Intermediality and “Art for All” in the Work of Walter Crane

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Abstract

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Walter Crane (1845-1915) was a British artist credited as one of the most influential illustrators of children’s books for his generation. However, he was also responsible for the circulation of many political prints for the socialist movement during the last decades of the nineteenth century. This thesis approaches these two areas of Crane’s work, not as mutually exclusive entities, but as connected parts of the artists “art for all” mentality. I argue that Crane was an intermedial artist whose pragmatic socialism was distinctive from his peers. Through an analysis of Crane’s Queen Summer: or the Tourney of the Lily and the Rose (1891), one of the flower books penned and pictured by the artist, I demonstrate how Crane incorporated his own socialist iconography into the floral fable in order to present a socialist utopia in capitalist commodity.
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Socialism and Aesthetics: 
Introduction and Literature Review

After receding into the footnotes and archives of art and academia after his death, scholars rediscovered Walter Crane (1845-1915) at the beginning of the twenty-first century, with some assistance from a child. In 2000 a young student named Bingham Bryant was with his class in the library of his elementary school in Old Lyme, Connecticut (fig. 1).² He noticed a painting, unframed and propped above a bookcase behind the librarian’s desk, during a class discussion. The then ten-year-old developed a fascination with the picture, which prompted him to discuss the piece with his father who was a dealer in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century militaria.³ Christopher Bryant found that his young son had discovered something rare—Walter Crane’s long lost oil painting *The Fate of Persephone* (1878). A Berlin art dealer sold *The Fate of Persephone* to Yale professor Brian Hooker in 1923, who loaned the work valued at $200 to the Old Lyme Center School in 1935, where it remained unclaimed by his family until Bingham’s rediscovery.⁴

When asked about why this particular painting, overlooked for decades, had captured his attention Bingham stated: “There was something about it [and] I suspected it might be very valuable.”⁵ He was proven correct in a two significant ways. Not only did

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³ Angus Wilkie, "Crane Spotting," *British Week* (June 6-12, 2002), 1.
⁴ Ishizuka, *Lost Masterpiece Discovered in School Library*, 25. Morna O’Neill *Walter Crane: The Arts and Crafts, Painting, and Politics, 1875-1890.* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 166-167. Most of Crane’s paintings were bought by German art collectors throughout his lifetime where he gained a much stronger following than in Britain. Ernst Seeger’s untraced collection of Crane’s work contained six of Crane’s most important canvases as of 1898.
the re-discovery of *The Fate of Persephone* reinvigorate an interest in Crane in art historical discourse after a prolonged absence, but it also demonstrated the artist’s ability to connect and communicate with children through images. It is precisely through Crane’s work for children that we might come to understand more about this Victorian artist and his consequence.

The career of English artist Walter Crane, best known for his involvement in the Arts and Crafts and British Socialist movements of the late nineteenth century, spanned over fifty years and included work in several mediums. A polymath, Crane was an active painter, but he also designed wallpaper, textiles and embroideries, stained glass, plasterwork, tiles, and designed political prints and maps. Yet his accomplishments in these areas have been overshadowed by his success in and influence on the genre of children’s book illustration. Providing works in stark contrast to the books of his youth, Crane’s graceful figures set in stylized settings, revolutionized children’s book illustration and he soon became known as the premier artist of the nursery.\(^6\) Characterized by fixed imagery rendered in bold lines, Crane’s wood block, and later lithographic, designs, influenced by Japanese prints, were conducive to new developments in colour printing and he found success in a growing market geared toward family reading. Furthermore, the emphasis in Crane’s work on beauty for its own sake, a reflection of the influence the Pre-Raphaelites and then of the aesthetic movement, was, according to Crane, meant to appeal to “a heart which, in some cases, happily, never grows up or grows old.”\(^7\)  

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\(^7\) Rebecca Knuth, *Children's Literature and British Identity: Imagining a People and a Nation*, (Scarecrow Press, 2012), 90.
Walter Crane was known as both “the artist of the nursery” and the “artist of socialism.”\(^8\) Despite this, Crane’s illustrations for children’s books have rarely been considered in relation to his socialist activism.\(^9\) One of the most prolific book illustrators of late Victorian England as well as one of the most prominent socialist artists during the last two decades of the nineteenth century, Crane believed that the beautiful could be political and the political could be beautiful.\(^10\) Crane was dedicated to dissolving the boundaries between fine and decorative art in the service of political activism. The tool he used was intermediality.\(^11\)

From an early age Crane witnessed his father’s success in working across mediums. Thomas Crane (1808-1859) worked predominately in portraits and miniatures, but he was a versatile artist who experimented with architectural design, lithography, landscapes, and silhouettes, among other genres. Crane believed that all types of art were connected and he advocated for this in his many lectures, texts, and visual works.\(^12\) A key example of this intermedial approach can be seen in Crane’s Fine Art Society Exhibition of 1891 in which he displayed together for the first time *Pandora*, his watercolour from

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1885, *The Riddle of the Sphinx*, an oil painting from 1887, and *Corona Vitae*, a wallpaper from 1889 (figs. 2-5). These images all feature one of Crane’s most important symbols—the sphinx.

For Crane, the mythological hybrid creature of the sphinx became symbolic of both art and socialism, which he created when he combined the Greek and Egyptian origins of the creature with the writings of the Scottish philosopher and author Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881), who was highly influential to early British socialists. For Carlyle, the sphinx was an agent of transformation that stimulated the questions that would inevitably lead to political change. The catalogue texts created a network for the exhibition audience to connect and interpret these works. In it, Crane described the relationship between the ancient sphinx and modern dilemma. In Crane’s iconography, the sphinx became the questioner of society—a creature from the past that with her riddles terrorized Thebes—that could now interrogate modern society about its current and future exploits. Crane placed the sphinx at transition points in the narratives: when Pandora opens the box, when Oedipus answers the riddle, and when symmetrically opposed sphinxes pluck the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge. By connecting the

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14 Socialists looked to Carlyle’s *Past and Present*, which was originally published in 1843. Socialist writers such as Ernst Belfort Bax, Sidney Webb, and George Bernard Shaw, among others, used the metaphor of the sphinx riddle being present in modern society. The Carlylean sphinx became an important emblem for the Fabian Society and it appeared on the frontispiece for their 1889 *Fabian Essays in Socialism* (fig. 7). Chris R. Vanden Bossche, *Carlyle and the Search for Authority* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1991) offers an extensive study of Carlyle’s theory of political order.
sphinx with these narratives, Crane depicts the creature as a figure who poses questions about the efficacy of socialism currently being debated in art and politics. These ideas would also be referenced in *Pandora Wonders at the Box*, an illustration from *The Wonder Book for Girls and Boys* (1892), the frontispiece for *Fabian Essays in Socialism* (1889), and *The Craftsman’s Dream* (1889), a drawing for a book he did not complete.18 These were not included in the exhibition, but nevertheless contemplated similar ideas (figs. 6-8).

Tracking the motif of the sphinx across mediums illustrates how Crane connects work relegated to the decorative margins of artistic production to the very centre of fine art. However, the sphinx is not the only character that reappears throughout Crane’s work, as heroic knights in Phrygian bonnets, the female personification of socialism in her Grecian dress, and the Atlas-like labourer supporting the weight of capitalism on his shoulders all appear in various mediums and narratives. An examination of his oeuvre reveals an emblematic language that communicates a consistent message. Crane is known for his direct support of the socialist movement and created posters, cartoons and designs that advertised rallies and critically engaged with politics. Crane’s particular brand of socialism held that art ought to be accessible to all classes. Therefore, his political ideas can be detected in all of his work.19 As Morna O’Neill aptly put, Crane transformed “art for art’s sake” into “art for all.”20

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Though scholarship reflects some acknowledgement of Crane’s socialist intentions with his children’s book illustration, the extent to which his socialist iconography permeated this material has not been fully investigated, particularly in regards to the works he both penned and pictured.\textsuperscript{21} This is, in part, due to the way in which his oeuvre has been categorized, not only by medium, but also by intended audience. As they were marketed to children and their parents, Crane’s book-works have rarely been invited to dialogue with his other, more overtly political work.\textsuperscript{22} This has led to the general assumption that they are devoid of critical content.

In this thesis, I will demonstrate the intermediality of Crane’s work. The way in which the images communicate and refer to one another across mediums, is a unique aspect of Crane’s oeuvre. Crane even developed his own iconography, a symbolic pictorial language that he deployed in the service of his “art for all” philosophy. This thesis therefore supports new research that suggests that Crane was not merely an aesthetic or political follower of the Arts and Crafts giant, William Morris (1834-1896), but that he had his very own style of socialism that can be traced throughout his oeuvre.

To do so, I will analyze Crane’s rarely studied 1891 illustrated work \textit{Queen Summer: Or the Tourney of the Lily and the Rose}, which I propose is not mildly socialist, but instead a bold and holistic example of propaganda meant for the dissemination of


\textsuperscript{22} In the early years of the twentieth century, Crane would have the opportunity to contribute to children’s books that were more overtly political such as A.A. Watts with Illustrations by Walter Crane, \textit{The Child’s Socialist Reader}, (London: Twentieth Century Press, 1907) and F. J. Gould, \textit{Pages for Young Socialists}, with Prefaces by H. M. Hyndman and J. Kerr Hardie, and Illustrations by Walter Crane, (National Labour Press, 1913. Morna O’Neill has made the most strides in connecting Crane’s painting to his socialism, and I will discuss her sizeable contributions to the study of Crane later in this chapter.
socialist ideologies in a domestic sphere. Crane incorporated symbols from his mythological and allegorical paintings and socialist prints, imbuing his fairy tales with political messages. To track this, I will situate Queen Summer within the artist’s work, thereby enabling comparison with materials that have recognized associations with Crane’s politics, including other books, Academy- and otherwise-exhibited paintings, and socialist pamphlets. This approach will show how Crane’s choice of visual symbols and motifs employed in his political paintings and prints pervades his book-works. Queen Summer is not an exception to Crane’s artistic output, or even a milder version, but one of many manifestations of his interest in the alliance of art and socialism.

Consisting of forty coloured illustrations. Queen Summer is one of Crane’s ‘flower books,’ a series of five works penned and illustrated by the artist between 1889 and 1906, which tell tales from the garden (fig. 9). The other titles in the series are Flora’s Feast: A Masque of Flowers, (1889), A Floral Fantasy in an Old English Garden (1898), A Flower Wedding: Described by Two Wallflowers (1905), and Flower’s From Shakespeare’s Garden: A Posy From the Plays (1906). In each book, Crane transforms

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23 A copy of Crane’s Queen Summer: The Tournament of the Rose, (London: Cassell, 1891) can be found on the Internet Archives here: https://archive.org/details/queensummerortou00cranrich. Queen Summer has been used predominately as an example of Crane’s later illustrative work. Spencer discusses Queen Summer and the rest of the flower books as taking the place of Crane’s early illustrations for children (Spencer, Walter Crane, 138), while authors such as Engen and Konody reference it as an example of Crane’s book design (Paul G. Konody, The Art of Walter Crane, London: G. Bell & Sons, 1902, 34-36 and 62-65). As one of the more successful flower books, pages from Queen Summer are often used as examples when discussing the category of flower books as a section of Crane’s oeuvre, but only in regards to its connection to the other books instead of an individual work. The most extensive examination that the flower books received was from O’Neill where she discusses the socialist connections between A Floral Fantasy in an Old English Garden (1898), and Flower’s From Shakespeare’s Garden: A Posy From the Plays (1906), and the Countess of Warwick who’s gardens inspired the illustrations for the books Morna O’Neill, "Walter Crane’s Floral Fantasy: The Garden in Arts and Crafts Politics," Garden History 36, no. 2 (Winter 2008): 289-300.

24 The Skeleton in Armour (1882-1883), Freedom (1885) A Floral Fantasy in an Old English Garden (1898), The Triumph of Labour (1891) and The Briar Rose (1907) to name a few.


26 All of the flower books went through multiple reprints so the dates associated with their publishing vary depending on what edition each author references in their discussion on Crane. The publishing dates
flowers into whimsical human-plant hybrids that captivate the reader’s imagination as they lead you through the story. Characterized by a decorative combination of classical, medieval, and gothic motifs, *Queen Summer* is set in a utopian garden in which anthropomorphized rose and lily ‘knights’ battle in a jousting tournament for the chance to become the lover of the Queen of Summer. The story, which begins with a clash of lances, is concerned with the aftermath of the match when it ends in a draw. Both knights fall together, still locked in combat, and a mêlée ensues between the ranks of the rose and lily knights who are determined to continue the fight that was not settled by the joust. The figure of Queen Summer, seeing her subjects in conflict, descends from her throne to explain why both factions are important to the success of the garden kingdom. After the Queen’s intermission, the lilies and roses come together and assist each other in recovering from the confrontation. The tale ends with harmony and celebration among the flower citizens.

Crane had a high regard for the intellect of British people. He believed that if you presented an idea in the right way, an audience would be able to understand what has been offered and come to an informed decision about the topic at hand. One of the right ways, in his opinion, was through “fantasy” or artistic renderings of fairy tales, which in this period became important. According to Molly Clark-Hilliard, the Victorian

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audience “understood fairy tales to represent England’s political landscape.”

The fantastical subject matter, which was connected to a historical past, could provide escape from an industrialized world, yet were also discursive tools that could be used to critically engage with, and interrogate contemporary concerns. This duality of past and present would have attracted Crane and other socialist artists to the fairy tale. The narratives were firmly connected to childhood and offered insight into the cultural childhood of a society—an attractive idea to artists who were interested in exploring the pivot point of social change and the beginnings of a new social structure.

Socialism, an economic, social, and political ideology that deals with social ownership and democratic control of labour was a multivalent movement in Britain during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Formed of mercurial parties with constantly shifting members, the movement focused predominately on improving access to education and working conditions and lobbied for structured leisure time for all. Crane joined a number of socialist groups and set about revolutionizing the visual representation of Victorian socialism by creating pamphlets, broadsides, programs, and banners for many of the groups, even those to which he was not a member. However, his involvement in both the consumer market and socialism—which challenged capitalism and the creation of art for capitalist consumption—have caused past critics to separate

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Crane’s political works from those that were commercially motivated or intended for elite artistic institutions. It was readily acknowledged during the Victorian era that socialist ideology permeated all of Crane’s artistic production following his public declaration of allegiance to the movement in 1884, along with that from the preceding decade. Yet, subsequent scholarship on Crane has either downplayed or, in some cases, overlooked the political underpinnings of his work. This has led to an underestimation of Crane’s political significance. Concerned with integrating art into the everyday life of British people, Crane believed that appreciating beauty was the key to transitioning to a socialist society.

According to Crane, art’s true purpose was to deal with the most important moral issues of the day, expressed through public works on a grand scale. However, Crane worked in a society in which commissions for art of this scale were few and far between. The practical challenges of supporting himself and his family meant that he had to find another way to channel his ideas. While some critics, such as Alan Crawford and Greg Smith, have come to believe that Crane failed to achieve his ambitions, I

35 This separation is seen or referenced in the works of Alan Crawford, “Crane, Walter (1845–1915),” Alan Crawford In Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, edited by H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, (Oxford: OUP, 2004. Online ed., edited by Lawrence Goldman, January 2013), 2. Greg Smith, and Sarah Hyde, eds. Walter Crane 1845-1915: Artist, Designer, and Socialist, Exhibition catalogue (London: Lund Humphries in association with Whitworth Art Gallery, University of Manchester, 1989). Separating Crane’s commercial work into chapters in Smith and Hyde’s book discusses an area, such as his Toy Books, his wallpapers, and his interior designs, separate from the other sections of Crane’s oeuvre. Spencer divides Crane’s work in her book Walter Crane in order to best discuss the entirety of his personal, political, and career exploits: Spencer, Walter Crane, Table of Contents. Vera, "Crane, Children and the Cause," The Illustrated Word at the Fin De Siècle, (2006). Vera circles around the overlapping of commercialism and socialism in some of Crane’s work throughout her site but does not explore it thoroughly.


believe Crane found a way to realize his political ambition without jeopardizing his need for income and his desire for recognition as an artist.\textsuperscript{39} As such, Crane can be characterized as a pragmatic socialist—he created a socialist platform out of a commodity, providing an innovative solution to the realities of British art, commercial and political life.

In Chapter One I will explore the tension between the artistic goals and the economic realities in Crane’s career in order to demonstrate how the artist began treating the illustrated book like an extended history painting. In doing so he combined his aspirations to become a public artist with being an artist associated with industrial methods. This chapter will also discuss the materiality of Crane’s work and how the illustrated books provided an opportunity to deliver his critique on society to an audience beyond the public spaces of the walls of the gallery or the crowds of the political rally. This chapter will also explore the place of the book as a work of art with respect to Crane’s thoughts on the function of total design and why he thought beauty would stimulate the evolution of British society. Illustrated books were transportable objects, but the book provided a liminal space in which people could safely interact with the radical concepts contained within its pages. This would have been important to Crane as he was not a revolutionist, but strongly believed that socialism would come about naturally once citizens were informed of the benefits of the movement.

In Chapter Two I will examine the significance of the flowers that Crane chose as his characters and the symbolism attached to them. I propose in this chapter that Crane was not depicting the lily that was common in the gardens of England at this time, but

rather he was referencing the emblem of the *fleur-de-lys*, in particular the Florentine lily, while the rose represents the beauty of art that was central to Crane’s ideas on socialism. Crane’s floral-hybrids therefore represent two different societies; the rose people of the medieval England of Crane’s imagination, and the lily people of the idyllic past of the Italian Renaissance—two ideal societies that Crane believed exemplified the qualities that socialism would provide for modern society. These flowers could also reconcile the tension between high art and craft.

The quest narrative, which I explore in Chapter Three, was particularly important. The quest is a key element in a fairy tale in which the hero sets out on a difficult journey in search of something symbolic, of an ideal that, when found, will change his life forever.⁴⁰ Along the way the hero encounters difficulties that make it seem as if his goal is impossible, but unlikely help comes to his aid and he is able to reach the end of his quest and return home happy, wealthy, and a changed person. The idea of a ‘happily-ever-after’ ending became a part of English fairy tales that were often sanitized versions of stories from France and Germany.⁴¹ It became expected in these stories that the hero would triumph over seemingly insurmountable obstacles. This storyline then became useful visual and literary devices for anyone who wanted a change to occur, so social and political groups appropriated quests for their propaganda. Crane found this particularly useful as he already had an audience that loved his books, but he also saw political potential in the genre. Crane transformed the traditional image of a heroic prince into a

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manual labourer, a common figure in the daily lives of the British people. With the inclusion of a Phrygian bonnet, Crane makes the connection between traditional fairy tales and the socialist movement.

Walter Crane had strong opinions on the role of art in society. It was Crane’s conviction that true art was dead. He believed stalwartly that art would be resurrected within a socialist society once the artist had been freed from the restraints of capitalism, a theme he explored throughout his artistic career. While Crane’s socialism may not seem to have been as robust as the likes of Morris, Crane viewed socialism as “a universal solvent,” one of the many painterly metaphors he uses to reconcile his concerns about art’s place in society. Critics have even been untrusting of Crane’s conversion to socialism, though the artist was quite clear about the importance of the movement to his life. In an article for an 1894 publication of Justice he states,

I imagine that as people can be roughly divided into Socialists and Individualists so they can be sub-divided into conscious Socialists and unconscious Socialists. I believe I really belonged to the latter class long before I knew I belonged to the former.

