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Anne Durst

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"OF WOMEN, BY WOMEN, AND FOR WOMEN"[1]: THE DAY NURSERY MOVEMENT IN THE PROGRESSIVE-ERA UNITED STATES

By Anne Durst **University of Wisconsin-Whitewater**

Pauline Lyons Williamson, a young African-American woman, was widowed in the 1880s and left with a small child to raise alone. In an effort to support herself, she moved to California with her son Harry, and found employment there as a nurse. She wrote to her family back East: "Harry is a great comfort to me. And if I can only take good care of him until he is able to help himself I shall not mind the hard work."[2]

Another wage-earning mother, a young Irish-American woman known to us only as Mrs. T., was widowed in 1909 at the age of twenty-one. She was left with two children, and a third on the way. Thrown upon her own resources, Mrs. T. struggled to earn a wage sufficient to support her young family. After the birth of her third child, she returned to the occupation she had held before her marriage, and worked as a clerk for five to six dollars a week. As this did not provide a living wage, her church gave her a small sum each week for groceries while relatives helped with her rent.[3]

Wage-earning mothers of the Progressive-era United States, like Williamson and Mrs. T., shared a very pressing concern: securing care for their young children during their working hours. Fortunately for Mrs. T., she lived with her mother-in-law, who cared for the two older children, while the baby lived for some time with Mrs. T.'s parents.[4] Indeed, most wage-earning mothers turned to relatives, friends, or neighbors in order to solve their child care problems and some studies suggest that many appeared quite content with these arrangements.[5] Other women, however, did not have access to such caretakers, and found it necessary either to leave their children at home alone or to search for child care outside of their circles of friends or relatives.

In response to the growing numbers of wage-earning mothers, middle- and upper-class women created day nurseries in cities throughout the United States, a movement analyzed recently by Sonia Michel in *Children's Interests/Mothers' Rights* and by Elizabeth Rose in *A Mother's Job*.[6] In 1902, the National Federation of Day Nurseries (founded in 1898) recognized 250 day nurseries in the country, and by 1914 that number had increased to 618.[7] Nurseries of this era ranged in size, some of them caring for 50–60 children.[8] The day nursery movement was part of the Progressive era impetus to confront the difficulties brought on by rapid industrial and urban growth.[9] An important part of this endeavor involved creating public (or extra-familial) institutions like the day nurseries that were responsible for the satisfaction of what had long been viewed as domestic or private needs.[10]

In this context of reform, the boundaries between private and public were reformulated. Women, prominent in such movements as both reformers and clients, played important roles in these politics.[11] Because most female reformers possessed the means with which to conform to the family ideal (of a male

breadwinner and a female homemaker), they were able to use their respectability to expand their private duties into public strengths. Operating in an expanded public realm, middle-and upper-class female reformers attempted to apply the values of the home to what they saw as teeming, troubled cities.[12] Wage-earning mothers, however, whose wage labor outside the home violated the ideal of the family, found that they had unwittingly (and unwillingly) exposed their private lives to public scrutiny. Rather than being encouraged to employ their domestic values in an effort to improve public life, poor and working-class women found it necessary to assert their rights to control their private family lives.

In the day nurseries of the turn of the century, these politics were played out. In creating day nurseries, the women involved in the reform effort took a formerly private need and brought it into the public realm.[13] The day nursery reformers found themselves situated between two very different perspectives on the provision of public child care services. In particular, those working in the movement at the local level—day nursery managers and matrons—saw, through their contact with wage-earning mothers, that gainful employment was sometimes the only way to keep families together. Faced with the reality of low male wages, high male unemployment, desertion, and divorce, these mothers either worked for wages or risked losing their children. Seen from this perspective, day nurseries were necessary services for women who were seeking to take control over their lives and their families. And many day nursery managers and matrons saw their reform work as just that: a response to changing family needs in the industrial cities of the United States.

However, many powerful figures in American society, and in particular the leaders of the charity establishment, judged these matters differently. Of paramount importance to them was the maintenance of the ideal family, with its sole male breadwinner, and unless the male breadwinner had died, no reform effort could be justified if it "encouraged" maternal employment and served "undeserving" families. Thus, families headed by wage-earning mothers were held in grave suspicion, and, according to this view, warranted careful scrutiny and intervention before being considered "worthy" of day nursery services.[14] Day nursery reformers both resisted and, to some extent, were influenced by this perspective.

Thus the day nursery was marked with a crucial ambiguity concerning the precise purpose of the institution, an ambiguity that left the day nursery vulnerable to attacks from outside the movement, especially concerning their appropriate clientele. While much criticism of nurseries was rooted in an attack on maternal employment and thus in an affirmation of the female domestic role, some derived from a critique of the exploitation of women under capitalism. For instance, socialist reformer Florence Kelley argued that nurseries providing night care for young children permitted the exploitation of women in poorly paid night cleaning work. Indeed, one group of day nursery reformers questioned the purpose of their institution, wondering if they made it "possible for industries to obtain labor at less than a living wage."[15] In addition to defending and debating the purpose and clientele of this reform effort, the women involved in the day nurseries participated in ongoing deliberations over the services provided and regulations governing the child care centers.[16]

In this essay, I place the day nursery in the context of the broader female reform effort to improve the lives of individuals in Progressive-era cities. By the

late 1910s, the day nursery movement, long the domain of voluntary reformers, began to shift and change under the growing influence of the social work profession. This essay will focus on the day nurseries before the arrival of the professionals, when relations among the women involved were marked more by the ethos of "friendly visiting" than by casework.[17] I begin by describing the principal participants in the politics and practices of day nurseries: the female managers, the matrons, and the wage-earning mothers. I delineate the different experiences and perspectives of the women at the various layers of this reform movement, relying on local sources from several cities, including New York, Cleveland, and Philadelphia. I then discuss how the interactions among these groups of women—mediated also by influences from outside the movement—shaped the policies and practices adopted by the day nurseries.

Influence in the nurseries did not always flow from the top of the movement down; rather, at times, managers and matrons ignored the directives of the national leadership and the charity establishment, and the wage-earning mothers, least powerful of all the participants, sometimes resisted the unwanted intrusions of the managers and matrons into their family lives.[18] As Regina Kunzel has argued in her study of unwed mothers and maternity homes, the clients determined for the reformers the "boundaries of possibility."[19] Thus to more fully understand the contours of the day nursery movement, it is necessary to look at the varying experiences and outlooks of the women whose lives intersected at the nurseries, and at how these interactions shaped the day nursery movement.

