

Jane Grant, *The New Yorker*, and Ross: A Lucy Stoner Practices Her Own Style of Journalism

Beverly G. Merrick

ABSTRACT. Grant was one of the founders of the New York Newspaper Women's Club, the first wife of publisher Harold W. Ross, and co-founder of *The New Yorker*. She was the organizing force behind the formation of the Lucy Stone League in the 1920s, a forerunner of the Women's Liberation movement. Grant's contributions to feminist thought formed a pivotal bridge between the feminism of the 1920s and the 1970s. She was a prominent pioneering woman reporter and her views had a significant impact on the future status of women in journalism and women in professional life. [Article copies available for a fee from The Haworth Document Delivery Service: 1-800-342-9678. E-mail address: getinfo@haworthpressinc.com <Website: <http://www.haworthpressinc.com>>]

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One of the founders of the New York Newspaper Women's Club was Jane Grant, first wife of magazine publisher Harold W. Ross and co-founder of *The New Yorker*. She was quite active in the newspaper women's organization during the 1920s. Grant also was a one of the first women reporters at *The New York Times*, and in her retirement years she wrote many letters to the editor to her former newspaper employer concerning the status of women.

Grant is most known for championing women's issues even as she wrote articles for the front page. She organized the Lucy Stone League, which

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established legally that it is not necessary for a woman to take her husband's name at the time of marriage. *The Times* called the league a forerunner of the Women's Liberation movement.¹ Throughout Grant's life, she insisted on being called by her birth name. She said, on the subject of a woman taking her husband's name, "It seems odd to me certainly that you don't want to be who you are."²

It is unfortunate that little has been written about either the public or private life of Jane Grant, except what she has written about herself in *Ross, The New Yorker, and Me*. In other works, she is mentioned only in passing about co-founding *The New Yorker*. It is virtually unknown within the newspaper profession that Grant was the first woman to work for the city desk at *The Times*. Her efforts to elevate the status of women journalists and of women in general have gone undocumented in the mainstream media. The purpose of this study is to present a biographical examination of her life, which will address these oversights.

A biography is best explained with anecdotes and writing samples placed in a narrative context. This is the approach taken in this paper. By no means is this biography comprehensive. It is only meant to address an oversight, and to provide a starting point for researchers interested in doing further studies on "the herstory" of the newspaper and magazine professions.

Those familiar with the historiography of women's biography know that generally what are considered secondary sources in the discipline are actually primary sources. This is true because these biographical citations are often the *only* sources to which an historian can turn to recreate a time line of the biographical subject. These cites, in effect, become primary sources, or original citations.

Often, these articles prove to be news items of less than three column inches, which briefly mention that the biographical subject was present at an event, without explaining the context. It takes a number of these news items to form a narrative. Therefore, it should be understood that the researcher has made an ambitious effort to go to the original source, whether it proves to be a letter, a news article or a magazine article. The researcher uses the autobiographical material of *Ross, The New Yorker, and Me* only when there is no other source available, to explain the context and to advance the narrative.

GETTING TO NEW YORK

Jane Grant was very much a product of middle-class America. She was from the Midwest. She was born Jeannette Cole Grant, in Joplin, Missouri, on May 29, 1892, and grew up in Girard, Kansas.³ Her father, Robert T. Grant, was a merchant and a miner. More is known about her mother, Sophronia Persis Cole Grant, because Jane wrote about her.⁴ Women autobiographers

usually write about the influence of their fathers, so this is a change from the norm. Jill Ker Conway writes about the struggles Gloria Steinem had even into her middle age in writing the *Revolution from Within* (1992) and Germaine Greer had in writing *Daddy, We Hardly Knew You* (1989). Conway said:

It is instructive to observe these two strong feminists struggle with the problem of “voice,” because their struggles show us that voice, the product of inner agency, doesn’t automatically follow ideological rebellion. Strong feminists they may be, but it is in relationship to their fathers or mothers that they first begin to speak to the world about their lives.⁵

Jane called her mother a redheaded, practicing Baptist, and the first female to hold a first-grade certificate for teaching in Kansas. After Jane’s mother died, her father married a redheaded Methodist, which caused much chagrin to the Baptists in her mother’s extended family. Jane said she had learned to practice “the gentle art of wheedling” on her Grandpa Cole, and she tried to reconcile the religious differences in her family. However, she did not get her way in the matter. To appease the family, Jane went through an immersion baptism given by a Methodist minister to mete “the necessary rite” overseen by all the relatives. This accommodation to the differing beliefs and lifestyles held by those around Jane Grant would continue throughout her life.

An example of this is Jane’s explanation of male companionship during her youth. Her parents thought that males should dominate the family. This, and the fact that males far outnumbered females in her extended family, undoubtedly influenced her ability in later years to work as the only female in a staff of males. Also, she was the youngest among a number of many grandchildren and the only one of the female gender interested in the activities of her male counterparts. Apparently she was the typical tomboy. Her older cousins taught her tree climbing, bareback riding and wrestling when she spent summers with her sister at her Grandpa Cole’s farm: “We fished for catfish in the muddy pond, using pins for hooks, and often the boys would push me into the dirty water. I had to be pretty alert to defend myself.”⁶

Jane came to New York City at the age of 16, where—belatedly—plans were made for her to develop her more feminine side.⁷ She reportedly had a precocious ability as a singer, which had earned her a year to study “vocal” in Manhattan.⁸ She was to live with the voice teacher and her husband in Roselle Park, where Grant would commute to New York City twice weekly. The family plan was that after a year of voice training, Jane would return to Girard to take over the duties of her local voice teacher.⁹ It was also presumed she would get married, of course, and raise more boys who would dominate the household. However, unbeknownst to her family, Grant had other plans. She said:

Although teaching voice was considered a cut above school teaching, I wanted no part of it. At an early age, I had decided against both teaching and marriage. In my secret heart I meant to remain in the East once I got there. I would be a singer—perhaps go on stage. But my secret must be carefully guarded, I knew, for no such idea would be tolerated by my mother's religious family.¹⁰

Her first view of New York City was of lower Manhattan, where she landed on the D.L. and W. Ferry. Her voice training was with Mme. Augusta Renard, a renowned Swedish singer and teacher. At the time, Grant was still very much tied to her religious background. Therefore, she supplemented her income by being a soprano solist at the First Presbyterian Church in Plainfield, for \$25 a month. When her father found that she planned to stay in New York and therefore refused to give her further help, she got small engagements at women's clubs and schools. She said she became fearful that she might not make it, especially after one of her benefactors died.

Grant was then taken under the wing of Mrs. Henry Stevens, whose husband would become one of the defendants in the famous Hall-Mills murder trial. In 1926, Stevens' husband would be accused of plotting to murder the Rev. Edward Wheeler Hall and his choir singer, who were found murdered under a crabapple tree. However, that was a decade in the future, and at the time, under Mrs. Stevens' guidance, Grant moved in with Grace Griswold, an actress and Stevens' cousin. Griswold obtained living quarters for Grant in The Three Arts Club, a home for girls in New York, where they studied music, drama and art. Griswold also took an interest in introducing her to New York society. Among those Grant met was the great suffragist leader and socialite, Mrs. O. H. P. Belmont.¹¹ Grant was introduced to ideas beyond her provincial background. This furthered her plan to gain increasing sophistication.

