

Women and Politics in the Interwar Period: Using *Time and Tide* for Primary Evidence in A / AS Level History

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<https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource/women-and-politics-interwar-british-history-12430023>

Teachers Notes

Articles and letters in the centenary issue of the political and literary magazine *Time and Tide* are useful material for British domestic politics in the interwar period, particularly on the changing role of women (including the 1928 franchise act) and reactions to the international situation in the 1930s. These notes concern a few of the articles and letters reprinted in the centenary issue of *Time and Tide*, which is available [here](#). These notes give teachers more information, while students are given some context to enable them to position the evidence, have some understanding of cause and effect and use their own knowledge / carry out research.

These notes and the student worksheets can be used to support A / AS Level History Edexcel Route H: Democracies in Change – Britain Transformed 1918 – 1997, AQA 2M: Wars and Welfare: Britain in Transition and OCR Britain c. 1918 – 1951. The articles and letters can assist with understanding and evaluating:

- The changing political landscape and challenges to stability in Britain
- The changing role and status of women, including the right to vote and political advances, changes in family life and quest for personal freedoms
- Popular culture and entertainment - the growth of print media
- Social and cultural responses to the international situation

Additionally, these notes consider historical issues around reading primary evidence so that students can better understand historical concepts. This helps them to:

- acquire an understanding of different identities within society
- acquire an understanding of the nature of historical study, for example that history is concerned with judgements based on available evidence
- understand the different sorts of evidence can be examined to understand the past, e.g. magazines or advertisements
- develop their use and understanding of historical terms, concepts and skills

This resource has been developed in association with the AHRC-funded project '*Time and Tide: Connections and Legacies*' directed by Catherine Clay, Associate Professor in Feminist and Literary Studies at Nottingham Trent University, UK. For more information about the project, visit the project website [here](#).

All sources come from *Time and Tide* with the title, author's name (where known), date and pages to the centenary issue given (in brackets): <https://www.timeandtidemagazine.org/read-souvenir-edition>

This project aims to introduce the history of *Time and Tide* and related interwar women's periodicals to a wider public through a host of centenary celebrations including: a Souvenir Edition of *Time and Tide*, a Festival of Women Writers and Journalists, and an Exhibition of Interwar Women's Magazines at the Women's Library, LSE.

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Newspapers and Magazines

Time and Tide

There was an increasing number of magazines aimed at women published in the UK between 1919 to 1939 as well as pages in newspapers aimed at women. The increase was part of one in media publication generally - in 1922 there were more than 50,000 periodicals published in the UK and ten daily national newspapers. The magazines varied from story weeklies aimed at mill and factory workers (e.g. *Peg's Paper*) to high society fashion glossies, such as *Vogue*, as well as the domestic focus of *Good Housekeeping* and career focus of magazines for professional women, like *The Woman Engineer*.

Some of these magazines crossed the division between 'high' culture and 'low' culture with the incorporation of recipes and style tips alongside reviews of books, cinema and original fiction. Many of these magazines were edited by women with a mixture of male and female writers and journalists.

The weekly magazine *Time and Tide* was established in 1920 by the Welsh industrialist and feminist Margaret Haig Thomas, Lady Rhondda. Rhondda had been a suffragette and was imprisoned for arson in 1913. The magazine was aimed for a broad, if intellectual, audience. It was closely linked to the Six Point Group, Britain's leading equal rights feminist organization between the wars, which was founded by Lady Rhondda in 1921.

The content in the weekly magazine *Time and Tide* mainly reflected the progressive and feminist views of its proprietor and female board of directors, but it did publish wide ranging opinions on cultural, political and literary affairs. The extract below is from an article in which Rhondda positions herself as a proprietor of a magazine who wants to publish diverse opinions and good writing, whether she agrees with the writer or not.

This is in contradiction to the attitude of other more mainstream and popular newspapers such as Lord Rothermere (Harold Harmsworth) who used the fourteen newspapers he owned – including the *Daily Mail* – to promote his right-wing conservative views, including support of Hitler until 1938.

a) 'Notes on the Way by Lady Rhondda', February 9 1935 (11-12)

Extract:

To take a few concrete examples, I choose, if I can get them, such people as St. John Ervine, T. S. Eliot, G. D. H. Cole, Ralph Bates, Helen Fletcher, Raymond Postgate, Roderick Random, Professor Laski, Wyndham Lewis, Gerald Heard, Cicely Hamilton, Patrick Thompson, E. M. Delafield, Odette Keun, Louis Golding, E. M. Forster, Aldous Huxley, Ellen Wilkinson, Walter Lippmann, Norman Angell and Winifred Holtby, because I find them

honest, stimulating and entertaining writers. It seems to me to matter very little whether I happen to hold exactly the same views as they do, or even whether, on some matters, I hold distinctly opposed views. With some of them, with the two last named, for example, I almost always agree. With some of them it seems to me that I scarcely ever agree.

