typically hazardous for middle-class women—dirty public streets. Frances Bourne, however, is a little less cavalier about tempting discovery. First, she worries about detection by her parents: “How I shuddered as we passed down familiar Cheapside lest some chance acquaintance should pass by and recognise me, and report me to my unconscious parents!”<sup>64</sup> Bourne indicates her escapade has not been sanctioned by her mother or father, bringing to mind periodical fiction in which the organ-grinder disguise is a means of contravening parental

authority. Additionally, the “excitement of that first awful moment as an Italian organ-woman” is quickly followed by further apprehension of recognition.<sup>65</sup> She writes, “It seemed to me that, in spite of my disguise, innumerable people recognised me, turned round, wondered, paused, stared, and then passed on, leaving me in an agony of doubt as to whether or not they then and there deliberately disowned me.”<sup>66</sup> Bourne’s sentence structure expresses her profound anxiety as she delays the moment of relief when the spectators move away. Relief is incomplete, however, as she is not sure whether they have identified her before leaving. Her angst about being discovered reminds us of the class and gender conventions, embodied in parents and one’s social circle, that circumscribed young women at this time. Bright and Bourne flaunt these constraints by donning cross-cultural dress, thereby offering a vicarious thrill for the reader of the *English Illustrated Magazine*, where such undercover operations, following the New Journalism style, were often featured.

Critics have overlooked the fact that many of these female investigators were more interested in their spatial mobility than social mobility. Whereas male reporters tended to restrict their investigations to the Italian colony, incognito female reporters took the opportunity to range around the city of London. Anna Mary Sparrow captures the appeal of this aspect of organ-grinding: “Life in the streets has its charms, and I will own that after a week of it the vagabondism of such an existence fell on me like a spell; and I understood, as no words could have made me understand, how liberty-loving man with his animal instinct of lawlessness, revels in its independence and freedom of restraint, and would rather run the chance of an occasional doss-house bed or a night on the Embankment than submit to be shackled with the fetters of the sweated slave.”<sup>67</sup> In a departure from the informative tone of the rest of her article, Sparrow romanticizes the work of organ-grinders, depicting them as pre-modern humans whose “animal instincts” and unstructured, nomadic lives bring them closer to nature. By contrast, modern occupations available to the working-classes—“sweated” or underpaid labor in poor conditions—are equated with the “shackle[s]” and “fetters” of imprisonment and slavery. Sparrow’s shift in tone indicates just how attractive the organ-grinder’s “independence,” “freedom,” and “liberty” to roam the streets of London could be to middle-class women.

Other female reporters likewise enjoy “independence and freedom from restraint” during their masquerades, evidenced by the verbal maps they provide of their peregrinations. Eva Bright, for example, begins her day as an organ-grinder in Notting Hill, where she finds an organ to rent on Mary Place. From there she walks to Bayswater Road and its side streets, and then south to Kensington. After spending the day in the West End, she heads east in the evening to the slums around Oxford Street by going up



Sloane Street to Piccadilly and then to the back streets around New Oxford Street and Drury Lane. After walking approximately nine miles from the tony West End to the slums of central London, Bright hails a hansom and rides home.

Frances Bourne's adventure takes her in another direction. She heads northeast from her home in Sloane Square, taking a hansom to the Italian colony. Dismissing the hansom in Saffron Hill, Bourne walks the streets of this slum until she finds an organ for hire and a place to change into her "Italian" clothes. Once in costume, she walks south to Fleet Street, following it to Trafalgar Square and to "the station" (probably Charing Cross), where she takes refuge from the rain.<sup>68</sup> After losing her Italian male chaperones, who have gone to a pub with her organ, Bourne walks back to Saffron Hill to get her clothes and then to the nearest station to take the train back to Sloane Square. However, she gets on the wrong train by accident and goes to Chiswick, a west London suburb, before returning home. Bourne only walks about three and a half miles during her outing, but she demonstrates her familiarity with multiple forms of public transportation—feet, rail, hansom, omnibus—and travels through much of the London metropolis alone.