Grant soon gravitated to journalism before the year was up. Her first journalism job was with *Collier's Weekly*.¹² She was hired to answer telephones, and hoped for something better.¹³ She worked at the magazine from 1912 to 1914,¹⁴ while continuing to develop her singing talent. When she could no longer live at The Three Arts Club, because of her changing goals, she rented a room from Florence Williams, who was secretary to Carr Van Anda, who was the managing editor at *The New York Times*. It proved to be a propitious turn of fortune. Following the advice of Williams, Grant took in sewing to make ends meet, and enrolled in a business school. Meanwhile, Williams interceded to Van Anda, who hired Jane at \$10 a week, on June 12, 1914, as a stenographer to write social notes for the society news section. Her supervisor was Wilbur F. Farley, society editor.¹⁵

Grant loved to write, but was dissatisfied with her efforts. She mentored with a friend of Griswold's, Richard Purdy, who required Grant to read from

a recommended booklist and to write an essay on a theme every day, which he reportedly corrected, criticized and complimented. The fledgling journalist said that before long, with all this practice, she was writing much of the Sunday society page, for which Farley received space rates: "But I didn't mind, for he allowed me to add my name to his at the top of the daily copy I wrote."¹⁶

This provided her with copy for the editors to see. Being in the right place at the right time, alone in the society news office at night, she volunteered to cover the annual stag party at the Salmagundi Club. It would be her first true assignment covering a news event. However, she was so taken by the revelers, which included Teddy Roosevelt, that upon her return to the newsroom, she discovered that she had forgotten to take notes. Farley arrived at midnight, interviewed her, and wrote the story himself.¹⁷ She must have convinced someone that she had potential because she would become the first full-fledged woman reporter for *The New York Times*.¹⁸

She was a veritable intellectual sponge, who was eager to "soak up" anything she could about the profession. Swearing was one of the first things she learned from her male associates. She said her ears became attuned to the familiar oaths, and she never gave it up.¹⁹ Grant learned to shoot craps, and because her office adjoined that of the sports department, she learned, as she characterized it, to "cope with such diverse temperaments as Enrico Caruso's and the fabulous Carr Van Anda."²⁰ Her office at *The New York Times* was also next door to that of one of the chief sophisticates of New York, Alexander Woollcott,²¹ nicknamed "Louisa M. Woollcott" by Howard Dietz. Grant had a nickname as well; the staff called the lone female they worked with- "Fluff."²²

Being the one and only female had its rewards. She said the male staff tended to make their way to her office while waiting for assignments. The late night crowd would also linger after finishing their stories. This would occur after the night city editor required them to say "Good night" and listen to his echoing "Good night," which meant they were free to go. All was not positive in the working environment. She was often the butt of practical jokes, such as her male counterparts phoning in fake stories to her from a nearby desk, just to see her reaction.²³

Much was made of her blighted ambition as a singer.²⁴ She was brought along to literary gatherings and first-nighters. Grant reportedly prodded Aleck Woollcott into taking her to dances at Hamilton College. When he was promoted to drama critic, it was he who escorted her to an occasional first-nighter. Meanwhile, Elmer Davis was said to have escorted her to the fancy dress ball at Webster Hall, and house seats were saved for her by the great Caruso himself.²⁵

Grant worked in that position at the newspaper until she decided to join the

war effort in World War I. An early archival notice in her morgue file is an internal form letter from *The Times* addressing Grant as “Dear Sir” and asking her for a photograph and for biographical information. The memorandum said that the paper wished to compile a biographical sketch of every *Times* “man” who was entering the military or naval service. It is difficult now to discover what Jane Grant made of the memorandum’s request, but she complied.²⁶

During World War I, while working for the Young Men’s Christian Association, she met Pvt. Harold Ross, a staff member at *Stars and Stripes*, the soldiers’ newspaper.²⁷ Ross was born in Aspen, Colorado, in the same year as Grant.²⁸ With Ross, Grant apparently attended the first anniversary celebration of the soldiers’ paper on February 8, 1919, saying that she was the surprise feature of the entertainment. The surprise was an unusual vignette planned by Ross and by Woollcott, who would continue to have an unusual influence on the couple’s personal and professional lives.²⁹

Grant was an unique addition to the all-male group, which she called her “cronies.” She said that during her Paris assignment, she mothered the whole group at *Stars and Stripes*, sewing and mending for all of them. She said although she had played a subordinate role with the professional group, upon their farewell departures to America following the war, she was laden with flowers and presents.³⁰

In *Ross, The New Yorker, and Me*, she also presents anecdotes about key players in the journalism field who were working in Paris early in their careers. For instance, she explains how Edwin L. James of *The New York Times* broke the military censorship regarding his cable dispatches.³¹ The group she—as the lone female³²—and Ross joined in Paris, would come to be called, after the war, among other things, “the sophisticates of post-World-War-I New York.”³³

After World War I, she returned as a reporter to *The Times*.³⁴ She was assigned by Ralph Graves, then city editor, to write hotel news, with a small raise.³⁵ During Grant’s first day back, Woollcott stuck his head in the door and said he would take her to a new luncheon place if she would pay for her own meal. The new place was the Round Table at the Algonquin Hotel, where Woollcott talked about his experiences at *Stars and Stripes* and discussed issues of the day with the likes of Murdock Pemberton, John Toohey and Dorothy Parker. The group met in the long room there, called the Pergola, because Woollcott wanted to feast upon the adjacent pastry presided over by Sarah the cook. He often invited press agents to the gathering.³⁶ Grant’s recollections of the group were well documented in *Ross, The New Yorker, and Me*.

BECOMING A NEW YORKER

Ross and Grant were married in 1920, saying their “I do’s” in the so-called “marrying church” of Manhattan. The edifice is still there today: the Church of the Transfiguration- “The Little Church Around the Corner.” It is close to Broadway, and is often called “the actors’ church.” Grant had covered many weddings there for *The Times*.³⁷ On her wedding day, Grant was shocked to hear herself called “Mrs. Ross.” She said: “Never for a moment had I considered the possibility of losing my name. I don’t think Ross had thought of it either, until that moment.”³⁸

Grant said she and Ross agreed to give each other complete independence. She had no intention of giving up her name, nor her dancing because he could not dance, nor her job at *The New York Times*. He had no intention of giving up his name, nor his card games, nor his job at the *American Legion Weekly*. Grant said the plan collapsed soon after they were married. He apparently waited for her to generate engagements and to arrange their social life.

