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In the late nineteenth century, American actresses increased their efforts to advance their status in nineteenth century society and, as a consequence, to improve their employment prospects. Some of these women performed in or interpreted roles that would make them appear to fit in with the images of the ideal woman which prevailed at the time, while others worked to make those images more inclusive. Although women in theatre continued to be considered unconventional by society, their efforts, along with changing societal attitudes, effectively lessened societal denunciation of women in theatrical professions. A pivotal event in the adjustment of America's attitudes towards women was the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. Because the images that women performed, both on-stage and off, in conjunction with the Exposition, reached so many people, this occasion can be considered a landmark in the shaping of public attitudes towards women in theatre and in general.

This study examines the performances of three groups of women: (1) the women who led and participated in the events associated with the Woman's Building and the World's Congress of Representative Women, particularly the Board of Lady Managers; (2) actresses who performed in the legitimate drama in Chicago during the Exposition and those who participated in key events at the fair; and (3) the women who formed part of the village performances and living ethnological exhibits on the fairgrounds.
This dissertation uses five topical concepts or classifications which were repeatedly evoked throughout the fair—history, beauty, ethnology, morality and industry. In this dissertation I intend to show how women of European descent, in various modes of performance, used the contemporary ideologies regarding these five topics in order to advance their position, sometimes, unfortunately, at the expense of other women.

Chapter One provides a context for the World's Columbian Exposition, with an overview of the establishment and organization of the fair. Chapter Two acquaints the reader with the theatre in Chicago, on and off the fairgrounds, during the Exposition season. The Chapter familiarizes the reader with productions, actors, producers and others in the entertainment industry at the time. Chapter Three focuses on the ways women adopted contemporary historical ideas, especially the concepts of utopia and progress to promote women's achievements. In Chapter Four, I examine how the belief that women were positioned as the moral center of American civilization was both reinforced and challenged at the Exposition. Chapter Five discusses the concept of the Ideal Woman in this era, and how the attempts to show the reality of women's lives conflicted with this ideal. Chapter Six considers how late nineteenth-century definitions of beauty affected women at the fair. Chapter Seven centers on the subject of industry, or the way women worked to show how useful they were to American society. Chapter Eight, the conclusion, summarizes my findings and shows how the performances of these three groups of women are intertwined, to help shape the new image of the ideal American woman.
Dedicated to the memory of Mary Taipale, 1892-1992
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INTRODUCTION

In the late nineteenth century, American actresses increased their efforts to advance their status in nineteenth century society and, as a consequence, to improve their employment prospects. Some of these women performed in or interpreted roles that would make them appear to represent the images of the ideal woman which prevailed at the time, while others worked to expand those images to portray real women. Although women in theatre continued to be considered unconventional by society, their efforts, along with changing cultural attitudes, effectively lessened the denunciation of women in theatrical professions. A pivotal event in the adjustment of America's attitudes towards women was the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. Because the images that women performed, both on-stage and off, in conjunction with the Exposition, reached so many people, this occasion can be considered a landmark in the shaping of public attitudes towards women in American society. And more specifically, the Exposition contributed to the changing status of actresses in the United States.

Martha Banta, In Imaging American Women: Idea and Ideals in Cultural History, highlights the traits of the ideal woman that developed out of the World's Columbian Exposition. She writes:

Once the 1893 Columbian Exposition had come and gone from the flatlands of Chicago, an official American image began to compose itself from the fluid elements of the times. "America" was female,
young, pretty, Protestant, and northern European. She was the heiress of America's history as edited by the American Whigs. Her features were "regular" and Caucasian. Her bloodline was pure and vigorous. That she might have "nerves," and that her will was at times inconveniently strong, was, after all, to be expected of any physical or psychical type that represented the nation's own restlessness and independence of spirit. Whether too selfless or too selfish, whatever else the Girl was, her various images had power over the public imagination. She was problematic, just as the country was. (91)

These traits—a strong bloodline and "regular" features, Caucasian, Protestant, and a strong will—correspond to classifications which were used pervasively throughout the fair. Every aspect of the fair was judged according to the prevailing standards of such areas as history, beauty, ethnology, morality and industry. In this dissertation I intend to show how women of European descent, in various modes of performance, used the contemporary ideologies regarding these five topics to advance their position and, as a consequence, to weaken that of other women.

From May to October, 1893, Chicago hosted the World's Columbian Exposition, a spectacular fair established to commemorate the quadricentennial of Columbus's landing in America. Though the Exposition included exhibits from all over the world, the primary purpose of the fair was to show the approximately twenty-seven million visitors the progress Americans had made in those four hundred years and to provide glimpses of what was yet to come. In Today Then (1992)\(^1\), Dave Walter writes:

> Yet this world's fair would do more than just document the present and provide working models of the future. It would demonstrate the unity of

---

\(^1\) On the occasion of the World's Columbian Exposition, famous people were asked to write about their prophesies for the future. Today Then is Dave Walter's compilation of these essays.
America and hint that further progress and development would result in an eventual utopian condition. The fair contributed significantly to urban planning, to beaux-arts architecture, to distinctly American arts, and to the popularization of technology. (17)

Women, who were fighting for recognition of their own progress towards equality of intellect and skill with men, succeeded in gaining inclusion into the fair's proceedings. The Woman's Building, the first major building in the U.S. to be designed by a woman, served as one of the principal sites at the Exposition. The Woman's Building housed exhibits from all over the world which highlighted women's work. Art, literature, handicrafts, and inventions, all by women, were among the items on view. Bertha Honoré Palmer, chosen the President of the Board of Lady Managers, was instrumental in deciding which images of women that the exhibits should display. From the spatial organization of the Woman's Building to the speeches Palmer gave at such events as the Dedicatory, Exposition Opening, and Women's Building Opening ceremonies, the Exposition's official position regarding women's place in the past, present, and future was made clear.

Though theatrical presentations were not among the works to be viewed at the Woman's Building, actresses nevertheless made a substantial contribution at the World's Columbian Exposition towards creating the image of women that the visitors to the fair took away with them. The World's Congress Auxiliary, an educational department of the World's Columbian Exposition, held a series of congresses on various issues of concern at the time, including such topics as religion, education, and labor. One of these was the Worlds' Congress of Representative Women. During one week in May, women met to discuss their roles in contemporary society. Several celebrated actresses of the day were among the speakers. Georgia Cayvan spoke about the stage and its women; Helena
Modjeska discussed the plays of Hrosvitha; Clara Morris talked of the woman in the emotional drama, and Julia Marlowe discussed the history of women on the stage. Other actresses, too, contributed to the Exposition: a bas-relief by Sarah Bernhardt was on display in the Women's Building, and a silver sculpture of Ada Rehan as "Justice" appeared in Montana's exhibit in the Mines and Mining Building. All of these activities worked to define the place of the actress within the context of the achievements of women. However, professional American and European actresses had almost no opportunity to practice their craft within the confines of the fairgrounds. Many actresses did, though, perform in the downtown theatre district during the six months of the fair.

Chicago's theatres catered to an enormous population of visitors, who found housing in the city. Several dozen theatres produced over 170 plays between April and October (see Appendix A). Therefore, plays produced during the six months of the fair, though not officially included in the fair's programming, can be considered as part of the event. Before the fair began, an article in Harper's Weekly contained a prediction that the city of Chicago itself would be the "main exhibit." Many of the most famous actresses of the day toured to Chicago in 1893. Also, since the Exposition attracted streams of journalists, the contemporary newspapers and magazines were flooded with articles and reviews about the productions in town.

Although the primary venue for legitimate drama was located downtown, theatrical events were not entirely absent from the fairgrounds. In her dissertation, entitled "Village Performance: Villages at the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition, 1893," Gertrude M. Scott documents the various types of ethnic performances on view at
the Exposition, especially those that took place on the Midway Plaisance, a section of the fairgrounds devoted to entertainment. Here several countries, such as Turkey, Algeria, China, and Egypt, "re-created environments and situations that gave the illusion of travel to distant and exotic lands" (9). On the Midway, visitors could watch what Scott calls "formal performance" which includes drama, music, puppetry, and dance; "popular entertainments," such as juggling and magic acts; "social performance," including representations of social rituals like weddings and funerals; and "work/life displays" in which inhabitants of these villages could be viewed making, exhibiting, and selling the products of their homelands. Described as "living ethnological exhibits" by the fair's organizers, the villages made a great deal of money while ostensibly providing educational opportunities for the spectator. In journalists' accounts, the reaction to the non-European women performers was overwhelmingly negative, expressing the belief in the superiority of white women over women of other races. Instead of creating a better understanding of their cultures and working towards unity with other peoples, the images these women displayed served to reinforce their oppression.

This study examines the performances of three groups of women: the women who led and participated in the events associated with the Woman's Building and the World's Congress of Representative Women; actresses who performed in the legitimate drama in Chicago during the Exposition; and the women who formed part of the village performances and living ethnological exhibits on the fairgrounds. How did each fit in with the idea of progress and how did each help form visitors' opinions of what the ideal woman should be?
Review of Scholarship

Commentary on the World's Columbian Exposition dates from the late 1880's when the idea for an Exposition was first suggested. Newspapers aired heated debates concerning where the fair should be held, with New York, Chicago, St. Louis, Washington, D.C., and Philadelphia vying for the site. Once Chicago was decided upon in February 1890, and the Columbian Exposition was officially established by the Federal Government in April of that year, countless anticipatory articles began to fill the newspapers, journals and magazines of the time. In reviewing the major newspapers of the above cities and elsewhere, I have collected information primarily on the Board of Lady Managers, the Midway Plaisance, and theatre productions both in the city and in conjunction with the fair. I focused attention especially on Chicago's newspapers, including the Chicago Daily News, Chicago Mail, Chicago Record, Chicago Evening Journal, Chicago Evening Post, Chicago Herald, Chicago Times, Chicago Tribune, and Daily Inter Ocean. Popular magazines I have examined include Cosmopolitan, Arena, Harpers, Frank Leslie's Illustrated, The Dial, North American Review, and a number of others. One of the most valuable journals for my research has been The World's Columbian Exposition Illustrated, a monthly magazine which began publication in January 1891 and lasted until December 1893. This magazine's focus was solely on the Exposition and touches on every aspect of the fair. In many instances, it contains full speeches from the Board of Lady Managers. It also has numerous pictures, many of which are not available elsewhere. The Exposition also housed the offices for World's Fair Puck, a journal which contains cartoons and jokes that demonstrate popular attitudes towards the
fair. These journals and newspapers provide the bulk of information on activities during the six months of the fair. Of special importance is The Chicago Tribune, with its daily updates on the fair's activities and current theatre advertisements and reviews. The syndicated column of Amy Leslie, who wrote about theatre and performance in Chicago both on and off the fairgrounds for the Chicago Daily News is of great value, as is Teresa Dean's "White City Chips" column for the Daily Inter-Ocean.

Guidebooks form another important category of primary source material. Dozens of companies, most notably Rand McNally, published guidebooks to Chicago, often providing detailed information on the World's Columbian Exposition. Typically, they contain maps, lists of Exposition activities, Chicago hotels, restaurants, parks, theatres and other valuable information. One especially helpful and compact guidebook is The "Time-Saver:" a book which names and locates 5,000 things at the World's Fair that visitors should not fail to see. These guidebooks are invaluable when attempting to re-create what Chicago and the fairgrounds were like during the fair. Unfortunately, since most of these books were published before the fair began, some of the information may be incomplete or incorrect. Therefore, newspapers have been more reliable in some cases.

Souvenir photo albums of the fair, such as Magic City, Dream City, Glimpses of the World's Fair, Columbian Exposition Album and Types of the Midway, are also valuable. The World's Columbian Exposition had strict rules regarding the taking of photographs and only allowed publishers to include officially sanctioned photos. Therefore, certain pictures show up repeatedly with sometimes contradictory captions attached. The books, especially Types of the Midway, include portraits of performers in
the ethnic villages. However, they are almost invariably posed shots, outside of performance conditions. Though there are fewer photographs of theatre interiors or people in performance, there are enough, along with written descriptions, to provide a reasonable idea of what the performances were like. Both the posed photos and performance photos are helpful in showing the performers' costumes and attitudes. The photo captions reveal a range of reactions to the performers, with many of the writers exhibiting a bias against the performers' exoticism. Though the publication of tourist photos is limited, contemporary comments mention visitor's pervasive use of personal cameras. A visit to the Eastman Museum in Rochester, New York, provided information on the development of the personal camera and its popularity during the fair.

Also, the fiction which sprang up during and directly after the fair proves quite suggestive about the fair. William Dean Howells, Martha Finley, Clara Louise Burnham, Frances Hodgson Burnett and others wrote stories with the Exposition at center stage. Howells' *Letters of an Altrurian Traveller*, children's books such as *Elsie at the Fair*, and romance novels such as *Sweet Clover: A Romance of the White City* evocatively place the reader at the fairgrounds in a way that newspaper articles do not. Marietta Holley's *Samantha at the World's Fair* is particularly useful and unique, as the author writes from the perspective of a woman's rights advocate.

Because the World's Columbian Exposition's image was of primary importance to its organizers, its Department of Publicity wielded enormous power. In addition to officially sanctioned photographs, the Department also produced official guidebooks,
catalogues, and portfolios. It has not been difficult to track down official statements regarding this department's goals and priorities. What was purposely excluded from publicity materials is often telling.

The idea that the Exposition was an "historical event" in the making is shown by the number of published histories that appeared almost immediately after the fair closed. In 1893, Hubert Howe Bancroft published The Book of the Fair, an historical and descriptive presentation of the world's science, art, and industry, as viewed through the Columbian Exposition at Chicago in 1893 in ten oversized volumes. Several other early histories of the fair are available. Though these books are best for providing overviews of events leading up to the fair and for descriptions of the exhibits of the White City, they also usually include chapters on the Midway Plaisance and the Woman's Building.

Many memorial volumes on the fair and its congresses exist, containing texts of papers and speeches delivered. There are, for example, volumes on the World's Congress of Representative Women, the World's Parliament of Religions, the Folk-Lore Congress, and one containing all the speeches delivered at the dedicatory, opening, and closing ceremonies of the fair. The speeches Bertha Palmer gave regarding not only her goals for the fair but also the progress of women are included in this Memorial Volume as well as in the Addresses and Reports of Bertha Palmer.

Bertha Palmer's personal papers are held at the Chicago Historical Society, and provide a wealth of information on her work for the Board of Lady Managers. Another useful collection is the Ellsworth Collection at the Chicago Public Library which contains the papers and ephemera of James Ellsworth, one of the department heads at the fair. This
collection includes many invitations to receptions, building openings, and some theatrical events. The Chicago Historical Society, Chicago Public Library, Newberry Library, and Ohio Historical Society all have collections of World's Columbian Exposition ephemera, including Midway Village programs, admission tickets, advertising cards, postcards, pamphlets, photography permission cards, and many other paper items. Other collections of import are the E.R. Walker Collection and the C.D. Arnold Collection at the University of Chicago, which contain original copies of some of the official Exposition photographs.

For information about theatre productions in Chicago during the World's Columbian Exposition, I used the program and scrapbook collections available at the Chicago libraries. These are listed in the bibliography and include the William James Davis Papers, the Flora Mayer Witkosky Collection and the William "Biff" Hall Scrapbooks. The Ohio Historical Society holds a copy of the program for Imre Kiralfy's Grand Historical Spectacle America in four acts and 17 scenes, which Kiralfy produced at the Auditorium Theatre during the fair, and some Chicago libraries have the program for the Turkish Theatre and other Village performances, and for Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, which appeared in Chicago during the Exposition.

For additional documentation on theatre, and actresses in particular, biographies and autobiographies have been important sources. With Helena Modjeska, for example, I have used her own Memories and Impressions and Marion M. Coleman's biography, Fair Rosalind. This biography contains Modjeska's speech on women in Poland which would result in her permanent exile from Russia and Russian-occupied Poland. Charles Russell's 1926 biography of Julia Marlowe includes the complete transcript of the paper Marlowe
delivered at the Congress of Representative Women. Biographies and autobiographies of other Exposition participants, such as Bertha Palmer, Sol Bloom, Susan B. Anthony, and Frederick Douglass are also included in my bibliography.

I have referred to several recent sources on women in theatrical professions in late nineteenth century America and England. Studies on American acting include Albert Auster's *Actresses and Suffragists: Women in the American Theatre: 1890-1920*; Claudia Johnson's *American Actress: Perspectives on the 19th Century*; and Benjamin McArthur's *Actors and American Culture*. Other helpful works are Jane Kathleen Curry's *Nineteenth Century American Women Theatre Managers*; Tracy Davis's *Actresses as Working Women: Their Social Identity in Victorian Culture*; and Vivien Garner and Susan Rutherford's *The New Woman and Her Sisters: Feminism and Theatre, 1850-1914*.

General theatre histories that have been the most valuable are Michael Booth's *Theatre in the Victorian Age* and *Victorian Spectacular Theatre 1850-1910*; Richard Foulkes's *Shakespeare and the Victorian Stage*; Bruce McConachie's *Melodramatic Formations*; Frank Rahill's *The World of Melodrama*; and David Grimsted's *Melodrama Unveiled*.

Current histories of the nineteenth century provide a context for the fair, especially those which provide social and cultural analysis of the late nineteenth century (e.g., studies that explain how fair participants used such concepts as "utopia" and "progress"). For instance, Stephen Kern's *The Culture of Time and Space: 1880-1918* and Warren I. Susman's *Culture as History: The Transformation of American Culture in the Twentieth Century* consider the World's Columbian Exposition as an important event in America's changing culture. Two other books that point to the Exposition as a
landmark in the development of American taste for the arts are Lawrence W. Levine's *Highbrow/Lowbrow* and Russell Lynes' *The Lively Audience*. For information on America's changing perception of women, I have relied heavily on Martha Banta's *Imaging American Women: Idea and Ideals in Cultural History*, which again points to the World's Columbian Exposition as a milestone. Jeanne Madeline Weimann's study, *The Fair Women: The Story of the Woman's Building* is a landmark in its examination of women's contributions to and benefits from the World's Columbian Exposition.

Studies of the fair include Reid Badger's *The Great American Fair: The World's Columbian Exposition and American Culture*; David F. Burg's *Chicago's White City of 1893*; John E. Findling's *Chicago's Great World's Fairs*; Neil Harris's *Grand Illusions: Chicago World's Fair of 1893*; Robert Mucigrosso's *Celebrating the New World: Chicago's Columbian Exposition of 1893*, and Robert Rydell's *All the World's a Fair*. Each of these is helpful in creating a sense of the whole exposition, and since each has a different focus, I have gained information from all of them.

More specific studies for my research include Donna Carlton's *Looking for Little Egypt*, which includes information on the Midway belly dancers on the Midway, and James S. Moy's *Marginal Sights: Staging the Chinese in America*, which has a chapter on the Chinese at the World's Columbian Exposition. Perhaps most helpful for my study of women who performed on the Midway has been Gertrude M. Scott's dissertation, "Village Performance: Villages at the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition." In this work, Scott attempts to reconstruct all of the ethnic performances at the fair.
Finally, the 1996 publication of *The World's Columbian Exposition: A Centennial Bibliographic Guide* provides the most complete list of sources on the World's Columbian Exposition available, although there are only five entries on dramatic performances. Still, listings on the Midway, the World's Congress Auxiliary, and Women at the Fair have yielded useful sources.

*Justification*

Although a number of studies have discussed the World's Columbian Exposition's effect on American culture, no one has specifically discussed its effect on theatre. Many scholars have focused on the fair and its relationship to developments in architecture, art, photography, and literature, but theatre and drama are invariably left out of the list. With plays performed downtown rather than at the fairgrounds, scholars have excluded theatre as an important part of the fair. This is a serious omission that I want to correct. With documents from Chicago theatres and other primary sources I am able to prove that attendance at dramatic presentations was an important aspect of the experience which visitors to the fair took home with them. If the fair indeed created an audience for such arts as architecture and photography, as many scholars argue, visitors' exposure to theatre while in Chicago certainly helped create future audiences for that art as well. At a time when the realistic genre was just beginning to take hold in the United States, making especially strong women's roles available to actresses, a study of how actresses reacted to this type of play in 1893 is significant. Also, with actresses actively involved in the
Congress of Representative Women, speaking on women's place in the theatre, their appearances on stage in Chicago at the time would surely have been intended partly to promote their profession.

Though scholars have pointed out the importance of women's contributions to the fair, none has fully examined the Board of Lady Manager's conscious efforts to present a specific image of women before the public. Nor has anyone placed those efforts within the context of performance studies. Marvin Carlson, in *Performance: An Introduction*, provides a possible definition of performance which can encompass the work of the Board of Lady Managers:

> The recognition that our lives are structured according to repeated and socially sanctioned modes of behavior raises the possibility that all human activity could potentially be considered as "performance," or at least all activity carried out with a consciousness of itself. The difference between doing and performing, according to this way of thinking, would seem to lie not in the frame of theatre versus real life but in an attitude—we may do actions unthinkingly, but when we think about them, this introduces a consciousness that gives them the quality of performance. (4)

Extant documents concerning the work of the Board of Lady Managers support the claim that Bertha Palmer and her Board purposely constructed the image they wanted to present and proceeded to perform that image. Some may question the validity of this portion of the study as part of theatre history; however, in "Theatre History, Methodology and Distinctive Features," Carlson argues that theatre historians should "feel free to follow their interests in human performance, into circus, or professional wrestling, or rock concerts, or political meetings without feeling the need to justify to themselves or others, that such activities can fall within the proper boundaries of theatre historiography" (96).
Since this type of performance can be shown to have had an impact on legitimate theatre and drama, it is an especially important aspect of my research.

My study of the performance of women in the fair’s ethnic villages combines the many categories of performance as outlined above. Although Gertrude Scott has written a dissertation reconstructing the village performances, she has taken a non-theoretical approach to the material. In her introduction she states: "This study was designed to re-establish the scope and diversity of the performances and their contexts, and to give voice to the spectators who saw and reacted to them" (22). She wishes to correct errors that have appeared in other sources, but Scott admits a bias against theoretical interpretations of the evidence. She writes that "studies which take a theoretical approach tend to select from the material those elements that support their underlying theories. The disadvantage to such approaches is that the historical context that lends complexity to these events is obscured" (22). My approach, as will be seen in the discussion of my methodology below, differs from Scott's and allows me to continue where she left off. I examine the public's reactions to women's performance to see how these performances both reinforced and challenged the hegemonic conceptions of race and femininity.

In examining these three groups of women performers separately, I am filling a large gap in scholarship, since none of these areas have been discussed in depth. Also, by studying the intertwining effects of the groups on one another, I show how the performances of all these women combined in creating a picture of womanhood that would be carried away by visitors and disseminated throughout American culture, and especially in the theatre.
Rossiter Johnson in his *A History of the World's Columbian Exposition* (1897-1898), called the Exposition "an epitome of the world's progress, a history and a prophecy" (489). "It was an epitome," he said, "of all that was extant in the world as the outcome and the evidence of its advancement in every department of human effort; it was a condensed history of the successive epochs through which the human race has pursued its long and toilsome march toward the realization of its nobler destinies" (491).

Discussion of America's progress since Columbus was pervasive in late nineteenth century histories. American intellectuals were becoming aware that having control over one's view of the past could give one influence over the shape of the future. At the Exposition, fair organizers arranged exhibits to show that America had been consistently progressing toward a utopia. American women, who were taking steps towards equality, were among those who saw advantages in using their understanding of the past to improve their lives in the present and future.

As a feminist historiographer, I am examining, from a feminist perspective, past methods and theories of writing history. Women, by performing in association with an event which was created to be historical, knew that how they appeared at the Exposition would be recorded and spread to a wide group of people. The way history was being written, therefore, becomes especially important.

As a feminist historian, I am using several historiographical techniques. Although the Exposition has been written about at length, as I state above, very little work has been done on the event's influences on theatre and no one, to my knowledge, has examined the
performances in downtown Chicago in relation to the Exposition. By gathering evidence pertaining to women and the theatre at the World's Columbian Exposition, I am recuperating information that has been neglected. Judith Stephens, in her article "Gender Ideology and Dramatic Conception in Progressive Era Plays" defines recuperation as "the process of negating and defusing challenges to the historically dominant meaning of gender in particular periods" (50). Since women's work in theatre has traditionally been devalued by both theatre historians and the theatre in general, the location of this material can be a difficult and consuming task. However, the recuperation of this work is instrumental in reevaluating the importance of women in theatrical professions in the past.

This type of recuperative theatre history has value, but one must realize that most of the recuperated work reflects the hegemonic systems in place at the time. For example, Stephens has examined several Progressive Era plays, both by men and women, and shown how, though they may exhibit unconventional views of women, in some ways they compensate by reinforcing other hegemonic images of women. Many feminists are therefore concerned with creating a historical method, as Charlotte Canning relates in her article "Constructing Experience: Theorizing a Feminist Theatre History," that enables them to describe and interpret women in theatre "without effecting their assimilation into the dominant discourse or so greatly distorting the theatre work that its oppositional potential is negated, so allowing the works' appropriation by patriarchal interest" (529). For Canning, the issue of representing "women's experience" is of primary importance for the feminist historian. Unfortunately, what constitutes women's experience is not a simple task. Many feminists of the 1970's made the assumption that there were essential truths
about being a woman which transcended race, class, and sexuality. Since white upper-
and middle-class women were in the majority, their experience took precedence.
Feminists using this approach to my topic might only consider the activities and
contributions of upper- and middle-class European and European-American women at the
fair, neglecting a large portion of female participants and visitors.

It was in the 1980s that postructuralist theory made inroads into feminist theatre
historiography, with its questioning of an homogeneous definition of experience. Teresa
DeLauretis, in Alice Doesn't: Feminism, Semiotics, Cinema, contends that experience is
not only produced by "external ideas, values, or material causes, but by one's personal
subjective engagement in the practices, discourses, and institutions that lend significance
(value, meaning, and affect) to the events of the world" (159). This contention negates
the concept of a universal women's experience. Instead, experience is grounded within the
discourses of sexuality, history, race and class. Without analyzing experience from all
these viewpoints, the feminist historian may simply be reifying hegemonic norms.
Fortunately, the information on the World's Columbian Exposition reveals many different
points-of-view. I have looked not only at the dominant cultures of the village performers,
for example, but these performers' opinions of their own experience. And, though upper-
and middle-class white women made up the composition of the Board of Lady Managers,
I discuss the attitudes of black women toward the Board of Lady Managers and the
World's Columbian Exposition. Ida B. Wells-Barnett's and Frederick Douglass's writings
on the African-American experience at the fair are important to my study, as are the
speeches of other African-American and non-White fair participants and spectators.
Perhaps most useful for this dissertation is the poststructuralist theory that gender is constructed and is not based on innate qualities in men and women. This theory again contradicts essentialism. Judith Butler's article "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory" uses theatrical metaphors to show how gender is performed, expanding on Simone de Beauvoir's claim that "woman is a historical idea and not a natural fact" (1099). From a phenomenological viewpoint, Butler discusses how the constitution of gender changes across historical eras. She insists that "one is not simply a body, but, in some very key sense, one does one's body and, indeed, one does one's body differently from one's contemporaries and from one's embodied predecessors and successors as well" (1098). If one fails at performing one's gender according to societal norms and restrictions, there is often a resulting punishment. Butler's theories support the idea that all of the women in my study could either consciously or unconsciously perform their gender in a way that might affect or counter societal norms. Because the Board of Lady Managers, for example, was in a position of power granted them by the federal government, its construction of gender would be observed and accepted as an officially sanctioned construction. Actresses were in the professional business of performing gender, which they artistically and socially constructed in various ways.

In her "Questions for a Feminist Methodology in Theatre History," Tracy Davis agrees with Butler's assertions and declares that the conviction that gender is socially constructed should be the primary aspect of analysis. Although recovery of "lost" plays is an important first step in feminist scholarship, these works must be examined, not in a
positivist, "objective" fashion, but as a part of a particular social, political framework. A critical feminist evaluation of traditional histories is also important, and should challenge any periodization concepts or categories that have been in place.

Overall, I agree with the many feminist theatre historiographers who find it healthy to examine theatre history from many points-of-view. Recuperation, though partially conforming to positivist techniques, has been a necessary step; however, a feminist historian's examination of the material can take many different focuses, but cannot be a completely neutral or unbiased view, nor should it be.

Structure

This dissertation uses five topical concepts or classifications which were repeatedly evoked throughout the fair — history, ethnology, beauty, morality, and industry. Three groups of women, (1) Bertha Palmer and the Board of Lady Managers; (2) actresses who performed in the legitimate drama in Chicago during the Exposition, and the few actresses who participated in key events at the Exposition; and (3) the women who performed in the villages and other ethnological exhibits at the fair, are the subjects for examination.

Chapter One provides a context for the World's Columbian Exposition, with an overview of how and why the Exposition was established. In turn, I offer a basic chronology of the events that occurred before the fair began, including information about the fair's administrative and economic organization. This chapter also furnishes an overall picture of the importance of the fair's location in Chicago. Finally, I introduce the three
groups of women that provide the focus for the dissertation, explaining how they came to be involved in the fair and what their primary responsibilities were.

Chapter Two acquaints the reader with the theatre in Chicago that occurred during the Exposition, on and off the fairgrounds. As the rest of the dissertation references certain productions and people, this chapter is necessary to introduce the reader to these topics. While not specifically focusing on women's participation, I discuss the major theatrical events planned for 1893, including Steele Mackaye's *The World-Finder*, Imre Kiralfy's *America*, and Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. Also, I familiarize the reader with the names and work of prominent actors and producers who were especially influential in Chicago that year. Finally, I provide an outline of the types of performance occurring on the Midway Plaisance.

Chapter Three focuses on the ways women adopted contemporary theories on utopia and progress to promote women's achievements. The Board of Lady Managers' insistence on exhibiting the progress of women up until 1893 reveals its conscious use of historical representations of women's lives and accomplishments. The Board of Lady Managers and actresses both recuperated and reevaluated historical materials in order to provide more prominent and positive female role models. An important historical figure that women used for their benefit was Queen Isabella. While the fair highlighted Christopher Columbus, as did the theatrical productions of *The World-Finder* and *America*, the Board of Lady Managers and other women promoted the image of Queen Isabella in an attempt to make her seem the primary actor in providing Columbus with the opportunity to make his voyage. Women found that such myth-making was an effective
means of improving the image of contemporary women. At the World's Congress of Representative Women, actresses Julia Marlowe and Helena Modjeska also used history and myth in promoting women's importance to theatre. The non-European women performers of the Midway Plaisance were, in comparison, unable to elevate their image through the use of history. Though advertisements touted the Midway performances as historically accurate and educational, these shows seemed to display to most Americans the primitive past from which European and American civilizations had emerged. White observers saw the shows and performers not as representative of valuable cultures, but as re-creators of a savage past.

In Chapter Four, I examine how women's emblematic position as the moral center of American civilization was both reinforced and challenged at the Exposition. In Chicago, where brothels and saloons were among the most popular places of business for many male visitors, women spoke out regularly against the evils of the City. Women's moral influence was also felt on the Midway, where several Board members tried to close down the Persian Village's belly dancing program because of its supposed indecency. In addition, actresses defended the theatre in order to counter the public perception of the stage as a moral wasteland. For instance, critics denounced the popular theatre for its objectionable "split" dances and high kicks. Actresses, therefore, needed to ensure the public that their personal lives were above reproach.

Chapter Five discusses the late nineteenth century concept of the Ideal Woman, and the difficulty real women had in conforming to this ideal. The Board of Lady Managers, many of whose members were successful at meeting societal expectations of
femininity, tried to expand the ideal to include working women rather than women who remained in the private sphere. However, by promoting the work of female artists, for example, while at the same time publicizing the artists' femininity, the Board reinforced certain aspects of the ideal woman. Leading actresses, who could have chosen to perform in the new realistic drama, thereby showing the lives of real women, chose instead to promote the ideal woman, especially in Shakespearean plays. Midway women, though conforming to the ideal of their own lands, came under attack for their lack of femininity according to American standards.

In Chapter Six, I consider how late nineteenth century standards of feminine beauty, which privileged Northern European women to the exclusion of all other women, affected women at the fair. Though a Midway attraction called "The International Congress of Beauty" was comprised, supposedly, of women from all over the world dressed in native garb, public reaction loudly acclaimed the American woman as the most beautiful. Members of the press rated the beauty of each member of the Board of Lady Managers, each actress performing in Chicago, and each suffragist speaking at the Congresses. Midway performers from Turkey, Persia, Egypt, Algeria, Dahomey, the South Sea Islands, Java, and elsewhere were compared unfavorably to the femininity of the Irish, German or Austrian villagers. Women who wanted the public to consider them feminine had to be very careful to dress in conventional styles. Women who did not do so, including suffragists and ethnic villagers, were called ugly and unwomanly. Actresses were especially dependent on their appearance for their success, and had to spend a great deal of money on clothing.
Chapter Seven centers on the subject of industry, especially the way women attempted to show how useful they were to American society. During the 1890s, labor was beginning to test its solidarity. The fair organizers intended to highlight the work of laborers as well as artists, but these efforts met with mixed results. First, I focus on Bertha Palmer and the Board of Lady Managers, and their efforts to exhibit women's achievements in the work force. Through an examination of the American woman's movement at the time of the fair, I show how the Board's goals contrast with those of feminists such as Susan B. Anthony. The representation of women laborers at the fair are also considered, as are those of the club woman and charity organizer. On the Midway, visitors could see women working in every ethnic village. But Americans' attitudes of racial superiority prevented the reception of any positive images the Midway women tried to convey. Actresses, whose profession necessitated public life are explored as an inspiration to women who were campaigning for new roles for women. Through an analysis of the acting profession, I attempt to show how actresses helped to improve not only their profession but also their place in American society.

Chapter Eight, the conclusion, summarizes my findings and shows how the performances of these three groups of women intertwined to help shape the new image of the ideal American woman. Each group had an interest in improving its position in society and each challenged the era's notions of the proper roles for women. However, the desire to change attitudes about women was oftentimes outweighed by the need to be accepted within the dominant culture. Therefore, women ended up reinforcing some gender roles through challenging others.
CHAPTER I

THE GREATEST THEATRICAL PRODUCTION OF THE CENTURY

For a variety of reasons, the World's Columbian Exposition was a major theatrical event of historic proportions, as David Burg points out in his valuable study, *Chicago's White City of 1893*:

The exposition was a stage spectacle worthy of David Belasco and Augustin Daly and embellished by the machines and marvels of Steele Mackaye. It was produced on the largest stage ever constructed, with monumental use of electric lighting, a host of huge buildings for its sets, and a cast of nations. On some days nearly three-quarters of a million people were in the audience, and by the time it ended its run over 27.5 million theatre-goers would have passed the box office. The World's Columbian Exposition was the greatest theatrical production of the century. (112)

Certainly, Burg was not the first to use a theatrical metaphor to describe the fair. As Burg himself noted, H.N. Higinbotham, President of the Exposition's Board of Directors, said upon the opening of the fair: "The occasion was the climax of a grand drama" (qtd. in Burg 112). Taking these somewhat vague evocations of theatricality as my starting point, I wish to analyze the fair as performance. Central to this study are the ways in which certain women or groups of women "performed" on or near the fairgrounds. Because of the many factors that made up this event, such as its organization and its location in time and space, the World's Columbian Exposition was an ideal
occasion for the dissemination of ideas on just about everything. Many women, knowing
their sex had been given an unprecedented amount of authority in fair matters, knew that
they could influence societal views of women, but only if they could control the
impressions visitors took home with them.

Robert W. Rydell, in his popular examination of American Expositions from 1876
to 1916 entitled All the World's a Fair, points out that "the directors of the [world's] fairs
attempted to organize the direction of society from a particular class perspective" (2).
Moreover, he says the fairs "propagated the ideas and values of the country's political,
financial, corporate, and intellectual leaders and offered these ideas as the proper
interpretation of social and political reality" (3). Through every facet of preparation,
including choice of location for the fair, architectural planning, exhibit selection and
overall organization, the leaders of the World's Columbian Exposition hoped to show the
public their conception of an ideal societal structure. Certainly boosterism and a
somewhat vague utopianism (which I will discuss more fully in Chapter Three), influenced
the fair's shape. The idea that human societies had been on a continuous progression
towards perfection induced organizers to promote exhibits from western, industrialized
nations as "beautiful" and "civilized." These exhibits were then carefully juxtaposed with
the "ugly" and "primitive" exhibits from other cultures. The women of the Board of Lady
Managers used similar methods to promote their agenda. What they deemed appropriate
behavior for the ideal woman was apparent through their displays and actions, which
included well-publicized rebukes of women whose behavior they deemed inappropriate.
Since these woman consciously regulated their behavior in order to present a particular
image for spectators, their actions can be considered part of the overall performance. By
governing the conduct of the Board of Lady Managers' representatives, organizing the
exhibits at the Women's Building, and carefully preparing speeches given at the World's
Congress of Representative Women and other public events, the Board of Lady Managers
used its enormous power to perform for the world what women could and should be.
Fittingly, actresses, who were trying to improve their reputations in society and, by so
doing, to better their professional opportunities, also made a substantial contribution
towards creating the image of women that the fair visitors took away with them. By
delivering papers at the World's Congress of Representative Women and performing in
plays in downtown Chicago, they reached large audiences with their view of the ideal
woman.

As reported by the World's Columbian Exposition Illustrated in its March 1891
issue, Thomas Palmer, President of the World's Columbian Commission, said on the
occasion of the first session of the Commission's Board of Lady Managers: "All that
American women ever lacked—opportunity—is here, and from every state and territory
the women of the hour are here to take advantage thereof" ("Board" 16). On 19
November 1890, history was made when this board, the first organization of women
established and fully recognized by the United States federal government, held its initial
meeting. Though Mr. Palmer told women at this meeting that their Board was
"recognized by the congress of the United States as an integral part of the commission"
("Board" 14), Congress considered the provision for the Board a minor concession in the
passage of the bill organizing the Exposition. Most members of Congress, when

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approving a role for women in the World's Fair, had no idea what a vast influence the Board of Lady Managers would have on how people all over the world experienced the fair. It took the women appointed to the Board some time, as well, to fully recognize the possibilities of this unique opportunity, but once they realized how much they could accomplish in advancing the cause of women, they vowed to show the world that they could competently fulfill their task. Rebecca Felton, whom the Board elected temporary chairman (this masculine title was soon abandoned in favor of President) at the first session, told her fellow board members, "Let us set an example that others may feel, in years to come, an example of prudence, of patience, of generous good will to every member of the body, and of faithful devotion to our duty. Let us take no step forward that we will regret afterward. Let us remember that we are on trial before this great nation" ("Board" 16).

Felton was not the only member of the Board leadership to see how consequential were the public actions of the Board members. Bertha Honoré Palmer, whom the Board unanimously elected President of the Board of Lady Managers on 20 November 1890, asked the gathering to "seriously realize the greatness of the opportunity which has been given us" ("Board" 17). With women from all over the United States as members, Bertha Palmer knew that differences could easily arise between them. "Above all things else," she warned, "harmonious action is necessary" ("Board" 17). It can be seen from the start that the Board leadership insisted on certain types of behavior from its women. Mrs. Palmer1

1 Although using the title "Mrs." seems archaic, doing so clarifies which Palmer (Thomas, Potter, or Bertha) is being discussed. Also, Bertha Palmer was consistently referred to as "Mrs. Palmer" during the fair. I have chosen to use this title throughout the dissertation for the sake of consistency, but only for Bertha Palmer.
implied that those who did not conform to appropriate standards of behavior would be
censured. Thus did Mrs. Palmer and the Board of Lady Managers seek to control the
image of woman which would be presented to fair visitors and dispersed far and wide.

The Idea

The origin of the idea for the World's Columbian Exposition is impossible to
pinpoint. Francis L. Lederer II, who made a detailed examination of the beginnings of the
traces the first public suggestions that a fair be held to commemorate Columbus's voyage
to the year 1876. The success of the Philadelphia Centennial in that year probably sparked
interest in finding a theme for the next world's fair to be held in the Americas. However, it
was several years before any further comment appeared along those lines. Then, in 1882,
no fewer than three proposals for such a fair emerged.2 The most persuasive proponent of
a Columbian fair seems to have been Dr. Carlos W. Zaremba, who pushed for Mexico City
as the site for the fair. Zaremba went so far as to have meetings in New York City and
Washington, D.C. to rouse interest in his project. Though he did not find support for this
particular proposal, he stimulated the imagination of enough people who proceeded to set
up organizations solely for the purpose of establishing a site for the exposition. New
York, Washington D.C., Chicago, St. Louis, Cincinnati, and Philadelphia were among the
cities that threw their hats into the ring.

2 According to R. Reid Badger in The Great American Fair, an article in the Baltimore Sun that year
advocated a combination exposition and Columbus celebration, while Dr. A.W. Harlan of Chicago wrote a
letter to the Chicago Times proposing Chicago as the location for such a fair (44).
Since the success of the London World's Fair of 1851, hosting an exposition had become a symbol of prosperity and achievement, not only for the host country but for the city where the fair was located as well. To be the site of the first major American international fair since the Philadelphia Centennial would therefore be a great coup. While several cities battled for the fair, various women's groups made sure they had representatives in those cities pushing for inclusion. They did not want women's interests neglected as they had been at the Philadelphia Centennial. At the Philadelphia Centennial, the objectives had been primarily to show the world what the United States had done in its one hundred years of existence. Women, however, were not deemed important enough to be made part of the original plans. Yet circumstances there provided women with the chance to learn vital lessons about participation in fairs that would serve them well in 1893. Jeanne Madeline Weimann, in her exhaustive study of the Board of Lady Managers at the Columbian Exposition, The Fair Women, documents the problems women faced in gaining recognition in Philadelphia. The only reason women had any role in the 1876 fair, Weimann suggests, was because the all-male Centennial Board was unable to raise enough money after a year of work. Therefore, they established a Women's Centennial Committee comprised of thirteen women to lobby for funds. The Board promised the women space in the Main Building for a woman's exhibit in exchange for their help; however, after the women raised almost $100,000, fair officials reneged on the offer for space and funding. If women wanted an exhibit, the Board told them, they could construct their own building for it. Weimann recounts the reaction of Committee Chair Elizabeth Gillespie (the great grand-daughter of Benjamin Franklin): "Elizabeth Gillespie never forgot 'the utter misery
of those first moments, for the women of the whole country were working not only from patriotic motives, but with the hope that through this Exhibition their own abilities would be recognized and their works carried beyond needle and thread" (2). The anger women felt at being thus slighted spurred them to action and they succeeded in obtaining a space for women's work. The resulting Woman's Pavilion, as Weimann notes, was "the first exposition building entirely planned, funded and managed by women, and devoted to women's interests and accomplishments" (1). A male architect, incidentally, designed the Woman's Pavilion, as women could not yet attain professional training in architecture. Though women's accomplishments in Philadelphia were remarkable under the circumstances, the lack of support from fair officials kept women's activities there from having the impact that women hoped for. When talks concerning the Columbian Exposition began, therefore, women made sure their voices were heard from the beginning.

_The Act_

The Chicago Woman's Club, founded in 1876, was one organization through which women could discuss upcoming preparations for a fair. It was through men's and women's clubs, in fact, that much of the initial planning of the Exposition took place. Chicago's leaders had formed several civic and social clubs after 1870, including the male-only Calumet, Iroquois Club, and Union League. On May 1, 1888, the Iroquois Club of Chicago, one of the most influential of the men's clubs, resolved that Chicago should be the site for a Columbian fair and appointed a committee to communicate with Chicago's
other clubs on this issue. Together, they adopted a resolution two months later that called for the organization of the Christopher Columbus Celebration Committee made up of representatives of the clubs of Chicago. The other cities vying for the fair site also found clubs an excellent source in building support for their city's claim as the best location for the fair. With the Paris Exposition of 1889 nearing, however, activity regarding the Columbian Exposition slowed. While the United States worked to make a strong showing at the Third Paris Internationale, many American visitors to Paris were eager to see how they could surpass the French. The Paris Exposition, with its magnificent Eiffel Tower, showed Americans the high level the Columbian Exposition would have to reach in order to exceed Paris's splendors. Critics found little to object to at the Paris fair. Its architecture and landscaping were especially noteworthy. However, the symbolism inherent in its celebration of the French Revolution was a cause for negative comment. Not wishing to alienate European monarchies, Americans wanted their exposition to have more universal themes.

Americans realized that creating a Columbian Exposition would require vast financial support, careful management, and carefully defined themes. These requirements quickly helped to narrow the field for the location of the fair. As R. Reid Badger suggests, "Philadelphia would have appealed too much to the national spirit and not enough to the international or universal significance of Columbus' achievement" (48). Washington, D.C., on the other hand, would have had trouble providing enough private funding. St. Louis lost favor when a circular suggested that Southerners visiting a Northern fair would be damaged by Northern ideas. North-South hostility was not what
the United States wanted the rest of the world to see. Though St. Louis and Washington remained in the running, it was Chicago and New York that provided the fiercest competition. These two cities waged a newspaper battle that Badger calls "one of the most bitter and vitriolic in American history" (48).

New Yorkers fully expected their city to be chosen because it was the nation's most populous and richest. An editorial in Harper's Weekly in August 1889 stated: "The chief scene of the event of 1892 which is designed to commemorate the material growth and prosperity of America should be the great city, which is itself one of the most imposing monuments of that progress and already the fourth city of the world" ("The World's Fair of 1892" 614). New York would also be the most solid in infrastructure for an anticipated (but later postponed) opening date of 1892, the anniversary year. New York newspapers viewed Chicago as raw and dirty, a city without the cultural achievements or social amenities to make it a viable candidate for a world's fair. Chicago, on the other hand, promoted itself as a more American city than New York. With its position as a divider between east and west, rural and urban, Chicago could better represent the United States. An article in the Chicago Tribune noted that for too long, "the American cow had been fed in the West and milked in the East; it is about time to move her hind legs farther West, so that some of the milking may be done here" (qtd. in Lederer 34). Chicago's location further west would also force foreign visitors to see more of the country than if New York hosted the fair.

On 17 and 22 July 1889, respectively, the Mayors of both New York and Chicago began movements to organize committees of prominent businessmen to ensure their city
would become the site for the fair. In Chicago, businessmen including George M. Pullman, Andrew McNally, Lyman Gage, and Charles H. Schwab formed a corporation called "The World's Exposition of 1892" for this purpose. Within a month, exhaustive efforts were being made by each competing city to lobby Congress. In August, 1889, as well, women in Chicago moved to organize an official woman's auxiliary to the men's fair committee. Two Chicago women, Myra Bradwell, a member of the Illinois bar, and Emma Wallace, a member of the Chicago Woman's Club and a social activist, consulted with the men about this issue. At a mass meeting in October 1889 with 2,000 women in attendance, the men of the Fair Committee expressed their enthusiasm for women's support.

The official Chicago Women's Department, or Women's Auxiliary, consisted primarily of women devoted to charitable and philanthropic interests. Though some of these women were suffragists, the right to vote was not the Auxiliary's primary concern. Members wanted a Woman's Pavilion at the fair to exhibit women's handiwork and to provide meeting rooms to hold a conference on charitable and reform activities. To achieve these goals, of course, it was first imperative that Chicago became the site for the fair. This meant selling stock in the Chicago Corporation. With their social standing in the community and their substantial experience in fund-raising, these women had the necessary qualifications to raise money.

3 Myra Bradwell, one of the first women admitted to the Illinois Bar, chose to work for legal reform rather than practice law. She founded the Legal News in 1868 (Weimann 26).

4 Emma R. Wallace was active in several organizations, including the Chicago Women's Club, the Women's Universalist Association, the Woman's Relief Corps, and the Women's Exchange (Weimann 27).
At the same time that the Women's Auxiliary was forming, another group of women, specifically devoted to suffrage interests, established an organization called the Queen Isabella Association, after the queen who enabled Columbus to make his voyage. The Isabellas, as they came to be known, were primarily professional women who had two goals for their group: to have a statue of Queen Isabella erected on the fairgrounds and to build a Woman's Pavilion which would serve as a meeting place (and not an exhibit hall) during the fair. The fundamental difference between the goals of the Woman's Auxiliary and the Isabellas was in this use of the Woman's Pavilion. The Isabellas were fighting for equal rights for women, which included the right to have women's work exhibited and judged alongside that of men, and not kept in a separate building. Therefore, the Isabellas' ideal Woman's Pavilion would not exhibit women's work. This difference of opinion would later cause much discord. Though the Isabellas were mostly Chicagoans, they wanted recognition no matter where the fair was held. Therefore, they also appealed to New York organizers. One of the Isabellas, Dr. Frances Dickinson, encouraged her cousin Susan B. Anthony who was a citizen of New York State, to write to New York City's Mayor Grant expressing the wishes of the Isabellas. Elizabeth Cady Stanton also lent her support.

By December of 1889 when Congress convened to address plans for the fair, both Myra Bradwell of the Women's Auxiliary and Susan B. Anthony were in Washington lobbying—Bradwell for Chicago, Anthony for women. Susan B. Anthony, who wanted women appointed to official positions in the governance of the fair, struggled to enlist
support among influential women. A petition she submitted to the Senate was read into
the record by Senator Orville Hitchcock Platt of Connecticut on 13 January 1890:

I present the petition of sundry ladies of Washington City, including the
wives of Chief Justice Fuller, Justices Field and Harland, and the wives of
many distinguished officials and citizens of Washington, praying that in the
legislation organizing the international exhibition of 1892 provision may be
made for the appointment of women on the board of managers of said
exhibition, in view of the fact that there will be in the exhibition a
presentation of the share taken by women in the industrial, artistic,
intellectual and religious progress of the nation. (Weimann 31)

This petition, along with those other groups had submitted, was referred to a special
House committee, which also heard arguments by the contesting cities. This committee
held a roll call on 24 February 1890, whereby a majority vote would decide on the fair
city, with 154 votes needed. During the first seven ballots, Chicago attained the most
votes, but not until the eighth ballot did Chicago receive the necessary votes, with 157.
Even then, St. Louis and New York, expressing doubts that Chicago would have the
necessary funding, induced Congress to require evidence of Chicago's finances. As the
Chicago Company had only pledged five million dollars to New York's ten million,
Congress demanded that Chicago increase its pledge, which it did.

With Chicago chosen as the official site, Congress's remaining task was to pass the
Fair Bill, entitled "An Act to Provide for the Celebration of the 400th Anniversary of the
Discovery of America by Christopher Columbus, by holding an International Exhibition of
Arts, Industries, Manufactures and the Products of the Soil, Mine and Sea, in the City of
Chicago, in the State of Illinois." This bill provided for the organization of a National
Commission composed of representatives from each state and territory to oversee and
approve all important decisions. The bill also announced the date for the Exposition. It
would open on 1 May 1893 and close on 30 October 1893.\(^5\) In addition, Representative William Springer of Illinois introduced an amendment to the Bill calling for a Board of Lady Managers. Whether the impetus for this amendment came from Susan B. Anthony, the Isabellas, or another source is unknown. In any event, when the Bill came to the House for a final reading, this amendment was not read, but Springer made note of the omission, and the amendment was restored with little argument. The amendment was part of Section VI of the Bill, which set up the duties of the National Commission. It read:

> And said Commission is authorized and required to appoint a Board of Lady Managers of such numbers and to perform such duties as may be prescribed by said Commission. Said Board may appoint one or more members of all committees authorized to award prizes for exhibits which may be produced in whole or in part by female labor. (Weimann 33)

These two vague sentences left possibilities wide open for women's participation in the fair. Unfortunately for the Isabellas, their amendment asking for a statue of Queen Isabella was struck out. The final bill was signed into law by President Benjamin Harrison on 25 April 1890.

**The City**

It is a World's Fair so far as its commemorative purpose and its exhibits are concerned. It is a Chicago Fair so far as energy, public spirit, enterprise, courage, and determination are concerned . . . . Chicago deserves the credit. ("Achieved")

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\(^5\) The most likely reason the fair was not held in 1892 was because two years was simply not enough time to be ready. Another factor was the 1892 Presidential election. However, organizers justified the 1893 date saying that they did not want to hold the fair before the October 1892 anniversary of Columbus's landing or during Chicago's inhospitable winter. The Dedication Ceremonies, however, were held in October of 1892. Why the fair ended on 30 October 1893 rather than October 31, the last day of the month, remains unclear. Discussions about this issue towards the end of the fair seem to indicate simple oversight. Implications of the ending date will be discussed later in this dissertation.
When the World's Columbian Exposition opened on 1 May 1893, Chicago was known as one of the world's most important centers of commerce, and it was quickly becoming recognized as a cultural center as well. Though at first debates raged regarding the suitability of Chicago for such a massive undertaking as a world's fair, the U.S. government's decision to accept Chicago's bid showed its confidence that Chicago was ready to represent the United States. Indeed, the more people examined Chicago's suitability, the more it appeared that Chicago was an ideal symbol for the United States. Young, industrious, and thriving, despite enormous obstacles, Chicago was a microcosm of America as a whole.

