

## The Beauty of Health

### CORA WILDING AND THE SUNLIGHT LEAGUE



IN OCTOBER 1931 four girls spent a night huddled in Mrs Ladbroke's sun-porch in the small South Island town of Geraldine.<sup>1</sup> Taken from their Christchurch homes by Cora Wilding, the girls were a test group for Wilding's theories about the benefits of rural life. Wilding had recently returned from a trip abroad where she had visited some of the more prominent European leaders in a movement exploring the healing effects of the natural environment on the human body. What Wilding wanted to know, as she put her charges to sleep in the well-ventilated porch, was how urban girls would respond to exposure to the sights, sounds and crisp spring mornings of rural Canterbury. Did the local environment hold the same health-giving properties as that of Switzerland, or even of New Zealand's North Island, where successful outdoor children's camps had already been held? Fuelled by her international observations and the positive findings of the informal 1931 trial, later that year Wilding inaugurated the only New Zealand branch of the British Sunlight League. Under its auspices, she ran a series of children's camps until 1936. Part of the wider inter-war health camp movement, Wilding's Sunlight League camps applied scientific methods to child-rearing and explored the possibilities of applied eugenics. But Wilding's camps were also different from the bulk of those making up the New Zealand movement. Wilding applied the laws of health to young children, creating muscular, resilient young female bodies through camping in the Canterbury countryside, but unlike other camp leaders, Wilding also applied the laws of aesthetics.

Wilding wrote of the successes of the early Geraldine camp in correspondence to her mother, Julia Wilding. In a letter sent in late 1931 she noted that '[t]he children are very responsive to the Beauty of everything and already have learnt to distinguish the notes of the fantails, [and] magpies'.<sup>2</sup> Works discussing the health camp movement in New Zealand give only precursory attention to the place of beauty within discourses surrounding children's health.<sup>3</sup> They certainly veer away from discussing the upper-case 'Beauty' that Wilding found in the Canterbury landscape; the ocular and/or aural sensory pleasure central to contemporary theories of aesthetics and a tool complicit in the perpetuation of social and cultural norms. Similarly, a wider social history of medicine flourished in New Zealand during the 1980s and 1990s, very few historians have offered what could be called a social history of art, showcasing the ways that groups of New Zealanders understood art, its purpose or its wider function.<sup>4</sup> Stemming from this, we know little about how beauty or creative self-expression have been valued or used by New Zealanders as a means of enabling social, or in its broadest sense cultural, change.<sup>5</sup> And yet these were the discursive sensibilities at the heart of Wilding's health camps. This article

steps beyond the usual medical discourses associated with children's health in the inter-war period to explore the links between Wilding's Sunlight League activities and applied aesthetics. It draws on the theoretical position of British aesthete Vernon Lee to enhance our understanding of Wilding, replacing the current construction of the Canterbury philanthropist as either failed artist or moderate eugenicist, with the more encompassing representation of new woman aesthete. In discussing the League's camps and keep-fit classes, it also seeks to extend our knowledge of inter-war discourses of health by considering their intersection with discourses of aesthetics.

Cora Hilda Blanche Wilding was born in Christchurch in 1888 to recent British immigrants Frederick and Julia Wilding.<sup>6</sup> Frederick was a barrister, but gained far greater reputation as an accomplished amateur sportsman. Julia had been involved in the feminist movement in Britain, but in Christchurch she was revered for her accomplishments on the piano.<sup>7</sup> Arriving at a time when the focus was changing in Christchurch from simply breaking in the land to also breaking in a colonial culture, well-rounded British immigrants like the Wildings were quickly embraced by the local elite. In turn Cora Wilding and her four siblings grew up in a relatively privileged social and economic environment. Her older brother, Anthony, was blessed with the freedom to explore his potential as a tennis player, which eventually saw him win four consecutive Wimbledon titles.<sup>8</sup> Similarly Cora Wilding was able to pursue her artistic and philanthropic endeavours, often supported financially by family and friends.

While Anthony, the most famous of the Canterbury Wildings, has been awarded a sound niche in the history of New Zealand sport, Cora endures an uncomfortable straddling of the history of art and the social history of medicine. She attended Canterbury College School of Art periodically from 1907 and took extended painting trips abroad in 1912 and 1921. On her return to Christchurch in 1927 Wilding became a foundation member of 'The Group', arguably one of New Zealand's most significant cultural organizations active in the middle decades of the twentieth century. Unfortunately for Wilding, the style of work she produced at this time failed to link her into the dominant narrative of New Zealand art history for Canterbury in the inter-war years; her paintings were not regionalist.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, the enthusiasm with which she painted had waned somewhat by the 1930s, leading historians to conclude that she had, at the time she began to take an interest in heliotherapy and camping, largely admitted defeat as a woman artist.<sup>10</sup> So while Wilding's name can be found in Anne Kirker's anthology of New Zealand women's art, there is very little attention given to her travels or paintings in the broader historiography concerned with the visual arts in New Zealand.<sup>11</sup> A thesis on The Group, for example, does not even register that Wilding was one of that organization's founding members.<sup>12</sup>

Wilding was also one of the first women to be trained as a physiotherapist in New Zealand and inaugurated the only New Zealand branch of Dr Caleb W. Saleeby's English Sunlight League. Her work for health reform has found a home in the works discussing the inter-war health camp movement. Wilding's camps were, as Margaret Tennant has pointed out, one of the many camping

ventures undertaken by women philanthropists in response to the Depression of the 1930s.<sup>13</sup> However, in positioning Sunlight League camps into the larger, eugenically motivated health camp movement, works by Tennant and Susan Wilson, among others, have given undue emphasis to eugenics as the discourse informing Wilding's camps.<sup>14</sup>

Wilding belongs to histories of New Zealand art and artists, but in part because she founded the Sunlight League her position as an artist is unstable: since the very nature of artistic identity is often constructed in ways that preclude the possibility of changing career paths at mid-life, Wilding appears to have 'sold-out'.<sup>15</sup> Remaining orphaned by works of art history, she has found a place in the social history of medicine, although incorporating Wilding into the health camp movement has required a sleight of hand with regard to the Sunlight League's motivations. But if the focus shifts to early twentieth-century discourses of aesthetics then Wilding and two of her most hands-on League activities, single-sex health camps and keep-fit classes, find a much more comfortable home.