By traversing London's classed and gendered geography, these women crossed social boundaries that typically restricted the movement of middle-class Englishwomen in the city. Scholars have argued that middle-class women were walking West End streets alone from the 1860s onward, but this mobility was not without difficulties.<sup>69</sup> Judith Walkowitz notes that the "West End and the City were notorious areas for street harassment of women" and quotes a woman whose mother warned her that she "would be taken for a 'bad woman'" if she walked in Piccadilly or Oxford Street alone.<sup>70</sup> However, Bright was not identified as a prostitute as she strolled in these very streets. Moreover, unlike her unclothed male counterparts, Bourne did not fear physical harm as she wandered in the Italian colony. Adorned in ethnic attire, the reporters under consideration in this study walked the streets in these areas without being hassled or propositioned for anything other than music. Cultural cross-dressing not only allowed these women to roam the streets of the upper- and middle-class West End unaccosted but also extended their range to well-known slum areas east of their stomping grounds.

Such freedom was not exclusive to women, of course; male investigators also enjoyed the anonymity of incognito dressing. Jack London, for example, remarked that his working-class costume afforded him invisibility in the East End as he became one with the crowd.<sup>71</sup> However, I have been unable to find a single example of a male reporter disguising himself as an Italian organ-grinder. I would suggest that the appeal of cross-cultural dress was stronger for female journalists for a number of reasons.

Male reporters investigating the Italian colony asserted their social authority and masculinity. This warrant was dependent on nationality and class position—men's middle-class Englishness proving, according to the cultural discourses of the period, their superiority over working-class Italians. However, whereas English nationality and middle-class status reinforced male strength and privilege, these factors imposed social and geographic limitations on women, restricting their movement in public spaces and exposing them to male harassment. A costume that facilitated social investigation and released one from gender and class conventions would, therefore, be more attractive to women. As we have seen, cross-cultural attire provided women with authority, anonymity, and independence, empowering them to move freely across the London cityscape.

### Spectator versus Spectacle

While the invisibility afforded by ethnic disguise offered women the freedom to rove the streets of London, the fact that they made themselves the subject of periodical articles—accompanied by illustrations and photographs—emphasizes the ways in which they functioned as spectacle. Indeed, this is a distinguishing feature of their articles; those by male reporters contain sketches of Italian immigrants at work or play but none of the men themselves. *The English Illustrated Magazine* and *Pearson's Magazine*, which relied on illustrations and other New Journalism techniques to entice readers, thus provided their audience with the sensation of seeing middle-class women adopting working-class poses. Following the precedent set by the initial two articles in the *English Illustrated Magazine's* series on "How the Other Half Lives" (both by Elizabeth Banks), Eva Bright's article includes illustrations of the reporter in costume, showcasing her Italian garb, and also captures her in the streets. For example, the last illustration in the article depicts her playing the organ in Drury Lane (figure 3). The street is narrow and crowded, and Bright almost blurs into the background as our attention is drawn to the man crossing the street in the foreground of the picture. Bright is overshadowed by her surroundings in this image, perhaps downplaying her exploits and the spectacle she makes, but at the same time the success of her disguise is evident in that she blends so seamlessly into the urban scene.

Other female reporters were prominent figures in the photographs and illustrations documenting their escapades. For example, Frances Bourne's article in the *English Illustrated Magazine* includes two photos: "The writer's first halt" and "In the Italian manner" (figure 4). In both, Bourne stands in largely empty streets with the piano organ and Italian male companions. The shots appear candid, and it seems as if the photographer was trying to be unobtrusive, aiming his or her camera from across the street





Figure 3. "In Drury Lane." Bright, "How the Other Half Lives," 1011.  
 Courtesy of the University of Michigan Libraries.

or from behind a vehicle (part of a large wheel looms on the right in one photograph), perhaps to avoid revealing Bourne as an imposter.<sup>72</sup> Thus, the reader has proof that her madcap adventure is not fiction. The evidentiary nature of these two photographs is heightened by the fact that they appear in the midst of line drawings of Bourne playing at being an Italian organ-grinder. While an artist may take liberties with his or her subject and may have drawn these sketches after the fact, the photographer was presumed by many to represent reality authentically and in the moment.<sup>73</sup>



*The writer's first halt.*



*In the Italian manner.*

Figure 4. "The writer's first halt" and "In the Italian manner." Bourne, "A Lady's Experiences as an Organ-Grinder," 23. Courtesy of the Walter Havighurst Special Collections, Miami University Libraries.