Because Grant did not want to give up her professional name, she spearheaded the founding of the Lucy Stone League. She said Ross had suggested forming the league because he became weary of the endless discussions on the subject. They had been sharing the apartment of Ruth Hale and Broun in the first summer of their marriage, and the subject often came up. Ruth Hale had been bothered by the loss of her birth name (in the same way as Grant), when she married Heywood Broun. Hale and Broun had been married prior to their departure that year to France, where he would write for the *New York Tribune* and she would be engaged in war work. So that Hale could sail with her husband on the ship, she had to capitulate, and be called Ruth Broun on her passport.³⁹

Jane Grant organized the Lucy Stone League for the sole purpose of effecting legislation that would allow women to keep their birth names. The league was named in honor of the first woman in Massachusetts to graduate from college. Lucy Stone was a contemporary of Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. When Stone’s father refused to put her through college like her brothers, she educated herself, becoming a school teacher at the age of 16. Her father relented, giving her some financial backing, and she graduated from Oberlin in 1847. Stone became known as a radical feminist and an abolitionist who fought for women’s rights.⁴⁰ She married Henry Brown Blackwell, a champion of feminism. In 1870 Stone founded the *Woman’s Journal*, a publication that fought for women’s suffrage for 50 years. It was edited after her death by her daughter Alice Stone Blackwell.⁴¹ It was still a viable publication during Grant’s early years in New York, and no doubt it influenced her to found the league in honor of Lucy Stone. There can be no doubt that Grant perceived her status as a woman to be very similar

to Stone's. Grant founded the league in 1921, a year after the 18th Amendment was passed.⁴²

Historians might think that Grant was anti-tradition in relation to marriage. However, during the decade she founded the league, she was a bridesmaid four times, a maid of honor once and, of course, was married in a church herself. In 1925, while she was on the bandwagon to get a married woman a passport in her own name, she wrote an article for *The Saturday Evening Post* about the \$50,000 class of weddings, saying that spending \$10,000 on a wedding was evidence of economy.⁴³ Around the time, she also wrote articles about women and for women that were published by *The Saturday Evening Post*, such as the article on the shopping habits of the newlywed, the spinster and the widow.⁴⁴

The Lucy Stone League numbered 300 members, including men. Many of the members were in the media and, therefore, knew the way to make the most mileage out of the organization's visibility. Some of the more renowned males were Ashley Montague, an anthropologist at Princeton; Harrison Smith of *The Saturday Review*; and William Coffen, the lawyer who helped Felicia Sphritzer become the first female police officer in New York City.⁴⁵ Smith said at a meeting in the Fifties of Manhattan that "more ridiculous things are written about women than ever before." He said there was a conspiracy among men editors "to make fools of women."⁴⁶

One of the league's early actions during the mid-1920s was to announce a suit against Charles Evans Hughes, then Secretary of State, for refusing to permit the issuance of a passport to a married woman because she insisted that it be made out in her maiden name. Frederick Edwards, a reporter for *The New York Times*, attended a fund-raising dinner of the league along with 200 others, where the announcement was made. He was apparently quite flabbergasted by the proclamation. The opening words of his news story, which appeared the following day, reflect his astonishment: "This amazing bombshell was exploded last night."

The dinner was organized by the Lucy Stone League for Helena Florence Normanton, the English lawyer who recently had arrived from England with a passport in her own name. She was married to Gavin Brown Clark. It should be noted that before air travel, New York was the port of call for passengers arriving on ocean steamers from Europe; therefore, anything bearing on their comportment and plans for travel made the news.

Edwards lamented that life was becoming complicated for New York reporters because half of the women at the dinner could not decide whether they should tell others to call them "Mrs." or "Miss" or just by their first name.⁴⁷ The reporter said:

Almost any evening now a poor, leg-weary, brain (if any) fagged newspaper man familiar with murders, banditry, political chicane, divorce

and triangular love affairs is likely to be removed from these homey pleasantries [sic] and ordered to go through the blizzard to a meeting of the Lucy Stone League. There he will meet up with Ruth Hale (Mrs. Heywood Brown), Jane Grant (Mrs. Harold W. Ross), Rose Falls (Mrs. Bres), Fola La Follette (Mrs. George Middleton) or a number of others of the 300 members of that organization.⁴⁸

The custom to document a woman's life under her husband's name often had unusual repercussions. Grant once told the press that she was troubled that Claudia Taylor would not be able to get a passport, but Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson would. She was chagrined that a passport was issued in a woman's maiden name only if she were known by that professionally. Also, an historian might be surprised to discover that at the Library of Congress, according to Lucy Stone researchers, works by Edna St. Vincent Millay had been originally filed under her married name, Mrs. Eugene Boissevain.⁴⁹

During this flurry of activity and early married life, Grant was doing well at *The Times*. Graves had promoted her to the city staff itself, and she was assured by him she was the first woman reporter to work on the general staff. In the new job, she found a much broader sphere, but her special field was women in the news. She said sometimes that meant reporting on women behind the news, including the wives of presidents. The women reporters had a fascination with coverage of First Ladies. One time Grant and Ishbel Ross, the first woman reporter of the city staff at the *New York Tribune*, shadowed Mrs. Coolidge at an exhibit in the American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum. However, the special teas held by Eleanor Roosevelt, which elevated the status of many newspaper women, came after Grant's days as a reporter, even though Grant and Roosevelt often met in social settings of the New York Newswomen's Club.⁵⁰ It is curious that Ross makes no mention of Grant in her book entitled *Ladies of the Press*, which featured nearly two hundred contemporary women journalists.⁵¹

Grant was no doubt pleased when *The New York Times* announced in a news item that the Census Bureau had finally recognized for the first time the right of married women to give their own surnames for the census, if they wished. The Lucy Stone League had won that petition for change. However, it also noted in the news item that the Census Bureau denied the league's request to tabulate the number of married women who used their maiden names.⁵²

FOUNDING THE NEWSPAPER WOMEN'S CLUB

Jane Grant and Ishbel Ross were two of a handful of newswomen who signed the charter for the New York Newspaper Women's Club. Other well-

known women signing the papers of incorporation were Emma Bugbee (who worked with Ross in the newsroom at *The New York Tribune*), Martha Coman, Theodora Bean, Jane Dixon, Mary Margaret McBride, Winifred Van Duzer and Lillian Lauferty. The first meeting and election of officers following their charter was the first Monday of May in 1924.⁵³

The organization would gain a lot of press coverage because the ranks of newspaper women in New York were still thin, and therefore the activities of the newswomen proved to be hot news items. In June 1925, the New York Newspaper Women's Club held a dance on the roof garden of the Waldorf Astoria, featuring Emma Haig and George Hale of the Three Hundred Club. Grant was one of the organizers of the event,⁵⁴ which featured music by the Knecht Orchestra and was broadcast from 10 p.m. to 3 a.m.⁵⁵ Grant also helped organize the annual ball in 1926.⁵⁶

The dance cards of the newswomen read like a Who's Who in Publishing of New York. A thousand attended the dance of the New York Newspaper Women's Club in 1927—newspaper women, newspaper men, artists and guests. Grant helped plan this event as well, and in this way to expand her influence in the newspaper field.⁵⁷ Gov. Smith and Will Rogers sent their regrets. However, Mayor Walker extended greetings and introduced Major General Charles P. Summerall, Major General James H. McRae and Rear Admiral Charles P. Plunkett, who made short speeches. Patrons and patronesses at the dance were newspaper scions: Mr. and Mrs. Cyrus H.K. McCormick, Mr. and Mrs. William T. Dewart, Mrs. William R. Hearst, Mr. and Mrs. Roy Howard, Mr. and Mrs. Adolph Ochs, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Patterson, Mr. and Mrs. Ogden Reid, and Ralph Pulitzer. The proceeds of the dance were devoted to a new clubhouse.⁵⁸

In May 1927, Grant was one of the members of the New York Newspaper Women's Club who planned a tea to honor women in the senior journalism class at Columbia University.⁵⁹ In May 1928, the much-respected Emma Bugbee was named president at the club's headquarters at 47 West Forty-Fourth Street, but Jane Grant became a vice president, along with Josephine Robb Ober of *The World* and Helen Rowland of King Features.⁶⁰ In May 1929, Jane Grant was again elected as a vice president.⁶¹ She was expanding her influence base.

