

Millenium Hall By Sarah Scott It is a comment on Western society as well as on the strengths of Scott's novel that the message of Millenium Hall continues to resonate strongly more than two centuries later. Although steeped in religious virtue the women who are running the house offer an interesting look on what freedom looks like for women who are able to withdraw from the rest of society. Those who are disabled are educated and there is a rehabilitative element to the approach and it is emphasized that they should be treated with respect and care and if they are they will contribute to society. I'm done XD 256 It's hard to describe this book as it comes on the heels of reading other 18th century reading but it is interesting that women at that time were so subjugated that their response to their condition is to fantasize about a society that is all women. I wonder how much has changed for women in the world 256 i ripped out a good chunk of my eyebrows while reading this book 256



Librarian Note: There is than one author by this name in the Goodreads database. Sarah Scott (née Robinson) (21 September 1720 - 3 November 1795)[1] was an English novelist.

In 1750 at the age of twenty-seven Sarah Scott published her first novel a conventional romance. A year later she left her husband after only a few months of marriage and devoted herself thereafter to writing and to promoting such causes as the creation of secular and separatist female communities. The text may be seen as the manifesto of the 'bluestocking' movement—the protean feminism that arose under eighteenth-century gentry capitalism (originating in 1750 largely under the impetus of Scott's sister Elizabeth Montagu) like a later Mary Shelley lived through a number of hardships despite her upper-class background when forced into an unhappy marriage she divorced and was cut off by her father. Her smallpox-scarred face also affected her deeply making her seek female friendship rather than male companionship and making her devote herself both to literature and to help others affected by deformities and cripples. Society is permeated with a form of proto-socialism and equality and is a haven for women who have fallen on misfortune often at the hands of men or poverty injury or deformity. It's ideas are remarkably progressive considering it was written in the mid-1700s and despite its strong religious undercurrent it is certainly the most progressive of the utopias written in the 17th and 18th century. 256 Difficult to really judge - Millenium Hall is very obviously a book from another time and its obsession to impart a moral (Christian) lesson to its reader could not be more glaring. However there are some very interesting aspects in this story that tells me about the origin stories of the first inhabitants of this 18th-century feminist utopia in the English countryside. The narrative is very interesting framed as it is by two men arriving at the estate and them urging one of the women (who happens to be a cousin) to tell the stories interrupting and questioning every now and again and closing the story by directly addressing us the reader. Moreover the novel is fascinating in its way it must justify its inherent paradox: how can these feminist icons these unmarried women devout Chrsitians explain why they do not follow their duty to society and God and get married? Effectively we follow along as Sarah Scott concucts complex narratives of danger faith misfortunes (though not economic ones - these women sure do have their money sorted) love and learning to justify that at the end of the day a woman can never be freer than if she remains unmarried. Some critical aspects that definitely have my 21st-century mind reeling: the truly amazing classism the blatant and abjectly painful ableism and treatment of disabled people the fact that the she dressed like she wanted it excuse had already been employed

by men how much women judge other women (but will still show solidarity in front of men you go girls). faith/virtue and reason/learning) and seen that maybe some of these ideas were designed to not benefit women (think of the way in which female interests like fashion were apparently already then disregarded as mindless because the mind is male). They had a big ass house and garden manufactories money they took in other girls and young women and at the end of the day carved out a space in a society set up against them. it starts a bit tedious as these older novels often do but I like the episodic narrative structure so you can finish a portion and then move on to a different one in a mock argument process of how these women found their way to an 18th century feminist utopia. has the conduct theme going on so it's also infuriating at the same time that it proposes an utterly liberating and frankly quite sapphic communist scheme for this delicate society. Coincidentally one of the founders of this lovely place is his cousin who politely invites him and his annoying friend Lamont to stay for a few days and learn about the place. It reminded me of occasions in my twenties when I wanted a man to stop talking and leave so I talked in as boring and formal a manner as possible about the spatial planning system. Secondly the obligation to be suitably grateful that is placed upon those the women of 'Millenium Hall' helped reminded me of how under current grotesque wealth inequality poor disabled and elderly people are expected to be just as grateful for basic subsistence. Consider this quote:As the ladies' conduct in this particular was uncommon I could not forbear telling them that I was surprised to find so great encouragement given to matrimony by persons whose choice shewed them little inclined in its favour. Morgan smiling to see people promote that in others which they themselves do not choose to practise? We consider matrimony as absolutely necessary to the good of society; it is a general duty; but as according to all ancient tenures those obliged to perform knight's service might if they chose to enjoy their own firesides be excused by sending deputies to supply their places; so we using the same privilege substitute many others and certainly much more promote wedlock than we could do by entering into it ourselves. This may wear the appearance of some devout persons of a certain religion who equally indolent and timorous when they do not choose to say so many prayers as they think their duty pay other for supplying their deficiencies. This is especially interesting in light of comments elsewhere in the book on how important it is for the higher classes to set a good example to each other and the lower classes by exemplary behaviour. She is blackmailed into a marriage she does not want and forced by her unpleasant husband to cut ties with her beloved friend Miss Mancel because her husband doesn't want his wife to love anyone more than him. I was unsurprised to find discussion of 'Millenium Hall' in chapter 4 of *Surpassing the Love of Men: Romantic Friendship and Love Between Women from the Renaissance to the Present* when I checked. Despite all the trappings of virtue duty and Christian worship the Millenium Hall community still has a certain appeal as its founders navigate Georgian womanhood in quietly radical ways.

