

ON MEMORY, FORGETTING AND DOROTHY  
RICHARDSON: A THEORETICAL COMPANION  
PIECE TO RICHARD EKINS, 'DILEMMAS OF  
PLACING AND DATING IN BLUE PLAQUE  
RESEARCH: THE CASE OF DOROTHY  
RICHARDSON IN BLOOMSBURY (1896-1907)'

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During the review process of my article 'Dilemmas of Placing and Dating in Blue Plaque Research: The Case of Dorothy Richardson in Bloomsbury (1896-1907) – An Essay in Grounded Theory and the Social Construction of Knowledge',<sup>1</sup> I received the following email from Scott McCracken, the editor of *Pilgrimages: A Journal for Dorothy Richardson Studies*: 'I really like this. I think it is particularly strong on the memory and forgetting of literary London. If you wanted to reflect a little more on the historical processes that cause one author to be remembered and another to disappear, I'd be interested, but it's not essential for publication'.<sup>2</sup> 'Thank you for this', I speedily replied, 'You - rightly - raise something of a hornet's nest'.<sup>3</sup>

Such an invitation does, indeed, raise a hornet's nest of problems which I will conceptualise, theorise and discuss according to the approaches taken within various disciplines. As a sociologist of knowledge rooted in the philosophy, social psychology and sociology of George Herbert Mead, I am particularly mindful of Mead's philosophy of the present,<sup>4</sup> incorporating, as it does, his

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<sup>1</sup> See preceding article.

<sup>2</sup> Email, Scott McCracken to Richard Ekins, 5 January 2016.

<sup>3</sup> Email, Richard Ekins to Scott McCracken, 6 January 2016.

<sup>4</sup> G. H. Mead, *The Philosophy of the Present* (La Salle, Ill.: Open Court Publishing Company, 1932).

theory of truth,<sup>5</sup> time<sup>6</sup> and the past.<sup>7</sup> From this perspective, there are as many pasts as there are presents. In particular, pasts are endlessly reconstructed from the standpoint of particular presents, in the light of particular futures. Put another way, Mead's view is that 'reality is always that of a present';<sup>8</sup> that all histories are social constructions from the standpoint of the present; and that 'no matter how far we build out from the present, the events that constitute the referents of the past and future always belong to the present'.<sup>9</sup> Such a view is applicable to all 'history' whether approached in terms of historical processes, biography, autobiography, literary criticism, or whatever. It is a view to which, I believe, Richardson herself subscribes. As she puts it, from the point of view of her identity as a writer, in the final two pages of *March Moonlight*, the final chapter of her thirteen-volume *Pilgrimage*, published posthumously in 1967:

While I write, everything vanishes but what I contemplate. The whole of what is called 'the past' is with me, seen anew, vividly. No, Schiller, the past does not stand 'being still.' It moves, growing with one's growth. Contemplation is adventure into discovery; reality. What is called 'creation' imaginative transformation, fantasy, invention, is only based upon reality.<sup>10</sup>

Once again the comparison with Mead is illuminating. For Mead: 'We speak of the past as final and irrevocable. There is nothing that is less so'.<sup>11</sup> That Mead's and Richardson's position are so

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<sup>5</sup> George Herbert Mead, 'A Pragmatic Theory of Truth', in *Studies in the Nature of Truth* (Berkeley: University of California Publications in Philosophy, 11, 1929), 65-98.

<sup>6</sup> Michael G. Flaherty and Gary Alan Fine, 'Conjugating George Herbert Mead's Perspective on Time', *Time and Society*, 10 (2/3) (2001), 147-161.

<sup>7</sup> G. H. Mead, 'The Nature of the Past', in John Coss (ed.) *Essays in Honor of John Dewey* (New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1929), 235-242.

<sup>8</sup> Mead, *ibid*, p.235.

<sup>9</sup> David Maines, Noreen M. Sugrue and Michael A. Katovich, 'The Sociological Import of G.H. Mead's Theory of the Past', *American Sociological Review*, 48 (2) (1983), 161-173.