This quote has been taken by Eve Stano to mean that some of the socialist iconography in Crane’s work from the early part of the 1880’s was put there by the artist

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42 For a more extensive study of the labourer as a heroic figure see Men at Work. T. J. Barringer, Men at Work: Art and Labour in Victorian Britain, (New Haven: Published for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art by Yale University Press, 2005).
44 Crane, An Artists Reminiscences, 255.
unconsciously.\textsuperscript{46} But Crane was grappling with his political identity when he was apprenticed to Linton in the 1860’s demonstrating decades of religious and political questioning.\textsuperscript{47} To my mind, suggesting that this questioning appeared in his art subliminally is going too far. Evidently Crane was quite aware of his reputation and how his art was being represented in the public sphere, which challenges the notion that socialist motifs slipped into his work unnoticed.\textsuperscript{48} Crane, who was known for berating publishers if the advertisements for his work did not meet his exacting standards, or for pulling his paintings from shows if their position in the exhibition undermined the political thrust, was after all, a commercial \textit{and} a socialist artist. I would argue that he was in fact hyperaware of how his art was handled in the commercial sector.\textsuperscript{49}

Crawford states in his biography of the artist that while Crane chased his ambition of being a celebrated painter he filled his time “creating tolerable substitutes.”\textsuperscript{50} Crane’s socialist iconography, acknowledged in his socialist propaganda and public paintings, appear throughout his books and wallpaper designs. This intermediality traversed the boundaries between the public and the private spheres. The domestic space and its design capabilities became important at the end of the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{51} Writers such as the Reverend W.J. Loftie (1839-1911) and Mary Eliza Haweis (1848-1898) promoted the benefits of an artistic interior that could increase enjoyment of the space and improve

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{50} Crawford, “Crane, Walter (1845–1915),” 2. Crawford does not state exactly what these substitutes were, he could be referring to any or all of Crane’s commercial works, but Crawford’s earlier comment on the success of Crane’s children’s books rubbing salt in the wound of his unsuccessful painting career, leads me to believe that Crane’s book works were not held in the highest regard by Crawford.
\end{footnotesize}
This emphasis on the benefits of art in the home was fundamental to socialist artists. It was the driving force behind Morris’s Kelmscott Press and the Hammersmith Society, also supported by Crane. According to Linda Parry, they shared the desire “to restore the dignity of art to ordinary household decoration.” As art moved into the home it also began to move into the nursery, and the space for children became another area for designers to focus on. Crane took full advantage of this, designing wallpapers that depicted stories from his *Toy Books* and designing his books to be objects of decoration that could add to the artistic value of an interior for the child as well as the adults who cared for them. Crane tailored his designs as much for the parents as for the children. Introducing the discourse of socialism through a decorative commercial object allowed Crane to cross the threshold of the nursery to the drawing room and connect the conversations of domestic life with public debate, interweaving the political with the decorative.

It would be fitting to consider Crane as a figure equivalent to a sphinx figure of late-Victorian society: a person who questions the socio-political and cultural happenings of Britain through his position as an artist and as a socialist. His art then becomes the visual representation of the riddles that were asked by the mythological creature that needed to be answered in order to save Britain from its current state of disorder. Scholars such as O’Neill, Dölvers, Brockington, and Smith have addressed the questions that

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Crane’s art leads us to ask, both in terms of politics and aesthetics. Yet, the scholarship surrounding Crane still has deficits that need to be addressed in regards to the intermedial nature of his work. The aforementioned hesitation in studying Crane’s work all together is in some ways understandable: he was prolific and each work can be interpreted in many ways. Nevertheless, without looking at Crane’s oeuvre holistically you miss the essence of Crane as an artist: as someone who believed that all art was connected and the driving force behind society.

The academic consideration of Crane can be divided into three segments: his political paintings, his life, and his influence on book illustration. The majority of scholarship surrounding Crane is done in a structured format – each medium given its own section and discussed from Crane’s first production to his last within the mediums parameters – until Morna O’Neill rediscovered Crane.

Over the last decade, O’Neill has emerged as the leading scholar on Walter Crane and the political significance of his painting. Her numerous texts draw connections between Crane’s artistic creations and his political activism, which she pursues through the examination of his iconography. Her scholarship revitalized his position in art history and as a leading artist in nineteenth-century British Aestheticism. O’Neill corrects the

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57 This began with Konody, The Art of Walter Crane, in 1905. The structure of this book became the standard format well into the 1980’s when Crane scholarship came to a standstill. This standard changed in the early 2000’s with the renewed interest in Crane as a painter, and the acknowledgment of his intermedial practice put forth by Morna O’Neill.

omission of Crane’s paintings from art history by demonstrating the contributions they supply to understanding the concepts of allegory as political and to theories of decoration. O’Neill is also one of the earliest scholars to deal critically with Crane’s socialist propaganda as an important form of nineteenth-century visual culture. O’Neill argues that Crane’s socialism was different from other socialists of his time, and to understand this difference we need to look at his art through a politically-attuned lens.

Throughout her works O’Neill emphasizes Crane’s personal belief that the artist and the labourer are one in the same—both contribute to society through their physical labour. Crane discussed this idea on the connection between labour and art production extensively in his writings on socialism, often drawing comparisons between dockworkers or farmers and artists of London. As Crane states in his book Claims of Decorative Art (1892):

It is difficult to draw the line and to say where labour ends and art begins…both are contributing to the best of their ability to the wants of man…The labourer is engaged in moving, say, earth or minerals from one place to another with his shovel. The painter is engaged in moving earth


59 Socialism and Crane is dealt with in all of O’Neill’s work but her Art and Labour’s Cause is One: Walter Crane and Manchester, 1880-1915, 2008, and "Cartoons for the Cause? Walter Crane's The Anarchists of Chicago." Art History 38, (no. 1 2015), 106-37 discusses the combination of aesthetics and politics in detail. Grace Brockington, "Rhyming Pictures: Walter Crane and the Universal Language of Art," 359-73, Dölvers, Fables Less and Less Fabulous : English Fables and Parables of the Nineteenth Century and Their Illustrations, 114-142, Fraser, “Walter Crane and His Socialist Children's Book Illustrations,” 6-10, and Stano, "Conscious and Unconscious Socialism in the Watercolours of Walter Crane and Thomas Matthews Rooke," 1-18, all discuss the importance of socialism in Crane’s works from its inclusion in his book illustrations and political prints, to its integration into his paintings. However, prior to the twenty-first century and O’Neill’s intervention, Crane’s socialism was discussed separately from his art outside of the explicit socialist propaganda he created.


and minerals (in the form of colours) from one place to another – from his palette to his canvas with his brush.\textsuperscript{62}

O’Neill argues throughout many of her publications that Crane’s paintings have not received the attention they deserve because their content has been separated from both socialist rhetoric and Crane’s own theories about this political movement. This is partially due to the idea, exemplified by Konody, that Crane’s “greatness lies not so much in his artistic achievements as in his influence.”\textsuperscript{63} O’Neill addresses this in her scholarship by focusing on the correlation between Crane’s paintings and socialism in order to demonstrate how understanding Crane’s imagery and its political content relies on reuniting Crane’s own theories on design and social reform with his art. This approach will best reveal how Crane’s career, political, and personal lives are all much more interwoven than they are thought to be.

Before O’Neill, the scholarship on Crane was predominantly focused on his influence on book illustration. Crane’s biographers attempted to provide comprehensive and unbiased accounts of the artist’s life and avoid overly complimentary responses to his work, in favour of a critical approach.\textsuperscript{64} The structure of these works divide Crane’s life into time periods showing the evolution of the artist, from his first moments of inspiration.

\textsuperscript{62} Crane, \textit{Claims of Decorative Art}, 50.-51
\textsuperscript{63} Konody, \textit{The Art of Walter Crane}, v.
\textsuperscript{64} There are three notable scholars who deal with the events of Crane’s life; P.G. Konody, Isobel Spencer, and Walter Crane himself. While Crane’s \textit{An Artists Reminiscences} (1907) deals extensively with his socialist activities and the international acclaim he achieved during his lifetime, it tends to overlook his illustrative work, emphasizing his paintings and professional connections. Contrary to this Konody’s \textit{The Art of Walter Crane} (1902) devotes a large amount of discussion to Crane’s endeavours in the publishing world (Konody, \textit{The Art of Walter Crane}, 29-86), with a smaller discussion on his painting, politics, and recognition outside of the nursery (Konody, \textit{The Art of Walter Crane}, 1-11, 87-107, 107-111 and 115-128). The most comprehensive biography on the artist in regards to discussing all aspects of his work equally, and the starting point for all Crane scholars is Spencer’s \textit{Walter Crane} (1975).
to his death. Though these accounts provide a large amount of detail the sections
created by the authors ultimately interrupts the viewer’s ability to view Crane’s oeuvre
holistically and disrupts the unified style and message contained in the entirety of Crane’s
work.

The most notable bibliographic accounts in this field are Gertrude Massé and
Rodney K. Engen, who provide a detailed timeline of Crane’s publications that includes
information on the publishers, the number of illustrations Crane produced, whether Crane
was responsible for illustrations or illustration and text, as well as whether or not the
work was commissioned by a particular patron. Attempting to compile a
comprehensive list of Crane’s publications, these works often have an introductory
chapter that discuss the importance of book illustration, or an aspect of it, to Crane’s
career. While Engen emphasizes the idea of pictures as learning tools, and Crane’s
intentions to create quality books with this idea of education in mind in his introduction,
the critical component of Massé’s book focuses on a comparison between two giants of
the Victorian nursery: Randolph Caldecott and Walter Crane. In the “Preface” to A

65 The common divisions are: early life, apprenticeship, early works, socialism, and later works. Sections
specifically about book illustration, painting, and decorative art sometimes further supplement these
categories.
66 Gertrude Massé and Rodney K. Engen are the most notable authors in this area of scholarship on Crane.
Massé, A Bibliography of First Editions of Books Illustrated by Walter Crane, (1923), and Rodney K.
Engen, Walter Crane as a Book Illustrator, (London: Academy Editions; 1975). Massé’s book was the first
critical attention that Crane received after his death and it was created to bring recognition to the artist as an
individual but also his influence on colour-printing, as well as, children’s book illustrations. Engen’s book
remains at the forefront of bibliographic-biographies written on Crane and it re-introduced Crane the book
illustrator to a greater public outside of academia. The work done by Massé and Engen has proven
invaluable to the study of Crane as a book illustrator as they were able to trace the majority of his
publications. However, the work from the very beginning of Crane’s career are difficult to track due to the
artist not signing his name to them. Also some of his illustrated work after 1900 has not been included in
Massé’s text, particularly that of The Child’s Socialist Reader, and Pages for Young Socialists. Massé, A
Bibliography of First Editions of Books Illustrated by Walter Crane, 11.
67 Engen, Walter Crane as a Book Illustrator, 1-17, and Massé, A Bibliography of First Editions of Books
Illustrated by Walter Crane, 7-9. Anne Lundin also discusses this idea of Crane being interested in
education through images and adds to Engen’s argument by discussing how the mass-market was appealing
Bibliography of First Editions, written by Heywood Sumner, the difference in line used for rendering characters is discussed in reference to the commercial success of the two artists.68 This comparison was one that Crane faced often during his lifetime, however, what is significant about this text is that it is the first instance when technique over imagery is emphasized for “the king and the grandfather of the nursery.”69

Crane would again fall into the recesses of scholarly attention as his works were dispersed throughout collections and lost, emerging briefly as a fleeting mention in overviews of art history and children’s literature of the late-nineteenth century until the 1970’s when a flurry of scholarship in the field of Library and Information Sciences brought his book-works back to the forefront of academic interest.70 However, it was not for an appreciation of Crane’s skills as an artist, but rather his interest in nature, that appealed to a new aesthetic interest. Since Crane attempted to introduce the beautiful into the Victorians’ everyday life through his book-works and wallpapers using stylized designs of nature, these mediums were counted as examples by most of the references to Crane as a source for disseminating his works, because it would provide educational images to a wider variety of children.

68 Lundin, Victorian Horizons: The Reception of the Picture Books of Walter Crane, Randolph Caldecott, and Kate Greenaway, 102. Crane being very deliberate and consistent in his use of line with an emphasis on contour, while Caldecott used incomplete, broken lines similar to sketching to create an impression or expression in his works. The two men had been compared in this respect during their lifetime, with Caldecott’s treatment being generally preferred as it provoked a sense of emotion, whereas Crane’s control of his lines was remarked on as cold, leading critics to label Caldecott the king of the nursery and Crane the father.


70 The 1970’s was a decade of renewed interest in the library and its function as technology became more prominent, and archives were fully explored to continue expanding the M Achine-Readable Cataloging of the previous decade. This emphasis on the library sciences was combined with a renewed interest of Art Nouveau, which had begun in the 1960’s and continued into the 1970’s, a movement that Crane had been connected to most notably through his later illustrated books. This combination brought about a renewed interest in Crane and his works. Annette Lamb, “Contemporary Libraries: 1970s.” History of Libraries. 2012, Jean-David Jumeau-Lafond, "Art Nouveau Revival 1900. 1933. 1966. 1974." The Art Tribune. November 22, 2009, and Wilkens, Walter Crane - and the Reform of the German Picture Book, 2.
connecting Crane to the Art Nouveau movement. Labelled a “proto Art Nouveau” artist, by critics, particularly in Germany, the impact of Crane as an ‘international’ artist is explored by Lea-Ruth C. Wilkens. Specifically, she examines how Crane’s popularity in Germany was principle to the reform of the German picture book between 1865 and 1914, and outlines the separate histories of English and German illustrated books directed at children. Outlining similarities in theme, use of colour, and a change in appreciation for overall book design by German illustrators after their introduction to Crane’s works Wilkens’ thesis also provides one of the first discussions of Crane as an influence on an individual artist—Ernst Kreidolf (1863-1956). In the discussion on the connection between Crane and Kreidolf, Flora’s Feast is referenced as the work that inspired the floral kingdoms of Kreidolf’s illustrations; and is, furthermore, one of the earliest instances of a flower book being discussed academically outside of Crane’s lifetime.

Examining Crane’s work in America, Frederic Daniel Weinstein identifies Crane’s influence on art rather than his actual artistic creations, as the artist’s true legacy. Weinstein coined the “Crane Manner,” a term that describes Crane’s draughtsmanship that allowed him to design images that appeared whimsical and naïve at first glance, but allowed the viewer to see the “deeper and more affecting values” upon

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72 Wilkens, Walter Crane - and the Reform of the German Picture Book, 1865-1914, 32-47 and 64-109. While many authors have referenced Crane’s popularity in Germany, Wilkens is the first one to provide an in-depth look at Crane’s popularity in this country. Lundin, Victorian Horizons: The Reception of the Picture Books of Walter Crane, Randolph Caldecott, and Kate Greenaway, 104.
73 Wilkins outline of the reform of the German picture book is similar to how these interventions were outlined by Konody in regards to Crane’s influence on English picture books. Konody, The Art of Walter Crane, 29-50, and Wilkens, Walter Crane - and the Reform of the German Picture Book, 11-20 and 48-64.
74 Wilkens, Walter Crane - and the Reform of the German Picture Book, 89-95.
closer inspection.\footnote{Weinstein, \textit{Walter Crane and the American Book Arts}, 114.-120.} This, he argued, was the key visual component to Crane’s success in Britain and the United States. However, Weinstein does not extend the “Crane Manner” to other genres.\footnote{Weinstein, \textit{Walter Crane and the American Book Arts}, 114.-120. I will discuss this same aspect of Crane’s work in a later chapter, but rather than using it as a tool of influence for other artists, I will discuss how it is a tool the artist used to subtly graft political messages into his decorative works.} 

There has been sustained interest in Crane’s book works. For example, his \textit{Household Stories from the Collection of the Brothers Grimm} from 1882 (fig. 10) has intrigued many scholars.\footnote{John Hutton, "Walter Crane and the Decorative Illustration of Books." \textit{Children's Literature} 38, no. 1 (2010). Konody, \textit{The Art of Walter Crane}, 56. Paola Spinozzi, "Accurate Reproduction, Ingenious Representation: Lucy and Walter Crane’s Household Stories, from the Collection of the Bros. Grimm (1882)." In \textit{Word & Image}, 261-272, 3rd ed. Vol. 30. (Routledge, 2014). Helen Stalker, "Sleeping Beauties: Walter Crane and the Illustrated Book" \textit{Imaginative Book Illustration Society: Diverse Talents}, no. 3 (2009) 7-52. Helen Vera, "Crane, Children and the Cause," \textit{The Illustrated Word at the Fin De Siècle}, (2006). These authors all discuss Crane’s \textit{Household Stories} and its importance in representing his ideas on book design and decoration.} This was the result of a collaboration with his sister, Lucy Crane (1842–1882) and has been used as a piece to connect many aspects of Crane’s work, from his own theories on book design, to his thoughts on collaboration between artists and authors.\footnote{Spinozzi, "Accurate Reproduction, Ingenious Representation: Lucy and Walter Crane’s Household Stories, from the Collection of the Bros. Grimm (1882)," 263-266.} In this book, Lucy provided the translations for Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm’s fairy tales and demonstrates the significance of illustrated books to education.\footnote{Hutton, "Walter Crane and the Decorative Illustration of Books," 27-31. Spinozzi, "Accurate Reproduction, Ingenious Representation: Lucy and Walter Crane’s Household Stories, from the Collection of the Bros. Grimm (1882)," 261. Laying out Crane’s metaphor of book design as the equivalent of building a house, Hutton summarizes Crane’s writings from a century before describing how each component of the book adds support to the structure, so that the finished object has a continuous and functional flow that compliments the story and captures the readers attention. Focusing on the visual aspects of book design, as they relate to the text, and how each visual component – title page, tailpieces, full-page illustrations etc. – should coordinate with the each other to provide a space for the reader’s complete immersion in the narrative.}

While Crane’s theories on book design, socialism, and art under socialism have been discussed by scholars individually, it is more difficult to find attempts to isolate the universal theory that connects all of Crane’s works across media outside of O’Neill’s
writing. The rhetoric of drawing has been argued by Gerard as the key to understanding the philosophical and technical skill of Crane’s art; to understand Crane you need to understand that to Crane the power of art lies in the fundamental craft of drawing. As Crane discussed in the *Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society*:

“The bases of all art...might be described as different kinds of drawing.
Each artistic craft...is a method of drawing, each is actually based on a drawing as a preliminary stage of its existence”

Gerard believes that this emphasis on drawing as the basis of art is Crane’s contribution to British art during his lifetime, and essential in understanding how Crane’s wide assortment of works are all connected. Gerard notes that painting and book illustration both have their roots in drawing, and in particular the ability to draw a distinctive line is necessary to relay an easily understood message through graphic art.

The identification and research by scholars of the political significance of Crane’s painting, the acknowledgement that his illustrations did more than simply influence other artists, the appreciation of the quality of Cranes’ work outside of Britain, and the recognition of there being an underlying connection in his art through the act of drawing all demonstrate the importance of Crane as an artist. However, the acknowledgment of Crane’s skills, influence, and acclaim need to be brought together in a study of his work to fully understand his proficiency in translating a conversation across mediums. This can be accomplished through the appreciation for, and further study of, the intermedial way in which Crane worked. The emphasis on the formal qualities of Crane’s work, as

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connecting threads that stitch his theories and practice together, is fundamental to the methods I employ in this thesis through an examination of the art form he was most famous for, worked in, and theorized about the most: the book.

While many of the book-works created by Crane were intended for children, the artist openly acknowledged that they were not the only audience who would interact with them, and tailored his designs to appeal to adult and children alike. These books were intended to be engaged with on the same intellectual level as Crane’s paintings and political prints, while providing a more personal and intimate experience to the viewer that these other, more public works, could not achieve. If it can be accepted that these books were part of a carefully considered and planned visual conversation by Crane, then the political content contained in their pages easily becomes apparent, and they become a part of this conversation, rather than just a beautiful book for the nursery.
CHAPTER 1:
From Paint to Print, and Back Again:
Emblems as Agents of Intermediality and the Significance of the Book in the Art of Walter Crane

In his Reminiscences, Crane reflected on the differences between drawing for pleasure in his father’s studio with having to work in Linton’s print studio in order to make a living after his father’s early passing.

I picked up in my father’s studio and under his eye a variety of artistic knowledge in an unsystematic way. I was always drawing, and any reading, or looking at prints or pictures, led back to drawing again…I never enjoyed myself copying, however, and was always happier drawing direct from Nature or doing something ‘out of my head.’ … I did not find the 4H pencil put into my hands a very sympathetic implement, though the surface of the wood was pleasant, but I dashed off something with it…[Mr. Orrin Smith] told me to work much more carefully and slowly. Rather depressed, I began again, but my stock of knowledge, equal to rapid sketching, did not gain by being laboured, and the drawing soon got as shiny as a black-leaded grate.\(^{85}\)

This tension, between the artistic goals and the economic realities in Crane’s career, followed him throughout his life. One of the ways he solved this problem was by treating the illustrated book, a commercial commodity, like an extended history painting, which was the ideal genre to express noble thought and deed.\(^{86}\) In doing so he combined his

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\(^{85}\) Crane, Reminiscences, 14, 40, 49. Harvey Orrin Smith was Linton’s partner at the time of Crane’s apprenticeship and assisted in Crane’s training at the studio.

