Shared Spaces *and* Divided Places

MATERIAL DIMENSIONS OF GENDER RELATIONS AND THE AMERICAN HISTORICAL LANDSCAPE

Edited by

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ONE

Gendering the Creation of Green Urban Landscapes in America at the Turn of the Century

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Traditional histories of urban landscape design have focused on individual men's accomplishments in designing not only domestic gardens, but also public urban green spaces in cities. Women are often considered only as domestic consumers of architecture and landscapes designed by men (Wright 1981; cf. Stilgoe 1988; Ryan 1990). Historians have constructed lineages of individual male leaders for the City Beautiful movement, the American playground movement, and the school garden movement. The significant and often seminal contributions by women to these movements have been marginalized (e.g., Cavallo 1981; Trelstad 1997; cf. Isenberg 1999).

Mary R. Beard (1915) contradicted these male-focused histories in her book, *Women's Work in Municipalities*. Beard presented evidence that women founded a wide variety of social reform movements, including children's gardens, playgrounds, and the beautification of cities with parks and plantings. These movements were considered to be natural extensions of women's domestic tasks and values (Beard 1915:23–24, 133–134, 307). This chapter transcends dualistic either/or construction of mutually exclusive stereotypic gender roles to address how women and men worked together to create urban green spaces. It presents evidence concerning the neglected cultural processes used by women, including enlisting the cooperation of men.

Richard Watrus of the American Civic Association made the following observation in the early twentieth century: "Hundreds of cities that have distinguished themselves for notable achievements can point to some society or several societies of women that have been the first inspiration to do things. . . . They have been leaders in organized effort and have enlisted the sympathy and actual cooperation of men and associations of men in their laudable undertakings" (Beard 1915:297).

The contradiction between traditional histories that focus on men's roles, and women's histories that address both women's and men's roles, led to further detailed research to determine what actually happened and whether these contradictions could be reconciled. This research uncovered previously overlooked evidence showing that nineteenth-century women's organizations created American public landscapes and urban green spaces. Further, evidence was found of leadership by women's organizations in transforming American urban landscapes through the City Beautiful movement as well as movements for playgrounds, school gardens, children's gardens, roof gardens, and roof playgrounds. The evidence of the significant roles of women's organizations demystified and corrected the overemphasis on the importance of individual men in traditional histories.

One reviewer of an earlier version of this chapter stated, "It is not surprising that [the author] found yet another case where women's role[s] in important developments were ignored. But at this point we know that this is often the case. . . . [W]hy does it matter that women were ignored once again here?"

It matters at many levels. At the broadest level, it matters in fulfilling the goal for academic scholarship to reconstruct the past as accurately as possible. It is not enough to simply know or state that women have been left out of history, because this does not correct the inaccurate claims to truth of male-focussed constructions of the past. It is imperative that we critique and correct androcentric histories to gain greater understanding of the actual complexity of historic cultural

processes. We cannot understand what actually happened in the past without understanding what historic women accomplished and how they created significant sociocultural change.

At another level, knowledge of historic women's roles matters because it fundamentally alters landscape history and landscape archaeology by changing our understanding of the gendered cultural processes involved in creating urban landscapes. We cannot fully understand the development of American urban landscapes by only considering what men did to design and build these landscapes (e.g., Thernstrom 1973; Warner 1978; Whitehill and Kennedy 2000). Men controlled governments while women did not. Therefore, the cultural processes and powers that women used to create urban landscapes can be expected to be different from the types of processes and powers used by men.

Methodology

Feminist theory and method were used in this research to ask about and find previously ignored evidence of historic women's important powers and processes for creating major cultural change. A material feminist approach is used to analyze how women reformers proactively used material culture—including landscapes, architecture, and artifacts—to transform American culture, gender identities, ideologies, roles, and relationships from the nineteenth century into the twentieth century. Material feminism theorizes the material world as an active social agent shaping cultural practices and actual behavioral performances of complex intersecting gender, racial, ethnic, class, and other identities (Spencer-Wood 1991a:242–243; 1996:407).

An inclusive feminist theory and methodology (Spencer-Wood 1992, 1995) led to critically researching histories and records of women's reform organizations for evidence of nonmonolithic diversity in interrelating 1) the viewpoints of reformers, 2) the viewpoints of participants in their programs, and 3) the views of male property owners and governmental officials who cooperated with women reformers and responded to their requests. Dialogue and negotiation over the use of landscapes was researched through the relationships between voices and actions of reform women and 1) actions and voices of male property owners and government officials, and 2) the voices and actions of participants in reformers' programs. Cultural processes and powers used by women and men were analyzed from annual reports of organizations such as women's clubs, mixed-gender settlements, and playground commissions.

Reformers' viewpoints were most evident in their records, as expected. But, in addition, the voices of participants in reformers' programs were recorded both directly through quoting participants' responses to programs in some cases, and indirectly through enrollment numbers and general statements about the popularity of programs. Participants' negative as well as positive responses were recorded in many cases because the reformers viewed their programs as pragmatic social experiments to be altered according to the expressed needs of the community (Spencer-Wood 2002:12). Finally, the views of male property owners and governmental officials were revealed in the reformers' records of the requests they made of men as well as men's responses to them, including words and/or actions.

Research Context: Domestic Reform

This research on social movements for parks, children's gardens, and playgrounds emerged as part of an ongoing study of the many different turn-of-the-century women's reform movements that have been related to one another under the rubrics of domestic feminism (Hayden 1981) and domestic reform (Spencer-Wood 1987). Feminist historians such as Beard (1915), Berg (1978), Blair (1980), Crocker (1992), Hayden (1981), Strasser (1982), Clinton (1984), Scott (1990, 1991), and Woloch (1984) have inspired and informed this research into the historical archaeology of domestic reform. Each of these historians found previously overlooked information about the public activities of a wide variety of women's organizations, thus correcting androcentric dichotomizations of history into an exclusively male public sphere dominating a subordinate female domestic sphere. In contrast, feminist theory has led to questions about how historic women acted as social agents in the public landscape as well as in the home (Spencer-Wood 1987, 1991a, 1994a).

The term "domestic reform" was coined to refer to a large number of interrelated but diverse voluntary organizations in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that shared the goal of improving the status and conditions of women's lives through the expansion of women's roles and mutual cooperation across classes, races, and ethnic groups. Domestic reformers were predominantly middle-class women who, according to the