<sup>10</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *Pilgrimage IV* (London: Virago, 1979), p.657 (henceforth page numbers in text).

<sup>11</sup> Mead, 1932, *op. cit*, p.95.

similar in this regard should be no surprise. Both writers were pioneering and innovative thinkers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when process philosophers such as Henri Bergson were being taken so seriously.<sup>12</sup> As, indeed, was William James, whose work on ‘stream of consciousness’ and the specious present<sup>13</sup> has been so closely linked with Richardson’s *Pilgrimage*, ever since May Sinclair’s germinal article ‘The Novels of Dorothy Richardson’ was published in 1918.<sup>14</sup> However, whereas Mead privileged process – in his case social process – resolutely and consistently, Richardson did not.<sup>15</sup> Richardson ultimately privileged her philosophy of ‘being’ over her philosophy of ‘becoming’ (process), as is evidenced by Shirley Rose and in Carol Watts’s *Dorothy Richardson*.<sup>16</sup> Shirley Rose effectively demolishes Kumar’s argument to the contrary.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>12</sup> On 10 August 1952, Richardson wrote to Shiv K. Kumar: ‘I was never aware of any specific influence . . . no doubt Bergson influenced many minds, if only by putting into words something that was then dawning within the consciousness’. Shiv K. Kumar, ‘Dorothy Richardson and the Dilemma of “Being versus Becoming”’, *Modern Language Notes*, 74 (6) (1959), 494-501 at p.495.

<sup>13</sup> On process philosophy, the specious present, and the influence of Bergson on James, see David L. Miller, ‘William James and the Specious Present’, in Walter Robert Corti (ed.) *The Philosophy of William James* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1976), pp.51-79.

<sup>14</sup> May Sinclair, (1990 [1918]) ‘The Novels of Dorothy Richardson’, in Bonnie Kime Scott (ed.) *The Gender of Modernism* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1948), pp.442-8.

<sup>15</sup> Mead did not privilege a philosophy of ‘being’. To him, a philosophy of being would be conceptualised as a phase within his philosophy of social process. Richard Ekins, ‘G. H. Mead: Contributions to a Philosophy of Knowledge’, unpublished dissertation, University of London, 1978. Far less did Mead gender ‘being’ and ‘becoming’ unlike Richardson. Rather, Mead’s principal contribution was his explicit social psychological approach to social process which does not feature overtly in any of Richardson’s thinking, G. H. Mead, *Mind, Self, and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1936).

<sup>16</sup> Shirley Rose, ‘The Unmoving Center: Consciousness in Dorothy Richardson’s *Pilgrimage*, *Contemporary Literature*, 10 (3) (1969), 366-382; Carol Watts, *Dorothy Richardson* (Plymouth: Northcote House, 1995).

<sup>17</sup> See Thomson, *A Reader’s Guide*, 1996, p.163: ‘Kumar claims DMR as a Bergsonian, in spite of herself. Intellectually she asserts “being” as having priority. In practice she shows “becoming” as the primary quality of Miriam’s experience. Readers wishing to pursue Kumar’s line of argument should consult Shirley Rose’s exercise in demolition in “The Unmoving Center”’.

My own view on what Kumar refers to as ‘Dorothy Richardson and the Dilemma of “Being versus Becoming”’<sup>18</sup> is that *Pilgrimage* is a ‘becoming’ story/narrative/pilgrimage/tour de force rooted in Richardson’s ‘in the Light’ ‘being’ experiences within Quakerism. These experiences provided the original source and inspiration for her identity both as a person and as a writer of her life’s work *Pilgrimage* in its entirety. I have argued this point of view in my article ‘Dorothy Richardson, Quakerism and “Undoing”: Reflections on the Rediscovery of Two Unpublished Letters’.<sup>19</sup> In my view, what she experienced at Quaker meetings equates to modern liberal Quaker interpretations of the Light: ‘It may be synonymous with “that of God within,” the divine aspect of every human being or a metaphor for the transforming spirit within. The Light speaks [in stillness and silence] of truth, love, rightness, and beauty.’<sup>20</sup> Moreover, the various ‘being’ (spiritual) experiences narrated in *Pilgrimage* provide both Richardson and her readers with remembering/s of this ultimate privileging of ‘being’ in a journey of ‘becoming’, whether these ‘being’ (spiritual) experiences relate explicitly to her often cited ‘bee experience’ in childhood in the garden at Abingdon, or are more overtly aesthetic as in her narratives of her experiences of music, or, indeed, are narratives of her ecstasy in her variously guarded expressions of her sexual and/or platonic ‘being’ in the actual or imagined company of Amabel and Jean, in particular.

