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Ladies' Library Associations of Michigan: Women, Reform, and Use of Public Space

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LADIES' LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS OF MICHIGAN: 
WOMEN, REFORM, AND USE OF PUBLIC SPACE

by

Sharon Carlson

A Dissertation 
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the 
requirements for the
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This dissertation investigates the ladies' library associations in Southwestern Michigan from the middle nineteenth century through the early twentieth century to explore the impact of these organizations as agents of reform and in shaping public space.

Ladies' library association records provide a major component of this study. Association records, consisting of constitutions, bylaws, minutes, treasurer records, book catalogs, yearbooks, and published reports yield valuable information to analyze and interpret the activities of ladies' library associations. Plat maps, panoramic maps, photographs, architectural drawings, and tax records offer evidence about the built environment and material culture of ladies' library associations. The actual buildings also provide important historical information for the purposes of this study.

The ladies' library associations of Michigan provide a framework for exploring historical meanings of gender,
power, and reform. Michigan's ladies' library associations existed as one variation of social libraries that provided much of the library service available in the nineteenth century. White middle class women participated in library associations as a moderate reform of the nineteenth century and exercised deliberate choices about the evolutionary path of these organizations.

Through library associations, women shaped the meaning of "public" and exerted influence in the physical and cultural space to provide a much-needed service. Ladies' library associations helped define and control public space within the community and participated in the process of promoting and forming public libraries in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ....................................... ii

LIST OF FIGURES ......................................... vii

CHAPTER

I. INTRODUCTION ........................................ 1

II. DEVELOPMENT OF MICHIGAN AND THE FACTORS INVOLVED IN LIBRARY FORMATION ........... 41

III. SOCIAL LIBRARIES IN SOUTHWESTERN MICHIGAN AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC CONSTITUENCIES . . . . . . . 94

IV. LUCINDA HINSDALE STONE AND A MODEL OF LADIES’ LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS .................. 138

V. THE KALAMAZOO LADIES’ LIBRARY ASSOCIATION: CONSERVATIVE REFORM IN SOUTHWESTERN MICHIGAN IN THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY .................. 176

VI. CULTURE, COMMUNITIES, AND VARIATIONS ON THE LADIES’ LIBRARY ASSOCIATION BASED ON THE STONE MODEL ............................. 245

VII. A PUBLIC PRESENCE: THE CULTURAL AND PHYSICAL SPACE OF MICHIGAN’S LADIES’ LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS .............................. 299

VIII. MICHIGAN LADIES’ LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS AND THE SHAPING OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES .................. 366

APPENDICES

A. Gender Composition of Social Libraries in Michigan 379

B. Ladies’ Library Associations in the United States 384

C. The Number of Public, Social and Ladies’ Libraries in Michigan, by Time Period 388

iv

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D. Year of Formation for 81 of 105 Ladies' Library Associations in Michigan .................. 390

E. The Year of Formation of Ladies' Library Association by Location in Michigan .............. 394

BIBLIOGRAPHY .................................................. 396
LIST OF FIGURES

1. The Number of Ladies’ Library Associations in Michigan, by County ........................................ 111

2. Area of the Kalamazoo Ladies’ Library Association 1874 .................................................. 325

3. View of Kalamazoo Ladies’ Library Association Building 1880 ........................................ 327

4. Interior View Kalamazoo Ladies’ Library Association Building ............................................. 331

5. Plainwell Ladies’ Library Association Building, 1918 .......................................................... 337

6. Otsego Ladies’ Library Association Building .............................................................. 340

7. Richland Ladies’ Library Association Building .............................................................. 345

8. Wayland Ladies’ Library Association Building .............................................................. 352
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

No one can estimate the influence of that [Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association] for improving the society and promoting the culture of the people . . . The library, managed by its board of women, . . . was for many years the most attractive place of which this beautiful town could boast.¹

Women's work in nineteenth century ladies' library associations provides a framework for exploring historical meanings of gender, women's roles, power, and reform. Existing as one variation of the social and subscription libraries that provided much of the library services available during the nineteenth century in the United States, ladies' library associations operated by subscription, selling of shares, or a per-service fee, and functioned under constitutions that defined the classes of membership and operating policies.²

This study assesses how ladies' library associations in southwestern Michigan sponsored social libraries beginning in the middle of the nineteenth century, shaping the meaning of "public" as they worked within formal and informal organizational networks. In this approach, I examine how gender shaped women's
roles as reformers and participants in ladies' library associations. Women's power initially emanated from the domestic realm, their roles as mothers, educators, and moral guardians. Women extended the domestic realm into the public arena, exerting power and shaping the public space, as they sponsored semi-public or public libraries in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in southwestern Michigan. By the beginning of the twentieth century, white middle class women also drew upon increasing political power to bring about library reforms.

Public space implies the built environment, as well as the intangible space where men and women negotiated for power and exerted influence; there they built library organizations. Thomas Schlereth writes of the data revealed in the "material culture of public buildings, spaces, institutions, [and] landscapes." Many of the libraries and organizations existed in the semi-public realm, operating for the benefit of members and the community. The services often required nominal membership fees. The material aspects of these organizations, in particular, communicate messages of negotiated power and women's influence within the community.
Southwestern Michigan as the focus of this study provides a context in which "small, but very densely textured facts," as anthropologist Clifford Geertz describes, speak to the larger issues of gender and reform. Additionally, the Midwest continues to be one of the lesser studied regions of the United States. The history of reform in rural small Midwestern towns has not been the subject of historical analysis. Literature about libraries and reform has ignored the role of women. The Midwest is a very diverse and large region with various population patterns. This study provides additional information about the characteristics associated with the migration of New England people and culture to Southwestern Michigan.

Studies of Midwestern material culture, women, and reform also warrant historical investigation. These women had a story to tell that transcended women's organizations, quaint buildings, or local lore. While the ladies' library associations were intrinsically bound with the histories of the towns where they formed, they also spoke to larger issues of reform, women's presence in the community, and library history.

By mid-century, southwestern Michigan had developed into a system of small towns with well-
developed transportation and communication networks. Kalamazoo, Allegan, and Kent counties, in particular, represent case studies of small town and rural life in the context of nineteenth century changes in urbanization and industrialization in the Midwest.

These counties also provide a fertile ground for study because of the level of activity by women's voluntary organizations, particularly ladies' library associations. Non-religious in origin, white middle and upper class women formed ladies' library associations in several communities within Kalamazoo County by the middle of the nineteenth century. Organizations in Allegan County in the communities of Plainwell, Otsego, and Wayland formed primarily in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The Grand Rapids Ladies' Library Association in Kent County formed in 1871 and traced its origins directly to the Kalamazoo organization.

Because of the variations among the Southwestern Michigan ladies' library associations and my questions about networks and community relationships, I concentrated on Allegan, Kalamazoo, and Kent Counties. This study has limited coverage of ladies' library associations in eastern Michigan, except where organizational networks and linkages existed.
Kalamazoo Village forms a central part of this study for several reasons. It was the site of the first ladies' library association to form in Michigan in the 1840s, incorporating in 1852. Lucinda Hinsdale Stone, the "mother of Michigan Women's clubs," was an early leader who influenced dozens of other organizations throughout the state. The Kalamazoo organization became the first women's club to construct its own building in 1878. The Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association also became one of the first to deal with the question of its purpose when public libraries began to emerge in Michigan in the 1870s. It made the transformation from a library association to a literary club between 1873 and 1900 and represented a model of an organization that chose to shift its focus rather than disband or merge with a public library.

In addition to Kalamazoo, the Richland Ladies' Library Association forms a substantial part of this study. The Richland organization drew from women in the village and nearby farming community. The Richland organization experienced some of the same growth and building issues as the Kalamazoo organization. It forged strong ties with agricultural interests in the early twentieth century. By the early twentieth
The study of the Grand Rapids organization in Kent County provides a stark contrast to the Kalamazoo and Richland organizations. Grand Rapids exhibited similar patterns of growth, with similar population characteristics. Factors in the growth of Grand Rapids and the agency of women involved with the organization demonstrate different patterns of evolution and development of the Library Association. Formed in the 1870s because of a kin linkage to Kalamazoo, the Grand Rapids organization worked with the community and succeeded in forming a city library association, which resulted in a public library. The group faced obstacles in maintaining influence over the new public library.17

Three organizations in Allegan County yield additional historical information about the development and evolution of ladies' library associations. The Plainwell and Otsego organizations had close geographical linkages to Kalamazoo, mirroring many of the developments of the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association, including operating circulating libraries
and constructing buildings. They represent different case studies of how the organizations evolved and dissolved. The Wayland organization provides a case study of an organization that began in the 1890s, evolving from a literary club to a library association. The General Federation of Women's Clubs heavily influenced the Wayland organization, and this relationship had powerful ramifications.

MAJOR QUESTIONS AND SUB-QUESTIONS

This study seeks to answer several key questions about how nineteenth century women in Southwestern Michigan demonstrated power, shaping the physical and cultural space of their communities, through the activities of the ladies' library associations. The major questions center around the issues of gender and reform. How did gender influence the community of women and men and reform movements, specifically ladies' library associations, as these women sought to form libraries?

I explore this broader question through several sub-questions. Since this study focuses on southwestern Michigan, I explore the backgrounds of the earliest settlers in Southwestern Michigan. Where did
they migrate from and why did they settle in Michigan? What had been their experience in the area of reading and literacy in their previous abodes? How did these factors influence the importance placed on reading and literacy? These factors related to early progressive library legislation that resulted in the formation of social and township libraries. To what extent did social and township libraries play a role in promoting a reading culture? What was the role of social libraries and which ones in Michigan were successful and why? Who operated the earliest social libraries in Michigan? How do the ladies' library associations fit into the category of social libraries?

I examine the earliest ladies' library association in Michigan, the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association. I explore the leadership of the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association. What were the backgrounds of the women who helped found the first organization? What was Lucinda Hinsdale Stone's role in the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association and did she influence other organizations throughout the state? What conditions in Kalamazoo made the coalescence of Stone's interest and the community come together to form the first ladies' library association?
Focusing on the social libraries founded and operated by women in Kalamazoo, Allegan, and Kent Counties, I examine how these organizations functioned within the physical and cultural spaces of their respective communities. What variations existed? How did the reading culture and literacy aims of these communities shape the organization? Were some periods more apt to influence the ability of an organization to thrive over time? Were there external or internal networks that influenced the course of these organizations? Did external factors such as the formation of the General Federation of Women's Clubs play a role?

This study also assesses how the women in these organizations demonstrated power. Legal powers extended to voluntary library associations and sometimes transcended the power women possessed as individuals in the nineteenth century. Unlike the literary societies, the ladies' library associations incorporated to own property and provide continuity during changes in leadership. How did the act of incorporating give women power? I also explore this issue through examining the material culture of the organizations. How did women influence the community
through the press? What was the significance of the buildings constructed by ladies' library associations for their operations?

This study explores the historical issue of women's identity in public by examining how the women viewed themselves in their library associations and networks or women's organizations, as expressed through their constitutions, bylaws, and minutes. Catalogs and other printed materials project a public presence and provide evidence of women exerting a public presence. The placement of collections, building campaigns, and the role accorded these organizations in the local media also serve as historical evidence for this study. How did gender influence their ability to operate libraries? To what degree did the Michigan ladies' library associations perceive themselves as private or public entities? Lastly, this study assesses the significance of the Southwestern Michigan ladies' library associations and their role in the larger public library development by the turn of the century.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Few published sources explore the relationship of ladies' library associations to the related issues of
reform, women's public lives, or library history. More recent studies about ladies' library associations as an offshoot of the women's club movement hint at their role as agents of reform and the relationship to library development. Yet, in all instances, these studies lack an interpretation of the relationship.

In this context, this study falls within the cross-disciplinary categories of reform, women's roles, club women, and library history. This study encompasses a time span from the middle of the nineteenth century through the first two decades of the twentieth century, addressing the historiography in these areas. It also contributes to women's history.

General works have been written about reform in the United States from the middle of the nineteenth century through the early twentieth century to inform this work. There have been various studies of the reforms, actors, and motivations of reformers for the Antebellum era and Progressive Era, briefly outlined below for the purposes of placing my study within the existing historiography.

Ronald Walters' American Reformers, 1815-1860 provides an excellent overview of the many reforms that emerged at the time of the Second Great Awakening.
Walters synthesizes existing literature on the topic as it relates to the antebellum period. While Walters credits women's involvement in the various reforms, he does not concentrate on the role of women's organizations in reform or the role of women in providing library services. Walters finds various motivations behind the reformers and how they looked for meaning in a rapidly changing society.

A full-length study that focuses on the role of women in one particular reform is Ruth Bordin's *Woman and Temperance*. Bordin's study focuses on the role of women in the temperance movement in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Bordin argues that temperance as a movement brought about the first mass movement of women in an era in which the General Federation of Women's Clubs was also emerging. Bordin also argues that the temperance movement ushered in large-scale suffrage activities. Bordin's study is compelling and focuses on the small, Midwestern communities that were most active in the movement. Bordin's study ends at nineteen hundred and does not include analysis of the ongoing temperance or suffrage reforms that continued into the Progressive Era. Bordin's study complements many of the club and organizational studies which also
concentrate on the last quarter of the nineteenth century, which I will address later.

Another study dealing with Antebellum and Civil War era reform is Lori Ginzberg's *Women and the Work of Benevolence: Morality, Politics, and Class in the Nineteenth-Century United States*. Ginzberg explores the meaning of gender and class in charity and reform from the 1830s through the 1860s and finds a shift from gender-based to class-based activism, which she links to the rise of the business class. Her study raises interesting issues, despite its limitation to eastern urban areas.

Health reforms involved women and men in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Health reforms addressed the real conditions of poor health in rural and urban areas. Women exercised agency in bringing about better health through dress and other types of reforms. Susan Caylef examines the water cure or hydropathy, which staunchly advocated the reformation of such personal habits as diet, exercise, and dress in *Wash and Be Healed: The Water-Cure Movement and Women's Health*.

There are several studies about the Progressive Era, which spans from the 1890s to the beginning of
Steven Diner's *A Very Different Age: Americans of the Progressive Era* provides an excellent synthesis of previous historical studies of the Progressive Era. Diner's coverage is broad and includes the conditions present from the post-Civil War era. Diner cites the radical changes of the era, coupled with individual aspirations for economic security, personal autonomy, and social status, as the motivating factors behind many of the reformers of the Progressive Era. He also finds their experiences were shaped by gender, race, and class.

An inclusive history of the role of women in the Progressive Era has yet to be completed, but there are studies that examine various aspects of women and reform during the period. Frankel and Dye's *Gender, Class, Race and Reform in the Progressive Era* is an excellent collection of essays dealing with various reforms headed by women. Dye's introductory remarks set the tone for the essays, which address how gender influenced reform and how women redefined the relationship between the home and the community in the Progressive Era. Several examples provide compelling evidence that women reformers reconstructed the meaning of domestic life and changed relationships between
private and public spheres to create lasting influence in the concepts of social justice, public policy, and the role of women. These studies are brief and provide fertile ground for further study.

Full-length studies dealing with particular aspects of reform also provide further insights about the role of women during the Progressive Era. Women's involvement in the settlement house movement is perhaps one of the best studied aspects of the period. Among the better-known full-length studies is Allen Davis' *Spearheads for Reform: The Social Settlements and the Progressive Movement*. Davis explores the role of settlement houses as they related to urban reforms of the Progressive Era. Bryan's and Davis' *100 Years at Hull-House* examines the Chicago settlement founded by Jane Addams and Ellen Starr. Certainly, the activities and personalities associated with Hull-House are central to understanding the reforms undertaken by women of the Progressive Era because this influence spread beyond Chicago. However, the role of women as reformers in small, rural Midwestern communities remains largely unexplored.

Historical studies analyzing the role of women in public and private also provide a context for examining
the ladies' library associations of Michigan. Historiography has often relegated women's roles primarily to non-public, non-activist functions. The historiographical construct of separate spheres placed women in distinct roles, which delineated the public and private realms. Historiography has concentrated on an authority granted to white middle class women vested in the "cult of true womanhood" that dictated the extent of women's forays from the private to public.

Women's role, through motherhood, of shaping the rising generation of republican males grew in importance in the years after the Revolutionary War. While the role of republican motherhood placed importance on a gender specific quality, a second direction in the evolution of women's roles was far more constraining. Historian Linda Kerber analyzes the historical construct of women's roles following the American Revolution. She identifies this construct as republican motherhood, "an ideology that carved out a political niche for themselves. Constrained to the domestic sphere, they imbued that domain with unprecedented significance .... Motherhood assumed almost the role of a 'forth branch of government'". Kerber argues that the construct of republican
motherhood extended into women's roles as reformers well into the twentieth century, noting it "could be pulled in both conservative and reform directions. It would be vulnerable to absorption in the domestic feminism of the Victorian period. It would be revived as a rallying point for twentieth-century Progressive women reformers." Using Kerber's theory and applying it to white middle class married females, the model works. The women migrating to Michigan were born in the thirty to fifty years following the Revolutionary War, primarily the 1820s, and most belonged to the generation reared by women who instilled ideas about civic responsibility and the role of women. Kerber also credits the women with agency, asserting that the construct must be understood in the context of a "sphere constructed both for and by women." The idea that women moved in public and exerted influence has been a topic of historical debate for at least twenty years. Recent scholarship suggests that women did exert influence and extend themselves in public. Nancy A. Hewitt in Women's Activism and Social Change: Rochester, New York, 1822-1872 challenges assumptions that revivalism stimulated white middle-class women to extend gradually their sphere from
charity to moral reform and ultimately to suffrage. Instead, she links regional economic and social history to women's reform activities.

Mary Ryan in her 1990 *Women in Public; From Banners to Ballots, 1825-1880* also maintains that women helped shape American public and political life and played significant symbolic and physical roles. She traces the evolution of changing symbolic roles and participation. Before 1825, women's public appearances were symbolic representations in political pageants or as the wives of the male elite. Between 1825 and the Civil War, women began to participate directly through parades, inaugurations, anniversaries, especially as they sought to promote new feminine civic values of chastity, domesticity and sobriety. During and after the Civil War, American life became increasingly politicized and women entered public life as partisans of sectional, class, and racial conflicts. By the 1870s, suffragists introduced gender into the public life as they helped usher in a new era of interest group politics.

Glenna Matthews' 1992 *Rise of the Public Woman: Woman's Power and Woman's Place in the United States, 1630-1970* takes on a chronological and geographical
scope. Relying on secondary sources, the author undertakes a synthesis of American women's public and private roles. She chooses the term "public woman" carefully because it was frequently a slur related to suspicions about sexual conduct. Matthews also attempts to dissect the complex ideology of the public from the private. She wants to know how American women have envisioned themselves as public actors and created legitimate public roles.

Daphne Spain's 1992 Gendered Spaces looks specifically at the issue of space and gender. Spatial designations for gender groups in the home, school, work, and public maintained women's inferior position by blocking female access to knowledge. Gender segregation was the norm during the nineteenth century, especially in education and employment. Spain uses the floor plans of nineteenth century homes, which reveal the types of rooms and uses and distinct gender-specified realms for men and women. For example, home libraries were the supposed domain of men and located far from food preparation areas. Material culture studies of women's activism during the progressive era also suggest that women operated in special spaces which helped them move their reforms to the fore.
These studies provide excellent starting points for examining the importance of ladies' library association construction projects for their own buildings.

Several works have not dealt specifically with issues of power and public presence but have dealt with the club movement itself. The recent scholarship about clubwomen has addressed how clubwomen exercised influence and worked within the doctrine of separate spheres to promote community reform. Several of these works have examined literary or study clubs, which bear a close resemblance and in many instances had a library component. Most of the monographs have had a decidedly eastern focus and cover the period after the formation of Sorosis in 1868 or the General Federation of Women's Clubs in 1890. They do not address library developments.

Since the 1980s, there have been several monographs dealing with the role of women in the club movement. Karen Blair's *Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined 1868-1914* looks at the activities of clubwomen and finds them to be "feminists under the skin." They developed strategies for achieving autonomy without risking their supposed natural qualities of domesticity and morality. Blair examines
women's organizations as a form of domestic feminism and applies it to the club movement. Involvement in club activities allowed women to go where they previously dared not without jeopardizing their status as ladies. She cites the existence of religious and moral reform organizations prior to the Civil War and mentions the existence of a limited number of literary clubs.

Blair's study concentrates on the period after 1868 and the formation of Sorosis and the proliferation of literary clubs in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Blair explores Sorosis, which she identifies as the catalyst for the formation of literary clubs that attracted ladies. Sorosis consisted of primarily career women who were atypical. Her inclusion of the Women's Educational and Industrial Unions moves toward the progressive realm and actually crosses over the boundaries of ethnicity and class.

For the most part, Blair's women are white, protestant, east coast women whose moderate stance applied to thousands of women. Their clubs were mostly low-budget operations that did not need a lot of money due to modest costs of programs, reports, ballots, flowers, postage, and refreshments. She does note that
some of them paid rent and some of the "most ambitious clubs" worked toward building clubhouses.\textsuperscript{31} She does not discuss the women involved in building community libraries or the roles of literary clubs in building collections. In fact, the source of reading materials was often problematic for the women's literary clubs, as many communities did not have libraries, forcing the women to get books from state libraries with circulating book programs.\textsuperscript{32}

Theodora Penny Martin's \textit{The Sounds of Our Voices: Women's Study Clubs, 1860-1920} looks at the Decatur, Illinois Art Class which fits the model of a post Civil War study club founded in 1880. Martin draws similar conclusions. Women's participation in study clubs enlarged the dimensions of women's lives within the proper sphere. Martin's case study of the Decatur, Illinois Art study club brings the focus to the Midwest.

Martin discusses the impact of the General Federation of Women's Clubs in the 1890s when she contrasts the Art Class to the Decatur Woman's Club. Formed seven years after the Art Class, the Decatur Woman's Club attracted much attention as it sponsored lectures, sewing classes, charity work, established
scholarships, and became the first woman's stock company in Illinois and the second women's organization to construct a club house. It also joined the General Federation of Women's Clubs while the Art Class did not and kept its original purpose. Martin sees a relationship between these two organizations. The Art Class allowed women to expand their self-perceptions. They could belong to a study club and remain true women. The Decatur Women's Club was the next extension and thrust women into the public arena toward the service orientation of the progressive era.

In *Natural Allies: Women's Associations in American History*, Anne Firor Scott synthesizes information about women's activity in voluntary associations. Like Blair, she identifies the rise of charity and reform related organizations prior to the Civil War. She cites the Civil War as a turning point in which many women became involved in aid societies. Literary societies, which had existed in limited areas prior to the Civil War, grew in prominence from this time forward. These organizations first promoted self-improvement and later took on more community-minded activities. They also provided a fertile training ground for the women who would lead progressive era
reforms. "For women . . . voluntary associations became a place to exercise the public influence otherwise denied them; in a sense they were provided an alternative career ladder." Balancing their participation in the clubs while maintaining familial responsibilities and roles was a struggle, but it allowed women to shape community life and they learned how to organize and administer in the process.

Scott gives some treatment to the topic of women's organizations and the building of libraries. In an earlier 1986 article, she suggests the topic of women and libraries as one that is ripe for study. In *Natural Allies*, she gives brief mention to women and libraries, citing a pattern in which, clubs identified problems or needs, initiated projects to meet them, and when their efforts were successful, persuaded local governments to take responsibility, while the club went on to the next challenge. This was a favorite tactic of library associations.

The library history literature has also largely dismissed the role of women's organizations in library development. Though several volumes of collected essays have appeared since the 1960s and 1970s, the role of women's contributions in forming public libraries remains unexplored. In fact, state studies
highlight the role of women's clubs more adequately than surveys of American public library development.\textsuperscript{38}

The role of ladies' library associations in the development of the community and as a cultural impetus in forming public libraries has received very limited attention. The earliest study of Michigan ladies' library associations is a 1954 master's thesis by Phyllis Hamner, "The Ladies' Library Associations of Michigan: A Curious Byway in Library History." Hamner relies on the \textit{1876 United States Bureau of Education Report on Libraries} and an 1876 publication \textit{Historical Sketches of the Ladies' Library Associations of the State of Michigan} for most of her study. She argues that clubwomen "must be given the credit for supplying the enthusiasm necessary to library-readiness in their State."\textsuperscript{39}

Hamner describes the evolution of library associations, which she traces to sewing circles. She also credits the dismal state of township and school libraries as another contributing factor in the rise of library associations. She provides numerous examples of the women's library associations that formed in Michigan. She credits the women for providing the first public library services and goes on to describe efforts
by some associations to construct buildings and offer quasi-public libraries.

Hamner alludes to the movement for female suffrage, but does not find direct links between the Associations and their purposes, though she asserts, "it was not absent from their thoughts." To demonstrate this argument, she relies on a statement issued by the Quincy, Michigan Literary Association about the necessity of women learning to conduct meetings and business so they could gain the power and responsibility to "stand side by side with man."

Hamner's overview is brief and has several limitations. She suggests sociological and economic factors as possible venues for further scholarship. She gives limited attention to the expanding role of the State Librarian, a position held by women beginning in the 1870s. She does not fully illuminate the importance of this role for aiding social libraries or the growth of public libraries. Because she relies heavily on source materials pre-dating 1876, Hamner does not address the Carnegie libraries which rose to preeminence in the 1890s.

Since the 1980s, the issue of women's clubs and their involvement in community formation has received
more scholarly attention. Victoria Musmann's 1983 dissertation "Women and the Founding of Social Libraries in California 1859-1910" describes women's organizations, specifically the Women's Christian Temperance Union, and how it contributed to library development in California. Marilyn J. Martin's study of Arkansas public libraries relies on a survey to discover the origins of Arkansas public libraries and determines that many resulted from women's organizations. Sally Ann Myers' study about northwest Ohio women's literary clubs also credits women with upholding cultural values.

Evelyn Leasher also provides an overview of the organizations in Michigan and developed a bibliography that was beneficial in my research. Cheryl Knott Malone touches briefly on the role of ladies' library associations and describes the role of women volunteers in forming subscription collections that became township libraries. She contends that through volunteer activities, women made a place for themselves, acted within their proper realm and contributed a great deal to community improvement.

Two 1998 doctoral dissertations have looked at selected ladies' library associations in Michigan. "Do
What You Can": Creating an Institution, The Ladies' Library Associations in Michigan, 1852-1900 by Mildred Jackson explores the institution building, literacy initiatives, and reading practices of Ladies' Library Associations in Michigan, concentrating on the Kalamazoo, Ypsilanti, Ann Arbor, and Galesburg organizations. Carole Nowicke's Not Built by Jack - But by You and Me: The Schoolcraft Ladies' Library Association 1879-1920 is a case study of the Schoolcraft organization and explores the relationship of the association to its members and its community and places it within the development of libraries in Michigan.

This study contributes to American social history, Michigan history, women's history, library history, American Studies, and material culture studies. It also contributes to fields such as the history of literacy in the nineteenth century. This dissertation demonstrates the importance of women in developing and promoting libraries in various communities and increases the historical understanding about women's activism, gender, and the cultural construction of spaces in the public context.
METHODS

This study uses historical methods of research and analysis in the examination of Michigan ladies' library associations. This study consists of quantitative and qualitative analysis and case studies and includes information from primary source materials located at archives, public libraries, and in private collections throughout Michigan. Other primary sources for this dissertation include published accounts in newspapers, autobiographies, biographies, visual evidence, and governmental documents. Secondary sources consulted for this study include works in American studies, Michigan history, women's history, material culture, organizational histories, and library history.

This study involves an analysis of the membership of the ladies' library associations and other organizations, which will comprise the quantitative portion of the study. Federal and state census records yield valuable quantitative data about the membership. Qualitative data from published biographies, city directories, and biographical compendiums provided useful information.

This study also necessitated examining the records of other organizations that promoted libraries and
literacy. This research involved examining the records for organizations such as the Grange, Young Women's Christian Association, Young Men's Christian Association, young men's library associations, and the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union. Organizational records, including minutes and published reports, were utilized for this portion of the study to analyze activities and networking relationships. Newspaper accounts, speeches, and other documents about these associations were also examined.

Ladies' library association records provided a major component of this study. Association records, consisting of constitutions, bylaws, minutes, treasurer records, book catalogs, yearbooks, and published reports yield valuable information to analyze and interpret the activities of these organizations.

These records provide an intimate link to the types of activities women pursued in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Records exist for the Kalamazoo, Grand Rapids, Galesburg, Richland, Schoolcraft, and Wayland organizations. The records varied in their completeness and physical condition. The records also varied in the quality of the documentation of the organization’s activities.
Historical records are fragile and vulnerable. A lack of recognition about the importance of such records contributes to the deterioration of these materials. Two of the saddest experiences relating to the dissertation research involved records that disappeared. Prairie Historical Society members recalled that records for the Climax organization existed until about ten years ago and have since disappeared. An equally sad experience was my discovery of the records of the Fennville organization in Allegan County. Water damage to yearbooks and minutes dating from the 1920s caused an advanced state of decay. Half the records were no longer legible.

The ladies' library association buildings served as another historical resource. Plat maps, panoramic maps, photographs, architectural drawings, and tax records offered evidence about the built environment and material culture of ladies' library associations. In instances where the physical evidence remains, the actual buildings also provided important historical information for the purposes of this study.\textsuperscript{50} As Schlereth states, "[P]ublic structures comprise the most obvious element for probing the city as a historical site."\textsuperscript{51} The buildings serve as historical
documents, evidence of the status attached to the women and organizations, and the negotiated power and activities of the ladies' library associations. In several instances, the buildings survived long after records disappeared. As Kenneth Ames pointed out, the "nonverbal communicative aspect of material culture continues beyond its original context; tools developed for a society to attain its own goals become for the historian of a later period a means to identify and analyze those goals."\textsuperscript{52}

SIGNIFICANCE OF GENDER AND ADVOCACY AND REFORM

Examining three counties in Southwestern Michigan, this study illustrates how ladies' library associations helped define and control public space within the community and participated in the process of promoting and forming public libraries in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. This study also examines how members of ladies' library associations took leadership roles in the community and worked collaboratively with men and with other organizations toward the goal of providing library services and setting the stage for public library development.

Findings of this study also suggest that concepts
of class and gender, while useful as a category of historical analysis, fail to account for the experiences of even non-wage earning women in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Certainly, ladies' library associations in Southwestern Michigan worked within the boundaries of engendered space. The members engaged in dialogue with selected male alliances within the community, creating collections, maintaining libraries, taking on ambitious building programs, and networking with other organizations in their communities and throughout the state. These women pushed the bounds of engendered traditional space. Their actions and movement in the community speak to larger issues of how to achieve reform, expanding and reinterpreting the domestic realm of middle-class women's lives in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Ladies' library associations operated in a realm of formal and informal networks at the state level in the years before the formation of the General Federation of Women's Clubs in 1890. To understand how these ladies' library associations operated within broader community and regional networks of voluntary associations, the dissertation investigates
relationships with other organizations such as the rural Grange, Young Women's Christian Associations, Young Men's Christian Associations, and young men's library associations, as well as the State Library's traveling library program. This study includes an analysis of the impact of informal networking and leadership, especially as seen in the influence of Lucinda Hinsdale Stone who traveled throughout Michigan and the Midwest to start other ladies' library associations and women's clubs.