Managers, Matrons, and Mother

Disturbed by stories of children left alone by day, troubled by impoverishment among families headed by working women, or eager to participate in the growing social reform movement, Progressive-era women organized day nurseries in many American cities. They formed boards of managers whose duties were various, and included fundraising, the hiring of matrons, and (occasionally) visiting both the nurseries and the day nursery families. Managers raised money for their nurseries through a combination of methods, most often soliciting subscriptions from friends and relatives, and also by charging mothers a nominal fee. Some managers were quite innovative as they endeavored to add to these more mundane sources of funding. For instance, manager Mrs. William Amory of New York City reported in 1892 that: "The increasing needs of the nursery and my anxiety have sometimes forced expedients which have proved successful." She explained that: "One winter, I planned classes for ladies in the art of marketing. *Armed* with a butcher's knife and *saw,* I taught how to know the useful portions of an ox, and I *cut him up* in the nursery." As the ladies paid five dollars each for this instruction, the nursery gained the useful sum of two hundred dollars.[20]

Day nursery managers came from varied but generally upper-status social backgrounds: Mary Ridgeway, a Haverhill, Massachusetts bookkeeper, was active in day nursery work in her city, as was Laura Spelman Rockefeller, wife of oil tycoon John D. Rockefeller, in her home city of Cleveland, Ohio. Middle-class women of moderate means came together with wealthy, prominent women, united in their belief in the female duty to help and protect poor women and their children.[21] Some of the nursery managers went on to participate in the

day nursery movement at the national level. The national leadership, as I shall discuss later, exhibited perspectives concerning day nursery work that can be contrasted with those of the managers and matrons connected to individual nurseries.

Day nursery managers employed matrons to care for the children and operate the nurseries. According to Barbara Brasseur, a former manager of the Haverhill Day Nursery, matrons were women who needed a home, usually widows or single women who "had to work" and also wanted to help the day nursery cause.[22] As untrained employees, they were expected to carry out the plans of the managers who hired them; however, their daily presence in the nurseries gave them a great deal of control over the nursery routines and activities. According to Mrs. A.B. Hirsch of the Philadelphia Association of Day Nurseries, "No matter what progressive suggestions are made, it devolves upon the matron to carry out these ideas and suggestions in an intelligent, understanding way, and to make them her own—so that she can incorporate them in the daily routine of the nursery."[23]

In contrast to the managers, whose businesslike, masculine title signified their public roles as moneymakers and administrators of the day nursery movement, the matrons bore a domestic, maternal title, signifying their roles as caretakers and nurturers within the movement. Day nursery matrons indeed assumed almost maternal responsibilities for the children under their care. Matrons "worked constantly," waking at 5:30 in the morning and working "straight through to 9:00 at night."[24] Day nursery matrons lived in their place of work; they made the nurseries their homes. Unlike mothers or housewives, day nursery matrons were paid for their domestic labors. Their wages, however, were low, as were virtually all women's wages; in 1916 the NFDN reported that matrons received a minimum of twenty five dollars per month in addition to room and board.[25] Matrons' wages (when room and board are included) compared favorably, however, to women's wages in the clothing industries, which averaged from five to six dollars a week in the 1910s.[26] Despite the long hours, then, the job of matron was not unappealing to women in need of lodging and work.[27]

Day nursery matrons lived in close contact with the working-class families who made use of the nurseries. As the Cleveland Day Nursery and Free Kindergarten Association observed in 1884, the "matrons of the nurseries learn to know the mothers' hardships and needs." This association praised the work of Kate McIntyre, matron of Cleveland's Perkins Day Nursery in 1885. Despite being "too neat and too particular," McIntyre extended "kindness to the poor hard-working mothers. She loans them money (her own), she goes to see them if they are sick, and once cared for a little delicate baby two or three nights because the mother was too ill to care for it at home."[28]

Similarly, Emma Greene, the matron of the Hope Day Nursery for Colored Children in New York City, reported in 1905 that "Space is too limited to speak further of the good being done through the nursery, yet all of our hopes have not been realized. Many of our mothers complain of insufficient work. Debarred as they are from shops and factories, most of them are forced to seek employment as laundresses, house cleaners, general workers, etc. with very uncertain days of work."[29] Day nursery matrons, female wage-earners themselves, confronted and understood the hardships of self-support.

Wage-earning mothers, for whom the day nurseries were created, faced many

difficulties in their efforts to manage the double burden of earning a wage and "keeping up a home."[30] Most of these women worked irregularly, entering and leaving wage labor as their family situation demanded. One wage-earning mother, a collar starcher, published her story in *The Independent*, a magazine concerned with social reform. When the author married, she thought that "her collar starching days were over. But my husband was taken ill, and before I realized that he was sick I was a widow with a two-year-old daughter to support." After maintaining herself for a short period by working in a friend's grocery store, she remarried, only to be widowed a second time, now left with two young children to raise alone. "Before the baby was one month old," she recalled, "I was back in the factory. You see I have really done my best to fulfill what the ministers and others often tell us is the true destiny of a woman—to be a wife and mother."[31]

Like the collar starcher above, many wage-earning mothers were raising their children alone; they were either widowed, divorced, "deserted", or had never married. Others were married to men who were unable or unwilling to contribute to the family income, due either to illness, wanderlust, or alcohol addiction. A significant (and growing) number of wage-earning mothers were married to men whose wages were insufficient for family support, or who faced sporadic or seasonal unemployment. Working-class life was financially precarious; many families lived on the edge of poverty, and crises such as illnesses, sudden layoffs, or rent increases could make it necessary for wives and children to contribute their wages to the family income.

Immigrant and black families frequently suffered from the inequities of the economic system, and often possessed few economic resources to tide them over during the ever-recurring hard times; therefore, female members of such families were more likely than native-born white women to seek employment. Indeed, information from a number of different sources indicates that many wage-earning mothers were either African-Americans, immigrants, or daughters of immigrants. For instance, in 1914, roughly half of the day nursery families in New York City were either Russian, Irish, or Italian.[32] In Cleveland in 1911, 85 percent of the day nursery families came from immigrant backgrounds.[33] And among the female wage-earners of Durham, North Carolina at the turn of the century, 51.1 percent of the black working women (and 15.3 percent of the employed white women) were mothers of children under the age of five.[34]

Motivated to earn in most cases by financial need, wage-earning mothers found when looking for paid employment that they "must take what they can get."[35] Thus these women filled some of the most undesirable and poorly paid occupations in the labor force. Wage-earning mothers worked primarily as domestics and charwomen in private homes, office buildings, railroad cars, and theaters.[36] Others worked in laundries, or in textile, garment, or cigar factories.[37] As Cleveland's day nursery reformers claimed in 1911: "the majority of our mothers have been suddenly thrown on their own resources, and are not trained for special work. Hence they do day's work or laundry work, which is poorly paid and uncertain."[38]

Wage-earning mothers worked long hours for low wages in order to keep their families together. Many of those who sought child-care assistance from day nurseries did so hesitantly; as they suffered many hardships in order to keep their children with them, they were reluctant to place their children in suspiciously

institutional nurseries, to be cared for by strangers. The day nursery managers and matrons often found that they had to work hard to win the trust of the working-class mothers. As the managers of the Sunnyside Day Nursery in New York noted, it was important to establish "confidence between the matron and the mothers," something that was "not easy to do." These reformers believed that they "must convince people that nothing is behind the movement but the desire to help."[39] Many wage-earning mothers were unwilling to surrender their children by day to the nursery matrons without wielding some control, however limited, over the day nursery practices and events.