Activity:

Look up six of the names mentioned on the internet and list beneath their name what they wrote, their general political outlook and what (if any) causes they espoused. When you are using searching online also think about reputable sources that you could quote in an essay.

Assess whether Lady Rhondda is right in her assertion that she chooses writers with different opinions.

The Changing Role of Women in the 1920s and 1930s

1. Political and Legal Rights

a) The Equal Franchise Act, 1928

After the passing of the Representation of the People Act in 1918 women over 30 who occupied land or premises of yearly value not less than £5 (or women whose husbands held this property qualification), or women who were university-educated were able to vote.

From 1919 the Labour Party presented an equal franchise bill almost every year in the early 1920s. The National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship (NUSEC) pushed for a vote in favour of the equal franchise. Stanley Baldwin supported equal franchise from 1924 and when Prime Minister and Leader of the Conservative Party, persuaded his cabinet to support it too in 1927. The evidence indicated that more women voted Conservative than Labour and there was greater female support for the government as opposed to the unions in the 1926 General Strike. Opponents of equal suffrage, such as the Daily Mail, derided the move as giving the vote to 'flappers'.

There were petitions and marches for equal citizenship for women in the mid-1920s until the Equal Franchise Act in 1928 when all men and women got the right to vote in national elections at the age of 21. The first General Election in which women could vote on an equal basis to men was in 1929.

Students could also refer to the article on the 'Equal Political Rights Demonstration, July 9 1926, on 1-2 of the centenary issue.

'A Rainbow Procession. Saturday Afternoon July 3' and Advert, June 18 1926 p. 28.

A Rainbow Procession

Saturday Afternoon July 3

DETAILS are now available of the main scheme of this dramatic demonstration. Finding themselves hampered politically, exploited industrially, restricted professionally and debased domestically women are coming together again as women, to demand equal rights. Practical, as always, they are making this demonstration not only a thing of multitudes, but a thing of beauty. Each section will have its own colours and the marshals are to carry rainbow colours so that the whole vast effect will be coloured as a rainbow, distinct and definite, but all harmonious.

[. . .]

Mr. Baldwin promised to enfranchise these women during his Government's reign. Time is slipping by and he makes no move. The "under 30s" and the "over 30s" are not too pleased at having to remind Mr. Baldwin, as they have done, so often and at now having to rub it in by means of demonstration. The type of stupid politician who, mole-like, says "there is no demand," will, after July 3, be silent. If he does not see it and hear it for himself he cannot fail to hear of it.

All the old arts and long practice are co-operating in this united effort of women, organised and unorganised, party and non-party, old and young, trained and untrained, skilled and unskilled, professional and domestic, manual worker and brainworker; only the non-worker, the idler, the parasite have no share in it. **[June 18, 1926]**

Question:

Stanley Baldwin, Leader of the Conservative Party and Prime Minister, supported equal franchise but needed to persuade members of his own party.

Using your own knowledge, list the reasons for and against the Conservative Government giving women the equal right to vote all men over the age of 21. Why do you think the bill passed in the Commons in 1928?

b) The Six Point Group

The enfranchisement of some women in 1918 encouraged legislative changes to give women greater legal equality in the 1920s, for example The Guardianship of Infants Act in 1924 gave guardianship of infant children to both parents jointly. An enabling act in 1919 allowed women to enter some professions, such as the law, that they had been barred from. In addition, changes to divorce law in 1923 and property ownership in 1926, reflected women's changing domestic role as well as recognition of their political citizenship. Many women, however, felt that this legislative change did not go far enough.

The Six Point Group was founded in 1921 by Lady Rhondda, a former suffragette, to push for change on six aspects of women's equality – political, legal, economic, professional, moral and social. It was seen as a more radical counterpart to the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, which had been the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (or suffragists) until 1919, headed up by Eleanor Rathbone.