EARNING A BYLINE IN THE NEW YORK TIMES

Grant's first bylined article was an interview with Charlie Chaplin, which appeared in *The New York Times Magazine* on September 18, 1921. She described Chaplin as a lonely and misunderstood man, whose greatest regret was that people did not take him seriously. He said it was good that Henry Ford used fair labor practices and that it was bad the government owned the

railroads. He wanted United States to establish trade relationships with the U.S.S.R.⁶² He told Grant:

Many people have called me a socialist. My radical views have been much misunderstood. I am not a socialist, nor am I looking for a new order to things. But I do believe that conditions can be much improved and that the lives of the working classes can be made far more pleasant than they now are.⁶³

The journalist always asked the newsmakers she interviewed about the status of women. Chaplin was no exception, and she was no doubt pleased by his answers. She asked him, "What do you think about the activity of women in public life?" He replied, "I think it is splendid. We have many fine, capable women and I see no reason why they should not hold office and establish themselves in public life and the professions. They have shown great courage to make the fight they have."⁶⁴

In a time when the newspapers reported about cigarettes being grabbed from the hands of women on the street and stomped out, Grant asked Chaplin if women should smoke and otherwise follow in the footsteps of men. Chaplin said it was up to women to decide those questions, "Certainly there is no reason why they should not."⁶⁵

In her job as reporter, Grant elevated the status of women in other ways. She took seriously the words of women she interviewed, particularly those who, like her, had entered professions typically held by men. She said in one article, "Our records are filled with the accounts of women who ventured into this work or that, leaving the familiar path where women have become more or less formidable competitors of men."⁶⁶ She added:

Such a course sometimes carried with it hardships, tending to make the move seem foolhardy, but they have stuck courageously, an amazing number of them, until they could raise their flag and add another name to the list of torchbearers. These women have become bankers, lawyers, politicians, mechanics, soldiers—to name a few of the occupations that fifty years ago were solely within the reach of men. In fact, so searching has been women's interest in the professions hitherto unknown to them, that there remains now only a few unchallenged for the pioneer spirit.⁶⁷

In 1926, she interviewed the one and only woman automotive engineer, Ethel H. Bailey. The engineer had built her own wireless set and had been working in aviation as well. Bailey, in fact, was the first woman to make it into the Society of Automotive Engineers. In 1925, Bailey represented the United States at the first International Conference of Women in Science, Industry and Commerce, where she presented a paper on automotive research

before the Women's Engineering Society of London. Bailey told Grant being an automotive engineer was far more pleasant than difficult, and she believed women could work on excellent terms with men.⁶⁸

Grant had the ability to delve into the real issues that concerned women. This included recognizing women in the arts. She interviewed Geraldine Farrar of the Metropolitan Opera, who revised the story of *Carmen* into a singing comedy in 1924. Farrar also directed and sang the role of Carmen. Farrar said about her venture, "The artist must recognize in the radio, the motion pictures, and even the automobile, her competitors and must adjust herself accordingly."⁶⁹

The dance industry launched the Charleston, and Grant wrote about "the comely young women" who were leaving their typewriters and store counters to start dancing schools. She reported that overnight Harlem had become a dancing emporium, turning out Charleston dancers, good and bad, by the dozens. At nearly every street corner traveling troupes offered entertainment, and the craze had made it to Broadway.⁷⁰

The enterprising reporter even found the woman's connection in her reports about the automobile. Cars were much in the news when the country opened the roads to the national parks during the mid-1920s, and Grant wrote about increased motor travel.⁷¹ In an article featuring a sketch of the latest Apperson Sedan, Grant wrote that feminine taste had stimulated the automobile's beauty in design, that "every one is fashioned by hands that appreciate the power of women as potential purchasers."⁷² She said there is a "housewife neatness" to the interior of cars:

[T]he average woman can talk automobile with the best of them. It is an accepted fact that they are well in the majority among the users of passenger cars. The other day an automobile authority expressed surprise at the absence of women in the industry in view of their knowledge. . . . It is a fascinating pastime to watch a woman inspect a car.⁷³

Grant said someone designing the automobile got the idea that a vanity case in an auto was superfluous, but that they needed to remember that women were consumers. "With their new enthusiasm for business, social improvement and kindred occupations," women were just as interested in their personal appearance as they had always been.⁷⁴

She was assigned to cover the mother of Charles Lindbergh, upon his departure and triumphant return to the United States. Grant called his mother a reticent source. Mrs. Lindbergh was a schoolteacher from Detroit, who would only see reporters with her aviator son present. Therefore, Grant found the interview to be challenging. However, because Grant requested that Lindbergh fly over the reporter's town of Girard, the aviator flew low on his next

trip through Kansas and dropped a scroll on the grandstand at the fairgrounds as a good-will gesture.⁷⁵

The journalist also wrote about other aviators. The return to New York from the successful 1928 flight across the Atlantic by Khoel and Fitzmaurice was described through the eyes of one of the aviator's children, the 7-year-old Patsy Fitzmaurice. According to Grant, during the welcoming speech from Mayor Jimmy Walker, Patsy climbed over tables to reach her father. She was lifted to the platform of dignitaries with hopes of keeping her quiet, but would not be still until, as Grant wrote, "she slipped through the crowd between them and hugged the only hero she cared about, with a real heart hug." Later in the day, Patsy reportedly exchanged a teddy bear for a toy airplane.⁷⁶

Grant also managed to wangle a trip to Europe by reporting about the maiden voyage of the *S.S. Manhattan*. She crossed the Atlantic with friends and joined Aleck Woollcott and Edna Ferber in Paris.⁷⁷ She also reported on the work of Hadassah, the Women's Zion Unit in the United States, which raised money for the largest national health organization for women in Palestine during the 1920s.⁷⁸

CO-FOUNDING THE NEW YORKER

Jane helped her husband found *The New Yorker* in 1925. The couple agreed that they would attempt to live on her earnings, and save his salary of \$10,000 for a magazine of his own invention. Grant said she persuaded Ross to put his ideas on paper. He reportedly had three in mind: a high-class tabloid, a shipping magazine and a weekly about life in Manhattan.⁷⁹

Ross and Grant were opposites in the truest sense of the word. For instance, Ross was tone deaf and could not abide her dancing, singing or whistling around him. But as is often true in the case of opposites, it took that combination to make the magazine reach fruition. Grant had a good business sense. Ross had a unique sense of humor, the kind of humor that would come to characterize *The New Yorker*. Grant encouraged him to go with the third idea. She intuitively knew that it would best suit him, as well be a success in the marketplace. It apparently took them five years to raise the capital for the venture.⁸⁰

Most of Jane's book, *Ross, The New Yorker, and Me*, covers their personal lives during their marriage. It was published in 1968, decades after their divorce.⁸¹ Grant had been encouraged to write the historical account by her second husband, William Harris. She dedicated the book to Harris, saying that without his constant prodding she never would have started it.⁸² She told a writer at *Time* that her account of the founding of *The New Yorker* topped the work on Harold Ross written by James Thurber, called *The Years*

With Ross. She no doubt made the comment because many literary critics considered the Thurber book the definitive work on Ross.⁸³

In Grant's version of the founding of *The New Yorker*, she said she had played a major role in her husband's process of making decisions, great and small. An example of this was her determination to "overcome his stubbornness" to improve his appearance, more particularly his hair. In her book, she talked about getting him into wearing his hair short, in terms of campaign and reform. When he needed to go to the dentist to have his wisdom teeth removed, she said she had been "obliged to take him by the hand and sit with him" while the dentist did the extractions.⁸⁴

Grant uses the same terms to describe her campaign to get him to publish a magazine. She wrote:

Ross had great humility then. He assured me he'd try anything I decided upon, that he wanted to be anything I wanted him to be. I'm afraid I did a good deal of prodding. But I felt he really could accomplish what he set out to do—with his talent and his enormous drive—even though many people doubted his ability. He would have given up, I am sure, if I hadn't encouraged him; fortunately I was able to influence him.⁸⁵

Grant said not even Thurber could top her ability to do that.