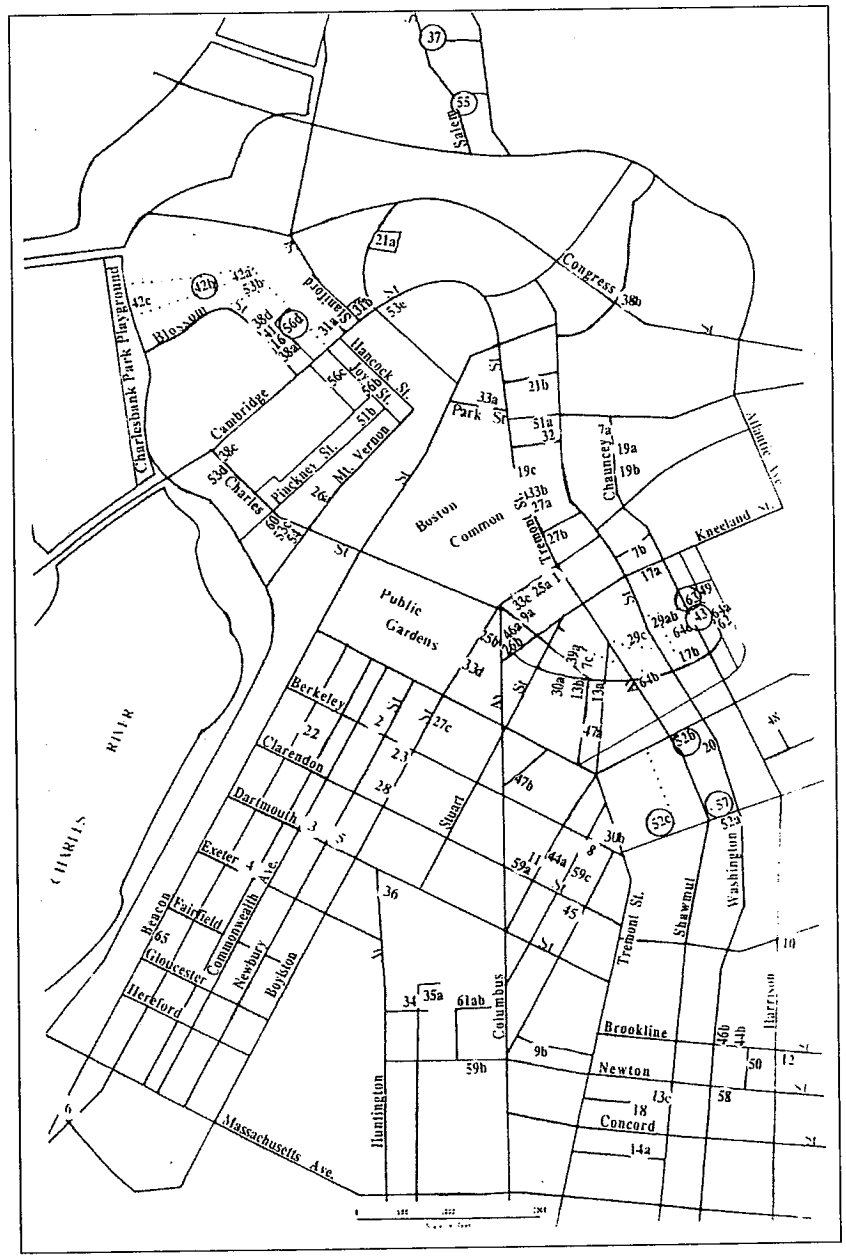
dominant Victorian gender ideology, were supposedly limited to a subordinate role in the domestic sphere of the home, which was in binary opposition to men's public-sphere dominance (Spencer-Wood 1991a:233).

However, the reformers did not passively accept a subordinate domestic role. Instead, they combined the supposedly opposed gender spheres, raising women's status by expanding women's roles and powers in both the domestic and public spheres. First, women applied men's elite scientific/industrial methods and technology to raise the status of housework and successfully claim the right to control the daily operation of their domestic sphere. Second, of particular relevance here, reform women re-created some domestic tasks as women's public institutions, landscapes, and professions. To justify these public actions, they transformed the Victorian ideology of private domesticity into a domestic reform ideology of public professional domesticity. The reformers made women's new public roles—in professions, enterprises and landscapes, including parks, playgrounds, and children's gardens—acceptable in the dominant ideology by arguing that they were extensions of women's innate domestic roles and values (Spencer-Wood 1994a, 1994b, 1996).

Domestic reformers materially blurred and shifted the boundary between the separate gender spheres by redefining women's domestic sphere to include large parts of men's public sphere (Spencer-Wood 1991b). The reformers' belief that every aspect of social life had "domestic meaning" (Leach 1980:209) was used to justify the domestication of men's public sphere with a wide variety of women's public institutions and landscapes. Reformers materially changed the dominant gender ideology by dramatically increasing the number of new, culturally acceptable women's roles and sites in public landscapes, challenging male dominance in the public sphere.

Since 1981, the survey of domestic reform sites in Boston has mapped over 120 women's public institutions and landscapes that contested male dominance in the city's public landscapes. Domestic reform institutions often visually dominated the surrounding landscape. In some cases, women's organizations had their institutions purposely built as the tallest or largest buildings in the neighborhood. Most female-controlled environments were dispersed over the urban landscape because they were located in the neighborhoods that they served (Map 1.1; Spencer-Wood 1987, 1991a, 1994a, 1996).

Playgrounds and children's gardens were landscapes associated with women because they were part of women's domestic role of child rearing.



MAP 1.1 Domestic reform sites in Boston, with settlement playgrounds and children's gardens circled, showing how they were concentrated in the poor immigrant neighborhoods of the North End, the West End, and the South End. Charlesbank Park Playground is at the upper left. Map by Suzanne M. Spencer-Wood.

Playgrounds and children's gardens materially symbolized and implemented a transformation in Western cultural conceptions of childhood and child rearing. Through the eighteenth century, middle-class children were treated as miniature workers. Boys were apprenticed to the master of a trade by age seven. Girls worked in household production of textiles, butter, cheese, eggs, and chickens, which formed major parts of the colonial and national economies until the mid-nineteenth century (Wertheimer 1977:14; Jensen 1986:79–87; McMurry 1987). Working-class children continued to work, often in factories, into the early twentieth century, when anti–child labor laws were passed.

In the nineteenth century, the middle class conceived of a new developmental understanding of childhood, in which children required exercise and play as well as education to develop into healthy adults (Hall 1904:ix–xv; Mallery 1910:153–155). Reform women further argued that playgrounds and children's gardens would provide the wholesome exercise, play, and contact with God's nature that was needed to rear poor as well as middle-class and elite children into healthy and moral adults (Spencer-Wood 1994b).

In many cultures, women have the power to fundamentally shape culture by changing their child-rearing practices (Mead and Wolfenstein 1955). After the American Revolution, middle-class women developed new ideologies in the Cult of True Womanhood or Domesticity and the Cult of Republican Motherhood, which stressed the importance of women's domestic role as mothers who were rearing the next generation of democratic leaders (Welter 1966; Epstein 1981:32, 76, 81; Spencer-Wood 1999a:172). Middle-class women elaborated their supposedly innate role as child-rearers, especially in urban areas where household production by women and children was declining (Wall 1994). Child rearing was no longer considered to occur naturally, but rather had to be learned. Starting in the 1830s, mothers' clubs were formed to address women's new concern about properly rearing their children (Cott 1977:150–151; Scott 1991:122).

In the Cult of Republican Motherhood, middle-class reform women stressed the importance of women's role in raising children through developmental stages that required not only education, but also play and explorations of nature. In the second half of the nineteenth century, reform women wrote domestic manuals and established schools to promote modern methods of housekeeping and child rearing, including play (Beard 1915:12; Ryan 1982:45–48, 56; Spencer-Wood 1994a, 1996).

Playgrounds and children's gardens were both major types of women's public cooperative housekeeping enterprises in which women transformed their individual domestic labor into public, shared group-controlled labor. In playgrounds and children's gardens, women transformed their private maternal roles into new, public, socialized child-rearing landscapes and professions. These institutions domesticated public urban landscapes with new kinds of built environments that were physically shaped and controlled by women. In running cooperatives, middle-class women created new public professions for themselves, which sometimes alleviated their own housework, but more often assisted working-class women. Public cooperative housekeeping enterprises included day nurseries, kindergartens, playgrounds, children's gardens, roof gardens, summer camps, public kitchens, laundries, and baths. Women's cooperative housekeeping professions were symbolized and implemented with special built environments, landscapes, material culture, and scientific training (Spencer-Wood 1994b).