After years spent travelling across New Zealand and throughout Europe and America, Wilding returned to Christchurch in 1931 and inaugurated the New Zealand Sunlight League. Wilding's League was largely modelled on the parent organization in England of the same name. The London-based Sunlight League had been founded on the work of Dr Augustus Rollier of Leysin, Switzerland, whose alpine retreats claimed to heal the consumptive. The redemptive capacity of sunlight was a touchstone for the League both in London and in Christchurch.<sup>16</sup> In Christchurch the League's membership was a roll call of the local elite, many of whom were not only willing to join in the mission of bringing vitamin D to the masses via sunbathing and an increasing variety of sunlamps, but were also friends of Wilding's family.<sup>17</sup>

In 1934 the aims and objectives of the Sunlight League were given as encompassing eight main ideals, which like many similar health organizations of the time, ranged from a desire to promote the benefits of sunlight to the human organism, to a desire to establish a solarium on the Southern Alps, reduce smog, improve mental health and children's teeth, as well as proposing dietary reform.<sup>18</sup> By far the most successful of the League's organized activities stemming from these goals were the health camps, overseen in their early years almost exclusively by Wilding.<sup>19</sup>

School doctor Elizabeth Gunn had been running health camps in the North Island since 1919. It was Gunn who set the standard for camps throughout the 1920s, with her emphasis on weight gain, hygiene and nutrition. Plump young bodies lying in orderly rows basking in sunlight was a common image of the camps. It was also a central image because, along with weight gain, sun exposure was viewed as a preventative against tuberculosis. Gunn's camps focused on weak and feeble children whose bodies betrayed their ill-health, but later camps adopted a broader understanding of what constituted childhood health. By the 1930s, mental health and child psychology became goals alongside the building of robust young bodies. Holistic approaches developed only once concerns over child mortality began to wane as the childhood death-rate declined in the 1930s and 1940s.<sup>20</sup> Ada Paterson, founder of the Wellington

Children's Health Camp Association in 1929 and subsequently involved with camps run at Otaki, emphasized the nervous strain children were under in the modern world, hoping that camps would make children happy and relaxed.<sup>21</sup> Holding camps for girls throughout the first half of the 1930s, Wilding's approach to child health reflected this change towards addressing more holistic concerns, including child psychology.<sup>22</sup>

In 1980 Susan Wilson wrote a thesis seeking to uncover 'The aims and ideology of Cora Wilding and the Sunlight League' from the perspective of the League's health camps.<sup>23</sup> Wilson's thesis offered what was for the time a bold exploration of the social history of medicine from the point of view of children's health and eugenics. Wilson's thesis also highlights the way in which Wilding's camps have had to be manipulated to fit in with preconceptions regarding health in inter-war New Zealand. When members of the League wrote the organization's aims and objectives in 1934, they agreed that the second goal would be '[t]o hold Children's Health Camps with the objects of making children better citizens, and to endeavour in camp not only to improve health and give the child happiness, but also to encourage appreciation of country life, love of beauty, also ideals of health, work and service to others'.<sup>24</sup> The second most important aspect of Sunlight League work, then, involved turning children into citizens who were healthy and firmly ensconced within particular imagined national and aesthetic communities.

In her discussion of the motivating ideologies behind Sunlight League camps, Wilson considered only the 'health' aspect of the camp object quoted above. To identify the ideology informing League camps, Wilson referred not to the second objective in the League's constitution but to the sixth, which expressed the organization's position regarding medicine and science. The sixth aim of the League read: '[t]o educate people through the medical and scientific advisors of the League, in the knowledge of the laws of heredity, the importance of civic worth and racial value, and by the study of eugenics to exchange racial deterioration for racial improvement'.<sup>25</sup> The whole of the League's sixth aim reeks with the principles of eugenics. Members of the League drew, as other eugenicists did, on the belief that heredity determined the extent to which an individual could contribute to society. This was often tempered by the belief that environment could alter the influence of what would otherwise be bad genes.<sup>26</sup> However, for proponents of eugenics, members of the community considered to have defective minds or bodies were discouraged, or in extreme cases prevented, from reproducing. Conversely, those with desirable characteristics were encouraged to reproduce for the good of the white race. Because of the presence of the League's sixth aim, Wilson and subsequent historians interested in 'health' have located Wilding's camps firmly within popular inter-war discourses of eugenics.<sup>27</sup> And yet eugenics was never mentioned in relation to health camp programmes. As the second object of the League's constitution indicates, eugenic discourse was at best only one of a handful of ideologies informing the running of Wilding's camps.

Clearly eugenics offers a pertinent backdrop for discussions of the Sunlight League. Hard-edged eugenic principles found a home in the League's sixth aim and League member Professor John Macmillan Brown, among others, was

an outspoken eugenicist.<sup>28</sup> But to suggest that the overarching aim of Wilding's camps was eugenic transformation is an overstatement. The reason Wilson and subsequent historians have emphasized Wilding's eugenic position is that eugenics fits into preconceptions about what constitutes discourses of health and medicine; that is, eugenic phrases like 'exchange racial deterioration for racial improvement' make sense in relation to bodily health and reproduction.<sup>29</sup> However, until recently eugenics has also experienced a compromised fit in the social history of medicine. Eugenics was a quasi-scientific form of social control allowing medical specialists to perpetuate gender, class and race hierarchies.<sup>30</sup> It was a discourse adopted by professionals which filtered down to become a popular philosophy for social responsibility. But it was also a body of knowledge riddled with aesthetic sensibilities. It was no coincidence that good human stock was visually synonymous with the most conventionally beautiful people. Eugenics was complicit in maintaining political categories of difference premised on standards of biological beauty. Few works discussing eugenics focus on the prevalence of aesthetic influences within the movement, but as Michael Hau has shown, aesthetic considerations were integral to eugenics and related social hygiene movements prior to the Second World War.<sup>31</sup> The eugenic backdrop behind the work of the Sunlight League, then, was a backdrop that already had aesthetic discourses entwined within its ideological position. This is not to suggest that renewed emphasis on a more broadly understood eugenic ideology would justify again claiming eugenics as the primary motivating factor behind Wilding's camps. It remains the case that surviving League records do not specify eugenics as a camping motivation. What documents illuminating League aims and objectives reveal about the discrete activity of camping undertaken under the auspices of the League, is that camps were premised at least in part on the understanding that beauty and nature had an immediate and positive impact on children's health. Not often considered within discourses of science and medicine, and even less often considered to be of significance to the inter-war camping movement, natural and artistic beauty were the touchstones of aesthetics.