Ladies' library associations were part of the migration of people and culture from New England and New York to Michigan. The ideas about education that developed in New York, in particular, influenced the evolution of education and libraries that developed in Michigan, including the ladies' library associations. The next chapter focuses on the migration of people and ideas to Michigan.

2. Jesse H. Shera, Foundations of the Public Library (Copyright 1949 by the University of Chicago, reprinted 1965 by The Shoe String Press, Inc.), 59.
4. The suggestion that these associations had a public or quasi-public status seems to be radical, except when one
considers that the 1876 report of *Public Libraries in the United States of America Their History, Condition, and Management* included these organizations. This issue is one of the more difficult aspects of this study when one considers that the historiography has concentrated on the ideology of separate spheres, which shaped much of women's and men's experiences in the nineteenth century and placed women within private realm of the home.

13. A Ladies' Library Association incorporated a few
months earlier in Flint, Michigan, in 1851. Kalamazoo
incorporated in 1852; however, early records indicate
that informal activities began in the middle 1840s.
14. Stone's status as "mother of clubs" appears to have
been as early as 1893. See Frances Willard and Mary
Livermore, ed. A Woman of the Century, Fourteen Hundred-
Seventy Biographical Sketches Accompanied by Portraits of
Leading American Woman in All Walks of Life. (Buffalo:
C. W. Moulton, 1893, reprint, Detroit: Gale Research
15. Carole Nowicke and Mildred Jackson also examined the
Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association in their studies
relating to ladies' library associations. My study
departs from theirs, in that I focus more on the original
leadership and the transformation from a library
association to a literary club, which occurred between
1873 and 1900.
16. For a brief overview of the Richland Ladies' Library
Association and library history, see Eugene McKean,
Marjorie Harrison, and Carol C. McBride, Richland From
Its Prairie Beginnings (Richland, Michigan: Richland
17. See Hogue Stinchcomb's History of the Ladies' Literary
Club of Grand Rapids, Michigan (Grand Rapids, Michigan:
Clandoin Printery, 1910).
18. Historians of American social history have organized
this period into three chronological categories, which
include the Antebellum period, Civil War and
reconstruction period, and Progressive Era. Sometimes
divisions have been made by presidential periods.
19. The literature on nineteenth-century women's history
is vast. See Nancy Cott, The Bonds of Womanhood, Woman's
Sphere in New England 1780-1835 (New Haven: Yale
University Press, 1977); Linda K. Kerber, Women of the
Republic, Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America
(New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1980), and Joan M.
Jensen, Loosening the Bonds, Mid-Atlantic Farm Women,
20. This problem was particularly evident in rural
antebellum New England. See Linda J. Borish, "Farm
Females, Fitness, and the Ideology of Physical Health in
Antebellum New England, Agricultural History v64n3
(Summer 1990): 17-30
21. A variety of reforms involving women's health emerged
in the nineteenth century. See Gayle V. Fischer,
Pantaloon and Power: A Nineteenth-Century Dress Reform
in the United States (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University
Press, 2001), Jane B. Donegan, "Hydropathic Highway to
Health": Women and Water-Cure in Antebellum America
22. See Noralee Frankel and Nancy S. Dye, Gender, Class,
Race and Reform in the Progressive Era (University Press
23. Though scholarship has largely ignored the public
roles of women, a few early works acknowledge the agency
of women. See Mary Beard, Woman's Work in Municipalities
(New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1915), Sophonisba
Preston Breckinridge, Women in the Twentieth Century, A
Study of their Political, Social and Economic Activities
(New York: McGraw-Hill, 1933), and Mary Beard, Woman as
Force in History: A Study in Traditions and Realities
24. The separate spheres paradigm of nineteenth-century
women has been explored in several studies. See Barbara
Quarterly 28 (Summer 1966): 151-174; Ronald W. Hogelund,
"The Female Appendage: Feminine Life-Style in
America, 1820-1860," in Our American Sisters, ed. Jean
E. Friedman and William G. Shade (Boston: Allyn & Bacon,
1973): 133-149; Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "Beauty, the
Beast and the Militant Woman: A Case Study in Sex Roles
and Social Stress in Jacksonian America," American
Quarterly 23 (1972); Gerda Lerner, "The Lady and the Mill
Girl: Changes in the Status of Women in the Age of
Jackson," in Friedman and Shade, ed., Our American
Sisters ed. Jean E. Friedman and William G. Shade
(Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1973): 82-96; Nancy F. Cott, The
Bonds of Womanhood: "Woman's Sphere" in New England
1780-1835 (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press,
1977), and Linda Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female
Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History,"
separate spheres paradigm basically presupposes that
industrialization, urbanization, and materialistic values
led to new definitions and the separation of the roles of
men and women. Men increasingly moved in the public
realm, as women were left in the home to maintain the
religious and moral values abandoned in the changing
society.
Ideology in Revolutionary America (New York: W. W.
Ideology in Revolutionary America (New York: W. W.
37. See John David Marshall, ed., An American Library History Reader (Hamden, Conn.: Shoestring Press, 1961),


47. Mildred Louise Jackson, "Do What You Can": Creating


53. Most studies have focused on middle class women. Other studies examining the experiences of working class women. See Alice Kessler-Harris, Women Have Always Worked: A Historical Overview (Old Westbury, N.Y.: Feminist Press, 1981).
CHAPTER II

DEVELOPMENT OF MICHIGAN AND THE FACTORS INVOLVED IN LIBRARY FORMATION

INTRODUCTION

Several factors influenced the development of ladies library associations. This chapter includes a brief overview of Michigan's development, particularly as it relates to ideas about libraries and education and subsequent reform efforts of women as they established social and subscription libraries in Michigan.¹ New York, in particular, shared many population characteristics with Michigan and developments in education and libraries occurred concurrently.²

Michigan Historical Overview

The development of Michigan in the decades before statehood in 1837 may be described as having three distinct phases. Native populations inhabited Michigan during a period of pre-European contact that spanned from pre-historic times to approximately 1620. The lives of

41
the numerous Native American tribes, such as the Chippewa, Pottawattomi, Ottawa, Miami, and Huron, changed after the first European contact occurred and the development of the area became influenced by a number of external factors.

A second distinct phase, that of European exploration, settlement, and contestation began in approximately 1620, when the first French arrived in Michigan, attracted to the rich fur resources. Non-native ownership and control of the land also characterized this period as French fur traders and missionaries established settlements and trading outposts throughout the state, including areas in southwestern and eastern Michigan. The end of the French and Indian War in 1760 resulted in the French surrender of possessions in the Great Lakes to the British. The British controlled the land that became Michigan until after the Revolutionary period.

The last major historical period occurred after the Revolutionary War of the late eighteenth century. This includes a period of territorial governance in the years leading up to statehood in 1837, and important federal
and territorial legislation that bears directly upon this study as it relates to issues of gender, reform, and libraries. The Land Ordinance of 1785 and Northwest Ordinance of 1787, and territorial legislation dealing directly with the issue of libraries and education created the climate that supported social libraries in the nineteenth century. After the Revolutionary War, the British ceded the area, including what would become Michigan, to the United States in the Treaty of Paris of 1783 although British soldiers continued to occupy Detroit and Fort Mackinac until 1796. During these early years before statehood several events and trends occurred that are important to this study including a migration of a population that would shape cultural institutions.

**Land and Northwest Ordinances**

Geographic divisions and cultural constraints, including provisions for education, were established for the area that became Michigan several decades before statehood. After the Treaty of Paris, Congress took over lands north of the Ohio River and mandated a system for organizing the land with the 1785 Land Ordinance, under
the Articles of Confederation.\(^5\) The Land Ordinance required a survey of the land making up the Northwest territory. The land was divided into basic units called townships that were six square miles each. Each of the townships was divided into 36 sections. Sections were broken down into halves and quarters.

Once surveyed, the land was sold at auction with a minimum price of $1.00 per acre. The least amount a buyer could purchase was 640 acres and alternate townships were sold intact, with section sixteen of every township reserved from sale for the benefit of schools. This was the basic policy that dictated sales of lands to the west, including Michigan.\(^6\)

The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 also laid out the means for achieving statehood and the cultural goals.\(^7\) In much the same manner as the geographic divisions had been developed with the Land Ordinance, the educational goals described the provisions for achieving statehood in terms of population and governance. The provisions for public education mandated that one section of each township, section 16, was reserved for schools. This section could physically contain the school building or
be sold to raise funds for schools. The emphasis on education was as important as religious beliefs and morality to achieve the goals of good government and happiness, as stated, "Religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged."  

When the earliest families of New England origin arrived, they entered a territory in which the conditions were ripe for the development of education and literacy promoting activities. The Northwest Ordinance fostered the conditions that promoted education and literacy, two key factors in the years leading up to statehood in 1837.  

**Opening of the Michigan Territory**  
The period of 1805 to 1812 was tenuous in the development of Michigan. Michigan was the last part of the original Northwest Territory to develop because of some particular geographic conditions. Other areas, Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana, developed before Michigan because of the issues of overland accessibility and climatic conditions. Prospective land purchasers and settlers regarded the interior of Michigan as swamp and
mosquito infested. With the exception of Detroit, Michilimackinac, and some scattered whites among remote trading posts on the St. Joseph, Kalamazoo, and Grand rivers native populations inhabited most of the state.\textsuperscript{10}

The War of 1812 proved decisive in determining Michigan's future development with the second Treaty of Paris and assurance that Michigan would remain an American possession. Other conditions, including a declining fur trade, also shifted the population of the future state. Farmers started to emigrate into the Territory after 1815, first to the eastern portion of the state, and a few years later, to concentrations in the western counties. The farmers co-existed for some time with the native populations with enmity, as the United States government enacted a series of treaties to control the Indians. Nine treaties from 1817 to 1842 resulted in a major relocation of the Native Americans and the selling and reselling of land that the settlers occupied as the century progressed.

The eastern portion of what was to become Michigan attracted the earliest settlers. White settlers had some familiarity with Detroit, founded in 1701.\textsuperscript{11} Traveling
conditions from east to west also influenced development. Before 1825, travel to the western part of the Michigan Territory required passage on the Great Lakes or by foot on Indian trails. Built between 1825 and 1835, the Chicago Road helped open southwestern Michigan.

After 1825, the opening of the Erie Canal improved and even popularized travel to Michigan. The opening of the Canal was a decisive and significant factor in attracting New Yorkers who were one-generation removed New Englanders. These people, often termed Yankees, brought their particular cultural inclinations to Michigan, particularly middle and southwestern Michigan. The newcomers also clamored for land.

President Andrew Jackson signed the bill granting statehood to Michigan on January 26, 1837. A debate over land known as the Toledo Strip impeded the entrance of Michigan into the Union. The area was originally ceded to Ohio, but the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 placed the land in Michigan territory. An 1817 federal survey reinstated the area in Ohio, and still another survey in 1818 placed it in Michigan. Not until statehood was the matter ended and the land placed under Ohio jurisdiction.
Development of Southwestern Michigan

Kalamazoo, Allegan, and Kent counties, in particular, represent case studies of small town and rural life in the context of nineteenth century urbanization and industrialization in the Midwest. Prior to permanent settlement by white pioneers, the Pottawattomi and Ottawa Indians populated the area. French fur traders were among the earliest non-native residents of this area, having operated in southwestern Michigan since the end of the seventeenth century.

The earliest settlement occurred in 1829, and Kalamazoo County formed in 1830, predating Allegan and Kent Counties. Allegan and Kent counties developed as separate legal entities from Kalamazoo County.\textsuperscript{16} By the 1850s, Kalamazoo County contained a mix of small towns, supporting a largely agricultural economy throughout much of the nineteenth century. Within the county were the villages of Kalamazoo, Climax, Richland, Galesburg, and Schoolcraft; Kalamazoo served as the county seat and largest town in the county.\textsuperscript{17} The community served the rural countryside, but gradually moved toward an industrial economy by the end of the nineteenth century.
During that period, the population of the village and city of Kalamazoo grew steadily from about 1,000 in 1840 to 24,000 by 1900.\textsuperscript{18}

Formed in 1833, Allegan County was and remained a largely rural and agricultural area for all of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Allegan County was also settled by people of New England and New York background, and its organization reflected ideas of local self-government and the organization of township governments. Township government sometimes preceded county government by a number of years; this was the case in Allegan County.\textsuperscript{19} The major communities of Allegan County included the county seat in Allegan and small farm-supporting villages of Plainwell, Otsego, Martin, and Wayland. Lake Michigan shore communities of Saugatuck and Douglas shared the agricultural characteristics but also supported maritime activities.\textsuperscript{20}

The earliest white settlers arrived in the area of Kent County in the late 1820s, attracted to the region as the vestiges of the fur trade along the Grand River was winding down. Formed in 1836, Kent County began as a sparsely populated and primarily rural settlement. The
character of the county changed with the rapid expansion of Grand Rapids.\textsuperscript{21} Although the earliest white settlers were of New England and New York origin, as were both Kalamazoo and Allegan counties, there were some marked differences in the earliest development.

The Grand River had a profound impact on the development of what would become Kent County's largest city, Grand Rapids. From 1837 steamboats traveled on the Grand River linking Grand Rapids and Grand Haven. In 1839 the state appropriated funds for the construction of canals and the improvement of the river. As a result, business development along the Grand River promoted industrialization and rapid population growth much earlier in Grand Rapids with the population growing from 880 in 1840 to more than 87,000 by 1900.\textsuperscript{22} Several farm supporting villages in Kent County included Sparta, Cedar Springs, Rockford, Byron Center, Hudsonville, and Lowell.\textsuperscript{23}

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YANKEES ON THE WESTERN FRONTIER
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The earliest arrivals in Michigan may be best characterized as Yankees because of their background.\textsuperscript{24}
In a 1986 article describing the background of settlers in south central Michigan, Gregory S. Rose analyzed four data sources, including manuscript schedules of the 1850 census, land office records, the *Michigan Pioneer Record* and *Michigan Biographies* and found a preponderance of people from New York and New England. Even as late as 1860, when one-third of the state's residents claimed Michigan nativity, a quarter of the residents consisted of former New Yorkers. New Yorkers who moved to Michigan were second and third generation New Englanders who had migrated to the western part of that state after the Revolutionary War. The other states of origin included concentrations of people from Vermont, Massachusetts, and Connecticut.

While there was settlement in the southern counties of Michigan by people from Ohio, the Carolinas, and Virginia, people from New York and New England settled southwestern Michigan. Some of the earliest southern Michigan residents came from neighboring Ohio and Indiana, and settled either in the Detroit area or in St. Joseph, Cass, and Berrien counties. Many of these former Ohio and Indiana residents were born in Virginia and
North Carolina. However, they made up a small portion of the overall population. Less than 5 percent were natives of Ohio, while Pennsylvania natives were about half as numerous as those from Ohio. A little less than 20 percent of Michigan's population in 1860 was foreign-born.

By the 1820s, economic conditions in New York and New England represented a mature society that was in a state of stabilization. Increasingly, New Yorkers moved west to take advantage of opportunities to purchase farmland or engage in agriculture related businesses. After the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825 and the use of steam-powered traffic on the Great Lakes, people from upstate New York, primarily the children of post-Revolutionary War New Englanders, moved to Michigan. An 1820s folk song beckoned,

"Come all ye Yankee Farmers,
Who'd like to change your lot,
Who've spunk enough to travel
Beyond your native spot,
And leave behind the village
Where Pa' and Ma' do stay,
Come follow me and settle
In Michigania."

Transplanted Yankees exerted a profound influence in
the development of culture and politics. In her study of Richland and Alamo Townships in Kalamazoo County, Susan Gray finds a strong Yankee influence in market involvement and communal institutions. Clearly the social institutions of church and education were influenced by Yankee origins. Early Michigan governance also copied the county board system and powers of New York, which, in turn, were borrowed from Massachusetts. Michigan ideas about antislavery and reform of the 1840s and 1850s spoke to the New England connection, as evidenced by its role in the antislavery crusade and the development and growth of the Republican Party in Michigan from 1854 to 1932. Michigan also took an early leadership role in public education. The support of literacy and reading reinforced ideas about education and reform, as evidenced by early support for libraries of all types.

Yankee Traditions of Literacy and Education

The earliest Yankees in Michigan shaped the cultural destiny of the state by advocating for the institutions that supported literacy and education. These
institutions began to take root in New York and New England in the decades following the Revolutionary War. Rising literacy rates and increasing interest in education as a reform set the stage for subsequent library development in Michigan after the 1850s.

New Yorkers and New Englanders arriving in Michigan in the 1830s possessed high levels of literacy. Several studies have dealt with the aspect of literacy, examining how many people were literate, what the forces were behind growing literacy, and what they read. In general, the studies suggest there were several factors relating to increasing literacy from the middle of the seventeenth century through the end of the eighteenth century. This trend occurred in the western world, but literacy did appear to rise faster in New England. This trend was evident across New England society with high rates of literacy that approached nearly one-hundred percent for the upper classes. Even the lower levels of society approached nearly 75 percent. That is not to say there were not differences in occupational groups with links to occupation and wealth.

In another study by Kenneth Lockridge, the
methodology relies on a limited variety of documents (wills) and a single-source method for analyzing the documents. Lockridge takes the signature or the mark of "x" to signify literacy or illiteracy, although sometimes the "x" was used in older age or in the case of feebleness or forgetfulness. Lockridge cites factors such as Puritan ideology, social concentration, educational opportunities available in rural areas, and the rise of Protestant religion as particularly important vehicles for the almost universal literacy found in New England by the close of the eighteenth century.

William Gilmore studies the five settled counties of New Hampshire and Vermont bordering the Connecticut River. During the early national era, the area accounted for about a third of the settled land. Gilmore further breaks down some of his analysis into a smaller unit, Windsor District, Vermont, the eleven townships comprising southern Windsor County. Gilmore links the rise of literacy to the economic changes in the society related to the expanding capitalism of the region. Gilmore also examines the various means of participating in the literate culture, including evidence of "[a]t
least six social libraries, two moral libraries, one encyclopedia library, and a pair of circulating libraries."  

This tradition of literacy also extended to women. By the late seventeenth century, women's opportunities for basic education had improved, and literacy levels approached the 45% level. Gilmore cites an increased attention to women's roles and female education under the banner of republican motherhood in the early nineteenth century. According to Kerber, the closing of the literacy gap occurred between 1780 and 1850 when the census reported little difference between the numbers of northeastern men and women who could both read and write. She concluded that the major improvements in female education occurred between 1790 and 1830.

In addition to the various factors pushing literacy levels higher, the mid-century also brought an interest by reformers in dealing with societal wide turbulence brought about by the growth of cities, industrialization, the movement from an agrarian to a market-driven economy, and an increase in immigration. By mid-century, education became one among many reforms helping people
adapt to a changing world.\textsuperscript{50}

Educational reform appealed to a broad cross section and included both urban and rural populations. From the 1840s, the \textit{Michigan Farmer} regularly included features about the value of education. Articles stressed the importance of schools, as well as opportunities for self-education, such as reading and libraries. "The rapid improvements of the age . . . the resources of a vast domain, yet to be developed by Art and Science" drove the need for educational reform in Michigan farm communities.\textsuperscript{51} Yankees migrating to Michigan also perceived an obligation to provide better opportunities for the next generation, as some of the "pioneers when New York or Ohio were new," lacked "early advantages for education."\textsuperscript{52}

Schools helped create better farming communities and citizens. The \textit{Michigan Farmer} noted, "[t]he influence of a good school is not only felt upon its pupils, but upon all who come in contact with them, their parents, friends and directors, and they in their turn influence others."\textsuperscript{53} It also fostered good citizenship. "In a republican country, the school should foster republican virtues."\textsuperscript{54}
Eventually educational reform extended to higher education and support of the agricultural college, now Michigan State University.\textsuperscript{55}

Women's traditional roles as mothers required an educated female farming population, as they provided the "direction and development of the infant mind" and "care of its physical wants."\textsuperscript{56} A farm "lady" possessed a dignified "deportment" evidenced by "her intellectual endowments" and "virtue which commands the respect and silent admiration of the world."\textsuperscript{57}

Self-education and life-long learning provided educational opportunities beyond the schools for Michigan farm families. The agricultural press perceived its role to be of the utmost importance in this respect, as reported by the \textit{Michigan Farmer}.

Parents are not aware of the vast importance of a newspaper in a family of children. Full one half, and an important half of education, as it respects the business of the world, and the ability to rise and make one's self respectable in it, is derived from newspapers.\textsuperscript{58}

In addition to newspapers, The \textit{Michigan Farmer} encouraged readers to provide books for children and "accord them ungrudgingly, time and facilities for reading them."\textsuperscript{59}
The *Michigan Farmer* did not view all reading materials as having equal moral or instructive value, however. It advocated that "[e]very child at the age of five years, should have the promise of a pocket Bible." The publication took a dimmer view of novel reading, noting its "pernicious influence on society."

Libraries became an extension of educational reform and by the 1850s, township and school district libraries attempted to provide reading opportunities for children and adults. An 1851 article in the *Michigan Farmer* noted the benefits of the school district libraries for the "farming population" as there was "scarcely an individual among them who cannot learn something profitable from books . . . They are intended for ALL, and are certainly most beneficial to adults."

For the adults unable to benefit from public schools, the library became "[t]he instruction, then, of the people." By the end of the nineteenth century educational reformers viewed public libraries as the zenith of this reform. "One of the most interesting features of our progress in intelligence and in thrift is the growing attention now given to the public library."
George Ticknor, credited with founding the public Library in Boston in 1852, summed it up, "A free public library, adapted to the wants of our people, would be the crowning glory of our public schools." For many years, educational reform extended to support of various forms of libraries, particularly social and subscription libraries.

**Tradition of Libraries**

The first libraries in the United States formed in pre-Revolutionary times, with the earliest being the Library Company of Philadelphia, incorporated in 1742. Begun by Benjamin Franklin in 1731, a social library with a charter was adopted and signed by Pennsylvania Governor G. Thomas on March 25, 1742. Franklin's company was the first and ushered in the establishment of social libraries and legislative support in New England and later New York.

Social libraries provided readily available reading materials, often through subscription or sale of shares and in many ways foreshadowed the public library movement. Carleton Bruns Joeckel, in his study of the governance of American libraries, became one of the first
scholars to point to the importance of social and subscription libraries to the public library movement during the mid to late nineteenth century. "From the viewpoint of use . . . the margin between the social libraries and their natural successors, the free public libraries, was on the whole a narrow one" but their legal structure was different.68

Franklin's library ushered in development of libraries and, more importantly, legislation to support libraries in the years before the American Revolution. Several social and municipal libraries in New England followed the Library Company of Philadelphia by incorporating.69 While the earliest libraries formed without legislative authority, the next step in the growth and development of New England and New York libraries was that of legislative approval to give members specific legal protection and insure the continuity of organizations. New York led the way in this regard with the first legislation concerning the founding and managing of social libraries. This was due, in part, to the increasing number of libraries seeking incorporation. New York's 1796 legislation required a
minimum number of twenty members with a subscription of at least 40. Elected trustees held the authority, and real and personal property holdings were limited to $500, not including the books.\textsuperscript{70}

Soon other states followed with library legislation aimed at the incorporation of social libraries. Legislation for social libraries in Massachusetts, similar to the New York legislation, came in 1798 and Vermont libraries passed a less detailed law, that did not set minimum membership numbers or maximum property value requirements.\textsuperscript{71}

Initially driven by the demand for incorporation, the legislation authorizing social libraries may have helped promote them as well. An 1802 editorial in the Massachusetts Register estimated there were roughly 100 social libraries in Massachusetts alone.\textsuperscript{72} Interestingly, while early provisions and discussions by Congress in the 1790s pondered a national library, the legislation authorizing the Library of Congress did not occur until 1800.\textsuperscript{73} Moreover, the Library of Congress was exactly that, a library for Congress, not the people per se.

Ohio led library development in the Northwest
Territory. The Coonskin Library in Ames, Ohio and the earliest Cincinnati Public Library both claimed founding dates of 1802. Both of these formed before territorial enabling legislation specified the conditions for library development.

The next important developments in libraries in New England and New York occurred simultaneously with the earliest library development in Michigan. New York was the first state to give support for funding school libraries. As early as the 1820s, New York Governor De Witt Clinton and Superintendent of Schools John Dix articulated the idea of the importance of libraries and education. The 1821 Report of the Commission on Common Schools of New York contained the earliest recommendation to fund school district libraries. Endorsements by Governor De Witt Clinton followed in 1827, and in the 1830s, promotion by James Wadsworth, an eminent philanthropist, and John A. Dix, Superintendent of Schools in New York, resulted in the 1835 legislation that was the first in the country to provide for tax-supported free library service for school districts. An 1835 law permitted voters in any school district to levy
a tax of $20 to build a library and a tax of $10 each succeeding year to provide for its support.\textsuperscript{76}

Despite the legislation, the debate on the value of providing funds for school district libraries continued well into the 1830s and 1840s. One of the debates centered around the purpose and constituency groups served by these libraries. This debate was repeated in other states, including Michigan. Reports of the New York Superintendent of Schools, John Dix, in the 1830s articulated this debate and appeared to support a concept of school district libraries that provided continuing education for self-learners after the primary grades.

School district libraries are intended for the inhabitants of school districts; as well for those who have completed their common school education as for those who have not. The primary object of their institution was to disseminate works suited to the intellectual improvement of the great body of the people, rather than to throw into school districts, for the use of young persons, works of a merely juvenile character. . . . They may have the privilege of drawing them if the inhabitants adopt such a rule; but I think any such rule must be subject to the right of any inhabitant to take from the library for perusal any book in it.\textsuperscript{77}

The early support of these libraries in New York occurred in 1838 with legislation that allocated $55,000
a year to libraries to buy books, provided they raised an equal amount by taxation. Where common schools had high levels of support, so did the school district libraries. The legislation resulted in an increase of 422,459 volumes in 1841 to 630,125 one year later in 1842. The libraries grew quickly, reaching a total of 1,604,210 volumes in 1853. However, despite such optimistic beginnings, a period of decline occurred by the 1860s with reports of poor collections, poor storage, and problems with lost and unreturned books.78

New England and New York men and women came to Michigan with ideas about libraries and literacy that had been part of their culture for several decades. These ideas migrated to Michigan with the settlers. These ideas became formalized and part of the culture as the establishment of a state library, enabling legislation for township libraries and school district libraries occurred. These developments provided some of the underlying motivations for the subscription libraries that were largely controlled by women for women at mid-century in Michigan.
Yankee Libraries on the Michigan Frontier

When the earliest Michigan settlers from New York and New England began arriving in Michigan territory in the 1820s, they were not unfamiliar with the concepts of social libraries and school district libraries. From the 1820s as they entered Michigan, and in the 1830s, they simultaneously formed libraries and enacted some of the most progressive library legislation in the country. Such actions are not surprising given their experiences.

The earliest settlers and territorial leadership demonstrated their support for libraries in the formation of the Michigan State Library in 1828. The concept of a state library has significance for several reasons beyond the service oriented function it provided for the governor and legislature. In symbolic terms, it placed importance on the library as a resource. The legislative support of a library served as the first progressive library legislation for which Michigan would become known. Legislation for the State Library occurred even before Michigan achieved statehood. Later legislation authorized social and township libraries. The State Library of Michigan also provides a case-study of the
gradual evolution of library services for all citizens by the 1890s. That story is too broad for the scope of this study but it requires a brief description.

The Michigan State Library began with 131 volumes that included state reports, laws, and other legal documents. The collection was exclusively for the use of legislators and the governor and had books and materials dating back to the earliest days of the territorial government. Formally mandated on May 17, 1828, an oversight committee consisting of Wolcott Lawrence of Monroe County and Henry R. Schoolcraft from the Upper Peninsula administered the Territorial Council Library. On June 16, 1828, Governor Cass signed the Bill appointing a librarian at "the sum of one hundred dollars" in exchange for taking "charge of the books, furniture."

Within a few years of the founding of the Michigan State Library, provisions for other libraries appeared in the territorial legislation. In 1831, legislation for "social libraries" provided the means for "proprietors" to organize "into a society or body politic, for the express purpose of holding, increasing, preserving, and
using such library." In 1835, a state constitution drafted in preparation of Michigan's entry into the United States mandated township libraries, making Michigan the only state that made such a provision. An 1837 law provided for school district libraries and allocated penal fines to support book purchases and operation. Because this study focuses on the social libraries that resulted from the 1831 territorial legislation, I will not discuss these topics at this point. Instead, I will briefly discuss the legislation enacted for township and school district libraries and their relationship to social libraries.

**Township and School District Libraries**

Michigan's 1835 State Constitution mandating township libraries reflected the influence of early legislators representing the Yankee influence. Michigan, with its 1835 Constitution and 1837 law enabling districts to claim penal fines, was on par and ahead of several New England states, implementing ideas brought forth by educational reformers, such as Horace Mann, who authorized school district libraries for the sole use of Massachusetts school children in 1837.
libraries, in particular, gained legislative support in Michigan and other states in the 1830s through the 1850s.  

Michigan township and school district libraries existed in tandem and became part of a complex web of nineteenth century library services that also included social libraries. In some instances, social libraries merged into the township and school district libraries. In other instances, the social libraries formed because of deficiencies of the township and school district libraries.

The 1835 Michigan Constitution made provisions for free schools and township libraries, mandating one for each township.  

John D. Pierce was influential in the inclusion of these ideas into the first constitution. A Congregational minister born in 1797 in Chesterfield, New Hampshire, Pierce had studied one year at Princeton Theological Seminary before his first appointment in Oneida County, New York. The Home Missionary Society commissioned Pierce to settle in Michigan and selected Calhoun County and the community of Marshall. Pierce participated in the educational committee charged with
defining Michigan's constitutional provisions for public education.90 Pierce was greatly influenced by Victor Cousin's Report on education in Prussia that included a system of primary, secondary, and college instruction headed by a central governmental minister.91 When the 1835 Constitution was approved, Michigan became the first state in the nation to have a separate Superintendent of Public Instruction. John D. Pierce was the first person to hold the position and became the leading force in building Michigan's system of education that other Midwestern and western regions eventually modeled.92

Two guiding principles shaped library policy: legislative support of township libraries and the appropriation of penal fines for the operation of these libraries.93 The Constitution clearly spelled out the provisions made for libraries.

As soon as the circumstance of the states will permit, the legislature shall provide for the establishment of libraries, one at least in each township; and the money which shall be paid by persons for exemption from military duty, and the clear proceeds of all fines assessed in the several counties for any breach of the penal laws, shall be exclusively applied for the support of said libraries.94
John D. Pierce, the first Superintendent of Instruction, who had incorporated his ideas about education into the State Constitution pushed his agenda that also included progressive ideas about providing library services for public schools. He recognized that these services would impact and ultimately dilute the power and potential service of the township libraries. In his 1836 report to the legislature, Pierce cited the benefits of township libraries but also pointed out the practicality of school district libraries.