And that rejected a world which early feminists saw symbolized in the black silk stockings demanded by formal society: Millenium HallI really enjoyed this early take on a feminist society: 256 Sarah Scott was a British author and philanthropist who.

Thus rendering Millenium Hall a valuable artifact of our progress. From what I can gather it seems these two gentleman find themselves in a women's sanctuary, All the women have either lost their husbands or fallen on unfortunate times and through mutual friends have found Millennium Hall, The novel is comprised of essentially the histories of some of the founding women of this place. How they came to find themselves either in possession of or in need of Millennium Hall and I can't explain more than that. I can see how it fits into a Utopian genre but my god it was dull. There were that many women that I couldn't quite remember who was who.

But the lower orders are directed to appropriate manual work. It is also remarkable in that it welcomes older age and deformity in women as positives and bringing benefits: Running through the novel is an element of divine providence/retribution which is active in favour of the women in the

history. A striking example is in the history of one of the women where a man about to commit an act of rape has a stroke and is dies: Most of them are unscrupulous.

And it was hard enough getting through the first part: That this would be an ideal way to live; a female utopia: This revolutionary concept was given flesh in *Millenium Hall* first published in 1762 and generally thought to be the finest of her six novels, A prolific writer she published both novels political texts educational texts and books on history: *Millenium Hall* is not sci-fi per se but an interesting book in the line of utopias being one of the very first descriptions of a feminist utopia, The book takes the form of a frame tale and a series of adventures and how some of the female residents arrived at the female *Millenium Hall*: The Hall the characters live in is a model of mid-century reform ideas: Property is held in common and education is the primary pastime: The old and weak are taken care of and they do their part for the good of the society to the extent they are able. In one secluded part of the garden is a small village for dwarves where they can live in peace, Men are not banished but apart from the dwarves cannot become permanent residents but rather guests of the resident women, First and foremost of all ideologies in *Millenium Hall* is Christianity. The book is well-written even if it perhaps lingers a bit too long on the melodramatic parts of the women's stories: And perhaps I am also left wishing the ladies had stood up against the masculinist institutions of the Church and science they view as the cornerstones of a good person (i: I still have to respect Sarah Scott's vision and grieve for the fact that in a way much has still not improved today, 256 probably would've never read something like this if it weren't for my "Women & the Country House" seminar but now that I'm here this was kinda fun, as Virginia Woolf said we owe it to these foremothers of women's writing that we're here now in rooms of our own or if one lady was referred to using multiple names, Research will be done to fully wrap my head around this one, It isn't easy to read because it has that irritating eighteenth century habit of needing to be didactic and morally improving. It was written by Sarah Scott and describes a female run and populated community run on what might be described as utopian lines: Her sister Elizabeth Montagu is better known for setting up a female literary salon which became known as the Blue Stocking Society. This was short-lived and her family removed her from the marital home in 1752, She then lived with Lady Barbara Montagu where they pooled their resources and became active in helping the poor: Scott wrote primarily to provide an income writing several novels and some histories, *Millennium Hall* is partially based on her life with Barbara Montagu, The novel revolves around a community of women who hold their goods and income in common and whose primary pastime is education: Two gentlemen are touring the area (in East Anglia) and as one is distantly related to one of the women they visit. They are given various guided tours and hear the histories of several of the women who reside there and how they came to move to the community: There are educational pastimes music education for local children work for those with disabilities local industrial enterprises charities and much more, There is help and work for the poor and underprivileged but according to their station: There is education for all children self-centred sexually predatory and generally unpleasant, There are some notable exceptions but they tend to be older having learnt from life: There is a redemptive element and for the two men visiting the community it is mediated through the community itself, This novel has been rediscovered in this century but is still little known and read, Admittedly it is not an easy read being couched in the sort of language used in novels like *Clarissa* and there is an irritating piety present. 256 I found a copy of '*Millenium Hall*' in a library sale for 50p, I hadn't previously heard of it or so I thought and was intrigued by concept of an 18th century feminist utopia, Then I noticed the poor average rating on goodreads of 2, 8 so didn't actually read it until libraries had been closed for four months: It's hard for me to predict what I'll enjoy reading at the moment as my brain is emphatically not thriving. In this case I got lucky and found '*Millenium Hall*' much more fun than expected: I appreciated the gently subversive use of a familiar framing mechanism for utopian literature: By chance a man (and his annoying friend in this case) stumbles upon an alternative community and is given a tour and detailed explanation of it, In this specific instance our interloper gets into a carriage accident and discovers a bucolic country mansion in