Further information about *Time and Tide's* links to the Six Point Group is available on this [timeline](#), which also features a photograph of Lady Rhondda with Emmeline Pankhurst.

'The Six Point Group', January 1923 (4-5)

Extract:

Whilst the objects for which the Group stands are actually of importance to every citizen in the country, they particularly and specifically affect women as women. Matters of special concern to women fall naturally into two groups, since there are two separate capacities in which women to-day stand in a special class. There is the group of reforms which affects women as mothers, and the group which affects them as wage earners. Or to put it in another way—there are the reforms which are concerned with the better protection of children, a matter which is of the gravest concern to every person, but which since the rearing of children is the special profession of so many women, is one on which women tend to have especially strong and definitely thought-out views—and there are the reforms which are grouped round the question of equality of status for men and women, most of which especially affect women in their capacity as wage earners.

The Six Point Group demands:—

1. Satisfactory legislation on child assault.
2. Satisfactory legislation for the widowed mother.
3. Satisfactory legislation for the unmarried mother and her child.
4. Equal rights of guardianship for married parents.
5. Equal pay for teachers.
6. Equal opportunities for men and women in the Civil Service.

Historical Explanations – Assessing an opinion:

Historian Jane Robinson has written that:

'If NUSEC was the progressive but well-mannered daughter of the NUWSS, the Six Point Group, two years younger, was ruder and louder – the natural successor to Emmaline Pankhursts militant Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU).'

Jane Robinson, *Ladies Can't Climb Ladders: The Pioneering Adventures of the First Professional Women*, London: Doubleday, 180

What do you think Robinson means by this statement? Use the source above and your previous knowledge of the campaign for women's suffrage 1903-1918 to inform your answer.

2. Sex and the Body

a) Birth Control

Marie Stopes published *Married Love*, a guide to sex and contraception, in 1918, after her own disastrous (and unconsummated) first marriage. It sold 400,000 copies by 1923 and over a million by 1939. Stopes followed this up with setting up birth control clinics so that women could get practical help in planning to have children at spaced-out intervals. Stopes was a eugenicist and developed the 'pro-race cervical cap' as part of her 'mission' to improve the race and health of the population. Stopes opened the first birth control clinic in London in 1921.

Naomi Mitchison was a prolific writer, social activist and regular contributor to *Time and Tide*. She described *Married Love* as an eye opener and championed birth control and the legalisation of abortion as well as writing frankly about sexuality and rape in her novels. Aside from articles, Naomi Mitchison mainly wrote historical fiction, often aimed at young adults, and incorporated many of her own progressive views into these books.

Another article of comparison in the centenary issue of *Time and Tide* is 'The Health of Women', which is a review of two books on menstruation by Vera Brittain. This could be used with the letter below to evaluate whether there was more openness about the biology of women's bodies during the interwar period.

Letter: The Population Problem, Naomi Mitchison July 6 1928

THE POPULATION PROBLEM

SIR,—It seems probable that after your admirable series of articles on population and the problem of contraception, many of your readers will be willing to consider an idea for their practical co-operation in solving some of the difficulties which confront anyone interested in birth control.

It is clear that birth control is already practised by large numbers in all classes; it is going to have profound effects of all sorts on the well-being of the community. Yet, up to now practically no scientific study has been made, either of the comparative advantages of different methods, or of the effects of the practice as a whole. The one thing that is clear is that no perfect method has been found, at once efficient, simple, æsthetically satisfactory and cheap. A good deal of laboratory work is being done on the subject now, but the ultimate test of any method must be made on healthy men and women living normally together.

There must be a large number of intelligent and public-spirited married couples who want to have children—or more of them—and to whom,

although they are willing to space them by the use of contraceptives, the advent of a child sooner than was intended would be a serious difficulty. These people could co-operate with the scientific workers by employing certain indicated contraceptives, old and new, and by keeping very careful records of all relevant facts in connection with their use. It is clear that reliable records can only be obtained from such people. Obviously this is a matter almost entirely for women: they take most of the precautions and all the essential risk. Can a sufficient number be found, each willing to help for a few years, to put this idea into practical form?

Will anyone who is interested write in the first place to me? There are first-class doctors, men and women, willing to give a good deal of time to practical investigation. They are in close touch with the research workers and understand as much as is, up to now, understood by anyone about contraceptive methods. When there are sufficient volunteers to make a start, they will be put in touch with these doctors, under whose direction the whole scheme will be carried out.