\(^{86}\) David H. Solkin, Art in Britain, 1660-1815. While Solkin discusses the importance of history painting and the challenges it faced in British art, Chapter six, “Making History after the ‘Glorious Revolution’” (48-62) is of particular significance. In this chapter Solkin discusses decorative history panting, the use of
aspirations to become a public artist with being an artist associated with industrial methods. Crane achieved this through intermediality. This chapter will discuss the materiality of Crane’s work and how illustrated books provided an opportunity to deliver his critique on society to an audience beyond the public spaces of the walls of the gallery or the crowds of the political rally. It will also explore the place of the book as a work of art with respect to Crane’s thoughts on the function of total design and why he thought beauty would stimulate the evolution of British society.\textsuperscript{87} Illustrated books were transportable objects, but the book provided a liminal space in which people could safely interact with the radical concepts contained within its pages.\textsuperscript{88} This would have been important to Crane as he was not a revolutionist, but strongly believed that socialism would come about naturally once citizens were informed of the benefits of the movement.\textsuperscript{89} The commitment, he thought, would come once the beholder had an opportunity to fully contemplate what he or she had read and experienced. To this end, Crane strived, not only to express beauty in all of his work, but also, as the contemporary critic, Ralph E. Moreland expressed, “to remove art from the sacred precincts of the

\textsuperscript{87} O’Neill, Walter Crane: The Arts and Crafts, Painting, and Politics, 1875-1890, 19-51.
galleries and academies, and to apply it in varied forms to those interests that lie close to
daily life.”

This chapter will also explore the visual language that Crane created to express
his ideas intermedially. In the second part of this chapter, I will investigate the creation
and dissemination of Crane’s visual language, and argue that its presence was not
contained merely in the artist’s easel paintings and political prints, but permeated his
commercial art works as well. The ways in which Crane’s emblems travelled from canvas,
to pamphlet, to page will be discussed to show how these visual memoranda combined
symbols in order to warn of the effects of capitalism on British culture and demonstrate
the benefits that a socialist society would offer the nation. The narrative of Queen
Summer features many of these emblems, expertly crafted into characters of the story,
that tell the tale of a renaissance in the garden kingdom. Excerpts from its pages will be
used to demonstrate how Crane combined his aspirations to become a public artist with
being an artist associated with industrial methods. To conclude, I will also examine how
Queen Summer resembles Crane’s political cartoons in format and content, through the
use of his political emblems and themes popular with the artist’s socialist prints. This
chapter is important because it discusses Crane’s strategies for dealing with the tensions
between art and commerce. This lays the foundation for the next chapter, which will

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90 Ralph E. Moreland, "The Art of Walter Crane," Brush and Pencil 10, no. 5 (1902), 257. Crane also had
much more success in his individual pursuits of education at home then he did in a traditional school
environment, and he detested the way in which boys were taught without any opportunities for creativity.
Since his days at school were so detestable, Crane turned to his father’s library for education, and it can be
strongly argued that the seed to create artful, beautiful, and educational books was planted early in his life.
Crane, Reminiscences, 30.
91 By “memoranda” I mean that these emblems acted as a device to inspire the subject to be remembered
and acted upon in the future, after the viewer had a chance to contemplate their meaning. "memorandum,
July 05, 2016).
explore Crane’s reconciliation of another set of tensions—fine art and craft—and socialism’s role in this reconciliation.

Part I- Intermediality and Materiality of the Book

The Fabian Society, which Crane joined in 1885, was a socialist group that was concerned with education.92 Primarily interested in the middle classes, Crane agreed with the Fabians’ belief that social revolution would be accomplished through the gradual saturation of society with new ideas, rather than with protest and revolt.93 Being a part of this movement, furthermore, allowed Crane to combine the two qualities he deemed most important for an utopian society: art and education. Crane had been including educational material in his children’s books for decades before he converted to socialism.94 In light of this, it may in fact be more accurate to say that his work reflected his concerns about education before his association with socialism formalized his politics. This concept of education through illustration is one of the reasons that I believe Crane was so influential to writers and artists of children’s books throughout his life and long after his death. He emphasized moral and social education, presenting the lessons in a way that was both attractive and informative to viewers of the middle and, in particular instances, the

93 Crane, An Artists Reminiscences, 258.
94 Spencer, Walter Crane, 147. Crane followed the tradition that stories for children would have a moral or educational message contained within them. Fairy tales are an excellent example of this and Crane drew on their structure and content for inspiration throughout his career, a topic discussed in Chapter Three of this thesis. While his works would include references to political and cultural events in their compositions or narratives, Crane also created educational primers that were meant to assist children to read. Grace Brockington, “Rhymin’ Pictures: Walter Crane and the Universal Language of Art,” Word & Image: A Journal of Verbal/Visual Enquiry 28, no. 4 (2012), 359-73, discusses some of the educational theories and theorists that Crane worked with.
working classes. Significant to this, the idea of leisure time for the lower classes became a debated topic during this era and the socialist groups were very vocal about how this time should be structured. Believing that workers were wasting their leisure time in unproductive ways, socialists campaigned for, and attempted to provide, what Water’s called “rational” leisure time. People could expand their minds in areas like art and literature through events such as public lectures, art exhibitions, musical concerts and theatrical entertainment, among others. Yet, while the communal group events were important, the individual was also an important figure to socialist groups, therefore they needed a way to enrich the individual’s leisure time, and the print medium was perfect for this. With rising literacy rates and advances in printing technologies, the periodical and the book became two of the most consumed venues for visual culture in Victorian society and the socialists used these forms of communication to spread their ideals throughout the public and domestic social spheres of England.

95 Working classes would have access to this material through multiple avenues. One of the most popular places where free art exhibitions would be held was Toynbee Hall in Whitechapel, a house run by Samuel Barnett (1844-1913) whose purpose was to provide free education to the residents of one of the poorest areas of London. Exhibitions, lectures, and concerts were held at Toynbee in order to provide more cultural opportunities to poorer citizens that they could partake in after work, in order to expand their minds. Rager, “Smite This Sleeping World Awake”, 442. Another establishment that functioned similarly to Toynbee Hall was the Red Cross Hall in Southwark. Founded in 1888 by Octavia Hill, a Christian socialist, the Hall was styled in part after Toynbee Hall and offered various classes, lectures, and other forms of entertainment. Designed by Elijah Hoole, the hall and the Red Cross Cottages adjacent to it, alluded to the morality of the Church and both Hill and Hoole wished for the hall to foster a sense of community and identity for the surrounding residents. (O’Neill, WC, 104-108, n224-225)

96 Waters, British Socialists and the Politics of Popular Culture, 1884-1914, 17-43.
97 Waters, British Socialists and the Politics of Popular Culture, 1884-1914, 22.
98 Waters, British Socialists and the Politics of Popular Culture, 1884-1914, 22-25. O’Neill, Walter Crane: The Arts and Crafts, Painting, and Politics, 1875-1890, 100-105. Toynbee Hall and the Red Cross Hall were examples of communal places that offered these events.

100 Lundin, Victorian Horizons: The Reception of the Picture Books of Walter Crane, Randolph Caldecott, and Kate Greenaway, 10.
Opportunities to create public works, which Crane believed to be the best way to educate, were in short supply. Crane had been using his books to educate children for two decades, so this medium, while commercial, became an innovative method to amalgamate his profitable career as an illustrator and his newly established role as an activist. Coupled with Crane’s belief that “every child, one might say human being, takes in more through his eyes than his ears and I think much more advantage might be taken of this fact,” the illustrated book provided the platform for Crane to disseminate his ideas in both text and visual form. The book medium and fantastical subject matter, already popularized by Crane, built on the established audience from his earlier successes, while introducing a new audience to socialist ideas. The illustrated book was available at a variety of price levels and it was smaller and transportable, which allowed for sustained and repeatable individual contemplation by the viewer, qualities that larger paintings or murals that were site specific could not claim. Perhaps inspired by a review published in *The Times* in 1878 that compared the illustrated book to space in a gallery, a place where viewers could stop and study each image, Crane explored the potential for this medium and was deeply concerned with the placement of images in text. This is exemplified by Crane in his *Decorative Illustration of Books*:

In a journey through a book it is pleasant to reach the oasis of a picture or an ornament, to sit awhile under the palms, to let our thoughts unburdened stray, to

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103 As quoted in, Lundin, *Victorian Horizons: The Reception of the Picture Books of Walter Crane, Randolph Caldecott, and Kate Greenaway*, 12. Lundin might have been discussing the "Christmas Books" review from 1879, which discusses the cover of “The Royal Nursery Picture Book” by Ward, Lock, and Co. as resembling a gallery due to the pictures on the cover, but the response evoked from Lundin’s description of the book is superior when discussing the benefits of illustrated books as individual objects.
drink of other intellectual waters, and to see the ideas we have been pursuing, perchance, reflected in them. Thus we end, as we begin, with images.\textsuperscript{104}

In Moreland’s 1902 review of the artist’s work, he claims that “Crane’s art appears to the best advantage on the printed page, and not in the formal frame.”\textsuperscript{105} In my opinion, Moreland is correct, however, with relatively few Walter Crane paintings extant, we are at a disadvantage. Nevertheless, \textit{Queen Summer} is an excellent example of Crane’s artistic propaganda in illustrated books that were more than decorative texts created for enjoyment.\textsuperscript{106} A well planned and executed art piece was meant to be attractive but educational to both children and adults. The fusion of the fantastical with a critique of modernity, allows the reader a sense of what could be called enthralled separation – at once distanced from the events being depicted, but consumed with a fascination, a need to witness the unfolding of events. By moving the representation of modern issues into a fantastical world, the viewer can interact with contemporary concerns without consequence, and when they emerge from the fantasy, the ideas presented stay with them subconsciously as part of a story, or even a memory.

Crane first experimented with this combination in his paintings. He had great success, for example, with \textit{The Skeleton in Armour} from 1883, inspired by Henry

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\textsuperscript{104} Crane, \textit{Of the Decorative Illustration of Books Old and New}, 5–6.
\textsuperscript{105} Moreland, "The Art of Walter Crane," 267.
\textsuperscript{106} Crane’s books contain many design elements important to the Aesthetic and Arts and Crafts Movements, particularly the emphasis on beauty in the finished piece. While the emphasis on beauty has often lead to the assumption that Aestheticism was apolitical, there is a political nature to creating utopian spaces in interiors or prints. In my opinion it is this political aspect of beauty that interested Crane and is what makes his books agents for a particular form propaganda; one that is slightly ambiguous but beautiful. Elizabeth Carolyn Miller discusses the politics of Aestheticism in her essay, “William Morris, Print Culture, and the Politics of Aestheticism.” See Elizabeth Carolyn Miller, “William Morris, Print Culture, and the Politics of Aestheticism,” \textit{(Modernism/Modernity} 15, no. 3, 2008) 477–502.
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Wadsworth Longfellow’s (1807-1882) poem first published in 1841 (fig. 11). A dining room frieze intended to adorn the walls of Vinland, a residence in Newport, Rhode Island, it recounts the legendary pre-Colombian settling of Newport by the Vikings. Crane’s version centres on a Viking warrior and the tower he constructs for his bride-to-be. Her father, unhappy with the match, tries to reclaim his daughter and the two lovers flee. The frieze ends tragically, the girl dies and her lover buries her under the tower he built before falling on his own sword—his skeleton guards her resting place for eternity. The tower, which brackets each scene, becomes the central motif for Crane’s rendition of the tale and, as the narrative progresses, the construction is gradually completed.

At the base of the tower, Crane places details incongruous for a Norse legend: all of his labourers are clad in the Phrygian bonnet (fig. 12). The labourers struggle under the weight of their work, often depicted in poses similar to Atlas suffering under the weight of the world. Like Atlas, Crane saw the labourer as responsible for supporting society and that capitalism made their load harder to bear. This would eventually lead to society’s demise, as the labourer is crushed beneath the burden of capitalism. Socialism was the solution to this impending doom and so the Phrygian cap became a beacon, calling the beholder to the movement. Crane would go on to deploy this same motif in his later political prints, for example The Strong Man, featured in the May issue of Justice in 1897 (fig.13). The hybrid of classical mythology, revolutionary symbolism, and the contemporary British labour movement was a favourite of Crane’s and would be

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109 The Phrygian Bonnet was a symbol used during the French Revolution as a sign of liberty and freedom. The cap would later be adapted by English radicals and then socialists to connote these same ideas of equality and liberty. O’Neill, Morna. “Art and Labour’s Cause is One”: Walter Crane and Manchester, 1880-1915. Exhibition catalogue. Manchester: Whitworth Art Gallery, 2008, 1.
drawn on extensively by the artist in the years to come. *The Skeleton in Armour* was the first commissioned painting that included this motif. The following year, Crane publically declared his allegiance to the socialist movement and the hybrid motif became a favourite in his arsenal of emblems, found across all the mediums in which he worked.

*The Skeleton in Armour* is also significant because it foreshadows Crane’s future method in book illustration. The evidence strongly suggests that this painting was the turning point for Crane’s relationship with narrative and politics. The frieze reads like a scroll, with the narrative stretched across a space that involved the active participation of the viewer and the towers act as page markers for the action within them. Once Crane completed the frieze in Italy, the seven canvases were shipped to Newport, where they were stretched onto wooden frames and installed at Vinland. Crane’s studio was too small to fit the large stretchers so, to complete the commission, Crane manufactured a support system to hold the canvases. Stretched over two rollers, Crane wound the completed paintings up; the viewer would, therefore, read the painting as an unfolding of the story.

Crane, furthermore, saw the revolutionary potential in decorative art because the objects were for the most part portable, but, more importantly, as commodities, he was using the tools of the market place to undermine capitalism. These objects were not merely hybrid emblems, but inhabited hybrid spaces. The dining room at Vinland, for example, was situated in a domestic sphere, but was also accessible to the public through social events and gatherings. However, as he did not receive many commissions for paintings, he turned to his most successful genre.

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In 1891 Crane visited America for a retrospective of his work, and while there he experienced some of the setbacks that faced an outspoken socialist activist. While visiting Boston, Crane stated that the Chicago Anarchists who were put to death in 1887 had been too severely punished for expressing their political beliefs. Due to this, he had his funding withdrawn, events in his honour cancelled, and faced a public backlash that threatened to bring his artistic and social prospects in America to ruins. Likewise in Britain, his overtly political works did not meet expectations for exhibitions or sales. In 1887 he withdrew his painting *The Riddle of the Sphinx* from the Grosvenor Gallery because of its poor placement, which was due, in Crane’s opinion, to the owner’s dislike of the political messages contained within the piece.

While his paintings were not always accepted if they were blatantly political, Crane consistently recycled his book illustrations for the political arena, blurring the line between his political cartoons with familiar tales from the nursery. Often heralded as reshaping the visual culture of British socialism, the narratives of Crane’s political prints featuring tales of social change, with the characters of capitalism and socialism as the antagonists and protagonists, were not confined merely to the political rally or campaign leaflet. While most obvious in his political prints, Crane’s narratives of social change could be found in most of his work from 1870 onwards, from his *The Fate of Persephone* (1878), and as discussed, *The Skeleton in Armour* (1883), *Freedom* (1885) and *Queen*

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Yet, the subtlety with which Crane insinuated his social critique into his exhibited paintings and commercial materials, including his wallpapers, has been undervalued by historians. Crane’s ability to intermingle social critique with elements from myths and fairy tales is one that deserves more attention in regards to its execution and reception—an undertaking that this chapter will commence with a focus on the invention and placement of Crane’s own iconography.

Part II – Emblems

According to Crane, one of the best places to situate a moral message was in decorative art, which, during this era, was widely disseminated across a variety of mediums but could also be considered art of public and, like his experience with The Skeleton in Armour, domestic spheres. While most British artists during this period associated the decorative with interior décor, there was a precedent for situating paintings in public interiors, and this provided artists like Crane the opportunity to reach a wider audience.

120 There are many more examples of Crane’s socialism permeating his art, including the work he continued to produce into the beginning of the twentieth century including A Flower Wedding: as Described by Two Wallflowers (1905) and The Briar Rose (1907), that deserve more attention then they can be given in this paper.

121 O’Neill is the leading scholar on Walter Crane and has written extensively on the emblems that appear in his work. Due to this she will be heavily referenced in this chapter as currently Greg Smith. Grace Brockington, Aesop Guy are the only other two scholars who have dealt directly with Crane’s iconography as opposed to his reputation as a children’s book illustrator or influence for other artists. While O’Neill focuses predominately on Crane’s paintings in order to show how his voice needs to be included alongside artists such as Edward Burne-Jones (1833-1898), William Morris, and John Ruskin (1819-1900) when discussing nineteenth century aesthetics, she does not disregard Crane’s career as an illustrator or designer. Borrowing from across Crane’s collection of works and iconography of O’Neill’s scholarship demonstrates how Crane’s painting practice is part of a larger decorative dialogue that makes up his oeuvre. One of the ways in which O’Neill does this is by tracing some of the figures and symbols that appear in Crane’s work quite frequently, such as the Phrygian bonnet, the classical female figure, or the figure of the labourer. In fact one of the greatest contributions that O’Neill has given to the understanding of Crane is the realization of the importance of the labourer figure to Crane’s artistic and political discourse, which has been overshadowed by his fairy tales after the artists death, and the loss of many of his paintings. O’Neill, Walter Crane: The Arts and Crafts, Painting, and Politics, 1875-1890, Art and Labour’s Cause is One, "Paintings from Nowhere: Walter Crane, Socialism and the Aesthetic Interior "A Political Theory of Decoration, 1901-1910",“Walter Crane’s Floral Fantasy: The Garden in Arts and Crafts Politics”, all discuss the use of emblems or symbols and their importance to Crane’s work.
audience. Basing his work on the idea that all art was in essence decorative, intermediality became paramount to Crane in his artistic endeavours to create total design that included both the private and the public. To accomplish this, Crane created a collection of emblems that would express his thoughts on beauty, socialism, capitalism, freedom, and labour. Termed “picture-writing,” a set of emblems created by the artist that encapsulates the concepts Crane wished to address in his art, this language, which was known in his lifetime, was lost after his death when his work became unstitched from its contexts and dispersed in various collections. Furthermore, in these collections the importance of intermediality in Crane’s work was undermined by object-based organization. While this language of symbols has been recuperated in the study of his paintings, the way in which it was used in his illustrated books has yet to be fully explored.

In order to demonstrate how Crane’s “picture-writing” could make decorative wallpaper political and political emblem artistic I will reveal how his iconography functions throughout the plot of *Queen Summer*. To begin, a selection of emblems will be discussed to show how Crane built upon the connotations already associated with certain motifs in order to connect them to the socialist movement and propaganda. Following this I will explain how the artist’s repertoire of emblems came into existence and, in

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123 O’Neill, "A Political Theory of Decoration, 1901-1910," 288. As Moreland wrote: “To [Crane] art was not art unless it was beautiful, and a picture lacked at least one of the elements of a picture unless it was decorative. His love of symbolism gave him a natural predilection toward figurative art, and as a consequence, this element can be traced quite as readily in his designs as in his finished pictures.” Moreland, “The Art of Walter Crane,” 264; Joanna Banham, “Walter Crane and the Decoration of the Artistic Interior” in Greg Smith, and Sarah Hyde, eds. *Walter Crane 1845-1915: Artist, Designer, and Socialist*, Exhibition catalogue (London: Lund Humphries in association with Whitworth Art Gallery, University of Manchester, 1989), 47.
particular, what influenced their creation, supported by Crane’s own writing on the importance of emblems to design. A visual comparison of illustrations from Queen Summer and a selection of Crane’s other work, such as Freedom (1885) and The Capitalist Vampire (1885), establishes how, by including emblems at certain points in the narrative, Crane added what John Barrell called an “irreducible indeterminacy” to his book illustrations, a double narrative which could be acknowledged or disregarded depending on the reader's preferences (fig. 14-15).

As the artist of the nursery, Crane already had a strong public following before he became active in politics. His successful line with Routledge demonstrated how Crane combined visuals with text in new and colourful ways that revolutionized the field of children’s literature. This was a reflection of his concern with access to education and the ways visual art could be utilized in the classroom. For Crane, fairy tales, and fables were undervalued materials, as their characters, morals, and narratives were: “fish to the moral net of the emblem designer.” He drew upon this fascination with fables and fairy tales to engage the reader and transform the stories into what one scholar has termed “political wolves in sheep’s clothing.” But these hidden stories were not challenging to

125 O’Neill, Art and Labour’s Cause is One, 9.
129 O’Neill, Art and Labour’s Cause is One, 20.
decipher. as the key to understanding them could be found in Crane’s visual and written works.\textsuperscript{130}

Crane, who was concerned with the evolution of society and language in his writings on political and educational reform, understood that “the historical relationship between design and language opened up an opportunity for political change” which he would exploit in his artistic endeavours through the figures he employed as emblems.\textsuperscript{131} The figures Crane chose to imbue with socialist meaning were often retrieved from past civilizations, with the Egyptians, Greeks, and Renaissance Italy being of particular interest to Crane, as they were all civilizations that had strong interests in public art.\textsuperscript{132} It was through public works of art that Crane believed the masses would be best educated on current events, and it was this model of “art for all” that Crane wanted to return to in a socialist Britain. However, Britain did not have the market for the public works that Crane wanted so he incorporated figures and stories from these eras into his iconography in order to use their narratives for inspiration and propaganda.