Day Nursery Practices and Policies

Day nursery policies were created by the nursery managers, sometimes in response to directives from the movement's leadership. In practice, however, many of these policies were re-shaped through the interactions among the mothers, matrons, and managers, amidst their conflicting conceptions of proper childrearing and ideal family lifestyles. Although the working-class women undoubtedly possessed less power than the upper- and middle-class women who ran the nurseries, they were nonetheless able to compel the reformers, in some instances, to yield to their demands. After all, the livelihood of the nurseries depended, at least to some extent, upon the patronage of the working-class families. In addition, some managers and matrons found the modified policies and practices to be more reasonable than those handed down by the movement's leaders. The revision of nursery policies and practices in response to the interactions among these women may be seen in the discussions and conflicts surrounding admissions policies, cleanliness regulations, and community services.[40]

Admissions policies:

Progressive era day nurseries were widely criticized, by the general public as well as the Charity Organization Societies,[41] for being too inclusive and for making it easy for mothers to seek employment. The Charity Organization Societies (COSs), associations created to coordinate the various charity movements of the urban United States, were powerful in the official charity establishment through the 1910s. These organizations had an ambivalent relationship with the day nurseries. COSs created day nurseries in several cities, and supported nurseries' provision of care to the children of widowed mothers, as this enabled such women to support their families (in some cases) without receiving "outdoor relief" or charity. Day nursery assistance thus kept some "deserving" women out of danger of "pauperization."[42]

The COSs disapproved, however, of day nursery women who were moved by sympathy for the poor. They seriously objected to day nurseries that operated without proper investigation of the families who sought assistance. Thorough investigations were to be held before a child was admitted to a day nursery, and nursery officials were instructed to continue such investigations by conducting periodic "visits" in the homes of the working-class families. Such measures were necessary, according to the COSs, in order to determine whether families were "deserving" or "worthy" of day nursery services.

The COSs held that few families were truly deserving of the assistance provided by day nurseries. Nathaniel Rosenau, treasurer and secretary of the COS of Buffalo, New York, addressed a group of day nursery reformers in 1892. Rosenau warned them that:

> A mere visit to the home is insufficient. This frequently fails to disclose that the destitution of the family is due not to the absence of a natural breadwinner, but to the laziness or shiftlessness or drunkenness of the father. Nothing justifies a day nursery in relieving a father from the responsibilities imposed on him by nature and by law.[43]

The COS position was unchanged in 1919, when another of their leaders, Lawson Purdy of the New York City COS, addressed a different group of day nursery women. Explaining that the COS "approves of the principle of nurseries," Purdy informed the women that:

> From time to time, the COS has not approved of the conduct of particular nurseries. The chief cause of complaint has been that some day nurseries have cared for children of mothers who ought to have taken care of their own children, particularly in cases where the man of the family was able, but not willing to work or where the man was able but receiving too small a wage.[44]

Although the Charity Organization Societies approved of the day nursery in theory, they wished to strictly control the types of families who would qualify for day nursery services.

Leaders of the day nursery movement responded to this pressure by urging managers and matrons to conduct family investigations before admitting any children to the day nurseries. As Josephine Jewell Dodge, president of the National Federation of Day Nurseries, explained in 1906, "An early criticism of our system was its lack of effective investigation. We wish other organizations to know that we realize the need of it, and the past two years have seen a great advance in that direction."[45] While day nursery leaders did not go so far as to advocate the restrictions suggested by the COSs, they did urge the day nursery managers and matrons to make extensive (and frequent) investigations in order to determine the "deservedness" of the families requesting assistance.

Despite these orders, day nursery managers and matrons offered assistance to many families whom the COSs deemed undeserving, recognizing perhaps that these were often the very families who needed nursery services the most. Families in which the men were disabled by alcohol or unable to earn a living wage increasingly patronized the day nurseries of many cities after the turn of the century. For instance, in New York City in 1914, less than one-quarter of the day nursery families were headed by widows, the only families whom the COS clearly considered worthy of day nursery assistance. Forty-five percent were families who needed the wages of both parents, while nearly twenty percent were families headed by deserted women, both groups representing families to whom the COS would likely have denied day nursery services.[46]

Efforts to restrict day nursery services to certain, "worthy" families were impeded by several factors. While some managers attempted to do investigative work themselves, most left this task to the matrons.[47] Overworked as they were,

only infrequently were matrons able to carry out the investigative work advocated by the COSs and urged upon them by the day nursery movement's leaders. Most nurseries opened very early (sometimes by six in the morning), and remained open until the early evening hours (usually until six in the evening). The children ranged from infants to "runabouts" (toddlers) to kindergarten children, and some nurseries admitted school-aged children before and after school hours. Thus matrons had their hands full organizing the care and occupations of youngsters of various ages. Often children of the appropriate age attended kindergarten for part of the day, but the weight of responsibility for the children was borne by the matrons. Thus many matrons were hard pressed to fulfill the investigative duties urged upon them by the COSs and their own leaders.[48]

Furthermore, neither managers nor matrons were trained for investigative work. As Barbara Brasseur recounted about a later period, after years as a manager of the Haverhill Day Nursery, "We were told to investigate, and we tried. I tried to do some calling. I felt it was a disaster. I wasn't trained, and couldn't make a judgment without training."[49] And finally, some day nursery managers and matrons questioned the belief that families headed by "unworthy" parents should be denied day nursery services. Helen Higbie was a day nursery manager who grappled with the contradictions between the demands of the COS and day nursery leadership and the needs of the working-class families. "What is to be done," Higbie asked, when "you discover a woman who has been spending money for beer that she told you she was unable to pay for her children that you have been receiving free of charge?" Higbie maintained that "as an example to, and in mere justice to the other women, it is only right and fair that she be dismissed." "And yet," she lamented, "there are the children, poor anaemic little creatures. . . . Are they to suffer for the sins of their parents, and their days of brightness in their airy, beloved nursery stopped?"[50]