Township libraries would undoubtedly prove beneficial to the public interests, but their benefits must necessarily be confined more generally to the immediate neighborhood of their location. . . . As the constitution leaves it discretion with the legislature to establish one or more in each township, it is respectfully submitted whether the public interests would not be greatly promoted by the establishment of one in each primary school district.  

By 1837, Pierce moved forward with his plan to provide for the support of primary schools. He also moved ahead with his recommendations to the legislature to establish district libraries, reallocating some of the resources previously made for the township libraries.
Pierce's emphasis focused on the children of the school district, as the allocations depended on the number of children.

Each and every district . . . shall be entitled to its proportion of the clear proceeds of all fines collected within the county for any breach of the penal laws; and also its proportion of the equivalent for exemption from military duty, according to the number of children between the ages of five and seventeen years inclusive.96

From about 1840 onward, the relationship between township libraries and school district libraries became complex. The establishment of school district libraries influenced the development and course of the township libraries. Township libraries and school district libraries both provided a basis for free public libraries and citizen experiences with both probably influenced the later public library legislation. The complex relationship between the district and township libraries, both of which were not well funded, was best explained in an 1846 report by Superintendent Mayhew to the legislature.

We have district and township libraries. In the former, the district owns a library which circulates
exclusively in the district. In the latter, the township owns a library, from which each district is entitled to draw books quarterly.97

Throughout much of the 1840s and 1850s, the township libraries languished, and the power and influence of the State Superintendent of Education moved the pendulum in favor of school district libraries. The emerging role of the school district libraries was at the expense of the township libraries. In 1858, Superintendent Ira Mayhew, successfully introduced Public Act 208 that distributed the books in the township libraries in proportional allotments to the school district libraries.98 About two-thirds of the townships voted to make the change. At the same time, the Legislature also authorized the State Board of Education to prepare a list of books suitable for district libraries and selected one vendor to supply the district libraries with books.99

Another part of the act removed the financial support, eliminating the annual appropriation of $25.00 for the township libraries. Townships had the option of raising money to fund libraries. Indeed, very few townships voted to raise any money and within a few
years, the libraries were languishing. Townships continued to receive proceeds from penal fines, but in most of Michigan, excepting some urbanized areas, these lacked sufficient funds to maintain libraries.100

Many townships grappled with the issue of "clear proceeds" referred to in the enabling legislation. In some instances interpretation was misapplied to suit the purposes.101 In 1860, Detroit Judge James V. Campbell rendered that deduction for expenses other than libraries was not legal. Despite his ruling, the Civil War soon absorbed the attention and resources of the people, delaying any action. 102 Even where "clear proceeds" were distributed, it was often not enough to purchase books or run a library.

Ten years later, and after disruptions caused by the Civil War, both the school district and township libraries faced declining support and operational difficulties. The Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Michigan, with Accompanying Documents for the Year 1869 cited the problems associated with the role of the township clerks, the problems in purchasing, and the problems in
distributing the books to the school district libraries.

The books were distributed to the districts by the town clerk to be returned by the directors every third month for exchange. This would now require more than 60,000 miles' travel per annum, as a positive expense to the directors, certainly, of $100,000, to say nothing of more than 10,000 days' time. This was like putting two locomotives ahead of each other to draw a hand car. The result was, the books were generally hidden away in the clerk's offices, like monks in their cloister, and valueless to the world. 103

An 1871 law, Public Act Number 103, established a "local option" act which allowed the Board of School Inspectors to put to a vote the question of re-establishing the township libraries, which had largely fallen into shambles by this time. 104 It was too little too late and by the close of the 1870s, Superintendent Briggs reported "no marked changes in the conditions of the libraries during the year" remarking that the figures were "not particularly encouraging." 105

The strained relationship between the township libraries and school district libraries resulted in the failure of both to provide services for their Michigan constituencies for a variety of reasons that probably boiled down to issues of funding, authority, and
accountability. Both the township and school district libraries faced problems in all three areas.

The accountability of the township libraries was a flaw in the legislation itself. The library was often a low priority, often held by the township clerk in his home. A township library formed in Otsego, Allegan County, per state legislation in 1844, and for the first 44 years traveled between the homes of the various township clerks. The township clerk or a member of the clerk's family had charge and oversight of the library. A 1926 account by a daughter of a township clerk recalled the situation and the "pleasant memories of handling and exchanging the books as many times they were kept in private homes." In her sketch of the history of Michigan libraries, Genevieve M. Walton describes an interview she had with the daughter of an early Otsego Township Clerk in which she described the operation of the library.

The library was moved from the township clerk's office to private homes and other places of refuge. Book purchase was a difficult process. One daughter remembers toiling through Rollins Ancient History before she was twelve years old and being questioned on it by her father. A town hall was built in 1861
and a fitting place made for the library. The selection of books was not always in wise hands, nor always suited to general reading.\textsuperscript{107}

The books were inaccessible most of the time and the "ponderous volumes" held little interest for many of the readers, particularly the "young women."\textsuperscript{108} Otsego is a compelling example because, in the 1870s, a ladies' library association formed because of problems with the services of the township library.

Selection, distribution, and control of the books were also problems with the township libraries. In the earliest years, township clerks and boards selected the books. The quantity and quality varied from township to township. An early account about the township libraries alluded to the problem with collection selection.

\textit{Generally it was better to sow oats in the dust that covered these books than to give them to the young to read. Every year, soon after the taxes were collected, the State swarmed with peddlers, with all of the unsalable books of eastern houses--the sensational novels of all ages, tales of piracies, murders, and love intrigues--the yellow covered literature of the world.}\textsuperscript{109}

Books circulated to the families in the district often became scattered. There were no provisions for trying to
secure unreturned books and the time and cost of doing so kept the township clerks from becoming involved in this activity.

School district libraries faced similar problems. Some of the defects of the legislation appeared in the 1876 report, Public Libraries in the United States of America: Their History, Condition, and Management. The 1876 report described defects in the administration of school library programs and cited problems with responsibility and accountability. Libraries suffered from a lack of state support, with library funds often diverted elsewhere. Libraries with funding suffered from mismanagement and poor selection of materials. The report placed the blame on teachers and township officials, noting how they allowed

the libraries to sink into neglect and contempt through failure to provide regular supplies of fresh reading; by trustees failing to realize their duty and personal responsibility in respect to the property management and preservation of libraries, and their indifference respecting the fate of the books.119

The public perceived problems with the township and school district libraries. A writer to the Michigan
Farmer in 1850 observed,

[0]ur present system of school or township libraries, is, in some of its features, at least a very, very bad one . . . The present law makes it the duty of school inspectors of each township, to purchase the books for the township library. They, in most cases, are men of a very common education, and have but a limited acquaintance with books and the current literature of the day.\textsuperscript{111}

Michigan served as a pioneer in its attempts to instill the goal of education into the constitution and legislation. Innovative legislation provided for township libraries and made Michigan a leading force. Following New York and Massachusetts, Michigan grappled with the issue of school district libraries. As township libraries developed and legislative changes provided more freedom and finances for the school district libraries, ideas emerged that placed libraries within a system of life-long education beginning at the primary grades and continuing into adulthood.\textsuperscript{112}

CONCLUSION

Despite the noble and lofty goals of Michigan's library legislation, the funding of school and township libraries was often meager. The social library, which often had a self-imposed purpose of community
improvement, took the cause of adult education that served many women and communities through the second half of the nineteenth century. Michigan would answer the question about community library services, in part, by legislation in 1877 that authorized cities, villages and townships to establish and maintain "free public libraries and reading rooms."\textsuperscript{113}

Charles C. Jewett's \textit{Notices of Public Libraries in the United States of America} provides a snapshot of the libraries that existed in Michigan just before the first groups of women organized library associations in Flint and Kalamazoo in the late 1840s and early 1850s. Jewett's study is even more compelling when examined in tandem with the earliest library legislation. The study alludes to the success, at least numerically, of the township libraries. However, it fails to provide a qualitative analysis of how the libraries operated and how well they served their constituencies.

Jewett's report of 1849 noted 381 libraries for Michigan: one was the state library, two were social libraries, four were college libraries, 74 were public school libraries, and 300 were township libraries. The
college libraries were primarily in the southern and eastern section of Michigan with the largest library that of the University of Michigan which by 1849 was twelve years old.\textsuperscript{114}

Michigan placed importance on literacy and reading and demonstrated this through the early establishment of libraries and library legislation that resulted in establishment of a state library and development of township and district libraries. The goals of the township and district libraries were at times conflicted; it was, however, within this context that the women organized social and subscription libraries that spoke to the need for reform in the community.

The combination of legislation providing for social libraries and a tradition of highly literate women fueled this powerful movement in Michigan. This movement coalesced in the social libraries organized by women, ladies' library associations, that existed throughout much of southern Michigan.

\textsuperscript{1}Several works deal with the historical development of Michigan from pre-European exploration to statehood and

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the twentieth century. See George N. Fuller (ed.), *Michigan: A Centennial History of the State and Its People*, a multi-volume account which provides an account of Michigan through the early twentieth century. See also Dunbar and May, *Michigan: A History of the Wolverine State*. It also deals with the broad history ranging from pre-European settlement to statehood and into the twentieth century. Other works of a more limited coverage include Quaife and Glazer's *Michigan: From Primitive Wilderness to Industrial Commonwealth* and Bruce Catton's *Michigan: A Bicentennial History* both of which emphasize pre-twentieth century development, primarily the period leading up to statehood.


5. Some historians argue that the 1785 Land Ordinance and 1787 Northwest Ordinance were the most important accomplishment of the United States government under the Articles of Confederation, which was replaced by the Constitution of 1789.

6. A law passed in 1800 established the minimum price at $2.00 an acre and implemented an installment plan, with a down payment of one-quarter the purchase price, and with one-quarter due and payable at the end of one, two, and three years. Many buyers purchased more than they could pay for and another law in 1820 established a cash price of $1.25 an acre. This is the price for which most of the United States government land in Michigan was purchased. An 1841 'preemption law' gave people who had settled on land, erected a dwelling, and made specified improvements rights to purchase 160 acres at the minimum price when the land went to market. In 1862 the Homestead Act was passed, which made it possible for a person to receive 160 acres of government land upon payment of a small fee, by residing on the land for five years. More than three million acres of land in northern Michigan were homesteaded under this law.
12. 1825 surveyor's map, "Plan of the United States Road from Detroit to Chicago." State Archives of Michigan.
14. Senate Bill 81, 24th Congress, 2nd Session, December 29, 1836, was the original bill introducing Michigan as a state. President Jackson signed Senate Bill 155, January 11, 1838 - January 12, 1838, which resolved the Toledo boundary dispute.
20. See *A History of Allegan and Barry Counties Michigan, with Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of the Prominent Men and Pioneers, 1880*, for an overview of county development.
23. See *A History of Kent County, Michigan; Together with Sketches of Its Cities, Villages and Townships, Educational, Religious, Civil, Military, and Political History; Portraits of Prominent Persons, and Biographies of Representative Citizens* (Chicago: Chas. C. Chapman & Co., 1881) for an overview of Kent County development.
170.
33. Rose cites the number of Congregational and Presbyterian churches which were strong in Michigan and the Baptist Churches that were located in towns settled by New Yorkers. He points to the schools, academies and colleges, as well. "South Central Michigan Yankees," *Michigan History* 70(2), (March 1986), 38.
36. See Ronald Walter’s *American Reformers, 1815-1860* (American Century Series. New York: Hill and Wang, 1978), 206. Some historians, such as Walters, argue that the earliest tradition of education and literacy began even earlier with the Puritans and the Protestant idea that all believers ought to be able to read the Bible.
37. The following studies which deal with the various aspects of New England literacy trends in the eighteenth


41. Lockridge's study has limitations when one considers the few number of men and even fewer women who prepared wills during colonial and post colonial New England.


46. Kenneth A. Lockridge, *Literacy in Colonial New
50. See Ronald Walter’s American Reformers, 1815-1860 (American Century Series. New York: Hill and Wang, 1978), 13, “At one extreme there were causes such as health reform and temperance, which were primarily significant for assisting people in achieving self-mastery and individual dignity. At the other extreme were antislavery and school reform, which acted as explanations of what had to be done to society.”
55. See Michigan Farmer articles, “Institutions for Education in Agriculture,” 16(12), (December 1858) and “The State Agricultural College,” April 1858, 115.
58. Michigan Farmer, 1(10), (July 1, 1848), 40.
60. Michigan Farmer, November 1, 1843, 139.
61. Michigan Farmer, 2(6), (May 1, 1844), 47.
63. James N. Hubbard,” Are Public Libraries Public
Blessings?" North American Review 149 (394) (September 1889), 341.
64. William A. Mowry, "The Relation of the Public Library to Education," The Library Journal 16(10) (October, 1891) 301.
66. Charles Grier Sellers also argues that as New England society was moving from an agrarian to a market driven economy, the bourgeoisie looked to cultural institutions such as libraries and voluntary organizations to meet their goals. Many of these people migrated to Michigan in the 1830s. See Charles Grier Sellers, The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815-1846 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 365.
69. Elizabeth W. Stone, American Library Development, 1600-1899. New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1977, identifies the incorporation of other libraries during colonial times as the Redwood Library in Newport Rhode Island (1747), Trenton Library (1750), New York Library Society (1754), Lancaster Library Company (1759), and a social library in Chester, Pennsylvania (1769).
75. Carleton Bruns Joeckel, The Government of the American
80. While the library was initially established as a service for the governor and the legislature, the services changed in the 1890s under the leadership of state librarian, Mrs. Mary Spencer. Appointed as librarian in 1893, Mrs. Spencer was instrumental in opening the Library of Michigan to the citizens in a number of ways. The libraries of the state became Associate Libraries and through this system could borrow books from the Library of Michigan. Mrs. Spencer also organized a system of traveling libraries, which were sets of fifty volumes that were loaned to clubs and organizations through the state for fixed periods of time. This action was to have profound impact with organizations such as the Grange. Other states followed Michigan's example and nearby Ohio eventually developed reading clubs and traveling libraries for children and adults equaled by no other state.
89. *Constitution of the State of Michigan as Adopted in Convention, Begun and Held at the Capitol, in the City of Detroit, on Monday, the Eleventh Day of May, A.D. 1835* (Printed by Order of the Convention. Detroit, Sheldon M'Knight, 1835).
92. John D. Pierce, "Origin and Progress of the Michigan


94. Constitution of the State of Michigan as Adopted in Convention, Begun and Held at the Capitol, in the City of Detroit, on Monday, the Eleventh Day of May, A.D. 1835 (Printed by Order of the Convention. Detroit, Sheldon M'Knight, 1835).


101. Constitution of the State of Michigan as Adopted in Convention, Begun and Held at the Capitol, in the City of Detroit, on Monday, the Eleventh Day of May, A.D. 1835 (Printed by Order of the Convention. Detroit, Sheldon M'Knight, 1835).


103. Michigan Pioneer Collections, Volume 7, 335. See
also the full report in the 1869, Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Michigan, with Accompany Documents for the Year 1869 (Lansing: W. S. George & Company, 1869), 190-191.


106. "History of Otsego Library" credited to Lizzie Palmer, Emily Smith and Mrs. Stephen Pierce, 1926.


111. Michigan Farmer, "Educational Department,) May 1850, 141.

112. See John A. Dix, Decisions of the Superintendent of Common Schools of the State of New York, Together with the Laws Relating to Common Schools, and the Forms and Regulations Prescribed for Their Government (Albany, New York, 1837). Dix was one of the first to articulate the idea that libraries served adult learners. This idea grew in popularity after the middle of the nineteenth century.


114. Charles C. Jewett, Notices of Public Libraries in the
CHAPTER III

SOCIAL LIBRARIES IN SOUTHWESTERN MICHIGAN AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC CONSTITUENCIES

INTRODUCTION

Pioneers from New York and New England came to Michigan in the mid-nineteenth century and brought a strong commitment to books and reading. They demonstrated this through building educational systems and supporting progressive enabling legislation that provided for township and district libraries. Although limited in collection size, staff, and services, and often in competition with the school district libraries, the township libraries were innovative and put Michigan in the forefront of library development. However, the township and school district libraries failed to meet most library user needs.

The 1831 Michigan legislation authorizing social libraries provided most of the library services for the public during the first three-quarters of the nineteenth century. Indeed, the early interest in social libraries influenced subsequent public library
legislation after the 1870s. Social libraries included libraries formed by men or women for membership subscriptions or shares.

In the absence of public libraries, female-sponsored social libraries, i.e., ladies’ library associations, emerged as a result of the 1831 Michigan library legislation. Once initiated, they developed quickly. Approximately one hundred Michigan ladies’ library associations provided services to communities in southern Michigan at the turn of the twentieth century. The formation of these organizations began about 1850 and continued through the 1870s. Even though fewer library associations organized in the 1880s, those that had formed in the 1850s and 1860s flourished and new ones developed until the early twentieth century.

Men and Women and the Founding of Social Libraries

The growth of social libraries began in the pre-Revolutionary period and continued for the first two decades of the nineteenth century. In the years before the American Revolution, the growth of social libraries was concentrated in the states of Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont. In 1796, New York became the first state to pass legislation concerning the founding of social
libraries because of the increasing numbers of libraries seeking incorporation.  

Jesse Shera identified 1,085 social libraries that existed from 1733 to 1850. Of these, 906 were general, 30 were for mechanics (skilled tradesmen), 21 were for juveniles and youth. Ladies' libraries made up 20 in number, as did lyceum libraries. Of the ladies' libraries, two had existed prior to 1800 as sewing-circle libraries. The Revolutionary War era marked a period of stagnation in library development. Growth and change followed in the years between 1790 and 1815, and Shera characterized the period after 1815 as one of specialization, or a "tendency toward experimental adaptation of the social library form to special purposes."  

Subscription or social libraries provided most of the library services for the majority of adults in the United States before the 1870s. Located in numerous communities throughout the United States, social libraries provided opportunities for securing books that placed the institutions in the public realm. The 1831 Michigan enabling legislation spelled out some of these characteristics, identifying a social library as a "society or body politic" with the powers to raise funds,
elect "necessary officers," "make by-laws," and hold property "to the amount of three hundred dollars" recognizing the public nature of these libraries and authorizing them to own property. Charles C. Jewett also identified characteristics particular to social libraries in his 1851 *Notices of Public Libraries in the United States of America* in providing a definition of a public library,

> Libraries which are accessible—either without restriction, or upon conditions with which all can easily comply—to every person who wishes to use them for their appropriate purposes. . . . All libraries in this country, which are not private property . . . are public libraries.

Social libraries generally operated under a constitution, which defined the classes of membership and operating policies. They were funded by subscription, the selling of shares, or in some instances a per-service fee. Social libraries often rented or secured a space for members to read and circulate books. According to Jesse Shera, the first historian of public library history, the earliest social libraries were general in purpose and clientele. By the nineteenth century, there was a tendency for special user or special reading groups to sponsor social libraries. Shera identified these as "the mercantile and apprentices' libraries, the
collections belonging to such special organizations as the Y.M.C.A. [Young Men's Christian Association] and the numerous young men's institutes, and book clubs for 'ladies.' These eastern patterns of libraries are also reflected in the migration from the northeast and New England to Michigan.

**Social Libraries in Michigan**

Just as the earliest libraries in New England and New York existed as social libraries, permanent white residents established social libraries in Michigan. The earliest library and literary activities occurred before statehood in the areas inhabited first by the French and, later, New England and New York pioneer settlers.

While Shera fails to explore the significance of the ladies' libraries or the sewing-circle libraries that provided reading for New England women, the role of social libraries in Michigan, specifically the ladies' library associations, provides additional evidence about the importance of these institutions as well as the role of women in the community. Until recently, women's role in organizing social libraries and contributing to public libraries has been absent from the historical record.

A city library formed in Detroit in 1817 and operated through a system of selling shares of stock to
obtain funds. Apparently this library continued to operate for over a decade until it merged with the Detroit Young Men's Society in 1832. A Detroit Mechanics' Society, which was formed in 1818, also had a library. These libraries provide strong evidence of the reading interests of the earliest white permanent residents of the Michigan territory, predating statehood by nearly twenty years. It is unknown if they allowed women access to the library.

Another early example of literary activities involved a reading society formed by Henry Schoolcraft in December 1826 at Sault Ste. Marie with several officers from the Fort Brady garrison. Born near Albany, New York in 1793, Schoolcraft first organized a literary society in Hamilton, New York, in 1809. Schoolcraft’s society met once a week to discuss books, scholarly subjects, and topics of local interest. As part of the society, Schoolcraft published a magazine, *Literary Voyager*.

In Jewett’s 1850 report, the Detroit Young Men's Society provided information about the origins of the organization. "The number of paying members is 103, including many of the first citizens of the place." Jewett's detailed report included a historical sketch of the organization and future plans.
A new brick building has been erected by the society; and will be ready for occupation in October, 1850. The building is 95 feet by 24. The lower story will be rented for stores. The second story contains, besides two offices, a large hall for lectures, 70 feet by 40. The third story is divided into two rooms: one for a library, and the other for a committee-room.15

The account also provided information about the services, noting that, “The rooms will be open at all times of the day, for members of the society, and their friends not citizens.”16 Whether the status of citizenship applied to immigrant males or females remains unclear. It is possible that this library provided services to women.

Jewett also identified the Monroe City Library as a social library. It is unclear why Jewett identified Monroe as a social library because it actually appears to be a hybrid of the township and school libraries. He identified the library as a public library in his narrative, but failed to have a category for public libraries in his tables.17 The original dates of this library differ in various accounts. An 1876 governmental publication indicated that the library existed as early as 1840.18 A historical account of Monroe traced the library to the late 1820s and identified the village council as the controlling body.19 It appears to have
developed under the legislation that allowed for township
and school district libraries and experienced some of the
same difficulties. One account reveals,

When the City of Monroe was incorporated in 1837,
the remnants of the old library were transferred to
the city, but a very limited number of volumes
remained, hardly worthy of the name of a library,
and was under the control of the common council and
school inspectors, the city clerk acting as
librarian.20

The fact that Monroe possessed an early library
speaks, again, to some of the Yankee origins in Michigan.
The Monroe library drew from the legislation mandating
township and school district libraries and formed a
public library. Monroe may have been the site of library
agitation in Michigan. An early Monroe settler, Edward
D. Ellis, helped draft some of the progressive
legislation in Michigan that called for funding libraries
through penal fines.21 Ellis arrived in Monroe in 1825
from Buffalo, New York. A native of Niles, New York,
Ellis brought the first printing press and type into the
community and established the first newspaper.22

Other gauges of the activity of social libraries
appear in the reports by the United States Bureau of
Education, which appear in the 1870s, and a publication
prepared by the Adrian, Michigan, Ladies Library
Association in honor of the United States Centennial.\textsuperscript{23} Growth of social libraries in Michigan occurred rapidly after 1850. In the intervening 50 years after Jewett's report, 133 social libraries formed. Of these, 105 were ladies' library associations, or as noted, social libraries operated by women. Nineteen were male libraries, social or trade libraries sponsored by men. Eight were co-educational social libraries, including male and female members and leadership.\textsuperscript{24} The single gender model prevailed in Michigan, with the ladies' library associations providing most social library services. See Appendix A, Social Libraries in Michigan.

In Michigan, women established the majority of social libraries. This pattern, however, appears unique to the Midwest, since in New England and New York, men formed the majority of social libraries.

Men as Library Founders

Men formed the vast majority of social libraries in New England during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Men's libraries remained powerful in the mid-nineteenth century. Charles Jewett's 1850 Notices of Public Libraries in the United States of America identified 126 social libraries in the appendix.\textsuperscript{25} Of these 126 libraries, he identified one ladies' library
association at Dublin, New Hampshire, founded in 1799, with 161 volumes.\textsuperscript{26}

Most of the social libraries identified by Jewett were founded by men for men, although a few made special provisions for women and girls. A Manufacturers' and Village Library at Great Falls, New Hampshire, made provisions for women employees of the Great Falls Manufacturing Company.\textsuperscript{27} "All females in the employ of the Great Falls Manufacturing Company are entitled to the benefit of the library on payment of 25 cents annually."\textsuperscript{28}

The Youths' Free Library of the Brooklyn Institute of New York also opened the library to girls, but the young men had many more hours of access. "The library will be open for girls every Thursday from 3 to 4 o'clock p.m.; for boys every Monday and Saturday evenings--from May to November, from 7 to 9 o'clock; November to May, from 6 to 8 o'clock."\textsuperscript{29}

Jewett identified numerous social libraries founded by young men.\textsuperscript{30} Five Young Men's Associations existed in New York, including Albany, Buffalo, Schenectady, Troy, and Utica. Young Men's Associations were also located in Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Hartford, Connecticut; New Haven, Connecticut; and Augusta, Georgia. Many of these formed in the 1830s and 1840s from lyceums. They appear to be
forerunners of the very popular Young Men's Christian Association libraries. The role of the Young Men's Christian Association (Y.M.C.A.) in promoting libraries has received limited scholarly attention. While the Young Men's Christian Association often evokes images of recreation and physical fitness, the early Y.M.C.A.'s included libraries along with the functions of uplifting the spiritual and physical condition of young men. This was particularly true in the years between the Civil War and the growth of public libraries in the 1880s.

The Boston Y.M.C.A. formed first and became the model for subsequent organizations. First opened in 1851, by the following year the organization sponsored a library of several hundred books and newspapers. Libraries became one of the earliest Y.M.C.A. outreach activities. Indeed, even in Boston the Y.M.C.A. library was on a par with, and in some instances superior, the first public library, the Boston Public Library, which was authorized in 1848.

Despite the overall moral mission of the Y.M.C.A., the reading room materials were more secular, and included a number of newspapers. The Boston Y.M.C.A. reportedly subscribed to some forty New England newspapers; this attracted a number of users who were not
necessarily Christian advocates.\textsuperscript{33}

A few years later, Young Men's Hebrew Literary Associations also provided literary activities "open to both men and women" with the first beginning in 1854.\textsuperscript{34} Larger associations provided numerous activities, including libraries and reading rooms.\textsuperscript{35}

In 1859, William J. Rhees reported on the status of the 145 Y.M.C.A. libraries in the United States.\textsuperscript{36} Of these, only one was in Michigan, in Grand Rapids. Rhees did not include information about its formation or number of volumes.\textsuperscript{37} The movement of men's library associations and men's organizations that typically sponsored libraries, such as the Y.M.C.A., never fully developed in Michigan. Y.M.C.A.'s that sponsored many eastern libraries in the 1870s had two such libraries in Michigan in 1880. This number grew to eight in 1880 and eleven by 1900.\textsuperscript{38} While other library-hungry states, especially New York and Pennsylvania, had dozens of Y.M.C.A. libraries, they simply failed to develop in Michigan.

Men also formed social libraries under the guise of mechanics or trade libraries. Mechanics libraries have received even less scholarly attention than the Y.M.C.A. libraries. They were founded by men and the earliest examples include a Mechanics Institute Library in
Bristol, Connecticut, formed in 1818 and Apprentices' Libraries in Boston and Philadelphia in 1820. Sydney Ditzion suggests there is evidence that apprentices' and mechanics' libraries incorporated in the 1850s and quickly started collecting dues, which, in turn, opened them to broader users. In the case of the New York General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen, he states that the use of the library was for "that portion of the community the most in need of information, and the least able to pay for it, viz., the working boys and girls of New York." The enlarged user category extended services to the working class.

The social libraries that were typically founded and supported by men in other states did not take off in large numbers in Michigan. Detroit had a Mechanics' Society that had formed in 1818 and featured a library. Fewer than a dozen Y.M.C.A. libraries formed in Michigan. Another pattern of female sponsored social libraries became the dominant pattern in Michigan. Women's Participation in Ladies' Library Associations

Public Libraries in the United States, at least 130 ladies' library associations formed in the United States. With the exception of the Templeton, Massachusetts (1840) and Dublin, New Hampshire (1799), organizations, all the organizations began in 1850 or later. See Appendix B for a full listing.

Michigan women formed the majority of ladies' library associations, accounting for 105 organizations from the 1850s through the 1920s. The majority of Michigan organizations formed prior to 1880. Patterns of development vary in other states, but New England and other states in the Old Northwest Territory led in development. Massachusetts women organized six ladies' library associations, while women in Vermont sponsored three, and New Hampshire women formed two. The next concentration of development occurred in states adjacent to Michigan, with five organizations forming in Illinois, two in Indiana, and two in Ohio. Single organizations formed in the states of New York and California. There were two in Maine. As in Michigan, ladies' library association development peaked in the 1870s in other states.

Jennie Croly's 1898 History of the Woman's Club Movement in America also provides evidence of the
importance of Michigan clubs. Though her work focused on clubs organized in the 1890s and affiliated with the General Federation of Women's Clubs, Croly credited Michigan women as leaders in education and libraries.

There is no State in the Union that owes more to the intelligent, self-denying work of its women than does the State of Michigan. Its library and educational system are not surpassed by any in the world; and the foundation of these was largely laid by the early women settlers.4

Women formed the majority of the social libraries in Michigan, and the ladies' library associations appear to have been the driving force. Predating Sorosis and the General Federation of Women's Clubs, the presence of women in social libraries suggests female activism and interest in educational reform in Michigan even before a unified club movement took force by the 1890s.

The development of ladies' library associations in Michigan grew phenomenally in the years after 1850 with some 105 ladies' library associations established between 1851 and 1925. Gender was a key factor in the formation of social libraries in Michigan; 105 ladies' library associations were formed in contrast to the 25 co-educational and men's library organizations.

Jewett's identification of social libraries as
providers of the majority of library services proved to be true in Michigan. Women founded Michigan's social libraries and called them ladies' library associations. Table C-1 compares the formation of social and public libraries in Michigan from 1833 to 1925. Table C-1 shows that a pattern of female sponsored social libraries became the primary form of library service between 1851 and 1900.

Michigan's library development evolved slowly in the period from 1833 to 1850. Michigan could boast of only one library providing free services to all patrons, without membership requirements, the Monroe Public Library. At the publication of Jewett's 1850 report, two social libraries, sponsored by men, had formed in Detroit. Before 1850, there were no organized ladies' library associations.45

Fifty social and public libraries formed in the second period, 1851 to 1875. Public library formation continued to be the slowest library form to evolve during this period, with one public library organizing in Ontonagon, in the middle of Michigan's Upper Peninsula.46 Social libraries operated by men grew by thirteen.47 Social libraries organized by women experienced the most dramatic growth. Between 1851 and 1875, forty-six
ladies' library associations organized under the principles of social libraries, using the enabling legislation that men used to form social libraries.\textsuperscript{48} 

Library formation was equally prolific in the next period of library development, 1876-1900, when an additional forty-nine libraries organized. While library enabling legislation established the basis for initiating and maintaining free public libraries after 1877, ladies' libraries continued to predominate.\textsuperscript{49} Nine public libraries formed, as did nine social libraries organized by men. Thirty-one ladies library associations organized during this same period.