Consisting of repurposed classical female figures as the embodiments of art and beauty; St. George dressed as a labourer, who slays the serpent or dragon of capitalism; the angel of socialism that frees the chained citizens of Britain; the bundle of rods of trade unionism; and the Phrygian bonnet, Crane deploys these among other emblems to

\textsuperscript{130} Dr. Andrea Korda explores the ways in which visual literacy assists the reader in deciphering the messages contained in Crane’s work. She outlines how actively and critically engaging with, or reading, images yields further information to the reader, which is especially relevant when considering Crane. Andrea, Korda “Learning from ‘good pictures’: Walter Crane’s Picture Books and Visual Literacy,” (\textit{Word & Image}, forthcoming) 8-11.

\textsuperscript{131} Brockington, "Rhyming Pictures: Walter Crane and the Universal Language of Art," 362.

\textsuperscript{132} This is discussed at various points in many of Crane’s published works including \textit{Bases of Designs}, \textit{The Claims of Decorative Art}, and \textit{Of the Decorative Illustration of Books Old and New}, which all feature written accounts of what past civilizations did well in various aspects of art and design.
connect his designs to broader concepts in history and a lineage of activism. These symbols were combined in a continuous narrative in Crane’s paintings, or act as the main characters in his books, with the idea that they would function as mediators between mediums, thus creating a single narrative that runs throughout his oeuvre. Deciphering this narrative was possible by attending public lectures as well as the classes Crane taught at varying institutions across England, in which he discussed the use of emblem in decoration and often used his own work as examples.

Crane took the familiar classically dressed woman or medieval knight and by adorning the figure in a Phrygian bonnet or carrying the torch of liberty, added another connotation that would connect the figure and its past associations to socialism. This new connection would register in the spectator’s memory so that the emblem could be identifiable as it was transferred to different stories and mediums. Crane summed up this concept in his Bases of Design (1898):

Allegorical art has, too, a modern popular form in the region of political satire and caricature, often potent to stir or to concentrate political feeling…the effective way in which the political situation is put into some piece of familiar symbolism which all can recognize and remember. In the region of poetic design symbolism must always hold its place…[the artist] must use figurative language, and seek the beautiful and permanent images of emblematic design.

This translation of emblems is one of the ways in which Crane connected the numerous styles and forms he worked in. The female personification of beauty could be found

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throughout his paintings, but it also made an appearance in many of his book-works as well, just as his angel of socialism appeared across paintings, prints, wallpapers, and book pages, which I will discuss below in relation to *Queen Summer*.

An example of this intermediality would be the aforementioned Phrygian bonnet, an important and recognizable symbol of the French Revolution that also makes an appearance in the frieze of *Corona Vitae* (1889) and is a regular component in his political prints, including *A Garland for May Day* (1895), *Solidarity of Labour* (1889), and *The Workers May Pole* (1894) (fig. 16-18).\(^{136}\) This symbol was also incorporated in his book illustrations, most prominently in his rendition of Spenser’s *Faerie Queene* (1895) where it adorned the head of the characters Belphoebe and Britomart.\(^{137}\) The *Faerie Queene* would also influence some of Crane’s political cartoons, including his frontispiece for *The New Party* of 1894 in which characters from the story are reconfigured into protagonists for socialism (fig. 19). The emblem is an important element to understanding the intermediality of *Queen Summer*, and Crane discusses it extensively in his publications on art.

In chapter seven of *The Bases of Designs* (1898), for example, entitled “Of the Symbolic Influence, or Emblematic Element in Design,” Crane discusses the history of emblems from the Egyptians to modern times, and their use in art and religion as important tools in communicating to a wider public:

> While much early ornament, as we have seen, is traceable to a constructive origin, another kind, or another branch of the tree of design is traceable to a symbolic origin, and springs from the endeavour to express thought - to find a

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succinct language in which to express some sense of the great powers of nature, and their influence upon the daily life of man - to embody even in a pictorial emblem, symbol, or allegory his primitive conceptions of the order of the universe itself.\textsuperscript{138}

With a focus on progression, Crane would often lecture on how it was important to know “that the letters of our alphabet were once pictures, symbols, or abstract signs of entities and actions, and grew more and more abstract until they became arbitrary marks—the familiar characters that we know.”\textsuperscript{139} Therefore, art, which transmitted ideas and concepts visually, would be understood at an earlier age than written or verbal languages, and a well-designed and aesthetically pleasing piece would be more conducive to educating the masses in both academic and moral matters.\textsuperscript{140} But language, written or otherwise, is a system that is dependent on signs and signifiers that have agreed upon connotations in order to be both understood and effective. In the absence of this system, Crane created his own by combining elements of other recognizable and popular subjects, such as fairy tales, myths, religion, and issues and events in popular culture.

The Esperanto movement of the last quarter of the nineteenth century greatly interested Crane, who was concerned with educational reform and art’s place in this restructuring.\textsuperscript{141} Esperanto is a constructed language that was invented by Ludwig

\textsuperscript{138} crane, \textit{The Bases of Design}, 237-38, 230. Crane lists emblems that he sees as important, such as the sun, Persephone, and Pandora, all stories that he uses in his art.

\textsuperscript{139} Walter Crane, \textit{Of the Decorative Illustration of Books Old and New} (London: George Bell and Sons, 1896), 5.

\textsuperscript{140} Brockington, "Rhyming Pictures: Walter Crane and the Universal Language of Art," 362-363. Also discussed in Crane, \textit{An Artists Reminiscences}

\textsuperscript{141} The most recent scholar to explore Crane’s involvement with education is Andrea Korda in her forthcoming article, “Learning from ‘good pictures’: Walter Crane’s Picture Books and Visual Literacy,” which looks at original books penned and pictured by Crane as objects that aid in learning visual literacy; a
Zamenhof in the 1870’s, on the premise that it would be easy to learn and international in its scope.\textsuperscript{142} Crane’s interest in this invented language is easy to understand, as he held similar ideas regarding art as a universal language.\textsuperscript{143} I argue that his interest in Esperanto, combined with his interests in education, highly influenced the construction of Crane’s own visual language of emblems. Crane would often argue that design was also a language, and an important one, that had far-reaching historical roots perceivable in the hieroglyphics of Egypt and other pictographic languages of the past.\textsuperscript{144}

Hieroglyphic languages, which combined design and literacy, became the foundation on which Crane built his own language of emblems. However, while Crane held strong opinions on the intelligence and perceptiveness of his viewers, modern critiques have been somewhat divided on the success of Crane’s language.\textsuperscript{145} The few scholars that have focused on Crane’s artistic language have done so primarily through the lens of his paintings. While Smith argues that Crane did develop a public language with his art that could be understood by all who encountered it, he states that only a small audience who visited exhibitions would have the chance to view this language. This is because Smith believes these symbols only appeared in Crane’s paintings.\textsuperscript{146} O’Neill, on the other hand, discusses at great length how themes that interested the artist were not confined to single mediums, but, rather, reveal themselves across Crane’s oeuvre, even in

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{Smith2001} Smith argues that Crane’s visual language was only in his paintings and would therefore be available to small select audience, Smith \textit{Walter Crane 1845-1915: Artist, Designer, and Socialist}, 17; However, Dölvers, Korda, and O’Neill, have all begun to engage critically with Crane’s illustrated books, as possible channels for political expression.
\end{thebibliography}
places one would not expect them to be.\textsuperscript{147} While O’Neill focuses predominately on
Crane’s paintings, she regularly draws on examples from Crane’s published and
unpublished works as examples for the complete integration of iconography in Crane’s
art.\textsuperscript{148}

Yet, while the pervasiveness of Crane’s emblems have been debated, what scholars
seem to agree on is the importance of nature and classical mythology as sources of
inspiration for many his symbols.\textsuperscript{149} Nature could be found in the mythology that had
been passed down through the ages, but could also be found in religion, and was a topic
of scientific discussion during this era. As Crane writes in his \textit{The Claims of Decorative
Art} (1892):

The ancient religions of the world were nothing but figurative systems [,] personifications and symbols of the forces of nature, varying in different
countries as they were gradually evolved from some perhaps common primitive
type, or grew naturally out of the independent imaginings of the human mind;
certainly all have elements in common, and varieties of the same conceptions
appear again and again, through endless modifications and developments, as the
same plants vary in different soils, and under different conditions.\textsuperscript{150}

Not only did nature provide Crane a framework through which to discuss aesthetics and
socialism, but objects in nature also allowed Crane to combine the morals and lessons
from Christian and pagan stories with scientific ideas on evolution for a Victorian

\textsuperscript{147} \textit{At and Labour’s Cause is One} is dedicated to showing how Socialism appeared across mediums in
Crane’s work in the shape of his interest and interaction with Manchester. O’Neill \textit{Walter Crane: The Arts
and Crafts, Painting, and Politics, 1875-1890}, tracks motifs throughout his works, focusing on the
reoccurring images and plots that appear throughout Crane’s oeuvre, Morna O’Neill ”A Political Theory of
Decoration, 1901-1910,” 287-311.

\textsuperscript{148} An example would be the sphinx discussed in the introduction of this thesis.


\textsuperscript{150} Crane, \textit{The Claims of Decorative Art}, 24.
audience. He grafted new ideas with accepted imagery in order to increase public awareness of socialist ideals.\(^{151}\) By combining elements from a variety of sources, Crane was able to formulate his own controversial and, at times, radical ideas on socialism and embedded them in stories that were already popular to ensure the continuation of his career.\(^ {152}\) It is through symbols influenced by nature, myth, and religion that Crane best communicates the prospects of political change, and *Queen Summer* is one of the many products that expands upon this overarching interest in Crane’s work, while incorporating many of his established socialist characters.

The main characters in *Queen Summer* are anthropomorphized roses and lilies who are battling for the favour of the Queen of Summer. The two factions of flowers are emblems of two forms of art: the lily represents fine art, such as painting that is championed by the Royal Academy, and the rose represents the Arts and Crafts, championed by Crane and seen as lesser art by Royal Academicians.\(^{153}\) If we take this to be true, and Chapter Two will demonstrate its validity, then the underlying narrative of *Queen Summer* would be that the separation of the artist and the craftsman, of fine art and craft, is causing undue strife in British art when the two are actually one and the same. In a socialist society there would be no division, leading to a renaissance of beauty in art. This renaissance would be made possible through the artistic freedom that socialism provided, and this freedom is represented in the form of the angel of socialism.

The angel became an important emblem for Crane, as both a symbol of hope and a


\(^{152}\) O’Neill, *Art and Labour’s Cause is One: Walter Crane and Manchester, 1880-1915*, 91. These figures would sometimes be slightly varied to fit the circumstances of the art but still recognizable. This is partly due to Crane voluntarily creating many different forms of memorabilia for the socialist movement, whether he was connected to a particular group or not, but also due to the fact that Crane, who worked in such a wide variety of mediums, had to alter certain figures based on what context they were appearing in.

\(^{153}\) A much more detailed explanation of this will be discussed in Chapter Two.
symbol of despair, depending on how he depicted it. When it was depicted with its feathered wings and blazing torch it represented freedom, and when it was depicted with the wings of a bat, it embodied despondency; these would eventually become the personifications of socialism and capitalism in Crane’s work and they both appear in Queen Summer.\textsuperscript{154} First appearing in 1885, Crane’s angel of freedom became cemented in his iconography during the summer of this year when it was featured in two of his most prominent works: Freedom (1885), an oil painting that was exhibited at the Grosvenor Gallery, and The Capitalist Vampire (1885), which was Crane’s debut piece as a political cartoonist.\textsuperscript{155} The two angels represent freedom—artistic, political, economic—or lack thereof, in society and play an interesting part in Queen Summer and as a unifying motif throughout his oeuvre.

Freedom and The Capitalist Vampire feature another emblem—the supine figure of the captive labourer—that would become central to Crane’s repertoire of emblems and suffuse many of his political and decorative works. These figures would become cornerstones to a pervasive visual culture of socialism that Crane circulated across mediums in order to unify the narratives of his paintings, illustrations, political designs, and wallpapers.\textsuperscript{156}

The angel appears sporadically throughout the narrative, at points where major events drive the plot forward. We first see an angel in Queen Summer on the first page of text where he sets the scene of the story. The hourglass and the rising sun—both emblems that were adopted by the socialist movement and represent the arrival and new day of

\textsuperscript{154} Brockington, "Rhyming Pictures: Walter Crane and the Universal Language of Art," 364.
\textsuperscript{156} O’Neill, Art and Labour's Cause is One: Walter Crane and Manchester, 1880-1915, 59.
socialism—immediately follow him on the next page. However one of the more interesting depictions of the angel appears on page six of the book, where blowing flower petals surround the angel (fig. 20). What makes this image particularly provocative is the text that accompanies it and the following page. The text reads: “And as the winds about them played, and shook the flowers or disarrayed, a whispered word among them goes of how the Lily flouts the Rose.” The angel of socialism is bolstering the winds of change that are shaking the flower denizens to their roots, as murmurs of discord between the lilies and the roses, the high and low arts, sweeps through the kingdom and rattles the status-quo.

The discord erupts into a confrontation and page twenty-three shows the fate of the two champions, locked in a struggle on the ground their weapons interlocked into a cross, trapping the combatants beneath their combined weight (fig. 21). The cross is a symbol that appears rarely in Crane’s work, as he was an agnostic with no strong religious inclinations. Yet, while religion had been closely connected with art through the centuries, as churches were often the main patrons of artists, Crane depicts his figures being oppressed by the cross onto which they are connected. While the figures struggle to rise beneath the weight of religion and the traditions in art and patronage that come with it, the Queen of Summer, who is the personification of art and beauty that is featured prominently in Crane’s work, descends from her throne in order to liberate them with the socialist message of change and unity (fig. 22). The personification of beauty and the angel of socialism appear together on page twenty-seven walking in unison with Crane’s inspirational text, “life and love close linked together, and strong to bear times wintry

158 Crane, *Queen Summer*, 6-7.
weather;” a motto for Crane’s life and career, where his art and socialism were all intertwined, providing support for him when his career and personal life became difficult (fig. 23). 160

The image of beauty and socialism walking together is followed directly by another page dedicated to the angel of socialism, one holding a torch, another symbol of socialism that is shaped like an apple—the fruit of knowledge (fig. 24). 161 Here Crane once again combines (and perhaps offers a corrective for) socialist iconography with religious imagery, as the apple of Eve becomes combined with the torch of socialism, offering the knowledge and light through which to enter and appreciate socialist discourse. 162 However, Crane has altered the connotations of the fruit of knowledge in his depiction. Rather than the apple leading to the expulsion from the harmonious Garden of Eden, the apple, if accepted from the angel of socialism, now offers a way into the utopian garden of Crane’s envisioned socialist society. This offer of knowledge is followed by a sequence of images depicting harmony between artists, poets, musicians, families, and labourers, a goal that Crane believed would be achieved through the implementation of socialism (fig. 25-28 pages 31-33, 36). And in these images, the intermediality of Crane’s work and life is shown as the artist depicts himself painting in a peaceful garden in a costume that he would have made and don in 1897 for the celebrations of Queen

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160 Crane, *Queen Summer*, 27. Crane’s *Reminiscences* outlines in great detail the intermingling of personal and professional life. Through stores and letters Crane outlines what influential people he met during what years, and what artworks these meetings corresponded with, or influenced.


162 The orange tree appears quite frequently throughout Crane’s oeuvre and acquires a political meaning in his use of the fruit. Some contemporaries to Crane believed that the Tree of Knowledge in the Garden of Eden was actually an orange tree. Taking the apple of Christian mysticism and replacing it with the orange in his visual works, Crane took this figure of the orange tree and made it the agent of redemption. Placed on the cover of books, in wallpapers, paintings, prints, and illustrations the orange tree and its fruit exemplifies hope and the recovery of paradise. However, Crane would occasionally flip between the apple and the orange as his restorative image. O’Neill, *Art and Labour’s Cause is One: Walter Crane and Manchester, 1880-1915*, 85.
Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee (fig. 29).\textsuperscript{163}

Returning to the supine figure, it appears most prominently across two illustrations on pages thirty-four and thirty-five, where fallen Lily and Rose knights lay injured on the grass. However, while Freedom and The Capitalist Vampire both have the angel of socialism coming down to liberate or rescue them, the flower knights have their opposing counterparts assisting them in their recovery (fig. 30-31). This is significant for the plot of the story, and for the message that Crane is attempting to communicate, which is that under socialism the discord between craft and fine art would disappear and art would be unified and accessible by all. The cross is seen once more in this dual image, but its size and influence on the combatants has shrunk considerably, allowing the two streams of art to break free of discord and proceed to a future, filled with collaboration and harmony (fig. 31). Queen Summer is in fact a product of this collaboration between art forms and draws on influences from across mediums in Crane’s oeuvre.

The style of drawing and layout of Queen Summer differs noticeably from the design of the other flower books. While the books from this genre consist of outlined characters against relatively simple backgrounds, as seen in the poppy illustration from Flora’s Feast (fig. 32), the background setting of the illustrations in Queen Summer are much more defined, at times even resembling the floral patterns of wallpaper. While the decorative gothic-medieval subject matter of Crane’s own imagination is epitomized in the flower subjects of Queen Summer, the layout of image and text on the pages of this volume are of particular interest when compared with the political prints he was creating.

\textsuperscript{163} Compare figure twenty-nine with figure twenty-five, where the artist illustrated in Queen Summer is wearing the same outfit that Crane would later wear for a costume party, the only difference being the actual costume’s design features roses rather than fleur-de-lis. It is also important to note that the artist in the garden resembles the artist in appearance as well. Crane had featured a self-portrait in another work of this year as well, The Triumph of Labour (1891).
during this time.\textsuperscript{164} The way in which the images are framed and the text laid out is reminiscent of Crane’s many political prints, as seen in the \textit{New Era} (1894) (fig. 19), where he made a practice of containing his images in double borders with the text contained in scrolls. This he duplicated in the images of \textit{Queen Summer}.

While, at first glance, this may seem like an inconsequential design aspect to focus on, it is important to remember that Crane was very particular about and aware of his reputation as an artist and how he was represented to the public. He would not have produced a work of art, much less allowed it to be published under his name, without careful consideration of its design qualities and layout. This is exemplified by the artist’s anger when publishers used his name without his permission to promote one of Kate Greenaway’s books in 1878 and when he attempt to regain the rights to the printing blocks for his sixpenny Toy Books in the mid-1890’s.\textsuperscript{165} While \textit{Queen Summer} shares the same floral anthropomorphism and garden setting as the other ‘flower books’ it is the strong connection to “Merrie England” that sets it apart and connects it more to Crane’s socialist imagery. As I will discuss in Chapter Three, much of his socialist imagery and theories drew on this golden age of Merrie England for influence and inspiration.\textsuperscript{166}

While mythological and religious symbols were significant to Crane, for their long-established importance and ability to be easily recognized and understood by all, the

\textsuperscript{164} Spencer, \textit{Walter Crane}, 137-138. William Morris, who introduced him to structured politics in the early 1880’s, inspired Crane and their ideas on a decorative medieval England were similar. Understanding Morris’s ideas on the medieval and beauty are useful in understanding the early developments of Crane’s political art. For a more thorough examination of Morris and his involvement in socialism and the Arts and Crafts Movement see Hart, \textit{Arts and Crafts Objects}, (2010) and in particular pages 121-129 for a closer examination of the importance of the medieval to Morris.

\textsuperscript{165} Crane, \textit{An Artists Reminiscences}, 178-180. The correspondence between Crane and the publishers of John Lane & Co. are currently held in the Houghton Library and are discussed in Smith, \textit{Walter Crane 1845-1915: Artist, Designer, and Socialist}, 24.

largest influence on Crane’s emblems was nature. From the earliest discussions of his artistic influences, Crane consistently cited nature as his inspiration and believed that the beauty of nature held the answers to society’s problems, often likening the coming of socialism with the coming of spring. Many of his most popular works of art featured nature scenes or characters that drew heavily from nature. This is most apparent in his flower books, in which anthropomorphized flower characters drew delight from all audiences. Nevertheless, the flower characters in *Queen Summer* are of particular importance when placed alongside Crane’s socialist iconography and lectures on art. In the next chapter, the implications of Crane’s choice of the lily and the rose as protagonists in *Queen Summer* will be discussed because for Crane, nature was a true form of expression, and a flower could speak as loudly as any man if given the right platform.

