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# **THE “LADIES OF THE CLUB” AND CAROLINE BARTLETT CRANE**

## ***Affiliation and Alienation in Progressive Social Reform***

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*This article focuses on social reformer Caroline Bartlett Crane (1858-1935) and her association with club women for municipal reform during the Progressive Era. Using archival material, the author examines the actual process of Progressive social reform in which Crane used social networks, sociology, and Social Gospel ideals to achieve positive social change. The author also addresses recent critiques of Progressive women reformers regarding their motivations, accomplishments, and their ultimate legacy in Progressive Era social change.*

Eliminate all persons of unworthy motives and doubtful motives and curious notions, and leave only for consideration the earnest, honest-hearted women who simply want to help and mean to help.

*Caroline Bartlett Crane (1896, 382)*

Social regeneration isn't a medicine entirely for the "other person."

*Caroline Bartlett Crane (1896, 383)*

Most scholars agree that women were crucial social actors and that their activities must be central to reliable accounts of the past (Kerber and DeHart 1991). This is especially true of the Progressive Era (1890-1920), in which there is a growing recognition of women's particular contribution to Progressive social and political reform (Clemens 1993; Lebsack 1990).

While women are no longer invisible in these accounts of Progressive reform, questions remain concerning what women reformers actually accomplished, why they participated in social reform, and how they succeeded in placing their social ideals within the center of a political system in which they were marginal. The role of women in the origins of the social sciences has also been obscured (Deegan 1988; McDonald 1994, 1995; Platt 1992). Using the archival data of Progressive Era reformer Caroline Bartlett Crane (1858-1935), this article addresses these questions

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and seeks to redress past oversights with a sociological examination of the gendered nature of agency and structure in the Progressive Era.

Crane was an exemplar of Progressive womanhood and social reform. As an acknowledged leader in Progressive reform movements, she was featured in contemporary books, magazine articles, and newspaper accounts along with Susan B. Anthony, Jane Addams, and many other prominent women in that era (Beard 1915; Bennett 1915). She formed an extensive reform network with both well-known women at the national level and little-known club women at the local level. Despite national attention during the Progressive period, Crane is seldom remembered even in her own hometown today.

Crane's historical fate is not unusual. It is easy to conclude from the historical record that only women such as Susan B. Anthony and Jane Addams were active in Progressive reform. Ironically, while women such as Addams or Anthony are considered to be the prototype of women in Progressive reform, in reality Crane was much closer to the typical woman reformer of the period (Campbell 1979, 48). The Caroline Bartlett Crane archival material documents the life and career of an extraordinary "ordinary" woman reformer. These previously overlooked and undervalued documents reveal the process of reform from the perspective of a woman at the grassroots level, and they supplement information that continues to emerge on more famous women reformers in the period (e.g., Barry 1988; Sherr 1995; Sklar 1995a).

This material allows not only women but scholars in historical sociology to recover a lost intellectual heritage. Crane's rich archival data have never been examined from a sociological perspective, despite her connection to early sociology and important social reform efforts. Examining Crane's career and personal choices, successes and failures in social reform, renown in the Progressive Era and subsequent historical neglect, help fill some blanks in the story of early sociology and social reform at the turn of the century.

An examination of Crane's relationship with club women and their impact on social reform also facilitates a greater understanding of contemporary critiques concerning women reformers in the Progressive Era. Currently, Crane and her cohort in reform have been faulted for mixed motives, unforeseen consequences, and a largely unmediated (by race and class) approach to reform. Crane's archival material suggests that while these critiques are certainly valid, they may be overstated and miss the complicated nature of social reform in the Progressive Era.

Crane's particular area of social reform, municipal sanitation, was at the center of a *maternalist* approach to Progressive reform.<sup>1</sup> This aspect of Progressive reform, although widely acknowledged at the time, has been largely absent in contemporary literature and current debates regarding the role of women and gender in Progressive reform. Perhaps this less well-known area of reform will illuminate some of the contradictions and ambiguities in the current debate.