Higbie reserved her most virulent attacks for the "unworthy husband," complaining that "anything that you do for the family benefits him and encourages him in his laziness instead of forcing him to work; and yet," she insisted, "the family must be helped."[51] Higbie could not understand why the wives of such men did not "denounce their husbands to the police," yet she was willing, albeit reluctantly, to offer care to the children of these men and women. Many day managers chose to assist the families who came to them for help, regardless of what some saw as the misdeeds of the fathers (or mothers), and in spite of the warnings and rebukes of the day nursery movement's leadership and the charity establishment. Certainly, many local reformers saw in the day nurseries an opportunity to "reach" the working-class families through their children. Some argued that they must attempt to "put sufficient nourishment and a growing soul" into the growing bodies of the young children, "in order that some day they may be good men and women and good citizens, instead of invalids, insufficients, or mendicants."[52] Thus, paired with the desire to assist families in need was the class-biased notion that they could improve the lives of the poor.

Matrons, working women themselves, were sometimes moved to sympathy for the wage-earning mothers. The matron of the Sunnyside Day Nursery in New York City in 1884 waxed emotional in her account of the difficulties faced by mothers of her nursery. She wrote that "The anxious tones of these distressed, forsaken mothers made my heart ache with sympathy," and recalled that many

mothers were haunted by the "fear that deserted husbands would come here for their babies." One mother warned her: "Never let anyone but me have my little Willie. I have a bad husband and he may come for him some day."[53] Rather than turn them away, as the COSs urged, this matron offered support to the "deserted" wives of "bad husbands."

Cleanliness regulations:

In addition to scrutinizing families for their moral "deservedness," charity reformers engaged in similar investigations of the hygiene of needy families. If charity reformers were overly concerned with family "worthiness," they were perhaps even more obsessed with cleanliness. Indeed, cleanliness involved more than just a physical condition to middle- and upper-class reformers; it was also imbued with moral significance.[54] The label of cleanliness carried with it all the virtue associated with a proper middle-class life, and reformers in many Progressive era movements consciously endeavored to spread this "virtue" around. Day nursery reformers were no exception; again, however, contact with working-class families forced them to adapt their ideals and practices. The National Federation of Day Nurseries advocated the adoption of rules requiring mothers to bring their children to the nurseries in a "cleanly" condition. While such rules were adopted, they were in some instances significantly modified by the day nursery managers and matrons.

Day nursery reformers at all levels—leaders, managers, and matrons—were preoccupied with the issue of cleanliness and hygiene. As day nursery manager Mrs. Dodd announced at the first national day nursery conference in 1892, "This is the great question of the nursery: The cleanliness of the child."[55] Just as the charity establishment and day nursery leaders advocated investigations of family worthiness, as defined by certain family structures, they also urged investigations of family hygiene. Day nursery matrons were instructed to inspect children thoroughly upon arrival each morning, to check for dirt and signs of contagious disease. Yet while the official rule was that "dirty" children be turned away upon arrival, it often proved to be difficult for day nursery women to deny services because children arrived unbathed. Instead, day nursery matrons and managers simply intensified their efforts to impress their ideas of proper hygiene upon the wage-earning mothers.

In some cases the day nursery managers and matrons succeeded in employing the children as young and innocent missionaries. Mrs. Elias Michael spoke to the members of the National Federation of Day Nurseries in 1912, and recounted one such tale of a small "success." As she told her fellow reformers:

> Little three-year-old Miss Austacher and her mother and aunt, both young, attractive women, were used to eating from dishes that, like the family, received an occasional bath. The mother reported that after two months of nursery attendance, little Miss Three Year Old, first demanding a clean dish for herself at every meal, was now demanding the same for her family.[56]

And in an interesting analogy, Michael explained that "What the trained, skilled nurse and governess are in the home of the well-to-do, the properly conducted Day Nursery is to the homes of the working classes."[57]

Many matrons and managers, however, were less sanguine in their analyses of working-class life, and understood how difficult it was to keep children clean in the often poorly-equipped tenement households. In a 1902 letter to *Charities*, the COS journal, day nursery manager Helen Higbie expressed her reservations concerning the fairness of cleanliness regulations in the nurseries. She explained that her nursery, "and I think most day nurseries, have a rule that if the mothers are reproved a certain number of times for bringing their children in too dirty a condition, they will be dismissed." Her nursery adopted this rule in hopes of "inculcating the very necessary habit of cleanliness in their homes." She asked, however: "Is this a good rule? In theory, doubtless; but in practice?" In terms that blended compassion with condescension, she wondered:

> How many of the officers of this nursery, if the routine of their daily work was to rise in the dark in a cold room, make the fire, dress some cross, sleepy children (number unlimited), get breakfast for them, bring these children (lug is the only word that describes this process) perhaps a mile, as some of our women do, then scrub the floors of an office building all day, after which the early morning's program is to be repeated in inverse order—I wonder how many of us would have the courage and strength to see that these very troublesome pieces of humanity were properly cleansed.[58]

In addition, managers and matrons found that their definitions of a "cleanly condition" often differed from those of the working-class mothers. At the Sunnyside Day Nursery in New York, the matron and managers attempted to abide by the rule that children "must come clean" to the nursery. They "tried to enforce this rule, but there soon arose such a difference of opinion [between the matron and the mothers] with regard to its technical definition" that they "decided to teach mothers through their children what was meant by cleanliness." The matron and her assistants bathed children "thoroughly upon arrival," and hoped that the appearance of the children at the end of the day would thus illustrate the managers' and matron's "technical definition" of cleanliness.[59] One can imagine this scene, in which real people (managers, matrons, mothers, children) bumped up against an ideological construct ("cleanliness"), and arguments, negotiations, changes of plans ensued. Certainly the end result, "teaching the mothers through their children," was equally as patronizing as the initial rule, requiring that children "come clean" to the nursery. Under the new plan, however, the mothers' need for child care was satisfied. The women whose children attended this day nursery refused to surrender their own ideas of adequate hygiene, and instead, forced the management to adapt the day nursery rules and practices to their demands.