Parks, playgrounds, and children's gardens were all aspects of middle-class women's municipal housekeeping movement—housework at the scale of the community. Domestic reformers used analogy to extend women's roles as housekeepers and mothers from the individual home to physically and morally clean up the larger "household" of the community (Blair 1980; Spencer-Wood 1989). Middle- and upper-class women's roles in maintaining family health and morals were expanded into public efforts to decrease the high rates of crime, disease, and mortality in poor urban neighborhoods by altering the physical environment in cities and towns across the United States. The reformers organized community clean-ups by local children; instigated city planning; created urban green spaces; lobbied male officials for pure food laws, municipal water, and sewers; and were appointed as inspectors of streets, garbage, and factories (Beard 1915). Some cooperative housekeeping enterprises—such as public baths, playgrounds, and children's gardens—also served municipal housekeeping functions by decreasing disease and crime in the public household (NBSIH 1881:21–22; Almy 1903, 1908:14; MT 1908; Beard 1915:131; Spencer-Wood 1994a, 1994b). Scott (1991:157) noted that "standard histories of the age of reform" have not included municipal housekeeping, although it was an important domestic reform movement that re-formed the public landscape, both physically and symbolically.

In creating urban green landscapes, middle-class reform women physically extended their feminine moral/cooperative values into the

public landscape, challenging the dominance of masculine capitalist values expressed in unnatural paved public landscapes. Women's organizations created public parks, flower gardens, playgrounds, and children's gardens to physically improve urban morality by bringing people into contact with the purifying influence of God's nature (EPH 1903:7; DH 1912:9). Women were considered best suited to create morally uplifting urban green spaces. In the oppositional dominant Victorian gender ideology, the closeness of women and their domestic sphere to nature and God made women innately more pious and moral than men and their public sphere, which was corrupted by sinful capitalistic practices such as usury and prostitution. In the eighteenth century, women became associated with the higher morality of Christian communitarian values as men were increasingly drawn away from the church by their subscription to the conflicting individualistic competitive values of capitalism (Epstein 1981). Reform women argued that men's capitalistic public landscapes needed to be reformed with women's superior moral/domestic values embodied in women's public cooperative housekeeping institutions and natural green landscapes (Spencer-Wood 1994b, 2002:123).

In many cases, playgrounds, children's gardens, roof gardens, and roof playgrounds were founded for poor children predominantly by middle-class female and/or male reformers who lived together cooperatively in social settlements. Social settlements were charitable institutions founded and mostly inhabited by college-educated reformers who offered social and educational services to the surrounding poor neighborhood. Programs for the poor were often funded by wealthy widows of industrialists such as Pauline Agassiz Shaw and Mary Hemenway in Boston, as well as by numerous smaller donations from the middle class (Spencer-Wood 1994a:191, 1996:432).

The reformers were not a monolithic group. Many middle- and upper-class reformers sought to share their privileges through social services such as childcare and educational classes that provided the poor with tools to become economically independent (DH n.d.:1–2; NBSIH 1881:4, 23; EWW 1947:7; Scott 1991:105). Many reformers were affected by the Christian gospel of social justice and sought to eliminate capitalist overexploitation of workers by advocating unions, decent working conditions, a 40-hour workweek, anti–child labor laws, and minimum wage laws. These reformers sought to offer programs of use to those among the poor who sought upward mobility. The poor did not monolithically want to remain poor or necessarily even working class. Some reformers did offer programs in an attempt at social control of the working classes, to force their middle-class values on the poor or to Americanize immigrants (Spencer-Wood 2002:118–121, 132).

Regardless of the goals of reformers, they could not force their values on the poor because participation in their programs was entirely voluntary. Likewise, the poor were not passive recipients of reformers' programs. They would not attend programs they viewed as serving the class interests of reformers, such as courses to train domestic servants. Further, the poor sometimes complained about the material shortcomings of programs, such as the Yankee menu at public kitchens or the lack of intellectual classes for Eastern European Jewish girls at Boston's Jewish settlement. The social control thesis is elitist in assuming that the middle and upper classes had the power to socially control the working classes by forcing them to participate in programs or to accept middle-class values expressed in programs. In fact, because many reformers in social settlements viewed their programs as social experiments, they recorded the responses of participants to programs, as well as resulting changes in programs, and in some cases the elimination of programs (Spencer-Wood 1994a, 1994b, 1996, 2002:119–121).

Women's Leadership in the City Beautiful Movement

This section discusses the leadership of middle-class Anglo women's organizations in the City Beautiful movement. These women's organizations instigated city planning that included the design of parks and other urban green spaces. Municipal housekeepers felt that women, because of their innately superior morality and sense of natural beauty in gardening and home decorating, could best design green spaces to re-form unnatural, immoral, man-made cities of stone. Parks were also viewed as part of woman's sphere because they were used for public socialized child rearing and social interaction (Beard 1915:299–300, 307–308, 312).

Historian Mary Beard (1915:307–308) argued,

> There is no doubt that women are the natural leaders for the realization of the city beautiful—beautiful not with a lot of expensive cut stone, formidable fences or marble columns, but beautiful with natural parks, with avenues lined with fine trees, and with front yards covered with verdure and blossoms, and beautiful with children, healthy mentally and physically. . . . [H]ere

> is a field that requires every virtue a woman possesses—her good taste, her moral instincts, her love of the beautiful, her patience and perseverance. Because of these, her natural gifts, she is bound to excel man in this field of endeavor, for after all, man's sphere of influence, in a general way, is his work and this work too often tends to become a matter of such routine that there is absolutely no inspiration in it. Men too often cannot see the moral issues at stake in living on treeless streets or in sections devoid of parks.

The ideology extending women's roles in beautifying their home grounds to beautifying their community grounds was implemented in the programs of a large number of women's organizations. Women's clubs frequently promoted beautification of private homes through competitions and prizes for the prettiest lawns, hedges, flowers, or trees planted in house yards. These clubs beautified cities and towns across the United States by planting trees and flowers in parks and along roads and by raising money to buy parkland and employ landscape architects to design parks. Further, women's clubs instigated the development of plans for the growth of three small cities (Beard 1915:313–315). In 1909, women settlement workers organized the first national conference on city planning (Gittell and Shtob 1981:67).

After demonstrating the utility of privately financed projects and gaining public support, women's organizations usually persuaded male officials to hire male city planners and landscape architects, and to provide funds, labor, and materials to assist in beautifying urban landscapes (Beard 1915:305–316). Thus, women's organizations instigated the City Beautiful movement and were instrumental in the municipal hiring of male landscape architects, who then founded this male-dominated discipline that largely excluded women (Isenberg 1999).

Before conducting a survey or excavation of urban parks, archaeologists need to conduct thorough historical research to determine whether parks were instigated by a women's organization. For instance, ordinary androcentric histories and records of the male-controlled Boston Park Commission document only that the city hired the Olmsted brothers to design the Charlesbank. Further research on women's organizations was necessary to discover that the park was created at the instigation of the women's Massachusetts Emergency and Hygiene Association (see "Playground Landscapes" below).

Children's Gardens

Beard (1915:23) states that the school garden movement was started in summer vacation schools where the mostly female teachers volunteered to teach poor immigrant children (e.g., MCC 1897, 1898, 1900). According to Trelstad (1997), a young teacher named Henry L. Clapp, his students, and the school janitor created the first school garden in Boston in 1891, sponsored by the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. The students planted wildflowers, some vegetables, and grains. However, Mary Beard, whose data has been demonstrated to be accurate on women's organizations initiating the City Beautiful movement (Isenberg 1999), states that school gardens were instigated by women's progressive reform organizations in cities across the country, from Philadelphia and New York to Seattle (Beard 1915:23–24, 133–139).