I will of course treat any communications in the strictest confidence.—
Yours, etc.,

NAOMI MITCHISON. [July 6, 1928]

Change and Continuity – Question:

In the 1920s birth control clinics were opened by Marie Stopes in London and Mary Stocks in Manchester. How might birth control and access to it make a difference to the role of women? Thinking about health and welfare in the period, what issues did women face with regard to having a family?

b) Changes to women's clothes and fashion

This advert illustrates changing fashion and freedom for women as well as the use of new technology in clothing. Rather than wearing a full laced and bone corset this 'corset belt' cover just the stomach and top of the legs and used rubber so it could be rolled on and off. Rubber was mixed with threads – cotton or rayon – to make a stretchy fabric.

Time and Tide magazine carried adverts for fashionable labels and some products, including this one for the Charnaux Corset Belt. An actual Charnaux corset is available to see in the John Bright Collection [here](#) – images of that and related collections could be used to supplement the advert. You could also direct students to these websites for looking at changing fashions:

- The V&A <https://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/fashion>

- The Costume Institute, The Metropolitan Museum of Art
<https://www.metmuseum.org/about-the-met/curatorial-departments/the-costume-institute>
- Manchester Art Gallery – Search Collection:
<https://manchesterartgallery.org/collections/search/?collections-search=corset>

Cautioning them, of course, that such collections tend to represent higher status clothing belonging to the middle and upper classes.

Advert: The corset belt, February 27 1932 (30)

the freedom of modern woman

ON page ii of cover will be seen a charming drawing by Miss Anna Zinkeisen which is intended to symbolise the freedom of modern woman. The Charnaux corset belt has been specially designed to foster this freedom in so far as it is within the capacity of a corset to do so.

The Charnaux corset belt is made from an 'Anotex' product, a wonderful material made by a new patented process which eliminates all the old objections to the use of rubber for corsetry.

The Charnaux corset belts are on sale at practically all the leading stores and shops throughout the country.

Prices 2½ and 3 Gns.

THE CHARNAUX

CORSET BELT

BRITISH MADE

British Patent Nos. 246532 & 257883
British Reg. Trade Mark No. 118024
Charnaux British Patent No. 236218

THE CHARNAUX PATENT CORSET CO., LTD. (Wholesale Only), 27, Bidegatehouse St., W.1.—Phone: Museum 4021-5

February 27, 1932

Examining Evidence – Activity:

Compare women's clothes and underwear from the 1920s and 30s to those in the 1900s and 1920s. List the changes in shape, freedom of movement, hem line, waistline etc.

Do the changes reflect changes in the role of women? Or are some features still similar?

c) Amy Johnson's breakthrough

Amy Johnson was from Hull and trained as a ground engineer while also learning to fly at the De Havilland works outside of London in 1928-29. In May 1930 she set off from Croydon Airport to fly solo to Australia in an attempt to break the former WW1 German airman and experienced pilot Bert Hinkler's record of fifteen days in 1928.

She had only flown for 100 hours solo but her engineering skills meant that she could fly her plane Jason the entire distance and fix it when needed. She made the journey in nineteen and half days.

The flight made Amy Johnson famous worldwide and she went on to make other ground-breaking flights. She became the epitome of 1930s glamour as well as the President of the Women's Engineering Society in 1935-37.

Time and Tide advertised in various professional women's magazines and developed a good relationship with the Women's Engineering Society, often advertising in and carrying adverts for their magazine *The Woman Engineer*.

Miss Amy Johnson's Flight', May 24 1930 (2-3)

'Miss Amy Johnson's Flight'

If it had been said before Miss Amy Johnson's historic flight that a young and inexperienced woman would successfully follow in the track of Mr. Hinkler, one of the most daring and experienced of male pilots, we have no doubt that the majority of people would have laughed ; especially as Miss Johnson had only an ordinary flying-school course and sixty hours' of air experience and no experience at all of long- distance flying. Her achievement is indeed remarkable and significant.

What Miss Johnson has done any young woman of like qualities—and there are hosts—can do. It is a question of a certain breakdown, conscious or unconscious, of mental barriers—a release from the conventional idea that piloting an aeroplane is in the first place a job for the man, and that the endurance and skill and mental balance needed for a flight of 12,000 miles over distant and dangerous lands and sea, can never be found in the female and are essentially and inevitably the prerogative of the male. The important and significant aspect of Miss Johnson's flight is that she has demonstrated once again that the sex division between male and female is absurd and obsolete, that both have to be regarded in the first place as individuals, and that there is no activity in the modern world that the one is less qualified to under- take than the other. **[May 24, 1930]**

Interpreting the evidence - Activity:

There is more information about Amy Johnson and her engineering ability [here](#).

