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High tea at Halekulani: Feminist theory and American clubwomen

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University of Hawaii, 1989
HIGH TEA AT HALEKULANI:
FEMINIST THEORY AND AMERICAN CLUBWOMEN

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

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IN AMERICAN STUDIES

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Reading *The Majority Finds Its Past* was the beginning of my education in womanculture; an afternoon at Hanauma Bay with Gerda Lerner was the genesis of this work. Thus, I extend enormous gratitude to Gerda Lerner for both her scholarly contributions to the field of women's history and her friendly support of my work. Although I had spent several years searching for an avenue through which I could explore my ideas, in one afternoon she provided a simple solution—that it is not the specific group of women that one studies which is most important, but the questions asked which can make one's work significant. It was on this sunny Hawaiian beach that the questions addressed throughout this research were formed.

The most important aim of this research was to provide women a look at their own perspectives, helping them to realize the validity of their own experiences and the importance of this vision to the building of society. I am thus indebted to all of the dedicated women who created that body of feminist scholarship which provided a foundation for my work.

I would like to extend special thanks to my entire committee for their continuous encouragement, critiques and support over the past several years. David Bertelson, Ruth Dawson, James McCutcheon, and Anna Keppel were all generous
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Special thanks are reserved for The Outdoor Circle. They were extremely helpful and open with their files and time.

Intense study and research effects the lives of one's immediate family members in a variety of ways. My children, Jameson and Nicolas, have lived the majority of their lives in tandem with this research. There were times that they understood my need to tangle with the computer, and others when they couldn't understand my leaving for the library. Somehow, we survived the stressful and often tense times with love and humor. Thank you boys!

My appreciation for my husbandloverbestfriend, Thomas, comes at the end of these acknowledgements. It comes at the end because his determination to let me be and explore the nature of woman is what came at the beginning. His support has been the circle within which I could grow and express my ideas.
ABSTRACT

The goal of this research is to explore the existence of a 'female world view'. The main focus is on The Outdoor Circle, a Honolulu women's club, whose activities are viewed in relation to clubwomen throughout America during the 19th and 20th centuries. A comprehensive survey of American clubwomen along with club records, personal letters, transcripts of speeches and lectures, interviews and media accounts of Circle activities provide extensive data.

This research has three major objectives. First, to contribute to the expanding library of women's history. Second, this study addresses the following questions: What motivated women to organize? Do club activities suggest a value system unique to women? Did participation in clubs develop feminist consciousness?

The third objective is to suggest a revision to existing theories of women's 'sphere'. An extensive critical survey of contemporary feminist literature on this subject provides the foundation upon which this revision rests.

Women have been seen as marginal by traditional historians. As a consequence, their activities have also been seen as marginal. This study suggests the traditional view is simplistic because it ignores the values inherent in women's activities.
The values which guide women's behavior have been belittled by patriarchal society. Women's activities have thus been viewed as insignificant independent of the fact that they were conducted by women. But because these activities did not coincide with patriarchal priorities women were further devalued.

That women have their own value system is an underlying assumption within this work. Women organized into clubs in order to undo or redo what they considered unnecessary, inappropriate or unwanted within their communities. They had a different agenda.

What is concluded in this study is that clubwomen were doing what they wanted to do. They were aware they had a female perspective which would benefit the community. Association offered women an avenue through which they could express a unique set of priorities, a 'female world view', the counterpart to existing patriarchal thought. Clubwomen brought a female vision to the center of society.
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CHAPTER ONE

LEGITIMIZING WOMEN'S EXPERIENCE

Still, it must be recalled that during her earliest years on this continent, the Euro-American woman seems to have been the unwilling inhabitant of a metaphorical landscape she had no part in creating—captive, as it were, in the garden of someone else's imagination. Annette Kolodny

Womanthoughts

Throughout American history men have been predominantly responsible for planning, designing, constructing and managing the world in which both men and women live. However, women have always imagined places which reflected their own ideas, utopian communities such as Herland:

We saw... a land in a state of perfect cultivation, where even the forests looked as if they were cared for; a land that looked like an enormous park, only it was even more evidently an enormous garden. Charlotte Perkins Gilman.

Or perhaps an unnamed town in the imagination of Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, who in 1883 wrote:

The width and shining cleanliness of the streets, the beauty and glittering material of the houses, the frequent presence of libraries, museums, public gardens, signs of attention to the wants of animals, and places of shelter for travelers such as I had never seen in the most advanced and benevolent of cities below, these were the points which struck me most forcibly.

That women have a particular perspective with regard
to the building of their communities is illustrated well
in a recent poem by Patti Tana:

Men Against the Sky

From my porch I see men walk against the sky
on wooden skeletons of new roofs.
Their hammers tell me
they're raising the horizon.

The sign foretold condominiums by September.
Here it is the fall and naked cement blocks squat,
blunt tokens in a monstrous Monopoly game,
on the last empty lot facing the boardwalk.

There's no pretending this delay means stopping
higher buildings, more expense,
for when I face the south I see
they're boarding up the sea.

Mornings I can still face east and watch the sun
filter through the spruce. By close of day,
when pollution from the city dyes the evening rose,
there's no escape--they're boarding up the sunset.

Even at night the clicking tracks
tap tap tap a warning:
one day we'll wake and find
they've boarded up the sky.

Although not formally active within the public realm,
women in nineteenth and twentieth century America were
aware of the activities within their communities, and with
these they were not happy. They did not have access to
traditional modes of political or economic power; they did
not have professional license to affect their communities.

Women did, however, experience the world around them
in a unique way, and when they found it necessary to bring
their experience to the fore they found an avenue, the
woman's club, through which they shaped and molded society.
to reflect their own values. These associations provided a forum in which the female world view was expressed.

That there is such a 'female world view' is what women's history attempts to validate. Gerda Lerner has questioned traditional history and wondered how it would be viewed if seen through the eyes of women and ordered by female-defined values. She has suggested that it was not so much collusion on the part of historians but lack of vision which led them to neglect the women:

Women have been left out of history not because of the evil conspiracies of men in general or male historians in particular, but because we have considered history only in male-centered terms. We have missed women and their activities, because we have asked questions of history which are inappropriate to women.

It is the express purpose of this study to legitimize woman's experience and the perspective she has embraced. When not viewed from the perspective of traditional history, her contributions are substantial.

Basic Argument and Research Objectives

This research endeavors to address both the contribution of women to their communities through their associations and the significance of these activities in determining what is unique about women's experience, priorities and value systems. This will be done by way of three major objectives. First, the emergence of women's clubs across the United States will be examined in order to provide cohesive documentation about women associating.
Although scholarship on the history of clubwomen is emerging, there is still a dearth of material on this subject. Material about the club movement can be found in general histories of women; a selection of books, such as The Clubwoman As Feminist by Karen J. Blair and The Remembered Gate by Barbara J. Berg, deal with clubs specifically. The only other sources of information are in-house histories that have been published by a handful of clubs.

Organizing the material available regarding clubwomen will help illustrate that women's activities were significant in the development of communities. These activities have traditionally been viewed as marginal, the focus being on male-centered activities, those within the economic, political or military realm. However, when viewed differently, women's activities have been equally central. Thus there are many important questions to be asked. What factors motivated women to organize? Did they expect personal development from joining these clubs? Were certain kinds of activities prevalent throughout the many organizations across America? If so, do these activities suggest anything about women's priorities and value systems in general? Did women have a choice in initiating or selecting the kinds of activities? Did participation in these organizations develop feminist consciousness?
These questions lead directly to the second objective of this research, which is to examine in detail a particular women's club in order to give greater substance to the analysis. The group to be studied is The Outdoor Circle, an organization formed in Honolulu, Hawaii in 1911 for purposes of "making Hawaii beautiful". This club addressed the side effects of urbanization in Honolulu and was instrumental in cleaning up the community, planting numerous trees, shrubs, and flowers, and lobbying for legislation which would support its concerns. The intensity and visibility of its efforts make this group of women an especially appropriate resource for understanding woman's world view.

The same questions asked of the general history of women's clubs will be addressed more specifically with regard to The Outdoor Circle. Why did the women of The Outdoor Circle organize? Who were the women? How did they organize? What were their plans and goals for Honolulu? What did they actually accomplish? What methods did they utilize in their attempts to meet their goals? Did their organizational experience give rise to the development of feminist consciousness? Did they view themselves as powerful agents within their community? Were their activities merely extensions of their roles at home, or were they actually the embodiment of a different
female perspective? Were these activities part of an alternative value system which was marginal in patriarchal thought?

The third and final objective of this research is to suggest a revision of the theories of women's sphere. To date, the majority of historians have viewed the public activities in which women have been involved as logical extensions of their place or 'sphere'. This 'sphere' has been seen as what is left over after the men have taken responsibility and control over whatever interests them. Thus, historians have argued that the community work of women's clubs over the years has been merely an extension of the traditional female roles of nurturing, beautifying and protecting the home. Women took the lead in caring for not only children, but also the elderly and weak. They cared for the extended family and community. Women were also expected to clean up the home and keep it presentable and comfortable for their families as well as visitors.

This conventional view has been acceptable because it has seemed so logical. If woman's roles have always included child care, health care, cleaning, and gardening, these same roles carried out within the public sphere are perfectly consistent with woman's private activities. In fact, this is precisely the suggestion of many historians, such as Carl Degler, who attempt to explain women's forays
into the public sphere by suggesting that somehow men allowed women to work on particular aspects of community life because these were actually extensions of the home.

This particular study will go beyond this 'relegated sphere' approach and will modify the existing theory. The working hypothesis is that regardless of the fact (one which is incontrovertible) that women have not had equal access to formal decision-making within their communities, the kinds of activities to which they devoted their energies have not been necessarily the 'scraps' left over by men but viable areas of concern high on a list of priorities within a value system of their own.

Inherent in this hypothesis, then, is the assumption that women have their own value system. This has been suggested by many cultural feminists and has been central to the argument of placing women in key decision-making positions, an argument which suggests that women's decisions would lead to different conclusions. However, that women have their own value system is difficult to prove because there has not been a preponderance of women in powerful positions making decisions which could serve as the basis for research. Thus, the argument in favor of a separate female world view can only be proved by going deep within the experiences and activities of women.

Since the early 19th century American women have organized themselves for a variety of reasons. One of
these has been the woman's club devoted to community improvement; these improvements have ranged from educational and health concerns to city parks and playgrounds. Reviewing these activities suggests that these particular clubwomen have always been in the process of undoing or redoing something within the community initially developed by men. If this assessment is taken to its logical conclusion, it follows that women with access to power might well have made very different decisions and policies in the first place.

Additionally, if this undoing or redoing can be seen as proof that there is a difference in women's way of thinking, men's acceptance of these activities suggests that the women's ideas may at times have been preferable. In other words, in order to be successful in whatever their clubs might have attempted, women had to persuade men that their ideas were valid. For instance, The Outdoor Circle fought billboards in Honolulu for fourteen years and was finally successful. However, this success would not have been possible without the eventual agreement by the men that billboards were an unfavorable presence in the community. Male acquiescence was not simply a result of humoring their women.

This is not to overlook the fact that women were responding and reacting to aspects of their communities which were already in place, thus giving them the
advantage of hindsight. However, men eventually had the same advantage yet continued along a course of economic and technological expansion which continually ignored the human needs and aspects of society. The urbanization and industrialization of America was not an overnight event; however, most men did not respond to the negative effects of these changes until the early 1900s as part of the Progressive movement. Women were at least fifty years ahead of men in their response to what some called progress.

The basic argument of this dissertation is that women organized into clubs in order to gather momentum and power for purposes of undoing and redoing what they considered unnecessary, inappropriate and unwanted activities in their community. These actions suggest that twentieth century women of the middle and upper class had a perspective different from men's, a different agenda. Not only did these clubwomen care about things not taken into account by men; they saw the problems differently, and had their own solutions. They also had the courage to say that what the powerful, influential and sometimes beloved men in their communities had done was wrong, or at best insufficient.

The organizational strategies utilized by the women to wield power and influence are also important aspects of this study. Historically it has been true that for
American men access to power has primarily been available within the Caucasian middle- or upper-classes. This has also been true for women. It was predominantly Caucasian middle- to upper-class women who formed and joined the organizations which eventually made a significant impact on their communities. This is true for the members of The Outdoor Circle in Hawaii; when studying the activities of this club, one is dealing with the apex of power for both women and men. Thus, when I suggest that a female point of view exists, it is a perspective drawn from a particular social and racial group. Further research needs to be done to establish whether the same phenomenon exists in different groups of women.

What is important is the combination of techniques used by these women's organizations. In order to succeed in their work, women used a variety of strategies. These methods were similar to the business and political methods of their husbands and fathers. From the standpoint of their own social class, they emulated establishment techniques: access to power through their 'old man' network, use of social connections, financial stability and backing. However, these same women borrowed other techniques. Methods such as boycotting, a rubber stamp campaign, phone calls, letters and other grass-roots activities were not necessarily in line with traditional establishment procedures. Women needed to pull from both
establishment and non-establishment methods in order to secure and achieve their goals. Perhaps this fact proves that women did not have equal access to power, but it also shows that their impact was significant. They were determined; they did achieve their goals.

Important questions must be answered in order to carry out this line of argument. Are women's clubs political institutions? Have women affected their communities by designing their own power structures? Are the values inherent in the decisions and actions of women's organizations particularly female? Gerda Lerner has emphasized the importance of documenting the historical contribution of women to the building of our society. This study will both document the activities of clubwomen and set forth the theory that women's effects on and contributions to society have always been illustrative of what they have seen as important and necessary examples of a female value system.

Perhaps it has been the patriarchal yardstick with which the world has been measured and documented that has made women and their concerns 'marginal'. Too much of history has been based on the masculine view of social reality, which fundamentally ignores women as social actors. Sidestepping traditional historiography and legitimizing woman's experience becomes the most important focus of this endeavor.
The Female World

The differences between male and female ideals and ideas are rooted in centuries of different habits, duties, ambitions, opportunities, rewards and therefore, perspectives. Annette Kolodny suggests that "the forms a fantasy may take, after all, are constrained by what the culture makes available to the imagination". Thus, women had little choice since the early 19th century but to draw their perspective from the domestic realm. In her own life Charlotte Perkins Gilman challenged the idea that women embodied the nurturant/mothering ideals. Nevertheless, these ideas permeate Gilman's utopian novel Herland and remain the basis for the widespread belief in separate spheres.

The world of women has been either neglected or documented in such a manner as to suggest that it is truly an abberation from norms rooted in patriarchy. Mary Daly suggests:

Patriarchy is itself the prevailing religion of the entire planet, and its essential message is necrophilia. All of the so-called religions legitimating patriarchy are mere sects subsumed under its vast umbrella/canopy. They are essentially similar, despite the variations. All--from buddhism and hinduism to islam, judaism, christianity, to secular derivatives such as freudianism, jungianism, marxism, and maoism--are infra-structures of the edifice of patriarchy. All are erected, as parts of the male's shelter against anomie.

As Daly suggests when women did find their way into the
history books, their lives were discussed as mere counterparts and reflections of patriarchal storytelling.

Daly emphasizes the necessity of spinning and weaving the stories of women's lives together so as to discover the individual and collective history of women. She suggests that traditional academic enterprises do not see or hear this "spinning" and therefore they attempt to "box it out or box it in to some pre-existing field." Discovering the female world is a task that does not fit neatly into male-centered and defined categories. It is a subjective discovery by woman/women. As Daly points out:

It is for each individual Journerer to decide/expand the scope of this imagination within her. It is she, and she alone, who can determine how far, and in what way, she will/can travel. She, and she alone, can discover the mystery of her own history, and find how it is interwoven with the lives of other women.

This process is a form of consciousness-raising that is woman-centered, a method of discovering the roots of the past and the celebration of "womanthought" in the future.

There are opposing views regarding the validity and value of the study of women and of this conceptualization of a female world, separate from that of men, with its own set of characteristics. Many women historians regard this concept of the 'female world' as one which can be used against women. Viewing the female world of ideas and values as separate from that of men could be construed as placating and patronizing women. Jesse Bernard suggests
that this actually tells us more about the male world than about the female world. Because the 'real' world consists of both men and women, the female world is an equal part of society. However, the separation of the two suggests that the male world has been viewed as the primary social system in which a female world is allowed to exist and against which it is compared.

The end of the eighteenth century marked a change in the lives of both men and women; work was moved out of the home into the public arena. This was the beginning of the public/private dichotomy which has been used to illustrate and rationalize the segregation of men and women. The concept of 'women's sphere' was strengthened during this period and has been instrumental in describing the lives of women for over a century. Bernard suggests that by the nineteenth century this concept was 'a powerful ideological tool' justifying the increasing break between the world of men and women, especially as a result of industrialization and urbanization. Men worked outside of the home and women worked within the home and cared for the children. Ann Douglas in The Feminization of American Culture finds that the institutionalization of the sphere of domesticity, sometimes referred to as the "cult of domesticity", was actually responsible for making women slaves to the home. She suggests that the kind of rationalization that one finds in Catharine Beecher's
attempt to find equality in what Bernard calls the "separate-but-functionally-equal nature" of women's sphere was instrumental in keeping women out of the public sphere.

Beecher emphasized the importance of 'woman's work' and called for mass education for women regarding all aspects of domestic life. Bernard suggests that Beecher "sought to reconcile the political inequality of women with the ideology of democracy" by giving women their own realm in which to operate. This push for domestic education and the call for a separate women's sphere was an attempt to give women a sense of importance and to raise their consciousness about their own qualities and came upon the heels of the eighteenth century assumption that dividing the world of men and women was actually a divine way of organizing society.

This divine organization centered on the values of the home. John Demos has found that a sort of 'moral halo' was associated with the family. Demos views the family as set apart from public life:

The family becomes a kind of shrine for upholding and exemplifying all of the softer virtues--love, generosity, tenderness, altruism, harmony, repose. The world at large presents a much more sinister aspect. Impersonal, chaotic, unpredictable, often characterized by strife and sometimes by outright malignity...14

Susan Saegert and Gary Winkel view the home as intimately tied to the definitions of the roles of men and women;
they argue that it is actually a cultural symbol which reflects these roles. This interpretation suggests that the home, considered 'woman's place', has been the source of her oppression. According to Nancy Wolloch, women responded by embracing the values of the home for it provided women with an arena for self assertion and a "rubric for a feminine value system". It was the foundation upon and within which women could build a power base.

Advocates of the study of home economics, such as Catherine Beecher and associations such as the National Congress of Mothers placed the individual homemaker on a pedestal. However, some women criticized the whole movement for being not at all in the best interests of women. Charlotte Perkins Gilman disputed the idea of separate spheres; she questioned the belief that women were naturally suited for homemaking and mothering. In *Women and Economics* she sought to create strategies to liberate women from the home in pursuit of a larger and varied life outside it. Michelle Rosaldo has also criticized the consequences of separate spheres and found that the wider the social gap between the private/woman and the public/man, the greater the devaluation of women.

What others have failed to address, Nancy Cott illustrates well. In *The Bonds of Womanhood* she argues that 20th century assumptions distort the way women
perceived their own lives and progress. She suggests that as production shifted out of the home and increasingly into the city/factory the idea of "women's sphere" was born out of the need of women to redefine their identity and status. To keep from being deprived of a set of responsibilities, they were presented with and embraced a different set. A flourishing male democratic society was not yet prepared to give equal opportunities to women. Thus the rationale to keep the sexes separate; thus the move by women to strengthen the bonds of sisterhood.

The belief was generated that women's identity was rooted in the private female sphere and that women's characteristics would eventually be useful in the public sphere. Estelle Freedman suggests that the separate institution building evident in the late nineteenth century was based on the notion of a private female sphere. The idea of separate spheres was extended beyond the home in response to rapid industrialization and urbanization. Carol Hymowitz states that "the needs of society were too great to allow the better sex the luxury of remaining silent." 17 The concept of the virtue of motherhood was used to justify women's foray into the public realm.

The process of defining womanhood by extending the female sphere is best illustrated by the work of Carl Degler. In *At Odds* he suggests that relegating women to
the home was actually a positive move. As the complexion of society changed, it became evident to women that they had something to offer to the building of their communities. As this study indicates, women moved into the public sphere by forming and joining a variety of organizations. Degler interprets this move as firmly rooted in traditional gender roles. He finds that the wide variety of activities in which clubwomen participated were only extensions of traditional values, such as nurturance, compassion, and support. In addition, these activities dealt with a range of issues related to social and moral reform—everything from education, child care, sanitation, to city beautification were all seen by Degler as extensions of the traditional role of women.

What has not been accounted for by historians such as Degler is that women actually preferred to define their priorities in this manner. Women became active in various organizations and obtained increasing educational and professional opportunities; the logical deduction that one draws from this activity is not necessarily the extended sphere theory, but rather a clear indication that women were carving out their own niche. This is not to suggest that women did not see the value of the public/private dichotomy. They were, in fact, living in a society which did not grant them equality in all areas, and a separate sphere allowed them to carve a niche of power for
themselves. What is critical here is what they decided to do with the power they had garnered for themselves.

Nancy Cott has simplified the successive interpretations of women's sphere. She suggests that the first feminist historians of the 1960's and 1970's viewed women as prisoners or victims of an ideology imposed upon them. Keeping women in the home suited the men's vision of social order. A revision of this theory interpreted the realm of domesticity as a place where women could gain personal advancement. It allowed them to influence both their environment and men. The third interpretation viewed women's sphere as a basis for strengthening identity, a subculture of women who saw the value in forming alliances with each other.¹⁸

An alternative approach to these historical interpretations about women's sphere has been suggested by Gerda Lerner, Adrienne Rich, Jesse Bernard, and Mary Daly. They do not see women in subcultural terms but rather suggest a woman-centered analysis dealing with historical information about the lives of women. Hester Eisenstein defines this woman-centered analysis as "the view that female experience ought to be the major focus of study and the source of dominant values for the culture as a whole."¹⁹ This means that one studies women's experience as the norm, and explains the male world in comparison. It is a reversal for the historian. Jesse Bernard
expresses this perspective well:

The idea is to deal with the female world in and of itself, as an entity in its own right, not as a byproduct of the male world. She argues that both the experience and the world experienced are demonstrably different for men and women. Our social system is not composed of males alone. Although some might argue the moral superiority of women, the kind of analysis advocated by Bernard and others does not lean in this direction. Until recently the discovery of the female world as a separate entity was carelessly ignored. No one asked the right questions.

To begin the arduous task of documenting women's experience, Gerda Lerner has asked whether one could determine a person's experience, activities or consciousness by looking at gender. If so, then the whole issue becomes what Adrienne Rich calls "a politics of asking women's questions". Rich advocates asking these questions so that the integrity of all women will be honored. Thus, as one shifts toward women-centered analysis, women's history can be written; a story which does not limit itself to a sphere in which women are allowed to exist, but embodies all of women's experience. Women must see themselves as the center. Mary Daly argues that:

The primary intent of women who choose to be present to each other, however, is not an invitation to men. It is an invitation to our Selves. The Spinsters, Lesbians, Hags, Harpies,
Crones, Furies who are the Voyagers of Gyn/Ecology know that we choose to accept this invitation for our Selves. This, our Self-acceptance, is in no way contingent upon male approval.

Therefore, documenting women's lives must also not be contingent upon the assumptions of traditional male historiography.

**Documenting Women's Experiences**

The historical approach most significant to the conceptualization of this work is that of women's history. This is not to neglect contributions from revisionist historians who have challenged conventional analysis, nor the new social historians whose departure from traditional interpretations has greatly broadened the scope of history. The inadequacy in both of these approaches, however, is their exclusion of women.

One Progressive historian, Mary Beard, did address women. In *Women as Force in History* she made a case for studying women and their contributions to society, and her work has been heralded by many feminist scholars as groundbreaking. Although her ideas were defined by the patriarchal vision, she raised a number of significant questions about contemporary historiography. As Gerda Lerner points out:

> Implicit in Beard's work, whether she fully understood it or not, was the recognition of the duality of women's position in society -- women
are subordinate, yet central; victimized, yet active. Thus Beard opened the vistas to the study of women.

The new social historians understood the importance of moving beyond the realm of economic and political history and asked questions about the private lives of ordinary citizens—male citizens. Thus, until the recent emergence of a new genre of social history women had not been given equal space in the history books.

Inspired by the women's movement in America since the early 1960's, women's history has evolved into a field of its own. Anne Firor Scott defines women's history broadly:

> Women's history is the study of the life experiences, the activities, the values, the functions, the relationships, the common problems, the consciousness, the life cycle of women—as these have changed over time in different times and places in different groups—studies from the point of view of the women themselves.

Gerda Lerner in *The Majority Finds Its Past* suggests that to many, women's history, in its simplest form, is the history of women. That is, a piece is missing from traditional history; so the study of women should fill in the blanks. She argues, however, that there are limitations to this simplistic view and finds that it is necessary to borrow tools from other disciplines. Thus, women's history becomes much more than a filling in of blanks; it is both historical methodology and a field unto itself.
Attempting to define women's history has been a complicated matter. William Chafe notes that sometimes narrow definitions undermine the richness and complexity implicit in the study of women:

There have, in the past, been tendencies to define women's history as "contributors' history," focusing on famous women, or as "protest history," focusing exclusively on protest activity. Other historians suggest that women's history to date has been varied. According to Ann D. Gordon, Mari Jo Buhle, and Nancy Schrom Dye:

Women who look to the current body of historiography in order to gain a better understanding of the social forces which have shaped their lives will find that writing on women falls into four categories: (1) institutional histories of women in organizations, (2) biographies of important women, (3) histories of ideas about women and their roles, and (4) social histories of women in particular times and places.