Although Trelstad (1997) constructs a lineage of individual male founders of the school garden movement, he recognizes that female teachers or garden directors supervised most school gardens. He also includes a few women leaders, such as Fannie G. Parsons. She created the DeWitt Clinton Park Children's garden in 1902 from a derelict park donated by the New York City Park Department. Over 1,000 children from surrounding immigrant neighborhoods transformed this park, which had become a dump, into a vacation school garden with small, rectangular plots used by different children (Parsons 1908:5–7). In 1907, a Bureau of Education Bulletin quoted Parsons:

> The country over, a more trying place could hardly be selected for a garden than DeWitt Clinton park in New York City; but not a thing was stolen. Respect for ownership spread from the garden to the neighborhood, children who had already become criminals in a small way were completely changed, the city was shown "how willing and anxious these children are to work, and they are taught private care of public property, economy, honest, application, concentration, self-government, civic pride, justice, the dignity of labor, and love for the beauties of nature, which they had never before had the opportunity to see." (Jewell 1907:41)

In 1907, Parsons founded the International Children's School Farm League to "urge the introduction of Children's Gardens into schools and park systems" (Bachert 1977:33). The president of the School Garden

Association of America, founded in 1911 as part of the National Education Association, was a woman named Van Evrie Kilpatrick, who said, "the garden at school should always go hand in hand with a garden at the home of the child" (School Gardening in America 1915:80).

In poor neighborhoods, household gardens were impossible in tiny, trash-strewn tenement yards. Here settlements pioneered in establishing children's gardens and playgrounds, often in nearby vacant lots that were lent by male owners for the payment of taxes. Aside from this economic motivation, many men were supportive of the women's goal of decreasing juvenile delinquency by providing alternatives for children who fell into gambling and street crime (MT 1908; EPH 1911:16).

Mapping of children's gardens and playgrounds revealed that they were dispersed across the urban landscape. They were located in neighborhoods because children could not be expected to walk long distances to use them (Map 1.1).

Children's gardens were among the most popular programs of social settlements and usually had a waiting list for admission. Settlements with children's gardens often created them by dividing the land into a number of small individual plots and allotting each child a plot

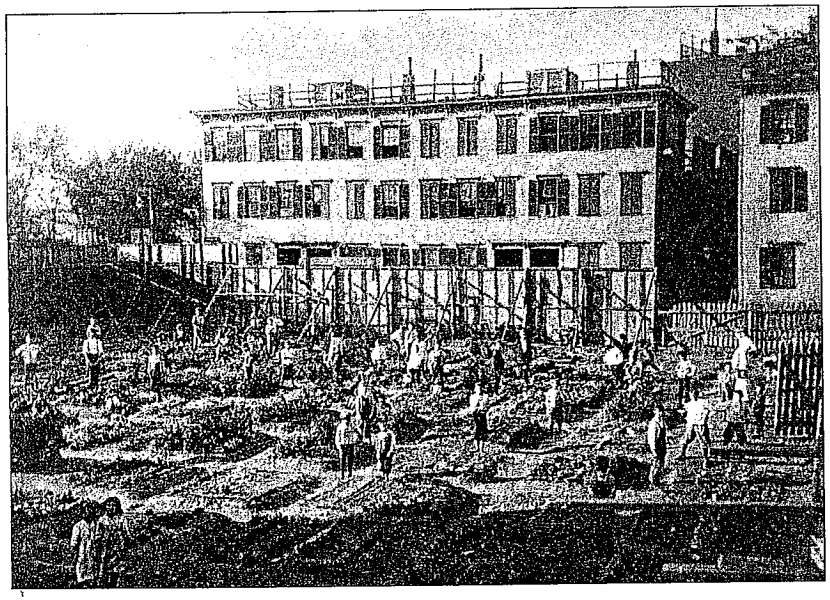


Fig. 1.1 Elizabeth Peabody house children's garden founded 1908 showing individual plots (EPH 1911:16–17).

where he or she could raise produce or flowers for their families and/or for sale. Gardens were viewed as a wholesome, uplifting influence in the "desert of debasement" of the slum (MT 1908). In 1908, Elizabeth Peabody House established a children's garden on a vacant lot loaned by the male owner (EPH 1911:5, Figure 1.1).

The plan of individual children's garden plots came from early kindergartens (which means "children's gardens" in German). Elizabeth Peabody established the American English-speaking kindergarten movement in 1860. She was inspired by a German-American kindergarten operated by Mrs. Carl Shurtz in Watertown, Wisconsin, in 1855. Subsequently, Miss Peabody visited Freidrich Froebel in Germany, where he had founded the first kindergarten in 1838 (Snyder 1972:9–12, 19–21, 41). Froebel's model kindergarten was designed to assist children in discovering scientific facts and the harmony of nature through individual children's garden plots in a design similar to the one implemented by Boston's Elizabeth Peabody House settlement, initially founded as a kindergarten (Weber 1969).

Many settlements promoted flower gardening by poor children both at the settlement and at their tenement homes through window flowerboxes and potted plants arranged on flat roofs in what were called "roof gardens." Most settlements had roof gardens of decorative potted plants and flowers where neighborhood residents and children could come into contact with what was considered the morally reforming power of the purity of nature, which was associated with women. Some settlements also promoted roof window-box gardens to beautify and bring the spiritual power of female-associated nature to morally reform dirty tenements. In 1910, Elizabeth Peabody House held a tenement roof garden competition with prizes for the best garden (Figure 1.2; EPH 1903:10, 17, 1913:18–19).

Playgrounds

The rest of this chapter presents the results of research on the cultural processes women's organizations used to found the American playground movement. This research critiques and corrects recent scholarship that claims the American playground movement was founded by a lineage of individual men, starting with Henry S. Curtis (e.g., Cavallo 1981;

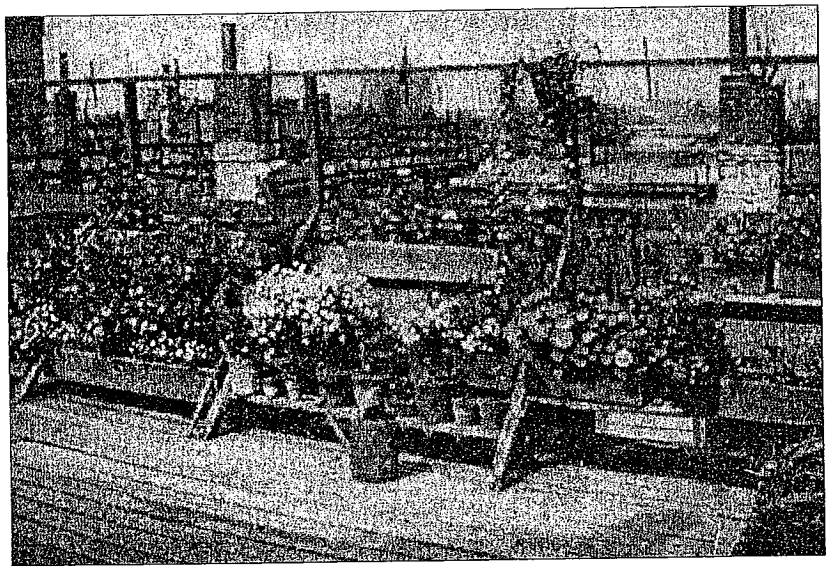


Fig. 1.2 Roof Garden at the Elizabeth Peabody House settlement, 87 and 89 Poplar Street, Boston, 1912. EPH 1913:1, 19.

Macleod 1998:66). Male bias is clearly evident in Cavallo's (1981:23) dismissive statement that Boston women's early, organized playgrounds for young children were "irrelevant" to the later development of the American playground movement. However, the source that Cavallo cited (Rainwater 1922) in fact argued and provided abundant evidence that the first playgrounds created by Boston women's organizations led to the development of the playground movement. Rainwater (1922) and Beard (1915:133–139) provided additional evidence of women's leadership in founding early playgrounds across the country.