Photo-essays were a prominent feature of *Pearson's*, and Olive Christian Malvery's series for the magazine was no exception. The photographs illustrating Malvery's articles include both staged studio portraits of Malvery in costume and informal photos taken on the street. Although the street photos may be posed and the participants are often aware of the camera, I would argue that the combination of studio and street photos has a similar effect as the incorporation of both line drawings and photos in Frances Bourne's article—the authenticity of the street photos is enhanced. For example, Olive Christian Malvery's "Gilding the Gutter," the third article in the series, includes both a studio portrait of Malvery "transformed into a coster" and a photo of her standing outdoors beside a vegetable coster's stall (figures 5 and 6).<sup>74</sup> In the studio portrait, Malvery, in a newly laundered skirt and shirtwaist, stands against a blank backdrop with a basket of fresh vegetables, offering a head of cauliflower to an imaginary customer. As Walkowitz notes, photographs like these emphasize Malvery's "artfulness" or "ability to transform herself through gesture, cosmetics, wigs, and stance" into various types of working-class women.<sup>75</sup> The street photographs, on the other hand, underscore Malvery's actual presence in the East End among the working classes. Her informal costermonger photo is dominated by a barrow overlaid with cabbages and potatoes, reminding the viewer of the physical labor required to move a heavy cart from market to pitch. In the foreground, the vegetable coster converses with a customer while Malvery stands in the background. The contrast between the two photos highlights the studio portrait's artificial and idealized representation of a costermonger, as opposed to the reality of heavy barrows and grimy, refuse-strewn streets. In the context of the staged photos, which accentuate Malvery's artifice, those taken in natural surroundings appear documentary. Interestingly, given the more elaborate costuming required for the part of Italian organ-grinder, Malvery includes no studio portrait of herself in this guise. Instead, "Music in the Byways" is illustrated exclusively with street photographs (see figure 2), thus stressing the veracity of her first-hand experiences.

The illustrations accompanying Anna Mary Sparrow's article in the *Newbery House Magazine* are also presented as evidence of the reporter's exploits. As this periodical rarely published investigative reporting, Sparrow's article and illustrations diverge from the journal's usually staid content. A footnote at the end of the piece indicates that the "illustrations are from photographs specially taken for the Magazine by Messrs. Soper and Stedman, 147, Strand."<sup>76</sup> Because photographs were expensive and time consuming to reproduce, some journals hired illustrators to "clarify and simplify photographs, perhaps tracing the image or working directly on a photograph before bleaching it out."<sup>77</sup> Gerry Beegan suggests that notes or captions indicating a photographic source for the illustration were intended



Miss Malvery transformed into a coster. She apprenticed herself to a coster's wife for a shilling a day, and helped her to sell vegetables, etc., from a barrow.

Figure 5. "Miss Malvery transformed into a coster." Malvery, "The Heart of Things. III.—Gilding the Gutter," 43. Courtesy of the Ohio State University Libraries.

"to bolster the trustworthiness of the image."<sup>78</sup> The choice of photo-based illustrations, therefore, lends credence to Sparrow's story. They are certainly more realistic in appearance than the line drawings that accompanied her second piece of investigative journalism for the *Newbury House Magazine* on cress sellers. Indeed, photo-based illustrations are unusual in this sparsely illustrated periodical, thereby amplifying their verisimilitude. Thus, at first glance, they appear to be authentic transcriptions of the scenes and events depicted textually by Sparrow. However, a close reading



A coster's vegetable stall, from which Miss Malvery helped to sell. Very large numbers of the poor rely for practically all their supplies on the costers' stalls.

Figure 6. "A coster's vegetable stall, from which Miss Malvery helped to sell."  
 Malvery, "The Heart of Things. III.—Gilding the Gutter," 47.  
 Courtesy of the Ohio State University Libraries.

reveals that the background looks suspiciously the same in all four of the article's photo illustrations. The scenes appear to have been staged in front of the same wall rather than captured candidly in the moment. The inclusion of pseudo-documentary illustrations, even though their reliability is questionable, suggests that the spectacle of women engaged in cross-cultural dress was part of the appeal of female reporters' investigative articles, whether they appeared in mass-market periodicals associated with New Journalism or those directed at Anglican clergy. The documentary photographs offered readers a vicarious thrill by locating middle-class women in urban settings that were normally off limits.