By the first two decades of the twentieth century, the impact of library legislation shifted in favor of public libraries. The number of new ladies' library associations dropped dramatically to five. Men formed no social libraries. Twenty-two public libraries organized through the provisions of Public Act No. 164. In addition to chronological patterns in the formation of ladies' libraries, organizations developed, with a few exceptions, in the southern half of the Lower Peninsula. As Figure 1 illustrates, the heaviest concentration of ladies' library associations existed on a band extending from Wayne County west to Kalamazoo County, stretching
Figure 1. The Number of Ladies' Library Associations in Michigan, by County

roughly along what would have been the Michigan territorial road. The territorial road extended from Wayne County and went through the key communities of Washtenaw, Jackson, Calhoun, Kalamazoo, Van Buren, and Berrien Counties. These counties contained some of the largest population clusters. These counties existed within twenty miles of the territorial road. The territorial road, and later the railroad, contributed to the settlement of this area by Yankees, bringing ideas and values from New York and New England.

Ladies' library associations formed in almost half of Michigan's 83 counties. From 1851 to 1925, women sponsored social libraries in forty-one counties. In sixteen counties, single organizations formed. Counties with only one organization tended to be in remote areas distant from the territorial road, including northern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula. These areas had smaller population masses and organizations formed in the larger villages and cities, such as Marquette and Traverse City. Yankee influences touched many of these cities, as well as the Lower Peninsula. This issue is more fully explored in Chapter 6.

Kalamazoo, Oakland, and Genesee Counties contained some of the largest populations and also hosted the
greatest number of ladies’ library associations. The Kalamazoo Ladies’ Library Association and its dynamic leader, Lucinda Hinsdale Stone, influenced the entire county, which had seven organizations. Stone’s leadership and influence are explored in Chapter 4. Women in Genesee County took an early leadership role and formed seven organizations. Genesee's early involvement in the movement is explored in Chapter 6. In the eastern half of the state, the first organization was formed in Oakland County in 1869, some eighteen years after the earliest Kalamazoo and Genesee County organizations had formed. Women in Oakland County eventually organized seven library associations.

Founding dates are known for 84 of the 105 Michigan ladies’ library associations. See Appendix D. Women in Genesee and Kalamazoo counties formed the first libraries in 1851. Both of these counties contained large Yankee populations that had migrated from New York, and presumably endorsed concepts of education for women and community. Both libraries formed independently of one another. The Kalamazoo organization forms the focus of Chapter 5, and the Flint organization is covered in Chapter 6.

Geography also influenced the chronological
evolution of ladies' library associations. See Table E-2. During the period of greatest growth, between 1850 and 1876, forty-six organizations formed in rural, small towns. Half of these organizations clustered in southeastern counties, the most populated area in Michigan. Sixteen organizations formed in southwestern Michigan, the second most populated area in the state.54

Thirty-one organizations formed between 1876 to 1900, with the majority, sixteen, organizing in southwestern Michigan. Growth of ladies' libraries stabilized in southeastern Michigan with eight developed during this period. Northern Michigan experienced a population growth and an increase of seven ladies' library associations during the same years.55 This period also coincided with the growth of both the women's club movement and the library movement. Sorosis formed in 1868 and, by 1890, the General Federation of Women's Clubs coordinated the efforts of club women throughout the United States. In 1877, the legislature passed enabling legislation that allowed Michigan communities to establish free public libraries through the auspices of Public Act No. 164.56 While nine public libraries formed as a result of the enabling legislation, ladies' library associations continued to organize in far greater
After 1900, ladies' libraries ceased to experience the phenomenal growth of the nineteenth century. By 1900, a strong club movement attracted many women and public libraries outpaced social libraries. Five ladies' library associations formed in southwestern Michigan and Northern Michigan between 1900 and 1925, while twenty-two public libraries organized during the same period. No new library associations formed in eastern Michigan or the Upper Peninsula during the period.

**Women Shaping Concept of "Public"**

During the nineteenth century women increasingly shaped the public realm in gender-specified areas, co-opting male support. As family and working relationships transformed in the middle of the nineteenth century, a growing white middle class ideal espoused the role of the women as manager of the home, elevating the status of women in accordance with these ideals. Women also charted new public roles. Through their participation in ladies' library associations, women adopted a socially sanctioned public role as they shaped community ideas about education, reading, and libraries.

The doctrine of “separate spheres” codifying distinctions about the role of men and the role of women...
began to appear in popular literature around the 1820s. Women's publications, such as *Godey's Lady's Book*, featured beautiful engravings, fashion advice, and articles speaking to the interests and roles of nineteenth century women. At the same time, early capitalists organized the first factories. Women had a special place in this new milieu and were responsible for maintaining a haven in this new order. They established stability and morality in the home amidst an increasingly static and secularized culture.

Prescriptive literature sought to deal with the changing social order in the antebellum era, espousing the ideals of true womanhood and manhood. Perhaps the best known of the prescriptive manuals of the nineteenth century were those written by Catharine Beecher. Beecher's *Treatise on Domestic Economy for the Use of Young Ladies at Home, and at School* first appeared in 1842 and went through several reprintings during the nineteenth century. Beecher's assertion was that women could and should find a respected role within the household.

The prescriptive literature expressed gender-specific ideals, including an emphasis on education and reading, which stretched the domestic realm.
particular, espoused high educational missions for American women. Her first concerns centered around women's role in producing a moral citizenry.

It is equally conceded, that the formation of the moral and intellectual character of the young is committed mainly to the female hand. The mother writes the character of the future man; the sister bends the fibres that hereafter are the forest tree; the wife sways the heart.65

The influence of a mother over her children, Beecher asserted, held the utmost importance; however, a "woman, who is the mistress of a family, feels her obligations, in reference to her influence over her husband, and a still greater responsibility in rearing and educating her children."66

Beecher viewed women's literacy and opportunity to read as critical to women's success in their gendered roles. Women bore the responsibility for educating children. Beecher also acknowledged the moral influence women held in their marital relationships. According to Beecher,

[I]n the early years of female life, writing, needlework, drawing, and music, should interchange with domestic duties; and one hour a day, being devoted to these pursuits, or to reading, would be all that would be needful to prepare them for a thorough education.67

This type of education provided the foundations for a
woman to become the mistress over a middle-class household and dispense her gender-prescribed duties. Husbands and children in this type of household also gained. As Beecher asserted, "Let any man of sense and discernment become the member of a large household, in which a well-educated and pious woman is endeavoring systematically to discharge her multiform duties."68

Gender roles shifted for the men and women working farms and residing in small towns as well.69 An 1850 account of a progressive Michigan farmer noted how the man "availed himself of the light afforded by agricultural publications," thus allowing his wife "to move in her own proper sphere, instead of being forced into a strange and unnatural one."70

Many historians have questioned the historiography of the rigidity of gender roles and the concept of separate spheres. As John Mack Faragher states in his article, "History from the Inside-Out: Writing the History of Women in Rural America," the scholarship used the "separate spheres" paradigm and portrayed men and women as one-dimensional stereotypical caricatures. Faragher argues that the problem lies in sources and that women exercised greater agency within the spheres.71

Certainly women gained greater legal status by the
middle of the nineteenth century. In Michigan, property laws concerning women became more progressive at mid-century. The Married Woman's Property Act of 1844 was the second such law in the nation. While the 1844 act gave a woman control of property brought into a marriage or inherited during the marriage, it restricted her control of its disposition until additional legislation in the 1850s gave women sole authority.\(^{72}\)

These roles extended to the proper function of women operating in the public realm. The gender specific roles of the men and women in forming and civilizing the community of Flint appear in an 1879 history. The role of women in establishing the library association is presented in gendered terms.

This work the ladies of Flint felt to be theirs; and while the fathers, brothers, and husbands were felling the forests, erecting the mills, tilling the soil, and building for their families new homes, the mothers, wives, and daughters did what was in their power to furnish wholesome food of the intellect.\(^{73}\)

Other accounts also suggest that women’s proper public sphere encompassed libraries. An 1872 History of Cass County, Michigan notes how the Dowagiac ladies’ library association formed because “the need of a public library was felt by the citizens."\(^{74}\)

By the 1870s, authorities deemed library work as an
appropriate venue for women. The 1876 Public Libraries in the United States of America Their History, Condition, and Management noted, "Women should be employed as librarians and assistants as far as possible, as the nature of the duties is, to a great extent, and in many cases, suited to them."

Nineteenth century women in Michigan operated in a gendered world with defined boundaries. There was a public realm that women moved in for specified purposes, purposes usually associated with child-rearing and raising moral consciousness of the community. The purpose of forming to organize a library or extend educational opportunities to women was within the boundaries appropriate for educated, middle-class women. The ideals of domesticity stretched into the public realm in many instances.

Women's Successes, Men's Failures

There is no question of the success of the association's efforts. In almost every case the numerous Carnegie and other public libraries of the country have started from the nucleus established by a local association similar to that in Quincy, and the work now being done by the ladies of Quincy will bear fruit through all the future years.

A historical account of Branch County, Michigan, describing the Quincy, Michigan Ladies' Library Association stated what many early twentieth century
citizens knew. Ladies' library associations contributed to the formation of the public libraries in numerous communities. The Quincy library was not the only library that formed through the efforts of women, nor was the library the only measure of the organization's success.

The women's library organizations succeeded in Michigan where the men's social libraries had not fully developed or had sporadic success. Ladies' library associations were far more successful than the men's organizations in the areas of longevity, ability to evolve over time, and success in meeting organization goals and providing community services. Factors behind this success are more fully explored in Chapters 5 and 6.

Men's organizations that developed as social and subscription libraries were scarce and prone to failure. Unlike the Y.M.C.A. libraries that eventually moved beyond reading rooms and concentrated on other educational functions, the social libraries were not able to evolve as the needs of the members and communities changed.

The Kalamazoo Young Men's Library Association provides an example. The Young Men's Library Association formed in 1858 and continued up through the Civil War when interest in national politics caused the
organization to falter just three years later.\textsuperscript{79} Even aligning the organization with the newly formed Y.M.C.A. after the Civil War did not guarantee longevity or evolution of the organization.

A few years later, the organization was in disarray again as interest dwindled and the Kalamazoo Public Library entered the arena. The organization ceased to operate, but held its books until formally disbanding in 1878, and then turning the books over to the Kalamazoo Public Library.\textsuperscript{80} With a few exceptions, such as the Detroit Young Men's Society, the men's organizations failed to provide library services to members or the community.\textsuperscript{81}

Similarly, the women in Battle Creek formed a library association in 1864 that operated a circulating library until the public library organized in 1871. The Battle Creek Ladies' Library Association evolved into a woman's club.\textsuperscript{82} An 1876 report about library activities in Battle Creek also identified a men's library organization that formed but did not last: "[I]t went out altogether, ingloriously . . . ."\textsuperscript{83}

In at least two instances in Michigan, men turned to women to sustain or bolster floundering men's library organizations. The first example of this involved the
Young Men's Association of Jackson that formed in 1863 for the purposes of sponsoring lectures. The lectures sustained the organization for several years, but a building did not materialize. By the mid-1870s, the association continued to rent rooms, and, by 1877, "mismanagement, or rather, a lack of management" put the organization in jeopardy. After raising funds to get the organization on a "firm foundation," a "radical change was made in the management, and a Board of Directors formed whose composition consisted partly of ladies." 

A similar situation also occurred in Cassopolis. In 1870, men formed the Cassopolis Reading Room and Library Association for "the establishment and maintenance of a library and reading room." They were not successful as the "public reading room feature of the organization was kept up less than a year." Once again, women stepped in and managed the library that was located in the Pioneer Room of the Court House. For unknown reasons, they continued this mode of operation for thirty years before deciding to incorporate as a ladies' association under new articles on September 5th, 1905. After incorporation, they became the "Ladies' Library Association of Cassopolis."
The ladies' library associations organized and operated organizations that continued for several years. Many organizations evolved as member and community needs dictated new agendas and forms. The Mendon, Michigan, organization provides an example. The initial ladies library association lasted for about ten years. Formed with a stated goal to obtain a public library with Carnegie funds, the women accomplished this goal and the library association evolved into a literary club.90

Evolution of the organizations occurred as community populations grew or as other entities, namely the local schools or governmental units, offered library services. Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo provide two of the best examples. The Grand Rapids Ladies' Library Association adopted the cause of forming a free public library. Upon accomplishing this goal, the library association shifted its focus to services for members. Kalamazoo's Association also filled the void created by a lack of a public library for twenty years. The membership and focus of the organization changed after a free public library became available to the community.

The ladies' library associations formulated goals and achieved them through planning and collaborating. Many of the ladies' library associations had the goal of
providing a forum for women to read and study. Examining the levels of membership of women in these organizations provides evidence that it served this purpose for many women. In Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids, literary arms of the library association attracted several hundred women each.

Most organizations adopted goals of constructing a library building for public and private functions. This is examined in detail in Chapter 7. Women in the communities of Kalamazoo, Grand Rapids, Mendon, Plainwell, Otsego, Ann Arbor, Flint, Ypsilanti, Richland, Schoolcraft, and other cities succeeded in purchasing, building, or getting buildings donated to their organizations.

Most ladies' library associations formed with dual purposes of member enrichment and community improvement. This often extended to providing circulating library services or collaborating with other organizations to form public libraries. Member and community services often overlapped and ranged from providing books and reading materials and to full circulating libraries in many Michigan communities. The services aimed at women are more fully explored in Chapter 5. While it is difficult to gauge the meaning of what these
organizations meant for female members, the public applause given these organizations in county histories, newspaper accounts, and the 1933 American Library Association's statement about the history of libraries speaks to the importance of women's organizations in library development.91

CONCLUSION

Before the 1870s, prior to widespread legislation for free public libraries, social libraries provided most library services to adults in the United States. Social libraries formed under the auspices of ladies' library associations in Michigan. The ladies' library associations filled a community need during the period leading up to the formation of free public libraries by sponsoring and operating the first social libraries. Michigan women succeeded at sponsoring about 100 social libraries that served members and the public, often succeeding where men's organizations failed.

Nineteenth century women reinterpreted their place in the community. Using engendered power from the domestic realm, they shaped communities through the library associations they organized. Evolving from educational reform, library work became an accepted
female activity with its "quiet and unostentatious" nature that had the potential to contribute to the "progress of mankind."92 The long term influence of social libraries, including the ladies' library associations, served as a necessary precursor in the growth and development of public libraries in New England and elsewhere.93

In 1877, the state legislature passed enabling legislation that allowed Michigan communities to establish free public libraries and provide reading materials to the public through the auspices of Public Act No. 164.94 This was a defining moment in the history of free public libraries in Michigan. The passage of this act was a culmination of more than forty years of evolving legislation that sought to address the library needs of Michigan communities from territorial days.

Even with the passage of this act, the wide-spread adoption of free public libraries in Michigan took another twenty-five years. Ladies' library associations continued to form and operate during this interim period. In the communities where free public libraries took root, the role of the ladies' library associations often shifted to the role of the women's club.

The next chapter analyzes the background and influence of Lucinda Hinsdale Stone, a leading proponent
of the movement. Stone was a leading force in the founding and evolution of the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association as well as several other women's organizations in Michigan and throughout the United States. While Stone's personal politics may have been more radical than some of the other founding members, her beliefs and rationale for organizing library associations spoke to conservative reform ideas of the day. Stone and her converts espoused education, reading, and the role of the library, and the appropriateness of women in their role as founders and managers.

2. For the purposes of this dissertation, I am defining public libraries as collections of books held by a public (school or governmental) entity whose circulation services are free to all and do not have membership requirements. In contrast, social libraries include libraries formed by men or women for membership subscriptions or shares.
3. Jesse H. Shera, Foundations of the Public Library (Copyright 1949 by the University of Chicago, reprinted 1965 by The Shoe String Press, Inc.), 72.
5. Jesse H. Shera, Foundations of the Public Library (Copyright 1949 by the University of Chicago, reprinted 1965 by The Shoe String Press, Inc.), 72.
7. The case of including social and subscription libraries in a quasi-public category is validated by the inclusion of these institutions in Public Libraries in the United States of America Their History, Condition, and
12. For an overview of some of the reading interests, see Leonard A. Coombs and Francis X. Blouin, Jr.'s Intellectual Life on the Michigan Frontier: The Libraries of Gabriel Richard & John Monteith (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Bentley Historical Library, 1985) 211-235. This volume provides an overview of the private library and reading interests of John Montieth. Montieth was one of the founding members of the City Library and eventually founded the Catholepistemiad of Michigania, which became the University of Michigan. In the course of relocating to New York, he compiled a catalog of books he owned as of 1821.


24. The significance of the eight co-educational library associations is an issue meriting additional examination. In an era when most activities were gender-restricted, the role of women in library co-educational library associations gives further credence to the argument that these organizations were more public oriented. Of the major organizations of the era, only the Grange included both men and women.


Lippincott & Co., 1859).
41. For an overview of working class children in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, see David Nasaw, Children of the City: At Work and At Play (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1985).
49. See [Michigan] Public Acts, 1877, No. 164, page 154-
156.


58. Barbara Welter's essay about true womanhood in "Dimity Convictions" discusses this emerging role for women in great detail.


61. See Robert Kunciov, *Mr. Godey's Ladies; Being a Mosaic of Fashions and Fancies* Princeton, New Jersey: Pyne Press, 1971). Godey's Book was one of the most popular lady's books of the 19th century. Each issue contained fashion information, poetry, engravings, and articles by some of the most well known authors in America.


64. See William Alcott's *The Young Wife* (1838) and *The Young Husband* (1839).


70. Michigan Farmer, "Note by the Way—No. 47, Volume 8, no. 1, January 1850, pages 1-2.


77. The term "domestic feminism" was coined by Daniel Scott Smith in his article "Family Limitation, Sexual Control and Domestic Feminism in Victorian America." In *Clio's Consciousness Raised*. Edited by Mary S. Hartmann and Lois Banner (New York: Harper and Row, 1974). Karen Blair used the concept of "domestic feminism" as a construct when explaining how women extended domestic and feminine qualities into the public realm when forming Sorosis in New York City and the New England Woman's Club in Boston.

84. *A History of Jackson County, Michigan; Together with Sketches of its Cities, Villages and Townships; Educational, Religious, Civil, Military, and Political History; Portraits of Prominent Persons, and Biography of Representative Citizens* (Chicago: Inter-State Publishing Company, 1881), 545.
85. *A History of Jackson County, Michigan; Together with Sketches of its Cities, Villages and Townships; Educational, Religious, Civil, Military, and Political History; Portraits of Prominent Persons, and Biography of Representative Citizens* (Chicago: Inter-State Publishing Company, 1881), 545.


CHAPTER IV

LUCINDA HINSDALE STONE AND A MODEL OF LADIES’ LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS

INTRODUCTION

In the 1850s, Lucinda Hinsdale Stone took a leadership role in organizing the Kalamazoo Ladies’ Library Association. Patterning the organization after a young men’s literary society in her native Hinesburg, Vermont, Stone developed a prototypical women’s organization that became a model for dozens of Michigan organizations.¹

By the 1870s, promoting library associations in other communities had become increasingly important to Lucinda Hinsdale Stone. Near the end of her life, in the 1890s, Stone’s title as the “Mother of Women’s Clubs in Michigan” embodied her influence.² At least twenty-eight women’s organizations in the State of Michigan acknowledged Stone’s leadership role in their formation.³ Her influence also extended beyond the state. The 1898 History of the Woman’s Club Movement in America contained

138

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several references to Stone and the Kalamazoo organization. The Dubuque Ladies' Library Association made Stone an honorary member. Through correspondence, Stone helped the Lawrence Club of Kansas organize.5

Beginnings

Stone was of New England heritage and belonged to the generation of women growing up in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Born in Hinesburg, Vermont, on September 30, 1814, Stone was the last child of a family of twelve children born to Aaron Hinsdale and Lucinda Mitchell. Hinsdale was a mill operator and died just before Lucinda's second birthday. Her earliest childhood memories were of trying to keep out of her mother's way because she had the large family and mill to attend to after Aaron's death. It was probably due to her mother’s absence that she turned to books. “Being left alone so much, I learned to love books greatly, and to live with them.”

The books were readily available to Lucinda because both her parents were ardent readers. Lucinda’s mother was her first role model. Stone later recounted, “She was a great reader . . . She read everything, even to the advertisements in the newspapers.” Her mother also
advocated educational opportunities for girls in the family. Stone attributed her mother's support of education for her children as a result of her own missed opportunities. "My mother had very few advantages while she was young . . . she was willing to make any sacrifice for the sake of the education of her own children."¹¹ As a result, Lucinda attended Hinesburg Academy when she was thirteen. From the Hinesburg Academy, she went to Middlebury Female Seminary. By age fifteen, she was teaching school.

Stone grew up amidst the early nineteenth century religious revivalism known as the Second Great Awakening.¹² It influenced religious life in the Hinsdale household. Stone's father was religious but did not belong to a church, although most of her older siblings attended the Congregational Church.¹³ Lucinda's mother upheld her own Episcopalian roots until a traveling evangelical minister brought about a conversion experience that also resulted in Lucinda's "being baptized as an infant."¹⁴

Despite her educational experiences and familiarity with the religious revivalism of the day, Stone was not a reformer or even aware of some of the most prevalent
reform issues of the 1830s. As a young woman, she accepted a position as a governess on a southern plantation in Natchez, Mississippi, between 1837 and 1840. During her first day in Natchez, she witnessed a slave market as she was driven to her new residence. Stone reflected on this event later in life. "It seems strange to me now that I could have lived through such a scene, but I am not the same person or being now as then, else I could not have borne it."15

As a young women, Stone knew nothing of abolitionism as a reform. Upon learning about the hasty departure of a previous teacher, discovered to have abolitionist views, Lucinda inquired of the slave providing this information to her, "What is an abolitionist?"16 Hinsdale's views of slavery solidified during her three years in the south, with first-hand views of slave markets and living on a plantation with several hundred slaves. She described her evolution and realization about the realities of slavery in the south, "Garrison was right in calling slavery 'the sum of all villanies'. . . yet how insensible was I, a Northerner, to what was inwrapped in the very life of it."17

By 1840, members of Lucinda's family had moved to
western Michigan. During a visit to Michigan in 1840, Lucinda Hinsdale and James A. B. Stone married in Grand Rapids, at the home of her sister Mary Hinsdale Walker. Lucinda met James Stone while at Hinesburg in 1834. James Stone was a young principal, four years older than Lucinda.\textsuperscript{18} James Stone had great familiarity with nineteenth century reforms. Having been brought up in the Congregational faith, he underwent his own religious conversion in the 1830s, when "convinced from his own study of the Scriptures that immersion was Scripture baptism."\textsuperscript{19} He was baptized and allied with the Baptist church. He also became interested in the abolitionist movement. He regularly traveled to Boston when he was a student at Andover to hear Lloyd Garrison and Wendell Phillips speak against slavery.\textsuperscript{20}

Upon their marriage, Lucinda Stone temporarily put her teaching career on hold as they made several moves and began a family. The Stones went to Gloucester, Massachusetts where their first child Clement Walker Stone was born on May 30, 1841.\textsuperscript{21} Lucinda and James Stone returned permanently to Michigan in 1843, when they came to take charge of the branch of the University of Michigan located in Kalamazoo.\textsuperscript{22} By this time, Lucinda
was pregnant with their second child, Horatio Hackett Stone, who was born on December 7, 1843. Their third and last child, James Helm Stone, arrived four years later on July 19, 1847.

Despite her familial obligations, Lucinda Hinsdale Stone took on the work of the Female Department of the College as her husband assumed the presidency. There is little evidence about how Stone managed to achieve so much with the family demands of three children and a household or what conflicts she experienced as a teacher and a mother. Stone’s papers contain very few materials relating to her marriage or family. In fact, her autobiographical sketch is sparse in details. Among the personal ephemeral items in her papers is a personality analysis, possibly an astrological assessment, listing traits such as “generous, proud, ambitious, serious, with a great love for the arts and sciences; . . . an acute - penetrating intellect - good scholar and writer” and hinting at domestic problems, “much suffering through children & either denying or destroying them.” James Stone’s mother, Mary, lived with them for extended periods of time and took over the care of the household and children. This released Stone to help her husband
run the College.

[T]he details of housekeeping worried her (Stone); and fortunately there was rarely any great need for her to take on these cares . . . Doctor Stone’s mother was with them. She was the typical New England housekeeper, and everything was perfectly looked after under her management.25

Stone also took her children to the College when she taught. Her son James recalled this in 1885, noting “I was born in 1847 and commenced attending the branch in ’48.”26

Lucinda Stone and Educational Reform at Kalamazoo College

If I could make the environment for the young women in the University of Michigan [available] . . . I would greatly prefer sending a daughter there—or a son either—than to any exclusively female or male college.27

Stone’s mission at Kalamazoo College focused on opening higher education to women, in a co-educational environment. Her goals of female access to college and co-education stemmed from her lack of opportunities as a young woman. Stone recalled in her later years how the young men at the Hinesburg Academy had laughed at her when she expressed her desire. "'Oh, I wish I could go to college.' But I had gone a step too far. College was for boys, but not for girls at that time. My remark was repeated and ridiculed."28
Stone’s zeal in getting women admitted to colleges stemmed from her own lack of opportunities as a young woman. She recalled, "[T]his remembrance was a strong incentive in working to make Kalamazoo College co-educational, and seeking to pry open the doors of the University of Michigan to women students."29

Lucinda Stone’s initial intent upon arriving in Kalamazoo with her husband had not involved teaching at all.30 She later recalled how “circumstances forced me to take the place of the principal of the ladies’ department.”31 The circumstances appear to have been exigency, as the board of trustees did not make allowances for salaries beyond Dr. Stone’s, but Lucinda came “free.” Lucinda received no salary and any assistant teachers were paid from Dr. Stone’s annual stipend of two-hundred dollars.32 Dr. Stone also advocated expanding the realm of female educational opportunities and was “a believer in co-education . . . it was for them to decide what they wanted to study.”33 The financial considerations, coupled with Dr. Stone’s belief in co-education, made Kalamazoo College from this period “coeducational in fact but not in theory.”34

The institution provided space for men and women to
study in one building and provided for mingling of the sexes probably to a greater degree than other institutions of the 1840s, perhaps with the exception of Oberlin, the first co-educational college in the United States. In the operation of the College, gender restricted students spatially and through the curriculum. The College was a two-story frame structure located near the center of Kalamazoo, just yards away from the Baptist Church. Men occupied one large room on the main floor and women studied in a smaller room on the second floor. The women were allowed in the men’s room on Wednesday afternoons to listen to recitations.

A program detailing the closing exercises in 1846 also reveals some differences in curriculum according to gender. The women studied grammar, arithmetic, and French, while the men studied advanced mathematics, Latin, and Greek. In addition to some differences in subject matter, the male curriculum emphasized elocution and public speaking. This is also evidence of the prevailing gender norms in the 1840s, in which men would need to speak in order to conduct a public life and women’s sphere restricted public declamation.

Likewise, the female curriculum focused on reading
and literary criticism. In 1885, students of Dr. and Mrs. Stone recalled their experiences at the College in the 1840s in a *Record of Addresses Delivered, Poems Read, and Other Exercises, at a Re-union of Former Pupils of Rev. J. A. B. Stone, D. D., and Mrs. L. H. Stone, Held at Kalamazoo, Michigan, Wednesday and Thursday, September 23rd and 24th, 1885*. Mrs. Julia McNair Teneey described Lucinda Stone's influence in the areas of reading and literary criticism during her days at Kalamazoo College.

"[S]he gave me the impetus towards right readings which has always gone with me. Even now, I never read a good book without thinking of her and wishing I might hear her criticism upon it."\(^{39}\)

Lucinda Hinsdale Stone's life changed permanently when, in 1864, financial problems at the institution mushroomed into accusations against the character of Dr. Stone.\(^{40}\) Stone stepped down from the presidency, and, while the problems did not involve Lucinda directly, she later recalled that the administration advised her to resign because of the situation.\(^{41}\)

The period of the 1860s also coincided with the maturation of Stone's family, with her two living sons married. Visiting her married sons and daughters-in-law
gave her opportunities to spread the word through Michigan. Her granddaughter recalled in 1914 how Lucinda's arrival to visit in Detroit put the household in a flurry with expected callers. "Grandmother's arrival was usually followed by a host of callers, such eager friends."\(^{42}\)

This resulted in freeing Lucinda's time to pursue her vision of opening educational opportunities for women at various life stages. The Stones remained in Kalamazoo, and for a period, Lucinda became the primary wage earner, opening a school in her home, directly competing with Kalamazoo College's Female Department.\(^ {43}\)

It was such a successful operation that she operated it for several years and drew away many who would have attended the college.\(^ {44}\)

Stone viewed the opportunity of preparing and sending a female to a major university, such as Michigan, as her "life work."\(^ {45}\) She pursued this during the 1860s and succeeded with her pupil Madelon Stockwell, who became the first woman to gain admission to the University of Michigan in the 1870s.\(^ {46}\) When the University of Michigan changed its policies at this time, Stone was pleased at the "beautiful reward of justice
that a girl of my own town was the first woman to enter its doors." She had lived to see her vision of co-
education a reality. At the conclusion of her life she noted, "I have lived to see all restrictions withdrawn, and all odium upon a woman for going to college removed." 

It was also during this period in her life that she became prolific in organizing women and learning about the club activities happening in the east. She organized classes and travel groups in conjunction with the Ladies' Library Association. She spoke or conducted classes for other organizations in Kalamazoo and throughout Michigan, proselytizing the message of women's organizations.

Mother of Clubs

Stone’s passion for women and educational reform extended to possibilities for women to educate themselves beyond the formal schooling offered them in the 1850s and 1860s. Stone viewed the club movement as the vehicle for older and married women who had never had the opportunity to attend college and gain intellectual stimulation. Stone asserted, "[W]omen [have] laid out for themselves elective, or what we have termed 'post-graduate' courses of study which they are pursuing in associations which
they call 'clubs,' and which . . . are the real institutions at present educating American women."\(^50\)

She also viewed the library associations as a vehicle for community education, serving men and women. In 1898, Stone recounted how the library association had organized according to these principles. "No public library then existed in this new Western town, and this library was established as a means of educating the people, and forming a taste for reading in the community of Kalamazoo."\(^51\)

Stone drew her inspiration for club work to advance women's educational causes from a men's literary society in her native Hinesburg, Vermont. She became familiar with the young men's literary society at the age of twelve. According to Stone,

> [A]ll the enterprise and enthusiasm and material resource of the county town of Hinesburg were enlisted to build an academy. A Young Men's Library, much like the Ladies' Library here, in its beginning, and a lyceum, in a manner with connected with it, had been established some years, and this academy was a school worthy of he best New England towns.\(^52\)

Stone's work in women's clubs in the 1850s through the 1870s earned her recognition in the state and beyond that resulted in her status as the "Mother of Women's
Clubs of the State of Michigan." Stone's greatest contribution may have been her spearheading and influencing the spread of club work for women, which extended beyond the confines of the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association to other Kalamazoo organizations and organizations throughout the state of Michigan and beyond.

THE STONE MODEL

Susan B. Anthony recognized the vital role Lucinda Hinsdale Stone had played in the formation of ladies' library associations in her 1897 correspondence. In her letter, Anthony stated, "I shall speak of you as the one who originated Woman's Library Associations." The earlier library associations had characteristics that if examined critically do fit a pattern, which I shall call the Stone model of ladies' library associations. This model played out in countless Michigan communities, with Kalamazoo leading the way and numerous other organizations forming by the end of the century.