Assess whether Amy Johnson was ground-breaking as an engineer and a pilot. Think about whether her achievements were typical of women in work at that time or celebrated because they were unique. Did she break through perceived physical and biological barriers too? You could consider how aviation and travel by plane was considered in this period too.

Challenges to Stability

Time and Tide had a 'feminist internationalist' and pacifist outlook with regard to foreign affairs and was internationalist in approach, looking to strengthen ties between nations and supported the League of Nations in order to prevent war. The magazine argued that women should have more of a voice in international politics and in 1931 incorporated as a monthly supplement the international news journal *Foreign Affairs*, edited by peace campaigner Norman Angell, to promote greater understanding of international affairs.

By the Munich Agreement in 1938 and German takeover of the rest of Czechoslovakia in March the following year, *Time and Tide* (and *Lady Rhondda*) had shifted from appeasement to the recognition that Hitler could not be negotiated with. The magazine broadly recognised the threat of fascism and the need to fight it, albeit with reluctance, though many of its readers (and contributors) remained staunchly pacifists.

The magazine covered the rising threat of fascism to women's newly won rights and freedoms, as well as to Jewish people, and the responsibility of women to as global citizens to respond to the international situation.

1. The Threat of Fascism

a) Cicely Hamilton on Germany in 1930

Writer and former suffragette Cicely Hamilton was a long-term contributor to *Time and Tide* and had been on its board of directors since 1921. Hamilton had attended boarding school in Germany before the First World War and served as a hospital administrator in the war. She published *Modern Germanies as seen by an Englishwoman* in 1931, which was based on articles, such as the one reprinted here, that she had written for *Time and Tide*. There is more on Cicely Hamilton [here](#). While *Time and Tide* published accounts by Hamilton of the rise of the National Socialists (Nazis) in Germany in 1930 and 1931, it also published more glowing appraisals of Hitler by the modernist and controversial writer Wyndham Lewis.

This account of the German Youth Movement by Cicely Hamilton, which drew on her time spent in Rheinsberg in May 1930, was published just after the parliamentary elections in Germany. The National Socialists (NSDAP) had increased their seats in the federal election from 12, only 36 seats behind the next largest party the Social Democratic Party (SPD).

'The Revolt Against Internationalism—German Variety by Cicely Hamilton', September 20 1930 (9-10).

This first extract follows Hamilton's observation that the German press is mainly anti National Socialist and her conversations with some Germans, who tell her that this is because the press is 'Jewish owned':

Race with them [the National Socialists] is everything—the German blood; thus only those in whose veins flows German blood are held worthy of German citizenship. Their programme demands, further, that all Jews and non-Germans are to be removed from positions of public authority and trust; it is even proposed that all Jews and non-Germans who have made their home in Germany since the outbreak of the war should be bidden to depart forthwith.... In the light of this more than drastic programme, is it to be wondered at if the Jewish-owned Press hits back?

In this second extract, Hamilton concludes that the National Socialist movement is anti-feminist and a masculine 'fighting party'. In an article the next month Hamilton warned of the threat to German democracy of the National Socialist party and of its militarism:

In conclusion: National-Socialism is anti-feminist. The Hitlerjugend [Hitler Youth] is a purely masculine business—no room for girls in its ranks; nor has its parent organisation much use for womenfolk, young or old, save as obedient followers. Adolf Hitler, their leader, has said as much in public; theirs was a fighting party, he declared, and therefore essentially a man's. It is true, there is a Women's Order of National-Socialism and I have even heard mention of a Maiden's Order; it is true, also, that the Women's Order voices its loyalty in the pages of a weekly paper. A nice Brown Shirt boy once pressed a copy on me—I am sure he thought I should like it. It is a humble little weekly, exhaling domestic subjugation of the pre-franchise era . . . A very humble little weekly.

Examining the evidence - Questions:

How does the idea of the 'Jewish owned press' fit into Anti-Semitism? (Think about other examples of anti-Semitism at the time).