Most of the histories of women in organizations have been about the struggle for suffrage. Only recently have historians looked at other groups of women, such as clubwomen. Biographies of women have often been narrow in scope. Because their experiences have not been part of the public record, the personal lives of women are difficult to ferret out. Although much attention has recently been given to diaries and letters as historical records, few women passed these on through the generations.
A combination of the histories of women's place and their activities during particular time periods might be the best way to explain women's experience. Gerda Lerner is probably the most significant contributor to the growing discourse about how to adequately tell the story of women. The first item on her agenda was to take women from the margin and place them into the center of study—a simple statement but difficult task.

Lerner suggests that the category of "women" is too large to study as a whole. Although more than half of the population, women are also members of different classes, races, ethnicities, religions, regions etc. Thus, she suggests that "it is useful to deal with the status of women at any given time—to distinguish their economic status, family status, and political-legal status." In addition, she argues that it is important to compare society's view of woman's place with the actual status of women at that time, thus painting a more complete picture.

The 'oppressed group' model does not address the significant contributions of women in America. True, women were (and are) deprived of political and economic power, but through other means they wielded power and affected changes and growth in their communities. A vital question to this study and all of women's history, has been asked by Lerner. How do we judge the contributions of women? What model do we use when we study women's
activities? Lerner asks:

Are women noteworthy when their achievement falls exactly in a category of achievement set up for men? Obviously not, for this is how they have been kept out of the history books up to now. Are women noteworthy then, as the early feminists tended to think, if they do anything at all? Not likely. The fact remains that women are different from men and that their role in society and history is different from that of men. Different, but equal in importance. Obviously their achievements must also be measured on a different scale.

Lerner has laid the foundation for many scholars who are now attempting to develop a clear methodology and standard by which to study women. This includes the search for new conceptual frameworks, periodization, and an essential paradigm shift. As Lerner points out:

It demands a fundamental re-evaluation of the assumptions and methodology of traditional history and traditional thought. It challenges the traditional assumption that man is the measure of all that is significant, and that the activities pursued by men are by definition significant, while those pursued by women are subordinate in importance.

The notion that civilization is man-made must also be challenged. Unearthing the myriad of contributions women have made through the centuries and viewing them as equally significant to those of men is one part of writing women's history. More important, however, is what women's activities can tell us about their perspective, world view, and priorities. Thus, in order to learn about women, we must ask women's questions.
Methodology

The methodology used for this dissertation is interdisciplinary in nature, drawing from the humanities and social sciences. However, women's studies as discussed in this chapter is the framework within which the issues are addressed; it organizes the questions raised.

Women's studies as a field was a response to both social and political movements; therefore, essential to its perspective is a critique of traditional assumptions and theories. Gloria Bowles and Renate Duelli-Klein in Theories of Women's Studies argue that, "women's Studies is concerned with the patriarchal biases inherent in the traditional disciplines and attempts to deconstruct them." Thus, a feminist perspective is central to this dissertation. Helen Roberts in her book Doing Feminist Research suggests that we should "challenge the hierarchy of credibility." She continues:

We begin by identifying sexism as an ideology, in the sense that it generalizes from the experience of one section of society, men, to create an explanation of the experience of both men and women, of the organization of society as a whole, and of the power relations within.

Gloria Bowles points out that the ultimate goal of women's studies is to raise the status of women; the research becomes for women rather than on women.

Research is not value-free or unbiased. The male bias is evident in all of written history. Speaking of
sociology Roberts argues:

Feminists, in stressing the need for a reflexive sociology in which the sociologist takes her own experiences seriously and incorporates them into her work, expose themselves to challenges of a lack of objectivity from those of their male colleagues whose sociological insight does not enable them to see that their own work is affected in a similar way by their experiences and their view of the world as men.

An interesting dilemma for the woman researcher is dealing with the tension between having been schooled in traditional male historiography and discovering and interpreting data outside that particular rubric. The methodology of women's history is in flux and not yet second-nature to the researcher; therefore, it is often difficult for her to avoid traditional interpretations. In this way the work becomes personal; the difficulty lies in separating the research from the researcher.

The purpose for studying The Outdoor Circle is not to develop an institutional history of this club but rather to provide a case study through which I can illustrate the 'female world view' discussed later in this chapter. In addition, my goal is to portray the women as they saw themselves, and this, understandably, will be a positive view of their activities. I am aware that there are a range of negative judgments that could be made about their attitude and their work, but I intend to gain an understanding of their values and behavior.
The Outdoor Circle as an organization and as a group of women can be studied from many perspectives. My work addresses class and does not attempt to deal with the racial concerns and complications of Hawaii's community.

Sources

Materials were gathered for this research in a number of ways. The majority of documents concerning the Outdoor Circle are housed at the State Archives in Honolulu, Hawaii. These files contain information about the Circle from 1911 to 1967. The remainder of the files are available at the offices of the Outdoor Circle. The documents are varied: minutes of meetings, written speeches delivered at conferences or on the radio, records of money spent, copies of letters sent, personal notes and journals kept by the officers through the years, poems, songs, and a host of other data which helped in piecing together its history.

Both the files at the archives and at the Circle office contain numerous newspaper clippings reporting the club's activities. In fact, the Circle office has annual scrapbooks which contain the majority of newspaper articles published about this group locally. Also consulted were early issues of Paradise of the Pacific, a Honolulu magazine which contains a number of articles describing the goals and aims of the organization. In addition to the written material on the Circle, several
members of the organization were available for interviews, providing a personal side to the Circle's activities.

The dissertation also relies on oral histories. The focus of oral history is on the individual, creating a new type of validation of the human experience. James Hoopes in *Oral History* points out:

> For it is he or she who thinks and feels and may be able to reveal something of the propelling force that moves him or her and perhaps others. Oral history's focus on the individual therefore should enable it to make a significant contribution to social history.

Human experience is influenced, according to Hoopes, by three large categories. First of all, society, the place in which we live among others, has the power to determine our behavior. Secondly, culture—the ideas, knowledge, customs, values and attitudes within society, enable individuals to choose patterns of behavior and yet also can blind us to other possibilities. The final influence on the human experience is that of personality. This is the individual response to cultural and social influences. Oral history allows for each personal contribution to come to the fore.

The technique of interviewing women is necessarily different from that of traditional sociological data gathering. Roberts suggests that:

> ...not only does feminism necessarily contravene the axioms of interviewing as established in the methods textbooks, but that these textbook descriptions of how social scientists would or do obtain their data are based on a masculine
view of social reality which is fundamentally at
odds with the viewpoints of women as social
actors. 35

It is the creation of a new type of historical material on
women, validating their experiences, the documentation of
which will allow for communication among women through the
ages.

Published materials consulted for this study can be
divided into three general categories: club histories,
women's history, and literature on feminist theory which
tries to explain or interpret women's experiences. The
club histories are histories of clubs as institutions, not
of the women themselves. These detail the various public
activities of women's civic organizations. Included in
the sources for women's history one finds a wide variety
of literature written in the past twenty years. Material
on feminist theory was found both in many of the women's
history books, such as those by Nancy Cott, Gerda Lerner,
Sheila Rothman and others. Specific books, such as Hester
Eisenstein's Contemporary Feminist Thought, Mary Daly's
Gyn/Ecology, and Feminist Theorists, edited by Dale
Spender, provided the theoretical background.

Definitions and Limitations

There are several words that are used throughout this
dissertation for which I intend specific meanings. I
define "sphere" as the social, economic, and political
roles of women in American culture at a particular time,
as well as the cluster of ideas that reflect and define these roles. Also relevant are factors such as class, race, ethnicity, age and region which shape these roles and change over time.

"Space" will be defined as the physical setting for human activity, sometimes shaped by human effort. It can be the natural environment such as the frontier or a built environment, such as the city. This "space" can be public and accessible or private and intimate.

I agree with Janice Monk's definition of "landscape" as distinguished from nature by its incorporation of the cultural. She suggests that:

It (landscape) is a more restrictive concept than environment and place, first because of its focus on the visual and second because it includes only relationships between people and their material world.  

Thus, the landscape incorporates both the natural and the man-made, the personal and the cultural.

Webster defines female as "the sex that bears the young and produces eggs" and feminism as "the theory of the political, economic, and social equality of the sexes". Within these definitions a feminist is basically just someone who believes in a prescribed theory, and the term female describes sex. For purposes of this study I would like to expand the definitions of both 'female' and 'feminist'. "Female" does describes sex but can also mean the whole range of human
characteristics which have been linked to the feminine. Thus, a female world view need not be held only by the "sex that bears the young", but is a perspective which can be embraced by anyone.

The 'male point of view' has been predominant throughout history and has guided decision-making and policy. The 'female point of view' has been belittled and ignored, yet this perspective can be viewed as a strong alternative/addition to existing patriarchal society. Examining the activities of clubwomen in America will make a case for the strength and impact of a female world view.

To define feminism, and thus the concept of 'feminist', one can draw from a myriad of interpretations of a theory which continues to evolve. My definition is an amalgam of several. I agree with Barbara Berg when she suggests that:

...feminism is used to describe a broad movement embracing numerous phases of woman's emancipation. It is the freedom to decide her own destiny; freedom from sex-determined roles; freedom from society's oppressive restrictions; freedom to express her thoughts fully and to convert them freely to actions. Feminism demands the acceptance of woman's right to individual conscience and judgment. It postulates that woman's essential worth stems from her common humanity and does not depend on the other relationships of her life.

The focus of feminism is then on women.

Nancy Cott in The Grounding of Modern Feminism suggests a three-part definition of feminism which, combined with the above, gives a fuller understanding of
the term. Cott agrees with the need for equality among the sexes, whatever form that might take. Secondly, she presupposes that "women's condition is socially constructed". Anatomy is not destiny and changes in the social condition are possible. The final aspect to her working definition of feminism is the understanding that women see themselves as more than a group tied by biological strings, but also as a social grouping. This group model has been puzzling to many because historically women have not operated as a group; they differ in social, economic and cultural characteristics. However, my working definition of 'feminist' is one who does envision herself as part of a greater whole, that group called women. My definition does not suggest that in theory feminism belongs to women; I am aware that it is an important contribution to philosophical inquiry, political theory, and social research. But for my study I think that it is important to view 'female' and 'feminist' as woman-centered. This is necessary because much of this research is grounded in the assumption that the alternative perspective, or 'female world view', is actually the embodiment of feminist philosophy.

An explanation is in order for the manner in which the women are identified by name. When possible, the women will be given their first and last names with no title. Some women never used their own names,
consequently, they will be referred to as Mrs. and a surname. If however, I had access to a first name, I chose to use it throughout. Names confer identity, and for these women their own name confers power, a small way to give these women their historical due.

My research has a few inherent shortcomings. First of all, I chose not to attempt a comparative study, looking at both men's and women's clubs. It is important to focus only on the women because there is such a scarcity of historical investigation about them. Also, central to this study is the search for a "women's perspective".

Another limitation of this dissertation is the dearth of available information regarding clubwomen in America. Much had to be pieced together from a myriad of diverse sources. Therefore, many of the conclusions drawn about these women are not based on a solid foundation of historical literature. On the other hand, the study itself offers historical data. Many more studies about women's club activities need to be done. Several feminist historians have noted this lack of information and have made a case for more research in the area in order to add substance and scope to the study of women.

Organizational Scheme

This dissertation is organized into six chapters. Chapter One, "Legitimizing Women's Experience" has
included necessary introductory material. The second chapter, "Women Organizing" is an overview of the history of clubwomen in America. Special interest is taken in why they organized and what activities they deemed important. Special emphasis is on the undoing and redoing within their communities. A section of this chapter also highlights the fact that many clubs around the country had similar priorities to The Outdoor Circle regarding city beautification.

"High Tea at Halekulani", the third chapter, is an historical account of The Outdoor Circle. This provides the case study to which the research questions are addressed. A more detailed look at the Circle's activities can be found in chapter four, "Historical Footnotes". This chapter focuses on the anti billboard campaign of the clubwomen and the variety of methods they used in order to achieve their goals.

Chapter Five provides the analysis for the dissertation. In this chapter, "Freedom of Choice", the major research questions are answered. There is also a discussion of several theories of women's "sphere" and women's "place" in society. The final chapter will restate my hypothesis and conclusions and will set forth some suggestions for further study by others about women's activities.
ENDNOTES


8. Daly xiv.

9. Daly xiii.


12. Bernard 75.


18. Cott 197.


22. Daly xii.

23. Lerner xxi.


27. Lerner 10.


29. Lerner 180.


32. Roberts 16.


34. Hoopes 33.

35. Roberts 34.


38. Berg 5.

CHAPTER TWO

WOMEN ORGANIZING

Stirrings 1800 - 1865

Better use has been made of this powerful instrument of action has been applied to more varied aims in America than anywhere else in the world. As a result of his study of American democracy, Alexis de Tocqueville in 1840 recognized that numerous associations which were active across the country served an important function. Organizing was a key strategy for effecting change. Personal independence, self reliance, and emphasis upon individualism in America prohibited any one person from attaining the power necessary to make grand sweeping changes within a community; however, associations of people with similar interests would often have a significant impact. Tocqueville's interest in these associations was part of his study of the differences between the aristocratic society of the Ancien Regime in France and the new American democracy; he perceived these varied associations to be vehicles through which society could be improved. He did not, however, foresee the tremendous growth and impact of women's clubs; he could not anticipate that women, too, would recognize the power of associating.
Clubs and associations have been viewed by historians as constructive segments of society; however, they have also been observed to be forms of organized social control through which upper middle-class men and women sought to promote and ensure the acceptance of a particular set of morals and standards. Religious and moral fervor provided the energy and commitment for people in the early nineteenth century to involve themselves in what we today term volunteerism. The men and women who founded these early benevolent and moral reform societies were interested in maintaining a stable community, one which reflected the values appropriate to their social position. But it was mostly the women, the wives and daughters of upwardly mobile men, who were the energetic supporters of these moral reform societies.

Barbara Berg suggests that one must look beyond the religious fervor of the early 1800s to find an explanation for the rise in women's volunteer societies. Certainly the women of this era were highly motivated by their religious beliefs, but more than piety was behind their work. Urban women were generally barred from participation in rewarding endeavors outside of the home. The networks of societies throughout urban America became perhaps, as Berg explains, an antidote for what was perceived as a useless existence. Joining benevolent societies was a means of finding fulfillment and the
beginning of developing personal identity. Although men also joined a number of organizations at this time, men had a variety of other options. For women, these associations were the only available source of personal achievement and means for improving their community according to their own vision.

The organizations formed in the early 1800's were often devoted to helping other women; however, many sought to abolish slavery and supported prohibition. The American Female Moral Reform Society, founded in New York in 1834, had as its original goal stamping out the sexual double standard. This group was interested in doing away with the accepted distinction between immoral men and women. For its founders moral reform was the fight against prostitution, sexual vice, and adultery. Two other benevolent organizations of this time were The Female Benevolent Society and the Female Charitable Society, each of which worked toward the improvement of the lives of impoverished women. Members of these associations saw the depth and extent of female suffering at the hands of men and came together in order to aid the poor, prostitutes, orphans, widows, and other indigent females.

Mary P. Ryan implies that this collective effort by women constituted more than a commitment to moral reform; it was a concrete attempt by women to exert influence and power in the community. She suggests that women used
their collective social positions as leverage to influence others. Women's networks, which are precisely what these organizations became, were powerful and made a significant impact on their communities. Ryan advocates an examination of female moral reform in order to illustrate and emphasize the force of these organizations in American history.

The reform societies of the early 1800's also popularized the belief that women, by their very nature, had desirable traits that should be spread throughout the community. The protective and nurturing qualities believed to be natural to women would be beneficial to those in need of care. The concept of the moral superiority of women was an integral part of the idea that a 'woman's sphere' exists, a place in which women carry out various activities and one which includes the values and priorities of women. Women were seen as the guardians of morality--in the home and in the outside world as well. Carl Degler, in At Odds, suggests that the concept of this special sphere provided a powerful ideological tool justifying the increased separation between the worlds of men and women. The gap between the realms of men and women was broadened with the onset of urbanization and industrialization. Men were involved in the building of cities, the invention of new technologies and the pursuit of progress. The women, left to care for their homes and
children, stepped into the public realm and formed organizations to combat the negative effects of urbanization and industrialization.

Although the women worked to change their communities, many changes took place within themselves. The work done by these societies also served to dispel the myth that women were feeble, delicate and unable to operate in the public arena. The early benevolent societies impelled urban upper middle-class females to confront their own lives and enter the domain of men. Although the participation of women in these public activities was not seen as out of character, it was seminal to the growth of their awareness and consciousness. Personal growth was an unexpected benefit. Mary Ryan points out:

The avowed goals of most of these women's organizations remained essentially altruistic--to serve the needy, weak, and defenseless--rather than to conquer wealth and power for either themselves or the female sex.

Nancy Wolloch agrees with Mary Ryan's assessment that women did not look for wealth and power for themselves; she suggests that the special mission of these women's benevolent organizations was to purify, uplift and reform men, children and society as a whole, extending the values of the home. These women were to preserve and conserve humanity and correct what Lois Banner calls the "defects of man's activities." Thus the targets for the early
reform were prostitution, profanity, gambling, saloons, and slavery. The organizations developed after the 1830's also founded day-care centers, schools, training and employment facilities, health care centers and hospitals, and a host of other projects.

I agree with Wolloch, Banner and Ryan in their assessment of women's unselfish desire to help their communities. These women joined together and addressed issues which they deemed important. In reform organizations they found a channel through which they could garner power and effect change. I am in disagreement, however, with the contention of historians, such as Degler, that the work of these women was simply an extension of the home and the values found there. There is no disputing the fact that these women were working within a female sphere, the values of which could often be found in the home. The important question is, who created the sphere? Those who accept the male point of view suggest that women operated within a sphere which was given to them. I suggest they operated in a place which they created for themselves.

Apart from the work done within the organizations on behalf of the community, the movement to associate served as a school in collective behavior. A major consequence of women's participation in these associations was the development of organizational skills. Not only did women
enter public life through these organizations; the associations provided the education necessary to function in this public arena. In addition to developing and improving skills, heretofore isolated women were beginning to come together and share the experiences of their female world. Barbara Berg and Karen Blair suggest that the experience of urban women in the early benevolent societies enabled them to confront their identities within society. These associations, although quite conservative in nature, served as one of the stepping stones toward a feminist consciousness. Helen Roberts suggests that feminism is an attempt to insist upon the experience and existence of women; perhaps the experience of the women was what ultimately insisted upon feminism.

**Associated Women 1865 - 1920**

The Civil War reshaped the organizational goals of caucasian upper and middle-class women. The benevolent societies became women's clubs, centers of stability and status, a means for women to identify with others like themselves. The early clubs were religious and moral in purpose. During the war they raised money for food and clothes, staffed hospitals, provided meals and helped those deprived by the war in any way they could. After the war they organized for self-improvement. From the beginning their work was instrumental in giving them confidence and self-respect; they were working for a
greater cause. What was unknown to them was that the 'greater cause' turned out to be themselves. In the process of preserving their values, status, and beliefs these women actually found a new purpose for their lives and found themselves changed. Clubs encouraged critical thinking, analysis, organizational skills, and general self-education.

In the late 1860s a new kind of club emerged in America, the women's study club. These clubs were dedicated to the study of art, music, history, geography and literature. Mary Wood describes these clubs as serving a positive function:

It meant a school where they might teach and be taught, a mutual improvement society, which should educate them out into better hopes, nobler aspirations and larger life. This is in agreement with Mary Beard, who found that although such clubs were first organized for purposes of self-education in literary and artistic culture, their expansive nature carried them into the community at large. For example, although the women typically met at each others' homes to discuss art, literature and music, their interest in reading, for example, led them to be hardy supporters of libraries across the country. This transition from self-education to service was common among women's clubs.

Post-Civil War clubs marked the emergence from the home of the middle-class woman to join either a study or a
service club. Exclusion by males was frequently the precipitating factor in the coalescing of a women's group. This was true of the first women's club, Sorosis, which was founded in 1868 by Jennie C. Croly in New York City. It was established by journalists and other career women because they were not admitted to the Press Club, a men's journalistic organization. Jennie C. Croly claimed Sorosis was not intended to be a philanthropic or charitable organization but was geared toward "collective elevation and advancement" of women. On the other hand, Sorosis has been described as "an order which shall render the female sex helpful to each other and actively benevolent in the world". Regardless of the original purpose of Sorosis, the end result was its evolution into a service-oriented association. In addition to Sorosis the late 1860s saw the founding of the New England Women's Club in Boston by Julia Ward Howe and others. The purpose of this club was similar to Sorosis, a desire to increase influence outside the home in the areas of temperance, education and suffrage. This decade also claims the founding of the Young Women's Christian Association, which was concerned with the moral problems of young girls working and living away from home. Karen Blair suggests that 'domestic feminisim', the extension of woman's traits into the public sphere, became politicized when these initial clubs organized. Nurturing a pride in the value
of morality, virtue, and domesticity, these early clubwomen developed a concept that would appeal to thousands of women across the country throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Clubwomen's activities suggested that the ideals of the home and family could be integrated into the wider society, the justification was the moral integrity of the women.

The early religious and benevolent associations and the later study clubs were designed to allow women to pursue the life of the mind. Theodora Martin implies that the women who were members of the study clubs and early benevolent associations were actually examples to their daughters, daughters who then quietly pursued higher education, and were at the forefront of the tremendous rise in women's clubs and activities during the latter 19th century. What these clubs always seemed to do, however, was to move toward philanthropic and civic projects. In Woman's Work in Municipalities Mary Beard noticed this tendency:

Thousands of men may loaf around clubs without ever showing the slightest concern about the great battle for decent living conditions that is now going on in our cities; but it is a rare woman's club that long remains indifferent to such momentous matters.  

Although self-education was a primary motive in the formation of many women's clubs, service was the ultimate result.
Within about twenty-five years of the founding of Sorosis approximately 1000 clubs were members of the General Federation of Women's Clubs. Such associations flourished at the turn of the century; 1880-1920 was the high point of women's club activities. In fact, by the 1890s the women's club had become a standard feature of the urban scene in America.

Clubs sprang up among all ethnic and racial groups, often because minority women were excluded by Caucasian women. Black women's clubs were very similar to those formed by Caucasian women; they were led by middle-class and educated women. What was different was that the black women's clubs concerned themselves with issues that bridged the class barrier. Black clubwomen were interested in aiding the poor but were equally determined to raise the status of black people in general. These clubs were interested in self-improvement, education and racial pride among all of the members of the black community, regardless of their social position. The establishment in 1896 of the National Association of Colored Women united over 100 local women's clubs in the pursuit of philanthropic and welfare activities.16 Black clubwomen also had the added task of lobbying the influential women in their communities to gain support for some of their reform measures. Clubs were also formed by Jewish, Italian, Irish and other ethnic minority women for
the purposes of mutual support and improvement of their own communities.

The majority of Federated Clubs consisted of members who were wives and daughters of wealthy men in prominent positions. These middle- to upper-class women had leisure, common interests and congenial tastes. Most women's clubs had members who also met at social gatherings. In fact, it has been suggested that those women's clubs with influence depended on the status of their membership to assure success. Women in the working class did not associate in the same manner. These women worked to put milk and bread on the table and had a different set of immediate priorities with which to deal. Working women organized later within the labor force.

Historians have traditionally viewed women's clubs as vacuous, social settings for tea, cakes and gossip; they have been devalued as frivolous and meaningless. The appearance of many clubs was social—punch was served and the women shared pieces of their lives—but then they proceeded to make plans to improve their communities. This particular facet of the clubs has been largely ignored by traditional historians. Jessie Bernard implies that the clubs were merely tolerated by society.

The women in these voluntary organizations were doing the millennial work of the integrity, of the female world—taking care of others. Doing good. Or, later in the century, they were doing cultural chores that were beneath the dignity of the male world. They were tolerated as long as
they tended to their female business. Some members of the clergy might object to their activities, but by and large no one really bothered enough to cause them concern. They were laughed at by some, joked about by some, but apparently tolerated by most. Clubwomen operated mainly within the confines of what was viewed as traditional women's activities; thus, the rest of society did not pay attention to what they were doing. Charlotte Perkins Gillman believed that the rapid rise of clubs showed how ready women actually were to respond to the needs of society; a "sense of human unity" was growing among women. Barbara Berg submits that out of woman's estrangement from society came her attempt to change it. Women's activities had earlier been conducted within the private sphere; thus, they were in a sense alienated from public life.

As non-voting citizens, unable to hold public office or head major corporations, women were essentially seen as inactive in the public sphere. However, through the formation of clubs, these women were able to connect with each other, share their personal concerns about the world around them, discover how closely aligned they were in their thinking, and then set out to address the problems they identified.