The Stone model depended on a culture that valued education and literacy. It did not evolve in a vacuum,
and there is ample evidence that the agrarian communities of southern Michigan advocated a literate culture even before Stone began to promote the ladies' library associations. Newspapers such as the *Michigan Farmer*, first published in Michigan in 1843, advocated elevating the lives of farm families. This population supported the concept of enlightened and educated farm communities.

Other activities associated with rural reform grew in the 1870s with the formation of the Patrons of Husbandry, or the Grange, first organized in Michigan in 1872 at Burnside, Lapeer County. The Grange was active in Kalamazoo County, the site of the first State Grange meeting in January 1874, representing 190 Subordinate Granges.

The Grange grew in strength and influence through the early twentieth century and in many ways complemented the work of the ladies' library associations in continuing education initiatives and Grange libraries. The Grange also took an active role in promoting the Traveling Michigan Libraries program. The cooperative efforts of the Grange and the State Librarian, Mary Spencer, resulted in the provision of traveling libraries
in Michigan.59

While the Grange and Traveling Library programs provided opportunities for farming communities to enjoy the privileges of books, the ladies' library associations in Michigan, motivated by Lucinda Hinsdale's model, provided the physical space where women and communities collaborated to provide books for members and communities in many small and middle-sized towns.

The Stone model encompassed several underlying assumptions. At the core of the model was the goal of education. The Stone model sought to provide opportunities for women to educate themselves and enrich communities void of such opportunities in the 1850s and 1860s. Indeed, most women did not have opportunities for education beyond high school in Michigan until the 1870s.60 This is hardly surprising, because in 1869-1870, only about two percent of the population graduated from high school, and just more than half of the graduates were females.61 The numbers of the general population, including women, entering into higher education were slimmer. In 1870, 1 percent of college-aged Americans attended college and 21 percent of these were women. The women entering college represented .7 percent of the
population of women aged eighteen to twenty-one. Even in the last two decades of the century, most women in their thirties and beyond did not have the educational opportunities that became available to their daughters in the twentieth century.

The stated purpose of the ladies' library associations included educational benefits that extended beyond the membership into the community. While most of the benefits of membership were available only to female members, the Stone model included specified benefits of membership to all in the community, including men. The most significant public outreach was a circulating library, available to both women and men. In most instances, circulating libraries sponsored by ladies' library associations predated all other circulating libraries in Michigan. The benefit of the circulating library was usually available to anybody in the community who could pay yearly or per use fees, including men. These fees, generally very nominal, ranged from fifty cents to two dollars. Men could not hold offices or vote in most instances, as stated in constitutions and bylaws. By far, the most privileges afforded by membership were for women. In fact, some clubs rarely let men partake in
any activities except fund-raising and subscribing to the circulating library. In contrast, some organizations had special meetings, which were open to the husbands.64

They were non-denominational but had a moral purpose stated in constitutions. Stone viewed the library association as a place where several dominations could meet and break down "the narrow prejudice of one sect against another." 65 She recounted one of her earliest experiences in Kalamazoo in which "it seemed . . . every man and woman was an Ishmaelite or a Philistine" and despite the small size of the community, people belonging to different churches did not mix.66

In practice, there were clusters of women with ties to one or two churches, usually Protestant denominations.67 Sometimes the church served as the vehicle that brought the women together initially. That was the case in Climax, Michigan, where the Ladies' Library Association organized at the Methodist Church on March 9, 1880.68 In some communities, women organizers explicitly made an effort to involve wives of clergy. They received invitations to become charter members, or even board members. In some instances, they received free or honorary memberships. The Galesburg Ladies'
Library Association was blatant in its attempts to include the wives of ministers, making them honorary members. "Motion made and seconded that the ministers' wives be notified they were honorary members." Ladies' library associations received support from local churches, and, in turn, aided the churches.

The organization operated within the female realm but expanded into public areas. The leadership of these associations included mostly married women with children. Stone viewed these organizations as a vehicle for married women with children to delve into intellectual pursuits that would improve the family and ultimately the community. "Through the education thus gained by the mother, these clubs are no less forming the tastes of their children for reading, selecting the books that shall come into their families and into the town, village, and district school libraries all over the country."

Women became empowered through their role as moral guardians of the home and community. They operated within a sphere that was appropriate for women and relied on the community leadership, males, to help them in their ventures. For the most part, these women did not embrace
early, radical feminist ideals. They sought advice and stayed within bounds deemed appropriate for white middle class women in the nineteenth century. Stone addressed this strategy as it related to the organization and advocated the idea of "men and women working together [is] better than by gathering into separate bands... Kalamazoo has done that in the Ladies' Library Association; though a ladies' society, they have from time to time asked help of the gentlemen of Kalamazoo." The women acted as master politicians and swayed decisions in this regard. They often had formulated a clear plan of what they wanted and co-opted men in their cause.

The ladies library associations, compared to literary clubs, were more public, as stated in the purposes of the organization and expressed in numerous ways. Ladies' library associations generally had more inclusive membership requirements than the literary clubs. They operated in the public realm through the act of incorporating and by hosting their activities in rented rooms and buildings constructed for the purposes of operation, which I will explore in detail in Chapter 7. Bylaws and constitutions insured continuity beyond
the initial founders and a public presence. Fund-raising was necessary to carry out the programs of the organization. In contrast, most literary clubs of the same period did not have rented rooms and were much more private, often meeting in people's homes. Membership in the literary clubs also tended to be more exclusive.

The majority of the organizations sought to attract married women. In fact, most organizations structured meetings and activities around the schedules of married women rather than professional or working women. Afternoon meetings catered to the household schedules of married, middle class women. The day of the week varied from Mondays in Kalamazoo to Fridays in Richland. Most women attending such meetings were in their thirties or older. Those of childbearing age usually had children. There were often ties based on kinship, which included mothers and daughters, sisters-in-law, and several generations of women from the families who took a role. Leaders tended to be a little wealthier than average. Leaders also tended to be a little more educated than average. Many leaders were former schoolteachers. Chapter 6 explores the variations on the Stone model.

Stone's initial work with women's clubs entailed her
role as a leader of the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association. Origins and analysis of the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association will be explored next in Chapter 5. Beginning with its formal inception in 1852 until the organization bestowed the title of honorary board member in 1882, Stone served as advisor, motivator, and board member until her death. Following a six-month stint as president, she served as vice-president and then, once again, assumed a role as a member of the board.

There also appears to be a chronological element of change over time to the Stone model, suggesting its evolution and improvement after its introduction in the 1850s in Kalamazoo, until the end of the nineteenth century. Some of the changes were the result of fine-tuning as organizations experienced decades of growth. Stone promoted the introduction of the literary arm of the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association after learning of the activities of the Boston Woman's Club.74 Many of the Stone inspired ladies' library associations also formed literary components.

**Stone as Reformer**

Stone’s reform activities broadened in the 1870s,
extending beyond education and women, to include suffrage and even issues of racial equality. She solidified her stance on the work of the club movement by becoming involved with the General Federation of Women’s Clubs in the 1890s.\textsuperscript{75}

By the 1890s, Stone took a public stance on suffrage as several bills sought to allow females the right to vote in municipal elections in Michigan.\textsuperscript{76} As the debate escalated, Stone organized a petition drive and began a correspondence with State Senator Marbin Sabin about women and the suffrage issue.\textsuperscript{77} An 1891 municipal suffrage bill lost in the State Senate by a 117-14 vote.\textsuperscript{78} Stone attached a letter to the petition stating her belief in equal suffrage and her belief that under the Constitution women had “natural and fundamental rights to all the privileges of citizenship in this country.” \textsuperscript{79} She acknowledged the role of women as “architect and preserver of our American homes” without the laws “giving her control of affairs of state.” \textsuperscript{80}

Stone continued her correspondence with Senator Marbin Saben, following with another letter citing the positive role women could bring to the political system “looking after the proper education of the children . . .
of the sanitary conditions of our school rooms" and "of the morals and matters of our children in the street" if they gained suffrage in local school board elections.81 Municipal suffrage, beyond school elections, eluded women until the Constitutional Convention of 1907-1908.82

Beyond her foray into suffrage, Stone focused most of her energies on the club movement in the 1890s. While Stone was not present, nor was the Kalamazoo Ladies’ Library Association represented, at the first convention in 1890 of the General Federation of Women’s Clubs, she became an active promoter of Michigan Clubs in state and national federations.83 By 1892, Stone was listed as the chairman of the State Committee. She held this position within the organization until 1896.84 Stone’s experience and leadership put her in an excellent position to take part. Even though her health was ailing by the late 1890s, she spent the winter of 1897 in Washington, D.C. as the guest of Lucia Eames Blount, an active member of the General Federation of Women’s Clubs. Stone became acquainted with the Eames family from her first arrival in Kalamazoo, first with Lucia’s mother and later Lucia. Lucia Eames Blount recalled their friendship in 1902, “Mrs. Stone became a part of my life
before I can remember. She and my mother were intimate, as only two congenial women can be, who are pioneers in a new country, and among the first settlers in a small village.” Blount belonged to the Kalamazoo Ladies’ Library Association and after relocating to Washington, continued her involvement in the club movement. She served on the Advisory Board of the General Federation of Women’s Clubs with Julia Ward Howe and June Croly.

Stone was instrumental in the formation of the State Federation of the Federation of Women’s Clubs in 1895. The following year in 1896, the General Federation of Women’s Clubs recognized Stone’s role and named her an honorary vice-president along with Julia Ward Howe and Jennie June Croly. While Stone’s age and failing health prevented her full participation in the General Federation of Women’s Clubs, the recognition as honorary vice-president acknowledged her long participation in the women’s club movement.

Her leadership of her last club, the Isabella Club, brought her fully into the fold of the General Federation of Women’s Clubs. Sanctioned by the Congress and formed as a study group in preparation for the 1893 Columbian Exposition, Mrs. Stone was given the task of organizing
Isabella Clubs in Michigan’s Fourth Congressional District in 1892. Stone headed up the Isabella Club in preparation for the Exposition, and in May, 1893, with Julia Ward Howe, Mary Livermore, and other leaders in women’s work, she took part in the council day program of the Congress of Women at the Columbian Exposition.

On Stone’s eightieth birthday, the Reverend Caroline Bartlett, with the help of the Unitarian Church, honored Stone for her accomplishments. Stone’s relations with other reformers included national, state, and local networks of individuals concerned with women’s education, suffrage, and race relations. Greetings from individuals in her gender network, such as Julia Ward Howe, Ellen Herotin, Celia Parker Wooley, Anna Howard Shaw, Fanny Barrier Williams, Mary Livermore, Rachel Foster Avery, and May Wright Sewall, revealed these broad linkages near the end of her life. Lucinda’s personal reform issues were broader. Her stances on co-education and suffrage brought her into the fold of reformers with more radical platforms. Stone’s ideas transcended racial lines, but her reform was primarily educational and literary in its nature. She extended her influence to African-Americans and those close to the African American community. In
Kalamazoo, she organized the Frederick Douglass Club for
men and women and included classes for reading and
study. While in Washington in 1897, she renewed her
friendship with Helen Douglass who corresponded with her
after her return to Kalamazoo in 1897. By this time,
Douglass, was, herself, on a lecture tour, speaking
before women's clubs, civic groups, and suffrage
organizations. Emphasizing her reforms for black women,
Stone also made Fanny Barrier Williams, a black woman
excluded from a Chicago women's club, an honorary member
of the Twentieth Century Club in 1894.

CONCLUSION

Libraries, Stone, and Reform

Stone exhibited exceptional characteristics for a
woman of the middle and late nineteenth century. She was
certainly more educated, widely read, and traveled than
most women and many men. She worked with other like-
minded women and developed a model of library association
that influenced club development in Michigan and
elsewhere.

Stone's efforts resulted in a vehicle for women to
participate in social libraries, "improving the society
and promoting the culture" of Kalamazoo and other communities. Stone’s biographer, Belle Perry, summed up the importance of the Kalamazoo Ladies’ Library Association: “I think it is not extravagant to say that it has done more to this end than all the schools, the college, and the Female Seminary, together, in the town.”

Stone’s Yankee background and dedication to educational opportunities for women became the basis of a model of library associations for women. The next chapter explores the formation of the Kalamazoo Ladies’ Library Association. The library associations and literary activities of Stone spoke to reform issues involving education.

The ladies’ library associations held more influence and prominence in Michigan than in any other state, due in no small part to Stone’s influence and her paramount role as a promoter and developer. A biography noted Stone’s contributions to the movement and the role of the Kalamazoo Ladies’ Library Association as “the mother of many other similar institutions in the state.” Upon her death in 1900, the General Federation took notice, stating, “the woman’s club movement and the cause of
woman and education, humanity and progress, have lost one of the foremost workers of the age, and one who made an impress on the life and thought of her time not exceeded by any other woman."\textsuperscript{101}

2. Stone's status as "mother of clubs" appears to have been as early as 1893. See Frances Willard and Mary Livermore, ed. \textit{A Woman of the Century, Fourteen Hundred-Seventy Biographical Sketches Accompanied by Portraits of Leading American Woman in All Walks of Life.} (Buffalo: C. W. Moulton, 1893, reprint, Detroit: Gale Research Press, 1967).
7. There has been no full-length scholarly account of
Stone's life. Stone's papers are at the Kalamazoo Public Library and consist of scrapbooks and notes, which she prepared for a serialized autobiographical account of her life which was published in the *Kalamazoo Telegraph* in 1898. Shortly after her death, Belle M. Perry wrote a full-length biography of Stone, *Lucinda Hinsdale Stone, Her Life Story and Reminiscences*. Perry's work was drawn from her personal relationship with Stone and her family as well as autobiographical materials, reminiscences of acquaintances and associates, lectures, and letters. Gail Griffin's *Emancipated Spirits: Portraits of Kalamazoo College Women* draws heavily from Perry's biography and provides an excellent account of her years at Kalamazoo College.


32. Charles T. Goodsell and Willis F. Dunbar, A Centennial History of Kalamazoo College (Kalamazoo, 1933), 43.
33. See Gail Griffin’s Emancipated Spirits: Portraits of Kalamazoo College Women (Kalamazoo: Ihling Brothers Everard Company, 1983), 11-16. Griffin provides an excellent overview of the evolution of coeducation. She argues that this was a western phenomena and occurred in Ohio and Michigan earlier because attitudes were less conservative and even the church affiliated schools were more open to change and reform.
40. Mrs. Stone's account of the problems at Kalamazoo College was published in An Episode in the History of Kalamazoo College. Letter to Honorable J. M. Gregory, L.
L. D. (Kalamazoo: 1868).
43. Mrs. L. H. Stone is listed as the Principal of the Kalamazoo Young Ladies Seminary in Thomas' Kalamazoo Directory and Business Advertiser for 1867 and 1868 (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Stone Brothers Telegraph Office, 1867), 173.
46. See Ruth Bordin's, The Dangerous Experiment: 100 Years of Women at the University of Michigan (reprinted 1999 from the original by Dorothy McGuigan, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1970), 5-6.
49. Stone wrote a column "Club Talk" which appeared in several newspapers in Michigan during this period in her life.
51. Letter to Mrs. Lucinda H. Stone, December 28, 1897,
from Susan B. Anthony. Lucinda Hinsdale Stone papers, Kalamazoo Public Library.  
56. The tradition of an educated and enlightened agrarian population was espoused by many farm publications between the antebellum and progressive periods. Publications such as the *American Farmer*, which was the first farm publication of permanence began in 1819. The agricultural magazines promoted farming as a dignified occupation and advocated education for the farmers to elevate farm living and keep younger generations interested in agriculture and the agrarian life. Many farm journals devoted special departments to women's concerns and also had information about the agricultural colleges.  
58. The idea that the Grange should be a vehicle for self-improvement and reading was one espoused by association leaders themselves. The Patrons of Husbandry, or the Grange, first organized in Michigan in 1872 as a Subordinate Grange at Burnside, Lapeer County. By 1873 when the State Grange formed, nineteen Subordinate Granges had organized. The first State Grange meeting was held at Kalamazoo in January 1874, representing 190 Subordinate Granges. The mission of education was frequently referred to in reports of the Michigan State Grange. The Michigan Grange would become involved in home reading programs, traveling libraries, and cooperative ventures with the State Agricultural College.  
59. The Michigan Traveling Library was only the second in the nation after New York began the practice in 1893. Michigan's program began in 1894 after the State Librarian, Mary Spencer, and other supporters advocated for the passage of Public Act 28 which appropriated $2,500 to cover costs of supplies and the purchase of books for a new service which would be known as the
Michigan Traveling Libraries.
57. See Willis F. Dunbar, *Kalamazoo and How It Grew* (Western Michigan University, 1959), 106-107. The Michigan Supreme Court determined in the 1874 Kalamazoo Case that Michigan high schools could be supported through taxation. Many communities had high schools predating this decision, including Kalamazoo, which had a high school as early as 1859. The legality of collecting taxes to support education beyond the elementary grades had been questioned.


60. The Kalamazoo, Flint, and Richland organizations explicitly included borrowing library privileges for men, per bylaw.

62. Grand Rapids allowed husbands to some night meetings. These appear to have been more social in nature.


65. This study provides insight. The Richland organization drew from members of the First Presbyterian Church. The Kalamazoo organization drew heavily from members of the Baptist and First Congregational Church.

68. Dorothy Cummins, manuscript *History of the Ladies' Library Association and the Lawrence Memorial Library* compiled in 1987 from the minutes. The minutes of the organization were reported as lost as of October, 2000. The manuscript history and some article are in a vertical file at the Prairie Historical Society, which is housed at the Lawrence Memorial Library in Climax, Michigan.

69. Galesburg Ladies' Library Association Minutes 4-7-1887.

68. The Kalamazoo Ladies’ Library Association was located in the Baptist Church 1860-1867. The churches of Wayland
provided space for some meetings of the Ladies’ Library Association. The Otsego and Richland organizations donated proceeds when their respective organizations disbanded.
74. Minutes of the Kalamazoo Ladies’ Library Association, December 28, 1872.
75. Perhaps I should place a note here about some of the reform initiatives of the GFWC in the 1890s.
School suffrage extended to parents and guardians of children in 1881. The 1907-1908 state Constitutional Convention determined that female taxpayers could vote on local bonding and tax issues.


84. See List of Officers and Directors, State Chairmen of Correspondence, State Federations, and List of Federated Clubs of G.F.W.C., 1890-1896.


86. See List of Officers and Directors, State Chairmen of Correspondence, State Federations, and List of Federated Clubs of G.F.W.C., 1890-1896.


92. Caroline Bartlett Crane Papers, "Lucinda Hinsdale Stone." Box 42.


CHAPTER V

THE KALAMAZOO LADIES' LIBRARY ASSOCIATION: CONSERVATIVE REFORM IN SOUTHWESTERN MICHIGAN IN THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY

INTRODUCTION

The Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association formed in the Kalamazoo community in the late 1840s. The organization included a high percentage of women of New England and New York origins who embraced the ideas of education and moral uplift in their community.

The Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association evolved as the community and the women gained more sophisticated strategies. It eventually spread to other communities in Michigan as the club movement began to grow in the late 1860s. It continued to refine itself as the club movement gathered momentum with the growth of the General Federation of Women's Clubs by the late 1890s.

The Kalamazoo Community in Historical Context

The earliest settlement in what would become Kalamazoo County occurred in the late 1820s. Kalamazoo County officially formed in 1830 and included Allegan and Kent Counties until they developed as separate legal
entities a few years later. Until about 1835, Schoolcraft was the largest village in the county.

Kalamazoo's origins as a white settlement date to June, 1829, when Titus Bronson arrived from Ann Arbor. Bronson, a Connecticut native, had emigrated to Michigan a few years earlier. He named the local area "Bronson" for himself and platted the town by 1831. The fortunes of the fledgling community changed after the land office relocated from White Pigeon to Bronson in June, 1834. By 1835, the village was renamed Kalamazoo, and the land office brought eager purchasers, including potential residents and speculators or "great monied associations of the East." Eventually, presidential mandates required payment of hard funds and ended some of the speculation. The Kalamazoo land office, the most active one in the nation in 1836, exceeded two million dollars in sales. It remained open until 1859.

By the 1850s, Kalamazoo County was a mix of small towns that supported a largely agricultural economy. Within the county were the villages of Kalamazoo, Climax, Richland, Galesburg, and Schoolcraft. Kalamazoo was the county seat and largest town in the county, serving the rural countryside. An 1880 history described the setting
of Kalamazoo Village within the context of the agricultural county, noting the abundant fruit and vegetable crops.

The bluffs which form the background of this enchanting valley are occupied by fine suburban residences, and covered with gardens, lawns, and fruit-orchards. There is perhaps no better situation in Michigan for the growth of fruit . . . and the ground has been carefully utilized.6

It gradually became more industrialized by the end of the nineteenth century. An 1887 special trade edition of the Kalamazoo Telegraph described the “exhaustive abundance of manufacturing materials” and “unfailing resources” that made Kalamazoo a “profitable point for manufacturing” and a “desirable city for a home.”7 During that period, the population of the village and city of Kalamazoo grew steadily from about 1,000 in 1840 to 24,000 by 1900.8

Reconstructing the earliest demographic characteristics of the population of Kalamazoo presents several difficulties. The earliest federal census of 1840 provides name listings of heads of household and ranges of information about the age and gender characteristics of the household. Birthdates and other information is not available, although the 1850 federal
census does record birth places of the individuals and their parents and provides financial and other information about the earliest residents.

However, social and genealogical information exists for the earliest individuals and families who arrived in Kalamazoo in the 1830s and 1840s and remained in the community, particularly if they achieved a place of prominence. By the 1870s, accounts of their origins appear in county histories and biographical sketches. Obviously, those who left before 1850 did not appear in this earliest, detailed census. Others who left in the 1860s or failed to achieve a place of prominence in the community also did not appear in the histories or biographical sketches of the later nineteenth century.

Much of the information about early Kalamazoo families is found in the 1850 and 1860 federal census. Examining these census data along with other sources points to a Yankee heritage in Kalamazoo, discussed in Chapter 2, which is in keeping with central and southwestern Michigan.\(^9\)

The period between 1840 and 1900 marked steady population growth in Kalamazoo. Inspired by the availability of land and the location of the land office
in Kalamazoo, the earliest population spurt occurred before 1850 and included the westward migration of New Englanders and New Yorkers. The earliest census for Kalamazoo, 1840, lists 1,377 residents in Kalamazoo township, which also included Alamo and Oshtemo townships. It seems probable that the village and township of Kalamazoo had about 1,000 residents.\textsuperscript{10} Between 1840 and 1845, the population doubled according to the state census, which listed Kalamazoo and the township at 1,943. Growth continued to be brisk in the following five years when Kalamazoo village and township grew to 3,339 by 1850. The population nearly doubled between 1850 and 1860 when the population grew to 6,070.

Kalamazoo experienced a much slower and steadier pace of growth during the last four decades of the nineteenth century. The population increased at rates of 25 to 40 percent every decade from 1860 to 1900.\textsuperscript{11} By the time Kalamazoo reorganized and became a city in 1884, the population was 13,909. In fact, Kalamazoo boasted the status of being the largest village in the United States through the 1870s. The 1880 county history noted its reputation as the "Big Village."\textsuperscript{12} By the century's end, Kalamazoo had grown to 24,404.\textsuperscript{13}
The estimated size of the village of Kalamazoo was about 2,507 and included 591 families in 1850. The entire village and township numbered about 3,339, and some 72 percent of them had ties to New England and New York states. Over half had been born in the States of New York, Vermont, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, New Hampshire, Maine, New Jersey, Maryland, or Rhode Island. The largest number was born in New York, 1269, with the next largest concentration of people from Vermont, 238; Massachusetts, 120; and Pennsylvania, 93. There were sixty-five from New Hampshire, Maine, New Jersey, Maryland, and Rhode Island. The next largest population concentration was that of children and dependent family members of these individuals with 640 Michigan born residents having ties to New England and making up almost 20 percent of the population.

The remaining 28 percent of the population came from several countries and regions. The largest concentrations were 175 from Ireland, 144 from Ohio, 124 from Holland, and 82 from England. An additional 80 dependent children and family members were born in Michigan to these families.

An early biographical account of Kalamazoo pioneers
also provides another clue as to the nativity of the earliest community leaders. This source, however, contains individuals who paid for inclusion and the earliest biographical sketch of the county appears in 1892. The Portrait and Biographical Record of Kalamazoo, Allegan and Van Buren Counties, Michigan, Containing Biographical Sketches of Prominent and Representative Citizens of the County, together with Portraits and Biographies of all the Governors of Michigan and of the Presidents of the United States does, however, point to the Yankee influence that permeated much of the nineteenth century in Kalamazoo. As late as 1892, the majority of individuals featured in biographical sketches traced their origins to New York.

Perhaps a more objective means of assessing the birthplace data and influence of the earliest leadership in Kalamazoo is that of elected position. The elected leaders were instrumental in helping the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association achieve their goals. From 1843 when Kalamazoo incorporated as a village, through 1900, 30 men served as village president (1843-1883) or mayor (1883-1900). Fourteen of the 30 men claimed New York nativity. Five hailed from Vermont, three from
Massachusetts, and two from Connecticut. Virginia, Ohio, Ireland, England, and Germany each accounted for one individual serving as the head of Kalamazoo's elected governance body as did Michigan. Finally at the century's end, in 1899, Kalamazoo voters elected a Michigan native as mayor.20

The earliest Kalamazoo residents arrived with a variety of employment backgrounds. Farming or related ventures that supported the agricultural businesses accounted for the majority of occupations. Those reporting the greatest wealth had ties to the land office or were among the merchants and lawyers.21

A substantial portion of the community arrived with some wealth, as evidenced by reported real estate holdings. Sixty percent or 350 owned real estate. The average value of the real estate was about $2100, which is not a true reflection of income level because a few individuals had substantial holdings that skewed the average significantly. The vast majority reported holdings of less than $1000.22

A minority reported holdings of land valued more than $5,000, which, as noted, skewed the listings significantly. Several farmers reported real estate
holdings in excess of $5000, including Horace Mower, Israel Kellogg, and Frederick Curtenius, Thomas Barnard, John Milham, and Alexander Buel. Several merchants and business owners reported holdings in excess of $6000 including L. Vanderwalker, Nelson Burdick, and Luke Whitcomb. A widow, Dorothy Hinsdale, appears to have been the richest women in Kalamazoo with holdings valued at $9,000. The two wealthiest men in Kalamazoo were T. P. Sheldon, a collection agent who owned holdings valued at $30,000, and a member of the Burdick family who listed his occupation as clerk. Two lawyers also had considerable personal wealth, with David Webster reporting holdings valued at $10,000 and Epaphroditus Ransom, $20,000.\(^23\)

As soon as a critical population mass with family units had settled permanently in the village and outlying areas, the residents replicated New England and New York traditions of church, education, and cultural institutions. The first church to form was the Methodist Episcopal in 1832, followed by the Congregational in 1835, First Baptist in 1836, and St. Luke’s Protestant Episcopal in 1837. The Congregationalists and Presbyterians operated together until 1849 when the
Presbyterian Church formally organized. The first Dutch reformed church appeared one year later in 1850. Itinerant priests were in the area in the 1830s and by 1856, a permanent Roman Catholic Church formed. The first Unitarian church formed in 1858. During this period, the first two African-American churches were established in Kalamazoo as well.

The earliest Kalamazoo residents also organized schools for the elementary and secondary school grades. The First District School formed in 1833 and in the next seventeen years evolved until eleven districts were operating four schools. Each had its own board, hired its own teachers, and conducted affairs independently. In 1851, all the schools consolidated into one district, under the control of the president and trustees of the village. There were about 900 students in the village and four one-room schools at the time. The first high school organized in 1860 and by the 1870s, Kalamazoo would turn its attention to the funding of high school education. Kalamazoo was also the site of the Kalamazoo Case of 1874, which determined that the school board could tax to support public high schools. Clearly, residents displayed a strong interest in advancing
educational aims of the community.

Kalamazoo College also exerted an important influence within the community. Kalamazoo College began as a branch of the University of Michigan in 1833. It achieved independent status in 1843. Kalamazoo College brought several people to the community, including Lucinda Hinsdale Stone. Kalamazoo College drew upon community residents for leadership on its board. Another institution of education was the Kalamazoo Female Seminary, which opened in 1867. Like Kalamazoo College, it brought students and teachers into the community and it also drew upon community residents for leadership on its board. Members of the Trask and Ransom families, who were part of the earliest leadership of the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association, served on the boards of both institutions.

Early on several social affiliations formed independently of church and educational institutions. The first to form was the Kalamazoo Lyceum by the mid-1830s. The Kalamazoo County Agricultural Society followed in 1845. There were also numerous fraternal organizations such as the Odd Fellows and Masons that formed about the mid-1840s.
By the early 1850s, a network of schools, churches, and social organizations existed in the community. Indeed, as Kalamazoo moved into the 1850s, the community celebrated its longevity by sponsoring a quarter-centennial celebration in 1854. Mandated by the village board, the newly formed Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association carried out the day-long pageant.

"The Reading Portion of the Community"

The earliest residents also brought an interest in reading, as well as their books with them. By 1837 the Kalamazoo Gazette, organized as a weekly newspaper, provided regular reading. Notices in the Gazette point to the existence of a bookstore by 1837 and Lyceum activities by the late 1830s. On December 14, 1839, the Gazette reported that the Kalamazoo Lyceum proposed investigating the establishment of a library.

On motion of L. F. Starkey, Resolved, That a committee of five be appointed to ascertain the propriety of, and the best plan for a library. The following named gentlemen were nominated: J. H. McBridge, L. F. Starkey, Amos Brownson, E.N. Colt, and W. G. Dewing." It was from the meeting of December 6, 1839. No evidence exists of follow-up activities because no further Gazette articles appear about library
activities. A few years later, however, an announcement for a circulating library appeared in the same newspaper.

The subscribers respectfully inform the public that they have established a Circulating Library in connection with the Bookstore. As this is the first undertaking of the kind in the village, they hope to receive the liberal patronage of the reading portion of the community. The new publications of the day will be added as received. Terms made known at the New Bookstore. C. R. Walker & Co. [38]

The first of its kind in the community, the library operated in conjunction with a bookstore. Announcements followed with advertisements for the bookstore and information about new arrivals.

Advertised books represented a wide variety of titles probably meant to be of interest to men as well as women, as evidenced by announcements of new books on September 1, 1843. [37] Books included several titles with story lines indicative of women's plots, as well as female authors. [38]

The two earliest known city directories, 1860-1861 and 1867-68, listed about a half-dozen bookstores or booksellers in Kalamazoo for this period. While these directories appeared more than thirty years after the founding of Kalamazoo, they provide evidence of the interest in books during the period of the development of
the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association, Young Men's Library Association, and the heightened interest in the School District Library.