This research found that women's organizations created the first landscapes for play in the United States and were instrumental in the development of the playground movement. Playgrounds spread across America because they were very popular, often with waiting lists for admission. American mission and settlement playgrounds spread not only across the country, but internationally at least as far as Turkey (Flad 1999).

Women reformers successfully argued that they were particularly well suited to design and supervise playgrounds because of their innately superior ability to train children to be moral and industrious citizens (Spencer-Wood 1994b). Playgrounds fulfilled women's municipal housekeeping goals by creating moral-domestic public landscapes that removed children from unhealthy play, such as gambling, and other corrupting influences in male-dominated public streets. Some cities reported a reduction in juvenile crime after opening playgrounds (Almy 1908; Beard 1915:131–132). In designing and supervising playgrounds, the reformers brought their values to the landscape by arranging equipment and fences to create orderly play and by planting shrubs, trees, and flowers to create a physically and morally healthy green environment.

Women of the Massachusetts Emergency and Hygiene Association founded the first supervised American playground in 1885 in Boston's Parmenter Street chapel yard, at the urging of Dr. Marie E. Zakrzewska. She had observed sand gardens built for slum preschoolers in Berlin. Sand gardens were large sand boxes in which small children played. On returning to Boston, Dr. Zakrzewska urged the association to found a sand garden. She argued that sand gardens would improve slum children's health and morality by improving their physical environment to counteract the congestion, filth, and lack of parental supervision of children in these areas (Rainwater 1922:22; Cavallo 1981:23; Map 1.1; Figure 1.3).

Fourteen years after this first success, the Massachusetts Emergency and Hygiene Association administered 21 playgrounds that included sand gardens, games, and "occupation work." Total attendance and the number of days of operation had increased. Although sand gardens were for small children, playgrounds soon came to include older children. Playgrounds had shifted from being created predominantly in mission, settlement, and tenement yards to being created in schoolyards, public parks, and a few indoor facilities. Schoolyards retained the dispersed distribution of playgrounds for easy access by neighborhood children, while playgrounds in parks and indoor facilities were less numerous on the urban landscape. Donations of goods to create playgrounds were replaced with a budget that grew to over $4,300 by 1899, $3,000 of which was allocated to the association by Boston's School Committee. The supervision of playgrounds was formalized as volunteer female play supervisors were replaced with 66 paid women kindergarten teachers under a woman superintendent of all playgrounds. In 1889, the Boston Park Department allocated $1,000 to grade and seed a playground to be managed by the association (Rainwater 1922:21–28).

In response to an appeal by the Massachusetts Emergency and Hygiene Association's playground committee, the Boston Park Department hired the Olmsted brothers to design the prototype "small park" of Charlesbank Outdoor Gymnasium, which is the narrow strip of land

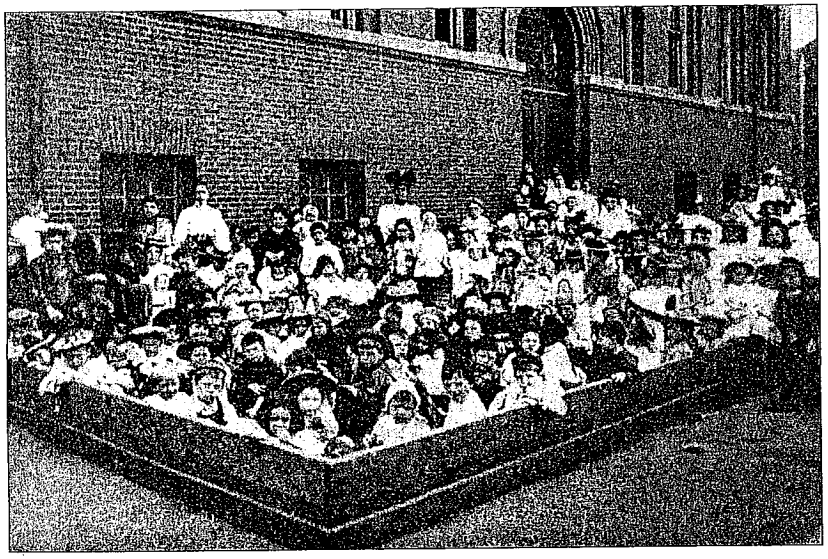


Fig. 1.3 Early Boston sand garden. Rainwater 1922:22–23.

located on the water in Boston's West End (Map 1.1). This was the first American Park Board facility to be designed primarily for play and the first American playground to be professionally landscaped. This park was the model for parks in a number of other cities (Rainwater 1922:28–29).

Cultural male dominance was expressed at the Charlesbank in opening the larger, more elaborate men's playground two years earlier than the women's and children's smaller playground. The playground for boys and men opened in 1889. The play area for women and girls, supervised by the association, opened in 1891. The smaller area for women and children included a green lawn surrounded by a small track; swings, seesaws, and sand gardens for small children; and wading, rowing, and bathing facilities. The men's larger play area did not include the facilities for children, but had the same adult equipment as the women's area, plus a larger track and the complex metal exercise apparatus called an outdoor gymnasium (Rainwater 1922:72–73; Figure 1.4).

Trees, shrubbery, and lawn separated the play spaces for women and children at one end of the park from those for men at the other end of the park (Map 1.2, Figure 1.4). The park design expressed the Victorian ideology of gender segregation between the play areas. But this Victorian ideal view of separate gender spheres and landscapes was soon challenged

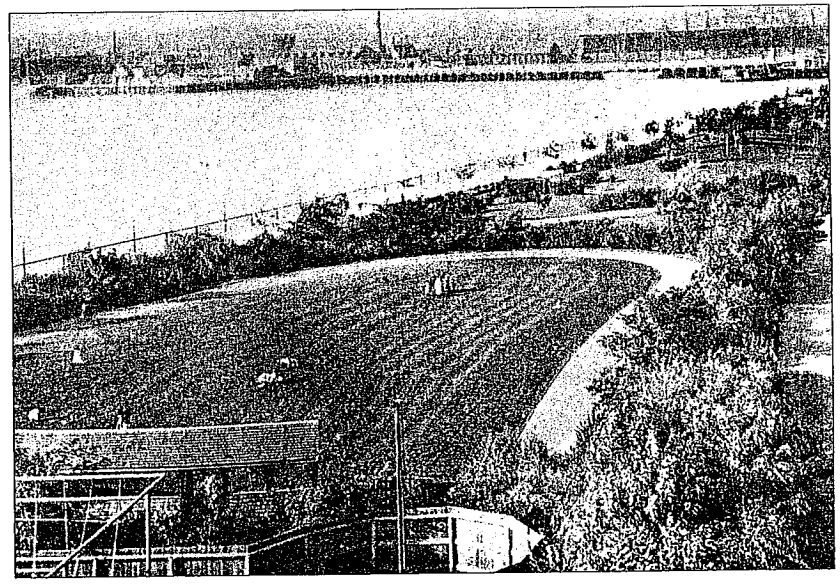
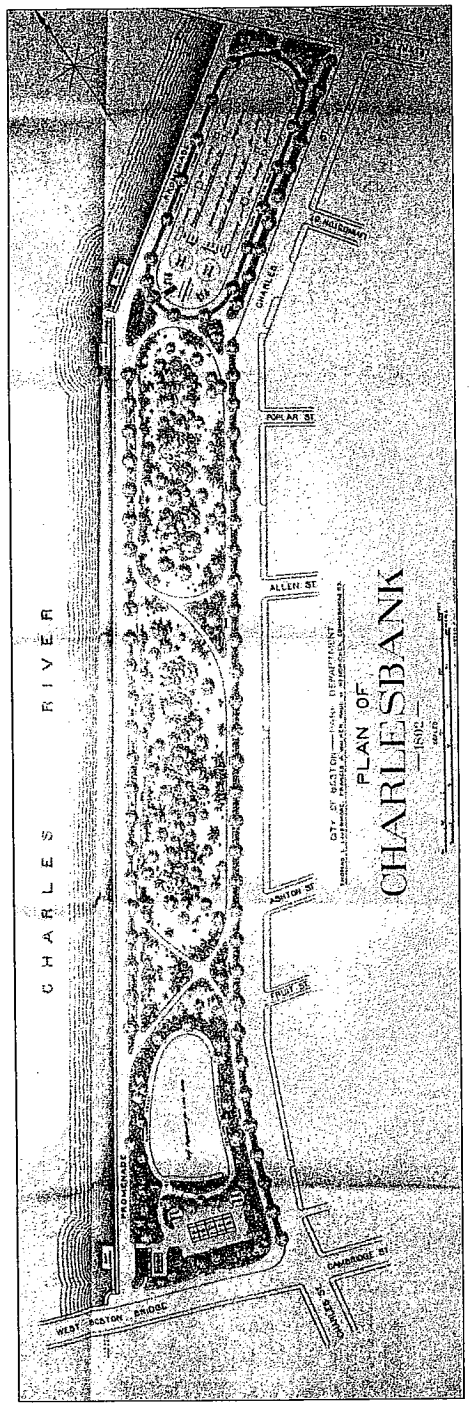