In *The Pictorial History of the World's Columbian Exposition*, written in 1893, Henry Davenport Northrop provides a brief history of Chicago. Like most other contemporary histories and guide books, Northrop's account highlights five major events: the exploration of the area by Joliet and Marquette towards the end of the seventeenth century; the first settlement; the Fort Dearborn Massacre; the Great Fire of 1871, and the Haymarket Riot. The first recorded settler on the site was Jean-Baptiste Point du Sable, a fur trader who built a log hut on the shores of Lake Michigan in 1779. According to Northrop, this settlement by a former slave from San Domingo "led to the humorous remark that 'the first white settler of Chicago was a black man'" (18). Du Sable stayed in his cabin for seventeen years, then sold it to a French fur trader, Le Mai, whose efforts brought more traders to Chicago. Its advantageous location led the United States government to establish Fort Dearborn there in 1804 but, unfortunately, when the United States went to war with England in 1812, local Indians led by Tecumseh saw an
opportunity to attack the outpost. The Fort's leaders had expected protection from the
friendly Pottawatomie Indians, but this support never developed because the Americans
had reneged on an offer of ammunition and supplies. Of the sixty-six soldiers and a few
families settled nearby, only a handful survived the massacre.

Although Fort Dearborn was rebuilt, the white population did not grow
substantially until an 1833 treaty signed by more than seventy Indian chiefs pushed the
Indians west of the Mississippi. Robert Muccigrosso reports that by 1850 the population
of Chicago rose to nearly 30,000, and by 1860, it grew to 109,000 (18). The population
grew quickly because of a rather unusual idea of George M. Pullman, who would later
become known for the Pullman railroad car. Because Chicago was built on swamp land, it
was known for its mud, and visitors to the city almost invariably mentioned the dirt and
muck as one of its drawbacks. Etymologists believe that the name Chicago possibly
derives from a word meaning "wild onion" for the vegetable that grew so well in the area's
wet soil. Since wild onions were no longer needed in Chicago, the mud served no
profitable purpose. Happily, George Pullman had been a contractor involved in the
building of the Erie Canal, and drawing upon his engineering experience, he used a
technique for elevating structures on his own buildings in Chicago. He succeeded in
having all the buildings on one of the city's streets raised four feet out of the mud. Since
his method worked without harming the structures, other owners raised their buildings.
This did not completely alleviate the mud problem, but even so, with less muck to contend
with, the city's respectability and self-image increased.
In addition to Pullman, other entrepreneurs who found a home in Chicago included Potter Palmer, Cyrus McCormick, Montgomery Ward, Marshall Field, Philip Armour, and Gustavus Swift. Chicago quickly became a major crossroads for America's expanding railways, and soon it was a commercial leader for several industries, with grain, lumber, and meat-packing among its biggest trades. The Union Stockyards, which opened in 1865, made millionaires of Armour and Swift, while the agricultural machinery business did the same for McCormick. Several other Chicagoans made their riches in the dry goods industry. One of these was Potter Palmer, a Quaker from New York State, who arrived in Chicago in 1852 to open a dry goods store. He was soon joined in his enterprise by two other Easterners, Levi Leiter and Marshall Field. Carson Pirie Scott & Company, the main rival to Marshall Field's in Chicago today, was another successful dry goods establishment of the time. George Pullman found his niche in the creation of luxurious railroad sleeping cars which came to national prominence when he lent the prototype for the purpose of transporting Abraham Lincoln's body to Springfield, Illinois in 1865. He incorporated his Pullman Palace Car Company in 1867.

The city's population had increased to 300,000 by 1871, but on October 8 that year, the Great Fire swept through the heart of the city. According to legend, a cow owned by a Mrs. O'Leary tipped over a lamp in her barn, starting the conflagration. Because a serious drought had dried out Chicago's wood-frame buildings and lessened the water supply, the fire spread quickly and could not be put out. The fire "devastated an area of 2,100 acres, or nearly three and a third square miles, destroyed 17,450 buildings, and rendered homeless 98,500 persons" ("Great Fires"). Estimates of deaths range from
200 to 300 people. The fire destroyed practically the entire commercial center of the city; however, according to Robert Muccigrosso, "almost 90 percent of the city's manufacturing capacity miraculously survived intact, as did at least three-quarters of its livestock" (22). Aid came pouring in soon after the fire and the energetic Chicagoans began rebuilding. An article in the Chicago Tribune written during the Columbian Exposition looked back on the fire as more providential than tragic: "But for the fire thousands of old frame and cheap brick buildings would have remained standing for years, many of them till now. . . . The fire did in a few hours what would otherwise have taken years to accomplish and forced the erection of better buildings" ("What the Day Means"). With the city center swept clean, new buildings could also be raised further out of the mud without worrying about added expense for owners.

Just three days after the Great Fire, Tribune editor Joseph Medill prophesied Chicago's future success. He wrote: "In the midst of a calamity without parallel in the world's history, looking upon the ashes of thirty years' accumulations, the people of this once beautiful city have resolved that 'Chicago Shall Rise Again!'" ("Cheer Up"). Indeed, contractors worked furiously to rebuild the city, but a recession in 1873 and another bad fire in 1874 slowed construction considerably. This delay gave Chicago's citizens time to think about what they wanted their city to be—a replica of the old city or a new and improved version. The fire had brought architects from the east who were enthusiastic about the opportunity to reconceptualize the city and anxious to experiment with new methods and materials. Because of the fire, Chicago would become famous for its architectural wonders. Elisha Graves Otis's safety elevator was installed in many new
buildings, as were electric lighting, an early type of air conditioning, and fireproofing materials. By 1889, the word "skyscraper" came into use as Chicago architect W.L.B. Jenney started using steel-frame construction. Famous buildings completed by the time of the Exposition included the Monadnock Building (1891), the Rookery (1886), the Masonic Temple (1891-1892), the Woman's Temple (1891-1892), and the Auditorium Building (1887-1889).

Amazingly, many of Chicago's millionaires quickly rebuilt their fortunes after the fire. Unprecedented loans from Eastern banks allowed businesses to survive. Potter Palmer, for example, had lost almost all of his real estate holdings in the fire, including his newly built Palmer House. This 225-room hotel had been built as a wedding gift for Palmer's new wife, Bertha Honore. After the fire, Palmer received a loan of $1.7 million dollars from an Eastern Insurance Firm (Muccigrosso 24), enabling him to rebuild the hotel in even greater splendor by 1873. Palmer had switched to the real estate business in the 1860s, leaving his dry goods business to his partners Field and Leiter. Like Palmer, Marshall Field also withstood the disastrous fire, and bought out Levi Leiter in 1881. By 1893, Field was the richest man in Chicago, with $200 million in personal worth. The Marshall Field Wholesale Store building, designed by Henry Hobson Richardson, opened in 1885.

Chicago's millionaires took advantage of the presence of leading architects to have new mansions built. The Palmers hired Henry Ives Cobb to build their home, known as Palmer Palace, on North Lake Shore Drive. In the Prairie Avenue District, just South of Chicago's Loop, Marshall Field, Philip Armour, and George Pullman built their palatial
homes. One of the Prairie District mansions, which H. H. Richardson designed for John J. Glessner in the Romanesque style, still stands. These rich Chicagoans felt a need to show Eastern and European visitors that theirs was a cultured society, and not simply a "Porkopolis." Rudyard Kipling, upon visiting Chicago in 1889, had called it "the first American city I have encountered." But he also noted that "having seen it, I urgently desire never to see it again. It is inhabited by savages" (American Notes 215, 218). This negative perspective was one that Chicago's leaders wished to put to rest. Their lavish estates, where they held dinners and receptions along with a growing social life of lectures, plays, and balls, were steps in advancing the cultural activities and reputation of the city. Bertha Palmer displayed her large collection of French Impressionist art in her home while Harriet Pullman held French and dancing classes. Cyrus McCormick's mansion housed a 200-seat theatre for the presentation of plays and musicals.

Bringing cultural activities to Chicago was a primary goal for members of Chicago's high society. By the time of the Columbian Exposition, there were more than thirty theatres in Chicago, including the Schiller, McVickers, the Haymarket, the Grand Opera-House, and Hooleys. Probably the most famous was the Auditorium, designed by Louis Henri Sullivan and Dankmar Adler. The 3.5 million dollar Auditorium housed offices and a hotel, but was best known for its 4,100 seat theatre, which was dedicated on 9 December 1889. In the audience at the dedication ceremonies were President Benjamin Harrison and Vice President Levi P. Morton, who listened to Adelina Patti singing "Home Sweet Home." The most famous opera singer of her time, Patti was representative of the caliber of artist to visit Chicago. Many of the theatres brought in touring companies,
starring the most famous actors and singers. Richard Mansfield, Julia Marlowe, Eleanora Duse, Helena Modjeska, Ellen Terry, Henry Irving, Joseph Jefferson, and Constant Coquelin were just a few of the stars who visited Chicago and became honored guests at social functions. Wealthy Chicagoans worked hard to refine their city, and by 1893, Chicago had an Art Institute, an Historical Society, an Academy of Science and two new libraries—the Newberry Library and the Crerar. Theodore Thomas was brought from the East to conduct his own orchestra at the Auditorium, and John D. Rockefeller's contributions allowed for the construction of the University of Chicago.

To be sure, Chicago was not populated solely with millionaires and cultural socialites. Though there were 200 millionaires in Chicago in 1893, the city was mostly made up of immigrants. As Bessie Louise Pierce points out in *A History of Chicago, 1871-1893*, "by 1890, 77.9 per cent of the city's population was of foreign parentage derived from almost every civilized quarter of the globe" (322). The largest immigrant group was Germans, followed by Scandinavians and Irish. Poles, Italians, and Bohemians were also prominent in the city. African-Americans comprised only slightly more than one percent of the population, and just a few hundred Asians lived in the city. Each of these groups, however, formed a vital part of Chicago's existence. They each brought their own customs to the mix, but diversity came with problems. The hardships of prejudice and poverty experienced by the immigrants gave charitable and reform workers much to do. Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr were probably the best known reformers who, with Hull House established in 1889, provided immigrants with a gathering place where they could receive educational instruction and medical care, and enjoy social activities. As
Chicago's labor laws were deemed unfit by Addams, she strove to improve working conditions through political activism. Thus, she became well acquainted with the Chicago political system, which was infamous for its corruption.

Like Jane Addams, many of Chicago's middle-class and wealthy women found uses for their time and money in aiding the lower classes, but they often discovered that Chicago politics was often a barrier to their good works. At the end of the nineteenth century, Chicago's forty alderman were known as "the forty thieves." Two of the most corrupt city leaders were "Hinky Dink" Mike Kenna and "Bathhouse" John Coughlin. Together they ran the First Ward, which encompassed the city's business district. The nineteenth precinct of the first ward included the Levee, an area noted for its gambling and prostitution. William T. Stead who in 1894 exposed Chicago's vice in *If Christ Came to Chicago!* noted that "In the nineteenth precinct there are 46 saloons, 37 houses of ill-fame and 11 pawnbrokers" (133). Though Stead may have exaggerated, other sources corroborate the figures that Chicago had approximately 7,000 saloons and 10,000 prostitutes at the time of the fair. Reformers received no help from Mayor Carter Harrison, who was elected to his office five times, in 1879, 1881, 1883, 1885, and 1893. In fact, he owned a brothel and a saloon himself. Even in the Nineteenth Ward, where Hull House was located, Harrison won the 1893 election three-to-one. Harrison's popularity, especially among the working classes, derived partly from his actions during the Haymarket Riot in 1886.

During the 1880's, strikes plagued the city and, in May 1886, approximately 80,000 men were on strike. A few days after a particularly violent incident between
laborers and police in which several union members were killed, a worker's meeting was called in Haymarket Square on May 4 to discuss police brutality and to hear a speech by anarchist Albert R. Parsons. Mayor Harrison and the Chief of Police had policemen assembled in anticipation of trouble, but after evaluating the meeting as "tame," with fewer people assembled than expected, Harrison dismissed most of the policemen and the Chief, then went home himself. The Inspector left in charge heard a rumor that the last speaker was going to advocate violence against the law, so he sent the remaining police force to the square to end the meeting. At this point, a bomb was thrown into the crowd by an unknown assailant, injuring sixty-odd people and killing seven policemen. Several known anarchists were arrested, with eight tried and convicted of the crime. Seven of these men were sentenced to death. Because Harrison had talked to the people at the Haymarket meeting instead of summarily sending in the police, workers saw the Mayor as their friend. His Sunday visits to immigrant sections of the city also served to elevate his position among the lower classes.

Harrison, who appealed to both the wealthy and impoverished, and who seemed to care for the plight of immigrants while turning a blind eye to vice and corruption, epitomized the contradictions in Chicago itself. With its contrasts between rich and poor, moral and immoral, the city could underscore the lessons set up on the fairgrounds, thus becoming an exhibit of the Exposition itself.
Once Chicago was selected as the Exposition site, the local Chicago Company⁶ set about the herculean task of making the event become a reality. On 4 April 1890, before President Harrison had even signed the Exposition Bill, the Chicago Company held its first general meeting of stockholders, who elected a forty-five member Board of Directors. This group, in turn, chose the Company's executive officers. They elected Lyman Gage President with Thomas Bryan and Potter Palmer as Vice Presidents. Though members of the Board of Directors were, for the most part, wealthy businessmen and civil servants, some of the most powerful men of the city were absent due to their business commitments. As the salaries for members of the Board of Directors were on a sliding scale based on their occupational losses, perhaps salaries for Field, Pullman, and McCormick would have been too great. Their absences, along with that of Armour and Swift, does not mean these men were uninvolved or uninterested with Exposition proceedings, however. In fact, Marshall Field had bought the largest block of stock.

One of the first acts of the Chicago Company was to change its name to the World's Columbian Exposition Corporation, for better name recognition. Another early responsibility which the Corporation shared with the National Commission was to decide upon a site for the fair. At the National Commission's first meeting on 27 June 1890, representatives elected Thomas W. Palmer, a former senator from Michigan, to serve as President. Also, the representatives decided upon the formal organization of committees and began to discuss qualifications for choosing the exposition site. Three primary criteria

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⁶ The Chicago Company had originally been formed to ensure that Chicago became the site for the fair. Members lobbied congress. worked to alleviate criticism about the city. and sold stock subscriptions for the fair (Badger 56).
were identified for selecting the location: It had to be big, not too expensive, and convenient for visitors to access (Badger 57). Fortunately, Chicago had a system of public parks surrounding the city which might serve the purposes of the Exposition. Frederick Law Olmsted, the co-designer of New York's Central Park, had been one of the landscape artists involved in the 1870 planning of the Chicago parks. Though Olmsted was none too happy that his ideas had not been realized because the Great Fire had halted park development, he was convinced to return to Chicago to consult on an appropriate space for the fair. Since Lake Michigan is Chicago's greatest natural feature, the commission preferred a location with a view of the lake. They considered three possible sites: the lake front on the east side of the business district (called the Loop); Lincoln Park, on the Near North Side; and the Jackson Park/Washington Park area, eight miles south of the Loop.

Many businesses objected to the downtown site, because it would pose an enormous traffic congestion problem. Also, in order to erect the Exposition's buildings, the lake would have had to be filled in as far as the breakwater, which would take six to eight months. Several groups already had property rights in the area—the Illinois Central Railroad, the War Department, and the City and State governments. Reaching an agreement among them would be an immense undertaking.

Olmsted favored the Lincoln Park location because the development would be cheaper and would offer a better view of downtown Chicago. But this option failed to get support when the transportation companies refused to lay the extra track that would have been needed to accommodate the many visitors. Therefore, the parks on the City's South
side were the only remaining option. James W. Ellsworth, a member of the Board of Directors, was the President of the South Park Commission, so he petitioned Olmsted for his support. By having the Exposition there, the parks would be developed, a benefit Olmsted appreciated. The site was close enough to the lake for the fair's needs and far enough from the Loop to keep traffic down. However, the South Park Commission refused to allow any changes in Washington Park, so that left Jefferson Park, a huge marshy wasteland, as the only viable alternative. Fortunately, Olmsted's plan had called for a system of canals and lagoons to take advantage of the topography, so Jackson Park won approval.

Once the Commission decided on the 650-acre Jefferson Park site,\(^7\) the next step was to hire a chief of construction. The National Commission selected Daniel Hudson Burnham of the architectural firm of Burnham and Root. Burnham, in turn, hired his partner John Wellborn Root as consulting architect. At ages 44 and 41, respectively, these men were at the peaks of their careers, having designed many of Chicago's most important buildings, including the Rookery Building (1888) and the Monadnock Building (1892), both of which still stand. Burnhams' first task was to decide who would design the dozens of buildings necessary for the Exposition. Laying out the options for the members of the Committee on Grounds and Buildings, he explained that they could hire a single architect, hire a group to work as a team with members chosen through open or closed competition, or hand-select architects. Because the task was enormous and there was very little time before the projected 1 May 1893 opening, the single architect plan was

\(^7\) The site for the Paris Exposition was 72 acres.
unfeasible. Having a competition would also waste valuable time. Therefore, the committee agreed upon an invitation-only method. Although Chicago had prominent architects, Burnham chose to look elsewhere for his team, thus emphasizing that the Exposition was a national, not just a local event. He selected the top architects in the country. From New York, he invited Richard Morris Hunt, George B. Post, and the firm of McKim, Mead and White. From Boston, he invited Peabody and Stearns, and from Kansas City, Van Brunt and Howe. Upon receiving criticism from Chicagoans, the Commission allowed Burnham to add Chicago firms. He chose Adler and Sullivan, William Le Baron Jenney, Henry Ives Cobb, S.S. Beman, and Burling and Whitehouse.

At first, Burnham had a hard time convincing his invitees to participate. Though Van Brunt and Howe accepted immediately, the others balked. They were not sure the event would be well-organized or well-funded, but Burnham convinced them otherwise. The first meeting of architects was held on 10 January 1891, at which time the group elected Richard Morris Hunt as chair, and Louis H. Sullivan as secretary. At this meeting, the architects agreed that there would be a Court of Honor, a prominent group of buildings that would provide a focal point for the fair. In the interests of time and unity, and because many of the architects had been trained at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, they chose a uniform neoclassical style for this grouping. This desire for unity plus the lack of time and money also led to the architects' decision to cover all the Court of Honor buildings with staff, a white fibrous material. Though not all buildings on the fairgrounds received this treatment with staff, the unity of color in the Court of Honor led to the use of the term "The White City" for the main part of the fairgrounds. Though there is no record
that anyone protested against these decisions at the time, in later years some criticism emerged. Louis Sullivan was perhaps most vocal in his disdain when, in his *The Autobiography of an Idea*, he blamed the fair for setting architecture back at least fifty years (325). According to Sullivan, John Root had suggested using various architectural styles at the first meeting, but Root, within days after that meeting, contracted pneumonia and died. His death, Sullivan suggested, ended any chance of the Exposition's architecture advancing the art. Incidentally, Louis Sullivan's Transportation Building, with its golden door, was notably polychromatic.  

The architects met again in Chicago late the following month with initial sketches for the buildings assigned to them. These included the Administration Building (Hunt); Agricultural Building (McKim, Mead and White); Manufactures and Liberal Arts Building (Post); Machinery Building (Peabody and Stearns); Electricity Building (Van Brunt and Howe); Transportation Building (Adler and Sullivan); Fisheries Building (Cobb); Horticulture Building (Jenney and Mundie); the Mines and Mining Building (Beman), and the Venetian Village (Burling and Whitehouse). These were just a few of the more than two hundred buildings that would house the fair's exhibits.

While Burnham's work was getting under way, problems arose between the World's Columbian Exposition Corporation and the National Commission. Each group vied for control, and their duplication of tasks wasted both time and money. Various

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8 Following John Root's death, Charles B. Atwood took the position of designer-in-chief of the Exposition, designing more than sixty of the Fair's buildings, while artist Frank Millet, as Director of Color, presided over the huge assemblage of painters and muralists. William Pretyman, the first Director of Color, resigned when the architects voted to cover all the Court of Honor buildings with staff.

9 The Venetian Village was never built.
methods were attempted to alleviate the problems, one of which was to form a twenty-six member executive committee from the National Commission to sit permanently in Chicago. Director-General George R. Davis, whom the Chicago Company recommended, led this group. The first two sessions of the executive committee cost much more than Congress was willing to spend, so the Commission had to streamline its duties. Under the recommendation of a committee made up of people from both the National Commission and the Chicago Company, a third organization was formed, led by the Director-General, to administrate the fifteen departments he established which were each associated with one of the preliminary exhibit classifications. These departments included Agriculture (A), Horticulture (B), Livestock (C), Fisheries (D), Mines (E), Machinery (F), Transportation (G), Manufactures (H), Electricity (J), Fine Arts (K), Liberal Arts (L), Ethnology (M), Forestry (N), Publicity and Promotion (O) and Foreign Affairs (P). The Forestry Department was later incorporated into other departments.

Once the leadership was organized, an extremely important job was to publicize the Exposition. On 24 December 1890, President Harrison had issued a proclamation announcing that the fair would be held in Chicago and inviting the nations of the world to participate in the celebration. To boost Chicago's reputation and to ensure an appropriate level of participation at the fair, the Department of Publicity and Promotion was established under the direction of Moses P. Handy. This amazingly well-organized Department quickly developed a mailing list with over 50,000 domestic addresses. The list also included addresses for 5,000 foreign and 30,000 U.S. and Canadian newspapers.

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10 For more detailed information on the organization of the National Commission and the Chicago Company, including information on funding, consult R. Reid Badger's *The Great American Fair.*
American and foreign V.I.P.'s were on the list as well. The Department's workers wrote a weekly newsletter in fourteen languages and sent out pamphlets, guidebooks, handbooks, and lithographs. For a time, they had the largest newspaper mail of any address in the U.S. Along with sending out mailings, they also subscribed to publications, making scrapbooks filled with items mentioning the fair. The Department sent out representatives to drum up interest in the fair and brought translators and tour guides to Chicago, too.

Because the Department itself produced most printed material about the fair in the years before the opening, the Department of Publicity and Promotion held the primary responsibility for establishing images and ideas of what the fair would be.

The Department of Publicity and Promotion succeeded in generating great interest in the fair among potential exhibitors and the general populous. Unfortunately, the response from exhibitors was so great that the fair organizers could not provide as much exhibition space as they received requests for. Eighty-six nations, colonies and principalities were selected to participate in the fair. It is interesting to note that every one of the colonies of England and France had a place among the exhibitors. Most of the exhibiting nations displayed their works in the main exhibition buildings, but nineteen nations were awarded space for their own structures. Some of these nations commissioned the Exposition architects to design their buildings, while others chose outside architects. The Norway and Sweden buildings, for example, were constructed in their home countries, dismantled, shipped, and rebuilt in Chicago. Japan and Ceylon sent their own workers to Chicago to build their structures on-site. In addition to the foreign buildings, thirty-nine states and territories of the United States had their own buildings on
the fairgrounds. These, too, were designed and built under various circumstances. Both
the state and foreign buildings were intended to provide a sanctuary for their citizens.
Tourists could use these "home buildings" as meeting or resting places during their stay.
They would be able to look at special exhibits from their states and countries, take
refreshment, encounter others from their home, or simply rest from their long hours of
touring the grounds.

The bulk of exhibits were displayed in the major buildings, in accordance with the
Exposition's complex classification system. G. Brown Goode, assistant secretary of the
Smithsonian Institution, was an advisor on exhibit classification. He also headed the
Department of Education, while F.W. Putnam of Harvard was chief of the Department of
Ethnology. Other leading scholars and practitioners were chosen to head the thirteen
remaining departments. With prominent people planning the Exposition and the
Department of Publicity doing an excellent job, people soon started believing that the
World's Columbian Exposition would be a world-class event. Before long, scores of
requests for concessions arrived. Though the Exposition was meant to be primarily
educational, revenue from concessions would be a major source of income, as had been
the case at other Expositions. There was an effort, however, to disguise concessions as
education. At the Paris Exposition, various theatrical managers had set up "ethnic
villages," supposedly realistic displays of life in exotic countries, inhabited by natives of
those lands. Thomas Palmer advocated the use of these exotic displays, which would
make money while being ostensibly educational. Several of these villages would be
constructed on a strip of land perpendicular to the White City. This separate strip was
called the Midway Plaisance. The Midway would also contain other concessions such as the ice railway, the Captive Balloon, and, most famously, the Ferris Wheel, the first example of this future amusement park staple.

Although the Midway villages were intended as educational exhibits, their theatricality overshadowed their educational merits. To support the idea that the villages were of anthropological value, the Commission classified them under the Department of Ethnology. Harvard professor F.W. Putnam, however, felt justly unqualified to organize such an endeavor as Department Chief, so the Exposition looked to a twenty-one-year old named Sol Bloom to take over the planning.

Sol Bloom, the son of Polish Jewish immigrants, had moved from downstate Illinois to San Francisco when a child. There, in his chosen profession as a theatrical manager, he gained a reputation for financial shrewdness. Bloom had already gained the rights to run the Midway's Algerian Village exhibit when Michael de Young, one of California's commissioners for the fair, approached him and asked him to manage all the fair's amusement concessions. Bloom, a future New York Congressman, wrote the story of how he was hired in his autobiography. Apparently, Bloom, not wanting to leave San Francisco, was given the opportunity to name his own salary. He asked for the princely sum of $1,000 per week, which he was sure he wouldn't get. Much to his surprise, De Young granted his request and Bloom was on his way to Chicago. Writes Bloom: "I rushed out and bought a ticket for Chicago. I could see the whole fair centering about my Algerian Village, and I didn't have a minute to lose. After all, the exposition was less than three years away" (Bloom 110). Bloom's plans got under way very quickly: "I plunged in
and set up an office. I put up signs and inserted notices in the newspapers and in various periodicals catering to the theatrical trade. I had applications printed and circulated. I let it be known through every possible channel that the Midway Plaisance was going to be the biggest thing of its kind ever known" (120). With Bloom's connections, he was much more suited to the task of managing the Midway than Putnam. As Bloom himself later remarked:

There never was any question about Professor Putnam's qualifications as head of the ethnological section, but to have made this unhappy gentleman responsible for the establishment of a successful venture in the field of entertainment was about as intelligent a decision as it would be today to make Albert Einstein manager of the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus." (119)

The novelty of the first Midway was joined by another unusual attraction, though the latter was perhaps more successful than the Midway in conforming to its educational claims. In 1889, a Chicago judge named Charles C. Bonney wrote an article in Statesman Magazine suggesting that a series of "Congresses" on various subjects of international interest should be held as part of the fair. Readers supported this idea and convinced the government to establish a new group, the World's Congress Auxiliary, to organize the huge undertaking. Bonney was chosen to Chair the Auxiliary, with Chicago banker Lyman Gage as treasurer. Two hundred and fourteen local committees were formed and charged with contacting eminent figures to participate in the congresses. There was also an advisory council of over fourteen-thousand non-resident members to help decide what subjects should or should not be included. The principal subjects to be under discussion at the Congresses were: "Woman's Progress, The Public Press, Medicine and Surgery, Temperance, Moral and Social Reform, Commerce and Finance, Music, Literature,
Education, Engineering, Art, Government, Science and Philosophy, Social and Economic
Science, Labor, Religion, Sunday Rest, Public Health, and Agriculture" (Bonney iii). Of
note, the topic of theatre was omitted from this group, but topics on the drama were
included under the heading of Literature.

These congresses would prove to be one of the most enriching aspects of the
Exposition. The first of the congresses held at the fair, the World's Congress of
Representative Women, would be especially influential by spreading new ideas about
women's place in society. This congress raised all the subjects mentioned above as they
related to women. All the Congresses together would sponsor just under six thousand
addresses for an audience of about seven hundred thousand people.

The inclusion of a Board of Lady Managers was also an unusual feature of the fair,
and for some observers and administrators this accommodation was considered a curiosity
that was sure to fail. The Department of Publicity had certainly done its part in promoting
woman's importance at this fair by featuring the Board of Lady Managers's plans and
actions in their publications, but President Bertha Palmer did a great deal on her own to
gain support for the Board's work. Although the Board of Lady Managers had no specific
duties outlined for them, and very little money allocated by Congress, Mrs. Palmer
accomplished an unbelievable task. At her own expense, she traveled around the world
drumming up interest for the Exposition—bringing about the organization of a substantial
number of foreign women's boards charged with collecting exhibits and statistics on
women's work. She successfully lobbied Congress and Exposition officials for funds and
was granted allocations for a Woman's Building, which would be the first major building
designed by a woman in the country. Mrs. Palmer also presided over meetings with such diplomacy that most Board members, with a few notable exceptions, practically idolized her. Her well-publicized successes made her probably the most recognizable figure at the fair.

By the time the fair officially opened on 1 May 1893, visitors would know a lot about what they could expect to experience. The publicity department had done its job in informing people about every stage of planning, while the guidebooks detailed the exhibits and furnished all the practical information a guest would need. Admission to the fairgrounds was fifty cents for adults, twenty-five cents for children under 12, and free for children under 6. There were additional charges for the Esquimau11 Village and the Cliff Dwellers' exhibit, as well as for various Midway exhibits. Visitors could get to the fairgrounds on foot, by Chicago City Railway, Illinois Central Railroad, or by water. The available methods of transport could bring 135,000 people per hour to the grounds. On the fairgrounds, one could ride in electric boats, gondolas, or steam launches; take the intramural railway, or hire rolling or sedan chairs. To feed the multitude, there were enough lunch counters, cafés and restaurants to serve 60,000 people at one time.

Accommodations ranged from nearby hotels with prices from $1.00 to $5.00 per night, while downtown hotels, boarding houses, and family hotels, provided accommodations for all classes of visitors. Guidebooks even listed the number of toilets on the grounds—1500 free toilets and 1500 "nicer lavatories" for a 5-cent charge. For entertainment off the fairgrounds, guidebooks suggested the Board of Trade gallery, area parks, monuments,

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11 Esquimau(x) was the common spelling of Eskimo during the fair. For the sake of consistency, I will use it throughout.
and buildings of Chicago. The zoo, slaughterhouses, theatres, department stores, and museums were also points of interest. With so many people coming to the fair, ready to be educated and entertained, educators and entertainers also flocked to Chicago to provide their services.
CHAPTER 2

CINDERELLA OF THE ARTS

P.T. Barnum, writing in March 1890 on the entertainment potential of the World's Columbian Exposition, said: "Make it bigger and better than any that have preceded it. Make it the Greatest Show on Earth—greater than my own Great Moral Show if you can" (400). Barnum died in 1891 without getting to see the fair, but he most likely would have been impressed with the results, especially with the Midway. Though the fair officials billed the Midway Villages as educational, the Midway's theatricality overshadowed its educational merits. On the Midway, visitors could watch residents of the villages at work or rest, or could attend a performance of native theatre, ritual, or dance. Interestingly, it was only on the Midway where theatre performances were a regular occurrence on the fairgrounds. While most of the arts were well represented at the fair, with the Fine Arts Building and Music Hall, there was little effort beyond the Midway to include theatre. Even though the Exposition planners neglected to provide for the performance of plays on the fairgrounds, downtown Chicago's theatres thrived, so visitors had more than enough opportunity to sample theatrical presentations. Because women's participation in theatrical activities is central to my dissertation, there exists a need to discuss what venues were open to them. This chapter will provide a brief overview of the types of theatre that

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occurred during the Exposition and what roles for women were available during the fair season, not only in downtown Chicago, but in the White City, and also on the Midway. In addition, I will focus on three especially important productions in their relationship to the fair. These are Steele Mackaye's *The World-Finder*, Buffalo Bill's *Wild West Show*, and Imre Kiralfy's *America*. As Chapter One provided a background on the World's Columbian Exposition, Chapter Two does the same for theatre. Future chapters will then assess how audiences perceived female performers and in what ways those performers worked to change those perceptions.

According to an article in the *Chicago Tribune* dated 30 April 1893, nineteen "regularly organized theaters" would be running in Chicago during the entire period of the world's fair. In addition, four "first-class" music halls would house "recitals, concerts, or elocutionary entertainments." There were also "cycloramas, second-class concert halls, amphitheatres and curio halls" ("Diversion in Plenty" 34). Though the author of this article took pride in the amount and variety of theatrical entertainments available in Chicago, he or she was highly disappointed that the Exposition had not taken theatre seriously:

> From the time of Aristophanes the drama has been the Cinderella of the arts, and it has patiently waited in the ashes for the Prince to take it to the ball to which its more fortunate sisters, poetry, music, painting, and sculpture, have always been welcome. The World's Fair was its golden opportunity, but it is to be again doomed to disappointment (34).

As far as exhibits on theatre were concerned, the August/September 1891 issue of the *World's Columbian Exposition Illustrated* announced plans for displays on theatrical art and artists, including Aescyklus, who was to be "handsomely emblazoned in the
exhibits made by the modern immortals of the Thespian art," and Shakespeare, who was to be "with us in statuary, paintings, poetry and prose, relics and discussion" (3). Also planned was an exhibit of "the actor and his profession in all their conditions, from earliest time to the present" (3). But the only live theatre event intended for the White City was the production of Steele Mackaye's Columbus play entitled The World Finder.

*The World-Finder*

Steele Mackaye is well-known to theatre scholars for his diversified talents as actor, director, producer, teacher, designer, playwright, manager, and inventor. Unfortunately, Mackaye's habit of always moving to something new before achieving complete success with his current venture meant that he was never quite able to turn his talents into profit-making ventures for himself. Though Mackaye's grandiose vision for The World-Finder was ill-fated practically from its conception, and it never opened, a discussion of the events surrounding it is important in order to show where theatre stood in the eyes of the Exposition's leaders. Thanks to Percy Mackaye's biography of his father, entitled *Epoch*, and Daniel Leroy Hannon's dissertation, "The Mackaye Spectatorium," more detail on this unproduced show exists than on many produced ones.

By 1891, though Mackaye's play, Hazel Kirke, held the record as the longest running show on Broadway, Mackaye was deeply in debt. His wealthy father had died leaving no money to Mackaye, but Steele accepted a five hundred dollar fee to travel to France to settle his father's estate. Mackaye first went to England to arrange for productions of his plays and, while there, heard that a delegation from the Columbian...
Exposition had arrived to drum up foreign interest in the fair. This delegation included an old friend of Mackaye, Moses P. Handy, the Director of the Department of Publicity and Promotion. Hannon relates how Handy told Mackaye that the commissioners were "searching for some cultural event which would serve as the focus and theme of the fair" (7). Mackaye quickly drew up a prospectus for his project. In it, Mackaye listed the following needs:

- Two acres in the grounds of the World's Fair of 1893, at Chicago.
- A portable Theatre, with a seating capacity worth $8,500, for each performance, at popular prices.
- A complete electrical plant for inventions applying electricity to stage illusions, scenic, mechanical, musical, and dramatic.
- A full equipment of scenery, costumes, properties and stage mechanisms, for the presentation of a great spectacle, illustrating the story of Columbus and the discovery of America, with grand Spanish, Aztec and savage ballets.
- The Theatre and complete paraphernalia built to be packed in sections and transported to any city in the world. (Hannon 8)

Mackaye named the theatre building the Spectatorium, and the stage area the Scenitorium. He called the type of production a "spectatorio," which he defined in a scenario of The World Finder: "A spectatorio combines grand spectacle with grand oratorio, utilising the most advanced artistic realism for the purpose of emphasising the most inspiring idealism. It seeks to present the facts of history with graphic force while suggesting, by music and poetic symbolism, the true philosophy of history" (P. Mackaye 337). The spectatorio entailed using actors performing in pantomime with orchestral and choral accompaniment, along with incredible stage effects.
The commissioners received Mackaye's plans enthusiastically, so he moved to Chicago and set about raising money for the venture. Mackaye's first snag came in his encounter with the restrictive rules established for the construction of the World's Fair buildings. Mackaye suggested that a particular "doubter" on the committee, whom he did not name, pushed the need for a working model in addition to extensive drawings. Though Mackaye knew building a model would be both time-consuming and expensive, he had no choice but to begin the work. The first set of working models cost $5,000 and took Mackaye several months of constant work to complete. Still, Mackaye was unable to meet the deadline, so fair organizers denied his request to be on the fairgrounds.

Losing a space on the fairgrounds was a substantial blow to Mackaye, but supporters encouraged him to build his Spectatorium just outside the fairgrounds, on the corner of Lakeshore and 56th street. There, he would not have to share his profits with the Exposition. Mackaye formed the Columbian Celebration Company and set about raising funds. Because of his enthusiasm for the project, Mackaye won over George Pullman, who put $50,000 into the project. Other wealthy patrons soon followed.

In a 1892 prospectus for his new company, Mackaye listed and defined the inventions he intended to use in *The World Finder*. These include automatic combustion stages, water-current makers, wave-makers, wind-current makers, weather makers, illuminoscopes, colorators, nebulators, umbrators, a proscenium adjuster, luxauleator (curtain of light), and automatic interpreters (titles describing the pantomime). The stage would also have twenty-five telescoping stages. All of these inventions would be used to "tell the story of Columbus in a manner that will illustrate . . . the patient endurance—the
stern determination—the benevolent nature—the religious faith—and the dauntless
courage of the man, to whom civilization is indebted for a new world” (qtd. in Hannon
18).

The architectural firm of Jenney and Mundie designed the huge Spectatorium, the
seating capacity of which would allow approximately 10,000 spectators at a time to be
seated in front of the 150 x 70 foot proscenium opening. Not only the building, but the
cast were to be enormous. For an anticipated three to four performances daily, Mackaye
wanted rotating casts of 1,500 singers and actors.

Since Mackaye knew that to fill his cast he would have to use non-professional
Chicagoans in the production, and would need at least six months of rehearsal, he opened
a school to train performers. Percy Mackaye calls this school the "first educational
organisation of amateur participants in large-scale dramatic production…” (374). The
"Choral, Dancing, Pantomimic and Dramatic School" opened on 13 February 1892. The
school auditioned men, women, and children, and those admitted received the training for
free. Classes included dancing, choral singing, stage deportment, and pantomime, with
"special instruction in dramatic action from Mr. Steele Mackaye." Since the actors did not
need to speak in the play, elocution was not taught. Those students accepted for The
World Finder received payment (374).

While Mackaye was getting his school underway, he hit another obstacle with his
investors. They were so impressed with his vision and models, that they decided the
Spectatorium should be a permanent building, rather than a temporary construction for the
few months of the fair. For the permanent structure, they wanted to add elevators, roof
gardens, restaurants, Turkish baths, a barber shop, and other costly adjuncts. With the earlier plans for a temporary structure, Mackaye had hoped to tour his production all over the world, but once the Spectatorium was to be permanent, Mackaye quickly adapted his plans and decided to make the acting school permanent as well so as to continuously provide performers for the Spectatorium. He now wanted to present a new production every spring.

Though the Spectatorium investors were excited about the project, they still induced Mackaye to build a larger set of models, this time at an expense of $30,000. While Mackaye did have assistants teaching in the school and building his theatre, the Spectatorium was still largely a one-man venture. In letters home, Mackaye wrote regularly of his frustration and overwork. Mackaye was head of a large family, to whom he was very devoted, but he was unable to visit home because of the impossible task ahead of him. Money was constantly tight for the Spectatorium and for personal expenses, but by the end of August, 1892, he had raised the $500,000 needed to complete the project.

Mackaye asked his son, Percy, to write the libretto for The World Finder. He commissioned Anton Seidl, the famous Wagnerian conductor, to conduct the 120-piece orchestra, and Frederick Archer, an English musician, to compose the choral pieces. Victor Herbert, who would later become celebrated for his operettas, also composed music for the production. For the incidental music, he looked to Anton Dvorak, who expressed great interest. Though The World Finder never opened, Percy Mackaye claims

1 Percy Mackaye became well-known in his own right as a playwright and developer of community pageants in the early twentieth century.
that Dvorak's "New World Symphony" was a direct result of his work for the

Spectatorium. The symphony premiered in New York in December 1893, with Anton
Seidl conducting.

Progress on The Spectatorium was reasonably well in hand by the end of 1892, and a May opening seemed within reach. But the beginning of 1893 proved disastrous. Chicago suffered through a brutal winter, with many Exposition buildings damaged in storms. A snow cyclone blew part of the roof off of the Spectatorium, killing several workers and adding enormous expense to the project. There were also worker strikes early in the year, and then the Panic of 1893 struck, freezing the assets of investors. These events were devastating for the Exposition as a whole, but they doomed the Spectatorium. At first, Mackaye postponed the opening of The World Finder to August, but by June, 1893 circumstances forced him to give up. Visitors to the fair complained about the unfinished building, which could be seen behind the state buildings. There was also worry about fire. Even though the venture had cost $850,000 so far, and supporters pleaded for a way to finish it, the Spectatorium was sold for junk for $2,250. By the end of November, 1893, the Spectatorium had been razed.

Still, the grand scheme of Steele Mackaye was not quite over. When the fair ended, Mackaye built yet a third model, which he called the Scenitorium, at a cost of $50,000. The Scenitorium was installed in a downtown Chicago theatre. On 5 February 1894, Mackaye held one performance of The World Finder, with no actors or chorus—only himself narrating. This demonstration was greatly acclaimed, but by this
time, Mackaye was gravely ill. He set out on a train to the west to improve his health, but on February 25, while still on the train, Mackaye died.

Because the technical aspects of the Spectatorium project are so fascinating, they have received the lion's share of attention from journalists and scholars. Little has been written about the affects of its failure on the performers, yet the Chicago Tribune reported on 1 June 1893 that "450 ballet girls and men, each having an individual contract for a period of service and all expecting to go to work today, have been thrown out without, it is said, any redress from the Columbian Celebration Company" ("Mackaye Goes Under").

One of the performers told the Tribune reporter that "many of these people have come here from other cities and have been hanging about Chicago for over a month out of employment and practically without money." Certainly, the constant ups and downs of Mackaye's fortunes would have taken their toll on these players. Though the cast sizes of many other plays running in Chicago were large, there may not have been many opportunities for Mackaye's group to find new employment since the fair season was already underway when the performers lost their jobs in June.

Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show

In the absence of The World Finder, Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show and Congress of Rough Riders became the fair's hottest theatrical event, though this show was not an official part of the Exposition either. The arena stood just off the fairgrounds, at Stony Island Avenue and 63rd Street. Opening on 26 April 1893, the Wild West Show held two performances at 3:00 and 8:00 every day, rain or shine, until 1 November 1893. The
Congress of Rough Riders of the World included soldiers and horsemen from America, England, France, Germany, Russia, Syria, Arabia, and Mexico. The performers reenacted such events as "The Battle of Little Big Horn" and an attack on a "Prairie Emigrant Train Crossing the Plains." Ironically, apart from the addition of the Congress of Rough Riders, it was essentially the same production that Steele Mackaye had produced for a run at Madison Square Garden seven years previously.

A few women performed in The Wild West Show, though none as famous as Annie Oakley. Oakley was an expert markswoman who did a series of trick shots in the show. In Annie Oakley of the Wild West, Walter Havighurst describes Oakley's act: "She shot on foot, on horseback, from a bicycle; she shot from both shoulders and behind her back. While six glass balls went up she turned a hand-spring and seized a repeating rifle; the six balls vanished. She caught her pony, leaped to the saddle, and raced away" (168). Oakley appeared third on the program, after the playing of "The Star Spangled Banner" and the introduction of the Rough Riders in the "Grand Review." Besides Oakley, white women in the cast included sideshow performers, comedians, and dancers. A few Native American women also participated in the show. There are three names under the heading "squaws" in a cast list printed in O.J. Seiden's Buffalo Bill: His Life and Legacy. Many wives and children of Wild West Show performers and management personnel, including Buffalo Bill's eleven-year-old daughter Irma, also toured to Chicago and were part of the show's community.
America

In journalist Teresa Dean's "White City Chips" column for the Daily Inter-Ocean on September 14, the following overheard remark is reprinted: "There are three things I said that I was to see when I came to the World's Fair, Buffalo Bill, 'America,' and Dr. Gunsaulus, and I'm going to do it" (330). None of these three attractions were actually official parts of the Exposition.² Like Buffalo Bill's Wild West, Imre Kiralfy's America was a very popular production during the Exposition, opening at the Auditorium Theatre on 22 April 1893. Imre Kiralfy and his brother Bolossy were known for producing colossal open-air productions such as Around the World in Eighty Days, The Fall of Babylon, and Nero, or the Burning of Rome. The Kiralfy's were from Budapest, Hungary, but moved to the United States in 1869. The brothers ceased working together after a falling-out in 1886, but both continued to have successful, if separate, careers.

America, which was a grand spectacle about the history of America since the time of Columbus, was to open at the Auditorium theatre a couple of weeks before the fair's opening, but a week's delay occurred because the stage hands needed more training. When the show did open, reviews suggested that there was still room for improvement. According to the Chicago Tribune, "Chaos would have been a more suitable title than America for the spectacle which was given at the Auditorium last night as a sort of prelude of folly to the amusements of the World's Fair season" ("America is Chaos"). Though many fair officials were there, the critic reported that the scenery did not move

² The Reverend Frank Gunsaulus gave popular sermons in his church on Chicago's south side. An 1890 sermon, about the need for a school where students from all walks of life could prepare for their roles in the changing industrial landscape, had inspired Philip Danforth Armour, one of the city's wealthy meatpackers, to finance the founding of the Armour Institute (now the Illinois Institute of Technology). The school opened in 1893 with Gunsaulus as its president.
well, and the performance did not end until 1:00 a.m. This critic had scathing comments regarding Kiralfy: "Even the libretto may be his work, for it is evidently by someone who is imperfectly acquainted with the English language or the sequence of American history.

Kiralfy did write the libretto, with music by Angelo Venanzi. The critic suggested cutting one-half to two-thirds of the show. He also thought America should be done in pantomime, except for the singing, as it was too difficult to hear the speakers. Apparently, Kiralfy accepted these assessments, because he did indeed discard one-half of the show after the first performance. Though America suffered a rough start, it soon became one of the most successful shows in Chicago.

Since the play traced the history of America from the time of Columbus, roles were ample, and many actors were often cast in multiple parts. Many of the parts, especially for women, were allegorical. The leading role was "Progress," which was the only part that continued throughout the entire play. This was played by Louise Beaudet, who had portrayed Ariel in The Tempest in Chicago two years previously. Carlotta Gilman played "The Goddess of Liberty and Freedom," and Anna Ross portrayed "Bigotry." Other women cast members were Horine Malcolm as Queen Isabella and Alicia Stochetti as both Priscilla (the Puritan) and "Chicago." One example of multiple casting includes that of actor J. Gordon Edwards who played Columbus, Roger Williams, George Washington, and Abraham Lincoln ("Opening of America Delayed"). None of these actors were famous, but the pantomimic nature of the show did not seem to require any particular acting ability. At any rate, reviews of the production describe the spectacle, not the acting. Dancing, however, was a very important aspect of the production. In The
Illustrated American. Austin Brereton remarked that America "embraces three ballets of exceptional elegance and marches and processions innumerable" (225). Parts for "ballet girls" and male dancers (there was no comparable term for men) numbered in the hundreds.

Chicago

Before the fair got truly underway, there was a great deal of worry on the part of theatrical producers about whether the fair would increase or decrease attendance. At both the Philadelphia Centennial and Paris Exposition, the theatres lost money during the first three months, and many Chicago producers feared they would fare no better, especially with an economic depression. On May 5, The Chicago Times said that it would take twenty thousand people per night to keep the playhouses running at a profit and by May 28, asserted that the theatre season was a bust. "The fact is that people are not going to theaters this year anywhere in these United States. They are going to the fair. 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' had just as well close its doors and allow little Eva to visit the doll show in Jackson Park" ("Dramatic and Musical"). David Henderson, manager of the Chicago opera house, announced that visitors to the fair would not want to spend time in theatres. He said "they prefer to roam about the streets and look at the electric lights and the frowning fronts of the skyscrapers, or to take in the wonders of . . . Buffalo Bill's Wild West and the sideshows of Midway Plaisance" ("Plays and Players" Chicago Herald). He continued, "When I say that this is the worst theatrical season Chicago has seen in years I am prepared to prove my words." Fortunately, Henderson's words proved incorrect. In
fact, by early June, theatres were graced with sell-out crowds. By mid-June, the Chicago Tribune reported that America was squeezing people into the second balcony, with an additional fifty to two hundred people standing or sitting in camp-chairs ("Play-Goers Plenty"). By September, the Chicago Tribune could report on America's success, saying that "if the figures could be printed, [they] would probably be without a parallel in the history of theatricals in America" ("Beyond All Records"). Because theatres were doing so well, some observers thought the economic depression was not as grave as feared. For example, the Chicago Evening Journal stated:

as theaters are the first places to feel the effects of a financial stringency, the depression is evidently more fancied than real so far as it affects people in general, for the Chicago houses never did a bigger business than they are doing now, even in the most prosperous season of their history." ("Play Houses Filled")

Among the plays available for audiences in Chicago during the World's Fair season were a mixed bag of old stalwarts, new plays, and grand spectacles. The list includes The Black Crook, Brother John, The Old Homestead, Captain Lettarblair, The Mountebanks, The White Squadron, The Professor's Love Story, The Middleman, The Charity Ball, Sweet Will, The Sportsman, Hendrick Hudson, Ali Baba, Yon Yonson, Ole Oleson, Caleb Brewster, and The Girl I Left Behind Me (see Appendix A for a more complete list).

The need for singers and dancers in many of these plays was great, and there were also plenty of leading and supporting roles for local actresses. Dozens, if not hundreds, of actresses also toured to Chicago for the theatre season as members of various theatre companies, including Augustin Daly's Company, Charles Frohman's Comedians, Daniel Frohman's Lyceum Theater Company, and the companies of such actors as Sol Smith.
Russell (Russell's Comedians), Lillian Russell (Lillian Russell's Opera Comique), Henry Irving (London Lyceum Theatre Company), Fanny Davenport, Rose and Charles Coghlan, Constant Coquelin, Eleanora Duse, and Helena Modjeska.

In April, right before the fair opened, both Eleanora Duse, the celebrated Italian actress, and Helena Modjeska, a famous émigré from Poland, toured to Chicago. Duse's repertoire included Camille, Cavalleria Rusticana, Fedora, Fernande, and La Locandiera. Modjeska performed in Camille as well, in addition to roles in Henry VIII, Macbeth, Mary Stuart, and Much Ado About Nothing. Once the fair opened, fair visitors could see Fanny Davenport in Cleopatra; Rose Coghlan in Diplomacy, Money, and Peg Woffington; and Georgia Cayvan, a member of Daniel Frohman's Lyceum Theater company, in Americans Abroad. Ada Rehan performed with Augustin Daly's company in such plays as Belle's Strategem, Twelfth Night, and The Hunchback. Lillian Russell, the flamboyant light-opera star, stayed in Chicago for a twelve-week engagement, performing in La Cigale, The Mountebanks, and Giroflé-Giroflé.

Probably the most anticipated tours of the fair season were those of Henry Irving, the great English actor, and Constant Coquelin, star of the Comédie Française. Both tours opened in October. Irving's leading lady Ellen Terry played in Becket, The Bells, Louis XI, The Merchant of Venice and Nance Oldfield, while Coquelin's leading lady, Jane Hading, performed in a huge repertoire of over a dozen plays, including La Dame aux Camélias (Camille), Frou-Frou, Les Precieuses Ridicules, Tartuffe, and Le Ménagère Apprivoisée (The Taming of the Shrew).
Besides the actors listed above, Chicago audiences could see such well-known performers as Nat C. Goodwin, Eddie Foy, Otis Skinner, E.H. Sothern, Robert Mantell, and Richard Mansfield. Overall, there were almost two hundred plays which ran during the Exposition. That most of these productions were successful attests to the fact that visitors to Chicago considered theatre-going part of the Exposition experience.

When one considers the large casts of some of these shows, it is amazing that there were enough ticket-buyers to cover just the performers' salaries. One of the larger spectacles in Chicago was the Siege of Sebastopol, created by London pyrotechnists James Pain and Sons. This production called for 15,000 square feet of scenery, an artificial lake, fireworks, and six hundred performers. At Tattersall's Theatre, a military tournament was on exhibit, which included a reenactment of a battle scene between Zulus and the British.

This mock battle provided one of the few opportunities for black performers in Chicago that season. A Chicago Tribune article about the show remarked that "a large contingent of colored supers" played the Zulus ("Attacked by Zulus"). There were several other opportunities for black performers, though probably not all of them were mentioned in the major newspapers. In May, one could see Peter Jackson, the renowned black Australian boxer, as Uncle Tom in Uncle Tom's Cabin. This production also featured "one of the best negro quartets" in the plantation scene ("Plays and Players" Chicago Post). There were also black dancers in the plantation scene of Caleb Brewster.
"equestrian comedy-drama of southern life" (Advertisement). Whether they were the same plantation dancers as in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is not known. Another popular production to feature African-American performers was *The Creole Show*, performed by Sam T. Jack's Creole Burlesque Company. This was basically a minstrel show, but whereas the genre traditionally featured white male performers wearing blackface, *The Creole Show* not only had black actors in the cast instead of whites, it starred black women, as Bernard L. Peterson notes in his *African American Theatre Directory, 1816-1960*: "This company was the first to replace men with women in the minstrel chorus and to add other features to the musical show that took it a step away from the minstrel pattern" (55). Some scholars have surmised that this show inspired many upcoming black entertainers who visited Chicago during the Exposition, like Paul Laurence Dunbar, Scott Joplin, and Will Marion Cook.