It is worth mentioning that from a classical Freudian point of view the roots of all these experiences lie in their prototype within the mother-baby ‘twosome’ pre-oedipal, pre-language relationship.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Kumar, op. cit.

<sup>19</sup> Richard Ekins, ‘Dorothy Richardson, Quakerism and “Undoing”: Reflections on the Rediscovery of Two Unpublished Letters’, *Pilgrimages: A Journal of Dorothy Richardson Studies* 7 (2015), 44-58.

<sup>20</sup> Marjorie Post Abbot, ‘Light: Inward Light, Light of Christ, Inner Light’, in Mary Ellen Chijioko, Pink Dandelion, and John William Oliver, Jr, *Historical Dictionaries of the Friends (Quakers)* (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, 2003), pp.156-8 at p.158.

<sup>21</sup> See Sigmund Freud, *Civilisation and Its Discontents*, (1930 [1929]), Standard Edition (London: Hogarth), Chapter 1, which sources the ‘oceanic feeling’ in the pre-oedipal and considers the pre-oedipal as ‘the source of the religious

As Carol Watts argues, Richardson's 'bee memory' may be seen as a screen memory.<sup>22</sup> This enables a disavowal of the loss experienced when the pleasures of the pre-oedipal must perforce give way to the realities of the oedipal 'threesome', and, indeed, a defence against anxiety brought about by subsequent losses both actual and feared, whether conscious, pre-conscious or unconscious. Richardson specifically links 'the effect of beauty on all its levels – the experience known as falling in love and the experience of conversion' in *Quakers Past and Present*, associating all such experiences with 'being' and to 'the great mystics' ability to break 'through the veil of sense, to making a journey to the heart of reality, to winning the freedom of Life itself',<sup>23</sup> hence her admiration of George Fox and the mystical Quakers. Richardson's sensitivity to feared loss and her defences against it was heightened by the fact that in her childhood she repeatedly lost her love objects, regained them, and lost them again, most obviously in the context of her father's fluctuating fortunes and her mother's fluctuating mental states.<sup>24</sup> It is entirely appropriate that Chapter 1 of Fromm's biography of Richardson considers Richardson's early life in terms of the theme of 'Alternations'.<sup>25</sup>

Regarding authors being variously remembered and forgotten, Dorothy Richardson might be seen as a variant of what Justin M'Carthy in his 'Disappearing Authors' refers to as an author 'of the revolving-light order, whose rays disappear from our sight for a moment, only to shine as brightly as ever in the certain moment of return'.<sup>26</sup> M'Carthy warms to his theme thus:

There are some authors, and really great authors, too, whose fame seems to be governed by a sort of process of regular

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energy'.

<sup>22</sup> Carol Watts, op. cit. pp.20-38.

<sup>23</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *The Quakers Past and Present*, (London, Constable, 1914), pp.34-35.

<sup>24</sup> Anna Freud, 'About Losing and Being Lost', *The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*, 22 (1967), 9-19.

<sup>25</sup> Gloria Fromm, *Dorothy Richardson: A Biography* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1977), pp.7-22.