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Chapter Two:
Lessons from Flora: The Political and Symbolic Importance of the Lily and the Rose to
Walter Crane’s *Queen Summer*

'And can all the flowers talk?'
'As well as you can,' said the Tiger-lily. 'And a great deal louder.'
Lewis Carroll, *Through the Looking Glass* (1871)

Flowers have occupied a central position in art as subjects and as symbols. Aptly put by Beverly Seaton, “It is clear that, whatever it meant to the thoughtful Victorian, a primrose was more than a primrose.” This sentiment certainly applies when looking at the works of Walter Crane, in which the image presented is much more than ink on a page, or paint on canvas. Crane envisioned a culture that trusted that viewers would understand the emblems implemented in artists’ work. This trust would be built by educators who would teach the interpretation of signs at an early age. Crane embraced this in his artwork: grafted onto the beautiful and decorative images were critiques on Victorian society, politics, and the British Empire.

In this chapter, I will examine the significance of the flowers Crane chose as his characters and the symbolism attached to them. I argue that Crane was not depicting the lily that was common in the gardens of England at this time. Rather, the artist was referencing the emblem of the *fleur-de-lys*; more specifically, the Florentine lily. This

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motif was appropriated by the artist because it symbolized a utopian artistic society that
he wished to encourage in England through socialism. Like fifteenth-century Italy,
Britain would also emerge from the dark age of capitalism and experience a rebirth.
Nevertheless, Crane wanted this renaissance to be English in character, so his other motif
was the rose. Not the large and showy hybrids from France and areas in Asia, but the
hardy, small budded, climbing perennial, that was pale in colour and native to the Isles.
Crane’s human-floral hybrids, therefore, represent two different societies; the “Rose
citizens,” who represent the medieval England of Crane’s imagination and the “Lily
citizens,” who represent the idyllic past of the Italian Renaissance—two ideal societies
that Crane believed exemplified the qualities that socialism would provide for modern
society.¹⁷³

As discussed in the previous chapter, Crane placed figures from his invented
picture-writing across his art in order to add political undertones to the narratives in his
work. While the pages of Queen Summer are littered with more overt socialist
iconography, I argue that the rose and lily characters are also emblems with strong
connections to Crane’s socialism; but, more importantly, they address another problem. I
argue that the lily and the rose are emblems that represent fine art and craft, and their
conflict represents the tension between high and low art that Crane faced during his
career. Through socialism, this tension would be reconciled.

As a necessary introduction I will first discuss the importance of flowers in
Victorian society and how, in parallel fashion to his re-rendering of ancient myths and
legends in his picture-writing, Crane recuperated the flower book, a popular form of
literature, for his socialist propaganda. Lauded by critics for the background landscapes

¹⁷³ Crane, Queen Summer, 14-15.
of his paintings and prints, Crane was able to transfer his exceptional skills in rendering vegetation to the foreground of his work by making the flower and the garden his subjects.\textsuperscript{174} For Crane, the flower book genre acted in a similar way to the fairy tale, which I will discuss in Chapter Three. However, Crane did not create traditional flower books and instead, chose to hybridize the concepts behind sentimental flower books. Unlike botany texts, these books were less sexualized and more moralized engagements with flowers and considered to be more appropriate for women readers. Sentimental flower books placed emotional or religious significance on flowers, rather than the educational or scientific importance that would more ‘properly’ appeal to men. With the exception of the work of Beverly Seaton, this area of flower book production is understudied in the discipline and would stand improvement, especially in how these books relate to gendered understandings of society, education, and art.\textsuperscript{175} Sentimental flower books, the language of flowers, and the narrative of fairy tales helped Crane to create his own floral literature that could infuse the political thrust currently absent from the traditional genres he borrowed.

Next, I will examine the histories of the lily and the rose in visual culture. These flowers have been used continuously to express different artistic, political, religious, and social agendas. The guilds of Renaissance Italy and Medieval England, about which Crane had a romanticized view, became the ideal structure for Crane’s vision of a new socialist art world. In this structure, decorative art would be placed on equal footing with painting, sculpture, and architecture. Furthermore, the idea of grafting, which was briefly

\textsuperscript{174} Konody, \textit{The Art of Walter Crane}, 4, 43-44, 120.

discussed in Chapter One in relation to Crane’s emblems, will be further examined to
demonstrate the artist’s interest in the political connotations of horticulture. This motif
was used by Crane to unite imagery and subject matter across the narratives of his books
and artistic practice. The tensions between fine art and craft, reconciled in Crane’s
utopian garden, will be explored further in Chapter Three, in which “happily-ever-after”
narratives of fairy tales are discussed in relation to what Crane hoped would be the
inevitability of socialism.

Part I: Flowers and Ideology

As Stephen Buchmann writes in the “Preface” to his 2015 *The Reason for
Flowers*: “Flowers represent our past along with our hope for a bright future,” a
sentiment that defines the use of flowers in art and literature during the Victorian era.176
As the nineteenth century dawned, the study of botany, which focused on the science and
cultivation of plants, was still a popular pastime in England.177 This preoccupation with
documenting plants began in the eighteenth century, stimulated in part by the specimens
brought home from Captain Cook’s voyages. Characterized by the urge to find and
classify plants, these activities resulted in the genre of illustrated botanical texts,
exemplified by Henry Phillip’s *Flora Historica* (1824). However, as the century
proceeded these science-focused books were superseded by literature that combined
smaller parts of botanical knowledge with pieces of horticultural-focused lore and legend,

176 Stephen L. Buchmann, *The Reason for Flowers: Their History, Culture, Biology, and How They Change
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such as Anna Pratt’s *Flowers and Their Associations* (1840).\(^{178}\) This genre of books was even further developed after the middle of the century when the language of flowers and florigraphy, the process of studying and encoding messages through the colour and placement of blooms in arrangements, became a popular pastime, ushering in the era of emotional, or sentimental, flowers.\(^{179}\)

First arriving in the 1820’s from the continent with the translated version of the Parisian book *Le Langage des Fleurs* (1819), by Madame Charlotte de Latour, the language of flowers did not initially have a high level of popularity in Britain.\(^{180}\) This may be due to the precedence of sexualized terms relating to botany, so the language of flowers was treated with a degree of caution upon its arrival.\(^{181}\) However, with the assistance of George Routledge (1812-1888), who published attractive books targeted for the gift market, they became a staple in English literature.\(^{182}\)

This shift in emphasis, from science and exploration, to entertainment and aesthetics coincided with the era of romantic flowers, understood to be devoid of scientific interest and, instead, filled with emotional attachment and meaning. These flowers began to make appearances in British art and literary markets.\(^{183}\) Flower poetry, an example of which is J. J. Grandville’s (1803-47) *Les Fleurs Animees* (1847), flower


\(^{182}\) Seaton, Beverly. *The Language of Flowers: A History*, 80-81. Mostly in the form of gift books, the genre of flower books took a decided turn away from the illustrated botanical texts that preceded them, focusing on moral and religious content instead of scientific content. Routledge published Kate Greenaway’s *The Language of Flowers* in 1884, and it has remained as one of the most recognizable and republished piece of florigraphy to this day.

folklore, like Reverend Hilderic Friend (1852-1940) *Flowers and Flower Lore* (1884), the language of flowers, as in *The Sentiment of Flowers; or, Language of Flora* (1836) by Robert Tyas (1811-1879), along with moral and religious flower works, such as Reverend Hugh Macmillan’s (1833-1903) *Bible Teachings in Nature* (1867), flooded the market, and the sentimental considerations of flowers became just as important as the scientific approach to flowers.  

Concerned with treating flora through an emotional lens, rather than the botanical and horticultural terms of the earlier century, sentimental flower books such as John Stevens Henslow’s, *Le Bouquet des Souvenirs; A Wreath of Friendship* (1840), John Kitto’s (1804-1854) *Thoughts Among Flowers* (1843) and Charlotte Elizabeth Tonna’s (1790-1846) *Chapters on Flowers* (1848) all use various forms of anthropomorphized flowers to illustrate emotional and religious situations. These forms of nineteenth century florilegia, an anthology of floral related subjects, recalled the prose of the Ancient Greco-Roman myths and epic poems, in which floral imagery was used to personify natural occurrences and flowers were used as the earthly touchstones between the pantheon of gods and humanity. It is this tradition of sentimental flowers that captured the interests the Pre-Raphaelite painters, like Burne-Jones and John Everett Millais (1829-1896), exemplified by their works *The Legend of Briar Rose* (1885-1890) and *Ophelia* (1852) (fig. 33-34) and would eventually engross Crane as well.

The popularity of floral subjects in books was supported by the growing interest and access to flowers by classes outside of Britain’s elite. With access to pleasure gardens, illustrated seed catalogues, the ability to buy and grow plants in your own home, and the design of plant furniture for domestic interiors, access to cut flowers for

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184 Seaton, "Considering the Lilies: Ruskin's "Proserpina" and Other Victorian Flower Books", 256-58.
decoration, and the increase of rose breeding competitions, the farming and middle
classes rose to prominence in the floral world.185 The act of rose breeding during this time
became something akin to craft; a pursuit that involved technique and attention to detail,
with a focus on line, shape, and colour—the formal qualities that interested members of
the Arts and Crafts and Aesthetic movements.

The Victorian middle-class had a profound interest in flowers. They were a driving
force behind the development of the horticultural press, which might include magazines,
farming guides, seed catalogues, and breeding guides. These publications featured a wide
range of coloured images. One example is a collection of advertisements for vegetable
seeds and fertilizer, which depict smartly attired vegetables, who appear to be delighted
at the prospect of being planted (fig. 35).186 The middle class soon became the primary
audience of such products, as they were for nature-focused periodicals.187 One argument
for why they were so invested in this material is that owning plants mimicked the
property owning and working that historically could only be pursued by the
aristocracy.188 But there are other reasons for their interest. Walter Crane believed that
garden cultivation allowed an expressive freedom, equivalent to other artistic mediums.
As Crane writes in his essay Art and Labour (1892) “the labourer is engaged in moving
say, earth or minerals from one place to another with his shovel. The painter is engaged

186 The connection between the different classes with fruits and vegetables was a common one during the
Victorian era. Trading cards depicting the different classes as various produce were printed and vegetal
fantasies, theatrical plays based around flowers, fruits, and vegetables often touched on class conflicts in
their narratives. Babil and Bijou, a play by Dionysius Boucicault, depicts the revolt of common garden
fruits and vegetables against the Court of Flowers and their insect allies. Michael Booth, Victorian
Spectacular Theatre, 1850-1910 (Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981), 78. This topic is also
discussed by Alison Syme, in A Touch of Blossom: John Singer Sargent and the Queer Flora of Fin-de-
187 Seaton, "Considering the Lilies: Ruskin's "Proserpina" and Other Victorian Flower Books", 256.
188 For a discussion on landscape tradition and middle station art consumption see Carol Gibson-Wood
"Picture Consumption in London at the End of the Seventeenth Century," The Art Bulletin (84, no. 3, 2002),
491-500.
in moving earth or minerals (in the form of colours) from one place to another – from his palette to his canvas with his brush.”

Gardening provided an action that collapsed the barriers between artistic and physical labour, allowing the middle-class citizen to participate in the aesthetic discourse of the garden. Furthermore, the middle-class led the way in rose breeding during the mid- to late-nineteenth century. As such, they became the prime target for publishers, a prime example being the cover for a seed catalogue from 1896, which compares the jobs of the gardener and painter, with the different coloured petals of roses placed on a palette as if they were blobs of paint ready to add pigment to the garden (fig. 36).

From the late nineteenth century to the early 1960’s, a generation of author/illustrators in the field of children’s literature depicted wildflowers as anthropomorphized flower people and fairies. Championed by Crane, these humanized garden characters were originally inspired by the increasing inclusion of flowers in English fairy tales, as they were translated from earlier French and German authors, and were later included in original narratives created by Crane and his colleagues. Crane’s tales, which were more distinctly political in their narratives than most, grew from practices in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when fables were used for social and political satire, before they became a genre associated most strongly with children's moral education. These fables and their contents would become important tools for

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189 Crane, “Art and Labour,” in Claims of Decorative Art, 50-61 (p. 51). The connection between artist and labourer is also discussed in O’Neill, “Walter Crane’s Floral Fantasy: The Garden in Arts and Crafts Politics.”
193 Beverly Seaton, “Towards a Historical Semiotics of Literary Flower Personification,” 692. Fables did not disappear from social or political commentary or satire, however with the improvements to printing
socialist activists as they searched for venues for propaganda that would reach a wider range of citizens.

As discussed in Chapter One, socialist parties throughout the 1880’s and 1890’s became increasingly popular with the middle-class as the political groups fought for the rights of labourers.\textsuperscript{194} In a conversation about art and socialism, Crane discussed his views on the relationship between the two, using flowers as his prime metaphor: “I love the splendid gorgeous orchid, but I am even more attracted by the simple charm of the flowers of the field.”\textsuperscript{195} According to Konody, the orchid represents the art produced and promoted by a market based on despotism and luxury, while field flowers represent an art more simple, more easily accessible to the masses, an art the appreciation of which does not require any special degree of culture, but which appeals to the child and to the grown-up person with equal power.”\textsuperscript{196}

While the rose and the lily were not field flowers they, nevertheless, became flowers claimed by the people during the mid-to-late nineteenth century as the visual culture of flora expanded throughout the classes.\textsuperscript{197}

Though traditional fairy tales and fables were immensely popular tools for conveying social and cultural issues, floral fables became one of the primary ways to express concerns to women and children, due to the perceived affinity that they had with flora.\textsuperscript{198} Fleeting beauty and youth, capacity for procreation, and delicacy in temperament

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\textsuperscript{195} Konody, \textit{The Art of Walter Crane}, 5.
\textsuperscript{196} Konody, \textit{The Art of Walter Crane}, 5.
\textsuperscript{197} Alison Syme discusses the way in which flowers permeated all levels of Victorian society in her book \textit{A Touch of Blossom: John Singer Sargent and the Queer Flora of Fin-de-siècle Art}.
\textsuperscript{198} Seaton, Beverly. \textit{The Language of Flowers: A History}, 53-57. Popular titles were \textit{Fables of Flora} by John Langhorne (1771) and \textit{Fables of Flowers for the Female Sex} by John Huddleston Wynne (1773).
\end{flushleft}
were equated to the condition of flowers. This tradition in Victorian visual culture may have its roots in seventeenth-century anatomical engravings of the female womb, which depicted the uterus as a blossoming flower and revealing the baby within. One of the best examples is Odoardo Fialetti’s engraving known as *Petal Venus* from 1631 (fig. 37). Evolving from multiple traditions, nineteenth-century floral fables attribute human qualities such as faithfulness or greed, to plants in order to provide lessons; but, like the abridged botanicals for women, the educational lessons in these children’s books had little scientific significance and focused, instead, on moral lessons or basic education like learning the alphabet.\(^{199}\) Crane, always concerned with education, would have been intrigued by this form of literature as a form of expression and as Crane grew up during the peak of this phenomenon, it is possible he would have remembered these books later in his career and recognized their potential for political intervention.

This line of inquiry into flower books has revealed two deficits in current critical literature; the first being the lack of research into the publication and dissemination of sentimental flower books, and the second being the absence of a study on Routledge’s contribution to the revolution of Victorian book publishing.\(^{200}\) While this thesis cannot adequately explore these topics, their exploration would provide a better understanding of the steady increase in popularity of flowers and floral paraphernalia across classes throughout the middle of the nineteenth century. Research in these areas would also shed light on how Crane, along with Greenaway and Cicely Mary Barker (1895-1973) after

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\(^{200}\) Routledge was responsible for revolutionizing flower books, fairy tales, and illustrated children’s literature during the mid-to-late nineteenth century. The publishing house was responsible for the collaboration between Edmund Evans and Crane, which resulted in the Toy Book series that launched Crane’s career. Along with Crane, Routledge was also responsible for publishing the works of Caldecott and Greenaway in the following decades to Crane’s initial success, cementing the triumvirate’s place in the history of the nursery. The influence of Routledge on the book culture of Victorian Britain is a study that this thesis does not have room to explore adequately, but one that needs more attention.
him, were able to use the flower genre to great success. Crane used the flower book genre to carry a message, as he had done with fairy tales. Like the enthusiasm for landscape painting and prints by the middling sort in the prior century, cultural importance of the flower books to the Victorian middle-class can be detected by their very popularity. Precisely why they were so popular has yet to be determined, but I suspect that flower books allowed for an illusion of mastery over land within the constraints of an urban environment while also engaging with an emerging preoccupation with emotionality.

Floral fables offered an opportunity to represent native British flowers as conduits for moral tales, creating deeper national attachment to the stories' plots.\textsuperscript{201} The importance of narrative to Crane, and the socialist movement in its entirety, will be discussed in greater detail in a the next chapter, but it is important to note here that the difference in narrative in Crane’s flower books and his toy books was not missed by critics of the time. Konody writes about the three “floral processions” produced by Crane, and states that when it comes to Crane’s children’s books, these have to be treated separately from the rest because their subject matter and style do not match his other books.\textsuperscript{202} However, as I have discussed in the previous chapter, the intermediality of Crane’s work allows for the comparison of the entirety of the artists’ oeuvre, as Crane treated all mediums as equals; a message that is important in understanding the underlying plot of \textit{Queen Summer}.

\textsuperscript{201} Landscapes and land in general were always important to the British identity, and Crane was using this accepted genre to his advantage by combining the love of land with the love of stories in his flower books.\textsuperscript{202} Konody, \textit{The Art of Walter Crane}, 32-34. When Konody was writing his biography on Crane in 1901, Crane had only produced three of his five flower books. It would have been interesting to see what Konody had to say of Crane’s later flower books, which contain a much stronger socialist connection in their imagery than his earlier ones do, as Konody’s writing does not favour Crane’s mixing of the artistic and the political.
The popularity of Crane’s children’s books with adults and children would have
offered him the opportunity to express more politically charged issues in his illustrations.
Since the subject of personified flowers had been so popular in literature for women and
children in the previous decades, it would make sense for Crane, who was always
cconcerned with adding to his collection of symbols, to adopt flowers into his own
iconography.

Part II: Flowers for all

Then will I raise aloft the milk-white rose,
With whose sweet smell the air shall be perfumed,
And in my standard bear the arms of York,
To grapple with the house of Lancaster;
And force perforce I’ll make him yield the crown,
Whose bookish rule hath pulled fair England down.203

Duke of York

Then will I raise aloft the milk-white rose,
With whose sweet smell the air shall be perfumed,
And in my standard bear the arms of York,
To grapple with the house of Lancaster;
And force perforce I’ll make him yield the crown,
Whose bookish rule hath pulled fair England down.203

Duke of York

The First Part of the Contention of the Two Famous Houses of York and Lancaster
William Shakespeare (1591)

The War of the Roses (1455-1485) was fought between the houses of Lancaster
and the York, two branches of the Plantagenet family, over the throne of England. Floral
standards were used by each house—white roses for the House of York and red roses for
the House of Lancaster—and renditions of the conflict were popular in both art and
literature. Shakespeare seized the metaphor of feuding flowers for two of his plays, The
First Part of the Contention of the Two Famous Houses of York and Lancaster (1591)
and The First Part of Henry the Sixth (1592), in order to foreshadow later conflicts in the
plot. The use of roses as representatives of political conflict in England in Shakespeare’s

203 William Shakespeare, Stephen Greenblatt, Walter Cohen, Jean E. Howard, Katharine Eisaman Maus,
and Andrew Gurr, “The First Part of the Contention of the Two Famous Houses of York and Lancaster (2
Henry VI)” in The Norton Shakespeare Histories, (2nd ed.; W. W. Norton, New York, NY, 2008), 1.1.253-
260, p135.
work is most prominent in *1 Henry VI* Act Two Scene Four, where the playwright constructed an entire scene around members and comrades of the York and Lancaster families antagonizing each other by picking the roses of the opposing faction from their bushes. The aggressive action of plucking the roses from the hedgerows acts as a catalyst for the start of the war.