Wilding was well versed in theories of art and aesthetics by the time she ran League health camps. In the decades prior to 1931 she maintained an assortment of notebooks that contained numerous quotes from and references to some of the more well-known art theorists of her time. Art theory was bread and butter for any artist studying locally, as Wilding did at the Canterbury College School of Art. It was also freely discussed at the schools Wilding attended abroad in the 1910s and 1920s, among them the Lucy Kemp-Welch school at Bushey, the popular Parisian La Grand Chaumiere, and the Academie Ranson and Academie Moderne.<sup>32</sup> In 1922 Wilding wrote to her mother describing the eclectic mix of artists with whom she was coming into contact, noting how she enjoyed 'most interesting talks in the evenings always . . . [where she] learnt quite a lot about art theories'.<sup>33</sup> Wilding found it difficult to adapt the extreme forms of modernism she came into contact with in the 1920s into her own painting style, but she diligently studied and read the principles behind the movement, claiming to 'adopt nothing until I have reasoned and comprehend [sic] it, and then accept it'.<sup>34</sup> She made direct reference in her notebooks to

the theoretical works of Leo Tolstoy, Clive Bell and Plato. The ideas of these men and the less well-known thinkers she met abroad contributed to her understanding of art and society.<sup>35</sup> But it is not so much the printed tracts of male theorists that give insight into Wilding's approach to child health as the way new women aesthetes began to challenge the masculine monopoly held over theories of art in the early decades of the twentieth century. Particularly resonant with Wilding's approach to child health and well-being was the kind of psychological aesthetics developed and applied by new woman aesthete Vernon Lee.

'Vernon Lee' was the pseudonym under which Violet Paget wrote both fictional and theoretical texts.<sup>36</sup> Like most Victorian intellectuals Lee was a prolific writer, sometimes penning fiction, sometimes literary studies, and sometimes tracts on aesthetics. As subjects, Lee and Wilding shared what was, until recently, under-representation in their respective historical fields. The lack of enthusiasm shown by New Zealand art historians to embrace Wilding within even narratives of women's art history is paralleled by the reluctance with which Lee has been recovered by feminists for inclusion in histories of British aestheticism and Victorian literature. In part this exclusion has its roots in the way that both women straddled changes in historical periodization. Wilding was neither part of what could be called the impressionist generation of Canterbury artists, epitomized by Margaret Stoddart, nor was she of the modernist generation, exemplified by Rita Angus. The artist rather sat somewhere in between, exhibiting in her watercolours and oils traces of both movements. As Christa Zorn has explained, Lee was similarly neither a 'Victorian sage' writing alongside the likes of John Ruskin, nor a 'modernist aesthetic critic', like Clive Bell or Roger Fry.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, Wilding and Lee both worked concurrently in areas typically dealt with by different sets of historians, fact and fiction in the case of Lee, and art and medicine in the case of Wilding. Subjects living in different countries, two generations of women whose lives barely overlapped, Wilding and Lee have until recently both fallen into gaps between recognized areas of research. Dressing them as new women aesthetes brings Wilding and Lee comfortably back into the light.

In 2000 Talia Schaffer announced that 'New Women criticism has neglected the female aesthetes as completely as aesthetic criticism has'.<sup>38</sup> The 'new woman' can be a slippery figure. Arguably she appeared en masse in the 1880s and in America, at least, began to fade over the course of the 1930s.<sup>39</sup> Schaffer's use of the term links the new woman aesthete to the much-discussed new woman writer more than to the wider generations of women renouncing their place in the home between the 1880s and 1930s.<sup>40</sup> The term 'new woman aesthete' is used here to refer to women who were assertively participating, through literary and other means, in the established field of masculine endeavour known as aesthetics. The term is also used to designate a specific approach taken to aesthetics by new women within the context of aestheticism.

Aestheticism was a late nineteenth-century movement that saw adherents value art exclusively for its sensual qualities. This was in reaction to earlier generations of aesthetes who had valued art for its moral qualities, amongst them John Ruskin and William Morris. The dominant figure within

aestheticism was the effeminate male. Typified in the luxuriant figure of Oscar Wilde, such men believed that beautiful objects (and they classed women within this category) existed purely for the ocular pleasure of the observer. Unsurprisingly, configuring gender relations in ways that undermined women's agency through relegating them to the life of a passive, albeit beautiful, object has led feminist historians to renounce aestheticism as a movement harmful to women.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, because of this proclivity to visually consume women alongside other forms of art, the male aesthete doing the consuming is usually viewed in opposition to the politically assertive new woman.<sup>42</sup> There were, however, counter-discourses to aestheticism. Sensible, manly men created counter-discourses intended to undermine the cultural dominance of the effeminate male aesthete. There were also, as Ann Ardis has noted, women who countered the counter discourses of the men speaking out against the effeminate male aesthetes.<sup>43</sup> It is these types of women who, like Vernon Lee, entered into debates about the nature of art in ways that gave women subjectivity and agency within aesthetic discourses that I refer to as new woman aesthetes. As Kathy Psomiades has shown, aestheticism was as much a particular intersection of ideas about gender and beauty as it was a moment spanning the 1880s and 1890s in Britain. Aestheticism can also be traced from the 1830s into the twentieth century, where we find Lee and, later, Wilding.<sup>44</sup> Lee was not the only woman actively engaging with discourses of aesthetics in the first half of the twentieth century, but she produced a lucid exposition of her aesthetic position which offers a particularly meaningful point of entry into the intellectual challenge posed to the male bastion of aesthetics by new women aesthetes. In turn, reflecting on Lee's aesthetics illuminates how Wilding can be reconstructed as a new women aesthete and how her League health camps can be situated within wider aesthetic discourses.

In 1913 Vernon Lee published a small text entitled *The Beautiful*, the subtitle of which was *An introduction to Psychological Aesthetics*.<sup>45</sup> In this book Lee broke away from much extant art theory by normalizing the aesthetic experience, by introducing the idea of empathy, and by centring the human body. By constructing the aesthetic response in terms of a psychological response, Lee argued that people respond to beautiful things in the same way they respond to every other thing in their lives. This was significant because art theorists had often looked at art as a special type of object, or conversely they constructed the aesthetic response as something which only certain people were civilized enough to develop. In both cases the aesthetic experience was situated as something that was rare, requiring either a great object or a great mind to acquire it.<sup>46</sup> Because Lee explored the aesthetic response in terms of a psychological response, she was able to claim that like all psychological responses, the aesthetic response was available to all. One just had to learn how to open oneself up to it.<sup>47</sup> According to Peter Gunn, Lee's emphasis on psychology followed in the footsteps of the James–Lange theory of emotions.<sup>48</sup> The James–Lange theory proposed that when rationally studied all emotions could be found to reside in bodily states. Accepting the James–Lange theory allowed Lee not only to break away from much art theory by normalizing the aesthetic experience, but also to break away by centring the mindful body in her

analysis.<sup>49</sup> The psychological emphasis in her work also led Lee to introduce to her British audience the idea of ‘empathy’ taken from the German school of psychological aesthetics.<sup>50</sup> These three components of Lee’s position allowed her to ultimately claim the importance of the aesthetic experience not only to the human psyche, but also to the human body, and moreover to recommend art appreciation as a broad path towards well-being. This is a position that Diana Maltz has termed the ‘Beauty of Health’.<sup>51</sup>