<sup>26</sup> Justin M'Carthy, 'Disappearing Authors', *The North American Review*, 170 (520) (1900), 395.

action and reaction. The author is cried up during the later years of his successful working time and for a while after his death, and then the reaction sets in. People begin to say that too much was made of him, a new school arises by whom he is proclaimed old-fashioned, and it gets to be the right sort of thing not to admire him or even talk about him any more; and so, for a time, the author has disappeared. But if there is any stuff in him the disappearance is only for a time. He outlives the reaction against him, he outlives the school which, for a time, was successful in crying him down, and he comes back to his former fame at the call of a new generation.<sup>27</sup>

Richardson's 'revolving-light order' trajectory was more unusual. Such fame as she was accorded followed in the wake of the publication of her *Pointed Roofs* in 1915 and continued during the 1920s and 1930s, to some degree. By the time of her death however in 1957, she had sunk into poverty and obscurity, 'abominably unknown', according to Ford Madox Ford.<sup>28</sup> It was the women's movement of the 1970s and 1980s that led to her changing fortunes which were marked, in particular, by the feminist Virago Press four-volume *Pilgrimage* published in 1979. Writing in 1991 for a 'Key Women Writers' series, Radford makes the pertinent points:

The revision of the 'modernist' canon (Joyce, Pound and Eliot with Woolf as the token woman) opens up new possibilities for reading and a new set of historical circumstances has created a new generation of readers. For the women's movement of the 1970s and 1980s has produced not merely the lost and forgotten texts of the earlier period, but a new audience with the 'empathy' to take up the challenge Richardson offers. The opportunity to enjoy *Pilgrimage's* 'emotional luminescence' is also, for us, an opportunity to take up the 'burden' of an earlier generation's sense of itself: their consciousness of what it meant to be a woman during the transition from a Victorian to a modern

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid, p.395.

<sup>28</sup> Ford Madox Ford, *The March of Literature: From Confucius to Modern Times* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1947), p.773.

world. Whether one reads *Pilgrimage* as experimental fiction, spiritual autobiography, case-history, or documentary, its concern with sexual difference at the beginning of the century makes it of enormous interest to readers – men and women – at the end of the twentieth century.<sup>29</sup>

Subsequently, with the increasing narrative turn in the humanities and social sciences,<sup>30</sup> and the growing awareness of the complexities of narrative in *Pilgrimage*, it was to be expected that Richardson would attract devoted enthusiasts and the push would be on to bring her back to, even beyond, her former fame. George Thomson, for instance, came to be ‘entirely committed to work on Dorothy Richardson’ since retiring in 1989.<sup>31</sup> In his *A Reader’s Guide to Dorothy Richardson’s Pilgrimage*, Thomson prefaces the main body of his text with a ‘Chapter 1: Preliminary Propositions’ which simultaneously highlights the complexities of narrative in *Pilgrimage* and, in the process, touches on major ‘causes’ as to why Richardson was forgotten in her long period of ‘disappearance’ and, conversely, came to be so highly regarded by her enthusiasts in the late-modern/post-modern period. As Thomson details, *Pilgrimage* is simultaneously ‘subjective narrative’, ‘subjective autobiographical narrative’, ‘cultural autobiographical narrative’, ‘realistic narrative’, ‘more than realistic narrative’, ‘exactly selective narrative’, ‘compressed & fragmented narrative’, ‘implicitly ordered narrative’, ‘demanding narrative’, and ‘exacting narrative’.<sup>32</sup> It is also narrative auto-ethnography, I might add.

Given the complexities and difficulties entailed in reading the long work on which Richardson’s claim to fame rests, it was not

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<sup>29</sup> Jean Radford, *Dorothy Richardson* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), pp.2-3.

<sup>30</sup> David R. Maines, ‘Narrative’s Moment and Sociology’s Phenomena: Towards a Narrative Sociology’, *Sociological Quarterly*, 34 (1993), 17-38; David, R. Maines and J. T. Ulmer, ‘The Relevance of Narrative for Interactionist Thought’, in Norman K. Denzin (ed.) *Studies in Symbolic Interaction, Volume 14* (Greenwich, Connecticut: JAI Press, 1993), pp.109-124; Richard Ekins and Dave King, *The Transgender Phenomenon* (London: Sage, 2006).

<sup>31</sup> Cover blurb, George H. Thomson, *A Reader’s Guide to Dorothy Richardson’s Pilgrimage* (Greensboro NC: University of North Carolina at Greensboro NC, Elt Press, 1996).

