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The Dissertation Advisory Committee and the student's Department Chair, as representatives of the faculty, certify that this dissertation has met all standards of excellence and scholarship as determined by the faculty. The Dean of the College of Education concurs.

Philo Hutcheson, Ph.D.
Committee Chair

Deron Boyles, Ph.D.
Committee Member

Chara Bohan, Ph.D.
Committee Member

Sheryl Gowen, Ph.D.
Committee Member

Date

Sheryl Gowen, Ph.D.
Chair, Department of Educational Policy Studies

R. W. Kamphaus, Ph.D.
Dean and Distinguished Research Professor
College of Education

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Mary E. McPherson
2545 Thompson Road
Atlanta, GA 30319

The director of this dissertation is:

Dr. Philo Hutcheson
Department of Educational Policy Studies
College of Education
Georgia State University
Atlanta, GA 30303-3083

VITA

Mary E. McPherson

ADDRESS: 2545 Thompson Road
Atlanta, GA 30319

EDUCATION:

Ph.D. 2009 Georgia State University
Educational Policy Studies
M.S. 2003 Georgia State University
Instructional Technology
B.A. 1996 Oglethorpe University
History

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

1999-Present Director of Academic Technology
St. Martin's Episcopal School, Atlanta, GA
1997-1999 Museum Lead Teacher
Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, GA

PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES AND ORGANIZATIONS:

2006-Present History of Education Society
2007-Present Southeastern History of Education Society
2006-Present American Educational Research Association
2000-Present Association for Supervision and
Curriculum Development
2000-Present International Society for Technology in Education

PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS:

McPherson, M. E. (2009, March). *Educating Our Girls: The Student Aid Foundation in Georgia, 1890-1920*. Paper presented at the meeting of the Southeastern History of Education Society, LaGrange, GA.
McPherson, M. E. (2008, March). *Organizing Women: Georgia Clubwomen and Education, 1890-1920*. Paper presented at the meeting of the Southeastern History of Education Society, Tuscaloosa, AL.
McPherson, M. E. (2006). *The Quest to Become a Profession: The Dilemma Facing the Field of Education*. Paper presented at the meeting of the Southeast Philosophy of Education Society, Decatur, GA.

ABSTRACT

Organizing Women: Women's Clubs and Education in Georgia, 1890-1920

by
Mary E. McPherson

The rise of women's volunteer organizations can be linked to the social changes that the United States was undergoing during the Progressive Era. The movement from an agrarian society to an industrial one, massive migration of Americans from rural areas to the cities, and increased immigration all contributed to social challenges in the United States in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Recently historians have begun to explore how women's contributions helped to combat these challenges and this study shows how women's clubs in Georgia were able to exercise their philanthropic power through their involvement in education.

By 1860, the women's club movement was well underway in the United States, with most of the activity in the Northeast, Midwest, and the West. The South, due to the devastation of the Civil War, did not see an emergence of women's clubs until 1890. Southern middle class white women felt compelled to help those they perceived as less fortunate at a time when they themselves were trying to establish their own placement within the social structure of the Progressive Era South. Women, due to changing societal roles, were beginning to move beyond the home. They began to use the expertise they acquired through managing a household and applied this knowledge to social programs that would help those in

need. Often times these social programs were focused on the education of young children and women.

Women's clubs in Georgia provide a lens for exploring how women were able to influence educational developments during the Progressive Era. Archival data show that the Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs, the Atlanta Woman's Club, and the Athens Woman's Club played an important role in educational advancements in Georgia during the Progressive Era. Archival and primary source materials were used to support an analysis of gender, social class, and geographic differences on women's roles in educational changes. This study analyzes how women were able to affect education in Georgia at a time when men dominated educational decision-making.

ORGANIZING WOMEN: WOMEN'S CLUBS AND EDUCATION IN GEORGIA,
1890-1920

by
Mary E McPherson

A Dissertation

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in
the College of Education
Georgia State University

Atlanta, Georgia
2009

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ABBREVIATIONS

GAFWC	Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs
GFWC	General Federation of Women's Clubs
GEB	General Education Board
NEA	National Education Association
SEB	Southern Education Board
WCTU	Women's Christian Temperance Union
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association

CHAPTER 1

Social Changes and the Progressive Era

In no other period in American history are the differences between the American South and the nation more apparent than in that of the close of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century. During the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era, a coalition of reformers who consisted of educators, social workers, politicians, ministers, school teachers, and volunteer organizations began to change the face of the nation. They were responding to the view that America in the late 19th century was a “society without a core.”¹ The United States lacked national centers of authority and information that might have given order to the changes that were taking place due to industrialization and massive immigration. American institutions were still oriented toward a communal way of living where family and church, education and press, professions and government still found their meaning by the way they fit with one another inside small towns rather than large urban cities. The rush of natives as well as immigrants into urban areas helped to create large cities such as New York and Chicago which, in turn, brought with it inexperienced newcomers who needed jobs, homes, and a sense of belonging.² They congested the centers of the cities and in response to these pressures, transportation lines began to move out into surrounding towns and created transportation and communication lines to towns that had once existed separately from the urban centers.

¹ Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Social Order* (New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 1967), 12.

² William A. Link, “The School that Built a Town: Public Education and the Southern Social Landscape, 1880-1930,” in *Essays in Twentieth-Century Southern Education: Exceptionalism and Its Limits*, ed. Wayne J. Urban (New York, NY: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1999), 20-21.

The American South, however, was in a quite different situation than the rest of the country during this explosion of growth. It still remained mostly agrarian with the few exceptions of Atlanta and Savannah. During this time of industrialization, the South was trying to pick up the pieces from the devastating Civil War which affected the area socially, politically, and economically. The damage caused by the Civil War left families without men to care for them and often the farm land that had once been so bountiful was ravaged by the effects of war. The destruction in the South forced southern leaders to begin to change the agrarian mind set to fit more closely with the more industrial one of their northern counterparts. This forced movement caused great strife as southerners began to reconcile their old way of life with the new.

With the tremendous changes that were taking place in the South as well as around the entire nation, a political, economic, social, and educational movement was on the rise to help Americans enter a new era of industrialization. The Progressive Era (1890-1920) was a defining moment in American history that helped the United States move from the conditions of a primarily agrarian society to those of an industrial one with social reform being at the forefront to help Americans through the transition. The Progressive Era encompassed many things and is hard to define in specific terms. Historians such as David Tyack and Lawrence Cremin try to tame the beast of progressivism by categorizing it into distinct areas; Tyack with his pedagogical progressivism and administrative progressivism and Cremin provided a third category of politically radical

reformers.¹ Peter Filene argues that progressivism lacked cohesiveness as a movement so it should not even be acknowledged as an era within American history.² Though I do not agree that movements on a scale such as the Progressive Movement in the late 19th and early 20th century can be reduced to specific categories, nor can it be ignored for the influence it had on the shaping of American culture.

Though there were many organizations that influenced the shaping of American culture during the Progressive Era, I argue in this dissertation that women's organizations had a particularly influential position during this time period. Through the creation of women's voluntary organizations and in particular, women's clubs, women had a means to make changes to American society and provide that core that some felt was missing. Women's clubs became a part of the social fabric across the United States, but they faced unique challenges in the South due to the staunchly agrarian and patriarchal way of life. While the rest of the United States was shifting from an economy based around an agrarian, rural system to an urban, industrial way, the South found its traditions and cultural ways being questioned by outsiders who believed a movement toward industry and urban was progress. Women's clubs in the South helped to make this transition from agriculture to industry and rural to urban less frantic for southern children. In the chapters that follow, specific examples are highlighted of how these women worked to maintain a sense of southern identity

¹ Lawrence Cremin, *Transformation of Schools: Progressivism in American Education* (New York, NY: 1961), 45. David Tyack, *The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education* (Cambridge, NY: Harvard University Press, 1974), 39-42.

² Peter G. Filene, "An Obituary for the Progressive Movement," *American Quarterly* 22 (Spring 1970): 20-34.

while meeting the needs of a quickly changing society. They established free kindergartens, started schools for rural, white mountain children, and provided tuition assistance to girls who wanted a college education. As one Georgia clubwomen stated, "in a time of change and uncertainty, it is only right to give back."³

This giving back was not always looked upon favorably. The involvement in social and political areas of American life was a relatively new phenomenon for women and was hard for some men to accept. This dissertation provides a thorough examination of the literature to highlight areas of agreement and dissent among historians. The issue of women's involvement in social and political areas cannot be divorced from the issues of race, class, and geographic location, nor can these topics be divorced from the Progressive Era as they provided the backdrop for the changes that were taking place. From Peter Filene's argument that the Progressive Era is not an era to Anne Firor Scott and Anastatia Sims' argument that women were crucial to the social changes and to some degree responsible for the progressive movement during the Progressive Era, historians continue the debate over the importance of this time period. If Filene's argument is accepted, then this dissertation is a moot point. Without the constructs of the Progressive Era, then it becomes difficult to explain how women's organizations were able to find empowerment during this time period. This is just one example of the analysis of the literature surrounding opposing

³ Atlanta City Federation of Women's Clubs, "Yearbook of the City Federation of Woman's Clubs, 1912-1913," Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, GA, MSS 393, Box 1, Folder 1.

arguments related to the themes of gender, race, social class, and geographic location that are explored in this dissertation. Though I take the position that women's organizations were more helpful than harmful, the literature review provides a basis for the reader to draw conclusions.

As I began writing, several themes did emerge from both the literature as well as the archival material which informed how women's clubs in the South were formed as well as the social reforms they felt compelled to address. The topic of women's clubs and education became much broader than the role of women in society during the Progressive Era, though this helped me frame the other themes in context of the dissertation; but it became clear that issues of social class, regional differences, and gender differences were integral to the development of women's clubs and what types of causes they chose to tackle. Issues of social class became even more apparent during the Progressive Era because of the emergence of a white middle class in urban centers. Women's club members were a part of the new white middle class and they used social reform to disseminate their social class values to others.

In addition to social class differences, regional differences between the North and the South influenced how women's clubs were established as well as the types of reforms they undertook. Southern clubwomen had to abide by cultural norms of watching the hearth and home that their northern counterparts were not necessarily hindered by. These cultural norms were informed by gender difference between what was appropriate for women and men in Progressive Era society.

The Issue of Class

Social reform was a hallmark of the Progressive Era and it is the one that I will use to frame the context of the Progressive Era. Progressive reformers, whether they focused on government, education, immigration, or industrialization, viewed these areas through the lens of social improvement. Social reform, important around the nation, was a focal point in the South for progressives because they were rebuilding a section of the country that many of them saw as backwards and ignorant.⁴ The South needed to be brought into line with the North and West. The South, they believed, had become a nation within a nation, what many would call an American problem. Despite the growth of the cotton mills and tobacco factories in the Gilded Age South (1878-1889), Southerners remained rural and agricultural.⁵ Their situation contrasted sharply with developments outside the South, where rapid industrialization and economic growth brought prosperity and rising incomes.⁶ Reformers were troubled by the implications of the poverty and social stagnation that typified much of the South. They noted the presence of a nearly permanent underclass, composed of both southern black and whites. While this static caste system oppressed southern blacks, whites lived under an inflexible class system, and the most noticeable socioeconomic development of the post-Reconstruction era - the rapid spread of

⁴ John Harden Best, "Education in the Forming of the American South" in *Essays in Twentieth-Century Southern Education: Exceptionalism and Its Limits*, ed. Wayne J. Urban (New York, NY: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1999), 9.

⁵ The Library of Congress, "The Gilded Age (1878-1889)," America's Story from America's Library. accessed 28 March 2009 from <http://www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/jb/gilded>. The Gilded Age was named for the overabundance of wealth that was amassed by individuals such as Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller during this time period. The lifestyle which these new millionaires lived was the result of newly formed industries in the United States.

⁶ Link, 19.

cotton mills and tobacco factories - only seemed to widen class differences among southern whites.⁷

Due to the development of urban centers and the influx of immigrants to the United States, the issue of race, class, and ethnicity became even more divisive as the country stumbled its way through becoming an industrialized nation. The caste division of blacks and whites, with the principle of white supremacy, based on violence and the fear of violence, created the ground for the hierarchical and paternalistic organization of society. Despite the threat of violence which often entailed public lynchings and beatings of blacks, or perhaps because of it, southern society was one in which codes of behavior became enormously important with attention to manners in almost courtly style within and between the castes; respect for authority and for social class position, white and black; pride in family and loyalty to kinsmen; and, above all, loyalty and honor among white men and the purity of white womanhood.⁸ The South made the transition after the Civil War to a free labor economy with the caste division of white and black firmly in place, accompanied by efforts to reach beyond agriculture to develop a more diversified economy in towns and small cities. The recent freeing of enslaved blacks complicated the class structure. In the New South, freed slaves as well as freedmen were competing with poor whites for jobs and were viewed as members of the same class.⁹

⁷ John M. Heffron, "Nation-Building for a Venerable South: Moral and Practical Uplift in the New Agricultural Education, 1900-1920" in *Essays in Twentieth-Century Southern Education: Exceptionalism and Its Limits*, ed. Wayne J. Urban (New York, NY: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1999), 56-57.

⁸ Best, 14.

⁹ Best, 17-20. The South had been dependent on slavery for its agriculturally based economy and was now having to transition to an economic model that involved paying workers to farm the

Northern reformers demonstrated cultural imperialistic attitudes toward the Appalachian South. James Klotter has noted a striking parallel in the paternalism of urban white reformers toward both blacks and mountain whites.¹⁰ Reformers considered both as alien cultures. Urban reformers' clash with mountain whites was even starker because of the reformers' convictions that Appalachian folks were derived from a purer stock of Anglo-Saxonism yet they were being treated similarly to blacks who were seen as second-class citizens. Pure white stock did not equate to second-class citizenship. Reformers concluded that the problem with most mountain whites stemmed from their isolation from a cosmopolitan mainstream culture and not inherent genetic deficiencies that were apparent in blacks. Mountain culture had developed on its own without interference from the progress of civilization and had evolved in defiance of order and stability. Only after considerable efforts of reformers that focused on schools and children would perceptions begin to change about mountain whites.

Often the reformers were the aristocrats of the Gilded Age and they were also thrust into a new social order in which they had to make peace with an impersonal world by extending their familiar pattern of life. This extension of their way of life was often thrust upon those they felt were less fortunate. For most Americans, many of whom were immigrants to the United States, the task was much more complicated than adjusting to a new social class. In the process of relocating themselves, they were forced to redefine their new environment as

land. Former slaves, many who were illiterate, also had to transition mentally to a way of life in which they, for the first time, made decisions about their livelihood. Former slaves were now openly competing with poor whites for the few jobs available in a recovering South.

¹⁰ James Klotter, "The Black South and White Appalachia," *Journal of American History* 66 (March 1980): 832-849.

well as defining a new white middle class which they were a member of. What distinctions could they make between themselves and the white lower and upper classes? Best suggests that the new white middle class was divided into two broad categories: One was those with strong professional aspirations in medicine, law, economics, administration, social work, and architecture. The second was those who were specialists in business, labor, and agriculture who were awakening to both their distinctiveness and to their ties with similar people in the same occupation. The unique skills and functions created an awareness that came to mold much of their lives and characterized the members of the new middle class.¹¹ They demonstrated it by the proud identification as lawyers and teachers, by a determination to improve the contents of medicine or the procedures of a particular business, and by an eagerness to join others like them in a union, professional organization, trade association, or agricultural cooperative. The new order offered men and women who were still in the minority a release rather than a threat. It provided outlets that had never been available and it afforded them a respect and profit as well.¹² They became secure in looking beyond the day's work to try to locate themselves within a national system. Scientifically minded farmers began to study marketing and suggested experiments in government assistance, social workers set their profession in an inclusive urban industrial framework, and teachers experimented with ways to relate public education to the whole society.¹³ They were pioneers who were outgoing and enthusiastic. Though an unusually diverse white

¹¹ Best, 13-14.

¹² Wiebe, 12.

¹³ Ibid., 14-16.

population, they may not have found cohesion, but they were reaching a remarkable degree of interaction. Having similar spirit, experiences, and to some degree aspirations, drew them together. They were encouraged by the ability to see how their talents meshed with others in a national scheme that encouraged them to look outward confidently.¹⁴

Cities tended to draw members of the new white middle class. Isolated academics, young journalists, professional architects, experts in administration and many others gravitated to where opportunities beckoned and where they could find their own kind.¹⁵ The cities drew together groups undergoing similar experiences and sharing similar values and interests. Professionals who moved among their organizations soon found members of the new middle class who spoke their same language and they began to encourage each other's efforts toward self-determination.¹⁶ They increasingly met each other in broad areas of mutual concern. For example, social workers, women's clubs, and teachers joined doctors in public health campaigns. Establishing and joining occupational organizations became a defining and identifying act. The occupational organizations supplied many answers, hopes, and enemies beyond the range of their immediate experience. The forces of occupational cohesion also caused social divisions. They widened the gap between the major cities and rural-small town America.¹⁷ The new white middle class helped to formalize the difference that had been developing for years. Professional teachers, for example were

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid., 128-129.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., 130.

improving a new, modern educational system that had scarcely touched the rural areas, especially in the South. This new middle class tended to lecture to but seldom talked to the rural people. To those in rural towns, the strange language and threatening values of the articulate urbanites came to represent the sinful city.¹⁸ A precise ethnic consciousness gave way to a more generalized racialism, presumably with scientific foundations. Careful comparisons of income were replaced by vaguer concerns about the moral and social implications of extreme wealth and extreme poverty.¹⁹ As much as any other trait, an earnest desire to remake the world upon their private models testified to the deep satisfaction accompanying this revolution in identity. The new white middle class realized that one of the most powerful vehicles for remaking the world in its image was through schools and social reform. What better way to help those less fortunate in American society than through the great equalizer of the schools and the teaching professionals who were themselves learning to be a part of the recently developed white middle class.

Education as a Tool for Social Reform

If the greatest public need for professionalism was in medicine, the greatest occupational need was in teaching. Ridiculed over the 19th century as Ichabod Cranes and fussy schoolmarms, teachers embodied the apparent paradox of exceptionally low prestige in a land that acclaimed universal education. Actually there was no paradox. To most Americans of the 19th century, universal education referred only to the bare rudiments, a basic version

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid., 131.

of the three R's, which countless people were qualified to teach. At the same time administrators were seeking programs for elementary education that would serve the industrial city.²⁰ In a decentralized agrarian society, instruction had become what each of a thousand communities cared to make of it. Usually that meant little more than rendering a people literate. The city required some formal means of organizing its schools, and a great many jobs in an urban-industrial market demanded skills well above a rudimentary level.²¹ After all, citizens of the cities needed to be able to move easily and seamlessly into the new white middle class and a public education beyond the three R's could provide the educational background to potentially meet this need. Hence, a variety of changes in schools began to occur in the late 1800s.

With the increased need for a skilled labor force in industry came the movement for vocational education, especially manual training, which gained momentum during the 1890s and spread in the country until in 1917 when it received federal assistance in the Smith-Hughes Act. With the addition of vocational education to schooling came an additional increase in teachers who were qualified to instruct students in manual training. From 1890 to 1910, both teachers and students of manual training increased more than fourfold, and then more than doubled again in another decade. In 1905, the National Education Association (NEA), long a vehicle of administrators and college educators, felt the surge of public school teachers among its members. With the election of Ella Flagg Young, an educational leader in Chicago, the balance of power in 1910

²⁰ Best, 32-35.

²¹ Heffron, 53.

tipped away from school administrators and toward teachers and the new science of education.²²

Women, now more than ever, were competing with men for teaching jobs which forced the question of "what public tasks would women seek and which ones would men allow them to fill?"²³ The answer to this question grew out of the traditional image of women as tender mothers, angels of mercy, and keepers of morals. Women found solace in two professions identified as appropriate professions for women which were also supported by men as appropriate for the fairer sex - social work and teaching. Women such as Lillian Ward, the nurse who pioneered social work, found works of mercy and child care as natural for female professionals. Women were encouraged to devote their energies to children - their health, recreation, education, and freedom from hard labor.²⁴ Thus, women were encouraged to enter the field of education and to be the caretakers of children's moral, physical, and mental health.

The moral health of children had consistently been a hallmark of American education since the 1700s. The unique needs of industrialized cities and the new white middle class caused a paradigm shift in how educators and society as a whole thought of moral education as well as how it was to be taught. Education of many kinds came to be of exceptional importance. The family, once the primary teacher of moral education, was now being replaced by schools and

²² Wiebe, 120.

²³ Ibid., 122.

²⁴ Estelle Freedman, "Separatism as a Strategy: Female Institution Building and American Feminism, 1870-1930," *Feminist Studies* 5 (Autumn 1979), 516. See also Jurgen Herbst, *And Sadly Teach: Teacher Education and Professionalization in American Culture* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), 47-48.

teachers as the primary deliverers of moral principles and behavior. The significance of imparting morality through schools had not been lost and public education was largely a holding operation until other forces could transform society. Idealists like American sociologists Lester Frank Ward and Franklin Henry Giddings were the first to assign the schools a central role. Through curriculum rich in civics and classes for adults as well as children, immigrants as well as natives, the schools would facilitate the arrival of Social Rationality, preparing the nation for a higher civilization.²⁵ Instruction did not end in the classroom.²⁶ Ward, however, expected the state to educate everyone. An uncritical faith in education almost marched the devotion for science with which it was closely identified and extraordinary hopes for an alert and informed citizenry were invested in the promise of scientific education.

Though the industrial cities were quick to accept this new scientific and rational view of education, the South was still wedded to the old way of education where each family and small village took care of its own. Although the pre-Civil War South had experienced a generation of urban growth and town-building, the bulk of its population still lived, and was schooled, in the rural countryside. The school problem of the South, as Eugene Branson declared in 1902, was

²⁵ Siegwart Lindenberg, "Coleman's Problem with Instructional Design." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association (Atlanta, GA, 2003); accessed 1 April 2009, available from

http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p_mla_apa_research_citation/1/0/8/0/5/pages108051/p108051-1-1.php. Social Rationality is the social influence on the individual as well as society as a whole and how the individual responds to cultural changes. Here, the curriculum is the influence that would determine what cultural norms would be taught to students and what appropriate responses were expected from the students to the changing cultural face of the United States.

²⁶ Anastatia Sims, *The Power of Femininity in the New South: Women's Organizations and Politics in North Carolina, 1880-1930* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1997), 24-25.

"preeminently the country-school problem."²⁷ Southerners, as Charles William Dabney put it, "live in the country and work in the country; they therefore must be educated in the country."²⁸ Over time, schools became reliable barometers of their social surroundings, and they internalized most of their characteristics, good and bad. Schools in the southern countryside did not mirror the social class struggles that were taking place in urban schools. The southern rural schools tended to be were fiercely democratic, and they enjoyed community participation. The public rural schools that spread during and after the Reconstruction Era were small, usually located in one-room school houses that often doubled, at least in the 19th century, as barns or outbuildings. Schools adapted themselves to the needs of a rural society whose population was dispersed and isolated by numerous geographic barriers so class divisions were not as prevalent as in urban public schools. Schools opened their sessions at local convenience, with a school term that ordinarily lasted between three and six months; they opened and closed at different times of the day, according to the local economy as well as social and geographical factors.²⁹ For teachers and students alike, schooling was often a transitory experience. Paid low wages and offered short school terms, teachers, most of whom were women, often experienced difficulty surviving on their salaries.³⁰ Not only was the school term short, but also student attendance was erratic. Parents, either because they placed little value

²⁷ Eugene C. Branson, "The Real Southern Question," *World's Work* 3(March 1902): 1888.

²⁸ Charles William Dabney, "The Public School Problem in the South." Proceedings of the Fourth Conference for Education in the South (Winston-Salem, NC: Southern Education Board, 1901), 31.

²⁹ Heffron, 56-57.

³⁰ Jurgen Herbst, *And Sadly Teach: Teacher Education and Professionalization in American Culture* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), 57.

on education or because they needed their children's labor in order to survive, did not hesitate to keep their children out of school during busy farming seasons.³¹

The stories of rural people trudging forward to the courthouse to school reform meetings are commonplace, but local enthusiasm for reform was rarely spontaneous. School crusades, however, were carefully orchestrated public events preceded by local canvassing, publicity, and organizing, along with an effective use of the print media. Reformers, many of whom were women of the new white middle class, discovered that while their approach toward schooling had undergone considerable change, the attitudes of most rural southerners remained the same. Rural southerners still strongly believed in parental participation and community control, and they continued to resist any limitations on those prerogatives.³² Although rural southerners regarded educational innovations suspiciously, they never organized themselves into an effectively united opposition against these innovations. Rural opposition tended to occur through passive resistance and non-cooperation. In many communities, this strategy slowed the onset of new policy changes in schooling. Rural opponents of reform were galvanized primarily by the issue of community control, and they mobilized to oppose school consolidation and compulsory education, two issues that most clearly threatened local autonomy.³³

Southern school reformers, subscribing to an ideology of uplift, were deeply influenced by at least two considerations. The first was a new conception

³¹ Heffron, 56.