The goal of this article is a modest attempt to use the case study of one woman reformer to "see the general in the particular" (Bauman 1990, 10) and help clarify the

motivations and accomplishments of women in Progressive reform. It is also meant to acknowledge the legacy of women in sociology and social reform in the past.

### CAROLINE BARTLETT CRANE

Crane was born in Hudson, Wisconsin, in 1858 to parents (especially her father) who encouraged her to pursue nontraditional goals for advanced education, independence, and a career. Crane graduated from Carthage (Illinois) College as valedictorian in 1879. While Crane's parents supported her quest for a college education, they did not approve of her request to attend a Unitarian seminary following her graduation from college. Crane, therefore, spent the next few years as a teacher and a journalist.

Eventually, she was able to overcome parental disapproval and train for the Unitarian ministry. Crane was associated with the Iowa Unitarian Conference, which, in contrast to Unitarian Associations in the East, allowed the ordination of women. Crane, an advocate of the Social Gospel and Social Christianity, was ordained into the Unitarian ministry as the pastor of the First Unitarian Church in Kalamazoo, Michigan, in 1889. She was one of the first woman ministers in Michigan, and she immediately began to use her church as a vehicle for social reform. Crane's efforts to combine religion and reform were very successful. The church, renamed the People's Church, expanded rapidly, and Crane's fame as a liberal minister and social reformer grew.

In spite of serious personal reservations, Crane unexpectedly married Dr. Augustus Crane in 1896. Two years later, citing ill health, Crane abruptly resigned from her position at the People's Church. On the advice of her husband, she took two years off to recuperate. When Crane eventually resumed her career, she did not return to the pulpit but chose a career in municipal sanitation, a field considered more acceptable for a married woman.

Crane's life mirrored closely her more well-known contemporary, Jane Addams (1860-1935). She encountered the same predicament as many others in her cohort as the first generation of college women (1860-1880) who found themselves prepared for professions that wanted nothing to do with them (Solomon 1985). In many ways, Progressive reform was both the creation of—and the salvation for—these disenfranchised, disenfranchised women. In a social world of few viable professional options, many women created innovative careers for themselves within the public sphere by both embracing and expanding traditional women's roles (Muncy 1991). The personal and professional lives of Crane, Addams, and many other women of that era epitomize these social tensions.

As a Unitarian minister, Crane studied sociology at the University of Chicago and eventually carved out a professional role for herself in "municipal housekeeping" in the Progressive Era. Crane's efforts to combine personal and professional goals illustrate the historical connection between gender, sociology, and social reform. Further, her career in social reform illuminates the currently contested

formation of Progressive Era maternalist welfare-state policies in the United States (see Gordon 1990, 1994; Kerber, Kessler-Harris, and Sklar, 1995; Koven and Michel 1993; Skocpol 1992, 1995).

This article is an addition to the expanding feminist, sociohistorical discourse that, in part, uncovers the silences of the past. Not all silences are easily addressed in this research, however, as issues of class and race were often elided by the primarily white, middle-class women who were involved in Progressive social reform; the Crane archives are no exception. Even so, reading against the grain, it is possible to tease out intersections between race, class, and gender in Progressive reform. The resulting relationships are more complex than the current feminist critique of Progressive women reformers would suggest.

### REFORM PROGRESSIVE STYLE

Women were responsible for the very origin of Progressive Era reform. Social reform was an extension of women's domestic sphere into politics; it came directly out of contradictions inherent in the ideology of *separate spheres* (Kerber 1988). Women were assigned the task of defending their homes and families in the private sector but were increasingly unable to do so without becoming involved in public political reform in the more modern, industrial society.