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, pp.2-10.

surprising, in retrospect, that the collaboration that led to her first blue plaque was the result of cooperation between University-based specialist academic scholars.

There are, of course, other more minor ‘causes’ of Richardson’s ‘disappearance’, as evidenced by those guides to literary London that ignored her entirely and her subsequent commemoration by her first blue plaque. As I write, my mind turns to a useful comparison with the poet Charlotte Mew who was also a ‘revolving-light order’ author. My document ‘The Case for a Marchmont Association Blue Plaque for Charlotte Mew (1869-1928) at 30 Doughty Street (1869-1890), London, WC1,’ has been approved by the full Marchmont Association Committee.<sup>33</sup> It is instructive to compare and contrast Mew’s case with Richardson’s in regard to their respective ‘revolving-light order’ trajectories, their respective personalities, and the type and extent of collaboration which led to a successful culminating in both cases in terms of a blue plaque.<sup>34</sup> In my case for Mew, I wrote:

There can be no doubting the high regard Mew was held in her day by a number of her fellow poets. Virginia Woolf referred to Mew as ‘The greatest living poetess.’ Siegfried Sassoon wrote of her: ‘One who surely stands with Emily Brontë and Christina Rossetti . . . many will be on the rubbish heap when Charlotte’s star is at the zenith where it will remain.’ Her foremost champion Thomas Hardy wrote: ‘Miss Mew is far and away the best living woman poet – who will be read when others are forgotten.’<sup>35</sup>

And then, as with Richardson, there was a ‘disappearance’, followed by Virago Press leading her comeback:

Following a long period of neglect, the feminist Virago Press edition of her work, published in 1982, played a major role in

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<sup>33</sup> Richard Ekins, ‘The Case for a Marchmont Association Blue Plaque for Charlotte Mew (1869-1928) at 30 Doughty Street (1869-1890), London, WC1’, Marchmont Association Archives, 22 June 2015.

<sup>34</sup> As of February 2016, the unveiling of the plaque is pending in Charlotte Mew’s case.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p.1.



her renaissance. The Penguin Classic *Complete Poems* edition was published in 2000. There have been a number of other editions of Mew's work since 2000, the most recent of which (Pastore, 2014) included yet more previously unpublished material.<sup>36</sup>

However, Mew's case rested on a very slim output dominated by one particular poem, with that one poem being widely disseminated. Mew's most well-known poem 'The Farmer's Bride', 1912, regularly features in UK English Literature GCSE syllabi. Indeed, this poem was featured in a 2008 *Guardian* 'Poem of the Week' column.<sup>37</sup> Like Richardson, and unlike Virginia Woolf and her Bloomsbury associates, Mew was no self-publicist. Indeed, she was something of a recluse. Moreover, as Carol Rumens put it, Mew was 'enclosed in a shabby gentility' where her 'lesbian longings were hardly likely to be fulfilled'. She was seen to be emotionally entombed.<sup>38</sup> All these things no doubt played into her period of obscurity.

The enthusiasts for Mew's case for a blue plaque were not principally academics. Rather, they were professional poets, writers and Bloomsbury enthusiasts. Nicholas Murray, the author of the recent book *Bloomsbury and the Poets*,<sup>39</sup> approached Ricci de Freitas (Marchmont Association Chair) with the suggestion that there was 'a major gap in the local blue plaque provision', namely 'the poet and fiction writer Charlotte Mew (1869-1928)'. Murray noted that:

Charlotte Mew's reputation has been steadily climbing – marked, for example, by the re-issue of Penelope Fitzgerald's biography of her with an introduction by the novelist, poet and feminist writer, Michèle Roberts who is very

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid, p.1. Pastore (2014) refers to Stephen R. Pastore (ed.) *Charlotte Mew: The Lost Muse* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform: Grand Oak Books, 2014).