³² Link, 25.

³³ Ibid.

of the role of the school in the nurture of children and adolescents, a conception that dominated the thinking of sociologists and psychologists by the 1890s. The second consideration was the reformers' common conviction that the South was an underdeveloped nation within a nation whose development and modernization into a sophisticated industrial economy would be impossible without a greatly expanded system of public education.³⁴ Parental participation and local control had mostly resulted in education stagnation; rather than leading to a modernized South, schools followed existing socio-cultural standards. What was more, reformers believed that local control over school meant that a culture of poverty would dominate education; ending southern underdevelopment would require the purposeful training of coming generations and the inculcation of forward looking attitudes and habits.³⁵ Yet another challenge, funding was also a part of the southern setting.

Philanthropy and Southern Education

Southern schools were very much a part of a national pattern of public education. Though American schools could loosely be termed an educational system, there was much in the rural schools in the South that resembled rural schools across the country as they developed in the 19th century. The rhythms of rural education differed fundamentally from those of urban education, where, in the last third of the 19th century, a model more attuned to industrial and city life was emerging. Southern rural school reform offers an example of southern

³⁴ Heffron, 50-51.

³⁵ Best, 14-16.

exceptionalism.³⁶ If isolation and localism were characteristic of rural schools nationally, southern country schools were the most isolated and the most localized of any in the country. Other characteristics present in rural schools elsewhere appeared amplified in southern rural schools. The most important of these was poverty. Southern rural schools were not the cause of social conditions, but they did embody them. Reformers placed high hopes on the transformative powers of public education. Southern schools reformers believed, as did Progressive Era educators elsewhere, that schooling should assume a new priority in the lives of children.³⁷ The southern school campaign early on assumed the character of an evangelical crusade because the diverse coalition of reformers became convinced that education could remake the region. Southern reformers thought that southerners' attitudes toward work and life would eventually change through the creation of a modern school system.³⁸ Children were the key to the future, and schools would lead the way toward regional modernization and uplift.

Southern schools could not afford modernization on their own so several philanthropic education organizations pitched in to provide funds and guidance. The General Education Board (GEB), a John D. Rockefeller philanthropy, organized in 1902 for the promotion of public education in the South. The GEB established a network of county agents who would train country people as they were found and train them for a perfectly ideal life where they were.³⁹ The

³⁶ Heffron, 62-63.

³⁷ Ibid.,

³⁸ Link, 36-37.

³⁹ Heffron, 62-64.

mission behind the GEB was not to transform southern farm children into philosophers, scholars, or scientists, but rather to train southern farmers in the new scientific way of farming. The emphasis was not on taking them out of their current environment but rather showing them how to work more efficiently in their environment. White middle class reformers saw the validity in new scientific methods and were eager to teach these methods to southern farmers. Reformers were now potentially creating a class of farmers that could mirror their middle class ideals of professionalism and scientific innovation; a particular form of vocational education.

The educational movement after 1900 combined the capital and organizational skills of northern entrepreneurs with the evangelical rhetoric and grass-roots revivals of southerners. The result was business idealism, the sanctification of paternalism as a mode of social control in which farms and factory workers benefited. In 1914, Abraham Flexner and Wallace Buttrick submitted a proposal to GEB for rural education in the South that encompassed the entire spectrum of progressive social thought: the establishment of a bureaucracy that would be more efficient in its handling of southern rural education. Sharing a preference for large, collective units of control, Flexner and Buttrick recommended the subordination of district management to county management in rural education. In place of an elected superintendent of education, they recommended an appointed one with proper qualifications. They

pressed for the reorganization of the South's district level rural schools into consolidated schools directly accountable to county authority.⁴⁰

Although organized and financed by northern industrialists, the leaders of the Southern Education Board (SEB) conceived it as purely a regional response to the problems of the South. SEB district directors, campaign committee members, and field agents were all southerners, ranging from college presidents and university professors to school superintendents, farm journalists, and common school teachers. Its propaganda aimed to stimulate public opinion in favor of tax-supported universal education.⁴¹ In a *New York Times* article from 1902, the SEB was being touted as the perfect way for “patriotic men to put in service” and that the SEB’s purpose was “to help communities and institutions that help themselves and that build up a natural and permanent public opinion in support of public education” for “both races and both sexes.”⁴² Members of the SEB were focused on more than the education of white children and they focused on helping communities that were willing to work alongside them to build a system of public education.

Rural southern areas, which relied on agriculture for survival, had unique needs and placed different pressures on children in these communities. Many citizens of these rural communities were not sure how a public system of education would mesh with their unique labor needs. In areas where cotton was king, public school attendance dropped off at harvest time by as much as 70%.⁴³

⁴⁰ Link, 28-30.

⁴¹ Heffron, 64.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid., 65.

Until 1896, when Kentucky enacted its compulsory education law, compulsory education was not in effect of in the southern states, not only because of a prevailing belief that children in an agricultural society had more pressing and immediate duties than education, but also because the states could not afford it.⁴⁴ It was difficult to rally support in the South for tax-supported public schools when the people who shouldered the bulk of the tax burden were low and medium income property owners and when existing schools were in need of the most basic supplies and improvements. Tax-supported universal education, however, became a pressing need fueled by the members of the SEB.

The typical southern rural school was a crude, single-room affair that according to northern reports, lacked proper ventilation and seating, was often inconveniently located to serve the surrounding area, and actually did more to contribute to rather than eliminate the problem of rural stupefaction.⁴⁵ The teachers in these one-room schools were local women and men, many of them little more than a step ahead of their own students in age and learning.⁴⁶ Grossly underpaid and undereducated, they came up through and helped perpetuate an education system in which ignorance struggled valiantly to teach ignorance. It was a system in which teacher training was practically unheard of.

To combat the horrid conditions of the schoolhouses and the poor teacher quality in rural schools, reformers focused not on providing a classical education to rural children but rather a practical education. The emphasis on practical or

⁴⁴ George F. Milton, "Compulsory Education in the South", *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 32 (July 1908), 58.

⁴⁵ Link, 25.

⁴⁶ Herbst, 67

industrial education in the South was a response to poverty; it also was a reflection of the New South vision of economic development through industrialization, commercial enterprise, and agricultural diversification.⁴⁷ In a predominately agricultural society like the South, the proper educational medium, progressives came to believe, was not the printed page but the soil and its cultivation. In 1914, the Smith-Lever Act brought an end to the relationship between government and philanthropy in the work of agricultural demonstration. The act established the Cooperative Extension Service and brought local colleges and universities on board to provide the resources for teaching agricultural education.⁴⁸ In essence, the government would take care of this type of education with no assistance needed from outside sources. Nevertheless, the GEB continued to give generously to southern education, specifically in the establishment of boys and girls' clubs and higher education institutions, until the end of the 1920s.⁴⁹

Unfortunately, education reformers in the South did not achieve their educational goals. In the South, the hegemony of agriculture led not to the idyllic life of independent producers by urban agrarians, but to a tenant-cotton regime that foreclosed for millions of poor blacks and whites the possibility of ever having operated their own farm.⁵⁰ Most poor tenant farmers had a hard enough time reading a service contract much less mastering the technical skills and

⁴⁷ Ibid., 67-75.

⁴⁸ United States Department of Agriculture, "Smith Lever Act Formula Grant," <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/business/awards/formula/smithlever.html> accessed 12 July 2009.

⁴⁹ Heffron, 62-63.

⁵⁰ Ibid. Urban agrarians refers to the farmers who would now employ new scientific methods that they had learned through agricultural extension services as well as the new vocational and manual training programs that were being introduced to rural schools.

know-how to manage a complex commercial operation. Literacy was not high on the list of southern and northern do-gooders.⁵¹ In the hands of philanthropists like the Rockefellers, the country school nevertheless became a progressive institution.⁵²

Women and Charitable Causes

The Progressive Era was marked by a shift toward bureaucracy in government, business, and education and an emphasis on scientific innovation. Though cities and southern rural areas had stark differences, one thing remained the same; both had residents who were in dire straits and in need of assistance from those more fortunate. As was discussed earlier, northern philanthropists such as the Rockefellers funneled large amounts of money into the southern rural areas to promote a greater understanding of new scientific agricultural methods to infuse these areas with prosperity. The urban slums also needed help in digging themselves out of a hole of depravity. Government officials, following the belief that the urban slums were not a part of the city, did little to police these disadvantaged areas, but rather focused on just containing them. With the rise of the industrial city, slums deepened and spread. Suddenly, slum dwellers were no longer just pariahs, they now made up an essential labor force that was an integral part of the city's fabric.⁵³

These slum communities caused a preoccupation with purity and unity among progressive social reformers and served as a common denominator in

⁵¹ Link, 34.

⁵² Heffron, 63.

⁵³ Herbert M. Kliebard, *Vocationalism and the American Curriculum, 1876-1946* (New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1999), 5.

community crisis. Women, as the keepers of nation's morals, fit the role as social reformers. Many of the female social reformers were members of the new white middle class and were determined to exert their new influence in society on those they perceived as being in need of help. Social and educational reform became areas in which women could be active socially and politically without ruffling the feathers of men.

One area of perceived depravity which took precedent for white female social reformers was what they considered the rampant abuse of alcohol, especially among the lower classes. Prohibition, one of the earliest expressions of social reform, enjoyed the advantage and support of the religious community and demonstrated the traditional Protestant characteristic of respectability.⁵⁴ Religious organizations often provided the organizational vehicle for white middle class women to gather in numbers to tackle social issues. One women's religious organization that tackled alcoholism through its support of Prohibition was the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). The WCTU convinced most states to adopt prohibitionist propaganda as a standard portion of the public school curriculum. Anxious Americans looked to the schools as a local defense against social ills, with increasing numbers insisting that public education infuse new strength, new cohesion, into threatened communities. The religious undertones of many of the white women's organizations provided the opportunity for a renewal of Protestant doctrines in the classroom.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Anne Firor Scott, *Natural Allies: Women's Associations in American History* (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 25-27.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

Prohibition was not the only social reform which took center stage during the Progressive Era. Other reformers concentrated on the corrupting influence of alien textbooks foisted on the schools by some distant entity that clearly did not know the community in which the students were being taught. With immigration on the rise, a campaign to instill patriotism through worship of the Constitution, the flag, and America's heroes engaged the energies of the Grand Army of the Republic. As servants of the community, the public schools would inculcate the youth with a narrow truth that was created by a small portion of American society.⁵⁶ Like Prohibition, protection of the common school served as a major line of battle for different ethnic groups. A great portion of the concern for public education was a direct response to the new ethnic assertiveness of white middle class natives who were reacting to the wave of immigrants entering the United States.⁵⁷

With the influx of immigrants to the United States came a renewed vigor of preserving culture and social norms. Immigration and poverty highlighted stark cultural differences between lower class members of society and white middle class members of society. The social question, a term covering many topics, emerged in 1885 as the most popular topic of the day.⁵⁸ It covered topics such as obscene literature, liquor, strikes, and monopolies. Robert DeCourcy Ward stated, "All the great problems...the liquor question, the public school question...,

⁵⁶ Sims, 68-70. The small portion of society that often flexed its muscle in determining what was taught in schools and written in textbooks were white middle class men.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Wiebe, 62.

are tied up with the one great problem of foreign immigration.”⁵⁹ When anxious Americans paired the congested cities with dwindling opportunities along the frontier, urban centers seemed that much more turgid, and the prospects of an explosion that much more ominous. Advocates of immigration restriction cited the scarcity of free land as one more reason why the nation could no longer leave its door open.⁶⁰ Educational reform seemed to be the most efficient way of educating immigrants in the American way of life. Women, as the keepers of the nation’s morals, were often charged with making sure that children of immigrants were taught how to be American.

The South, though not a foreign country, was seen by many in the North as a strange land that also needed to be brought into the fold of American way of life. What energized southern educational reform more than any other single factor was the mobilization of thousands of women. Southern towns embraced public activism, primarily through women's clubs. With the onset of educational reform, women played a decisive role in grass roots, community level school crusades that occurred across the South. As scholars of the subject have shown, not only did women emerge as prominent leaders of the school crusade, they also were foot soldiers, providing the necessary organizational energy.⁶¹ This reform movement involved further feminization of southern culture and the extension of the maternalism of the home to a larger public sphere.⁶² The issue of education was, for women, their own; the school question had become the

⁵⁹ As quoted in Wiebe, 62.

⁶⁰ Wiebe, 65.

⁶¹ Scott, *Natural Allies*, 120.

⁶² William J. Reese, “Between Home and School: Organized Parents, Clubwomen, and Urban Education in the Progressive Era,” *The School Review* 87 (November 1978): 10.

woman's question. The activities of these women reformers helped to focus reform ideology toward child-centered programs. These notions of humanitarianism and child-saving were transmitted by women to men. Although crusading did not alter perceptions of rural southerners about the organization of their schools, it elevated the issue for other reformers and it rallied public support behind an undefined educational agenda. The crusades were successful because the agenda remained undefined. Its message was evangelical rather than bureaucratic which implied state intervention and long term social policy.⁶³ Southerners, still fiercely distrustful of government bureaucracy, were much more willing to accept social reform as an extension of the church, and women tended to be the reformers working on behalf of the churches.

The involvement of white women in southern education can be exemplified by how white middle class clubwomen in Georgia advanced educational causes during the Progressive Era. Though white clubwomen were involved in more social reforms than education, school involvement was an acceptable avenue for them to affect social and political causes without raising the ire of too many men. They used the idea of municipal housekeeping to justify their activities in the schools.⁶⁴ Municipal housekeeping was the term used to define the movement during the Progressive Era in which women believed their duty was to their homes, but their definition of the home went beyond the four walls of their houses and to society as a whole.⁶⁵

⁶³ Scott, 43.

⁶⁴ Sims, 115.

⁶⁵ Agnes Hooper Gottleib, *Women Journalist and the Municipal Housekeeping Movement, 1868-1914* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2001), 10.

It is this notion of municipal housekeeping that provided an avenue for women to get involved in political and social issues. Southern women felt that it was their duty to intervene on the behalf of others who were less fortunate than themselves. This dissertation takes into account the history of the club movement in the United States and how that movement made its way to the South and Georgia. Each chapter has been developed to encompass what was happening nationally, regionally, and locally. It is through the lens of the national movement that a baseline is set for how and why many of these changes took place. Regionally, the South was different from the rest of the country because of the destruction during and after the Civil War. It was this destruction that led to many of the social changes that were taking place in the South that would eventually fall to the women, especially the clubwomen, to enact. Locally, Georgia, trying to find its place in an industrial society, was quickly redefining its way of life. Still predominately rural and agrarian, Georgians were trying to find how they fit into the new progressive ideals and an American society that was quickly becoming industrialized and urban. Georgia clubwomen realized that one way to make necessary changes in Georgia was through the education of the young and women. The following chapters will follow this outline with the scene being set on a national level, then a movement toward regional concerns, and ending with local concerns and the response to these concerns by Georgia clubwomen.

The first chapter provides an overview of the club movement in Georgia and establishes the connection between white clubwomen and educational

innovations and advancements in Georgia during the Progressive Era. The Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs (GAFWC) was a crucial player in the influence of women in Georgia public schools as well as the national organizing body, The General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC). Though there were hundreds of women's clubs on record in Georgia by 1920, two in particular, provide extensive records demonstrating their involvement in educational issues: the Athens Women's Club and the Atlanta Women's Club. The following chapters provide explicit examples of how these white women's clubs, with the help of countless smaller women's organizations, established free kindergartens, created the Student Aid Foundation which funded over a thousand of young women's education at institutions of higher education, and opened and continues to manage the Tallulah Falls School. The examples cited in this dissertation are not meant to be exhaustive. Though these examples do highlight the actions that white women's clubs in Georgia took in addressing the social injustices to white children, these clubs also worked to address injustices to black children. The work they did on behalf of black children, however, is not as clearly documented as their work with white children. Despite this gap, through the study of these organized women's actions, a clearer picture begins to emerge as to how these women were able to effectively navigate their own political oppression to help others in their communities.

Many lessons were learned from the actions of the women's clubs. The social reform of the Progressive Era widened the crack in the door of opportunity for political and social involvement of women in American society that had been

started by female reformers such as Jane Adams and many others who began to exert their feminine power in Seneca Falls, New York in the 1848. Using their role as mother in society, women stepped in as members of the white middle class to educate those in need with the idea in mind that they could help them rise from their lower class placement and potentially move into the ranks of the white middle class. They believed everyone wanted to be a part of the middle class whether or not that assumption was true. Often these women had to work within their own subjugated position in American society to help those they believed were less fortunate.

As I conducted the research for this paper, I found myself becoming increasingly frustrated with what I perceived as a lack of historical writings on women's contributions to social reform during the Progressive Era, specifically in the South. I often found books and articles that were dedicated to black women's voluntary organizations, such as the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs.⁶⁶ Colored women's clubs contributions are important to the landscape of women's history and educational history, but after culling through archives, I realized that the story of white women's clubs in Georgia deserved to be revisited and specific examples highlighted that demonstrated their philanthropic work with white children.

Women's contributions, whether black or white, are often overlooked in the writing of American history. Not only did these women have to fight a

⁶⁶ Anne Firor Scott, "Most Invisible of All: Black Women's Voluntary Associations," *Journal of Southern History* 56 (Feb 1990), 3-22. See also Stephanie Shaw, "Black Club Women and the Creation of the National Association of Colored Women," *Journal of Women's History* 3 (Fall 1991), 10-25.

suppressive environment during the Progressive Era, they continue to be ignored by historians of education. Female reformers in the South had a unique impediment that was not shared by their sisters in the North or the West. The impediment was their southernness.⁶⁷ Not only were they being ignored due to their sex, they were also being ignored because they were southern. The historiography of American education does not explain the South. In fact, in mainstream history writing, the South is largely ignored, dismissed as backwards, or treated somewhat condescendingly as peripheral to the progress of the nation. The South in this view is hardly American.⁶⁸

Women have been largely ignored in historical writings. It is only recently that historians have begun to pay appropriate attention to the contributions women have made to American history.⁶⁹ Barbara Finkelstein calls for the study of educational history to press beyond politics, economics, ideology, and the study of the lives of the elite and to include ordinary people in a face-to-face context. In this direction, new studies in the history of education in the South can continue the understanding not only of the region but of America's past and present.⁷⁰ I hope to accomplish this by analyzing the ordinary lives of the clubwomen in Georgia and show how ordinary women did some extraordinary things during a time of great change.

⁶⁷ Jane Turner Censer, *The Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood, 1865-1895* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2003), 5-8.

⁶⁸ Best, 9.

⁶⁹ Louise M. Young, "Women's Place in American Politics: The Historical Perspective," *The Journal of Politics* 38 (August 1976): 113.

⁷⁰ Barbara Finkelstein, "Education Historians as Mythmakers," *Review of Research in Education* 18 (Jan 1992), 285-288.

CHAPTER 2

Women's Place in Society

Michelle Rosaldo argues that “universal sexual asymmetry (the lower value placed on women's tasks and roles in all cultures) has been determined largely by the sexually defined split between domestic and public spheres.”¹ To simplify her thesis: the greater the social distance between the women in the home and men in the public sphere, the greater the devaluation of women. The implications for feminist strategy become clear at the end of Rosaldo's essay in which she says the greater the overlap between domestic and public spheres means higher status for women.² Carroll Smith Rosenberg's research has shown how close personal relationships enhanced the private lives of women in 19th century. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, intimate friendships provided support systems for politically active women as demonstrated by the work of both Blanche Cook and Nancy Sahli. The women's culture of the past - personal networks, rituals, relationships- did not automatically constitute a political strategy. As loving and supportive as women's networks may have been they could keep women content with a status which was inferior that of men.³ Women's societies used what Rosenberg termed the African Queens strategy which is the creation of a separate, public female sphere that helped mobilize women and gained political leverage in the larger society. In fact, between 1890

¹ Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo, “Woman, Culture, and Society: A Theoretical Overview,” in *Woman, Culture, and Society*, ed. Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1974), 21-25.

² Ibid, 24.

³ Carroll Smith Rosenberg, *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1985), 14-16.

and 1920, the number of professional degrees granted to women increased 226% at three times the rate of increase for men.¹ A separatist political strategy, which Estelle Freedman refers to as "female institution building," emerged from the middle-class women's culture of the 19th century.² Reforms emphasized the need for greater scientific and bureaucratic control; they were also framed in terms of gender, since the majority of rural teachers were female working in relatively autonomous one and two-room schools. Some education reformers influenced by ideas of scientific management and control argued for the need for supervision of rural female teachers because of the presumed weaknesses of women; they argued for expert, usually male, control and supervision. This view was not uncontested. Women who had experience working in rural schools celebrated the capabilities and potential of rural women teachers. This more positive view was particularly strong among California educators who were influenced by both progressive politics and conceptions of Deweyan progressive education.³ Teachers in the South, specifically Georgia, tended to fall in line with the belief that men were better suited to leading and making decisions about education and the running of educational institutions. This does not mean, however, that there were not women who disagreed with this patriarchal view of education and many of the clubwomen who will be discussed in this paper would oppose male-only school administrations.⁴ However, as I discuss later in this

¹ Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Social Order* (New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 1967), 12.

² Estelle Freedman, "Separatism as a Strategy: Female Institution Building and American Feminism, 1870-1930," *Feminist Studies* 5 (Autumn 1979): 519.

³ Kathleen Weiler, "Women and Rural School Reform: California, 1900-1940," *History of Education Quarterly* 34 (Spring 1994): 32.

⁴ Katherine Chaddock Reynolds and Susan L. Schramm, *A Separate Sisterhood: The Women who Shaped Southern Education in the Progressive Era* (New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2002), 31.

paper, southern women had to adhere to southern societal norms which were not always accepting of women's perceived intrusion into the establishment and workings of educational institutions.⁵

The early decades of the 20th century were marked by the growth of state bureaucracy and the regulation of the preparation and work of teachers. These reforms were tied to more widespread reforms of the Progressive movement. In the rapidly expanding system of the state normal schools, women held positions of authority and influence even though men tended to hold the presidencies. In 1910, women teachers across the country were heartened by the election of Ella Flagg Young as president of the National Education Association.⁶

One of the largest manifestations of social feminism was the women's club movement. Their activities served to politicize traditional women by forcing them to define themselves as citizens, not simply as wives and mothers. Through this definition of citizenship, the clubs reflected the social issues of the time.⁷ In reflecting much of the country during this time, women's clubs were separated along racial and social class lines. Recent histories, however, have shown that groups hoping to bridge class lines between women existed within the working-class or radical movements.⁸ In the past, one of the limitations of separate female institutions was that they were often the only place for women to pursue

⁵ Joan Marie Johnson, *Southern Ladies, New Women: Race, Region, and Clubwomen in South Carolina, 1890-1930* (Tallahassee, FL: University of Florida Press, 2004), 17-20.

⁶ William A. Link, "The School that Built a Town: Public Education and the Southern Social Landscape, 1880-1930," in *Essays in Twentieth-Century Southern Education: Exceptionalism and Its Limits*, ed. Wayne J. Urban (New York, NY: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1999), 26-27.

⁷ Christine Woyshner, "'Valuable and Legitimate Services': Black and White Women's Philanthropy through the PTA," in *Women and Philanthropy in Education*, ed. Andrea Walton (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005): 217.

⁸ Sims, *The Power of Femininity in the New South*, 24-25.

professional or political activities while men's institutions retained the power over most of the society.

In the 19th century, as the interaction between women and men moved beyond the comfort and privacy of homes, a succession of women found a means to affect the course of events by politicizing their subject status. In varied and often fortuitous ways they interacted with political, social, and religious institutions to forward social change and advance their own sex from political non-existence to a degree of individual autonomy and collective awareness justifying claims to be regarded as values in themselves, independent of their biological function.⁹ Institutionalizing the principle of association in the earliest church-related societies laid the basis for women's political socialization through the independent exercise of organizing talents outside the church; and served as the primary means of transforming them from social pawns to autonomous individuals.¹⁰ In the 1830s, as he toured the United States, Alexis de Tocqueville perceived that there was a "necessary connection between the principle of association and that of equality in a democracy." Individuals "can do hardly anything by themselves", he wrote, "...and if they do not learn voluntarily to help one another." Indeed, "the art of pursuing in common the object of their common desire" is "the only means they have of acting."¹¹ The art of associating together became a practiced skill among women in the 19th century.