What tone does Hamilton take in writing about the Hitler Youth? Why does she take this tone for her readership do you think?

How valuable do you think this is as a record of what is going on in Germany in 1930?

b) Ellen Wilkinson on the 'Nazi Terror'

Ellen Wilkinson had been in the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, the Independent Labour Party and Fabian Society before the First World War. During the war she was a pacifist and was employed by a trade union. After the war she was elected as a Member of Parliament in 1924 and was known as 'Red Ellen' due to the colour of her hair and political views. She was a regular contributor to *Time and Tide* and wrote books (including *The Terror in Germany* in 1933), particularly in her time without a parliamentary seat between 1931 to 1935.

The Labour M.P. Ellen Wilkinson was an early opponent of Fascism and warned about the threat from National Socialists. She later opposed appeasement and supported the Popular Front, which was formed as anti-appeasement group to unite left and centre-left opposers of appeasement against the National Government led by Neville Chamberlain.

Letter: The Nazi Terror, Ellen Wilkinson, April 15 1933 (17).

THE NAZI TERROR

SIR,—The natural astonishment and indignation of decent people against the unprovoked attacks of the Nazi storm troops on inoffensive fellow-citizens has somewhat obscured the tragedy that has overtaken so many educated German women.

The Fascist leaders have never disguised their disapproval of the independent woman worker. Captain Goering has defined woman's sphere as being the home, and her chief occupation the recreation of the tired warrior... two activities that may be somewhat difficult to reconcile. In the wholesale clearance of Jews and Socialists from any official positions, many women have lost their posts as doctors, teachers, public officials of all kinds, particularly in Berlin, where the Socialist municipality had carried its ideas of equality into practical effect by encouraging the employment of women in responsible positions.

But non-Jewish women not connected with any political party have also been compulsorily retired, and their places filled by men. Very few women are included in the lists sent by the Nazi local leaders to the Chancellor in response to his demand for trustworthy Nazis to fill the vacated posts. What women are included have been so for such positions as nurses and baby-welfare attendants, which could not be filled by men.

So great is the terror in Germany at the moment, and so vindictive the punishment on anyone suspected of complaining to foreigners, that any observer has to be careful with names and addresses, but the list of women of repute dismissed from their posts is already a long one. The unknown must number many more.

While it is quite impossible in present circumstances for foreigners to intervene in individual cases, it surely is the duty of the various

women's organisations in this country, irrespective of party or religion, to make a very emphatic protest against unfair discrimination against women as workers.

The liberties of women in this country, as of others, have been too hardly won, and are even now too precariously held, for it to be safe to allow the case of the German women to go by default.

I am, etc.,

ELLEN WILKINSON. [April 15, 1933]

Interpreting the Evidence - Questions:

What was the National Socialist policy with regard to women? [Think about Children, Church, Cooking]. Why might Ellen Wilkinson be alarmed by this?

How much do you think her attitude reflects changes to the role of women in British society at this time?

2. The responsibility to act

a) Spain and Writers

Sylvia Townsend Warner was a regular contributor to *Time and Tide* and wrote for the magazine about attending the Second Congress of the International Association of Writers for the Defence of Culture in Spain in 1937. The magazine was torn on the policy of sanctions, advocated by the League of Nations, against both sides in Spain, which the fascist powers of Italy and Germany broke with their obvious military support of Franco led Nationalists.

Sylvia Townsend Warner was a writer who became a communist in the 1930s, partly as a reaction to the international situation. After the civil war broke out in 1936 Warner went to Spain, with her partner the poet Valentine Ackland, to work in the Red Cross in support of the Republican Army. Both Ackland and Warner helped to found the Left Book Club, which specifically set up to publish books warning on the dangers of fascism.

Warner quotes Langston Hughes, who was an African American poet and journalist, who was closely associated with the Harlem Renaissance in the 1920s. In 1937-38, Hughes was a correspondent in Republican Spain for the *Baltimore Afro-American* and other African American newspapers. He was one of several anti-segregation activists to travel to Spain to support the fight against fascism.

'Letter: Aid for Spanish Intellectuals', Sylvia Townsend Warner, May 7 1938 (18)

AID FOR SPANISH INTELLECTUALS

SIR,—From Madrid, Langston Hughes writes:

Sometimes a meal consists largely of bread and of soup made with bread. Somebody is sure to repeat an old Spanish saying, “Bread with bread— food for fools.” Then we all laugh. One of Franco’s ways of getting back at Madrid is to broadcast daily from his radio stations at Burgos and Seville the luncheon and dinner menus of the big hotels, the fine food the Fascists are eating and the excellent wine they drink.