A great many variety shows and dime museums were available to audiences in addition to the regular plays and large spectacles. At Kohl and Middleton's Clark Street Dime Museum, one could see in just one week, "the Zulu Sampson and his wife, the transparent ossified man, the lightning calculator, the German midget, the lady band and other wonders" ("Notes on Amusement" 9 May 1893). During that same week, the State Street Globe Museum presented Herr Dodretti, the modern Samson; the educated albino dog; the long-haired Allyne sisters; the boy glaut; and the gypsy band.

Another popular attraction was the variety show at Florenz Ziegfeld, Sr.'s Trocadero. Ziegfeld and his partner W.W. Kimball had founded a highly respected musical college in Chicago decades earlier and, for the fair season, Ziegfeld hoped to bring
the best classical performers from Europe to play at his hall. Therefore, he sent his
twenty-five year-old son, Florenz Ziegfeld, Jr., to Europe to engage the performers.
Young Ziegfeld, however, had other plans. Instead of hiring classical performers, Flo
engaged vaudeville and circus acts. Ziegfeld, Sr. exhausted his budget trying to fix his
son's deed. As the classical musicians who did appear on the stage were not a success,
Ziegfeld Sr. had no recourse but to start using the vaudeville and circus acts. Business
picked up, but the show needed a headliner. So, in August 1893, Ziegfeld, Jr. hired
European strongman Eugene Sandow away from the New York theatre where he was
currently working. Though Sandow had not been very successful in New York, Ziegfeld
used his gift for publicity to create a star. One of his strategies was to convince audiences
that the muscle builder was a gentle giant. Charles Higham recounts one of the young
producer's promotions in his 1972 biography of Ziegfeld. At the end of the opening
performance, Ziegfeld announced that any woman in the audience willing to donate three
hundred dollars to charity could come backstage and feel Sandow's biceps. Bertha Palmer
and Harriet Pullman took the challenge. Once these women reported their experience to
their friends, "Sandow was 'made' in Chicago" (14). Ziegfeld also took Sandow on a walk
through the woods with Chicago Daily News drama critic Amy Leslie to show that
Sandow loved spring flowers. Leslie was impressed. In an article entitled "The Muscles
of Sandow," she wrote: "Sandow is brawny, blonde and beautiful. . . . He is pink and
white as a baby, has clear blue eyes and a wealth of golden, close-cut curls. His teeth are
even, shiny and white, his face soft and lighted by a smile that is just short of girlish. Mr.
Sandow is a dangerously handsome young man . . . " ("The Muscles of Sandow").
Ziegfeld's tour with Sandow after the fair helped launch the future impresario's career.
The Trocadero also provided opportunities for female performers--primarily as singers and dancers. Interestingly enough, when Ziegfeld produced Show Boat in the 1920s, he named the hall where Magnolia makes her singing debut the Trocadero.

*The White City*

Once theatre off the fairgrounds had begun to flourish, rumors started that an official Exposition theatre production was to take place. On 23 July 1893, the *Daily Inter-Ocean* reported that Joseph Jefferson, greatly beloved in the role of Rip Van Winkle, might do *As You Like It* on the fairgrounds with Mary Anderson. As the much-admired Anderson had retired from the stage in 1890 following her marriage, this was exciting news. The report stated that Jefferson had consulted with Exposition directors a year earlier about producing a Shakespearean drama in connection with the fair, declaring "that it would be a mistake to allow the fair to pass without some great celebration in connection with the stage" ("On Nature's Stage."). A day later, the *Chicago Tribune* announced that on August 22, Harry Lee and Duncan Harrison would be giving a matinee at Festival Hall, which would include recitations of "selections from the poets" followed by an open-air performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* ("Music and Drama"). On 30 July 1893, the *Tribune* changed their report and confirmed that the outdoor production would actually be *As You Like It*. The *Tribune* stated that J.H. McVicker, owner of McVicker's theatre in downtown Chicago, had been asked early on to arrange a theatrical program for the Exposition, but that he had refused, and no other volunteers had stepped
forward. The reporter suggested that "the members of the directory who were well-wishers of the stage thought that the drama would be indirectly honored by the production of *The World Finder* at the Mackaye Spectatorium" ("As They Like It"). Since that hadn't come to fruition, the production of *As You Like It* would be the first recognition of the drama by the Exposition. According to the Tribune reporter, the Shakespearean production, "being under the auspices of the World's Fair directory, ... will take on a national significance." A month later, the Tribune reaffirmed its impression that this production would be important, saying that it would probably be the "nearest to a definite exhibit of the drama as an art which the World's Fair, the grand collection of the best and highest results in the arts and sciences of the world, will afford" ("Drama at the Fair").

The play took place in an area called the Sylvan Dell, near the German Building. The stage was seventy feet square and four-and-a-half feet high, with a tall fence surrounding the round auditorium. Electric lights hung in the trees, and the fence was decorated with vines and flowers. The auditorium sat 2,800 people, who paid from one to five dollars each.\(^5\) The cast included, not Joseph Jefferson and Mary Anderson, but Rose Coghlan (as Rosalind), and Otis Skinner (as Orlando).\(^6\) Both of them were also well-known and well-respected actors, though not of the celebrity status of Jefferson and Anderson. Coghlan

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\(^5\) After the opening night of *As You Like It* on August 29, the *Chicago Tribune* reported that seating had been reduced to 2,000 ("Listen to Rosalind").

\(^6\) On 26 Aug. 1893, the *Chicago Evening Journal* had reported that the cast would include Charles Coghlan as Jacques, Alexander Salvini as Orlando, and Eugene Sandow as Charles, the Wrestler. Mayor Carter Harrison was to open the entertainment with an address entitled "Shakespeare and the Poets," while Prince Kolkonsky, "delegate of the Czar of Russia and special Minister of Education of the Russian Empire," was reportedly going to follow with a speech on "The Poet Pushkin's Works" ("In the Sylvan Dell"). Neither Coghlan, Salvini or Sandow appeared and the only speech preceding the play was a prologue by the drama critic for the *Daily Inter-Ocean*, Elwyn Barron, read by manager Henry Lee, who was dressed as Shakespeare ("Listen to Rosalind").
and Skinner had played these parts recently, so had little difficulty stepping in at the last minute. Otis Skinner, the leading man in Helena Modjeska's company, had appeared in the play in Chicago that April, and Rose Coghlan had been playing Rosalind in open-air performances of *As You Like It* for the past two summers ("In the Sylvan Dell"). The Sylvan Dell production opened on August 29, and was "revived" on Tuesday, September 5. It ran for an additional week, with matinees on Wednesday and Saturday. Rose Coghlan, however, left the production after the September 5 performance ("Listen to Rosalind").

Only one other play had a performance in the White City, and that was, of all things, *The Two Captives*, by Plautus. It featured a cast of male students of St. Francis Xavier College in New York, and was performed only once on October 19 in the music hall. *The Chicago Tribune* reported that the production, "viewed as part of the educational exhibit at the Exposition . . . was both interesting and important" ("For Laughs in Latin"). Apparently the house was only half full, however, with mostly members of Chicago's Jesuit societies and fellow Catholics present.

*The Midway Plaisance*

A discussion of theatre during the World's Columbian Exposition would, of course, not be complete without information about performances on the Midway. For the duration of the fair, the Midway Plaisance was home to hundreds of male and female performers from many nations. They lived in villages constructed to look like those of their homelands. These exhibits included the Dahomey Village, South Sea Islands Village,
Javanese Village, German Village, Austrian Village, Irish Village (also known as Donegal Castle), Irish Industries Village (known as Blarney Castle or Lady Aberdeen's Village), Chinese village and Joss House, Bedouin Encampment, A Street in Cairo, Turkish Village, Algerian and Tunisian Village, and Persian Palace of Eros. There were also villages in the White City that were inhabited by indigenous peoples, including the Aztec Village, Esquimaux Village, Lapland Village and American Indian Village. In all of these villages, people lived, worked, and gave public performances. Though the India Palace and Japanese Ho-o-den Palace were not villages, there are performative aspects to them that are appropriate to discuss in this chapter.

As outlined in the Introduction and discussed below, many types of performance took place in the villages including, in a few cases, the presentation of plays. Although the conventions of theatre and dance in the ethnic villages were incomprehensible to many fair visitors, the shows were very popular and certainly helped to shape audience's views of what theatre was or should be. The sorts of performance in each village gave visitors the opportunity to learn about different cultures, including what each country's gender roles were. Unfortunately, as will be discussed in Chapter Five, many visitors actually increased their prejudices against non-western nations after a trip to the Midway.

In the European villages on the Midway, including the German Village, the Austrian Village, and the two Irish Villages, there were no formal theatre performances. Both the German Village and Austrian Village were known for their bands, but theatre was not part of either village's exhibit. Though Germany was the country of Schiller and Goethe, the organizers of the exhibit (which was both privately and governmentally
sponsored) apparently did not see theatre as important enough to produce at the fair. As the Franco-Prussian War had left Germany out of the Paris Exposition of 1889, Germany was heavily invested in promoting its reputation as a world leader with its appearance at the Exposition. The country had exhibits throughout the Exposition buildings and, in addition to its Midway village, had its own building in the White City (as did Austria). Many of Germany’s exhibits, such as the Krupp Cannon and the German Village's arms and armor display, demonstrated military interests. There was little opportunity for women to perform in either the German or Austrian Villages, except for jobs as costumed waitresses, barmaids, or information guides.

In the Irish Villages, there were both outdoor and indoor performing spaces, but again, theatre was not produced. These villages existed primarily to promote the cottage industries of Ireland, with Donegal Castle exhibiting the wares of northern Ireland and Blarney Castle those of southern Ireland. Therefore, work/life displays were the most prominent form of performance in these villages. Visitors could watch women doing such work as spinning, weaving, knitting and lace-making; in turn, men demonstrated such skills as wood-carving, dyeing cloth, and gardening ("Donegal is Opened"). Both villages also presented folk art performances, including storytelling and the presentation of traditional songs and dances.

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7 At Chicago's downtown Schiller Theatre German theatre companies regularly played. During the 1893 theatre season, Rose and Charles Coghlan's company and Charles Frohman's Comedians also made the Schiller their home.

8 In only a few short years (1899), William Butler Yeats and Lady Gregory would found the Irish Literary Theatre, the forerunner to the Abbey, which produced the plays of such playwrights as John Millington Synge and Sean O'Casey.
Japan and India, two countries with ancient theatre traditions, also neglected to include theatre in their exhibits. India, still a colony of Great Britain, chose to sell products in their White City building rather than holding performances on the Midway. The customs of India were very little known to Americans, and the merchants who managed the fair exhibit were careful to promote a civilized view of their country. One obstacle to having Indian performers was that, according to Gertrude Scott in her dissertation "Village Performance: Villages at the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition 1893," western audiences perceived Indian fakirs (a class of which were renowned as magicians, jugglers, sword-swallowers, snake-charmers etc.) as "fakers," somehow assuming that these performers cheated the public (100). Nevertheless, a troupe of these Indian fakirs did eventually perform on the Midway, once the Indian merchants realized the profitability of such a venture.

Like the Indians, the Japanese were also very conscious of their image at the fair. Instead of a building on the Midway, the Japanese government was allotted space on the Wooded Island, a large open park on the fairgrounds. There, across from the Horticulture Building, the Japanese built the Ho-o-den Palace and Teahouse. These traditional Japanese structures sat in a relatively serene locale, in comparison to the noisy, crowded Midway. The only type of performance here was the Tea Ceremony, which Japanese women reenacted. Apparently, Japan had considered bringing traditional Japanese dramas to Chicago, but decided against it. An article in the New York Times on 9 October 1892 reported that American actress Georgia Cayvan had visited Japan that summer and had discussed with one of the Japanese exhibit managers the possibility of Japanese dramas
being presented at the fair. He told her that most of Japan's famous actors were over sixty years of age and did not want to make the long voyage to Chicago. Another manager told the actress that some Geisha dancers might be sent to the fair, but Cayvan advised him that "it will be necessary to have an explanatory programme of the dances. They all illustrate stories and if understood as such are very artistic, but otherwise would seem only grotesque to American audiences" ("Japan at the World's Fair").

As will be discussed in Chapter Five, American audiences did find many of the foreign performances grotesque, so Japan's exclusion of theatre may have been prudent. Managers of the Chinese Village did choose to produce plays, and became the butt of jokes because of the theatre's unusual conventions. The company of thirty-eight actors played scenes from a repertory of twenty to thirty traditional plays ("Freaks of Chinese Fancy" 33). The Chinese Theatre pamphlet passed out on the Midway said that "The plays are exact reproductions of life occurrences, some of them having taken place 2400 years ago." The brochure announced that performances of the plays took place from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., and from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. Actors rotated in and out of the plays. Although the pamphlet stated that "the finest actors and actresses in China... have been imported for this theatre," women did not appear in the plays since, in traditional Chinese theatre, men played women's roles. This was convenient as the United States law limited the immigration of Chinese women.9 There was one

9In 1892, the U.S. government also passed the Geary Act, which severely limited the immigration of Chinese men as well as women. This caused difficulties in bringing Chinese actors to the Exposition. Immigration officials would not allow any Chinese actors into the U.S. without governmental documentation that they were an official part of the Exposition. Hundreds of Chinese had apparently tried to enter the United States pretending that they were actors. Those that were not employed by the Wah Mee Company that ran the Chinese Village and Joss House were returned to China.

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Chinese woman living in the Village, however, in a "facsimile of a dwelling house of a Chinaman of rank and wealth" ("Freaks of Chinese Fancy" 33). This woman, along with two children (a boy and a girl) were on view to the public for certain hours each day, doing daily activities. The Tribune article reported that this woman was "one of the few Chinese women who have ever been brought to America" ("Freaks of Chinese Fancy" 33).

In the villages of indigenous peoples (the Lapland Village, Esquimau Village, American Indian Village and Aztec Village), most of the performances were work/life displays. The inhabitants of these villages might play music, sing or dance, and visitors could also watch them do exhibitions of such activities as fishing, hunting, sewing, beading, and weaving. Both men and women participated in these activities.

Each of the remaining Midway villages held formal performances in designated performance spaces, as well as work/life displays, popular entertainments, and social performance. Visitors to the Midway could watch people attending to daily tasks and practicing various crafts. Villages also demonstrated native rituals, customs, and ceremonies. The Street in Cairo, for example, daily reenacted a traditional wedding procession. Most villages had such variety performers as clowns, jugglers, magicians, sword-swallowers, fortune-tellers and wrestlers. Mock battles were another staple in the villages, with inhabitants showing their prowess with weaponry. Women joined in these displays of fighting in some villages, including the Street in Cairo, the Algerian and Tunisian Village, and the Dahomey Village. In the latter village, as the Chicago Tribune reported, the 67 inhabitants included twenty women and two children, with seven of the women being Amazons, "the bravest of the warriors of King Behanzin" ("West African
The men and women of the Bedouin Encampment performed the "Wild East Show," which included displays of horsemanship, mock combats, and also a wedding procession. An article in the New York Times described how in the show's simulated attack of a Bedouin tribe on a desert caravan, women performers were "captured" by bad Bedouins then rescued by good Bedouins ("A Living Oriental Exhibit").

The type of Midway performance that caused the most controversy at the fair was the performance of the danse du ventre or "belly dance." Many women in the Muslim villages displayed regional variations of this type of dance. In the Street in Cairo, one could see Egyptian women perform the danse du ventre in the Egyptian theatre, or Soudanese and Nubian women doing their variation in huts ("Cairo Street Open" 2). Women also performed this dance in the Algerian and Tunisian Villages and the Persian Village. The reaction of some audience members to these dances brought about one of the biggest controversies at the fair. This episode will be discussed in Chapter Four. Men also participated in dance performances, most notably the "torture dance" which Teresa Dean described in her "White City Chips" column for July 19: "A man with a smile announced that the first torture would be the eating of a cactus plant. . . . Then [he] announced cheerfully that the second torture would be a man who would eat a glass tumbler. . . . Then came the hilarious announcement that a man would pierce his flesh with needles" (225). There were also traditional dance performances in the Javanese, South Sea Island, and Dahomey Villages.

As for drama, only the Chinese Village, Turkish Village, and Java Village produced plays. In the Turkish Village, sixty-five actors and actresses performed plays in
the Odeon theatre. Titles included "The Prodigal Son," "A Wedding in Damascus," and "Antar, the Son of Sheddad." The Turkish Village's pamphlet stated that "the scenes presented on the stage are purely Oriental, showing the manners and customs of the various countries constituting the Turkish empire; such, for instance, as the Oriental "Wedding to [sic] Damascus;" the Kalamounic drama "Antar, the Son of Sheddad," the Kurdish drama, etc."

The presentation at the Javanese Village was a forty-five minute sampling of different traditional art forms. The program, as described in the Village's pamphlet, is as follows:

Programme.
1. *Lagoe Rame*, or musical welcome.
2. Soendanese dance, or *tandak*, performed by dancing girls from West Java.
4. Javanese *Wajang*, performed by the Javanese dancing girls from Court of H.M. the Sultan of Solo (Central Java).
5. American national airs, performed by the *gamelan* or orchestra.

The Chicago Tribune reported that in Java, only seldom could anyone except the Sultan and his guests see these dances performed. This article stated that "many of the Javanese in the village saw women dance for the first time in their lives here in America" ("Glimpse into Java"). Traditionally, the Tribune continued, the Javanese people watched puppet shows instead of live dancers. Occasionally, Villagers performed these puppet shows for the Exposition public, using either doll puppets or shadow puppets.

With so many productions on the Midway, it would have been difficult for a visitor to the Exposition to avoid exposure to some aspect of the theatre. Although a larger
focus on theatrical production in the White City would have probably increased theatre's respectability among fair visitors, theatre was certainly far from invisible during the fair season. Visitors packed the shows on the Midway, and it is also evident that audiences perceived many productions, such as Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show and America, as part of the Exposition, whether official or not. With hundreds of roles available for women in Chicago's theatres, there was ample opportunity for actresses to show their importance to the theatrical profession, and those women who could choose which roles to play had the opportunity to alter America's image of the ideal woman. Women who took part in the Midway performances challenged westerners' notions of womanhood as well as art, and made them reexamine their prejudices.
CHAPTER 3

MYTH-MAKING FANCY

Though the World's Columbian Exposition would not open for visitors until May 1893, Congress's act had called for a dedication ceremony to be held on 12 October 1892, the anniversary of Columbus's landing. On this date also, schoolchildren across the country would recite in unison the new "Pledge of Allegiance."¹ The Pledge recital went forward as planned, but Congress postponed the fair's dedication until October 21, due to New York City's plans for a huge 5-day celebration beginning on the 12th.² On the 21st, an estimated crowd of 100,000-150,000 onlookers gathered on the fairgrounds in the new Manufactures and Liberal Arts Building, then the largest building in the world. To open the ceremony, Theodore Thomas conducted a 5,000-member choir accompanied by a 500-piece orchestra in a performance of John Knowles Paine's newly-commissioned "Columbia March." Several distinguished personages then delivered addresses, extolling the glories of the Exposition to come, the tremendous progress the host country had made in its short history, and the genius of Christopher Columbus, without whom this event would not be

¹ Francis J. Bellamy, an editor of Youth's Companion, wrote the Pledge of Allegiance, which the Bureau of Education circulated to teachers across the country.

² Purists, taking into account calendar changes since Columbus's day, said that the 21st was the actual anniversary of Columbus' landing.
possible. One of the speakers was Board of Lady Managers President Bertha Palmer, who spoke on the "Works of the Lady Managers." In her speech, Mrs. Palmer recognized the novelty of having women officially included in such an important event. However, she said: "It seems particularly appropriate that this honor should have been accorded our sex when celebrating the great deeds of Columbus, who, inspired though his visions may have been, yet required the aid of an Isabella to transform them into realities" (152). Mrs. Palmer detailed her expectations of the progress women would make now that technological advances had opened more opportunities for them, then thanked Congress for creating the Board and for "having subsequently approved and indorsed" its plans. After also thanking "the President of the United States, the Department of State, and our foreign Ministers," she significantly stated: "Even more important than the discovery of Columbus, which we are gathered together to celebrate, is the fact that the general Government has just discovered woman" (154). This method of drawing parallels between Christopher Columbus and current events was in constant use throughout the Exposition. And just as Mrs. Palmer invoked Queen Isabella's name to remind her audience that Columbus could never have made his voyage without a woman's help, other women, including suffragists, actresses, African-American women, and Midway performers, also used history to promote women's achievements.

The late nineteenth century was an era in which historians believed that through the use of scientific methods, they could discover history as it had actually happened. Yet they also realized that history could be used to affect current events. Warren I. Susman in Culture and History calls the decade of the 1890s the beginning of "that great era of
historical awareness," a time when American intellectuals began to realize that "the way one viewed the past had significant consequences for the way one acted in the present" (18). By controlling the interpretation of the past, creating a "usable past," one could dominate the present and perhaps control the future. For the United States, using the past was necessary in order to show the nation's progress. At the end of the nineteenth century, the use of the term "progress" to describe the continually advancing development of the United States filled the era's histories. Social and political writers, who loosely adapted Darwin's theories on evolution, had proclaimed the inevitability of progress and improvement. The new material growth and economic expansion that the United States enjoyed was believed to be a part of this ordained development. Because the United States would continue to improve, according to this notion of progress, eventually the country was destined to become a utopia. Visions of a utopian future had an appeal for Americans, especially, as they did not have a long past to glorify in. Without the rich past or culture of Europe, Americans seemed to have an inferiority complex. By taking up the idea of progress, America could, as the newest nation, be the best. Europe's past became America's past, and America's present was the result of progress over European systems. In *Triumphant Democracy* (1886), Andrew Carnegie wrote, "The old nations of the earth creep on at a snail's pace; the Republic thunders past with the rush of the express. The United States, the growth of a single century, has already reached the foremost rank among nations, and is destined soon to out-distance all others in the race" (1).

One of the events surrounding the Exposition's dedication ceremonies exemplified this notion of America's progress and utopian future. For the evening of October 20,
plans included the presentation of a water pageant on the fairground's lagoons. As the *World's Columbian Exposition Illustrated* reported in its "Programme of Ceremonies" in September 1892:

>'The Procession of the Centuries' will move through the beautiful water-ways of the Exposition grounds, illustrating with beauty and historic accuracy some of the great facts of history connected with the discovery of America, such as the condition of this country prior to the landing of Columbus; striking events in the life of the great discoverer; important epochs in American history and the world's progress in civilization. (144)

From the "Aboriginal Age; representing the American Indians" to "The Universal Brotherhood of Man; equal rights, law of justice; Liberty enlightening the World" the twenty-four tableaux would float on vessels "from forty to fifty-three feet in length, modeled after the naval architecture of the period represented" (144). All the costume and scenic needs for the pageant were near completion, with about $90,000 already spent, including $17,000 on the more than four hundred costumes but, at the last moment, fearful of the danger from overcrowding, the organizers cancelled the pageant. Nevertheless, the procession exemplified a major goal of the fair—to present America's past as a series of events leading in progression to what would certainly be an ideal and utopian future.

Utopian writings flourished at the end of the century, and not only in America. A 1982 bibliography of utopian literature lists one hundred seventy works published between 1880 and 1889. The authors include John Jacob Astor, Walter Besant, William Dean Howells, William Morris, H.G. Wells, Lewis Carroll, Edward Bellamy,3 and Friedrich Engels (Wynn). In some ways these utopian works were a response to a feeling of

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3 Edward Bellamy, who wrote *Looking Backward: 2000-1887*, which was one of the most successful of the utopian novels, was the brother of "Pledge of Allegiance" writer Francis Bellamy.
confusion over major technological advances of the last half of the century. Utopias, as perfectly ordered societies with no social problems, made people feel that although their countries may have been going through political and social upheavals, everything would come out all right in the end.

Yet the United States was poised at a critical juncture. Many historians saw America at the end of the nineteenth century as a place without an identity. The diversity of both its geography and population made a commonality hard to achieve. Thus, the World's Columbian Exposition, with its immediate status as an historical event and ability to reach large numbers of people, became a huge experiment in creating a definition of America. Through the use of history and the scientific principles of order and classification, fair organizers hoped to establish a unified image of America. Many scholars have indeed called the fair the first major transition in America's defining itself. Henry Adams, who visited the fair twice, in May and September, 1893, wrote in The Education of Henry Adams that "Chicago was the first expression of American thought as a unity; one must start there" (343). To succeed in establishing a unified image of America, fair organizers knew that they first had to establish a unified image of the fair. If they presented the White City as a utopia, it could be used as an example of what America could become.

The fair's Department of Publicity and Promotion had a great deal of power in controlling the image of the fair. Its materials form much of the historical record. Besides sending various guides and pamphlets about the fair all over the world, the Bureau of engraving dispersed lithographic views of the fairgrounds by the hundreds of thousands.
According to R.E.A. Door, director Moses Handy's chief assistant, the Department produced about one-third of everything printed about the fair. Among its publications was the *Daily Columbian*, "the only official bulletin of the Columbian Exposition," a morning newspaper issued on the fairgrounds ("The Daily Columbian"). R. Reid Badger in *The Great American Fair*, gives Moses Handy credit "for helping to establish the pre-opening day image of the fair as a major symbol of American culture (unified, mature, progressive) and character (idealist, unselfish, perservering), and as an educational object-lesson not to be missed by anyone who harbored doubts" (77). Not coincidentally, similar adjectives were used to describe Christopher Columbus, the mythic hero with whom many Americans wished to identify.

At the World's Columbian Exposition, there was an obvious attempt to present the "true" Columbus. One of the most popular buildings was an "exact" replica of the Convent of La Rabida, a Spanish monastery Columbus visited both before and after his voyage to the New World. Contemporary descriptions of the exhibit described, in detail, the hundreds of original manuscripts and relics of Columbus and Queen Isabella. Among the documents were Columbus's will and the original commission Ferdinand and Isabella granted Columbus for his first voyage. Paintings, both originals and reproductions, covered the walls. Visitors to the fair could also see replicas of the Niña, Pinta, and Santa Maria which had sailed all the way from Spain to Chicago. The Hayti Building, too, displayed a Columbus relic, the original Santa Maria anchor, which was "wrecked off Cape Haytien December 14, 1493" ("Hayti's Doors Open").

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4 This was the common spelling of Haiti during the Exposition, so I will use it throughout.

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To explain the significance of Columbus, biographies of him abounded in the years surrounding the anniversary of Columbus's landing. Most showed Columbus in a completely positive light. Although some books mentioned that atrocities had been committed against indigenous peoples, they rarely included Columbus as a participant; rather, they usually describe him as having been appalled at the way the Spanish acted. Among the many speeches heard at the Dedicatory Ceremonies in October, 1892, any references to flaws in Columbus's character or in American history, for that matter, were severely toned down. Vice-President Levi Morton, in his dedicatory address, implied that any negative attributes in Columbus's character can simply be overlooked: "Columbus's character was complex, as was that of many of the men of his time, who made their mark in history. But his character and attainments are to be estimated by those of his contemporaries, and not by other standards" (163). Although the scientific reasoning of nineteenth century historians led them to "simply show how it really was," ("wie es eigentleich gewesen") as Leopold von Ranke had proposed, there was also developing a celebratory history, in which Americans established new patriotic, mythic heroes, partly from fact, but just as much from their imaginations.

Columbus was just one of the many figures whose factual life was shaped to create a more suitable hero. Americans who received this treatment included George Washington, Stonewall Jackson, Johnny Appleseed, and Buffalo Bill. Other figures, like Paul Bunyan and the Yankee Pedlar, were completely fictional. It seems contradictory that a culture so interested in finding historical "truth" would also thrive on mythologizing the past. Yet, the use of myth in the nineteenth century coincides with the interest in
utopianism. In *Culture as History*, Warren Susman discusses how myth "provides a vision of the future." Myths can, in fact, provide "the collective dreams of the society about the past, the present, and the future, in the same instant" (8). What myths lack—a plan for changing the current order—history picks up. Says Susman, "myths often propose fundamental goals; history often defines and illuminates basic processes involved in achieving goals" (9). At the World's Columbian Exposition, the mythic (utopian) and historical (political) clearly intersected. For Susman, it is this "special meeting ground between history and myth that frequently provides a key to the central tensions within a culture" (11).

*The White City*

Early histories of the World's Columbian Exposition emphasized the mythic nature of the fair. The White City was also called "The Dream City," and historians regularly referred to its ephemeral qualities. In December 1893, after the Exposition had closed, Hjalmar Hjorth Boyesen wrote in *Cosmopolitan* that "the flashing into vision of the White City by the Lake, and its sudden extinction, is one of the most startling incidents which the American continent has witnessed. It furnishes exquisite material for the myth-making fancy. What a noble legend the Greeks would have made of it!" (173). Because it disappeared, myriad histories were produced to keep the dream alive. Not surprisingly, most of these histories used photographs taken by the Department of Publicity and
Promotion, thus offering the vision of the White City as a beautiful, mythic utopia. The White City was a vision not of the world as it was or had been, but as visitors imagined it might become.

The woman who most exemplified the ideals of the World's Columbian Exposition and, by extension, America, was Bertha Palmer. Exposition publications and newspapers world-wide described Mrs. Palmer as beautiful, unselfish, diligent, and patient. When Spain's Infanta Eulalia visited the Exposition, reporters found Mrs. Palmer more like a princess than the real one. Bertha Palmer was very careful of her image. She was one of the doyennes of Chicago society and knew the importance of conveying a positive image to the public. As President of the Board of Lady Managers, Mrs. Palmer had the responsibility of controlling the Board's image as well as her own. With the Board, Mrs. Palmer hoped to accomplish some very difficult tasks and knew that projecting the right image was key to getting things done. In a world where women's roles were strictly defined, Mrs. Palmer wanted to prove to the public through the Board's work that women could do work traditionally done by men. Although she professed the belief that women's first duties were as wife and mother, she knew that many women lived under circumstances that made earning a living necessary. Therefore, women needed educational and professional doors opened to them. She also believed in equal pay for equal work. Mrs. Palmer took every opportunity to speak publicly about these issues, (e.g., her speech at the dedication ceremonies), but the primary means by which Mrs. Palmer could prove that women could do men's work was through the success of the Board of Lady Managers. That meant that the Board had to run smoothly and without
controversy. Unfortunately, various parties wished to see the Board fail and made it
difficult for Mrs. Palmer to keep bad publicity out of the press. One such party was
Chicago's Queen Isabella Association.

As mentioned in Chapter One, the Isabellas were mostly professional women who
believed in women's suffrage. Because Mrs. Palmer believed that the average American
did not promote women's suffrage, she wished to keep her distance from the Isabellas.
She believed that people would be more likely to listen to her and the Board of Lady
Managers if she presented a more conservative view of women's roles. Any association
the Board of Lady Managers had with the Isabellas might be viewed as supporting their
agenda. Therefore, Mrs. Palmer dismissed many of the Isabellas' ideas regarding how
women should be represented at the fair. Her attitude led to regular conflict between the
Board and the Isabellas.

The Isabellas were particularly angry with the Board of Lady Managers because it
and not the Isabellas had been asked to run women's affairs at the Exposition. Though the
Isabellas did manage to convince the National Commission to appoint nine delegates from
Chicago to the Board, only one of these people, Dr. Francis Dickerson, was an Isabella
Association member. However, once the Board positions were filled, the Isabellas began
to recruit Board members to their organization in order to influence Board votes. Among
these new recruits were Isabella Beecher Hooker, Phoebe Couzins, and Matilda Carse. If

5 The rest of the Board of Lady Managers was made up of two women from each state, territory, and the
District of Columbia, plus eight at-large members. The other eight Chicago delegates came from the
Woman's Auxiliary of the Chicago Company. The Woman's Auxiliary disbanded once the Board formed,
but the Isabellas remained active.

6 Harriet Beecher Stowe's sister.
matters before the Board, such as whether to integrate men's and women's exhibits, did not go the way the Isabellas wanted, bad press for the Board of Lady Managers on the issue at hand seemed to result. Mrs. Palmer suspected the Isabellas of providing the press with negative propaganda. In a letter to Mrs. F.B. Clarke, Lady Manager from Minnesota, dated 16 November 1891, Mrs. Palmer wrote:

You were quite right in thinking that the Isabella Association has been unfavorably inclined toward us. It has tried to defeat us at every point and has always betrayed anything but a friendly spirit. I trust that you will not countenance it in any way.

Because Mrs. Palmer felt such antagonism on the part of the Isabella Association, she did not want to give the Isabellas any publicity. This included allowing them a statue of Queen Isabella on the fairgrounds. Early in the planning stages for the fair, the Isabellas had commissioned a statue of the Spanish Queen from noted sculptor Harriet Hosmer, who began her work while living in a women's artist colony in Rome. The Isabellas had hoped to have the statue erected on the fairgrounds along with a pavilion for their Association. However, due to Bertha Palmer's perception that the Isabella Association was trying to undermine the work of the Board of Lady Managers, she made a point of assuring that the Isabellas had as little presence on the fairgrounds as possible. Therefore, this statue was not included in the official plans for the fair.7

Still, Bertha Palmer found Queen Isabella a useful historical figure. Since Columbus provided the central image for the fair, it was only appropriate that women latched onto Queen Isabella as a fitting icon for themselves. Though some historians had

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7 Palmer, an admirer of Hosmer's work, offered to display the statue in the Women's Building, but the artist refused the offer as she, like the Isabellas, did not want women's work segregated from that of men. The statue ended up displayed in the California Building.
reproached Isabella for her part in the Spanish Inquisition, the Queen's important association with Columbus was too valuable to ignore. Queen Isabella's story could easily be made to support the idea that women had been important agents in the world's progress. It was in part due to the efforts of the Queen Isabella Association that the Spanish queen had become such a strong part of the Columbus myth. In order to advance the idea of Queen Isabella's significance in the eyes of the public, the Isabellas charged their Vice-President, Eliza Allen Starr, with writing a biography of the Queen, entitled Isabella of Castile. This book, Starr explained, was intended as "a long delayed tribute to Isabella of Castile as Co-discoverer of America" (Weimann 39). With Columbiana everywhere, Isabella could be brought up continually to support the Isabellas' opinion that women could hold important positions in the public sphere. As with Columbus and the issue of the slaughter and enslavement of native peoples, Isabella's actions regarding the Inquisition and other matters, if not denied, were passed over as "faults of her race and time..." (Weimann 39).

Because of Queen Isabella's association with the Isabellas, Mrs. Palmer tried early on to keep Queen Isabella from being linked with Columbus. She wrote to William Curtis, a friend of hers in the State Department, to find out if Queen Isabella had really been such an integral contributor to Columbus's discovery. Curtis replied that papers of Columbus's father-in-law, an admiral, had actually provided the inspiration for Columbus's voyage. Mrs. Palmer thought that instead of using Queen Isabella, she would elevate the stature of Columbus's wife, Felipa Monez Perestrello, and use her name instead of Queen Isabella's

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8 Starr's niece. Ellen Gates Starr, helped Jane Addams to found Hull House.
to show women's importance. Doña Felipa had gone on voyages with her father and was interested in geographical exploration herself. Although Doña Felipa's actions made her an appropriate prospect for myth-making, Mrs. Palmer decided against the plan. First of all, there wasn't enough time to build up Doña Felipa's story in the public imagination, while Queen Isabella already had a place there. Also, Doña Felipa's non Anglo-Saxon name did not slip as easily off the tongue as Queen Isabella's. Therefore, Mrs. Palmer decided to accept Queen Isabella as a useful icon and referred to the Queen whenever she could.

Mrs. Palmer, by using Isabella in speeches to prove the importance of women to progress, perpetuated the Queen's mythology. And, when the Isabellas convinced a Board member to put a resolution forward calling for a coin honoring Queen Isabella, Mrs. Palmer agreed. After all, Congress had already authorized the striking of a Columbian half-dollar, which would have Columbus's image on the face. It also didn't hurt that the Isabellas' resolution had called for a portrait of Mrs. Palmer on the reverse. The Board President humbly declined this honor, but proposed that a commemoration of the Board of Lady Managers or an image of the Woman's Building be made on the coin instead. When Congress authorized the minting of this coin, known as the Isabella Memorial Quarter, Mrs. Palmer commissioned Caroline Peddle, a 23-year old artist, to design it. However, because of misunderstandings and disputes between the artist, Mrs. Palmer, and the Mint, the Mint's own (male) artists designed the coin. The Isabella quarter has a profile of a young Queen Isabella on the face, but for several reasons, Mrs. Palmer's proposals for the reverse were abandoned. Instead of the Woman's Building, the reverse side displays a
kneeling woman holding a distaff. This kneeling woman certainly did not suggest the new, modern woman, and neither the Isabellas nor the Board of Lady Managers approved of the image, but with time running short, Mrs. Palmer gave the Mint her okay. Forty-thousand of the coins were struck. This is the first American coin with the image of a real, rather than symbolic, woman on it. 

In addition to conflicts with the Isabellas, Mrs. Palmer and the Board of Lady Managers carried on a well-publicized battle with African-American women's groups. At the Exposition, the African-American population had not been able to secure adequate representation at the fair. Though prominent black citizens such as Frederick Douglass and Ida B. Welles worked diligently to secure a place of prominence for African-Americans at the Exposition, they had little success. The fair organizers did set aside one day of the fair as "Colored American Day," but this concession did little to appease the black community. In protest of their lack of representation, Douglass, Welles, J. Garland Penn, and F.L. Barnett produced a pamphlet, "The Reason Why The Colored American Is Not in the World's Columbian Exposition," subtitled "The Afro-American's Contribution in Columbian Literature." The authors devoted much of this pamphlet to a discussion of the progress of their race since emancipation, and the they also emphasized the importance of the African-American's contribution to the progress of America as a whole. Wrote Douglass: "The exhibit of the progress made by a race in twenty-five years of freedom

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9 The Board of Lady Managers planned to sell the coins for a dollar a piece, but found that most people were unwilling to purchase a quarter for a dollar. Due to slow sales, the Mint remelted many of the coins, and current estimates suggest that about 24,000 of the quarters remain in existence, compared to over 2 million Columbian half dollars.
against two hundred fifty years of slavery would have been the greatest tribute to the
greatness and progressiveness of American institutions which could have been shown the
world" (49)\textsuperscript{10}.

Only one African-American man, Hale G. Parker, was appointed to the National
Commission (as an alternate from Missouri), but no African-American women were on the
Board of Lady Managers. Though Mrs. Palmer was not opposed to having black women
participate in the organization of an African-American woman's exhibit, dissension on the
Board as well as among the African-American groups kept black women from
participating. Circulars appeared criticizing the Board of Lady Managers for its perceived
discrimination against black women and calling for a mass meeting of black women in
Washington to discuss the matter. Mrs. Palmer had to pull many strings to stop the black
women from taking further action and also to stop reports from appearing in the press.\textsuperscript{11}

Mrs. Palmer had friends among Chicago's press who were inclined to portray her
as she wished, but the novelty of the Board of Lady Managers made its every action news
around the world. Therefore, Mrs. Palmer was unable to keep journalists from publicizing
conflicts at the Board of Lady Managers meetings, no matter how trivial. Fortunately,
Mrs. Palmer's own level-headedness and diplomacy kept negative reports from ruining the
Board of Lady Managers' reputation completely. For example, a dispute that started in

\textsuperscript{10} Frederick Douglass, who was the United States Ambassador to Haiti during the Exposition, had an
office in the Hayti Building.

\textsuperscript{11} For example, she contacted Mary Logan, a writer living in Washington, D.C., to ask Frederick
Douglass and Bishop Charles Fowler for their help. Bishop Fowler could keep the black women from
being heard at the Methodist Conference being held in Washington. Mrs. Palmer also had Mrs. Russell
Harrison write to her father-in-law, President Benjamin Harrison to ensure that the black women would
not be received cordially. While making sure the women would not be able to take action against the
Board, Mrs. Palmer was also working to convince Southern Board members to sign a pledge of good will
toward the black women.

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May 1893, just after the fair opened, demonstrates her control over the board. Many Board members had become jealous because the women on the Committee on Ceremonies were able to meet all the distinguished visitors to the fair, such as the Princess Eulalia. The disgruntled women wanted to rotate the members on the Committee so they could get a chance to mingle with the celebrities, too. The conflict on this issue became very heated, and Board members started hurling insults at each other during Board sessions. This type of behavior was just what the press loved to report. The back-stabbing, petty jealousies, and lack of order provided evidence of the women's inability to handle important matters. Once news of this particular conflict came out in the papers, Bertha Palmer immediately called a closed session of the Board. In her speech to the assembled women, Mrs. Palmer severely chastised the Board and let the women know how ashamed of them she was. She called upon their sense of pride and duty, asking them to put aside their pettiness so they could achieve greatness:

I wish to say to the members of the board again that their action is in their own hands; that if the board cannot purge its record and cannot maintain its own dignity, which has been so sadly dragged in the dust during the last few days in the papers all over the country, I do not wish to be humiliated by having my name on the roll of its membership.

We have thought that we were working together as a band of women for something high, for something fine, for representing the interests of women; that we prove not of advantage to a few individuals at most, but that we mark an epoch in the events of men. If I am mistaken in that estimate, if it is only a struggle for a few passing honors—if I may call them such—and we are all torn up and pulling our hair over an introduction to a Duchess or some other attention to somebody my time is too valuable, your time is too valuable, the government's money is too valuable to be wasted in this way. I have nothing else to say to this board except that I feel deeply humiliated. ("Women Shed Tears")
Mrs. Palmer's speech broke the tension and the women in attendance wept in shame. As one can see, Mrs. Palmer could be a formidable opponent. Those who opposed her met with her wrath, but her public image remained untarnished. To some, like the character Samantha in Marietta Holley's 1893 novel, *Samantha at the World's Fair*, Mrs. Palmer was more than royalty, she was like an omnipotent goddess:

> Yes, Mrs. Palmer has stood up on a high mount durin' the hard years past since the Fair wuz thought on. She has stood up so high that she could see things hid from them on the ground. She could see over the hull world, and could see that, like little children of one family, the nations wuz all havin' their own separate work to do to help their Pa's and Ma's— their Pa Progress, and Grandpa Civilization, and their Ma and Grandma Love and Humanity.

> They differed in looks and behavior, as every big family will, and she could see that they had their little squabbles together, a-quarrelin' among themselves over their possessions, their toys and their rights—they wuz jealous of each other, and greedy, as children will be; and they had their perplexities, and their deep troubles, and their vexations, as children must have in this world, and some wuz fractious, and some wuz balky, and some wuz good dispositioned, and some wuz cross and mean, and had to be spanked more or less.

> But she could see from her sightly place that the hull of the children wuz a-movin' on, some slower and some faster, movin' on, and a-gittin' into line, and a-fallin' into step, to the music of the future. (291-292)

The Board of Lady Managers faced many controversies, but Mrs. Palmer was able to bend any transgressor to do her will. By keeping the Board on track, Mrs. Palmer proved that women could indeed hold positions of importance. However, it was in the control of her own image that she was most successful.
In contrast to the unified neoclassicism of the White City, the Midway Plaisance was a disjointed mixture of exotic buildings and people. Guidebooks stated that in the Midway Villages, visitors would see accurate depictions of life in foreign lands. Sceptics questioned the accuracy of the Midway presentations, but even if not all visitors believed that the villages were realistic, most of them happily suspended their disbelief and enjoyed the fantasy-world on display.

On the Midway, the dividing line between myth and reality was difficult to ascertain. As part of the Department of Ethnology, headed by anthropologist F.W. Putnam, the Midway Villages were supposed to display how people from other cultures and races lived. To aid in authenticity, Putnam had sent fieldworkers around the world to bring back representatives of primitive cultures for the exhibits. However, since the Midway was also the central location for the Exposition's concessions, theatrical manager Sol Bloom had been hired to run the Midway on a day-to-day basis. Bloom's business was not science, but commerce and entertainment. In addition to Bloom and Putnam, there were many others who exerted authority over the villages. Daniel Burnham, as the Director of Works, had control over the architectural design of the village buildings and the overall plan of the Midway Plaisance; each village had its own manager, who might or might not be from the culture on display; the villages also had sponsors, which might be commercial ventures, government agencies, or a combination of the two. All of these entities had the power to shape what audiences would see. Consequently, Midway performers had very little agency in controlling their images. Most had never been to
America before, and most spoke only a little English, if any. Therefore, they could not explain their intentions to the press, or speak directly to audience members. Audiences got their information about the villages from Exposition publications, newspapers, and the individual village programs that were distributed at the fair. Most of these publications pointed up the educational value of the displays. The programs, for example, describe each aspect of the displays, explaining how they are significant within the culture. Though demonstrations of the villagers' contemporary ways of life were important aspects of the Midway, other types of performance were equally important in translating the culture for fair visitors.

Twentieth-century anthropologist, Milton Singer, coined the term "cultural performance" in his introduction to *Traditional India: Structure and Change* (1959). To Singer, cultural performances include such events as theatre, dance, religious festivals and concerts. Singer argues that "Indians, and perhaps all peoples, think of their culture as encapsulated in such discrete performances, which they can exhibit to outsiders as well as themselves" (xiii). These performances, Singer said, provided the "most concrete observable units of the cultural structure" (xiii). Certainly, the Midway villagers' performances were a way of exhibiting their cultures and keeping the past alive. The program for the Javanese Village emphasized the importance of history:

The performances in the Javanese Theatre are exactly like those given in Java at the Court of the native princes and noblemen. It is almost impossible to give an exact idea of what will be performed on the stage, as the plays are mostly taken from the Javanese Mythology, which is very complicated. It reminds the people of the glorious past, when their Kings were absolute rulers, their Courts were full of splendor, and when the gods were on speaking terms with the Kings and heroes.
An article in the *Chicago Tribune* about the Chinese drama again stressed history:

According to the Chinese mind a play is but a play; it is not real life because it must all be produced from ancient history. Not even the events of the present dynasty can be portrayed upon a public stage. ("China's Long Plays")

Village performers, who had little opportunity or ability to talk to fair visitors, primarily controlled their image through their performances. Unfortunately, though the performers had centuries of tradition behind the conventions of their art forms, fair audiences saw only evidence of primitiveness.

Because of the prominence of the Board of Lady Managers at the fair, eyes were particularly focused on women's roles in the different Midway cultures. Americans found the wearing of veils by Muslim women to be very odd. Harems were another concept that seemed primitive to Americans. Though Americans found these two customs too restrictive for women, they found other Midway customs too free. Audiences thought that the role of women as warriors, like in the Dahomey Village, was completely abnormal. As for the performers of the *danse du ventre*, visitors perceived them as immoral. Americans believed there was little value (except as curiosities) in the religious and traditional customs of the Midway villagers.

With visitors mostly unwilling or unable to locate value in the rich traditions of the Midway cultures, the villagers' portrayal of their culture's histories and mythology did not improve their positions in American eyes. However, one dancer on the Midway made herself part of the mythology of the World's Fair by capitalizing on the negative perceptions of the *danse du ventre* performers. No one knows this dancer's real name for
sure, but within a short time after the Exposition closed, a belly dancer calling herself Little Egypt was performing at Coney Island. Little Egypt became a great success and, as early as 1894, dozens of imitators also calling themselves Little Egypt appeared at the amusement parks and vaudeville stages. In almost everything written about the fair after 1900, Little Egypt is mentioned as the star of the Midway Plaisance. Some books spend pages recounting her activities at the fair, and even books that include only one or two sentences about the World's Columbian Exposition mention Little Egypt. Yet there is absolutely no such Little Egypt to be found in any newspaper, book, or photo from 1893. Sol Bloom, in his autobiography, states clearly that he knew of no one going by the nickname Little Egypt during the fair:

I most emphatically deny that I had anything whatever to do with a female entertainer known professionally as Little Egypt. At no time during the Chicago fair did this character appear on the Midway. She was introduced at Coney Island, and there and elsewhere she acquired great renown for her actual or reputed stage appearances in the nude. (134)

One would think that the manager of the Midway would know whether there was a Little Egypt at the fair or not, but her legend continues.

Donna Carlton in her book, Looking for Little Egypt, deconstructs the Little Egypt myth and tries to find out who this woman really was. It is probable that the dancer did appear on the Midway, though not as Little Egypt. Audiences perceived Midway performers as part of a group, not as individuals. But by tying herself in with the danse du ventre scandal, she was able to become a celebrity very quickly after the close of the fair.

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12 Most sources think she was Fahreda Mahzar.
The woman who would call herself "Little Egypt" created a mythology for herself and thus became a permanent part of the World's Fair mythology.

*Chicago*

Like the White City and the Midway, Chicago had a mythic quality. After Mrs. O'Leary's mythic cow started the Great Fire of 1871, Chicago, like the mythic phoenix, had risen from the ashes. Though certainly not a utopia, Chicago's progress, especially following the fire, showed the strength of American commerce and ingenuity. During the World's Columbian Exposition, the myths of Chicago's past could be seen in theatres side-by-side with myths about America's and Christopher Columbus's past. A diorama of the Great Fire was housed in one Chicago theatre which, after the fair, made way for Steele Mackaye's scenitorium. Mackaye's *The World-Finder* would have been the ultimate theatrical presentation of the Columbus myth had circumstances allowed it to go forward, but in its absence, Imre Kiralfy's *America* became the Columbus play to see.¹³

Imre Kiralfy intended that his spectacle, *America*, would be "serious," on the order of grand opera. A preview article in the *Chicago Tribune* related Kiralfy's plan:

> It is designed to be an enacted history of America from the days of the rulers of Castile and Aragon to the present. This will be accomplished by a prologue and three acts containing the realistic representation of their affect in shaping the progress of the nations of the world. It promises to be told with adhesion to historical detail and fact so that it may approach history itself. ("Grandeur of *America*"

¹³ Many playwrights of the late 1880s and early 1890s also chose Columbus as the central character in their plays. Some titles include as *Columbus, or a Hero of the New World: Columbia: Drama in One Act for 31 Females: Columbus: Christopher Columbus, The World's Fair Drama: Columbus and Isabella*; and *Columbus the Discoverer*. Even a Columbus musical-comedy, entitled *1492*, reached Broadway in 1892. Though some of these may have been directly inspired by the coming Exposition, none of them were produced at the fair or in Chicago during the fair season.
Austin Brereton affirmed that Kiralfy emphasized progress in an August 1893 review of *America* in *The Illustrated American*: "Progress has been Mr. Kiralfy's watchword. Progress is his chief allegorical figure, and Progress is the order of the production" (226).

*America* represented not only the myths surrounding Christopher Columbus and the founding of the country, but also those about Chicago, such as the invention of the skyscraper, the massacre at Fort Dearborn, and the Chicago Fire. The final, culminating scene of *America* was "the assembling of all the people in the Administration Building at the White City." In this scene "The Genius of Chicago welcomes them to the World's Columbian Exposition and they in turn give homage to the ambitions and far-reaching Spirit of America typified by Chicago" ("Grandeur").14

One area of the country's progress that Kiralfy staged was westward expansion, as exemplified in one of the play's scenes entitled "The Early Pioneers in the Far West, 1845." The importance of westward expansion to progress was not a new idea, as another event at the Exposition made clear. At the conference of the American Historical Association, held as part of the World's Congresses, Frederick Jackson Turner delivered his influential paper, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History." Turner's address was in response to a bulletin by the Superintendent of the Census for 1890 which suggested that there was no longer a frontier line in the country. Turner spoke of the frontier's influence

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14 Yet another spectacle depicting mythic events in America's history was 1776—The American Revolution, which Adam Forepaugh's circus presented in Chicago during the fair season. William Gillette, who was probably best known for playing Sherlock Holmes on stage in his own adaptations of the Arthur Conan Doyle novels, had conceived the show. 1776 depicted such events in American history as Paul Revere's ride, the Battles of Concord and Bunker Hill, the signing of the Declaration of Independence, and Washington Crossing the Delaware ("Music and Drama").
on American culture and the consequences of its disappearance. He stated: "And now, four centuries from the discovery of America, at the end of a hundred years of life under the Constitution, the frontier has gone, and with its going has closed the first period of American history" (229). Turner wondered how America would progress without the possibility of further westward expansion. The United States had fought the last of the Indian Wars in 1890-91. Most significantly, the U.S. had quelled the last major Native American resistance at Wounded Knee in 1890. During the fair itself, on 16 September 1893, the Cherokee Strip, "America's last great body of arable land," was opened for settlement (Havighurst 182). The Chicago Tribune reported that the size of the strip was "about 5,000,000 acres, of which about 3,000,000 are good for agriculture, 1,000,000 adapted for grazing and 1,000,000 good for nothing" ("The Opening of the Cherokee Strip").