⁹ Woyshner, 220.

¹⁰ Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, trans. Henry Reeve (New York, NY: The Colonial Press, 1900), 240-241.

¹¹ Ibid.

Organized Sisterhood: Women's Volunteer Associations

As towns grew to cities in the 18th century, the distinction between the roles of homemaker and breadwinner grew sharper and tradition tended to reassert itself with a denigration of women's status.¹² The political behavior of women was patterned by the same influences that shaped her position in the family along the line of settlement when the political center of gravity shifted to the frontier states west of the Alleghenies. Her freedom during the initial stages of settlement on the westward moving frontier, had taken on cultural attributes. Around her had gathered legends of courage, resourcefulness, and endurance- a legacy from the 17th century- individualizing the frontier woman on a heroic scale as a symbol of a new woman in an egalitarian society.¹³ She came to be regarded as the carrier of civilization and increasingly as the custodian of morals. In her wake came settlements, churches, and schools. The American woman was at once the freest and the most circumscribed.

Over the next several decades, women would have to grapple with a way to harness this circumscribed freedom and potentially move into an area that was not so hindered by societal norms and constructs. This organized movement began to take shape on the 1800s with the development of religious organizations that were created by women to aid those in need. Though religious beliefs provided the backbone and justification for many of the activities taken on by women's volunteer organizations, the Civil War also offered the impetus for women to gather and perform social activities for secular reasons. Women were

¹² Mary Alden Ward, "The Influence of the Women's Clubs in New England and in the Middle-Eastern States," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 28 (September 1906): 13-14.

¹³ Anne Firor Scott, *Natural Allies*, 37-53.

now gathering to provide medical care to soldiers, sew uniforms, and also to provide accounting services for businesses whose male employees had left to fight in the Civil War.¹⁴

After the Civil War there was a rise in the number of women who began joining clubs and volunteer organizations that were secular in nature rather than religious. In the 1860s and 1870s, three of the most prominent religious women's volunteer organizations were established: The Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), The Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), and the foreign and domestic missionary organization of the Presbyterian churches. Many women belonged to more than one of these organizations because they drew from the same pool of white church women. These organizations tended to work together, and they provided the environment for these women to not only do things that would have been forbidden if not for the religious context, but that environment also allowed them to tackle social and political topics that would have been seen as too radical in a secular setting. Local societies began to form into regional and national societies even though local chapters still existed. These organizations did see opposition by clergymen who felt the women were trying to preach the gospel, a male responsibility in American society. The YWCA encountered particularly harsh attacks from the men who felt the financial resources donated should go to the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA). These women, some who for the first time were exercising their social and political vocal chords, used the opposition as a

¹⁴ Ibid., 111.

catalyst for feeding a female consciousness and demands for independence.¹⁵

The freedom and new skills many of these women gained during the Civil War, such as bookkeeping and group organization, could not be contained and the idea that the causes of the YWCA were less important than those of the YMCA further promoted the questioning of the role of women in society and the duty of municipal housekeepers.¹⁶

One of the most prominent members of the women's club movement was Frances Willard. Frances Willard found her vocation with the Women's Christian Temperance Union. She politicized the moral issue arising from temperance and transformed a cause to a political movement that became the first centrally controlled, nationwide, and politically effective organization of women in American political history.¹⁷ From 1879 until her death in 1898 she was president of an organization with a peak membership of 200,000 in 15,000 tightly controlled unions scattered nationwide but predominately in the Middle West and the South exercising national and power and influence in promoting a wide range of reforms. During the 1870s, 1880s, and 1890s, when the suffrage movement was weak and divided and regarded as radical,¹⁸ Frances Willard applied a combination of psychological insight, eclectic imagination, and personal

¹⁵ Ibid., 85

¹⁶ Ibid., 103. The Civil War thrust many women into positions they were not able to hold during non-combative times. Women were taught how to keep books for volunteer organizations because the men who would have been in that position were off fighting. Women also learned how to organize and effectively run an organization that tackled multiple problems at one time without the leadership of men.

¹⁷ Sally G. McMillen, *Seneca Falls and the Origins of the Women's Rights Movement* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008), 31.

¹⁸ Louise M. Young, "Women's Place in American Politics: The Historical Perspective," *The Journal of Politics* 38 (August 1976): 300-302.

magnetism to draw women out of their homes to engage in political activities under the benign aegis of protecting their homes. Pressing for an awareness that society finds its ends obstructed by women who do not understand that they are members of a larger social order than the family, she found a way to help women escape from the "swathing femininity" imposed by the "cult of domesticity" in provincial towns and cities that had long outgrown the influence of the pioneering phase of settlement.¹⁹

In 1890, Jane Croly founder of Sorosis, a professional women's club in New York, invited representatives of ninety-four women's literary and civic clubs to form the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC), the largest and most diverse organization of women in the United States with several million members and the nucleus of a worldwide association.²⁰ Croly, a professional journalist, decided to start Sorosis after she had been banned from a banquet for the New York Press Association, where she was a member. Even though her organization was established for professional women, it did act as a catalyst for the founding of other clubs that revolved around specific areas of interest and would eventually lead to the founding of the General Federation of Women's Clubs. The General Federation of Women's Clubs was established as a national and centralized alliance of American women's clubs that would give socially active women the numbers needed to affect change on a national rather than local level. The General Federation of Women's clubs was started in 1890 with fifty-two clubs represented and by 1896 there were over five-hundred clubs with

¹⁹ Ibid., 310.

²⁰ Mary I. Wood, *The History of the General Federation of Women's Clubs: for the First Twenty Years of its Organizations* (Chicago, IL: Norwood Press, 1912), 12-16.

a membership total of over one hundred thousand women.²¹ Leadership between 1890 and 1920 broadened the social and literary character of clubs to embrace social and political concerns. Local clubs were encouraged to have politically oriented civic programs. Because of its size and diversification, the GFWC played an effective role in the socialization of American women.²²

The less radical organizations such as GFWC and WCTU were fearful of limiting growth by nationally endorsing so divisive an issue as woman suffrage, and they developed the concept that pressure by indirection was the woman's traditional way of getting things done. Their absence from the polling place they came to regard as a positive advantage, since their male rulers were more susceptible to pressure if their self-image was not disturbed.²³ This confusion of ends and means, sometimes referred to as "electoral schizophrenia," delayed the formation of a massive coalition of women's organizations until 1914.²⁴

The Progressive Movement continued to provide fuel to the flames of women's involvement in social, political, and educational reform.²⁵ Women became heavily involved in the social activism of the Progressive Movement and according to Linda Rynbrandt, were its originators.²⁶ Women's clubs started as places for middle class women who were experiencing increased leisure time

²¹ Athens Women's Club, "For Our Mutual Benefit: The Athens Women's Club and Social Reform, 1899-1920". Available from Galileo [www.galileo.peachnet.edu/]: Internet; accessed 27 November 2007.

²² Ibid., 22.

²³ McMillen, 35.

²⁴ Sims, 134.

²⁵ David L. Angus and Jeffrey E. Mirel, *The Failed Promise of the American High School, 1890-1995*. (New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1999): 20-23. See also David Tyack, *The One Best System*. (Cambridge, MA, 1974): 36-40.

²⁶ Linda J. Rynbrandt, "The 'Ladies of the Club' and Caroline Bartlett Crane: Affiliation and Alienation in Progressive Social Reform," *Gender and Society* 11 (Spring 1997): 201.

due to modern conveniences in the home. Social activism was seen as a natural extension of women's domestic sphere and this led to a crack in the social and political door for women to get more involved in reforms that were seen as unwomanly in previous decades. Where many women had joined religious volunteer organizations to become involved in reform efforts, with the introduction of progressive ideals by prominent figures such as John Dewey, women no longer needed the cloak of the church to justify getting involved in the reforms.²⁷

Education, one of the hallmark reform topics of progressivism, along with moral reform provided appropriate avenues for women to express their desires for change in American society without ruffling the feathers of men who continued believe a woman's place was in the home. Both education and social reform were seen as natural extensions of the women's domestic sphere. After all, ideal schools were an extension of the American home. William Reese argues, "clubwomen tried to isolate the precise areas where the home and school responsibilities began, overlapped, and ended."²⁸ Industrialization had widened the gap between husbands and wives as well as between rich and poor. The market place was cruelly unfair to working women and children.²⁹ The highly charged reformist zeal of these volunteer women produced a proliferation of social and political innovations, including the settlement house movement, which represented a significant adaptation of the principle association to the functional activities of the individual home. Urbanization had destroyed the home as an

²⁷ Scott, 100-105.

²⁸ William J. Reese, "Between Home and School: Organized Parents, Clubwomen, and Urban Education in the Progressive Era," *The School Review* 87 (November 1978): 10.

²⁹ Jane Turner Censer, *The Reconstruction of White Womanhood, 1865-1895* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University, 2003): 56-60.

independent fortress, and had robbed the homemaker of most of her functions. Both by precept and by example, Jane Addams made a persuasive case for politicizing the role of the homemaker by urging her to follow her traditional functions into the political world as the "municipal housekeeper": in short, to take control of local government.³⁰ The motivation of Addams and those in her orbit was the deep concern for human welfare. Their activities touched the political process at innumerable points. They penetrated the neighborhood by policy-oriented investigations of social and economic conditions by organizing community pressure to secure improved public services, pressuring state legislatures to secure ameliorative legislation, and pressuring the federal government to inquire into living and working conditions of women and children. Hull House and its sister settlements in other cities institutionalized the concept of social responsibility.³¹

The activities of these coalitions and voluntary associations demonstrated that lay people could play a creative role in public education."³² Child labor laws, vacation schools, kindergartens, playgrounds, libraries, school lunch programs, domestic science and manual training as well as other educational innovations received backing and strength from women's organizations. Mr. W. L. Bodine, superintendent of compulsory education in Chicago, stated:

Women's clubs are the natural product of a progressive sex living in a progressive age. They stand for the home, for the school, for art and

³⁰ McMillen, 56.

³¹ Ibid., 106.

³² Scott., 11

literature, and music; for domestic science and for the intellectual advancement of the American woman who presides over the American home. They are not theoretical, they are practical; they act, they do things for the good of society; for the good of the community and of the country. The greater the woman means the better nation.³³

Women's volunteer organizations supported prison reform, sex education in schools, minimum wage laws, and eventually woman suffrage.³⁴ In several southern states, they led the fight for the establishment of higher education institutes for women. Just as many women's organizations, the WCTU helped spread the news of what they were doing through a publication, *The Union Signal*.³⁵ Now not only were women sharing ideas amongst themselves at organized meetings, but they were also disseminating information nationally through print media. Thirty years after the founding of the Sorosis Club, Jane Cunningham Croly wrote in 1898,

the early half of the century was marked by a crusade for the cause of better education for women...the women's club was not an echo, it was not the mere banding together for the social and economic purposes like the clubs of men. It became at once, without deliberate intention or concerted action a light-giving and seed-sowing centre of purely altruistic and democratic activity. It had no leaders. It brought together qualities

³³ Josiah Strong, W. D. F., Samuel McCune Lindsay, Homer Folks, Ben B. Lindsay, Clinton Rogers Woodruff, Edward Everett Hale, Thomas M. Balliet, James B. Angell, W. L. Bodine, Calvin Milton Woodward, H.M. Wiley, and E.G. Routzahn (1906). "Men's Views of Women's Clubs: A Symposium by Men Who are Recognized Leaders in the Philanthropic and Reform Movements of America," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 28 (September 1906): 85-94.

³⁴ Reese, 11-12.

³⁵ Scott, 110.

rather than personages; and by a representation of all interests, moral, intellectual, and social, created an ideal basis of organization, where everyone has an equal right to whatever comes to the common centre.³⁶

Croly clearly stated there were no leaders in the movement, even though she acted as one of the main catalysts for the development of women's clubs across the United States. She also explained that not all of the women's clubs were equal and often were not concerned with the same issues. Women's clubs were defined by regions within states, but where this separation could have provided a natural divide among women, the clubs worked as unified organizations that promoted social, political, and educational reform across state lines. Even though women could not vote, they found power in a unified organization that was used as a change vehicle.

Modern conveniences that helped propel the United States through the Progressive Era helped to propel women into the role of social reformers. Many of the modern conveniences found in middle class homes were particularly influential in the South where distances between cities and in the rural areas, homes, could easily cut off or delay communication between women. Mrs. A. O. Granger, a member of the Athens Women's Club in Georgia, explained that new innovations of an industrialized society, telephones, increased railroad facilities, and wider delivery of the daily newspaper did not take women away from their homes, but it did bring the world closer to them and their families.³⁷ Due to these innovations, women were more informed about world events that had once been

³⁶ Croly, 6.

³⁷ A.O. Granger, "The Work of the General Federation of Women's Clubs Against Child Labor," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 25 (May 1907): 103.

filtered to them through their husbands. Lucetta C. Chase in 1923 supported this claim but also showed the contrast between the lives of different women, stating that “some women followed the industries and went into the factories to earn their living, some merely sat in their beautiful homes and were content, while others, women who realized that with their leisure comes responsibility were the founders of the Women’s Club Movement.”³⁸ The clubs provided a forum for women to discuss history, politics, and literature, as well as many other topics that were considered too strenuous for the weak mind of women to comprehend and discuss. These were topics of men. Many women who now found more leisure time were not satisfied to stay in their beautiful homes, but now wanted to take part in the society they were becoming more aware of outside their homes.

The women’s clubs worked with school officials to establish manual training and domestic science as a part of school curriculum, set up libraries either as permanent fixtures of schools or as traveling exhibits, developed public kindergartens, and many provided other social services that entered into the everyday functions of the public school. Schools were not seen as “factories churning out finished products but rather as a center of everyday neighborhood activities.”³⁹ They actively supported innovative programs and social services in schools such as lunch programs and the beautification of school grounds.⁴⁰ The women’s clubs provided an avenue for women to validate their thoughts and

³⁸ Lucette C. Chase, “The Social Program of the General Federation of Women’s Clubs: One Index of Fifty Years of Progress,” *The Journal of Social Forces* 1 (June 1923): 465.

³⁹ Reese, 14.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 16.

ideas about social reform and gave them a way to embrace their motherhood as a tool to fight for changes in education.

Though the actions of the women's clubs can be seen as very positive to educational reform, there were many critics of women's involvement in education. Common critics of women's clubs and voluntary organizations were men who felt the women were overstepping their boundaries and meddling in affairs that should be left to school administrators who were mostly men. For example, in 1928, Julian Butterworth, a Cornell professor of education, concluded in his study on white parent-teacher associations that a typical educator's opinion of volunteer involvement by women was usually officious and uninformed and the study also acknowledged the overwhelming commitment of women's organizations to philanthropy in local schools.⁴¹

Historians tend to argue that the proliferation of parent-teacher organizations in public schools during the first half of the 20th century was combating the increased bureaucratization of the school system.⁴² Christine Woyshner argues that women's organized interest in public education through schools improvement societies, parent-teacher organizations, and women's clubs was as much an extension of the rapidly growing women's club movement as it was a reaction to the rise of education professions and the reorganization of school administration.⁴³ Most PTA women felt that because they were women, they possessed special qualities that had the potential to influence society for the

⁴¹ Julian E. Butterworth, *The Parent-Teacher Association and Its Work* (New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing, 1928): 52.

⁴² Woyshner, 215.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 216.

better; therefore, their educational philanthropy was legitimate work in the public realm. This kind of municipal housekeeping challenged the male administrative hierarchy of schools, which tried to manage and control women through parent-teacher organizations.⁴⁴ The maternalist argument that fueled municipal housekeeping became outdated as an ideological framework and more politically radical women turned to other justifications for their work in the public arena. This shift happened around the beginning of World War I and was attributed to a social emphasis among white middle class women on romantic marriage over motherhood as a uniting ideology and the fact the reformers of the Progressive Era did not enhance opportunities for women in structural ways.⁴⁵

Progressive Era Women's Clubs in Georgia

Though women's clubs were first formed in the northeast, southern women were not far behind in establishing their own organizations. In an effort to encourage women in the South to join the federation movement, the General Federation of Women's Clubs partnered with several Atlanta women's clubs to host a Federation Day during the Cotton States and International Exposition which was held in Atlanta in 1895. Women who attended the event were exposed to the ideas and actions of the women's clubs and openly recruited.⁴⁶ Within two years, state federations had been established in Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Arkansas, and Tennessee. In 1906, there were twelve women's federations in

⁴⁴ Ibid., 218.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 220.

⁴⁶ Atlanta Woman's Club, "25th Yearbook of the Atlanta Woman's Club, 1919-1920", Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, GA, MS 87.

the South which included Oklahoma and Indian Territory and there were 647 individual clubs with an estimated membership of over 25,000 members.⁴⁷

The establishment of the Georgia Federation Women's Club provided a governing structure for the women's club movement in Georgia. It set a broad reform agenda that emphasized issues with national importance, but at the same time gave individual women's clubs the oversight to choose which areas of social reform they would focus on in their own regions. Rebecca D. Lowe, a member of the Atlanta Women's Club and the first president of the Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs, played a pivotal role in determining the types of reforms that the Federation would pursue in Georgia. During her tenure as president, she worked toward the improvement of rural schools, specifically the founding of the Tallulah Falls School, and helped to establish the State Library Commission. Lowe would later become the president of the General Federation of Women's Club.⁴⁸

Lowe was not the only one focused on improving rural life. Women in the South were working for improvements in the public school with particular attention being paid to rural areas where many young children were working in mills rather than attending school.⁴⁹ The Athens Ladies' Club in Georgia played a significant role in leading social reforms that specifically targeted the needs of women and children in rural Georgia. The Athens Ladies' Club, which was the precursor to what would become the Athens Women's Club, began in 1896 under the direction of Mary Ann Lipscomb and Rosa Woodberry. The club was

⁴⁷ Athens Women's Club, "For Our Mutual Benefit: The Athens Women's Club and Social Reform, 1899-1920". Available from Galileo [www.galileo.peachnet.edu/]: Internet; accessed 27 November 2007.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Granger, 51

formed to address the poor condition of the rural schools in Athens and Clarke County. The women of the club worked with the schools and provided textbooks and supplies, and awarded students with prizes and parties for academic achievements. The Athens Ladies' Club changed to the Athens Women's Club in 1899 when the Ladies Club adopted a formal charter under the name of the Athens Women's Club. Members were typically well-educated, upper middle class, white women whose husbands, fathers, and brothers were the prominent figures in business, government, and education. As originally developed, the Athens Women's Club was a literary club that was divided into five major departments: Music, Letters and Arts, Current Topics, Folklore and Fiction, and Historical Research and Biography. As the 20th century progressed, the Athens Women's Club began devoting its efforts to social reform and community development and away from the study of humanities.⁵⁰

Southern clubwomen also negotiated the issue of social class. Northern women had restricted their club memberships to middle-class white women initially and many of their outreach efforts were directed at poor immigrants. The GAFWC members restricted the majority of their educational work to helping poor rural whites. They used the idea of racial purity to promote their education work in the northern mountains. They often relied on stereotypical images of their ancestry and their traditions. Lipscomb described the mountain people as

⁵⁰ Athens Women's Club, "For Our Mutual Benefit: The Athens Women's Club and Social Reform, 1899-1920". Available from Galileo [www.galileo.peachnet.edu/]: Internet; accessed 27 November 2007.

having "fine American heritage; they were of the purest Anglo-Saxon blood in America."⁵¹

In their efforts to uplift poor whites, the clubwomen forged new identities and political spaces for themselves that allowed them greater access to the political and social venues of Progressive Era Georgia. The movement away from humanities and toward social reform provided the opportunity for club women to engage in discussions of political issues and social concerns and shed light on the increasing significance of their ideas, opinions, and power of association. No longer were their discussions private, but were now being taken to much more public forums. The *Atlanta Constitution* proved to be a powerful vehicle used to spread the ideas of club women by way of the club pages that provided information about the clubs activities.⁵² The club pages provided a means for sharing activities such as book collections for traveling libraries, the opening of kindergartens, and solicitation for money. Now anyone within the reach of the *Atlanta Constitution* would know of the good works of the clubs. The women in the Athens club and elsewhere understood the power inherent in their roles as mothers, homemakers, and caretakers and they used the rhetoric of these roles to support their reform efforts in a society that was dominated by men. Club women used terms such as social mothering and municipal housekeeping to describe their civic and municipal reforms.⁵³ The use of this rhetoric provided the framework to garner support from men in positions of power

⁵¹ Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs, "Scrapbook, 1903-1917."

⁵² Atlanta City Federation of Women's Clubs, "Yearbook of the City Federation of Woman's Clubs, 1912-1913," Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, GA, MSS 393, Box 1, Folder 1.

⁵³ Reese, 7.

because they saw this as a natural extension of the woman's place within society and the home.

The Athens club helped to establish free kindergartens for rural children and it provided financial help to girls who wanted to attend secondary schools or obtain training from either normal schools or universities. Scholarships were offered to girls who were deemed worthy enough to be trained as teachers. Women in the clubs understood the need for well-trained teachers to help improve the school systems of Georgia. What they asked in return from these girls was a commitment of teaching at least two years in the common schools of Georgia. Club members were also concerned about the low pay that many rural teachers received and lobbied to increase the wages of rural teachers. To help increase the number of qualified teachers in common schools and provide more opportunities for women, the women's clubs supported the opening of state normal schools to train female teachers and the Athens Women's Club specifically lobbied the University of Georgia to admit women, which the school did in 1919.⁵⁴

The Atlanta Women's Club also provided significant support for social, political, and educational reform in Georgia. The club, founded in 1895, is one of the oldest organizations that belonged to the General Federation of Women's Clubs. The goal of the Atlanta Women's Club was "to bring professional women of all ages together to improve the local community socially, politically, physically,

⁵⁴ Granger, 53.

and educationally.”⁵⁵ In 1896, Rebecca Lowe, the president of the Atlanta Women’s Club, stated:

We, as Southern women, owe a greater debt to our fellow beings than the women of other sections. We have been the exotics of civilization: reared in the lap of luxury, with more time at our command than ordinarily falls to the lot of women, guided by mothers and grandmothers, not only endowed with superior intellect, but with that graceful tact, which enables a woman of education and brilliance to carry conviction in all she says.⁵⁶

With its primary purpose as community activism, the Atlanta Woman’s Club established specific areas women could choose to volunteer their time:

Education, Arts, Home Life, and International Affairs. In later years, the club would add Public Affairs and Conservation.⁵⁷ The club members were active in the community and often focused their attention on providing financial resources to women and men who wanted to attend institutions of higher learning. In 1908, fifteen of the founding members of the Atlanta Women’s club gathered to discuss the ever increasing problem of women meeting the financial obligations to attend a higher education institution. The end result of this meeting was the establishment of the Student Aid Committee which would eventually become the Student Aid Foundation. The Student Aid Foundation became the first such foundation sponsored by a State Federation of Women’s Clubs and its purpose and methods were used as a model for other women’s clubs around the United

⁵⁵ Atlanta City Federation of Women’s Clubs, “Constitution and By-Laws of the Atlanta City Federation of Woman’s Clubs, November 1898,” Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, GA, MS 393, Box 1, Folder 1.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

States. By 1958, the Foundation had provided help to 1,286 women with over \$350,000 being granted.⁵⁸

The Athens Women's Club, the Atlanta Woman's Club, and the Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs provided help to the children and women of Georgia from 1890 to 1930 that propelled Georgia's educational system into the 20th century. One of the most daunting tasks of these clubs was the passage of child labor and compulsory education laws. The South and in particular Georgia were sluggish in the passage of child labor laws. In the census of 1900, of the 24,170 children under the age of sixteen employed in factories in the South, 22,145 were working in the Carolinas, Georgia, and Alabama. In Georgia alone, the number of working children under the age of sixteen grew from 2,400 to 4,500 in 1900.⁵⁹ In Georgia, since jobs that were considered dangerous or morally detrimental to children were more or less prohibited, the state legislature continued to drag its feet with the passage of laws that would place legal restrictions on child labor. Labor laws in the Carolinas and Alabama were enacted in 1903 while Georgia did not enact a child labor law until 1908.⁶⁰ Neal Anderson argued in the early 1900s that the South was slow to enact child labor laws because of unfamiliar industrial conditions, the rural character of the

⁵⁸ Atlanta Woman's Club, "Atlanta Woman's Club Souvenirs, 1922-1923," Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, GA, M 87.