The mothers of the San Christofero Day Nursery in Philadelphia responded similarly to managers who attempted to exert too much control over the nature of the care the children would receive. At a general meeting of the Philadelphia Association of Day Nurseries in 1909, a manager from the Willing Day Nursery suggested that day nursery matrons cut the children's hair, presumably to control the spread of head lice. A San Christofero Day Nursery manager spoke in opposition to this proposal, insisting that her nursery's "effort to endorse this rule resulted almost in closing the day nursery", so overwhelming was the mothers' collective anger in response to this rule.[60] It is not clear whether the matron

actually cut the children's hair, or merely proposed this to the mothers, but the mothers' response was powerful enough to alter the day nursery management's plans. Thus, the mothers interacted with the nursery managers and matrons to define the limits of intrusion into their family lives, and to assert the strength of their own childrearing beliefs and practices.

The day nursery as social center:

The use of day nurseries as social centers further illustrates the importance of the interactions among the various groups of women involved in the day nurseries. The Cleveland Day Nursery and Free Kindergarten Association noted in 1898 that "It seems only necessary to find the place and establish in it a day nursery, before the demands for all the other varieties of philanthropic work clamor for attention in the neighborhood."[61] Similarly, the Philadelphia Association of Day Nurseries declared in 1906 that "settlement work is the natural outgrowth of day nursery work."[62] Indeed, in 1907, Philadelphia day nurseries offered "classes for domestic science, manual training, and physical culture, circulating libraries, milk dispensaries, [and] mothers' meetings."[63] Services provided by other nurseries included hot lunches and clubs for school children, employment bureaus for mothers in need of work, the use of laundry facilities, care for sick children in separate spaces, and even early versions of the now ubiquitous take-out meals: hot dinners for mothers to purchase after work. The provision of these services in day nurseries resulted both from working-class demands and middle- and upper-class attempts to spread "inspiration and stimulus to better living and higher thinking" among the working-class people of the nursery neighborhoods.[64]

For example, many day nurseries conducted mothers' meetings, most of which were originally created to educate mothers on matters of childrearing, cleanliness, and hygiene. Through these instructional meetings, day nursery managers hoped to extend their values to the working-class women. However, it sometimes happened that meetings that had begun as educational forums turned into social gatherings; it is likely that the working women were too fatigued (or uninterested) to sit through often value-laden instructional lectures. Instead, at the Wayside Day Nursery in New York, mothers were "read to, counseled, and comforted while they sew."[65] As the Cleveland day nursery reformers reported in 1919, "We have come to realize that the woman with the task of earning added to her motherhood is in need of more recreation and joy." And some mothers appeared to enjoy these meetings. As one Cleveland woman stated, "This is the first time I have been anywhere for a year."[66]

Some day nurseries also provided lending libraries for the families. The libraries included books that had been carefully selected to expose working-class families to "morally uplifting" material. The managers of the West Side Day Nursery in New York triumphantly announced in 1885 that their library was "appreciated by children whose minds might otherwise have been perverted by cheap pernicious trash and dime novels."[67] Yet while the reformers gloried in their successes, working-class families used the libraries for their own purposes and enjoyment. In Cleveland, the circulating library was so popular among the day nursery families, and "so much interest was manifested that the advisability of providing each nursery with a library was soon brought to the (association)

president's notice."[68] Thus the provision of libraries, like the mothers' meetings, evolved as a result of both day nursery reformers' intentions and working-class families' needs and desires.

Conclusion

Progressive-era day nurseries offered services that permitted women to work outside of the home while raising children. Because this violated the norm of the ideal family, day nursery reformers came under attack from those Americans who were interested in preserving the ideal family at all cost. Charity establishment leaders wished to dictate the terms under which families could be admitted to nurseries, advocating the exclusion of all but a limited number of "deserving" families. While leaders of the national day nursery movement attempted to comply with such dictates, local day nursery women often found exclusionary regulations difficult to implement. Recognizing that this would deny services to many families who needed assistance the most, some day nursery managers and matrons effectively ignored these strictures. (Similar patterns of resistance would emerge after the 1910s, when increasingly influential social work professionals advocated casework investigations of families they judged to be "maladjusted.")[69] Likewise, and from even less powerful positions, wage-earning mothers resisted what they saw as violations of their power as parents, thus forcing the day nursery reformers to adapt nursery policies to their demands. Challenges and negotiations among those involved in the institutions shaped the day nurseries of the Progressive-era United States, illustrating the importance of investigating the differing perspectives of women at all levels of the day nursery movement.

By looking at local archives of municipal day nursery associations and individual day nursery records, it is possible to tease out the intricacies of negotiation that marked the relationships among the day nursery managers, matrons, and mothers, as well as those between the national and local reformers. It is possible to see some of the aspirations of the mothers and their families in the Cleveland mothers' eagerness for "recreation and joy," and in their great interest in lending libraries. Likewise, we see their efforts to define their maternal responsibilities and rights in the Philadelphia mothers' refusal to permit others to cut their children's hair without their approval. The local day nursery managers and matrons, in their close working relationships with the families, were able to see wage-earning mothers in their particularity, and thus were able in some cases to evaluate the issue of maternal employment differently from those, like the national day nursery and charity establishment leaders, who were physically (and thus empathetically) removed from the needy families.

In his study of "slumming" in Victorian London, the middle- and upper-class practice of visiting London's poor neighborhoods, Seth Koven argues that: "Those positioned as objects of slumming readily challenged their social betters' characterization of them and had their own ideas about the affluent men and women in their midst. The poor asserted themselves in their daily encounters with philanthropists, but they did so with circumstances of grotesquely unequal power."[70] Similarly, the mothers of the children for whom day nurseries were created "asserted themselves" when possible, in spite of their vulnerability. Among

the many sources of this vulnerability was their need and desire for safe places in which to entrust their children during their work hours—the need to which the day nursery reformers responded. At least some of the reformers working closely with the wage-earning mothers saw in this vulnerability the "courage and strength"[71] of women who sought to forge new ways of mothering, when circumstances prevented them from "fulfilling what the ministers and others" told them was their "true destiny."[72]

Department of Educational Foundations
800 West Main Street
Whitewater, WI 53190-1790

ENDNOTES

1. Cleveland Day Nursery and Free Kindergarten Association, *1920 Yearbook*, held at Western Reserve Historical Society.

2. Letter, January 188(3)?, from Pauline Lyons Williamson to the Lyons family, in the Henry Altro Williamson Collection, Letters 1880–1887, Reel 1, Vol. 2–4, held at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York City.

3. Mary E. Richmond and Fred S. Hall, *A Study of 985 Widows Known to Certain Charity Organization Societies in 1910* (New York, 1974, first published in 1910), 59.