The fact that female reporters' articles are supported with visual documentation indicates that the authority for their investigations lies in their embodied experience of the lives of organ-grinders. The photographs and illustrations provide proof of the women's transgressive behavior, bringing attention to the cross-cultural and spatial mobility they enjoy. They also serve to focus the reader's attention on the reporters and not the Italian organ-grinders they are investigating. Thus, rather than "struggl[ing] to escape the status of spectacle and become spectator," as Nord argues,

these women have it both ways: assuming roles as invisible observers on the street but objects of curiosity in the illustrations and photographs that accompany the articles.<sup>79</sup> This spectacle was staged for a particular audience: the middle-class readership of family- or church-oriented periodicals like the *English Illustrated Magazine*, *Pearson's Magazine*, and *Newbery House Magazine*. Because this encounter occurred in the pages of a magazine rather than the street, female reporters limited their public exposure to the private reading experience of fellow members of the middle class, thereby preserving their social respectability.

These women's desire to protect their social standing, despite making spectacles of themselves, is evident in textual reminders to the reader of their middle-class status and behavior. For example, Eva Bright conveys her class status by indicating where she purchases her costume: the fashionable department store Liberty's and the shops on Oxford Street, all of which catered to the middle classes. Frances Bourne indicates that her home is in the well-to-do neighborhood of Sloane Square, and she highlights her sense of propriety—despite her unorthodox caper—by noting that she must find an Italian boy to go with her since “I could not go alone.”<sup>80</sup> Furthermore, she must seek shelter from the rain at a train station during her adventure because she cannot “summon the courage” to enter a public house.<sup>81</sup> By obtaining a chaperone of sorts and avoiding a working-class drinking establishment, Bourne maintains her middle-class respectability and avoids being taken for a prostitute. Though Olive Christian Malvery lives and works with the London underclasses during her investigations, she too has a chaperone, “Mr. C.” It is he who provides her access to the working-class people and professions she investigates and who pulls the piano organ during their outing.

Female reporters also depict themselves as unsuited for the physical labor or commerce involved in this working-class profession, thereby signaling their difference from their subjects. Even with Mr. C's help, Malvery must hire a youth to help pull the organ.<sup>82</sup> Bright ends her article by calling attention to her “blistered hands, aching wrists, and almost shoeless feet,” and Bourne notes that while on the street, “for the life of me I could not summon up courage enough to go round and ask for money, and not a penny was given to me.”<sup>83</sup> Notwithstanding the audacity of her escapade, Bourne presents herself as unable to face the everyday aspects of working-class life, such as entering pubs or collecting payment for work performed. These reporters' insistence on signaling their middle-class status alongside photographs documenting their cross-cultural impersonations suggests that adopting conventional middle-class attitudes was necessary in order to be viewed as acceptable by readers of middle-class periodicals.

Furthermore, this concern with maintaining middle-class identity suggests that while cross-cultural dressing created the possibility for sympha-



thetic identification with marginalized groups, permanent class or ethnic crossing was not possible. As Gail Ching-Liang Low argues, "The primary attraction of the cross-cultural dress is [. . .] the promise of 'transgressive' pleasure without the penalties of actual change. Such metamorphosis does little to subvert existing power hierarchies since the cross-dresser may always reveal or revert to the white identity underneath the native clothes."<sup>84</sup> While these women enjoyed the anonymity and mobility that came with adopting other cultural identities, Victorian class and ethnic hierarchies were never in doubt. Indeed, the reporters all conclude their articles by removing their costumes literally or figuratively. Eva Bright concludes her adventure by "jump[ing] into a passing hansom," reasserting her class status by taking a more expensive form of public transportation home.<sup>85</sup> In the cab, she muses, "The events of the day seemed to resolve themselves into a kind of 'Walpurgisnacht' dream," stressing the unreality of her cross-cultural adventure despite her sore hands and feet.<sup>86</sup> Frances Bourne likewise returns to a middle-class existence—her home in Belgravia and her "unconscious parents"—at the end of the article.<sup>87</sup> Moreover, the article's final illustration is of Bourne re-clothed in fashionable attire, watching "[her] boys with the organ" playing in Sloane Square (figure 7).<sup>88</sup> She is depicted viewing organ-grinders from her usual class and ethnic position—in the foreground and distanced from working-class Italian immigrants. Once again she resembles other conventional images of middle-class women in the pages of the *English Illustrated Magazine*, returning to familiarity and thus respectability.