Clubs which emerged in the 1860's were quite different from the earlier societies. Although they were concerned with self-improvement and became centers for united thought, their founders had in mind an organization
which would attempt to improve conditions within their society. In her study of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, Mary Wood finds that 'service' was the key to every activity undertaken by women in these organizations. As Karen Blair has suggested, women did much more than enter the mainstream of social and political innovation through their orientation toward service; they frequently remained to direct it. A variety of clubs were formed during this boom period—literary, historical, civic, social science, scientific, community improvement, business, and professional. As was true for the earlier study clubs, these clubs drew women into association with each other for a variety of cultural purposes and then turned toward supporting an agenda of civic reform.

From 1865 on, a domestic revolution was underway. Middle-class women were freed from some household chores by gas lighting, municipal water systems, plumbing, stoves, furnaces, washtubs, and the commercial production of ice. Growing numbers of immigrants looking for work supplied cheap labor domestic labor. Thus, both the technology of housekeeping and the availability of servants guaranteed middle-class women the leisure time necessary to become active members of these clubs.

Degler suggests that women's response to industrialization was rooted in their traditional roles.
Again, I suggest that their activities were rooted in a female world view. Degler points out that charity organizations, the educational system, and social health services offered places of least resistance for women to penetrate and philanthropy was seen by society as a legitimate activity for women. My contention is that they chose these activities because they were in fact high on their list of priorities. In addition, the clubs constituted what others might have considered respectable 'careers' for these women, who did not as of yet ask themselves about their boredom. These clubs, however, did more than serve as an escape from home life; they eventually served as a vehicle of entry into the mainstream of public affairs.

The women's club movement asserted that women had the right to a social and intellectual identity. The associations proved to be a training ground for public life; the activities forced women to identify themselves not simply as housewives and mothers, but as citizens. The perceptions that these middle-class women had of themselves were changed. The club movement enabled them to enter public life without seeming to abandon their traditional duties, but at the same time it encouraged the belief that they had gained political leverage for their values within the larger society. Perhaps it turned out for the best that society assume clubwomen were of no
consequence; it allowed presumably traditional values to permeate the public sphere in a non-threatening manner. They had themselves been trained to believe that their values were insignificant or at best to be kept at home. By joining a club these women never had to admit that they were becoming political.

While the clubs were ostensibly serving the community, they were also providing a form of schooling for women. Volunteer work forced women to learn about organizing. They drew up constitutions and by-laws and worked within the framework of parliamentary procedures. They acquired the art of directing meetings and delegating duties. In addition, the need for money to carry out various activities demanded a great deal of fund-raising. Planning for and actually raising funds provided a training ground for acquiring money management skills. This helped link the various regions in the country.

Associations provided support groups for women who bonded together because they came from similar backgrounds, had similar concerns, and were equally interested in changing their lives and their communities. The growing involvement of local clubs in larger national concerns exposed the women to a mix of ideas and activities. Some women stepped outside of their own clubs and made money travelling the club lecture circuit. By attending national conferences they began to understand
the concerns of women across America. The networking was far-reaching.

Whether or not these clubs helped to develop a feminist consciousness will be discussed later, but it is evident that they at least helped contribute to a coalescing of the 'female view'. As thousands of women gathered together at meetings, kept in contact through flyers and letters, and drew up agendas which were relevant across the country, a cohesive point of view began to develop. Women everywhere found that they were concerned with the excesses of urbanization and industrialization and their effects upon people. What they were also beginning to realize was their exclusion from the political and economic centers of their communities. Women involved in the suffrage movement had known that this had always been the case, but clarification of this reality for a larger group of women came upon the heels of organizing.

Activities

The kinds of activities in which clubwomen engaged were varied; the projects ranged from gardening to legislative lobbying. Reform activities, discussed in a later section of this chapter, were in full swing during the Progressive era. During the period of 1880 to 1920, three kinds of associations could be found. First of all, there was the local club organized specifically to further
social, gardening, or some other special interest. Each of these clubs had a pet project which was designed to improve the community. It could be as small as planting some trees in a school yard, or as large as taking on the business community regarding billboard advertising.

Secondly, women formed specific reform agencies, such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) founded in 1873, which had a very clear and distinct agenda. Frances Willard, the founder of the WCTU, the first truly national organization for American women, mobilized members to work for prison reform, child labor laws, working women's protective legislation, women's suffrage, kindergartens, and temperance. The third kind of association was national in scope. The General Federation of Women's Clubs was an organization with which local clubs could affiliate.

The Federation was launched in 1890. Its original purposes were social, literary and artistic, not civic, political or philanthropic. However, the move into these other areas was swift. Jennie Croly of Sorosis called for a change in agenda at the Federation Council banquet in 1891:

Is there not room in the clubs for outlook committees, whose business it should be to investigate township affairs, educational, sanitary, reformatory and all lines of improvement...in the schools, in the streets, in the planting of trees, in the disposition of refuse...?
Just four years after the Federation was started, the trend toward active participation in civic affairs was evident. The clubs were no longer only respites from the labors or boredom of home; their members were now obligated to become informed about the urgent political, economic and social issues evident in their communities and the country as a whole.

By 1906 approximately 5000 local organizations had joined the Federation; Theodora Martin claims that this was only five to ten percent of the clubs in existence across America. In fact, the national organizational network that was created operated in a similar manner to the corporate business world. The interdependence and support among this multitude of clubs gave clout to their agendas. The original campaigns of the national organization were concerned with smaller classrooms, safe playgrounds, sanitation, establishment of local and national conservation sites, and including art and music in school curricula. But the organization did not limit itself to these concerns; it was at the forefront of all attempts to improve living conditions and was the mainstay of reform during the Progressive era.

Within all of these organizations the activities served at least two purposes, nurturing the women's quest for identity and offering an avenue for their response to urban problems. Mary Beard conducted an extensive study
of the activities of women's clubs at the turn of the century and found that their work was substantial in scope. The women were concerned with education, public health, recreation, housing, social services, corrections, public safety, civic improvement, government and administrative practices and sexual vice. Nancy Wolloch describes these women as:

...enemies of vice, filth, corruption, ugliness, ignorance and exploitation. Their special concerns were anything involving children, home, family, education, health, hygiene, food, sanitation, and other women.

It must be remembered, as Barbara Berg warns, that these women were reformers, not radicals. They may have urged better treatment of domestic workers but did not question their own right to have household help. They founded day care centers but did not necessarily push for communal living. Rarely questioning the factory system itself, the women fought to improve the working conditions and wages of the workers.

Between 1890 and 1920 women's clubs made a good deal of headway in their activities. For instance, the Chicago Civic Club led successful drives to raise investment capital to improve slum conditions and tenement houses. The Young Women's Christian Association worked with new residents in the cities, women who had found work and were living away from their homes. The Buffalo Federation of Clubs worked toward the creation of open-air schools in
order to keep the children healthy and prevent infection from tuberculosis. Across the country various clubs were fighting to pass legislation to punish indecent offenses against children. In fact, children were a high priority with women, who were concerned about children's educational, health, and emotional well-being. Women began the kindergarten movement, fought for hot lunches to be served in the schools, raised money to create safe playgrounds for children in the schools and elsewhere, and supported legislation which protected children. Along with these activities, clubwomen were concerned with public corrections, fire prevention, sanitation, and many other aspects of community life.

All of these activities could be viewed merely as extensions of women's duties within the home. Perhaps they were; however, what is significant is that these women freely chose to engage in this range of activities. In addition, the values which are derived from the home may actually be the foundation upon which the 'female world view' rests.

City Beautification

Another response to urbanization by clubwomen was their regard for city beautification. They were appalled at the squalor, empty lots, garbage, lack of shade trees, and general untidy appearance of the cities. Throughout
the country clubwomen rolled up their sleeves and began cleaning up.

Clubs initially devoted to art, literature and music often turned to city beautification. Frances Willard, founder of the WTCU, stated that:

...men have made a dead failure of municipal government, just as they would have of housekeeping; and government is only housekeeping on the broadest scale.

In a society which liked its women in the home, cleaning, it followed that women could serve as 'municipal housekeepers', a term used among historians to illustrate that city cleansing was women's work. Women's role in national and municipal political organizations had been marginal. They could not participate directly in the political life of the city and thus used volunteer associations and clubs as channels for their interests. Therefore, as woman's historic function had been the protection of her home and children and the beautification, cleaning if you will, of the home, to many it naturally followed that her talents would be carried over into her community. The general belief at this time was well stated by Katharine Bowlker, leader of The Women's Municipal League of Boston, who believed that "the housekeeping of a great city was women's work". An alternative view is that these women were actually engaging in covert political activities behind the screen
of 'municipal housekeeping'. Were they allowed to do this work, or did they choose it quite on purpose?

Discussions, meetings and club publications reinforced the conviction that city housekeeping was a vocation. The General Federation of Women's Clubs took this concept seriously and promoted the reorganization of clubs across America to focus on city beautification. This again was couched in the familiar terms of women's sphere. As Mary Beard stated:

It is a most legitimate object of civic endeavor and it is comparatively easy of accomplishment where it touches no vital economic interests. 24

Beard believed that women's work in the city was sanctioned, or perhaps ignored or tolerated, because it did not touch a 'vital economic interest'; as long as women did not venture into areas which were the domain of men, they were successful in their endeavors. Beard was wrong. Women's participation in civic affairs did eventually touch upon areas which demanded economic changes and even threatened particular business interests. City beautification became an activity that reached far beyond artistic or cultural recreation. It became a movement which was concerned with the well-being of citizens in urban areas. In addition, it became an attempt to regulate the activities and disposition of the community. Lewis Mumford followed this line of reasoning in his suggestions to the people of the city of Honolulu.
in 1938:

An ugly, disheveled environment discourages good use; whereas a handsome, well-ordered environment usually stimulates the best kind of human reaction: under normal circumstances people take personal pride in maintaining such beauty.

Women, having been designated the 'keepers of morality' in the home, moved easily into extending that influence to the community.

Civic improvement projects were aimed at safety, health, social well-being and beautification. In 1909 the Federation formed a waterways committee to promote clean water throughout America. The rationale was that pure water was healthy and prevented disease and death. Public education campaigns, contests for school children, and pressure brought to bear on city councils across the country led to the development of safe water purification practices. Although men such as Upton Sinclair and the legislators who passed the Pure Food and Drug Act are generally recognized as leaders in protecting the food supply from contamination, the clubwomen were also interested in pure foods and drugs. The women banded together and campaigned for ordinances to be passed which would make certain that food would be clean and healthy for consumption. The clubwomen inspected bakeries, meat markets and dairies in their struggle to obtain clean and safe food and milk for their children.
An interest in general cleanliness led these women to devote a great deal of energy to the establishment of sanitary practices in their cities. They conducted campaigns to have public launderies created in congested areas because there were no facilities for drying clothes. Many clubwomen supported the development of sanitation departments in order to deal with the disposal of garbage. In addition, they were engaged in trying to beautify private yards, vacant lots, school yards, and many public areas, such as parks, streets, and public buildings.

Although much of their effort was in response to the needs of women and children—shade trees so that mothers could comfortably stroll with their baby carriages or safe milk—the work done by these organizations most often affected the total population of their communities. For instance, the women's clubs were quite interested in providing recreational facilities. Women were behind the movement for social centers in the majority of cities. The quest for the provision of municipal recreational facilities was rooted in the belief that unless wholesome recreation was provided, unwholesome activities would be prevalent. Thus, these clubs developed playgrounds, established dance halls which were controlled by the municipality rather than the liquor interests, promoted musical concerts, founded clubs for youth and for the elderly, endorsed the viewing of wholesome movies, and
themselves staged a number of social events such as pageants.

Women were also interested in municipal art and the general attractiveness of their communities. To this end they planted trees, shrubs, and flowers wherever possible. They encouraged the building of sidewalks, the removal of unsightly fences, the use of containers for garbage removal and the disposal of litter. Billboards were also considered a blight and therefore many women's clubs in America campaigned against the use of these for advertising. Many cities passed ordinances to cut down on billboards within their communities, but only the women of The Outdoor Circle in Hawaii were completely successful in their removal. There was also a movement to create engaging 'entrances' to cities and towns. This reflected the desire to encourage community pride among citizens. The general consensus was that beautification of one's environment would lead to civic pride and patriotism.

Progressive Reformers

By the turn of the century America had become a powerful country, one in which, ostensibly, the common man had a better life than anywhere else in the world. National wealth was on the rise, millions of immigrants were adopting a new way of life, industry and agriculture had made great strides, and in general the political and social foundations upon which this country was built were
intact. However, the rise of industrialism and urbanism and the development of technology left in their wake polluted water, depleted soil, over-populated cities, and people who had been needlessly and recklessly exploited. In the push toward greater productivity depletion of resources was ignored. The gravitation of wealth into the hands of a few permitted the degradation of millions of people. Women, children, immigrants, and African-Americans were abused by being neglected, ostracized, or forced to work and live in deplorable conditions. The 'equality of opportunity' which America had supposedly promised all its citizens was now but an illusion. The growth of big business, the sharpening of social distinctions and the rise of the city contributed to the feeling of many that some of the general principles of democracy had been lost.

Both men and women--those in power such as Woodrow Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt, and those of the general population such as clubwomen--responded with a new fervor for reform. Social, political and economic institutions lagged behind the whirlwind of change that accompanied the industrialization and urbanization of America. The progressive reformers took as their goal the reorganization and creation of institutions that would successfully address this new society.
Women participated in the reform movement through their membership in women's clubs and local civic organizations. They recognized that industry had expanded, cities had grown and community life had changed. Thus, although excluded from the formal centers of urban power, through their affiliation with clubs many women actually led urban reform movements. In 1910 800,000 women were members of the General Federation of Women's Clubs. These women were interested in curing the evils of modern society. Women had already taken on the role of 'municipal housekeeper' and thus were easily assimilated into the role of progressive reformer. In fact, as early as 1865 clubwomen had been addressing the very same problems that were now uppermost in the minds of Progressive Reformers.

Social activism was a symbol of middle- and upper-class status for the women in this era. Mary Ryan suggests that:

...while the businessmen of the gilded age were building their trusts and monopolies, the women of the upper and middle classes were creating equally impressive national organizations and formulating some ideas of their own about the organization of industrial society.

Nancy Hymowitz agrees with Ryan that native-born white women believed themselves to be members of the better sex, "gentler, more virtuous, more fair minded, more concerned for the general welfare than men." She suggests that women used the issue of corruption as a means to secure a
position of power for themselves. They were needed to cleanse the community. This was actually an extension of their separate sphere into the larger world of economic and social action. Ryan believes that women had their own network of power:

By the second decade of the twentieth century, social housekeepers were aligned in an impressive formation alongside male structures of public and political power. The women who went to Washington during the Progressive era were not simply assimilated into the male political establishment. They did not disregard this network, even as they often aligned themselves with men in power. They continued to believe their value system to be superior and were determined to bring it to the fore of society. These women saw through and beyond the convenient middle-class male capitalistic excuses, which blamed the ills of society on the people rather than the institutions. They recognized the real injustices and felt that what was then considered the moral superiority of women and their interest in the human element would offer a stabilizing influence on urban life.

Women's associations turned into pressure groups that began to challenge local and state officials to deal with the problems. They continued their work of promoting playgrounds, kindergartens, compulsory education laws, child labor laws, protective laws, pure food and drug legislation, prohibition, ending prostitution, prison
reform, sanitation, tax reform, nutrition, libraries and a host of other projects which were now on the agenda of progressive reformers, but which had been on clubwomen's agenda for at least fifty years.

Clubwomen in urban areas were quite upset over the squalor of tenements and pushed for better housing conditions. Advocating municipal ordinances which would regulate housing and sanitation, they crusaded to clear the slums, provide low cost housing, and stressed the need for more open spaces. For example, the Women's Municipal League of New York investigated the ownership of tenements and then rallied in support of renovation, the building of new structures and the general tidying up of slum areas.32

The problem of housing was a major concern of the clubwomen. Clifford Clark suggests that in order to counteract the restless movement of the population from town to town, reformers encouraged a commitment to a single dwelling place.33 This was the beginning of a movement into the suburbs, a search for closeness to nature, a place to escape the evils of the city. A growing emphasis on the enhancement of motherhood and the home permeated the Progressive era.34 Thus the home, and all of the traditional values it symbolized, became even more the oasis of stability and morality in the midst of a restless society in turmoil. Perhaps, these values, the ones always attributed to women, should never have been
deemed marginal in the first place. I think that women knew this was true all along; historians have just missed the point.

During this period domesticity was encouraged and home economics attained professional status. Not only was there a movement to educate women to be better mothers, as in the child study movement headed by G. Stanley Hall, but the push was toward educating women in all areas of domestic responsibilities. Emphasis on the importance of home maintenance, the rearing of children, and the beautification of one's surroundings spilled over into the reform activities of clubwomen. Middle- and upper-class women were not only interested in excelling in these areas themselves, they wanted to provide the opportunities for the whole community to develop and maintain these values. In many cities the work of a particular women's organization was the only push for improved water, pure food, an improved school system, scholarship fund or a library. These women were intent on tidying up the man's world; they were intent on forcing their own values upon the community.

Carolyn Merchant proposes that women, in response to the squalor of the cities, "burst vividly into the public arena" as a force in the progressive conservation crusade. By 1929, more women than men were members of the National Parks Association. They clearly saw
themselves as protectors of the environment and transformed the crusade from an elitist male one to a broad-based conservation movement. Merchant suggests that the enormous interest and energy women invested in this enterprise was actually self-serving. They were hardly unique in this regard. The conservation movement functioned ultimately to insure their and future generations' social status. There was strong emphasis on conservation of the home, womanhood and children. Thus, preservation of the wider environment was only insurance against any encroachment of industrialization on their haven, the home.

The connection between women and nature is far-reaching. The long accepted practice of linking woman to nature and man to culture has been utilized to justify women's political action on behalf of forests, water and natural resources. According to Annette Kolodny, frontier women viewed the vast land before them as the setting for a garden, a home. It follows then that clubwomen would link the conservation of natural resources with the preservation of children and future generations. Carolyn Merchant suggests that women's view of the environment is heavily linked with their concept of 'home'.

According to Mrs. John Walker, a member of the Kansas City Chapter of DAR, women's role in conservation was dedicated to the preservation
of life, while man's role was the conservation of material needs. Drawing upon the same set of values, these women viewed themselves as caretakers of the home and the greater environment.

Another product of the Progressive period was the growth of institutions designed both to house and train women, who then would be of service in the larger community. These associations offered women their own community within which they could find collective power. Although men also participated in the activities of Hull House in Chicago, this organization provides an excellent example of a community of resident women who supported each other and thus were able to reach outside the boundaries of their group. Jane Addams envisioned a community of women who were equally well educated, had similar political persuasions, and generally came from the same backgrounds. Hull House provided an environment which was supportive and yet encouraged autonomy among its members. As a settlement house, Jane Addams' community advanced political solutions to social problems. This group of women not only provided shelter, food, and education for poor and immigrant women, but they lobbied and formed coalitions with many other women's groups in support of a number of reforms, such as the right of children to education, or fair wages for hard labor.
Women gained unprecedented collective power by forming these associations. Although women gained the right to vote in 1920, it was through their clubs that their influence was felt. This generation of women did not invade male territory; they built a separate domain and pushed for its recognition in the public arena. In 1912 Mary Wood described the role of women as she saw it:

In short woman is conserver, preserver and helpmeet. As man forges ahead, going from one field to another, woman follows closely along, supplementing the work of his functions by that of her own, conserving and preserving much which his haste has passed by and making perfect much which his eagerness has but delineated.

Many historians, both feminist and otherwise, suggest that women in the club movement operated on a very simple principle: they accepted and developed a power base around the traditional sex roles assigned to them. They then challenged the political and economic institutions from within the framework of their own value system. What is important, however, is to evaluate their contribution in more than an incidental manner. It may be that women were picking up the pieces, following 'closely along' behind their men as Wood describes; however, as women gained more and more status in the public arena, their goals remained the same. Therefore, we cannot lose sight of clubwomen's activities as clear expressions of a different perspective, one that actually counterbalances traditional history.
Feminists By Any Other Name

Giving an account of the activities of women within their various organizations illustrates well their particular definitions of and responses to the ills within their communities. What is not being addressed by this approach is the underlying motivation for these activities. As marginal participants in the political process and active mainly in civic affairs, women have traditionally been associated with matters concerning the home and family or the well being of the community. Even as members of decision-making bodies, they were concerned with education, social services, housing, arts and culture. They had lesser roles in such areas as urban services, transportation, planning and finance. For instance, the men supplied the food, and the women worked to pass ordinances to make certain that the food would be clean and free of disease. This traditional separation of spheres was clearly acceptable to the clubwomen. They viewed their participation in reform activities as ultimately related to successful family life. Women recognized the relationship between the family and the community. Regulations of the food industry would insure healthy food on the kitchen table.

The vast majority of clubwomen did not see themselves as feminists, nor were they particularly interested in advancing the movement for equality. Their work was in
line with traditional images of women and they took the path of attempting reform within existing political and social institutions. In fact, much of their strength was derived from the very separation of their world from that of men. They were interested in expressing their individual identity as women and in making a lasting contribution. These 'municipal housekeepers' wanted more than the vote; they wanted to exert their influence in the public sphere at a time when running for public office was not a viable option. Club activities were rationalized on the grounds of self-improvement and the precepts of women's domestic nature to which men and women had attributed special moral superiority. This then allowed women to move beyond the family circle and participate in social welfare and humanitarian reform.

Karen Blair's analysis of the club movement suggests that through their activities women discovered not only their own personal awakening or consciousness but also a collective and distinctive outlook belonging to females. This education began in the culture, study and literary clubs. Later the values sharpened in these associations were transferred into the public or male domain. The women's activities could always be construed by others as extensions of the domestic realm, and thus they could freely indulge in their efforts without seeming to move out of their proper sphere.
The rationalization of extending the domestic realm that is referred to over and over again by many historians is puzzling. Traditional historiography limits analysis to this kind of generalization. But we have to ask different questions. Did the women themselves rationalize their actions, or was it the rest of society which labeled their activities part of the woman's sphere? Or is it just in retrospect that historians now categorize women's enterprises as belonging in a special place. The women did at times refer to themselves as 'municipal housekeepers' and guardians of morality, but maybe they were just adept at playing the game in order to accomplish their goals.

As noted earlier, a widely held belief of the nineteenth century was that women embodied desirable traits which were good for society. Karen Blair defines this as the 'ideology of the lady'. The function of this 'lady' was to embellish the family environment and to be the moral guardian of the home. Her values and quest for morality would be best served within the confines of the family and home. However, thousands of women justified their work in the clubs by invoking these special traits of the 'lady'. They were told that they were 'ladies', agreed and then went on to do as they pleased. They ended their confinement within their homes and began to influence the public realm. "Domestic Feminism resulted
when women redefined the ideal lady".\textsuperscript{43} It was a type of feminism which allowed women to use their supposed innate and special talents in the public sphere. According to Blair, women redefined the ideal lady. She implies that preserving conventional appearances actually opened up new avenues for women. What is important here is that in stretching their domain of the home into the community, clubwomen were actually a significant part of the campaign for women's rights.

Clubwomen certainly did not see themselves as feminists, as is evidenced by the fact that the preponderance of clubs did not support suffrage. One reason that they did not was that they could accomplish their goals without the vote. These women did not view the political arena as the only avenue to power and influence. They were interested in achieving moral and domestic perfection and thus took the ideals of the home into the school system, social programs and other activities which eventually extended into the male-dominated public sphere.

They did not challenge their place in society, as did the suffragists; they built on the concept of separate spheres. In spite of this, they actually helped dispel the notion that woman's place is in the home and made a significant contribution to the struggle for autonomy.\textsuperscript{44} In fact, it was quite ingenious political strategy.
The nationalization of the clubs, such as the General Federation of Women's Clubs, helped formalize the idea that women had the right to be active in civic affairs. All of the knowledge and skills gained over the years within various clubs served the women well. Their collective energy could bear considerable influence on issues that they deemed important.

Measure for Measure

An important contribution of the study of the clubwoman to the history of women in general is the illustration of how differently women and men experience life. Men and women of the same social class had very different perceptions regarding the evils of society at any given time. For instance, during the Progressive Era, middle-class men were immersed in the battle for economic well-being. On the other hand, women, through their organizations, gave priority to social, cultural and humanitarian concerns. In *The Majority Finds Its Past* Gerda Lerner strongly suggests that historians must measure the achievements of men and women quite differently. The yardsticks of political and economic power are not sufficient for measuring women's contributions to our society. Woman's experience, value-system, and world view must be studied apart from that of man. This is because of the unequal attention given to their respective value systems. Lerner suggests:
But the history of women has a special character, a built-in distortion: it comes to us refracted through the lens of men's observations; refracted again through values which consider man the measure.

History must contain much more than just the activities and events in which women participated. It must address the perception they had of themselves, of their role in society, of the changes within themselves over time.