4. Richmond and Hall, 985 *Widows*, 59.

5. On these child care arrangements, see Anne Durst, "Day Nurseries and Wage-Earning Mothers in the United States, 1890–1930" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1989), especially chapter two.

6. On the day nursery movement, see Sonya Michel, *Children's Interests/Mothers' Rights: The Shaping of America's Child Care Policy* (New Haven, 1999); and Elizabeth Rose, *A Mother's Job: The History of Day Care 1890–1960* (New York, 1999). Both works are important contributions to the study of the day nursery movement. Michel's is national in scope, covers an extended period of time, and focuses on child care policy. Rose's focuses on Philadelphia, with attention to national developments, and covers the period from 1890–1960. Focusing on one era (the Progressive era), with national coverage that includes the examination of several municipal day nursery associations and individual day nurseries, I use the archival records to investigate the interrelationships among the women involved in the day nurseries, and to analyze how these relationships shaped day nursery policies and practices across several major cities of the era. My analysis of several cities during this era suggests that by looking at the different layers of the reform movement, it is possible to see that the local reformers were sometimes quite responsive to the needs of wage-earning mothers, in some cases providing a rich and varied range of services.

7. For 1902 statistics, see Association of Day Nurseries of New York, *Annual Report*, (New York, 1908); and for 1914 statistics, see National Federation of Day Nurseries, *Report of the Conference* (New York, 1914).

8. For instance, the Masters' School Day Nursery in New York served 50–60 children in 1904. See "Notes of the Week," *Charities* Vol. XIII, No. 7(November 12, 1904): 159. Similarly, the Wayside Day Nursery in 1885 served 60 children. See Wayside Day Nursery, Annual Report for 1885, held at the New York Public Library; and Margaret O'Brien Steinfels, *Who's Minding the Children?: The History and Politics of Day Dare in America* (New York, 1973), p. 46. And in 1916, thirty-five day nurseries in Philadelphia cared for an average of 1487 children daily (an average of 42 children per nursery); of that total, 629, or 42% were school children, who were under the care of the nursery before and after school. See "A Study of the Day Nurseries of Philadelphia," completed by the Child Federation in 1916, p. 21, held at the Urban Archives. One problem the day nurseries faced was overcrowding. As day nursery reformer Ethel Beer noted, because day nursery women were "zealous to relieve the plight of working mothers, [the day nursery] was often crowded. Regimentation was the rule rather than the exception." See Ethel Beer, *Working Mothers and the Day Nursery* (New York, 1957), pp. 43–44. On the size of the nurseries and the problems of overcrowding, see also Rose, *A Mother's Job*, p. 58.

9. Like most movements of this era, the day nursery movement was racially segregated. While some evidence suggests that racially integrated nurseries existed at this time, residential patterns and discriminatory policies dictated the single race (and often single ethnicity) patronage of the institutions. On black women's efforts to create day nurseries, see W.E.B. DuBois, ed., *Efforts for Social Betterment Among Negro Americans*, The Atlantic University Publications, Number 14, (Atlanta, GA, 1909), 119–120; Dorothy Salem, *To Better Our World: Black women in Organized Reform, 1890–1920* (New York, 1990); Mary Church Terrell, "Club Work of Colored Women," *Southern Workman* 30 (August 1901): 436–437; and the Secretary's Report of Hope Day Nursery, 1905, in the clipping files of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture.

10. On Progressive era educational reform, see Lawrence Cremin, *The Transformation of the Schools: Progressivism in American Education, 1876–1957* (New York, 1961); William J. Reese, *Power and the Promise of School Reform: Grass-roots Movements during the Progressive Era* (Boston, 1986); and David Tyack, *The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education* (Cambridge, MA, 1974). For a discussion of the transfer of needs from the private to the public arena, see Nancy Fraser, *Unruly Practices: Power, Discourse and Gender in Contemporary Social Theory* (Minneapolis, MN, 1989). On the public consideration of the problem of family violence, see Linda Gordon, *Heroes of their Own Lives: The Politics and History of Family Violence* (New York, 1988). On women and the welfare state, see Molly Ladd-Taylor, *Mother-Work: Women, Child Welfare, and the State, 1890–1930* (Urbana, 1994); and Gwendolyn Mink, *The Wages of Motherhood: Inequality in the Welfare State, 1917–1942* (Ithaca, 1995).

11. See Mary P. Ryan, *Women in Public: Between Banners and Ballots, 1825–1880* (Baltimore, 1990). For recent discussions of the public/private sphere in British history, see Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes* (New York, 2002); Judith Flanders, *Inside the Victorian Home* (New York, 2003); and Eleanor Gordon and Gwyneth Nair, *Public Lives* (New Haven, 2003).

12. On female reform movements during this period, see also (among many others) Paula Baker, "The Domestication of Politics: Women and American Political Society, 1780–1920," *American Historical Review* 89,3 (June 1984): 620–647; Mari Jo Buhle, *Women and American Socialism, 1870–1920* (Urbana, 1981); Nancy Cott, *The Grounding of Modern Feminism* (New Haven, 1987); Estelle Freedman, "Separatism as Strategy: Female Institution Building and American Feminism, 1870–1930," *Feminist Studies* 5 (Fall 1979):

512–529; Lori Ginsberg, "'Moral Suasion is Moral Balderdash': Women, Politics, and Social Activism in the 1850s," *The Journal of American History* 73,3 (December 1986): 601–622; Gordon, *Heroes;* Linda Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Women's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History," *The Journal of American History* 75,1 (June 1988): 9–39; Kathleen McCarthy, ed., *Lady Bountiful Revisited: Women, Philanthropy, and Power* (New Brunswick, 1990); and Kathy Peiss, *Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure in Turn-of-the-Century New York* (Philadelphia, 1986). On "maternalism," see Seth Koven and Sonya Michel, eds., *Mothers of a New World: Maternalist Politics and the Origins of Welfare States* (New York, 1993); and Michel, *Children's Interests/Mothers' Rights*.

13. See Nancy Fraser, *Unruly Practices*, 156–157; and Denise Riley, *"Am I That Name?": Feminism and the Category of "Women" in History* (London, 1988), especially chapter three.

14. See Peiss, *Cheap Amusements*, especially chapter seven; and Christine Stansell, *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789–1860* (New York, 1986), 197. Stansell writes of an earlier period: "Although the problems of the streets—the fights, the crowds, the crime, the children—were nothing new, the 'problem' itself represented altered bourgeois perceptions and a broadened political initiative. An area of social life that had been taken for granted, an accepted feature of city life, became visible, subject to scrutiny and intervention."