From the entries, it is unclear as to whether the merchants sold books aimed at students for educational purposes or leisure for adult readers. Five entries appear under the heading of "Booksellers and Stationers" in the 1860-61 Kalamazoo directory. M. A. Allen lists its business as a "wholesale and retail Book-seller and stationer." The advertisement features an illustration of blank books and reports that the business "keeps constantly on hand all the school books used in the state." A. E. Bartlett also carried a variety of items, including "books, stationery, Yankee notions, jewelry, and fancy goods." Two of the advertised booksellers, Charles Beerstecher and Gibson & Brother, appeared to sell blank books and stationery. Another bookseller, Jacob Wagner, appeared to sell insurance even though his advertisement was under the books and stationery heading.

The situation remained largely unchanged in 1867-1868, with the exception that the directory also featured a separate listing for bookbinders. Beerstecher
continued his listing under the category of bookbinder. Bartlett, Gibson, and Wagner continued to advertise under stationery and books, in addition to two new businesses, Roberts & Hillhouse, druggists and booksellers, and Fletcher Marsh, varieties and news. M. A. Allen did not appear in the 1867-1868 directory.41

Even before the newspapers formed and bookstores opened, however, Kalamazoo's earliest residents brought books with them from the east. An examination of probate records reveals the importance placed on books in probating estates. Most of the probate records included the estates of the wealthiest families and males.42

Cyren Burdick was born June 25, 1800 in Waitsfield, Vermont and served in a sheriff's department in the east. Burdick enjoyed a place of prominence in the community, given his well-known kin relations. A brother of General Justus Burdick, he arrived in Kalamazoo in 1832 and built the Kalamazoo House, a hotel. He was active politically as evidenced by his 1837 Democratic nomination for state representative. He died on October 26, 1837, in Allegan County at the mouth of the Kalamazoo River near Otsego.43 An inventory of the estate from March 4, 1838 revealed a number of books. Apparently, he had personal wealth as
evidenced by the real estate in his probated will, which included 1759 acres valued at $10,000.44

Another early probate file of a man, Valentine Schuyler, who died June 18, 1840 also revealed a substantial number of books.45 It is unclear why Schuyler was in Kalamazoo. He was formerly of Seneca, Ontario County, New York, and died at the age of twenty-one without a will or family in Kalamazoo. The report of the Administrator's Bond of June 23, 1840, reported the estate consisting of "books, paper, quill pens, etc. to a total of $1091.70" followed by the comment, "I would think he was the owner of a book store."46

Women of prominent families also made provisions for their personal belongings upon their death, particularly books. Two early wills by Kalamazoo women made provisions for the distribution of books and related reading paraphernalia. When Sarah S. Forbes died on October 22, 1849, she left to her grandson John S. Shafter "my book cubbard." Information about Sarah is rather sketchy. Her husband Caleb was an elected trustee of the Baptist Church and other members of the Forbes family rose to prominence later in the nineteenth century.47
Lucinda Ransom, a member of a very prominent family involved in merchantile and political activities, specified the distribution of her books in her will.\textsuperscript{48} Lucinda was a native of Vermont and an early arrival in Kalamazoo.\textsuperscript{49} Her husband, Ezekial, died in 1838.\textsuperscript{50} Her sons were prominent in regional and state affairs. Ephaproditus was an early Michigan governor. Her other son, Alexis, owned a flour, feed, and grain business and served as a postmaster for a few years in the 1840s.\textsuperscript{51} In Ransom's will, filed on January 20, 1851, she made provisions for leaving a table to the Baptist Church and proceeded to distribute books and related items to family members.

To Miranda Ransom, the Bible now in use in the family. . . . To Fanny Marsh, the spectacles I now use. . . . To my son Ephaproditus a volume of American Biography and the Biography of Hardom Page. To my son Roswell, a volume of Baxter's Saints Rest and Whitfield Sermons. . . . To my son Alex my desk and case for books. . . . and large church Testament to my son Samuel. My large family Bible, I also give to him and two village lots in Village of Kalamazoo.\textsuperscript{52}

Not surprisingly, members of the Ransom family became involved with the formation of the Ladies' Library Association in 1852. Numerous Ransom women, spanning several generations, became members in the nineteenth
The importance placed on books and reading reflected the concerns of New Englanders and New Yorkers who came to Michigan and built a system of church, educational, and cultural institutions, similar to those in which they had participated earlier. The formation of the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association represented the catalyst of community institutions, Yankee backgrounds, and an interest in serving educational needs of the community at mid-century.

THE KALAMAZOO LADIES' LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

In many respects, the Ladies' Library Association of Kalamazoo, Michigan points to the culmination of interest in education and culture in the community, and in particular, middle and upper-class women's interest in books and reading. It expanded women's domestic boundaries for personal and community enrichment and provided the means for several women to operate the first circulating library in Kalamazoo.

Women as Founders

The earliest accounts of the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association cite informal beginnings of the
organization about the mid-1840s. Most accounts credit Mrs. Lyman (Helen) Kendall, Mrs. Alexis (Lois) Ransom, Mrs. Charles (Catherine) Gibbs, and Mrs. James (Lucinda) Stone as the founders of the organization. The Minute Book of the Association giving its history states the following:

About 1844-45, Mrs. Lyman Kendall and Mrs. Alexis Ransom adopted the plan of meeting once a week and reading to each other, for mutual benefit, and very shortly afterward Mrs. Charles Gibbs united with them in their enterprise. Soon the number of ladies was increased to eight, and the subject of forming a library association was seriously discussed. Mrs. Dr. J. A. B. Stone was also prominently connected with the organization.

This account, which also appeared in an 1880 Kalamazoo County history, represents an organization several decades old, acknowledged as a cultural icon in the community.

Historical accounts of women's organizations also recognized the Association's pioneering role as having been the first of its kind in the nation. Croly wrote in her 1898 historical account of women's organizations, "The Ladies' Library Association, of Kalamazoo . . . was the earliest society of the kind in the United States founded and maintained by women."
All of the founders became part of the first board of directors, with the exception of Mrs. Charles Gibbs and Mrs. Alexis Ransom, when the Ladies' Library Association formally organized on Friday afternoon, January 21, 1852.\textsuperscript{57}

The following ladies were elected as a Board of Directors. Mrs. A. S. Kedzie, Mrs. D. B., Webster, Mrs. M. J. Goss, Mrs. Bruce, Mrs. L. Kendall, Mrs. S. Traver, Mrs. William Dennison, Mrs. E. G. Huntington, Mrs. J. A. B. Stone, Mrs. N. A. Balch. Mrs. Kedzie (President), Mrs. Anderson (Vice President), Miss Hannah Trask (Librarian), Miss Susan Rice (Treasurer), Mrs. Traver (Secretary).\textsuperscript{58}

The Association also elected officers and formed three committees, including a Committee on Lectures, Committee on Social Meetings, Committee on Books.\textsuperscript{59}

An investigation of the founders and earliest board members reveals many cultural, economic, religious, and kin ties among these women.\textsuperscript{60} Their marital, age, economic, and family status represent a microcosm of the middle and upper classes of the Kalamazoo community. The women depart from the norm in areas of husband's occupational status and their own levels of education.

Six of the eight women identified as founding members share several characteristics. The majority hailed from New York and New England. Of the six, four
traced their origins to New York, including Mrs. (Helen) Lyman Kendall, Mrs. (Lois) Alexis Ransom, Mrs. (Ruth) David Webster, and Mrs. (Elizabeth) Kedzie. Stone and Gibbs also traced their origins to New England and New York. Stone came from Vermont. Mrs. (Catherine Hays) Charles Gibbs represented the only individual born in the Northwest Territory; however, her parents and husband were from New York. Helen Anderson is also an exception with her birthplace of Nova Scotia.

Fifteen of the women were born in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. They grew to maturity and married in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Most likely, these women had personally experienced the effects of the new presence of women in teaching, which began to gain acceptance by the 1820s. In their childhood, they encountered teachers and women whose public roles had carried them "beyond the confines of the home" to a "public sphere." Hannah Trask, born in 1830, was the youngest member.

The Ransom and Webster families represented the wealthiest elite in early Kalamazoo. Lois Ransom belonged to a family whose wealth and political connections transcended the Village of Kalamazoo.
Webster's husband, David Webster, was a judge and one of the wealthiest attorneys in Kalamazoo. Webster's household also included two non-family members who may have been servants, suggesting affluence that allowed for hired household help. The remaining women belonged to families that were representative of the socio-economic status of the Kalamazoo community. Of the 15 with available information, 10 or 66 percent, owned real estate, which was about average for the city. The average value of the real estate was $3600, which was about 70 percent more valuable than the average real estate holdings for the city. The wealth of the Webster family artificially skews the figure upward.

Ranging in age from thirty to forty, all were married and had from one to four children. Of the thirteen married women with available information in the 1850 census, there were 31 reported children, making the average number of children 2.38. These findings are consistent with Susan Bloomberg's findings for small towns and villages in her study of southern Michigan, also using the 1850 census. Kedzie and Gibbs each had one child. Several of the women had three children, including Stone, Webster, and Kendall. Lois Ransom had
four children and eventually gave birth to a fifth child, born June 23, 1854. Mrs. Rice had five children and Mrs. Anderson reported having no children.

The households and number of children per household reflected the averages in southern Michigan. In 1850, the average size of household for Michigan was about 5.5 individuals. This number reflected any extended family or servants residing in the household. Of those studied, the Websters had two additional individuals in the household who appear to have been unrelated, most likely servants. The Rices had extended family in the household, including unmarried adult women and aged parents.

Many of Kalamazoo's residents in 1850 belonged to Protestant churches that emanated from the Second Great Awakening in New England and New York in the antebellum era. The earliest leadership of the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association reflected this trend as well. Five of the founding members were married to ministers affiliated with mainline Protestant churches. Mrs. Webster belonged to the Presbyterian Church. Lois Ransom belonged to the Baptist Church. Perhaps most interesting of all was the inclusion of two Catholic
women, members of the Rice family. Religious affiliations are not known for Mrs. Kendall and Mrs. Gibbs.

In recounting the state of religion in the Kalamazoo community in 1851, the Reverend A. S. Kedzie wrote about the composition of the community. "There are in this village today six Protestant churches and a Catholic church. There is a Baptist church with one hundred seventy-six members," he stated and a "Methodist with eighty members; St. Luke's with fifty members; a Dutch Reformed with sixty members; a Presbyterian with one hundred eighty, and the Congregational with one hundred sixty." He went on to remark about the Ladies' Library Association and the religious affiliations of its members. "It is composed of ladies of all the different religious societies." Kedzie was correct in his observation and an overview of the board of directors illuminates his point. The board represented women affiliated with the Congregational, Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, and Catholic denominations.

Politically, Kalamazoo was more liberal than the rest of the county in 1850 and had an active Liberty Party, which advocated anti-slavery sentiments. The
County voted down a mandate to adopt Equal Suffrage to Colored Persons in 1850 with 702 votes for and 803 votes against. The results for the Village of Kalamazoo were substantially in favor of granting suffrage for African-American males with 168 votes cast for and 131 voting against adopting the mandate.\(^8\)

The political affiliations of the husbands and fathers of Ladies' Library Association Board members reflected a mix of liberal anti-slavery views, as well as the more conservative views espoused by the Democratic Party.\(^8\) Seven reported to be Democrats in 1850. There were also two members belonging to the Liberty party and two Whigs.\(^8\)

From a standpoint of geographical proximity, the women lived in close proximity to one another. Census listings for Kalamazoo indicate that the Goss, Gibbs, and Ransoms were neighbors.\(^8\) Likewise, the Rice and Stone families lived within one block.\(^8\) Gertrude Denison and Catherine Denison were neighbors and the Kedzies and Balches lived a few households away.\(^8\) The close proximately of these women seemed to bind them in interests, influencing the earliest informal gatherings of the women.
Kin connections also existed among the earliest leadership. Two members of the Rice family resided in the same household. Bathesheba and her unmarried sister-in-law Susan were on the first board. While not part of the same household, Gertrude and Caroline Denison were sisters-in-law, too, and resided next door to one another.87

The Ladies' Library Association leadership also represented a broad cross section of the oldest and newest residents. Acknowledged pioneers included members of the Ransom and Trask families who came to Kalamazoo in the 1830s. Many of the members arrived in the 1840s, including the Stone and Rice families. Later arrivals included Helen Anderson who arrived just in time to appear on the 1850 census. Mrs. Bruce and Mrs. Huntington moved to the area after 1850.

The women's educational attainment or acknowledged intellectual traits represent another distinguishing characteristic of the founders. Among the founders are one teacher, one former schoolteacher, and an acknowledged poetess and author. Lucinda Stone served as head of the Female Department at Kalamazoo College.88 Mrs. Charles Gibbs (Catherine Hays), an early Kalamazoo
resident, taught school from 1835 through the early 1840s. According to her obituary in 1855, Mrs. Simon (Fanny) Traverse, a charter member, "was possessed of fine mental endowments [which] when added to an excellent early education . . . resulted [in] a woman of far more than ordinary accomplishments." She wrote poetry and short stories under the name Fanny Woodville. County histories identified Mrs. Nathaniel (Elizabeth) Balch as an educated and accomplished woman, a "mistress of the French and Spanish languages." "[S]he was also a fine student of history, and possessed an extensive knowledge of great men."

Mrs. (Catherine) Milo Goss left a paper trail that suggests the importance she and her husband placed on reading. In 1850 her husband left Kalamazoo to go to California for the gold fields. An exchange of letters provides evidence of the importance they placed on books and reading. Mr. Goss described the books he read as he traveled to California, many of them packed by Catherine. Apparently, he also found additional reading during his trip to California. In one letter he describes a book unfamiliar to his wife. "I have just finnished [sic] 'Shirley by the author of Jane Eyre.' I wish you would
read it, it would give you so much pleasure.\textsuperscript{95}

The founders and early board members, a rather homogeneous group with a few exceptions, also reflected the population of Kalamazoo in age, marital status, and kin ties. The earliest membership roster dates from 1854 and included one hundred and sixteen individuals. Of these individuals, only about fifty appeared on the 1850 census, suggesting that the membership may have included more recent arrivals than composition on the board. The census information also provides some details about origins and date of birth.

Married or widowed women made up the membership ranks. There were 77 married or widowed women and 31 unmarried women. Ten years later, the Association continued to draw primarily married or widowed women. By 1865, the membership had nearly tripled and included 191 married or widowed women and 93 unmarried women.

Of the 116 members on the 1854 roster, census information exists for about 50, suggesting that about half of the membership may have been new arrivals since they did not appear in the 1850 census. Of those fifty, forty-one had been born between 1792 and 1834 in states other than Michigan. There were also kin ties in the
daughters that appeared on the roster with members of the Balch, Ransom, and Rice families. Twenty-two had been born in New York, eight in Massachusetts, seven in Vermont and nine in Michigan.

From the census, information exists on the occupational status of the husbands. They were primarily small business owners and merchants, suggesting a primarily middle and upper class membership.

Though primarily geared for women, membership in the Association was available to men from the very beginning. Men could join for one dollar and have access to the Library, "the same as lady members." Membership rosters never include more than ten male members, usually the sons or husbands of female members.

Evolution of the Ladies' Library Association

The Ladies' Library Association undertook a variety of programs that were of service to the community. One of the most visible was that of sponsoring a library which was open to the public. The initial purpose of the Association provided for the "establishment and maintenance of a Library" to promote "moral and intellectual improvement" in Kalamazoo. Within months of formation, the organization succeeded, opening to "the
public on Friday afternoon March 12, 1852 at the residence of Col. Rice." The Ladies' Library Association soon moved to a space over a downtown storefront, at the northwest corner of Main and Burdick Streets, where it remained for two years.

The organization operated in the public realm with the sanction of the male members of the community. In 1854, the Village Board requested assistance from the organization to organize the village's quarter-centennial celebration. On June 16, 1854, the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association printed a notice in the Kalamazoo Gazette inviting "the Ladies and Gentlemen of Kalamazoo and vicinity, to unite with them in such public celebration." One of the village papers reported favorably on the celebration and the role of the organization, noting "the Library Association [members] are entitled to the highest praise for their efforts in this and other objects connected with their institution. . . . May their influence continue to widen and deepen." The Association published the speeches and activities of the celebration the following year. The final publication included articles by pioneer settlers, the speech of Colonel Curtenius, and a poem by E. Laken Brown of
Schoolcraft. 102

Finding a space for the circulating library proved to be a major task of the organization for the first thirty years. After a brief move to Fireman's hall in 1853, the Supervisors of the County granted the women a room in the Court House, an arrangement that proved satisfactory for about five years. Between 1854 and 1860 the Supervisors of the County granted the Ladies' Library Association a room in the Court House. Collections grew to eight hundred and fifty volumes in 1860, and the board looked for another site. The first floor site offered by the Baptist Church "fitted up in a neat commodious style" served their purposes.103 The space problem forced the women to rely on the good will of the village board until they could construct their own building in the 1870s. This, too, required the assistance of the male leadership in the community. This issue is more fully explored in Chapter 7.

The purposes of association within a group of women was at first an unstated and later became a stated goal of the organization. Stone recollected in 1898 how this function grew from "Saturday Evening Reunion" meetings of Kalamazoo College professors and students interested in
discussing books.\textsuperscript{104} Mrs. Kedsey [sic] said to me one day: ‘Why not have something of this kind connected with the meetings of our Library Association?’ and with this suggestion reading and discussion events occurred informally.\textsuperscript{105}

One of the earliest attempts at formalizing the social aspects of the organization occurred in 1856 when the first literary club formed from the organization. The minutes spelled out the parameters and clearly made the social club subservient to the Ladies' Library Association. "The members of the Ladies Library Association may assemble socially for mutual improvement, at their pleasure, choosing their own offices and being governed by their own bylaws, provided they do not in any way conflict with the spirit and letter of the Ladies Library Association constitution."\textsuperscript{106}

The auxiliary social club reorganized in December 1867 after the Civil War and several years of dropping attendance. The meetings had evolved into presentation of original articles by the members with discussion on the articles and issues covered. In the first eleven years of the Social Meetings, topics ranged from what women should read to issues concerning religion and
children. This revised plan appears to have failed, also, to keep membership.

By the mid-1870s in a response to the free public library, the Literary Club formed. This time the idea of a social and literary club succeeded. The addition of classes in French and Drawing and discussions about a variety of topics may have helped attendance. By this time similar organizations formed in other cities and their influence may have helped the Kalamazoo organization succeed.

The club took on a more exclusive focus. The issue of private space now extended across gender and class. Women with leisure time attended the Monday afternoon meetings of the Association to read, present, and discuss. Eighty-one members participated in these activities in 1875, in contrast to membership levels of 301 in 1865. The 1875 membership included primarily married or widowed women.

The meetings of the club shall be held in the Library Rooms every Monday afternoon. Any lady may become a member of the Club by the payment of $1.00 annually, but none are entitled to the use of the books from the Library except those who by the payment of $2.00 annually become full members of this Association. Occasional attendants of the Club will be expected to pay a fee of 10 cents.
The reduced numbers, increase in dues, and Monday meeting times suggest a more exclusive membership. In theory, the Association remained open to the community, but the members began to sense a reputation of exclusivity. In 1878, an annual report emphasized the inclusive nature of the organization.

It should be stated that the attendance upon the club has been largely of ladies who are encircled with the multitudinous cares and duties of everyday life, who have here found rest, refreshment and improvement. And also to add that the association is ever watchful to learn, and would be quick to adopt all best measures for serving this community.\textsuperscript{109}

The emphasis on duties of “everyday life” suggests the organization became aware of a reputation of exclusivity.\textsuperscript{110} Certainly, by the 1870s Kalamazoo became more heterogeneous with the influx of Dutch and German immigrants, as well as the influence of growing manufacturers.\textsuperscript{111} The report also stated the Ladies’ intention to serve the interests of the Kalamazoo community, possibly asserting its influence in the wake of a new library service provided by the public school.

From its origins, the Ladies' Library Association operated within the system of township and district libraries that were so influential within the State of
Michigan. In 1859, the county officers voted to support school district libraries. Before 1859, the township library included 124 books and was difficult to access. With the change in policy, the Board of Education selected Frank Little to serve as librarian. The policy change also resulted in relocating the library to rooms over a storefront on Main Street and providing hours of service from three to four on Saturday afternoons to residents of the district having pupils in the public schools.\(^{112}\)

In 1868, the Kalamazoo Telegraph provided an account of the library.

\[\text{[A]n addition of six hundred volumes of choice books has recently been made to the Library. The Library is kept in the office of the Board of Education, in the new Corporation hall on Burdick Street. The books were carefully selected by the Librarian, Frank Little, Esq., in Detroit.}^{113}\]

The public library eventually grew from the township library. After a revision in policy, the school library became a public library and began circulating books to all Kalamazoo residents on October 12, 1872. The concept was quite popular. Initially open only on Saturdays, by 1874 the library began offering three days of service. By the end of the year, "three days a week were none too
many to serve the growing patronage" and by December, the
library was "ministering to its patrons each week-day
afternoon except Monday, and all day on Saturday."\textsuperscript{114}

The free circulation service of the Public Library
challenged the need for the Young Men's Library
Association. With the new public library, interest in
the men's library dwindled with the competing free
library. Though the Men's Library Association offered
evening hours six days, expanded Public Library hours in
1874 resulted in the dissolution of the Men's library.
An 1878 agreement between the Men's Library Association
and the Board of Education resulted in the books being
"turned over to the public library."\textsuperscript{115}

The Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association pondered
its future as these developments came to light. It
became clear that the Ladies' Library Association needed
to redefine its role in the new milieu. Minutes from
1872 recount the discussion.

Some conversation was had upon the possible danger
of our Association being superseded by the "free
Township Library" now instituted here: and from
which everybody within the Corporation is free to
draw books, gratuitously and everyone is free to
send in to the Library or Board a Education a
request for the purchase of any book desired.\textsuperscript{116}
With the expanded services of the public library, the women concentrated on changing the focus of the Association. The literary club of the Ladies' Library Association evolved as the organization sought to redefine itself.

Unable to compete with a free circulating library, the women decided to devote their "attention to works of art mainly, and scientific works and to build up these departments which will be enduring," presumably those that the women determined to have value. The 1872 Annual Report described the collection policy as one that focused on books of a higher caliber than the public library. "[I]t is a difficult task to select from amongst the garbage of the day, such nascent fruits and flowers of literature as shall satisfy the Board as being really profitable reading for all the classes and conditions of mind among its patrons."

The organization also recognized the role it could play in helping rural residents. The Association recognized it could help a class of women unable to use the free public library.

Thus has the Ladies' Library Association sought to continue its patient, and persistent labors to interest, instruct, and edify the people of the
community about it, with the books for circulation and for reference--many of them being carried many miles into the country, by subscribers who can enjoy none of the amenities afforded by various other libraries.\textsuperscript{119}

Despite the assertion to help rural patrons, there is not much evidence in the membership rosters that many rural women participated.\textsuperscript{120} Membership directories and annual club booklets indicate that the majority of members lived in Kalamazoo.

The Association shifted its emphasis to a literary focus, moving from general community enrichment to that of educating the membership. The literary club took off during this period, tracing its origins to the changing focus of the organization. Minutes from the end of 1872 sum up the anxieties experienced by the women and illustrate the connections Stone maintained with northeastern women.

Mrs. Stone and several others felt that some 'new departure' was called for on our part, if we would maintain our standing . . . She had recently conversed with some Boston ladies who were visiting her, who explained their plans and success in this direction, and it seems very plausible.\textsuperscript{121}

The change in focus resulted in a decreasing, but stabilized membership for the Ladies' Library Association, which consistently attracted seventy-five to
ninety members annually between 1874 and 1880. The literary Club grew in numbers, eventually surpassing the membership of the core Library Association.¹²²

While the earliest membership was, in theory, inclusive and open to anybody who wanted to pay the dues, exclusivity sustained and also divided the Association by century's end. The literary club began operating actively in 1873 and gained momentum in the 1880s. By 1890, membership levels reflected vast differences in the numbers of women belonging to the Ladies' Library Association and the Club. In fact, both organizations operated independently as far as officers and agendas were concerned, although the Club remained dependent on the Library Association financially.

The leadership of the Ladies' Library Association and the affiliated "Club" differed.¹²³ In examining the records of the organization, the differences become clear. Forty-nine women held officer positions for the Ladies' Library Association from 1852 to 1900. Thirty-seven women held leadership roles in the Club from its formation in 1873 until 1900. Of these two groups of women, thirteen women moved between the organizations, holding leadership positions in both the Library
Association and the Club.\textsuperscript{124} The leaders of the Library Association and the Club tended to restrict their roles to one or the other. Leaders of the Library Association also held office for much longer. Some women held positions as secretary or treasurer for years or decades. Conversely, leaders in the Club tended to change every few years.

By 1890, membership rosters indicate that membership was lagging in the Association.\textsuperscript{125} About this time, women who held officer positions with the "Club" typically differed from officers in the library association. Members of the "Club" began agitating for more control over finances. Members of the Library Association sought more harmonious relations with the "Club." This marked the beginning of a ten-year struggle, which would pit the founding members against newer members and eventually result in the return to a single membership category.

The earliest concessions involved restricting new membership. A radical change to the constitution required a two-thirds vote of the membership to approve a new member. Use of the library was still open to anybody paying one dollar yearly but it did not include any
membership benefits. The 1891 president's report reported on the new relationship in favorable terms, "A spirit of harmony and desire for mutual cooperation and helpfulness has been prevalent throughout the Association and among the members of the club. Past experience has brought wisdom."

By 1893, however, the rift reemerged and involved a founding member of the Library Association. Lucinda Hinsdale Stone began organizing her last club, the Isabella Club to prepare women for the forthcoming Columbian Exposition. The Queen Isabella Society formed in Chicago in 1889 with the goals of providing a statue of Queen Isabella on the Fair grounds and building a Woman's Pavilion. In order to spread the movement across the United States, the women mapped congressional districts and organized leaders in each district. The national Isabella Society appointed Stone in charge of the Kalamazoo area congressional district. Stone approached the Public Library for meeting space. The Public Library denied Stone's request, informing her that another building existed in the community for women's organizations.

The Ladies' Library Association also denied Stone's
request on the basis that the Isabella Club did not have an affiliation with the Ladies' Library Association. Of the members of the Isabella Club, only one was not a member of the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association. Stone expressed her deep disappointment through a written response to the organization, citing the original intention that the building should serve the community and not the "edification of a chosen few." The Isabella Club continued to struggle with space, meeting in member homes and renting space from the Peoples' Church.

By the close of 1898, the issue of the control of the club and the library association was at a major point of crisis. Several members suggested merging the Club and Library Association as a solution to the problem. In response, the president ordered that bylaws be amended to allow for this change. The bylaws had to be passed by the vote of the membership. When the issue came up for a vote in 1899, the Board president who was one of the remaining founders voted not to change the bylaws.

Many members considered the Club to be ancillary to the Ladies' Library Association and refused to cast a vote to unite the two related but separate entities.
Mrs. Cornell summed up what the officers of the Ladies' Library Association understood, that "[t]he Club was instituted as a child of the Association and has been thus regarded." She also addressed the financial grievances of the Club, noting "that the Board [of the Ladies' Library Association] has been considered by some as an independent and arbitrary body . . . [and] that this money is all needed for current expenses . . . in reality only rent for the use of the building." The Club and Library Association continued to co-exist for another year until 1900 when the Club dissolved. The organizational minutes of this action are brief but hint at the turmoil that resulted in a reuniting of the two entities. All members of the Club became members of the Library Association. New committees took over the study functions, previously the sole function of the Club.

The Ladies' Library Association and Reform Linkages

In the earliest years of the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association, few organizations competed for the interest of members. The earliest members of the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association had ties to some of the earliest organizations, such as the Lyceum and the
agricultural society, that reflected their ongoing interest in reform and progress.

The Lyceum, among the first cultural organizations formed in the city, formed about 1836. Luther Trask served as president for much of the 1830s. Many other members of the Trask family participated regularly in the debates. The Lyceum debated questions about religion and politics. For example, an 1838 question about the value of novel reading, resulted with the house judges deciding sixteen for and four nay.\textsuperscript{138} There are no records for the Kalamazoo Lyceum. The \textit{Kalamazoo Gazette} and \textit{Kalamazoo Telegraph} provided reports of the organization and names of the early male members.

While not a cultural organization, probably the most prominent organization in the area that drew in the most people was the Kalamazoo County Agricultural Society formed in 1845. The Kalamazoo organization claimed that it was one of the first in the state.\textsuperscript{139} There is evidence that earlier organizations had started but not continued in counties to the east such as Livingston, Washtenaw, and Jackson.\textsuperscript{140} The Kalamazoo organization appears to have had some momentum as it began and held successive fairs from the beginning of its organization.
in Schoolcraft in 1846, 1847, and 1848.

In 1849, Kalamazoo hosted the fair for the first time in an area on the far southern portion of the city, because by 1849, Kalamazoo had a larger population mass than Schoolcraft. This marked the permanent move of the fair to Kalamazoo. The Kalamazoo Society predated the formation of the State Agricultural Society, formed in Lansing on March 17, 1849.

Several members of the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association played a role in the events of the Kalamazoo County Agricultural Society. Reports of the Agricultural Fair in the *Kalamazoo Gazette* in the early 1850s listed judges and prize winners. Mrs. George Rice and Miss Hannah Trask both entered items in the needlework area and won prizes. Several members of the organization, and their husbands, served as judges. Mrs. Webster, Miss Trask, Mrs. Traver, and Mrs. Lyman judged needlework and household goods. Luther Task often judged flower entries. Fairs provided opportunities for men and women to participate in public venues and became a popular vehicle to promote education and agricultural improvement, as well as bringing people together.

By the 1860s, two library organizations in the
community also provided opportunities for reading and self-education. While the Young Men's Library Association and the School District Library restricted availability of books and services, many residents probably found ways to access library holdings.

The Young Men's Library Association formed in September, 1858, and established a reading room in Parker & Dewing's block, on Burdick Street. The first meeting was held at the room of the Association on March 7, 1859 and articles of incorporation were adopted and officers selected.\textsuperscript{147}

The Young Men's Library Association did not enjoy the longevity of the Ladies' Library Association. Closing in 1861, due to "the excitement of war," the organization reassembled in 1868 under the auspices of the newly formed Young Men's Christian Association.\textsuperscript{148} The reorganized organization worked in a complementary capacity with the Ladies' Library Association. The Men's Library Association and Ladies' Library Association cooperated to bring "some of the leading and most eminent men of the country" to speak for lecture series.\textsuperscript{149} One such cooperative effort resulted in P. T. Barnum's 1866 appearance in Kalamazoo to speak about "The Art of Money
By the 1870s, the Men’s Library Association fell in disarray. The free circulation service of the Public Library challenged the need for the Young Men’s Library Association. Though the Men's Library Association offered evening hours six days, expanded Public Library hours in 1874 resulted in the dissolution of the Men's library. An 1878 agreement between the Men's Library Association and the Board of Education resulted in the books being "turned over to the public library." By the end of the nineteenth century, many organizations in Kalamazoo competed for women's interest, money, and time. The interest in reform evident in the early Library Association manifested itself in a variety of activist-oriented women's organizations that included the Women's Christian Temperance Union and the Young Women's Christian Association. Both of these organizations had educational agendas.