In her book, Grant portrayed her husband as so shy that he had trouble rustling up funds to start the magazine. She called him an "ungainly not too articulate Coloradan who proved that a hick reporter could come to the big city and give the blase natives the last thing one would have expected from him: a successful, sophisticated magazine."⁸⁶

Although he was no phrasemaker, he dealt with the best humorists of the time. During their marriage, they maintained a perennial "open house," what one writer called "the most tumultuous menages on record," which involved living arrangements with the world-class humorists, whose work would often appear in the magazine.⁸⁷ Woollcott, for instance, lived with the Rosses and Hawley Truax for years in an apartment called "Wit's End," at 412 West 47th Street.⁸⁸ The living arrangements there seemed like having an around-the-clock leaf added to the Round Table at the Algonquin Hotel. Apparently, Woollcott hated to be alone, and his "vanity and intrusion is said to have given the newlyweds no peace." Their living quarters were described thus:

[A] combination home, casino, salon and restaurant, this venture in cooperative living—Alexander Woollcott was its most spectacular tenant—stood on 47th Street in the slum known as Hell's Kitchen . . . It was a popular gathering place for their ever-widening circle of acquaintances, which became an almost Who's Who of the Twenties. The establishment reportedly operated almost around the clock.⁸⁹

They had a Chinese cook, a Chinese garden, and a huge living room to which came many future contributors to the magazine: Robert Benchley, Dorothy Parker, FPA, March Connelly, Heywood Broun—among others.⁹⁰ It was not all fun and games. One contemporary has noted about Ross and Grant's relationship:

When they were alone, there would be five for supper, Sundays there might be thirty extra. The Thanatopsis Poker and Inside Straight Club [a gambling get-together of their own making] played through every Saturday night, and Ross when liquored up was likely to lose. In one expensive game at the Swopes, . . . he lost a stake equivalent to their initial investment in *The New Yorker*. Wit's End . . . was to fracture their marriage.⁹¹

Grant talks about Ross drifting into high-stakes gambling, and so many losses in the Thanatopsis poker games, that the debt surpassed their original investment in *The New Yorker*.⁹² Grant was apparently sometimes at her wit's end, trying to cope with the montage that characterized her marriage with Ross.

She also spoke of being troubled that the first issues of the magazine were not selling well. During the first week of newsstand sales, Grant haunted the newsstands at the hotels while making her rounds on *The Times* beat. She said the piles of unsold magazines were staggering. She also related key decisions that brought in new talent through the magazine's probationary period. She said the house at "412" became the second office of *The New Yorker*.⁹³

The house at "412" figured in another scandal of the times. Grant and Ishbel Ross would be among the hundreds of journalists involved in the Hall-Mills murder trial. Ishbel Ross wrote pages and pages of copy about the 1926 long-running trial of Frances Stevens Hall, and Willy and Henry Stevens (the widow's brothers), who were charged with the murder of her husband and the choir singer at his church.⁹⁴ It was a different story for Grant. Even though Carr Van Anda begged Grant to help cover the trial in Somerville, New Jersey, she begged off—not telling him why, of course. She and her husband were providing the family with a private place to stay when they were obliged to come to New York. Grant said:

The excessive activity around 412 was a good smokescreen. I felt a little wicked keeping mum at the office when a hunt still was on for Mrs. Henry Stevens, her mother, Mrs. George W. Griffin, and her sister Miss Helen Griffin, who were known to be at that moment in New York [but nobody knew where].⁹⁵

After nine years of marriage and an uphill struggle for the magazine, both Harold Ross and Jane Grant agreed upon a divorce.⁹⁶ E.B. White said Ross

never really grew up. White said the best contributors to *The New Yorker* never grew up either.⁹⁷ Grant would certainly agree with that. She did not appreciate the price of success, nor the endless procession of “house guests” at “412.” Friends had always known Ross to be volatile and volubly profane.⁹⁸ Now he became impossible to live with. He reportedly developed ulcers, and she developed cancer. Even in separation, other people were involved in their marriage. It was acknowledged by all in the know that Woollcott, sadly, played a mischievous and vindictive role in their marriage and in their breakup. Even Grant agreed that Woollcott was a big factor in making their marriage impossible. Another factor in their final separation, according to Grant, was her husband “twitting to his poker cronies that he was afraid of women, and that he allowed me to dominate him.”⁹⁹ It was a statement that bothered her for the rest of her life.

An indication of how much Woollcott was involved in their personal relationship is his participation in their nuptials and honeymoon. On the night of their marriage, for instance, Woollcott arranged a dinner for the three of them at the Waldorf-Astoria, then put them on the train for a weekend in Philadelphia. On Monday, he presented them with an itemized bill for \$218 for the wedding ceremony and dinner, which included an item for \$100 for his “personal wear and tear.”¹⁰⁰ One writer said the story of the divorce is especially sad because as time would prove the case, Ross married again, but could be happy with no one else.¹⁰¹

Following the breakup, Grant was shunned by much of the literary community, which—as in the case of divorce—forces one to choose up sides. Their literary friends chose Harold Ross. A critic for *Harper's* calls Grant's accounts of their married and professional life distracting, even though she wrote the book 40 years after the fact. The writer said, “In spite of the fact that Miss Grant made her living for many years by writing, there is very little literary quality—nor even perception” in the book. The critic was troubled by the “me” parts of the narrative.¹⁰² One wonders what Ross would have made of her account of their private and professional lives in *The New Yorker*, if the editor had still been alive when the book was written.

The animosity of the literary community probably occurred because Grant was the one who wanted them to stop their all-time poker parties at “412.” It is certain, however, that repercussions of the animosity have lasted up to the present day. At the Web site about the Algonquin Roundtable (which was checked on November 26, 1997), Grant was called the spouse of Harold Ross. She was not listed among the literary figures “because she had not written an autobiography.” The Web site fails to mention that *Ross, The New Yorker, and Me* is an autobiography and a literary work.