15. Florence Kelley, "Invasion of Family Life by Industry," Annals, 34 (July 1909): 90–96; and "Suggestions for an Annual Inventory," unpublished, Chicago Association of Day Nurseries,

16. Nancy Fraser calls this arena of social service provision the arena of "the social", and describes it as a "terrain of contestation." See Fraser, *Unruly Practices*, chapters seven and eight. See also Riley, *"Am I That Name?"*. On conflicts over services provided by public schools during the Progressive era, see Reese, *Power and the Promise of School Reform*. Reese argues that "There was tremendous enthusiasm for the elusive concept called 'reform' but vigorous dissent over specific school innovations." (xx.)

17. On this shift, see Durst, "Day Nurseries and Wage Earning Mothers", chapter five.

18. See Durst, "Day Nurseries and Wage-Earning Mothers," chapter four. On grassroots influence on public school reform, see Reese, *Power and the Promise of School Reform*.

19. Regina G. Kunzel, *Fallen Women, Problem Girls: Unmarried Mothers and the Professionalization of Social Work, 1890–1945* (New Haven, 1993), p. 142.

20. Mrs. Wm. Amory, "Ways and Means: How the West Side Day Nursery has been supported at 266 West 40th St., New York," National Federation of Day Nurseries, Report of the Conference, 1892, p. 20. Another fundraising scheme was recounted by Haverhill Day Nursery manager Barbara Brasseur. She told of Mrs. Ora Griffin and Miss Bonney, sisters born into wealthy circumstances, who were both members of the Haverhill Day Nursery's board of managers during the early 1900s. In order to bolster the nursery's coffers, the Bonney sisters ventured forth in their automobile to sell hats throughout the countryside. The sisters purchased a number of hat forms, decorated them according to current fashion, and went door-to-door in the rural areas surrounding Haverhill, where fashion was ordinarily slow to arrive. The sisters were apparently well-received; they made as much as one hundred dollars for a day of vending hats, a considerable sum. Interview

conducted on August 2, 1988, by the author with Barbara Brasseur, a former manager of the Haverhill Day Nursery, Haverhill, Massachusetts. On the duties of managers, see Durst, "Day Nurseries and Wage-Earning Mothers", chapter 4.

21. The membership of the Haverhill Day Nursery's founding Board of Managers offers an illustration of the variety of social backgrounds from which day nursery managers came. In 1895, members of a female reform organization, the Young Women's Building Association (YWBA), founded the Haverhill Day Nursery in the shoe manufacturing town of Haverhill, Massachusetts. While some of the members of the day nursery's founding board of managers were members of elite and wealthy Haverhill families, others hailed from middle-class families that were less prominent in the community. Of the twenty-seven day nursery founders, twenty could be traced in the Haverhill city archives and described either by family background or occupation. Of these twenty, ten were wives or daughters of shoe manufacturers, prominent store owners, or lawyers, while ten were themselves clerical workers or nurses, or were related to men employed in skilled trades or small businesses. See the Haverhill Public Library clipping file, and collection of photocopies in possession of the author. I am indebted to Gregory Laing, curator of the Haverhill Public Library's Special Collections, who painstakingly uncovered this information on the women of the Haverhill Day Nursery.

22. Interview conducted on August 2, 1988, by the author with Barbara Brasseur, a former manager of the Haverhill Day Nursery, Haverhill, Massachusetts.

23. Mrs. A.B. Hirsch, "Opportunities of a Matron," *Day Nursery Bulletin* 2, 3 (January 1919): 6.

24. NFDN, *Report* of the Conference (New York, 1916), 13.

25. NFDN, *Report*, 1916, 13.

26. Edith Abbott, *Women in Industry* (New York, 1919), chapter ten. For further comparison, men's wages in the clothing industries during the 1910s averaged from nine to nineteen dollars a week.

27. While evidence suggests that matrons occupied a position in the class structure somewhere between the wage-earning mothers and the managers, little information is available on the race and ethnicity of these women. In one nursery for black children in Philadelphia, the matron was also black. (See Philadelphia Association of Day Nurseries, 1899 Yearbook, held at the Urban Archives, Temple University.) And in Cleveland, a nursery was unsuccessful because the Bohemian families mistrusted the matron in charge due to religious differences, and another woman, who shared the immigrants' religious beliefs, was hired. (See Cleveland Day Nursery and Free Kindergarten Association, 1885 Yearbook, held at the Western Reserve Historical Society.)

28. Cleveland Day Nursery and Free Kindergarten Association, minutes of meeting of 1884, and minutes of the Perkins Day Nursery committee meeting, 1885, held at the Western Reserve Historical Society.

29. Hope Day Nursery for Colored Children, Matron's report, 1905, held in the clipping files of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture.

30. On women's wage work, see, among others, Jacqueline Jones, *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work and the Family, from Slavery to the Present* (New York,

1985); Alice Kessler-Harris, *Out to Work: A History of Wage-Earning Women in the United States* (New York, 1982); Leslie Woodcock Tentler, *Wage Earning Women* (New York, 1979); and Lynn Weiner, *From Working Girl to Working Mother: The Female Labor Force in the United States, 1820–1980* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1985). On wage-earning mothers, see Katharine Anthony, *Mothers Who Must Earn* (New York, 1914); and Gwendolyn Salisbury Hughes, *Mothers in Industry: Wage Earning Mothers in Philadelphia* (New York, 1925).

31. Leon Stein and Philip Taft, eds., *Workers Speak—Self Portraits* (New York, 1971), 78.

32. Association of Day Nurseries of New York City, *Annual Report,* (New York, 1914), statistics follow the text, un-paginated. Each nursery listed the "predominant nationality," and not the nationality of each family.

33. Cleveland Day Nursery and Free Kindergarten Association, 1911 Yearbook, held at the Western Reserve Historical Society.

34. Dolores E. Janiewski, *Sisterhood Denied: Race, Gender, and Class in a New South Community* (Philadelphia, 1985), 132.

35. *Cleveland Leader,* November 6, 1904.

36. In Katharine Anthony's 1914 study of wage-earning mothers on New York's West Side, 70 percent, or 254 of the 370 women whom she surveyed were engaged in some form of domestic or personal service. As Anthony explained, "the requirements of this work were such as could be met by women who could not keep the rigid hours required in factories and stores." See Anthony, *Mothers Who Must Earn,* p. 69.