There was an extensive network of women's organizations in the Progressive Era. Women's clubs provided a bridge for women between the private home and the public world. Although these women's associations were at the center of social and political reform, historian Anne Firor Scott contends that we still know very little about them and the actual process of social reform. She claims:

it had come to be taken for granted in many communities that when problems were recognized, women's associations would undertake to deal with them, yet very little evidence remains of the concrete ways they went about their self-imposed tasks day-to-day. (1991, 152-3)

The archival material of Progressive Era reformer Caroline Bartlett Crane makes it possible to examine the "concrete ways" in which women approached Progressive reform.<sup>2</sup> Crane's relationship with the "ladies of the club" provides an interesting picture of the heady triumphs and inherent tensions for women in Progressive social reform efforts. Crane's work with club women also illustrates the potentials, limits, and (im)possibilities for women to cross lines of race and class, and illuminates the contested, contradictory, and situated nature of social reform.

#### Allies and Aliens in Progressive Era Women's Clubs

Reflecting the segregated nature of the period, Crane's work with club women was accomplished nearly exclusively in connection with white women's clubs. While the Black women's club movement shared a middle-class orientation and many

similar goals and beliefs with white club women, there were also crucial differences that led them to separate organizations (Giddings 1985). Predating the current split in feminism along class and race lines by about a century, women in the Progressive Era splintered over issues of racial prejudice, class privilege, and the purposes of social reform. Then, as now, differences rather than similarities predominated and muted the potential for women to work together to further common social goals (Giddings 1985; Gordon 1994).

Benevolent associations and ladies literary societies founded for newly educated women, with time on their hands, were the roots from which the massive networks of women's clubs emerged. It was not long, however, before women moved from an emphasis on self-improvement to community improvement. The General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC), founded in 1890, encouraged this shift from culture and self-improvement into public affairs (Schneider and Schneider 1993, 98). The GFWC promoted the municipal housekeeping movement in the name of domestic feminism, which championed women's "innate" moral values both at home and in the larger society (Blair 1980). The maternalist approach to social reform, which valorized motherhood and womanhood, was prevalent in the period. This view encouraged the "feminization of politics" in the Progressive Era (Gordon 1990, 107).

Black women, after being excluded from the club movement of their white "sisters," formed their own clubs and founded the National Association of Colored Women (NACW) in 1896 (Giddings 1985, 93). These clubs were formed not only in reaction to their exclusion by white women's clubs but also to fill the particular needs of Black women, which included race and class issues in addition to questions of gender and social welfare. Today, these particular concerns would exemplify a womanist, rather than a feminist, approach to social reform.

### **Plato's Dead**

In 1894, Crane challenged the women in the Ladies Literary Club of Kalamazoo to stop their study of Cairo and Rome and begin to concentrate on Chicago, or even Kalamazoo (Duties of citizenship 1894). Crane used formal training she received during sociology classes in 1896 at the University of Chicago (Rynbrandt 1994) and the more informal instruction she received through her networks of women's clubs to form a club to pursue the study of sociology at the community level (Brown 1972, 292).<sup>3</sup>

Crane, along with many others in her era, believed in education as a method for social reform. Crane was convinced along with her mentors in academic sociology that a scientific understanding of society was crucial for social reform (Sociology as a study n.d.). She argued that

the club is the natural school of the adult woman; sociology in some form is the leading topic today. What women do not know they can learn and are ready to learn. And what they learn they are, by their natural practical bent, strongly impelled to put into practice. (Crane 1904)

The relationship between Crane and club women was not uncommon but rather typical of the role of women's organizations all across the nation in Progressive reform (Schneider and Schneider 1993).

While both men and women in the Progressive Era widely believed that a woman's place was in the home, this sphere was often enlarged to incorporate those outside influences that would have an impact on the home and family. Women reformers, such as Addams and Crane, charged that women could not protect their home from bad food, dirty streets, and dangerous germs unless they were willing to leave the privacy and safety of their own homes. Crane contended that the sanitary and charity aspects of municipal affairs were like housekeeping and that women were to be crucial actors, not mere helpers, in the campaign for public health (*Duties of citizenship* 1894).

Although Crane argued that the vote would make them better municipal housekeepers, she also maintained that women did not need to wait for the vote to make an impact on society (*Woman can be power* 1912). They could influence local and even national politics through their various women's civic groups. Crane depended on the women in various women's organizations for her ground troops in the battle against actual dirt in the streets and "dirty" local and national politics. Crane argued that municipal housekeeping was simply housecleaning on a large scale (*Who but a woman* 1910). Who, then, but the ladies of the club as her "natural allies" (Scott 1991) in this venture.