Perhaps the study of the activities of clubwomen in America in this manner will help formulate not only how women perceived the world around them, but what they took to be their personal priorities, and how they responded to their experiences. For purposes of this research, one such club, The Outdoor Circle of Honolulu, will be examined in detail. The women personally and collectively had considerable influence in the shaping of Honolulu. By carefully studying the goals, activities, motivations, and successes particular to this group of women, an attempt will be made to validate woman's experience of and response to her world.
ENDNOTES


5. Degler 43.


7. Woloch 270.

8. Banner 50.


10. Martin 18.


16. Lerner 83.

17. Woloch 290.


21. Woloch 299.

22. Gittell and Shtob 69.


27. Breckinridge 30.


29. Ryan 168.


32. Beard 205.


42. Hymowitz 223.

43. Blair 4.

44. Blair 119.

45. Lerner 160.
CHAPTER THREE

HIGH TEA AT HALEKULANI

The Outdoor Circle of the Kilohana Club has a practical way of getting things done that ought to be an object-lesson to many a man who does nothing but criticize the board of supervisors. The Ladies of the Outdoor Circle carry their plans directly to the board and enlist its cooperation and support at once. While a large part of Honolulu has been sitting on its lanais and discussing plans for beautifying the city, the Outdoor Circle has gone quietly about practical work. The results are showing.

High Tea 1987

On May 27, 1987 approximately 150 members and guests of The Outdoor Circle enjoyed high tea at the Halekulani Hotel in Waikiki. Dressed in afternoon finery, seated around tables adorned with China and sprays of orchids, listening to the gentle music of Irgard Aluli, and watching a graceful hula, these people were assembled for the Circle's annual meeting and installation of officers. Ninety-five percent of the people in attendance were Caucasian middle- and upper-class women with an average age of approximately fifty-five, not unlike the original membership of this organization.

At a similar tea in 1946, Mrs. A.G.M. Robinson reported:

On Wednesday, October 30 at three pm at the Halekulani's terrace, House Without A Key, Mrs. Julliette Kimball will be hostess for the Fall meeting and tea of the Outdoor Circle. As president of the Circle, I invite every civic minded woman in Honolulu to attend that meeting,
to join the Outdoor Circle, so that she may do her part in making Honolulu one of the most outstanding cities in beauty and cleanliness in the world.

High tea has been a popular social form for this organization throughout its seventy-five years, beginning in the early 1900's with tea in the parlors of such wealthy women such as Harriet Thurston, Beatrice Castle, Mrs. Walter F. Dillingham and Mrs. Theo. A. Cooke. The purpose of these teas has always been primarily social; the purpose of The Outdoor Circle has not.

At the annual meeting in 1987, the strength of the organization was emphasized by the first speaker, who reminded the group that they had a membership of 3000, a thirty-nine member Board of Directors, and six branches throughout the islands all working with the legislature and county branches of government for purposes of city beautification. This particular meeting's agenda was to present beautification awards and install a new president and executive committee. Betty Crocker, the outgoing president, introduced three special guests: Hiram Kamaka, Director of Parks and Recreation, Walter Arawa, Deputy Director of Parks and Recreation; and Sophie Ann Aoki, executive director of the Waikiki Improvement Association.

Awards were given to two individuals and two corporations for beautification of several entrance areas at traffic junctions in Honolulu: to a private citizen who tends a small plot of land at the junction of the Pali
Highway and the H-1 Freeway, a downtown 'entrance'; to the president of Astin Hotels for maintaining Gateway Park; to a private citizen for planting a small patch of land as one enters Waikiki; and to the McDonald's Corporation for beautifying the entrance to the Honolulu Zoo. Dessert was then served to people already sated by cucumber and salmon sandwiches and an abundance of Devonshire cream and jam on scones. The only remaining item on the agenda was the installation of new officers.

Carolie Simone, wife of the president of the University of Hawaii, was installed as the new president of The Outdoor Circle. Her acceptance speech was brief but emphasized the need for growth, a new image, greater involvement by present members and recruitment of younger people to work within the organization. The meeting was adjourned, marking the 75th year of activity of the Circle.

Roots 1911

Charles Mulford Robinson's advice, which he presented to the Board of Supervisors in 1906, was taken seriously by the women of The Outdoor Circle.

For a town is not like a picture, simply to be looked at and admired; it is to be lived in, and loved; and the more lovable it is the more people will come to it. ..... So my first charge is, be true to yourselves. Do not dream of what other cities may have done; but, far isolated from them, develop your own individuality, be Hawaiian, be a more beautiful Honolulu. Then you have distinction, and only then.
Called in by the Board of Supervisors of Honolulu in 1906, Robinson, a well known civic advisor from New York, was to prepare plans for the growth and beautification of the city. He presented these plans in the form of a book to the Board of Supervisors. Later the members of The Outdoor Circle were to adopt them plans as a basis for their work in the community.

An interest in beautification was the foundation upon which The Outdoor Circle was built. In 1894 the Kilohana Art League was formed, its aim was to foster an interest in and support of the arts. As the Kilohana Art League expanded, several members became interested in preserving some of the natural landscape, improving the open spaces and built environment, and adding a significant amount of greenery to Honolulu.

A favorite story which circulates throughout the Circle today is about a chance meeting in France of Mrs. Henry Waterhouse and her daughter Elnora Sturgeon with Cherilla Lowrey at a beautiful Versailles fountain. The palace of Versailles, often said to be one of the greatest expressions of monarchy in the world, is set in a garden of flawless landscape design. These women were delighted by the landscape of the palace and remarked among themselves that they would return to Honolulu and work on its beautification. The fountain in the middle of Thomas Square in Honolulu illustrates the inspiration of
Versailles. They returned to Honolulu and apprised the president of the Kilohana Art League of their ideas.

The Kilohana Art League had numerous sub-organizations called Circles. These were groups of men and women with specific areas of interest such as music, literature and drama. Thus, in 1911, a new circle was formed for those interested ostensibly in beautifying and cleaning the city. They organized in order to landscape Honolulu as they thought a community should appear. The beginning of The Outdoor Circle was in the Kilohana Art League.

The original seven members were: Eliza Cooke, Mrs. Henry Waterhouse, Ida Sherman, Mrs. Isaac M. Cox, Kahumanu Ward, Cherilla Lowrey and Frances Lawrence. Cherilla Lowrey was appointed chairwoman and Frances Lawrence was named the ex-officio head of the Circle.

Both the men and the women of Honolulu were exposed to Robinson's ideas, but it was the women who chose to put them into practice. These women were quite impressed by the beautification proposals of Robinson. Even though his work was basically ignored by the Board of Supervisors, the women took it as the basis for their own efforts. His plans for designing Honolulu mirrored their own ideas about the value of parks, shade trees and the like. The fact that the clubwomen did not ignore his work is
important in light of one of the major theses of this study.

When newer organizations interested in the development of an art academy and the fostering of art appreciation emerged, the Kilohana Art League disbanded.\textsuperscript{5} In 1912, after the dissolution of the Art League, The Outdoor Circle decided to become an independent club with a wider membership representing all districts. Their express purpose was to develop what they called 'a more beautiful Honolulu'. The membership was open to all women who were interested in creating a beautiful city. The Circle had thirty members within the first year; by 1915 the membership had grown to 300.

The Social Context: A Brief Overview

Members of The Outdoor Circle, at least through the 1950's, were from the social and economic upper crust of Hawaii. Their standing has... a peculiar and sometimes bitter history. Historians of Hawaii--such as Gavan Daws, Lawrence Fuchs, Ralph S. Kuykendall, and Theodore Wright--agree that diseases, commerce, new religions and other changes following Cook's discovery of the islands contributed to the disintegration of the long-established culture and morale of the Hawaiian people. By the time the Christian missionaries arrived in the early 1820's, the Hawaiian people had been weakened in numbers and will. The impact of Western civilization had already undermined
the culture and people. While the missionaries attempted to gain control of the souls and minds of the people, some of their descendants were among the leaders in the movement to seize control of the economy and government of the islands.

By the late 19th century the Hawaiian economy revolved around the sugar industry. Sugar was a plantation crop, and vast tracts of land were available for lease to wealthy--usually Caucasian--farmers, who imported peasants from Asia to work on the land. The rise of a few wealthy landowners and power brokers was closely linked to sugar.

In his history of Hawaii, Theodore Wright stated in 1941:

Rising within a stone's throw of one another in downtown Honolulu is a group of imposing office buildings--the headquarters of the influential corporations long known to island residents as the Big Five.6

Those in control of sugar were at the top of the power structure. The 'Big Five', a common term among historians of Hawaii, were: C. Brewer and Co., Ltd., Castle and Cook Ltd., American Factors, Ltd. (prior to WWI, Hackfeld, now Amfac), Alexander and Baldwin, Ltd. and Theo H. Davies and Co. Ltd. The people in power in these companies were for the most part either descended from missionaries or related in some way. Gavan Daws lists such names associated with power in Hawaii as Dole, Alexander,
Baldwin, Smith, Castle, Cook, Judd, Wilcox, Damon, Thurston, Waterhouse, Atherton, Frear, Young, Lewers and Dillingham. Many of the wives of these men were members of The Outdoor Circle. The annexation of Hawaii as a U.S. territory came in July of 1898; 70% of the key officers in the new government were descended from missionaries.

Lillian Power, granddaughter of Cherilla Lowrey, first president of The Outdoor Circle, states that her grandmother's contemporaries, those wealthy families in Hawaii, knew and acted upon what was best for Hawaii. Her attitude is suggestive of the dominant one among the wealthy elite. Its members, sweeping aside the history of Hawaii before European contact, saw themselves as benevolent, wise, and loving the island well enough to know what was best for it. Others suggest that this wealthy elite believed that they were destined to rule Hawaii. These families felt a sense of obligation to their community and supported private charities; however, this top 5% of the population was also in control of politics, land, labor and enterprise. Putting the matter more baldly, Joseph Barber Jr. in Hawaii: Restless Rampart argues that the community in Hawaii consisted of a relatively few Caucasian residents who held the economic power and controlled masses of immigrants from Asia at the bottom of the social scale. These Asians were considered inconsequential when Hawaii became a United States
Territory; they were not given status as citizens and had no voting privileges. The Hawaiian people were treated slightly better and often were given government positions.

Gavan Daws suggests that "economic power meant political power." The same handful of men either had key government positions or controlled those in government. He describes the concept of 'interlocking directorates' well:

Such integrated control has, of course, fostered a system of interlocking directorates. For instance, the president of one member of the Big Five is also president of most of the sugar companies served by his agency, president of an electric company and director of many corporations, including telephone, sugar refinery and another of the Big Five in which his corporation holds stock. The president of another Big Five member is, as might be expected, head of the sugar and pineapple companies served by his agency. He is also president of a national bank, vice-president of a telephone company and director of other firms. The chairman of the board of a third member of the Big Five is the president of sugar companies, president of an insurance company, vice-president of an electric company, director of a pineapple company and so on. A director of one of the Big Five is also president of a gas company, president of a street railway and bus company and director of other enterprises, including a sugar company.

Many of these same people were then sought after to serve on community boards of the YMCA, Salvation Army, school boards, the Chamber of Commerce and other organizations. Thus, social, political and economic power was clearly in the hands of a few men.
Cherilla Lowrey

In 1951, Alice Spalding Bowen wrote a short "History of The Outdoor Circle" and remembered the founders in the following manner:

Those first members of the Outdoor Circle--forty odd years ago--were a handful of women who led a more easeful life than most of us are able to today, but they had perceived a vision of a city beautiful and they went about achieving it with astounding will.12

The early members of the Circle were part of the elite in Hawaii; either because of blood ties or marriage, these women moved within the circles of power. A detailed account of the life of one of these women will illustrate the power base enjoyed by many of the early members.

Cherilla Lillian Storrs Lowrey presided over The Outdoor Circle from 1912 to 1917. Her memory is deeply alive among present-day members of the organization as she was clearly the driving force of the Circle. A fountain was placed on the grounds of the Mission Memorial Building in her honor; this is now a part of the Lowrey plot at Oahu cemetery.

Cherilla Storrs was born on August 18, 1861, in Utica, New York. She later moved to California with her mother and siblings and then found her way to Hawaii in 1882. For two years she was a teacher of young Hawaiian girls at the Kawaiahao Seminary. Subsequently, she was hired as an assistant principal of Punahou Preparatory School and there taught the second grade.13 She was
basically a modestly well educated young woman who showed a sense of adventure by travelling to the Territory of Hawaii alone.

On January 17, 1884 she married Frederick Jewett Lowrey, and in the course of their marriage they had four children. Her husband was a merchant and businessman with Lewers and Cooke; he became president of the company in 1901. He was a part of what Joseph Barber describes as the 'interlocking directorate'. Lowrey was president of the Oahu Sugar Company and the Waiahole Water Company. He was also vice-president of the Honolulu Gas Company. In addition, he was a leader in community organizations such as the Oahu Cemetary Association and the Hawaiian Board of Missions. Within the community he served on the board of Prison Inspectors and the Board of Health, was president of the Queens's Hospital, trustee of Central Union Church, the YMCA, and the Chamber of Commerce and was a member of the three most influential clubs in the city.  

Cherilla Lowrey had married into a widespread network of power. Her adult life represents an early twentieth century elite female counterpart of her husband's life. Drawing upon her deep religious beliefs, she became quite active within the community. She taught Sunday school at Central Union church, was involved with the Children's Aid Association, and joined the Women's Board of Missions. During World War I she worked with the Women's War
Council. Better known in her day than her husband, she is best remembered as the first president of The Outdoor Circle. According to the many in-house histories written about her, Lowrey's energy and vision were essential to the growth and development of this organization. Also, as one of the first two female members of the City Planning Commission, Lowrey was well placed to carry out the Circle's ambitious community agenda.

Lillian Power remembers the stories told about her grandmother which highlight her drive, energy, love of nature and vision for Honolulu. In an early diary Lowrey notes the following poem and remarks to herself that this was "my card at Ellie Williams Christmas party--I wish it were true--I'll try and make it so."

There is a garden in her face
where roses and white lilies blow;
a heavenly paradise in that place
wherein all pleasant fruits do grow
there cherries grow that none may try
til Cherry Ripe themselves do cry.

The poem embodies a number of female symbols: the metaphors deal with paradise, the place for nurturance and the bearing of life. This is a recurring theme throughout Circle literature. Although her diaries are full of family matters, social calls, ducks and chickens to purchase, visits to cemeteries, and dinner with friends, Lowrey wrote a great deal about her walks and planting at "Niniko". Niniko, named for a Tahitian princess who was intended to be King Kalakaua's bride, was the Lowrey's
country or mountain home in Nuuanu Valley. Weekends, summers and an occasional week were spent on this thirty-five acre estate.

Sitting in Lillian Power's parlor discussing her grandmother, one can look across the street at Niniko. The estate has since been subdivided; however, the original home in Nuuanu Valley is nestled in the midst of koa trees and lush plantings reflecting a passion for natural beauty, greenery and an abundance of flowers. In fact, this passion was so great that her granddaughter, born two years after Lowrey died, remembers that many of the conversations at family meals were centered upon the Circle's activities. Perhaps in reaction to this focus, Lillian Power admits, with a touch of humor, that she herself did not become an active member of The Outdoor Circle, focusing her energies elsewhere instead.

Cherilla Lowrey was not alone in her quest for city beautification. The other six original members were equally determined and committed to the task at hand, and they were equally well connected.

Organization and Goals

The Outdoor Circle became an official organization in 1912, with an executive committee, by-laws and 30 members. The objective of the group was stated in the by-laws:

The object shall be to work for a more beautiful and healthful city, freeing it from disfigurement, developing its natural beauty and advantages and
cooperating in all efforts toward community welfare.

Membership was open—at least officially—to all women interested in this objective; officers were to be elected by majority vote, and the board of directors would consist of an executive committee plus chairwomen of committees and neighborhood circles. From the start the committees were: billboard, playgrounds, the Civic Center, Kalkaua Avenue, parks, education, publicity, and ways and means.

The goals or aims of The Outdoor Circle have remained the same throughout the last seventy-five years and can be found in all of their literature:

1. To plant shade trees in streets.
2. To secure sidewalks and curbs—urging concrete sidewalks.
3. To remove all old fences.
4. To rid city of billboards.
5. To clean up vacant lots.
6. To get as much hibiscus planted as possible.
7. To park open spaces.
8. To establish playgrounds for children.
9. To conserve and develop the natural beauties of the landscape by encouraging the growth of native trees and shrubs, and the introduction of such new ones as belong to tropical life.

In 1937, Grace Wilder, for whom a street is named, explained the intense determination of the members of The Outdoor Circle:

A passionate few are always behind any combined movement. When it became apparent nearly a quarter of a century ago that the ever increasing hurly burly of trade was bringing to these beautiful islands a growing neglect of the esthetic, then it was that the 'passionate
few' realized that organized effort should be made to carry on the vital necessary task of preserving the natural beauty of the community and safeguarding in the future, Hawaii's right to be known as the Paradise of the Pacific.

At the first annual meeting of The Outdoor Circle in 1912, thirty women gathered from around Honolulu to formulate the goals for this new organization. Although Grace Wilder emphasized "preserving the natural beauty" of Hawaii, the purpose of the organization was clearly not only to preserve but to create paradise in the Pacific. In the 1820's missionary women found Hawaii to be a dusty unattractive land; the members of The Outdoor Circle were determined to make it clean, green and what they believed to be beautiful.

Throughout the years the membership has consisted primarily of women. In 1950 Alice Spalding Bowen summed up the basic attitude toward membership:

This is a woman's organization and we are very, very proud of our traditions and are aware that our unique accomplishments were made possible by an all woman membership. So we cannot accept men as members.

These women, aware of their female perspectives and strengths, and determined to continue their work according to goals set forth by the founders, were not interested in a male agenda. In order to allow male participation in the Circle's work, a men's auxilliary was formed in 1950. Today men can be members, but very few choose to do so.
The Circle continues to grow, now reaching the Neighbor Islands. The Maui Outdoor Circle's parent organization was the Maui Women's Club, which then branched out into civic improvement areas. Today the Outdoor Circle on Maui is involved in projects throughout the island, including landscaping schools and monitoring signs and billboard advertising. In 1949 the Kona Outdoor Circle received its charter and has worked for nearly forty years in the tradition of circle objectives. A Lahaina Outdoor Circle was formed in 1964 and devoted its energy at first to keeping Lahaina beautiful and landscaping the Baldwin house. The Kauai Outdoor Circle was formed in 1974 with its activities ranging from recycling to plantings at Lihue airport, Kapaa town, schools, and other public sites. On Oahu three other branches thrive outside Honolulu, Kaneohe, Lanikai-Kailua, and most recently, the North Shore. Both Kaneohe and Lanikai-Kailua, formed in 1948, have been quite active in planting trees and shrubs along highways, in public areas and at schools. They have also monitored signs put up by businesses and private individuals. The Lanikai-Kailua branch also offers to help locate needed plants and cuttings in an exchange program. These other branches of The Outdoor Circle have substantial accomplishments in their histories; however, for purposes of this work the
discussion will be limited to the Circle's work in the greater Honolulu area.

In 1970, Chester Collins of the San Francisco Magazine wrote that the Circle "is a recognized conscience of the community with an influence over virtually every decision involving man's environment in all of Hawaii." The women of The Outdoor Circle have worked on a multitude of projects and activities; these are too numerous to document individually. Their efforts have clearly changed the face of Honolulu, contributed to laws protecting the landscape, minimized the impact of commercialization, and fostered public awareness of surroundings.

In order to gain a fuller understanding and appreciation of the Circle's contribution to the landscape of Honolulu, one must address the major accomplishments of this organization over the past seventy-five years. Its activities cannot easily be grouped into distinct categories; its work has been diverse and for the most part quite successful. However, to provide an historical overview of the Circle's work, five areas can be construed to cover the majority of its efforts: signs and billboards, the greening of Hawaii, municipal housekeeping, education and miscellaneous public service projects. The following account of the organization's activities and accomplishments should illustrate its enormous impact on Honolulu.
Signs and Billboards

If the women of The Outdoor Circle are remembered for any one effort it will be the fourteen-year campaign against the use of billboard advertising in Hawaii. As Grace Wilder said:

The elimination of billboards from the roadsides of this island has been the Outdoor Circle's most outstanding achievement and its biggest contribution to the community. In the days of the tourists, visitors constantly assured the circle that the absence of billboards and garish outdoor signs was one of the principle reasons they liked to return to Honolulu again and again. Eternal vigilance is necessary...

To date, Hawaii is the only state in the nation with anti-billboard legislation. Across America these women received acclaim for this accomplishment. It was and is the vigilance of the Circle's members which has kept Hawaii relatively free of billboards and large signs. In 1946, Harrington Littel of the New York Times reported enthusiastically:

.....not by law, I say, but by unfailing watchfulness on the part of the women of Hawaii, who have created a simple and effective instrument for both protecting and enhancing scenic beauty, called the Outdoor Circle. 'Never underestimate the power of a woman.' Thus is preserved out in the Pacific an oasis where billboards cease from troubling and the tourist is at rest.

Their campaigns throughout the past seventy-five years have included all forms of advertising—rubbish can advertising, sky writing, advertising on the umbrellas of traffic officers, murals for purposes of advertising, such
as a 'whaling wall' on Ala Moana Boulevard, and most recently the use of lights on boats offshore to advertise products. The Circle has also voiced its opinion against political advertising in the form of large signs and streamers.

One of the histories of the Circle written by a member addresses the core of the anti-billboard campaign:

But such work is never finished. Unscrupulous or unthoughtful people who care little for the real good of the islands are a constant menace to the beauty of Hawaii. The price of a lovely community is eternal vigilance.

The Circle's 'vigilance' has indeed been constant. Since the club's inception there has been a vast growth in population in greater Honolulu. The organization continues to keep informed of new developments in advertising throughout the islands and gathers forces to oppose anything that threatens to spoil the views and vistas of Hawaii.

The antibillboard campaign was unique. Women with no official political power, but well connected socially and economically, forced both mainland and local merchants to cease billboard advertising in Hawaii. A detailed account of these activities will be presented in chapter four of this study.

The Greening of Hawaii

An undated letter in the Outdoor Circle files shows how the members operated:
A few weeks ago while at breakfast a telephone message came to me that one of the beautiful trees at the foot of Judd Hill was being ruthlessly cut. This time the city was the offender.

Mrs. Thurston and I hastened to the scene and found two men with axes making inroads into the trunk of one of the most beautiful trees on this Avenue. We stopped the work of destruction, got into communication with Mr. Whitehouse and succeeded in saving the tree...

'Vigilant little old ladies in tennis shoes' is a characterization of this organization which members today find quite humorous. Apparently it is a characterization that has been quite popular, if patronizing, among people who are either uninformed about the Circle's activities, or are in disagreement with its work. What is true is that these women were determined. They rode up Tantalus on horseback, for example, to distribute Kukui seeds and thereafter to water these seedlings. They blockaded trees to keep 'hatchet men' away from them, as one member in 1917 said:

Imagine my consternation and dismay one afternoon when I went to the playgrounds to see piles of branches lying around the ground and the trees along the fence literally cut in half, with ugly bare stumps sticking out here and there. Ignorant men had been around to clear...No words in the English language could adequately express my feelings.

They planted hibiscus whenever and wherever possible.

As was previously mentioned, on March 14, 1906 Robinson presented to the Board of Supervisors of the Territory of Hawaii his plan for the improvement of the city of Honolulu. Included in this were plans for
streets, entrances, waterfront, boulevards, parks and the
downtown district. Keeping in mind the attraction of
Hawaii to a growing tourist industry, Robinson's proposals
were centered around beauty, open spaces, shade trees,
ease of traffic patterns, and many parks for public
enjoyment. For instance, regarding Tantalus Park,
Robinson suggested:

The Tantalus park should be, with the far
uncertainty of its further boundary as one looks
across to other mountains, the one great park;—
for Honolulu that bit of God's world that cities
now are learning to secure and save for the
people, that they may get close to nature,
forgetting the fences and survey lines which
civilization has thrown, like a network of
prison walls, upon the world.27

The Outdoor Circle was inspired by Robinson's ideas and
took to heart his call to secure a bit of 'God's world' in
the midst of a growing Honolulu.

As these women were not themselves city planners, or
landscape architects, they relied on Robinson's work and
also called in others such as Louise S. Hubbard, a
landscape architect from Winnetka, Illinois, to make
recommendations for city landscapes. Hubbard spent the
winters of 1920 and 1922 in Honolulu and during the course
of her stay developed plans for planting Honolulu.28 She
wrote a small pamphlet outlining landscape plans for the
greater Honolulu area, the executive building grounds,
judiciary and federal buildings and the grounds of the
state library in downtown Honolulu. In addition, she made
recommendations for types of plants to be used at the Normal, Royal, and Kaahumanu Schools. Her suggestions were detailed and expansive. For instance, when describing the Pali Road, she addressed almost every tree and plant along the way:

Just above the Mangoes you come to three Ironwoods along the road, placed one hundred to one hundred fifty feet apart. They show you as nothing else could, how beautiful it would be if there could be more open spaces.

Hubbard's pamphlet was instrumental in clarifying the agenda of The Outdoor Circle.

The Circle also solicited suggestions from other landscape architects; these helped establish a mode of operation and trained members' eyes in the area of landscape planning and design. As early as October 26, 1913, a Mrs. Phillip Martineau, who was an expert gardener, was in Honolulu to speak to the members. Of course, many members were themselves quite knowledgable regarding types of trees and plants suitable for any particular environment found in Honolulu; they shared this information freely.