Though the real frontier was gone, according to Turner, visitors could look at representations of the frontier that were on display at the Exposition. Hundreds of exhibits in the Anthropological Building showed the history of the American Indian, and representatives of many tribes lived in the Native American encampments. However, the most vivid and popular representation of the frontier in Chicago was Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show and the Congress of Rough Riders. Even Buffalo Bill remarked on the passing of the real frontier. The opening paragraph of the show's 1893 program refers to an earlier program from 1883 which mentioned the "rapidly expanding frontier." The 1893 program remarked that such a phrase could no longer be used, "so fast does law and order progress and pervade the Grand West" (qtd. in Carter 375). Although Buffalo Bill
knew the frontier no longer existed, he kept it alive with his Wild West Show. And, like everyone else at the fair, he found a way to yoke the image of Columbus to his activities. Over the Wild West gateway was a banner showing Columbus on his quarterdeck facing Buffalo Bill on horseback. Columbus was labelled "Pilot of the Ocean, the first Pioneer," while Buffalo Bill was labelled "Pilot of the Prairie, the Last Pioneer."

At the Wild West Show, visitors by the thousands could see re-enactments of the Indian Wars through the heroics of their favorite dime-novel hero, Buffalo Bill Cody. Joseph G. Rosa and Robin May in Buffalo Bill and the Wild West claim that William Cody ("Buffalo Bill") "did more than anyone to promote the myths and reality of the frontier West" (vii). Through books, plays and Cody's own shows, the myth of the Old West, with cowboys as the good guys and Indians as the bad guys, spread throughout the culture. But at the World's Columbian Exposition, Buffalo Bill insisted upon the historical accuracy and educational benefit of his show.

The Wild West Show, as organized in 1891, consisted of 640 "eating members" (including support staff and over 250 cast members). In Chicago in 1893, the performers presented two shows a day, seven days a week, for 186 days. With the ability to reach about 20,000 people per show, Cody had great power in constructing the myth of the west. He was also effective in constructing the legend of Buffalo Bill. According to his business partner, Nate Salsbury, "There were two of them... One the true Cody as he has always been from his birth, and the other... a commercial proposition" (qtd. in Sorg xiv).
Like Cody, his star performer Annie Oakley also knew that her image was central to her success. Though she had grown up in Ohio when the frontier had moved west of the Mississippi, Oakley became a symbol of the West. And, in an age when neither acting nor shooting guns were considered reputable occupations for women, Oakley managed to maintain a feminine persona and remain socially acceptable. Newspapers always emphasized Oakley's domesticity. During the Exposition season, journalist Amy Leslie took a tour of the Wild West Show grounds and described Oakley's tent:

Annie Oakley's tent is next invaded and the clever little sharp-shooter welcomes us royally. Her tent is a bower of comfort and taste. A bright Axminister carpet, rugs, cougar skins and buckskin trappings are all about in artistic confusion. She has a glass of wine and a suggestion of honest enticute cordial awaiting me when I enter” ("Amy Leslie at the Fair" 5 May 1893).

Walter Havighurst in Annie Oakley of the Wild West further describes the femininity of Oakley's quarters:

A bed of flowers bordered her tent, primroses and geraniums flanked by tall-blooming hollyhocks. Inside the tent were her books and pictures, her couch and rocking chairs, her guns and her banjo, her embroidery stand and dressing table. Wherever Annie travelled, she took her creature comforts with her and set up a cozy home on the road. (171).

That Oakley could outshoot any man and still embroider made her a marvel. Other reports of Oakley mention that her tent was the gathering place for other women on the tour, such as the wife of manager Nate Salsbury. And children reportedly loved Annie. As Oakley and her husband Frank Butler had no children of their own, this emphasis on her maternal nature was important to her image. Papers generally neglected to say that Oakley actually stayed in hotels on tour. The tent was on the grounds simply as a place to rest between shows or to welcome visitors.
Oakley's modesty and femininity appealed to audiences, and made it acceptable for women and families to see the show. Except for Oakley's act, the Wild West was primarily a display of masculine violence. Her ability to maintain social respectability while in a male occupation increased audiences and also helped make it easier for other women to follow in her path.15

Like Oakley, actresses appearing downtown during the fair were experts at manipulating the press to suit their needs. This manipulation could include lying about or omitting certain facts about their lives. Later, many of the actresses perpetuated these myths in their memoirs. Actresses knew the importance of their public image. Many actresses of the day were writing their memoirs or submitting to biographical treatments, ostensibly with the intent of sharing intimate details of their lives with their fans. However, these pieces were deliberately shaped to create a particular public persona. The Chicago Tribune, reporting on actress Mary Anderson, who was writing her memoirs while the Exposition was open, helped support Anderson's image as a moral, intelligent married woman: "Mary Anderson Navarro's favorite relaxation is chess-playing, and she resorts to it when she is weary with her present task of preparing her reminiscences for publication" ("Personals"). Likewise, in pieces on actresses Ellen Terry or Lillian Russell, such details as divorces and illegitimate children were regularly omitted from mention.

15 Florenz Ziegfeld, Jr. liked to tell the story that he had run away with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show when he was a boy. But the details of this story are unclear. Charles Higham says that Ziegfeld beat Annie Oakley in a shooting contest when the Wild West Show toured to Chicago in 1883. The story goes that when he beat Annie, Cody asked him to join the show. Ziegfeld accepted the offer and left on tour with the company; however, Ziegfeld's father and child labor laws brought him back very quickly. One of the problems with this version of events is that in 1883, Oakley had not yet joined the Wild West Show. The story changes from source to source, but since there is no mention of this incident in any books on Buffalo Bill or Annie Oakley, chances are the story is apocryphal.
Certainly, the insistence on morality in this era convinced actresses that telling the whole truth would not be in their best interest. By crafting their personal histories, and only detailing the parts that advanced their position, the actresses could control their images.

By 1893, Ellen Terry, for instance, had been married twice and was the mother of two illegitimate children. Lillian Russell had also been married twice and given birth twice. Her first marriage took place after she had conceived her first child (who died as a baby). Her second child, by second husband Edward Solomon, was born before Russell had divorced her first husband. Moreover, it turned out that Solomon was still married to someone else when he married Russell. If these transgressions weren't enough to ruin Russell's reputation, her mother was an ardent feminist. This combination of facts would lead one to believe that Russell would be unable to succeed in late nineteenth century society, yet she was one of the most successful entertainers of her day. Certainly, her talent as a performer helped keep doors open to her, but much of her ability to maintain her success was due to her handling of the press.

Probably the most prominent use of history by actresses at the fair occurred at the World's Congress of Representative Women. This was the first of the Congresses held during the Exposition. This congress convened on 15 May 1893 and adjourned on 23 May 1893. The Chicago Tribune remarked, with a hint of sarcasm: "As is only proper, the women will lead off and will tell what they have done in the past and hope to do in the future before the less important male congresses begin their sessions" ("The Women's Congress"). The newspaper prophesied that the best attended session would be the one on "Woman and the Drama, in which celebrated actresses spoke on women's influence on
their art." According to Mary Wright Sewall, chair of the Committee of Arrangements, when she suggested this topic to her colleagues, there was some doubt as to whether any distinguished actresses would be interested in participating. Whether her colleagues had any prejudices regarding having actresses participate has not been recorded. Perhaps they realized what a draw the actresses would be. There were still people expecting women to fail at their Exposition endeavors, so it would be likely for the Committee to worry about poor attendance. Actresses would assuredly pull in an audience. At any rate, Sewall sent out invitations to a number of actresses. The actresses who responded reacted positively to the invitation, appreciating being asked to participate in such a venture. Actresses were not usually portrayed as intelligent enough to talk about their art.

Although acting engagements kept many invitees from taking on the assignment, six of them agreed to take part. As the Committee had hoped, these six represented different nationalities, differing degrees of professional experience, and different schools of acting (161). They were Helena Modjeska, a Pole; Clara Morris and Georgia Cayvan, Americans; Julia Marlowe, an Englishwoman; Fanny Janauschek, a Bohemian; and Mlle. Rhéa, a Frenchwoman.

According to the Chicago Tribune, Sewall remarked:

It means much that those queens regnant of a growing realm, Januschek, Modjeska, and Morris; those grown princesses, Cayvan, Marlowe, and Rhéa, should, at great pecuniary sacrifice and personal inconvenience, so modify their professional plans that they may add the flash and sparkle of their brilliant gifts to the glow which their sisters diffuse about them as they move along the less conspicuous or less alluring paths of philanthropy, charity, education, the industries, and the reforms ("Begin the Congress")

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Some reporters suggested that the appearance of the actresses at the Congress would advance the importance of the Congresses in general. A Chicago Times reporter said: "This instance alone suggests how broadly democratic are the scope and tone of these congresses." But he was also surprised by the actresses' participation: "Whoever heard before of actresses appearing in an international assemblage to tell of their art and discuss its sociological influences!" ("Woman's Era Dawning").

The statements by both Sewall and the Times reporter reveal much about public perceptions of actresses. The Times seems to convey the idea that actresses lacked the intelligence to talk about their art in a scholarly fashion, and that they also lack the social standing to appear before the social elite. Sewall's inflated rhetoric is intended either to appeal to the vanity she assumes actresses have or to increase interest in the session by stressing the sacrifices the actresses must make in their careers. Since Helena Modjeska, in her 1910 autobiography, notes that Sewall "for years has been my friend," one may assume that Sewall's words were not perceived as being sarcastic (512).

Janauscheck and Rhéa were, at the last minute, unable to come to Chicago, but the other four were present at the Congress to give their papers. Although it was good for public relations for both the Congresses and the actresses to infer that the actresses had made sacrifices to come to the fair, the speakers did have to overcome obstacles in order to appear. Helena Modjeska ended her season a week earlier than intended, Clara Morris traveled "across half a continent," Julia Marlowe postponed a trip to Europe by a week, and Georgia Cayvan obtained a two-night release from an engagement in St. Louis to
make the trip to Chicago and back. These actresses took this opportunity to speak about their craft seriously, and perhaps they also recognized that the occasion allowed them to improve their social standing.

The congress on Woman and the Drama was called to order at 8:10 p.m. on 17 May 1893 at the Hall of Washington in the new Art Institute building. The huge crowds overflowed into the Hall of Columbus and beyond. The crush was so bad that Dr. Julia Holmes Smith, who was to have introduced the speakers, was unable to get into the room. Instead, Sewall asked Mme. Callirrhoe Parren, from Athens, Greece, to do the honor, as it "seemed proper, on the occasion when women who stand for one of the greatest of the arts are to speak, that a woman who comes from the city where the arts originated, should preside" (Sewall, "The World's Congress" 164). Helena Modjeska's topic was "Woman and the Stage," Cayvan's was "The Stage and its Women," Julia Marlowe's was "Woman's Work Upon the Stage," and Clara Morris's was "Woman in the Emotional Drama."  

Cayvan and Morris's papers (which will be discussed later), emphasized the actress and the contemporary stage, but both Marlowe and Modjeska looked back to the past, making the case that women had had a positive effect on theatrical development.

Julia Marlowe traced the history of women on the English stage from 1660, stressing her belief that it made more sense for women to play women's roles than for men to play women's roles as had been conventional in the English Renaissance. Modjeska, however, went back to Hrosvitha, the "nun of Gandersheim," who, in the 10th century, wrote plays based on Terentian models. Modjeska went so far as to give Hrosvitha credit.

16 The full text of these papers appears in the Appendices.
for originating modern drama. Said she: "I think it is one more laurel in the crown of womanhood that it was a woman who was the originator of the modern drama . . ." (Modjeska, "Woman and the Stage" 167). Though current scholarship questions whether Hrosvitha's plays were performed or not, Modjeska claimed that young nuns performed the plays:

There have been long discussions upon this point, but at present it can be accepted as a fact, based on the authority of the German and French savants, that all of the plays of Hrosvitha were performed in the convent of Gandersheim by young nuns, in the presence of the bishop of Hildesheim and several high officials of the empire, probably even before the members of the imperial family (168).

Here we see evidence of Modjeska's participation in myth-making. There is no evidence that Hrosvitha's plays were performed in the 10th century. It is not good enough for Modjeska that Hrosvitha was the first "modern" playwright. She has to prove that the plays were produced for Hrosvitha to be important. After highlighting Hrosvitha, Modjeska then discussed women's participation in medieval mystery plays. In turn, she described the emergence of professional actresses in Spain, Italy, France, England, Poland, and Germany. By discussing, in detail, the long history of women in theatre, Modjeska made the case that women had been not only an important but indispensable part of theatre. In the process theatre had become a respectable profession for women. After discussing the significance of such women as Caroline Neuber and Sophie Schroeder in the German theatre, Modjeska stated:

The influence of woman may not have acted in such a direct way upon the development of the theater in other countries, but whoever is familiar with the history of the theater will acknowledge with me that at every new phase of development, at every new step of progress, actresses have marked their way as prominently as actors (172).
Overall, response to the actresses' presentations were positive. Charles Russell's biography of Julia Marlowe states that the women at the Congress found Marlowe's paper to be "noble," and Modjeska was asked to speak again at another session on the situation of women in Poland. This speech, which will be discussed in a later chapter, would have permanent impact on her career.

Women who, like Helena Modjeska, had a voice at the Exposition knew that citing historical figures and events could give legitimacy to their claims that women could be powerful influences in the world. However, these women were also caught up in the prevailing tendency to manipulate historical facts in support of particular agendas. Though this historical methodology was flawed, it could work effectively to change public opinion. Women also knew that controlling their own personal histories or the histories of their organizations could affect how future generations perceived them and their work. These strategies worked—for a long time, anyway. It was only in the last third of the 20th century that scholars began making a concerted effort to deconstruct the myths established at the fair, including those that women were instrumental in creating.
CHAPTER 4

DARKNESS INTO LIGHT

For more than two weeks in September, 1893, the World's Parliament of Religions met in Chicago's Art Institute Building. This ecumenical congress featured presentations not only by Christians (both Protestant and Catholic), but Jews, Moslems, Buddhists, Confucianists, Hindus, and believers of many other faiths. The gathering was the best-attended of all the Congresses, and some people even though it was the best part of the whole Exposition. Director of Works Daniel Burnham proclaimed that the Parliament of Religions would be the one thing people would remember about the fair after a thousand years, and President of the Board of Directors Harlow N. Higinbotham called it the "proudest work of our exposition" (qtd. in Burg 328). According to Parliament President John Henry Barrows,¹ the purpose of the congress was:

- to bring the different faiths into contact and conference; to deepen the spirit of brotherhood; to emphasize the distinctive truths of each religion;
- to show why men believe in God and the future life; to bridge the chasm of separation between Christians of different names and religious men of all names; to induce good men to work together for common ends; and to promote the cause of international peace.²

¹ At the time of the Exposition, John Henry Barrows was the minister at Chicago's First Presbyterian Church. He was one of the foremost preachers of his time, and was a popular speaker at gatherings in Chautauqua, New York. In 1893, Barrows became Oberlin College's fifth president. He stayed in that post until his death in 1902.

² One of the speakers at the World's Parliament of Religions was Mohandas Gandhi.
Although Barrows fails to mention women in this statement, he announced women's participation in the Congress in his preface to the Memorial Volumes of the World's Parliament of Religions: "These volumes will show many of the jewels of thought and self-sacrifice which she [woman] has contributed to the golden treasury of history" (1: viii). Barrows also dedicated the volumes to a woman:

To her who is the bright star of a happy Christian home, and the crown of God's best earthly gifts, THE BELOVED WIFE, whose kindly and farseeing wisdom, unwearied helpfulness and unwavering faith in the high ends of the parliament of religions, were my constant solace and inspiration amid the labors of the last three years, these volumes, which record the history and proceedings of a memorable event in the Columbian anniversary, are gratefully and affectionately dedicated.

From these statements, one can see some of the obstacles women at the fair had to overcome in order to make their presence in the public sphere acceptable. In great measure, contemporary Christian ideology portrayed women as the moral center of the home. They were expected to be devoted wives and mothers who dedicated their lives to helping others. Though Bertha Palmer, suffragists, and actresses had differing opinions regarding the place of women in modern society, the vast majority of them endorsed the concept that women were morally superior to men. However, certain activities that occurred during the Exposition presented an image of women that many visitors considered immoral. In this chapter, I will examine how religious restrictions and prevailing moral standards affected the reception of women's performances and how women reacted to moral controversy.
That the fair's Board of Lady Managers was the first body of women created by the federal government for any purpose shows that women's appearance in public roles was still unusual, but that opportunities were beginning to open up for them. Bertha Palmer, Susan B. Anthony, and Jane Addams were three of the many women who spoke repeatedly throughout the six months of the fair, making sure that women and their interests were extremely visible and audible. Yet, almost invariably, female speakers had to justify their presence and their ideas from a religious or moral standpoint. Although Bertha Palmer told the world in her speech at the Opening Ceremonies for the Woman's Building that women should be accepted in the work force because many of them needed to support themselves and their families, she admitted that "every woman who is presiding over a happy home is fulfilling her highest and truest function and could not be lured from it by temptations offered by factories or studios" (Palmer, Addresses and Reports 125).

Mrs. Palmer had no need to work outside her home. In 1870, after an upbringing which included finishing school in Washington, D.C., she married one of the richest men in Chicago.³ So, when she was just twenty-one years old, she became one of the leaders of Chicago society. She had two sons, Honoré and Potter (born in 1874 and 1875, respectively), but was able to combine motherhood with a demanding social calendar. Besides being a successful hostess, Mrs. Palmer was a tireless worker for various charities. In keeping with the ideal feminine quality of self-sacrifice, she was a member of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union and the Chicago Woman's Club. She also

³ Bertha Palmer's father was a wealthy Kentuckian who moved his family to Chicago, where they lived among other rich transplanted Kentuckians.
volunteered at Hull House. Within all these organizations, Mrs. Palmer worked to improve the lives of working women. Although the other Lady Managers may not have been as wealthy as Mrs. Palmer, most of them had similar backgrounds. They tended to be the wives or widows of important, wealthy men, and were also able to spend their time and money in charitable pursuits.

Even though the work of the Board of Lady Managers might seem to put its members in the public sphere, the members' attitude was that their efforts were an extension of their charitable activities. They would be helping needy women around the world obtain better salaries and working conditions. But these endeavors forced them to be constantly under public scrutiny. As discussed earlier, as soon as Mrs. Palmer was elected President of the Board of Lady Managers, she established the codes of conduct she would use and expected Board members to use in public. Though she knew that the Board's conduct would affect whether people would accept women in positions of leadership, she also understood that the exhibits in the Woman's Building could have as much influence in changing fair visitors' impressions of what women could do.

Mrs. Palmer wanted to stress the validity of women's place in the work force, yet the exhibits within the Woman's Building foregrounded women's domestic role. Handicrafts, from prehistoric pottery to contemporary laces formed the largest part of the displays in the Women's Building, while paintings and other artworks, even those by professional artists, generally showed women in either domestic or allegorical roles. Exhibits of women's work outside the home stressed those occupations most closely tied to traditional women's work, such as teaching and nursing. The exhibits featured a model kitchen, where women showed spectators how to be more scientific in their home.
cooking; a model hospital, where nurses exhibited the latest in health care; and a room for charitable associations to describe their activities. The Children's Building, where mothers could leave their infants and children while at the fair, was next door to the Woman's Building and funded by the Board of Lady Managers.

Visitors to the World's Columbian Exposition had mixed views on the Woman's Building and the Board of Lady Managers. Some women were very proud of their sex's presence at the fair and wanted to go to the Woman's Building the first thing upon arriving at the fair grounds, while others found the structure's very existence threatening to their beliefs of a woman's proper place. Though Bertha Palmer had been very careful not to align her Board with the suffrage movement, women's strong presence was enough to scare people off. Men often didn't go to the Woman's Building simply because they did not think there would be anything of interest to them there. Yet for many women, the Woman's Building was a great source of pride. Samantha, the title character in Marietta Holley's series of novels about a rural suffragist, announces in *Samantha at the World's Fair*: "I will go first to the Woman's Buildin', home of my sect [sex], and my proud ambition and love" (Holley 244).

Bertha Palmer knew that any association with the suffrage movement would hurt the Board of Lady Managers' chances to change the average person's attitudes towards women in public life. However, this does not mean that suffragists were invisible at the fair. The Queen Isabella Association's actions were well-publicized, and the National American Woman Suffrage Association held its conference in Chicago during the Exposition. To ensure that everyone understood their stance on women's rights, Susan B. Anthony, Lucy Stone, the Rev. Anna Howard Shaw and other prominent suffragists...
spoke frequently at all the Congresses. Their opinion of a woman's highest function differed markedly from Bertha Palmer's. Agnes M. Manning, in a speech given at the World's Congress of Representative Women, complained that the division between public and private sphere had kept women slaves to men: "Man likes a willing slave, and so for all the ages he has taken care to have her taught that her highest happiness lies in belonging to him. His needs, his comforts, his pleasures, his surroundings, his ambitions, his hopes and joys are her chief concern" (108). Manning professed that women needed to be freed from the bondage of dependency. Though some speakers implicated the church in training women to be subservient to their husbands, most still stressed their belief in God. A paper by Women's Christian Temperance Union President Frances Willard stated that the new ideal of womanhood that the WCTU was proposing would make woman "what God meant her to be." She would be "the companion and counselor, not the encumbrance and toy of man" ("Gandhi"). Even if suffragists endorsed a more independent and less self-sacrificing model for womanhood, they still emphasized that women were the moral center of American life. The Reverend Anna Howard Shaw, a leader of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, went so far as to say that women were more temperate than men, more religious than men and more peace-loving than men (Eagle 154). Many other speakers supported this supposition, including Helen L. Bullock who, in a lecture entitled "Power and Purposes of Women," said: "Whatever

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4 Though neither Elizabeth Cady Stanton nor Frances Willard actually traveled to the Exposition, both were heavily involved in the planning stages and both wrote several papers for the World's Congresses which were ready by others.

5 As Willard was not in attendance. The Reverend Augusta J. Chapin read it in Willard's absence.
difference of opinion may exist concerning the range of women's intellect, there can be no question as to her superior moral and religious status" (143).

As arbiters of morality, women participated in many religious discussions at the fair. One of the topics of conversation was whether the Exposition gates should be open on Sundays. The Fair Bill stipulated that the Exposition should be closed on the Christian Sabbath, and organizers had originally accepted that condition since otherwise, Congress wouldn't agree to provide money for the Columbus souvenir coin. But, after disappointing gate receipts when the fair first opened, fair organizers changed their minds. They wanted the additional money an extra day would bring. To support their position, organizers said Congress had broken its part of the agreement by withholding some of the appropriation they had originally agreed to. Also, organizers said they did not believe Congress had the constitutional right to make any restriction based on religion. Though the decision on whether to stay open or to close was hammered out in the courts, the public was extremely vocal in its opinions.6 Debates over Sunday opening had filled papers even before the Fair Bill was signed, and continued throughout the fair season. Opponents of Sunday opening were mostly Sabbatarians, those who believed that the Biblical commandment to "remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy" was sacrosanct. They believed it would be going against God's word to go to the fair on the Sabbath. Many ministers, even if not particularly strict about what activities were appropriate on Sundays, were against the opening because they thought that people

6 The history of the court proceedings in the Sunday opening matter is complicated, but the general picture is this: The Chicago Company opened the fair on Sunday, May 28, because it had an order from the state courts to do so. However, on June 8, a federal court ordered the fair to close. The gates remained open pending appeal, and on July 17, the Circuit Court of Appeals reversed the federal court's ruling. However, because of slow Sunday attendance, the fair officials decided to close on Sundays again on July 23. The next day, a state judge found the Chicago Company directors in contempt of the previous state court order, and forced them to reopen. The Exposition was open on Sundays thereafter.
would choose to go to the Exposition rather than to church. Preachers from coast to coast denounced Sunday opening from their pulpits and some religious groups even arranged boycotts of the Exposition. Even after the fair's directors arranged for sermons to be held on the fairgrounds on Sundays, the complaints continued.

There was an equally vocal group of advocates for Sunday opening. Some of those in favor thought that any legislation against Sunday opening was actually running counter to Christian teaching. An editorial in the Arena stated that Sunday legislation was "an insult to Jesus, as it runs counter to the spirit of His positive thinking" ("Jesus" 254). This writer believed that the Sabbath was made for man; not man for the Sabbath. The World's Columbian Exposition Illustrated reminded readers that people of all religions had been invited to the Exposition, and no one should be kept off the fairgrounds on Sunday because of Christian tradition ("Open the Fair "). The most compelling argument in favor of the Sunday opening was that it would enable workers and their families to attend the fair on their one day off during the week. If the fair were closed on Sundays, the people who could benefit most from the edifying and morally uplifting exhibits would not be able to attend. Additionally, supporters of this view believed that visiting the Exposition would be a much more wholesome activity than attending Chicago's saloons, gambling houses, and brothels. Many people concluded that the Exposition itself could be considered a religious event. Frances E. Begley, one of the Lady Managers, said:

The opening on Sunday of the World's Exposition is demanded because of its inherent religiousness and sacredness. It is the great religious event of the time. . . . It is showing us the Divine plan of the universe as worked out through the inventions of art and mankind." ("Sunday Opening")
Another advocate of Sunday Opening was Susan B. Anthony, who spoke on the issue at the Religious Press Congress. She remarked:

The first step towards religious liberty is political liberty. I have stood from the first with Elizabeth Cady Stanton and others in favor of opening the gates of the World's Columbian Exposition on Sunday, not because I do not respect God, but because I do respect him. Of all the works that honor God on his own day there is nothing more lofty or inspiring than the things to be seen within the gates of the White City. ("Favors")

Some Sunday opening advocates included theatre among the activities visitors would do well to avoid by going to the fair instead, but Anthony saw nothing wrong with attending theatre on the Sabbath, at least such wholesome entertainments as Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. In response to a clergyman's hypothetical question as to whether she would approve of her own son's attending the Wild West Show, Anthony said: "Of course I would. In fact, I think he would learn more there than from the sermons preached in some churches" (qtd. in Sherr 274). Buffalo Bill, upon hearing this, invited Anthony to his show. She did attend, bringing several of her suffragist friends. One of Anthony's companions remembered that when Cody entered the arena:

he rode directly to our boxes, reined his horse in front of Miss Anthony, rose in his stirrups, and with his characteristic gesture swept his slouch-hat to this saddle-bow in salutation. 'Aunt Susan' immediately rose, bowed in her turn, and, for the moment as enthusiastic as a girl, waved her handkerchief at him, while the big audience, catching the spirit of the scene, wildly applauded. (qtd. in Sherr 274)

By the end of July, the final decision had been made to keep the fair open on Sundays, but many exhibits were covered over and the machinery was shut down. Attendance was generally about half of what it was during the rest of the week. Many of the workers who were supposed to be the ones benefiting most from the Sunday opening could not afford
the admission price or the transportation to get to the fairgrounds. And many tourists did what Sunday opening advocates feared they would with a closed fair—they took that time to sample other offerings in the City.

Chicago

There was still a significant section of the American population that believed theatre was immoral. In 1877, the Methodist Episcopal Church passed a ban on amusements, which stated that church members could be censured or expelled from the church for attending certain entertainments, including the theatre. In 1889, the Baptist Association, also, adopted a resolution barring members from patronizing the theatre (McArthur 130). During the Exposition, the Chicago Tribune reported on a preacher from Georgia, who called the stage "the modern hotbed of vice" and wouldn't allow his daughter to attend her graduation because it was being held in a theatre that had water nymphs painted on the drop curtain" ("Preaches"). Religious prejudice against the theatre was so widespread that some ministers even refused to perform funeral services for actors. When America's most celebrated actor, Edwin Booth, died on 7 June 1893, the Tribune commented on the fact that Episcopal Bishop Henry Codman Potter had been asked to conduct the services: "Booth was one of the few actors whom Bishop Potter has ever allowed himself the privilege of seeing. If the Bishop should read the funeral office it would perhaps be the best indication of the esteem which Mr. Booth was held in

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7 This ban was not lifted until 1924.

8 In a bizarre coincidence, on the morning of Booth’s funeral, Ford’s Theater in Washington, D.C. collapsed, killing about 100 government workers. The theater was the site of John Wilkes Booth’s assassination of Abraham Lincoln.
cultivated circles in this city [New York] ("Sad Days of Booth"). Though many clergy did not find theatre wholesome entertainment, they recognized its popularity with the masses. Dwight L. Moody was one preacher who used the theatre's popularity to his advantage. This revivalist, who founded the Chicago Bible Institute in 1889, chose to exploit popular culture in order to attract audiences to his sermons. By advertising in the theatre sections of newspapers, passing out tickets, and holding sermons in theatres and circus tents, he managed to reach "almost a tenth of the tourist population" during the Exposition (J. Gilbert 2). One of Moody's favorite places to preach was the Haymarket Theatre, which his assistant, the Rev. H. B. Hartzler, described as being "in the midst of a very hell of saloons and vile resorts of all kinds" (70). In this location, Moody could call attention to the immorality of the stage and other entertainments.

Not all ministers thought theatre was immoral. Jacobus Metcalfius Jowler, the Bishop of Long Island Sound, wrote a letter to Life Magazine, in which he said that "only the most sensational of preachers lifts his voice in condemnation of an institution which has done much to entertain, something to instruct, and a little to elevate, the minds of those who have come within its influence" (210). During the World's Columbian Exposition, several actresses took the opportunity to persuade the public that the theatre was in fact a perfect medium for teaching morality, and that women have an especial role in that task, both onstage and off. For the session on Woman and the Drama at the World's Congress of Representative Women, newspapers reported that women who would not set foot in a theatre thronged to see the actresses in person. The Chicago Tribune described the session this way: "Drama's women left their home last night, turned their backs on flashing footlights, left unreaped their nightly harvest of plaudits,
just to make a visit. More than that—to meet other women on a common ground, to stretch out their hands to them, and to show them that they were warm, honest, generous hands that might be clasped full womanly" ("Speak").

With the public's assumption that theatre was immoral, actresses were considered immoral as well, and doubly so, since they were neglecting their proper domestic sphere by performing in public. As the Tribune reporter implied, actresses had the reputation of not being "womanly." Besides acting, one of the only other professions historically open to women was prostitution. In the public mind, therefore, acting and prostitution seemed to be linked. Therefore, actresses had to work especially hard to convince people that they belonged to a noble profession and further, that even though they worked, they could still be decent citizens. The actresses who spoke at this session assured their listeners that both actresses and theatre could be moral. Georgia Cayvan pointed out in her speech that theatre could provide excellent moral instruction, especially for people who don't go to church:

Those most in need of ministration, the bitter, world-worn, pessimistic men and women, the heartbroken and hopeless, the gay and frivolous, as well as the immoral, come to us when they will not go to you. . . . We speak to them in a language they understand; we appeal to their better natures by presenting pictures of true nobility of character, by making our villains more unfortunate and repulsive than the genuine article, and by always seeing to it that the hero marries a rich heiress, that the wronged wife is recompensed, and the betrayer of innocence is punished. Seriously, the influence of the stage upon the morals of the community is too valuable to be lightly considered. It should be guarded, and protected, and encouraged. ("Speak")

Helena Modjeska, by calling tenth century nun Hrosvitha "the originator of modern drama," linked theatre directly with Christianity. Modern drama developed from Christianity, in Modjeska's opinion, and therefore, is not inherently immoral. The
actresses charged that if there was a lack of morality on the stage, it was largely due to the desires of the public. Modjeska said: "Who can influence the public? I think only woman. She forms the larger half of it, and can to a great extent, rule the other half. The American woman especially has always been an important factor in all the civilizing influences" ("Woman and the Stage" 165). Modjeska's speech shows acceptance for the idea that women are moral influences on men. If women use their power for good, immorality on the stage will be replaced with the elevating drama.

One play in Chicago that had the reputation for being morally acceptable was Imre Kiralfy's America, the allegorical pageant which related the history of America's progress. Though some people found the ballet girl's costumes a bit skimpy, Austin Brereton in The Illustrated American, announced that "No man need be ashamed of bringing his sister to such a brilliant and wholesome form of amusement" (226). Other elevating plays to see in town included those by William Shakespeare. In an Arena article entitled "Moral and Immoral Literature," Howard MacQueary wrote that even though Shakespeare's plays include questionable material, "the inspired dramatist is one of the greatest moral teachers of history. He makes us loathe vice by painting it in all its hideousness. He makes us love virtue and nobility by showing us their intrinsic beauty and lovableness" (448).

The production that garnered the most disapproval that season was The Black Crook. This melodrama had first opened in 1866, and was notorious not so much for its plot, but for its spectacle, music and, most notably, its dancing girls. The novelty of having scantily-clad (for the time) dancers had brought both protestations of indecency and huge ticket sales. The first production was a major hit, running for 475
performances. Since 1866, The Black Crook had toured throughout the country, continually inciting public outrage and anticipation. Imre and Bolossy Kiralfy produced their own successful reworking of the play in 1873. In the 1893 revival of The Black Crook at McVicker's Theatre in Chicago, attention again focused on the dancing.

Mademoiselle La Sirene, the featured dancer in this production, was criticized for her specialty, "the split." Said the critic for the Chicago Tribune, "she leaped from a flight of stairs, alighting not on the feet provided by Nature for such exigency, but in a way which one must leave to the reader's imagination" ("Her Ideal"). At one performance, Mlle. Sirene injured herself during this maneuver and had to be carried offstage. A week later, the Tribune reported "an increase in the casualties resulting from the disagreeable contortions of the quartet of French girls who go through the disgusting movements of the quadrille dance" ("Accidents"). This dance included women doing somersaults. The Chicago Evening Journal called on a woman, Hattie Lee Whicher, to describe a female attitude toward The Black Crook. Whicher wrote that she "waited and watched for the objectionable feature" but in her enthusiasm for the spectacle "forgot to be shocked." She thought the moral of the play to be a good one. But of the "split," she said, "One looks at that part of the performance with feelings of apprehension and even disgust. There is nothing immoral about it, or about the somersaults those four women do simultaneously; it is only coarse, and awkward and thoroughly unpleasant" ("Bunch"). The Inter-Ocean suggested that the managers take out the "split" dance for the visit of the Columbus's descendent, the Duke of Veragua, "for however indifferent to that sort of thing may be the 'thousands' of persons who now attend the theatre, it can but be offensive to truly well-bred ladies, as it may be assumed, the ladies of the duke's party are" ("Amusements"
Another onstage dance move that some people found offensive was the high kick:

For a woman to shoulder her leg and hold her foot in her hand above her head seemed a most extraordinary thing to do, and this strange tableau has never failed to provoke very enthusiastic applause. . . . It is not only not pretty, but it is a little disgusting to any one of refined tastes. But if the arrested kick be had, what is to be said of that other invention of the high kicker—the split. Well, the less said about it the better, and also of the somersaults that the young women in skirts turn while doing the split. ("Development")

Though drama critics railed against theatre managers for allowing these dances to be performed before the public, their censure only served to increase attendance for The Black Crook and to induce other managers to add the dances to their own shows. The "Amusements" section of the Daily Inter-Ocean, said in May that Mike Leavitt, whose company was playing Spider and Fly, had added eight split dancers to his show. Not to be outdone, the paper said, McVicker was going to add four more to his" (28 May 1893).

As Cayvan and Modjeska anticipated, women at the fair had a grand opportunity for influencing the public's opinion about theatre and actresses, but not in the way the actresses hoped. Not only had the wicked dances renewed charges of immorality against female performers, but so had reports of the offstage actions of certain stars. The era's press regularly searched out scandalous reports of actresses' private behaviour, much to the dismay of those actresses like Cayvan and Modjeska who wanted to improve the reputation of their profession. Because the circumstances of the acting profession made it difficult for most actresses to fit in with the domestic characteristics of the ideal woman, deviations from convention were not hard to find. The reality of touring made it almost impossible for an actress to maintain a stable home. Divorce was common, and though
some of the starring actresses in Chicago during the Exposition season had children, the actresses' professional duties made it difficult for them to be full participants in parenting. Still, whenever possible, actresses provided the public with evidence of their domesticity. Helena Modjeska let the press know that she had been accompanied to Chicago by her husband and son, and in an interview with Betty Brady for the Chicago Evening Journal. Lillian Russell emphasized her interest in home and family: "And thus on and on she talked of her home, her little 9-year-old daughter, who already is doing wonderfully well as a pianist under the instruction of Hattie Leonard, her mother's sister; of her father, Charles Leonard, and of her school days." Annie Oakley (as discussed in Chapter 3) was probably most successful of the women performers in Chicago that season in maintaining the image of domesticity. She had been long and happily married to Frank Butler, who worked for the Wild West Show as her manager. She and her husband owned a home in New Jersey and, though they couldn't live in it while touring, Mrs. Butler (as she was known offstage), kept her tent on the show grounds the epitome of taste and comfort.

Georgia Cayvan was one actress who did not approve of the public's interest in the private lives of actresses. In her speech, she noted that the biggest obstacle to the development of the actress is that "the personality of the artist is ever made paramount to her art." She criticized the public for its inquisitiveness and the press for satisfying that "insatiable curiosity concerning the smallest details of [the actress's] private life, which results in culpable carelessness in circulating sensational and unfounded rumors, and an equally culpable credence in accepting without investigation any extravaganza of the
penny-a-liner's fancy."^9 Cayvan admitted in her speech that actresses have a different lifestyle than most women, but that the majority of them maintained "an integrity of principle which has given to the profession such womanly women as my colleagues of today, and many others of humbler gifts but equal worthiness" ("Speak"). Helena Modjeska also remarked on the perception of actresses as immoral, and concluded that "as for morals, I can only state that there are as many good women on the dramatic stage as in any other walk of life" ("Speak").

During the Exposition, the press was fairly quiet about reporting tales of divorce and illicit love affairs among actors, but there were a couple of minor scandals involving performers in Chicago that the press passed on to an eager public. Singer Mlle. Nikita was one performer to be accused of bad behaviour. The Chicago Times charged her with dishonesty because, it said, she had pretended to be a temperance reformer. Nikita had been contracted to sing at Ziegfeld's Trocadero, but had forfeited her contract because she said she wouldn't perform in a place where liquor was sold. Upon hearing this news, the Temperance Congress had given a reception for her, and praised her for her steadfast belief in temperance reform. At the reception, the Times reported, Mlle. Nikita "bent her pretty head to conceal her blushes, and when she had sufficiently regained her composure, she sang 'Nearer, My God, to Thee,' in a voice trembling with emotion and with tears in her eyes" ("Two New Play Bills"). However, the Chicago Times informed readers that the singer had been seen performing at Covent Garden theatre in London where liquor was served freely and the bar was in plain sight of the audience.

^9 For Cayvan, this gossip-mongering would soon bring an end to her own career. In 1896, she was named as correspondent in a divorce case, and though the court exonerated her, she suffered a mental breakdown and died five years later in a sanitarium.

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Unfortunately, the reaction of the temperance leaders to the news about Nikita's alleged hypocrisy is unrecorded. We do know, though, how certain society women responded when they thought Lillian Russell was behaving badly in public. Russell knew how to use the press to her advantage, and had enjoyed a successful career even after personal missteps, but her image was still somewhat tarnished. Her personal exploits, like public corn-on-the-cob eating contests with Diamond Jim Brady in Chicago's restaurants, were regularly depicted in the press. In New York, Russell had achieved enough respectability to be able to socialize with the upper crust, but Chicago society was not as welcoming. Instead, Russell associated with other entertainers. She enjoyed attending Washington Park racetrack on Saturdays when she wasn't performing matinees, and on Derby Day at the end of July, she visited the park's clubhouse. The wives of club members became incensed because they felt their husbands were paying too much attention to the comely actress. These women forced the park's management to bar her from the clubhouse. Russell apparently left peacefully, and retired to the racetrack's best box which the management had offered her in way of apology. This did not completely assuage the matrons, though, as admirers continued to greet Russell between races ("Opera Queen"). Though Russell did not publicly denounce the women for their condemnation of her, she immediately "became ill" and did not perform for a week. As Russell had been known to feign illness before when things weren't going her way, newspapers suggested this was her way at getting back at the women. Soon after this incident, Russell decided she would no longer perform on Saturday nights. The Chicago Daily News said she had made this decision supposedly because if the fair were closed on Sunday, there would be huge audiences available for a Sunday show. Since Russell was
contracted to perform only seven shows a week, she chose to cancel Saturday night. Saturday matinees, she said, were the only time women and children could attend the theatre without escort. Although Russell was made "a most munificent offer" to sing extra performances, she refused ("Mr. Willard's Last Week"). Armond Fields, in his biography of Lillian Russell, declares that Russell actually cancelled her Saturday evenings so she could go on weekend trips to other cities (82).

These controversies might have been damaging to the image of female performers, but huge ticket sales seem to indicate that the public was willing to go to the theatre no matter what society women said. However, the women of the Board of Lady Managers had a greater impact on the public's attitude toward female performers in a situation that occurred on the Exposition's Midway Plaisance.

_The Midway Plaisance_

The White City, often referred to by reporters and visitors as the "Celestial City" or the "New Jerusalem," was contrasted with the Midway, or "Tower of Babel," a disordered and cacaphonous amalgam of mostly "primitive" peoples. The Woman's Building lay at the border between the White City and the Midway, the symbolism of which did not go unnoticed. In Clara Burnham's novel, *Sweet Clover*, for example, Aunt Love describes her journey from the Midway to the White City:

> The angels on the Woman's Buildin' smile down and bless you, and you know that in what seemed like one step, you've passed out o' darkness into light... It's come to me, Mr. Gorham, that perhaps dyin' is goin' to be somethin' like crossin' the dividin' line that separates the Midway from the White City. (201)
Though lacking the utopian vision of White City, the Midway drew masses of visitors. In a June visit, Amy Leslie speculated on the Midway's popularity:

There is a spice of adventure, something rakish and modestly questionable about this legalized harlequinade of other people's habits. There is an unspoken notion prevalent that exquisitely wicked things are uncloaked under the arc lights of the Turkish theater and that Dahomey teems with savage awfulness quits too utterly shocking, all sanctioned by the law of the land and the lights of the century. ("Amy Leslie" 23 June 1893)

Actually, most of the ethnic villagers were quite religious and regularly practiced their religious rituals on the fairgrounds, but the press rarely acknowledged the value of the villager's practices. Some Christian evangelists even spent time on the Midway attempting to convert the inhabitants. The Chicago Tribune wrote about the attempts to convert people that a Professor W.F. Black of the Central Church of Christ had made. Apparently, Black had already converted two Japanese people, including one of Japan's Royal Commissioners, and had some Japanese, Syrians and Turks in "the church's porch" ("Converts"). The Esquimaux villagers were reportedly all converts to Christianity, but Teresa Dean told her readers that the villagers still followed their pagan religion and only pretended to be Christian because they were afraid "the white managers [would] interfere with them" (White City Chips 8).

A journalist with the Chicago Herald took the time to investigate the many forms of religion practiced on the Midway, but unsurprisingly, found Christianity the best. He was satisfied "that the Christian religion comes nearer being divine than any of the others, and is therefore more suitable for mankind" ("Piety"). This reporter had harsh things to say about other religions, particularly Taoism and the "fetish worship" of the
Dahomeyans. He called the Taoists "the grossest idolaters in China," but declared that "it is in the Dahomey Village at the west end of the plaisance that the grossest forms of fetish worship concentrate. The Zulu, the Figian and the Samoan are but mild specimens compared with the negro from west Africa." It was probably not the actual rituals that the reporter found so repulsive, but the inhabitants. Because the Dahomey villagers came from the same part of Africa as America's slaves, most villagers to the Midway transferred their prejudice against African-Americans to the Dahomeyans.

The people of Dahomey tended to be the most cruelly regarded villagers on the fairgrounds, but the entertainment that received the harshest condemnation was the danse du ventre. The danse du ventre (now commonly known as belly dancing) was the most ubiquitous form of entertainment on the Midway. Women in several villages, including Street in Cairo, the Algerian Village and the Persian Village offered these performances. Paul E. Monty, in his dissertation on the evolution of belly dance, says that the danse du ventre is one of the world's oldest dance forms, and is "indigenous to predominantly Islamic countries, particularly those of North Africa, and a geographic area known as the Middle East" (1). Americans first had the opportunity to see this dance at the Philadelphia Exposition in 1876. During that fair, police raided a performance of the danse du ventre at the Turkish Coffee House because the dance was "immodest in character" (Monty 18). By 1893, publicity surrounding performances of the dance in London and Paris had spread its reputation as being immoral. Many people were surprised that the Federal Government was sanctioning the performances of the danse du ventre at the Exposition, but contracts with concessioners stipulated that the dancers

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10 The press used both the word "Dahoman" and "Dahomeyan" for the Dahomey villagers. Since the bulk of my sources used "Dahomeyan," that is the spelling I am using in this dissertation.
would dress and dance modestly. Still, reporters were curious to discover whether Chicagoans would appreciate the dance's "barbaric eccentricities" ("Warriors"). Teresa Dean reported that audiences didn't know what to think. Certainly, she said, "the dancers are a great study, even if their gyrations are not exactly in accordance with our ideas of what is most graceful and refined" (White City Chips 89). But, she continued, "the audience, without much exception, cannot understand whether they ought to be shocked or entertained." Dean recognized that in order to appreciate the dance, it was important to view it from the "standpoint of the customs of a foreign country." But this attitude was rare. A reporter for the New York Daily Tribune wrote that "The Egyptian theatre is not a place to be commended to modest people. . . . The danse du ventre is given with all of its original vulgarity and repulsiveness. As a rule, after it has been in progress one minute, every woman in the audience departs" ("Odd Shows"). Teresa Dean remarked on the irony that the women who "would think nothing of attending burlesque opera, and expressing great admiration for the dainty scarcity of clothing, or the success of the most reckless high kicker" left Midway theatres full of righteous indignation (White City Chips 89). Yet, if a woman wanted to be considered appropriately modest, she was expected to be offended.

The alleged immorality of the danse du ventre kept some people from the Midway Plaisance, but overall the negative publicity increased attendance. Men, especially, put the performances on their list of things not to miss at the fair. But women went too, many so they could confirm their preconceived prejudices. Not all women were offended by the show, however. Teresa Dean overheard one of a party of women who attended the Cairo theatre performances, saying "we all come, sooner or later"
Members of this particular party differed in their opinions of the dance. One said: "It is beastly. No dancing at all. It is low and immoral." But another said:

I don't see anything to make a fuss about. It is not refined. In fact, it is very coarse, but to me it is interesting, until it becomes monotonous, from the fact of its being purely an Egyptian dance. Surely you have only to look at the faces of the dancers to see that they have only a desire to show their scientific abilities. I have no doubt but what those same girls would blush at some of the dancing in our down-town theatres. (157).

The comparisons between the Midway dances and those downtown were made regularly, and often the downtown theatres came off worse. Another woman Teresa Dean overheard remarked that her husband wouldn't take her to the Midway shows because he said it wasn't proper, but she went on her own anyway. Although she didn't think much of the dancing, she couldn't see anything bad about it: "There's some of the girls in America that seem a good deal worse to me," she said. "I don't mind tights, but I hate to see real undergarments, unless it is a lot of lace. And in America you can see garments that there's no mistaking what they are. There's nothing real bad about it, but it's a heap worse than seeing the Egyptian girls, I think" (White City Chips 111).

The controversy over whether the dances were immoral or moral was fairly contained, with no one demanding that they be closed, until early August, when postal inspector Anthony Comstock, namesake of the 1873 obscenity law, visited the Midway. Although Comstock found nothing wrong with the topless women in the Dahomey and South Sea Islanders' Villages, Comstock was stunned by the performances of the danse du ventre. He immediately attempted to close the Midway theatres that exhibited this dance, which he called the "hootchie-cootchie." Seeing the Board of Lady Managers as a
group with a great deal of moral influence, he wrote to them asking their support in his attempts at censorship. Bertha Palmer, though one of the most important collectors of French art, another Comstock target, publicly agreed with Comstock that the dances were lewd, though she had not seen them herself. Newspapers accused her of hypocrisy, saying that she had taken her friends to the Cairo theatre, but Mrs. Palmer denied the accusations. Three lady managers did, however, visit the attractions to make a judgment regarding their decency, and agreed with Comstock that the dances were vulgar. Mrs. Palmer and other members of the board visited the council of administration demanding that action be taken. Lady Manager Helen Barker submitted the following report on her experience at the theatres:

The utmost depravity and licentiousness were openly practiced. The places were filled with the vilest of women, the equals of those to be found in the lowest part of Chicago, whose only mission is to degrade and debauch. We are urging our boys and girls to come and see this grand and beautiful exhibition at the risk of contaminating their souls. . . . I would sooner lay my two boys in their graves than that they should look at the sights I saw yesterday. (Broun 226)

Though the fair organizers (including the Board of Lady Managers) were planning an International Ball for August 16, to which all Midway performers had been invited, and the Board of Lady Managers was going to host a reception in the Woman's Building for women of the Midway, Barker now wanted to renege on the invitations to the belly dancers. She said:

unless we can qualify our invitations so as not to include these women, with whom association will be contaminating, I object to the board putting itself on record as the entertainers of the women of the Midway Plaisance. Appoint me if you will as one of the committee and I will be ready and willing any time to go among and labor with these degraded women, but do not bring them here where no good can result (Broun 226).
Director Charles H. Schwab told the women he would investigate the matter. He told the Chicago Daily News, "Foreign manners and foreign forms of amusement are all right and we don't want to interfere with any concessioner's rights but immoral practices will not be tolerated, contract or no contract" ("To Look").

The theatres could not be closed too quickly for Anthony Comstock. He told a reporter for the New York World that "the whole world's fair must be razed to the ground or these three shows must stop" (Broun 227). Comstock expressed his appreciation for the assistance of the Lady Managers, "good and pure women as ever lived," who made the sacrifice of going to see "that horrible exhibition," so that they could see for themselves how shameful it was. Journalists who did not condone the censorship of the danse du ventre, criticized the Board of Lady Managers for sticking their noses where they didn't belong. After all, the Board of Lady Managers's activities had not been above reproach.

Journalistic debates raged over whether the dances were immoral or not, and fair organizers eventually attempted to close the Persian Theatre, where the most lascivious of the dances were apparently held. The manager of the Persian Village, Mr. Bustang, told the Chicago Tribune, "I don't consider [the dances] half as bad as the high kicking, the split, the serpentine, and shadow dances done by the girls in tights on the theater stages. They are the true native dances of Persia and the girls are always dressed in loose-fitting costumes instead of tights" ("Persian Girls"). An article in Frank Leslie's Weekly suggested that to an Oriental, high-kicking would be "extremely stupid and unentertaining." Simply because the danse du ventre does not appear to be dancing in Western eyes, does not make it immoral, the article suggested ("Egyptian Dancers" 89).
A court order kept the theatre open, and eventually the theatre managers agreed to tone down the dance. Nevertheless, the negative publicity greatly increased attendance at the theatres. Sol Bloom, manager of the Midway Plaisance, wrote about the *danse du ventre* in his autobiography. "It is regrettable—or, if anyone should choose to disagree, it is at least a fact—that more people remember the reputation of the *danse du ventre* than the dance itself. This is very understandable. When the public learned that the literal translation was "belly dance" they delightedly concluded it must be salacious and immoral. The crowds poured in. I had a gold mine" (134). Barkers even advertised their theatres as "the Comstock shows." On September 5, Teresa Dean noted that the barker in front of the Persian Theatre proclaimed: "This is the theater that was closed because the girls were all arrested." Continued Dean: "And the crowd could not get in fast enough. Every individual member of it acted as if he or she were afraid the Director General or somebody else would come by and stop it again before they had an opportunity to see" (White City Chips 302). A reporter for the *Chicago Daily News* said he enjoyed watching the faces of people who tried to sneak unobtrusively into the theatres: "They so evidently feel that they are treading the verge of a social precipice that their breathless expression is positively smothering to an observer" ("Stories"). *World's Fair Puck*, the cartoon newspaper printed on the fairgrounds, joked about men sneaking to the shows behind their wives' backs, and women going so they could act offended afterwards. Said Dean, "if Anthony [Comstock] had not discovered or recognized so much wickedness along the jolly Midway I'm sure we would not have the trouble and the

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11 Bloom credits himself with writing the musical phrase that is most associated with the belly dance. It is printed in Figure 75. His story has not been unsubstantiated.
crushing we do to get along in some places. Something naughty or something that is expected to be naughty does so chain the attention" (White City Chips 389).

During this whole controversy, very little was said about what the dancers felt, either about their dances or the public's reaction to them. Before Comstock's visit, people who didn't like the danse du ventre called the dances immoral, not the dancers. Afterwards, visitors began to perceive the dancers as willing participants in their own debauchery, when most of them were actually quite respectable Muslim girls. Teresa Dean thought that this change of perspective had affected the dancers adversely. She said that many people were determined to find evil on the Midway, "and they still keep up the search, openly and broadly, until many of these Nautch girls have lost entirely the unconscious expression which was particularly noticeable in their faces at first" (White City Chips 247).