<sup>37</sup> Carol Rumens, 'Poem of the Week: The Farmer's Bride by Charlotte Mew', 1 September 2008, <http://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2008/sep/01/poemoftheweekthefarmersb>.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Murray, op. cit.

knowledgeable about literary Bloomsbury and keen to help with this project. I also devoted a short chapter to her in my *Bloomsbury and the Poets* (2014). Another example of how her reputation is growing is the appearance of some of her poems in a new Oxford University Press anthology of poems of the First World War edited by Tim Kendall. I think it would be fair to say that as far as the literary world is concerned the absence of any memorial to her in Bloomsbury – where she was born, lived, and died unlike many of the more famous names associated with the patch – is starting to look like a serious omission.<sup>40</sup>

Charlotte Mew's recent comeback (remembering) has also been associated with an LGB, then LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) advocacy of Mew's importance in terms of claiming neglected figures of a hidden history.<sup>41</sup> This constitutes a new contemporary 'bringing to light' (remembering). More recently still, there has been the addition of Intersex and Queer and all manner of gender fluidities into the melting pot of various outcomes of the possible interrelations between sex (the body), sexuality (eroticism) and gender (social accompaniments).<sup>42</sup>

What a few years ago, for instance, would have been considered the isolated oddity of self-proclaimed 'non-gendered' persons (neither male nor female; neither man nor woman; neither 'he' nor 'she', but 'Per') people seeking to have that fact recognised socially and bureaucratically is now entering the mainstream.<sup>43</sup> As it does

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<sup>40</sup> Richard Ekins, 'The Case for a Marchmont Association Blue Plaque for Charlotte Mew', op. cit, quoting from an email Nicholas Murray to Ricci de Freitas, 10 June 2015.

<sup>41</sup> Rictor Norton, 'The Suppression of Lesbian and Gay History', <http://rictornorton.co.uk/suppress.htm>; Michael Ellman and Frederick Roll, *The Pink Plaque Guide to London* (London: Gay Men's Press, 1986).

<sup>42</sup> [Brighton and Hove City Council](http://www.brightonandhove.gov.uk), UK, recently forwarded a survey to a secondary school at the request of the Office of the Children's Commissioner which asked the pupils to define their gender in terms of 23 options, which included bi-gender, non-binary, gender fluid, agender, and all genders, *The Argus*, 28 January 2016, [http://www.theargus.co.uk/news/14236195.Brighton\\_school\\_children\\_asked\\_to\\_choose\\_from\\_list\\_of\\_23\\_terms\\_to\\_describe\\_their\\_gender/](http://www.theargus.co.uk/news/14236195.Brighton_school_children_asked_to_choose_from_list_of_23_terms_to_describe_their_gender/).

so, we might expect new hidden histories to emerge within which will emerge new candidates for new blue plaques.

2015 has been variously declared ‘The year of transgender’, ‘The year to be trans’, and ‘America’s transgender moment’.<sup>44</sup> The beginning of 2016 was marked by the general release of the film ‘The Danish Girl’.<sup>45</sup> The film tells the story of Einer Wegener’s transition to Lili Elbe, first published in 1933. This autobiographical work was edited by Niels Hoyer and titled *Man Into Woman: The True Story of the Miraculous Transformation of the Danish Painter Einer Weneger (Andreas Sparre)*.<sup>46</sup> A new edition followed in 1953 as a ‘Popular Library of New York’ paperback with a somewhat lurid cover and the cover blurb: ‘This almost unbelievable book deals with the outstanding biological phenomenon of a man who changed his sex. Complete and unabridged.’ Both editions languished in obscurity until the rise in transgender studies and activism in the 1990s led to the publishing and popularity of David Ebershoff’s fictionalised account of Lili Elbe’s life in his *The Danish Girl* published in 2000.<sup>47</sup> An obscure ‘weird’ true story, forgotten for decades until re-vitalised by the novel, has now become a major box office and critical success as a film. Moreover, Eddie Redmayne, fresh from his success in his role as Stephen Hawking in ‘The Theory of Everything’, 2014, starred as Lili Elbe. Redmayne, one of the most acclaimed new actors of the early twenty-first century, was nominated for a raft of best actor awards, including an Oscar for his role as Lili Elbe, and

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<sup>43</sup> Richard Ekins and Dave King, *The Transgender Phenomenon* (London: Sage, 2006), pp.143-172. ‘Early Day Motion 660: Legal Recognition for People who do not Associate with a Particular Gender’, 5 November 2015, <http://www.parliament.uk/edm/2015-16/660>.