Fueled by the success and shortcomings of the Ladies' Library Association and Literary Club, several study groups formed with similar aims of socialization and self-improvement. While the Literary Club had been a direct outgrowth of the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library
Association in 1873, several clubs formed in the 1890s that drew heavily from the Ladies' Library Association but without a direct affiliation. The degree to which these organizations drew from the leadership and membership of the Ladies' Library Association varied.

A History of the Tuesday Book Review Club cited fall-out from the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association’s problems, particularly the power struggle over the literary club and library club, as a contributing factor in the formation of the organization. The same account also cited the needs of Ladies' Library Association members who wished for a smaller, more intimate group as the reason for the formation of the "Book Review Club" in 1895. Each of the four founding women invited two other members and the charter group began with twelve women. Of the founding group of twelve, eight had been members of the Ladies' Library Association or the Club. While the primary purposes of the organization was study of books, records dating from 1907 indicate that the organization did take public stances on some issues relating to community reform, such as garbage collection in the city, and support of parks and arts.

Another Kalamazoo Ladies’ Library Association
offshoot, the Every Friday Club also drew from the membership of the Ladies' Library Association. Carrie Coleman Jones co-founded the Every Friday Club with Maude Ranney in 1896. Both had been members of the Library Association's literary oriented Club.\textsuperscript{153} Again, these were primarily study, social, and conversational organizations.

The literary and study clubs in Kalamazoo at the end of the century shared characteristics of membership and interest with the Library Association. With similar aims of community improvement, their scale of operation proved to be much smaller than the Ladies' Library Association for several reasons. They did not compete equally in terms of membership, finances, or space. Their activities sometimes took on a public stance, but primarily focused on services aimed at restricted membership classes, often centered in members' homes.

Two other organizations in Kalamazoo grew in numbers and influence at the end of the nineteenth century and also spoke directly to issues of reform and education. The Young Women's Christian Association and Women's Christian Temperance Union featured active campaigns, rented rooms, and projected a strong public presence.
These organizations resembled the Ladies' Library Association to a greater degree than literary or religious clubs.

The Young Women's Christian Association formed in 1886 as an outgrowth of a Sunday afternoon Bible study club. The Telegraph reported on the progress of the organization in 1889 after it secured rooms and started to assume a public presence. The organization sponsored a particularly successful New Year's open house. "While this is a comparatively new organization the young ladies are doing a good work, and the success of their reception shows something of their strength." A full roster of activities included Bible training classes, educational training classes, and socials. A reading room was open Thursdays and Saturdays. By the end of the nineteenth century, crossover in leadership of the Y.W.C.A. and Ladies' Library Association began to occur. The 1899 President, Secretary, and Treasurer were all members of the Ladies' Library Association.

The Women's Christian Temperance Union represented another reform initiative. Like the Ladies' Library Association and Young Women's Christian Association, the Women's Christian Temperance Union (W.C.T.U.) formed in
Within a few years, the organization rented space in a downtown building. Mary Pengelly became the key leader of the Kalamazoo chapter and maintained linkages to the Ladies' Library Association.

Pengelly, an energetic and powerful women with extensive interest in reform, led the W.C.T.U., serving as president and spokes-person beginning in 1881. The organization became known as the "Pengelly chapter" in recognition of the work she performed. The W.C.T.U. was her major reform activity, but she also went on to be the first women elected to the School Board in 1893. During her tenure on the School Board, she became chairman of the Library Committee in 1895 that oversaw the Public Library.

Pengelly, like Stone, demonstrated leadership, particularly to the degree in which she participated in the temperance cause. In the 1870s, when she would have been in her fifties, she began organizing temperance societies in Michigan, often traveling to church services to speak about the temperance cause. She was the founding president of several temperance organizations and assisted many other small towns in southwestern
Michigan. One of her messages involved the use of unfermented wine in sacraments, which she eventually published in a booklet, *A Conversation on the Use of Unfermented Wine*.\textsuperscript{166} By the end of the nineteenth century, she continued her involvement in temperance and also began agitating for woman suffrage. Her earliest suffrage activities included agitating for the rights of women to vote in municipal elections. She cast the first vote in Kalamazoo in 1901.\textsuperscript{167}

Newspaper articles cited her interest in reform on many levels. In the article announcing her death, the *Kalamazoo Evening Telegraph* noted how "Mrs. Pengelly found time to devote attention to working for many other reforms, among them the uplift of the unfortunate."\textsuperscript{168} "[J]ail work and reform work" provided the initial motivation for her enthusiasm for the temperance cause.\textsuperscript{169} At the time of her death in 1911, the Ladies' Library Association cited her involvement with the organization and noted her passing.\textsuperscript{170}

**Conclusion**

In 1895, the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association became a member of a broad network of women's organizations by joining with the General Federation of...
Women's Clubs in 1895. Kalamazoo led the movement for a state federation along with Grand Rapids and Jackson. Stone played a major role in this growing development and became one of the first members of the state board of directors.\textsuperscript{171} By joining the General Federation of Women's Organizations in 1895, the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association secured its place in a network of women's organizations.

Taking a leadership role in a network of organizations was not a new phase for the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association. This role grew in importance in the 1860 and 1870s when other women's organizations in Michigan began to take on library causes. The Kalamazoo organization alluded to the purpose in the secretary's report for 1890. "Communications have been received from many sister societies, some to learn how our own attained its desirable position."\textsuperscript{172}

The Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association began as a progressive outgrowth of women's interest in reading and self-improvement. The Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association evolved through stages growing from a small, informal reading circle based on mutual interests and
common geography of interested women. It became formalized and adopted a structure, eventually incorporating to insure the continuity of the organization.

Its earliest leaders and members included a relatively homogeneous group of women with common cultural and socio-economic experiences, comprised primarily of middle-class, married women, with ties to New York and New England. By the end of the nineteenth century, the organization's success enabled the Association to broaden its mission to account for changes in the community and the social needs of its members. It reincarnated itself as an exclusive club for the self-improvement of selected women while providing community outreach in the areas of advocacy and literacy.

The Association, operating on a model developed by Lucinda Hinsdale Stone, succeeded in creating a permanent cultural space in the community and found a place of permanence with the construction of a public club building, the first constructed in the United States by a women's organization. Chapter 7 explores this building.

The evolution of the library association to a women's club also highlights Stone's connections with the
women involved with the fledging club movement in the northeast. The next chapter explores the variations of ladies' library associations and how the model played out in communities in Michigan through the early twentieth century.

1. Accounts of Kalamazoo and county history are found in the 1880 History of Kalamazoo County. A contemporary overview of Kalamazoo history is Dunbar's Kalamazoo and How it Grew. Recent accounts of selected Kalamazoo history have included Schmitt and Massie's Kalamazoo the Place Behind the Products and Schmitt's Nineteenth Century Homes in a Midwestern Village.  
4. See Willis F. Dunbar, Kalamazoo and How it Grew (Kalamazoo: School of Graduate Studies, Western Michigan University, 1959), 44-45.  
5. Kalamazoo Gazette, June 24, 1859.  
10. See Willis F. Dunbar, Kalamazoo and How it Grew (Kalamazoo: School of Graduate Studies, Western Michigan University, 1959).  
14. Figures for the population are from the 1850 Federal United States Census for Kalamazoo County, Michigan. Family figures were drawn from examining and counting the number of households from the manuscript census on microfilm.  
18. See Portrait and Biographical Record of Kalamazoo, Allegan and Van Buren Counties, Michigan, Containing Biographical Sketches of Prominent and Representative Citizens of the County, together with Portraits and Biographies of all the Governors of Michigan and of the Presidents of the United States (Chicago: Chapman Brothers, 1892).  
19. See Portrait and Biographical Record of Kalamazoo, Allegan and Van Buren Counties, Michigan, Containing Biographical Sketches of Prominent and Representative Citizens of the County, together with Portraits and Biographies of all the Governors of Michigan and of the Presidents of the United States (Chicago: Chapman Brothers, 1892). Of the first one-hundred one-hundred sketches for Kalamazoo county residents featured in the 1892 work, fifty-three trace their origins to New York. Ten are Michigan natives. Eight have Pennsylvania origins. Five report Irish roots. Massachusetts, Ohio,
Connecticut, and Germany contribute four prominent citizens each. Vermont contributes three. One sketch for citizens from Holland, England, Scotland, and Canada are included.

20. Mary Jane Ross, "History of Kalamazoo, Michigan." (A Thesis presented to the Faculty of the Department of History The University of Southern California, In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Arts, 1942) breakdown of birth places of Kalamazoo mayors was particularly helpful.

21. In the 1850 Federal United States Census listings for Kalamazoo County, Michigan, the two wealthiest men in Kalamazoo were T. P. Sheldon, a collection agent for the land office who owned holdings valued at $30,000 as did another member of the Burdick family listing his occupation as clerk. Two lawyers also had considerable personal wealth, with David Webster reporting holdings valued at $10,000 and Epaphroditus Ransom, $20,000.

22. These values were located using the 1850 Federal United States Census listings for Kalamazoo County, Michigan.

23. These values were located using the 1850 Federal United States Census listings for Kalamazoo County, Michigan.


26. For an overview of the school, church, and cultural institutions of early Kalamazoo see Mary Ross' History of Kalamazoo and Willis Dunbar's Kalamazoo and How it Grew.

27. Harley Anderson Account of Kalamazoo Public Schools, as cited in Mary Jane Ross, A History of Kalamazoo, Michigan (A Thesis presented to the Faculty of the Department of History The University of Southern California, In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Arts, 1942), 83.

28. See Willis Dunbar, Kalamazoo and How it Grew (Kalamazoo: School of Graduate Studies, Western Michigan University, 1959), 106-107.

29. There have been several published histories of Kalamazoo College including Arnold Mulder's The Kalamazoo
College Story (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Kalamazoo College, 1958); Charles True Goodsell and Willis S. Dunbar's Centennial History of Kalamazoo College (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Kalamazoo College, 1933); Ann Graham, ed., Kalamazoo College: A Sesquicentennial Portrait (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Kalamazoo College, 1982).

30. Willis Dunbar, Kalamazoo and How it Grew (Kalamazoo: School of Graduate Studies, Western Michigan University, 1959), 81.

31. Willis Dunbar, Kalamazoo and How it Grew (Kalamazoo: School of Graduate Studies, Western Michigan University, 1959), 46.

32. See Kalamazoo Gazette, January 10, 1845 and Samuel Durant, A History of Kalamazoo County, Michigan, With Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Prominent Men and Pioneers (Philadelphia: Everts, 1880), 129.

33. Willis Dunbar, Kalamazoo and How it Grew (Kalamazoo: School of Graduate Studies, Western Michigan University, 1959), 84.


37. Kalamazoo Gazette September 1, 1843, 2.


40. Loomis & Talbott's Kalamazoo City Directory, and Business Mirror, for 1860-61 (Compiled by George W. Haws, Detroit, 1860), 20.


42. Despite the problems with probate records and wills, there is value in using them as historical evidence. See Daniel Scott Smith's "Underregistration and Bias in Probate Records: An Analysis of Data From Eighteenth-Century Hingham, Massachusetts," William and Mary Quarterly 1975 32(1): 100-110.

43. "Cyren Burdick," Ross Coller Collection, Western
Michigan University Archives and Regional History Collections.
44. Kalamazoo County, Michigan, Probate Records 1831-1857, Abstracted by Mrs. Ethel Williams [et al.] in the 1950s and copied and indexed by Virginia S. Ford and Margaret F. Robinson, 1970s, (Kalamazoo, Michigan, 197?), 24. File Number 33 -- November 20, 1837. An inventory of the estate from March 4, 1838 reveals a number of books. See also the Rosser Coller Collection entry for "Burdick, Cyren."

45. "Valentine B. Schuyler," Ross Coller Collection, Western Michigan University Archives and Regional History Collections.

46. Kalamazoo County, Michigan, Probate Records 1831-1857, Abstracted by Mrs. Ethel Williams [et al.] in the 1950s and copied and indexed by Virginia S. Ford and Margaret F. Robinson, 1970s, (Kalamazoo, Michigan, 197?), 46. File Number 75 - No will.


48. The Ransom family included numerous business and political connections. Alexis Ransom had a flour, feed, and grain business and served a postmaster. See Wyllys Ransom's Historical Outlines of the Ransom Family of America and Historical Record of the Colchester, Connecticut Branch (Facsimile Reprint. Salem, Massachusetts: Higginson Book Company. Originally published Ann Arbor, Michigan: Richmond and Backus, 1903). Also see Michigan Pioneer Collections (Pioneer Society of Michigan, Volume 14), 116.

49. See Wyllys Ransom's Historical Outlines of the Ransom Family of America and Historical Record of the Colchester, Connecticut Branch (Facsimile Reprint. Salem, Massachusetts: Higginson Book Company. Originally published Ann Arbor, Michigan: Richmond and Backus, 1903).

50. "Ezekial Ransom," Ross Coller Collection, Western Michigan University Archives and Regional History Collections.

51. See Wyllys Ransom's Historical Outlines of the Ransom Family of America and Historical Record of the Colchester, Connecticut Branch (Facsimile Reprint.)


53. Other accounts include the names of Elizabeth Kedzie and Ruth Webster. Stone indicates Kedzie was a founding member in Mrs. J. C. Croly, *The History of the Woman's Club Movement in America* (New York: Henry G. Allen & C., 1898), 680. Stone identified Ruth Webster as a founding member in 1877 at the time of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the organization. The remaining founders are unknown because the organizational records do not identify the women participating in the informal reading activities before 1852. Other possible founders that were visible and involved from accounts dating from 1852 include Mrs. Francis Dennison who hosted the initial meeting to formalize the organization. Members of the Colonel George Rice family, including his wife, Bathsheba, and sister, Susan, also are likely candidates because they initially hosted the library in their home. Certainly, the earliest board members elected in 1852 may have been part of the informal association and included Mrs. A. S. Kedzie, Mrs. Anderson, Miss Hannah Trask, Mrs. Milo Goss, Mrs. Bruce, and Mrs. F. Traverse, Mrs. Nathaniel Balch, and Mrs. William Denison.

54. Minute Book of Board of Director meetings. This also appears in Samuel Durant's *A History of Kalamazoo County, Michigan, With Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Prominent Men and Pioneers* (Philadelphia: Everts, 1880), 244.


57. There is no information about Gibbs or Ransom and why they did not become part of the first board. Gibbs remained a member. Lois Ransom died on October 9, 1854.
and may have had health problems.

58. Minutes of the Ladies Library Association Board of Directors Meeting, introduction, history.

59. Minute Book Board of Directors

60. Information about the earliest board of directors is drawn from the 1850 Census, county histories, obituaries, and other sources. There is little information about Mrs. Anderson and Mrs. Bruce. Mrs. Anderson was probably Helen Anderson, wife of Baptist minister, Reverend Edward Anderson. They appeared in the 1850 Census. They were in Kalamazoo from 1849 through 1852. See Ross Coller Collection "Edward Anderson." Helen Anderson fits many of the characteristics of the other founders and early board members. Her husband was a minister, so presumably she would have had an interest in education for moral uplift. She was about the same age as the other women. She was born in 1822 in Nova Scotia. She had no children. Her nativity and that she had no children distinguish her from the other women. Additional evidence pointing to Helen Anderson as one of the founding board members is her affiliation with the Baptist Church. Certainly the Stones and several other members would have known the Andersons for this reason alone. An 1867 note by Mrs. William Denison noted that in 1852 Mr. Anderson was one of the speakers in the first year of the organization. Other members' husbands addressed the organization that year, including the Reverend Kedzie. The other unknown board member was Mrs. Bruce. There is little information about Mrs. Bruce, beyond her husband's name or occupation. There are no people in the 1850 census with the surname Bruce, so they were very recent arrivals in Kalamazoo at the time the organization formed in 1852. Mrs. Bruce was the wife of the Reverend Caleb Bruce, a minister for the Kalamazoo area Methodist Conference. See Kalamazoo Gazette, September 27, 1850, 2:2. They did not arrive in Kalamazoo until 1851 when the Kalamazoo Gazette began to report weddings performed by the Reverend Bruce. The Bruces remained in Kalamazoo about two years, during which the Reverend Bruce extended into the business community. He purchased a grocery store in 1852. See Kalamazoo Gazette, August 20, 1852, 2:3. They most likely left about 1853 when the Gazette began reporting letters at the post office. By 1860, there was no trace of the Bruce family in Kalamazoo County.

62. 1850 Census, Kalamazoo.


64. 1850 Federal United States Census listings for Kalamazoo County, Michigan.

65. See Wyllys Ransom's *Historical Outlines of the Ransom Family of America and Historical Record of the Colchester, Connecticut Branch* (Facsimile Reprint. Salem, Massachusetts: Higginson Book Company. Originally published Ann Arbor, Michigan: Richmond and Backus, 1903).

66. These values were located using the 1850 Federal United States Census listings for Kalamazoo County, Michigan.

67. These values were located using the 1850 Federal United States Census listings for Kalamazoo County, Michigan.

68. These figures are from the 1850 Kalamazoo Census.

69. Kalamazoo 1850 Census.


71. Kalamazoo 1850 Census.

72. Ross Coller, "Alexis Ransom." Possible complications from the last pregnancy and birth may have contributed to her death on October 9, 1854, which left her husband with five children ranging in age from a few months to eighteen years.

73. These figures are from the 1850 Kalamazoo Census.

74. These figures are from the 1850 Kalamazoo Census.

75. The following information is derived from the The Reverend James Stone affiliated himself with the Baptist Church and served as president of Kalamazoo College, a
Baptist institution. Edward Anderson also served as a Baptist minister. The Reverend Adam Kedzie arrived in Kalamazoo to take over the ministry of the Congregational Church. William Denison also served as a Congregational minister, and Caleb Bruce was a Methodist minister.

76. Get citation for Webster's obituary!
77. Citation from Baptist Church records as well as her obituary!
82. See John William Ward, Andrew Jackson, Symbol for an Age (New York, Oxford University Press, 1955).
83. Affiliations have been identified through obituaries and other sources.
84. 1850 census, Kalamazoo, Michigan, 9.
85. 1850 Census, Kalamazoo, Michigan, 23.
86. 1850 Census, Kalamazoo, Michigan, 13.
89. Samuel Durant, A History of Kalamazoo County, Michigan, With Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Prominent Men and Pioneers (Philadelphia: Everts, 1880), 239.
90. Kalamazoo Gazette, "Death of Mrs. F. D. G. Traver" June 1, 1855, 2.
91. Kalamazoo Gazette, "Death of Mrs. F. D. G. Traver" June 1, 1855, 2.
92. Samuel Durant, History of Kalamazoo County, Michigan. With Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of its
96. "Ladies Library Association, Constitution," Article 9, July 10, 1858, Archives and Regional History Collections, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo.
97. "Ladies' Library Association, Constitution," Article 2, July 10, 1858, Archives and Regional History Collections, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo.
98. Minutes of the Ladies Library Association Board of Directors Meeting, introduction, history.
99. "Minutes of the Ladies' Library Association Board of Directors Meeting," introduction to minute book includes brief history, Archives and Regional History Collections, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo.
100. Kalamazoo Gazette, June 16, 1854.
107. The Ladies' Library Association The Twenty-first Annual Report of the Secretary--President Condition of the Association--Its Work During the Past Year, January

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3, 1874. Mrs. J. O. Sely Secretary.
110.The Secretary's Annual Report of the Ladies Library Association for the Year ending June 5, 1877.
111.See Willis F. Dunbar, Kalamazoo and How it Grew (Kalamazoo: School of Graduate Studies, Western Michigan University, 1959), 86-102 for an overview of the 1870s.
113.Kalamazoo Telegraph March 11, 1868.
117."Minutes of the Ladies' Library Association Board of Directors," September 24, 1875, Archives and Regional History Collections, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo.
118.Nineteenth Annual Report of the Secretary of the Ladies Library Association of Kalamazoo, January 6, 1872 (for 1871) by Mrs. J 0. Seely, secretary.
120.Membership directories from the 1870s and 1880s reveal that most members lived within Kalamazoo Village and City limits.
121.Minutes of the Ladies Library Association Board of Directors, December 28, 1872.
122.Figures taken from membership rolls and yearbooks from 1874 through 1880.
123.Data for information about leaders in the Library Association and the Club are drawn from the Yearbooks of the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association, 1873-1900. Annual Yearbooks indicate leadership roles in both organizations.
124.Yearbooks of the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library
Association, 1873-1900.
125. Yearbooks of the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association, 1890.
126. Constitution As Amended by the Board of Directors, December 27th, 1890.
128. "20th Century Club Started Here in 1893," Kalamazoo Gazette, November 18, 1925.
130. Ross Coller, "Isabella Society/Twentieth Century Club." "20th Century Club Started Here in 1893." Kalamazoo Gazette, October 18, 1925.
133. Mrs. George Foote, History of the Twentieth Century Club (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Twentieth Century Club, ca. 1948) describes the special constraints. Materials in the Twentieth Century Club papers, such as treasury records, indicate the Peoples Church served as a club space through 1903. In 1903, an agreement between the Ladies' Library Association and the Twentieth Century Club finally resulted in the use of the auditorium for activities of the Twentieth Century Club.
137. May 28, 1900.
138. Kalamazoo Gazette, December 1, 1838.
139. See Kalamazoo Gazette, January 10, 1845 and Samuel Durant, A History of Kalamazoo County, Michigan, With Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Prominent Men and Pioneers (Philadelphia: Everts, 1880), 129.
140. See Julie Avery's An Exploration of Several Early Michigan County Fairs as Community Arts Organizations of the 1850s, 1860s and 1870s, A Dissertation Submitted to Michigan State University in Partial Fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, College of Arts and Letters, 1992, Volume 1, 68.
141. Coller "Kalamazoo County Agricultural Society."
142. For information about the role of women in agricultural fairs, see Linda Borish, "'A Fair, Without the Fair is No Fair at all': Women at the New England Agricultural Fair in the Mid-Nineteenth Century."
Also see Avery, Julie. An Exploration of Several Early Michigan County Fairs as Community Arts Organizations of the 1850s, 1860s and 1870s. Ph.D. diss., College of Arts and Letters, 1992, Michigan State University, 1992.
143. Transactions of the State Agricultural Society, with Reports of County Agricultural Society. (Lansing, Published by the Legislature, 1849).
146. See Linda Borish, "'A Fair, Without the Fair is No Fair at all': Women at the New England Agricultural Fair in the Mid-Nineteenth Century." Journal of Sport History 24 (Summer 1997): 155-176.
147. Ross Coller "Young Men's Library Association."
149. "Notice of Union Lecture Course, 1866-1867," co-sponsored by the Young Men's Library Association and Ladies' Library Association, Archives and Regional History Collections, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo.
150. "Notice of Union Lecture Course, 1866-1867," co-sponsored by the Young Men's Library Association and Ladies' Library Association, Archives and Regional History Collections, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo.
151. "Notice of Union Lecture Course, 1866-1867," co-sponsored by the Young Men's Library Association and Ladies' Library Association, Archives and Regional History Collections, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo.
152. "Tuesday Book Review Club, Kalamazoo, Michigan 1895-
Dorothy Gauntlett, A-950, box 1.
Organized to Instill Religious Teaching." From Ross
Coller Collection.
155.Telegraph, "The Young Ladies Entertain 130 of Their
Friends at Their Rooms," January 2, 1889, 6.
157.The records of the Women's Christian Temperance Union
are missing through 1919. Scrapbooks and published
reports from the newspapers provide membership
information. The women cited most often were officers or
members of delegations attending county and state
meetings. Of the forty-six women identified in newspaper
accounts, only three appear to be Ladies' Library
Association members. None are among the leaders of the
organization through 1900. Caroline Bartlett Crane, Mrs.
Emma E. Pollard, and Mrs. M. E. Winterburn were members
of both the Ladies' Library Association and the Women's
Christian Temperance Union.
158.According to an article, "Half Century Mark in
County," Kalamazoo Gazette, October 18, 1925, the first
temperance organization was headed by a Mrs. Charlotte
Brown in 1877. Most accounts credit Mary Pengelly as the
founding president.
159.City Directory, 1883.
160.Pengelly's link to the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library
Association is nebulous. She does not appear in
membership records, but the Association notes her death
and involvement in the organization in an article, "Club
Women Pay Silent Tribute to Mrs. Pengelly," Kalamazoo
Telegraph, January 17, 1911, 5.
161.Dr. Richard Pengelly appears in City Directories
beginning in 1881. Pengelly and her husband appeared in
the 1880 Census in Plainwell, Michigan.
162.Kalamazoo Evening Telegraph "Mrs. Pengelly Paid
Tribute," February 10, 1908, 7.
163.Kalamazoo Daily Telegraph "Devisser and Pengelly,"
June 6, 1893, 1.
164.Various articles and pages from Mary Pengelly's
scrapbook at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum.
165.Among the articles in Pengelly's personal scrapbook is
an article, dated July 29, 1879, probably from the Wayland
Union Enterprise, noting Mrs. Pengelly’s visit from Plainwell on the 27th. She spoke in the interest of the temperance cause at church in the morning and helped organize a W.C.T.U. in the afternoon.

166. See Mary Pengelly’s *A Conversation on the Use of Unfermented Wine* (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Ihling Brothers & Everhard, 1892).

167. Pengelly’s suffrage stance was in keeping with other women involved in the Woman Christian Temperance Union. See Ruth Bordin, *Woman and Temperance: The Quest for Power and Liberty, 1873-1900*, (Rutgers University Press, 1990). Pengelly is believed to have cast the first vote at a regular (non School Board) election in Kalamazoo on April 1, 1901. See “Mayor Mills,” *Kalamazoo Daily Telegraph*, April 1, 1901.


172. Secretary's Report for the Year Ending 1890.
CHAPTER VI

CULTURE, COMMUNITIES, AND VARIATIONS ON THE LADIES' LIBRARY ASSOCIATION BASED ON THE STONE MODEL

INTRODUCTION

In 1897, Lucinda Hinsdale Stone reflected on the history of the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association and its relationship to the flourishing club movement at the end of the century. Stone viewed the library associations as distinctly different from the woman's club movement, noting "[a]bout the middle of the fast-waning century there were a number of library associations . . . and the like. . . In the modern sense, they were not women's clubs. The club idea started to grow in the latter part of the sixties."¹ Stone saw the educational work and club activities as the culmination of the work of the Ladies' Library Association.

Stone acknowledged Jennie June Croly as the leader of the contemporary club movement at the end of the nineteenth century, but she probably underestimated the long-range influence of the ladies' library associations in the club movement or in the growth of libraries.²

245
Nearly 100 communities duplicated Stone's model of a library association by the end of the century. Library associations provided a forum for women to take part in community reform and pre-dated the club movement by several decades. The Stone model of a ladies library association made inroads that contributed to the club movement and library development by the end of the nineteenth century.

**Institution Building and Yankee Leadership**

Between the 1850s and the end of the nineteenth century, Lucinda Hinsdale Stone's model of library development occurred in about 100 communities, primarily in southern Michigan from the 1860s through the end of the century. While variations on gender roles and the evolution of the organizations differed in each of these communities, many of the library associations bore a strong resemblance to the Stone model.

The Stone model flourished in southwestern Michigan and was especially prevalent in Kalamazoo, Allegan, and Kent counties. The majority of the organizations in Michigan developed in rural, small town settings, dominated by Yankee settlers and their cultural influences.³

Kalamazoo County led the development. Between 1876
and 1880, organizations formed in Galesburg, Richland, Vicksburg, Augusta, Schoolcraft, and Climax.\textsuperscript{4} In all instances, there appear to have been ties to the Kalamazoo organization.\textsuperscript{5}

Galesburg attracted former New Yorkers and New Englanders who moved to Michigan in the middle 1830s for farmland. In the years before the surveying and platting of the village in 1837, they replicated the schools and churches of New England and New York.\textsuperscript{6} Village dry goods, hardware, and drug stores supported the farming community.\textsuperscript{7} At the time the Galesburg Ladies' Library Association formed in 1876, the village of 800 residents supported a newspaper, bookstore, jeweler, photographer, printer, and a restaurant.\textsuperscript{8}

Richland Township attracted the first non-native settlers in 1830, about four years after the initial survey.\textsuperscript{9} The size of the population and largely agricultural occupations are indicative of the rural character of the township. The community supported a largely agricultural economy based on family owned and operated farms. The 1874 state census reported 181 farms.\textsuperscript{10} Ten years later, there were roughly the same number of farms, with the state census indicating 182.\textsuperscript{11} As the population stabilized, the number of farming
operations declined. In 1894, there were 147 farms. There were slightly more farms in 1904, with 161 reported in the township. White, resident owners operated these family farms.

Richland Village with 275 residents constituted the major urban center within the township in 1880 and supported a greater concentration of non-farm operations. It prospered because of its close proximity to Kalamazoo, nine miles, which provided its chief shipping point by rail. Richland Village became the center of cultural activities for the township, with small businesses that served the farm families and agricultural economy of the township. According to the 1880 history, Richland Village contained:

the beautiful church edifice of the Presbyterian Society, the Prairie Seminary building, one hotel, two stores of general merchandise, a carriage-factory, a cider- and vinegar-manufacturer, the lodge-rooms of the Masonic and Odd-Fellows Associations, two physicians, various mechanic shops.

By 1880, Richland boasted of established religious, educational, social, and manufacturing operations. The Village lacked a library.

Allegan County was more rural and had fewer linkages via the railroad and waterways than Kalamazoo County. From 1868 to 1921, four library associations formed.
Plainwell formed in 1868. Otsego organized in the early 1870s. In 1893, Wayland organized as a Ladies' Literary Association and had meetings at the homes of members, eventually incorporating under the name of Ladies' Library Club in 1899. The Woman's Club of Fennville formed in 1921 and essentially operated as a library association, providing circulating library services to the community until 1948.

Plainwell, located in Gun Plains Township, evolved as a primarily agricultural area in the 1830s and 1840s and attracted Yankee and New England migrants. Plainwell's growth as a community in the 1850s occurred as a result of the construction of the plank road, extended from Kalamazoo to Grand Rapids. Further growth occurred after the Kalamazoo and Allegan Railroad completed a line to Plainwell in 1868. The village officially incorporated in 1869. By the early 1870s, the village had several small businesses that supported the area farming community and travelers, and amenities to support a small town, including a fire department, and a public water works.

Otsego Township organized in 1833 as a primarily agricultural community. It soon became a desirable area because of its location near the juncture of the Gun
River and the Kalamazoo River. The location required no dam and the waterpower provided energy for the sawmills, gristmills, and flourmills. The dam and waterpower provided energy and disposal for the paper manufacturing in the 1870s. Although Otsego incorporated in 1865, it did not acquire some of the amenities of village life until the 1880s when a fire company organized and the village installed a water works.