In some way, the Board of Lady Managers' participation in the Midway censorship events backfired on their hopes to retain moral superiority at the fair. As in most large organizations, especially inexperienced ones, infighting and backstabbing occurred. The Board of Lady Managers was constantly being watched for errors, so as to show that women could not hold responsible positions of leadership. Therefore, all the Board's problems were prominently aired in the news. By damning other women for immorality, they exposed themselves to similar kinds of criticism. By the end of the fair, 

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12 Fahreda Mahzar, who probably was the woman who became Little Egypt, was always chaperoned. When she married a Greek coffee house owner in 1905, she retired from public life. In 1933, she returned to the stage for Chicago's Century of Progress fair in 1933. However, times had changed and her once shocking clothing and dance was now tame. Fan dancer Sally Rand drew audiences instead (Burton 16).

13 Another name for belly dancers.
most journals had plenty of fodder for denouncing the Board. Frank Leslie's Weekly commented:

If the evils of that incongruous but interesting locality are all that the lady managers would lead us to believe from their appeals and remonstrances, they would certainly be wise to adopt the artist's suggestion when they make their progresses. But where is the immorality? It is time to revive the old French proverb: 'Honi soit qui mal y pense'" ("Grotesque" 266).

The Lady Managers' acceptance and promotion of their role as moral leaders may have been the only way their ideas would have been listened to, thereby making change possible in other areas, but their denouncement of non-Western women as moral inferiors opened the gates to charges of hypocrisy, indelibly staining their reputation. And instead of stopping the danse du ventre, their actions increased the audiences for the Midway shows. With Little Egypt soon making an appearance at Coney Island, belly dancing would, in fact, become a nation-wide craze.

The highbrow attitudes regarding morality expressed by such actresses as Helena Modjeska and Georgia Cayvan were similar to those of the Board of Lady Managers, and equally problematic. By saying that the theatre could be a moral influence, and that most actresses are moral, they implied that theatre and actresses could also be immoral. When Modjeska told the women at the Congress that they had the power to keep immorality off the stage, she did not advise them how to achieve this objective. She only said that theatres, as commercial ventures, could only produce what the public wants to see. While she may have believed that women could best influence what kinds of shows were produced by what shows they went to see and what they avoided, she could have equally been giving them permission to seek out immorality in the theatre and campaign against it. As with the danse du ventre, public protests against "leg shows" like The Black Crook
increased, rather than decreased, ticket sales. As for Georgia Cayvan's proclamation that
the public should stop being curious about actresses' personal lives, people knew that
most actresses thrived on the publicity newspapers gave them. Many actresses, like
Lillian Russell, depended on press reports of their personal adventures to keep audiences
interested in coming to their shows. In fact, actors were beginning to hire press agents to
handle their publicity. As Cayvan said, gossip could damage an actress's reputation, but
for some actresses, it was the key to success.
On the morning of 1 May 1893, a procession of carriages carrying President Grover Cleveland and hundreds of dignitaries made its way through the Exposition grounds from the Midway Plaisance to the Administration Building. Here, on a platform that seated 3,000, such luminaries as President Cleveland, Vice-President Adlai Stevenson, Illinois Governor John Peter Altgeld, Chicago Mayor Carter Harrison, Daniel Burnham, Bertha Palmer, the Infanta Eulalia of Spain, and the Duke and Duchess of Veragua gathered. Before a crowd of over 200,000 people, the Opening Day Ceremonies began. After a prayer, a poem, a performance of Wagner's overture to Rienzi, and speeches by Director General Davis and President Cleveland, it was time for the official opening of the World's Columbian Exposition. At 12:08 p.m. (according to the Chicago Tribune), President Cleveland pressed an electric key. At that moment, jets of water shot from the electric fountains, guns from the battleship Michigan went off, and flags of many nations began to unfurl. At the same time, the Statue of the Republic at one end of the Grand Lagoon was uncovered. Of this moment, the Chicago Tribune said: "At the instant the drapery fell from the golden figure of the 'Republic,' backed by the classic peristyle, she stood forth in radiant beauty welcoming the world" ("Springs into Being").
Later that afternoon, Bertha Palmer presided over the opening of the Woman's Building. At this event, Bertha Palmer spoke eloquently of the necessity for many women to work outside the home. In order for these women to achieve acceptance and equality in the workplace, Mrs. Palmer said that men were going to have to stop putting them on pedestals. "If we can really find, after a careful search," she said, "any women mounted upon pedestals, we should willingly ask them to step down in order that they may meet and help to uplift their sisters. Freedom and justice for all are infinitely more to be desired than pedestals for a few" ("Dedicate the Home"). Unfortunately, with female allegorical figures on pedestals all over the fairgrounds, including the 65-foot tall "Republic" by Daniel Chester French in the central lagoon and a silver representation of actress Ada Rehan as "Justice" in the Mines and Mining Building, the effect of Mrs. Palmer's words was somewhat diluted.¹

The vision of woman as goddess was not an unusual one. Even May Wright Sewall, the chair of the Committee for the World's Congress of Representative Women, said in her speech on the opening of that congress that she hoped the congress would:

exalt that perfect woman, who, uniting in her own person the characteristics of Eve, Venus, and the Virgin, is the ideal that can be conceived only by the high-hearted man, the lofty-minded woman; that ideal which, taking a different name in every country, is Hera in Greece, Minerva in Rome, and in America, the Goddess of Liberty. (Rossiter Johnson 21)

This image of women as perfect, divine, pure, and beautiful was one that Bertha Palmer would have to modify if she wanted the public to accept women in the work force. If women were like goddesses, it followed that they were too good to work. Because

¹ Daniel Chester French was the sculptor of the seated Abraham Lincoln in the Lincoln Memorial.
women in this model were supposedly too fine and delicate to have to deal with the
difficult and unpleasant world outside the home, they were relegated to the private sphere
of home and family. The ideal woman at the end of the century was a devoted wife and
mother who dedicated her time to managing her household and raising her children. She
was responsible for beautifying the home and keeping herself attractive. She took pains to
dress well and maintain a neat appearance. The ideal woman was not college-educated,
but was proficient in such "feminine" activities as playing the piano and sewing. She also
knew how to be an excellent hostess. Her activities outside the home were restricted to
charitable work and woman-only club activities, unless she was unmarried, in which case,
nursing and teaching were acceptable professions. Of course, she would normally give up
these occupations upon marriage. If a woman deviated from this model, she could be
called unwomanly or unfeminine.

This ideal was a serious obstacle that women at the fair had to overcome in order
to change public opinion about what woman's roles in society should be. Women who
wanted to expand the prevailing image of the ideal woman to more adequately reflect real
woman's experience were themselves constantly judged—not on their intelligence and
talent, but on how well their personal lives and actions matched the current conventions of
the feminine ideal. Paradoxically, some of these women believed that in order to achieve
their goals, they would have to perform publicly in a manner contrary to those goals.
Women including Bertha Palmer and members of the Board of Lady Managers, artists,
and actresses, chose what aspects of this ideal woman to reinforce and which to challenge
in order to advance their agendas. Midway performers, as outsiders from western
conventions, had little agency in changing their position in American's eyes, but they were used as examples of what the ideal was not. Both the press and the public at the fair compared every woman of interest with this ideal model. Though the women in question took the occasion of the fair to change women's position and had some success, views of women's "femininity" affected the reception of their ideas.

The White City

Mrs. Palmer fit in well with the ideal image herself, but she knew that for most women, this image was impossible to live up to. She realized that some women needed to work, could work, and should be able to work on the same footing as men, but in order to make working women acceptable to the public, Mrs. Palmer felt that she had to demonstrate that work did not necessarily make women "unfeminine." One place she could prove her hypothesis was through her own work with the Board of Lady Managers. Another was through the exhibits and presentations of women's work in the Woman's Building. Bertha Palmer wanted to ensure that what visitors saw in this setting would prove her supposition. Two areas of women's work on display can serve as models of how she took up that goal—art and architecture.

When Daniel Burnham first began choosing architects for the individual Exposition buildings, he selected the celebrated Richard Morris Hunt for the Woman's Building. Bertha Palmer, however, insisted upon a woman architect. In order to prove that women could participate on an equal footing with men in all spheres, Mrs. Palmer wanted women in charge of all aspects of the Woman's Building. Though time was short, Mrs. Palmer
convinced fair organizers to hold an architectural competition. With just six weeks to submit designs, fourteen women entered the race and Sophia Hayden, the first woman graduate of MIT’s architecture program, won the contract (D. Burnham 4: 1). Her design was for a two-story neoclassic structure with an open rotunda in the center. The first floor was primarily for exhibits, while the second also included meeting rooms, offices, a library, dressing rooms and other various spaces. Some critics found Hayden's design conventional and uninspiring. An article in American Architect stated:

The Woman's Building is neither worse nor better than might have been expected. It is just the sort of result that would have been achieved by either boy or girl who had had two or three years' training in an architectural school, and its thinness and poverty of constructive expression declares [sic] it to be the work of one who had never seen his or her 'picture' translated into substance. ("The World's Fair Buildings")

Though the building may have been accused of blandness by some, many of those who visited the building insisted on its fundamental femininity. For instance, Candace Wheeler, the Director of Decoration for the Woman's Building, defended Hayden's design in an article for Harper's Monthly: "But the most peaceably human of all the buildings is the Woman's Building. It is like a man's ideal of woman—delicate, dignified, pure, and fair to look upon" (Wheeler 836). Unfortunately, being feminine was not Hayden's intention for her building. In an article in the Chicago Tribune, Hayden rejected the idea of a separate, feminine sphere of achievement for women:

Finally, I would say that I hope that this concentrated effort on the part of women to show what they can do may be a help in breaking down the

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2 Candace Wheeler established the New York Society of Decorative Art, and headed the textile division of Louis Tiffany's design firm, Associated Artists. She also ran her own textile manufacturing company, also called Associated Artists. The New York Board of Lady Managers made Wheeler Director of their Bureau of Applied Arts. The Metropolitan Museum of Art held an exhibition of Wheeler's textile designs and other art work from 10 October 2001 - 6 January 2002.

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barrier between man's and woman's work and be an aid to all women who have inclination and talent to work in whatsoever line they may choose, that in the near future, our work shall stand firmly on its own merits, so that the question of sex shall be obliterated. ("Honor Miss Hayden")

Yet despite Hayden's aims, it seemed important to the Board of Lady Managers and those closely aligned to the Board to establish Hayden's personal femininity as well as that of the Woman's Building. Laura Hayes, Bertha Palmer's private secretary, mentions Hayden in Three Girls in a Flat, a book she wrote with her two roommates, Enid Yandell and Jean Loubourough. In this book, which details the experiences these women had participating in the planning of the Exposition, the authors wrote:

Miss Hayden is of medium height, slender, with soft, dark hair, and a pleasant manner that is shy, without the least lack of confidence. . . . She is of Spanish parentage, and inherits the soft, dark eyes of the Latin race; though, perhaps it is her long residence in Boston that has made her so quiet and reserved. (Yandell 64-65)

Even though the Board of Lady Managers pursued excellence in the women it hired for Exposition projects, it sought to certify the femininity of those women. Femininity seemed to equal beauty and beauty equaled goodness. As Candace Wheeler said in her Harper's article: "The Woman's Building is one of the good buildings,' said one who knows; and good in this city of beauty means beautiful" (836).

At Bertha Palmer's insistence, women were hired to do all the decorations of the Woman's Building. Alice Rideout was the official sculptor, Candace Wheeler was the interior decorator, and Enid Yandell (one of the authors of Three Girls in a Flat) designed the caryatids that held up the roof garden. Dora Wheeler Keith (Candace Wheeler's daughter) decorated the ceiling of the library and, for the central hall of the building, panel decorators included Rosina Emmet Sherwood, Lydia Emmet, Lucia Fairchild, and
Amanda Brewster Sewell. The subjects for the Woman's Building decorations were, not surprisingly, women. By looking at the sculptures, murals, and other art work, one can see the conflicting image of womanhood that the Board of Lady Managers conveyed.

According to Daniel Burnham's Final Official Report, Alice Rideout's sculptures for the Woman's Building were to "illustrate a woman's usefulness, in her manifold spheres" (4: 2). Though the sculptures no longer exist, the report described Rideout's groupings in detail. One grouping showed the influence of Progress on the woman of 1893. Entitled "Enlightenment," the figure of Progress is shedding its light on a female figure who "is eagerly looking upward at the torch. Her face is beaming with a determined satisfaction, which is the reflection of her mind and soul, while contemplating the wonderful strides of social, artistic and literary advancement which have been made under the enlightening influences of the torch of Progress" (4: 3). This advanced woman was juxtaposed with a Medieval woman whose "downcast expression is indicative of a forlorn hope for the advancement of woman from the position of a servant of her lordly husband, to a sphere of intellectual attainment, which would make her his equal" (4: 3).

Although "Enlightenment" suggests a feminist viewpoint of women's roles, two of Rideout's other groupings reinforce women's traditional roles as wife, mother, teacher, and nurse. A prominent sculpture grouping had Columbia³ at its center. This figure stood "holding a bible and the scales of justice over a church, near which is a school house which she is covering with a wreath of laurels" (4: 2). To the right of this central figure was a woman teaching children. Next to this figure were figures of Music and Study, then came

³ Columbia was the allegorical representation of the United States.
a battle scene with a woman nursing the wounded. To the left of Columbia was an
description of a woman's life, "showing the duties of a wife and mother under the
enlightened influences of the present generation" (4: 2). These duties are depicted as
follows:

In the first sphere of womanhood, she stands at the church door as a bride;
a little later on she is attending her sick child; then figures of Science,
Sculpture and Painting demonstrate her influence in beautifying the home;
but her chief function is left for the last where she is represented in her
capacity of both wife and mother. While trying to comfort her son, she at
the same time soothes the last hours of her dying husband. (4: 2-3)

The proper roles of a woman were further insisted upon in Rideout's "The Three Virtues
of Woman." These three virtues are innocence, sacrifice, and charity.

Apparently, no one fussed over the subjects of Rideout's statuary, but controversy
abounded over the murals gracing the northern and southern tympana of the Woman's
Building's central hall. For these projects, Bertha Palmer wanted to hire world-class
American female artists to show the world the great accomplishments of those of her sex.
She decided upon Mary Fairchild MacMonnies and Mary Cassatt. MacMonnies, who had
studied in Paris under Puvis de Chavannes, was the wife of Frederic MacMonnies, himself
a celebrated artist. Mary Cassatt, unmarried and forty-nine years old at the time of the
Exposition, was an expatriate American in Paris where she had lived since 1874. In
France, Cassatt had aligned herself with the Impressionist movement. Bertha Palmer, an
avid collector of French Impressionist art, was especially excited to have Cassatt work on
the Woman's Building, and hoped the mural would spread interest in this new style.

Cassatt's mural was entitled "Modern Woman" and Mary MacMonnies' was entitled

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4 Frederic MacMonnies had already been commissioned to design the "Columbian Fountain," which
would offset "The Statue of the Republic" in the Grand Lagoon.
"Primitive Woman." Both murals were in three panels. The left side of MacMonnies' mural depicted girls sowing grain; the center showed girls carrying water jars and a mother with two babies; and the right had a hunter, just returned from the kill, being cared for by a group of women and children. In *Art and Handicraft in the Woman's Building*, Maud Howe Elliott wrote that this mural was "of a high order; it shows a true decorative sense, a sure hand, and a fresh, joyous imagination. Artistically and intellectually it is a composition which commends itself to all those who understand and honor the idea for which our building stands" (45). In Cassatt's mural, the left side included a group of girls followed by ducks. The girls are pursuing Fame, who is flying upward. The center showed women gathering apples; and the right had three women, one playing a stringed instrument, another listening, and a third dancing. Unfortunately for Mrs. Palmer, critics and visitors vastly preferred "Primitive Woman," finding both its subject and composition much more pleasing. Cassatt's mural was perceived as highly unusual and unsettling, in part because of its style. Of course, French Impressionism had not yet received the positive attention it would soon attain. Though some wealthy Americans, including Bertha and Potter Palmer, had become collectors of Impressionist art, many critics and the general public "did not understand" the style. Macmonnies used conventions recognizable to the public, but Cassatt's conventions were unclear. Viewers were also confused by her symbolism. Teresa Dean commented on Cassatt's mural in her "White City Chips" column on 18 April 1893: "After that desperate flight from the feathered kingdom in the first section, and the hard work of climbing ladders for knowledge in the second, the great goal attained in the third and final was only banjo playing and skirt dancing" (19). Even the
World's Columbian Exposition Illustrated had trouble praising the mural: "It is said to be a sample of French art. Its figures are strangely posed and to understand and comprehend the idea of the artist one needs to consult her. It is a peculiar conception and attracts much attention" ("Women's Department").

Though today art historians consider the 1890s to be the peak of Cassatt's artistic achievement, critics condemned the style and subject matter of Cassatt's painting. They also expressed their disapproval of her because she worked with men on equal terms. Her lifestyle and art were perceived as masculine, while that of the married MacMonnies was more feminine. Teresa Dean recounted in one of her columns a reaction to Cassatt's work that she overheard: "As the wife of a very celebrated artist said, in looking at it [the Woman's Building], 'It is so ladylike.' It is ladylike. It is too bad to have a painting with boldness for its only recommendation destroy any of the effect" (21). Though Bertha Palmer had worked hard to enlist Cassatt as a muralist, she did not expect the negative criticism of the painting that detracted from the effect Mrs. Palmer had hoped to achieve.

Mrs. Palmer's goals were also thwarted in the Gallery of Honor, a large exhibit space on the first floor of the Woman's Building. Here she wanted to display art works of "rare value and merit." At first, the Board of Lady Managers had decided not to display women's work in the Woman's Building because they had accepted the Isabella Association's idea that women should not have their art displayed separately from that of men. However, the Board members changed their minds. They worried that without an exhibit, the Woman's Building would fail to attract visitors. Bertha Palmer was diligent in gathering art works for the Gallery of Honor, but many of the best women artists chose to
exhibit their work in the Exposition's Fine Arts Building, where there would be no segregation by sex.⁵ Sara Hallowell, Assistant Chief of the Department of Fine Arts for the Exposition, had told Mrs. Palmer that "no woman artist of ability would I believe be willing to have her work separated from the men's" (qtd. in Weimann 281).

In America, women's art work was acceptable only if it was "feminine." Decorative arts, such as needlework, textiles, and china painting, were appropriate tasks for women, as were paintings of "charming" subjects. Many professional women artists from America who were not interested in such pursuits, like Mary Cassatt, lived and studied abroad and remained unmarried. To the average person, the artist's lifestyle was not suitable for women. Sara Hallowell knew that exhibiting in the Woman's Building would marginalize professional women artists who already had difficulty being taken seriously. Hallowell suggested that Mrs. Palmer focus on decorative, rather than fine art for her exhibit. Mrs. Palmer did collect a large exhibit of woman's handicrafts, but continued to pursue her goal of including outstanding works of fine art. Professional sculptors whose work she admired (e.g. Vinnie Ream Hoxie, Anne Whitney, and Harriett Hosmer), wanted nothing to do with the Woman's Building, but Mrs. Palmer found ways around their objections. She owned a statue of Puck by Harriet Hosmer, and didn't ask the artist's permission to display it. As for Whitney, some Lady Managers visited her and convinced her that her work would be displayed in a separate area for sculpture, not

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⁵ The Fine Arts Building is the only of the Exposition buildings still standing in Jackson Park. It now houses Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry.
among women's "drapery or bedspreads." To get Vinnie Ream Hoxie's work, Mrs. Palmer had to resort to even more subversive methods. Hoxie, who was the first American woman sculptor to receive a commission from the U.S. government, submitted a female allegorical figure of "The West" to the Fine Arts Building. However, Mrs. Palmer used her influence to make sure the piece wasn't accepted. Since "The West" was without a home, Hoxie allowed Lady Manager Mary Eagle to take it and two others for display in the Arkansas Building. Eagle, however, gave them to Palmer for the Woman's Building.

In both the Fine Arts Building and in the Woman's Building art works were crammed together without a particular eye to arrangement. There were hundreds of pieces in the Gallery of Honor, but few of particular merit. Some of the most notable works were three marble sculptures by French actress Sarah Bernhardt and two sketches of dogs by Queen Victoria. The British Royal Family also sent works by the Princesses Christian, Beatrice, and Louise. The exhibit did include pieces by more esteemed artists such as Cecilia Beaux and Elizabeth Thompson, Lady Butler, but these were in the minority. One particularly exciting display, however, was the Keppel collection of engravings and etchings. This included almost one hundred fifty works by such people as Marie de Medicis, Elisabetta Sirani, Rosa Bonheur, and Mary Cassatt.

Mrs. Palmer and the Board of Lady Managers made a great effort at the Exposition to convey the theme that women could equal men in artistic pursuits, and had

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6 Jeanne Weimann reports that "in the end Miss Whitney's fountain stood in the center of the Hall of Honor, surrounded by display cases full of needlework" (285).

7 Cecilia Beaux, Lady Butler, and Rosa Bonheur also had works on display in the Palace of Fine Arts.
some success in doing so, but they had difficulty in overcoming public opinion that women artists were not feminine unless they created feminine types of art. By promoting the femininity of artists and displaying "feminine" domestic crafts in the Woman's Building, the Board of Lady Managers reinforced the stereotypes surrounding women's art and, in the process, alienated many professional women artists.

Chicago

Actresses were among those artists whose participation in the public sphere kept them from fitting in fully with the image of the ideal woman. But they were excellent models for those trying to make the idea of the working woman acceptable. Unfortunately, as with other female artists, the circumstances of their profession often kept them from fulfilling the domestic aspects of the ideal. However, if the facts of their lives precluded them from performing the feminine ideal offstage, some of them could choose roles in which they could play that ideal onstage.

Georgia Cayvan, in her speech at the World's Congress of Representative Women expressed her wish that the public would resist prying into the private lives of actresses. As in today's culture, many people idolized the stars of the day, and wanted to imitate their behavior. Therefore, the press constantly filled their papers with news about actresses' personal activities. Cayvan was irate about the things the newspapers wanted to know:

"We receive letters of interrogation intended to fill out special newspaper articles—

"When, where, and how do you sew?" "Are you afraid of mice?" "What do you want for Christmas?" "What kind of dog do you prefer?" etc.—as if private preference in such
matters had any bearing on dramatic art" ("Speak"). She believed that the public should not look at actresses as models of ideal womanhood, but at the drama instead. She said that the modern drama "should be the authority on fine points of etiquette, on the truly artistic in dress, on the conventional and correct in social form and ceremony. In short, it should be the final court of appeal in all that pertains to the accurate and cultured in manners, morals, and speech according to the standard of the time" ("Speak"). She believed that in theatres "where mothers may bring their young daughters, and teachers may send their young pupils, where men may come with their wives and sweethearts, the play is sure to present the lesson of life wholesomely, and to set a high ideal of manhood and womanhood that is an inspiration to pure living."

Unfortunately, because actresses were always in the public eye, it was difficult for people to separate their personal lives from their private ones. Other professional women artists, including painters and musicians, could work in isolation, and therefore not be under constant public scrutiny. Actresses, on the other hand, often had to be accepted offstage in order to be accepted onstage. But it was much easier for actresses to play the role of the ideal woman in plays than in life. As discussed in Chapter Four, actresses' professional responsibilities often kept them from succeeding at domesticity. But some actresses could have chosen to act in realistic plays with their realistic rather than idealized female characters and so try to spread the idea that circumstances prevented most real women from attaining the ideal in the first place. However, public criticism of the realistic school was still so strong that it tended to dissuade actresses from acting in plays of that style.
The realistic style in literature and art had been under attack since its first appearance and, in 1893, the debate over whether realism or idealism was better still raged. That year, two literary magazines, The Arena and The Dial, published several articles in which authors argued over the merits of truth and beauty in literature. Clarence Darrow, B.O. Flower, and Edward Everett Hale were among those who weighed in on the subject. In an essay titled "Realism in Literature and Art," Darrow remarked on how people had progressed to the point where they could find beauty in real life: "It is only now that the world is growing so delicate and refined that it can see the beauty of a fact. . . (100).

Realists claimed that art should depict the world as it can be observed and experienced while Idealists believed that art should strive to depict beauty. Both camps, however, said that they aimed at truth. Wrote John G. Dow: "The offence, whether in poetry or prose fiction, lies in the mistaken view that fidelity in truth consists in accepted literal facts as they are found." He continued: "Whether a certain incident ever happened in real life is a matter of the utmost irrelevance in the estimation of its artistic value" (204).

Drama critics and theatre practitioners had also expressed their opinions on the realism vs. idealism argument. Actor Joseph Jefferson, as reported in the Daily Inter-Ocean on 30 April 1893, felt that:

Severe realism has taken the poetry out of acting, and out of your novelist too, for that matter. That form of work by Zola and our own realistic school in this country have made readers think it true art to photograph life rather than to suggest it. The actor and the novelist seem to go about with literary and dramatic kodaks, giving us, as it were, views of such disgusting subjects as pumps, barn-yards and the like, and extremely short and unsatisfactory glimpses of poetic themes. The society drama of the day is filled with the realistic intrigues of everyday life, in which morbid feeling
and indelicate passion are the leading motives. For my own part, I shall go
on painting character in a poetic and idealistic form. (Barron)

In this statement, Jefferson expresses two typical complaints against realism. First, that it
lacks the poetry of idealism, and second, that its graphic portrayal of real life is
"indelicate."

Helena Modjeska, in her speech at the World's Congress of Representative
Women, stated her views on the debate between idealism and realism:

Thoré, the great French critic, says: "Art is the expression of the
beautiful." Nowadays, art is more often called the expression of the true,
of nature. But, whether it is the beautiful that brings to our hearts the love
of truth and justice, or whether it is truth that teaches us how to find the
beautiful in nature and how to love it, in either case art does a noble work.
It drags out the soul from its everyday shell, and brings it under the spell of
its own mysterious and wonderful power, so that a memory of this
experience stays with the people, sustains them in their daily labors, and
refines their minds. ("Woman and the Stage" 173)

Modjeska seems to see value in both approaches. Perhaps, as an actress who
enjoyed playing a variety of roles, Modjeska preferred not to limit herself to one method.
Though she was known as an idealistic actress (e.g., Rosalind in As You Like It), she was
attracted to the roles in realistic plays. Many of the new realistic plays, especially those of
Henrik Ibsen, had strong, complex roles for women, and though the challenge of these
roles could be appealing to actresses, there was some concern that playing them could
damage one's reputation. Realistic plays showed how lives can be ruined if women are
forced to fit in with society's standards of womanhood. Though such critics as William
Archer and George Bernard Shaw championed these plays, others, most notably Clement
Scott, condemned them for their vulgarity. Scott and others judged Ibsen's characters

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Nora and Hedda Gabler, for example, as being unwomanly. By extension, actresses who played these roles risked being called unwomanly as well.

Helena Modjeska had taken such a risk ten years before the Exposition. She had actually been one of the first to portray Nora in *A Doll's House* in America. She had already performed the role twice (in St. Petersburg in 1881, and in Warsaw in 1882), before attempting a production in Louisville, Kentucky. This production opened on 7 December 1883 with Maurice Barrymore as Torvald. Only an amateur production in Milwaukee in June 1882 preceded Modjeska's. Unfortunately, Kentucky audiences were not quite ready for the controversial subject matter, and it was not until 1889 that *A Doll's House* was produced in New York.8

Though such realistic plays as Ibsen's *The Master Builder*, Arthur Wing Pinero's *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*, and Oscar Wilde's two plays, *Lady Windermere's Fan* and *A Woman of No Importance* were making headlines in 1893, realism was almost completely absent in Chicago during the fair season.9 Many of the star actresses that season performed in classic verse dramas, particular those of Shakespeare. *Camille* was also a popular choice. Reviewers praised actresses not for their ability to handle the language or convey the playwright's idea for the character, but for their personal charms and for their success in making their characters seem feminine. Helena Modjeska was one actress who

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8 A production of *A Doll's House* in German was produced in New York City at the Amberg Theatre on 26 Sept. 1889, starring Therese Leithner as Nora. Then Beatrice Cameron played the role at Palmer's Theatre on December 21 (two performances). She had also presented *A Doll's House* at the Globe Theatre, Boston on October 30.

9 On October 15, towards the end of the fair season, Charles Frohman's company opened *Lady Windermere's Fan* at the Schiller Theatre. Of the play, the *Chicago Tribune* said: "Its lines are risky enough to give it the tart flavor which the many seek in stage presentations, yet its insinuations are not bold enough to offend" ("Miss Many Treats").
fit the attributes critics were looking for. On 9 April 1893, The Chicago Tribune gave her high praise:

In the realm of poetic and ideal dramatic portraiture Mme. Modjeska stands easily at the top. Nor is any living actress more deserving of the respect of the theatre-going masses. Her strongest attributes are intellectuality, womanliness, and a delightful personality, which exert their charms on all who see and hear her. ("Interest of Modjeska's Return")

Modjeska's "womanliness" made the role of Queen Katharine in Henry VIII an appropriate one for her, both in critics' opinions and her own. The Chicago Tribune critic remarked that in this role, Modjeska "has found a role that is congenial, because she is enabled to make it ideal. It conforms naturally to the lofty conception of womanhood with which she is endowed" ("Interest of Modjeska's return"). Modjeska's own comments reiterate this view of the role:

Katharine is, in my opinion, less intellectual than Portia, Rosalind, or Beatrice. It is lacking in the intensity of Lady Macbeth and has not the poetry of Juliet, Viola, or Ophelia. Yet it does share the ideality of exalted womanhood of Imogen and Isabel, and in point of devotion and forbearance is one of the most exquisitely drawn characters in the whole range of the drama, as well as being congenial, for it is tender, womanly, and dignified" ("Modjeska's Idea of Katharine").

Both Ellen Terry and Jane Hading were praised for their femininity as well. Of Terry, the Chicago Times remarked that "the heart of an audience readily warms to [her] sincere womanliness" ("Coquelin and Irving"), and of Hading in Camille, the Chicago Evening Journal wrote: "Mme. Hading has the first requisite for the character, beauty and personal fascination" ("Hading as Camille"). The Chicago Times also praised Hading for her portrayal of Frou-Frou: "More than in any other of Mme. Hading's roles is revealed the charm of her personality and the wide scope of her abilities. As the frivolous and light-
hearted Parisian girl she reveals the qualities that are the most fascinating and at the same
time most weak in womanhood!" ("Music and Drama"). The Chicago Times, however,
did not like Hading's performance as Kate in The Taming of the Shrew because her shrew
(!) was not womanly enough: "Mme. Hading makes Kate an escaped lunatic, a violent
and vulgar virago, with the manners of a fish wife. Not merely in the outbursts of anger
but all the way through the play the heroine cut a preposterous figure. No such woman
could have been tamed by anything short of straitjacket and padded cell" ("Plays and
Players").

Clara Morris, in her speech at the World's Congress of Representative Woman,
gave her opinions of the type of woman that should be seen on stage. Morris was
renowned as an "emotional actress" and achieved her greatest success as Marguerite
Gautier in Camille. When she was asked to deliver a paper on Women in the Emotional
Drama, she was disappointed, as the term suggested to her "a darkened room, an
hysterical woman, and a strong odor of ether" ("Speak"). All dramas, she said, required
actors to recreate emotions, but since early examples of the type of play dubbed the
"emotional drama" tended to emphasize grief, people still think grief is the only emotion
required to play. Morris stated that it was due to women's increased power in theatre and
the world that male playwrights felt obliged to study women more closely, so that they
could write more accurately about their natures and discover their more complex
emotions. Morris said these playwrights found women much more multifaceted than they
had imagined. Said Morris:

Poor male student of womankind! Many a time he must have felt that the
regally repellent riddle of the desert was easier to guess than any one of the
living riddles about him. He found women who, seeming scarcely capable of the fierceness of an angry dove, yet possessed the endurance and tenacity of the bull dog; women with ambition as high as men's, but purer; nay, sometimes even a woman with passions strong enough to wreck Othello, but in her—so curbed, so coerced were they by her will—they paced primly quiet, to suit conventional demand, her whole life through.

For Morris, the first production of *Camille* (La Dame aux Camélias) in 1848 was a landmark in the theatre, for its main character, Marguerite Gautier, though a "fallen woman," was a sympathetic heroine rather than a villain. Instead of turning the audience against this woman, playwright Alexandre Dumas fils showed Marguerite's transformation from self-indulgence to self-sacrifice. Morris said that at the premiere of this play:

> there was a miracle performed, for before [the audience's] awed and startled eyes there passed a fallen woman's soul. Marguerite Gautier, with laughing face and anguished heart, seemingly unconscious of observers, laid bare before them the bitter mockery of her mirth, her secret shame, her love, her hope, her torture and despair, until at last she bowed her weak shoulders beneath her self-made cross and stumbled blindly to her grave.

Even though Marguerite was a more complex character than the virtuous heroines of melodrama, she still conformed to the womanly ideal of self-sacrifice. In the play, Marguerite and Armand Duval are in love, but Marguerite sacrifices her happiness and breaks off the relationship with Duval in order to protect his honor. By dying at the end of the play, Marguerite further gained the sympathy of the audience.

In this type of play, the audience is meant to realize that women who go against society's norms will have to pay for their immoral behavior. Although these women can repent and people can feel sorry for them, they will not be able to reenter decent society. In some realistic plays, on the other hand, the audience is led to believe that society's norms are at fault, not the women who fail to adhere to them. One can surmise that since
three actresses played Camille in Chicago between April and October 1893, the public still preferred the message of the emotional drama to that of the realistic drama. Also, since the character of Marguerite developed throughout the course of the play, allowing actresses to display a huge range of emotions, it was an exciting role. But it still required actresses to show idealistic rather than realistic images of women.

In order to conform to the image of the ideal woman both on and offstage, actresses were often confronted with a set of restrictive codes for social behavior. They were not permitted the luxury of a private life in which their every deviation from the ideal was not magnified before the public, and public distaste for realism kept actresses from feeling free to interpret classic characters in a realistic manner. In turn, most actresses avoided the challenge of playing the more complex characters of realistic plays.

The Midway Plaisance

Women performers on the Midway had almost no chance of conforming to American's feminine ideal, as they were subject to the concepts of femininity of their own cultures. Each culture that was represented on the Midway had its own gender construction, and though women there performed their particular nation's ideal, their behavior was constantly compared to what was accepted in the west. Visitors who analyzed the villagers and their performances were less interested in increasing their understanding of the feminine ideal of other cultures than in proving the superiority of their own.
Though many of the women on the Midway fulfilled domestic roles similar to white women, the press downplayed any likenesses between the two races. For example, even though there were hundreds of wives and mothers among the Midway villagers, there was rarely any comment about the villagers' maternal or wifely demeanor. Even at the start of the fair, when the Chicago Evening Post reported on the death of a baby in the Javanese Village, the article's focus was not on the mother's grief, but on Chicago's cold weather. The article said that when the foreman of the Java Village saw a woman huddled up in one of the huts, he thought at first she was homesick or cold. After asking her if this was the case and getting a negative response, he realized that she must be the woman whose baby had just died. He said: "The other women in the village cannot comfort her. I do not know what to do with her" ("Sorrow in Midway"). He appeared less concerned with the woman's well-being than with the ways her behaviour might hurt the village commercially. When the mother, too, died, her funeral was turned into a public event ("Mournful Music in the Village").

Even if Americans seemed to want to know every detail of stage actresses' private lives, visitors to the Midway were mostly content to look at the performers as part of a freak show rather than as individuals with real lives and feelings. In a speech at the World's Parliament of Religions, one of the delegates spoke on this tendency to objectify Midway Villagers. Prince Serge Wolkonsky said that he was saddened because the Midway Plaisance was "human life exposed as a show; human beings deprived of their feelings, and reduced to the state of a catalogued exhibit; a moving panorama of human empty forms" ("Piety is in Conduct"). He berated the so-called civilized people who visit
the Midway but "do not inquire whether these human brothers of ours have a human soul under their interesting and picturesque costumes." Instead, Wolkonsky said, "we stare at them like animals we are allowed to approach for our 25 cents." Clara Louise Burnham, in her World's Fair novel, Sweet Clover, gives an example of how people preferred not to think of the reality of the Midway performers' situations. Mildred, a character in the book, is drawn to a baby in the Bedouin Encampment, and knowing that one of the Bedouin women is the baby's mother, she looks at the women with more interest than she had before. When the mother is pointed out, "a realization of the probable hardships and homesickness endured by these people in all the changes of scene and weather they had undergone assailed her." However, Mildred decided, "it did not do to dwell too long on that side of life in the Plaisance" (270).

One aspect of village life that visitors did dwell on was the seemingly masculine behavior of some women. In observing the American Indian encampments, for example, the press remarked on the role reversals of the Oglalla Sioux tribe. When the Sioux prepared their camp in April, the Chicago Tribune mentioned that "the squaws superintended the raising of the tepees and did much of the work themselves." Buffalo Bill, who knew some of the people in the encampment, told the Tribune reporter that "it was a great condescension . . . for the bucks to even assist" ("Build Their Tepees"). The apparent masculine behavior of women also received attention when the Dahomeyans arrived on the Midway. The Tribune noticed that, like the Sioux women, Dahomeyan women also worked harder than the men of their group: "The women carried the heaviest loads, and that was the only way in which the sexes could be distinguished" ("West
The article also emphasized the Dahomeyan women's savage, masculine appearance: "They were Amazons, hideous with battle scars and with the lines of cruelty and determination on their faces."

In America, one of the objections to women's rights was that if women were given equal rights with men, they would start to lose their femininity. The supposed masculinity of some Midway women could provide evidence to support this hypothesis. Even white women who promoted women as workers found these Midway women primitive. When Susan B. Anthony and other suffragists visited the Dahomey Village to see the women who had the right to bear arms in their country, Anthony was shocked at their appearance. The Chicago Evening Post printed Anthony's reaction to seeing the women: "'I wonder, said Miss Anthony, 'if humanity sprung from such as this! It seems pretty low down, doesn't it'" ("Equal Rights Here").

Whereas the actresses in downtown Chicago could portray the ideal woman onstage, though their lives may not have fit in with the ideal offstage, conventions of femininity on the Midway were no closer to the American ideal onstage than off. Visitors to the Midway saw the performances, like the villagers, as savage, ugly, or amusing. In Frank Leslie's Weekly, R.S. Dix described a visit to the Turkish Theatre:

Nothing more amusing could be witnessed that this attempt at acting. An American child of five years, when acting out some scenes she has witnessed among her elders, is as accomplished and mature in her gestures as these children of the East. So ungainly, so stiff, so absolutely conscious and unnatural—ah, it is delightful. (250)

The Javanese performances, too, were seen as quaint. The character Clover, in Sweet Clover, said that "when [the Javanese girls] dance, you can no more help laughing than if
you were being tickled with a feather. Such dear, cunning, absurd motions they make, their little bits of mouths looking so serious all the time" (C. Burnham 322).

The dancing in the Soudanese theatre was more likely to be described as barbaric, rather than quaint. Charles McClellan Stevens, in his novel of the World's Fair, The Adventures of Uncle Jeremiah and Family at the Great Fair, had a character describe the dance: "If you were to paint your face black, look wild-eyed, stiffen your hair in many strands, array yourself in a cotton garment that revealed more than it concealed, and then were to jump straight up and down to the music of a dolorous chant you would not be far astray" (169). And of the Dahomey Village, Stevens wrote:

In their 'dance,' as it is termed, they take a step forward with the right foot, and drag the left after it. This is repeated until they stub their toes on the orchestra, when they swarm back and go through the difficult feat of advancing by a series of hops on one foot. All of this is to the discordant pounding of drums and scrap-iron where tune could not be discovered with a search warrant (169).

Though dances on the Midway were generally seen as unsophisticated, officials of the World's Columbian Exposition hosted an International Ball on 16 August 1893, to which all the villagers were invited. Here, prominent citizens could mingle and dance with Midway performers. The evening began at 9:15 p.m. with a grand march down from the upper rooms of the Natatorium led by George Francis Train, accompanied by a ten-year-old Mexican girl in a ballet costume. Following behind were two young American women dressed in spangled skirts and carrying American flags. Then, marching along four

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10 In Prominent Men and Women in America (1888), Thomas W. Herringshaw calls George Francis Train "one of the most eccentric men in America." A Presidential candidate in 1872, Train became known for his public speeches in which he championed women's suffrage and anarchists, among others. He was also heavily involved in the construction of the Union Pacific Railroad. Jules Verne's Around the World in Eighty Days is supposed to have been based on Train's own voyage around the world in 1870. 175

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abreast, came the inhabitants of the Midway, filling the concert hall. The Chicago Tribune, in announcing the event, called it "The Ball of the Midway Freaks." The Tribune made fun of the fact that Exposition officials would be dancing with Midway women:

including the women of the so-called Beauty Show, the little Javanese ladies, the Samoan Island belles, the Dahomey Amazons, the Persian houris, the Algerian beauties, the Arab and Turkish ladies, the Laplanderesses, the squaws, the devotees of the Temple of Luxor, the Chinese small-footed fairies, the Bedouin maidens of the desert, the ebony-hued Soudanese and the numerous representatives of Archer and other avenues who figure as Orientals to beguile the visitors of their quarters and halves for trinkets.

The article joked about proper etiquette when dancing with a Midway woman: "Suppose that President Higenbotham finds as his vis-à-vis an anointed, barebacked Fiji beauty or a Dahomeyite amazon bent upon the extraordinary antics of the cannibal dance, is he to join in and imitate her or risk his head in an effort to restrain her" ("Ball of Midway Freaks").

This kind of condescension towards non-white women (and men) was rampant during the Exposition. And though Bertha Palmer was ostensibly concerned with improving the plight of women throughout the world, she and other members of the Board of Lady Managers did little to encourage positive attitudes toward women on the Midway.

At the time of the ball, the Board of Lady Managers had been waging a war over the perceived immorality of the so-called belly dancers on the Midway Plaisance, and at least one paper worried that members of the Board would not appear at the dance in protest. However, negative press reports about the hypocrisy of the Board of Lady Managers induced them to appear. In fact, Bertha Palmer purchased box seats. The whole Natatorium building on the Midway was closed to the general public for this event, with only invited guests permitted inside. According to the Chicago Tribune, attendees
numbered in the thousands. Besides Bertha Palmer, such luminaries as Mayor Carter Harrison, Director-General George Davis, and Director of Works Daniel Burnham had box seats. After watching native dances by the Midway performers, the guests joined in the program of traditional ballroom dances. Each dance was dedicated to a particular individual, group or idea. The first waltz was in honor of "Our Foreign Guests;" a polka was for the "United States Commission;" and a schottische was dedicated to the "U.S. Lady Commissioners." At first glance, it might seem that the Exposition Officials were attempting with this gala to show their respect toward people of foreign nations and nonwhite races. Yet a perusal of the menu card for the evening reveals a decidedly condescending attitude toward those groups. Printed in newspaper articles publicizing the event, the menu card read as follows:

RELISHES.
Hard boiled potatoes, à la Irish village.
International hash, à la Midway plaisance.

COLD DISHES.
Roast missionary, à la Dahomey, west coast of Africa.
Jerked buffalo, à la Indian village.
Stuffed ostrich, à la ostrich farm.
Boiled camel humps, à la Cairo street.
Monkey stew, à la Hagenbeck.

ENTREES.
Fricasee of reindeer, à la Lapland.
Fried snowballs, à la ice railway.
Crystallized frappe from Libby Glass exhibit.

PAstry
Wind doughnuts, à la captive balloon.
Sandwiches (assorted) specially prepared by the leather exhibit.
DESSERT
Twenty-five per cent of gross receipts.
"Pure water from the Chicago river."
P.S.—no extra charge for toothpicks.
Carriages (patrol wagons) called at 4:30 a.m. ("A Grand Ball on Midway")11

Certainly, this menu could be seen as simply amusing, but in many ways it reflected the lack of respect for people who were not European-Americans, and particularly those who were not Caucasian.

Even though Bertha Palmer took the opportunity of the fair to showcase women's abilities in the arts, she could not overcome her conflict between wanting to show the finest examples of women's art and wanting women's art to be idealistically feminine. Though Mrs. Palmer asked women to "step down from their pedestals" so that men would accept women in the workplace, many of the pieces on display in the Woman's Building put woman right back up on those pedestals. Allegorical representations of women as Columbia, Music, Study, etc., and depictions of women in the traditional roles of wife, mother, and nurse were exhibited throughout the building. These works reinforced the other artistic visions of women, like the Statue of the Republic, which appeared throughout the fairgrounds. In the Fine Arts Building, visitors could see more examples of art by professional women artists--pieces that were neither overtly feminine nor traditional depictions of women--but since the Woman's Building was emphasized as the

11 At the ball, guests actually chose meals from the regular menu of the café.
one place to see the best of women's work, the large display there of domestic and
decorative arts naturally reinforced the public's opinion that women were best at doing
such work.

Like Mrs. Palmer, actresses such as Georgia Cayvan and Clara Morris also chose
to promote women's achievements in art, but they, too, were confronted with having to
conform to an ideal. Cayvan wanted the public to look at characters in plays for the ideal
of womanhood rather than at actresses and their lives, yet people persisted in making idols
of actresses and in examining their private lives to see how they adhered to conventional
ideas of femininity. On stage, leading actresses in Chicago overwhelmingly chose to play
either characters that fit within the ideal or characters who, like Marguerite Gautier,
suffered for their nonconformity. By emphasizing the womanliness of the characters they
played, the actresses apparently pleased the press and the public, but they also limited their
own chances to develop more complex and personally satisfying characterizations.

Visitors to the Midway did not idolize female performers there, but they did
objectify them. Instead of viewing them as talented individuals performing highly codified
plays and dances, the public saw them as groups of savages or children whose
performances were crude and unsophisticated. Though the villages and performances
adhered to the ideals of the countries they represented, most Americans could only judge
them based on their own conventions. F.W. Putnam, Chief of the Department of
Ethnology, had wanted the Midway to serve as a place where Americans could compare
"primitive" cultures with their own. By doing so, they could see the progress Americans
had made in becoming civilized. Unfortunately, they learned this lesson all too well. The
Midway could have helped to improve understanding between cultures, but instead, it mostly served to increase Americans' prejudice against non-white peoples.
CHAPTER 6

THE BEAUTY SHOW

At the Opening Ceremonies of the Woman's Building, Bertha Palmer presided from behind a table made in Pennsylvania. On the table were a silver jewel-studded box from Colorado, a block of yew taken from the Washington State Building, and a golden nail from Montana. To Mrs. Palmer's left, on a small table made of New Mexican onyx, was a hammer donated by Nebraska. After the speeches and the presentation of a laurel wreath to Mrs. Palmer, the President of the Board of Lady Managers took the hammer and drove the nail into the block of yew, thus officially opening the Woman's Building.

Though newspapers applauded Mrs. Palmer's leadership and printed her opening-day speech in its entirety, what most concerned them was her appearance. The Chicago Tribune, for example, reported that Mrs. Palmer "wore a becoming costume of heliotrope and black crepon, trimmed half way up the skirt with a broad band of gold passementerie, studded with jet nail-beads. The bodice was trimmed with the passementerie in a horse-shoe design; the large sleeves were of black dotted with heliotrope" ("Dedicate the Home"). Columnist Amy Leslie admitted to being more interested in Mrs. Palmer's clothes than her work for the Board of Lady Managers:
Mrs. Palmer's beauty and personality are of such unusual inflexion that her dainty costumes are mere accentuations of more decided charms, but really her toilet has been so exquisitely appropriate and tasteful these halcyon days that even the extended reading of minutes and the enforcement of every feminine business meeting, is not uninteresting so long as one can forget the subject at hand and study the handsome president's lovely clothes." ("Amy Leslie at the Fair" 4 May 1893)

Amy Leslie's comments show one of the obstacles that women at the fair had to overcome in order for the public to listen to them. Though women had the extraordinary opportunity at the fair to change public opinion about women, and made the most of it, the American public's interest in physical attractiveness diminished the power of their words. The press and the public at the World's Columbian Exposition judged every woman of interest, including actresses, suffragists, Lady Managers, and Midway performers according to the established standards of beauty. In this era, the public often determined the femininity of a woman by the perceived femininity of her attire and other aspects of her appearance. If people decided a woman looked too masculine, they could turn against her. It was necessary, therefore, for those women who cared about their public image to know what their dress and appearance signified. Some of the women who were under scrutiny at the Exposition rejected conventional dress in order to promote dress reform, but many chose to align themselves within the prevailing standards of beauty and dress in order to achieve their goals.

The White City

In November 1893, the World's Columbian Exposition Illustrated printed the address Bertha Palmer gave upon accepting the presidency to the Board of Lady
Managers, in which she spoke of her hopes for women's future:

As a result of the freedom and training now granted them [women], we may confidently await, not a renaissance, but the first blooming of the perfect flower of womanhood. After centuries of pruning into conventional shapes to meet the requirements of an artificial standard, the shears and props have been thrown away. We shall learn by watching the beauty and the vigor of the natural growth in the open air and sunshine, how artificial and false was the ideal we had previously cherished. Our previous efforts to protect nature will seem grotesque, for she may always be trusted to preserve her types (Palmer "Address")

In this speech, Bertha Palmer was celebrating the new-found freedoms of women that permitted members of her sex to follow avenues of education and employment rather than to accept confinement in the domestic sphere. However, her words could have just as well been suited to the topic of dress reform.

Dress reform had been part of the suffragist platform since the early 1850s when Elizabeth Smith Miller, a cousin of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, began wearing an outfit based on Turkish women's clothing. The outfit of pantaloons and knee-length skirt caught on among her fellow woman's rights advocates, including Amelia Bloomer, for whom the costume was named, Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Lucy Stone. Suffragists found the style eminently more comfortable and practical than the corsets and crinolines of the time, but public ridicule of the women who wore bloomers eventually led most women to give up or to avoid the clothing. However, discussion of dress reform continued throughout the century. Women's rights advocates realized that Victorian fashions not only kept women from being physically able to do many things that men could do, but were dangerous to women's health. Corsets constricted women's bodies, pushing their organs out of proper alignment. Long skirts could pick up dirt and germs from the
street, transferring them to the home. The skirts also made walking difficult and running practically impossible. Women had difficulty maneuvering up or down stairs, and could easily catch on fire when their skirts came too close to flame. The heaviness of the clothing, especially when complicated with hoops or bustles, was oppressive and overheating could easily result. Fainting was not unusual for women.

Though by the 1890s, the bustle of the 70s and 80s had gone by the wayside, corsets were still de rigueur. An exaggerated hourglass figure was fashionable, so clothing was designed to give the appearance of wide shoulders, wasp waists, and wide hips. Large "leg o’ mutton" sleeves further accentuated the small waist. Women were, in truth, being "pruned into conventional shapes to meet the requirements of an artificial standard," as Mrs. Palmer had said. Although there were many women at the fair dedicated to changing the styles of women's fashion so that clothing was more suited to women's real bodies, Bertha Palmer was not one of them. One of the worries Bertha Palmer had regarding the Board of Lady Managers was that the public would perceive its members as being too masculine. Although she wanted to show that women could do the work of men, she did not want their femininity to be challenged.¹

To ensure that her femininity, at least, was never disputed, Mrs. Palmer always dressed at the height of fashion. Charles Worth, the famed French designer,² created her wardrobe, and when Mrs. Palmer was in Paris drumming up interest in the fair, she

¹ An example of how the press could affect public opinion by the way it described a woman's appearance can be found in descriptions of Lizzie Borden, whose murder trial took place in June 1893. The Chicago Tribune announced that Borden "possesses muscular strength in her arms, it being said of her that she can hold a fifty-pound weight with her arm extended without the faintest indication of effort" ("Court Room Scenes").

² Worth was an Englishman who lived and worked in France.
stocked up on gowns. Her husband, Potter Palmer, meanwhile, went to Tiffany's to
expand his wife's renowned jewelry collection. No matter whether Mrs. Palmer was
attending the theater, a reception, or presiding over a meeting of the Board of Lady
Managers, she was always dressed appropriately and fashionably. That many of the Lady
Managers were also considered attractive is evidenced by these comments about them in
Three Girls in a Flat:

I have said nothing of the appearance of these women, but their faces were
all bright and intelligent, while, for the lovers of society, there were many
pretty women, from the graceful member from Western Illinois, to the
swell little member from New York, whose light-trained dress, with its
high, black sleeves, was an object of general admiration to the rows of
spectators who filled every available inch in the parlors behind the
president's desk. (Yandell 62)

Unfortunately, not all Board members received such praise as the "swell little
member from New York." For example, Amy Leslie, who often roundly criticized the
activities of the Board of Lady Managers (but not Mrs. Palmer), said this about one Lady
Manager's clothes: "There is a speechless plaid suit and one wilted shirt front in ghostly
attendance upon all congressional sessions held by the lady managers. These distressed
masculine habillements identify the mutilated remains of the parliamentarian of women's
meetings at the fair." ("Amy Leslie at the Fair" 17 June 1893). Though Mrs. Palmer
probably wished she could control how Board members dressed, or at least what the press
said about them, this was not the case. Usually, however, it was the suffragists on the
Board, those with whom Mrs. Palmer had the most conflicts, who bore the brunt of the
criticisms.