Olive Christian Malvery also returns to her middle-class subject position at the end of her article. She closes with an anecdote about coming across excellent street musicians while walking in the wealthy south London suburb of Putney, which leads her to speculate about the effects "good music" could have on the "lives of even the terribly degraded inhabitants" of "our dismal slums."<sup>89</sup> Malvery physically positions herself in upper-middle-class territory, distanced from the East End. No longer impersonating the working poor, she reassumes the mantle of social reformer, considering how to improve the lives of "degraded" slum-dwellers. Anna Mary Sparrow seemingly avoids this pattern of shifting back to middle-class identity by ending her article with a description of a working-class dance at a Westminster public house, concluding with the statement, "Though I may forget many things, it will be long before I forget my first Organ Grinders' Ball."<sup>90</sup> However, by referring to a dance at a pub as a "ball," a term more commonly used to describe a middle- or upper-class social event, she ironically distances herself from the subject of her investigation. Once the masquerade necessary for establishing their investigative authority is ended, these reporters reassert their middle-class English identity and consequently Victorian class and ethnic distinctions.



*In the square were my boys with the organ.*

Figure 7. "In the square were my boys with the organ." Bourne, "A Lady's Experiences as an Organ-Grinder," 26. Courtesy of the Walter Havighurst Special Collections, Miami University Libraries.

This outlet for escaping middle-class gender restrictions was short lived. The turn of the century saw a shift in attitudes toward Italian organ-grinders due to a number of factors. The influx of Jewish immigrants at this time drew attention away from Italians, and motor cars began to compete with the noise of organ-grinders, adding to the general din of the city.<sup>91</sup> Additionally, undercover investigations demystified the profession, replacing notions of wealthy Italians retiring to country houses with descriptions of the hard work and squalid conditions organ-grinders actually experienced. Public perception of the Italian colony changed as well. In 1905, the same year as Olive Christian Malvery's expedition, George R. Sims sought to dispel myths about the area, writing in the *Strand Magazine* that the Italian quarter "is clean, well-ordered, and [. . .] under far better control than many districts of London in which the dreaded alien immi-



grant has found no foothold.”<sup>92</sup> He further notes that the inhabitants of the Italian colony “lead industrious and frugal lives” and pay their rent on time.<sup>93</sup> Sims reverses early stereotypes of Italians, depicting them as hard-working model citizens and better residents than some native-born Londoners. Moreover, by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, organ-grinding seems to have lost its association with Italians. When in 1911 Frank A. Morgan and Harry G. Hopkins recounted for the *Pall Mall Magazine* their three-day experience of playing a barrel-organ on the streets of London to raise money for charity, Italians and the Italian colony received nary a mention.<sup>94</sup>

While some reporters, like Anna Mary Sparrow and Olive Christian Malvery, viewed themselves as social investigators and attempted to allay misconceptions about the lives of Italian organ-grinders, others, such as Eva Bright and Frances Bourne, saw an opportunity to escape their lives of middle-class propriety for a day. Regardless of their motives, female reporters found that cross-cultural dressing offered both authority for their observations and protection against male harassment when moving through public spaces. By assuming the costume of the Italian organ-grinder, they co-opted this transgressive figure’s freedom to roam in the city of London, thereby crossing ethnic, gender, class, and geographic boundaries. Ethnic attire allowed women to shed their “respectable” identities and subvert the social pressures that restricted middle-class women’s mobility in the city. Yet by publishing their articles in periodicals that combined investigative reporting of social issues with illustrations in a forum that promised to be suitable for middle-class family audiences, women were able to maintain their respectability. Their investigations highlighted the complex ways women could be both spectators and spectacles in the nineteenth century.