The irony of the whole relationship was that the marriage survived as long as it did. Ross, married to someone who worked to raise the status of women

and who thought a lot of her own potential, was known by his contemporaries to think little of the female gender, or of their capabilities. Brendan Gill noted Ross's prejudice in *Here at The New Yorker*, saying his boss perceived homosexuals as failed women "and his estimate of women was far from high."¹⁰³ In a recent biography of Ross's professional life, Thomas Kunkel, in *Genius in Disguise*, characterizes Ross as a generous and brilliant man. However, Kunkel also describes Ross as a difficult man to be around, using adjectives like acrimonious, uncompromising and profane, especially in long-term relationships, such as that with business partner Raoul Fleischman.¹⁰⁴

FREELANCING FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

During her years at *The Times*, Grant's bylines and datelines ranged from New York to Hsingking, China.¹⁰⁵ She worked for *The New York Times* until 1930, but continued to write occasional articles for the newspaper. She defined herself as a freelancer from 1925 to 1972.¹⁰⁶

The enterprising journalist pulled off coups for the newspaper. She was given assignments by Edwin L. (Jimmy) James, whom she called "my faithful friend at the *Times*."¹⁰⁷ She was in Hsinking in June 1934, where she interviewed the Emperor Kang, of Japan, who had temporary palace quarters in a former tax office, a drab and rambling structure. Preceding the interview, she was advised to wear an evening gown and to question him only on non-controversial subjects. She interviewed him in his study, where he sat at a table in the center of the room wearing the uniform of the Manchukuoan Army, which she described as a severely tailored khaki uniform with the highest decorations.¹⁰⁸

Grant talked with him about the newsreels she had seen of his enthronement. She said he was more robust than the news had shown him to be, and that he indignantly denied recent Chinese dispatches that said he was in ill health. He spoke of the new capitol being built, and of his diversions of reading and tennis. She was surprised that he offered her a cigarette; and because of that, she called him a modern man. She said:

When I thanked him and refused, he assured me they were of a special brand and displayed the imperial orchid crest on them.

Soon the interpreter signaled that the normal time for interviews was exceeded, though the Emperor showed no desire to end the talk.¹⁰⁹

She took umbrage in another interview, with the director of the Nazi Press Bureau. Through the first-person format, she would not resist asking him about how Germany viewed the rights of women and about sterilizations that had already been decreed in some cases of retardation. The bureau chief was

Harvard-educated Ernst Franz Sedgwick Hanfstaengl, a German-American, who characterized himself as Hitler's friend. He agreed with her that Germany had instituted sterilization acts, but said that Germany cannot afford to have "even a small percentage of deficient children."¹¹⁰ It is a telling comment, in view of subsequent events.

In January 1935, Grant reported upon a return from the U.S.S.R. that basic English was taught to the Red Army. She interviewed Mme. Maxim Litvinoff, who taught basic language skills in English.¹¹¹ Grant wrote more about Russia in an unfinished manuscript, which she called *I Saw What I Could*.¹¹² She was in Austria in July 1935 to report in a travel article about the August opening of the Glacial Gross Glockner Road to international traffic.¹¹³

CHANGING NEW YORK EDITORS

Jane Grant married William B. Harris in December 1939.¹¹⁴ He had been working as an editor at *Fortune* since 1931, from the period of its founding by Henry Luce.¹¹⁵ It is interesting to note that Luce eventually bought out the greater portion of shares of *The New Yorker* owned by Harold Ross. Meanwhile many of the earlier editorial workers at *Fortune* would become wealthy through the Luce enterprise, Harris among them.¹¹⁶ During their marriage, Harris would also work with the brokerage firm of Laidlaw & Co.¹¹⁷ She once had something to say about this marriage in a letter-to-the-editor she wrote to *The New York Times*:

Women can change their names as often as they change husbands, but let one of them want to keep her original name while making the husband-change-overs and she causes quite a stir. It comes as a complete surprise that she might have a deep attachment for the only thing she has worn continuously from birth.¹¹⁸

It is said Harris and Grant registered in hotels as Mr. Harris and wife, Jane Grant. On the front door of their New York apartment, there were two bold brass letters: "H." and "G." Grant was said to have gone so far as to refuse telephone calls at her home that asked for "Mrs. Harris." Reportedly, she said, "There is no Mrs. Harris here."¹¹⁹

Her second husband called Grant "one of the first real women's liberationists."¹²⁰ It is certain he supported her in her quest to elevate the status of women. A prolific period of feminist writing followed her second marriage. She wrote a work claiming Aristotle was a woman.¹²¹ Grant also published an essay called "Confession of a Feminist," which began, "It must be true I'm a feminist, for all my friends say so."¹²²

Nor would she allow others to disclaim their own feminism and their

abilities, as was often done by women of the 1940s and 1950s in the name of protective coloration to keep their jobs and advance their careers. Like Katharine Graham, the foremost woman publisher of this century as head of *The Washington Post*, many women professionals had been socialized to abnegate their own accomplishments and slow to recognize their own strengths.¹²³

This is the phenomenon that has kept women journalists out of most history books until the 1970s. This is the phenomenon which caused contemporaries of Grant to trivialize her influence on the founding of *The New Yorker* and criticize her account of her contributions in *Ross, The New Yorker and Me*. Several authors have made a study of the narratives of women and men who are a product of this socialization. Several of the more noteworthy works are *American Autobiography*, edited by Paul John Eakin; *When Memory Speaks*, written by Jill Ker Conway; and *Women's Lives/Women's Times*, edited by Trev Lynn Broughton and Linda Anderson.¹²⁴

Grant would have none of this abnegation; she would not allow narratives nor the accomplishments of women to be marginalized. Her voice followed the dictates of her ideological rebellion to the norm. In a letter to the editor to *The New York Times*, Grant applauded an article about the business success of Bernice Fitz-Gibbon, but railed at her disclaimer of being a feminist. In the article, "Tips for Would-Be Women Bosses," Fitz-Gibbon had reportedly said: "I am not a feminist. I'm not *for* females any more than I am *for* horses and cows. Women today, even women leaders, are not struggling to be lords of all they survey."¹²⁵

In her letter to the editor Grant said of Fitz-Gibbon, "She's as much a feminist as anyone I know. She wouldn't have written the article if she were not. With her views she can no more deny being a feminist than she can secede from the sex."¹²⁶

Grant said a feminist was not something sinister: "You do not even have to be a female to be a feminist. Thank God, I know several he-men who believe in the doctrine." She added sarcastically, "Perhaps in her next article, Miss Fitz-Gibbon will clarify the meaning of that nasty word."¹²⁷

Yet, Grant said about her own feminism, "You drift into a thing like that."¹²⁸ By the 1950s, she had apparently drifted quite far into feminism. She became more active in the cause of elevating the status of women. The Lucy Stone League had been very active during the Twenties and the Thirties. She and 22 other charter league members re-activated the league in 1950, expanding the purpose of the organization to include activities to educate women, and to safeguard and extend their civil and social rights.¹²⁹ The different portrayals of league members and goals in the two time periods resulted from changes in journalism formats, life course issues, and political conservatism regarding the family in the 1950s.¹³⁰

The league, now headquartered at 38 East 57th Street, Manhattan, became

a clearing house on the status of women. The organization ranked somewhere politically right of the National Women's Party and left of the League of Women Voters.¹³¹

Like Lucy Stone, the league also worked on behalf of married women who wanted to vote, work, travel and campaign under their maiden names. The league maintained that the courtesy title of "Mrs." was a psychological label that implied inferiority. Grant said the word "Mrs." did not mean married; it meant a woman was a mistress of her own affairs. She noted that the last definition in Webster's was the appellation for a wife. In later years the league also advocated using a woman's maiden name followed by the married name in brackets.