⁵⁹ Neal L. Anderson, "Child Labor Legislation in the South," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 25 (May 1905): 491.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 491-493. Anderson continues this argument regarding the lack of legislation in Georgia due to the tremendous amount of money being funneled into the cotton industry of Georgia by foreign investors.

population, the slow development of a civil consciousness, and the needs of the industry in the South outweighed the evils of child labor.⁶¹

Clubwomen of the South, and specifically Georgia, fought against the use of child labor. Mrs. Granger, the Chairman of the Child Labor Committee of the General Federation of Women's Clubs and a member of the Atlanta Woman's Club, wrote in 1905,

Not all women's clubs are for the study of sociological conditions; there are studies of many kinds, and clubs of many varieties, but whether the studies were of one kind or another all club women have hearts. When once those hearts have opened to the suffering of the children the motherhood inherent in women responds to the call-she listens to the "Cry of the Children" who are wearing out their lives in unwholesome work-and listening and studying, the club women have learned many things!⁶²

Even women's clubs whose primary purpose was not social reform were drawn into social activism to combat child labor. Club women were most often appalled at the lack of literacy of children who were working. According to the 1900 census, there were 579,947 children between the ages of ten and fourteen in the United States who could not read and write; 479,000 lived in the South with 232,127 living in the textile states of the Carolinas, Georgia, and Alabama.⁶³

Club women were encouraged by the General Federation of Women's Clubs to

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² A.O. Granger, "The Work of the General Federation of Women's Clubs Against Child Labor," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 25 (May 1905): 516.

⁶³ Ibid., 104. See also Neal L. Anderson, "Child Labor Legislation in the South."

perform surveys to identify the number of children employed in industry and the number of families that were dependent on the money earned by these children.

One of the most common and unfortunate arguments for child labor came from mothers who claimed to be widowed and in need of the money and from fathers who claimed to be unable to work. Granger cites a story of one father who walked his ten-year old to work in a cotton mill while he, the “vampire father,” returned home to do nothing.⁶⁴ Further actions were encouraged by club women once the surveys were conducted. Club women were to persuade the children to go back to school and provide scholarships to children whose families demonstrated financial dependence on the child’s income, help establish a federal age minimum that would provide further protection to children in states that had little or no child labor laws, and work with industrial states to create better educational opportunities and provide better state level protection for children in harmful working conditions.⁶⁵ Lucy Drown lamented that though industries provided more leisure time to the prosperous, they drew women and children from the working classes and exploited the cheap labor for financial gain.⁶⁶ Granger also argued that the supply of children and women workers were being drawn from the tenant classes but faulted the industry because it was knowingly exploiting a section of society that was economically dependent on others and were ignorant enough to be easily persuaded to change their way of

⁶⁴ Ibid., 105. Granger defines a vampire father as one who claims to be too feeble to work and who sends his children to work in factories to support the family even though he is able to work.

⁶⁵ Chase, 466.

⁶⁶ Lucy L. Drown, “The Committee of the General Federation of Women’s Clubs on the Industrial Problems as it Affects Women and Children,” *The American Journal of Nursing* 1 (August 1901): 814.

living. Women were pulled from the home to earn a living, and their youngest children were not learning the ways of a well-conducted home because the mothers were unable to teach them due to lack of time, strength, or knowledge of a good home.⁶⁷

In addition to the kindergartens, club women were also encouraged to open rural schools that would introduce industrial training so that the children's minds in rural areas would be opened to the beauty and pleasure around them.⁶⁸ One of the rural schools funded by the women's clubs of Georgia was the Tallulah Falls Industrial School in Tallulah Falls, Georgia. Mary Ann Lipscomb, a summer resident of Tallulah Falls and president of the Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs, founded and helped raise needed funds for the school. As a summer resident, Lipscomb saw the hunger the mountain children had for knowledge and would often teach them on her front porch. In July 1909, Tallulah Falls School opened with an enrollment of twenty-one students serving Rabun and Habersham counties. The original campus, which consisted of five acres of land and one five-room building, today includes twenty buildings, 500 acres of land, and a physical plant valued in the millions of dollars. For over sixty years, the school operated as a public and private institution and then in 1970 it became a privately chartered school serving the needs of children in Georgia, the United States, and the world.⁶⁹ The school continues to be owned and operated by the Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs. A more thorough discussion of the history

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Granger, "The Effect of Club Work in the South."

⁶⁹ Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs, "Tallulah Falls School: A History of Achievement," available from http://www.gafwc.org/html/tallulah_falls_school.html; Internet; accessed 27 November 2007.

of the Tallulah Falls School and the role of the Georgia Women's Club in its creation is examined in chapter 5.

The educational system in Georgia has been influenced by the activism of the women's clubs. They fought child labor in states whose livelihood depended on the cheap labor of women and children and helped to establish schools for rural children. The introduction of kindergartens into the public school system was also a direct result of the actions of women's clubs, as I will discuss in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

Women and the Education of the Young

Viewing women as the keepers of American morals and nurturers of American's children meant they were naturally suited to educating the young. After the American Revolution, women were encouraged to become educators of a new generation of American citizens. In Jacksonian America, womanhood and the domesticity associated with it became the status of a national ideal.¹ The central theme of the new American child-rearing literature was that mothers should learn about and spend more time educating their young children at home. For indigent mothers, however, the message was different. They were encouraged to send their children to charity infant schools where they could be socialized and educated communally and saved from the supposedly harmful influence of their families. White children were educated in a variety of private settings before they began attending public grammar schools around the age of seven. Some were taught at home by their parents or governesses; others in the homes of relatives or friends if they were apprenticed.²

Increasingly, however, both little boys and girls were taught in schools, either in petty or dame schools run by neighborhood women or in private schools run by schoolmasters, who charged relatively low fees and accepted children from a range of social backgrounds. Dame school teachers, often widows, taught very young children how to read the Bible and cared for them much as

¹ Barbara Beatty, *Preschool Education in America: The Culture of Young Children from the Colonial Era to the Present* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995), 10-13.

² Caroline Winterer, "Avoiding a 'Hothouse System of Education': Nineteenth-Century Early Childhood Education from the Infant Schools to the Kindergartens," *History of Education Quarterly* 32 (Fall 1992): 290.

their own mothers.¹ For example, though the Infant School Society of the City of New York had a board of male advisors, most of whom were members of the men's public school group, the women's group was more than just an auxiliary of the men's education society. While both groups focused on religious and moral instruction, the women concentrated on the education of very young children and claimed to espouse Pestalozzian methods. Rather than allow the women's infant school group to receive public funding directly, the men's society decided to open infant schools and to incorporate those the women had started.² The Infant School Society of the City of Boston (ISSBC) and the men's group shared the same primary goal, moral instruction of poor children, but the women focused on educating very young children. An article in the *Ladies' Magazine* stated the education of young children was "entirely in the province of Ladies; Men are apt to regard children under 4 years of age, either as plagues or playthings."³

The Boston women's society also expanded its responsibility to include moral reform of poor families. Infant school teachers instructed their young charges to teach their parents new behaviors and mores. These rapidly changing views on children and education were coupled with another development that probably more than anything else contributed to the decline of infant schools in Boston and elsewhere: the adoption of the romantic view of womanhood. In the doctrine of separate spheres that took hold in Jacksonian America, a period in which gender roles became more rigid and sharply

¹ Barbara Beatty, *Preschool Education in America*, 152-154.

² Ann Taylor Allen, "Let Us Live with Our Children': Kindergarten Movements in Germany and the United States, 1840-1914," *History of Education Quarterly* 28 (Spring 1988): 25.

³ "Infant Education," *Ladies' Magazine* 2 (February 1829): 89; "Infant Schools," *Ladies' Magazine and Literary Gazette* 5 (April 1832): 180.

divergent, women were supposed to stay at home as goddesses of the hearth and nurturing wives and mothers.⁴ The growth of this romantic ideology of domesticity led to a new emphasis on home education and new fears about the effects of separating young children from their mothers.⁵ In the 1830s promotion of extra-familial infant school education was supplanted by the advancement of the family school, in which mothers were to take on the role of teachers.⁶ The 19th century home education movement combined conservative reactions against public schools with liberal concerns about the supposed harmful effects of didactic teaching on young children.⁷ In fact, reliance on moral education and character training as a hedge against the future remained a constant in American child-rearing and child-teaching literature for many years to come. As men came to dominate the marketplace and women dominated at the fireside, domestic advice literature written by women for women focused almost exclusively on the responsibilities of mothers in home education.

According to Barbara Beatty, the movement of women from the private to public sphere is complex. German sociologist Ralf Dahrendorf related public/private boundaries to conservative and liberal political traditions. He speculated that conservative societies emphasized private or inward turning virtues, such as piety, profundity, and deference and maintained rigid

⁴ Jane Turner Censer, *The Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood, 1865-1895* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2003), 14.

⁵ Allen, 38.

⁶ Beatty, *Preschool Education in America*, 56-57.

⁷ Larry Cuban, "Why Some Reforms Last: The Case of the Kindergarten," *American Journal of Education* 100 (February 1992): 168.

private/public boundaries. Liberal societies sought to open the private sphere to the public virtues of sociability, good citizenship, and political responsibility.⁸

Cultural definitions of public and private were also expressed through conceptions of the status of women and children whom conventional 19th century political thought defined as embodiments of the private virtues. The kindergarten movement, which was typically led by women, exemplified a major theme of the 19th century and was an attempt to redefine public/private boundaries as defined by a patriarchal society. Women's roles, as defined by the American patriarchal system, were to focus their attentions on the home, but the kindergarten movement helped to validate the movement from the home and into the public sphere of social reform. Kindergarten founders challenged these definitions by urging women not to forsake the private for the public, but to transcend the dichotomy altogether by opening the private world to public concerns and the public world to the elevating influences of private virtues.⁹ The philosophical basis of the kindergarten movement indicates the centrality of issues involving the relationship of public and private spheres and of the individual to society. Kindergarten teaching was seen as a means to national regeneration through the rearing of a new generation of citizens. Pestalozzi felt this was a task for mothers in the home.¹⁰ Fichte, however, was critical of the family as the center of complacent privatism and had envisioned the removal of children from the home into a public institution as the only effective basis for

⁸ Beatty, *Preschool Education in America*, 35-36.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Edward Biber and Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, *Henry Pestalozzi and His Plan of Education: Being an Account of his Life and Writings* (London, England: J and C Adler Printers, 1831), 144-148.

training citizenship.¹¹ The Froebel kindergarten represented a compromise between home-centered and institutional child-rearing by limiting its sessions to three or four hours a day aimed at supplementing the family rather than supplanting it. Froebel's pedagogical methods were intended to awaken children's awareness of divine truth by exposing them to toys that symbolically represented the relationship of the individual to the whole and of diversity to harmony. The discipline of the kindergarten attempted to cultivate the child's nature rather than to coerce it and was not based on the traditional paternal authority but rather on the nurturing qualities associated with women and with the private sphere.¹² Thus the teaching function was ascribed completely to women. By demanding that women emerge from the private sphere and use their distinctive traits of cooperation, compassion, and nurturing love, and use them in a professional context, the kindergarten movement was among the first of many 19th century movements that urged women to find public applications for virtues of the private sphere. By its maternal discipline or as Reese refers to it, municipal housekeeping, and cooperative ethic it brought private values into the school.¹³

Kindergarten founders transcended conventional conceptions of public and private by creating institutions based on private values derived from home and from the networks of female friendship to which women of this era turned to for support. Many kindergarten training institutions developed community

¹¹ Johan Gottlieb Fichte, *Addresses to the German Nation* (Chicago, IL: The Open Court Publishing Company, 1922): 144-160.

¹² Allen, 25.

¹³ William J. Reese, "Between Home and School: Organized Parents, Clubwomen, and Urban Education in the Progressive Era," *The School Review* 87 (November 1978): 10.

services: nurseries and school lunch programs for the children of working mothers, extensions programs for parents to learn child-rearing and domestic skills, and rural vacation camps for city children. These programs showed a concern for the child's total environment which transcended the traditional educational division between public and private spheres (the school and the home).¹⁴ The kindergarten movement advocated the transcendence of traditional private/public boundaries presenting the values of public and private spheres- family and school, maternal nurture, and responsible citizenship- as complementary rather than dichotomous. The greater acceptance of the kindergarten in America reflected a different vision of social order which aimed not to preserve the private responsibility but to open it up to the public values of citizenship, social responsibility, and assimilation.¹⁵

Kindergarten as an Ideology and Movement

Friedrich Froebel's kindergarten succeeded where the infant school failed for two main reasons: it was perceived as a supplement to rather than a replacement for familial child rearing, and it was seen as a new environment appropriate for young children, not a school. Froebelianism was a romantic reconstruction of traditional modes of child nurture and not solely academics.¹⁶ At the same time the kindergarten was a force for modernization in the family and in education, legitimizing extra-familial education in new pedagogical methods and modifying relationships among young children, women, families, schools,

¹⁴ Beatty, *Preschool Education in America*, 145-147.

¹⁵ Anne Durst, 'Of Women, By Women, and For Women!': The Day Nursery Movement in the Progressive Era United States," *Journal of Social History* 39 (Fall 2005): 143.

¹⁶ Beatty, *Preschool Education in America*, 168.

and the state. This social curriculum attracted a wide range of reformers who saw the kindergarten as a means of fostering social harmony and preventing class conflict.¹⁷ Froebel's female followers made the kindergarten one of the first and most popular female movements. He based his model for teachers on peasant mothers and derived much of his teaching methods from folk child-rearing practices. Kindergarten teaching and advocacy provided new occupations for women outside the home. He stressed educating women to be better educators inside the home and focused on women and children's joint interests, thus alleviating the concerns about the separation of young children from their mothers.¹⁸ His primary aim was to strengthen popular culture and enhance young children's development and learning by encouraging and expanding the earliest intimate play relationships with adults and children, getting mothers and teachers to participate actively rather than standing apart as an authority figure. The belief in the possibility of achieving social harmony without the loss of individual freedom attracted reformers from various political backgrounds and contributed to the success of the kindergarten as a mainstream social and educational movement.¹⁹

Though his primary concern was education, Froebel was also concerned about the role of women in society. He believed that women were one of the most oppressed and neglected of all classes in society. His plan for emancipation was to join the needs and interests and to elevate the status of

¹⁷ Dom Cavallo, "From Perfection to Habit: Moral Training in the American Kindergarten, 1860-1920," *History of Education Quarterly* 16 (Summer 1976): 149-150.

¹⁸ Beatty, *Preschool Education in America*, 159-163.

¹⁹ Cuban, 171.

child-rearing and education.²⁰ Well to-do German women with liberal leanings began to support Froebel and kindergartens in increasing numbers. He thought the root of all social problems was society's undervaluation of women's material function; increased industrialization caused a rift between women and children and devalued women's natural roles as mothers. Affluent women were leaving their motherly duties to servants while laboring women left their children to go to work. Bertha von Marenholtz-Bulow, a follower of Froebel, argued that working class and poor children should attend kindergartens. She believed the mothers of these children were not capable of practicing Froebelian techniques because of their work and that upper-class women should take it upon themselves to educate lower class children in the tradition of *noblesse oblige*. Until the mothers of lower-classes were better educated, the education of their children would have to be in the care of the educated class.²¹ Froebel's reliance on women as teachers and advocates was important because it harnessed a new and powerful interest group, putting the force of the growing numbers of educated American women behind the kindergarten movement.

In the United States, there was an acceptance of the notion that children from poor families should be educated outside the home, but there was no consensus that children from higher class backgrounds would benefit from the same. These class-based European attitudes greatly affected ideas about educating young children in America and set a precedent for separate preschools for rich and poor and sowed doubts about the effects and value of early

²⁰ Bertha von Marenholtz-Bulow, *Reminiscences of Friedrich Froebel*, trans. Mary Mann (Boston, MA: Milton Bradley Company, 1914), 308.

²¹ Beatty, *Preschool Education in America*, 136-138.

educational programs.²² Schools needed to be infused with what Froebel called mother spirit.²³ Pestalozzi believed that a school needed to be a place "in which the female character is at an early period developed direction which enables it to take so prominent a part in early education."²⁴

The German influence on early education in the United States cannot be ignored. In the late 1880s the movement to establish public kindergartens that had begun with German-Americans in St. Louis in the 1870s spread to spread to Boston, Chicago, San Francisco, New York, and other cities and towns in Northeastern, Midwestern, Western, and Mid-Atlantic states.²⁵ Americanization of the kindergarten began when American educators such as Elizabeth Peabody and Susan Blow joined the kindergarten cause. Kindergartens were seen as voluntary supplements to upper and middle class rearing rather than a remedial intrusion into lower-class families and this had much to do with its acceptance. There was no stigma attached to attending a kindergarten in America. American parents paid for private kindergartens for their children.²⁶ There was resistance to incorporating kindergartens into public schools. Americans were ready to accept the idea of privately controlled extra-familial education for young children but not the extension of public schooling to children under six.²⁷

²² Durst, 149.

²³ Marenholtz-Bulow, 310.

²⁴ Pestalozzi, 33.

²⁵ Allen, 33-34. The first kindergartens in the United States were begun by German immigrants for their own children. Conducted in German, these early kindergartens were intended in part to preserve German language and culture for second generation German-Americans. For some German émigrés, they were also meant to promote liberal political ideology and to find a new home for Froebel's educational ideas.

²⁶ Beatty, *Preschool Education in America*, 84.

²⁷ Durst, 153.

In Boston, Peabody merged Froebelianism with transcendentalist philosophy and domestic ideology and promoted kindergarten teaching as a vocation for American women.²⁸ The kindergarten offered women like Peabody a respectable, meaningful cause and the possibility of self-respecting, autonomous work. Single and perennially seeking employment, Peabody opened the first English-speaking kindergarten in America in Boston in 1860. She published *Kindergarten Guide* in 1863 in a volume by her sister called *Moral Culture of Infancy*. She also published *Kindergarten Messenger*.²⁹ Peabody used the early 19th century ideology of domesticity and women's sphere to promote kindergartening as an occupation for American women. She proclaimed kindergarten to be the ideal solution to the problem of what educated women should do with their lives. She argued that "being a kindergartner was the noblest vocation to which a woman could aspire."³⁰(61) She insisted that teaching was a religion rather than a business and this served secular ends. It preserved kindergarten teaching as an occupation for middle and upper class women and protected it from schoolmen because as public schools expanded to accommodate growing immigrant children and urban populations, more men and women from lower social class backgrounds who were more dependent on salaries were being hired to meet the teacher demand. Rather than taking control away from families and giving it to the state, Peabody hoped that privately sponsored charity programs would be sufficient to meet the needs of the poor

²⁸ Cavallo, 149.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Beatty, *Preschool Education in America*, 61.

and immigrant children who were filling the cities.³¹ By regulating access to kindergarten, the status of kindergartens increased.

The high-minded ideals enhanced the identification of kindergartening with upper-class models of female benevolence and patrician civic responsibility. Records from early kindergarten training schools show that most teachers came from middle to upper class backgrounds.³² William Torrey Harris, a supporter of public kindergartens, also wanted to reach young children because he saw the kindergarten as the transition between life of the family and the severe discipline of the school. He argued that children who attended kindergartens were better prepared for the structure of public schools.³³ Harris believed that the kindergarten should mediate between two opposing principles- the private sphere of the family and the public sphere of the state-- to produce a citizen for whom individual fulfillment and social commitment were not contradictory but complementary. Harris' vision of the school as an active agent of social integration had considerable public appeal in cities with large immigrant populations.³⁴ The removal of the small child from the family identified by many German political leaders with radicalism and subversion was widely viewed in America as a means of preserving order by training children when they were most impressionable in the values of the public sphere of American society. Kindergarteners used the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia to promote awareness and acceptance of Froebelianism. The exposition included a

³¹ Cavallo, 158.

³² Ibid.

³³ Winterer, 301.

³⁴ Ibid., 301-305.

Woman's Pavilion with various exhibits devoted to aspects of the women movement. A prominent exhibit was a "Centennial Kindergarten" demonstration with a teacher and children in daily attendance.³⁵ The 1880s and 1890s saw an increase in kindergarten exhibits all over the country. The exhibit also took place in 1892 at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago, where private, charity, and public kindergarteners from around the country put on displays and held conferences. Though Peabody was in poor health, she continued her crusade for kindergartens and the exhibits provided an effective means for her to do this and provided an avenue for younger women to become involved in the movement. The control of the American kindergarten movement began to shift to younger women working in charity kindergarten organizations who concentrated more on young children's mental and physical development rather than moral or spiritual.³⁶ With the change from mortality to reality, those who supported kindergartens came to realize that American cities were not a paradise for young children and those private kindergartens had a public responsibility to do what they could to help "other people's" children.³⁷

A Response to Drastic Changes: Kindergartens and Social Reform

The rapid growth and industrialization of the United States after the Civil War was perceived as harmful to children. Increased rates of immigration and high birth rates among immigrants were also cause of concern as more and more

³⁵ Barbara Beatty, "Politics are Quite Perplexing": Besie Locke and the National Kindergarten Association Campaign, 1909-1960." in *The Educational Work of Women's Organizations*, ed. Anne Meis Knupfer and Christine Woyshner (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), 216-218.

³⁶ Cavallo, 148.

³⁷ Ibid., 150.

young children from different backgrounds flooded city streets. Some of the private wealth amassed during the Gilded Age of economic expansion of the 1880s and 1890s were directed to helping these children through free kindergartens associations, some 115 of which were in existence by 1890.³⁸ Most urban kindergarteners were as intent on reaching the mothers as they were the children. They wrote books, made home visits, held mother's classes, gave lectures, and started training programs and national organizations. Efforts initially focused on mothers from lower class and poor backgrounds, but kindergartening also became popular with women of the middle and upper classes, as teachers, not as mothers. Free kindergarteners envisioned forging new bonds among women based on their shared commitment to improved child rearing and education and expanded public responsibility for young children.³⁹

Expanding public responsibility of educating the young also needed additional support from notable educators. Pauline Agassiz Shaw, G. Stanley Hall, Anna Bryan, Alice Putnam, and Elizabeth Harrison were some of the most notable supporters of kindergartens in the United States. Shaw was exemplary of a new generation of wealthy, socially conscious, socially active women who in the Gilded Age expanded their sphere of influence from private to public by sponsoring projects related to children and education. Shaw, just as Elizabeth Peabody, worked in Boston, Massachusetts to establish free kindergartens. From 1861 to 1876, Shaw opened and supported sixteen free kindergartens and

³⁸ Beatty, "Besie Locke and the National Free Kindergarten Association Campaign," 215.

³⁹ Ibid., 217.

normal school classes to teach women the art of kindergartening. Oftentimes, she provided the funds to keep these schools in operation.⁴⁰

G. Stanley Hall attributed the ignorance he found to city life and he was not alone in this assessment. He thought children who grew up in cities were being cheated because city life was unnatural and inferior to pedagogic value to country experience. The solution was to send children to the country and to kindergarten.⁴¹ Anna Bryan's work in Louisville and Chicago led the way for change in new conceptualizations and implementations of kindergarten policy and pedagogy. She did not believe that the kindergarten should be a replacement for the family or a way of relieving women's responsibility for mothering.⁴² The kindergarten could bring about needed reform indirectly by changing families, particularly mothers, through their children.⁴³

Free kindergartens in the Midwest melded psychological concepts of development and mother's concerns for young children into the new ideology that would transform kindergarten from a class-segregated private program for the affluent or a charity for the urban poor into universal public early education. This policy transformation was enhanced and consolidated by the work of women working in free kindergartens in the West.⁴⁴ Alice A. Putnam was a model of maternalistic politics of how women in the Progressive Era extended private caring to public commitment and connected the domestic sphere of their own

⁴⁰ Ednah Dow Littlehale, "Art and Handicraft in the Woman's Building of the World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893." accessed 24 April 2009 from <http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/elliott/art/147.html>

⁴¹ Cavallo, 158.

⁴² Beatty, "Besiege Locke and the National Kindergarten Association Campaign," 223-224.

⁴³ Cavallo, 157.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 231.

home and families to that of other women's homes and families and then to the public domain of urban reform. She was directly involved in founding and operating the Chicago Free Kindergarten Association and the Chicago Kindergarten Club, and both sponsored various programs throughout the city.⁴⁵ Elizabeth Harrison wanted people to know the hidden agenda behind the kindergarten movement: to prevent class conflict and to promote cross-class communication. She published *A Study of Child Nature from the Kindergarten Standpoint* in 1890.⁴⁶

Others contributed to the discussion about kindergartens. Kate Douglas Wiggin, who along with her sister, Nora Archibald Smith, expanded the idea of mother's responsibilities to their children into a concept of society's responsibilities to children and children's rights. Nora Archibald Smith's book, *The Children of the Future* published in 1898, stated that there were "as many shallow, weak, careless, stupid, morally, obtuse mothers among the rich as among the poor"⁴⁷ and the sins of the poor mothers were forgivable because their mothers did not know what they were doing. She cited examples of women's clubs and study groups on other topics rather than children and education and she argued that young children should be a legitimate topic of discussion as starfish, microbes, and plants.