Fig. 1.4 View of the Charlesbank park showing the mowed lawn of the "Little Girls" playground in the foreground. Boston Department of Parks 1893:58–59; courtesy of Bostonian Library.

by the more flexible views of reformers interested in meeting community needs. In 1907, the Elizabeth Peabody House settlement at 87–89 Poplar Street in the West End obtained permission to use the Charlesbank Gymnasium for Women for boys' gymnastic drill and basketball on Saturday evenings (EPH 1908:17).

Other outgrowths of the Massachusetts Emergency and Hygiene Association playgrounds included the 1893 plan of Boston's Metropolitan Park Commission to provide numerous small squares, playgrounds, and parks in densely populated areas of 11 cities and 25 towns. In addition, the Park Commission bought the very large Franklin Field in Dorchester in 1894. In 1908, the Massachusetts Playground Referendum—authored by Boston playground movement leader, Joseph Lee—passed when citizens in towns of 10,000 or more people voted to provide public playgrounds (MCC 1908:1–2; Rainwater 1922:29). A playground park in Charlestown had a representative landscape in which the men's area was a bit larger than the women's area. However, the men's and women's fenced and segregated playgrounds were adjacent to each other, dramatically decreasing the degree of gender separation (Map 1.3).



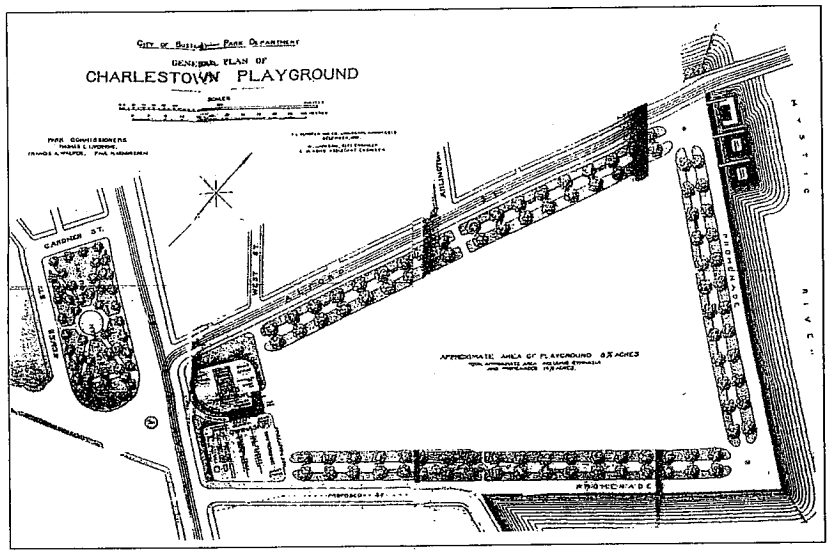
MAP 1.2 The Charlesbank park in Boston's West End. City of Boston Department of Parks 1893:36–37. Courtesy of Bostonian Library.

The Massachusetts Emergency and Hygiene Association's playgrounds and methods were so successful that in the summer of 1898 the mayor of Boston opened 20 schoolyard playgrounds. However, they discontinued the playground supervision by kindergarten teachers, which resulted in the near desertion of the playgrounds "in a fortnight" (Rainwater 1922:31). As one boy complained, "there was nothin' to do and no discipline" (Rainwater 1922:31). So, in the summer of 1899, the city returned to providing funding to the Massachusetts Emergency and Hygiene Association to run the playgrounds by hiring kindergarten teachers. In 1901, Boston's School Committee successfully made schoolyard playgrounds a part of the municipal education program, because they adopted the association's methods of supervision by kindergarten teachers (Rainwater 1922:31–35).

This evidence shows how male governmental officials initially held views on operating playgrounds that were opposed to the views of women reformers. Further, this case shows how these male officials had to change their views and adopt the reformers' methods of supervision in order to provide children with playgrounds that met their need for supervised play.

Historic evidence shows that Cavallo (1981:23) was inaccurate in claiming that the American playground movement developed out of playgrounds founded by men for boys' team sports. In fact, the earliest "model playground" to admit older boys was created in 1894 in Chicago by the women's settlement of Hull House. It was followed in 1897 by the women of the Providence Free Kindergarten Association, who opened two playgrounds for older boys. In Boston in 1899, the women of the Massachusetts Emergency and Hygiene Association created the first three playgrounds for boys ages 12–15 and hired young male physical education instructors to supervise the boys' games. Contrary to Cavallo's claim that Joseph Lee's Massachusetts Civic League established the first model playground for older boys in 1901 in Boston, this playground was in fact modeled on the example of the 1899 playgrounds for older boys by the Massachusetts Emergency and Hygiene Association. The advice of Ellen M. Tower, chairwoman of the Playgrounds Committee of the association, was sought and followed in constructing the league's playground, according to the league's annual report (Rainwater 1922:34–36, 56, 59).

The Mothers' Club of Cambridge founded the first playground in that city in 1902. Although it was founded for small neighborhood children, older children soon negotiated to be admitted (see below). However,



Map 1.3 Charlestown Park in the greater Boston area, showing women's and men's play areas closer together than in Boston's larger Charlesbank Park. City of Boston Department of Parks 1893; courtesy of the Bostonian Library.

when the older boys disrupted play for the younger children, the Mothers' Club opened large ball fields in parks and hired men to supervise the older boys in team sports (Figure 1.5; MCC 1903:4, 1904:2, 1907:2–6, 1908:5).

Women's experiences with the problems of mixing children of different ages in playgrounds led to the design of playgrounds exclusively for different age groups, often within parks. For instance, the Cambridge Park Commission hired Ernst Hermann, who designed city parks with age-graded separate playgrounds. Young children's playgrounds included teeters (seesaws), sand gardens, slides, small swings, a wading pool, and hammocks for tubercular children. Grade-school playgrounds included large swings, slides, gymnastic apparatus, a merry-go-round, and a hill. Between these two playgrounds was a dance hall for adults, with sanitary facilities. Special gender-segregated courts were designed for older children to play baseball, basketball, tennis, fist-ball, etc. A track, jumping pit, scaling wall, shot-put enclosure, and roller skating and ice skating rink were also included. The age-segregated playgrounds were usually physically separated by tree-lined promenades for adults (Brooks 1911:30). These age-graded playgrounds expressed the developmental stages of play, as described by Hall (1904:ix–xv).