Lee’s ideal for a beauty of health saw both the mind and the body benefiting from being in the presence of great works of art. In *The Beautiful* Lee essentially constructed the work of art in terms of a Freudian dream, where the concept of empathy allowed the viewer to interpret images in terms of their own desire. This resulted in the consumption of art being posited as an ideal means of self-expression. Self-expression, usually understood as requiring the active creation of an art object rather than what was more often described as its passive reception, was particularly valued in the early decades of the twentieth century as a preventative of mental illness. Another work of Lee’s, *Laurus Nobilis*, further demonstrated this position showing Lee’s ‘aesthetic beliefs [to be] expressed almost entirely in terms of mental hygiene’.<sup>52</sup> If the viewer of art engaged with the artwork in ways that saw them empathically recreating what they saw in ways that offered them self-expression, then consuming the visual arts was good for mental health.

Lee developed the health benefits of aesthetic consumption one step further. Because the James–Lange theory posited emotions as bodily sensations, Lee was able to extend her claim that art was good for mental health to also claim that art was good for physical health. It was understood that in empathizing with the work, that is, in reproducing the ‘balance, rhythm, and weight’ of the beautiful work of art, the art viewer physically experienced balance, rhythm and weight, which were considered by Lee to be vital needs.<sup>53</sup> According to Lee and theoretical collaborator Clementine (Kit) Anstruther-Thomson ‘the aesthetic seeing, the “realisation of form”, was connected . . . with bodily conditions and motor phenomena’ which could in turn lead to ‘massive conditions of organic well-being and the reverse’.<sup>54</sup> From the point of view of Lee’s aesthetics, if one wanted a balanced, healthy mind and body, one merely had to spend enough time in front of a harmonious work of art or beautiful landscape (while studiously avoiding disharmonious works and landscapes).

One of the more interesting aspects of Lee’s aesthetics was that her writing was premised on quasi-scientific experimentation. Prior to penning *The Beautiful* Lee undertook a number of tests designed to determine the effect works of art had on the human organism. Lee’s test subject was Anstruther-Thomson. In 1894 Anstruther-Thomson realized that her breathing pattern changed in the presence of great art.<sup>55</sup> For Lee this offered tentative proof that the aesthetic experience could, as she had hoped, affect well-being. In many ways a series of experiments, Lee set her work in opposition to the hard facts of science, insisting that the aesthetic exercises and their findings were merely ‘observation’ and ‘conjecture’.<sup>56</sup> Anstruther-Thomson and Lee preferred to think of themselves as ‘travellers and antiquarians of the old school . . . as compared with the systematic excavators of our own day’.<sup>57</sup> Because few

theorists of art or any other branch of philosophy sought to prove their theories through physical testing, this bodily experimentation has seen Lee's aesthetics handled with a degree of condescension in the literature.<sup>58</sup>

Lee's work demonstrates that despite many male aesthetes discursively locking women into beautified passivity, there was no echoing chasm between the politically active new woman and her stereotyped cultural counterpart, the male aesthete. Decadent male aesthetes may have lolled around on beautifully upholstered couches discussing interior décor while they visually consumed their requisitely passive female friends. New women certainly challenged the dominant model that required such gendered passivity by seeking knowledge and power publicly for their own sex. New women aesthetes challenged both, reconstructing aesthetic discourses to empower women in ways that both transgressed and supported existing gender norms.<sup>59</sup> New women had found that aesthetics was rife with politics too, creating tension between elitist male-centred high aestheticism and aestheticism that was, in the case of Lee, translated into a feminized discourse of applied aesthetics. What made Lee's psychological aesthetics feminized was that it could be applied to and by women in ways that empowered them consistent with their gendered work as healers and helpmeets. In what amounted to a reactionary stance to much of the elitist world of aestheticism and decadence, Lee in particular was concerned with the responsibility of the aesthete to the wider social arena.<sup>60</sup> Believing that art was beneficial to the well-being of the viewer, Lee became a new breed of missionary aesthete trying to bring what she perceived to be the benefits of the aesthetic experience to the wider community by encouraging gallery attendance.<sup>61</sup> There may not have been the same degree of ostentation in the aesthetic circles of Christchurch in the 1920s and 1930s as in Britain around the turn of the century, but Christchurch women began to threaten male bastions of art and aesthetics in new ways in that city from at least the mid 1920s; Wilding was part of that trend.<sup>62</sup>

The Sunlight League's aims and objectives ostensibly set Wilding's camps apart from much of the wider health camp movement, but it is difficult to know how widespread Wilding's aesthetic approach actually was. Ideology aside, League camps were almost indistinguishable from many other health camps held during the 1920s and 1930s. Wilding had modelled the day-to-day activities of her camps on what she perceived to be the most successful aspects of camps already being run in New Zealand. Two obvious differences between Wilding's camps and others were the size of her camps and the sex of the children attending. Compared to Ada Paterson's Otaki camps, where an average of 80 children attended per camp, or even compared to the South Canterbury Health Camp Committee's Summer Health Camp for 1936, which took 50 children camping, Wildings camps were tiny, catering for between 15 and 30 girls.<sup>63</sup> Similarly it was uncommon for camps to be run exclusively for girls. Camping was usually a sex-segregated activity, but most organizations ran concurrent or sequential camps for boys and for girls.<sup>64</sup> What is less obvious is whether Wilding was alone in attempting to use camps as a means of applying aesthetics to children. At a material level the aesthetic aspects of Wilding's camps came through in the naturally beautiful surroundings and in

an assortment of creative activities, including pageantry. But all New Zealand health camps were run in rural areas where natural beauty was close at hand, and most camps incorporated cultural elements in their scheduled daily activities. It is possible that Hilda Ross and William Paul were influenced by similar discourses in their Waikato camps.<sup>65</sup>

Applied psychological aesthetics does not offer a blanket explanation of Wilding's motivations any more than a eugenic interrogation is unjustified, but aesthetics explains aspects of the second aim of the League in ways that eugenics simply cannot. In linking an appreciation for nature and a love of beauty to goals of improving children's physical and psychological health, Wilding drew on the same basic premises established by Lee and Anstruther-Thomson's work: beauty could heal.