37. Gwendolyn Hughes, in her 1918 study of Philadelphia "mothers in industry," found that 459 of the 728 working mothers whom she surveyed (or 63 percent) worked in manufacturing and mechanical industries, and 223 of those worked in the textile industry. Hughes excluded black women from her study, and thus it is likely that her findings exaggerate the numbers of wage-earning mothers who worked in industrial occupations. See her *Mothers in Industry,* pp. 128–129. And according to Katharine Anthony, the textile trades "have always been a stronghold of married women in industry." See Anthony, *Mothers Who Must Earn,* p. 15. See also Elizabeth Hughes, "Children of Preschool Age in Gary, Indiana," US Children's Bureau, Publication #122 (Washington, DC, 1922); and Helen Russell Wright "Children of Wage-Earning Mothers, a Study of a Selected Group in Chicago," US Children's Bureau, Publication #102 (Washington, DC, 1922).

38. Cleveland Day Nursery and Free Kindergarten Association, *1911 Yearbook,* held at the Western Reserve Historical Association.

39. See the Sunnyside Day Nursery, *1900 Annual Report,* held at the New York Public Library.

40. Instances in which the nursery managers and matrons insisted upon enforcing their rules and succeeded in imparting their values occurred often as well. It is my contention, however, that despite such instances of middle- and upper-class "social control," the interactions among the reformers and the working-class created challenges to the reformers' ideological conceptions of their reform work and aims. See also Durst, "Day Nurseries and Wage-Earning Mothers," chapter four.

41. On the Charity Organization Societies, see Paul Boyer, *Urban Masses and Moral Order in America, 1820–1920* (Cambridge, MA, 1978).

42. For COS beliefs concerning pauperization, see Mimi Abramovitz, *Regulating the Lives of Women: Social Welfare Policy from Colonial Times to the Present* (Boston, 1988).

43. Nathaniel Rosenau, "How to Start a Day Nursery," NFDN, *Report,* (New York, 1892), 10–11.

44. Mr. Lawson Purdy, "Day Nurseries and the Charity Organization Society," Association of Day Nurseries of New York City, *Annual Report* (New York, 1919), 9–11.

45. Josephine Jewell Dodge, NFDN, *Report of the Conference* (New York, 1906), 8.

46. The remaining families (nearly 15 percent) were headed by women whose husbands were "incapacitated." It is likely that the COS would have based their judgment of the "deservedness" of these families upon the specific illness afflicting each father. Association of Day Nurseries of New York City, *Annual Report* (New York, 1914), un-paginated. See also Josephine Jewell Dodge, "Address of the President," NFDN, *Report of the Conference* (New York, 1914), 15.

47. This began to change by the 1920s, when day nurseries increasingly employed case workers to do investigative work. See Durst, "Day Nurseries and Wage-Earning Mothers." chapter five.

48. Former day nursery manager Barbara Brasseur remarked, "You had to do some kindergarten work with the children. You couldn't keep them busy all day if you didn't." (See Brasseur interview, 1988) On the daily activities in the nurseries, see Durst, "Day Nurseries and Wage-Earning Mothers," especially chapter four.

49. See Brasseur interview, 1988.

50. Helen Higbie, "Problems of the Day Nursery," *Charities* VIII, 24 (June 14, 1902): 541.

51. Higbie, "Problems of the Day Nursery," p.541.

52. Higbie, "Problems of the Day Nursery," p.542.

53. Sunnyside Day Nursery, Annual Report, 1884, held at the New York Public Library. There is evidence that, in the 1920s, after the professional social workers had joined the day nursery movement, similar patterns of resistance marked the local layer of the reform movement. For instance, in 1928, a group of day nursery managers participated in a conference discussion concerning social work in the day nurseries. They were asked whether "it is your own group that wants social work? Do the boards of managers, or are there other forces?" One manager answered that "the Association of Day Nurseries [of New York City] wants it." See the Association of Day Nurseries of New York City, (ADNNYC), *Annual Report of the Conference,* 1928, p. 36.

54. See Richard Bushman and Claudia Bushman, "The Early History of Cleanliness in America," *The Journal of American History* 74, 4 (March 1988): 1213–1238.

55. Mrs. Dodd, "General Administration," NFDN, *Report* of the Conference (New York, 1892), 25.

56. Mrs. Elias Michael, "The Day Nursery as an Educational Factor," National Federation of Day Nurseries, *Report,* 1912: 24–25.

57. Mrs. Elias Michael, "The Day Nursery as an Educational Factor," National Federation of Day Nurseries, *Report,* 1912: 25–24.

58. Higbie, "Problems of the Day Nursery," p. 541.

59. Sunnyside Day Nursery, *Annual Report,* 1892, held at the New York Public Library.

60. Philadelphia Association of Day Nurseries, Minutes for the general meeting, 1909, in the minute book for 1908–1913, held at the Urban Archives.

61. Cleveland Day Nursery and Free Kindergarten Association, *1898 Yearbook,* held at the Western Reserve Historical Society.

62. Philadephia Association of Day Nurseries, minutes of the executive meeting of May 28, 1906, held at the Urban Archives in Philadelphia, PA.

63. Philadelphia Association of Day Nurseries, minutes of 1907 meeting, held at the Urban Archives.

64. "The Little Ones, all about what is being done for them in Cleveland," *The Journal and Bulletin,* February 7, 1896. See Durst, "Day Nurseries and Wage-Earning Mothers," chapter four, on the day nursery as a social center.

65. Wayside Day Nursery, annual report, 1887, held at the New York Public Library.

66. Cleveland Day Nursery and Free Kindergarten Association, *General Secretary's Report, 1919,* and *1897 Yearbook,* both held in the Western Reserve Historical Society. See Peiss, *Cheap Amusements,* on working-class mothers' leisure activities.

67. Westside Day Nursery, *Annual Report,* 1884–1885, held at the New York Public Library. On working women and dime novels at the turn of the twentieth century, see Nan Enstad, *Ladies of Labor, Girls of Adventure: Working Women, Popular Culture, and Labor Politics at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (New York, 1999).

68. *Cleveland Plain Dealer,* August 10, 1897.

69. See Durst, "Day Nurseries and Wage-Earning Mothers," chapter five.

70. Seth Koven, *Slumming: Sexual and Social Politics in Victorian London* (Princeton, NJ, 2004), p. 12. In his recent study of childhood in the United States, Steven Mintz argues similarly that "There was always a dialectic between the child-savers and the people they wanted to help, with poor children and their parents using child-saving institutions for their own purposes." See Steven Mintz, *Huck's Raft: A History of American Childhood* (Cambridge, MA, 2004), p. 155.

71. Higbie, "Problems of the Day Nursery," p. 541.

72. Leon Stein and Philip Taft, eds., *Workers Speak—Self Portraits* (New York, 1971), 78.