### **Women's Civic Improvement League**

In 1904, Crane formed the Women's Civic Improvement League (WCIL) in Kalamazoo to help facilitate her interest in civic reform. She promoted a popular trend of the period when she maintained that the application of civic philanthropy could be facilitated by a comprehensive, scientific, and objective approach (Baker 1984; Muncy 1991). Crane believed a more coordinated approach to public charity would be gained if the various civic groups attempting to help the less fortunate in the city were combined into one, more efficient, organization.

Crane drew from many existing groups to form her new civic league.<sup>4</sup> One in particular, the Celery City woman's club, is of special interest since this was a Black women's organization. Crane was very interested in this club. She noted:

I counted some of the leaders as my friends. I have been much pleased with the work done by this club in the way of self-culture and kind offices to needy colored people, and white people, too. . . . However, I have always wished the club to take up some line of systematic work for some of the colored people in Kalamazoo who are not as fortunate as they. (Crane ca. 1909)

Crane assumed that their affiliation with the WCIL would facilitate this goal.

Municipal sanitation and the provision of more efficient public assistance were joint projects for the WCIL from the beginning. All women were invited to join; men were only welcomed on a limited basis. Eventually, men were encouraged to

participate more fully. The word *women* was removed from the name of the group, and the Civic Improvement League worked in tandem with the city of Kalamazoo for many years in the provision of public assistance.

Sociologist Charles Henderson and Caroline Bartlett Crane shared an environmental approach to social problems. Both envisioned a practical sociology in which research would lead to action. They also shared the notion that there should be a division of labor in social reform. Since women (read: middle-class/upper-class women) were the only "leisure class" in America, it was their duty to lead social reform (Henderson 1897, 41). Their shared belief in the reciprocal relationship between moral character and external conditions lead directly to Crane's approach to social health and welfare.

One of the first projects of the newly founded WCIL proved to be the beginning of Crane's eventual national prominence in public housekeeping. Crane and the club women took on the task of cleaning up the streets of Kalamazoo. As good housekeepers, they argued that the "Waring" method could clean the streets better, and at less expense, than the current method used by the city fathers. This project, which was later abandoned due to lack of official city support, led to national and even international media attention for Crane and Kalamazoo.<sup>5</sup>

In addition to municipal sanitation, Crane's group also promoted efforts to systematize the organization of local charity. Visiting nurses and visiting housekeepers attempted to improve the standard of living for the poor in the city. Crane and the club women formed a work project for "tramps" and endeavored to find jobs for the unemployed. They encouraged saving accounts, removed children from abusive homes, and urged husbands who deserted their wives to return.

There is always an unpleasant element of social control in even these informal, unofficial efforts to help the less privileged in society. However, Muncy (1991, 36) claims that middle-class women have always mediated between classes. Crane's papers present an ambivalent account of the relationship between the middle-class women reformers and the disadvantaged. In most cases, the intentions were an honorable attempt to uplift those in need, but elements of noblesse oblige emerged occasionally. Crane's exhortation for club women to participate in civic work in a speech titled "The White Women's Burden" is telling. She also, however, acknowledges in this speech that "[h]ow true is that word of Jane Addams that the poor and disadvantaged classes did not need to be ministered to more than we need to minister to them" (Crane 1908).

In 1908 Crane resigned from the WCIL to begin sanitary sociological surveys in over 60 American cities (including surveys of three entire states).<sup>6</sup> Crane used social survey techniques in her sanitary surveys. She used personal observation of the city in question, a survey questionnaire, as well as local city records and newspaper accounts to make an evaluation of municipal sanitary conditions.<sup>7</sup>

Crane's extensive use of social surveys put her in the mainstream of sociology and social reform in the period, an era in which social surveys had become so common that Gordon maintains they could be called a "social movement" (1994, 170). Crane's methodology and social reform exemplify the transition in social



research in that period. She was a transitional figure in the movement in sociology toward ever greater professionalism, quantification, and objectivity (Bannister 1987; Bulmer 1984; Faris 1967; Ross 1991). Crane eventually became well known in the field of municipal sanitation. Indeed, historian Mary Beard maintained that Crane was one of the "leading experts in this field" (1915, 86-7).