Reconsidering Wilding and her place in the historiography in light of Lee's type of aesthetics and the construction of the new woman aesthete also makes aspects of Wilding's life make sense in ways that earlier historiographical approaches have been unable to do. The recognition of broader discourses of aesthetics and their relationship to the work of the new woman offers Wilding a sort of biographical coherence. Her life encompassed two types of aesthetic positions: the male-centred aesthetics dealing with the hierarchy of the arts and the artist, and a feminized discourse of aesthetics dealing with societal well-being. For whatever reasons, Wilding became increasingly interested in feminized aesthetic discourses from the later 1920s onwards.<sup>66</sup> This development in her life only comes across as artistic failure if inadequate space is given to the new woman aesthete and the way that art and aesthetics bled into otherwise unaesthetic inter-war discourses. Arguably by undertaking aesthetic work that extended beyond the parameters set by picture frames, Wilding is all the more interesting as a cultural figure in New Zealand's past.

*The Beautiful* was readily available in New Zealand and Wilding was discussing theories of art with fellow artists at the time Lee's works were topical. However, no evidence remains to prove that Wilding developed her aesthetic approach to health from first-hand contact with Lee's texts. Before briefly considering the influence of other types of applied aesthetics on Wilding's activities it is worth noting that, intentionally or otherwise, Wilding's camps overcame what have been considered weaknesses in the proposed application of Lee's works. Lee believed that the healing power of beauty was available to all and encouraged workers to attend galleries. Critics have pointed out that the lives of the working classes were in no way ready to accommodate the type of commitment of time and energy required to experience Lee's aesthetic empathy.<sup>67</sup> Nor did they have the past experiences of beauty that Lee required them to be able to draw upon for a successful aesthetic response. The working classes did not, to borrow from Pierre Bourdieu, have the cultural capital required to achieve Lee's aesthetic empathy.<sup>68</sup> Wilding overcame these problems by promoting aesthetics to *children* rather than adults, and by utilizing *natural* rather than artistic beauty in her health camps. Wilding's work also held greater potential for success than Lee's schemes because Wilding did not require the working classes to have spare time at their disposal to attend galleries. In effect all Wilding's method required, outside the setting of the

camp, was an individual taking the scenic route to work to receive an aesthetic experience beneficial to their well-being. Similarly, by working with children in her camps, Wilding provided the young with aesthetic experiences which they could later draw on in their adult working lives.

By taking into account the types of aesthetic discourses circulating as Wilding began her artistic career, we can see that motivations behind League camps were consistent with Wilding's artistic leanings. But Wilding's interest in the relationship between art and society extended beyond beauty's place in her camps. In the 1930s Wilding wrote about changes in education, reflecting her interest in the relationship between art and mental health: '[o]ne is glad of new Art training work in schools by self expression releasing and controlling inhibitions and negative attitudes of a lifetime'.<sup>69</sup> In a draft booklet on camping Wilding elaborated on what made art important to children's education, writing that it trained the child to 'think and use his imagination' as well as offering the opportunity to plan and co-ordinate shapes which prepared children for the 'art of harmonious living' while teaching 'appreciation of form'.<sup>70</sup> Wilding also wanted art made available for adults, enthusiastically supporting public murals. In 1946 she published a booklet promoting their use.<sup>71</sup>

'Keep-fit' classes, organized by the Sunlight League, were another avenue for Wilding to explore the relationship between beauty and health. Assisted by Viola Macmillan Brown and Doreen Hight, daughters of professors at Canterbury College, Wilding held Sunlight League keep-fit classes on the roofs of local city buildings on Saturday afternoons for a few months in 1933 and again in 1941.<sup>72</sup> The classes centred on 'sunbathing, physical exercises, and folk-dancing' and were initially intended for unemployed girls in 1933 and for working girls in the later year.<sup>73</sup> Like Wilding's health camps, keep-fit classes linked health and beauty, in this case associating ideals of fitness with statuary and dance. Wilding incorporated Greek 'held' positions, where young women were required to replicate classic Greek statues, into both her camps and keep-fit classes. Emphasis on Greek beauty was part of much wider aesthetic aspects of the eugenics movement, aspects which often came through in the work of physical culturists like famed strongman Eugen Sandow or New Zealand's Ettie Rout and Frederick Hornibrook.<sup>74</sup> As was the case with Wilding's camps, however, beauty's relationship to well-being in League keep-fit classes was more complex than an explanation leaning on the eugenic associations of physical culture alone allows.<sup>75</sup> As Jill Julius Matthews has shown, the Women's League of Health and Beauty (in New Zealand, the Health and Beauty Movement) took a similar position to the Sunlight League in promoting light exercise for women, including Greek positions and dance.<sup>76</sup> The League of Health and Beauty's British founder, Mollie Stack, described physical culture as 'physical poetry'.<sup>77</sup> Held positions also fitted within the view of aesthetics developed by Anstruther-Thomson, who believed that works of art were beneficial because they inspired empathy within the body for the physical balance represented in the art. In held positions, one was required to *become* the work of art, embodying its balance and harmony outright. While Wilding encouraged static emulation of artworks, more significantly she also promoted expressive dance.

Wilding's training in physiotherapy as well as in the fine arts led her to promote creative movement as a means to improved well-being. Margaret Morris, a leader in the therapeutic dance movement of the time, believed that the beauty inherent in the motions of dance had the ability to heal, and she recommended that physiotherapists be trained in aesthetics for that very reason. Morris wrote that '[w]hen the study of aesthetics in relation to movement forms part of the training of *every* masseuse and medical gymnast, widespread results will be possible in the treatment of paralysis and other conditions, by the combination of the aesthetic with medical knowledge'.<sup>78</sup> The structure of the dance and the dancers was also what famed art critic Clive Bell had labelled significant form, and significant form was understood to heal.<sup>79</sup> Morris, moreover, encouraged people being treated through dance to devise their own aesthetic movements, claiming that this would be of both psychological and social benefit to the dancer.<sup>80</sup> Wilding, having read Morris's works, agreed. The more widespread Health and Beauty Movement promoted mass uniform movements associated with the efficiency of modernity alongside its more dynamic 'physical poetry'.<sup>81</sup> Wilding viewed the military aspects of such programmes as anathema to her goal of utilizing the creative self-expression at the heart of beautiful motion as a path to health.<sup>82</sup> There were no standardized mass movements on Christchurch's rooftops.

