# Annemarie McAllister, ***Writing for Social Change in Temperance Periodicals: Conviction and Career.*** New York and London: Routledge, 2023, 167 pp. Hb £120.00. ISBN: 978-1-03-206993-7

Reviewed by **Beth Gaskell**

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*Writing for Social Change in Temperance Periodicals* is an exploration of a specialist genre of publications that has hitherto received little academic attention. The study investigates temperance periodicals by uncovering the lives, motivations, and experiences of those writing for and editing them. It discusses the types of writing produced, focussing in particular on the various forms of fiction, and looks at the ways in which stories, articles and addresses were reworked and republished across publications and formats. It also provides interesting insight into the relationships among the numerous social causes and campaigns of the nineteenth century, placing the temperance movement firmly within the context of a much wider campaigning environment.

McAllister clearly lays out her aims for the book in the opening chapter. She indicates that her study will challenge preconceived ideas about the temperance movement, particularly demonstrating that it was lively, nuanced, politically important, and a mainstream part of society during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. She suggests that it will argue for a more nuanced understanding of professional identity, considering the role of moral conviction alongside financial imperative. She makes clear the centrality of the temperance movement to the intersections between writing and other aspects of their service. Finally, McAllister outlines how she will trace the reworkings and republishing of temperance writings across titles and formats, demonstrating the place of this movement in the wider publishing environment. I believe she goes even beyond achieving all of these aims and lays incredibly solid groundwork on which future scholars can build.

The book explores the way that advocates of the temperance movement used periodical writing to express their convictions by outlining the lives and careers of seven individuals: Clara Lucas Balfour (1808–1878), William Hoyle (1834–1895), Mary Anna Paull (1838–1917), Frank Adkins (1846–1928), Alfred J. Glasspool (1850–1928), Walter N. Edwards (1853–1916),

and Mary Magdalen Forrester (1859–1834). Each has their own dedicated chapter, which appears chronologically by date of birth, although there is much crossover of period and several of these figures operated concurrently. This approach can, at times, be a little disconcerting, with its jumps forwards and backwards in time, but it does very clearly demonstrate the interconnectedness of the temperance movement in this period.

There are three publications that form the core texts of McAllister's study: *Onward* (1865–1910), *The Band of Hope Review* (1851–1937), and the *Band of Hope Chronicle* (1878–1980s), but others mentioned include *The Band of Hope Treasury* (1868–1917), *The Temperance Companion* (1894–1901), *The Good Templar's Watchword* (1874–1965), *The Juvenile Templar* (1877–1941), *The Temperance Record* (1870–1902), and *Wings* (1892–1925). All individuals included in the book wrote for at least one of these publications, and all had other involvements with the temperance movement, while some also had careers beyond that. McAllister repeatedly challenges assumptions around professional identity and the place that moral conviction held in the lives of these figures.

There are two areas where this book is particularly strong. The first, and potentially most important for readers of this journal, is that it seeks to raise the profile of many temperance stories and novels that have been written off due to their association with the movement. McAllister doesn't shy away from the propaganda purposes of such fiction, but she argues that many of the authors writing this material were able to weave their social message into engaging and well-plotted stories. She suggests a number of titles that should be revisited, including "Sidney Holt's Purpose and What Came of It" by Clara Lucas Balfour, serialised in *Onwards* from April-December 1871, as well as *Tim's Troubles* by Mary Anna Paull, a novel which was published in 1870. For those interested in forgotten 'popular' fictions of the period, this book provides a useful introduction to an important genre.

Taking this exploration of temperance fiction (and non-fiction) a step further, McAllister shows how this writing fitted into the wider publishing environment, pointing to the circulation of these texts beyond their original homes. Reusing and republishing was a common practice during the nineteenth century, with stories appearing across publication types and formats, serialised stories being reprinted as novels, and works being expanded or reworked and sometimes renamed. McAllister provides numerous examples of these practices, using Clara Lucas Balfour to demonstrate how such republishing could make authors look even more prolific than they were. There is a great deal of further work to be done mapping this type of reuse, but McAllister points to the incompleteness of the archive as a limiting factor, outlining how it makes it hard to know where pieces first appeared, or how often they were reprinted.

The book's second strength is that it goes beyond a simple focus on temperance periodicals and firmly imbeds these publications in the movement they represented and the wider social environment in which they operated. It provides clear links between temperance periodicals and the movement's lecturing tour system, music hall performances, choral concerts, magic lantern presentations, and meetings for adults, and their children's organisations – particularly the Band of Hope. McAllister stresses how important this entertainment element of the temperance movement was, and how those involved were often active in numerous elements of this. She says: "If I could select one key point, it would be the importance of entertainment and performance in the lives of those in the movement, and consequently of many of the writers" (164).

McAllister also demonstrates how intertwined and interdependent a wide variety of social causes were in the nineteenth century, noting the crossover between temperance and animal rights, religious dissent, vegetarianism, the ragged school movement, social welfare, popular science, women's education movement, and suffrage. The tools that were used for temperance

entertainment, for writing fiction and poetry, articles and addresses, were universal and transferable, and were used by many individuals in the book to advocate for a number of causes.

There are limitations to the book. The majority are caused by the fact it tries to do so much. It introduces a great number of concepts, organisations and publications, but it doesn't have space to fully unpack or explain them all. It can be useful, therefore, to come to the book with some basic knowledge of the temperance movement, or with the willingness to look up key points. There are also so many interesting characters and stories contained within this study that, at times, you are left wanting more. For instance, I would argue that Mary Magdalen Forrester's life is interesting and varied enough to fill a book all on its own.

Overall, however, this book achieves its aims. And it does so with great generosity. Throughout, McAllister lays out opportunities for further research, for example, pointing out that the republishing of Balfour's work or Frank Adkin's historicising and mythologising of the temperance movement could each be studies in their own right. In her conclusion, McAllister states that "my intention has always been to open up a field in which I hope others will enjoy working," and she is therefore content "if I have given some indication of the potential fruitfulness of studying such writers and temperance writing, particularly periodicals" (163). I think effectively highlighting such potential is the greatest achievement of this book. For readers of this journal, this book provides pointers to, and the context behind, some interesting but overlooked popular fiction.