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At the Exposition, suffragists were often accused of ugliness and lack of femininity, as their beliefs and actions often differed from the conventional ideal. For example, instead of wearing current fashions, many of them wore dress reform clothing. In 1892, The Arena had held a two-part "Symposium on Women's Dress," under the auspices of the National Council of Women of the United States. In the September issue, Council President May Wright Sewall listed the requirements for rational dress: "1. Freedom of movement; 2. absence of pressure over any part of the body; 3. no more weight than is necessary for warmth, and both weight and warmth equally distributed; 4 quick changeability" (Sewall 488). Though these goals seem sensible today, at the time most women considered "rational dress" to be abnormal and ugly. In April 1893, the Chicago Tribune printed pictures of the clothing that the National Council of Women recommended that women wear to the fair. Of one style, the article said: "The Syrian dress has one thing in its favor. It is so irremediably and appallingly ugly that no woman with proper regard for her duty towards man will yield to it" ("Chop Off the Skirts").

Although many women went to hear members of the Rational Dress Society speak on dress reform at the Exposition Congresses (some supposedly to laugh), the average woman was trained to distrust and dislike clothes that would be eminently more comfortable and safe than stylish. Repeatedly, women who believed in dress reform were judged unfeminine. Susan B. Anthony had learned this lesson years ago, and had chosen to abandon unconventional attire so as not to divert attention from her message of woman's suffrage. At the Exposition, the 73-year-old Anthony paid careful attention to her dress, and was consistently praised for her appearance. Teresa Dean wrote:
I wish all white-haired ladies would dress with the thought of color that runs through Miss Anthony's toilet. She wore a summer silk with black ground, and sprinkled over it a sprig of pale blue. On her head was a tiny black-lace bonnet with a face border of forget-me-nots the same shade as the blue in the dress. Her gloves were light with a bluish cast, and with her fair face and white hair she looked as cool as if the sun was not beating down on her as on the rest of us poor mortals." (White City Chips 255)

Susan B. Anthony and her compatriots Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucy Stone had all realized that average women did not feel oppressed by their clothing or by society, for that matter, and would not support dress reform until they understood the entirety of their political subjugation. Lucy Stone's opinion on this subject was quoted in the August 1892 issue of The Arena. She confessed that she did not "expect any speedy or widespread change in the dress of women, until they feel a deeper discontent with their present entire position" (Russell 328). She continued:

While they suffer 'taxation without representation' and are thus placed, politically, lower than thieves, gamblers and blacklegs, and bear it without a murmur; . . . . while as wives, in most of the states, they have no right of personal property, or of earnings, and nowhere the right to the baby, warm nestling in their bosoms; nor even the right to themselves, and yet with exultant boast, iterate and reiterate that 'they have all the rights they want;' believe me, they who can bear all this, are not in a condition to quarrel with the length of their skirts." (Russell 328)

Though dress reformers had plenty of opportunity to speak at the fair, the press's constant criticism of these women and their clothes, and its praise of fashionable women wearing the current styles, kept the average woman from being convinced that dress reform was necessary. However, there would soon be changes in women's lifestyles that would make some of the dress reformers' ideas more palatable.
The Midway Plaisance

An example of the extent of most American women's dislike of dress reform clothing could be seen on the Midway Plaisance, where many American women worked as sales clerks, guides, or waitresses. Often, these women wore costumes representing the country of the Midway Village in which they worked. Trouble occurred when female workers in the Turkish village realized that the native Turkish dress they were expected to wear was very much like the bloomer dress. They threatened to strike rather than wear bloomers. The Chicago Tribune reported the views of one worker: "The young lady here intimated that she would have to draw the line at all attempts at radical innovation in her present style of dress, and declared vehemently that she wouldn't wear the horrid, horrid things if she had to go on strike" ("Object to Bloomers"). In an article the next day, the Tribune expressed the view that the girls' reasoning was faulty. In the writer's opinion, regard for "artistic truth" demanded that the girls make the sacrifice: "So if the girls in the Turkish Village were called on to shave their heads or to cover up their hair with ugly caps or to blacken their faces they might be justified in rebelling. But all that is asked of them is to live up to their vocation and to assume a garb which is not unfeminine in Damascus or by the Sea of Marmora. Realism, fidelity to truth, demand [sic] that they sacrifice their skirts" ("Realism calls for Red Trousers"). This journalist apparently did not understand the ostracization that could come from being associated with extreme feminism. Another disadvantage to wearing the costume was that the American women might be taken for real Turks. This could be just as uncomfortable as being linked with dress reformers.
The Midway Plaisance fell under the purview of the Department of Ethnology, the purpose of which was to help reinforce the message that America had progressed since 1492 to become the most civilized nation on the planet. One of the ways to show America's progress was to compare older, more "primitive" cultures with contemporary American culture. Though many of the ethnological displays were housed in the Anthropology Building, the Midway acted as a living ethnological exhibit. Though some said that the Midway was grouped with the Department of Ethnology simply for classification and had no direct connection with it, Exposition officials maintained that the Midway was educational. Americans were thus ready to use the perceived primitiveness of nonwhite people to help defend their own superiority.

Even though Americans could be very critical of other Americans' beauty, they still noted a preference for American women over women from other countries, and among foreign women, white Americans preferred light-skinned Northern Europeans. As contemporary reports on the Princess Maria of Parma show, even Italians were not among the favored. The Chicago Tribune said that Princess Maria, whose marriage was in the news in 1893, looked like a horse. The paper did not blame her Italian heritage for her facial imperfections, but said that "as she is an Italian, it is very improbably that her defects of feature are redeemed by a brilliant complexion and golden hair, as was the case with the Princesses Sophie and Margaret of Prussia" ("A Princess and Not Pretty"). At the fair, Princess Eulalia, the Infanta of Spain, was one of the most distinguished guests. Although Spaniards' typical dark coloring kept them from being as prized for their beauty as Northern Europeans, fortunately the Infanta was light-skinned. Remarked Amy Leslie:
"The princess is fair, pink-and-white skinned, and bonny as an Iowa girl." ("Eulalia at the Big Fair"). Teresa Dean agreed, saying that Eulalia "seemed more like a pretty, smiling blonde American than the dark beauty the masses expected to see" (White City Chips 130).

At the Exposition, American women enjoyed comparing and contrasting themselves with women from other countries. Because advance publicity had promoted the beauty of the Midway women, visitors were anxious to see how the foreigners matched with American notions of beauty. In April, for example, when the Egyptian villagers first arrived on the fairgrounds, women went to Jackson Park to see what the foreign women looked like. The Chicago Tribune said that "the inspection was evidently satisfactory to the American girl, as the feminine contraction of the brow had disappeared and a satisfied smile played about her lips as she left the scene of supposed Cleopatran loveliness. No danger there for the Chicago girl" ("Crowds at the Park").

Once the fair opened, a popular place where visitors could see and judge examples of women from around the world was the International Dress and Costume Exhibit on the Midway. This exhibit advertised "forty women from forty countries." These women sat on view in their allegedly native costumes while tourists strolled past evaluating their beauty. Teresa Dean, in her "White City Chips" column for May 10, called the Exhibit the "beauty show," though she surmised that the producers of the exhibit "would not consider it dignified to have the world know they could be interested in such a trifling thing as beauty." Nevertheless, the exhibit became popularly known as the "beauty show" (58). Visitors tended to be skeptical of the display's authenticity and harshly critical of the
women's beauty. Wrote Teresa Dean on June 7, "It is amusing to notice how little faith men have in fellow men. Every man of 'em makes straight to the 'beauty show' the instant he strikes Midway Plaisance. Then he commences to criticize the beauties" (124). Amy Leslie was one of the critics. In her column, "Amy Leslie at the Fair" she wrote:

There are so many pretty girls and comely matrons in and about the plaisance that the advertised 'beauty show' is perhaps the most sparkling farce exhibited. In the first place, the sirens are dressed up in toggery the like of which never draped more unaccustomed shoulders. Worth costumes upon dairy-maids could not equal the grotesque humor which is achieved by the incongruous habilments of this supposititious [sic] revelation of attractiveness." (17 June 1893)

Other performers on the Midway Plaisance, particularly non-white performers, could receive even harsher criticism. One example is this description of Egyptian women from the Illustrated American:

The ladies in this pocket edition of Cairo are shockingly unpicturesque, unromantic, and vulgar. . . . The veiled, mysterious modesty of the Orient is lacking, and, as they sit in the street on stools smoking vile smelling cigarettes, they make a display of bedraggled stockings and slippered feet that banish romance. . . . Their kinky hair, dirty-butter complexions, bad features, stained teeth, and tendency to embonpoint are dreadfully disillusioning, and their voices are of a timbre that would drive an American cat in disgrace from any well regulated neighbourhood. ("Within the Magic City" 673)

Though this type of negativity was not uncommon, newspapers tended to be generally positive about the appearance of most Midway women, though not allowing that they were more beautiful than Americans. Of one Egyptian dancer, the Chicago Tribune said:

"Farida has a pretty face, dark mischievous eyes, black hair, but is rather too corpulent to be shapely" ("From Niles Banks"). In an age when Americans preferred the look of tiny waists, the abdominal muscles of the belly dancer seemed highly unattractive. The Dream
City, a portfolio of photographs from the Exposition, described one of the Egyptian
dancers and acknowledged that "this [abdominal] development has increased her beauty in
the Oriental imagination," but said that it had "certainly lessened it according to Western
canons of taste." The Algerian dancers, too, received mixed reviews. The New York
Daily Tribune praised the dancers for their youth and prettiness, but remarked that their
beauty was "of a type that is rarely admired by Americans" ("Odd Shows"). This article
also said that "in a few years [the dancers] will become homely and coarse, and even now
they are too plump to suit the average taste."

The Midway women that received the most praise from Americans were the
Javanese and Samoans. A speaker at the World's Congress of Representative Women
spoke on Samoa's people, saying: "The Samoans are a very good-looking and a finely-
built race, both men and women, with skins of a pale brown color, bright eyes, straight
black hair and beautifully white teeth. Physically it would be difficult to find a better
developed race" (Eagle 590). And in the novel, Sweet Clover, Clover says of the
Javanese: "I want one of those brown girls to take home as bric-a-brac. . . . Aren't they
the roundest, prettiest little creatures!" (C. Burnham 303).

All of the groups of villagers were judged regarding their beauty, but the Africans
from the Dahomey village were, without exception, acknowledged as the ugliest and most
primitive inhabitants of the Midway. The knowledge that Dahomeyan women participated
in battle made them all the more unpalatable to American tastes. The Daily Inter-Ocean
said: "The place to find barbarism undefiled and coal-black negroes wrapped in little else
than a thought is in the Dahomey village in the west end of the Midway plaisance. . . .

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Each individual Dahomeyan is an ugly-looking customer, and unless their looks libel them they would rather murder their visitors than dance for them. Of the two the women are more ferocious-looking than the men" ("Dahomey Village Opened").

Part of the problem that Americans had with the appearances of Midway women was that their clothing was so much different from that of Americans. For example, except for the European villagers, few Midway performers wore corsets, and those women who did not wear corsets were perceived as particularly fleshy. Visitors thought that the Egyptian dancers, with their lack of corsets, revealing clothing, and exotic dance, were not only ugly, but immoral. Though today the clothing of these belly dancers seems downright prudish, the short sleeveless tops over sheer light-colored chemises suggested bare skin in the 1890s. If Americans didn't find Midway performers' dress too revealing, they might find it too masculine. The Bedouin women, for example, wore heavy robes that did not show off the figure at all. The Javanese women certainly showed their figures, as they often went bare-breasted. The partial nudity of the Javanese disturbed visitors, but since Americans found the Javanese women to be attractive, their lack of clothing was excusable. Visitors thought that the nudity of the Dahomeyan women, on the other hand, was horrifying. Of one Dahomey dancer, the Chicago Record said: "Her costume, as described by a bystander, included nothing but a calico skirt and a little brief authority" ("Dedicated a Village"). The article described the dance of the Dahomey villagers, then said that "after the dance was over the performers gave an imitation war dance and then walked over to the front of the steps of their cottages and proceeded to disrobe"
themselves in full view of the horrified visitors. Before the disrobing was finished the village was bare of clothing as well as guests."

The presence of Dahomeyans on the Midway Plaisance strongly upset prominent African-Americans and the African-American press. They felt that fair organizers had purposely brought the "primitive" Dahomeyans to the fair to justify racial bias. African-Americans had hoped that during the Exposition they would be able to show how freedom from slavery had enabled them to progress to a near-level of civilization with whites, and that, given the opportunities, they would soon be equal. But the existence of the Dahomeyans was problematic. Comparisons between the Dahomeyan performers and black Americans abounded, not to the African-Americans' benefit. Such papers as the satirical World's Fair Puck regularly drew parallels between Dahomeyans and African-Americans in offensive jokes and cartoons. One example is a rhymed story entitled "A Sable Surprise" from the October 16 issue:

One was a dude from Dahomey, one was from Illinois—if they'd changed their costumes you couldn't have told which was which of the boys. The same velvet-black epidermis, the very same contour of face, with lips that were thick and protruding, and flat noses, broad at the base; with smiles, as they looked at each other, permitting their white teeth to show; with tops of their heads scattered over with wool where the wool ought to grow.

The dude from Dahomey affected a crest of gay plumes on his locks. The home-grown article wore the latest creation of Knox. The wild Ethiopian native went strictly without any hose—or anything worthy of mention from knee-caps clear down to his toes. Around his black, muscular body a fringe of long grasses was hung, and, here and there, scattered among them, glass beads and bright seed-pods were strung.

The sable Chicago civilian was dressed in a new suit of fawn, his bright, satin necktie reflecting the rosiest blushes of dawn. They stood contemplating each other, a slight that was funny to see, this civilized man and that savage—but that which most paralyzed me—which gave me a

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shock of amazement, and my large sense of fitness a wrench, was to hear darky dialect answered in polished and elegant French! (279)

With this kind of prejudice against African-Americans and Dahomeyans prevalent, African-American women who were trying to improve their position in society had a hard road to travel.

Interestingly, some talented African-Americans found inspiration for their artistic work from their visit to the Dahomeyan Village. Paul Laurence Dunbar and Will Marion Cook, both of whom were in Chicago for the fair, some years later wrote a musical entitled In Dahomey. This Broadway hit of 1903 starred Bert Williams and George Walker, two of the greatest African-American stars of their time.\(^3\)

Chicago

Though African-Americans had found little success obtaining official recognition at the fair, they nevertheless did an incredible amount of networking while in Chicago. With such eminent citizens as Frederick Douglass and Ida B. Wells in attendance, visitors like Paul Laurence Dunbar, Will Marion Cook, and Scott Joplin found positive images to inspire them as well as the negative images of the Dahomeyans.

One attraction that would influence black artists in Chicago for the fair was Sam T. Jack's Creole Show, the first all-black minstrel show to feature black women. As popular as the show was with white audiences, Chicago's white newspapers glossed over any

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\(^3\) According to Walker in a 1906 article in Theater Magazine, he and Williams came face-to-face with the Dahomeyans at the Midwinter Fair in San Francisco in January 1894. Walker recounts that as the Dahomeyans were late coming from Chicago, the fair's managers hired African-Americans to play Africans until the Dahomeyans' arrival. Walker says that he and Williams were among the fake Dahomeyans (i-ii).
mention of the black female stars' beauty. According to Jean Gould in *That Dunbar Boy*, Sam T. Jack conceived the show to "glorify the colored girl" (95). Gould says that the Creole Show "featured a chorus of sixteen beautiful Negro girls who sang and danced" (95). Though Gould reported in this book in 1958 that the women were beautiful, the white press of 1893 did not. The Chicago Daily News regularly published articles on the Creole Show during the summer of 1893, describing the show's content and remarking on its popularity. The paper said that the show was "composed mostly of girls from the bayou districts of Louisiana" ("Notes on Amusements" 24 June 1893). It described the show as "bright and breezy" and said it featured southern songs and dances. Other features were a burletta of "tropical revelries," "a march of creole amazons, a reproduction of ancient and modern statuary, and a dancing competition" ("Notes on Amusements" 24 June 1893). The newspaper remarked that the programme of the Creole Show was "composed largely of music, wherein the Creoles, like all their race are experts. Their singing is remarkable and their dancing vigorous and earnest, but possessing native grace and skill" ("Next Week's Show Bills"). Later in the season, when the show added a group of "hula-hula dancers," the Chicago Daily News called these women "queer barbarians" ("Play-Houses Next Week"). In addition to dancing, the women in the Creole Show exhibited their talent as singers and musicians. The Daily News said: "Like most dark-hued races they sing well, with rich harmonious voices and are remarkably skilled with almost any kind of musical instrument" ("Play-Houses Filled").

Event though the Chicago Daily News acknowledged the talent of the performers in the Creole Show, it barely mentioned their appearance. In July, an article said that "this
organization, the only one of its kind in existence, is proving an excellent summer attraction, partly through its unique and original programme and partly through the equally unique performers themselves. All the creoles sing well; the women are handsome and the men are agile dancers and good comedians" ("Play-Houses Next Week"). Even though white papers didn't go further than calling the black female performers in the Creole Show "unique and "handsome," it is probable that their beauty had a lot to do with the show's success and not just their singing and dancing.

White actresses certainly knew that their beauty was central to their success. In a January 1893 article in Cosmopolitan, Joseph P. Reed and William S. Walsh wrote that "This is preeminently the period and ours is the country of the Stage Beauty." They continued: "Even the legitimate artiste of the stage has learned the lesson of the value of beauty. She too must find her fortune in her face" (294).

Beauty had not always been of such importance to actresses. In Actors and American Culture, 1880-1920, Benjamin McArthur recognizes that there was little emphasis on appearance in the early part of the nineteenth century. Even homely women such as Charlotte Cushman, McArthur notes, could become stars. However, as the popularity of "leg shows" like The Black Crook demonstrates, audiences soon became interested in watching the attractive female form on stage.

The public's desire for beauty in actresses was accentuated with the advent of the photograph. By the 1870s, photographs of actresses became ubiquitous, appearing in restaurants, shops, hotels, and even in cigarette packages (McArthur 41). People who may not have had the opportunity to go to the theatre could still appreciate the beautiful
faces in these theatrical portraits. Even if a woman wasn't particularly talented, her beauty might be enough to make her a star. Georgia Cayvan, in her speech at the World's Congress of Representative Women, regretted this possibility, and expressed her hope for a theatre that would "honor gifted womanliness rather than brainless beauty" ("Speak").

Though Cayvan's and the other actresses' speeches at the Congress were the most highly attended at the Congress and, in fact, were repeated directly after the session for the overflow crowds, spectators seemed more interested in seeing their idols than in hearing what they had to say. Newspapers printed the speeches, but remarks on the event were likely to include comments such as these in The Chicago Record:

If you see all your girl friends wearing their hair all fluffy and parted straight to their foreheads, you may know that they are trying to imitate Julia Marlowe. Some girls kept their opera glasses pointed at her back hair all the evening, and when the show was all over one of them said: 'I haven't heard a blessed word. I've been trying to find out how Julia Marlowe does her back hair, but it wasn't any use. The way she fixes it is a mystery. ("At the Woman's Congress" 19 May 1893)

Unfortunately, as this remark implies, the reality was that an actress's success lay less in her talent than in her ability to fit in with the prevailing standards of beauty.

Lillian Russell, whose fame owed a lot to her beauty, told the Chicago Evening Journal that she was tired of being judged for her looks: "I do wish that people would stop raving about my appearance and remember that I have a voice and that I can act. If you want to win my favour, tell me I can sing and act, don't tell me I am a Grecian goddess, a peerless blonde, a divinity, a dream or a poem" ("Playhouses Do Well"). Russell may have meant what she said, but she certainly knew how to use the public's

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4 Helena Modjeska was unable to repeat her speech due to a cold.
admiration of her beauty as well as any actress. Russell regularly submitted to press interviews about her beauty and dress and, indeed, the public even bestowed on her the nickname "American Beauty."

In this era, women were praised for their fine complexions and youthful appearance. Lillian Russell had both. In the Chicago Evening Journal, Betty Brady wrote that even "under the glare of a half dozen electric lights," Russell's "complexion seemed smooth and clear as a rose-leaf." Brady said she could "scarce believe [Russell] to have lived thirty-two years" ("Lillian Russell Behind the Scenes"). By 1893, make-up was not yet in regular use by the average woman, but because actresses used it, cosmetics manufacturers were starting to make progress in convincing non-actresses to use their products.5 One of the stars of America, Louise Beaudet, discussed her use of make-up in an article in the Chicago Times. Because many people found the use of make-up immoral, as it was associated with prostitutes, the Times assured readers that Beaudet didn't wear make-up offstage. However, Beaudet described in detail what products she used on stage and how she applied them. She particularly approved of "Java Powder": "It is pretty on the skin, and not a bit injurious. I use it always and so does Miss Russell." She then had the reporter try some, and said that "there really is no reason why any woman should ruin her skin with cosmetics if she uses them judiciously" ("Good Plays in Plenty").

It would not be long before beauty parlors and cosmetics industries would truly begin to thrive, in part due to the endorsements of actresses. Cosmetics could help provide a woman with the desirable youthful look. Ellen Terry was one actress who was

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5 Lillian Russell even started her own cosmetics business in 1916. Unfortunately, Lillain Russell's Own Preparations, Inc. was not very successful and World War I further slowed sales. The company went bankrupt in 1918.
particularly admired for her youthful appearance. Even though Terry had two grown children, critics accepted her in young roles. The **Chicago Times** said that Terry would, "because of her girlish, slender figure, because of her merry laugh . . . be able to play the part of the most lovesick girl of eighteen" ("Women Who Stay Young"). Fanny Davenport was another critics praised for her youthful aspect. Amy Leslie said that Davenport as Cleopatra "looks wonderfully young and seductive. . . . She is wonderfully 'fine' and thin again. She has not been in such beautiful form for years" ("Crowds at the Theaters").

Not all actresses received such praise. In review after review, reporters stressed physical form over talent in playing a role. Amy Leslie wrote of actress Rose Coghlan that she "has not grown into maturer [sic] years with any of the graces her youth and comeliness promised. She is gross, heavy-muscled and expressionless. Her face is hard and her neck lumpy and uncomfortable" ("Crowds"). Unfortunately, in this era, journalists found it acceptable to exaggerate both their praise and criticism of a woman's beauty and dress. The **Chicago Daily News** on 17 May 1893, gave a strongly-worded opinion on the appearance of the actresses speaking at the Congress:

Modjeska will capture the crowd, as she always does her audiences, by her grace and dainty, high-bred ways. The advocates of bloomers, dress reform and other atrocities can gaze in rapture at the great Polish woman's clothes, which always cling to her and suit her marvelous personality as a bird's plumage suits its movements.

Pretty Julia Marlowe, with her inadequate voice, lovely face and wondrous eyes, is the youngest of the crowd, and is the only actress who received a large amount of advertising from typhoid fever and a consequent loss of hair.
Clara Morris, the homeliest of them all, and yet with her genius as crude and unpolished as it is unapproachable and intangible, will deserve the great criticism.

Cayvan looks much as she does on the stage—a trifle more moon-faced and thick-necked, perhaps. Her gowns are always lovely and she reminds one forcibly of a big, buxom dairymaid, with the soft voice and girlish affectations of a society girl in her first season. ("Stage Folk Will Talk")

With the press picking at every supposed defect in costume or physical form, actresses had little choice but to follow fashion's decrees. Maintaining one's appearance, especially in regards to clothing, could be very expensive for actresses. Cayvan told the Congress crowds that the public's demand that actresses wear gorgeous clothes was a financial burden:

The price of perpetual daintiness on the stage is eternal vigilance and expense, and the cost of modish gowns, which can be worn but a season and require the skill of the fashionable dressmaker instead of the stage costumer in construction, taxes heavily the resources of small-salaried players. ("Speak")

Annie Oakley could afford the thirty-five costumes she had for her season with the Wild West Show, but many actresses found buying clothes a particular drain on their income. Since theatrical portraits showed actresses dressed in gorgeous gowns, audiences expected to see them wearing such clothes, both on and off stage. Thus, wardrobes became a major expense for actresses. As Cayvan stated, stars often had to purchase designer clothes rather than wear those created by stage costumers.

In Theatre and Fashion: Oscar Wilde to the Suffragettes, Joel H. Kaplan and Sheila Stowell remark on how at the end of the nineteenth century women looked to the stage for advice on how to dress. Though Kaplan and Stowell confine their discussion to England, their findings are true for America as well. The authors attribute much of the 201
public's interest in stage fashion to Charles Worth, Bertha Palmer's favorite designer. Worth created clothing for the stage as well as for wealthy socialites, aristocrats, and even royalty. Worth's designs dominated the French stage and throughout the 1890s, Worth was also the preeminent designer for London's West End. His designs were so impressive that it was not uncommon for the rich to ask for copies of gowns actresses wore on stage.

Other dressmakers eventually challenged Worth's on- and off-stage monopoly on fashion. Kaplan and Stowell report that such women as Madame Paquin "sought to replace the 'dignity' for which Worth was most often noted with a more openly theatrical glamour" (10). Two dressmakers who participated this assault on Worth's dominance were Mesdames Savage and Purdue, who designed for the St. James Theatre in London. They built costumes for no less than thirteen shows there between 1892 and 1897. Two of these were Oscar Wilde's Lady Windermere's Fan and Arthur Wing Pinero's The Second Mrs. Tanqueray.

Lady Windermere's Fan, which premiered in London in February 1892, had its New York opening a year later. This comedy concerns Lady Windermere, a young wife and mother, who believes that her husband is having an affair with a fallen woman, Mrs. Erlynne. Lady Windermere is on the verge of leaving her allegedly philandering husband, but at the last minute, Mrs. Erlynne convinces her to stay with her family. The audience learns, though Lady Windermere does not, that Mrs. Erlynne is actually Lady Windermere's mother.

When Lady Windermere's Fan first opened in London, critics were so shocked by Oscar Wilde's insolence in his opening night curtain speech that they had difficulty praising
his play. His patronizing tone and cigarette smoking negatively affected what would probably have been more positive reviews. The London correspondent to The New York Times wrote that "the critics almost unanimously condemn the play. They say that the plot lacks novelty, and that the principal scene is palpably cribbed from The School for Scandal" ("Oscar Wilde's New Play"). The play proved very popular with audiences, however, and by the following year, audiences and critics were more disposed to liking the play, though not finding it very deep. Some found Wilde's style grating, though. The drama critic for the Chicago Times in October 1893, acknowledged Wilde's wit, but revealed some of his weaknesses:

The value of "Lady Windermere's Fan" as an amusing play is not clear to everyone of course. The smart, epigrammatic lines actually irritate some people. . . . Of course, the fact that all the characters in the play have the same sort of style, talk alike, look alike, and act alike, is a grave defect, but the even and general distribution of epigrams has the effect of keeping the dialogue bright all the time." ("Winter Season at Hand")

In this play, Wilde explored the subject of the sexual double standard, where women are cut off from fashionable society for sexual dalliances while men are not. This was a topic that Arthur Wing Pinero also investigated in his play, The Second Mrs. Tanqueray. This play opened on 27 May 1893 in London with Mrs. Patrick Campbell in the title role. Its story of a fallen woman who tries to re-enter fashionable society only to end up killing herself from shame, was a great success. George C.D. Odell, in his Annals of the New York Stage, calls it the "first important play of the new school that it helped inaugurate" (585). Mrs. Campbell was especially praised for her portrayal of a woman
with many facets to her character. In Pinero: A Theatrical Life, John Dawick calls Paula "perhaps the most complex study of a female character attempted in British drama for two hundred years" (183).

In these plays' London productions, every aspect of the actresses' apparel signified the characters' status. The society women who frequented the theatre could see aspects of their social structure played out on stage and understood the codes expressed by the clothing. Oscar Wilde, who off stage chose to promote aesthetic, bohemian, or "rational" dress at various times, clothed the characters in his plays in the most fashionable styles of the day. He wanted his audience members to see themselves in the characters on stage.

Of the apparel in Lady Windermere's Fan, Kaplan and Stowell state: "In the end both play and production [engaged] spectators in a discourse in which [citing Leonore Davidoff], 'every cap, bow, streamer, ruffle, fringe, bustle, glove and other elaboration symbolized some status category for the female wearer'" (14).

Like the English, Americans also revelled in details about actresses' costumes. The press during the fair did not, however, discuss the meaning behind the costumes. The expense, novelty of materials, and complexity of design, were what made gowns for the stage particularly attractive to the public. In September 1893, the Chicago Times described Rose Coghlan's costumes for Diplomacy. With her first gown, the Times reported, Coghlan wore "all her diamonds," "including the famous Coghlan dagger." This pin, the article said, "is solidly set with flawless stones of fine size." The second dress "is one of the most magnificent ever designed or made, at least so its creator, the celebrated Worth avers." For that dress, just the customs duties were reportedly over three hundred
dollars. The last dress that Coghlan wore was "perhaps the most expensive dress to be seen on the American stage today. . . . The jet embroidery alone represents the uninterrupted work of eight women for a period of six weeks" ("Rose Coghlan's Gowns").

The advent of stage realism would make some changes to an actress's wardrobe requirements, on-stage at least. As Kaplan and Stowell comment: "Ibsen's heroines, most simply put, did not dress to West End Standards" (45). In A Doll's House, for example, Ibsen specifies that Nora and Torvald are not wealthy. None of the women in the play are rich enough to dress in the type of clothing Wilde's and Pinero's society women can wear. Ibsen's Hedda Gabler, however, does take place in a fashionable environment, and though Hedda is not rich, she still dresses quite fashionably. Even though Ibsen was attacking contemporary values in this play, English and American audiences could still enjoy looking at lovely settings and costumes. Arthur Wing Pinero's The Second Mrs. Tanqueray was also an attack on conventional society, but Pinero, too, allowed for appealing costumes. Kaplan and Stowell call Pinero's plays "curious amalgams of drawing-room melodrama, well-made play and Ibsen adjusted for Mayfair markets" (49).

In Chicago during the fair season, actresses chose plays that allowed for extravagance in costume, and were celebrated for their dress. Even Georgia Cayvan, who had announced her discomfort with the public's love of extravagance in actresses' dress, gained a great deal of publicity for one of her gowns. The Libby Glass Company, which had an exhibit on the Midway, displayed a dress it had created specifically for Cayvan. This dress, surprisingly enough, was made of spun glass. The beauty of the gown was such that the Princess Eulalia ordered one for herself.
The wealthy Bertha Palmer may never have found a personal need for dress reform and, in fact, continued to be known for her beautiful, extravagant wardrobe. However, her advocating of women as workers helped obviate the need for changes in fashion. One of the reasons fashions had already simplified from the bustles and tight skirts of the 1870s and 80s, was that more women were entering the work force. Styles had been completely impractical and often dangerous for work in factories. The typical frills and furbelows of clothing were also inappropriate. At work, women needed clothing that was more sedate and more comfortable. Still, fashion magazines continued to convince women that beauty in clothing was of utmost importance. Unfortunately, for dress reformers, the corset would not go away for decades, and the large sleeves would be popular for a few more years. Oddly enough, it was the invention of the bicycle, more than anything else, that had an impact on women's clothing. It was impossible to ride a bicycle in a full-length skirt, yet doctors advised women that bicycle-riding was a healthy activity. Therefore, shorter skirts became accepted for bicycle-riding. With physical fitness on the rise, more comfortable athletic wear also became a necessity.

Though one might have hoped that the uncorseted comfort of the Midway performers' clothing would have inspired changes in American fashion, the small waisted silhouette would stay in vogue until the 1920s. The perceived primitiveness of the Midway women kept Americans from following their example, lest they also appear primitive.

Unfortunately for actresses, the public demand that they wear opulent gowns did not decrease even though realism was becoming more popular. Nor did physical beauty
become less important. The fair's emphasis on beauty in art, architecture, and everything else helped increase the public's desire for physical beauty as well. At the Exposition, people could take photographs using a list provided by the Department of Publicity and Promotion of "appropriate" subjects. George Eastman had a building on the fairgrounds where visitors could develop their film and exchange their used Kodaks for new ones. Eastman's invention of the Kodak camera was making it even easier for press agents to plaster actresses' faces into books and magazines, on posters, and in every other medium. Thomas Edison, who had created the means by which the fairgrounds could be lit with electric light, had also recently invented the motion picture. Though for a few years his invention would just be a novelty, it would not be long before actresses' faces would be shown close up in movie theatres across the nation. With actresses' every flaw magnified a thousand times, the public would further demand physical perfection.
CHAPTER 7

THE NECESSITY FOR THEIR WORK

On Friday, 25 August 1893, a parade of unemployed workers marched down Chicago's streets protesting the lack of available work. As the workers tried to pass City Hall, the police intervened and stopped them from going further. The next day, the Chicago Tribune accused anarchists and socialists of stirring up trouble and said that the unemployment problem in Chicago was not as dire as the demonstrators made out: "It is not believed that there are more than 25,000 persons out of work and actually seeking and in need of employment. Many of those filling the streets with cries of 'We Want Work!' would not work if it were offered them" ("Hobos in the Crowd"). In another article, the Tribune criticized Mayor Carter Harrison for not being able to handle the trouble-makers:

It is astonishing, in view of what happened in 1886 [the Haymarket riots], that he, in his insane craze for the praise and cheers of loafers, tramps, black-flag anarchists, and red-flag socialists should have allowed the business center of the city to be blockaded and occupied by processions of anarchists, agitators, and ruffians pretending that they wanted work." (qtd. in Badger 100)

Just a few days after this uprising, on August 30, the Exposition's World's Congress of Labor began.
In order to accommodate the crowds of laborers who were interested in the Congress's speeches, the afternoon session on the 30th was held outside on the lakefront. Approximately twenty-five thousand workers attended. Apparently, Mayor Harrison had heeded the Tribune's criticism, as he stationed police at the event to forestall any more demonstrations. One of the speakers on the second day of the Congress was Mary E. Lease, a political activist from Kansas and a member of the People's Party. She expressed her disapproval of the police presence, believing it infringed on the Constitutional right to free assembly, and suggested that women would be better at fixing the labor problem than men: "If the horrid men cannot solve the labor problem they had better stay at home to mind the babies and darn the stockings and let the women folks have a chance. They can just straighten things out in three shakes of a sheep's tail" ("Mary E. Lease Talks").

Women at the fair may not have solved the labor problem, but they at least made a concerted effort to improve the conditions of working women. At the fair's Dedication Ceremonies, Bertha Palmer had specified the goal of the Board of Lady Managers:

Without touching upon politics, suffrage or other irrelevant issues, this unique organization of women for women will devote itself to the promotion of their industrial interests. It will address itself to the formation of a public sentiment which will favor woman's industrial equality and her receiving just compensation for services rendered. It will try to secure for her work the consideration and respect which it deserves, and establish her importance as an economic factor. (Palmer, Dedicatory & Opening 153)

Bertha Palmer chose to use the Board of Lady Managers to focus the attention of the public on women as laborers. Though the Board's official position was that women's primary responsibilities were as wives and mothers, it was also an important aspect of the "ideal woman" that she be useful. Although this generally meant that women could be
involved in charitable activities so that they could help people less fortunate than
themselves. Board members emphasized that many women needed to earn money outside
the home, and should therefore be treated with respect and equality in the labor market.
Through the actions of the Board of Lady Managers, displays in the Woman's Building,
and speeches at the World's Congresses, women at the fair used performance and
spectacle to change visitors' views on women laborers.

Actresses performing in downtown Chicago during the fair also aided in spreading
the message that women could work alongside men. Actresses such as Julia Marlowe and
Helena Modjeska spoke to large crowds at the World's Congress of Representative
Women, assuring them that women could work successfully in the theatre in many cap-
acities, and that such work was not inherently immoral. Articles in Chicago's newspapers
during the fair talked about women's life on the stage, aiding in the improvement of these
performers' reputations in the public eye.

Another area of the fair in which visitors came into contact with women laborers
was on the Midway Plaisance. Fair visitors could watch the inhabitants dance or act in
formal performances, or watch them at work, making, exhibiting, or selling products of
their homelands. Many of these displays emphasized women as workers. The Irish
Village and the Blarney Castle, for example, both showed off Irish women's skills with
textiles, hoping to increase the demand for their goods.
Bertha Palmer made it clear in her speech at the opening of the Woman's Building just how important it was that women be permitted to work:

Of all existing forms of injustice there is none so cruel and inconsistent as is the position in which women are placed in regard to self-maintenance, the calm ignoring of their rights and responsibilities which has gone on for centuries. . . . The necessity for their work, under present conditions, is too ardent and too urgent to be questioned. They must work or they must starve. ("Dedicate the Home")

Mrs. Palmer named two groups of people who were against the idea of women working: Idealists, who Mrs. Palmer said had "poetic theories about the sanctity of the home and the refining, elevating influence of women in it," and "certain political economists," who objected to the competition that women workers would bring. Mrs. Palmer knew that there were many women who needed to work. Unmarried women may not have had male relatives to support them, and married women may have had husbands who were unable to work, or did not earn enough to support their families. Husbands could also be criminals, alcoholics, or simply idle. There were also many women who were divorced or whose husbands died leaving them without financial support. About these women, Mrs. Palmer remarked: "If not permitted to work, what course is open to them?"

Certainly, women were already working in 1893, but to a much lesser degree than men. They were not found in all professions and did not make the same wages as men. An article in the Chicago Tribune on 26 August 1893 included a table showing the results of a survey that Chicago's factory inspectors had made in 1892. The table listed the trades that had more than one thousand employees and then reported the number of workers in each trade. This number was then divided between male and female employees. Of
551,123 people employed by 66,460 firms, 471,384 were male and 79,739 were female. By far, the trades which employed the most women were those involving the manufacture of clothing. These trades accounted for 23,742 of the jobs held by women. Other classifications listing more than one thousand women workers were paper box makers, confectionary, hotels and large restaurants, meat packing, and printers and publishers ("Hobos in the Crowd"). Because the table only included commercial industry, it did not account for the heavy employment of women as private domestic help (maids, governesses, etc.).

Though Bertha Palmer's speeches emphasized that it was women of the lower classes who needed work the most, she was unable to find adequate means to display the contributions of women laborers in the Woman's Building. As with Fine Art, the exhibits in the Woman's Building highlighted the work of middle and upper-class women. One reason that working women did not have sufficient representation in the Building was that they had little time or opportunity to put together an exhibit. Another reason was that it was impossible to separate most women laborers' work from that of men. Even though fair visitors wouldn't know it, many of the industrial exhibits in other parts of the fairgrounds involved women's labor. Still, as Mrs. Palmer wanted to highlight the plight of the female worker in the Woman's Building, she delegated the task of gathering statistical data and information on the conditions of women workers to Helen Barker, a Lady Manager from South Dakota. Barker first contacted the American Federation of Labor, but as its leaders did not like having women in competition with men, they were

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1 These include the following listed trades: Clothing and tailoring, cloaks and suits, gent's furnishings, millinery, and corsets.
not interested in promoting women's work. Barker tried to talk to women directly by visiting Chicago's sweatshops and laundries, but the workers there were reluctant to speak freely for fear of being fired. In 1893, there were few unions for workers, men and women alike, and even those that existed had little, if any, bargaining power. Bertha Palmer did know of one woman who wanted to speak for women laborers, Charlotte Smith, the President of the Women's National Industrial League. Unfortunately, Smith was not interested in working with Bertha Palmer or the Board of Lady Managers. Smith thought her League would have been better suited to run women's affairs at the Exposition than the Board of Lady Managers. In 1892, Smith had tried to convince Congress to give her group $50,000 of the Board of Lady Managers' $110,000 annual allocation. And at one point, Smith told members of the Board that though she had a list of industrial associations of women, something that would have been very helpful in creating a proper exhibit on women laborers, she would not give it away without compensation. Because of Smith's conflicts with the Board of Lady Managers, she tried to spread the tale that the Board was not interested in factory workers. Of course, bad publicity was anathema to Bertha Palmer, so she refused to have anything further to do with Smith. Instead, Mrs. Palmer contacted Grace Headley Dodge, who had established clubs for working women in New York City. Mrs. Palmer sent Dodge a survey which asked working women a set of detailed questions about their employment situations. Getting this survey completed was unfortunately too great an undertaking for Dodge, but she did agree to talk to the women
in one of the clubs, asking them what their greatest needs were. The list included: equal pay for equal work, pay for working after normal closing hours, enforcement of sanitary laws, and an outlet for airing grievances.

Other advocates for women workers had created more detailed lists of women's needs in the workplace. Throughout 1893, The Arena had published a series of articles by Helen Campbell, entitled "Women Wage-Earners: Their Past, Present, and Their Future." Campbell, a frequent contributor to The Arena, outlined many of the dangers women faced at work. In factories, there was often a lack of ventilation and seriously unsanitary conditions. Many women had to work, standing, in excessive heat, and were not given time to eat meals. The materials they had to work with could be caustic, yet no protection was provided. Also, women were continually subject to sexual harassment. Campbell said that women had to ask permission to go to the bathroom, and that some refused "to run the gauntlet of men and boys" on their way to the toilet (174). Women in domestic service, Campbell said, could easily lose wages because of a complex system of fines, and store clerks were often expected to work in unsanitary conditions for excessive hours with no overtime or holiday pay.

Though the Woman's Building could do little to exhibit the plight of the average working woman, Bertha Palmer did seek to display exemplary work by women. One room in the Building was dedicated to women's inventions, for example. Mary Lockwood, one of the feminists on the Board of Lady Managers, was on the Board's Patents Committee. After doing research, she reported to the Board: "When it is considered that over 4,000 patents have been issued to women from 1809 to 1892, 2,000..."
of this number being issued since 1888, it is manifest that the field is one from which a valuable and instructive harvest should be gathered" (qtd. in Weimann 428). Unfortunately, because the Congress had not allocated enough money to the Board of Lady Managers to help women send their inventions to Chicago, the Inventions Room housed mainly small items, such as flour sifters, carpet dusters, and cake beaters. Also, some inventors had chosen, like artists, to exhibit in the other buildings of the fair, so their work would not be segregated by sex. In the Transportation Building, for example, a woman's design for a lever that would unhitch a carriage from runaway horses was on display. A woman sat in a cart and demonstrated the invention. Other designs that attracted attention were Josephine Cochran's dish-washing machine, which was not only on display in the Woman's Building, but was in use in nearly all the large restaurants on the fairgrounds; and Harriet Ruth Tracy's elevator, which was installed for use in the Woman's Building.

In addition to the Inventions Room, the Woman's Building also had a Science Room, which displayed work by women in such areas as archaeology, botany, astronomy, and geology. There was an Education Room which included exhibits of nurses' training programs throughout the country, and a Model Kitchen, where Philadelphia Cooking School founder Sarah Tyson Rorer gave cooking demonstrations.² On the second floor was a library, filled with thousands of volumes of books written by women.

Since one of the aspects of the Ideal Woman was her charitable work, the Board of Lady Managers chose to devote space in the Woman's Building to women's organizations.

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² The Model Kitchen was combined with the Illinois Corn Kitchen. Each morning, Rohrer demonstrated the use of corn in cooking, showing the public that corn was not solely food for animals.
Many of these groups were intended to help working women. In the Organization Room, each group was allotted space where they could exhibit information about the group and try to recruit members. More than sixty organizations were represented. Some of these were the Young Women's Christian Association, the National Council of Women, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Federation of Woman's Clubs, the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Association of Collegiate Alumnae, the Women's National Indian Association, the National Association of Women Stenographers, and the National Press League of Chicago.

Some of these groups were interested in helping girls and women who planned to come to Chicago in search of jobs during the fair. There were, sadly, many unscrupulous people who had taken out ads in papers trying to lure unsuspecting girls into prostitution and other dangerous situations. To counter this problem, the YWCA enlisted members to be stationed at railroad depots where they could catch young women and help them find their way before meeting with danger. These Traveler's Aids wore bright blue badges so they could be easily spotted. The YWCA and other organizations let women know through letters and newspaper articles what possible dangers lurked in city streets and gave them tips on how to stay safe. An additional help for working girls that women's groups provided was reasonably-priced boarding houses. The International Board of the YWCA built the Hotel Endeavor for this purpose and the Chicago YWCA leased five boardinghouses, all for visiting women. The Chicago YWCA also opened an employment office.
Unfortunately, there were not enough jobs for the women who came in search of them. The Board of Lady Managers, for example, got ten thousand applications for one hundred job openings. The opportunities the Board of Lady Managers had included sales clerks, guides, and concession workers. These jobs were typical throughout the fairgrounds. Women could also be hired in such positions as barmaids, waitresses, and office workers. Regrettably, working conditions on the fairgrounds were not necessarily ideal. Many workers were subject to strict rules and restrictions. One employer of women on the fairgrounds was the Waukesha Hygeia Mineral Springs Company, which sold water on the fairgrounds for a penny a glass. In April 1893, when firms were getting ready for the fair to open, the Chicago Tribune reported that the Hygeia Company wouldn't hire anyone under eighteen-years-old or over forty. The women they did hire had to pay for their own uniforms and work nine hours a day for $1.00 per day. Employees were required to deposit ten dollars with the company, which would be taken out of their first month's wages. If the worker left without giving a month's notice, or if they misused their fair pass (which cost them a dollar), this deposit would be forfeited. In addition, any cash the company lost due to a worker's error in making change would be taken out of the deposit. On top of this, workers still had to pay for their own room, board, and transportation. The Tribune reporter found that this treatment of women workers was not unusual: "A correspondent, one who earns her own living, calls attention to the Hygeia company, and says it is but a sample of the attitude of corporations towards women's labor at the fair" ("Women are in Doubt").

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3 There was also free filtered water available on the fairgrounds.
Though occasionally the press commented on poor working conditions for women, much of the discussion about working women at the fair occurred at the World's Congresses, particularly the World's Congress of Representative Women. This Congress had an advisory council of 528 women, which helped to organize the sessions and choose the speakers. There were 81 meetings at which more than 330 women read papers. Over the course of the Congress, approximately 150,000 women attended. Many newspapers described the excitement that the Congress engendered in women. The Chicago Record said: "The fact is that wherever you may chance to meet her, there is a flush of excitement and sparkle of interest that betrays at once the one who has been, or is just going, or even wishes she might go. to the wonderful world's congress of representative women that is happening just now" ("At the Woman's Congress" 18 May 1893).

In one of the sessions, Susan B. Anthony stated what her and her fellow suffragists' purpose was by speaking at the Congresses:

We want to show womanhood first; we want to show how wifehood and motherhood are accidental thereto; we want to show that not every woman is designed and ordained for housekeeping; we want to show that a woman should be directed toward or permitted to choose the life work for which she is designed; and thereby help to save many a man from being sacrificed to sour bread and like ills." ("The Woman's Congress")

Suffragists spoke not only at the World's Congress of Representative Women but all the other Congresses as well. At these meetings, suffragists could speak regularly to large audiences about the position of women in society. They spoke on such topics as suffrage, temperance, prostitution, education, dress, labor, religion, and the arts. Black women,
such as Fannie Barrier Williams, Fannie Jackson Coppin, Sarah J. Early, and Hallie Q. Brown spoke on the particular conditions of women of their race.

Each of these women spoke at a session of the World's Congress of Representative Women. Fannie Barrier Williams, in her speech, "The Intellectual Progress of the Colored Women of the United States since the Emancipation Proclamation," expressed dismay at the lack of employment opportunities for black women:

> It is almost literally true that, except teaching in colored schools and menial work, colored women can find no employment in this free America. They are the only women in the country for whom real ability, virtue, and special talents count for nothing when they become applicants for respectable employment." ("World's Congress of Representative Women" 705)

Williams and the other African-American women speakers recognized that education could help raise the status of African-Americans. Fannie Jackson Coppin, who was the first black woman to be granted a degree from Oberlin College, remarked on the arguments against black people getting an education. She said white people asked: "What are you going to do with an education?" (716). Coppin told her white audiences that she knew that many men and even some women still did not believe that women, white or black, should be admitted to colleges and universities. According to Coppin, these

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4 Fannie Barrier Williams had been a teacher when she married a recent law school graduate, S. Laing Williams. They moved to Chicago and he became an assistant district attorney. Fannie Barrier Williams was active in Chicago civic life. After the fair, she became the first member of her race to become a member of the Chicago Women's Club, and the first woman to be appointed a member of the Chicago Library Board.

Soon after graduating from Oberlin in 1865, Fannie Jackson Coppin became the principal of the Institution for Colored Youth in Philadelphia. She held that position until her retirement in 1902. She spent a year in South Africa with her husband, who was a bishop in the African Methodist Church. Sarah J. Early was also a graduate of Oberlin College. She taught at Wilberforce University and at public schools. She was active in the African Methodist Church and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. Hallie Q. Brown was dean of women at the Tuskegee Institute at the time of the Exposition. Afterwards, she taught at Wilberforce University, and later became the seventh president of the National Association of Colored Women. She also worked as an elocutionist, lecturer, and singer.

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skeptics' question was: "Why educate the woman—what will she do with it?" Coppin said that such a question was "impertinent" and "unwise." She said "rather ask, 'What will she be with it?"' (716). These African-American women knew that most white Americans were worried that education would help African-American people gain respectability in society. "Everywhere," Williams said, "the public mind has been filled with constant alarm lest in some way our women shall approach the social sphere of the dominant race in this country" (707). She continued: "The dread inspired by the growing intelligence of colored women has interested us almost to the point of amusement" (708).

Hallie Q. Brown, who was the dean of women at the Tuskegee Institute, also believed in educating the black woman, but thought these women should be taught a trade:

The mill and the factory are veritable hives of industry. The age and the race demand skilled labor, educated labor. The girls of the South are realizing that with a common education and a trade they are superior to the girl who completes the academic course and neglects the training of her hand.

The gospel of honorable manual labor sinks into the mind with every stitch that is taken, with every nail that is driven. The dignity of labor is taught with every lesson in domestic economy, cooking, dressmaking, tailoring, nurse-training, and carpentry.

What more is needed?

Time and an equal chance in the race of life. (World's Congress of Representative Women 725)

Though these women may not have completely agreed on what type of education the black woman should have, they did agree that another avenue to success for black women was organization. After all, one of the reasons black women did not find a place
on the Board of Lady Managers was because they were not organized enough to ensure nomination to the board. In her speech at the Congress, Sarah J. Early told the audience why organization was so important:

Organization has given hope for a better future by revealing to colored women their own executive ability. It has stimulated them to acquire wealth by teaching them to husband their means properly. . . . It has assisted in raising them from a condition of helplessness and destitution to a state of self-dependence and prosperity. (720)

Fannie Barrier Williams, too, saw the value in organization, but understood that it was difficult for black women to know how to work together. This, she implied, was due to slavery:

For peculiar and painful reasons the great lessons of fraternity and altruism are hard for the colored woman to learn. Emancipation found the colored Americans of the South with no sentiments of association. It will be admitted that race misfortune could scarcely go further when the terms fraternity, friendship, and unity had no meaning for its men and women. (701)

The primary thesis of all these women's speeches was that black women had made incredible progress since the end of slavery and now deserved equality with white women. The only thing that stood in their way was prejudice. And although black men and women suffered from the hatred of white people, they would not allow feelings of hate or a desire for revenge to enter their hearts.

Though the African-American speakers talked of equality, they did not discuss the suffrage issue. Perhaps because of the conflict between black women's groups and the Board of Lady Managers before the fair began, they did not want to further antagonize Bertha Palmer and the Board. One might have guessed that Bertha Palmer, who was not a suffragist, would not have promoted suffrage speeches at the fair, but this was not the
case. Although Mrs. Palmer certainly did not want the Board of Lady Managers linked with the suffrage movement, she had nothing against suffragists in general. Only when they crossed her in her plans for the Board of Lady Managers did she take offense.