In the 1880s, 1890s, and 1900s, the free kindergarten movement was transformed from the Gilded Age of charity for the children of urban poor and

⁴⁵ Beatty, "Besie Locke and the National Kindergarten Association Campaign," 220.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 230.

⁴⁷ Nora Archibald Smith, *The Children of the Future* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1898), 97.

their families who were thought to be at fault for their own social position to a Progressive Era social program that provided comprehensive education services to children, mothers, and families entitled to these services as civic rights.⁴⁸

There was a great need for kindergartens for other people's children. Though there were many obstacles impeding the provision of universal kindergartens, this glaring need and the ideology of children's rights legitimized the idea of public assumption of responsibility for the education of everybody's young children.

The South and Southwest were slow to join the kindergarten campaign and rural areas everywhere lagged behind the rest of the country. In a United States Bureau of Education document, an increase was seen in the establishment of kindergartens from forty-two public and private kindergartens in 1873 to almost 3,000 in 1898 with an enrollment of over 200,000 children.⁴⁹ By 1910, the United States census counted 396,431 children under the age of six attending school which constituted 3.1% of the population of children who were under the age of six.⁵⁰ William Torrey Harris argued that poorer cities were more concerned about the amount of money that would need to be dedicated to kindergarten education. Large urban centers such as Boston, which was the second wealthiest city in the United States at the time, were not quite as concerned with the amount of money kindergarten education required.⁵¹ Much of the growth of kindergartens in smaller cities was subsidized by the kindergarten

⁴⁸ Beatty, *Preschool Education in America*, 35.

⁴⁹ Winterer, 293.

⁵⁰ Beatty, *Preschool Education in America*, 133.

⁵¹ Cavallo, 157.

teachers themselves; they, however, were paid considerably less than other public primary school teachers. In Chicago, the maximum amount paid to kindergarteners was \$500 compared to \$900 for other teachers.⁵²

Starting in the 1880s, many Free Kindergarten Associations in the 1880s grew out of a concern for young children who were being turned away from public schools due to lack of space. Kindergartens were important because they were an effective method of Americanizing immigrant children because they were reached when very young and their natures were still "plastic."⁵³ Young children could still be swayed and molded to grow up as Americans. A 1918 United States Bureau of Education pamphlet told kindergarteners to visit mothers of immigrants more often than American mothers to teach English and civics and to also help these mothers find substitutes for their native foods. A year later, another pamphlet questioned this approach as robbing immigrants of their customs and traditions.⁵⁴ Promoting Americanization was an apparent rationale behind the formation of the National Kindergarten Association which was founded by members of the New York Free Kindergarten Association in 1909. It established links with other organizations such as the National Congress of Mothers and the General Federation of Women's Clubs.⁵⁵ Kate Douglas Wiggin, in the first annual report of the National Kindergarten Campaign, stated that kindergartens were needed to lead "the child gently into right habits of thought,

⁵² Beatty, *Preschool Education in America*, 134. Kindergarten teachers would subsidize the growth of kindergartens by paying for their teaching supplies and taking pay cuts, and at times, not being paid, to allow for the continuation of the kindergarten program in smaller cities.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Cuban, 171.

⁵⁵ Beatty, "Besie Locke and the National Kindergarten Association Campaign", 224.

speech, and action from the beginning."⁵⁶ The problems afflicting America's cities, such as juvenile delinquency and abject poverty, had become more pressing by the late 19th century and the kindergartens, just like infant schools were seen as potential reform agents. As they began to grow in the 1880s and 1890s, they began to be seen as a way to assimilate and educate the children of the impoverished and ill- educated immigrants.⁵⁷

Until the last quarter of the 19th century, kindergartens remained indebted to private philanthropists for their survival. William Torrey Harris began the first public kindergartens in St. Louis in 1873, and other cities soon followed with Philadelphia in 1881, Boston in 1888, and Chicago in 1899.⁵⁸ By this time, however, kindergartens were no longer a novelty, and educators began to see the potentially positive effects of adding this new grade to the public school hierarchy. They hoped that the kindergarten might pay for itself by becoming a part of the tiered system that produced better workers and citizens. Though costs and restrictive state laws continued to pose stumbling blocks, by the beginning of World War I, kindergartens had been adopted by most large public school systems and in smaller cities and suburbs nationwide.⁵⁹

The Free Kindergarten Movement in Georgia

The South and some states in the West were slower to establish public kindergartens, especially for black children. According to the National Kindergarten Association statistics from 1916-1917, only 2% of children between

⁵⁶ Beatty, *Preschool Education in America*, as quoted, 106.

⁵⁷ Winterer, 291.

⁵⁸ Beatty, *Preschool Education in America*, 230.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

the age of 4 and 6 were enrolled in kindergartens in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, and Mississippi and only 1% were enrolled in North Carolina, Tennessee, and West Virginia. In New York and New Jersey, the rate was 29%.⁶⁰ In the *Atlanta Constitution*, Mary Dickinson, one of the clubwomen of Atlanta, stated that “there are 22 (kindergartens), by the way, some fine private ones, some equally fine housed in nurseries, settlements, social centers or buildings, provided by the Free Kindergarten Association.”⁶¹ She went on to argue that if Atlanta were up to other cities of its class the number would be fifty-two and not twenty-two.

Though the number of kindergartens that were established in 1917 in Atlanta was small in comparison to larger cities in the northeast such as Boston and Chicago, it was the work of clubwomen and the Atlanta Free Kindergarten Association that provided the means for opening the twenty-two that were in existence at the time. Kindergartens in Georgia were developed through three channels: private schools, mills and churches, and public schools. The clubwomen were able to use the networking that was established through the GAFWC to promote the idea of kindergartens as well as raise money and supplies for the opening of schools. They also realized the importance of the relationships they had with many of the most prominent men in the state and often used these relationships to solicit support for kindergartens. Private kindergartens helped to promote the kindergarten movement in Georgia and

⁶⁰ Ibid., 116.

⁶¹ Mary Dickinson, No title given, *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, 24 June 1917, Club Page.

would eventually change the mindset of southern reformers to push for the inclusion of kindergarten into the public school system.

Between 1887 and 1889, there were three private kindergartens in Atlanta, one which was conducted by Miss Kittie Roberts, another by Miss May Close, and the third by Ms. Stovall. Three Georgia cities by 1917 had kindergartens as part of their public school systems: Atlanta, Columbus, and Augusta. In 1897, Miss Allen started the Atlanta Kindergarten Normal and Elementary School which would later be granted a charter by the State of Georgia. The purpose of the school was to promote kindergartens as a part of the educational system of Georgia as well as train teachers for kindergarten classes.⁶² Many of Miss Allen's graduates went on to open their own kindergarten schools in Georgia before the acceptance of kindergartens into the public school system.⁶³ The portion of Miss Allen's school that was devoted to training kindergarten teachers would be chartered by Emory University in 1930 and became the Atlanta Kindergarten Training School.⁶⁴

The Atlanta Free Kindergarten Association had its beginnings when the Cotton States and International Exposition came to Atlanta, in 1895. Miss Nettie Sargent, the principal of the Girl's High School in Atlanta and Miss Willette Allen were sent to Louisville, Kentucky to specifically study the kindergarten of Louisville and to persuade leaders to send an exhibit and a demonstration teacher to the exposition. They agreed, and the exhibit was housed in the

⁶² Atlanta Kindergarten Alumnae Club, "History of the Kindergarten Movement in Georgia", n.d., Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, GA, MS 87.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

Woman's Building and was directed by Miss Mary Hill. Even though kindergartens were not new, the exposition provided a catalyst for getting more women involved in the kindergarten movement in Georgia.⁶⁵

One such woman who became a prominent player in the establishment of kindergartens in Atlanta as well as Georgia was Miss Nellie Peters Black. Mary Ellen Peters Black personified the early club woman movement in the South. She dedicated her life to organizing women for the purposes of benevolence, self-improvement, and social and civic reform. She was born in Atlanta on February 9, 1851, the eldest of nine children. Her father, Richard Peters, emerged from the Civil War to become a financial and civic leader in postwar Atlanta. After graduating from finishing school, Nellie joined her family in its philanthropic and charitable endeavors. Devoutly religious and a staunch Episcopalian, she taught Sunday school and organized the city's first mission. At age twenty-six she married George Robison Black, a congressman from Screven County. The couple had three children before George Black died in 1886.⁶⁶

Nellie Black belonged to numerous civic and social organizations, including the Every Saturday Club, Pioneer Club of Atlanta, Colonial Dames, Daughters of the American Revolution, and United Daughters of the Confederacy. She held various positions of leadership in the Women's Auxiliaries of the Episcopal Dioceses of Georgia and Atlanta. Through her membership in the Atlanta Woman's Club, Atlanta Federation of Women's Clubs, and the

⁶⁵ Atlanta Kindergarten Alumnae, "History of the Kindergarten Movement in Georgia."

⁶⁶ New Georgia Encyclopedia, "Nellie Peters Black," History and Archeology, May 2004 [encyclopedia on-line] available from <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-2916>; Internet; accessed 5 March 2008.

Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs (GAFWC), Black focused on social and municipal engineering. She served on the founding board of the King's Daughters Hospital and the executive committee of the Woman's Building at the 1895 Cotton States and International Exposition.⁶⁷ Intent on increasing statewide educational opportunities, Black lobbied the state legislature for compulsory education laws and the admittance of women to the University of Georgia. She became the president of the Atlanta Free Kindergarten Association in 1896. In 1896, the first kindergarten established by the association was opened on Magnolia Street and in the same year, the women's club sponsored a kindergarten on Hilliard Street. Once the women's clubs became active supporters of the kindergarten movement as well as the Free Kindergarten Association, kindergartens began springing up around Atlanta: Decatur Street (1896), Plum Street (1897), Woolen Mills (1899), Exposition Cotton Mills (1902), Mary Raoul Kindergarten and Rock Street (1904), Stewart Avenue (1909), and the Nellie Peters Black Kindergarten in Joyner Park (1919).⁶⁸ Students from Miss Allen's Atlanta Kindergarten Normal and Elementary School served as student assistants. Many of these kindergartens continued until 1923 when the Atlanta Board of Education added kindergartens to its program of education.⁶⁹ An ardent supporter of early childhood education, Black served as president of the Atlanta Free Kindergarten Association for twenty years and helped establish numerous kindergartens throughout the city. Although unsuccessful at the state level, Black

⁶⁷ Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs, "Tallulah Falls Scrapbook, 1903-1917," Tallulah Falls Museum, Tallulah Falls, GA. The King's Daughters Hospital was the first free hospital in Atlanta.

⁶⁸ Atlanta Kindergarten Alumnae Club, "History of the Kindergarten Movement in Georgia."

⁶⁹ Ibid.

persuaded the public school system in Atlanta to incorporate kindergartens into its schools in 1919.⁷⁰ When this was done, the Free Kindergarten Association closed all of its kindergartens and turned over all the money and equipment held by it to the Atlanta Board of Education. In 1923, Atlanta introduced forty-four kindergartens into its program under the direction of Miss Ethel Massengale. Until then, only one kindergarten had been housed in a public school building and that was the one on Spring Street that had been established by the Parent-Teacher Association.⁷¹

Upon her death in 1919, newspapers across the state praised Nellie Black's service. The *Atlanta Journal* noted that "her name was a synonym for charity, for gentleness of spirit, for love of humanity, for constructive citizenship. No man or woman in the last century has exerted a stronger influence for the uplift and advancement of the state."⁷² One editor claimed that "had [Black] been a man she would have been in the United States Senate."⁷³

Conclusion

Power struggles over kindergarten curriculum began to take place in municipal politics when in the 1870s women's groups began to get involved by trying to get women elected to city school boards. The kindergarten was one of the reasons women fought to gain the right to vote; they wanted to vote for public kindergartens and other maternalistic programs for children, women, and

⁷⁰ Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs, "Tallulah Falls Scrapbook, 1903-1917," Tallulah Falls Museum, Tallulah Falls, GA.

⁷¹ Atlanta Kindergarten Alumnae Club, "History of the Kindergarten Movement in Georgia."

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

families.⁷⁴ Although kindergartens remained indebted to private philanthropists for their survival, by 1914, kindergartens were entrenched in urban public school systems with over 900 cities operating 6500 kindergarten classes with an enrollment of 312,000 children.⁷⁵ The kindergarten movement was successful based on two characteristics: assimilating immigrants that poured into the United States after the Civil War and the emphasis on "the child, the home, family, and motherhood" as well as faith in the perfectibility of children meshed well with the evangelical concerns over the conflict between the private and public sphere.⁷⁶ It found a great following among female reformers, philanthropists, and educators in Georgia.

One issue that was directly related to the expansion of kindergartening was the training of women to teach in these new schools. Though women were considered a natural fit for kindergarten teaching, they still needed to be trained in the latest pedagogical theories. The next chapter demonstrates one way in which the women's clubs in Georgia found to provide assistance to women to become trained in kindergartening.

⁷⁴ Sally G. McMillen, *Seneca Falls and the Origins of the Women's Rights Movement* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008), 75-76.

⁷⁵ Beatty, *Preschool Education in America*, 156.

⁷⁶ Censer, *The Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood, 1865-1895*.

CHAPTER 4

"As the first great need of the people is adequate elementary instruction, and as this instruction must come to children largely through mothers and women teachers, we desire to emphasize our belief in the wisdom of making most liberal investment in the education of girls."

-Georgia Board of Education (1901)

Educating Girls in the Progressive Era South

The distinctiveness of the southern cultural life itself contributed to the uniqueness of southern higher education. Due to the impoverishing effects to the Civil War and the South's relative isolation from the rest of the nation, changes in higher education evolved at a slower pace than was true elsewhere. The shared common cultural life of the South added to the region's insularity; in the years preceding the Civil War, when collectively the North, Midwest, and West were becoming more alike culturally, the South--rural, isolated and dominated by slavery-- was developing a uniquely regional way of life. ¹

After the Civil War in the South there was a strong press for a more practical education rather than classical. The War had exacted a significant economic toll upon the region; widespread poverty and desolation were clearly evident. Yet from this destruction arose the push for economic development and by 1879 conditions seemed opportune in the South for a strong effort toward

¹ Anastatia Sims, *The Power of Femininity in the New South: Women's Organizations and Politics in North Carolina, 1880-1930* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1997), 6. See also John Harden Best, "Education in the Forming of the New South." In *Essays in the Twentieth Century in Southern Education: Exceptionalism and Its Limits*, ed. Wayne J. Urban (New York, NY: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1999), 18.

attaining a diversified industrial economy characteristic of the North.¹ This effort found strong support and sustenance among progressive southerners, who generally accepted the idea that regional progress would require rapid economic growth and development of a diversified economy.

In 1870, there were 62,000 students in colleges, universities, professional, normal and teacher colleges in the United States. By 1890, the total enrollment was 157,000 and by 1910 had risen to 355,000.² Multipurpose institutions with programs characteristic of the leading 20th century universities began to appear in the East, West, and Midwest. No such development was evident in the 19th century South where colleges struggled to remain alive. Left virtually destitute by the Civil War and lacking students, buildings and assets, college leaders clung more to romantic dreams and were unable to share in the bold expansion experienced by other regions.³ The Civil War resulted not only in the closing of colleges but in a complete reversal of the pattern of antebellum expansion and prosperity.

Philanthropy in the South

Philanthropy, education, and the American South traditionally have been linked with the work of southern blacks such as Booker T. Washington and northern philanthropists such as George Peabody, Andrew Carnegie, and John D. Rockefeller. Booker T Washington's Tuskegee Institute and Samuel

¹ Best, 14.

² Christine A. Ogren, *The American State Normal School* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 202-209.

³ John C. Kiger, "The Large Foundations in Southern Education," *The Journal of Higher Education* 27 (March 1956): 125-132. See also James Anderson, *Education of Blacks in the South* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 56-64. See also Joseph M. Stetar, "In Search of a Direction: Southern Education After the Civil War." *History of Education Quarterly* 25 (Autumn 1985): 343-345.

Armstrong's Hampton University were colleges in the post-bellum era that offered an opportunity for education that southern states would not provide African-Americans in the decades following Reconstruction.⁴ During this period, however, work was also aimed to further the education of children in poor white families.

Education was crucial to the rebuilding of post-Civil War South whether the focus was on educating black or white children. For economic reasons the foundations created by southerners were not so numerous or large as those created in other sections of the country. Often, the money provided to rebuild the educational system in the South came from wealthy northerners such as Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller. Wealthy individuals provided the seed money to establish educational funds that were earmarked to improve and/or rebuild the educational system of the South. While it is true that prior to the Civil War, there had been some significant philanthropies created, the establishment of the Peabody Education Fund in 1867 by George Peabody and the John F. Slater Fund in 1882 started by John F. Slater marked the real birth of the American philanthropic foundation, although the Peabody Education Fund never amounted to more than \$3,000,000 from the time of its inception in 1867 to its dissolution in 1914.⁵ In carrying out its obligation to administer its funds in the interest of southern education, the Peabody Fund began at the local level and moved successively upward. It encouraged the training of teachers and by 1903, these programs had progressed to such a point that the trustees felt that the remaining

⁴ Kiger., 172-173.

⁵ Franklin Parker, "George Peabody, 1795-1869: His Influence on Educational Philanthropy," *Peabody Journal of Education* 49 (January 1972): 8-10.

portions of the fund could be best used in creation of centers for teacher education which would remain a continuing force in the improvement of teacher education in the South.⁶ The Peabody Fund and the Slater Fund were merged into the Southern Education Foundation, which incorporated and restricted its primary activity to elementary and secondary education by helping to prepare and to sustain teachers for those segments of education.⁷ A significant feature was the use of the money as seed funds or venture capital to be used for areas which had previously received little attention. These funds were concentrated on that portion of the educational system which could provide a steppingstone for future aid to other parts of the educational system.⁸

The General Education Board (GEB) was a Rockefeller philanthropy organized in 1902 for the promotion of public education in the South. It was restricted to privately supported, non-denominational institutions which met certain academic requirements and financial standards.⁹ The GEB during its first fifteen years supported public secondary schools in the South and worked to encourage taxation for public schools.¹⁰ The organization established a network of county agents that were responsible for training country people for a life in the country. Their purpose was not to train country people to be philosophers, scholars, or scientists.¹¹

⁶ Kiger, 127-129.

⁷ William A. Link, "The School that Built a Town: Public Education and the Southern Social Landscape, 1880-1930," in *Essays in Twentieth-Century Southern Education: Exceptionalism and Its Limits*, ed. Wayne J. Urban (New York, NY: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1999), 65-69.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 70.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 70-71.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Kliebard, 188-193.

The Southern Education Board (SEB), which was also supported by northern industrialists, saw its role as a regional response to the problems of the South. Though the SEB's financiers were from the north, its district directors, campaign committee members, and field agents were all southerners. These members were pulled from various walks of life: college presidents, university professors, school superintendents, farm journalists, and common school teachers. Much of the propaganda of the SEB was aimed at stimulating public opinion in favor of tax-supported universal education.¹²

Organizations like the GEB and SEB provided a stream of money into the South at a time of great need. They were financed by northern industrialists, which at times, was a bitter pill for some southern country folk to swallow. However, these organizations found ways to convince southerners to use the money and resources that were generously being offered. Both of these organizations, as well as the trustees of the Peabody Fund and the Slater Fund, recognized the importance of an education system to southern regeneration and focused on providing financial assistance to help rebuild a portion of the country that had been devastated by the Civil War. Though these organizations were started by and funded by men, women also felt a need to contribute to the rebuilding of the South and southern women, in particular, wanted to get involved in resurrecting their areas.

Southern Women and Philanthropy

Little has been written about the philanthropic contributions of women during the Progressive Era. One of the major reasons that we have little insight

¹² Best, 7-9.

into the history of women as philanthropic actors in education is that we have underestimated the significance of small, but timely gifts. When we think about philanthropic gifts in such narrow terms, current scholarship has not seen women's philanthropic action in education. We have only focused on large monetary gifts and the conceiving of education as only the formal instructional activities associated with schools and universities.¹³ Most works addressing the subject have tended to equate philanthropy with large monetary gifts and foundation activity. This focus ignores volunteered time as a philanthropic gift.¹⁴ We have focused on what David Tyack calls a particular way of seeing, where historians have overlooked the expansiveness, complexity, and significance of women's giving to education and have not seen this giving as a part of a larger cultural tapestry of women's philanthropy.¹⁵ More studies need to shed light on education where private donations have figured greatly in shaping opportunities for both sexes and where women's philanthropic contributions have been long-standing, diverse, and significant. The variety of ways in which women have given is numerous even when they have had less access to disposable wealth as men; they still supported and adopted education as a means to advance philanthropic ends. They encountered gender-related barriers in nearly every sphere of life, including education and philanthropy, and yet they were still able to promote new ideas, to advance their individual and collective goals, and to shape

¹³ Andrea Walton, "Introduction: Women and Philanthropy in Education-A Problem of Conceptions." in *Women and Philanthropy in Education*, ed. Andrea Walton (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005), 3-5.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 10.

¹⁵ David Tyack, *The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), 136.

education in the United States over the centuries. Exploring women's philanthropic contributions to education is important because both philanthropy and education were among the earliest spaces women, within their prescribed roles, were able to find opportunities to participate in the public sphere.

Catherine Beecher wrote in 1835 that a woman's most critical responsibility is the physical, intellectual, and moral education of children.¹⁶ Women were particularly responsible for the care of health and the formation of the character of the future citizens of the nation. With increased responsibility being placed on women, the church was often the venue through which women got involved in charitable work and it became the means to access an enlarged domestic sphere that included dependents beyond the immediate family.¹⁷ Distinctions between upper class and middle class women did not fit precise economic definition in this era since virtue, piety, and gentility were mechanisms of social mobility that were available to all but the poor.¹⁸ Social status was of less concern to educational reformers than the need to arm young women with the moral means to cope with changing social and economic conditions.¹⁹

Social class, however, was still a concern for southern society. White southerners were highly class conscious; the term "poor white" designated the often property-less plain people of the South. Although many mountaineers owned their property, they were still stigmatized in the minds of most southern

¹⁶ As quoted in Frances Huehler, "Teaching Philanthropy: Catherine Beecher and the Hartford Female Seminary," in *Women and Philanthropy in Education*, ed. Andrea Walton (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005), 31-34.

¹⁷ Walton, 10

¹⁸ Sims, 24-27.

¹⁹ Scott, *Natural Allies*, 47.

whites. Southern women saw an opportunity to use education to help southern mountain people. Two prominent women in Georgia provide an example of how women used education as a means for philanthropic activity: Martha Berry, the founder of Berry College and Rome, Georgia and Mary Ann Lipscomb, the founder of the Tallulah Falls School in Tallulah Falls, Georgia.²⁰ Both women have very similar stories as to the opening of their respective schools. Both were born into a climate of increased expectations and broadened opportunities for women. They both worked on behalf of mountain children, Berry in the northwest mountains and Lipscomb in the northeast mountains of Georgia. Berry's Sunday schools grew into what became Berry College whereas Lipscomb's school became the Tallulah Falls School.²¹ The life and work of both of these women expand the understanding of Southern women educators during the 20th century, a time when education was being used as vehicle for the regeneration of southern society.

Though southern by birth, Berry and Lipscomb shared the same motives as many northern women who came to the South infused with the missionary spirit to improve living conditions of mountain people, particularly through schooling.²² Education for these children was problematic. Most rural schools only offered school five months out of the year. Many rural children who lacked transportation or proper clothes were deprived of an education. Most existing

²⁰ For information on Martha Berry, see Victoria-Maria McDonald and Eleanore Lenington, "Southern Poor Whites and High Education: Martha Berry's Philanthropic Strategies in the Building of Berry College." in *Women and Philanthropy in Education*, ed. Andrea Walton (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005), 135-176. For information on Mary Ann Lipscomb, see Carol Stevens Hancock, *The Light in the Mountains: The Story of the Tallulah Falls School* (Toccoa, GA: Commercial Publishing Company, 1975), 5-15

²¹ McDonald and Lenington, 140-145 and Hancock, 5-15.

²² Walton, 12.

rural schools were small, isolated, and crumbling, and the teacher was not qualified. The curriculum entailed teaching the classics which was of little use to mountain children.²³ Both women were carrying out the type of philanthropic work that politically disenfranchised but financially elite southern white women of this era pursued. They were frustrated by a lack of governmental provisions for schools, health care, and other matters. They responded to a public problem with their own personal solution with the building of institutions for the overlooked children of the Georgia mountains.

