

Indeed, in the end, Broughton seems to endorse both Clare's all encompassing feminine domesticity and the modern energy of social reform by melding them in the union between Althea and Drake. Both the destabilizing and reforming powers of the sororal bond are rendered ineffective and replaced by the overarching social control of heteronormativity, even as social reform work depends on that passion to mobilize its reformers. The dangerous passion excited by reform work can be channeled into a conventional paternalistic model of reform that gives middle-class women an outlet for their energies, while simultaneously excising all forms of sisterhood. Broughton thus masterfully reinforces conservative Victorian sexual, class, and gender ideologies by incorporating into them the compelling affective energy of the New Woman's ideological resistance and making the New Woman herself ultimately redundant.