The worst sinner in this regard was Phoebe Couzins, a suffragist who was appointed to the Board as a Lady Manager from Missouri. She and Isabella Beecher Hooker were the most vocal dissenters on the Board. Couzins was elected Secretary of the Board of Lady Managers, and apparently took her duties seriously; however, her belief that the socialites on the Board (including Bertha Palmer) were conspiring against her and other suffragists soon caused serious conflict. She made accusations that Mrs. Palmer was altering minutes, and Mrs. Palmer made accusations that Couzins was derelict in her duties. Unfortunately for Couzins, she made her accusations in the press, thereby permanently ruining her standing with Mrs. Palmer. The Board's Executive Committee eventually declared the Secretary's post vacant "because [Couzins] had not performed her duties, and had incurred unnecessary expenses, and had through the public press given expression to opinions and sentiments that tend very seriously to destroy in public estimation the dignity and usefulness of the Board of Lady Managers" (Darney 104). When Susan Gale Cooke was elected to replace Couzins as Secretary, Couzins sued Mrs. Palmer, the Board of Lady Managers, and the Exposition. She lost. Still, the long drawn-out battle had done its damage.5

5 For a complete account of the Phoebe Couzins matter, see Jeanne Weimann's The Fair Women.
Unsurprisingly, most Lady Managers were careful to check with Mrs. Palmer before saying anything positive about suffragists in public. In December 1891, Lady Manager Mary Lockwood wrote to Bertha Palmer asking whether she should discuss Susan B. Anthony when giving a slide show on the history of women. Mrs. Palmer responded:

I can see no reason why you should not do justice to her work in your lecture. I will say frankly that I do not like to have her name mentioned in connection with our Board as we do not want to risk antagonizing anybody and our movement has nothing to do with politics, but aside from that I should agree with you that there is no possible harm in telling of a woman who has tried to do so much for her sex." (qtd. in Weimann 493)

Anthony seemed to understand Mrs. Palmer's strategy of appearing apolitical and she never crossed words with her. Many of her fellow suffragists were understandably nervous of Mrs. Palmer's anti-suffrage stance, especially after hearing of her quarrels with Phoebe Couzins and the Queen Isabella Society, but Anthony assured them that Mrs. Palmer was not committed to keeping suffragists quiet at the Exposition. In May 1892, a group of suffragists including Anthony held an informal meeting in the parlor of the Palmer House. At this meeting, the group decided that the National American Woman Suffrage Association should have its convention during the fair. Anthony informed the women that Charles Bonney (head of the World's Congress Auxiliary) and Bertha Palmer had told her they wanted a woman reading a paper at every congress with the men. In this way, they would be sure that men heard women speak without having to go to a women's meeting. Said Anthony: "Mrs. Potter Palmer and the Board of Lady Managers have also manifested every disposition to give woman suffrage 'a good show'" (Woman's Journal).
Mrs. Palmer realized that it was not enough to convince women that they were sufficiently intelligent and talented to work on an equal basis with men; men had to be convinced of this, too. If men were inundated with the speeches of smart women, they might be persuaded of their equality. It was true that few men went to the Woman's Congress the first day, but once they decided they wouldn't be ostracized for going to a woman's meeting, more began to attend. Some men even began telling their wives to go to the sessions, not only of the Woman's Congress, but the other Congresses as well. In June, the Daily Inter-Ocean remarked on this tendency:

One of the most delightful features of the congresses that have been held, thus far, in the series proposed during the summer and autumn, has been the approval of men who have attended the sessions to applaud as auditors, talk it all over afterward, and marvel at the progress of the world. Many have urged their wives to 'let things go at home a little' and attend the meetings, the like of which will not be enjoyed soon again." ("Woman's Kingdom")

Certainly, the speakers did not convince everyone either of the idea that women should work or that women should be allowed to vote, but there were some well-publicized victories. In journalist Kate Field's speech at the Woman's Press Congress, she said that she did not believe in woman's suffrage or even universal men's suffrage. She believed that suffrage should be given based on character and education. However, during her speech, she suddenly announced: "I am tired of the present condition of things, and if Miss Anthony is in this hall I want to tell her that I am ready to join her suffrage association." The ubiquitous Anthony was indeed present, and said: "I accept you right now, and I hereby declare you to be one of us." She went to the platform and shook
Field's hand. Said the Chicago Record: "The two women refrained from kissing each other and that little touch of femininity was lost to history" ("Kate at the Congress").

If nothing else, the Congresses made women feel more united, politcially, than at any other time in history. The Chicago Daily News said: "This congress has awakened in woman the consciousness of her physical, intellectual and spiritual possibilities and of a grander yet self-respecting individualism. It has bound together women of every nationality in a feeling of sisterly love and kinship of endeavor ("Last Day for the Women").

The Woman's Building, too, with its visible examples of women's achievements, made women aware of their valuable contributions to society. Unfortunately, conflicts among the Lady Managers did not completely convince people that women were suited to running large organizations, no matter that hundreds of other women's organizations were functioning rather well at the fair. Though many reporters admitted that the Board's difficulties were due to a lack of training, and that men would have done no better under the circumstances, some harshly criticized the Board. The St. Louis Star wrote: "The Board of Lady Managers is a splendid thing for the fair, but not for the purpose of managing. Its place is among the curiosities on the grounds, where it would draw fully as well as any of the novelties from abroad that crowd the Midway Plaisance" ("The Lady Wranglers").
In late May 1893, a female journalist for the Chicago Evening Post spoke to Susan B. Anthony, bringing to her attention the fact that Dahomeyan Amazons were warriors. "Miss Anthony," the reporter said, "do you notice that the Dahomey women have upset the last objection of the anti-suffragists; they bear arms" ("Equal Rights Here"). According to the reporter Anthony replied, "Hmm, suppose we go to Dahomey." The reporter accompanied Anthony and her companions to the Dahomey Village. It was closed at the time, but after the reporter banged on the gate with her parasol the manager let the women inside. He then brought out one of the female warriors for their inspection. The reporter described the woman for her readers: "She was big, she was brawny, and when she let her blanket slip aside there was a suggestion of masculinity in her habiliment which made the visitors step back in sudden doubt." Anthony and her friends were shocked by the savage appearance of the woman, but one of Anthony's companions said: "I don't know but we suffragists owe the Dahomey women a debt of gratitude. They have proven that women can bear arms, you know."

The female performers on the Midway could have provided many positive images of women for fair visitors, but most visitors were determined to see the savagery in Midway women rather than anything worthy of admiration. The Board of Lady Managers didn't know whether to approach them as poor souls who, like American women, suffered under the oppression of male domination, or as primitive savages who could only help emphasize the superiority of white women. Unfortunately, as Gertrude Scott notes in her dissertation on Midway village performances, little is known about what
the Midway performers thought of Americans. Scott says that "for the most part, recording the villagers' impressions and comments played little or no part in the writings on the Chicago Exposition" (92-93). Of the records that do exist about what villagers felt about working on the Midway, comments on women's specific experiences are rarer still. However, a picture of women's work life on the Midway can be extrapolated from a general analysis of what life on the Midway was like. Since Chapter Two gives a description of the types of work women did on the Midway, this chapter is intended to explore what their working conditions were.

The fair experience started out badly for many villagers. An Esquimau baby died of bronchitis before the fair even opened, and one Dahomeyan died in New York en route to the fair. After the villagers had made the long, arduous voyage to Chicago, they probably hoped for a warm welcome. However, not only was the weather cold and wet, the villages had no water hookup. There were no lights, either. Even once the fair opened on May 1, the Exposition directors had not fixed these problems. By May 4, Midway managers formed the Midway Plaisance Concessionaire's Club so they could present objections to the Exposition management as a unified group. Without electricity, after all, the Midway could hardly attract sightseers after dark.

The Chicago Tribune explained the problem with the lights. Apparently, fair directors had offered electric lights to the villages for $60 each, but then raised the price to $100. Even those villages who had paid for lights in advance didn't get them. The German Village, which had paid Exposition authorities $15,000 for electric light was still in the dark. Villages weren't allowed to put in their own electric lights, either. Villagers
had to use oil lamps in order to open the theatres ("Plaisance Men are Objecting"). The
electricity and water problems were eventually solved, but there were other issues
bothering village managers. Village managers told the Chicago Times that Exposition
directors had promised them that they would "roof over the roadway" on the Plaisance.
This way, visitors would patronize their establishments on rainy days ("Rebellion in
Midway"). Knowing the size of the Midway, it is hard to imagine that the fair officials
ever really contemplated covering the street; whether they actually told villagers they
would or not is unknown. At any rate, there were still sightseers on rainy days, though
fewer than on clear days. As visitors would at least have had umbrellas, rainy days were
probably more uncomfortable for those villagers who were contracted to stay outside no
matter what the weather.

One reason the village managers were so concerned with getting sightseers in their
gates was that the contracts with the Exposition required them to pay large percentages of
the villages' grosses to Exposition authorities. For example, the Java Village had to give
the Exposition fifty percent of the grosses from the theatre and ten percent of the grosses
from sales of merchandise. Fair organizers also convinced the sponsors of the Java
Village to charge an admission fee just to enter the village. President Higinbotham
apparently told the sponsors that the Exposition would only take a "moderate percentage"
of this fee. Upon opening, however, Higinbotham requested fifty percent of the gate
receipts. Such gouging from the Exposition authorities made it difficult for villages to
meet their expenses ("Java Village Closed").
Besides rigid rules about monetary matters, the Exposition authorities also had specific requirements about what the village management was to provide for each exhibit. A typical clause can be seen in the contract with the Egypt Chicago Exposition Company, which ran the Street in Cairo. The contract said that the Company was to "supply said street with everything necessary to give a true and life-like representation of said street with its inhabitants" (qtd. in J. Gilbert 97). The sponsors of the Turkish Village, in accordance with their contract, had to "furnish their employees, natives of Turkey, such sleeping accommodations as they are accustomed to in their own country, and supply them with such food as they usually eat" (qtd. in J. Gilbert 97). In addition, the contracts stated that the Exposition's Ways and Means Committee would have the right of approval over the Village's costumes and dancing. This clause gave the fair directors the authority to control any supposed lewdness in clothing or performances, and it also allowed them to make sure that the villagers were presenting native customs. Interestingly, when some villagers arrived in Chicago, they tried to dress in American fashions. The Samoans even cut each other's hair, which was over a foot long, to mimic American styles. This action was, however, in violation of the village's contracts, so the village's manager became very upset. The press reported that with the manager's urging, the Samoans made a "heroic and laudable effort to resume their natural state of barbarism" ("Samoan Surprises"). For villagers from warm climates like those in Dahomey, Samoa, and Java, being forced to wear native clothing could be very uncomfortable and even dangerous. Exposure in Chicago's cold weather had killed most of the animals the Javanese had brought with them to display. Cold might also have been a factor in the deaths of the Esquimaux baby and the
deaths of the Javanese newborn and the baby's mother. Esquimaux, who were at least used to the cold, had a harder time with the August weather. They did have lighter than normal clothing for summer, but fair visitors were disappointed at not seeing them in their winter clothing.

Village managers were under the (mostly correct) impression that visitors wanted to see uncivilized people, so they told their employees to cater to that notion. Teresa Dean visited the Pueblo Indians living in the Aztec Village and discovered that they were much more educated than they let on. They pretended not to be able to speak English, but when spoken to in Spanish they admitted knowing English fluently. Said Dean: "Their managers have evidently impressed upon them the fact that they are better drawing cards if they do not know too much about civilization" (White City Chips 319).

Americans found it exciting to be up close to "heathens," and felt adventurous and courageous by visiting the villages. Some visitors would talk about villagers' ugliness and savagery right to their faces, assuming the inhabitants couldn't understand. One Native American who was particularly annoyed by this behavior was Antonio Apache, who lived in the Indian Encampments. This man had been well-educated and was, in fact, an assistant to F.W. Putnam of the Department of Ethnology. Some sightseers who didn't know this often acted as if they thought he was about to scalp them. Teresa Dean recounted a story about how Antonio reacted to one group of sightseers who were talking about how savage-looking he was. He had a number of wigs from the Anthropological Village in his tent, so he went in and started throwing them out: "With a yell that would
have done credit to the fright of a pioneer settler, the sightseers scampered away from the Antonio-Apache-Private tent" (White City Chips 333).

Many of the Midway performers that were more educated, well-mannered, and modest than some of the Americans who ogled them, were understandably disgusted with their treatment by both visitors and fair organizers. Many villagers had come to the fair because they had heard that America was a great, civilized country. They also certainly hoped to make a lot of money. Midway villagers had been told that all Americans were rich, and were promised great fortunes if they came to the fair. Sadly, many villagers left Chicago feeling cheated and disillusioned.

Villagers who had heard so much about how civilized America was supposed to be were disappointed in its citizens. A Hindu fingernail artist, who belonged to a high caste, was surprised that so many American visitors were less educated than he was, yet treated him like an inferior (Dean, White City Chips 322). The Dahomeyans and Samoans were particularly annoyed with Americans, who kept asking them if they were cannibals. The Dahomeyans became so tired of these questions that they put a placard outside the entrance to the village asking that visitors to stop asking such questions ("Plaisance Men are Objecting").

Other villagers experienced their own difficulties. The Esquimaux, for example, were extremely ill-treated by their managers. They had been brought to Chicago in the fall of 1892 so they could get acclimatized to the city, but their village was practically inhabitable. Although the managers were collecting admission fees to the village even before the fair opened, they weren't feeding the inhabitants properly. There was a marked
lack of food in the camp. Esquimaux told reporters that they were being cheated out of their wages and weren't allowed to leave their encampment ("The Esquimaux Village"). Once the press publicized the plight of the Esquimaux, an officer of the British army who had helped gather the people for the village, came to Chicago to investigate. He found that the Esquimaux' living conditions were indeed deplorable and prophesied that many of the villagers would not live to see their homes again. Still, the Exposition authorities took no action. Finally, the villagers took the matter into their own hands. Because an Esquimau and an Arab had gotten into a fight, the two men had been brought to court for a hearing. While there, the judge heard that the Esquimaux were not allowed to leave their encampment, and he ruled that the villagers could not be kept against their will. Immediately, five families left the village ("Exodus of Esquimaux"). It was not long before a theatrical producer started exhibiting these Esquimau families off the fairgrounds.

The Esquimaux were not the only villagers to be forced to stay in their village. The residents of the Streets in Cairo could not exit their area in the fair's early days when the electricity had not yet been provided, and even after that, they needed permission to leave. The Dahomeyans had to stay in their village, too. Those villagers that did walk the fairgrounds or visited downtown Chicago found that they were so conspicuous that they had trouble finding any privacy. European villagers from the German, Austrian, and Irish Villages did not have this problem. This may be one reason there were fewer newspaper reports of the Europeans' private actions. Many of the non-white villagers learned to wear western-style clothing when not working, so that they would be less noticeable.
In addition to changing their manner of dress in order to fit in with Americans better, some of the villagers who didn't know English tried to learn it. Teresa Dean reported that the Javanese started asking visitors to their village to name everything in English. Once they learned enough of the language and enough about American behavior, they became more aware of the rude things Americans were saying about them. While some villagers may not have completely comprehended the Americans' patronizing behavior toward them, managers were understandably angry. In August, the Java Village sponsors boarded the gates in protest of their poor treatment by the Exposition directors. The Exposition had been trying to collect payment for the bond which gave Midway concessions the right to charge admission and sell their products. Since the Javanese managers had originally been led to believe that the Javanese Village was going to be on the main fairgrounds as an ethnological exhibit, and not on the Midway Plaisance, they had not paid the bond. To submit to this fee on top of the percentages of receipts they had to pay was too much for the village managers. The Village's stockholders wrote a letter of complaint to President Higinbotham. One of the stockholders, G.L. De Bruyn, told the Chicago Record that Higinbotham's reply was anything but polite:

He grew insulting and said that he did not invite us to come here. He told us that we could not read or write the English language and that he did not want any more insulting letters from us. . . . He told us that we were not grateful for the favors we had received. . . . He was insulting, said we lacked generosity, whatever he may mean by that, and finally dismissed us like a servant. ("Java Village Closed")

The manager of the village, J.M. Kalff, decided the gates would remain closed until the Exposition authorities agreed to a ten percent concession rather than the current one of fifty percent. If not, the Javanese would leave the fairgrounds. Kalff told the Chicago
Times: "We have been treated like persons of dubious character by many of the officials of this exposition, and the treatment we and other foreigners are receiving is becoming known abroad" ("May Quit the Midway"). President Higinbotham answered the charges, saying that the Javanese had signed a contract stating the percentages they were to pay, and if they left Chicago, they would be breaking that contract ("Close Bamboo Gates"). Eventually, the village reopened, apparently with no change in payments.

Besides feeling patronized, another problem Midway workers experienced was that after the danse du ventre scandal, people started treating the Midway as if it were a den of iniquity. Happily for village managers, attendance went up, but complaints of the Midway's immorality rose as well. Midway barkers started competing for audiences more loudly than they had before, using the publicity surrounding Midway dancing as a draw. Midway attractions that didn't have dancers before, like the Eiffel Tower exhibit, started adding them. Soon, visitors didn't know which performances were "authentic" and which were frauds. By September, the noise on the Midway from competing barkers grew so strong that the Exposition officials banned barkers from speaking. In protest of this ruling, the Dahomey Village closed its doors. To evade fines and still attract visitors, some villages resorted to using signs or pantomimes. The Hungarian Café, for example, had a sign which said: "$100 fine for talking, but the show talks." The Persian theatre sign read: "This is the place you read so much about where the girls are" ("Dahomey Keeps Shut").

Visitors to the fair were very worried about being cheated, not only by allegedly fraudulent Midway shows, but by the Exposition as a whole. From the day the Exposition
opened, newspapers and word-of-mouth reports had told the public that prices were overly high on the fairgrounds and that visitors were being gouged. People even started bringing their own lunches, to avoid paying too much for a meal. The fair organizers had to work hard to convince the public that their restaurants served good meals for reasonable prices. On the Midway, the fact that so many attractions required an extra fee troubled the thrifty Americans. And when reporters started suggesting some shows were "fakes," visitors became skeptical and even more reluctant to part with their hard-earned money. Two of the shows that were suspected of being frauds were the beauty show and the Dahomey Village. Some said the Dahomeyans were really black Americans, not Africans, and that the women in the beauty show were not from the countries they were supposed to be from. Most other exhibits also came under scrutiny. In the *Columbian Gallery: A Portfolio of Photographs of the World's Fair*, the caption to a photograph called a "Trio of Oriental Gamblers" shows the type of cynicism that abounded on the Midway: "... is it in the bounds of possibility that some of these gorgeous Turks, naked South Sea Islanders and stalwart Arabians are no other than citizens of our own colored race made up for the occasion?" Since visitors didn't know which shows to spend their money on, barkers were indeed needed to induce people to part with their money and come in the village gates. Teresa Dean talked about how one barker did his job with the ban in place: First, a dancer played a tambourine to attract the crowd. Then the barker spoke quietly:

> This is the only show on the Plaisance which tells the truth. That is the reason why we are allowed to talk on the outside. All the rest of the shows have been shut up because they cannot tell the truth. They were getting the crowds to come into the fake shows. We tell the truth, and it is proven by
the fact that right in this crowd there are seated detectives employed by the World's Fair officials who are watching us. If I didn't tell the truth they would stop my talking. But you see they don't stop it. We are the only ones allowed to talk on the Midway (White City Chips 363).

The fair directors finally lifted this ban against barkers in the first half of October.

It was ironic that the increase of dancing on the Midway and the resulting furor stemmed directly from the Board of Lady Managers' attempts to shut the danse du ventre down. Interestingly, one of the actions the Board of Lady Managers had contemplated taking towards Midway women before the danse du ventre controversy was to take the money from the sale of the Isabella quarters and devote it to educating "their foreign sisters on the Midway" ("Women of the Fair Meet"). Apparently, no more was done about this suggestion. In fact, some of the Midway women were already well-educated. Most of the Samoans had gone to missionary schools, and many of the Syrian women in the Bedouin Encampment had gone to the American University in Beirut. Americans didn't know how to react to these educated women. Some visitors to the Samoan village even expressed disappointment that the villagers had been "drawn from those groups most influenced by Western cultures" (Scott 275). And the women in the Bedouin village were looked upon with "a good deal of curiosity as they were quite as intelligent as their lords" (Picturesque World's Fair 97).

When the publicity surrounding the danse du ventre got under way, a group of Midway villagers were intelligent enough to try to change the attitudes of white women toward their work. On 8 August 1893, nine women from the Midway villages came to a Board of Lady Managers' meeting. The group consisted of five Turkish women and four Arab women from Damascus. Two of the Damascenes were dancers. An interpreter

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came with them and made a short speech about the women's lives. Knowing that the Board was interested in women's work, the interpreter explained that the women came from a country where women were all expected to work, and did work "although their opportunities in the industrial arts were very limited" ("Minutes"). Like most Midway women, the Turkish villagers emphasized domestic arts in their work/life displays. The visitors invited the Board members to visit their village on the Midway so they could see for themselves the kind of work they did, and gave them season passes so they could do so. There is no record, as far as I can discover, that the Lady Managers took up the invitation. As this meeting took place just at the time the Board was demanding that the danse du ventre exhibits be closed, it is likely that the villagers were attempting to show the Board that they were not the immoral heathens the ladies perceived them to be. This meeting may have had an impact on the Board's decision not to renege on the invitations for the Midway dancers to the International Ball. Hopefully, the meeting also helped focus the Board of Lady Managers' attention on the work that Midway women were doing rather than on their supposed immorality. Though there were many performing artists on the Midway, a much greater percentage of the women were artisans. It was bad enough that respectable women who were exhibiting the traditional dances of their culture had to undergo charges of lewdness, but perhaps worse was that all other Midway women, by association, started to get bad reputations. Even Lady Aberdeen of the Irish Village felt the need to defend her female villagers from charges of immorality. Near the close of the fair, on October 21, she spoke to the Board of Lady Managers: "The forty Irish girls whom we brought out with us go back the pure, true, sunny maidens that came out with
us, and I know that my friends on the Board of Lady Managers will rejoice that I am able to state this without fear of challenge, but in a spirit of deep thankfulness ("Lady Aberdeen Returns Thanks").

Who knows what exactly Lady Aberdeen was thankful for. The Board of Lady Manager's overreaction to the danse du ventre seemed to sanction the ill-treatment of Midway Villagers. If the villagers were uncivilized, as the Board's actions suggested, they didn't need to be treated with respect. Teresa Dean noticed this behavior: "These Americans seem to take it for granted that the people from 'foreign parts' have no code of etiquette. When, as a matter of fact, the laws of precedence and deference to rank and dignity are much more rigid in any heathen country than in America" (White City Chips 351).

Regrettably, many of the villagers probably left Chicago thinking that Americans were stupid, rude, liars and cheats. They had worked diligently to show off their culture, their arts, and their goods, but were rewarded with insults and patronizing behavior. Though women on the Midway could have benefited from some of the discussions about women that were taking place at the Exposition, the Board of Lady Managers was too narrow-minded to see the women as capable of intelligent thought. Therefore, both groups missed a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to learn positive things from each other.

_Chicago_

Before the Exposition, as many as 3,000 actors were living in Chicago. In May 1893, the Chicago Evening Journal interviewed a dramatic agent, A. Milo Bennett, who
said that this number was increasing because of the World's Fair. Bennett said that in previous years, Eastern managers hadn't looked at Chicago actors because they were "not pretty to look at, untidy, shiftless, tobacco-stained individuals who knew nothing of and cared less for the better traditions of the stage" ("Is an Actor's Heaven"). Bennett said that by 1893, however, many Chicago actors were being recruited to replace other actors in touring shows from New York. Also, Chicago actors were recruited for tours further west.

The actor's life in Chicago during the fair season had its particular problems. It was customary for Sundays to be dark nights in the theatre, but because the fair brought so many potential audience members to Chicago, there was a great opportunity for money to be made by having Sunday night performances. Some managers even added Sunday matinees. And in a time when theatres were not air-conditioned, seats were filled even during the hottest summer nights. The Chicago Evening Journal said: "It is unfortunate, from the actor's point of view, that the public will persist on going to the theater when the thermometer is flirting with 100 degrees by day and showing little less decorum at night" ("Woes of the Actors"). In this era, actors had no union to help them keep from being overworked and underpaid, so they couldn't easily refuse to do extra performances. During the summer of 1893, however, some actors did try to strike. The Chicago Tribune reported that the chorus and ballet girls in America had planned to strike just before curtain on opening night. They were going to ask for an increase of three dollars a week, but apparently they backed down ("America is Chaos"). A week later, the extras in the show went on strike in the middle of the play. Their complaint was that they were only

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being paid twenty-five cents a night but had to climb five flights of stairs to get to their
dressing rooms. Plus they had four changes of costume. They wanted to be paid double.
The Tribune said that the extras' absence didn't affect the smooth running of the play, and
the managers told the extras that replacement actors could easily be found ("Supernumer-
aries").

Though actors didn't have as much time to enjoy themselves as was usual during
Chicago's summer theatre seasons, the hundreds of actors in Chicago that year still had
many opportunities during the day to go to the fairgrounds. On one afternoon, Amy
Leslie saw actresses Corrinne, Annie Blancke, Marie Burroughs, Lillian Russell, Louise
Elssing, and Sydney Armstrong all on the Midway eating lunch in Old Vienna ("Dull
Time"). Leslie had remarked in June on how visitors to the Midway were excited with the
fantasy that wicked things were going on there. She noted that "the only visitors who are
not entirely carried away with the sights of the congress of nations are people from the
stage. . . . It is a panorama of 'make-ups,' from Blarney Castle to the Ferris Wheel" ("Amy
Leslie at the Fair" 23 June 1893). She continued:

Every actress of experience has worn the pretty frocks and spoken the
musical brogue of the spinning colleens in Donegal castle. She has
coquetted in the veils of Indian princesses and groaned as African slaves.
The customs of most nations form a part of the study for stage
representation, and all this Midway Plaisance is simply behind-the-scenes
familiarity and proof of accurate information and character appreciation
already a part of the trade they follow.

While she was on the Midway, Leslie overheard one dancer say: "Let's go to the forestry
[building] and see nature. This is like theatrical art."
For women who were hoping to find members of their sex working on the same
plane as men, they had only to look to the stage. Georgia Cayvan, in her speech to the
World's Congress of Representative Women, brought the audience's attention to this fact:

In particular should women recognize the progressive spirit and influence
of the stage, for the dramatic profession has been the pioneer in granting to
women the privileges which in other intellectual callings they are still
striving to compass; the first to rise above the narrowness that makes sex a
barrier to success, and to recompense woman's talent and ability with the
same measure of fame and fortune commanded by men. The women of the
stage, by their convincing genius and determination, have made the breach
in the wall of prejudice which women of other professions are widening
every day. It has not been to us an easy victory, but we went about it
sooner than you, and thus we have the advantage. ("Speak")

As both Helena Modjeska's and Julia Marlowe's speeches had shown, women had been
working on the stage for centuries. Though there had been a great deal of prejudice
against actresses since that time, they hoped that now that the idea of working women was
gaining acceptance, prejudice would give way to admiration.

Leading actresses visiting Chicago for the fair season were quick to assert in the
press that their profession had given them the financial independence no other career
would have offered. They also stressed that the stage had been an elevating influence.
Sydney Armstrong, a leading lady with Charles Frohman's company, said that her
profession had made her "a better daughter, a more helpful sister, and a truer woman" than
she could have been without it. With her income, she could be a financial help to friends
and family ("Fond of Stage Life"). Clara Morris, in her speech to the Woman's Congress,
expressed her gratitude "to the profession that has given me under God, every good thing
I ever had." Besides giving her a good salary, the theatre also gave her an education. At a
time when there were still few colleges or universities open to women, Morris found the
theatre a great teacher: "It takes you by the hand and leads you by paths of romance and
dramatic incident from land to land, from age to age, and, best of all, from poet to poet,
till you reach the knees of Shakespeare's self" ("Speak").

Even though many actresses gave glowing accounts of how the theatre was
woman's truest friend, they still acknowledged the disadvantages of a theatrical career.
Most implied that it was easy for unwitting young women to be corrupted. Sydney
Armstrong simply said that actresses were deprived of "home influences" ("Fond of Stage
Life"). A columnist in the Chicago Daily News discussed more candidly some of the
hazards of being an actress. She said one of the problems was that there were too many
actresses for too few roles. With a ratio of eight male roles to four female roles in the
average play, there was no way all the available actresses could be employed ("Women
and Stage Life"). But, since acting was one of the few professions open to women, and as
it offered comparatively good wages and the hope for fame and fortune, many young
women were still trying to become actors. The columnist remarked that because
competition was so fierce, an actress needed an agent to get jobs, and some of these might
well be unscrupulous. Though the columnist couched her words, she implied that both
agents and managers could expect sexual favors from actresses in return for jobs. She said
that to get cast in a show, actresses needed "influence." The columnist said that primarily,
influence "means money—that lacking, whatever obtains it."

There was no byline for the above article, but one woman who wrote about the
stage for the Chicago Daily News and may have been the columnist was Amy Leslie. As a
former actress herself, she knew the pitfalls of the stage first hand. Leslie was originally

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from Iowa, but she studied music at the Chicago Conservatory of Music and in Europe
before becoming a light opera soprano. By the mid-1880's she had achieved some fame in
her profession. She had married a fellow performer around 1880, but in 1889, while she
was preparing for a role in the show Castles in the Air, her son died of diphtheria. After
that tragedy, Leslie quit the stage permanently. After her husband left her, she settled in
Chicago with her mother. At her mother's suggestion, Leslie wrote a review of Castles in
the Air in 1890 for the Chicago Daily News and the paper promptly hired her as a drama
critic. She remained in this position for forty years (Arnquist).

Amy Leslie was well aware of the changes that had taken place in theatre
organization in recent decades, some of which actors found detrimental to their craft. In
earlier decades, actors worked in stock companies, which were permanently established
theatres which used the same group of actors to perform a repertoire of several plays.
New actors who joined the company learned their craft on the job and, as they progressed
in talent, moved into better roles. By the end of the century, however, most stock
companies had disappeared as the combination show became prevalent. Combinations, as
defined by Benjamin McArthur were "theatrical companies that performed a single play for
the season on a prearranged tour" (9). The production used the same actors, costumes,
scenery, etc. as the original. For this type of show, actors could be hired without having
had any training. Beauty, youth, "influence" or a combination of these could get an
actress a job.

The Chicago Daily News columnist regretted the loss of the stock company,
because of the resulting loss of talent on the stage. She said:
We used to have stock theaters and tragedians and comedians. Now we have traveling companies and variety artists. The stock theater was a school that turned out competent actors and actresses. Now we have no schools at all and very few followers of Thespis who can act. Fame used to be the laurel crown of art on the actor or actress, hardly won and well worn. To-day popularity is the seal of notoriety, and that means instant and shifting success. ("Woman and Stage Life")

Georgia Cayvan, too, preferred the stock company for the training it provided and for its promise of producing good plays rather than simply commercial ones. In her speech at the Woman's Congress, she made a special plea for stock actresses. She said she believed that "the regeneration of the drama is in the hands of the stock company, and that, when the drama reaches its pristine glory and power among the arts, it will be the stock companies that will present, with a degree of perfection never reached before, the masterpieces of dramatic literature" ("Speak").

It would be hard to produce "masterpieces of dramatic literature" with talentless performers. It seemed that many of the actresses who were being hired for the combination companies were not only talentless, but low class. The Chicago Daily News columnist found that "the women of the stage, belonging for the most part to the lower ranks, are necessarily uncultivated and (the word is not too strong to use) vulgar." These women, the columnist suggested, could be easily led to the casting couch, and then, once they had fallen, they might also start using drugs or alcohol: "The hardships consequent upon stage life frequently lead to the use of stimulants" ("Woman and the Stage").

Georgia Cayvan thought one of the solutions to the problems actresses faced, not only regarding sexual harassment, was to have more women theatre managers:

Their tendency would naturally be to diminish the scandals which infect the atmosphere of the stage altogether too largely, to purify the relations
between the sexes so far as they meet on the theatrical platform, to apply a more exquisite refinement, a quicker and keener perception, a loftier standard and a nicer discrimination to the selection of plays, the formation of companies and the conduct of theatrical affairs. (Cayvan, "Women as Managers")

Cayvan thought women managers would be more sympathetic with actresses, and would treat them better. She said women managers would be careful to "shield the young and inexperienced from serious temptations, more thoughtful provision in regard to dressing rooms and the sanitary arrangements of theaters." Cayvan also believed that women managers would be more likely to hire women for their talent than for their beauty.

Unfortunately, there were not that many women managers around. Even if they had been in place, they probably wouldn't have changed some of the other problems for actors (not just women) that were common. For one, actors weren't paid for rehearsals. An actor could get a job, rehearse for weeks and then get fired without ever having been paid. Or if the play did bad business, it could close and an actor could lose his or her job. Still, even with all the drawbacks, the number of actors and showmen grew over 1,000% between 1870 and 1900. Only the job of commercial traveler grew more in that time. (Perfect Cities 9).

With all the lower class women flooding the acting profession, actresses wanting to improve their position in society had to fight the impression that actresses were inherently vulgar and stupid. Julia Marlowe acknowledged in her Congress speech that male actors had had a hard time gaining respectability in society, but said "it is not generally known how much more fierce has been the strife in regard to women on the
stage, and how much more difficult it has been for them to convince the world at large of the importance of their hard-won position, and their beneficial influence in dramatic art ("Speak").

The public's impression of acting based on the behavior of untalented lower-class actresses was certainly an obstacle that women like Marlowe had to fight against. Another obstacle was that many people thought actresses were flighty. In the "Woman and the Stage" article, the Chicago Daily News columnist said that "the average actress's life and the butterfly's life are pretty much alike. Both creatures are irresponsible; both are attracted by the shining things of life. They are alike in their gay aimlessness, in regard for the day only; alike in their unconsciousness of real life, and alike in their fate. . . ." A reporter for the Chicago Evening Journal also thought actresses were irresponsible.

Before the session on Woman and the Drama, the reporter said that she expected that the actresses would be late if they showed up at all. "Actresses are rather uncertain folk. . . . If more than two out of the six show up it will surprise a good many people." She believed the public could only count on Modjeska and Cayvan to come ("Actresses are Late").

Helena Modjeska had actually already been in town for a few days before her session. She had attended sessions of the Woman's Congress and was well-prepared for her speech. In fact, she had already published an article on the same subject. Georgia Cayvan had also written articles for publication. The Chicago Evening Journal reporter said that Georgia Cayvan had the reputation of being a good writer. Her writings on several topics, not only theatre, had appeared regularly in newspapers and magazines.
About Cayvan, the Chicago Evening Journal said: "She is a bright, intellectual woman, with a love for literary things" ("Actresses are Late"). Cayvan was apparently honored to be asked to speak at the Congress because she wasn't really a star like the other actresses involved.

It was partly Helena Modjeska's drawing power as a star that induced May Wright Sewall to ask her to speak at the Congress again, this time as part of a discussion on the position of women in modern life. The session involved delegates from around the world speaking about their particular experiences. There were supposed to have been speeches by delegates from Russian Poland at this session. However, they did not appear, and instead sent some statistical information on Polish women. According to Helena Modjeska, the women probably failed to come to Chicago because they were afraid of possible conflict with their government (Memories and Impressions 512). Since May Wright Sewall wanted a representative from Poland at the Congress, she asked Modjeska to speak in her countrywomen's stead. After some urging, Modjeska consented. In her biography, Modjeska described the scene:

The auditorium was packed, and I had some difficulty in reaching the platform. The beginning of my speech was an excuse for the absence of my countrywomen from the Congress. I explained that they could not do anything so independent as speaking freely upon the situation of Polish women under the Russian and Prussian government, and then I sketched a few pictures of our existence, such as I knew and had read about. (512)

Without much time to prepare, the actress was not particularly careful in choosing her words and instead "said such words as [her] heart prompted [her] at the moment." The next day, most of the Chicago papers talked about her address, and "added their own scathing comments upon the governments which had dismembered Poland, and especially
upon Russia." Apparently, excerpts from these articles were also sent to European newspapers. Modjeska thought little more about this event until two years later, when she went to Poland. She was supposed to appear at Warsaw's Imperial Theatre, but when she arrived, she was denied permission to perform. Not only was she prevented from performing, but an imperial decree was then issued which forbade the actress from entering "any part of the Russian territory," including Russian Poland. This ban was not lifted during Modjeska's lifetime. Her biographer, Marion M. Coleman, said that the words Modjeska spoke at the Woman's Congress "were to prove so important in their impact not only on her own future, but on the Polish national spirit, that they have gone down in history as Modjeska's most significant statement of her long career" (623).

Helena Modjeska's speech on Poland was an example of activism that the public did not expect from actresses. Unlike today, when actors are often publicly involved in social and political activism, this activity on the part of actors was less apparent to the public in 1893. While charity work and reform work was an important part of the ideal woman's activities, the public's perception of actresses was that they were not interested in these areas. The introductory note to the section on Woman and the Drama in the memorial volume for the World's Congress of Representative Women remarks on the oddity of actresses' participation in reform work:

> Formerly artists and reformers had held aloof from each other. This was not unnatural, since an artist's development is individual and her career is, in a certain sense, isolation; while reformers, working from impersonal motives for purposes outside of themselves, naturally seek strength for a cause through the organization of its supporters (Sewall, *World's Congress of Representative Women* 161).
This comment suggests the popular belief that actresses worked only for personal motives, without any concerns for the good of society. When May Wright Sewall introduced the actresses at the Congress, she also made a remark about actresses' lack of participation in charitable endeavors. She said that the actresses were adding the "flash and sparkle of their brilliant gifts to the glow which their sisters diffuse about them as they move along the less conspicuous or less alluring paths of philanthropy, charity, education, the industries, and the reforms" ("Begin the Congress"). Though the public may not have recognized actresses' participation in these "less alluring paths," many actresses were heavily involved in these activities. For example, actresses regularly held benefits for needy actors or other charities. Annie Oakley gave money freely to charities, especially those helping orphans. During the Exposition, Oakley participated in the Wild West Show's benefit for homeless children, and Lillian Russell was on the bill for a benefit for the widows and children of firefighters killed in the Exposition's Cold Storage Fire. Russell was also a member of the recently-formed Professional Woman's League of Theatrical Performers. This organization's goals were to strive for better compensation and treatment for actresses, and to aid sick or destitute women performers. Georgia Cayvan was also an activist. In 1889, on the twenty-first birthday of Sorosis, a feminist organization, Cayvan spoke about the Actor's Fair Fund Association (Business Woman's Journal).

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6 On July 10th, the Exposition's Cold Storage Building burned down. This building was used for storing perishable goods used on the fairgrounds. The upper story also had a skating rink, dining room, kitchen and dance floor. It is probable that the fire started from a gasoline blowpot that an electrician was using. Twelve men including four members of fire department, and eight members of the Exposition force, lost their lives. Others were injured. Over one hundred thousand dollars was collected for charity.
The Woman's Club Sorosis was organized in March 1868, when the New York
Press Club tried to keep women journalists from attending its banquet honoring Charles
Dickens. Horace Greeley, who was to preside over the event, told the banquet committee
that he would back out of hosting unless the women were invited. The committee did
send invitations, but they dripped with sarcasm: "If a sufficient number of ladies can be
found to prevent each other from feeling lonesome, who are willing to pay fifteen dollars
each for their tickets, they will be allowed to purchase them" ("History of Sorosis").
Unsurprisingly, the women passed up the invitation and instead decided to start their own
club. Sorosis' constitution said that its object was "to bring together women engaged in
literary, scientific and philanthropic pursuits with the view of rendering them helpful to
each other and useful to society." One of the organization's nine standing committees was
drama.

Though the club allowed actresses to join, its acceptance of women in this
profession was not complete. In June 1893, the Illustrated American accused the group of
blackballing actresses from being elected to office. The magazine said on 17 June 1893
that two actresses, Lotta Crabtree and Mrs. John Dillon, were kept from being elected and
suggested prejudice was the cause:

The action of Sorosis was based upon the profession of these two ladies, a
profession which they adorn and which is quite as elevating as the
novelist's, the honors of which are coveted by many of the members of
Sorosis, and which—par parenthese—few, if any, will ever attain. The day
for such narrow-minded action is past. ("Sorosis and the Stage")

The article said that the stage is no longer proscribed and actors should no longer be
considered social pariahs. A week later, the Illustrated American suggested that the real
reason the actresses were black-balled was that they had discouraged the plays a high-ranking Sorosis member had written. ("Sorosis Settles the Drama").

Actresses' participation in club life and charity work helped raise the public's impression of the theatrical profession. These activities showed that actresses were not working only for personal gain, but for the well-being of the less fortunate. Their speeches on the profession of acting brought to women's rights advocates the realization that actresses had been working alongside men for centuries. Therefore, they could provide a model for other women wanting equality in the work force. However, actresses had not solved the labor problems of their profession, so could do little to shed light on how to help the female factory worker. The average actress, like the factory worker, had to work long hours for low pay in unsanitary, and sometimes dangerous, conditions. Sexual harassment was rampant in both occupations. Many leading actresses hoped that a return to the stock company would lead to both better trained actresses and better working conditions.

The Board of Lady Managers may not have been particularly successful at showing the plight of the factory worker in its exhibits in the Woman's Building, but Bertha Palmer's speeches certainly brought attention to the fact that women needed to work. And the existence of the Woman's Building and its contents made sure that no one who visited the fair would be able to ignore that women could, and did work. For women who visited the fair or those who simply read about it in newspapers, the pride of knowing that women formed such a huge part of the activities and exhibits must have been overpowering. Because Bertha Palmer and most members of the Board of Lady

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Managers assumed an apolitical stance, even a very conservative woman could feel and express pride without worrying about being labeled an extremist. The combination of the Board of Lady Managers' conservatism and the suffragists' liberalism may have eased many women into believing women should have more power in society. Susan B. Anthony and many other suffragists were able to peacefully coexist with Bertha Palmer, but regrettably, Phoebe Couzins' very public complaints against the Board of Lady Managers tainted the image of both suffragists and Mrs. Palmer.7

One would have hoped that both the Board of Lady Managers and suffragists could have gained insight on women workers by talking to women on the Midway. Unfortunately, the language barrier aided in Americans' impressions that Midway women were "freaks" and not people with ideas and feelings. Without talking to Midway women, the Board of Lady Managers made assumptions about their work and morality. Some white women even made negative judgments without seeing Midway performances, much less discussing the work with the village inhabitants. While Midway women, too, could have learned a lot about how to improve their lives as working women, Americans' patronizing attitude and behavior probably kept Midway women from finding any value in what the American women said.

One horrifying footnote to the fate of women workers at the fair is the story of Herman Mudgett (a.k.a. H.H. Holmes), a con man and murderer who built a hotel not far

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7 In 1896, Couzins, who was in ill health, appealed to Susan B. Anthony's suffrage organization for aid. Anthony refused. Anthony told the San Francisco Chronicle that "[Couzins] has attacked all the leaders, saying the most bitter and unkind things of all of us, and lately she has repudiated suffrage entirely, saying she preferred to work with men" ("No Suffrage Fund for Miss Couzins"). Later, Couzins repeatedly attacked Anthony and women's suffrage. She said that she had reversed her earlier beliefs in women's equality and said that women should be "homekeepers."
from the fairgrounds. He lured as many as two hundred young women into "Holmes' Castle" (as the building came to be known) to live and work in his fly-by-night corporations. His bizarre three-story building contained about one hundred rooms of varying shapes and sizes. Holmes seduced and murdered many of the women who came to live there. After Holmes was arrested in Boston in 1894 for murdering his partner in fraud, B.F. Pitzel, and three of Pitzel's children, police entered Holmes Castle to look for evidence of criminal activity. In his essay on Holmes in the book Chicago Murders, John Bartlow Martin describes what police discovered: "They found that the entire second floor was a labyrinth designed for evil. It was cluttered with staircases that led nowhere, blind passageways, false partitions, hinged walls, rooms without doors or windows" (80). There were dozens of rooms designed for various methods of torture and death. Martin says: "Nearly all the rooms had gas connections, some were lined with iron plates, some had false floors concealing tiny airless chambers, some were rigged with blowtorch-like appliances. Just behind the asphyxiation chamber was another chute down which bodies could be dropped to the basement" (81). In the cellar, police found a crematory, quicklime pits and vats of acid. Here, police found the bones of the women he had seduced and murdered.

After the fair, newspapers had reported that many people had vanished while visiting the fair, and estimates suggest Holmes alone could have killed as many as two hundred women. Holmes was convicted and hanged for the murder of Pitzel and his children, but he was never tried for the Chicago murders. Because Holmes had targeted
women who had come to Chicago by themselves and who had no family connections, none of the victims' relatives reported them missing.
The Act for the World's Columbian Exposition had called for the fair to end on 30 October 1893. That Congress chose a date that was not the last day of the month appears to have been simply an oversight. Anyway, once October arrived, no one seemed to want the fair to end. On October 19, the Chicago Tribune announced that the fair would not close on the scheduled date after all. The Exposition's National Commission had decided to keep the gates open as long as the weather and the crowds held out. However, on October 20, the Tribune announced that the fair would indeed close on the appointed date. Apparently, the National Commission did not have the power to make the decision to keep the fair open, and the other entities controlling the fairgrounds saw no economic benefit to continuing the Exposition. Therefore, the program for an elaborate closing celebration was to go forward. Then something occurred that quickly put an end to even this plan.

At 5:00 p.m. on October 28, Mayor Carter Harrison went to his home after having been on the fairgrounds all day. At 6:00, he ate dinner and then decided to rest in a back room of his home. Two hours later, a man came to the door and asked to see the Mayor. The maid thought she recognized the visitor, so she went to get Harrison. The visitor
followed the maid back to the room Harrison was in, and the maid left the two men together. Before long, servants reported hearing words like "I won't do it," followed by three shots. The visitor ran away, but servants found the Mayor on the floor. He had been shot three times, in the hand, the gut, and just above the heart. Twenty minutes later, with his son and daughter by his side, the Mayor died ("Harrison is Killed"). The assassin was Eugene Patrick Prendergast. Prendergast had hoped to be hired as Corporation Counsel for the city, but when he was passed over, he became incensed. He came to Harrison's home to induce the Mayor to change his mind. When Harrison refused, Prendergast killed him.

Instead of a festive climax to the Exposition, there was only an austere, solemn gathering in the fair's Festival Hall. Speeches were somber, and flags flew at half mast. Only a week before, the Chicago Tribune had sounded excited about the fair remaining open, but on October 31, a reporter wrote: "The fair is closed now and thank god. Now we can rest and get back to normal" ("The Close of the Fair"). "Normal," however, would be a long time in coming. The utopian dream that the White City represented soon gave way to reality. The unemployment that had been somewhat alleviated by the fair now rose drastically, and the homeless population of Chicago rose with it. The poor, who could not afford to go to the Exposition when it was open, now lived in the deserted buildings. It was not long, though, before fires burned the White City to rubble, and the homeless were ousted even from this refuge.¹ In May 1894 workers for George Pullman went on strike,

¹ According to Hubert Howe Bancroft in The Book of the Fair, a major fire on 8 January 1894 damaged several Exposition buildings, including the Casino, the Music Hall, the Agricultural Building and the Manufactures Building. Another fire, which occurred on 5 July 1894, completely destroyed most of the major structures of the White City. Bancroft states that the origin of the fires was never determined.

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protesting the huge pay cuts Pullman had imposed on them in order to keep his company afloat during the economic depression. The striking workers joined the American Railroad Union, and together, workers and union leaders waged one of the most significant battles in the history of labor.

The White City

In January 1894, Teresa Dean commented on the disappearance of the White City: "Out of the ashes something may come more beautiful than what we knew before, but never again will come what the year 1893 has given us" (425). Certainly, the utopia that the Exposition had envisioned did not come to be, but there were many advances, especially in the way people viewed women. Many times during the fair season, women's issues were plastered on the front page of every newspaper in the country. The speeches of socialites like Bertha Palmer were printed alongside those of suffragists. Also, even African-American women, in at least a few cases, were able to publish their thoughts in the newspapers and journals of the white press. No one who read a newspaper could have avoided learning what these women's hopes were for their sex. Ida Husted Harper, author of a three-volume biography of Susan B. Anthony, wrote: "It is doubtful if the whole years of agitation made as many converts to equal suffrage as did the great object lesson of the Woman's Congress" (qtd. in Darney 113). Because American women did not gain the right to vote until 1920 (fourteen years after Susan B. Anthony's and just two years after Bertha Palmer's deaths), many social historians have focused on the Edwardian era
feminists whose activism can be directly linked to the passage of the 19th amendment. However, the activities at the World's Columbian Exposition were crucial in providing women with examples of female leadership. The work of the Board of Lady Managers and other women's groups proved that women could effectively create and run organizations. At the World's Congresses, women discussed the political and social issues affecting women from all walks of life and thereby gained allies in the search for improved living and working conditions for women. The networking opportunities available at the fair ensured the growth of both women's organizations and women's political involvement.

Even though Bertha Palmer was not a suffragist, Ida Harper gave both Mrs. Palmer and Susan B. Anthony credit for making the World's Columbian Exposition a success in promoting equal rights for women. These two women allowed one another to make their own choices about the images they wanted to present at the fair and refused to criticize each other. Thus, they were able together to attract a very broad range of people to their messages. Rachel Foster Avery, who had assisted May Wright Sewall in organizing the World's Congress of Representative Women, later wrote in a letter that Susan B. Anthony's choice not to become involved in the leadership of the Board of Lady Managers "was perhaps the wisest thing under the circumstances, for the Board, as appointed, being unconnected with suffrage, proved an immense source of education to the conservative women of the world--an education needed by the radical women of our own ranks" (qtd. in Darney 124).
Bertha Palmer's decision to avoid linking suffrage with the mission of the Board of Lady Managers was carefully calculated. By performing the role of the ideal woman, Mrs. Palmer became an icon that even the most conservative of women looked up to in admiration. Those women who tended to disregard what they saw as suffragists' political extremism hung on Mrs. Palmer's every word. But, though Mrs. Palmer presented a new ideal of womanhood that would allow women to work outside the home, she reinforced most other aspects of the ideal. Therefore, her performance at the fair was as much backward-looking as it was forward-looking. Even as she and the members of the Board of Lady Managers promoted the excellent work of women in industry, science, and the arts, they strengthened the idea that women's most important occupations were as wives, mothers, and homemakers.

As Ida Husted Harper said, the speakers at the fair did attract many women to the suffrage movement. But the technological displays at the fair may have done just as much to help the cause of women's rights. The Woman's Building and other exhibit buildings displayed many labor saving devices that could ease women's domestic work, and for some, make it possible for them to become more active in the public sphere. All manner of electric and gas appliances, such as refrigerators, stoves, dishwashers, and washing machines showed women that they could do their work more efficiently. Though many of these items would not come into common use for some time, they would eventually make an enormous impact on women's lives. Other inventions on display, such as the telephone and typewriter, were also influential in changing women's lives. In the coming decades, women primarily held the jobs involved in working with these two machines.
Unfortunately, the Lady Managers' belief that women were the moral centers of society led them to think they had the authority to charge the performers of the *danse du ventre* on the Midway with immorality. Without knowing anything about the performance conventions of the various cultures represented or about the personal characteristics of the individual dancers, the Board of Lady Managers condemned the dances and performers.

At the end of the nineteenth century, America's elite citizens were attempting to become the arbiters of taste, culture, and beauty, and these matters tended to be associated with women as part of their sphere of influence. So the Board of Lady Managers believed not only that they had authority in matters of morality but also in matters of taste and culture. By damning the *danse du ventre*, both morally and artistically, the Board of Lady Managers ended up reinforcing the idea that the white race and its art forms were the apex of civilization. The Midway performers, who had little ability to respond to the charges of lewdness because of language barriers and lack of social status, had to go on with their work, knowing that their reputations had been marred. The members of the Board of Lady Managers had tried to profit by comparing the Midway performers' allegedly primitive dress and behavior to their own, but the Lady Managers' attempted censorship of the *danse du ventre* illustrated their sometimes petty and hypocritical nature. Little is known of what happened to the Midway performers after the fair—whether they went back home or whether they tried to make lives in America. At least one performer, the woman who became Little Egypt (if indeed she was a dancer on the Midway), stayed in the United States and used the negative publicity surrounding the belly dance to her
advantage. The public, instead of being driven away from the danse du ventre by its perceived immorality, made belly dancing a fad.

Although most of the commentary on the Midway's non-western conventions of theatre and dance was negative in 1893, there were artists who were beginning to find inspiration in these traditions. Mary Cassatt was heavily influenced by Japanese art, and Frank Lloyd Wright would bring a Japanese flavor into his architecture after seeing the Ho-o-den Palace on the fairgrounds. American music, too, was affected by nonwestern styles. Scott Joplin and other African-American musicians who were in Chicago during the Exposition incorporated the syncopated rhythms of the Dahomeyans and other villagers into their compositions, creating a new style—ragtime. Perhaps there were not any American theatre artists who changed their work because of what they saw on the Midway Plaisance—at least I have not discovered any evidence of this, but in later years, theatrical practitioners and theorists, such as Antonin Artaud, praised nonwestern performances seen at other fairs and attempted to appropriate certain aspects of nonwestern theatre for their avant-garde approaches to performance.

Chicago

The leading actresses in Chicago during the Exposition were definitely not among those who would become involved in avant-garde theatre. Like Bertha Palmer and the Board of Lady Managers, actresses at the fair performed publicly in both traditional and nontraditional roles. Like members of the social elite, the actresses who spoke at the Woman's Congress tried to lead the women in their audience to "elevating" entertainment,
both by affirming that women had the authority to encourage theatre managers to produce
moral plays, and also by choosing to appear onstage in the idealized roles of classic
dramas. By suggesting, however, that the stage could be a place for moral advancement,
these actresses risked being charged with hypocrisy as the Board of Lady Managers had
been. Most of these actresses' personal lives were not free of blemish, so their attempted
moral leadership was perhaps misguided.