They faced many obstacles to get students to the schools. Parents were reluctant to send their children to boarding schools. There was fluctuating attendance because children were needed on the family farms to tend crops or watch younger siblings while parents worked in the fields and there was a more deeply rooted issue of parent independence and pride.²⁴ To circumvent many of these issues, establishing a boarding school made sense. Just as the officials of the Native American boarding schools had concluded, removing children from their home life apparently forced them to become accustomed to a more mainstream southern middle class lifestyle.²⁵ Berry did not seek to stamp out the child's birth culture entirely, but rather she worked to instill pride and preserve part of the child's heritage.²⁶ The traditional academic curriculum followed that of the public schools but was balanced with industrial training. Boys and girls had separate responsibilities as was typical with industrial training during the

²³ Nellie Roberson, "The Organized Women in One State," *Journal of Social Forces* 1 (November 1922): 52-53.

²⁴ MacDonald and Lenington, 140-142.

²⁵ Link, 69-71.

²⁶ MacDonald and Lenington, 143.

Progressive Era. This blended type of education would preserve mountain heritage while at the same time opening the door for new success on the farms.²⁷ If students could improve local agriculture then they would be less likely to leave the land for the city or other regions of the country.

Berry and Lipscomb's industrial focus was in keeping with educational conventions of the time; similar efforts had been made with African and Native Americans but not yet with poor whites.²⁸ The nation's industries were clamoring for more skilled workers so vocational education began to receive more attention in educational circles. Progressive educators believed in linking the classroom with real life rather than studying abstract theories that required rote memorization.²⁹ Oftentimes, in rural areas, such as Floyd County where Berry College was located, educators called for more training in agriculture to help students learn more about what needed to be done in life as well as learn how to meet the needs of their communities.³⁰ Henry Ford, the founder of Ford Motor Company and inventor of the assembly line, became friends and a benefactor to Berry College but what was most important was the belief that both Ford and Berry shared. They believed that practical education would ensure a lifetime of productivity and independence and they were determined to provide that commodity to the less fortunate.³¹ Educators and benefactors who supported these schools in the mountains saw them as vehicles for creating self-made 20th

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Link, 61.

²⁹ Herbert M. Kliebard, *Schooled to Work: Vocationalism and the American Curriculum, 1876-1946* (New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1999), 105-107.

³⁰ MacDonald and Lenington, 167-169.

³¹ Ibid.

century individuals who through hard work and opportunity could rise above their origins.

The mountain background of these students drew the attention of northerners during the late 1800s and early 1900s. During a time of enormous migration to the northeast, Appalachian whites became an object of interest and admiration because of their perceived purity of Anglo-Saxon blood, pioneer stock, independence, and patriotism. This view of mountain people would help bolster support for mountain schools since World War I helped spur patriotism and nativism in the United States.³² The term Anglo-Saxon stock crept into the literature of the schools during this time, revealing both a bias toward the white race as well as the ability to use that racism to fundraise. As southern white women in the first half of the 20th century, Berry and Lipscomb often had to adapt their strategies to their still marginal position in society and used current views of white southern mountain people to raise funds.

Though Lipscomb and Berry made significant contributions to education in Georgia, another more pervasive organization which channeled a number of women into philanthropic work was the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) which was becoming more prevalent in the schools. In her 1893 book, Frances Abigail Goodale attempted to shed some light on what was considered philanthropy in the 19th century and she also made a connection between philanthropy in education and women's participation in a variety of philanthropist activities. In education she found a particularly powerful agent of reform and a means for providing for the welfare of the poor. She articulated the connection between

³² Ibid., 172.

philanthropy and education by insisting that philanthropy could not be divorced from education nor from religion. Based on what she considered philanthropic acts, Goodale shed light on the fact that a philanthropic act in the 19th century did not only involve the giving of money, but also the giving of time and talent.³³

The trend shifted in the 20th century. News reports of giving on an unprecedented scale by philanthropists such as Carnegie and Peabody overshadowed reports of the time that women devoted to the PTA and other charity organizations. The press focused on the single-handed funding of academic institutions, the millionaire who bequeathed millions of dollars to the arts, and the activities of great foundations such as Carnegie and Rockefeller.³⁴ Philanthropy became synonymous with monetary donations, professional fundraising, and foundation activity. Since women were not among the few who accumulated great wealth in post-bellum decades and could thus steer the course of foundations, their work was shoved to the background and histories focused narrowly on the philanthropic works of monetary donors. With limited means and long before government concern with racial or gender equity, women used philanthropy to challenge institutional and ideological barriers in education to fashion roles for themselves as educators who helped to shape new and more equitable modes of social thought and to pose alternatives to the educational institutions and artistic canon supported by philanthropic men.³⁵ Women are not new givers and philanthropy does not only come from wealth; it also comes from

³³ Francis Abigail Goodale, "The Literature of Philanthropy," in *The Literature of Philanthropy*, ed. Francis Abigail Goodale (New York, NY: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1893), 6-8.

³⁴ John C. Kiger, "The Large Foundations in Southern Education," *The Journal of Higher Education* 27 (March 1956), 129.

³⁵ Walton, 15.

a deep concern for the well-being of society. The PTA has been seen as a reform initiated by women to counter the male-dominated school administration but not as a part of the larger women's club movement which was partly a philanthropic endeavor.³⁶

Though historians argue that the increase in the number of parent-teacher organizations in public schools during the first half of the 20th century was due to the increased bureaucratization of the school system, they do consider the number of women who were involved in women's clubs and PTA's.³⁷ Christine Woyshner argues that women's interest in public education was as much an extension of the growing women's club movement as it was a reaction to the rise of education professions and the reorganization of school administration.³⁸ Mary Ritter Beard, an active clubwoman in 1915, observed that women's associations contributed significantly to the schools so much that the schools were becoming "one huge settlement with a thoroughly democratic basis in place of a philanthropic foundation."³⁹

Prior to the 1920s, women's organized philanthropy in schools was both a local phenomenon and a national movement directed by groups such as the General Federation of Women's Clubs, the National Congress of Mothers, and the National Association of Colored Women. For most of the 1910s, the extensive educational reform efforts of women's organizations were coordinated

³⁶ Christine Woyshner, "Valuable and Legitimate Services': Black and White Women's Philanthropy through the PTA." in *Women and Philanthropy in Education*, ed. Andrea Walton (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005), 136-140.

³⁷ As quoted, Woyshner, 148.

³⁸ Ibid., 147.

³⁹ Ibid.

through the National Education Association Department of National Women's Associations.⁴⁰ By the mid-1920s, when gender-segregated reform activities had largely lost their appeal, women's activism in public education became less intrusive into school affairs and was subsumed under the National Congress of Mothers which in 1924 changed its name to the National Congress of Parents and Teachers or National PTA.⁴¹ By 1930, the NEA had dissolved the National Congress of Parents and Teachers so the National PTA came under the control of local school hierarchies rather than a national educational organization.⁴²

Most PTA women felt that because they were women, they possessed special qualities that had the potential to influence society for the better; therefore, their educational philanthropy was legitimate work in the public realm. This kind of municipal housekeeping challenged the rising male administrative hierarchy of schools because women were now trying to become more involved in the decisions about schooling which posed a threat to the power structure that sought to manage and control women through parent-teacher organizations and women's clubs.⁴³ The contributions of the parent-teacher organizations helped enact curricular reforms such as kindergartens, vacation schools, and vocational education programs.⁴⁴ They also improved teacher pay and benefits and provided school lunches. Donations of time allowed for greater decision-making power among clubwomen who successfully lobbied for women school board

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid., 150.

⁴² Reese, 10.

⁴³ Woyshner, 140.

⁴⁴ Henry S. Curtis, "Vacation Schools and Playgrounds," *Harper's Magazine* (June 1902), 22. Vacation schools were established so that children of working parents could attend school during the times they were unattended in the summer when school was not in regular session.

members. Conditions in white schools in the South during the early decades of the 20th century were dire and women's organizations helped gather the capital for establishing educational institutions.

White middle- class women's belief that attractive schools would translate to an ideal educational setting was reflected in attention to aesthetics, thereby imbuing schools with the cultural conventions of the middle class. White women generally worked to reform institutions and gain political power while black women worked locally. Elisabeth Clemens argues that more conservative white women's associations opted to continue voluntary contributions while the more radical women's groups worked for cash contributions to get political power.⁴⁵ White PTA women used both strategies; they volunteered their time and they raised money and as a result they challenged the authority of male administrators in schools more than the average taxpayer would. Their influence far exceeded taxpayer power because they were organized and typically worked from the inside of the school.⁴⁶ Their meetings were usually held in school auditoriums and classrooms and the focus of their work was on school improvement. In response, male administrators began to question whether such extensive philanthropic work was the best use of the volunteer's time.

During the initial phase of PTA involvement in schools, local associations gave significant aid to public schools in rural as well as urban areas and ensured that each had such programs as affordable lunches and school nurses.⁴⁷ Generally, however, white PTA women did not intend to continue their

⁴⁵ Ibid., 141

⁴⁶ Ibid., 142.

⁴⁷ Reese, 11-15.

contributions over the long term. Through municipal housekeeping in the Progressive Era, clubwomen sought to transform public policy, to move from personal and private encounter to state action, to bring about compulsory legislation of one sort or another. PTA women tried to remake society according to white middle-class standards.⁴⁸ They faced gender barriers due to a growing hierarchical school administration that excluded them from decision making and sought to place them under the watchful eye of male school administrators and school board members. If these administrators clashed over control of the schools, they were united to fight against white women's power in matters of school decision-making even if their efforts improved the local schools.

Elmer Holbeck in 1934 commented that the efforts by PTA's were directed into money raising activities and other fields that had nothing to do with their original intent - child welfare. Holbeck, a school administrator, was hesitant to allow white women's clubs' power influence in schools through their philanthropy.⁴⁹ If white women's philanthropy was accepted as central to educational work, it might confer power on women outside the school management hierarchy. To counter this threat, male administrators successfully separated fundraising from what they considered to be true educational work, thereby assuring male-dominated control of public education. The maternalist argument that fueled municipal housekeeping and women's involvement in education became outdated as an ideological framework and more politically radical women turned to other justifications for their work in the public arena.

⁴⁸ Woyshner, 139-141.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

This shift happened around the beginning of World War I and was attributed to a social emphasis among white middle-class women on romantic marriage over motherhood as a uniting ideology and the fact the reformers of the Progressive Era did not enhance opportunities for women in structural ways.⁵⁰ By 1930, white women's philanthropy was contained and PTA women were relegated to an auxiliary role in the public schools through local parent-teacher organizations that emphasized cooperation.⁵¹

The commonplace activities of the PTA formed an unmistakable network of philanthropy that contributed to the advancement of popular education in tangible and significant ways. Emphasizing the more radical and overt acts performed by women in public education has led historians to undervalue the small, everyday, and seemingly ordinary philanthropy of women in school associations. Their efforts, repeated time and again in schools all over the country, produced significant impacts on education.

GAFWC and the Student Aid Foundation

Women were able to navigate their positions in American society to find appropriate ways to volunteer their time and even raise small amounts of money to improve education throughout the United States. The PTA is one organization that demonstrated how women organized to provide philanthropic activities that involved the giving of time more often than money. Many of the women who were members of the PTA were also members of women's clubs. Though PTA's had an indirect relationship with the women's club movement through individual

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid., 142.

members, one philanthropic organization for education that had a direct tie to the women's clubs in Georgia was the Student Aid Foundation. With increased participation of women in educational causes and the increased need for the perceived salvation of the lower classes, prominent women who were members of the Atlanta Woman's Club saw a need to help Georgia girls who were seeking an education beyond that of the public schools in their areas.

In 1908, fifteen of the founding members of the Atlanta Women's Club gathered to discuss the ever increasing problem of women meeting the financial obligations to attend a higher education institution. At the conclusion of the meeting, the women moved to have this issue addressed by the Education Department of the Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs. The organization, which would become the Student Aid Foundation, established by the Atlanta Women's Club, was the first such foundation sponsored by a State Federation of Women's Clubs and its purpose and methods were used as a model for other women's clubs around the United States.⁵² Each of the women contributed ten dollars to help establish the Student Aid Foundation and agreed to recruit others interested in providing financial assistance which "would secure and disburse funds for the education of needy girls in Georgia."⁵³ By 1923, the Student Aid Foundation had helped 251 girls from 145 towns in Georgia.

In 1908, C.P. Friar of Lavonia, Georgia, wrote to Dr. William H. Allen, educator and president of the Institute of Public Service in New York City, asking

⁵² Student Aid Foundation, "Minutes of the Student Aid Committee, 1908-1923," Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, GA, MSS1, Box 1, Folder 1.

⁵³ Student Aid Foundation, "Student Aid Foundation Reports, Annual, and Financial, 1909-1923," Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, GA, MSS1, Box 5, Folder 8.

for help in securing a small loan to send his 18-year-old daughter, Cora, to school to be trained as a teacher. Mr. Friar had four small children and made \$50 a month. At that time, \$100 was sufficient to send a girl to the Normal and Industrial College in Milledgeville, Georgia for one year.⁵⁴ In turn, Dr. Allen wrote to Mrs. Frank Woodruff seeking an organization in Georgia which helped young girls obtain higher education. Inspired by the Fulton County Educational and Loan Association, founded in 1892 "to promote the industrial and higher education of women," a group of 15 Atlanta women met to discuss the problems facing Georgia girls who needed financial help to continue their education.⁵⁵ The women were: Mrs. E.L. Connally, Mrs. James Jackson, Mrs. Bolling Jones, Mrs. Sam D. Jones, Mrs. M.A. Lipscomb, Mrs. E.G. McCabe, Mrs. Emma Garrett Morris, Mrs. John K. Ottley, Mrs. Robert E. Park, Mrs. W. P. Patillo, Mrs. H.B. Wey, Mrs. High Willett, Mrs. David Woodward, Mrs. Frank Woodruff, and Mrs. Robert Zahner.

When the women of the Atlanta Woman's Club met to establish the Student Aid Committee in 1908, they soon pleaded their case to the Georgia Federation of Women's Club and on November 17th, the bylaws were drawn. According to the bylaws of the Student Aid Committee, it would officially become a part of the Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs:

all its business, financial and otherwise shall be under its own control. All sums to the committee from subscriptions, gifts, or other source beyond what is needed for expenses will be disbursed as loans without interest to

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Student Aid Foundation, "Student Aid Foundation Correspondence, 1908-1936," Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, GA, MSS1, Box 4, Folder 3.

those applicants who are in good health and who pass with credit the investigation by the committee. All payments on the loan are to return to the original fund.⁵⁶

By February of 1909, the committee had secured pledges of \$226. The plan for aid appealed to “the strong, earnest girl and at the same time, becomes a valuable part of her training and education.”⁵⁷ The Student Aid Committee requested the cooperation of all club women who could assist either financially or through personal work. The goal at this point was to raise at least \$5,000 to work effectively and to raise it as quickly as possible.⁵⁸ In November of 1909, 7 clubs had contributed \$200 and the Student Aid Committee had loaned \$255 to seven girls. Within a year, the number of clubs donating money to the fund rose to twelve with \$317 being collected from the members. Raising \$5,000 was proving to be difficult for the Committee. In a letter to the GFWC, Mrs. H.B. Wey, the president of the Student Aid Committee, pleaded with the clubs to “help the earnest, honest, industrious girl,” that through their donations they would also help “her (the girls) the home and community from which she comes.”⁵⁹ Not only were Wey and the Committee trying to improve the situation of the poor girls, but also the community in which they lived.

One method of raising money for the loans which was particularly effective was the creation of various scholarships which were established to honor either

⁵⁶ Student Aid Foundation, “Reports, Annual, and Financial, 1909-1923.”

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Student Aid Foundation, “Letter to the President of the GFWC,” February 1909, MSS1, Box 1, Folder 1.

⁵⁹ Student Aid Foundation, “Letter to the President of the GFWC,” November 18, 1909, MSS1, Box 1, Folder 1.

past recipients of the loans or Student Aid Committee members who had passed away. In 1911, the first scholarship funds were established. The Perry Scholarship was a perpetual scholarship for the State Normal School of Georgia. The scholarship was for \$75 and stipulated that the faculty of the school must approve of the recipient.⁶⁰ Miss Eugenia Perry had been a recipient of money from the committee and requested to establish this fund. Margaret Galloway was the first recipient of the fund in 1911.⁶¹ The Sophia Sargent Boggs scholarship fund was established by the committee in memoriam of Ms. Boggs and also provided \$75 for a deserving girl to attend the State Normal School. Also, with the sum of \$75, the Caroline Baldwin Fund was established.⁶² In August of 1911, two scholarships for \$50 each were created in honor of the Women's Clubs as well as the Girls Canning and Poultry Club to send two girls to Piedmont College.⁶³

In 1910, nine students were loaned money which totaled \$470.⁶⁴ By 1911, the Student Aid Committee had given loans to twenty-one girls. According to Mrs. Wey, in a letter to the GAFWC, fourteen of the girls were self-supporting, five had paid loans in full, five were still paying loans, four had made no payments, and seven were in school (one at Agnes Scott College, three at the State Normal School in Athens, and three at Piedmont College), all in high standing. They came from across the state: Atlanta, Americus, Athens, Alpharetta, Brunswick, Boston, Cartersville, Cairo, Musella, Monticello, Midland,

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Student Aid Committee, "Minutes of the Student Aid Committee."

⁶⁴ Ibid.

Pavo, Roswell, Toccoa, and Tallapoosa. Two of the girls were in business offices, one a kindergartener, and eleven were teaching and making between thirty and sixty dollars a month.⁶⁵ They supported the cause of the Student Aid Committee and requested more donations from the GAFWC by arguing that on the “back of every loan is a story of struggle and deprivation and payments on loans are small, and often delayed because Georgia does not pay promptly her teachers salaries.”⁶⁶ The Student Aid Committee kept meticulous records of loans that had been made and what had been repaid. Figures 1 through 3 show detailed accounting of loans made through 1925. Though the repayment of the loans may have been slow, the majority of the girls did repay what they had received from the Student Aid committee. The girls were very appreciative of the opportunity they were given. One specific example was detailed in an article in the *Atlanta Constitution* in 1912 which showed the far reaching influence of the loaned money. The article presented a story of a girl who borrowed money from the committee for a year's training at the State Normal School to perfect her work in the rural schools of her county. Once she completed her training, she took charge of the country day school and at the end of the year had made enough money to pay her loan back in full. She started a night school for boys who could not attend during the day and at the end of her second year, she accumulated \$75 which she gave to the Student Aid Fund because she wanted to help others as she has been helped. She continued to do community work which has brought

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

back positive results.⁶⁷ This story showcased the purpose of the Student Aid Committee's work. The money it had loaned provided an educational opportunity to this young girl that she could not afford on her own and in the end, she gave back to her community by teaching in her home county and quickly repaid her loan with additional money donated to help other girls.

Not all of the girls who were loaned money were as exemplary as the one detailed above. If girls defaulted on loans, two reasons were cited most often: illness or marriage. Two young girls were discussed at great length by the committee because they were the first two to have defaulted on their loans, Mrs. Friar and Miss Cornelius. To deal with these defaults, the Committee suggested that the first step in recovering the money was to have members of the GAFWC who resided in the counties where these girls lived to try to locate them and inquire about the loan payments. Mrs. Wey took a personal interest in these two girls and "deeply regretted the lack of cooperation by these two girls and that for their own good they should repay the loans."⁶⁸ Mrs. Wey, as the president of the Student Aid Committee, wrote personal notes to each recipient of the loans and kept in constant contact to make sure that the girls were fulfilling their obligations to the GAFWC as well as their county and state.⁶⁹ By October of 1912, the Committee had received correspondence from Miss Cornelius who said she was sorry to had not made payments on the loans but had been ill and under heavy expenses. Mrs. Friar, however, had made no attempt to repay her loan though

⁶⁷ Student Aid Foundation, "Student Aid Foundation Newspaper Clippings, 1909-1929," Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center, MSS1, Box 4, Folder 8.

⁶⁸ Student Aid Foundation, "Student Aid Foundation Memorandums," Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center, MSS1, Box 7, Folder 3.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

STUDENT AID FOUNDATION LOANS
October 6, 1925.

NAME	LOANS	PAID	BALANCE
Miss Lula Allen	\$200.00	\$124.00	\$76.00
Mattie T. Aldermen	75.00		75.00
Ethel Marie Albright	125.00	90.00	35.00
Amanda Martha Brady	222.00	189.50	32.50
Martha Breedlove	250.00		250.00
Margaret Edwina Barley	150.00		150.00
Lois Claire Bourne	200.00	110.00	90.00
Mary Jewell Brown	225.00		225.00
Clara Frances Bright	75.00	50.00	25.00
Mary Lou Bell	125.00	54.00	71.00
Trumie Inez Bentley	250.00	165.00	85.00
Louise E. Burnley	125.00	90.00	35.00
Mary Lee Brinkley	150.00		150.00
Peggy Baker	100.00		100.00
Nellie Blythe Burnette	75.00		75.00
Elizabeth Balkcom (Mrs. C. E. Graves)	300.00	100.00	200.00
Emma Glin Bland	100.00	25.00	75.00
Ruby Marie Bell	375.00		375.00
Mary Burson	200.00		200.00
Loyce F. Cargile	200.00		200.00
Mary Arminda Carter	100.00	45.00	55.00
Lillie M. Chandler	150.00	30.00	120.00
Mary Elizabeth Cline	200.00	50.00	150.00
Mary Cook	400.00	20.00	380.00
Ava M. Curry	25.00		25.00
Nellie K. Calloway	75.00	15.00	60.00
Peggy V. Carson	150.00		150.00
Ethel Carter	60.00		60.00
Ide Mae Christopher	200.00		200.00
Leona Belle Dorsey	192.00		192.00
Dorothy Driskell	350.00		350.00
Tommie Lee Davis	65.00	40.00	25.00
Georgia Bigham Duggan	100.00	60.00	40.00
Mary Wyl Duggan	225.00		225.00
Ione Durden	75.00		75.00
Martha E. DuPree	150.00		150.00
William Elizabeth Davey	100.00	35.00	65.00
Lessie Davis	75.00		75.00
Tessie Davis	75.00		75.00
Frances Dillard	75.00		75.00
Dunnie Ellerbee	200.00		200.00
Mary Rosalyn Greene	200.00	100.00	100.00
Mildred Z. Hale	150.00		150.00
Georgia Ruth Humphreys	125.00		125.00
Mattie Lou Hammock	50.00		50.00
Jewel Wesson Heath	125.00	20.00	105.00
Opal Hale	70.00	51.00	19.00
Ross Harrison	200.00		200.00
Mrs. H. L. Heath	25.00		25.00
Marguerite L. Hubbs	250.00		250.00
Mary W. Hester	200.00		200.00
Mary Gertrude Huff	300.00		300.00
Lula Mae Ingram	150.00		150.00
Lucie Victoria Jones	375.00	100.00	275.00
Nora Jones	75.00		75.00
Lillie Mae Kinney	200.00	100.00	100.00
Jonnie E. Lattay	150.00		150.00

Figure 1. Student Aid loan ledger as of October 1925.

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NAME	LOANS	PAID	BALANCE
Miss Vassie Irene Bentley	\$100.00		\$100.00
" Martha N. Berner (married?)	250.00		250.00
" Mary E. Bishop	100.00		100.00
" Ida Catherine Bonner	29.00		29.00
" Barbara Marguerite Caldwell	300.00		300.00
" Belle Capps	50.00		50.00
" Irene Ludell Carson	225.00		225.00
" Cora Friar	25.00		25.00
" Maida Kelly Gammon	75.00		75.00
" Anna Kate Lancaster	40.00		40.00
" Lucile Clark Lee	250.00		250.00
" Annie Laura Leslie	250.00		250.00
" Alma E. McNeil	75.00		75.00
" Myrtle Milton	304.00		304.00
" Gladys Muse	250.00		250.00
" Clara G. Robinson (Mrs. ? McCurry)	200.00		200.00
" Agnes Lucretia Scarborough	50.00		50.00
" Bessie Mae Seay	300.00		300.00
" Ada Mae Shellnutt	100.00		100.00
" Mildred Thomas	35.00		35.00
" Bessie Linn Vorbees	200.00		200.00
" Polly Waller	75.00		75.00
" L. Almarine Watkins	200.00		200.00
" Sallie Joe Williams	200.00		200.00
" Mary Wood	415.00		415.00
	<u>4098.00</u>		<u>4098.00</u>
Miss Willie V. Dowdy (5th District Fund)	\$250.00	\$75.00	\$175.00
Miss Catherine R. Collins (2nd District Fund)	\$250.00		\$250.00

No payments

Figure 2. Student Aid loan ledger detailing girls who have defaulted on their loans as of October 1925.