Planting was seen as the first item on the agenda in 1912; care and maintenance of the plantings became essential after that. Given the tropical climate of Honolulu, miles and miles of shade was seen as necessary to the health and comfort of its citizens. Lowrey notes in her early diary:
The first venture was the planting of Aala Park around the outer edge with Monkey Pod trees and Bouganvella along the stone walk at river's edge. Mrs. Waterhouse has this week planted 31 Monkey Pod trees on the side walks about this Plaza (Alapai).

After the ladies planted, they returned in numbers weekly to water, prune, fertilize and otherwise maintain their trees and plants. The trees at Aala Park and Alapai Plaza were the first among many, numbering to date over 250,000 trees and untold additional shrubs, bushes and flowers. The scope and impact of this work cannot fully be appreciated without a partial listing of the results.

Imagine Honolulu without the following vegetation:

- Monkeypod trees in Aala Park
- Bougainvillea along River Street stream
- Flowering trees at Thomas Square
- Coconut trees on Kalakaua Avenue
- Royal palms in Manoa Park
- Oleanders on Kalakaua Avenue
- Royal Poinciana on Wilder Avenue
- Shower trees on Gulick Avenue
- Koa trees in Queen Emma park
- Oleanders throughout Makiki
- 10,000 mock orange shrubs at Ala Moana Park tennis courts
- Shower trees and panax hedges at school sites
- Pink shower trees at Makiki park
- Coconut trees in downtown waterfront district
Wiliwili trees, Bougainvillea and night blooming cereus

Round Top Road

Coconut trees at Lighthouse Road

Monkeypods in Palolo Valley

Planting of Iolani Palace grounds

Hala trees planted on Diamond Head Road

Oleanders along highways

Planting of Capitol grounds, cemeteries and subdivisions

Mahogany trees on Kalakaua Avenue

Trees and plants in Kamamalu park, Pauoa Park, Kaliki park and Queen Emma park

Honolulu Post Office with oleanders, palms and ferns

Pink shower trees on Piikoi and Liholiho streets

Hibiscus along windward Oahu highways

In addition to all of the above, the Circle planted 5000 trees in Kaimuki, landscaped numerous public buildings, and gave plants to the Territorial Hospital in Kaneohe. In 1939, 11,513 plants were distributed; in 1940, the number was 10,303 and in 1942 trees, shrubs, and vines were planted at Schofield Barracks and Forts Armstrong, Kamehameha, Ruger, DeRussy, Shafter and Makalapa.32

Often mistaken for merely a garden club, this group has gone far beyond the traditional love of flowers and social gatherings highlighted with talks by horticulturists. As seen from the list above, The Outdoor Circle had enormous impact on the landscape of Honolulu;
both visually and practically, the greening of Hawaii was no small matter. This was especially true because of the inconsistent support from the city and county throughout the years.

Planting trees was one aspect of the job; saving them was another. In January of 1948, the Christian Science Monitor in a story about The Outdoor Circle noted:

> Whenever the city fathers or traffic engineers announce the cutting down of trees to widen roads, the women get busy. Unless actual safety is concerned—and often it is not—they put up such a fight that usually the men retire in resignation, and some other method for the road work is evolved.

Perhaps their most significant achievement in this regard was their fight to keep the ironwood trees on Kalakaua Avenue in Kapiolani Park from being destroyed for purposes of widening the road. A 1977 Sunday newspaper lauded activities of the Circle:

> One mile of the Ironwood trees, planted in 1890 by Princess Ka'ahumanu's father, Mr. A. S. Cleghorn, was threatened when it was decided that the road has to be widened by six feet. The Circle's Mrs. A. G. M. Robertson stated that a mere detail of widening a road six feet proposed by the Planning Commission should not rob Honolulu of its cathedral of Ironwood trees.

Instead of chopping down trees in order to widen the road, a second parallel road was built to accommodate traffic. Today, when driving through Kapiolani Park these stately ironwoods tower over the road and provide shade for residents and tourists alike.
The Outdoor Circle did not limit its campaigns to long avenues of trees; the women were ever-vigilant regarding any single tree endangered by encroaching construction, commerce or population. Thus, the club organized its efforts to save anything from a mile of ironwoods in Kapiolani Park, a lone banyon in someone's yard, or coconut trees around the islands, the heart fronds of which were being used to make coconut hats. Merchants with an eye for the increasing tourist business, for instance, were destroying palm trees on both private and public property. The Circle launched a media campaign to save these trees from providing souvenirs for tourists. It was instrumental in getting the city government to pass an Exceptional Trees of Hawaii law in 1975. This protects any tree or grove of trees worthy of preservation by virtue of age, rarity, location, or size.

Destruction by both men and nature was decried. Following a storm in 1919 Josephine King noted in the elaborate language of her day:

"The loss of our grand 'Algaroba' trees all over the district is a calamity I cannot speak of without feelings of regret and "minamina" (sorrow) as we say in Hawaiian! And may Madam Boreas--the North Wind--get lost if she ever attempts another raid on Honolulu in Hawaii Nei."

The members of the Circle were serious about their work and would not look kindly upon any sort of interference.
For almost forty years the Circle was the sole landscaping agency for the public schools on Oahu. The kind of assistance given to schools was threefold: "furnishing a landscaping plan if none exists; advising about improvements for existing plantings; furnishing plant material when needed." The labor, expense and sheer numbers of schools made it necessary for the Circle to pull out of this role. It suggested that it was the function of the City and County to landscape and maintain public school grounds.

The Circle opened and maintained its own nursery and employed a tree trimmer in an attempt to keep trees from being mutilated. An undated note jotted down by a member of the Circle illustrates the feelings which guided their work:

It is everybody's business in this old world of ours to root up all the weeds he finds to make room for the flowers so that every little garden, no matter where it lies will look like one which God once made and called it Paradise.

Referring to a sense of duty to keep the weeds out of paradise, the women viewed their work as akin to a calling from God.

In 1918, The Outdoor Circle, with Grace Wilder and Mrs. Olivera as overseers, started a nursery on Kalakaua Avenue; it was later moved to Kapiolani Blvd. Thousands of trees, shrubs and flowers were grown in this nursery for use by members and for the beautification of parks,
playgrounds, and public school grounds. The nursery was maintained by a full-time paid attendant. On July 1, 1946 the Circle turned the nursery over to the City and County for use throughout the state. This nursery is still in existence today.

In a 1920 letter to one of the Circle members, a major general in the U.S. Army remarked:

Men who labor with their hands or their brains in the pursuit of money or power are apt to overlook or have no time to strive for the beauty of life. It remains for women to supplement our weakness. 38

Although his statement is patronizing, it is still interesting that he would view their work as supplementing a 'weakness'. This fairly common belief that women provided the beauty and kept men from ruining, or at least overlooking, the environment illustrates well that women were at the controls in certain areas of community building. In 1914, The Outdoor Circle employed a tree trimmer and paid him twenty-five cents an hour to trim trees on public grounds, maintain parks and build guards to protect newly planted trees. In 1918, members of The Outdoor Circle wrote to the Mayor and Board of Supervisors suggesting they employ a tree trimmer themselves to maintain the greenery of the city of Honolulu. In 1920 the Board followed their advice; eventually the city took over the business of maintaining schools, parks, playgrounds, and tree-lined highways. Although The
Outdoor Circle continued to work on landscaping parks and schoolgrounds, by 1931 the Parks Board was at last actively involved in planting and maintenance. However, when one looks at the grounds of most public schools in Honolulu today, it is clear that the landscaping and care has been minimal. Many of the schools have barren playgrounds, lack shade trees and are generally in disrepair. The men have not continued the high aesthetic standards of the Outdoor Circle.

In 1923 The Outdoor Circle presented to the Board of Supervisors an ordinance for the creation of a Shade Tree Commission. It was determined to convince these men the trees in Hawaii should be protected. The following shade tree ordinance was passed in 1926:

Section 516. Shade Tree Commission Created. A Commission to be known as the Shade Tree Commission of Honolulu is hereby created to consist of five persons to be appointed by the mayor of the City and County of Honolulu...

Section 518. Authority of Commission. The said commission shall have full and complete authority over the trimming and removing of all shade trees, hedges, and shrubs growing in and upon the public streets, highways, public thoroughfares and alleys of the City and County of Honolulu...The said commission shall also have full and complete authority over the trimming of all shade trees growing in the public parks, school grounds, playgrounds and places of the said City and County of Honolulu.

Outdoor Circle president, Mrs. F.R. Day, sat as first head of the commission, which in 1931 became a sub-division of the newly created Parks Board. Two Circle members, Grace
Wilder and Louise Dillingham, were also on the Parks Board. Throughout the years The Outdoor Circle continued to have members on the Board, and decisions about issues pertaining to planting and related matters were often made jointly between the City government and the Circle. Upon creation of the Shade Tree Commission and later the Parks Board, the women were relieved to see trees trimmed by experts rather than the hatchet men they despised.

Another aspect of 'greening Hawaii' has occurred on the personal or private level. Home gardens and indoor plants, the subjects of most garden clubs, were encouraged and supported by the establishment of neighborhood clubs--garden circles. These were primarily social gatherings. In the March 1919 report of the Kaimuki circle, Mrs. E.H. Corbaley noted:

The Circle met at Mrs. A. J. Cooke's residence February 7 taking the form of a social--thirty ladies were present--Mrs. Robertson presided and gave us all a very encouraging talk offering to help us at any time and making us feel that she is a guiding light. Later on, she delighted us by singing a group of Hawaiian songs.

The women who joined these circles were interested in furthering their own knowledge of plants and flowers and were interested in contact with other women with similar predilections. In a speech given in 1924, Beatrice Castle described one of the events supported by the Circle:

The Community Flower Show, held in the gymnasium of the Nuuanu Y.M.C.A., played an important role in the life of the community on May 1st and 2nd and, under the clear headed leadership of Mrs.
Charles Chillingworth and later Mrs. A.H. Terletan, the Flower Show Committee accomplished a fine piece of work with efficiency and harmony. The wealth of flowers from Maui and Kauai and the leis from Hawaii added greatly to the interest of the flower show.

Flower shows, lei-making contests, pagents, theatrical fetes—all were designed by The Outdoor Circle to broaden the interest, enjoyment and knowledge of their membership and the public alike. A dual purpose was served by these activities; public awareness was heightened and funds were raised to further the Circle's activities.

In a small pamphlet published by The Outdoor Circle, its views regarding gardens were well articulated:

A garden should be enjoyed in an esthetic sense as well as a useful sense. We should have what we love in color and fragrance; at the same time we should make our gardens produce fruit and vegetables, and with careful thought no ground will be wasted.

The words esthetic, useful, fragrance and wasted in the above statement suggest a vision of a garden similar to that of Charlotte Perkins Gilman when describing Herland; a garden which is not only beautiful and well ordered, but also productive. This theme is often found in feminist utopian thought, and it was certainly a guiding factor in Circle work.

Throughout the years The Outdoor Circle has published a variety of pamphlets, newsletters, and books aimed at either instruction or celebration. The Lani-Kailua branch published a booklet in 1952 listing types of plants, from
ground covers to trees, which would flourish on the windward side of Oahu. In 1982, marking the 70th anniversary of The Outdoor Circle, Majesty: The Exceptional Trees of Hawaii, was published. Its aim was not only to provide a beautiful coffee table pictorial of rare trees but to foster continued protection of these unusual trees. The latest publication, Pua Nani, is a pictorial representation of some rare and beautiful flowers in Hawaii.

Among the innumerable 'greening' legacies left by this club stands the hibiscus. As a tribute to Cherilla Lowrey, a white hibiscus was adopted in 1918 as the official flower of the Circle. On May 2, 1923 the hibiscus, an indigenous flower of Hawaii, became the official flower emblem of the Territory; later it was adopted as the State Flower. One of the original and long standing aims of The Outdoor Circle was to plant as many hibiscus as possible.

Municipal Housekeeping

From the beginning, improving the cleanliness of the city was one of the main goals of the organization. As Barbara Prock stated in a 1961 newspaper article about the Circle, cleaning was an expansive venture:

And by dirty housekeeping I don't mean sweeping the dirt under the carpet or neglecting the venetian blinds. I mean outside housekeeping—the messy garbage cans in plain view, the untrimmed hedges, the unpainted fences, the dilapidated lean-tos, the open garages filled
The women worked on a variety of what could be seen as 'housekeeping' projects: general cleanliness of vacant lots, disposal of rubbish, unsightly fences, run-down buildings, underground wiring, trash, recycling, anti-litter, and lobbying against the construction of unsightly structures. A 1946 Honolulu Star Bulletin article indicated that the Circle was the moving force behind getting the wider community involved in municipal housekeeping:

"Company's Coming" was the slogan for the 1953 clean-up campaign sponsored by the Circle. This slogan exemplifies the prevalent position of the fifties' women; one should always have the house clean for company. Extending this into the community was clever and well received.

These yearly campaigns began as early as 1918 when the members appealed to Mr. John Winthrop, Chair of the Committee of County and Municipal Affairs, to pledge his support of a yearly Clean-Up Day. In October of 1918, a resolution was passed by The Outdoor Circle to support Governor McCarthy in observance of a November 2, 1918 Clean-Up Day. This was the beginning of yearly efforts to involve the community in city housekeeping chores, and for many years thereafter this organization worked with
the Mayor, City Council, Board of Supervisors, and the Department of Road Maintenance. As the "Company's Coming" slogan suggests, tourism, an important industry throughout the years, was another significant reason to improve the cleanliness of the city. However, in general, the Circle was a progressive, civic-minded group interested mainly in ensuring and maintaining the sanitation, health and beauty of Honolulu for its own citizens.

The campaign for better refuse collection and for use of covered trash containers was an important contribution to cleaning up the city. Before any formal regulations regarding garbage disposal were enacted, the sidewalks of the city were strewn with cardboard boxes filled with litter. Empty metal cans and barrels were also used for garbage. The containers were not put back off the street or hidden behind fences or bushes. Thus, the general appearance of streets and sidewalks was often quite untidy and unsanitary.

As early as 1931 The Circle made a plea to remove garbage boxes from sidewalks and for the next twenty years, with the cooperation of the Board of Health and the City and County, it encouraged the use of covered garbage cans and the reduction of the size of garbage items to be picked up. In November of 1946, to be better prepared to suggest plans for trash containers and their collection, several members of the club got on board a garbage truck
to see life from the collector's point of view. When Mrs. Ray Morris rode the refuse truck, she observed many difficulties which faced the collectors:

One whole mango tree had been laid on the sidewalk for the collectors to take away. An immense flour barrel required four men to lift it.

In addition to the fact that private and business refuse containers were inadequately covered, secured, and placed out of sight, the refuse trucks themselves littered the highways. Years later, in 1954, a Honolulu Advertiser editorial described the problem:

A towering refuse truck, laden with samples of almost everything mankind rejects because of odor, decay or disuse, sailed down Ala Moana Boulevard Wednesday morning in the direction of the incinerator. For a mile or so the truck, with a tall superstructure held insecurely by palm fronds, was the plaything of tradewinds which stuck gusty fingers into the load of pig-goodies, picked out samples at random and then lavished them upon the boulevard.

In this case members of The Outdoor Circle were in a car behind the truck and in their outrage stepped up their campaign to get covers, nets or tarpaulins over the trucks.

By addressing the issue of garbage collection at all levels The Outdoor Circle was prepared to suggest two plans to the Board of Supervisors for consideration. The first called for refuse collection and disposal to be considered a public utility, a service provided by the City and County. The second plan was to remove city
government altogether and to allow private contractors to provide the service. The membership was split as to its endorsement of these plans; however, by 1950 legislation had been passed which required the city government to provide year-round collection services and laid down rules concerning trash containers and collection trucks.

In 1968, a local cartoonist was commissioned to design Mr. Mynah-Bird, The Outdoor Circle's litter prevention symbol and mascot. Mr. Mynah appears on posters and anti-litter campaign material throughout the islands today. The bird, a Circle member in costume, also shows up at schools to help make students aware of litter problems and what they themselves can do about them. But the push for cleaning up litter had been present from the early years. A June 24, 1934 column written by members of the Circle outlined this appeal:

The Outdoor Circle has issued an appeal to all residents of Honolulu, particularly the women of the community, to take part in a summer house cleaning, not of their own trim and well cared for homes, but of the parks and public areas of the city. Much can be done, particularly by women, say members of the organization through supervision of their children while on outings and by seeing that after a day in the parks or on the beaches all papers and other litter is carefully picked up and put into containers nearby.

The anti-litter campaigns throughout the years were extensive. In 1921-1922 alone sixty vacant lots were cleaned; in 1935 the organization helped during Fire and Prevention week by collecting 1002 tons of rubbish and
haling junked cars to the dump; and in the early 1950's it launched the Litter-Bug campaign. A pretty button was given to children to reward their achievements in fostering anti-litter attitudes among their friends and families. Children also were encouraged to care for and not harm plants. The Outdoor Circle also sponsored an anti-litter poster contest in 1975. The purpose of the contest, held at intermediate and high school levels, was to educate the community. There was so much enthusiasm shown by both students and the State Department of Education that this contest became an annual event for several years.

To address a modern aspect of the litter problem, the Circle was instrumental in developing aluminum recycling plants throughout the islands. The Sand Island Recycling Center, with six pick up points on Oahu and branches on Maui and Kauai, was established by the Circle. Not allowing any type of trash or what they considered 'unsightliness' to get by their watchful eyes, the members campaigned for underground wiring throughout the islands. As it was not economically possible to rewire already built communities, they concentrated their efforts on two subdivisions, Kahala and Aiea, both of which were built with underground wiring. The main objection was that the wires and poles interfered with the natural views and
vistas of the islands. This objection was in keeping with the Circle's overall concern about the Honolulu landscape.

The battles to maintain the natural beauty of Honolulu, including its waterfront, were hard fought and over time not completely successful. For example, in the early 1920's The Outdoor Circle objected to the construction of fish canneries next to Ala Moana Road and to the building of commercial booths on the Pali Highway and its mountain crest lookout. On one count, that of canneries, it lost; in securing the beauty of the Pali, it was successful. Today, the battle for cleanliness and beauty continues, but with the ever increasing population, the rise of the tourist industry, and a generally more diverse community than the Honolulu in which The Outdoor Circle began, it has had to step up its efforts.

It is interesting to note that while the members of The Outdoor Circle were constantly working to preserve the 'natural beauty' of Hawaii, many of their activities suggest that they were not necessarily content with Hawaii in its uncultivated, pre-Western, 'natural' state. The Outdoor Circle continually made decisions regarding which parts of Hawaii's natural landscape to preserve and which needed redoing. The women visualized a garden, not a wilderness, and felt it was their duty and perhaps calling to transform the land into a garden of their choosing.
Choices about preserving or designing areas of Honolulu were guided by values which came from their cultural background. They supported any effort aimed at setting up ecological and esthetic guidelines for the community's future.

**Education**

The Outdoor Circle has expended considerable effort in educating the children of Hawaii. As early as 1915 the Outdoor Circle recognized the need to educate the general public regarding the beautification of the city landscape. The Makiki tree planting committee reported:

> There is considerable complaint about children destroying...trees that the Circle puts out, and I would suggest that they be taken for an Automobile ride by the Chairman of the Educational Committee and "educated".  

As early as 1919 the organization proposed "Arbor Day" at schools with the intention of teaching children how to care for plants. In October of the same year buttons were awarded to children who took a plant protection pledge, and then in February of 1936 the Circle formed a Junior Protective League for children 8-12 years old.

As part of the anti-litter campaigns, skits were presented in classrooms across the island in an attempt to get children interested in keeping Hawaii clean. A volunteer member of The Outdoor Circle, "Auntie-litter", would present an entertaining program to elementary school students. She would provide the students with the
necessary information regarding litter in an humorous manner. In a 1931 newspaper article, Louise Dillingham stressed the need for the education of young people:

As the twig is bent, so is the tree inclined. Hackneyed and trite as those old copybook maxims may appear, some of them are as peculiarly applicable today as they were in the spencerian age, and The Outdoor Circle, after nearly twenty years of ceaseless-striving 'for a more beautiful and healthful city, freed from disfigurement and with natural beauties developed,' finds that in bending the twig of youth toward an appreciation of civic beauty and a realization of civic responsibility it is making effective strides in the direction of its goal.

Once again the theme of controlling nature emerges.

In addition to skits by members and Mr. Mynah-Bird, environmental films were available to the schools free of charge. A lending library is still available; however, due to the increased cost of educational films and materials in general, the Circle has not updated its reserve and the library is no longer in heavy demand.

In 1951 the Junior Outdoor Circle sponsored the Committee on Natural Sciences for Youth, and with the help of a consultant from the Bishop Museum lectures and training classes were held for leaders of youth groups. Local scientists were invited to discuss their particular fields and thus help young people begin to gain respect for and knowledge of nature.

A more recent program sponsored by The Outdoor Circle is the Hawaii Nature Center, formerly the Makiki
Environmental Education Center. The Center has served thousands of children and adults throughout the island. It is funded by grants and the money raised from a variety of activities. The Center is open to all of the schools on Oahu for field trips, nature study, exploring and hiking. Due to the popularity and diversity of the program the yearly calendar is booked solid. The Center also offers speciality hikes and nature walks which are open to the general public; participants are accompanied by a knowledgable guide provided by the Center.

Much of the programming available through the Club has been geared toward the education of children; however, The Outdoor Circle has also offered lectures for its own membership and the public at large. For instance, outside speakers talked about "Tropical Plants" in 1915, soils in 1916, and in 1917 a lecture was given on "Civic Improvement". Similar lectures continued throughout the years in response to community needs and interest.

In the area of educating the public the women of The Outdoor Circle demonstrated once again their ability to see the forest and the trees. They worked for civic improvement, beautification and preservation of the Honolulu landscape on many levels, actively planting trees, then maintaining them, removing rubbish and cleaning up unsightly areas. They also taught others, be
they children or the city government, how to do their part in these endeavors.

**Miscellaneous Public Service Projects**

A *Honolulu Times* article in 1931 praised the diverse work of the women in The Outdoor Circle:

> When the women of a community get behind any proposal they give to it a momentum which makes it absolutely irresistible.

As though cleaning the city, greening the islands, monitoring signs, and educating the public were not enough to keep the organization busy, The Outdoor Circle supported numerous other proposals, plans, functions and ideas. Its activities ranged from planting and equipping the first playground at Kamamalu Park (this was later turned over for management to the Free Kindergarten and Children's Aid Association) to fighting to keep Diamond Head Crater untouched by high rises, tennis courts or any other commercial ventures; from staffing Foster Botanical Gardens with volunteers to sponsoring other organizations such as Hui Manu, Hawaii's avian society and the Honolulu Garden Club; from the development of McCoy Pavilion, a project funded by a longtime Circle member, Hazel McCoy, to honor her husband, to entertaining the people of Hawaii with festivals, flower shows, house tours and balls. The range is extensive and impressive.

"Parking open spaces" was one of the original goals set forth by The Outdoor Circle. Thomas Square was one of
the first projects; planting flowering trees in this park began in 1912. The Outdoor Circle provided the thousand mock orange plants surrounding the park and donated the fountain to the city in 1932 in memory of Beatrice Castle Newcomb, an active member of the Circle at its inception. With this donation the founder's vision of Versailles was realized. Ala Moana Park was at one time a dumping ground. In 1925, the governor discussed with the Circle plans for 'parking', in their words, this open space, and the club worked on this project for over fifty years. In the 1930's it arranged for school children throughout Oahu to sprout 4000 coconut seedlings for the park; its own nursery provided the 2000 mock orange plants for the tennis courts. Not only did the organization create parks; it was also active in opposing any encroachment, destruction or development which would harm an existing park. Thus, in 1963 it "vigorously opposed the proposed elevated freeway along the City's waterfront" and in 1965 opposed "the development of Magic Island for high-rise hotels." These campaigns were successful.

In order to encourage others to take an active role in city beautification, the Circle has given individual awards, certificates of merit, badges for children and for a time presented a daily series of civic improvement citations which were published in the Honolulu Star Bulletin. The newspaper ran a photograph along with the
citation in order to illustrate to the public how many businesses, clubs, private citizens, members of the military and others were striving to make their areas more attractive and clean.

In a 1950 Honolulu newspaper article, Jared Smith recalled the significant impact of The Outdoor Circle:

The only active city planning and city beautification organization in Honolulu in the 1900's was the Outdoor Circle, its membership comprising the heads of resident families, a forceful group of ladies wise in the ways of making their menfold think proposed plans were their own. County government had not arrived, nor were there any laws on the statute books giving anybody any authority. The militant Outdoor Circle simply said: "You dumb males do things our way, or else!"

It is interesting that Smith thought the women were somehow scheming to make their activities appear to be the ideas of their husbands. These women were not conniving wives, nor were they particularly 'militant' and insulting to the men. They were just extremely confident that their ideas were the best for Honolulu. Organizing gave them a power base from which to direct their activities.

Certainly the work done by these clubmembers since 1912 deserved some recognition. In honor of their seventy-fifth anniversary The Mayor of Honolulu proclaimed October 13, 1987 as The Outdoor Circle Day. The proclamation was read at a birthday celebration held at the Atherton Halau at the Bishop Museum. The mayor
honored the Circle's dedication and service to city beautification. With perhaps one hundred people in attendance, happy birthday was sung by members gathered around a large white hibiscus shaped cake; punch and tea were consumed; some chatted, nibbling on sandwiches; others waited in line to have their copy of *Pua Nani* signed by the authors and photographer.