Crane's success in municipal sanitation would not have been possible without her association with women's clubs.<sup>8</sup> Often, the invitation for Crane to perform a sanitary survey of a community was initiated by local club women. Crane advised the club women on how to fund the surveys and promote and publicize her visits. As Skocpol (1992, 364) notes concerning women in Progressive reform, Crane became adept at media tactics to influence public opinion and encourage social reform.

The club women's endeavors in Crane's sanitary surveys went well beyond organization and fund-raising. Crane (1912) noted their extensive role in making all the local arrangements, gathering and forwarding statistical data, accompanying Crane on her tours of inspection, and supporting Crane in the face of indifferent or corrupt city officials.

Crane both exploited and empowered club women. Clearly, she used them as unpaid aides in her sanitary surveys. Still, this experience also gave them the ability and confidence to monitor and influence positive social change in their communities long after Crane left the scene. Following Jane Addams, Crane and her club women counterparts intended the results of her surveys to be used for community betterment in the city in which it was collected, not simply to increase social knowledge, a function that research data would increasingly be seen to fill in the social sciences (Deegan 1988, 35). In contrast to the growing pressure on sociologists within academe to separate social knowledge from social action, women outside of the academy had less restraints placed on their reform activities.<sup>9</sup>

Crane and her cohort apparently did not consider praxis to be problematic. They systematically combined idealism with pragmatism and social knowledge with social action to accomplish their goals. Although the Progressive period saw the beginning of the disconnection between social thought and social action, various approaches to reform were practiced simultaneously. Today, as the process appears to have come full circle, and feminists and other social activists are calling for a reattachment between thought and action, the Progressive period offers examples and suggests lessons for those interested in reconnecting social knowledge and social action (Hartman and Messer-Davidow 1991; Maynard and Purvis 1994).

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Crane's life and work illustrate long-standing feminist concerns regarding both difference and praxis. Putative differences between men and women, and elided differences among women, both facilitated and hindered social reform. Notions of difference allowed Progressive women reformers to greatly expand their arena for

social action, as it simultaneously constrained their vision and their ventures. Questions concerning the division between social thought and action also predominated in Crane's era. Finally, Crane's archival material illuminates, but does not resolve, the contested nature of Progressive reform.

While Crane's career exemplified the maternalist focus on social reform used by many women in the Progressive Era, her work also calls this ideology/perspective into question. Even though she used the ideal of domesticity to foster social reform, she saw herself as acting on behalf of humanity in general, not exclusively for the cause of women and/or children. Although much of women's social reform in the period focused on women and children, Crane's mission was much broader. Throughout her career she attempted to link both male and female "political cultures" in social reform (Sklar 1995b).

Crane also formed a crucial link between reform and professionalism. Not unlike her academic male mentors in early sociology, she also attempted to carve out a professional niche for herself as an "expert" in scientific municipal sanitation. She "popularized" scientific knowledge and helped to create a "female dominion" in Progressive reform as she became a "bridge between the producers/practitioners of scientific knowledge and the utterly naive laity" (Muncy 1991, 21). While professional success was important to Crane, her primary goal remained social reform.

Crane's work with club women certainly had a white, middle-class core, which reflects the segregated nature of the period (Giddings 1985; Gordon 1994). Still, her work crossed race and class lines repeatedly. The notion of women's inherent responsibility for their larger social home, the community, provided an ideology for Crane that helped to a limited extent to close gaps created by race and class.