There is a long history of constructing flowers to fit a particular need, and the political re-modeling and repurposing of flowers has been a common practice by many royal and religious institutions. In England the Tudor Rose is the benchmark example when discussing the creation of a political and heraldic symbol. Created after the War of the Roses, the Tudor Rose combined the roses of the House of York, with the House of Lancaster (fig. 38). By placing the white rose of York, inside the red rose of Lancaster, Henry VII stabilized his claim to the English throne, and the newly grafted Tudor rose, deployed repeatedly in royal propaganda, became a permanent political image that would

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205 The garden has occupied a significant position in English history as a tool for representing and critiquing the British Empire and homeland, and theft from a garden is a common narrative trope in both English art and literature. While the use of stealing plants from a garden as a plot device deserves more attention then this thesis can allow, its presence in fairy tales as an instigating action of conflict is of particular interest. A prime example is in Rapunzel when the cobbler steals radishes from the witches garden and in retribution for the theft the cobbler forfeits the life of his unborn daughter to the witch’s care; Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Grimm's Complete Fairy Tale*, with illustrations by Arthur Rackham, (New York: Barnes & Noble Inc. 2009) 88.
206 The construction of flowers is discussed by Jack Goody, *The Culture of Flowers*, (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), see also Potter, *The Rose: A True History*, for an in depth discussion on the history of the rose and how its’ popularity and meaning has fluctuated over time.
207 Ernst Lehner and Johanna Lehner, *Johanna. Folktale and Symbolism of Flowers, Plants, and Trees*, (New York: Tudor Publishing. 1960), 79. While neither side actually fought under the emblem of either rose during the war, the Lancastrian family that Henry VII was from did have a red rose as one of their heraldic signs. While the York’s did have a white rose in their heraldic repertoire, it was only indirectly connected to them. However the white boar was the York’s primary heraldic sign, which with some assistance from strategic propaganda work, could be connected to the white rose and assist in making the flower a proper emblem of the York house.
overshadow all other roses in the British Isles.\textsuperscript{208} While the English were cultivating their royal rose, the French had claimed their own imperial bloom with the fleur-de-lis.\textsuperscript{209} Much like the royal champions of the past, Crane would construct his own political blooms that merged past, present, and future into a cohesive political message for the socialist movement, exemplified in \textit{Queen Summer}.

The path to an ideal future is expressed in \textit{Queen Summer} through a collision of flowers. These flowers represent two different past societies: the first is the Elizabethan past of the rose knights, when the English Queen was a powerful patron of the arts and used art for her own political purposes. In the second, the lily knights represent the idealized past of the Renaissance and the Florentines, who re-created art. Combined, these flowers epitomized the ways in which Crane wanted the socialists to associate with art in modern society.\textsuperscript{210} Using the lily’s connections with Renaissance Florence and the rose’s association with Medieval England, Crane was able to represent the conflict between fine art and craft in Britain. Implicated in this discussion are the historical and religious connotations found within the language of flowers.

From the beginnings of floral narratives, the lily was understood to be “the milk and blood of ancient myth and legend [and conveyed] passion and fecundity in tales of life and death.”\textsuperscript{211} Believed to have been introduced to Britain by Roman soldiers, who stewed and ate the bulbs for medicinal purposes, the vivid whiteness of the lily, which came to be known as the Madonna lily, eventually became the symbol of the Virgin Mary.

\textsuperscript{208} Jennifer Potter, \textit{Seven Flowers and How They Shaped Our World}, (London: Atlantic Books, 2013), 155. Queen Elizabeth I in many of her portraits also used this political rose, however the Virgin Queen also appropriated a different rose into her personal symbolic repertoire, the Eglantine or sweet brier.


\textsuperscript{210} Potter, \textit{Seven Flowers and how they Shaped Our World}, 156.

throughout Christendom.\textsuperscript{212} Used in early Christian mosaics and frescos, the symbolic connection between the lily and the Virgin increased in the Middle Ages, and it became a feature of Annunciation scenes, often placed in the hands of archangel Gabriel, or in the hands of Mary, herself.\textsuperscript{213} The lily took on other symbolic meanings as the iconography of the Christian faith grew and expanded; most notably, the miracle of Christ’s resurrection.\textsuperscript{214}

This association with resurrection and “surmounting earthly effects,” or the overcoming the naturally sinful condition of humanity, is important to remember when considering the lilies represented in \textit{Queen Summer}.\textsuperscript{215} The female figures are often shown in costumes that recall nun’s habits and in the book they perform acts of charity that restore characters who have succumbed to their enemies. For example, on page thirty-five, two maiden lilies administer medicine, from the restorative lily bloom, to a fallen rose knight. The crossed swords in the foreground, furthermore, reference Christ’s sacrifice, but also suggest his resurrection (fig. 31). Resurrection is also a key component of the rose iconography in \textit{Queen Summer}.

By the end of the thirteenth century, the rose had taken over the lily in popularity in religious iconography, and had itself become a prominent symbol of Christ’s resurrection.\textsuperscript{216} Although it is not clear why this change occurred, the rose was widely admired in antiquity. For example, the Romans used roses as representations of the

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{213} Marina Heilmeyer, \textit{The Language of Flowers: Symbols and Myths}, (Munich: New York: Prestel, 2001), 50, and Potter, \textit{Seven Flowers and How They Shaped Our World}, 47.
\item \textsuperscript{214} Lehner, \textit{Folklore and Symbolism of Flowers Plants and Trees}, 33.
\item \textsuperscript{215} Heilmeyer, \textit{The Language of Flowers}, 50.
\item \textsuperscript{216} Buchmann, \textit{The Reason for Flowers}, 115, 241-242.
\end{itemize}
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deities of love.\textsuperscript{217} Woven into garlands, placed in elaborate arrangements, painted onto ceilings, or the petals strewn across every available surface, the rose, with its luscious scent and vibrant colour, became a staple decoration of the Roman elite.\textsuperscript{218} Religious groups initially scorned the rose, which had become synonymous with extravagance and decadence during the Roman empire.\textsuperscript{219} It was not until the eighth century that the rose, along with other flowers, began to regain its importance in Christian lands after Charlemagne (c. 747-814). During the Crusades, Charlemagne witnessed the beauty of the gardens in Moorish Spain and began a tradition of planting roses in monasteries across his empire, both for their medicinal and aesthetic values.\textsuperscript{220}

After it was stripped of its pagan significance, the rose, along with the lily and the iris, became the flowers of the Virgin Mary, and appeared in illuminated manuscripts, paintings, mosaics and stained glass.\textsuperscript{221} They became fixed in religious iconography from the Middle Ages onwards. As the flowers of resurrection they would have been intriguing to Crane, who used religious icons in his work to great effect despite the fact that was not a religious man. Crane believed that the two best periods in artistic production were the Renaissance, during which there were considerable numbers of commissions for public paintings, and Medieval England, when there was a strong emphasis on craft.\textsuperscript{222} Both of

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\item Potter, \textit{Seven Flowers and How they Shaped our World}, 135.
\item Goody, \textit{The Culture of Flowers}, 73-96. The first part of chapter three, “The Decline of Flower Culture in Europe” in Goody’s \textit{The Culture of Flowers}, discusses the different type of flower paraphernalia that the Roman’s used and how it changed after the fall of the empire in regards to Christian and Catholic religious practices.
\item Goody, \textit{The Culture of Flowers}, 89.
\item Crane, \textit{Line and Form}, 194; Crane, \textit{The Bases of Design}, 34-36 and 362-363, he discusses the fraternity of the guilds, along with the difference in industrial and manual productions of art objects; \textit{Of the Decorative Illustration of Books Old and New}, 125-126, discusses the beauty and success of Renaissance books and designers.
\end{thebibliography}
these time periods had extensive guild systems that benefited artist and art production and these eras are what Crane wanted to resurrect in his own time.

In *Queen Summer*, an important part of Crane’s lily faction is their symbol, a fleur-de-lis emblazoned on their armour, horses, and weapons. However, the iconography of the fleur-de-lis has a muddled history. Commonly understood to be a stylized lily, the fleur-de-lis actually derives from an iris, which was named after the Greco-Roman goddess, who acted as a messenger for the gods.\(^\text{223}\) It was a political symbol and has been traced to the Frankish conqueror, Clovis I (c. 466-511), who appropriated the fleur-de-lis during his fifth-century campaign against the Visigoths.\(^\text{224}\) The pointed leaves and petals that some varieties of irises feature, have been used in association with military activity as the shape recalls knives and swords. Known as “Schwertlilie” in German, which translates to sword lily, the military connotation of the iris can be traced as far back as Ancient Greece and came to prominence as a heraldic ornament under the Frankish Kingdom.\(^\text{225}\) The iris is known throughout flower folklore as a symbol of power, taking its place in depictions of rulers, on the sceptres of kings, and even being placed upon the brow of the Egyptian sphinx.\(^\text{226}\) Like the lily and the rose, the iris evolved into a potent religious symbol during the Middle Ages, when it would become associated with the Annunciation, and the Virgin Mary more generally.\(^\text{227}\) This connection between the lily and the iris through the fleur-de-lis is one that is well documented. Crane would have been aware of this iconographical history from his travels in Florence in 1890-91, the


\(^{225}\) Heilmeyer, *The Language of Flowers*, 34.

\(^{226}\) Lehner, *Folklore and Symbolism of Flowers, Plants and Trees*, 64.

\(^{227}\) Willes, *Pick of the Bunch*, 57.
year before *Queen Summer* was released.\textsuperscript{228} Crane may have even begun illustrating *Queen Summer* on this trip, as he had in the past sent works home to London while abroad. The best example of this is when he was working on *Mother Hubbard* with Edmund Evans and, while on his honeymoon in Italy, sent drawings back to England to be printed.\textsuperscript{229} However, the iris would not lose the masculine connotation that it had gained in the hands of the Franks, and later the monarchs of France, and the fleur-de-lis’ feminine (Virgin Mary) and this gender versatility would become vital to Crane’s floral iconography in *Queen Summer*.

Yet, the iris was also adopted by another prominent civilization, not to signify victory and conquest, but to emphasize faith, authority, and resurrection.\textsuperscript{230} The Florentine Lily, which is also (vexingly) based, not on lilies, but on the irises that grow around the city, has been a recognizable symbol of Florence since around the eleventh or twelfth century after the cities knights’ participation in the first Crusade.\textsuperscript{231} This version of the fleur-de-lis is slightly different in form than the one used by the Bourbon monarchy. Although the shape is similar, the Florentine lily has two additional stamens protruding from the petals. It is this version of the fleur-de-lis that can be seen emblazoned on a banner, which hangs over the Queen of Summer’s throne (fig. 39).

On first glance, and based on the iconographical traditions of Britain and France, one could argue that *Queen Summer*’s plot recalls the long-standing conflict between

\textsuperscript{228} Crane, *Reminiscences*, 351-352.

\textsuperscript{229} Crane, *Reminiscences*, 148.

\textsuperscript{230} Heilmeyer, *The Language of Flowers*, 34.

these countries. However, in deploying the Florentine lily, Crane makes a significant departure, which takes us out of the past and into the future. I argue that Crane deployed the symbol of the city of Florence because of the city’s association with the birth of the Renaissance. Crane believed that socialism would stimulate a renaissance in British art and culture.\textsuperscript{232} This connection between the fleur-de-lis and the city of Florence would have been vitally important to Crane in his explorations of the place of art in socialism.

The artist further underscores this message by having \textit{Queen Summer} holding a peacock fan (fig. 40). The peacock, both the bird and its tail feathers, became a symbol of the Aesthetic movement, in which Crane was heavily involved. However, in early Christian traditions the peacock also symbolizes eternal life and resurrection; which, as discussed, was also expressed by both the lily and the rose at varying points in their histories.\textsuperscript{233} In fact, Crane was known to have used the symbol of the peacock to reference resurrection in quite a few of his works, including his multiple treatments of \textit{Sleeping Beauty} (fig. 41, 42, 43-a, 43-b), which he understood to be the ideal fairy tale to express the awakening of art through socialism.\textsuperscript{234} Crane’s connection between a utopian vision of a future socialist Britain and a romanticized image of Renaissance Florence is expressed through the language of flowers.

While the lily was the embodiment of high art of the Renaissance in \textit{Queen Summer}, the rose was the epitome of Medieval England craft and design. The rose had manifold meanings in art at the close of the nineteenth century, when the debate between natural and hybrid blooms was at the forefront of many horticulturists’ minds. The

\textsuperscript{232} Reiss, \textit{Lily}, 120.
\textsuperscript{233} O’Neill, \textit{Walter Crane: The Arts and Crafts, Painting, and Politics, 1875-1890}, 156.
Victorians were in the midst of “rose mania” during most of Walter Crane’s career.\textsuperscript{235} During the mid- to late-nineteenth century, rose breeding and cultivation had reached new heights with the introduction of many new foreign breeds of roses into Britain. The flower that stood as the symbol of England was undergoing a transformation of identity and ownership, with all class levels involved in the increasing need to own the latest breeds of rose.\textsuperscript{236}

In the last decades of the century, rose parties and exhibitions became frequent social functions, featuring breeders who were interested in perfecting the rose and bringing more spectacular varieties to the British public.\textsuperscript{237} They crossbred old and new varieties of roses and created hybrids that glorified the beauty of the flower. In consequence to this desire to improve upon nature, the British populace began to overlook the beauty of the hardy, native blooms that acted as the support for their experiments. By the end of the nineteenth century there were more than 3,000 new varieties of roses, while native varieties became relatively scarce.\textsuperscript{238} Crane pre-empted the resurgence in the first decade of the twentieth century of what could be called the renaissance of the natural varieties, when gardeners began searching in graveyards and isolated locales for the lost “old roses.”\textsuperscript{239}

The wild roses found in Britain hardly resemble the carefully constructed beauties popular in flower exhibitions of the Victorian era. Small in size, consisting of five petals on average, with colours ranging from white to pink, the most common wild rose breed in

\textsuperscript{235} Potter, \textit{The Rose: A True History}, 363.
\textsuperscript{236} Potter, \textit{The Rose: A True History}, 363.
\textsuperscript{237} Potter, \textit{Seven Flowers, and How They Shaped Our World}, 140-141.
\textsuperscript{238} Wiles, \textit{Pick of the Bunch}, 136. According to Wiles, the amount of natural rose varieties dropped from 292 different types to 51 between 1840-1865.
\textsuperscript{239} Wiles, \textit{Pick of the Bunch}, 138-139.
Britain is the dog rose (fig. 44). Both native blooms have exposed stamens and pistils that range from yellow to gold in colour, and are climbing plants that have small hooked thorns on their vines. While not as ostentatious as the roses of the *Rosa Gallica* family, the dog rose, in particular, had a very important part to play in the Victorian rose rush (fig. 45).

The dog rose was used extensively for grafting in the nineteenth century due to its hardiness and vigour. Grafting is a horticultural process that involves transplanting a more delicate blossom or plant (scion) onto a resilient root plant (stock) that will support the more delicate component, and allow the new hybrid plant to thrive (fig. 46). This process is mimicked in Crane’s rendition of the rose throughout *Queen Summer*, where the knights, ladies, and background roses are all composites of different roses circulating in England at this time. The grafting process is an ideal metaphor for Crane’s ideas about a socialist future: he wanted to improve Britain, and British art, by introducing morals and examples from past ideal societies into modern culture so that both would grow and intertwine, becoming stronger together over time. Therefore, the depiction of a wild English rose would have been associated with Britain's past, while the new blossom could serve as a representation of an impending change. Similarly the revolutionists can be seen as a way to lift a society from a stagnant past and keep them progressing towards the future.

The importance of this connection to a native English rose rather than a newly bred variety is connected to the growing history of the plant. The rose has a remarkable

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ability to grow in hostile areas, and the tenacity of this species has enabled it to survive for thousands of years. However, it is the natural wild versions of these flowers that are best-suited to survival in the northern hemisphere, not the types that are created in greenhouses, and whose survival in Victorian England, relied on being successfully grafted onto more resilient versions of its species. This ability to cling to life and adapt would have been immensely intriguing to Crane as a socialist, whose own political views were facing pressure from the English society in which they were trying to take root and grow. By connecting his main rose figure with that of a common English plant, which thrived throughout the centuries, I argue that he is seizing the metaphor of grafting to argue that that socialism will also flourish in the English political and social landscapes, once it has the chance to take root.

At the point of the narrative when the legions of lilies and roses clash, the dog rose is featured predominately (fig. 47). The roses progress from pale pink, almost white, in colour to darker pinks and reds as they advance toward the point of impact with the lily legion. The lead rose knight, who is portrayed closest to the reader, is situated on a black horse decorated with flowers that resemble the dog rose and the sweet brier, the variation of the flower that represented Queen Elizabeth I. The knight is much darker in colour than the rose knights that surround and precede him in the story, and his armour has changed, showing a more layered, decorative quality that is similar to the new breeds of flowers being bred in England at this time. The rose affixed to his hip has even begun to transform. In previous iterations, it was a simple, stylized version of the dog rose in form if not in colour, but at this point in the story, it has taken on more elaborate form (fig. 48).

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242 Potter, *Seven Flowers and How They Shaped Our World*, 134.
243 Potter, *Seven Flowers and How They Shaped Our World*, 156.
Meanwhile, in this confrontation, the lead lily knight brandishes a shield emblazoned with the Florentine lily, his white steed decorated in flowing fleur-de-lis, with the rest of the knights attired in a similar manner (fig. 49).

This particular scene, and these particular knights, show the qualities that socialists were attempting to provide to the greater Victorian public; a view of an idealized or constructed past in order to comment on the present. However, in his attempt to incorporate nature and the fairy tale into his social commentary, Crane takes this juxtaposition of idyllic past and tumultuous present and adds another dimension; the prospect of an ideal future. O’Neill best describes this goal in Crane’s works when she states:

Crane [subverts] the meanings of [the figures] traditional mythological attributes and [claims] them for his own ends…the images [by] Crane however offer something else: a regeneration of the fragile and false divides between…an idealized past and an ideal future. They represent Terry Eagleton’s ‘twilight between two worlds’ a third space that expresses both rupture and continuity between the present and the future

Crane depicts this moment of rupture and continuity through floral symbolism in the clash of the lily and the rose knights. This moment of a potential collision occurs twice in the book: first with the initial joust of the lily and rose champions, and then again when the legions of lily and rose knights retaliate to defend their fallen leaders (fig. 50 and fig. 47). Both of these conflicts encompass two pages, the images bleeding across the margins of the folio. Crane depicts the two opposing forces seconds from colliding with each

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other, the weapons mere inches from making contact, and one even jumps across the spine of the book into its opponent’s pictorial realm. This action then collapses the barriers separating the idyllic past and future through a present physical action, and makes the realization of this future possible.246

This is where other scholars leave this confrontation. The next layer of analysis that I offer is the inclusion of the tension between craft and fine art. While the actual collision is never shown, there is a suggestion that the rose factions were the aggressors, crossing the centre part of the book and forcing their way into the realm of the lilies. This is reflective of Crane’s own beliefs and writings on the subject of the importance of craft to British art. In Crane’s *The Claims of Decorative Art*, he wrote at length about the cooperation and unity of art and craft in the past and laments the damage that commercial pressure has done in separating craftsmen from their work and from each other.247 This is further underlined by his grandson’s eulogizing speeches about his grandfather’s frustration with being excluded from high art institutions. But roses are ubiquitous in Crane’s “craft” objects, including the *Briar Rose* cabinet from 1907 and his *Sleeping Beauty* wallpapers, along with his book projects. Significantly, roses are also shown similarly infiltrating his high art painting, like *The Fate of Persephone*, in which the figure of capitalism is pictured abducting Persephone, who is here deployed as a

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246 This idea of a socialist future seen through an action is explored in many of Crane’s other work, particularly that of his *Briar Rose* cabinet from 1905, which involves the viewer having to physically open the cabinet doors in order to see the results of socialism in this imagined scene. This is most likely why Crane created his socialist messages in book or pamphlet form, as it required the physical action of the viewer or reader, which mimics the physical action of social change being carried out by socialist activists.

representative of high art. When fine art is stolen by Hades (capitalism), what remains will be the wild roses and the “flowers of the field.”

The aftermath of this scene in Queen Summer has the two flower-men entwined in the struggle for victory (fig. 21). It is here that Crane brings in the religious symbolism connected with both the lily and the rose. The two knights struggle, wrapped around their fallen, crossed weapons, unable to disengage without the cooperation of their opponent. It is only after the Queen, the emblem of socialism, has risen and actively entered the field of battle that the two flowers are able to overcome their differences and rise together to create an utopian world. Crane visualizes this world throughout the next section of his book, with men and women working together, and the painter and the poet both finding joy and inspiration in this new society.