The league's vice president in the 1950s was Doris E. Fleischman, a charter member who spoke at a meeting of rededication and about thirty years of tribulations of not using her married name, Mrs. Edward L. Bernays. As for Bernays, he reportedly boasted at the meeting that his wife had never worn a wedding ring, and as befits a public relations person, coined a nickname for the league: "The Freedom from Husbands Society."¹³²

The league provided scholarships for women to go to graduate school in fields not receptive to women. The league helped one of the first African-American women at Oberlin College, who then pursued an advanced degree in nuclear physics at Stanford.¹³³ The league also provided scholarships to women students at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Finance and Commerce.¹³⁴ The league worked to elevate the status of women in adverse circumstances as well. The organization established a library in the name of Abigail Hooper Gibbons in the House of Detention for Women, located in Greenwich Village.¹³⁵

One of the most notable gifts was in honor of a colonial newswoman. The Lucy Stone League presented the Anna Maulin Zenger Memorial Library to the Julia Richmond High School in Manhattan. At the ceremony, Grant hailed Anna Zenger as "the mother of the freedom of the press," saying that she had played an "equal part" with her husband in the fight for a free press in the colonies in 1735. The plaque, presented along with 300 books, credits Zenger with continuing to publish the paper while her husband was in jail. After her husband died, she continued to publish the newspaper under her own signature.

Among the books were *Anna Zenger: Mother of American Women*, by Kent Cooper; as well as *This I Remember*, by Eleanor Roosevelt; *Out of These Roots*, by Agnes E. Meyer; *The World of Willa Cather*, by Mildred R. Bennett; and *The Revolt of American Women*, by Oliver Jensen. Emma Harrison of *The New York Times*, who reported on the presentation, said the library gift also included a set of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, which-incidentally-mentioned the trials of John Peter Zenger, but did not mention his wife.

Others present at the ceremony were William Nichols of *This Week*, who represented the press; Margaret Halsey, author, who represented career women; and Peggy Wood, actress, who spoke as the wife of a present-day printer, William Walling.¹³⁶

In 1955, along with 68 other prominent New Yorkers, Grant established a memorial fund for Neysa McMein, a painter, illustrator and writer. She was a personal friend as well. The fund was established at the Whitney Museum of American Art.¹³⁷

TAKING ISSUE WITH COVERAGE IN THE NEW YORK TIMES

Because Jane Grant founded the Lucy Stone League in the 1920s, she has been referred by the women involved in the women's movement of the 1960s and 1970s as "an old feminist." In a *Times* article titled "The Feminists Are On the March Once More," Jane was depicted and quoted along with Betty Friedan, as one of the "old feminists," as opposed to those like Ti-Grace Atkinson, who was then president of the New York Chapter of NOW, and Gloria Steinem, who would soon help launch *Ms*.

In December 1967 the league demonstrated with other feminists at the Equal Opportunity Commission at 326 Broadway, wrapped in red tape and carrying picket signs that said, "Title Seven Has No Teeth, EEOC Has No Guts." Betty Friedan spoke for Grant and the rest of the group, saying that the federal agency practiced "absolute laxity" in enforcing Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Members of NOW and the Lucy Stone League were picketing to support Pauline Dziob, who was suing the National Maritime Union, of which she was a member, and Moore-McCormick Lines, Inc., her employer, for refusing to classify her as a yeoman because it had been a man's classification at sea.

During the demonstration, Grant was noted as still being militant about using her maiden name. A young feminist with her, Linda Leffert, treasurer of the league, said she used her husband's name. Even so, Grant introduced the former stockbroker, doctor's wife and mother of two young children as "Miss Garelik."¹³⁸

In the retirement years of her life, Grant continued to work for the rights of women, taking on causes to elevate their status. During these years, Grant also served an active role in advocating the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, as vice chair of the Connecticut Committee for Equal Rights and a member of the National Council of Women.¹³⁹

She also wrote many letters to the editor concerning the status of women. Often these letters were commentaries on coverage of women in *The New York Times*. In September 1947, she wrote that it was a breach of women's

civil rights for organizations such as the WAVEs and WACs to arbitrarily oblige women to change their names at the time of marriage. Even though the Passport Bureau had changed its attitude about what Grant called “the confusing practice,” she said it was still not unusual for a prejudiced clerk to make his own rules.¹⁴⁰

One of her editorials noted that 1960 Coverage of the court of Magistrate Edward D. Calazzo talked about his reprimanding Mrs. Irving Rabinowitz for wearing slacks in his courtroom for “trying to look like a man.” Grant told the editors that an important point had been overlooked in the coverage:

Is it out of order for me to suggest that women could object to men imitating female attire, which the judge himself does when he wears his skirts-or robes-of office? Priests of the churches and academicians [sic] through the ages have used robes in the belief that they lend dignity to their calling. Are men alone to be accorded the privilege of flattery by imitation?¹⁴¹

Grant praised an editorial entitled “A Woman for Judge,” saying that those who worked for the advancement of women looked forward to the time when a woman serving in a public office would be the rule, and not the exception. She said a large number of men and women should have a greater participation in social relationships. She pointed out that the New York Supreme Court dealt with cases concerning divorce, annulments, the custody of children and problems with family relations. She suggested the vacancy on the court caused by the recent death of a sitting judge be filled with a woman.¹⁴²

In a 1957 letter to the editor, she noted there was laughter at President Eisenhower’s press conference when May Craig of *The Portland Press Herald* introduced the subject of discrimination based on sex, more specifically, the Equal Rights Amendment, during a discussion about the civil rights bill. Reportedly, the president answered, “Well, it’s hard for a mere man to believe that woman doesn’t have equal rights.”

Grant suggested to the *Times*’ editors that men preferred to ignore the fact that women did not have legal equality. She chastised Eisenhower, saying that if he would look into the issue, he would not find it a laughing matter. She added, “And the male reporters too might do some research on the status of women.”¹⁴³

In one of the published letters, speaking as president of the Lucy Stone League, she petitioned for the Equal Rights Amendment. She noted that a debate on the status of women at the Women Lawyers Association would have been more gratifying if it had included a generous sprinkling of logic from the male lawyers and politicians who felt women could gain ground regarding the ERA through exercising an increasing number of “citizenlike

acts.” She said the founding fathers were not bothered by being called less citizenlike when they struggled for their rights.¹⁴⁴

She also dressed down the male reporters at a 1961 presidential press conference, saying that she did not expect chivalry but they could show a similar modicum of courtesy toward the female reporters that they showed each other. She wrote:

Even the President’s halfhearted efforts to give the women reporters a chance met with little success, for there is always a loud-voiced man nearby who pretends that the nod was given him and he quickly embarks on his lengthy query.

