Deborah Epstein Nord

In the article "Neither Pairs Nor Odds" Female Community in the Late Nineteenth-Century London," Deborah Epstein Nord discusses the lives of three women (Beatrice Potter Webb, Margaret Harkness, and Amy Levy) that built a social circle defined by the social confines of the New Women. She goes in depth on the way these women made a living and the types of literary works they produced. Each relied on this community as a means of challenging the preset social limits of women in a male dominated society.

Her explication of Amy Levy helps lend to the reasoning behind her stories. In Romance of a Shop, Levy writes about four unmarried women that use photography as a means of maintaining independence. In Reuben Sachs, we see how Levy feels that marriage is a social and political constraint that is forced upon women. Both stories, as Nord points out, are a look inside Levy’s persona.