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## NOTES

1. Greenwood, “The Private Life of a Public Nuisance,” 227. While no one mistakes Greenwood for an Italian man in this costume, a waiter in a pub takes him for a fellow working man.
2. Keating, “Introduction”; Seth Koven, *Slumming*; Freeman, “Journeys into Poverty Kingdom”; Freeman and Nelson, “Editor’s Introduction.” Both Keating and Koven describe the cross-class experience of middle-class investigators as a “descent,” perhaps following Jack London, who titles his sartorial transformation and entry into the East End “The Descent” in *The People of the Abyss*.
3. Nord, *Walking the Victorian Streets*, 207; Ross, “Slum Journeys,” 11–21; Koven, *Slumming*, 140–80; Walkowitz, “Indian Woman,” 3–46. See also Ross, “Introduction,” 12–15.

4. Higgs, *Glimpses into the Abyss*, 94; emphasis in the original text.
5. See, for example, Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight*; Walkowitz, "Going Public"; Nead, *Victorian Babylon*; and Walker, "Vistas of Pleasure."
6. Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight*, 46.
7. Ibid.
8. Nord, *Walking the Victorian Streets*, 4.
9. "In 1861 the Italians represented 5 percent of all foreigners in Britain; by 1901 their proportion had increased to 9 percent." Sponza, *Italian Immigrants*, 5.
10. The wide array of periodicals reporting on the street music debate included the *Times*, *Saturday Review*, *All the Year Round*, *Chambers's Journal*, *Athenaeum*, *Punch*, and many music journals. For more on the campaigns against street music and Italian organ-grinders, see Sponza, *Italian Immigrants*, 163–94, and Zucchi, *Little Slaves*, 83–88. See Picker, *Victorian Soundscapes*, 45–52, for discussion of the xenophobic nature of the response in the press. For an analysis of *Punch's* response at mid-century in particular, see Annemarie McAllister, *John Bull's Italian Snakes* and "Fear and Loathing on the Streets of London."
11. Zucchi, *Little Slaves*, 18.
12. The Italian Colony was bounded by Holborn Street to the south and Rosebery Avenue to the north, with its eastern and western borders demarcated by Gray's Inn Road and Farringdon Road. Sponza, *Italian Immigrants*, 20. For rumors of the supposed wealth amassed by organ-grinders, see Untitled Item, 265; Hadden, "The Regulation of Street Music," 953; and "Echoes of the Month," 241.
13. Hadden, "Regulation of Street Music," 953; "Bright and Brief," 232. These salary estimates of £75 to £300 a year would place organ-grinders' incomes in the range of those earned by clerks, teachers, high-wage government employees, and miners, as well as skilled building, textile, engineering, and printing workers. It would place their incomes above those earned by agricultural workers, policemen, general laborers, and some low-wage government employees. Williamson, "The Structure of Pay in Britain," 48.
14. Sponza, *Italian Immigrants*, 67.
15. Malvery, "The Heart of Things. IV," 156.
16. Ibid., 157. For another defense of organ-grinders, see Rev. H. R. Haweis, "Street Music in England," 598–99.
17. London, *People of the Abyss*, 274.
18. Manning, *A Life for Education*, 23.
19. McAllister notes, "Much of mid-nineteenth-century discourse about the organ grinders explored liminal space, that contested boundary between the hard-won home space and the uncontrollable outside and other." *John Bull's Italian Snakes*, 167–68.
20. Picker, *Victorian Soundscapes*, and McAllister, *John Bull's Italian Snakes*, have argued that the organ-grinder was perceived as a threat to English national identity.