Fig. 1.5 Older boys playing baseball in Rindge Park playground, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Almy 1903, Almy papers; courtesy of the Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library of the History of Women in America, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University.

The playgrounds for older children and adults were usually segregated by gender and by race as well. Settlement leader Robert A. Woods claimed that people in Boston's South End demanded racially segregated settlement activities, including basketball teams. However, Woods's writings show that he was racist and would likely have supported segregation (Woods 1898; Woods and Kennedy 1911:121–122).

In contrast to Boston's segregated settlements run by white college men, settlements and playgrounds run by white college women were usually racially and ethnically integrated. Photographs are the only evidence showing that playgrounds for young children were often integrated in terms of gender, race, and ethnicity, reflecting the composition of the neighborhood (Figure 1.6). Further, team games supposedly taught older children to integrate "feminine" values of cooperation, intuition, and public morality with "masculine" values of rationalism and individual competition (Cavallo 1981:110–114).

On older children's playgrounds, men sometimes worked for women, inverting normative gender relations in the public landscape. These early playgrounds directed by women contrasted with most professions in which men dominated the top of the hierarchy. For instance, most school principals and doctors were men, while women predominantly worked under these men as teachers and nurses, respectively.

FIG. 1.6 Integrated organized game at Pine Street Playground, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Brooks n.d.b; courtesy of the Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library of the History of Women in America, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University.

However, the preeminence of women's leadership in creating playgrounds led male governmental officials to appoint women to playground commissions and school commissions. For instance, playground leader Mrs. Helen Almy was appointed to the Cambridge Playground Commission (Brooks 1911). Further, in both Boston and Cambridge, a woman was superintendent of all playgrounds (MCC 1908:3).

By 1909, the Mothers' Club of Cambridge operated summer playgrounds in four public parks and seven schoolyards, which included sandboxes furnished by the city (Almy 1903, 1904, 1905, 1906; MCC 1903, 1904, 1906, 1907:1, 1908:3, 1909:3–4; Brooks 1910). The success of the Mothers' Club led to the design and implementation of a number of playground parks by the City of Cambridge Playground Commission (Brooks 1911).

In 1911, the Cambridge Playground Commission took over 13 playgrounds operated by the Mother's Club, at the club's suggestion (Brooks 1911). This case exemplifies how women's clubs transformed their reforms into permanent cultural changes by persuading men to incorporate them into permanent social structures, such as governmentally run playgrounds in parks and schools.

Women's organizations, particularly social settlements, gained the assistance of men to establish small playgrounds through donations of land, play equipment, plants, and landscaping (e.g., DH 1919:16). For instance, the Hawthorne Club of Boston was a social settlement founded in 1900 for girls aged 5–10, and expanded to include boys in 1910. This organization received permission from the owners of a block-length property to the rear of the club to clear it of trash and equip it with swings, sandboxes, seesaws, and other equipment for a children's playground. The Hawthorne Club was authorized to use the parcel as a playground until it was sold. The male street commissioner reinforced the ground with gravel, and the male park commissioner had shrubs planted around the border. In her book about the Hawthorne Club, Robinson (1937:11–13) noted, "As to the ethics of this cooperation I'm not quite sure as I look back on it, but my conscience does not trouble me greatly. Both city departments were moved by a sincere desire to help the children. . . ." The ethical concern expressed was over the informal use of public resources and the time of public employees to create a private playground. However, the playground was open to all neighborhood children. The Hawthorne Club and its playground closed in 1937 (Robinson 1937:1–61, 93–99, 113–116).

The Mothers' Club of Cambridge created the Pine Street Playground through donations from citizens as well as the city park commission. Citizens' donations were used to hire kindergarten teachers and a janitor, as well as to clear the land of bricks and debris, leveling it, and arranging tree stumps so children could climb on them. The city park commission donated barrels of sand to fill in the holes (MCC 1902). The Mothers' Club created a cultural play landscape by providing swings, seesaws, and a basketball hoop. In 1903, the Narragansett Company donated some gymnastics apparatus (MCC 1903). A simple picnic table was designed by the club leader, Mrs. Helen Brooks, the wife of prominent local official John Graham Brooks (Brooks n.d.a).

Fencing expressed major social concerns of reformers at playgrounds. The Mothers' Club of Cambridge expressed their desire to limit

their playground to young children by fencing it and keeping the fencing repaired (MCC 1902, 1903, 1904). Subsequently, the male-dominated city playground commission reported on the importance of fences for inculcating habits of orderliness, creating an acceptable environment for "respectable" people, and keeping out the "undesirable elements" (Brooks 1911:44).

Reformers occasionally recorded oppositional views by participants in their programs and their negotiations concerning uses of landscapes and built environments to suit participants' needs (Spencer-Wood 1994a, 1994b, 1996). For instance, the Pine Street playground run by the Mothers' Club of Cambridge for young neighborhood children was so popular that older children sought admittance. When they were refused, the older children were not passive, but instead devised a strategy to negotiate their admission to the playground. Older children would bring

FIG. 1.7 Older girl with baby on leveled ground in the Pine Street Playground, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Brooks n.d.b; courtesy of the Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library of the History of Women in America, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University.

younger siblings or neighbors to the playground and gain admittance in order to "mind baby in the sand" (Brooks 1908:4; Figure 1.7).

Although men had passed laws against street play, middle-class reform women did not monolithically oppose such play or try to force poor children into playgrounds. Many women's organizations diminished social barriers between classes by creating a dialogue between middle-class reformers and working-class people that improved their understanding of each other. For instance, in 1910, neighborhood children in Boston's West End persuaded the Elizabeth Peabody House settlement that the repressive law against street play was turning innocent children into criminals. The settlement's playground supervisor realized that playgrounds did not replace street play for all children, so she planned to gain the cooperation of other settlements in organizing street games on a couple of nontraffic streets. In Boston and New York, women worked with male government officials to provide for play on certain streets by shutting off traffic on them during certain hours of the day (EPH 1911:20; Beard 1915:139; Spencer-Wood 1994b:126).

Roof playgrounds became a standard feature of women's social settlements because they were a popular and safe alternative to street play for small children. Purpose-built settlements in Boston were designed with flat roofs for playgrounds. Settlement roof playgrounds included sandboxes, toys, dolls and doll carriages, rocking horses, small slides, small chairs, and even a jungle gym at the North Bennet Street Industrial School for Girls. The roof was fenced in for safety. Potted plants were sometimes included at the bottom of the fence or around the chimney, combining a roof garden with a roof playground (NBSIH 1906).

The design of roof gardens and playgrounds was a specialty in the field of landscape architecture and considered particularly well suited to women's artistic abilities (Madsen and Furlong 1994:93). Thus, the informal creation of roof playgrounds in settlements was transformed into a female profession that justified the acceptance of women into professional schools and firms in the male-dominated field of landscape architecture.

The successful process used by women of the Massachusetts Emergency and Hygiene Association for founding playgrounds and gaining male governmental funding became a model for people starting playgrounds in the largest cities throughout the eastern United States and in Manchester, England (Rainwater 1922:12–73). In the 1890s, women's

clubs opened the first playgrounds from South Carolina to California (Beard 1915:136–138; Byington 1931:177). In cities across America, women's organizations, including women's settlements, created children's playgrounds and also provided apparatus, supplies, and paid supervisors (Beard 1915:23–24; EWW 1947; Woods and Kennedy 1911).