Though these actresses promoted the ideals of womanhood in the roles they played
onstage and in their speeches to the World's Congress, they also challenged tradition
because they were independent, working women. At the fair, they attempted to show
other women that actresses could serve as models for women wanting to enter the work
force. The intelligent and thoughtful remarks that actresses made at the World's Congress
of Representative Women helped change the view that actresses were inherently immoral
and self-serving. Their appearance at the fair provided the impression that stars of the
stage were just as much interested in helping those less fortunate than themselves as were
women in their audience. By participating in charitable activities and women's clubs,
actresses assured other women that their profession did not preclude them from helping in
the reform movements so prevalent at the end of the century. Their combination of
conservatism and activism served both to improve the public's views of the acting
profession as a career for women and to contribute to an increasing acceptance of
actresses in the social world. In turn, the theatre at the turn of the century began to attract
a much larger part of the proper middle-class audiences that had, in earlier decades, stayed
away from most performances.

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Still, even without the actresses' active attempts to promote their profession, the fair would have probably brought new audience members to the theatre. Because there were so many people in Chicago with so much time on their hands, people were bound to seek out entertainment in the theatres. Because the Exposition was so closely related to Chicago, most entertainments happening in the city seemed to be part of the fair, and therefore officially sanctioned. *America*, Buffalo Bill, and Lillian Russell all entered the collective memory of the fair as if they were present on the fairgrounds. And even though Helena Modjeska and Georgia Cayvan spoke of wanting to elevate the drama, the productions that achieved the most success during the Exposition were not the classics, but the spectacles and "leg shows."

Although the Board of Lady Managers, suffragists, and the actresses who spoke at the Congresses each promoted the view of women as moral (read chaste), social forces at work during the time were expanding the image of women to include their sexuality. Early suffragists, like Susan B. Anthony and Jane Addams, had chosen to remain unmarried rather than give up their work. However, the "new woman" that was emerging combined an independent working identity with a sexual identity. Mass entertainment had no small part in causing this change.

Whether actresses chose to take the moral high road or not, beauty and sexuality as a publicity tool were there to stay. Many young American women who aspired to achieve the independent lives began looking at actresses as models of behavior. Since actresses (whether performing in classical dramas or not), belly dancers, and the high-
kickers of the theatre stages were all on display as sexual beings, average women, too, began to display their own sexuality. Although the general public continued to perceive actresses as unconventional, admiration and respect for the acting profession increased in the years after the fair. So, even if Cayvan, Morris, Marlowe and Modjeska may not have fully succeeded in leading the masses to "elevating" drama or in proving that actresses were just as moral as other women, new audiences in the twentieth century not only came to accept and even to admire the independent lives of actresses but also to seek independence and professional opportunities in their own lives.
Figure 1: Bertha Honoré Palmer, President of the Board of Lady Managers
Figure 2: Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton

Figure 3: Carter Harrison

Figure 4: A group of Exposition planners. Left to right: Daniel H. Burnham, Director of Works; George B. Post, architect of Manufactures; M.B. Pickett, Secretary of Works; Henry Van Brunt, co-architect of Electricity; Francis D. Millet, Director of Decoration; Maitland Armstrong; Col. Edmund Rice, Commandant of the Columbian Guard; Augustus Saint-Gaudens, adviser on sculpture; Henry Sargent Codman, landscape architect; George W. Maynard, muralist for Agriculture; Charles F. McKim, architect of Agriculture; Ernest R. Graham, Assistant Director of Works; and Dion Geraldine, general supervisor of construction.
Figure 5: Court of Honor. View from Administration Building

Figure 6: Court of Honor. View from Peristyle
Figure 7: Transportation Building

Figure 8: Midway Plaisance. View from Ferris Wheel
Figure 9: The Mackaye Spectatorium. Watercolor by Childe Hassam

Figure 10: The Virginia State Building, with Spectatorium behind
Figure 11: Buffalo Bill Cody

Figure 12: Annie Oakley
Figure 13: Eleonora Duse

Figure 14: Helena Modjeska in *Camille*, 1886

Figure 15: Fanny Davenport

Figure 16: Rose Coghlan, 1888
Figure 17: Georgia Cayvan

Figure 18: Ada Rehan in *Taming of the Shrew*, 1888

Figure 19: Lillian Russell

Figure 20: Mary Anderson
Figure 21: Henry Irving in *Louis XI*

Figure 22: Constant Coquelin

Figure 23: Ellen Terry as Queen Katherine in *Henry VIII*, 1892

Figure 24: Jane Hading in *Plusque Pene*
Figure 25: Florenz Ziegfeld, Jr.

Figure 26: Poster advertising Eugene Sandow at the Trocadero
Figure 27: Dahomey Village

Figure 28: German Castle in the German Village
Figure 29: Town Hall in Old Vienna

Figure 30: Irish Village (Blarney Castle)
Figure 31: Irish Village (Donegal Castle)

Figure 32: Aztec Village
Figure 33: Bedouin Encampment

Figure 34: Quackhul Indian Encampment
Figure 35: Chinese Theatre
Figure 36: A Street in Cairo

Figure 37: Algerian Theatre
Figure 38: Persian Palace

Figure 39: Esquimaux Village
Figure 40: Lapland Village

Figure 41: India Building
Figure 42: Japanese Ho-o-den Palace

Figure 43: Moorish Palace and Ferris Wheel

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Figure 44: Chinese Woman

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Figure 45: Turkish actress (Bride in *Wedding in Damascus*)

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Figure 46: Interior of Chinese Theatre

Figure 47: Interior of Javanese Theatre
Figure 48: Samoan performers

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Figure 50: Map of the Midway Plaisance. From The Official Guide to the World's Columbian Exposition
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Figure 52: Statue of Queen Isabella. Harriet Hosmer, sculptor
Figure 53: Isabella Memorial Quarter
Figure 54: Javanese actresses

Figure 55: Little Egypt
Figure 56: Annie Oakley’s tent

Figure 57: Julia Marlowe

Figure 58: Georgia Cayvan
Figure 59: Helena Modjeska

Figure 60: Clara Morris

Figure 61: Gymnasium in Children's Building
Figure 62: Lillian Russell and daughter

Figure 63: Veiled Tambourinist (Street in Cairo)

Figure 64: Dancer in Algerian Theatre

Figure 65: Belly dancing tune written by Sol Bloom

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Figure 66: Statue of the Republic

Figure 67: "Justice"
Figure 68: The Woman's Building

Figure 69: Sophia Hayden
Figure 70: Candace Wheeler

Figure 71: Alice Rideout
Figure 72: "Enlightenment." Alice Rideout, sculptor

Figure 73: "The Virtues of Woman." Alice Rideout, sculptor
Figure 74: Central Panel of "Modern Woman." Mary Cassatt

Figure 75: "Primitive Woman." Mary MacMonnies

Figure 76: "Modern Woman." Mary Cassatt
Figure 77: Gallery of Honor

Figure 78: Bas-relief by Sarah Bernhardt
Figure 79: Sarah Bernhardt in her Studio

Figure 80: Soendanese Dancing Girls (Java)
Figure 81: Four dancers from Constantinople

Figure 82: Dancer from Hungarian Café

Figure 83: Two Sisters
Figure 85: "The American Costume" (Rational Dress)
Figure 86: The Infanta Eulalia

Figure 87: Beauty Show
Figure 88: Fatima. The International Congress of Beauties

Figure 89: Dancer in Egyptian Theatre

Figure 90: Samoan Women
Figure 91: Serimpis (Java)

Figure 92: Bedouins
Figure 93: Group of Dahomeyans
Figure 94: Javanese Woman

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Figure 95: Rose Coghlan

Figure 96: Lillian Russell in An American Beauty

Figure 97: Lillian Russell in Girofle -Girofla

Figure 98: Lillian Russell in La Cigale

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Figure 99: Costumes for Lady Windermere's Fan at the St. James Theatre, London

Figure 100: Bicycle Costume, 1894

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Figure 101: Phoebe Couzins
Figure 102: Esquimaux

Figure 103: Women on camel
Figure 104: World's Fair Puck cartoon

Figure 105: World's Fair Puck Cartoon
Figure 106: World’s Fair Puck Cartoon

Figure 107: World’s Fair Puck Cartoon
APPENDIX A

PLAYS PRODUCED IN CHICAGO
APRIL-OCTOBER 1893

Alabama
Ali Baba
Alvin Joslin
America
Americans Abroad
April Fool
April Weather
Arcadia
As You Like It
Aventurienne, L'
Barrel of Money, A
Becket
Belle Helene, La
Belle Russe, La
Belle's Strategem
Bells, The
Benefit
Black Crook, The
Black Flag, The
Brother John
By the World Forgotten
Caleb Brewster, or, Just Before the War
Camille
Captain Lettarblair
Cavalleria Rusticana
Champagne
Charity Ball, The
Cigale, La
Clemenceau Case
Cleopatra
Clothilde
Corner Grocery
Corsican Brothers, The
Countess, The
Country Circus
Cousin Joe
Creole Burlesque
Crust of Society, The
Curiskeen Lawn, The
Dame Aux Camélias, La
Dark Continent, The
Dazzler, The
Deacon's Daughter, The
Die Bernehmte Frau
Die Fledermaus
Die Schoene Galathee and Cyprienne
Diplomacy
Dollars and Sense
Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde
East Lynne
Effrontes, Les
Eight Bells
Ensign, The
Evergreen
Face in the Moonlight
Fantasma
Faust and Marguerite
Fedora
Female Beauty
Fencing Master, The
Fernande
Fool's Paradise, A
For a Million

315
Forget-Me-Not
Friends
Frou Frou
Gendre de M. Poirins
Gentleman Jack
Girl I Left Behind Me, The
Girofle-Girofla
Gladiator, The
Gloriana
Gringoire
Hendrick Hudson; or the Discovery of Columbus
Henrick Hudson
Henry VIII
Hunchback, The
Hustler, The
Idea, The
In Mizzoura
Irishman's Love, An
Joie Fait Peur, La
Judah
Kentucky Girl, A
Kerry
Killarney
Lady Windermere's Fan
Last Word, The
Lights O'London
Limited Mail
Little Faust
Loan of a Lover
Locandiera, La
Louis XI
Love in Tandem
Macbeth
Maitre de Forges
Major, The
Man From Boston, The
Marriage Spectre
Mary Stuart
Master of Woodbarrow, The
McCarty's Mishaps
McKenna's Flirtation
Mégerè Apprivoisée, La
Mercedes
Merchant of Venice, The
Middleman, The
Miss Blythe of Duluth
M'Liss
Mlle. De La Seigliere
Monbars
Money
Monte Cristo, Jr.
Mountebanks, The
Mrs. O'Brien, Esq.
Much Ado About Nothing
My Colleen
My Jack
Nance Oldfield
Neapolitan Maiden, A
Night Off, A
Niobe
Nominee
Nos Intimes
O'Dowd's Neighbors
Old Age and Youth
Old Homestead, The
Old Musician, The
Ole Olson
Operator, The
Othello
Pair of Spectacles, A
Parlor Match, A
Peaceful Valley
Peg Woffington
Poor Jonathan
Poor Relation, A
Precieuses Ridicules, Les
Pretzel, A
Prince Karl
Professor's Love Story, The
Pulse of New York, The
Railroad Ticket, A
Richard the Lion Hearted
Rob Roy
Robin Hood
Rocky Mountain Waif, The
Scout, The
Sebastopol
She
Shining Light, A
Side-Tracked
Sinbad, or the Maid of Balsora
Society Fad, A
Soudan, The
Span of Life
Spider and the Fly
Sportsman, The
Struggle of Life, The
Superba
Surprises du Divorce, Les
Sweet Will
Tartuffe
Therese
Tornado, The
Trip to Chinatown, A
Turkish Bath, A
Twelfth Night
Uncle Tom's Cabin
Uncle's Darling
Virginius
Voodoo, The
Wealth
White Squadron, The
Wife, The
Wild West
Yon Yonson
APPENDIX B

"WOMAN AND THE STAGE"—ADDRESS BY HELENA MODJESKA

AT THE WORLD'S CONGRESS OF REPRESENTATIVE WOMEN

There is a general impression that the connection of woman with the stage is of recent occurrence and does not date farther back than the seventeenth, and in a few countries the sixteenth, century. This impression is erroneous, as probably a great many of you are aware. Woman is not a new arrival in the history of the drama. Her influence on its development, and I may say more truly on its very origin, has been traced far back into the remotest period of the middle ages, to the second half of the tenth century.

It would be out of place here, and I do not feel competent, to enter into elaborate historical researches and discussions. We all know that the ancient theater had a theocratic origin; it is, therefore, not strange that the Christian theater also had its cradle in religion. But nowhere did woman appear on the ancient stage, if we except her participation in the Greek mysteries and occasional exhibitions of physical display; it is only due to the higher level upon which Christianity has placed woman that she has obtained the opportunity to figure as an important and beneficent factor in the development of dramatic art.
There is a theory, almost generally accepted, that there is no direct connection between the new Christian theater and the old one, and that the former one was born long after the death of the latter. This theory is not exact. The vitality of the dramatic spirit was never entirely extinct. One can trace its continuity through ages, but unquestionably the most important link of the chain is the so-called comedy of the tenth century, the work of a Christian woman.

The very name of comedy in the tenth century seems an anachronism. It was a time of concentration of religious thought and of political upheaval and anarchy caused by the disintegration of the work of Charles the Great. By far the greater part of the Christian community expected the end of the world would come with the approaching millennium of the Christian era. Certainly it does not appear a favorable epoch for an artistic or literary revival. One would think it scarce possible to find then for the drama a poet, a stage, or a public. And yet it was then that from the recess of a monastery hidden in the dark forests of Germany, on the banks of the river Ganda, resounded the first note of dramatic renaissance.

This note was uttered by a woman's voice.

The convent of Gandersheim was founded by Lutolf, Duke of Saxony, grandson of a celebrated Saxon chief, Wittikind, who was conquered and converted by Charlemagne. During the first years of its foundation most of its abbesses were members of the ducal family. One of these abbesses is supposed by some historians to have been a Greek princess, daughter of the Emperor of the Orient, and to have brought from Constantinople elements of higher culture to this remote corner of Germany.
Whatever may be the case, it is certain that the convent of Gandersheim became an intellectual oasis among the deserts of barbarism. It was there that lived and died a modest nun, Hrosvitha, known even to-day more generally as the "Nun of Gandersheim;" it was there that she wrote in Latin her legends, her historical poems, and what interests us most, her six or seven comedies. About her life we know almost nothing, except the very few personal allusions contained in her works. Thus she informs us that it is to the Princess Gerberg, an imperial niece and abbess of the convent, and to Riccardi that she owes most of her classical knowledge and her literary attainments.

Hrosvitha wrote in Latin. Her legends are in either hexameters or elegiac verse; her plays, the so-called comedies, are in prose. Her Latin is correct, far above the so-called "Kitchen" Latin of the middle ages. She was evidently well versed in the knowledge of the old classic authors, and equally well acquainted with the rich lore of Christian legends and with the theological philosophy of the fathers of the church. Of the dramatic writers of Greece and Rome she seems to have known only Terence. It was her admiration of Terentius' genius and style, combined with abhorrence for his lack of morality, that seems to have inspired Hrosvitha to write her dramas. She states her object in the following words: "I intend to substitute for the picture of the dissipation of pagan women edifying stories of pure virgins. I have endeavored, so far as the means of my poor little talent allowed, to celebrate the victories of chastity, especially those where woman's weakness triumphs over man's brutality."

The value of Hrosvitha's dramas is mostly in the dialogue, in the richness and subtlety of thoughts, in a spirit of genuine poetry, as well as in an aspect of life and of womanhood to which we have not been treated in the ancient literature.
It is the most important work of transition between the two eras, because, although modeled upon and inspired by the classics, it is the first to bring forth new elements and new forms, on which developed later the drama of the Christian era.

Today the name of the modest nun of Gandersheim is very little known, though students of the drama and a few learned archaeologists and professors in Germany and France have done their best to extol the significance and merits of that strange figure standing solitary between the ancient and the modern world. The publication of her manuscripts by Celtes, in 1501, created a sensation among the German and Italian humanists of the time, and it would not be strange to suppose that they were known, though probably in a transfigured shape, to some of the dramatists of the sixteenth century, and inspired their genius; and thus the influence of Hrosvitha upon the later drama may have been much greater than we can realize today.

It seemed to me that in the connection of woman with the stage, or let me say rather with dramatic art and literature, no name deserved a higher rank than the very name of Hrosvitha. I think it is one more laurel in the crown of womanhood that it was a woman who was the originator of the modern drama, and we can claim with pride that the first female dramatist ever known in history was inspired in her work by the highest and most ideal motives, and that her tendency has been to elevate the moral standard of the drama.

Another point almost as important as the authorship of the first modern plays is their performance. There have been long discussions upon this point, but at present it can be accepted as a fact, based on the authority of the German and French savants, that all of the plays of Hrosvitha were performed in the convent of Gandersheim by young nuns, in
the presence of the bishop of Hildesheim and several high officials of the empire, probably even before the members of the imperial family. How strange, how hardly conceivable is the fact of such an origin for the modern theater in the presence of the unreasonable antagonism between church and stage which has been fostered by narrow-minded people on both sides. Yet it is only natural when we remember the whole history of ancient and modern drama, and if we keep in mind that for long centuries after Hrosvitha the only manifestations of the dramatic spirit were confined to the so-called mysteries, "miracle" and "moralties," performances where religion and scenic display were combined in a curious fashion, much less legitimately than in Hrosvitha's plays.

I do not intend to dwell upon them except to mention that generally women were excluded from such performances. There is known of only one instance of woman's participation in a so-called mystery. In the beginning of the sixteenth century, in the city of Metz, three women personated in public the three Marys in the representation of our Lord's passion. In the female convents, however, the custom of private theatricals seems to have persisted from the time of Hrosvitha during the middle ages. They were often forbidden by the bishops, but we know that as late as the sixteenth century, in some of the Spanish convents, they were customary, as Friar Juan Mariana testifies.

In the first half of the sixteenth century, under the reign of Charles V, woman appears on the professional stage in Spain. Her appearance, however, does not seem to have been generally welcome, because Charles, the son of Philip II, prohibits it by a special edict. Soon, however, the prohibition fell into disuse, and the actress ceased to be an exception. A Spanish writer, Augustin de Rojas, says that in the times of Lope de Vega there were a great many organizations of strolling players through the country. He
enumerates as many as six different kinds of such organizations. In the lower
organizations women's parts were played by men, in the middle ones by women or boys,
but in "The Farandula" and "Comania" all the female parts were personated by women.
Cervantes, in his "Don Quixote," speaks of a company of actors that included one
woman, who was the wife of the author and played the part of a queen.

Another interesting detail in the history of the beginning of the theater in Spain is
an attempt made in 1586 to give separate performances for men and for women. The
time selected for the latter was immediately after noon—a regular matinee. It seems that
the ladies of Madrid in those times were very fond of matinees, because 760 tickets were
disposed of at one real apiece to so many ladies. For some reason or other, however, the
performance was forbidden by the authorities, the money was refunded, and the custom
of almost exclusive matinees for ladies was not renewed until the present days in
America. Italy was the next country after Spain where woman appeared on the stage,
about the middle of the sixteenth century, but, following in the footsteps of Philip II, the
pope, Innocent IX, forbade their appearance. But, notwithstanding the pope's decree, the
substitution of woman for man in female parts became a feature of the Italian theater, as
it did of the Spanish, and the Spanish and Italian companies appeared even abroad with
women actors.

In September, 1548, the Cardinal of Ferrara, Archbishop of Lyons, was
entertaining the king of France, Henry II, and his wife, Catherine de Medici. The
entertainment was exceedingly sumptuous, and its principal feature was a tragic comedy
performed by Italian actors and actresses. This was the first time woman was seen on the
stage in France, but it was only fifty years later that a French woman appeared before the
public. Her name was Marie Vernier, and her appearance is a very important event in the annals of the French stage, because it was followed immediately by the establishment of a regular theater, the first one in France, managed by her husband and herself.

The formal entrance of women on the stage in England is usually credited to the epoch of the Restoration. It seems, however, that already under Cromwell, when the fervor of the Puritans against the stage had somewhat abated, and Davenant was allowed to give performances at the Rutland House, there was produced the "Siege of Rhodes," a play with music, wherein the part of Ianthe was personated by a woman, Mrs. Coleman.

Under the reign of Charles II the custom of women's performing on the regular stage was regulated by royal rescript, and a memorable date is the 8th of December, 1680, when the play of "Othello" was given a special prologue written by one S. Jordan, in order, as he says, to introduce the first woman that ever acted on the stage. Jordan, evidently, could not have been aware of the earlier performance of the "Siege of Rhodes" with Mrs. Coleman, or must have intentionally omitted to refer to it. The woman he alludes to in his prologue was Mrs. Ann Marshall. He curiously insists on the fact that she was a married woman.

In Poland, at the end of the sixteenth century, the Italian troupes of actors and actresses appeared on the private royal stage or in the public squares. A Polish woman is already seen at the beginning of the seventeenth century, when she appears occasionally in translated and original drama.

The country in which woman appears latest on the stage, but where she has contributed to its development more than anywhere else, is Germany. About 1678 there was formed a company of actors from the students of Leipsic [sic] University, under the
leadership of Magister Johann Velthen. This company received permission for a permanent organization from the Duke of Saxony, and established the first German court theater.

Mrs. Velthen, the wife of the manager, was the first German actress. After the death of Johann Velthen the management of the company passed into the hands of his widow, and so the first German actress is also the first woman who was a theatrical manager.

Frederica Caroline Neuber, or, as she has usually been called, the Neuberin, was the founder of the Leipsic school of acting. She did more than any one else to build up a higher dramatic repertoire, as well as to promote a loftier standard of dramatic art, in Germany. As a German historian says, she closed the gap existing between the German stage and poetry. The life of the Neuberin was a continual struggle against the low prevailing forms of burlesque and harlequinades, and she died poor and solitary, with a broken heart, in a little hamlet near Dresden. The epitaph on her tombstone, erected long afterward, calls her the creator of artistic taste on the German stage, a title which she certainly deserves.

The woman who had the most pronounced influence upon the German stage was Sophie Schroeder.

At the beginning of the present century there were two tendencies in the dramatic art of Germany opposed to each other. The Hamburg school, under the influence of the great actor Louis Schroeder, was tending toward realism; the school of Weimar, created by the great poets Goethe and Schiller, tended toward idealism.
The object of the first was to preserve strong characteristics, and to avoid pathos; the object of the latter was to keep up the standard of the ideal of poetry, which might be lowered, they feared, in the narrow limits of every-day surroundings and commonplace treatment. Both were right to some extent, and the solution of the struggle lay in the union of the two tendencies. This work of unification was done by a woman.

Antoinette Sophie Schroeder was an eminently poetic nature. She could not resist the influence of Goethe and Schiller, and became a genuine idealist in the conception of her parts; but, on the other side, brought up under the influence of her cousin in the Hamburg theater, she remained a realist in execution.

The influence of woman may not have acted in such a direct way upon the development of the theater in other countries, but whoever is familiar with the history of the theater will acknowledge with me that at every new phase of development, at every new step of progress, actresses have marked their way as prominently as actors.

If the influence of our sex upon the theater is beneficent, can we say the same of the influence of the theater upon the woman herself? In other words, does the life of an actress tend to develop her better qualities, or does it do the contrary? I should not like to give a decisive reply to the question. I may, however, say that, while the life that we lead exposes us to many temptations, stimulates our vanity too much, and takes us sometimes too far from our family duties, it has some advantages which may compensate for the losses. It certainly must develop in us a sense of independence, and therefore of responsibility. On the other side, it brings us into contact with the highest creations of the master minds, and is bound to open both our hearts and our minds to the generous
impulses and higher problems which they lay before humanity. As for morals, I can only state that there are as many good women on the dramatic stage as in any other walk of life.

The good that woman can do on the stage for humanity can be summed up in the good that the stage itself can do. We can not expect that only the work of great masters shall be produced in the numerous theaters. Very often the stage is used only for amusement, but even in that case it should not be detrimental to the better instincts of man. Lessing said: "It is of the utmost importance that the amusements of the stage shall not be coarse and idiotic." But he adds, and we all, I hope, believe with him: "A good theater is more than an amusement, and can produce an effect second only to that of the pulpit. It helps to build up and to keep the purity of our language; it impresses our morals and customs; it ennobles both the performer and the public."

In the present days there has appeared in a new form the old struggle between idealism and realism, similar to the one I alluded to in mentioning Sophie Schroeder. Thoré, the great French critic, says: "Art is the expression of the beautiful." Nowadays, art is more often called the expression of the true, of nature. But, whether it is the beautiful that brings to our hearts the love of truth and justice, or whether it is truth that teaches us how to find the beautiful in nature and how to love it, in either case art does a noble work. It drags out the soul from its everyday shell, and brings it under the spell of its own mysterious and wonderful power, so that a memory of this experience stays with the people, sustains them in their daily labors, and refines their minds.

Dramatic art has a more limited field than some of her sisters. While a painter or a sculptor can choose his own subjects, and only deal with nature as it appears to his
temperament, the actor has to follow the dramatic author. But the interpretation of the author's work depends upon the performer. By transfusing his own soul into the character performed, the actor can either degrade or elevate the impersonation. There is no question that almost any part of the higher drama can be interpreted, without detriment to the author's object, so as to appeal to the lower instincts of the public or to its higher intellect or sentiment.

It is in this direction that I think woman's mission on the stage can be of great significance to her art, to her public, and to herself.

I have hitherto alluded only to the actress, although the connection of the female dramatist with the theater is of similar, if not stronger, importance. I referred to the subject in speaking of Hrosvitha, but the general treatment of the question belongs to the congress devoted to literature. There is, however, yet a third way in which stage and women react upon each other. It is the woman who goes to the theater. All of us have at heart the future of the American stage, and by this we mean the progress of dramatic art and dramatic literature. This future may, in some way, be made brighter by the combined efforts of the playwright and the performer, but in the present condition of affairs the improvement of the stage depends first of all upon the public.

In these last years of the nineteenth century, when materialism, or at least a practical spirit, rules over everything, the theater has become principally a commercial enterprise. We may consider this a drawback, we may seek remedies for it, but in the meantime we have to look at facts as they are. Now we know that in all the economic
questions the law of supply and demand is the supreme master, therefore the theater will produce what the public requires. The manager, the author, and the actor obey the public's dictation.

Who can influence the public? I think only woman. She forms the larger half of it, and can to a great extent rule the other half. The American woman especially has always been an important factor in all the civilizing influences. Her position in this country is superior to that occupied by her sisters elsewhere, and is due to her intellectual qualities and to the high general level of her instruction.

I am happy to say that there has always been a tendency on her part to protect and encourage true art. Hrosvitha's spirit of refinement and poetry is still living in women's hearts, and therefore I look with serenity and hope to the future, convinced, as I am, that the almighty power of American woman will create a new era in the history of the American stage.
"WOMAN IN THE EMOTIONAL DRAMA"—ADDRESS BY CLARA MORRIS
AT THE WORLD'S CONGRESS OF REPRESENTATIVE WOMEN

First and foremost let me say that, standing here by the right of kindly invitation,
before this great body of brainy, big-hearted women—earnest workers, not for
themselves alone, God help them, but for the welfare of the whole race—I feel I am
receiving the highest honor of my life. Honored and proud I am, but I am vexed. I
suppose you all know what happens when a red flag is waved in the face of an angry
bull? You may not have tried the experiment personally—neither have I—but the books
say that such an act results in frenzy to the bull, who proceeds to mix things up and
generally to hurt somebody. Now I don't want to hurt any one, but when a lady asks me
to stand up and make some remarks about the emotional drama she flaunts in my face the
very reddest red flag to be found in all this big, beautiful city. Emotional drama, indeed!

Whenever I hear the term "emotional actress" it always suggests to me a darkened
room, an hysterical woman, and a strong odor of ether—it has such a weak, whimpering,
soppy sound. Don't think I am venturing to find fault with the drama, particularly the
very branch in which I have longest served. No, I only quarrel with that dreadful word
"emotional," as applied to plays and players. All dramas deal with the human emotions.
To be sure, some of the old-time playwrights treated their human emotions in a most inhuman way. They swathed them up in bombastic language, then mounted them upon the stilts of pomposity and affectation. Thus accoutered it would, of course, become difficult to recognize the humanest sort of emotion. The whole body of actors of the natural school came near being made ridiculous through having that wretched title tacked to them. The idea prevailed for a time that an emotional play must be a tearful play. A synopsis might read like this: First Act.—A tiny, tearful trickle. Second Act.—A widening, weeping woe. Third Act.—A flood; tumultuous torrent of tears. Fourth Act.—Everything washed away.

But after a time it came to be understood that there were other human emotions than that of grief—such as love, hate, hypocrisy, jealousy, and the like—and that the deadliest grief, the bitterest anguish may be quite dry and tearless; that, in fact, an emotional actress is not of necessity a human reservoir. But one thing is certain, this school or style of acting, whatever it may be called, we owe to woman, just as to woman we owe the existence of those wonderful modern plays, those studies of human life, in which one almost sees the movement of the living brain, so closely is thought followed; one almost feels the hot throbbing of the human heart, so fiercely are its secrets sought for.

There came a time in the history of the drama when, woman's influence growing ever stronger, the writer of plays began to think about her, to study her, to write of her and for her. Poor male student of womankind! Many a time he must have felt that the regally repellent riddle of the desert was easier to guess than any one of the living riddles about him. He found women who, seeming scarcely capable of the fierceness of an angry
dove, yet possessed the endurance and tenacity of the bull dog; women with ambition as high as men's, but purer; nay, sometimes even a woman with passions strong enough to wreck Othello, but in her—so curbed, so coerced were they by her will—they paced primly quiet, to suit conventional demand, her whole life through.

Finding this subject interesting himself, he doubtless argued that the public might find it interesting too; and so one night in France the young son of a mighty father, in the face of all artistic Paris, cast his gauntlet down. Many of course there were who rushed to take it up, but paused amazed. That night there was a miracle performed, for before their awed and startled eyes there passed a fallen woman's soul. Marguerite Gautier, with laughing face and anguished heart, seemingly unconscious of observers, laid bare before them the bitter mockery of her mirth, her secret shame, her love, her hope, her torture and despair, until at last she bowed her weak shoulders beneath her self-made cross and stumbled blindly to her grave. Surely that night was an epoch in play making.

Two lilies, broken both, I often dream of. One tall, and fair, and sweet, oh, heavenly sweet, with all its perfume still about it, broken by too strong a wind, lies all its fair length upon the grass, green and cool with sparkling dew—broken but pure—and that the Lily Maid of Astolat. The other, which had been a bud of equal promise, grown equal tall and fair, and sweet, oh, honey-sweet is broken too, broken and cast by an evil hand upon the city street, where every passer-by may see ground into the sweet whiteness of its face the smirch and bruise of a man's boot-heel—broken and soiled—and that is Marguerite Gautier, poor Queen of the Camellias.

I am wandering too far afield. Oh, dear mistress of ceremonies, before I take my seat let me cast aside the limitations put upon me to speak only of the emotional drama,
and say a word of my profession as a whole. Already you have been addressed upon this subject by those far better fitted for the task than I, but, even so, you will allow me to express my gratitude to the profession that has given me under God every good thing I ever had—the dear profession that has always been woman's friend. Hundreds of years ago, when every other profession was locked against her, and most of them had a man on guard outside that she might not learn too much about the size and shape of the keyhole, the doors of the theater stood wide, and to the woman who would enter there were two questions put: "Can you act?" "Will you work?" for women must work. They may weep, too, if they want to, but they work on a perfect equality with man, and, what is more, are as well paid for their work. And, further still, has one been without previous education, what a teacher is this profession! It takes you by the hand and leads you by paths of romance and dramatic incident from land to land, from age to age, and, best of all, from poet to poet, till you reach the knees of Shakespeare's self. There our greatest and mightiest have stood with the humility of little children to learn the A B C of that great art we call acting. She acts best who is not held bound to one narrow school.

Doubtless, who serves Shakespeare serves best. There is a lady here this moment who illustrates my meaning, for will she not one night declaim her uncrowned, death-sentenced queen right royally, and the next night, in her laughing rush through Arden Forest, seem at times almost to catch the master's very mantle in her bonnie, reckless hands?

To the great student of Shakespeare here present I humbly bow my head, and to the other sisters present I offer greeting and God-speed to the goal of their desires.
Surely our profession is great and beautiful, a very temple of art. A temple with many courts, full crowded; and altars, some to art, some to nature; but it is within the sevenfold sanctuary, before the grand high altar erected to art and nature, that one finds the little band of mighty ones, who, having hearts to feel with, eyes to see with, brains to think with, have with loving, loyal labor won the right to enter there.

Now, my last words I speak to those whose eyes my eyes have never met; whose hands my hands have never grasped—to the actresses of the future. Through a veil of tomorrows I see dim forms struggling forward; from them I would exact a promise that when they enter this profession which they have chosen above all other professions, when they stand upon the threshold of that great temple, they will take a solemn vow that whether they win name and fame within, or whether they pass their whole life in some outer court, at the end, when all is done, they will leave upon its altar the pure white flower of a blameless life.
APPENDIX D

"THE STAGE AND ITS WOMEN"—ADDRESS BY GEORGIA CAYVAN
AT THE WORLD'S COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION

I come before you tonight, as one from the rank and file of the theatrical profession, not to make a set speech on the subject in which I am enrolled, but to talk to you, if I may, simply, earnestly, perhaps a little disjointedly, about the stage and its women.

The veil of illusion has long been torn away from the stage. Why not direct our efforts toward tearing away the cloud of misapprehension that obscures this power in the world's progress? The drama has its legitimate province, its peculiar function. Primarily the purpose of the stage is relaxation, and herein lies its great usefulness.

The terrible tension of stimulation, the restlessness and lack of repose which has come upon the American people through our rapid growth and formation as a nation, our intensity of interest and concentration of desire for the best of life, amounts to a disease which physicians call "Americanitis," and which makes essential a form of recreation which shall satisfy in the majority the intellectual craving at small expense of mental effort. Such recreation the stage supplies.
It is for us to take the tired men and women, to lift them out of the rush and struggle for a brief space, to help them forget the strife and ambition, the disappointment and sadness of their lives, in the world of the stage, where the glamour and romance bring restfulness, where ideal love and worthy deeds and noble sentiments are happily shown, and where griefs are only agreeably pathetic because they are not real agony, and everything comes out all right in the last act. And so we send them back to you, preachers and teachers and reformers, rested and refreshed, to take up the exactions of life. And on these lines the stage becomes a popular educator, in that it presents to men and women who are too worn and weary, perhaps too indifferent and thoughtless, to read for themselves, literature in a form pleasing and easy of comprehension—gives them three volumes before 11 o'clock, tells whether he marries her or not in the last chapter, and sends them home satisfied.

It is not an ignoble mission to poetize the prose of simple things and lend a touch of romance to the practical for the inspiration of the masses too limited in mind, or too much occupied with the world's work, to grasp the splendor of great thoughts set in classical language. Remembering the drama's honorable service in the past, when it was the temple of art, the highest exponent of culture, perpetuating and disseminating the thought of the great teachers and philosophers before printing had made literature an inheritance of the common people, I claim for it also a place in the intellectual life of today, because it interprets for us in the classical drama the life of the past, which is the literature of the present, and presents to us with nice exactness in the modern play the life of today, which will be the literature of the future.
A valuable contribution, then, to mental growth is the familiarity which the stage gives us with the great masterpieces of literature, and the interpretation of them by men and women who devote their lives to studying special characters and personages which baffle the scholar and confuse the critic. One might pore over Hamlet until one was as mad as the melancholy Dane himself, and never approximate the clear conception of the great master's meaning which Edwin Booth has given to the world. We search the record and study the archives concerning that ever-fascinating but ill-fated Queen of Scots until we are weary with much reading, and then go some night to the play, and in three hours we meet and know this Mary Stuart as Modjeska has recreated her from Schiller's story.

But the modern drama has its field of practical usefulness as well. It should be the authority on fine points of etiquette, on the truly artistic in dress, on the conventional and correct in social forms and ceremony. In short, it should be the final court of appeal in all that pertains to the accurate and cultured in manners, morals, and speech according to the standards of the time. There are a few theaters where mothers may bring their young daughters, and teachers may send their young pupils, where men may come with their wives and sweethearts, because the play is sure to present the lesson of life wholesomely, and to set a high ideal of manhood and womanhood that is an inspiration to pure living.

Moreover, the stage reaches a class of people which the pulpit can not influence. Those most in need of ministration, the bitter, world-worn, pessimistic men and women, the heartbroken and hopeless, the gay and frivolous, as well as the immoral, come to us when they will not go to you. You seek out some of them with your vigilance and zeal; they come to us of their own accord. We speak to them in a language they understand;
we appeal to their better natures by presenting pictures of true nobility of character, by making our villains more unfortunate and repulsive than the genuine article, and by always seeing to it that the hero marries a rich heiress, that the wronged wife is recompensed, and the betrayer of innocence is punished. Seriously, the influence of the stage upon the morals of the community is too valuable to be lightly considered. It should be guarded, and protected, and encouraged.

There is much talk of the elevation of the stage among some of those who devote themselves to it. But the real elevation of the stage must come from the people, not from the profession. It must come from a grander art-view, which shall refuse to narrow the art down to the personality of the artist. It must come from a purification of public sentiment which shall refuse to accept women whose only qualification for stars in the dramatic firmament is an appeal to morbid curiosity. It must come from a better understanding of the stage and its prerogatives, which shall demand and indorse legitimate drama rather than the sensational, the degrading, the sensual; which shall distinguish between talent and notoriety, and shall honor gifted womanliness rather than brainless beauty.

In particular should women recognize the progressive spirit and influence of the stage, for the dramatic profession has been the pioneer in granting to women the privileges which in other intellectual callings they are still striving to compass; the first to rise above the narrowness that makes sex a barrier to success, and to recompense woman's talent and ability with the same measure of fame and fortune commanded by men. The women of the stage, by their convincing genius and determination, have made
the breach in the wall of prejudice which women of other professions are widening every
day. It has not been to us an easy victory, but we went about it sooner than you, and thus
we have the advantage.

In the rapid growth of this profession, in the increase of theatrical centers, in the
multiplication of dramatic companies, and in the demand of the popular drama for
women of gentle breeding and broad culture, as well as for those gifted with great
histrionic talent, a new problem in sociology presents itself to the thoughtful. The
women of the stage—what will you do with them? What is your duty toward them? You
cultivate your flowers for the delight they give you—you do not step on them because
they yield no useful fruit; you do not criticize them except in tenderness to make them
more beautiful. I am not speaking to people of my own profession today, but as a woman
to women I would make my plea for a better understanding, a more sympathetic
appreciation of women of the stage. I would present to you something of what the
dramatic profession demands of women—particularly here in America, where conditions
prevail which are not to be found in any other country—that, with the wise tolerance that
knowledge and understanding always establish, you may learn to regard us not as curious
creatures to be looked up to with sentimental heroine-worship, but simply as women of
the same family, speaking a different language, governed by different standards, yet in
spite of tradition and environment maintaining an integrity of principle which has given
to the profession such womanly women as my colleagues of today, and many others of
humbler gifts but equal worthiness.

A serious obstacle to the development of the actress, and one which is peculiar to
America, is this: the personality of the artist is ever made paramount to her art. For the
public is curious, and the press must perforce satisfy their curiosity. In this respect the press reflects the demands of the readers, as the stage reflects the taste of its audiences. Doctor Johnson said truly,

\[
\text{The drama's art the drama's patrons give,}
\text{As they, who live to please, must please, to live.}
\]

Perhaps the greatest injustice of the public toward this woman, to whom it looks for its happiest recreation, is this insatiable curiosity concerning the smallest details of her private life, which results in culpable carelessness in circulating sensational and unfounded rumors, and an equally culpable credence in accepting without investigation any extravaganza of the penny-a-liner's fancy. The player is accused of seeking notoriety, when it is notoriety that seeks the player. We receive letters of interrogation intended to fill out special newspaper articles—"When, where, and how do you sew?" "Are you afraid of mice?" "What do you want for Christmas?" "What kind of dog do you prefer?" etc.—as if private preference in such matters had any bearing on dramatic art.

Still another demand, and one which affects all actresses more or less seriously, is the desire of the public to enjoy luxury and magnificence in dress. The price of perpetual daintiness on the stage is eternal vigilance and expense, and the cost of modish gowns, which can be worn but a season and require the skill of the fashionable dressmaker instead of the stage costumer in construction, taxes heavily the resources of small-salaried players. The love of money may be the root of all evil, but the lack of it is the bitter fruit which hangs thick upon the giant tree whose shadow falls across many a noble woman's life, wrecked in the struggle with poverty before talent is recognized.
learned that it was at first intended to include the women of the pulpit and the women of
the stage in this day's session, I remembered how, in the school for oratory where I
studied, the future women ministers and players sat in their classes together and received
the same instruction. Indeed no profession requires dramatic instruction so much as that
of the clergy, because the magnificent lines of Scripture need all the inspired expression
that nature and art can give, that they may be uttered as grandly as written. And this
profession of ours, which the idle and frivolous plunge into from vanity, which disgraced
women seek in their degradation to the insult of all sincere artists, into which so many
tumble without any preparation, and with some degree of success, really demands as its
foundation the broadest, most liberal education, and requires not only a knowledge of
some of the arts, but an intelligent appreciation of all of them. It is really a life-long
study, in which success is never a satisfaction, but always a spur to fresh endeavor, a
goad to greater effort, while at the last it leaves nothing but a memory which dies with the
last person who has witnessed one's success.

There is among the actors in Japan a beautiful custom which gives to dramatic
talent the value of inheritance, the certainty of perpetuity. Every great actor who has not
a son of his own adopts a boy, to whom he gives his name; and this boy becomes to him a
son and pupil, who will receive and hand down in time to a son and pupil the name and
methods of the master. Thus their stage has an aristocracy of great family names and an
inheritance of cumulative genius. With us "the unsubstantial pageant fades and leaves no
trace behind," for our aristocracy of art is limited.

I should like to make a special plea for the stock actresses, for I believe that the
regeneration of the drama is in the hands of the stock company, and that, when the drama
reaches its pristine glory and power among the arts, it will be the stock companies that will present, with a degree of perfection never reached before, the masterpieces of dramatic literature.

By stock company I mean an organization of actors, each in himself an able actor, not supporting and assisting a name of greater magnitude, but each eminent, and capable of doing his part toward giving that harmony and symmetry to a performance which makes the good play seem a real transcript of life. Such a company is the present one of the French theater, every member of which has reached the highest individual distinction in his or her line of work. Such a company is fitted to perform any play, classic or modern, tragedy or comedy. The dramas of Shakespeare could be re-illumined with such an organization. If one actor achieved distinction one night in Shylock, another of the same company at another time would display his power as Hamlet or Romeo. So with the women. All the parts would be emphasized by the actor's art according to the dramatist's aim. And so it is in the drama of today, which does not aspire to great efforts, because our deeds have ceased to be heroic, because war and the pomp and circumstance of war have given place to peace and the arts and graces of social and domestic life, to which the modern drama devotes itself. In this the actor of the stock company, while not, like his brothers and sisters of the past, possessing the opportunity of so great personal display, is still enabled at times to illumine with his art the simpler and less complicated conditions of his play. But the vastness of the theater-going public of today requires so many repetitions of a popular play that the stock actress must appear over and over in the same role. The person who witnesses a performance once can not realize what it means to the actress to play the same part two, three, or four hundred times with the same degree
of feeling, pathos, humor, and naturalness of charm and manner at every performance. Horsemen tell us that a horse never makes his record more than once; and some horses never make a record at all, because they are not brought on when all conditions are most favorable. An actress must make her record every night. She must not only act her best, but look her best at every performance, and under all circumstances, or be accused of retrograding.

The inspiration necessary to keep oneself up to this plane of excellence must come from the public. Applause to the actress is the breath of life to her being; it is the only recognition, the only approval, and the only indorsement which she can be assured of that makes her feel that her efforts are pleasing; she submits herself with perturbation to the suffrages of that great and inexorable being, the public. Do you wonder, then, that we come before you with fear in our hearts, and with hope that you will be satisfied with our work, and that you will show it with discrimination and wholeheartedness? It is your applause that stimulates us, takes away the mechanical feeling caused by constant repetition of the same part, and wakes up the inspirational sources of our art. The women of the domestic circle know how grateful is the approval of husband, brother, or son; how is it, therefore, with us who appeal nightly to so many whose judgement and approval is none the less pleasing? Art has its triumphs no less renowned than home, and it is from you, the people who sit in front, that we hope to win them. And in this country alone, I am sorry to say, a woman's art-life on the stage is comparatively short, for old age seldom brings honor, because of the public's constant craving after the new and the pretty at the expense of art; and yet no art can be worthy unless it is matured.
The question of stage morality—that is an incubus which has clung to the drama for many years; but the nineteenth century has luckily dissipated the clouds of mystery and doubt that surrounded the player, and the stage has never before numbered so many worthy women as today. The stage itself is purer and nobler, but the publicity of its life is its stumbling block.

It might seem pertinent to explain some of the influences that prevent an actress from being exactly like other women. Does it seem possible for a woman who has to simulate a varied assortment of feelings every night to be like the woman whose every emotion is sincere and natural? A woman of the stage must lay bare her heart and soul before the public in order to present in perfection some type of woman. The artificial is always dangerous to character, whether it is the artificial in society or the artificial on the stage. It is almost menacing to moral perception to bring the most sacred impulses of womanhood down to the level of the commonplace by constant draft upon them. In every other profession a woman may keep inviolate the holy of holies of her individuality. In this alone is the veil rent, and the sacrificial flame upon her altar is lighted for the entertainment of the public. They little realize what it costs her.

There is an old story of a dancer who wore about her neck a precious chain of pearls as she came before the king; in the midst of the dance the chain parted, and the pearls were scattered beneath her flying feet. How was she to step the measure so gayly that the king should never know her care, nor the handsome courtiers smiling lightly down, nor the gentle ladies looking on in languid grace, and yet never crush a single snow-white pearl, while the cymbals clashed and the wild, glad music sounded madder and merrier, and the witchery of the dance dulled her fear and deadened her caution?
exceptional woman of exceptional breeding may, when the court pageant has passed, count her pearl chain and find it all complete, even as those which home-guarded women wear so proudly. Will you remember what it costs? Will you think of the danger—a moment of forgetfulness, a careless step? Will you help us by understanding us—help us with your sympathy, your influence—lest we crush our pearls?
"WOMAN'S WORK UPON THE STAGE"—ADDRESS BY JULIA MARLOWE
AT THE WORLD'S CONGRESS OF REPRESENTATIVE WOMEN

To show clearly and fully woman's relation to and influence on dramatic art, it would be necessary to treat comprehensively of the whole history of the drama, which it will be impossible for me to do at this time because of the necessary brevity of this paper.

I hope to show, however, by a few historical examples and a brief discussion of woman's peculiar adaptability to the needs of the drama, not only her special fitness for dramatic expression, but also her right, by accomplishment, to the exalted position in this art which she has won, and won by courage, industry, and perseverance.

The struggle that actors have undergone for recognition, and for a respectable, established position in society, since the modern drama first appeared in the tableaux and the spectacles of the early Christian church, is now a matter of history; but it is not generally known how much more fierce has been the strife in regard to women on the stage, and how much more difficult it has been for them to convince the world at large of the importance of their hard-won position, and their beneficial influence in dramatic art.

Notwithstanding the marked disfavor with which women were first received upon the English stage, about 1660, reasonable and serious-minded persons could not fail to see the propriety of having Juliet and Desdemona acted by a girl rather than a boy. The
need for the innovation is well expressed in these lines, taken from the prologue written for the introduction of the first actress:

Our women are defective, and so sized
You'd think they were some of the guard disguised:
For, to speak truth, men act (that are between
Forty and fifty) wenches of fifteen,
With bone so large, and nerve so incompliant,
When you call Desdemona enter giant.

The work that properly belonged to women, when given to men, often caused ridiculous incongruities; and the idea in itself is so truly fantastic that I can not refrain from citing the apology that was made to his majesty Charles II when, during a prolonged wait at one of the theatrical performances at which this sovereign was present, the delay was explained and indulgence begged on the plea that the "queen was not shaved." It would appear that immediately upon the substitution of women for boys, in the advancement of dramatic illusion, the importance of woman's appearance, and the artistic need for it, must have been generally felt, for we read that actresses were soon in great demand, and it was found not only that they increased the popularity of the theaters in which they performed, but that their cooperation was indispensable to the proper presentation of any play. They made possible a fullness of beauty of interpretation which had not before been dreamed of. Take, as a single example, the women of Shakespeare. They stand as vivid types of youth and beauty, so alive, indeed, with the living warmth of femininity that their expression by other than women is a sacrilege. A play performed by men only can hardly be conceived today, and the wonder is that such an absurdity should ever have existed. The feeling of the need of woman's cooperation with man for dramatic purposes grew rapidly, for men's minds were at this time too highly susceptible to
advancement to remain in ignorance of this necessity, and it was not long before actresses were recognized and highly respected. Mrs. Betterton, for instance, in the year 1674, when "Calista" was performed at court, was chosen as instructress to Lady Mary and Lady Anne, and much of the subsequent graceful elocution and dignity of bearing of these princesses was accredited to this actress. We read that, in company with her distinguished husband, she made her home the abiding-place of "charity, hospitality, and dignity."

What a vast work has been accomplished in the drama since then, and what a lasting monument of art has woman reared for herself in the annals of the stage! To those whose souls are filled with sacred reverence for creative genius what a wealth of delight there is in looking back upon the dazzling record of the theater! The achievements of Mrs. Betterton, Nell Gwynne, Woffington, Oldfield, Siddons, and more latterly Rachel, Ristori, Fanny Kemble, Ellen Terry, Charlotte Cushman, Helen Faucit, Adelaide Neilson, and a host of others stand forth as irrefutable proofs of the dignified importance of woman's work in the line of true artistic, dramatic advancement.

The history of the theater will show her serious devotion to dramatic art, and that it has absorbed her very being as no other calling has ever done; that it has not been a fancy, nor in the higher expression even a gratification of vanity, but has been and is a life devotion, an art to which woman has given her best intellectual and emotional self.

Innumerable instances may be given to women in the profession who have shown rare administrative ability. The history of the English stage affords many examples of the women who have been successful managers, and the same is true in this country—Mrs.
Conway, for instance, and Mrs. John Drew, who, aside from her fine ability as a comedienne, for years conducted the Arch Street Theater, Philadelphia, with dignity and success.

It is often stated that woman is lacking in most walks of life in the faculty of creative genius, and indeed that in this particular, in comparison with man, she is decidedly inferior. This is, perhaps, a reasonable conclusion in view of her history, but not so emphatically in regard to dramatic work.

It is by no means a new thought that man is by nature more intellectual, and woman by nature more emotional. Of course it is not meant by this that man is never emotional and woman never intellectual, yet it is surely fair to assume that to man belongs more properly the power of intellectuality, and to woman the emotional quality. Was it not, therefore, the very possession by nature of this latter quality, which is certainly an absolute necessity in dramatic art, that made her inherently suited for dramatic expression?

Mr. Ruskin, in speaking of the necessary qualities that go to form great artists, says: "First, sensibility and tenderness; second, imagination; and third, industry."

Woman's nature is peculiarly alive to all these conditions. It is then no wonder that women on the stage have accomplished great things; and they will accomplish greater things in the future while such women as Modjeska, Terry, Duse, and the matchless Bernhardt continue to show their genius to the world.

Woman's work in literature has, with few exceptions been denied any claim to greatness. In music and in other arts she is admitted not to have shown any particular creative power, but her place upon the stage is as absolutely unquestioned as man's. In
having thus secured for herself an eminent position in the drama, the actress has advanced the whole cause of woman, since every individual triumph raises the estimation in which the intellectual achievements of a whole class are held. Women is better understood because she has been faithfully portrayed; she is more highly regarded because of her ability to make that portrayal; and that faithful portrayal has, I feel, a powerful moral influence in an educational sense. I thoroughly believe it is the duty of mothers to foster in the hearts of their children, while at a tender age, a serious consideration for the better form of dramatic literature and dramatic representation, avoiding the unhappy tendency of the present age, which is to regard acting merely as a form of amusement rather than, as it should be regarded, an amusement combining a means for intellectual control and artistic suggestion, presented in an attractive and suggestive manner.

That woman is capable of arduous effort and untiring devotion has been fully demonstrated upon the stage. She has helped to elevate the drama to its rightful place among the educational forces of life, and to make true what Morley says: "At the playhouse door, we may say to the doubting, 'Enter boldly, for here, too, there are gods.'"
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