As has been argued by O’Neill and others, Crane used allegory as a tool for expressing his political opinions throughout his works, and tended to focus on the human figure as his main subject. The human figure as allegorical agent was seized upon because, as O’Neill states, “the natural tendency of the human mind...gives figurative art its importance.” Like the urge in the sentimental flower books to use anthropomorphized figures to make nature relatable, Crane uses the intense interest in the human figure as a means for communication. This anthropomorphizing of the flowers also connects Crane’s tale to the Victorian interests in fairies and natural history.

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249 This cross is recreated in a smaller form on a later page, which incorporates the assistance of the female lilies in restoring a rose knight.
250 Crane’s Queen Summer closely resembles his renditions of Britannia. The reference to any “Queen” in visual culture during the Victorian era would likely invoke the idea or image of Queen Victoria, and Crane used this to his advantage in his iconography. Rendering his female heroines in the guise of a successful and beloved English Queen allowed Crane to interlace radical and innovative political ideas with contemporary figures and events, much the same way he did with historical material.
However, what this chapter has revealed is that the decorative elements of his work are also intensely rich with critique.

Crane began his career as a children’s book illustrator, and continued on as one throughout his life. As one of the most successful illustrators of his time, Crane understood what designs would appeal to his audience, as well as what subjects would draw the public to his works. Due to his own success in the field, Crane was well aware of how “in Victorian art fairies [merged] within the natural world…often [reflecting] the Victorians' own dreams of better worlds” and used this to his advantage when designing his socialist, and personal book works. In Victorian culture “fairies and fairy tales were strongly connected to…nostalgia” an emotion that was “conjured up at the turn of the century” for many Victorians, who looked backwards in time for inspiration, or as a means to escape the impending turn of the century.

The Victorians had an intriguing relationship with time, which was expressed throughout their literary and artistic endeavours. While many social and political groups were focused on looking forward to the beginning of a new century, the majority of people were focused on the past, reminiscing about the mystical, and the medieval. Queen Summer is an important work of art that expresses Victorian anxieties surrounding time—it presents an argument for a future that relies entirely on motifs, symbols, and, most importantly, skills from the past. Fairy tales, which are considered in the next chapter, become for Crane conduits for what Marx argued was the inevitability of

252 Spencer, Walter Crane, 76-100.
253 Talairach-Vielmas, Fairy Tales, Natural History, and Victorian Culture, 9.
254 Talairach-Vielmas, Fairy Tales, Natural History, and Victorian Culture, 1-6.
255 Margaret Deming, Wish-landsapes and Garden Cities: They myth of the garden in allegories of English reform 1880 to 1920, (Unpublished doctoral thesis. Harvard University, Cambridge, MA. 2001), 97. This concept of reminiscence and nostalgia is discussed at length through Deming’s work as she argues that the images of gardens found in nineteenth century visual culture were often based more on myth than reality.
revolution. But, pragmatic to the last, Crane was convinced of a longer term socio-political project and the quests, common in fairy tale narratives, were conducive to his ideas about education and political evolution, as opposed to revolution.

The illustrations by Crane throughout *Queen Summer* are dependent on histories and knowledge constructed hundreds of years before their creation. The lily and the rose as floral symbols can be traced back centuries, and gained new meanings that were carried across time and place and, ultimately, drawn on by Walter Crane in his rendition of the flowers for the British socialist movement. By embedding the accolades of socialism into the fantastic, Crane is providing an inviting yet comprehensible picture of what socialism offers—a revival in British art and beauty that is accessible to, and accepting of, all levels of society.
Chapter Three: Constructed Pasts and Fantastical Futures: The importance of fairy-tale narratives to Crane’s representation of a socialist utopia

Fairy tales, fables, myths, and legends were essential to the art of Walter Crane, and their narratives provided the basis for some of his most successful works of art. This success was noticed in Crane’s own lifetime, and according to Konody was partially due to the fact that,

The whole world of [Crane’s] imagination is filled with chivalrous knights in armour, heroes in quest of strife and adventure for the glory or protection of virtuous dames, though in later life he invested such representations with some unmistakable allegorical significance and gave them some direct bearing on some question or other of the day.\(^{256}\)

From the early Toy Books, which illustrated tales from Hans Christian Andersen (1805-1875), Charles Perrault (1628-1703), and the Brothers Grimm (Jacob 1785–1863; and Wilhelm 1786–1859), to his renditions of Greco-Roman myths in his paintings, and his fascination with the tale of *Sleeping Beauty*, Crane relied heavily on his imagination to make these narratives come to life in both his art and politics. However, as many of his paintings were sold to dealers on the continent and lost over time, it is Crane’s illustrations of fairy tales that have survived and cemented his name in art and literary history.\(^{257}\) As discussed earlier, Crane’s reputation as an illustrator for the nursery has, at times, lessened or overshadowed the impact of the political content contained in his art; an oversight this thesis has begun to address. I argue that by viewing Crane’s fairy tales

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\(^{257}\) O’Neill, *Walter Crane: The Arts and Crafts, Painting, and Politics, 1875-1890*, 236. Ernst Seeger bought most of Crane’s paintings and brought them to Germany.
in light of his intermedial treatment of socialism, we can recuperate the pragmatic socialism championed by Crane.

In this chapter, I argue that narrative was an element of design used much like line, form, and colour in Crane’s work. Narrative was the thread that stitched Crane’s art together across his oeuvre. In order to demonstrate this I will first explore the fairy tale as a genre and demonstrate why these narratives would appeal to Crane, and the socialist movement, as sources for visual propaganda. In this first section, I will examine the quest narrative—the journey of a hero to achieve his ‘happily-ever-after,’ and how these often-arduous adventures lead to a change in fortune for the protagonist. Just as the protagonists in many fairy tales face villains and surmount ominous obstacles to change their fortunes, so Crane faced his own challenges to change capitalism and the Royal Academy. Yet, Crane believed that, much like in a fairy tale, there would be a happy ending and when the dragon of capitalism was destroyed, the evolution of a socialist Britain would begin. This sentiment can be seen in many of Crane’s works, most notably England’s Emblem (1895), in which the legend of St. George slaying the dragon, an emblematic figure in England since the fifteenth century, is transformed into a socialist tale of triumph (fig. 51).258 As such, the quest fairy tale became a visual and literary device that could be appropriated by propagandists who wished to enact change in their society.

Within this section, the concept of Karl Marx’s (1818-1883) theories of the inevitability of revolution will be discussed as a parallel to the ‘happily-ever-after’ ending

of a fairy tale.\textsuperscript{259} According to Marx, socialism would emerge when the workers, who had been exploited by the upper classes, reclaimed their labour and began participating more actively in society.\textsuperscript{260} Ludwig von Mises (1881-1973) was a theoretical economist, who concentrated on praxeology, or the study of human choice and action, put it in human terms when he stated, “socialism will come when the material conditions for its appearance have matured in the womb of capitalist society.”\textsuperscript{261} Crane also believed that through active participation, labourers would realize their place in society and join the political movement. However, Crane departs from Marx in how utopia is envisioned. It was Crane’s conviction that labourers would take their cues from the artists, who Crane believed were best suited for relaying significant messages about society.\textsuperscript{262} This is why Crane was not conflicted by the industrial methods he used in his work and actively visualized an utopian society in print, in wallpaper as well as in paint. Through his participation in rallies, his lectures on socialism and through his art, he presented a garden, a metaphor for peace and harmony under socialism.

This garden is taken up in the next section, which I will examine in relation to \textit{Sleeping Beauty}, a fairy tale that captivated Crane for over thirty years. By probing Crane’s treatments of this classic fairy tale, which he revisited several times over his career, with one that the artist penned and pictured himself, the true effect of narrative as political agent will be demonstrated. Quest narratives, Marxist theory, garden motifs and the awakening of a slumbering entity, find their expression in Crane’s original

\textsuperscript{259} A full discussion of Marx’s theories and their impact on Crane and the British socialists is beyond the scope of this thesis, but I will touch on aspects of the German philosopher’s theories in relation to Crane’s socialist propaganda.
\textsuperscript{262} Crane, \textit{Reminiscences}, 452; Crane, \textit{Bases of Design}, 238.
contribution to the tradition of the fairy tale—Queen Summer. In this final section, I will show that the narrative of Queen Summer was driven by the desire for profound, socio-political and artistic change.

**Part I: Quest Narrative and Marx**

Crane was fascinated by fairy tales; they provided him a scope for his imagination, a venue for the fantastical that history painting (and the institutions that promoted history painting) did not allow, and they were primed for allegorical significance. The transition from an oral tradition into visual and written traditions, would have appealed to Crane’s sense of history. They could circumvent reality and entertain, while simultaneously acting as moralizing or didactic agents. The duality of education and entertainment, paired with the malleability and versatility of the tales, has contributed to the longevity of their popularity.  

Fairy tales have always been reworked to fit contemporary needs, and artists and authors have demonstrated a tendency to repurpose fairy-tale themes, learned in their own childhoods, in order to elucidate personal and public issues. This reprocessing of issues through a fantastical lens is particularly apparent in artistic and literary works of the Victorian era, when the obsession with fairies and fairy tales led to a vast consumer market for these products.

At mid-century, there was a marked increase in interest in the fairy tale genre by poets and authors. For example, The Eve of Saint Agnes (1819) by John Keats (1795-1821), and Alfred Tennyson’s (1809-1892) Day Dream (1842), a reworking of an 1830 poem, are two of the most popular English renditions of the tale of Sleeping Beauty, with

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263 Dawn Heerspink, “‘No Man’s Land’: Fairy Tales, Gender, Socialization, Satire, and Trauma During the First and Second World Wars,” Grand Valley Journal of History, (Vol. 1: Iss. 1, Article 1, 2012), 3.

both poets returning again to the tale, even after they had been published.265 By the last quarter of the century, however, there was a dramatic upsurge in the production of illustrated versions of these tales. This can be explained in part by the innovations in printing technology—lithography enabled unprecedented speed and accuracy. This resulted in a multi-tiered market, with chapbooks on the low end and ornately embellished gift books at the high end.

In studying the history of fairy tales, which are loosely defined as stories featuring fantastic or magical elements with idealized endings, we see over time a range of socio-political issues that are explored through the use of the genre.266 In World War I, the Allied forces compiled a collection of tales from eleven allied nations with illustrations by Arthur Rackham, binding them together in a collection to show unity.267 During the same time Beatrix Potter (1866-1943) used her Tales of Peter Rabbit, which is arguably a scaled down sub-genre of the fairy tale, to explore the repercussions of using animals to support the conflict and to bring attention to the importation of German goods into Britain.268 In World War II, this appropriation of fairy tales for political purposes continued with the Nazi regime recreating classic tales to rally solidarity behind the

267 All of these tales were nationalistic, showing a pride in nation and a connection to history during tumultuous times. Jessica Short, "Found It in the Archives: War and Fairy Tales," Shh! The Blog of the Charleston Library Society, (April 12, 2013. Accessed October 15, 2016) http://librarysociety.blogspot.ca/2013/04/found-it-in-archives-war-and-fairy-tales.html
Führer. The Nazi propagandists used fairy tales as political vessels for their ideologies as well, developing minor characters into larger contributors to the plot and connected them with Adolf Hitler (1889-1945), to show the racial superiority of the “Aryan” racial grouping. For example, both the Allied forces and the Nazis portrayed their beliefs through the tale of *Little Red Riding Hood*, with a wolf who resembled Hitler terrorizing the innocent people of Europe, or an Aryan Red Riding Hood being terrorized by soldiers in allied uniforms. While many of these versions of tales have been overlooked, or suppressed, they stand as examples of the convention of imbuing socio-political ideologies into tales often associated with childhood.

According to Hillard, at the end of the nineteenth century, the Victorian audience “understood fairy tales to represent England’s political landscape.” By associating his flower books and socialism with fairy tales, Crane was demonstrating that he was not solely an intermedial artist, but he was also an intertextual writer: drawing on and utilizing conventions associated with specific genres in his work, in order to connect his illustrations and writings with the genre’s messages and morals.

The quest narrative in mythology and folklore is typically understood as a hero’s journey, in which an individual, usually a young male, leaves the comforts of his social environment to battle and defeat monsters, and return home in order to receive renown.

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273 An example of this would be the phrase “Once upon a time,” which when read, immediately alludes to the fairy tale and its familiar conventions, such as the anticipation of a “happy ending,” the suspension of disbelief, and the potential for magic. Heerspink, “‘No Man’s Land’: Fairy Tales, Gender, Socialization, Satire, and Trauma During the First and Second World Wars,” 2012.
and glory, often in the form of a kingdom.\textsuperscript{274} This was seized by Marx in his influential essay, “Capital: A Critique of Political Economy” (1867), in which he states that there will be an inevitable revolution in society when labourers take ownership of their labour and its products.\textsuperscript{275} However, envisioning a utopia was not the method by which change would occur. Marx deployed the myths featuring Perseus and Medusa, which is likely where Crane got his snake motif, to demonstrate socialism’s inevitability.\textsuperscript{276} This concept would have been appealing to Crane as it played into his fascination with narrative while also providing him with a ready to use metaphor for the success of socialism. However, Crane would expand on the mythological examples presented by Marx, to include characters and narratives from fairy tales, adventure stories, and legends. Much like the adventure story genre,\textit{Queen Summer} sees a conflict that develops at an urgent pace, with protagonists who struggle for their own versions of a happy ending. Both protagonists end up enriched by their struggles to achieve happiness and discover a form of pleasure and contentment previously unknown to them. This happiness is accomplished through the intervention of the Queen of Summer, who is the embodiment of\textit{British} socialism. Unlike Marx’s masculine and combative Perseus, Crane’s Queen of Summer—a female allegory reminiscent of Britannia—bring peace through inclusion and beauty, demonstrated in the climactic scene in which she embraces and draws together roses and lilies.

Crane’s brand of socialism has been difficult to see in works like this because it is often overshadowed by the intensity of William Morris’s devotion to Marx. Caroline Arscott and others deal extensively with the relationship between Morris’s involvement in the Arts and Crafts Movement and the ideas of labour over industrialization that were stimulated by Marx’s critique.\(^{277}\) However, Crane’s expression of Arts and Crafts motivations, delivered through industrial methods, emphasize the artist’s agency. He connects England’s past to England’s future, through aesthetics. Crucially, rather than having this story play out in a distant and exotic location, like the boy/youth adventure stories set in colonial contexts that were popular in this period, Crane situates his struggle for civilization inside the immediate and recognizable setting of an English garden.\(^{278}\) Crane departs from Marx by envisioning an utopia in order to express the benefits of socialism for Britain, as well as his perspective on the artist’s place in this new society. As in the quest narratives before it, the combatants are also rewarded for their struggle with a happily-ever-after conclusion in the form of a harmonious socialist garden kingdom.


\(^{278}\) Robert Louis Stevenson’s (1850-1894) *Treasure Island* (1883) and *Kidnapped* (1886) were popular adventure stories for boys, along with the writings of Robert Michael Ballantyne (1825-1894) and Captain Frederick Marrayat’s (1792-1848) *Masterman Ready; or the Wreck of the Pacific* (1841-2). While the boys adventure stories are well known Thomas Fair has recently written an article on the forgotten adventure stories for girls that examines how heroines were portrayed in the popular genre. Thomas Fair, "19th-Century English Girls' Adventure Stories: Domestic Imperialism, Agency, and the Female Robinsonades," *Rocky Mountain Review* (68, no. 2, 2014) 142-58. 
The story of *Sleeping Beauty* seemed to captivate English artists of the mid- to late-nineteenth century, and was popular among all levels of society. It resonated with many political and artistic movements, but found prominence in the socialist propaganda as a symbol for the awakening of a new age. Crane’s *Briar Rose* cabinet, constructed and decorated in 1905, features image cycles on the exterior and interior, which together tell the story of *Sleeping Beauty* (fig. 43-a, 43-b). The exterior consists of a briar, or a rose thicket, similar to that represented by the artist Edward Burne-Jones in his work entitled *The Legend of the Briar Rose* (1873-90) (fig. 33).\(^{279}\) Crane’s rendition—which was likely influenced by Burne-Jones’s paintings as Crane had seen earlier versions of the works as the artist developed the compositions—is less dense, but is still made up of dog roses and slender trees.\(^{280}\) The dog rose in Crane’s cabinet is in its natural form, with no grafting processes being enacted on the plant. In the top right corner, barely visible through the dense and foreboding forest, is a castle tower, which invites the viewer to play the role of the Prince, who is enticed by the promise of adventure. The only way to traverse the thicket is to open the door of the cabinet, where the viewer is presented with three panel images: the sleeping court members, the discovery of the Princess, and the handmaidens,

\(^{279}\) While Burne-Jones has not been recognized as a socialist, his wife, life-long friend William Morris, and many other acquaintances were heavily involved in the socialist movement. While Burne-Jones’s mythical paintings explored the same ideas as Crane there has been no evidence of easily identifiable political iconography contained in them. It is important to note though that Burne-Jones did not seem to mind his work associated with, or referenced by socialists. He allowed William Morris to write an accompanying poem to his *The Legend of the Briar Rose* series that had strong undertones of socialist rhetoric, as well as exhibiting his work for free at Toynbee Hall in Whitechapel; a common practice by socialist artists who wished to bring beauty to the poverty stricken areas of London. Burne-Jones even went so far as to specify in his bill of sale for the series that the canvases had to be shown in a free public exhibition before they could be privately owned, and taken to a domestic setting. Rager, “Smite This Sleeping World Awake”, 442. Frances Spalding, discusses the relationship between Morris and Burne-Jones’s *The Legend of the Briar Rose* in *Magnificent Dreams : Burne-Jones and the Late Victorians*. (Oxford: New York: Phaidon ; Dutton, 1978) 47.

\(^{280}\) Crane, *Reminiscences*, 104-105.
awakening from their sleep (fig. 43-a). Throughout these scenes, the viewer is presented with yet another rose, the English rose that is similar in design to the Tudor Rose, which was used emblematically throughout English history.\textsuperscript{281} This rose is embroidered on clothing, bed sheets, carpets, curtains, and samplers visible throughout the scene.\textsuperscript{282} Outside the window, the forest and briers recall the exterior of the cabinet and show the route that the viewer took to reach the sleeping figure.

As discussed in Chapter two, in the language of flowers the dog rose is often understood as a symbol that evokes nostalgia for the past but could also represent pain and pleasure.\textsuperscript{283} This is due to the dog rose’s association in Christian mysticism with the pain of Christ’s death, but also the pleasure that humanity secured by his sacrifice and ascension.\textsuperscript{284} In many cases, the blooms of the dog rose have variations of colour throughout a single brier that range from white to red. Some authors of flower lore associate this variation with the droplets of blood from Christ’s wounds that fell on the petals of flowers that surrounded the cross.\textsuperscript{285} Crane was aware of these associations and so his use of the dog rose is not surprising, particularly in a cabinet that tells a fairy tale, which was a historicized genre. Fairy tales are imbued with history and nostalgia, which during the nineteenth century were argued to be “rooted in rural beliefs and the rites of childhood, [conveying] a certain primitive innocence and moral clarity.”\textsuperscript{286} The

\begin{footnotes}
282 Potter, \textit{Seven Flowers and How They Shaped Our World,} 135.
284 Feydeau, \textit{From Marie Antoinette’s Garden: An Eighteenth-century Horticultural Notebook,} 208. The five petals of the dog rose are said to represent the five wounds on Christ’s body.
286 Rager, "Smite This Sleeping World Awake": Edward Burne-Jones and \textit{The Legend of the Briar Rose",} 443.
\end{footnotes}
Victorians understood the fairy tale to be “a sign of England’s lost innocence and imaginary perfection.”\textsuperscript{287}

Crane began his artistic relationship with the tale while working on his sixpenny books with Edmund Evans in the late 1870’s. Arguably the most successful of the collaborations with Evans, and a book which is widely available today, was \textit{The Sleeping Beauty in the Wood} (1876), which contains some of the first commercially printed book illustrations to feature Crane’s allegorical symbols (fig. 41).\textsuperscript{288} The figure of \textit{Sleeping Beauty} became integral to Crane’s works on the interrelations of art and politics, becoming a design element that the artist would incorporate into many of his works in connection with his allegorical figure of Freedom. The artist himself even acknowledged the importance of the tale to his society in his Reminiscences, where he discusses the use of the tale as an” allegory of the revival of arts and the new Ideal of Life.”\textsuperscript{289} This use of Sleeping Beauty as an allegorical figure can be best demonstrated in Crane’s masque \textit{Beauty’s Awakening: A Masque of Winter and Spring} (c. 1898) along with his cover design for the twelfth issue of the \textit{The Pioneer}, the political journal for the Fabian Society, in 1887 (fig. 52), and his nursery wallpaper design of 1879 (fig. 42).\textsuperscript{290} The masque and both of these designs show the artist’s preoccupation with the tale in relation to its political importance. Crane chooses the tale of \textit{Sleeping Beauty} to illustrate what the Fabian Society believed they were accomplishing by bringing socialism to England; namely, bringing truth to the people. This can be seen in the position of the Princess, who is depicted sleeping beneath a lamp that bears the phrase “What is Truth?” The answer

\textsuperscript{287} Hillard, \textit{Spellbound: The Fairy Tale and the Victorians}, 121.
\textsuperscript{289} Crane, \textit{Reminiscences}, 452.
will presumably be discovered when the Prince, who in this case is understood to be the symbol of the Fabian society and, incidentally, is wearing Perseus’s winged helmet, finally succeeds in waking the allegorical figure of England from her slumber. The wallpaper carries a similar motif, with one notable difference. Once the Prince resurrects the sleeping woman, her awakening will also rouse the labourers, symbolized by the spinning woman, the minstrel, and handmaiden, who are entangled in the thorny briars. All of these previous treatments of Sleeping Beauty would be referenced in Crane’s final work on the subject—The Briar Rose.