21. See, for example, "Lights and Shades," 238–49; N. G. S., "Our Organ Grinder," 264; and "The Piano Organ Case," 525–28. Crowest suggests that organ-grinders served as fences for household goods stolen by servants. *Phases of Musical England*, 121.
22. See, for example, "Books of the Season," "Marion's Fate," "The Man with the Organ," and "Only an Amateur."
23. Picker, *Victorian Soundscapes*, 77.
24. Sponza, *Italian Immigrants*, 181.
25. Picker, *Victorian Soundscapes*, 77. Sponza reports that there were 872 organ-grinders in England and Wales in 1861, 1,441 organ-grinders in 1891, and 2,237 organ-grinders in 1901. *Italian Immigrants*, 181, 187.
26. Sponza, *Italian Immigrants*, 59–60.
27. *Ibid.*, 187.
28. Susan Cohen and Clive Fleay, "Fighters for the Poor," 37.
29. Symon, "Home," 81.
30. Bright, "How the Other Half Lives," 1007.
31. *Ibid.*, 1010.
32. Bourne, "Lady's Experiences," 20.
33. Vachell, "Passing," 333.
34. Symon, "Home," 81–88.
35. Greenwood, "Private Life," 227.
36. Symon, "Home," 82.
37. Malvery, "The Heart of Things. I," 468.
38. Ross, "Introduction," 16.
39. *Ibid.*
40. *Ibid.*, 17.
41. *Ibid.*
42. *Ibid.*
43. Bright, "How the Other Half Lives," 1007–12.
44. Bourne, "Lady's Experiences," 20–26.
45. "The Heart of Things. IV," 155.
46. Sponza, *Italian Immigrants*, 241–51.
47. Bourne, "A Lady's Experiences," 20.
48. *Ibid.*
49. *Ibid.*, 21.
50. Bright, "How the Other Half Lives," 1007.
51. Guerdon, "Street Musicians," 67.
52. Malvery, "The Heart of Things. III," 41.
53. Bright, "How the Other Half Lives," 1012.
54. Sparrow, "London Street Toilers," 251–52.
55. Malvery, "The Heart of Things. IV," 156.
56. Sparrow, "London Street Toilers," 248; Malvery, "The Heart of Things. IV," 155.

57. Bright, "How the Other Half Lives," 1008; Bourne, "A Lady's Experiences," 22.
58. Malvery, "The Heart of Things. IV," 155, 156.
59. Ibid., 156.
60. Walkowitz, "Indian Woman," 8.
61. Freeman, "Journeys into Poverty's Kingdom," 99.
62. Bright, "How the Other Half Lives," 1010.
63. Ibid.
64. Bourne, "A Lady's Experiences," 24.
65. Ibid.
66. Ibid.
67. Sparrow, "London Street Toilers," 252.
68. Bourne, "A Lady's Experiences," 26.
69. See, for example, Nead, *Victorian Babylon*; Walker, "Vistas of Pleasure"; and Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight* and "Going Public."
70. Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight*, 50, 52.
71. London, *People of the Abyss*, 15.
72. Female reporters do not mention being accompanied by a photographer or a sketch artist on their outings, perhaps to emphasize their daringness.
73. According to Jennifer Green-Lewis, "The camera was far more widely regarded as an instrument of revelation than of deceit" in the nineteenth century. Green-Lewis, *Framing the Victorians*, 3. For more on Victorian debates about photographic realism, especially in relation to the lower social classes, see Rosen, "Posed as Rogues," 9–39; and Koven, *Slumming*, 124–38.
74. Malvery, "The Heart of Things. III," 43.
75. Malvery, "Indian Woman," 19.
76. Sparrow, "London Street Toilers," 255.
77. Beegan, *The Mass Image*, 156.
78. Ibid.
79. Nord, *Walking the Victorian Streets*, 12.
80. Bourne, "A Lady's Experiences," 21. According to Charles Booth's poverty maps for London, Sloane Square was inhabited by the "Middle-class [and] Well-to-do." London School of Economics, *Charles Booth Online Archive*, <http://booth.lse.ac.uk>.
81. Bourne, "A Lady's Experiences," 25.
82. Malvery, "The Heart of Things. IV," 156.
83. Bright, "How the Other Half Lives," 1012; Bourne, "A Lady's Experiences," 24.
84. Low, "White Skins/Black Masks," 93.
85. Bright, "How the Other Half Lives," 1012.
86. Ibid.
87. Bourne, "A Lady's Experiences," 26.

88. Ibid.
89. Malvery, "The Heart of Things. IV," 157. Booth categorizes this area as "Upper-middle and upper classes. Wealthy." London School of Economics, *Charles Booth Online Archive*, <http://booth.lse.ac.uk>.
90. Sparrow, "London Street Toilers," 255.
91. Sponza, *Italian Immigrants*, 194.
92. Sims, "Trips About Town," 511.
93. Ibid., 514.
94. Morgan and Hopkins, "Touring London with a Barrel Organ," 275–82.

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