which a community of women live virtuous and philanthropic lives, It was fascinating to read a utopia that appears emphatically pre-Enlightenment in sensibility and grounded securely in Christianity quite different to Victorian novels like *Erewhon*. The community depicted resembles a Protestant version of a convent that takes charity frugality and chastity very seriously: The women who run it manage their wealth communally and use it to employ and support poor children the elderly and disabled people, They establish what would now be termed social enterprises and offer young couples financial support to get married and set up a household: As the introduction written in 1985 asserts this compassion is presented in a manner that seems rather patronising and pious today. As I read the text though I was conscious of two other ways of looking at this: Firstly within the book itself this tone is one taken by women conversing politely with uninvited male guests who they very probably want to go away: Perhaps I am projecting my 21st century sense of irony onto 18th century sincerity. Nonetheless within the historical context women would obviously have to display unimpeachable Christian virtue in order to justify the radical step of refusing to get married: The support depicted here seems accompanied by fewer conditions and less suspicion than social security benefits in the UK and US: Not to mention the neoliberal theme that governments should be grateful that billionaires are willing to create precarious low paid jobs and workers should be grateful to have them. In other words there is still a utopian cast to the economics of 'Millenium Hall' aside from the feminist elements, It's a very pastoral preindustrial utopia however in which cities are painted solely as sources of dissipation and vice. The style of writing is of course very much of its time with long involved bouquets of subclauses, The edition I read as mentioned included a 35 year old introduction that left unmentioned what to me seemed like obvious subtext, Of the four 'Millenium Hall' ladies whose biographies are recounted Mrs Morgan is the only one who has actually been married. Once he's on his deathbed the two reunite and after his death live happily together at Millenium Hall, Lady Mary Jones and Miss Selvyn likewise prefer the company of their female friends: This might all be romantic friendship but they could also be a happy commune of lesbians: Indeed it is cited as 'the most complete fictional blueprint for conducting a romantic friendship', So I have come across mention of it before but didn't remember as I read Faderman's book back in 2014, Either way I enjoyed the fact that 'Millenium Hall' is essentially a lecture by a woman to men about the superior moral virtue and financial management of women without men: Given some of the boneheaded emails I've received recently from male colleagues there was something vindicating about this high tone. It is also notable that the narrator and Lamont actually listen with only brief interruptions: The message that solidarity between women across social classes and generations is essential as men cannot be relied upon retains relevance today: I honestly haven't even thought about the book in 2 months and I know what happens at the end. Nothing eventful is supposed to happen in the rest of the book translator and social reformer: Her father Matthew Robinson and her mother Elizabeth Robinson were both from distinguished families and Sarah was one of nine children who survived to adulthood, Although born in Yorkshire Sarah and the other children spent a great deal of time in Cambridge England and at Cambridge University. 3/5 256

**\*\*Actual Rating 2.5/5\*\***I've read this book.and I still can't tell you what its truly about. I've never been so confused reading a book before. I can't really think of any other name for it honestly. However there is an interesting approach to disability. This illustrates the nature of the men in the novel. I think I read between 1/2-2/3 of the book.e. But hey. I'm at a loss at the moment.[www.a-novel-idea.co.uk](http://www.a-novel-idea.co.uk) 256 This is an interesting novel published in 1762. Sarah Scott was a well-educated woman from a good family. Sarah Scott was married in 1751. There is no challenge to society's structures. But it is striking and quite revolutionary. He then repeats this in letter form to somebody else. Food education and healthcare are provided for all. I liked that; others may not.Does it surprise you answered Mrs. 256 DNF!I've given up..