Women also sometimes created citywide playground plans. For instance, Mary Graham Jones, renowned for her sixteen years of settlement work to improve the quality of life for city children and neighborhoods, submitted a city-wide playground plan to the City of Hartford in 1914. The juvenile commission implemented this plan by leasing a dozen or more vacant lots from the city at nominal rent and preparing them as playgrounds under the supervision of the male superintendent of parks (Beard 1915:133). In Chicago, women's organizations also founded a set of park playgrounds (Tuason 1999).

Beard (1915:134) stated, "Women have everywhere been largely instrumental in initiating the playground work, they have followed it in many cases by service on appointed commissions and as paid city playground employees, and in other cases they have held positions on state recreation commissions." Lillian Wald, for instance, created a playground in the yard of her Henry Street settlement in New York, became secretary of the Parks and Playground Association of New York, and was one of the settlement leaders who founded the Playground Association of America (Cavallo 1981:36). Male governmental officials appointed women to city playground commissions across the country, from San Francisco to Boston and Cambridge (Byington 1931:177).

Although playgrounds have not usually been distinguished as a site type by archaeologists, their remains have occasionally been excavated in schoolyards and other sites. A playground may only be distinguished as the hard-packed dirt surface of a schoolyard, such as that excavated behind the African-American Phillips School in Boston (Pendery 1999). The site of the commune of Brook Farm (1841–1847) in the Boston area included an early infant school where Elizabeth Peabody taught as a young woman. Excavations around the early twentieth-century Lutheran orphanage at Brook Farm found a sand lens that could well have been a sand garden (Pendery 1992). Archaeologists need to know about historic playground landscapes, equipment, and activities in order to be able to identify such archaeological remains.

Conclusion

This research has provided evidence of the leadership and important contributions of women's organizations in the City Beautiful movement, the school garden movement, and the American playground movement. Women also provided leadership at social settlements in the movements for children's gardens, roof gardens, and roof playgrounds. Women materially extended their moral/domestic values and ideologies of cooperative housekeeping and municipal housekeeping through parks, playgrounds, and children's gardens that domesticated men's public urban landscapes.

The green landscapes of the City Beautiful movement, the American playground movement, and the school garden movement were associated with women for two reasons. First, women were considered closer to natural landscapes than men. Second, playgrounds and children's gardens symbolized and implemented a transformation in middle-class conceptions of childhood and child-raising practices that were considered part of women's domestic sphere. Women's organizations were leaders in these major social movements because they were considered aspects of woman's domain.

Playgrounds and children's gardens were among the most popular programs offered by reform women's and men's organizations, as indicated in records of high enrollments, waiting lists for admission, and photographs of these well-populated landscapes. Playgrounds and children's gardens were dispersed across the urban landscape in order to be easily accessible by children in individual neighborhoods. Children could not be expected to travel far to use playgrounds or children's gardens (Map 1.1).

This research has shown the importance of women's processes of nonhierarchical leadership and culture change in creating green urban landscapes. Knowledge of historic women's active social agency fundamentally changes our understanding of past sociocultural processes. This research demonstrates the great strength of types of lateral affiliative and cooperative "powers with" historically associated with women, in contrast to men's forms of hierarchical dominating "powers over" (Spencer-Wood 1999b:178–179). The historically important social movements for The City Beautiful, for playgrounds, and for children's gardens were not simply founded one day by a man or a group of men as represented in recent scholarship (e.g., Cavallo 1981; Trelstad 1997; Macleod 1998:66).

Men used their dominant hierarchical power to pass laws against street play, but they could not use masculine hierarchical processes of dominating or socially controlling people in social movements involving voluntary participation. To solicit voluntary participation in settlements and clubs, men actually used the types of cooperative "powers with" people that were associated with women.

Many social movements with voluntary participation, such as parks, playgrounds, and children's gardens, were founded by women's organizations using cooperating feminine processes of "power with" people. Middle-class women's organizations carried on dialogues and negotiations with the predominantly working-class participants over the material content of reform programs. Many reform women viewed their programs as social experiments to be changed in response to the expressed needs of local people. Thus, annual reports of some organizations, especially social settlements, include negative as well as positive responses to programs offered by the reformers (Spencer-Wood 2001). For instance, reformers in Boston and New York learned through dialogue with neighborhood children that playgrounds did not replace street play. As a result, the reformers worked to have a few streets designated for play at certain hours. In another instance, older children successfully negotiated with reformers to be admitted to a popular small playground for little children.

Women also used lateral affiliative "powers with" men to gain their cooperation in creating green urban landscapes to meet the shared moral-charitable goal of helping children. Women transformed their subordinate domestic position into a position of higher moral authority and used their new religious source of "power with" called "moral suasion" to persuade men to cooperate by donating land, equipment, and landscaping for playgrounds and children's gardens. Further, women's organizations sought to materially transform American culture and gender ideology by permanently institutionalizing their programs across the country. To this end, women's organizations worked with men to have programs such as playgrounds, children's gardens, and kindergartens adopted in male-hierarchically controlled institutions such as schools and recreation facilities.

Some evidence has been found concerning the diverse relationships between women's organizations and the men whose support they sought in creating urban green landscapes. In many cases, male governmental officials and property owners assisted reformers in creating playgrounds and children's gardens. However, in their first failed attempt to found schoolyard playgrounds in Boston, male governmental officials initially opposed reform women's hiring of kindergarten teachers as supervisors. In this case, men had to change their views and methods of operating playgrounds so children would use them. The larger goals of helping children that men and women shared led the government officials to change their playground views and practices in response to experience.

Women and their organizations also engaged in hierarchical forms of power usually associated with men. Women exercised hierarchical power when appointed to governmental positions such as the playground supervisors of Boston and Cambridge and, to a lesser extent, when appointed to city playground commissions and school committees. In addition, in their own reform organizations, women inverted the normal gender hierarchy by employing and supervising men, including male playground supervisors for older boys, and male landscape architects who designed cities with green spaces.

Finally, this research has revealed some of the processes involved in erasing women's significant contributions to history. First, when women's organizations were creating parks, playgrounds, and children's gardens, they were willing to give men the credit for these socially transforming programs in order to convince men to permanently adopt and institutionalize them. Second, historians have traditionally constructed history from men's public institutional records and books that have focused on men's leadership and important contributions to the City Beautiful movement, the American playground movement, and the school garden movement. Records of women's organizations traditionally have not been researched because they have been considered private/domestic clubs that could not have made significant contributions to history. Gender stereotypes have led to the exclusion of women from history. This exclusion has been perpetuated by the common practice of later histories using and referencing earlier, male-biased ones. For instance, Macleod's (1998) book entitled *The Age of the Child: Children in America 1890–1920* uncritically uses and refers to Cavallo's (1981) book, thus perpetuating the exclusion of women's leadership and important contributions in the development of the American playground movement. The periodization of the book also reflects Macleod's reliance on male-focused sources, since women's organizations started creating the age of the child much earlier than 1890.

This research has revealed a number of new types of site landscapes of which archaeologists need to be aware, from settlement playgrounds and children's gardens to school gardens and park playgrounds. This chapter has shown that these site landscapes were imbued with gendered meanings and power dynamics from the dominant ideology of the cultural context. Further, these new urban landscapes expressed women's new gender ideologies and identities that combined the supposedly opposed male/public and female/domestic values and powers in ways that increased women's status and power. Thorough research is needed to reveal the significant leadership of women's organizations and the cultural processes and power they used to create and gender urban landscapes.

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