A question that needs to be answered is why seize upon the story of Sleeping Beauty, particularly when other fairy tales like Cinderella and Snow White feature prominently laborious tasks, played out in domestic acts of cooking and cleaning and drudgery exploited by oppressors. Three things complicate this: the first is that Cinderella and Snow White worked within a realm relegated to women, whereas spinning could be associated with more industrial methods of production—as it had transformed from a form of female manual labour to one of industry—in which machinery was the dominant form of manufacturing. The second is that the act of labour that causes the Princess’s downfall in Sleeping Beauty can be connected to textile and fashion design, which were areas of interest for many artists in the Arts and Crafts Movement. Crane developed cartoons for tapestries, which is, in fact, how he met William Morris and was first introduced to structured socialism. The third issue is that the heroines in Cinderella...
and *Snow White* enjoy their labour to a certain extent and see it as their duty, whereas the heroine in *Sleeping Beauty* is drawn to the work out of fetishistic curiosity in craft rather than necessity, traits socialist artists would have found helpful for a variety of reasons.

At the end of the tales *Cinderella* and *Snow White*, the title characters are both rewarded by being elevated and reinstated to the aristocracy, removing the need for labour, altogether. The tale of *Sleeping Beauty*, on the other hand, centers on touching a spinning wheel or spindle, an act that (in some versions of the tale) throws the kingdom into a century-long slumber. Two endings are possible: through action, the slumber is broken, or through inaction, the eponymous heroine remains in a form of stasis. This choice is shown in both Burne-Jones’s *The Legend of the Briar Rose* and Crane’s *The Briar Rose* and both artists chose to depict that moment before a decision is made, creating tension. Will society awaken with the acceptance of socialism, or it will society continue to suppress social development?

The concept of time was important to Victorians. According to Hambbrook, Hillard, and Schaffer, the idea of stasis and degeneration was prevalent in Victorian literature.\(^{293}\) The end of the century caused anxiety, but also hope, which fairy tales generally, and *Sleeping Beauty*, specifically, could reference.\(^{294}\) The Princess is asleep, devoid of agency, but if certain conditions are met, the promise of revival is implied. Crane depicts an hourglass on the exterior and interior cycles of his cabinet, marking the time until change occurs. Walter Crane’s *Briar Rose* adopted a fairy tale lens through which to view his own society. However, unlike Burne-Jones, Crane added a physically active element to the contemplative. By placing the story within a cabinet, Crane involves

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the viewer, but through the action of opening the door, he also, as O’Neill argues, “creates a political statement that unfolds before [the viewer’s] eyes.” Thus, the beholder pushes the narrative of the story along, and transforms a society, transporting himself into a different world, an active agent in awakening socialism within. This construction acknowledges the subversive potential of the fairy tales. In *Queen Summer*, Crane invites the beholder to enact change, not by opening a cupboard, but by opening a book.

**Part III: Up the Garden Path in *Queen Summer***

In combining socialism with fairy tales, Crane was naturalizing political activism. There is a history of acclimatizing foreign ideas, spaces, people and objects through the metaphor of the garden. Jill H. Casid’s work on “natural possession,” which is defined as incorporating plants from far off places into the familiar English landscape, demonstrates how effective this metaphor could be for reconciling politically uncomfortable ideas. Crane re-imagined a socialist Britain and reconciled this conflict, redirecting the discourse surrounding socialism by focusing it on the anthropomorphized landscape of the garden and its inhabitants. As discussed in the previous chapter, this switch in focus allowed the artist to draw on the symbolism attached to particular flowers, but also the historical discourses surrounding the garden itself. This dialogue is extensive and goes well beyond the scope of this thesis, so I will concentrate on the political arguments

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296 O’Neill, *Walter Crane: The Arts and Crafts, Painting, and Politics, 1875-1890*, 163-164. While it is no longer possible for individuals to open this piece themselves, at the time it would have been encouraged to do so, and audiences would have had the opportunity to interact with it in its intended way.
relating to the garden in England, in order to show how Crane effectively utilized them in his work.

*Queen Summer* is not the first, and certainly not the last use of the garden metaphor in Crane’s art. In 1897, *The Labour Leader*, a socialist newspaper for the Independent Labour Party, published a political cartoon by Crane, which can be seen as an extension of the ideas he explored in *Queen Summer*. The cartoon depicts a winged angel, who stands outside a garden of “Economic Emancipation,” which appears to be nearly identical to the garden depicted in *Queen Summer* (fig. 53). The angel is offering a weary labourer a key to open the gate, through which a lush garden brimming with flowers and other vegetation can be glimpsed. We are meant to compare this paradise, accessible only with the key of “Political Independence,” to the weed-infested grounds upon which the labourer currently stands. This cartoon, which was not intended for commercial gain, certainly encapsulates many of the more subtle depictions of his socialist propaganda found throughout Crane’s oeuvre, especially *Queen Summer*, but in this case, he is more direct.

Other leading socialists shared Crane’s idea of a garden as representative of a utopia during this time. In 1893 Robert Blatchford (1851-1943), a socialist activist and journalist, wrote *Merrie England*, a collection of essays on socialism that stood as an introduction to the tenets of socialism for the working man. 297 First appearing in weekly articles of the *Clarion*, Blatchford offered a vision of society as “a garden full of light and air and flowers cleared of weeds,” that was open to all people, and connected to the long idealized political history of the garden as a place of harmonious bounty. 298 The title

Merrie England that was used by Blatchford has an attachment to the Arts and Crafts Movement, and the artists who championed the style in their work. The term “Merrie England” relates to the idealized version of the medieval past that was popular with socialists of the time, as it recalled a nostalgic England before the Industrial Revolution.299 Since Crane and Morris looked to the medieval past for models of art in society, this aesthetic utopia that was represented in their works, and others like them, became a vividly imagined goal that served as a rallying image for the socialists as it represented a time of acceptance and beauty that had been lost with the advent of the machine.300 As the metropole expanded, diminishing the wild, green spaces that once evoked ideas of fairies and magic, this mythic utopia receded farther into the past.301 To compensate for this loss I would like to suggest that the garden became a physical and metaphorical representation of both civilized and uncivilized nature to in Crane’s work; a place of intercession where the civilized person was allowed to interact with the fantastic that usually dwelt in the depths of the untamed countryside. This idea of garden as mediator between the real and the imaginary is seen not only in Queen Summer, but the other flower books as well, where Crane makes the point of stating, through image and text, that has his fantastical flower people dwell not in the spaces of the unknown landscape, but inside the walls of the cultivated garden. This idea advanced by Casid that

299 O’Neill, Art and Labour’s Cause is One: Walter Crane and Manchester, 1880-1915, 95. While not discussing the nostalgic landscape that the Pre-Raphaelites and Crane sought in their work under the title “Merrie England,” Deming provides a very similar definition of the wish-landscapes that fascinated these artists; Wish-landscapes and Garden Cities: They myth of the garden in allegories of English reform 1880 to 1920, 97.
300 For a better idea of how Morris treated the idea of “Merrie England” in his work see Caroline Arscott’s William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones: Interlacings (2008) and O’Neill’s "Walter Crane’s Floral Fantasy: The Garden in Arts and Crafts Politics," for Crane.
301 The distinction between garden and wilderness is made very clear in fairy tales and the discourse surrounding landscape, especially in England. The antagonists of the fairy tale Prince are found in the wild spaces, past the walls of civilization and the controlled gardens within. This topic is one that cannot be fully explored in this paper but deserves more attention, especially in regards to Crane.
“[gardens] produce the past not as foreign and inaccessible country but as living history tilled out of the ground of the ‘country’ in and for the present and potentially future” is especially important when considering Crane’s flower works as the garden and its inhabitants in *Queen Summer* drew on the past in order to comment on the present, while simultaneously presenting a hopeful image for the future. Evoking the past through land was not constricted to reality however, as some of the most evocative renditions of the past are found in constructed landscapes by artists and writers. 

The urge, when looking at *Queen Summer*, is to think that Crane is referencing the Garden of Eden, since “roses and lilies covered the grounds of paradise.” However, an argument can be made that Crane was naturalizing political change by drawing on the political efficacy of traditions in late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century landscape design. “Georgic” landscaping, a term coined by Casid, is a sub-genre of the picturesque that hybridized foreign and domestic gardens in order to make landscape a tool of empire. These landscapes, which included depictions of ornamental farms, picturesque gardens, and colonial vistas, worked as mediators between nature and man, work and leisure, metropole and empire, and civilization and the exotic. These references to flora naturalized the process of colonization.

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304 Feydeau, *From Marie Antoinette's Garden: An Eighteenth-century Horticultural Notebook*, 208. Feydeau writes that the rose was, in part, such a popular garden flower because of its association with the garden of paradise and the notion that “Adam and Eve slept in a floral bower that rained rose petals down on them.” Marie Antoinette used the rose extensively in her garden of love for this reason.
305 Casid, *Sowing Empire: Landscape and Colonization*, xxii and 45.
306 Jill Casid discusses the use of landscaping in conjunction with the growth of the British Empire during the eighteenth century, and how cultivating gardens and farms stood as a metaphor for cultivating the British Empire and civilization in her book *Sowing Empire*. 
Crane, who was critical of empire, nonetheless used the tools of its naturalization in his flower books by combining notions of gardening and landscaping with the ingrained traditions associated with the genre of fairy tales. While they have been viewed as tools of escapism, Crane's representations of fairy tales and gardens are featured in some of the works most expressive of his political beliefs. Intersplicing different emblems in his representations of the garden demonstrate that an intermixed landscape is an improvement on nature. Crane’s garden in *Queen Summer* transforms from a site of conflict into an oasis, a place of harmony where labour of all kinds is valued. It has been radically transformed, yet is still familiar in its difference.

This concept of conserving the old in the new is crucial to keep in mind when considering Crane’s politics, as it is what has placed him on the fringe of consideration when looking at British socialism historically. Marx’s inevitable revolution is tempered in Crane’s happily-ever-after, with the vision of a utopic garden, in which artists take their rightful place as agents of change through beauty. In the dénouement, portrayed immediately before the pages showing the reconciliation of the combatants, the Queen of Summer, who appears silhouetted against a rising celestial orb, ascends from a garden of lilies and roses in full bloom, while the bat of capitalism retreats and the sleep-inducing poppies of empire wither (fig. 54). Typically for a work of Walter Crane, the text departs from the sun symbol, a staple socialist emblem. He writes, “Beneath the summer full orbed moon,/ Ruddy and gold that rose full soon,/ Like rose and lily fused in fire,/ Ere the

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sunset’s torch expire.” The figural meaning of the images is overshadowed by the
textual components of the tale, but through an intermedial examination of his works, his
true meaning has been unearthed.

309 Crane, *Queen Summer*, 37.
Conclusion:

This case study, that examined Walter Crane’s *Queen Summer* in relation to his other media, has only begun to demonstrate the political significance of his illustrated books, long relegated to the apolitical confines of the nursery. While this study has not demonstrated the full scope and importance of this text and the flower book genre, more generally, it stands as a beginning stage in understanding Crane’s independence from his peers and their expressions of change. Crane reconciled tensions between high and low art, fine art and craft, capitalism and socialism throughout his artistic career. However, these interventions have been diminished over his lifetime and after his death, as critics and scholars divide and categorize the artist’s work by medium in order to study it within a confined genre of similar objects. By separating print from paint, decorative from political, the intermediality that not only connected, but strengthened Crane’s work is lost, and the underlying message of beauty and art for all is lost with it.

This thesis has provided a foundation for further study into Crane’s flower books as objects that were not created in a separate genre from the rest of the artist’s work, but as agents of intermediality that were exemplary of Crane’s style. *Queen Summer* was created at a time of great excitement for Crane. The Arts and Crafts Movement, which he championed, was flourishing, while the excitement of the potential for a socialist change was visible as the dawn of a new century approached, and Crane’s fervour is easily perceived in the pages of the book. This early rendition of a socialist utopia requires a comparative study with those created after the turn of the century, after many of the
socialist groups that Crane once upheld succumbed to radicalism, as they explore similar, yet notably different approaches to the naturalization of socialism in Britain.

The scope of this thesis has been confined mainly to Crane’s success in Britain, as an artist and a socialist. However, it is arguable that Crane’s decorative political message had far more success abroad than it did at home, especially in Germany where many of his works were sold. This international success of Crane’s work deserves closer study, particularly because of the nationalistic emblems that his messages are often coded in. Likewise, though scholars such as Morna O’Neill, Horst Dölvers, and Andrea Korda have made notable strides in the scholarly consideration of Crane’s illustrated books, further study still needs to be done on the extent of Crane’s intermedial iconography contained in his commercial works, and on the idea that Crane’s true artistic medium of creation was not illustration, painting, or printing but narrative.

P. G. Kondoy begins his comprehensive work on Crane by stating that when future historians look back on the last decades of the nineteenth century Crane and Morris “will stand out conspicuously, like [two] isolated high peaks above the minor summits” due to their artistic and political aims, methods, and views.¹¹ You would be amiss to write on Crane without mentioning the impact that Morris had on his career. However, Kondoy’s image of Crane as a separate entity, not as a disciple of Morris, but as a successful collaborator, is one that needs to be adopted when considering Crane and his career of aesthetic politics, as this separation from Morris allows the nuances of Crane’s pragmatic socialism to become apparent and distinguishes the radical approach to art and politics inherent in his work.

¹¹ Konody, The Art of Walter Crane, 1.
Although my study of *Queen Summer* has only uncovered more questions on Crane that need to be addressed, and more content than this thesis can adequately speak to, I have established that Walter Crane was not just the artist of the nursery or the artist of socialism, but rather he was an intermedial artist whose pragmatic socialism—his ability to situate a socialist message within a commercial commodity—distinguished him from other activists and illustrators of his time. I have argued that Crane’s use of irreducible indeterminacy and intermediality allowed for him to successfully reconcile his position as both a commercial artist and socialist activist, along with his desire to be considered both a fine art painter and a craftsman.
Figures

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Figure 9: Walter Crane, *Queen Summer: or the Tourney of the Lily and the Rose*, pg. 1, 1891. Coloured lithograph. London: Cassell.
Figure 10: Walter Crane, title page from *Household Stories from the Collection of the Brothers Grimm*, 1882. Lithograph.


Figure 13: Walter Crane, *The Strong Man*, printed in the May Day issue of *Justice*, 1897. Lithograph.


Figure 20: Walter Crane, *Queen Summer: or the Tourney of the Lily and the Rose*, pg. 6, 1891. Coloured lithograph. London: Cassell.
Figure 21: Walter Crane, *Queen Summer: or the Tourney of the Lily and the Rose*, pg. 23, 1891. Coloured lithograph. London: Cassell.
Figure 22: Walter Crane, *Queen Summer: or the Tourney of the Lily and the Rose*, pg. 24, 1891. Coloured lithograph. London: Cassell.
Figure 23: Walter Crane, *Queen Summer: or the Tourney of the Lily and the Rose*, pg. 27, 1891. Coloured lithograph. London: Cassell.
Figure 24: Walter Crane, *Queen Summer: or the Tourney of the Lily and the Rose*, pg. 28, 1891. Coloured lithograph. London: Cassell.
Figure 25: Walter Crane, *Queen Summer: or the Tourney of the Lily and the Rose*, pg. 31, 1891. Coloured lithograph. London: Cassell.
Figure 26: Walter Crane, *Queen Summer: or the Tourney of the Lily and the Rose*, pg. 32, 1891. Coloured lithograph. London: Cassell.
Figure 27: Walter Crane, *Queen Summer: or the Tourney of the Lily and the Rose*, pg. 33, 1891. Coloured lithograph. London: Cassell.
Figure 28: Walter Crane, *Queen Summer: or the Tourney of the Lily and the Rose*, pg. 36, 1891. London: Cassell.

Figure 30: Walter Crane, *Queen Summer: or the Tourney of the Lily and the Rose*, pg. 34, 1891. London: Cassell.
Figure 31: Walter Crane, Queen Summer: or the Tourney of the Lily and the Rose, pg. 35, 1891. London: Cassell.

Figure 34: John Everett Millais, *Ophelia*, 1851-1852. Oil on canvas. 30”x40”. London: Tate Britain Museum.
Figure 35: Victorian see and fertilizer trade cards, c. 1885-1890. All between 12.8 and 13.5 x 7.5 and 8 cm. Photo: Syme, Alison. *A Touch of Blossom: John Singer Sargent and the Queer Flora of Fin-de-siècle Art*. University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010, 40.

Figure 36: Cover of *Maule’s Seed Catalog*, 1896, 27 x 19.7 cm. Photo: Syme, Alison. *A Touch of Blossom: John Singer Sargent and the Queer Flora of Fin-de-siècle Art*. University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010, 149.

Figure 39: Florentine lily above Queen Summer’s throne. Walter Crane, *Queen Summer: or the Tourney of the Lily and the Rose*, pg. 12, 1891. Coloured lithograph. London: Cassell.
Figure 40: Walter Crane, *Queen Summer: or the Tourney of the Lily and the Rose*, pg. 24, 1891. Coloured lithograph. London: Cassell.
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Figure 43-a: Walter Crane, *The Briar Rose*, cabinet exterior, 1905. Tempera and gesso on panel. Glasgow: Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum.

Figure 43-b: Walter Crane, *The Briar Rose*, cabinet interior, 1905. Tempera and gesso on panel. Glasgow: Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum.
Figure 44: *Rosa Canina L* (Dog Rose) from 1885 *Flora von Deutschland, Österreich und der Schweiz* by Otto Wilhelm Thorné, 1885, Gera, Germany.


Figure 47: Walter Crane, “Clash of Lilies and Roses,”: *Queen Summer: or the Tourney of the Lily and the Rose*, pg. 20-21, 1891. Coloured lithograph. London: Cassell.
Figure 48: Walter Crane, detail of rose on hip in clash of lilies and roses from *Queen Summer: or the Tourney of the Lily and the Rose*, pg. 20, 1891. Coloured lithograph. London: Cassell.

Figure 49: Walter Crane, detail of fleur-de-lis on shield of lily on clash of lilies and roses from *Queen Summer: or the Tourney of the Lily and the Rose*, pg. 21, 1891. Coloured lithograph. London: Cassell.
Figure 50: Walter Crane, initial clash of rose and lily champions from *Queen Summer: or the Tourney of the Lily and the Rose*, pg. 16-17, 1891. Coloured lithograph. London: Cassell.

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Figure 51: Walter Crane, *England’s Emblem*, 1895. Photograph from Walter Crane Archive, Whitworth Art Gallery, University of Manchester.

Figure 53: Walter Crane, “Political Independence the Key to Economic Emancipation” from a Supplement of the *Labour Leader* Diamond Jubilee Number (19 June 1897). Photo: O'Neill, Morna. "Walter Crane’s Floral Fantasy: The Garden in Arts and Crafts Politics." *Garden History* 36, no. 2 (Winter 2008), 290.
Figure 54: Walter Crane, *Queen Summer: or the Tourney of the Lily and the Rose*, pg. 37, 1891. Coloured lithograph. London: Cassell.
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