The social atmosphere belied the achievements and strength of the organization's members. Carolie Simone, president of the organization that year, accepted the proclamation and then proceeded to outline the serious business which lay ahead for Circle members. Plans included the original goals of greening, controlling litter, educating, and monitoring signs and billboards, plus pursuing new areas of concern such as water in Hawaii. Simone also expressed the hope of recruiting new and young members to the organization in order to keep alive the legacy of the Circle's vigilance, innovation and success.

**Modifications**

Over a seventy-five year history organizations usually reconsider their goals, change in size, reorganize their membership and alter their relationship with the community. The Outdoor Circle has adjusted to both internal and external changes which have affected its capacity to accomplish its agenda.
In the early fifties the political and social climate changed in Hawaii; new names and faces were emerging as power brokers. This was due to changes which occurred following the return of the highly decorated 100th Infantry Battalion. These veterans, a team of loyal Americans of Japanese descent, returned to Hawaii with opened eyes; they had seen Caucasians do menial work on the mainland, and returned to seek justice for themselves. Men such as John Burns and Daniel Inouye led the way toward the emergence of a coalition of independent Democrats to challenge the Big Five Republicans. The Democratic party was revitalized; many of the so-called 'second class citizens' went to the polls in 1954 and voted in a Democratic majority. They wanted an end to discrimination in government jobs and in private industry. While the former rulers of the Territory, those who represented the views of Merchant Street, that bastion of the Big Five, were content with the status quo, the new democratic surge was toward statehood and the promise of democracy. The elite class which had controlled Hawaii both politically and economically for a long time had lost its political hold, and soon others would be making inroads on its economic power.

In addition to the great political changes the population of the state of Hawaii was growing rapidly, and in this more complex society the Circle had difficulty
monitoring the abuses of the environment. Tourism blossomed as a major economic force in Hawaii, ensuring that as a major industry it would be influential in political and economic decision-making. The economic scale was tipped differently; by the late 1950's being economically and socially well connected did not necessarily mean that one had the power to completely influence the community. Although the members of the 'interlocking directorate' were still wealthy and powerful, new groups of people were beginning to garner power for themselves.

Looking through newspaper accounts of Circle activities throughout the past seventy-five years, it is evident that there has been a reduction in the amount of space made available to Circle news. No longer having a direct line to the editor of the city paper has made it more difficult to be considered newsworthy on a daily basis. Additionally, the news items printed in a more complex and populated community have also become more diverse.

Social and volunteer organizations' activities have come to play second fiddle to 'hard' news. In the 1950's, the decade in which women were to be model homemakers and to conform to stereotypical female roles, newspaper coverage changed from accounts of the Circle's work to accounts of its social functions. In fact, if one were to
read the Honolulu newspapers from 1950 to 1959, The Circle would seem to have been a completely social organization, sponsoring only teas, festivals, balls and parties. Newspaper accounts of the work of the Circle reproduce the decade's stereotypical female image.

In the early 1960's The Outdoor Circle emerged once again as a viable force joining other organizations in various campaigns to preserve, conserve, or beautify some portion of Hawaii. To date the organization continues this work. Simone suggests that beautification has always been women's role:

Take the early pioneers...there was a man out chopping wood and rustling up the cattle while his wife put roses in front of that sod roofed house. I think that's always been the case. Women have always made it pretty. The men build the house and pay for the food, but the woman makes it pretty...it's always been the tradition.

Circle members continue to 'make it pretty' and fight to keep it pretty. The organization now has power based in tradition and history, and although the impact today is perhaps different than in the early 1900's, The Outdoor Circle continues to be vigilant of both the public and private sectors.

To appreciate fully the work of the women of The Outdoor Circle a close analysis is made in the next chapter of their most successful effort, the anti-billboard campaign. Study of the methods utilized by these women in their quest to remove all billboards from
Honolulu is important in understanding how women's clubs gained and used power.


10. Daws 313.


22. Grace B. Wilder, interview, Hawaii Farm and Radio Program, KGMB 21 May 1944 The Outdoor Circle Office Files.


25. Letter found in File 1 - 26 of The Outdoor Circle Papers, Hawaii State Archives, Honolulu. No date or author, but was probably written around 1917 when Mrs. Thurston was president of the Circle.

26. Letter in File 1 - 26 of The Outdoor Circle Papers, Hawaii State Archives, Honolulu n.d. no author. Again this was probably in 1917.


29. Hubbard "Tree Planting."

30. Clip dated 26 October 1913 from The Pacific Commercial Advertiser, found in The Outdoor Circle Office Files, Honolulu.


32. This information was gathered from the many letters, papers and reports in The Outdoor Circle Office Files, Honolulu and in The Outdoor Circle Papers, Hawaii State.
Archives, Honolulu.


37. The Outdoor Circle Papers, Hawaii State Archives, Honolulu, File 1, item 31. This is one of many handwritten scraps of paper found as part of the archival papers. Most of these have no author or date but can often be catalogued into time periods due to the subject matter.


39. Ordinance No. 289, City and County of Honolulu, 17 November 1925.


41. Beatrice Castle, speech, 13 May 1924, The Outdoor Circle Office Files, Honolulu 4-5.


45. The Outdoor Circle, letter to John Winthrop, 19 October 1918, The Outdoor Circle Papers, Hawaii State Archives, Honolulu File 8.
46. Resolution passed October 1918 by The Outdoor Circle, The Outdoor Circle Papers, Hawaii State Archives, Honolulu File 8.


50. Outdoor Circle column in the Honolulu Advertiser, 24 June 1934, The Outdoor Circle Office Files, Honolulu. The Outdoor Circle ran a regular column in this newspaper to keep the public current on their activities. Scrapbooks of newspaper clippings in the Circle's office are filled with these short articles. A good deal can be learned from these as they are quite detailed.


56. Statement found in File 11, 30 October 1919, The Outdoor Circle Papers, Hawaii State Archives, Honolulu.


60. "Activities of The Outdoor Circle 1911-1923," The Outdoor Circle Office Files, Honolulu.


64. Information on the changes in Hawaii during the 1950's can be found in a number of books. Among these are Theon Wright, The Disenchanted Isles; Gavan Daws, Shoal of Time; and Lawrence H. Fuchs, Hawaii Pono.

I think that I shall never see
A billboard lovely as a tree
Perhaps, unless the billboards fall,
I'll never see a tree at all.

Accolades

Since 1927 billboards have not been used for advertising in Hawaii. In 1987, Betty Crocker, president of the Outdoor Circle mused, "mention billboards to children in Hawaii and they have no idea what you are talking about". For years, however, Honolulu was in fact disfigured by huge signs and billboards. A photograph taken in 1926 of the intersection of McCully and King Streets shows seven side-by-side billboards lining the street. These advertised, among other products, Wrigley's Chewing Gum, Chesterfield Cigarettes, and Bull Durham Tobacco. This billboard-ridden intersection was not the only one in Honolulu; billboards were visible everywhere.

In a 1951 report one member remembered the billboards:

It is difficult to visualize now that the highways of Honolulu were formerly disfigured by huge signs—that billboards on Diamond Head urged you to smoke Bull Durham or buy certain brands of whiskey. An immense pickle sign put up on the road to Waikiki blotted out the lovely view of Manoa Valley. Even the Pali was not safe from the orgy of billboards.

A recent Spirit of Aloha magazine article praises the Circle's anti-billboard campaign:
There will never be another giant green pickle planted on the Pali. No more whiskey, tamales and ketchup promoted on the flanks of Diamond Head. No cigarette billboards in Manoa Valley. No 10-foot-high letters hawking soap on the slopes of Punchbowl.

The views and vistas of Honolulu were obstructed by these large commercial billboards, and the membership of The Outdoor Circle was determined to erase these blots on the landscape.

The women of the Circle were so successful in their campaign 'to rid Hawaii of billboards' that they received letters of acclaim from around the world. People from the mainland and from foreign countries looked to the Circle for advice on how to conduct similar civic campaigns. Numerous Honolulu newspaper and magazine accounts throughout the years have lauded the work of these women; equally important have been the myriad letters written to the editors of Honolulu newspapers from tourists applauding the absence of billboards in Hawaii.

Addressing this issue in a radio broadcast in 1937, Grace Wilder, chairwoman of the signs committee of the Outdoor Circle, commented:

Visitors constantly assure the Circle that the absence of billboards and garish outdoor signs are one of the principle reasons they like to return to Honolulu again and again.

Preserving natural beauty was important to both visitors and residents of Honolulu. Residents were interested in
the quality of their own lives and were equally interested in encouraging a growing tourist industry.

In their quest to remove billboards from the face of Honolulu, the women of the Outdoor Circle mobilized public opinion in a variety of ways. Legislation passed in 1927 was but a capstone to the creative work of these women in attaining their goal. Admiration for the Outdoor Circle's work regarding billboards has continued until today.

Billboards as artifact are now a footnote in Hawaii's history, but the strategies, motivations, connections and work around which the women organized to make them a footnote are important. This campaign illustrates the success of a women's organization, the methods they used to convince the business community at home and abroad to discontinue use of billboards, and the move to get the government to pass laws. This not only illuminates the capabilities of a women's club for affecting its community, but captures the philosophical and political essence of their work as well. Although other communities around the United States were interested in removing billboards from their midst, none was as successful as the Outdoor Circle in Honolulu. A detailed account of its work on this campaign will illustrate why this particular group of women was victorious. They competed with big league advertising teams, whose business it was to influence the
public's buying habits; these women beat them at their own game.

"To rid the city of billboards"

In the nineteenth century Hawaii came to be seen as a place of economic opportunity. The missionary outpost view of the island was replaced by a view of the island as a viable place in which and with which to conduct business. Billboards were but an outgrowth of this attitude. Members of the Circle did not disagree with the general emphasis upon economic growth. However, they were much more aware than were the men of the necessity of preserving what was beautiful and overhauling what was not.

As a women's organization formed primarily to promote civic betterment, the Outdoor Circle placed special emphasis on cultivating natural beauty in the islands. Although much of the rhetoric was to preserve the natural beauty, members were not interested in restoring the pre-contact appearance of Hawaii. In reality their plan was to plant a garden based on their singular vision of paradise; billboards were not in this vision. When the goals of the organization were formally drawn up in 1912, committees were formed to deal with the variety of projects outlined in the charter; the billboard committee was but one. The first chairwoman of this committee, Mrs. G. Fred Bush, promptly began assessing the scope of the
billboard problem in Honolulu and drawing up plans for a successful campaign.

The Circle viewed the removal of billboards as a matter of health and beauty for the Islands as well as an asset for attracting tourists; members drew upon the strong belief that they knew what was ultimately best for Hawaii and its people. To these ends they used the technique of direct contact or letters to legislators and other high government officials. They also circulated petitions, used the news media and bought radio time to present their particular viewpoint.

In 1913 approximately forty-three local firms and numerous mainland firms used billboard advertising in Hawaii. The American Brewing Company, Centennial's Best Flour, Snyder's Ketchup and Mennen's Talcum Powder were some of the mainland companies with billboard ads in Hawaii. Locally, the advertisers ranged from news agencies such as the Hawaiian News Company and the Japanese Daily Chronicle to shoe stores such as Silva's Toggery and Regal Shoe Store. Larger firms such as the Trent Trust Co., Pioneer Building and Loan Association, and the Consolidated Amusement Company also utilized billboards. There was, therefore, a wide range of commercial interests behind the use of billboards which marked both rural and urban scenery.
The first goal of the billboard committee was to arouse public indignation and insure the recognition by everyone within their socio-economic class that billboards were detrimental to beauty. Members believed this to be especially true in Hawaii where the land area was limited and scenic beauty was part of the stock in trade. In 1914 they wrote directly to businesses on the mainland that put up the signs:

We are trying to preserve the beauty of Honolulu for you who are contemplating a trip to these Islands, and you will be defeating not only your own pleasure and ours, but that of every tourist who visits us if you persist in this method of heralding your goods.

In their eyes 'preserving' nature was clearly for both the good of the people and the economy.

Mobilizing local public opinion in support of the anti-billboard campaign was the logical first step. This task was executed with ease. Harriet Thurston, an active Circle member, called upon her husband for assistance; Lorin A. Thurston, owner and publisher of The Pacific Commercial Advertiser, (forerunner of today's Honolulu Advertiser and one of two English language daily newspapers) offered a Sunday edition to the Outdoor Circle. On May 10, 1913, the entire newspaper was devoted to that plague on the landscape, the billboard. In fact, the front page heading was "Anti-Billboard Edition of the Pacific Commercial Advertiser". No document better
illustrates the dominant attitudes of these people regarding city beautification and their connections to power.

In order to fill this edition of the newspaper with essays, articles, poetry and other personal commentaries in support of removing billboards from Honolulu, the committee sent letters to 'prominent men and women' asking for contributions to the issue. These were edited by members of the Circle. Remarkably all advertisements in the issue were in support of anti-billboard work in Honolulu. Contributors included members of the Outdoor Circle, members of the business community, local advertisers, school children and others. This edition of The Pacific Commercial Advertiser was crucial to the success of the anti-billboard campaign.

An editorial by Thurston introduced the goals of the Outdoor Circle and gave a general overview of what needed to be accomplished. He denounced the billboards as a community evil and suggested that the Circle's fight represented "the sentiments of the overwhelming majority of the thinking people of Honolulu". This comment by Thurston is interesting in its implications. Was he addressing a small segment of the population as 'thinking' people, or was this statement intended to provoke everyone to want to be included? He also recommended that the
special edition be used as an educational tool to advise mainland advertisers of these sentiments.

Bush contributed an article explaining why the Outdoor Circle was pursuing this campaign. She asserted that billboard advertising "detracts from the beauty of the city and makes Honolulu a less desirable place as a home". She insisted that pride had a great deal to do with the concern over the beauty of Honolulu.

We are proud of the reputation of our city for beauty. It is one of the principal things which brings people here, and we want people who appreciate beautiful things to come to Honolulu. They are the kind of people who improve a community socially, morally, artistically and financially.

The members of the Circle subscribed to a culture which had its roots in a European and Christian tradition. They held themselves in high esteem. They were also convinced that their social value system and appreciation for high culture would benefit the community as a whole. This is important to keep in mind as one looks at the rationale behind the work of the Circle. Certainly there were other views of what was 'best' for Hawaii, but these women worked from a power base that was most influential in the community—probably the same power base that Thurston was addressing as 'thinking' people. This is not necessarily an indictment of their work; Honolulu is more picturesque than it was when the early missionaries found much of it to be barren and dusty. However, it might explain why
these women used the language of battle when they referred to their work relating to billboards.

Another reason for opposing billboards was the depreciation of property values near their locations. Bush claimed that billboards blocked the trade winds, shut out the view, and generally made life uncomfortable in the area. She denied that there was anything self-serving about the campaign. Most of the women in the organization lived in the "better residence districts" of Honolulu and therefore did not personally have billboards in their backyards. Bush stated:

The members of the Circle are acting from higher motives than to merely secure their own personal comfort; otherwise they would not be undergoing the work and discomfort of this effort against billboards.

It was a matter of principle within the organization, she continued, that the members should work on behalf of their "less fortunately situated neighbors". This paternalism/maternalism (the more fortunate taking care of the less fortunate) was characteristic of Progressive thought and paralleled the attitudes of civic organizations throughout America.

Bush defended a boycotting practice that advertisers had deemed unfair:

You are entitled to your opinion and we are entitled to ours. But when it comes to the money question—you may be able to make money by advertising on billboards—that's your business; but you can't make it out of us—that's our business.
She added that the women were not at all angry with the individuals who advertised; after all, many of them were personal friends or family members. She explained that their position was merely for the benefit of the community.

One portion of this Sunday edition of The Pacific Commercial Advertiser contained "Billboard Bulletins", short statements by prominent people in the community offering their views. Their names comprised a Who's Who list of women in Hawaii in 1913. The wife of sugar tycoon Henry Waterhouse was quoted as saying "put 'em down! Put 'em down! I am very anxious to see them come down". Deborah Damon stated: "They are most disfiguring to nature". Agnes Judd, daughter of Albert F. Judd, attorney at law and son of an advisor to early kings of Hawaii, exclaimed: "Am I in favor of billboards? I should be crazy if I were. They are a blot on the face of our beautiful city."

There were at least two dozen such statements in favor of removing billboards from Honolulu, many supporting the idea that this was a job for women, as suggested by Mrs. A. G. Hawes, Jr.:

No human being would willingly disfigure his own person. Why should we disfigure this beautiful town with billboards? It gives us a black eye to all tourists. Nature has endowed us with all that is beautiful. Every woman should be glad to help nature. I am in full sympathy with the move to abolish billboards in Honolulu.
The Outdoor Circle had the support of the citizens with the most influence on the community.

This issue of the newspaper also included the names of mainland and local advertisers who had recently agreed to discontinue billboard advertising. Their compliance showed support from the business community and led to additional cooperation from those companies that were still using billboards; this list also effectively advised the community whose products they should be buying.

The school children of Honolulu had been invited to send in essays, statements and drawings of their views of a beautiful city. In line with many of the major arguments against the use of billboards, the published entries depicted trash surrounding the base of billboards, views blocked by billboards, and the general untidiness of billboard advertising.

Charles R. Frazier, proprietor of the only billboard manufacturing company in Honolulu, the Pioneer Advertising Company, had also been invited to express his opinions. His published reply criticized the newspaper's role in the anti-billboard campaign and accused it of coercion and unfair practices. Frazier wrote that he ran a good business and had respectable customers from within the community. Not surprisingly, he took the entire campaign personally:
Hasn't there been a good deal of misplaced enthusiasm in this anti-billboard campaign? Doesn't it look a little like persecution?

Josephine Campbell suggested that Frazier's standing in the community made things difficult for members of the billboard committee. She stated that Frazier

... was a man who had gained considerable popularity in business, social, and church aidees, and many of his friends looked upon the attempt to rid Honolulu of billboards, not from the angle of the principle involved, but from a personal angle, resenting injury to the man's business.

This was but the beginning of a long power struggle between Charles Frazier and the Outdoor Circle. Filled with propaganda aimed at the community at large in order to gain support in beautifying Honolulu, this special edition marked the beginning of an earnest 'battle' to free Hawaii from billboards. Key figures in the political and business community made public their support for this endeavor. The word was out; the women would win.

**Connections**

One month before the special Sunday edition was published, the Outdoor Circle had written a letter to the publisher asking for advice on how to proceed with the campaign. On April 14, 1913 Thurston wrote a lengthy reply outlining his suggestions. His recommendation was the special edition, and he gave advice on whom to contact for help, who should be interviewed, and how the format would best serve the Circle's interests. Thurston also
offered special advertising rates for those businesses that would advertise on behalf of the anti-billboard campaign. His help to the organization was invaluable.

Mr. A. N. Campbell, treasurer and director of the Henry Waterhouse Trust Company and a member of the Board of Directors of the Honolulu Chamber of Commerce, suggested to the Outdoor Circle that it secure endorsements for its campaign from the Honolulu Chamber of Commerce, the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of Honolulu, and the Tourist Bureau (now known as the Hawaii Visitor's Bureau). On October 14, 1914, with the assistance of F. M. Swanzy, Faxon Bishop, E. I. Spalding and Campbell, the Board of Directors of the Honolulu Chamber of Commerce passed a resolution that stated its approval, support and appreciation of the Outdoor Circle's work in beautifying Honolulu. Josephine Campbell commented on the support of her husband and the Chamber:

This action by the Directors of the Chamber of Commerce was not only encouraging to the members of the Outdoor Circle, but it indicated a consciousness in the business community of the practical need for doing away with disfigurements of the landscape in the name of advertising.

Garnering such support was necessary to succeed; the 'old man' network was crucial.

Prominent members of the community encouraged the Circle's work. Sometimes support would be solicited by Outdoor Circle members, and other times the support would
be forthcoming simply because the work of these women was a newsworthy endeavor. For example, a United States Army major repeatedly sent pamphlets to the Outdoor Circle describing the work of other groups around the nation and their advances toward eradicating the nuisance of billboards. George Rodeik, manager of Hackfeld, arranged matters so that his firm refused to take on agencies whose manufacturers insisted upon using billboard advertising. One such example was Henry May & Co. Ltd., wholesale grocers in Honolulu, which had a contract with Francis H. Leggett and Co. to advertise and sell Premier Salad Dressing. After Leggett was apprised of the situation in Honolulu and the attitude of Hackfeld and Company, it cancelled its contract to advertise on billboards. A letter to Henry May & Co. stated its officials "have been convinced it is a bad thing on account of the feelings on the part of the ladies of Honolulu".19 On a smaller scale, Mr. Louis Greenfield, proprietor of the Princess Theater, refused to use billboards to publicize his new enterprise.

Other kinds of support were mutually beneficial. The De Folco Grand Opera planned on using ten large billboards to advertise the new season in Honolulu. After a conference with Cherilla Lowrey in 1916, Madame Eugenio de Folco decided to align herself with the Circle to preserve the natural beauty of Honolulu. In return, members of the
Outdoor Circle agreed to help advertise the opera. Another form of support came from organizations with their own interests at heart, such as the Holy Name Society. Its members were quite incensed at the indecent posters put up by 'moving picture houses'. Because of their concern about good morals and decency they asked for the Outdoor Circle's help in removing these kinds of billboards.

In 1923 the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of Honolulu passed a resolution in support of the Outdoor Circle's efforts. In this same year the Tourist Bureau voted to endorse the Circle's campaign on the grounds of its intrinsic value to the tourist business in Hawaii. Consolidated Amusement Company, the last local firm to buckle under the pressure, abandoned billboard advertising.

Throughout the fourteen-year 'battle' Thurston kept his newspaper readily available to the Outdoor Circle. Articles about the billboard campaign appeared weekly, if not daily; some were written by Circle members, others by Thurston and his staff. A July 22, 1923 article is representative of Thurston's strong commitment. He wrote about the refusal of the William Wrigley Jr. Company to remove billboards. He insisted that he really preferred Wrigley's chewing gum to any other and was sorry that he would have to discontinue buying the product.
Personally I desire to say that I cannot consistently use your gum as long as you continue to use the billboards here, nor do I intend to do so.

He urged Wrigley to cooperate with the "ladies of this city" and the community at large. In the term 'ladies' we once again find the appeal to chivalry and class.

Although the campaign against billboards was centered in Honolulu, people on the outer islands were also supportive. Included were the Mokihana Club of Kauai, the Hilo Hawaii Women's Club, and an assortment of sympathetic merchants. Without the help of these various individuals and organizations the women of the Outdoor Circle would have found their struggle even more difficult.

The Process

The process of eliminating billboards from Hawaii focused first on public awareness and influence. This was accomplished with the publication of the Pacific Commercial Advertiser special edition. The following year Josephine Campbell was appointed chairwoman of the billboard committee; she served for ten years. The grassroots process of infiltrating the business community in Honolulu and nationwide was headed by her.

The work was long and arduous. Members of the committee called upon local firms using billboard advertising and tried to convert them to the Outdoor Circle's cause. Letters were sent regularly to all of
these advertisers asking their cooperation in helping to preserve the scenic beauty of Hawaii. Letters were also written to political candidates asking for cooperation in not using posters or billboards in their political campaigns. In early 1914, Cherilla Lowrey, Harriet Thurston and Josephine Campbell wrote such a letter to Mr. J. C. Cohen of the Consolidated Amusement Co. Ltd. during his campaign for mayor of Honolulu.

...we wish to request that you show regard for the beauty of Honolulu and for our efforts to erase the artificial blots by not displaying the billboards for your campaign purposes.

Unhappy with the pressures of the press but willing to cooperate with the women Cohen replied:

I want it to be emphatically understood that the Advertiser nor any other newspaper can dictate to or control me. However, a request from you ladies is an entirely different matter and to be able to conform to your wishes is a pleasure of which I gladly avail myself.

Chivalry reared its head again in Cohen's gentlemanly deference to the ladies. He did not use billboards during his political campaign; however, his theater-related signs were not removed until 1923 because he was convinced that his kind of business needed billboard advertising to reach the non-English speaking population within the community.

Letters were not only written to local concerns, but many were sent to national advertisers in an attempt to inform them of the attitudes and sentiment prevalent in the dominant segment of the Honolulu community. For
example, personal letters went to all tobacco and gum manufacturing companies on the mainland requesting their cooperation in ending their use of billboard advertising on the islands. A typical letter was quite personal:

I am writing you first as a member of the Outdoor Circle--second as one of a community who suffers from the unsightly billboards erected here principally by foreign manufacturers who do not understand the conditions of these islands.

The letter would then discuss the unique nature of Hawaii and the need to keep its vistas open and free from billboards.

Picture an Island forty-six miles long and twenty-six miles wide with one town that was overspread with billboards.

The billboard committee did not limit its letters to advertisers already using billboards in Hawaii; letters were sent to dozens of potential advertisers warning them of the fight in Hawaii that was being waged against billboards. Representative of the tone of these letters is one by Cherilla Lowrey in 1916:

A somewhat discouraging feature of the situation has been that there is a perennial crop of new 'Pharaohs who knew not Moses', who, through ignorance, keep appearing on the boards, keeping us busy enlightening them.