Morris, Lee, Anstruther-Thomson and Wilding all held similar understandings of the relationship between beauty and health. This understanding saw the discourses of art and health merge in ways that affected more than what was within a frame or upon a stage. All four women were interested in using beauty as a means to heal the body and mind. Morris saw dance as a way to re-beautify the deformed body, Lee and Anstruther-Thomson saw works of art in terms of their capacity to transfer the health inherent in their beauty to the whole human self, and both of these ideas seem to represent a beauty of health which allowed for the apparent transgression of discursive boundaries that saw Wilding, in taking children into the Canterbury landscape and women onto rooftops, anesthetizing health within the Sunlight League. It also seems that aestheticism, rather than being reserved for the male aesthete who dealt solely with art and artists, could manifest into a discourse which centred health and well-being. All of which begs the question, how else did discourses of aesthetics influence bodies and bodies of knowledge in New Zealand? While Wilding had a knowledge of eugenics, she was not simply a eugenicist; while she failed to achieve international recognition as an artist, she was not just a hobby watercolourist. Instead, Wilding was a new woman aesthete whose identity fluctuated between that of the aesthete who dealt with the fine arts of the gallery, and the aesthete who dealt with the fine people of Canterbury.

NADIA GUSH

*Christchurch*

## NOTES

1 Cora Wilding to Julia Wilding, 25 October [1931], Correspondence: 1880s–1970s, 4.2, Cora Wilding Papers, MB183, Macmillan Brown Library (MBL), University of Canterbury (UC).

2 *ibid.*

3 See Margaret Tennant, *Children's Health the Nation's Wealth: A History of Children's Health Camps*, Wellington, 1994; Ross Galbreath, *Happiness, Health, and Outdoor Education: The Story of the Port Waikato Children's Camp 1928–2003*, Hamilton, 2003; S.K. Wilson, 'The Aims and Ideology of Cora Wilding and the Sunlight League 1930–36', MA research essay, University of Canterbury, 1980.

4 Key works in the social history of medicine include Tennant; Linda Bryder, ed., *A Healthy Country: Essays on the Social History of Medicine in New Zealand*, Wellington, 1991; Philippa Mein Smith, *Maternity in Dispute: New Zealand, 1920–1939*, Wellington, 1986. By a 'social history of art' I do not mean the approach the Arnold Hauser suggested — a study of the way in which society affected the arts — but rather the way the arts could and did affect society. See Arnold Hauser, *The Social History of Art*, London, 1951; Larry Shiner, *The Invention of Art: A Cultural History*, Chicago and London, 2001; Richard Wendorff, *After Sir Joshua: Essays on British Art and Cultural History*, New Haven and London, 2005. The area where the greatest attention has been given to discourses of aesthetics outside of the fine arts is in studies of visual culture. For an overview see Nicholas Mirzoff, ed., *The Visual Culture Reader*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., London and New York, 2006, especially pp.469–530.

5 In New Zealand see Rachel Elizabeth Barrowman, 'Culture and the Left in New Zealand 1930–1950', MA thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, 1987. Caroline Daley's *Leisure & Pleasure* offers insight into the way groups of New Zealanders understood beauty but given the work's focus on leisure it only does so peripherally. Caroline Daley, *Leisure & Pleasure: Reshaping & Revealing the New Zealand Body 1900–1960*, Auckland, 2003. The international literature more readily addresses these types of questions; see among others David Wayne Thomas, *Cultivating Victorians: Liberal Culture and the Aesthetic*, Philadelphia, 2004; Ken Montague, 'The Aesthetics of Hygiene: Aesthetic Dress, Modernity, and the Body as Sign', *Journal of Design History*, 7, 2 (1994), pp.91–112; Ruth Kinna, *William Morris: The Art of Socialism*, Cardiff, 2000; Bradley J. Macdonald, *William Morris and the Aesthetic Constitution of Politics*, Lanham and Oxford, 1999.

6 Frederick and Julia had arrived in New Zealand in 1879. Len and Shelley Richardson, *Anthony Wilding: A Sporting Life*, Christchurch, 2005, p.18.

7 See Shelley Richardson, "'Striving after Better Things': Julia Wilding and the Making of a 'New Woman' and a 'Noble Gentleman'", MA thesis, Canterbury University, 1997; Len and Shelley Richardson, *Anthony Wilding*.

8 On Anthony see A. Wallis Myers, *Captain Anthony Wilding*, London, 1916; Len Richardson, *The Making of a Champion: Anthony Wilding*, Christchurch, 1999; Len and Shelley Richardson, *Anthony Wilding*.

9 On regionalism see Gordon H. Brown, *New Zealand Painting, 1920–1940: Adaptation and Nationalism*, Wellington, 1975.

10 This comes through particularly clearly in the biography of Wilding. See Elizabeth Mathews, *Cora: A Wilding Seed: An Interpretation of Cora Wilding M.B.E.*, Cheviot, 1999, pp.98–99.

11 Albeit sporadically. See Anne Kirker, *New Zealand Women Artists: A Survey of 150 Years*, Tortola, BVI, 1993, pp.12, 34, 75, 89, 115. Wilding is also mentioned in the anthology of Canterbury women artists and in a biographical dictionary of artists involved with Auckland's Rutland Group. Robert McDougall Art Gallery, *White Camellias: A Century of Women's Artmaking in Canterbury*, Christchurch, 1993, p.42; Ian Thwaites and Rie Fletcher, *We Learnt to See: Elam's Rutland Group 1935–1958: A Biographical Journey with Auckland Artists*, Auckland, 2004, pp.212, 397–8.

12 Julie A. Catchpole, 'The Group', MA thesis, University of Canterbury, 1984.

13 Tennant, pp.102–8.

14 *ibid.*; Wilson. See also Mathews.

15 Artistic genius, and its legacy in much art history, required of artists that they devote their life to their calling. For criticism of artistic genius see such feminist classics as Linda Nochlin, 'Why have there been no great women artists?', *artnews*, 69, 9 (1971), pp.22–39; Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock, *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology*, London, 1981; Christine Battersby, *Gender and Genius: Towards a Feminist Aesthetics*, Bloomington, 1989.

16 Wilding had first become familiar with the healing properties of light from her training in physiotherapy.

17 League membership included artist William Sykes Baverstock, *Littledene*'s author H.C.D. Somerset, city councillor and National Council of Women office-holder Mary Maclean, and educationalist Maurice Bevan Brown. On the League's membership see Nadia Gush, 'Beauty of Health: Cora Wilding and the Sunlight League', MA thesis, University of Canterbury, 2003, pp.106–21.

18 The League shared aims with the Sunlight League of London, the New Health Society of London and Christchurch, and the British People's League of Health. *ibid.*, pp.98–105.

19 Wilding is also responsible for successfully bringing the Youth Hostels' Association (YHA) to New Zealand. On the YHA see Alice M. Bendall, 'From Tramping to Tourism: The Youth Hostel Association of New Zealand, 1932–1980', MA thesis, University of Canterbury, 1980; Dion Crooks, *Cora and Co: The First Half-century of New Zealand Youth Hostelling*, Christchurch, 1982.