Crane's association with the Social Gospel movement also set the stage for her interest in both sociology and scientific social reform. The ideology of secular salvation and brotherhood encouraged Crane, as well as many of the earliest sociologists, to embrace issues of concern for the poor and working class (Feffer 1993). Crane's earliest reform efforts included the establishment of an "institutional" church in Kalamazoo to address the special material and social needs of workers, both men and women. Indeed, at the completion of the construction of a much larger church building needed to provide services to the community on a seven-day-a-week basis, the church held a banquet to honor not the donors who funded the new building but the workers who actually constructed the facility! Crane's philosophy and work represent the school of Chicago Pragmatism that endorsed education, community, and a caring model for social reform (Deegan 1996; Feffer 1993).

The church also provided a room for a group of "colored" women to meet, and Crane encouraged interracial contact and equality. She wrote letters of protest against the Klu Klux Klan to her local newspaper and withstood wide community disapproval when she invited a mixed-race group to her home for lunch following a lecture by Reverend Celia Parker Woolley of the Frederick Douglass Settlement in Chicago. This suggests that contemporary feminist censure of Progressive women reformers for their latent race and class bias may be valid, but inflated, since ambiguity regarding these issues abound in Crane's life and work.

An examination of the life of an individual woman, such as Crane, in conjunction with her work with many women in her time illuminates the ties and tensions between ideology and action in the Progressive Era and places similar concerns in better focus for feminists and other social activists today. Crane's life and work illustrate not only the potential of a maternalistic ideology to both empower and constrain women, but also how these factors worked together dialectically to foster women's efforts for self and social enhancement.

No resolution is possible from this case of the current theoretical debates concerning the relative importance of gender versus class consciousness in the formation of the U.S. welfare state (Gordon 1990, 1994; Sklar 1993; Skocpol 1992). Crane appeared to favor an approach to reform that considered gender to be the most salient factor; however, her focus in practice was much broader. Crane's archival material is an important addition to Skocpol's (1992) call for further research and scholarship into the gendered nature of the welfare state.

Skocpol (1992, 354) contends that there must be more social analysis on the intersection of women's civic activities and the shifting political structures in Progressive Era reform. Crane's career in municipal sanitation not only provides a look at a little-known area of reform but is an excellent concrete example of Skocpol's notion of "historically grounded and institutionally contextualized" research, which will "allow for the possibility of unintended outcomes and changing configurations of causally relevant processes over time" (1992, 38).

However, despite a close analysis of Crane's life and work, it is not possible to either confirm or deny contemporary critiques of white, middle-class women reformers in Crane's era. Crane was both ahead of her time and a product of it. She believed in the potential good in everyone, while sometimes privileging special qualities in women. She fought for social justice and public health in the name of all humanity, while using a maternalist ideology. She extolled women's domestic cultural values but encouraged women to expand their domestic space well into the public sphere. She strove for racial justice, while believing "the African race is a much inferior race, genetically" (Caroline Bartlett Crane to May Gaunett, April 18, 1927, Crane Papers). She battled for the socially disadvantaged of all sorts from a position of relative privilege. However, she also self-consciously reflected on race and class issues, and encouraged the large groups of club women she addressed to do so as well. Even more remarkable, a century ago Crane "deconstructed" the category *women* for a group of male clergy!

While these inconsistencies and ambiguities frustrate contemporary scholars, it is crucial to take Gordon's admonition seriously and attempt to read and (re)interpret Crane's legacy in social reform with "foresight as well as hindsight . . . from the vantage point of participants who did not already know the outcome" (1990, 29). Crane represents a remarkable group of women, despite their very apparent flaws and limitations. Just as it has been important over the past few decades to recover "lost women" in the sociohistorical account, we run the risk of losing sight of their accomplishments in the light of present-day critiques.

## DISCUSSION

Why is the "process of recovery" important for contemporary feminist scholars in the social sciences (Tilly 1989, 458)? The "losers" in the history of a society, or a professional academic discipline, illustrate potential social, political, and intellectual alternatives (Deegan 1988; Hill 1993; McDonald 1994, 1995; Reinharz 1992; Tilly 1989). It is very easy for the work of forgotten forerunners to disappear when the history of a discipline, or a historical period, is written either by or from the perspective of the "winners."