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CELESTE PARRISH MEMORIAL FUND LOANS

NAME	LOANS	PAID	BALANCE
Miss A. Bernice Echols	\$150.00	\$50.00	\$100.00
" Harriet Elizabeth Colbert	450.00		450.00
" Clara Florence Bright	325.00		325.00
" Martha Rebekah Clark	100.00		100.00
" Annie Cannady	250.00		250.00
" Mary Rebecca Smith	350.00		350.00
	1625.00	50.00	1575.00

NEW LOANS - October 1st, 1924 to October 6, 1925.

Mary Burson	\$200.00
Margaret E. Baxley	150.00
Mary Lee Brinkley	150.00
Peggy Baker	100.00
Ida Mae Christopher	200.00
Loyce F. Cargile	200.00
Ava M. Curry	25.00
Peggy V. Carson	150.00
Ethel Carter	60.00
Ione Durden	75.00
Martha DuPree	150.00
Frances Dillard	75.00
Georgia Ruth Humphreys	125.00
Mildred Z. Hale	150.00
Mary W. Hester	200.00
Lula Mae Ingram	150.00
Nora Jones	75.00
Dorothy Moses	100.00
Curtis Louise Malcolm	175.00
Virginia J. Norton	100.00
Rose Antonio Neal	200.00
Jewell Pitts	100.00
Martha Irene Rawls	150.00
Jane Smith	300.00
Ellie Smalley	250.00
Leila Mae Weaver	50.00
Myrtle Wallace	200.00
Mary Estelle Wells	150.00
	<u>4210.00</u>

Figure 3. Student Aid Celeste Parrish Fund ledger as of October 1925.

it had been discovered that she was in a position to pay. Mrs. Wey stated that Ms. Friar “seemed to feel no responsibility to repay even though she is keeping other girls from receiving the benefit she once received.”⁷⁰ The Committee, for the first time in the three years since its inception, agreed to allow Mrs. Wey to decide if outside council should be sought to collect the \$25 from Ms. Friar. In response to this default, the Committee created an Office of Auditor.⁷¹ Even with the creation of this new office, based on the written account kept through 1958 by each president of the Student Aid Foundation, Ms. Cornelius eventually paid her debt, but Mrs. Friar never did.⁷²

Though women had found increased strength and influence both politically and socially during the Progressive Era, they still had little influence in business affairs. It became clear to the women of the Student Aid Committee that they needed the business backing of men in the community to secure the money they needed to help young women who wanted to obtain an education beyond what they afforded in the common schools of Georgia. They also discovered when dealing with the defaulting of Mrs. Friar’s loan that they needed the ability to seek and retain legal counsel. In November of 1912, the women of the Student Aid Committee decided that a board of trustees needed to be established to handle the donations that were being received, manage the funds that were available to loan, as well as make arrangements to take legal action if a loan was not being

⁷⁰ Student Aid Foundation, “Student Aid Foundation Miscellaneous (Personal Items), 1910-1975,” Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center, MSS1, Box 3, Folder 4.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Student Aid Foundation, “Student Aid Foundation Records, 1908-1977,” Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center, MSS 1, Box 2, Folder 6.

repaid in a timely manner.⁷³ At the time of the establishment of the board of trustees, the committee had loaned \$1,300 to “girls of very high character” and \$1,700 had been loaned in total.⁷⁴ The committee also recognized the need to solicit the general public for funds rather than just the women’s clubs of Georgia. By including men as members of the Board of Directors, the women were able to gain more support from the general public. In a letter of the solicitation, the Committee stated that “the fund accumulated will be cared for by men trustees (duly elected) and the most careful investigation will precede final action.”⁷⁵ What was not shared with the public was that only the women of the committee would decide which girls would receive the funds.

In addition to the letters of solicitation, the Committee also publicized its connection to a similar fund that had been established at the University of Georgia. The Joseph E. Brown loan fund was established for men and it served a similar purpose as the Student Aid Fund. The *Atlanta Constitution* touted that “the men and women in this state who subscribe to the fund may do so with the consciousness that philanthropy really plays the smallest part in the ultimate effect of their action - they are in reality making future dividends for Georgia by increasing the number of girls capable of earning dividends.”⁷⁶ The Board of Directors who would help in this philanthropic effort would consist of five people, three men and two women who would act as a self-perpetuating Board. The

⁷³ Student Aid Foundation, “Student Aid Foundation Minutes, 1908-1937,” Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, GA, MSS1, Box 4, Folder 7.

⁷⁴ Student Aid Foundation, “Student Aid Foundation Reports, Annual, and Financial, 1909-1923.”

⁷⁵ Student Aid Foundation, “Student Aid Foundation Correspondence, 1908-1936,” Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, GA, MSS1, Box 4, Folder 3.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

initial members would be: Mrs. Wey to represent the foundation, Mrs. Edward T. Brown, Mr. Hugh M. Willett, Mr. Z.D. Harrison, and Mr. David Woodward.⁷⁷ One of the first actions by the Board was in 1913 when it sent a letter, on legal letterhead, to Mrs. Friar requesting the repayment of her loan.⁷⁸ Unfortunately, even with the threat of legal action, no record is shown of Mrs. Friar repaying her debt.

The Board of Trustees, urged by Mr. Edward Brown, drew up a charter which created the Student Aid Foundation and on May 2, 1913, the Student Aid Committee officially became the Student Aid Foundation.⁷⁹ By March of 1915, the Student Aid Foundation showed receipts of \$7,401.19 (\$2,099.93 coming from women's clubs), disbursements of \$2,796.19 (\$2,205.00 going as loans), and a total of \$8,685.69. With a portion of the residual, the Foundation purchased \$2,000 worth of stock in the Georgia Railroad and Electric Company.⁸⁰ The Board of Trustees realized that the viability of the Foundation could not hinge on the donations from women's clubs and the general public so it began to generate money from the dividends of the stock it purchased. This would prove to be a wise decision. By the end of 1918, the Foundation showed total assets of \$12,157.20 with outstanding loans in the amount of \$7,917.00.⁸¹

The Student Aid Foundation, now ten years old, had shown itself as a viable organization for the young girls of Georgia. At a time when the United States was focused on the start of World War I, the women of the Student Aid

⁷⁷ Student Aid Foundation, "Minutes of the Student Aid Committee, 1908-1923."

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Student Aid Foundation, "Student Aid Foundation Reports, Annual, and Financial, 1909-1923."

⁸¹ Ibid.

Foundation saw a resurgence of patriotism as a way to secure more funds.

Though the repayment of loans had slowed due to the war effort in the United States, Mrs. Wey took this as an opportunity to further promote the cause of the Foundation. In a letter to the GAFWC in 1917, she wrote,

today the necessity for better training for our young people is emphasized as never before in our national history. Schools and Colleges of every class and rank are full to over-flowing; boys and girls of every walk in life are clamoring for training. They want to know how to do something. As a result, we are being called upon to make that training possible for some who could not otherwise obtain it. Our work, in one sense, be styled a war measure.⁸²

Many of the girls could not make loan payments during the World War I, but in 1917 the Foundation showed fifty-five girls applied for loans and twenty-six were granted. Twenty-nine loans could not be granted because the funds had been exhausted. The Foundation took pride in helping girls throughout Georgia and in 1917 the following counties were represented: Atlanta, Dawson, Jeffersonville, Morven, Lithonia, Dublin, Brunswick, Winder, Parrott, Commerce, Bolingbroke, St. Simon's, Raymond, Sale City, Locust Grove, Hoschton, Newnan, Douglas, Flemington, Perry, Pravo, Rockmart, Hartwell, Forsyth, Columbus, and Kirkwood.⁸³ See figure 1 for clarification of where these counties are located in Georgia as well as the number of girls from each who received loans from the Student Aid Foundation. Two girls were training to be nurses, three were in

⁸² Student Aid Foundation, "Student Aid Foundation Correspondence, 1928," Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, GA, MSS1, Box 6, Folder 7.

⁸³ Ibid.

business courses, fifteen were at state normal schools, two were at A and M School, two were at Bessie Tift, and one was at "Chicago University." Two things, according to the Foundation were obvious; "we are supporting girls all over Georgia and that our funds are inadequate."⁸⁴ The Foundation was only able to do half of what it wanted to do. The loans for 1917-1918 were \$1, 518. In this year, the collection on loans was the largest ever, the number of applicants was the largest, the number of applicants not granted was the largest, the number of clubs contributing was largest, and the Foundation assisted two other Federations in Missouri and New Mexico to organize similar work.⁸⁵ The work of the Student Aid Foundation was considered patriotic. The Student Aid Foundation was

doing its part, small though it may be, in training young women who will become trainers of children and community leaders as well....Our work, so to speak, is a war measure. Quite a number of our girls have brothers in the army and as a result have assumed financial burdens in the family which the brothers have laid down, often making payments on loans less frequent, almost impossible."⁸⁶

Despite the element of patriotism, World War I pushed the Foundation to reassess its own requirements for the loaning of money. In 1918, the Student Aid Foundation decided that girls must demonstrate sound health, moral and intellectual power, and the promise of usefulness to the community.

⁸⁴ Student Aid Foundation, "Student Aid Foundation Correspondence, 1908-1936."

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

The Foundation was pleased that it was meeting a great need, but when the war was over, it realized it would have to meet a greater demand as “teachers and workers must be prepared to do not only constructive but reconstructive work, and we must help educate.”⁸⁷ The Student Aid Foundation helped support these girls not only in their quest to get an education but also in their plight to provide for their families and the country.

The Student Aid Foundation had proved to be a powerful force in providing the financial backing for girls in Georgia who may not have afforded to obtain a higher education. The women of the Student Aid Foundation realized that they needed the backing of the men to further their work in the educating of the girls. The work of the Student Aid Foundation can best be described by President Thwing of Western Reserve College in 1918 when he said, “The lending of money to students seems to me one of the most effective ways of aiding our common democracy. The money given to help poor girls and boys comes back to the democracy in the form of nobler character and of greater personal efficiency. The result is a thousand fold gain.”⁸⁸ Not only were these women providing an education to poor girls in Georgia, they were also providing a hallmark of democracy.

⁸⁷ Student Aid Foundation, “Student Aid Foundation Minutes, 1913-1928,” Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, GA, MSS1, Box 3, Folder 1.

⁸⁸ Ibid. Thwing was a prolific writer on higher education. For more information on Charles Franklin Thwing, please see “Charles Franklin Thwing,” *American National Biography*, vol. 21, eds., John A. Garraty and Mark C. Carnes, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 638-639.

CHAPTER 5

Vocational Education and Manual Training

Disappointed by the poor quality of urban life and education during the Progressive Era, many Americans concentrated their hopes on the country schools, which they viewed as a wellspring of American virtues-the rugged individualism, moral and racial purity, and patrilocalism for their forebears. The country school's real appeal was to the past, a simpler, rural past the products of which- the small shopkeeper, one room schoolhouse, the neighborhood church, and the general sense of community -- small town life seemed to afford. The universal southern school would uplift by replacing sterile book knowledge with vital life experiences, by emphasizing, for example, the practical lessons of plant and animal husbandry over studying the Greek classics or reading Shakespeare. The work of the home, like the work of the school, would bring the child into sympathetic harmony with his surroundings.¹

If the United States were to turn the tide against city building and redirect itself toward its country districts, agriculture institutions would have to formulate a new social economy, setting the farm on a sounder scientific and organizational basis no less than a spiritual one. As properly husbanded and lovingly developed well-managed farms, they were potentially the nation's most abundant source not only of agricultural but of commercial prosperity as well. The greatest impact of farm and country life in general remained its educative power. For many education reformers, urban life had made the schools large machines that

¹ Heffron, 56-57.

turned out uniformly unhealthy, unintelligent, and unskilled young adults. In addition to Godliness, the urban child lacked the most important and basic ingredient of a good education, observational training.¹ Urban children were well versed in book knowledge, but they lacked the knowledge of everyday living in which rural children seemed to have. Rural children, who grew up learning how to run farms, were taught these skills by observing what happened on the farms. Progressive reformers saw this apparent need for observational training to be incorporated into the school curriculum.² One of the ways that this happened was through the support for manual training in the schools.

Manual Training for Youth

John D. Runkle in 1877 urged the Massachusetts Board of Education to incorporate manual training into the curriculum of the public high schools, arguing that the conventional curriculum was not successful in promoting high culture or in preparing the next generation for the world of industry. Manual training focused on teaching students a trade which reflected knowledge of an art or craft such as woodworking. His new manual arts curriculum would instill both the traditional respect for manual labor and prepare graduating students to make their way successfully in the new industrial world.³ He saw the new manual training as a bridge between the older values associated with the honest toil that had been the hallmark of the independence artisan so revered earlier in the 19th century and the mechanized forces being unleashed by the new and restructured

¹ Herbert M. Kliebard, *Schooled to Work: Vocationalism and the American Curriculum, 1876-1946* (New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1999), 25.

² Ibid., 31.

³ Ibid., 33.

industrial society.⁴ The emerging manual training movement embraced two almost contradictory justifications. At the same time that manual training seemed to preserve the values associated with the Protestant work ethic that had its origins in a preindustrial society, it seemed to address the needs of the new industrialism. In fact, the work ethic was in many ways at odds with the new industrial order. The old order relied on a work ethic that was a way of thinking rather than being concerned with efficiency. Work not only had dignity; it was also a moral imperative. The new manual training seemed to tap nostalgia for older values, giving a measure of comfort to Americans disconcerted by the rapid rise of the factories and the consequent decline of the artisan system. If work was being debased under the regime of the new factory system, it could at least be esteemed and perhaps even ennobled in schools.⁵ At the same time, manual training in schools appeared to be an appropriate response to a changing economic system where apprenticeship no longer fit. The school was being proposed as a mediating institution between an intimate and familiar world marked by traditional values and the increasingly impersonal and remote world of modern industry.

As a vehicle for resurrecting and preserving 19th century ideals and as a way of coming to terms with the new industrial society, manual training had a powerful appeal. The campaign for manual training became a morality play in which the mythic American hero was portrayed as a vigorous, bare-armed worker. That representation of the ideal American, a modernized version of the

⁴ Ibid., 35.

⁵ Ibid., 76.

antebellum noble artisan, was to do battle with bookish, ink-stained rivals for most of the 20th century. The theater in which the play was enacted was the American public school.⁶

Calvin M. Woodward supported manual training and his argument began to reflect a threefold emphasis: manual training as moral regeneration, pedagogical reform, and preparation for the workplace in the new industrial society.⁷ He promoted manual training as a part of general education. Traditional education was a two-legged stool which needed the leg of manual training to make it stable.⁸ Manual training was not a rival to traditional education, it completed it.

The question for manual training no longer was whether or not it should be a part of the public school curriculum but when it should be introduced. For example, William Torrey Harris was not antagonistic about the idea of manual training but he believed it should appear late and only after suitable attention had been given to intellectual culture. Harris' Committee on Pedagogics, a part of the National Education Association, recommended that the introduction of manual training be postponed until the pupil reached the age of twelve. This would ensure that the child had a proper foundation in reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, grammar, and history. The child's increased maturity would also enhance the effectiveness of the instruction. He was concerned that the idea that it was the school's responsibility to forecast a child's placement could result

⁶ Ibid., 34.

⁷ Ibid., 122.

⁸ Ibid. For more information on the Committee on Pedagogics, see Zalmon Richards, *History of the National Education Association of the United States: Its Organization and Functions, Historical Sketch* (New York, NY: Press of J.J. Little and Company, 1892), 41-45.

in limitations on the child's intellectual and spiritual development. Woodward countered Harris by arguing that in school more than books should be studied.⁹

Manual training was seen as particularly beneficial for those segments of society that were believed to require remedial treatment for one reason or another. Even before the Civil War, manual training was prescribed for delinquent children in northeastern cities and it was the education of choice for children with physical disabilities.¹⁰ The poor as a class were also among the earliest target groups for the supporters of manual training since their impoverished condition was in part deemed to be a function of defective values. Furthermore, manual training was increasingly being seen as a curative power for immigrants as well as for various ethnic and racial minorities.¹¹ For example, Native Americans were taught farming and trades such as blacksmithing, shoemaking, and harness repair. Native American girls were taught to mend and make clothing, washing, ironing, and cooking.¹²

Though manual training was not supposed to compete with liberal education, it often did. School officials had to deal with the day-to-day realities of implementing an ideal that had considerable costs. Manual training required uncommon tools, equipment, and space. The reality hit hard when bills had to be paid. To deal with the realities of teaching manual training, special schools were created. The special schools and programs were to elevate the working classes

⁹ Herbert M. Kliebard, *The Struggle for the American Curriculum, 1893-1958* (New York, NY: RoutledgeFalmer, 2004), 119-120.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 95-96.

¹¹ Kliebard, *Schooled to Work*, 35.

¹² *Ibid.*, 37.

and close the social gap between artisans and the other classes.¹³ When there was a reluctance to implement proposed reforms, often outside groups would initiate the change and actually develop the curriculum. Once the curriculum was in place, and the public reaction was favorable, the public schools were compelled to accept the change.¹⁴ As an example, a group of women, the Milwaukee Public School Cooking Association, felt that girls were being allowed to grow up without the knowledge of housewifely arts. They wanted to see cooking classes introduced into the public school curriculum which would teach girls about wholesome food and the health and welfare of the home. Physical limitations kept this program out of the schools even with a strong public interest from parents.¹⁵ Moral virtues were pointed to as well as additional outcomes such as cleanliness, industry, and discipline by school managers as positive results of public school training. The program of cooking served not only to serve traditional roles and values but also created a kind of noble artisan for women that incorporated the idea that scientifically based cooking program that would bring the benefits of proper nutrition and hygiene.¹⁶ The Milwaukee Girls Trade School enjoyed support by leading activist women who felt that the home was no longer preparing young women to assume traditional roles.

By 1909, vocational education was seen as a successful school reform that benefited both girls and boys, but what form it should take remained ambiguous. Vocational education should provide a parallel education for boys

¹³ Ibid., 45.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid. 55-60.

¹⁶ Kliebard, *Struggle for the American Curriculum*, 14-18.

and girls because girls also deserved an education that provided an opportunity for financial independence. The girl's program reflected domestic arts which aligned with what was considered women's work (dressmaking, sewing, millinery, cooking, applied art and design, and academic work). The public schools were now offering occupational training for boys and it seemed only right and proper that girls should also be given vocational training although it was intertwined with preparation for being a wife and mother. Unlike the boys program, girls did not receive a diploma when they completed the program.¹⁷

Emphasis also began to be placed on training a new type of teacher. The ordinary school teacher did not know anything about industry or how to teach it. Dr. Charles McCarthy, one of the planners of the Wisconsin Vocational and Adult Education Program, believed that teachers should be skilled workers who had taken a short course for teachers.¹⁸ Training teachers to teach vocational education took money that many states did not have, so finding other sources of funding became very important. Federal support became key to a successful vocational education program which included training teachers. The South, in particular, had a difficult time securing funds for vocational education because of a meager economic base. The support of schools in the South as well as industrial education led to a tremendous support by southern congressmen for the Smith-Hughes Act which was originally introduced in 1914 and finally passed in 1917. It established the financial backing for vocational education program as long as states set up a vocational board whose job would be to develop a plan of

¹⁷ Kliebard, *Schooled to Work*, 136.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 143.

how to use the funds. The board was to set strict guidelines in terms of the beneficiaries of the legislation, the instructional time that would be devoted to vocational education, and the actual content to insure the money could not be expanded for general education purposes.¹⁹ The General Federation of Women's Clubs lobbied aggressively for Congress to add a provision that would provide funding for home economics programs for girls, and it was added to the bill in preference of supporting industrial education for women.²⁰ Home economics was considered desirable for rural girls; the program typically included raising poultry and vegetable gardening, although in the 1920s only 6% of young women were enrolled in vocational agriculture.²¹ Despite the notion that home economics would keep the women down on the farm, home economics enrollments were smaller in rural areas as compared to urban areas. Rural women, just as their urban counterparts, tended to gravitate more toward clerical work, teaching, and nursing rather than farm work.²² In 1880, 6% of clerical workers were women and by 1910, women made up 35% of the clerical workforce.²³ Clerical work, however, was not included in the funding provided by the Smith Hughes Act, despite the fact that in 1900, the number of girls enrolled in commercial courses in public high schools was 35,757 and by 1917, enrollment jumped to 138,043.²⁴ New opportunities were being opened for women even though office and clerical work was still male-dominated. With

¹⁹ Ibid., 165.

²⁰ Mrs. Percy V. Pennybacker, "The Eighth Biennial Convention of the General Federation of Women's Clubs," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 28 (September 1906): 79-84.

²¹ Kliebard, *Schooled to Work*, 157.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid., 163.

²⁴ Ibid., 164.

emphasis placed on home economics and agriculture, the creators of the Smith-Hughes Act missed the target for women's education.

Southern women's clubs worked initially in urban areas, but over time their efforts were superseded when the professionalization of public welfare and public agencies took over the responsibilities for the urban poor. They then turned their attention to rural reform, especially the education of the poor children of the rural communities. The GAFWC contributed significantly to this effort by establishing and supporting industrial and model schools for mountain children in northern Georgia, specifically the Tallulah Falls School.

The Light in the Mountains: The Tallulah Falls School

Given the dire conditions of rural education in Georgia and around the Southeast, the clubwomen responded by supporting traveling libraries, providing scholarships to young women to attend normal schools, establishing free kindergartens, promoting manual and vocational training, and beautifying school campuses. They also supported the use of scientific methods which was a part of the progressive education movement. During the 1890s, the GAFWC, in cooperation with the state school commissioner, had conducted surveys and published their findings of school conditions from kindergarten to the university in the state.²⁵ Due to these surveys, the clubwomen came to understand that higher education for women was inseparable from the improvement of the rural schools. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries in Georgia, educational opportunities for women were limited to the state normal school and single sex

²⁵ Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs, "Tallulah Falls School Scrapbook, 1907," Tallulah Falls School Museum, Tallulah Falls, GA.

schools such as the Lucy Cobb Institute, and LaGrange, Agnes Scott, and Wesleyan Colleges.²⁶ As early as 1896, the clubwomen petitioned the University of Georgia to admit women. It was not until 1918 that women were allowed to enroll in the University's College of Agriculture and Education although not in the College of Liberal Arts.²⁷

Southern women played a distinct role in helping to rebuild the educational and political infrastructure of the new South. They did so by working with other women's volunteer organizations such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Daughters of the American Revolution, and the Southern Association of College Women. At the same time, they had to negotiate their reformist roles within a power structure that was largely male. Although northern women often deferred to male legislators and businessmen, southern women had to mediate traditional images and expectations of what it meant to be a Southern lady.²⁸ For example, Mary Ann Lipscomb, a southern club woman, while speaking at the Columbian World Exposition in Chicago in 1893, stated that "I am not an advocate of woman's rights in the opprobrious sense of that expression. I do not care to see—hope never to see the women of American leave the quiet sanctity of their homes and thrust themselves into the political world."²⁹ She argued in that same speech that women were not only as capable as men but also better than them at handling money. So that this argument did not seem too radical, she

²⁶ Darlene Rebecca Roth, *Matronage: Patterns in Women's Organizations, Atlanta, Georgia, 1890-1940* (Brooklyn, NY: Carlson Publishing, Inc., 1994), 27.

²⁷ Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs, "Tallulah Falls School Scrapbook, 1913-1922," Tallulah Falls School Museum, Tallulah Falls, GA.

²⁸ Anne Firor Scott, *Natural Allies: Women's Associations in American History* (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 63-66.

²⁹ Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs, "Tallulah Falls School Scrapbook, 1903-1917," Tallulah Falls School Museum, Tallulah Falls, GA.

had to qualify her position by making sure that women, in her view, would still fit the mold of a southern lady whose main concern was taking care of the hearth and home.

In 1900, the GFWC decided to establish twelve model schools in rural areas to teach industry and thrift by adding industrial and agricultural training to existing schools. Clubwomen were not the only ones to open model schools. Religious organizations and other women's volunteer organization such as the Daughters of the American Revolution also opened model schools throughout the Appalachian South. As of 1920, there were over one hundred and fifty settlement and model school in remote mountain villages with sixteen of them in Georgia. The GFWC considered these schools as being "more human, more rational, and more nearly related to the life of the children and the home in which they lived."³⁰

One of the driving forces behind the founding of the Tallulah Falls School was Mary Ann Lipscomb. Lipscomb had vacationed in Tallulah Falls, Georgia since she was a young girl and she owned a house there as an adult. The daughter of William Cobb Rutherford, a professor at the University of Georgia, she grew up on the campus of the university and had a particular devotion to education. She graduated from the Lucy Cobb Institute and worked as a literature teacher until she married Francis Adgate Lipscomb in 1869.³¹ In 1903, she returned to vacation in Tallulah Falls with her grandchildren. As she watched

³⁰ Mary I Wood, *The History of the General Federation of Women's Clubs: for the First Twenty Years of its Organization* (Chicago, IL: Norwood Press, 1912), 146.