The one woman who succeeded in making herself heard on March 8 was far more intelligent with her questions than were some of her male colleagues. Women journalists who are assigned to Washington must be seasoned reporters and are expected to have a real grasp of the issues our nation faces. A lot of us would like to hear what they have to say.¹⁴⁵

Grant criticized President Kennedy’s 1962 State of the Union message because he made no mention of the problems confronting women in “the long list of ills,” which he had proposed to remedy. She wanted him to support the Equal Rights Amendment. She asked if he had already forgotten that he appointed a commission headed by Eleanor Roosevelt just a month earlier “to demolish prejudices and outmoded customs which act as barriers to the full partnership of women in our democracy.”¹⁴⁶ *The Times* ran an editorial by James Reston adjoining Grant’s column, suggesting that the time had come for women, which he called “the greatest unused national resource.” This in turn brought a response in the form of a letter to the editor from Fannie Hurst, who said women should work on their own to hoist themselves out of their long second-class citizenship.¹⁴⁷

Grant’s letters were not always critical of coverage. In 1964, she congratulated *The New York Times* on an editorial about global civil rights, saying that American women owed the newspaper a debt of gratitude for acknowledging the subjugation of women,

which is one of the conventions that has so long and so ruthlessly been clouded by various subterfuges. It is indeed time for the American people to rally for the support of all women, [and change] the little known but vital laws dealing with the subjugation of women.¹⁴⁸

In her final years, Grant and Harris ran a business together called the White Flower Farm, a 100-acre retail plant and seed operation in Litchfield, Connecticut.¹⁴⁹ They also kept an apartment at 480 Park Avenue. She

worked on a novel, which—like her non-fiction work on Russia—was never completed, called *Dennis O'Connor*.¹⁵⁰ She died of cancer on March 18, 1972 in Litchfield. She was 80 years old.¹⁵¹ She had kept her shares of *The New Yorker*, of the \$20,000 original investment with Harold Ross, and was still in possession of them at the end.

As it turns out, Jane Grant and William Harris both contributed greatly to the status of women.¹⁵² Upon his death in 1981, Harris left a \$3.5 million bequest in her name to the Center for Study of Women in Society at the University of Oregon. He also left much of the documentation of the public and private life of Jane Grant in special collections at the library there, with much of that comprised of the work of the Lucy Stone League. The center awards \$100,000 annually to support research by faculty and students, as well as to support visiting scholars, conferences and course planning.¹⁵³ Mary Lou Parker, who completed her dissertation at the University of Oregon in 1994, took advantage of the collection with her sociological work called “Fashioning Feminism: The Making of the Lucy Stone League by Members and Media.”¹⁵⁴

The Lucy Stoner’s name did survive beyond her years. Her contributions to feminist thought formed a pivotal bridge between the feminism of the 1920s and the 1970s. Her sense of mission in co-founding *The New Yorker*, her noteworthy firsts as a pioneering woman reporter at *The New York Times* and her choice to speak out as a mentor to editors—all these—reflect on a life that worked for the good. From the cradle to the grave, Jane Grant in many instances of personal choice and public activism had an impact on the status of women in journalism and women in professional life. This is her lasting contribution.

ENDNOTES

1. *Contemporary Authors* [Detroit: Gale Research, Permanent Series] 2: p. 227. This manuscript is a revised version of research first presented as a paper at the Magazine Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Annual Conference in Chicago, in August 1997. The author was head of the division at the time.

2. Ann Geracimos, “Was Aristotle a Lady?” *The International Tribune* (April 7, 1966).

3. “Jane Grant Dead,” Obituary, *The New York Times* (March 17, 1972), Sec. L+, p. 44.

4. *Contemporary Authors* [Permanent Series] 2: p. 227. Jane Grant, *Ross, The New Yorker, and Me* (Reynal and Company, with William Morrow & Company, Inc., 1968), p. 72.

5. Jill Ker Conway, *When Memory Speaks* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998), pp. 180-183.

6. Jane Grant, *Ross, The New Yorker, and Me*, pp. 70-75.
7. "Jane Grant Dead," Obituary, *The New York Times* (March 17, 1972), Sec. L+, p. 44.
8. E. Weeks, "Wit's End," *Atlantic Monthly* 221 (April 1968): p. 125.
9. Grant, *Ross, The New Yorker, and Me*, pp. 70-76.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 71.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 77-80.
12. "Jane Grant Dead," Obituary, *The New York Times* (March 17, 1972), Sec. L+, p. 44.
13. Ann Geracimos, "Was Aristotle a Lady?" *The International Tribune* (April 7, 1966).
14. *Contemporary Authors* [Permanent Series] 2: p. 227.
15. "Gift to Coast Women's Center," *The New York Times* (October 4, 1983). Biographical Sketch, morgue file, *The New York Times*, undated. Grant, *Ross, The New Yorker, and Me*, pp. 82-83. E. Weeks, "Wit's End," p. 125.
16. Grant, *Ross, The New Yorker and Me*, pp. 87-89.
17. *Ibid.*
18. "Jane Grant Dead," Obituary, *The New York Times* (March 17, 1972), Sec. L+, p. 44.
19. Grant, *Ross, The New Yorker, and Me*, p. 91.
20. "Ross, *The New Yorker and Me*," book review, *The New York Times* (July 28, 1969). Van Anda was the managing editor until 1925.
21. Jane Grant, letter to "Mr. Whitman" concerning the obituary of Dorothy Parker, *The New York Times* (June 8, 1967). From Four Eighty Park Avenue, New York; in Grant Morgue file.
22. Weeks, "Wit's End," p. 125.
23. Grant, *Ross, The New Yorker, and Me*, pp. 91-95.
24. *Ibid.*
25. Weeks, "Wit's End," p. 125.
26. Biographical Sketch on Jane Grant, morgue file, *The New York Times*, undated. With Grant depicted in photograph, which is in her file at the off-site morgue at *The Times*.
27. "Jane Grant Dead," Obituary, *The New York Times* (March 17, 1972), Sec. L+, p. 44.
28. Weeks, "Wit's End," p. 125.
29. Grant, *Ross, The New Yorker, and Me*, p. 60.
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 63-66.
31. *Ibid.*
32. Weeks, "Wit's End," p. 125.
33. "Books in Brief," *Harper's* (March 1968), p. 152.
34. "Gift to Coast Women's Center," *The New York Times* (October 4, 1983).
35. Grant, *Ross, The New Yorker, and Me*, p. 107.
36. Jane Grant, letter to "Mr. Whitman" concerning the obituary of Dorothy Parker, *The New York Times* (June 8, 1967). From Four Eighty Park Avenue, NY; in Grant Morgue file.

37. Jane Grant, "Purveyors of the Bride," *The Saturday Evening Post* 198 (September 5, 1925): p. 23. Jane Grant, *Ross, The New Yorker, and Me*, p. 128.
38. Grant, *Ross, The New Yorker, and Me*, p. 129.
39. *Ibid.*, pp. 123, 128-129.
40. "Jane Grant Dead," Obituary, *The New York Times* (March 17, 1972), Sec. L+, p. 44. See *The Continuum Dictionary of Women's Biography*, edited by Jennifer S. Uglow (New York: Continuum Publishing Company, 1989), pp. 519-520. Reference to previous source: E.R. Hays, *Morning Star: A Biography of Lucy Stone* (1961).
41. Geracimos, "Was Aristotle a Lady?"
42. "Jane Grant Dead," Obituary, *The New York Times* (March 17, 1972), Sec. L+, p. 44.
43. Jane Grant, "Purveyors of the Bride," p. 23.
44. Jane Grant and Katherine Sproehnle, "Ten Per Cent Off," *The Saturday Evening Post* 196 (May 23, 1924), pp. 20, 189-190, 193-194.
45. Ann Geracimos, "Was Aristotle a Lady?"
46. "23 Lucy Stoners Hold Session Here," *The New York Times* (March 23, 1950).
47. Frederick B. Edwards, "Lucy Stoners to Sue Hughes on Maiden Name Passports . . .," *The New York Herald-Tribune* (January 21, 1925).
48. *Ibid.*
49. Ann Geracimos, "Was Aristotle a Lady?"
50. Jane Grant, *Ross, The New Yorker, and Me*, p. 138.
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