This is an appeal for money to send food to loyal Spain. There have been many such appeals, and it is to the credit of England that they have been answered. But this is a different appeal. It is an appeal for those men and women, loyal to their country, who are teaching in schools and barracks, nursing in hospitals, making drugs and anaesthetics in laboratories, carrying on researches in science, and preserving libraries and works of art. Their contribution to keeping up the spirit of the people and to mitigating the agonies of war has been of inestimable value.

Let us send them what reinforcements we can: the material reinforcement of such things as food and tobacco; the mental reinforcement of a gesture of friendship and admiration. Please send your money to: Spanish Intellectuals Fund, Writers Association, 23, Haymarket, London, S.W.1.

I am, etc.,

SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER. **[May 7, 1938]**

Evaluating the Evidence - Activity:

Look up the political affiliations of Langston Hughes and Sylvia Townsend Warner. What other writers do you know of who published and campaigned on the Spanish Civil War? Did they share similar views to Warner and Hughes?

How does this letter indicate the cultural response within Britain (and internationally) to the war and the rise of both fascism and communism?

b) A plea from a ‘provincial lady’

E. M. Delafield’s *The Diary of a Provincial Lady* records the minor (and sometimes major) tribulations of a middleclass woman living in the country with two children and a husband, who tries to be engaged in culture and fashion with not quite enough money. The Diary was serialised in *Time and Tide* and, with gentle irony, captures

the frustrations and thwarted ambitions of a woman living a domestic life. There is more on E. M. Delafield [here](#).

The anti-Semitic violence of the 'Kristallnacht' pogrom in Germany and Austria on 9-10 November 1938 shocked many British people, even those who had supported Neville Chamberlain's strategy of appeasement and the Munich agreement earlier in the year. Jewish homes and shops were looted, 267 synagogues were blown up, dozens of Jews were murdered, hundreds committed suicide and 30,000 Jewish men were sent to concentration camps for 6 weeks.

E. M. Delafield was a long-standing contributor of essays and short stories to *Time and Tide* from the early 1920s. She is best known for her *Diary of a Provincial Lady*, which was serialised in the magazine. Gently ironic, this letter is written in the same style and allows the the ordinary housewife's concerns to be heard and challenges them to overcome their reservations and take action.

Letter: Hospitality for Jewish Refugees, E. M. Delafield December 31 1938 (18)

HOSPITALITY FOR JEWISH REFUGEES

SIR,—May I, as a Provincial Lady, make the following suggestion to others ? Most provincial households have at least one guest room that could be offered to one or two Jewish refugees in need of rest and country quiet, for a month's hospitality or more.

As my own guests, although applied for, have not yet been allotted to me, I propose to deal frankly with the difficulties that will naturally occur to the mind of every housewife.

It will be possible to ask for guests able to speak English.

It will also be reasonable to suggest that Christian, or non-practising, Jews would be easier to entertain than those requiring special catering.

It is probably advisable to state a definite length of time for which hospitality is available.

Even so, the plan will undoubtedly mean extra work, added expense, a considerable sacrifice of time—possibly grumbling from the less imaginative members of the household—perhaps trouble with the maid—or maids—and additional difficulty in the already complicated business of running a small home today.

There is one consideration, and so far as I know one only—that disposes of all these objections. Are we going to wait to help those who have lost everything, and have suffered unspeakable cruelty and injustice, until we can do so with no slightest possibility of inconvenience to ourselves? If so, we shall wait a long time.

Offers of hospitality can, I believe, be made to Mrs. Ormerod's office at 5, Mecklenburg Square, London, W.C.1.

I am, etc.,

E. M. DELAFIELD. **[December 31, 1938]**

Understanding Change and Continuity – Questions: What difference did Kristallnacht make to the British public's perception of Germany? Why might Delafield's letter appeal to readers?

What might its limitations be? Think about where it is published, its readership, and Delafield's writing.

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<https://www.theiet.org/publishing/library-archives/the-iet-archives/online-exhibitions/women-and-engineering/the-woman-engineer-journal/>

Time and Tide Centenary Project Website – includes the edition of the magazine, further notes on many of the writers and a timeline:
<https://www.timeandtidemagazine.org>

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