<sup>44</sup> <http://janariess.religionnews.com/2015/01/12/2015-year-transgender/>;  
<http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/transgender-rights-ten-historic-milestones-which-show-2015-was-year-be-trans-1534376>;  
<http://edition.cnn.com/2015/04/23/living/transgender-moment-jenner-feat/>.

<sup>45</sup> ‘The Danish Girl’, 2015, directed by Tom Hooper.

<sup>46</sup> Niels Hoyer (ed.) *Man Into Woman: The True Story of the Miraculous Transformation of the Danish Painter Einer Weneger (Andreas Sparre)* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1933).

<sup>47</sup> David Ebershoff, *The Danish Girl* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2000).

went on to win a number of awards, including a Women Film Critics Circle Award for best actor of 2015.<sup>48</sup>

As is well-known to Richardson scholars, *Pilgrimage* is peppered with passages in which Miriam/Dorothy self-defines as neither male nor female and/or both and/or beyond both.<sup>49</sup> 'I am something between a man and a woman; looking both ways' (II 187).

Within me . . . the *third* child, the longed for son, the two natures, equally matched, mingle and fight? It is their struggle that keeps me adrift, so variously interested and strongly attracted, now here, now there? Which will win? . . . Feeling so identified with both, she could not imagine either of them set aside. Then her life *would* be the battlefield of her two natures. (III 250)

Since the late 1990s, such material is increasingly read in the context of a lesbian claiming of Richardson that began in earnest with Kristen Bluemel's *Experimenting on the Borders of Modernism*<sup>50</sup> and took a particularly compelling turn in Joanne Winning's *The Pilgrimage of Dorothy Richardson*.<sup>51</sup>

While the occasional Richardson scholar has begun to conceptualise Richardson's life and work in terms of concepts drawn from trans studies, most notably those of 'gender dysphoria'<sup>52</sup> and 'female masculinity',<sup>53</sup> I believe that Richardson studies would benefit considerably from full length contributions

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<sup>48</sup> 'The Danish Girl (2015) – Awards' shows 'all 27 wins and 70 nominations' for the film. <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0810819/awards.P>.

<sup>49</sup> Richard Ekins, 'Dorothy Richardson, Quakerism and 'Undoing': Reflections on the Rediscovery of Two Unpublished Letters', *Pilgrimages: A Journal of Dorothy Richardson Studies*, 7 (2015), 44-58.

<sup>50</sup> Kristin Bluemel, *Experimenting on the Borders of Modernism: Dorothy Richardson's Pilgrimage* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1997).

<sup>51</sup> Joanne Winning, *The Pilgrimage of Dorothy Richardson*, (London: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2000).

<sup>52</sup> Winning, op. cit, pp.59, 69, 98, 175.

<sup>53</sup> Winning, op. cit, pp.67-68, 175; Scott McCracken, *Masculinities, Modernist Fiction and the Urban Public Sphere* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), p.20.

along these lines in the spirit of Mead's and Richardson's view that with every new present there is a new past, or as Mead puts it, more subtly: "The past which we construct from the standpoint of the new problem of today is based upon continuities which we discover in that which has arisen, and it serves us until the rising novelty of tomorrow necessitates a new history which interprets the new future."<sup>54</sup> More specifically, studies of this type would provide a fitting legacy of the Dorothy Richardson plaque sponsored, as it was, by the University of Ulster Transgender Archive.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Mead, 'The Nature of the Past', op. cit, p.235.

<sup>55</sup> As set forth in Richard Ekins, 'Dilemmas of Placing and Dating in Blue Plaque Research: The Case of Dorothy Richardson in Bloomsbury (1896-1907) – An Essay in Grounded Theory and the Social Construction of Knowledge', the companion article to this one. On the University of Ulster Transgender Archive (TGA), see <http://transgenderarchives.uvic.ca/university-of-ulster-tga-collection>.