³¹ Carol Stevens Hancock, *The Light in the Mountains: The Story of the Tallulah Falls School* (Toccoa, GA: Commercial Publishing Company, 1975), 10-11.

the mountain children play with her grandchildren, she realized that the mountain children could not read or write.³² She quickly discovered that there was not a regular school house for these children to attend and the space that was available was a room above the county jail which, in the words of Lipscomb was "a place not so good as an ordinary barn."³³ She was convinced that mountain people were of good Anglo-Saxon stock and should be considered some of Georgia's most valuable assets so she was determined to open a school for them. The residents were not very receptive to the idea of a new school, but Lipscomb continued to engage them and over time they became interested and even offered assistance when they could.³⁴ As a member of the GAFWC, Lipscomb decided to solicit the women's help. In 1904, she sent a letter to the member clubs asking for their cooperation. In 1905, at the annual convention, the GAFWC decided to adopt the development of the Tallulah Falls School as a project. Their first activity was to establish a board of trustees with five members. Lipscomb was appointed the first president of the school.³⁵

Lipscomb was determined to adapt the curriculum to what she perceived to be the needs of the mountain children. She and other club members were concerned that many day schools established by outsiders in other remote southern regions had failed because they lacked a connection to the community and region in which they were situated.³⁶ Lipscomb had the foresight to get the

³² Andra Mari Knecht, "The Tallulah Falls School: Female Reform and Rural Education in the New South," Master's thesis, Mississippi State University, 2005: 5.

³³ Georgia Federation of Women's Club, "Scrapbook, 1907".

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Andra Mari Knecht, "'We are from the City; and We are Here to Educate You': The Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs and the Tallulah Falls School," in *The Educational Works of*

community involved as much as possible in the planning of the school and its operation. Lipscomb understood that the curriculum needed to take into account the economic and geographical aspects of the local region in order for the school to be successful. For example, the students were expected to learn what crops would grow best in their area and how to grow them. Girls were expected to learn sewing and cooking so that they would know the best way to care for their families using materials and foods that would be readily available.³⁷ The clubwomen thought that if the mountain people could achieve an adequate standard of living in their communities, they would not migrate to the mill and factory towns.³⁸ Urban reformers complained that the migration of rural people to urban centers caused problems because they were unable to interact appropriately with city people. Their innocence about the way of cities made them vulnerable to those who might take advantage of them, so improving education in the mountains was the solution to both problems.

Lipscomb began to raise money for the land and materials to make the school a reality. Mrs. BMA Young Cartledge, a resident of Tallulah Falls, donated the initial five acres of land with the condition that the school had to be built within two years. W.J. Barnett, an architect from Athens agreed to design the school for Lipscomb, and Jonathan Lambert of Clarkesville, GA agreed to construct the school for \$2,900. Lipscomb, however, could not secure the funds in a timely manner and the opportunity was lost. In 1907, Lipscomb secured

Women's Organizations, 1890-1960, ed. Anne Meiss Knupfer and Christine Woyshner (New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), 12-15.

³⁷ Hancock, 67.

³⁸ Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs, "Scrapbook, 1903-1917."

enough funds to purchase five acres of land from Sarah E. White with a stipulation that the school be built within two years. Still using the Barnett's design, Lipscomb secured the construction of the school at an estimated cost of \$2,000 by Alex Saye, a builder from Athens.³⁹

Originally, the GAFWC decided to be the sole operator of the school which would make it the "only industrial federated school in the United States."⁴⁰ On June 30, 1909, with over one hundred in attendance, the school was formally dedicated. Local officials were supportive of the school. However, no newspaper within forty miles of the school reported either the dedication or the opening of the school, not due to the number of dignitaries in attendance, (there were enough to justify such reports) but because the people the school was to help were mostly illiterate, the editors of these papers may have considered the story fruitless and unworthy of coverage.⁴¹ The *Atlanta Constitution* did regularly cover the school over the years.⁴² This may be in part because the women's club had a dedicated club section in the paper.

The GAFWC worked hard to hire qualified teachers for the school. The salaries of rural school teachers were meager and the Tallulah Falls School was no different. The first teacher at the school, Annie Thrasher, taught at the school from July to September of 1909 when she had to return to her regular teaching job in nearby Watkinsville. Frances Campbell, a graduate of the state normal school, filled the vacancy. Two other state normal school graduates, Madeline

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs, "Scrapbook, 1907."

⁴¹ Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs, "Scrapbook, 1913-1922."

⁴² Ibid.

Quillan and Gladys White, soon joined Campbell to teach until winter vacation in December. Initially there was a high turnover, but the school began to reap what it had sown when former female students attended the state normal school and returned to Tallulah Falls School to teach, and most of the teaching staff up until 1921 was female.⁴³

The teachers did find it difficult to find appropriate living quarters near the school. In 1910, the GAFWC agreed to build a model cottage at the school where the teachers would be able to live. The plan also included space for two to twelve students to live since some lived too far away to commute every day. The community became involved in the building of the model cottage through the donation of plans, lumber, hardware, and money. The policy of the board of trustees was not to incur debt, so contributions were gladly accepted until the necessary materials and funds were collected to build the cottage. While waiting for the necessary funds, the GAFWC rented a small house which the Atlanta Woman's Club furnished with donated furniture and other furnishings. Initially, two students boarded with the teachers including a "big strong capable boy" who received the first scholarship and who hoped to go to the State Agriculture School.⁴⁴ By the end of 1910, the school plant had expanded to include a five-room school building with school rooms: a sewing room, a kitchen, a workshop, and a school parlor with a piano. The campus was valued at an estimated \$5,000 and the school had an overall annual operating cost of \$1,200.⁴⁵

⁴³ Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs, "Scrapbook, 1907-1917." and Knecht, "The Tallulah Falls School," 45.

⁴⁴ Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs, "Scrapbook, 1907-1917."

⁴⁵ Ibid.

The school plan was consistent with the philosophy of Philander Claxton who was affiliated with the Southern Education Board (SEB) and was also the head of the Department of Education for the SEB and the new Summer School of the South in Knoxville, TN. Claxton, like many other southern progressive reformers, thought the teacher's house should be the community center of the mountain school. By being the center, the teachers could easily model how community members, particularly women, could improve their living conditions.⁴⁶ In a perfect world, the school would have a shop, a large assembly room, an orchard, gardens, and vineyards. The community was now eager to take care of the school. In 1910, Thomas A Early, professor of school extension for the University of Georgia, volunteered to help plant an apple orchard and school garden. He worked side by side with the students and residents of Tallulah Falls to clear the land. The men of the community also used tools that had been donated to build the school's workshop. The workshop was an important addition to the school because it provided space for the boys to work before they would leave for home while the girls had the opportunity to stay in the afternoons to learn domestic science lessons.⁴⁷ In addition to regular academic class work outlined by the state, the students took part in industrial work such as basketry, gardening, animal husbandry, field work, and cooking. Cooking classes were held each week and the students took special interest in learning new recipes. They wrote down the recipes in notebooks and took them home to introduce the recipes to their families. Some of the new foods that were introduced were

⁴⁶ Knecht, "We are from the City; and We are Here to Educate You," 196.

⁴⁷ Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs, "Scrapbook, 1913-1922."

biscuits, muffins, and stuffed potatoes. Teachers emphasized using local products and as a result, the school cooking lessons repeated themselves “all through the mountains round about.”⁴⁸ Parents were accepting of the school as is evidenced by the increase in the number of students attending as well as the increase in the number of students living in the model cottage. By the time school closed for the winter, the number of students had quadrupled from twenty to eighty-six.⁴⁹ The school was meeting what Claxton's vision of mountain schools should be, the center of the community.⁵⁰ For example, the school hosted a Christmas celebration before the school closed for Christmas vacation. The children helped set up and decorate two holly trees. They made gifts such as baskets and pin cushions for their family members. One grandmother walked several miles to see the Christmas trees since she had never seen them before. According to the clubwomen who attended the celebration and the teachers, many of the children had never seen a Christmas tree nor knew the Christmas story.⁵¹

From 1909 to 1912, the school had grown from twenty students, one building, and one teacher to eighty-six students, two buildings, and three teachers.⁵² Though many rural schools in the South were open five months out of the year, Lipscomb wrote that she and the other clubwomen had not realized that the previous school in Tallulah Falls, which has been housed in the jail, was only open three months out of the year and that the school was uninhabitable

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs, "Scrapbook, 1903-1917."

⁵⁰ Knecht, "We are from the City; and We are Here to Educate You," 200.

⁵¹ Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs, "Scrapbook, 1903-1917."

⁵² Knecht, "We are from the City; and We are Here to Educate You," 200.

and the quality of the teaching was poor.⁵³ Lipscomb wanted to ensure that the Tallulah Falls School did not fall into this pattern of decay and she needed to make sure that needed funds would be available to keep the school operating most of the year. Local taxation was not a solution since there was very little to tax. Nevertheless, the Tallulah Falls School lies in a very peculiar and advantageous position, straddling the line between two counties: Rabun and Habersham. Due to its location, the school was adopted by both counties and it received county funds regularly from both. The only other means of financial backing for the school came from donations by the clubwomen plus \$150 from the state.⁵⁴ The amount given by the state to rural schools was very small in comparison to urban schools. In 1907, Georgia spent less than \$4 per rural student as compared to \$10 for each urban student.⁵⁵

Fortunately, the Tallulah Falls School was able to meet its monthly operating costs of \$125 during its early years primarily due to the contributions of the clubwomen.⁵⁶ Lipscomb asked that the clubwomen continue to support the school's industrial program to "equip the children for lives of usefulness and independence in their own local environment."⁵⁷ Not all GAFWC's supported the school. In 1914, only eighty of the two hundred and forty-six federated clubs pledged their support and of these, only thirty donated money.⁵⁸ Many of the clubwomen were involved in other social reform movements which took their time

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 199.

⁵⁶ Knecht, "We are from the City; and We are Here to Educate You," 196.

⁵⁷ Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs, "Scrapbook, 1913-1922."

⁵⁸ Ibid.

and financial resources. In addition, many were focused on the selling of war bonds and knitting for soldiers. Despite these limitations, the thirty clubs provided enough funds for the school's continued operation.

Lipscomb capitalized on the increase in American patriotism by promoting the teaching of patriotism to the students so they would become better citizens. She encouraged students to learn the history of the Red Cross and join its ranks. She also encouraged teachers to gather the students around a "good wood fire and give them a lesson on patriotism with practical illustration."⁵⁹ Students in turn purchased thrift stamps to "do their bit for the government, show their loyalty and patriotism, and at the same time lay by something for the future for themselves."⁶⁰ Clubwomen's concern for patriotism may have also been in response to the fact that many of the mountain people were opposed to secession and were disaffected toward the Confederacy from the beginning of the Civil War. Union sentiments had been predominant in mountain people during the Civil War. The mountain counties had voted for the Union in 1861 and had resisted conscription in 1863.⁶¹ Lipscomb concluded that the allegations against the mountain people regarding their loyalty to the South were wrong when she questioned one young mountain boy how he felt about the draft law. The young boy replied that "if my country needs me, I am ready and willing to go."⁶² Lipscomb thought they were "a brave and sturdy set of boys and would

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Hancock, 66.

⁶² Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs, "Scrapbook, 1913-1922."

make good soldiers."⁶³ She also concluded that "with our mountain girls working in the Red Cross and buying books of Thrift Stamps there need be no fear of loyalty and bravery of our mountain boys."⁶⁴ In fact, seven of the boys were already members of the military and others were waiting to be called. Some of the students joined the Red Cross after earning money for the membership fee. Others, who could not afford the fee, made knitting needles and constructed furniture from rhododendrons to sell for the war cause.⁶⁵

In 1914, Lipscomb was forced to step down as president of the school due to failing health. Lucy Lester Willett took her place. Willett had been the president of the GAFWC from 1909 to 1911. At the time of Lipscomb's departure, there were eighty-six students enrolled in grades one through eight. The school plant was now valued at over \$10,000 and the school plant now included a model kitchen, workshop, model home with three teachers and seven students in residence, a library, orchards, and gardens. Willet worked with W.I. Duggan, a state education supervisor, to bring the school up to the standards of progressive industrial schools. They decided that in order to meet the standards they needed to add five more acres and a playground. Lipscomb once again stepped in to raise funds to purchase the land and helped to raise the \$500 needed.

With the help of Celeste Parrish, the state school supervisor who oversaw 2,000 rural schools in Georgia, Willet revised the school's industrial curriculum. Parrish was committed to John Dewey's philosophy of connecting children's

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

home and community life to schools. She encouraged teachers to engage the school children in meaningful activity, convinced that all elementary education grew out of and should be centered on the life and experience of the child; hence the work was to have its basis in the industries which were essential to the home and the community. Education in country schools should help to foster a sort of life which would be so attractive to the best young men and women in the country communities so as to furnish a strong check to the growing tendency to leave the country and rush into city life, without any real fitness for that life.⁶⁶

In keeping with this philosophy, the teachers at the Tallulah Falls School taught lessons in raising poultry and dairying and organized canning clubs for girls and corn and pig clubs for boys. In 1917, the school offered courses in basketry, weaving, knitting, woodworking, cabinet making, carpentry, furniture making, wood carving, shoe repairing, sewing, crocheting, and gardening.⁶⁷ The townspeople became involved in teaching as well. Local women offered lessons in sewing and crocheting and a cobbler taught shoe repair. The students themselves helped defray costs. They built furniture for the school from rhododendrons and their work in the gardens and dairy also helped with the costs of running the school.⁶⁸

Though the students did what they could to help with the costs of running the school, Lucy Willet was still concerned about the rising cost of the school and

⁶⁶ Celeste S. Parrish, "An Educational Development in Georgia," *The Elementary School Teacher* 6 (November 1905): 136.

⁶⁷ Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs, "Scrapbook, 1913-1922."

⁶⁸ Hancock, 137.

the relatively low endowment. To continue the tradition of fundraising started by Lipscomb, Willet wrote to the GAFWC's district presidents. She explained that,

like the teachers, I often work from 6 a.m. until 12 at night. Last year (1916) I wrote 550 letters personally, paid out of my own funds \$100.00, made nine trips to Tallulah at my own expense....It takes time and thought and many times when funds are low it is an almost maddening responsibility.⁶⁹

Willet was particularly concerned about the teachers who were not paid when funds ran short. Despite her efforts, Willet was unsuccessful at building the endowment until in 1918, Lipscomb's children donated \$5,000 on the condition that the women's clubs of Georgia and friends of the school raise an additional \$25,000. By 1926, \$26,000 was pledged.⁷⁰

In 1920, Willet and state school superintendent Joseph Brittain met to discuss separating the public school from the industrial school. One of the changes proposed was that day students would change to the public school after the current year. Out of the eighty-five students who were currently enrolled, sixty-one would be forced to change to the public school. With this change, Brittain argued that the GAFWC could then focus solely on the industrial school as well as the students who had to board at the school due to the distance they traveled to attend. Brittain agreed that notice should be given to the day students since a statewide local tax law had just been passed and residents of the counties would now be assessed a new tax that would help pay for a local public

⁶⁹ Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs, "Scrapbook, 1913-1922."

⁷⁰ Knecht, "We are from the City; and We are Here to Educate You," 195.

school.⁷¹ Residents of Rabun County, however, were not pleased and did not want a public school of their own. They wanted the choice of continuing to send their children to the Tallulah Falls School. They even offered to "pay for the privilege."⁷² The local tax law was passed and a local public school was established. Many of the residents of Rabun County, however, did continue to send their children to the Tallulah Falls School.⁷³

The school continued to thrive in the northeast mountains of Georgia even when public schools began to be built and residents made the decision to send their children to the local public school rather than the Tallulah Falls School. Over the years, the school would transition from one president to another who would continue to follow the mandates of the GAFWC. The clubwomen realized that they needed to find an additional base of students since the local children were now going to the local public schools. They began to advertise and reach out to students in other Georgia cities and neighboring states. This change in student population forced the clubwomen to find creative ways to keep the school open and financially viable. In 1974, the school briefly became a public school, and then in 1980 it reverted back under the sole direction of the GAFWC.⁷⁴

Through schools like the Tallulah Falls School, clubwomen in Georgia were able to improve the educational opportunities of rural whites. Seeing that the state was neglecting its responsibility to educate the mountain children, the GAFWC stepped in to

⁷¹ Ibid., 196-200.

⁷² Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs, "Scrapbook, 1913-1922."

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs, "A History of Achievement: Traditions Grown Deep in our Mountain Heritage Continue to Shape our School's Present and Future," The Tallulah Falls School [article on-line] available from http://www.gafwc.org/html/tallulah_falls_school.html; Internet; accessed 15 April 2008.

provide that educational opportunity. Though Andra Mari Knecht provides a comprehensive analysis of the Tallulah Falls School and the role the GAFWC played in its viability, this chapter has delved more deeply into the financial and philanthropic works performed by the clubwomen. Women such as Mary Ann Lipscomb were able to raise funds to build a school for the mountain children at a time when women were not in a position of power. It is a testament to the philanthropic nature of the GAFWC that the school still stands today and has been able to stand the test of time for over a century. The school still today provides that educational opportunity for the mountain children of Georgia, even though the student population is much more diverse with students coming from all over the world.

CHAPTER 6

Concluding Remarks and Considerations for Future Research

As an educational historian who often focuses on women's history, it was difficult to narrow down all of the good works that women's clubs did in Georgia during the Progressive Era. This endeavor started with my interest in female teachers as professionals, changed into a study on the Georgia Normal and Industrial College in Milledgeville, Georgia, and finally ended up at the doorstep of the Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs. It is interesting to see the evolution of an idea and how that idea grows to become something completely different from where it started.

Throughout this dissertation, I traced the social and political origins of the women's club movement and tied those origins to the development of women's clubs in Georgia during the Progressive Era. What could be lost in the origins, however, is the overall goal of these women's clubs and organizations to cure the social ills of an industrialized America. Curing these ills became increasingly difficult because of the increasing number of immigrants who were entering the United States and had to be shown the proper American way as well as the need to combat increased poverty that was being seen in the burgeoning urban slums.

Women's clubs in Georgia, though their lifestyles were regionally different from their northern and western sisters, still combated what they perceived as the ignorance of rural mountain whites and the reconstruction of a devastated South after the Civil War. Southern children had to be cared for and shown the proper

way to live within their own communities so that these communities would once again thrive. Though southern club women had to fight their own battles with the patriarchal hierarchy of America and particularly the South, they still found ways to use the system to their advantage. Whether through municipal housekeeping or social mothering, club women used the Progressive Era ideology to their advantage so that they could begin to repair social ills.

Though there were many women's organizations who targeted specific social ills that did not necessarily narrowly focus on children, such as the WCTU and their fight for prohibition, I chose to focus specifically on club women in Georgia and how they influenced the education of white children. Three clubs, in particular, demonstrated the various ways in which club women in Georgia were involved in educational change: the Atlanta Woman's Club, the Athens Women's Club, and the Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs. These three organizations' records provide a comprehensive look at the works of women's clubs in Georgia. After culling through the research available from these organizations, I narrowed down to the topics that I explored in this paper: the development of women's clubs in Georgia, free kindergartens, the Tallulah Falls School, and the Student Aid Foundation.

Each of these developments were important to the further development of education in Georgia during the Progressive Era. The overall establishment of women's clubs in Georgia provided the impetus for the changes that took place during this time period. These women provided a focus to particular areas of need in the South that men did not see or did not have time to address.

Women's club members found an easy transition from their role as mother to their role as municipal housekeeper.

Their role as social mothers provided the opportunity for them to take care of the young in Georgia which led to the development of free kindergartens. Though these kindergartens started as educational institutions for children of factory and mill workers, middle-class women soon saw the validity of sending their own children to kindergartens. Not only did clubwomen focus on the children of mill workers, but they also saw a need in educating the children of rural mountain people. This need led to the establishment of the Tallulah Falls School in Tallulah Falls, Georgia. This school, which started as a five-room schoolhouse, still exists today with students from all over the world and it continues to be under the guidance of the GAFWC.

Clubwomen in Georgia also saw the need to trained girls to teach in the common schools. One of the most unique organizations that grew out of the club movement in Georgia was the establishment of the Student Aid Foundation. This foundation, which still exists today, provided much needed funds to needy white girls who wanted an education beyond what they could get in their local common school. In providing these social services to the poor and needy of Georgia, white clubwomen began to alter the meaning of philanthropy. Where the traditional view of philanthropic giving revolved around large monetary donations such as those given by George Peabody, John D. Rockefeller, and Andrew Carnegie, these women began to demonstrate that philanthropy goes beyond money. White clubwomen did demonstrate some ability to give monetarily as

evidenced by the money raised by the Student Aid Foundation, but their time and devotion to social problems was much more apparent. The Georgia clubwomen were not focused solely on raising what were large amounts of money for them nor were they focused solely on volunteer work. They successfully combined both of these and demonstrated that philanthropic activities did not only involve the raising of money, but also the giving of one's time. What is interesting is that in all three cases – the establishment of free kindergartens, the Tallulah Falls School, and the Student Aid Foundation – the clubwomen were able to not only give of their time, but they were also successful in raising small amounts of money to implement their ideas. With these small amounts of money, the clubwomen were able to influence education in Georgia from the establishment of free kindergartens to the loaning of money to needy white girls. The tightly woven organization of women's clubs as well as the media outlet provided by the *Atlanta Constitution* allowed clubwomen to enter the homes of many Georgians to seek help to implement their ideas. It is this focus on the philanthropic activities of the Georgia clubwomen that sets this dissertation apart from similar studies. Andra Mari Knecht has written several comprehensive works on the activities of the women's club in Georgia, but she does not examine how these works are philanthropic in nature, but rather she focuses on the social ramifications through the lens of gender. Though gender is one lens that I used to analyze my findings, it has been viewed mostly through that of the relationship of gender, social class, and philanthropy. Christine Woyshner provided a wonderful avenue to explore the idea of women's philanthropy in the Progressive

Era and allowed me to structure my arguments so that free kindergartens, the Tallulah Falls School, and the Student Aid Foundation could all be viewed together as a way to understand how these women had to reconcile gender roles and social class to implement their ideas.

There are several opportunities that still need further investigation and I know that I have just scratched the surface of the influence these women had and still have on education in Georgia. In many of the records of the Atlanta Woman's Club, the Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs, and news articles from the club page of the *Atlanta Constitution*, compulsory education and child labor was discussed by clubwomen. How influential these women were on the passage of compulsory education and child labor laws, I do not know, but it is worth investigating to find out if these women were able to use their limited political power to help in this endeavor. Within this same framework, a more in-depth study of the political paradigm in which these women had to maneuver would also be an interesting study to see how they navigated their still subordinate political position in American society.

Another opportunity for additional research would be further investigation into the influence women's clubs had on institutions of higher learning in Georgia. In chapter two of this paper, I briefly discussed the influence the Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs had on the University of Georgia opening its doors to female students in 1919. Identifying other colleges and universities in Georgia who may have benefited from the works of the women's clubs may also be research worthy.

Additional research could also be conducted on the evolution of these clubs past 1920. I chose to focus on the Progressive Era because it was a time of great change in America with a post-Civil War society that was trying to move from a mainly agricultural way of living to an industrial one. According to the records of the three clubs I discussed in detail, all three saw a waning in membership starting around 1930 and memberships have not returned to the levels they attained during the Progressive Era. Was this due to the Great Depression, a shift in political ideology in America, the women's movement, or some other factor or combination of factors? Those questions lead me to my next question, are women's clubs still relevant organizations in today's society?

All of the considerations for future research I have put forth would be natural extensions of the research I have conducted. One of the best things I have found as I have completed my research, had countless conversations with people to flesh out my ideas, and in writing and editing, I never came to concrete conclusions about anything. This can be frustrating at times, but also exhilarating because one tidbit led to another and a whole new world of information and interpretation opened up before me. I intentionally use the word interpretation because I think that history is interpretation and that historians have to be careful about what interpretations they make. I am hopeful that the interpretations I have made about women's clubs in Georgia are accurate, to the best of my ability, and that these interpretations provide a sense of the influence these women had on education in Georgia. Also, maybe, just maybe, someone

will be inspired to continue my research and answer some of the questions I have put forth.

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