20 Philippa Mein Smith, *Mothers and King Baby: Infant Survival and Welfare in an Imperial World: Australia 1880–1950*, Basingstoke, 1997, pp.225–37.

21 Tennant, p.65.

22 Positioned towards the later, more holistic phase of the New Zealand health camp movement, as Dr Eleanor Baker McLaglan and Dr Phillipps reported after visiting camps in 1934, Wilding's camp attempted 'something a little different from the others. It tries to do something for the children's minds and psychology, as well as for their bodies.' Extract from Dr McLaglan's Report for January 1934. Correspondence 1928–34, 1.8, MB183, MBL, UC.

23 Wilson.

24 The first aim of the League was educating the public in 'the appreciation of sunlight and fresh air as a means of health'. 'Aims and Objectives of the Sunlight League', *The Sunlight League of New Zealand*, Christchurch, 1934, p.1.

25 *ibid.*

26 Some eugenicists believed that acquired characteristics were passed on to future generations along with inherited ones. This not only meant that self-neglect could destroy the capacity for good human stock to produce fit offspring, it also made active self-improvement important for the entire reproductive community. On this see Michael Hau, *The Cult of Health and Beauty: A Social History, 1890–1930*, Chicago and London, 2003.

27 Tennant, pp.102–8. On eugenics and the League see also Daley, *Leisure & Pleasure*, p.135; Philip J. Fleming, 'Eugenics in New Zealand', MA thesis, Massey University, 1981, p.61; Angela C. Wanahalla, 'Gender, Race and Colonial Identity: Women and Eugenics in New Zealand, 1918–1939', MA thesis, University of Canterbury, 2001, pp.110–24.

28 Under the pseudonym Godfrey Sweven, Macmillan Brown wrote utopian novels based on eugenic principles. On Macmillan Brown see Michael Belgrave, 'Archipelago of Exiles: A Study in the Imperialism of Ideas: Edward Tregear and John Macmillan Brown', MA thesis, The University of Auckland, 1979.

29 'Aims and Objectives of the Sunlight League'.

30 Examples of works acknowledging this include Philippa Mein Smith, 'Blood, Birth, Babies, Bodies', *Australian Feminist Studies*, 17, 39 (2002) pp.305–23; Wanahalla; Nancy Leys Stepan, "The Hour of Eugenics": Race, Gender and Nation in Latin America, Ithaca and London, 1991; Alexandria Minna Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*, Berkeley and London, 2005; Wendy Kline, *Building a Better Race: Gender Sexuality and Eugenics from the Turn of the Century to the Baby Boom*, Berkeley and London, 2001.

31 Hau, pp.32–100. Most works exploring eugenics in New Zealand, including works discussing the League, note that Greek ideals for human beauty influenced the eugenic ideology but do not give attention to the ongoing influence of beauty within the movement. For a work which does acknowledge ongoing aesthetic aspects of the New Zealand eugenics movement see Wanahalla, pp.45–58, 95–98. For a more cultural exposition highlighting links between eugenics and beauty see also Caroline Daley, 'The Body Builder and Beauty Contests', *Journal of Australian Studies*, 71 (2001), pp.55–66; Caroline Daley, 'The Strongman of Eugenics, Eugen Sandow', *Australian Historical Studies*, 119 (2002), pp.233–48; Daley, *Leisure & Pleasure*.

32 For a more detailed account of Wilding's time abroad see Gush, 'Beauty of Health', pp.44–88.

33 Cora Wilding to Julia Wilding, 20 July [1922], Item 73, Outward Correspondence, May

1922–August 1922, Folder 173, Box 37, Wilding Family, ARC 1989, 124, Canterbury Museum (CM), Christchurch.

34 Cora Wilding to Julia Wilding, 24 November [1922], Item 87, Outward Correspondence, September 1922–December 1922, Folder 174, Box 37, ARC 1989, 124, CM.

35 ‘Cora Wilding Opawa Christchurch New Zealand’, Notebooks: Art, Physical Recreation etc. 1950s, 4.7, MB183, MBL, UC.

36 On Lee see Christa Zorn, *Vernon Lee: Aesthetics, History, and the Victorian Female Intellectual*, Athens, 2003; Vineta Colby, *Vernon Lee: A Literary Biography*, Charlottesville, 2003.

37 Zorn, p.xv.

38 Talia Schaffer, *The Forgotten Female Aesthetes: Literary Culture in Late-Victorian England*, Charlottesville, 2000, p.7.

39 See Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America*, New York, 1985, pp.176–7, 245–83.

40 On the new woman writer see, for example, Faye Hammill, ‘Round the World Without a Man: Feminism and Decadence in Sara Jeanette Duncan’s *A Social Departure*’, *The Yearbook of English Studies*, 34, (2004), pp.112–26; Elizabeth MacLeod Walls, “A Little Afraid of the Women of Today”: The Victorian New Woman and the Rhetoric of British Modernism’, *Rhetoric Review*, 21, 3 (2002), pp.229–46; Ann Heilmann, *New Woman Fiction: Women Writing First-wave Feminism*, Basingstoke, 2000; Lyn Pykett, *The “Improper” Feminine: The Women’s Sensational Novel and the New Woman Writing*, London and New York, 1992.

41 On how women were affected by aestheticism and other late nineteenth-century aesthetic movements, see Schaffer; Talia Schaffer and Kathy Alexis Psomiades, eds, *Women and British Aestheticism*, Charlottesville, 1999; Judy Attfield and Pat Kirkham, eds, *A View from the Interior: Women and Design*, London, 1995; Anthea Callen, *Angel in the Studio: Women in the Arts and Crafts Movement 1870–1914*, London, 1979.

42 It has also been argued that the new woman and the decadent aesthete were seen as part of the same social and political trend by contemporaries: see Hammill, pp.118–19.

43 Ann Ardis, ‘Netta Syrett’s Aestheticization of Everyday Life: Countering the Counterdiscourse of Aestheticism’, in Schaffer and Psomiades, eds, pp.233–50.

44 Kathy Alexis Psomiades, ‘Beauty’s Body: Gender Ideology and British Aestheticism’, *Victorian Studies*, 36, 1 (1992), pp.31–52.

45 Vernon Lee, *The Beautiful*, Cambridge, 1913.

46 Immanuel Kant, for example, had influentially declared that art required a special attitude of ‘disinterested interest’ to be adopted by viewers of art to appreciate it. Clive Bell, writing much later, preferred to reserve the aesthetic experience for those few, like himself, who were able to scale the ‘cold white peaks of art’. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, trans by W.S. Pluhar, Indiana, 1987, p.46; Clive Bell, *Art*, London, 1914, p.33.