A feminist intellectual heritage is lost if the history of social reform and the historical origins of sociology are informed exclusively from the position of prominent individuals and institutions. Over the years, the story of sociology increasingly became more professional and more male. Departments in academic institutions replaced settlement houses as the locus of scientific social thought. Social theory and social reform went their separate ways. Contemporary calls concerning the reconnection between thought and action, between academe and activism, and between male and female cultures, attempt to restore some of the major fissures deliberately created in sociology a century ago.

Crane, and many other women and men, were crucial social actors during this critical transition period for both sociology and society. Without their stories, the history of sociology and social reform remains unnecessarily incomplete. While there have been great strides in the recovery of women in the history of social thought and social reform, numerous gaps remain.

The loss of a woman, such as Crane, in the historical narrative is especially telling, because her story is one of success and failure, acclaim and silence. She was once a famed, but now largely forgotten, social reformer. Crane never became a professional, credentialed sociologist, although she originally intended to pursue that course of study. Even if she had, her fate would likely have been similar to other women in the social sciences, as they were systematically pushed to the margins (Deegan 1988; Fitzpatrick 1990; Rosenberg 1982). Crane was often called a sociologist. However, by the end of her career, she labeled her profession "social work" rather than sociology.

A careful analysis of the archival material of Caroline Bartlett Crane, and other individuals on the margins of sociology at a time in which these boundaries were being negotiated, helps define and explicate those at the center. A more inclusive examination of the discipline expedites a clarification of the exclusions. Crane's story reminds us, as feminists, of the women who came before us and laid the foundation for our struggle for social justice today. It also reminds us, as sociologists, that the broad shoulders on which we purportedly stand reach far beyond the "holy trinity" of Weber, Durkheim, and Marx.

Likewise, women have debated the dilemma of difference as well as the problem of praxis for well over a century. The dilemmas that women reformers faced at the turn of the 20th century may suggest how feminists on the brink of the 21st century can address the challenge of continued sexist, racist, and elitist influences in society,

as well as critical race and class issues within the feminist movement itself. Perhaps, the ultimate challenge is to acknowledge the legacy of racism and elitism in the women's movement, while still claiming the achievements of the pioneer social activists in the past, in the quest for a feminist future.

## NOTES

1. The role of women in this aspect of public health has, for the most part, been nearly invisible (see, e.g., Duffy 1990; Melosi 1980, 1981).

2. The records of Crane's personal life and public career are located in the Caroline Bartlett Crane Collection in the Regional History Collections and Archives at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

3. At the third biennial of the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC) held in 1896 at Louisville, Kentucky, a resolution was passed urging women to investigate local conditions in their own communities in keeping with the GFWC's official projects of Practical Sociology, Practical Sanitation, Twentieth-Century Problems, and Practical Art (Blair 1980, 101). Crane not only attended but also gave a speech at this meeting.

4. These groups included the Ladies's Literacy Association, the Twentieth Century Club, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Black Women's Celery City Club, and various religious groups.

5. Wright called the period between 1890 and 1910 the "golden age of public health" and noted that in this era cleanliness had become a media event (1980, 117, 121).

6. Much of her survey work was done during the same years in which the well-known Pittsburgh Survey (1909-1914) was being conducted (see Bulmer 1984, 66-7; Cohen 1991, 245-68; Faris 1967, 7-8).

7. Typically, she would examine the water supply, sewers, street sanitation, garbage collection and disposal, milk supply, meat supply, markets, bakeries, food factories, schoolhouses, tenements, almshouses, hospitals, jails, and any other municipal venue concerning public health (Bennett 1915, 2-3).

8. Diner (1980, 63) notes that Addams and Sophonisba Breckinridge also used club women and made them a major force in social reform in Chicago.

9. Simultaneously, the few women within academe were "encouraged" to pursue their goals in applied areas of the discipline (Fitzpatrick 1990; Rosenberg 1982).

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