Because the addresses of all national advertisers were not readily available to the women, they decided to advertise themselves on a national scale. The *Saturday Evening Post* was known to be supportive of the national campaigns against billboard use and offered the Outdoor Circle space
to place its ad. This ad explained the sentiment of what the Circle called 'the Honolulu community' and warned potential advertisers that billboard advertising would be offensive and unprofitable to them.

Soon after the letters were sent, positive responses came in, all very similar to this one from the H. J. Heinz Company in 1914:

•• regret much to learn that our recent advertising in Honolulu was a cause of offense to any of its good people.27

Even if immediate compliance was not possible, the various manufacturers were interested in finding some way to cooperate in the future. The M. A. Packard Company wrote to say that it would ask the advice and follow the wishes of James McInerny, director of the Tourist Bureau.28 The John Bollman Company of California stated that it "should like to be in a position to comply at once" but felt it necessary to advertise on billboards to reach its customers. It would, however, be open to suggestions of alternative methods.29 One such method was suggested by Enoch Morgan's Sons Co., soap manufacturers. The company would discontinue use of billboard advertising but wanted to be able to send pamphlets describing its products directly to the ladies of the Circle.30

The billboard committee had calculated well: advertisers were grateful for feedback from the public as to whether or not their way of selling their product was
appreciated. A case in point was the Cherniavsky trio, internationally famous musicians headed for Honolulu. It anticipated using approximately sixty posters to advertise a series of concerts. When apprised of the probable decrease in ticket sales if the posters were used because of the work of the Outdoor Circle, the group cancelled its billboard contract.\textsuperscript{31}

Advertisers received a great deal of feedback; letters were sent not only by committee members, but the entire membership was asked to write the manufacturers. In this manner the personal attitude of those responsible for a good percentage of household buying in Honolulu was made known to the advertisers.

Campaigns to end billboard advertising were evident throughout the United States. Interest in anti-billboard work in other states led the committee to send letters to various magazines, such as The Ladies' Home Journal, asking for articles which described in detail the work of other groups. Such groups had been formed at the community level and also by national organizations, such as the National Highway Protective Society and the National Federation of Women's Clubs.

The personal calls and letters which were made to owners and managers of local and mainland businesses were augmented by a rubber stamp campaign. The two-and-half-
inch-long and half-inch-high lettering said 'ANTI-BILLBOARD' and was always stamped in red ink. Members of the Outdoor Circle stamped checks, receipts, bills, letterheads, and the outsides of envelopes to attract attention to their project.

From 1914 through 1926 the Circle encouraged its members and others within the community to refrain from purchasing products which were advertised on billboards. In a small community such as Honolulu the women of The Outdoor Circle represented a wealthy block of consumers, one which was of some consequence to manufacturers. These women made effective use of their economic power as consumers. A case in point involved the Royal Baking Powder Company in 1916. In her report of the billboard campaign Josephine Campbell noted:

One morning the advertisement of a popular and well known baking powder appeared on the billboards. Instead of realizing increased sales from the advertisement they received an avalanche of personal letters from members of the Outdoor Circle stating that as long as the baking powder remained on the billboards in Hawaii the writers would be forced to find another brand to use and recommend to their friends and acquaintances. Soon after receiving this mountain of mail from Honolulu, the Royal Baking Powder Company cabled the Outdoor Circle that it had cancelled its contract with the Pioneer Advertising Company and would take its advertisements off billboards immediately. In 1966 Mary Cooke commented on the Circle's impact:
Since it was the era when "woman's place was in the home", they could hardly guess that a group of middle-aged matrons in high-necked shirtwaists, hobble skirts, and lauhala hats would make billboards so unpopular as to be unprofitable.

Many firms accused the Outdoor Circle of boycotting and persecution; however, the women stood by their principles and continued to suggest to its membership, friends and neighbors that they refuse to buy goods advertised on billboards.

By 1917 the use of billboards was greatly reduced. However, those that remained were larger; billboards which might have had three advertised products now carried only one large one. The billboard committee increased its calls, letters, rubber-stamping, and boycotting. It also sent petitions to dozens of firms asking for cooperation and endorsement. Efforts to discourage mainland firms from billboard advertising took the longest. A letter sent by Maude Young, president of the Outdoor Circle in 1918, emphasized to these mainland firms the situation in Hawaii:

The local sentiment against billboards is so strong that most landowners refuse to permit them on their premises; the railroads and street car lines do not permit advertising in or about their premises, stations, or on their cars; and nearly all of the local merchants have desisted from billboard advertising, for the double reason that they find that it does not pay, and that they sympathize with the effort to improve the appearance of the city.

By 1921 there were three mainland and two local companies
advertising on billboards, the Ideal Clothing Co. and the Consolidated Amusement Co. By 1923 when Cohen, of Consolidated Amusement Company, finally agreed not to use billboards to advertise his theatres, only mainland manufacturers remained. After all this work and the cooperation of the local merchants, the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of Honolulu finally passed a resolution supporting the work of the Outdoor Circle. Prior to this time, the Board had remained officially neutral in an effort not to offend either the business community or the women of the Outdoor Circle. However, after all local concerns had ended billboard advertising, the Board came forth with its support.

The difficulty in bringing down the national advertisers was due to the limited constituency for their products, one which the women had not yet reached. In a May 19, 1925 report of the committee Alice Hastings Cooke described this attitude:

Mainland firms have little concern as regards our aesthetic feelings. These particular firms are difficult to approach since the commodities which they advertise are popular brands in a limited field and, therefore, are not as easily affected by adverse public sentiment as had been the case with soap, flour, and clothing advertisers.

Billboarded women's wares and household goods had been ostentatiously boycotted by the Circle women, and thus those firms advertising on billboards had changed their method of informing the public of their products. The
remaining national advertisers sold tobacco and chewing gum, products which upper-class women did not use. The members of the Outdoor Circle felt that since tobacco was purchased primarily by men, perhaps the men could boycott the products. The committee drew up an appeal that was signed by many prominent male citizens of the city. The idea was to refuse to use brands advertised on billboards, aiding the Outdoor Circle in finally removing all billboards from the city. The appeal stated:

We should act individually and collectively through the Chamber of Commerce, Ad, Rotary, Automobile, and Hawaiian Civic Clubs, and all other organizations dedicated to the promotion of Honolulu's well-being. Let us complete the Vision of Honolulu!

Numerous businessmen in the community signed this appeal. Furthermore, a plea was made to the Oriental business community to help support this cause. In several newspaper articles published in 1916 reference can be found regarding the cooperation of Oriental businesses.

The remaining mainland firms, William Wrigley Company, American Tobacco Company, and Ligget & Myers Company, rented or leased billboard space from Charles Frazier, owner of the Pioneer Advertising Company. The last obstacle to clearing billboards out of Honolulu was Frazier. The battle between the Outdoor Circle and this man began at the start of the anti-billboard campaign and continued throughout the fourteen years necessary to realize its goals. The contest, battle of wits, public
disclosures, myriad of phone calls, letters and meetings between Charles Frazier and the women of the Outdoor Circle is the final puzzle piece to the success of this project.

Charles Frazier: Victim or Villian?

Charles R. Frazier, proprietor of the Pioneer Advertising Company, the only billboard company in Honolulu, had been invited to speak his mind at the very onset of the anti-billboard campaign. In the special 1913 edition he was given space in which to set forth his point of view. He appealed to the fairness of the public to recognize that the use of the local newspaper as a weapon in this battle basically involved one advertising medium against another. In fact, the two media, newspapers and billboards, did not reach the same clientele. Not everyone was buying a newspaper, especially an English language edition. The non-buyers, probably the working-class and non-Caucasian population, might, however, be reached by billboard advertising. Frazier rightly suggested that under the cloak of city beautification, the women of the Outdoor Circle were actually attempting to destroy a viable business, one which he claimed had numerous respectable citizens as customers. He was quite disturbed by both the attitude of the Outdoor Circle and that of the Advertiser; he felt persecuted. Frazier summed up his argument bluntly--but with discernment:
Billboard posting is respectable; it is honest; it is profitable. Therefore I have a right to post bills and I am going to post bills. No one has a right to interfere with me, and if they do it is unfair and is persecution.

Throughout the campaign Frazier stood by his legal right to conduct a business for profit; he did not address city beautification.

After this opening round, in which Frazier refused to surrender, the billboard committee concentrated its efforts on lobbying the rest of the business community. Once the members felt they had wide-ranging support (or at least acquiescence), their contest with Frazier again became heated. Meanwhile their push to create community opposition to billboards began to hurt Frazier's business. By 1916 local firms increasingly backed the Outdoor Circle's stand on the billboard issue. Frazier fought back with a canny plan, looking to new businesses for support. He offered them free advertising space. He sought out the manager of a new business and offered him some free initial advertising space in an effort to increase later sales and to show the Outdoor Circle and the general public that he had good customers. Many businesses used advertising in this manner, only to find out later about the prevalent attitude within the community regarding billboards. For example, the Ingersoll Musical Comedy Company, a company which had not used billboards for advertising previously, took advantage
of Frazier's offer. Ingersoll had said that he actually did not believe in billboard advertising from both a civic or an advertising viewpoint. However, Frazier approached him and offered free space. Ingersoll accepted, though was later shocked at the hostility in Honolulu towards billboards.38

Almost all of the communications between the Outdoor Circle and Frazier were published in the newspaper. The Circle released its letters and in order to ensure that his views were presented fairly, Frazier demanded equal space. He continued to use legal arguments:

The law sanctions the billboard. It is used continually by the United States Government for recruiting new men for the Army and Navy. Both President Wilson and candidate Hughes are using it extensively in their present campaigns. Many of the largest and most reputable firms are among its strongest patrons, and the governments of Europe have been using it widely ever since the Great War began to appeal to the Patriotism of their citizens.39

Frazier thus linked his business to the President and patriotism. He also suggested that if citizens were willing to tolerate telephone poles and trolleys, why not billboards? Reading through the letters and newspaper articles one senses Frazier's anger; he, a single small businessman, was fighting a battle against a tight-knit clique of the richest, most prominent and privileged men and women in Honolulu, who he felt were denying him his legal rights. These men and women stood to lose nothing; Frazier could be forced to lose everything.
By 1916 it was also quite clear that the only way to ensure the removal of all billboards in Honolulu was to buy out the Pioneer Advertising Company. This action had first been suggested to the Outdoor Circle by Walter F. Dillingham; Robert W. Shingle, president of the Henry Waterhouse Trust Company and later a Territorial Senator, made the first offer of $5000 to Frazier in 1915. Frazier rejected the offer, asking for $15,000. The Outdoor Circle felt it could not raise that kind of money. The entire transaction was made public, at which time Frazier inexplicably denied ever having been offered $5000.

Throughout November of 1916 the daily paper was filled with correspondence between Frazier and the Outdoor Circle. Frazier stood by his view:

I reiterate: Mr. Shingle, the Outdoor Circle or anyone representing the organization never offered me $5000 nor any other sum for my billboard business.

All of the articles about, and more or less by, the Outdoor Circle, claimed that the offer had been made and his counter offer of $15,000 was not only too high but unreasonable. On the day after Christmas, 1916 Senator-elect Shingle published a statement in the newspaper claiming that he had indeed made an offer to Frazier which had been turned down. He felt that the $5000 offer was responsible and fair, and he was unable to understand Frazier's continued denial. Frazier actually missed an
opportunity; the offer was proof that the Circle was attempting to put him out of business. Instead, with his denials he allowed the issue to become his honesty versus Shingle's, and he was too small and too poorly connected to win. Thus, the public backed Shingle's point of view, and this ultimately enabled the Circle to buy out Frazier.

In November of 1916 Frazier attempted to undercut the billboard committee's strength by suggesting that it only represented itself and not the entire membership of the Outdoor Circle. He wrote individual letters to each member of the Circle asking for her opinion on billboards. In this letter he clearly demonstrated his distrust of the committee:

Ladies: Is the billboard committee afraid that your answers will be favorable or show toleration, that they wish to dictate your replies? Shall you ladies submit to this method of having your opinions and thoughts come to you--ready-made, as it were? Or shall you keep your minds free to fair arguments--so that your replies to my questions will be truly your unbiased, individual opinions and judgments? 43

Approximately 290 members of the Outdoor Circle (3/4 of its membership) sent a response opposing billboards, no contrary responses were sent. These were published in the newspaper outlining their opinions and listing the names of the women who endorsed the actions of both the executive and billboard committees.

Charles Frazier publicly charged the Outdoor Circle with unfair and illegal boycotting practices and used
several examples of businesses that were hurt economically by the Circle's refusal to attend events or buy products. Certainly, the businesses run by these women's husbands were adamantly opposed to boycotts. However, the Circle self-righteously, but evasively, defended its position:

The Circle does not resort to the boycott to carry its point against offending advertisers, but it has demonstrated that it stands ready and willing to reward its friends.

In many articles the Outdoor Circle stated that its members did not boycott; however, as the anti-billboard campaign was their strongest effort as an organization, it suggested publicly that it would be reasonable to assume that many of the women refrained from endorsing certain products or attending events advertised on billboards. The organization did not issue an official statement or directive to its members. All of the so-called boycotting was done quietly, but efficiently. The Circle, however, was not above using a wide range of tactics. In response to all of the publicity regarding Frazier and the Outdoor Circle, Cherilla Lowrey's husband wrote an open letter on November 3, 1916 in the newspaper. He informed Frazier that the billboard committee had the support of the men in the community. Claiming, in the accustomed manner of his group, to know what was best for the people of Hawaii and to be able to speak for them, Lowrey grandly --and very unfairly--recast the issue: "the convenience of the whole people as against your profits as an individual". The
entire affair was thus narrowed to the simple issue of money and influence. Frazier was defending his right to run a business against an elite movement to beautify Honolulu. This problem would not be resolved for ten years.

With the American entry into World War I the public display of antagonism between Frazier and the Outdoor Circle quieted down for about four years. During this time the committee worked on informing national advertisers of its goal, initiated the rubber stamp campaign, and continued to favor enterprises which did not resort to billboard advertising. By 1921, the negative sentiment regarding billboards was all-pervasive among the prominent men and women of Honolulu, and Charles Frazier had to change his stand on the issues. He suggested a variety of compromises which he felt would benefit his business and not offend the Outdoor Circle. In 1921 his language appeared to change from that of a persecuted businessman to that of a concerned citizen of Honolulu.

To begin with, I think we are both of one mind in our earnest desire to preserve the great natural beauty of Hawaii and to protect it from being marred and injured by outdoor advertising that is offensive. I am just as thoroughly committed to the cause of civic beauty and the preservation of the sanctity of nature from defacement as you are.

This seemingly new-found commitment to civic beauty was Frazier's response to an overwhelming effort by the
outdoor Circle which he had been unable to undercut through the years.

Nonetheless, a new billboard appeared on South King Street in May of 1921 and truly raised the ire of the billboard committee. It quickly gathered the signatures of over 100 representative business firms and men in Honolulu on a petition protesting the billboard and asking for its immediate removal. In response to this petition Frazier drafted a lengthy letter outlining his ideas for a reasonable community policy on billboard advertising. He suggested that billboards not be placed in the countryside where they might intrude on scenic beauty or deface the landscape; billboards should be artistically constructed and displayed; when placed in empty lots they should be viewed as contributions to civic art; when located in dark places, their illumination would provide safety and public comfort; and outdoor advertising should be sanctioned by legal ordinance.47

Although the tone of Frazier's letter was much more cooperative than in earlier years, the billboard committee was recalcitrant. All billboards, regardless of artistic value, were seen as unsatisfactory. Frazier was invited to speak to the Circle and was given the opportunity to sell his ideas; but he spoke to deaf ears. Recognizing this fact brought out the anger in him once again:

If the billboard must go, then let's gather in at the same time all those unsightly exhibits of
raw meat, canned goods, electric light poles, lingerie and hardware from the windows and streets of the business district and replace them with potted palms.

In the end, he had to capitulate; the pressure of the community was too much.

**Victory**

A renewed interest in buying the Honolulu Poster Service, the arm of the Pioneer Advertising Agency which built billboards, was met with little resistance from Frazier. The process of removing the billboard business from Honolulu was greatly simplified because the business was in the hands of one company; it was therefore feasible for the clubwomen to raise enough money to buy it out. With the shrewd help of Walter Dillingham, an offer was again made to Charles Frazier in November of 1926. At the Territorial Tax Office it was found that the company was submitting tax returns on an investment of $2500; the Outdoor Circle thought this sum plus an extra $1500 for the sake of good will would be a fair price to offer. In addition, the Circle felt that it could raise this amount of money from its own membership. This is suggestive of the financial firepower the organization could bring against the feisty Frazier.

Frazier agreed to the offer of $4000 but stipulated that he would retain the actual property. He did, however, agree never to become involved in a poster business again. The money was raised entirely from the
membership; twenty-four of the women pledged either $150 or $200 to this end. An agreement dated December 20, 1926 was drawn up which outlined the purchase of the Honolulu Poster Service from Charles Frazier for the amount of $4000. Before money changed hands, however, on the advice of Walter Dillingham the women drew up a petition to the merchants of Honolulu asking them to promise to continue to support the Outdoor Circle regarding the ban on billboards. In January 1927 such a declaration was signed by approximately seventy-five of the largest firms in Honolulu. In an unusual gesture toward a segment of society they usually ignored, the members sent a similar petition to the Japanese business community. This too was signed by a significant number of firms.

The last and only billboard business in Honolulu was finally in the hands of the women of the Outdoor Circle. As soon as it was legally theirs, they scrapped it. As Frazier had feared from the beginning, the only purpose for the purchase was to put his billboard firm out of business. All that remained was to remove the remaining billboards from the community. One of the in-house histories summarizes what the women of the Circle had done:

When billboards defamed the landscape they bought out the billboard business. When they found, to their surprise, that they owned all those billboards, solidly planted over the country sides, they went with their Oriental
yardboys, and with pick and hammer hauled the billboards down!

With the pledges from the membership, the acquiescence of Frazier, and the 'gentlemen's agreement' signed by heads of large firms and many small businesses, the Outdoor Circle could claim success.

**Eternal Vigilance**

In early 1927 the Outdoor Circle proposed a bill forbidding the erection of billboards in Honolulu. This bill passed both houses of the territorial legislature and was subsequently signed by the governor. 'Act 195' restricted billboard advertising to the downtown area bounded by Queen Street, Beretania, River Street, and Punchbowl. The act was not a complete victory for the Outdoor Circle, but this restricted area was relatively small and the damage would be contained. In order to keep other advertising companies from bringing a poster business to Hawaii, Walter Dillingham cautioned the Outdoor Circle to keep its success quiet. He apparently had met with the largest advertising firm on the West Coast and advised it about the opposition to billboards in Honolulu. Because he suspected that the Outdoor Advertising Association of America would not be happy to have any section of the country proclaim itself to be free of billboards, he advised that neither the Circle nor the Tourist Bureau use the successful ban to lure visitors to Hawaii:
If no special publicity is given by the Outdoor Circle or the Tourist Bureau of the fact that we boast of a Territory without billboards it will be less likely to arouse the interest and antagonism of the Outdoor Advertising Association of America.

The women agreed. But their success nonetheless became known and was heralded by organizations such as the General Federation of Women's Clubs and the National Committee for Restriction of Outdoor Advertising.

Unfortunately, large billboards were not the only nuisance in Honolulu. The billboard fight was followed by a campaign to rid the city of large advertisements on the outside of buildings and fences, remove signs on storefronts which were gaudy and unsightly and keep new enterprises from erecting any kind of posters or banners in Honolulu. A Circle report grandly proclaimed:

Eternal vigilance is the price of our success, and if it were not for the very splendid cooperation and support we receive from the majority of the business firms of Honolulu, the tide of commercialism would soon again flood our beautiful islands.

The Circle clarified their desire to expand their control of advertising in Honolulu. The members did not object to signs advertising a business conducted on the premises where the sign was placed, such as stores or theatres; they were only concerned with the size and artistic quality of these signs.

The billboard campaign was a long and intense struggle. Removal of billboards and the scrapping of the
Honolulu Poster Company were but two of the very important achievements of this campaign. The third and perhaps most significant accomplishment of the Outdoor Circle was the impact these women had on the public realm. Support from the community at large enabled the organization to keep at bay any other billboard enterprises throughout the years. Most of the community was proud to be free of billboards and would usually rally behind other projects of the billboard committee.

After 1927 the committee turned its attention to the numerous signs and posters used by businesses around Honolulu. It waged a fight to have advertisements removed from umbrellas used by policemen, urged tobacco and tire companies to quit using numerous small signs around the community, and encouraged the liquor commission to pass 'Rule 29' which prohibited posters for outdoor advertising and limited on-premise advertising to nine square feet. Advertising came in many forms and the committee tried to deal with all of them. Alice Spalding Bowen describes these:

After the war large and garish signs, almost as disfiguring as billboards, started to appear. The Circle, by diplomacy and gentle coercion persuaded many sign displayers to remove their atrocities. One particularly bitter skirmish fought recently in a flurry of postcards, letters to newspapers, personal appeals and mainland communications, vanquished an advertiser who was ruining the Hawaiian sky with a low flying airplane dragging an immense sign advocating a certain brand of whiskey.
Bowen noted that "now we have to protect the sky as well as the land from superimposed ugliness". Not only were airplanes dragging signs through the sky, but Standard Oil and others started using sandwich 'A' signs around its service stations. In 1957 the first signs ordinance was passed by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of Honolulu. This restricted the use and size of signs for all of Honolulu. In May of 1961 Senate Bill 170 was signed into law by Governor William Quinn. This anti-billboard measure was enacted in order to comply with Federal Government bonus requirements for highway allocations and thus get money for the state. In 1967 another City and County of Honolulu ordinance was passed regarding the use of signs. The legalities involved were complicated; prohibiting signs on the basis of esthetics rather than public health, safety or morals was questioned.

The most recent billboard controversy was that of the Outdoor Circle the Whaling Wall. Artist Robert Wyland painted a large mural covering the entire side of a ten-story Waikiki building ostensibly to create public awareness and sympathy for whales. The Outdoor Circle contended that his mural was advertising his artistic enterprises. In the tumult of media coverage, as the swell of public opinion favored the Whaling Wall, the Outdoor Circle was seen as an interfering group of women
who could not appreciate art. The Circle lost; the mural remains in Waikiki. Ironically, the mural has recently been hidden behind a newly erected building. Thus, today it has neither artistic nor commercial value.

All of the arguments in favor of the Whaling Wall mirrored the arguments of Charles Frazier in his attempt to convince the Outdoor Circle of the value of artistic displays on billboards. Frazier lost his battle because in his time public opinion was not get measured in the same way as today; the Big Five no longer dictate taste. However, the attitude of the Outdoor Circle remains consistent:

Most of us here in Honolulu think that the war against billboards was waged and won a long time ago, and that we are now entitled to sit back and complacently read laudatory articles from the mainland on how Hawaii has kept its natural beauties unspoiled by advertising eyesores. Unfortunately, billboards are like dirty dishes—there are always more.”

The women of the Circle stand firm: allowing any form of billboard advertising opens the door to all variations of billboard advertising.

Conclusion

The campaign that was won in 1926 was successful due to the variety and ingenuity of the methods utilized to rid Hawaii of billboards. The Circle's only viable opponent was a single small businessman with no elite connections. Nevertheless, these women were fighting what they considered a 'battle' against the business community.
at large, often their own husbands or friends in particular, and in many instances were inconveniencing themselves by refusing to purchase certain products. Their dedication, tenacity and resourcefulness made it possible to curtail the use of billboards.

The methods in and of themselves are also of importance. These club women consciously borrowed techniques from other sources. From the standpoint of their own social class, they emulated establishment techniques. The members of the organization gained access to power through the use of social connections, financial stability and their "old man network". Making a social call or writing personal letters to heads of corporations, the governor, or whomever they chose was basically just making contact within the wider network of their own social group. Such methods were similar to the business and political methods used by their husbands and fathers. The "old boy network", as it is popularly called, was one in which the men of the dominant class would call upon each other for favors in matters of business. The members of the Circle had access to this power base; however, for them it was the "old man" network. What is significant is that these same upper middle-class women were willing—or perhaps found it necessary—to use techniques such as boycotting, the rubber stamp campaign, massive calling, mass letter writing and other grassroots
operations. They needed to use any strategy which would enable them to achieve their goals. It was clear that they did not have access to all of the traditional avenues of power. They were members of the same class and could communicate their wishes within this network, but as women they were not always taken seriously. Thus, pride did not prevent them from moving outside their social class in search of success.

Women were officially recognized politically in 1920 by the passage of the 19th Amendment. With the power of the vote in hand women could ostensibly affect the process of government and consequently the quality of life within their communities. However, when studying the activities of clubwomen throughout America it is evident that women were affecting their communities long before suffrage was granted. In fact, the passage of this Amendment had little impact on their activities; women had discovered a successful means by which to gain access to power and continued to work within their own organizations in order to implement their goals.

The clubwomen organized around a particular value system with which they were aligned. The methods that they used in order to implement their goals were indicative of a need find power wherever possible. Writing their histories thus legitimizes more than just their activities; it also recognizes that woman's
experience, when not measured against male standards, offers an alternative perspective.