47 Lee believed that there were numerous aspects to a work of art and the reason why any individual might be unable to experience an aesthetic response to art was simply that they were focusing on the ‘wrong’ (perhaps economic or mechanical) aspect of the work. Lee, pp.14–21.

48 Peter Gunn, *Vernon Lee: Violet Paget, 1865–1935*, London, 1964, p.4

49 *ibid.*, p.150.

50 Zorn, p.xix.

51 Diana Maltz, ‘Engaging “Delicate Brains”: From Working-class Enculturation to Upper-class Lesbian Liberation in Vernon Lee and Kit Anstruther-Thomson’s Psychological Aesthetics’, in Schaffer and Psomiades, eds, p.215

52 Burdett Gardner, *The Lesbian Imagination (Victorian Style): A Psychological and Critical Study of ‘Vernon Lee’*, New York, 1987, p.525.

53 Maltz, ‘Engaging “Delicate Brains”’, p.214.

54 Vernon Lee and Clementina Anstruther-Thomson, *Beauty and Ugliness and Other Studies in Psychological Aesthetics*, London and New York, 1912, pp.25–26, cit. Hilary Fraser, ‘Women and the Ends of Art History: Vision and Corporeality in Nineteenth-Century Critical Discourse’, *Victorian Studies*, 42, 1 (1998–1999), p.92.

55 Maltz, ‘Engaging “Delicate Brains”’, p.214.

56 Lee and Anstruther-Thomson, p.viii, cit. Fraser, p.92.

57 *ibid.*

58 On Lee and Anstruther-Thomson’s experiments see Gardner, p.216; Dennis Denisoff, ‘The

Forest Beyond the Frame: Picturing Women's Desires in Vernon Lee and Virginia Woolf', in Schaffer and Psomiades, eds, pp.251–69; Maltz, 'Engaging "Delicate Brains"', p.213.

59 On the divergent paths of female and male aesthetes see Schaffer.

60 Lee was not alone in this concern, but her psychological position saw her stand apart from men like William Morris, the most famous proponent of artistic social responsibility. On others who worked in this way, see Linda Dowling, *The Vulgarization of Art: The Victorians and Aesthetic Democracy*, Charlottesville and London, 1996; Charles Harvey and Jon Press, *Art, Enterprise and Ethics: The Life and Works of William Morris*, London and Poland, 1996; Kinna.

61 Maltz, 'Engaging "Delicate Brains"', p.224. See also Diana Maltz, *British Aestheticism and the Urban Working Classes, 1870–1900: Beauty for the People*, Basingstoke and New York, 2006.

62 On the wider trend see Nadia Joanne Gush, 'Cultural Fields of the Canterbury Plains: Women and Cultural Citizenship in Canterbury c.1890–1940', PhD thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, 2007.

63 *Summer Health Camp 1936*, Correspondence 1935–43, 1.9, MB183, MBL, UC; Tennant, p.81.

64 Wilding was publicly challenged on her girl-only policy. Wilding was ostensibly interested in providing girls with camping experience at the expense of boys because Christchurch boys were already benefiting from Young Men's Christian Association camps and Heritage Camps. In 1936 Dr McIntyre wrote to the *Press* complaining that funds raised nationally from health stamps were being used on camps that only catered for half the childhood population. Wilding defended her position, assuring the public that there was no anti-boy sentiment on the League's part. Cora Wilding to Editor, 27 October 1936, 1.9, MB183, MBL, UC. Wilding's emphasis on girls also located her within discourses of inter-war feminism and women's citizenships. Mary Rothschild has described this, in relation to American scouting, as a 'practical feminism'. Mary Aicken Rothschild, 'To Scout or to Guide?: The Girl Scout-Boy Scout Controversy, 1912–1941', *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies*, 6, 3 (1982), p.115.

65 Ross was a pianist, conducted for the local operatic society and believed singing was the heart of camp-life. Galbreath, pp.7, 15.

66 One of the earlier indications that Wilding was beginning to take an interest in more socially minded art movements can be found in her early involvement with The Group. On this see Gush, 'Cultural Fields of the Canterbury Plains', pp.187–207.

67 Maltz, 'Engaging "Delicate Brains"', pp.224–5.

68 See Pierre Bourdieu, ed. and introduced by Randal Johnson, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature*, New York, 1993.

69 'Notes on Health Camps'. Sunlight League Health Stamps Campaign. Miscellaneous 1930s, 1.19, MB183, MBL, UC.

70 'Children's Holiday and Health Camps', p.6. Sunlight League Publicity: Press, Radio etc. 1930s–1940s, 1.16, Box 1, MB183, MBL, UC.

71 Cora Wilding, *Murals for New Zealanders: Handbook for Art Students, 1946–47 Mural Competition*, Christchurch, 1946.

72 'Sunlight League Gardening and Keep Fit Hapu', Sunlight League Gardening and Keep Fit Hapus 1941, 1.4, MB183, MBL, UC.

73 8 March 1933, Sunlight League General Committee Minutes 1930–1936, 1.1, MB183, MBL, UC.

74 On Sandow see Daley, 'The Strongman of Eugenics'. On Rout and Hornibrook see Jane Tollerton, *Ettie: A Life of Ettie Rout*, Auckland, 1992; Wanhalta, pp.45–58.

75 The Sunlight League minutes for the Annual Meeting for 1933 described the keep-fit classes as 'physical culture classes' designed to improve the chance of women finding employment due to increased 'vitality'. 'Sunlight League of New Zealand, 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting Year Ending May 9<sup>th</sup> 1933', Sunlight League Miscellaneous, 1.23, MB183, MBL, UC.

76 Jill Julius Matthews, 'They Had Such a Lot of Fun: The Women's League of Health and Beauty Between the Wars', *History Workshop*, 30 (1990), pp.22–54. On the New Zealand movement see Sandra Coney, 'Health and Beauty Movement 1937– ', in Anne Else, ed., *Women Together: A History of Women's Organisations in New Zealand/Nga Ropu Wahine o te Motu*, Wellington, 1993, pp.267–9.

77 Matthews, p.32.

78 *The Aesthetic in the Treatment of Paralysis*, p.13, 4.7, MB183, MBL, UC.

79 Bell, pp.283–4. Saleeby, the founder of the English Sunlight League, also published on the healing benefits of music in 1929. C.W. Saleeby, ‘On Music as Medicine’, *Music Supervisors’ Journal*, 16, 1 (1929), pp.27, 29, 31, 55.

80 *The Aesthetic in the Treatment of Paralysis*, p.11.

81 See Matthews, p.44.

82 Wilding’s distaste for military precision comes through in her booklet on health camps. See *History of New Zealand Health Camps*, p.5, 1.16, Box 1, MB183, MBL, UC.