It is precisely this 'alternative perspective' which makes the study of clubwomen so important. Notwithstanding the fact that historical documentation of clubwomen's activities is significant in and of itself, what these same activities tell us about an entire value system is what will bring women's experience from the margin into the center. If this particular value system, or world view, is recognized as a viable alternative to the existing patriarchal framework, women, who have embraced it throughout history will no longer be viewed as insignificant.
ENDNOTES

1. Poem found on small scrap of paper in files at The Outdoor Circle Offices, Honolulu.


3. Photographs of advertisements in Honolulu from 1910 to 1931 were taken by Lawrence E. Edgeworth and can be viewed in a collection at the Bishop Museum in Honolulu.


5. Horton 43.


17. Lorin A. Thurston, letter to Cherilla Lowrey, 14 April 1913, The Outdoor Circle Office Files, Honolulu.


23. J. C. Cohen, letter to Cherilla Lowrey, 1 September 1914, The Outdoor Circle Office Files, Honolulu.

24. Form letter to tobacco and gum manufacturers, n.d. The Outdoor Circle Office Files, Honolulu.

25. Form letter to tobacco and gum manufacturers, n.d. The Outdoor Circle Office Files, Honolulu.


30. Enoch Morgan's Sons Co., letter to Josephine Campbell, 8 February 1917, The Outdoor Circle Office Files, Honolulu.


34. Maude Young, letter sent to a number of mainland advertisers, 1918, *The Outdoor Circle Office Files*, Honolulu.


38. "Billboard Man is Mighty Generous These Chill Days," *The Pacific Commercial Advertiser* 1916, found in *The Outdoor Circle Office Files*, Honolulu.


40. "'No Offer Made,' Frazier Answers Outdoor Circle," *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* 25 May 1915, found in *The Outdoor Circle Office Files*, Honolulu.


42. "Bona Fide Offer Made to Frazier", *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* 26 December 1916, found in *The Outdoor Circle Office Files*, Honolulu.


47. Charles R. Frazier, letter to The Outdoor Circle, 24 August 1921, The Outdoor Circle Office Files, Honolulu.


52. Alice Spalding Bowen, "History of The Outdoor Circle," 13 April 1951, The Outdoor Circle Office Files, Honolulu.


CHAPTER FIVE
AN ALTERNATIVE VISION

When a woman seriously asks herself what it means to be a woman she is pulling at a thread that can unravel an entire culture.

**Unconsciousness, the Raising Of**

In Reinventing Eve Kim Chernin searches for a female deity, a goddess who is the incarnation of the female psyche, she who is life-giving. Chernin is concerned with the imbalance in our culture, with the overbearing presence of a patriarchal vision in all aspects of life. She is however, optimistic; she can see women beginning to ask themselves and others about being female, knowing full well that if enough women ask, the entire culture will begin to unravel.

In order to answer the questions about why women organized, or what they hoped to accomplish, and whether or not their work was particularly female in nature, it is necessary to understand the direction of my analysis. I am imposing a theoretical framework on the behavior of clubwomen. These women were not themselves involved in an analysis of their own status as were Elizabeth Cady Stanton or Alice Paul, two women who were clearly looking both inward and outward in their determination to gain the vote for women.
Clubwomen were steeped in what has been historically viewed as traditional behaviors; they had not the faintest notion that their activities might be construed as feminist, political or worthy of analysis. In fact, the perception that they might be doing something radical or political would doubtless have disturbed them. They were merely interested in carrying out their work in the best possible manner because they considered their goals important and necessary to their own well being, as well as the well being of their community.

What I find fascinating, noteworthy and critical to the study of women is the fact that these women were doing what they wanted to do. They were not consciously advocating an alternative perspective; they were part of it. How were they to imagine that what came naturally to them would one day be viewed as significant to the study of women, not only in terms of their concrete contributions, but their vision as well? This 'vision', or what I call the female world view, is the foundation upon which this dissertation rests.

Feminist: To Be or To Become

Feminism as a concept, an ideology, a political ism, a cultural bias, or a radical stance has been evolving for at least the past thirty years. In 1963, at the beginning of the second, or modern women's movement in America, Betty Friedan warned us about the 'problem with no name'.
She strongly advocated a number of changes in our culture which would help free woman from domestic bondage, open up equality of opportunity across the board and thus stop her from yearning for fulfillment. Many women accepted Friedan's insights, and they sought alternatives in the quest for women's rights.

Thus, many people's definition of feminism during the 1960's was quite narrow. The emphasis was essentially on 'rights' and equality. These women viewed patriarchal society, and therefore men, as the enemy. More importantly, they were often willing to renounce what was feminine about themselves in order to prove that they too could do anything men could do. This unfortunately had two drawbacks. First of all, they were leaving behind their very strengths, the feminine side of human nature. Secondly, the radical denunciation of femininity alienated large numbers of women who should have been allies. All women were frustrated to some degree trying to fit themselves into patriarchal structures. All, therefore, had a vested interest in attacking the structures themselves.

In the mid-1970's the concept of feminism expanded and embraced the move toward woman-centered analysis. Instead of viewing the differences between men and women as the "source of women's oppression", as Hester Eisenstein suggests, differences were seen as the "seeds
The emphasis was now being placed on a celebration of women. It was a return to the 'separate sphere' ideology but with a modern twist.

What was good about this move to celebrate women was that it helped bring about a broader definition of feminism. Thus, the concept of feminism has moved away from the 'women's rights' agenda and from Simone de Beauvoir's position which Karen Offen describes well:

By positing the male model as its ideal type, by posing for women the transcendent act of "becoming" against the imminent stance of "being," Beauvoir set up a de facto trap whereby...women are constantly faced with the threat of demission, or backsliding into "being," or female passivity.

Instead 'being' woman is now substantive in and of itself. Thus, feminism has evolved to encompass much more than 'rights'. It is a system of ideas which is critical of patriarchal thought and social organization, and as a philosophy it suggests that the feminine side of human nature might actually have a great deal to offer our society.

Offen suggests that "feminism is necessarily pro-woman," but that it does not follow that "it must be anti-man." For her, feminists should fulfill three conditions. First of all, they must recognize the validity of women's experience and their interpretation of it. In other words, let women speak for themselves. Secondly, Offen states that a feminist must express anger
or at least discomfort at institutionalized inequity; and thirdly, a feminist must advocate elimination or alteration of prevailing attitudes. Offen concludes by saying that "to be a feminist is necessarily to be at odds with male-dominated culture and society."^5

The clubwomen of the nineteenth and early twentieth century were not angry with their culture. As noted in chapter two, clubwomen were by and large not a part of the early women's movement; most did not support suffrage or any radical departure from the status quo. They operated within the so-called 'women's sphere'. However, they did meet the conditions set forth by Offen. Clubwomen were 'at odds' with their culture when they worked at undoing or redoing aspects of their communities. All of their work in the areas of child care, health care, city beautification, education and such are concrete examples of their 'discomfort' with the community as it was. In addition, they viewed women's experience as valid; they depended solely upon themselves for the creation of agendas for action. It never occurred to them that their own view was anything but sound and solid. They even met Offen's third condition; they were constantly advocating the 'alteration of prevailing attitudes'. The premise of all of their service activities was that something had been missing in the community, ostensibly something which
was not important within the framework of those 'prevailing' attitudes.

Building on Lerner, my theory about women's sphere diverges from others. Whenever women's activities are mentioned, which has not been often, most historians designate them as either 'traditional' or 'nontraditional'. Therefore, we are forced to view their activities from within the rubric of patriarchal confinement. Instead we should be asking many questions. Traditional for whom? In men's eyes? In women's eyes tainted by men's vision? In women's eyes? In order to be traditional we must accept a standard for a culture—that standard to date has been patriarchy. If we discount the patriarchal norm, what would we view as traditional? Or would women's activities suddenly take on a different guise? We, as feminist scholars, must not allow the dominance of a patriarchal mode to cloud our interpretation of women's experience.

When studying clubwomen we should proceed in such a way as to make clear how the women actually viewed themselves and their tasks. We must allow them the voice to tell us about their world and let their experience offer illumination. This is not to suggest that other research which is comparative or traditional in nature is not useful. These women were not operating in a vacuum; they were an integral part of society and responded and
interacted accordingly. Thus, clubwomen cannot be studied as a group completely separate from the rest of their communities, but they can be analyzed outside of traditional patriarchal guidelines. This study attempts to do just that.

I have shown in chapter two that in the mid- to late nineteenth century women joined a variety of associations, such as study clubs, in order to sustain and develop their intellectual lives. Their search for personal and intellectual growth was the general premise for organizing. Clubs such as The Outdoor Circle, however, were formed to support a specific agenda. Women became involved in this type of association because they supported the goals at the onset. They were looking to contribute to the life of their communities rather than seeking personal fulfillment. That they did indeed find fulfillment through their participation was an extra benefit to them.

Membership in community-agenda clubs did not directly develop feminist consciousness. Circle members did not view themselves as radicals; however, if pressed they would admit a willingness to go against the grain of the social fabric. In fact, they often delighted in doing so. In addition, they were aware of their public image and often found a humorous way to alter it. Karen Horton, in a recent article for Aloha Airlines reported:
'We're still little old ladies in tennis shoes to some people,' said Marnie Herkes, a past president of the Kona Outdoor Circle on the Big Island. 'When we were doing the plantings along Kamehameha III Road with bougainvillea and palm trees, we went out of our way not to wear tennis shoes for just that reason: I ruined a good pair of high heels that way.'

They were quite conscious of their agenda.

Within my definition of feminism, they were clearly developing a consciousness of their own. To substantiate this one must remember the Circle's argument against allowing male members to join the organization. The members were protective of what they viewed as their own special perspective on city beautification and what was 'best' for the community in the eyes of the women. They were aware that women could make unique contributions, and they did not want to undercut this special strength. However, they, like many others, would not have preferred the feminist label.

I must reiterate what I said at the onset of this study; I am not interested in debating equality. These women were not different from many other segments of the population that were vying for position and trying to gain power in order to have some input into the communities in which they lived. Obviously, some had more success than others for a variety of reasons, social, racial, ethnic or economic. What is of interest here is not the incontroversial fact of women's subjugation and/or oppression, nor the fact that the women who associated
generally belonged to a certain social class. What is important is the goals they chose to embrace. What was their strategy for involvement? How did women define themselves publicly? If one looks closely, women were neither invisible nor captive.

The Power of a Woman

Influence, control, the feeling of self-esteem and a sense of achievement are all part of having power. Janet Zollinger Giele suggests that "power is the ability to affect the outcome of events in ways that serve one's own interest". Webster's New World Thesaurus offers a number of synonyms--authority, command, jurisdiction, dominion, ascendancy, superiority, domination, mastery, control, sovereignty, prerogative, prestige, omnipotence, rule, law--to name a few. The concept of power has been discussed by many scholars and has been defined in a myriad of ways, all of which hinge on some kind of authority. For this study power will be defined as the ability to exert influence within a community.

Michelle Rosaldo points out that "men are (and have always been) the locus of cultural value." This gives them the authority to wield power within their communities; thus their activities have always been recognized as being predominantly important. She affirms:

Women may be important, powerful, and influential, but it seems that, relative to men of their age and social status, women everywhere
lack generally recognized and culturally valued authority.

Rosaldo however suggests that the acknowledgment of men's authority throughout history does not necessarily lessen the importance of women. She points out:

Social scientists have by and large taken male authority for granted; they have also tended to accept a male view that sees the exercise of power by women as manipulative, disruptive, illegitimate, or unimportant. But it is necessary to remember that while authority legitimates the use of power, it does not exhaust it, and actual methods of giving rewards, controlling information, exerting pressure, and shaping events may be available to women as well as to men.

Where do we find women's source of strength and influence? Their power has not been visible in the public spheres of work and politics. Or have we failed to look for it? Women's power is visible when one examines the private world, or that space we have designated as the "female sphere".

There is no question that society has placed constraints on women's ability to participate fully in major institutions within the public sphere. However, Liesa Stamm in Social Power and Influence of Women, suggests that there are four major themes relevant to the study of women's power which prove their access to it. First, she finds that it is multifaceted. Their power and influence are not felt in only one area of the community; nor is it simply economic or political. Secondly, women exert influence through a variety of situational contexts.
Thirdly, power for women also changes throughout each individual's life span. Fourthly, and most important to the study of women, much of it operates outside of formal societally defined authority structures. On a personal/private level, women were influential.

How then, did women create their own power structures? Rosaldo suggests that women needed to transcend domestic limits to gain power and a sense of value. They could do this "either by entering the men's world or by creating a society unto themselves." This study has documented the strategies of women for getting what they wanted despite apparently restrictive social systems. Notwithstanding their inability to take a traditional route to power, women associated and used their collective social positions as leverage. Thus, clubs empowered women; women created a 'society unto themselves'. Rather than keeping to themselves, however, they harnessed their energy and ideas and entered the public sphere.

The members of The Outdoor Circle had a built-in power base, their husbands and fathers, the 'old man' network mentioned earlier. By virtue of these connections, associating only served to strengthen their already burgeoning influence in Hawaii. They definitely utilized their 'collective social positions' to reach their goals. In fact, their actions were meant to
maintain an aristocratic and elitist lifestyle. This is well illustrated by their embracing Versailles as a model for beautification.

Clubwomen throughout America learned that through their associations they could exert influence in the public realm. The collective consciousness which was developed within the various clubs turned into cultural power exercised by the women. This research is predicated on the assumption that women have different cultural perspectives than men; this is why the study of power and clubwomen becomes significant. The Outdoor Circle had a great deal of power and was thus able to make choices about the tasks it was willing to undertake. Its members were not just operating within some 'relegated' sphere; they freely chose their activities.

**Political is Personal**

I am in agreement with Ellen Dubois and others that one should write woman's history without losing sight of the political questions. Feminism must remain in the picture. We must retain our focus on social change. The question arises then, are women's clubs political institutions? Or are they merely avenues of political expression? Are these interwoven? Estelle Freedman suggests:

Their (clubwomen's) activities served to politicize traditional women by forcing them to define themselves as citizens not simply as wives and mothers.
Thus, what historians have called a 'civic minded woman' could actually mean a 'politically interested person'.

The clubs initially served as forums for political expression and in the process became political institutions. Freedman finds that the creation of this separate sphere of influence, the woman's club, actually helped mobilize women and thus they gained political leverage in the larger society. The early benevolent societies were waging political campaigns against prostitution, gambling, saloons, and profanity. Later clubs mobilized members for a wide range of activities—from sanitation problems and city beautification projects to child care and child labor laws—all highly political.

The clubwomen themselves did not view their work as inferior to men's. They created a space in which they were free to explore their own social, personal and political relationships. This separate institution-building by women thus served a dual purpose. Since their ideas had been traditionally undermined or given short shrift in the public sphere, women's associations allowed them to politicize their concerns and enter that sphere. Linda Richter, in her study of twenty-three urban histories, found that very few women were mentioned and those were activists. She noted:

Studies designed without the assumption that both sexes have been active and vital to the course of history frequently miss all but the most bizarre (the unusual entertainer, the
famous mistress, or the first of her kind to do some particular activity) or \textsuperscript{15} the faceless mob that one can generalize about.

Yet when one studies women's clubs throughout America one can view their work as being akin to the work of local governments. County government oversees health, safety, education, morals and public welfare. These tasks are parallel to the work of women's clubs including The Outdoor Circle. Its work was in fact ground-breaking. In the early 1900's there was not much government interference in private lives. The Circle actually expanded the scope of control by addressing such issues as garbage collection and containers and fences built to keep sidewalks available to the public. It moved issues from the private sphere into the public sector; then when it gained influence there, it moved back into the private sector to take control. In addition the Circle often began a project, such as landscaping the public schools, and then suggested to the county government that it should assume responsibility.

The organizational strategies of clubwomen have been varied, due in part to the fact that their particular agendas were not given priority in the public sphere. The Circle pulled out all the stops and utilized a variety of methods to succeed in removing billboards in Hawaii. However difficult it might have been for them to keep their momentum for the fourteen years it took to succeed,
one cannot lose sight of how well the women organized and operated. High tea at the Halekulani should thus be viewed as the counterpart to the high-powered two-martini lunch.

**Womanculture**

The factors which motivated women to organize were deeply rooted in what Gerda Lerner has defined as 'woman's culture'. This differs from that relegated sphere which males defined as appropriate for women. Woman's culture is the sum total of woman's goals and activities from a woman-centered point of view. Lerner states that this culture is the assertion of "their own creativity in shaping society." Clubwomen brought a part of womanculture to the fore.

It has been stated throughout this dissertation that patriarchal society does not reflect the norms of women's lives and has all but ignored those elements of humanity which are defined as female/feminine in nature. Lerner suggests that women actually live a dual role; they are both members of the general male culture and participants in their own woman's culture. There is, however, no question that this distinction between the sexes is culturally conditioned. Rosaldo observes:

> Every known society recognizes and elaborates some differences between the sexes, and although there are groups in which men wear skirts and women wear pants or trousers, it is everywhere the case that there are characteristic tasks,
manners, and responsibilities primarily associated with women or with men. But there is also no reason that men should not partake of women's culture.

However, the values perceived as 'womanly' have been weeded out of the male code of behavior. Sonia Johnson finds that the values which have been cast aside and discredited by patriarchal society "could and did survive in women's culture--the 'other' culture." Johnson sees feminism as a philosophy based on these womanly traits, which have been diminished in importance by patriarchy but which many today find necessary to the survival of humanity. Whether the values embraced by clubwomen throughout America were particularly feminine, becomes the larger question. Woman's culture then is the formal articulation of feminine characteristics. It embraces a value system equal to that of patriarchy; but it is a system which has to date been rejected.

It is counterproductive to assume that men and women do not share the full range of human traits. In fact, I agree with Johnson when she asserts that to believe in a clear difference between males and females "is to accept patriarchy's most basic rationale: biology is destiny." My research suggests that men and women may share values, have access to the full range of human emotions, traits and characteristics, but prioritize them differently. This is well illustrated by the activities of the
clubwomen in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These women were not prisoners of their men, acting as agents of masculinist values, but freely chose to support an alternative to the dominant view.

It is unfortunate that in the past clubwomen have been viewed as insignificant and perhaps even detrimental to feminist philosophy. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg comments on the fact that their leadership at the turn of the century disassociated themselves from the suffrage struggle in order to concern themselves with more pressing issues, continuing:

And in so going, women reformers typically drew on values distasteful or disturbing to our generation: motherhood, the home, sentimental sisterhood, and purity. With political and cultural strikes against them, these women have stood in past interpretations as villains in the history of feminism.

These same 'disturbing' values have recently become central to discussions of the future of society. Rather than being relegated to the realm of the insignificant, values traditionally embraced by women are viewed as crucial to the survival of our world. Riane Eisler's book, The Chalice and the Blade examines our hesitation in accepting the feminine:

For many people it is difficult to believe that any other way of structuring human society is possible—much less that our future may hinge on anything connected with women or femininity.

She then suggests that this major flaw is the result of our incomplete study of humankind; if womanculture had not
been seen as secondary, perhaps our views about how we structure society would be open for analysis and change.

In my earlier discussions of women's clubs in the mid 1800's I noted that they were undoing and redoing many things within their communities. In addition, I stated that their goals and values in the latter half of the nineteenth century were well ahead of men's similar response to progress, a response which came fifty to seventy-five years later during the progressive movement. Reviewing the types of activities in which clubwomen were involved illustrates their innovativeness and pioneering response to the negative effects of modernization. It also shows their determination to force public recognition of their point of view. If Eisler's theory is correct, then having paid attention to the work of clubwomen throughout the nineteenth century might have made it possible to avoid some of the pitfalls—environmental problems, deficiencies in health and education, housing shortages, child care—that finally became evident to large numbers of people at the turn of the century. Thus, I agree with Estelle Freedman that in order to secure an egalitarian future in which both men and women are free to experience the full range of human experiences, we must strive to allow women entrance into the male realm, but must also push men to enter the women's sphere.
Priorities

Does feminism as a philosophy put human needs and the quality of life higher on its list of priorities than does the dominant patriarchal system of ideas? If feminism is the embodiment of a female world view, the answer must be yes. The basic premise of this research is that there is such a world view, one that differs considerably from the patriarchal vision, and one which has historically been neglected. However, by studying the activities of clubwomen throughout America and The Outdoor Circle specifically, I have shown that although the women and their ideas have been ignored, they continually brought them into the public realm.

Another aspect of my theory is that women have not only been oppressed throughout history, but their ideas or 'vision' have been ignored. Numbers of historians have pointed out that women as a group have been considered historically insignificant. What has logically followed is the ideas or activities that they might have espoused have consequently been belittled or dismissed. I would like to propose a reversal of this theory. Perhaps the value system itself was what has been oppressed. Would the women who embraced it not be oppressed also? In fact, anyone who operated within this value system has been viewed as someone of lesser consequence. For instance, men who hold environmental programs, child care, or health
programs in higher esteem than the defense budget are unlikely to be considered major historical figures.

Women's sphere was never fixed in size, shape or content. Women were indeed embracing a value system left or abandoned by men; this is different from embracing one which was left over by men. That is the critical difference. One can continue to undermine and undervalue the work of women in clubs or elsewhere and thus believe that their ideas are trivial. Or, by contrast, one can elevate the value system itself and the status of women is automatically increased.

Organizing for women was a way to facilitate accomplishment of their specific goals; however, patriarchal historiography has ignored clubwomen's activities and thus has not given credit to that 'other' value system. In fact, there have been a number of feminist scholars who themselves belittled women's sphere as insignificant. What a disservice these theorists have been to women! If that which is female/feminine in all of us, male or female, is continually repressed, oppressed or ignored, we are doing a grave injustice to our society and to ourselves.

This research suggests a shift away from viewing women as conducting their lives within a relegated sphere determined by men. Yes, women did operate within this sphere, but they also believed in their own values; they
chose their paths. If this argument holds up under scrutiny, then all of those 'little old ladies in tennis shoes', those energetic members of The Outdoor Circle, were the embodiment of a greater agenda, that of bringing the female world view from the margins into the center.
ENDNOTES


4. Offen 151.

5. Offen 152.


10. Rosaldo 17.


18. Lerner 52.


24. Freedman 512.
CHAPTER SIX
CONNECTING CONCLUSIONS

Women have the saving gift to give earth's people, the only alternative to the male model that imperils us all: how we think, how we perceive the world, what we value, how we are in the world. This is our genius.

Whether or not this alternative perception is part of genius or capable of saving the world, as Sonia Johnson suggests, it does provide a new perspective on our patriarchal, capitalistic society. Respect for and interest in this 'female world view' is what shapes this research.

This study proposes that the ideas and values embraced by women have historically been deemed marginal and insignificant, leading to women being placed even further from the center of patriarchal and capitalistic storytelling. This is different from assuming that since women were marginal, their ideas were also devalued. Therefore, this dissertation analyzed clubwomen in America, specifically The Outdoor Circle of Hawaii, in order to substantiate the existence of an alternative world view. It has been written in the context of developing feminist theory.

The Outdoor Circle, a group that began in 1911, was primarily responsible for landscaping the city of Honolulu and providing greenery for schools, public grounds and
roadways throughout the islands. Its most lauded achievement was the banishment of billboards from Hawaii.

This association was composed of middle- and upper-class women who were quite confident of their abilities to declare what was best for Hawaii's landscape. These women used strategies from their own social class as well as borrowed techniques from wherever possible to achieve their goals. This was necessary because, as women, they were both part of and outside of formal power structures.

The major issue that this research addressed was whether or not the activities of clubwomen were grounded in what I have called the 'relegated' sphere, or whether, in fact, their activities were freely chosen. This study suggests that it was the latter; women chose their own paths. Women's unequal access to power throughout American history led them to associate in order to gain leverage in their communities. Through these associations women's priorities have been made visible.

I have based my theoretical framework on much of Gerda Lerner's work. Lerner's message to historians has been clear; take women's experiences as the norm and history will rewrite itself. In addition, I have expanded, or perhaps, restated this theory.

Johnson believes that women's values should be seen as important. She suggests:

Everywhere the shift is away from the masculine value system—based upon power over others,
achieved and maintained by violence for the benefit of a very few—and toward values and behaviors that have always been associated with women.  

One of the ways one knows that men did not see these same values as important is that men had access to power and yet chose not to give priority to them. Thus, Liesa Stamm's statement becomes especially significant:

Whether in the future social power and influence in the hands of women will be expressed in novel ways for new purposes is one of the more critical questions of our age.  

And the reason this is a 'critical question' is because historically women have embraced an alternative set of values, ideals, and priorities. This was clearly illustrated by the kinds of activities in which clubwomen engaged.

Thus, whether or not this alternative world view will offer solutions is open for discussion. However, the dialogue cannot even begin before we recognize the value of the perspective itself. Thus, many more studies such as this must be conducted in order to fill in the wide gaps in our knowledge of women's lives. In addition, the focus should also be on the values which drove the women to act as they did. This is not to suggest that this type of inquiry is the only method by which to study women; however, it does offer a viable alternative.

It can be enlightening to discard traditional assumptions about woman's place and focus on the
significance of her activities. Women utopian writers envisioned places vastly different from the society in which we live; perhaps, some of this vision can be grounded in reality if we take special note of the unique contributions of women.
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