Wayland organized in the late 1830s. One of the earliest residents, Nelson Chambers, arrived in 1837, after suffering financial setback in Ypsilanti, Michigan. Chambers, a native of Litchfield, Connecticut, and his wife, Emily Shephard of Vermont, were typical of early residents, often New Englanders who arrived after having settled in other points in Michigan. Other settlers, such as Isaac and George Barnes, also arrived from other points, such as Kalamazoo County. Initial ventures involved lumber and agricultural ventures followed. The first business ventures included removing the timber and operating sawmills using power from the many rivers. The rivers also aided in the transport of agricultural products. By mid-century, Wayland became accessible by other routes. The Plank Road connected Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids by 1854. Wayland became a
mid-point stop with a hotel for travelers. When the Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad was completed in 1870, Wayland became a station on the north and south route. Kent County experienced different growth patterns. The county formed after Kalamazoo and Allegan Counties, and the Grand River had a profound impact on the development of Kent County's largest city, Grand Rapids. From 1837, steamboats traveled on the Grand River, linking Grand Rapids and Grand Haven. In 1839, the state appropriated funds for the construction of canals and the improvement of the river. The development of the Grand River promoted industrialization and rapid population growth much earlier in Grand Rapids with the population growing from 880 in 1840 to more than 87,000 by 1900. Three ladies' library associations formed in Kent County between 1871 and 1906. Southwestern Michigan's Ladies' Library Associations Libraries, that would formerly have been considered treasures fit only for princes, are now within the reach of individuals of moderate fortunes, and of village societies. This 1834 pronouncement about the growing accessibility of libraries appeared in an article in the North American Review. By the 1830s and 1840s social, township, and school district libraries became a part of
the Yankee landscape in Michigan. Ladies’ library associations often formed in areas where previous attempts at libraries failed to meet user needs. Sometimes libraries only served specific populations, such as families with children enrolled in the school.

Women’s organizations in these three counties represent variations of the Stone model, influenced by geography, chronology, and the presence of other women’s networks. These organizations grappled with issues of providing services to members and the community at large, balancing library and literary interests, and working with informal and formal organizational networks.

Earlier Grand Rapids organizations experienced various levels of success in establishing social subscription-based libraries, which may have been due, in part, to a larger population base. As early as 1843, the Grand Rapids Lyceum Association organized a library with a chest of books discovered in the attic of a schoolhouse, left by an eastern attorney who lived in the area briefly. The Lyceum Association made additions to the collection until it numbered about three hundred volumes. By 1850, the association turned over the books to another organization, the Mechanics Mutual Protection Lodge. The Mechanics Mutual Protection Lodge disbanded.
in 1859 and distributed the books among individual members.\textsuperscript{32}

As the Mechanics Mutual Protection Lodge disbanded, the Grand Rapids Library Association formed according to its Articles of Association and By-laws for the purposes of "intellectual improvement of its members by the maintenance of a Library Reading Room, and as such other measures as shall be deemed necessary."\textsuperscript{33} This organization succeeded in establishing a stock company with 96 members and 51 stockholders. With a library of 771 volumes and a treasury of $769.14, the Association held its first meeting May 5, 1858 and hired a librarian at the annual salary of $150. By November, the library moved into centrally located rooms in the Lovett block.\textsuperscript{34}

For unknown reasons, initial enthusiasm fell, and financial support dwindled. The organization tried unsuccessfully to secure funds through lecture courses. By October 1861, the Library Association sold its library and fixtures for a debt of $250. Within a short time, the Association gave its library of 855 volumes to the Board of Education of District No. 1, that was a tremendous increase to the existing library of less than 100 volumes. Pupils could use the district school library located in the school house attic for an annual
fee of fifteen cents. The same library was available to the public for a fee of thirty cents, though the attic location and hours of operation dissuaded most potential patrons. An 1870 description of this library by an early Ladies' Library Association seemed hardly complimentary. "We have something of a public library at the public school but it does not seem adequate." In these instances, ladies' library associations stepped in to fulfill a need for intellectual and moral uplift through programs and circulating libraries. Often services extended to Association membership and the community at large. Library associations stated these purposes explicitly in constitutions and bylaws. The Richland Ladies' Library Association formed on December 3, 1880 for the "purpose of promoting moral and intellectual improvement and to encourage useful and entertaining reading." The Richland Constitution stated the membership requirements and privileges. Women paying the "usual dues of members shall be fifty cents." Men could join for one dollar and by "the vote of the Association be admitted to the benefits of the library." Richland, similar to other ladies' library associations, recognized the value of making circulating libraries available to the larger community, while reserving most
member benefits for women.

Often the goal of a circulating library or of developing a circulating library became the impetus for organizing a Ladies' Library Association. The Galesburg organization formed in 1883 for the purposes of the "establishment and maintenance of a library; to afford and encourage useful and entertaining reading; to furnish literary and scientific lectures, and other means of moral and intellectual improvement in this community." The Galesburg organization also made itself available to the entire community, including men. Membership articles stated, "A gentleman paying one dollar per annum, shall be entitled to the use of the library, the same as lady members."

Open membership provided access to the circulating libraries for men and women of the community. Many Associations also sponsored special literary groups, which became more exclusive in membership. Testimony supplied by George Henika in the 1902 Wayland lawsuit attested to the exclusive and often gender segregated nature of literary clubs, or as he cited, an "exclusive society."

The Galesburg organization recognized the various needs of the members from its inception. The Association
formed a literary arm of the club, ancillary to the primary Association.

A motion was made by Mrs. Blake and supported by Mrs. Earl that there be a committee appointed to form a literary club, which shall be auxiliary to the Association in order to bring the subject before the meeting for discussion . . . A motion made and carried that said committee consist of five members.43

Thus, the Association provided a lending library for the entire community and specified educational and social opportunities for female members.

Networks to Other Library Associations

The success of the ladies' library association often inspired other groups to form similar organizations. While the Woman's Christian Temperance Union and Grange built collaboration and cooperation within the organizational structure through state meetings and other reporting methods, the Michigan ladies' library associations lacked a formal structure.44 The library associations existed in a non-formal network of women's organizations for at least twenty years before the General Federation made inroads in southwestern Michigan. In countless cases, the ladies' library associations helped other organizations form by providing information to help in the start-up and also provided speakers for
programs and attending important functions.

The Grand Rapids Ladies' Library Association illustrates the family and informal club networks that existed in Michigan in the late 1860s. In 1869, Mrs. Marion Withey of Grand Rapids visited her aunt, Mrs. Lucinda Hinsdale Stone, in Kalamazoo. Inspired by the history classes sponsored by the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association, Withey decided to organize a class in Grand Rapids. She discussed the matter with a few women and, with her aunt's assistance, organized the first history class. Like the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association it modeled, the resulting Grand Rapids Ladies' Library Association exerted a public influence and expanded physical and spatial boundaries of the organization and its members.45

The first study class included about sixty members, primarily married women and female schoolteachers. They immediately faced obstacles in procuring books for their studies because the requirements were beyond the personal libraries of the class members. One woman writing to her aunt in 1870 described the efforts of the organization to procure books, "[l]ibraries have been searched and bookstores ransacked to find the necessary information upon the various topics that come up before the class."
But our libraries were found insufficient for our wants." Mrs. Stone provided books from her personal library and the Kalamazoo organization. The study group soon discussed forming a library to meet their needs, as well as those of the community. Mrs. Ball in her letter noted, "The idea of the Ladies' Library Association grew out of the needs of the History Class."

The earliest historical accounts of the Plainwell Ladies' Library Association also indicate connections between neighboring communities. The charter members of the Plainwell Ladies' Library Association borrowed books from the neighboring Kalamazoo organization. It was fifteen miles to the south and accessible by the plank road and train. An 1876 publication about ladies' library associations recounted how "several of the ladies were accustomed to send to the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library for books . . . this arrangement proved unsatisfactory and inconvenient" and resulted in the formation of the Plainwell organization in 1868.

The Galesburg organization also deliberately modeled itself after the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association. As the organization established policies and procedures, members looked to Kalamazoo for guidance. A meeting in 1877 featured "Mrs. Van Buren [who] gave a short account
of the manner in which the Kal. Club is conducted and proposed that we organize on a similar plan.\textsuperscript{50}

The Richland Ladies' Library Association also relied on informal networks within the region. One of the first actions of the fledgling association involved writing the Augusta organization "for a copy of their Constitution and By Laws."\textsuperscript{51} These networks appear to have operated on social, political, and philanthropic levels. For example, the motive behind a 1911 invitation to the "Hickory Corners ladies" appears to have been for purely social reasons.\textsuperscript{52} A 1913 program consisting of "a very interesting talk by Mrs. C. A. Read of Kal. about the work of the L.L.A. of that city" may have been an information sharing meeting.\textsuperscript{53} Mrs. A. J. Mills of Kalamazoo gave a lecture about social service at the same meeting. In 1914, the Association explored the suffrage issue again when Mrs. D. L. Bromwell of Kalamazoo "spoke very entertainingly on the subject of suffrage."\textsuperscript{54} This program resulted in the formation of a suffrage organization.

The women in Wayland collaborated with other ladies' library associations and other women's organizations, which resulted in the exchange of information and collaboration. They invited a speaker from Plainwell to
talk about the General Federation.55 A member of Kalamazoo's Twentieth Century Club attended a meeting in 1913 to read a paper about the anti-cigarette campaign.56 They met with clubwomen of Bradley, a small village to the south, several times between 1911 and 1915 and considered forming a suffrage organization.57

These linkages became more formalized after the Wayland Ladies' Library Association chose to become involved in the G.F.W.C. They joined the State Federation in 1912.58 The organization also became charter members of a County Federation formed in 1914.59 Many library associations became part of the network of women's clubs by affiliating with the General Federation of Women's Clubs. The Federation provided formal networks of communication and collaboration.

Because of their involvement with the State and General Federations, the Wayland Library Association became involved in broader causes beyond the library and literacy. The organization provided food for the poor in the community during the holidays. The first evidence of this occurred about 1911, when the organizations moved to "help the most needy ones in town to provide for a Thanksgiving dinner" and followed this motion with another forming a committee "to find out who the needy
ones are and what they are most in need of."60

The Wayland Ladies' Library Association relied on a strategy to insure the survival of the organization. In many instances, literary and other objectives helped sustain ladies' library associations after circulating libraries ceased to be a major function.

Literary and Other Interests

Literary clubs existed as auxiliary services beyond the library association. Often the benefits existed primarily for the benefit of women. The structure of the auxiliary literary associations accommodated married middle class women in most cases. In some communities, the schedules of the organization made it easier for married women. The day of the week varied from Mondays in Kalamazoo to Fridays in Richland.61

The Plainwell Ladies' Library Association relied on "reading circles" to bring women together for social and educational purposes.62 Reading circles provided additional structured events, beyond the circulation services of the library association, for women to discuss books, as well as raise funds. Collections taken at the events netted twenty dollars in 1875 and 1876.63

The literary function could prove troubling, especially if the core organization viewed its purposes
as a provider of library services. The Wayland association struggled with the social needs of the club. In 1913, the Association engaged in a "discussion about the advisability of having social members admitted to our club." The membership approved constitutional amendments later that year to allow for social members.

Grand Rapids took a more progressive stance and encouraged female schoolteachers to attend as evidenced by a circular sent to area schools "inviting the Lady Teachers to join the club." Grand Rapids was atypical in this instance. It also took a more inclusive stance by allowing men to participate in the literary activities. Members met at private homes every Saturday evening from seven to ten, with the proviso that prohibited non-literary entertainments such as "cards and refreshments" from meetings. Members brought their husbands and friends.

Library associations that existed into the 1920s grappled with how to provide literary club activities amidst a growing club movement. Galesburg provides a good example. By the early twentieth century, several literary clubs had emerged in Galesburg. There was some overlap in the membership of these organizations. The Book Review Club and Mio-Cressey Home Literary Club both
met for the purposes of discussing books. The Mutual Improvement Club often included book reviews as part of its meetings. Bette Henderson, who served as secretary to the Library Association in the 1940s, also served as secretary to the Book Review Club. Unlike Kalamazoo, the Galesburg organization did not evolve into literary club, possibly because there were other literary opportunities in the community.

The Richland Ladies' Library Association also responded to community needs and altered its emphasis and programs, in part because of some of the competing women's clubs and other societal changes. During World War I, the Red Cross occupied the Richland Ladies' Library Association building and the membership became involved in activities devoted to the war effort. In the 1920s, the Library Fair became an annual event involving the local school. The Library Fair continued into the 1930s and involved collaborations with the Western State Teachers College, Woman's Christian Temperance Union, and Future Farmers of America. The fair included entries of produce, baked goods, clothing and special features such as slide and movie features.

The 1920s and into the 1930s appear to have been prosperous times for the Richland organization. It
reported information about hours, circulation, and new books in the Galesburg Argus. The newspaper also noted out-of-town visitors with ties to affiliated General Federation Clubs. In 1934, Dr. Caroline Bartlett Crane addressed a joint meeting of the Ladies Library Association and the Home Literary Club of Milo and Cressey. Mrs. A. J. Mills of the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association was on the program, too.  

Women's Influence in Shaping Ladies' Library Associations

Women exercised power as the "helpers of public spirited men" and succeeded at forming library associations that benefited the female membership and the greater community. Nineteenth century women succeeded in shaping community institutions through collaborative and mutually supportive relationships with men. The ladies' library associations of Michigan provide many excellent examples of these relationships.

In 1876 "[m]any ladies of the village of Galesburg met at the residence of Miss Carrie Flint on Grove Street . . . pursuant to a warrant issued by R. G.. Smith, Justice of Peace." Formed at the request of the male elite in the community, the Galesburg Ladies' Library Association worked with the men in the community who
supported the organizational goals of “moral and intellectual improvement” in the community.74 This often involved co-opting men who believed in the benefits of the association. The Galesburg women noted the assistance of a man who posted notices and helped prepare the constitution. “Mr. Van Buren aided the ladies by posting notices, drawing up the constitution, etc.”75 They also enlisted the community at large. An early report of the Association appeared in a newspaper, describing the purposes and seeking support. “Apparently the object of the association is well understood in the community and one hopes a general interest in our behalf may be manifested.”76

The power exercised by women became precarious when library associations pushed traditional female boundaries. The Grand Rapids Ladies' Library Association provides a case study of how a women's organization collaborated with other groups at the onset to form a public library.

On March 21, 1870, the Grand Rapids Ladies' Library Association formed, adopting a constitution, electing officers, and appointing a committee to solicit members and raise funds. Their constitution and bylaws clearly stated their public purpose as well, which included the
"promotion of literary and scientific pursuits" and the "establishment and maintenance of a library" for general use and accessible to all.\textsuperscript{77}

A few months later, they amended their constitution to reflect their broader purpose, changing the name of the organization from the Ladies' Library Association to the "City Library Association." On July 23, 1870, the City Library Association hired Mrs. Frank Holcomb as the first librarian and opened to the public.\textsuperscript{78} With the newly established library, the community took notice of the organization's efforts. A newspaper account lauded the organization, noting "[t]he ladies of Grand Rapids have succeeded in a good enterprise."\textsuperscript{79}

The Grand Rapids organization operated the library in the business district in a room over a millinery store on Monroe Street. The library experienced dramatic growth.\textsuperscript{80} Circulation grew from 60 books in the first month to more than 500 by the following February. Operas, socials, and lectures contributed to the treasury balance.\textsuperscript{81} The City Library Association provided daily hours.\textsuperscript{82} Newspapers also reported on the appeal of the reading room, noting "The tables are also constantly supplied with fresh papers and periodicals, with the newest news and latest literature."\textsuperscript{83} The organization
advertised the library services regularly in local newspapers. An advertisement from the Grand Rapids Daily Eagle provided an overview of the library and services, “City Library, 46 Monroe Street, open daily from 4 to 8 p.m., membership $2. Annual Tax $1.00. Quarterly membership 50 cents. Memberships transferable.”

Despite the success of the City Library, the City Library Association advocated consolidating the three city libraries and establishing one central library for the public. In November 1871, the Library Association, Board of Education, and Young Men’s Christian Association merged libraries, creating one free library for the community. The women of the City Library Association accomplished this through taking on the role of public advocate when it entered into an agreement with the Board of education and Young Men’s Christian Association, thereby “founding and perpetuating a free Library and Reading Room” for Grand Rapids.

The new public library was under the jurisdiction of a joint committee composed of members appointed by the City Library Association, Board of Education, and Young Men’s Christian Association. The Y.M.C.A. and Board of Education agreed to maintain the expense of the Library housed in the Y.M.C.A. rooms. The agreement further
stipulated including members of the Ladies' Library Association on the governing board that oversaw the book committee and recommended the librarian. Given the "custody and guardianship of said Library," the Committee was responsible for selecting books and recommending the librarian, with preference to be given to a "lady Librarian." The Ladies' Library Association viewed this as a public victory, speaking of it in familial terms as "this first child of their affection--the first Public Library of Grand Rapids."

By all accounts the merging of the libraries proved successful until 1877 when the joint committee disagreed over the choice of a new librarian. The committee recommended Mrs. Putnam, despite a majority vote favoring another candidate. The members of the committee, representatives of the Ladies' Literary Association, voted for the majority candidate. The Board of Education responded to protests, noting the right by agreement of the Ladies' Literary Association to "have a voice in nomination of the Librarian," and that it could ultimately reject the candidate for any reason.

The Ladies' Library Association took notice of this flaw in the agreement when they attended the November,
1877 meeting of the School Board. The School Board meeting evolved into a discussion about the future relationship between the School Board Library Committee and the Ladies' Literary Club. It is unclear why the School Board elected to appoint a librarian other than the one recommended by the Ladies. The documentation does not exist, though newspaper accounts described a tense meeting, which continued after the Board adjourned with "considerable discussion among the member and the visitors, gathered in little knots."91

Because of the disagreement, the Ladies' Literary Club opted to withdraw from the earlier agreement and remove the estimated 2,000 volumes they contributed to the initial venture. By the next School Board meeting, the Board recommended the formation of a Committee to work with the Ladies' Literary Association to identify the books belonging to the former City Library Association.92 By March, the Grand Rapids Eagle reported Board of Education purchases to replace books removed in the division.93

The Grand Rapids Ladies' Literary Association exerted a public influence and expanded physical and spatial boundaries of the women's organization and its members. In pushing boundaries and exerting a public
influence, the women encountered resistance and difficulty. An 1876 report of the Grand Rapids Ladies' Library Association noted the difficulty of their situation, "what anxiety, what discouragements, what sneers at every stage were encountered." 94

As the legal status of women changed and women's involvement in political affairs increased in the twentieth century, the political nature and power of ladies' library associations shifted. 95 Ladies' library associations took active roles in promoting and agitating for public libraries. They brought their expertise, books, and other resources to the table.

The Plainwell organization illustrates how women's increasing political power translated into a public role and agency for the women. After its founding in 1868, the Plainwell Ladies' Library Association struggled with the issue of adequate space for the first twenty years. The Plainwell organization, with the cooperation of the community, purchased land and constructed a permanent building in the middle of the community in 1889. 96 The building issue is explored more fully in Chapter 7.

This building remained the home of the library until 1917 when Amanda Allen Ransom, a former member of the
organization, died. In her will, Amanda Ransom deeded "the village of Plainwell . . her fine home for a public library . . also $1000 with which to fit the house for that purpose, and $2000 as a fund for maintaining the library." The bequest of Amanda Allen Ransom resulted in a committee appointed by the Village Council to meet with the Ladies Library Association and discuss merging.

The Library Board and committees included women who had been members of the Ladies' Library Association as well as men of the community. The library board advocated for a 1/2 mill tax increase to support the free public library. On March 14, 1918, the vote passed, with 216 yes and 26 no. Women participated in this election; however, the number of women voting is unknown.

By the beginning of the twentieth century ladies' library associations entered into collaborative partnerships with communities to exert influence and agitate for public libraries. The Sparta Ladies' Association in Kent County organized in 1906 and began providing a circulating library in 1910. Their circulating library provided community services about seven years. By 1917, they succeeded in working with the Carnegie foundation and getting a grant for a library in
Sparta. Some ladies' library associations, such as the one in Mendon, worked with funding sources, such as Andrew Carnegie, to secure a public library. After they succeeded in getting a public library, the organization turned its efforts to literary pursuits.

Alternative Models of Library Development

The Stone Model failed to spread to all parts of Michigan. Ladies' library associations did not organize in several counties in the southern portion of Michigan, most notably Monroe, Macomb, and Jackson Counties. The Stone Model of a ladies' library association did not develop in areas where other organizations and mechanisms provided library services to the larger community.

Monroe formed in the early 1800s, following Wayne County. An 1890 history of the county described the intellectual origins of the county.

The first French settlers that located on the River Raisin were the direct descendants from the old French pioneers of Detroit. Few among the French farmers had much of the education to be derived from books, yet there was quite a number of intelligent, strong thinkers.

Monroe's earliest residents were French, with religious and cultural backgrounds differing from the residents
that populated other southern Michigan counties, with the exception of Wayne. An account of Erie township refers to the pioneers from Canada and France, and noted that they "were temperate in the use of whisky and tobacco, and unrestrained by Red Ribbon Societies or temperance advocates." The religious traditions of the county included a predominant Roman Catholic presence. In contrast, many of the counties with strong library movements had temperance movements and predominantly Protestant populations.

Monroe formed an early village library in 1828, under the control of the village council. As state library legislation evolved, control of the city library transferred to the board of education. By 1890, a bequest of a building and money gifts resulted in a suitable library building and a growing collection. "There are two thousand four hundred and fifty-nine volumes at this time in the library, and the annual circulation is over five thousand." 

Monroe did not remain exclusively French or Catholic. Yankee influences included Edward D. Ellis who arrived in Monroe in 1825 from Buffalo, New York. Ellis advocated for funding libraries through progressive legislation. Ellis desired to allocate library
funding from "the clear proceeds of all fines assessed in the several counties for any breach of the penal laws." Edward D. Ellis arrived in Monroe in 1825 from Buffalo, New York, bringing the first printing press and type into the community and establishing the first newspaper.

Macomb County organized in 1818 after Wayne and Monroe Counties. It shared many population characteristics, which may also account for the lack of library associations that formed in the rest of the southern portion of Michigan. The 1882 History of Macomb County noted the lack of library and educational institutions in the earliest history.

The literary privileges of the early settlers were on neither an exalted nor advantageous footing for many years. Many localities, while yet in their infancy, both east and west of this county, were far better situated in this respect.

While there was no library in Macomb County or organizations providing library services, private collections accounted for the best law and antiquarian libraries in Romeo. The populace of Utica, Michigan formed a Lyceum. A literary Society organized in Armada in 1877 and consolidated with a Ladies' Literary Society in 1880. The combined organizations had a collection of fifty volumes. The Carnegie Library
built in 1905 at Mount Pleasant grew from a private collection started by a Professor Wood in the 1860s.¹¹⁶

Ladies' library associations did not form in Jackson County, perhaps the most difficult omission to explain. Jackson County shared many demographic characteristics with the southern counties having the most ladies' library associations. The earliest social library activity in Jackson involved the formation of the Young Men's Association in 1863.¹¹⁷ An 1881 history of Jackson noted the lack of literary or educational facilities in the community, "The fact that Jackson is so barren of institutions and organizations calculated to create and foster an intellectual taste makes the Young Men's Association really a necessity." ¹¹⁸

The society began with the goals of establishing a reading room and sponsoring a lecture series. Public purposes guided the development of the library. "It takes position from its singularity, and became, not solely an organization for the benefit of its members, but an object of public interest and regard." ¹¹⁹ After incorporation in 1869, and a couple of generous donations to the library fund, the number of volumes began to grow. The organization rented rooms until it purchased a large hall, which made access to the library
The success of the organization was short-lived. "The spring of 1877 found the affairs of the association in a chaotic condition." Financial mismanagement by two consecutive boards of directors had placed the organization in jeopardy. Two members appointed a committee to solve the problem and raise $1,000 to pay debts and get the organization on firm ground once again. The committee also recommended a radical reorganization of the association, which included placing women on the board of directors. "[A] radical change was made in the management, and a Board of Directors formed whose composition consisted partly of ladies."121

While the Stone model did not initially contribute to the development of a social library in Jackson County, the ideas behind the model could be introduced to correct a floundering men's association and turn it into a successful organization. At the writing of the county history in 1881, the author credited the women with sustaining and growing the organization. "[T]he present flourishing condition of the association is due very greatly to this change . . . the association has been kept constantly before the public by a series of literary and social entertainments which ladies alone can
successfully undertake."\textsuperscript{122}

By the end of the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century, the woman's club movement took a strong hold in Jackson County with numerous women's organizations.\textsuperscript{123}

Pre-dating the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association by a matter of months, the Flint Ladies Library Association formed in 1851, in an unincorporated community of just under three thousand people.\textsuperscript{124} In many ways, the Flint organization mirrored the Kalamazoo organization but there were notable exceptions.

The Flint organization, located in Genesee County, shared demographic characteristics with Kalamazoo. Yankee women, interested in promoting and advancing the educational interests of the community, were the catalyst in organizing the Association. Using 1850 census data, 62 percent of the members and their husbands or fathers were born in New York State, with an additional 26 percent of men and 20 percent of women being born in the New England states.\textsuperscript{125} An 1868 address by Governor Henry H. Crap recounted the beginnings of the organization, and how the "Ladies of that day . . . with a public spirit . . . looking beyond the simple clearings . . . were then beginning to unfold themselves" and recognize "the wants
of the higher intellectual nature . . . in the establishment of a circulating library."^{126}

The Flint Ladies' Library Association formed primarily to provide circulating library services. An 1853 notice published by the organization stated its aims and progress to date, "[f]or the purpose of disseminating useful information, and fostering . . . a taste for healthy reading. . . [the organization] has already accumulated a permanent Library."^{127}

By all accounts, it was very successful. The Flint Ladies' Library Association achieved prominence in the community and operated in the public realm by renting rooms. Circulating library privileges were available to any person paying a $2.00 annual fee.^{128}

Similar to the Kalamazoo organization, the Flint Ladies' Library was a popular public institution.^{129} An 1861 fire nearly destroyed the library, but there was "so much public spirit manifested, that it was decided the association ought to own a building instead of depending upon rented rooms."^{130} The Flint women, not unlike the Kalamazoo women, relied heavily on the men in the building of the library. In fact, in Flint, the effort was spearheaded by men. "[I]n July, 1866, a subscription paper was drawn up and circulated for the purchase of a
lot and the erection of a library building. Seven gentlemen very cheerfully put down their names for two hundred dollars each." The community assisted the organization, constructing a library building in 1868.

The Flint organization also possessed characteristics distinguishing itself from Kalamazoo. There was not a direct connection with the churches of the community. In fact, the founding members of the Flint organization came from very wealthy families and represented the business and governing class of the community. About 40 percent represented the merchant class. Another 30 percent included lawyers and insurance and real estate agents. The remaining 30 percent included farmers, lumbermen, and printers.

Perhaps because of the personal wealth of members, the earliest membership fees and subscription rates were substantially higher than Kalamazoo's annual one-dollar membership and subscription fees. In Flint, members purchased subscription shares which "amounted to ten dollars . . . and the members agreed to loan and exchange their own books also." At some point, the Association reduced fees for members and subscribers. An 1869 constitution and bylaws listed dues of fifty cents yearly and one shilling every month. The organization
extended borrowing privileges to subscribers for two dollars a year.\textsuperscript{135}

The Flint organization dissolved in 1885 for some of the same reasons associations discontinued in other communities. A 1905 history reported that the public education system experienced success at the same time as the Library Association. "While the members of the Library Association found their object achieved and their labor crowned with success, another institution had been taking on new life."\textsuperscript{136} The Union High School Building, constructed in 1875 with a library, outgrew the space by the 1880s. Interest in organizing a free public library grew during the period, due in part, to the fact that the "school library was very far from being such as the wants of the school demanded."\textsuperscript{137} Sufficient interest generated tax revenue for its support.\textsuperscript{138}

At a special meeting of the organization on June 28, 1884, the women decided their efforts at "establishing a library" had been "crowned with success," due in part, to the "generous public."\textsuperscript{139} They determined to concentrate on furthering the mission of the free public library, and through a resolution, they presented "to the City of Flint, the library and building now belonging to said Association" providing the "ladies" could "appoint four
trustees "to cooperate in carrying out" their objectives. The City named a committee of Library Association ladies to carry out the resolutions. Final resolutions and bills of sale deeded all property to the Union School District of the City of Flint "under sole condition that said property be devoted to library purposes" on April 25 and June 6 of 1885.

The 1905 history of Flint also hints at internal difficulties that contributed to the dissolution of the Ladies' Library Association.

The library was popular. A new generation had grown into the work, the daughters of the earlier members, and many others, who were attracted by the reading, congenial occupation and agreeable society. One after another took up the responsibilities... but the third generation was attracted elsewhere.

Unlike other ladies' library associations, the Flint organization did not evolve into a literary club. Other literary oriented clubs formed, but the initial ladies' library association ceased to exist after it deeded its assets to the public library.

The Stone Model and Impact on Library Reform in Michigan

The Stone model provided a structure for organizing libraries and associations that provided benefits to women and the communities in which they formed. It acknowledged women's qualities that made them the
acceptable transmitters of literacy through the formation of libraries. In response to community needs for reading, self-education and moral uplift, women formed organizations to deal with the lack of libraries. In many communities, the ladies' library associations became the first women's organizations to form.

They operated in a realm that was appropriate for women, in that they did not advocate radical breaks or radical stances that were not appropriate for middle-class women. By the 1870s, professional literature supported the activities of women in libraries, noting that "the nature of the duties is, to a great extent, and in many cases, suited to them [women]."\textsuperscript{143} The Grand Rapids Daily Eagle also supported this assertion, reporting about the labors of the female sponsored City Library Association "in a field, where woman's right to labor will not be disputed."\textsuperscript{144}

Women expressed their power through exploiting the gendered roles of middle class white women, collaborating and co-opting with men to enlarge their sphere of influence, and becoming involved in the local political process by shaping library policies and developing public constituencies to further the cause of community uplift through library associations and library building.
The Stone model expanded to provide social and educational opportunities for women, essentially an early forerunner of the club movement. Those that thrived adopted or evolved into organizations more reminiscent of the club model, which Stone credited to Croly.

The club movement took root at the end of the nineteenth century as communities established public libraries. Consequently, the ladies' library associations evolved in two directions. Stone's ideal model evolved from association to a club, with the educational work and club activities defining the mission and function of the organization. Of those associations that evolved into literary clubs, many thrived well into the twentieth century. They focused on the needs of the membership and contributed to community betterment by raising funds for educational or literacy projects.

The alternative to becoming a woman's club was dissolution. Those that disbanded often advocated or collaborated with other constituencies to insure that some library service continued to be available to the community after the library association ceased to exist. Some organizations evolved into library friends groups.

The Plainwell Ladies' Library Association disbanded. An article noted the "transferring [of] the Ladies
Library Association books and furnishings to the new Public Library” marking the “closing of fifty years of service to the menial, moral and social conditions of the village of the organization.”\textsuperscript{145} Former members continued their involvement as officers of the library board. Among the initial board of six directors, three included former members of the Library Association.\textsuperscript{146}

In both instances, the accomplishments and contributions of the original ladies' library associations became lost in the historical accounts, perhaps explaining why early library historians, such as Ditzion and Shera, took dim views of these organizations. Those organizations that thrived into the middle-twentieth century evolved into very different entities and often became part of the General Federation of Women's Clubs. While the General Federation of Women's Clubs took a proactive stance regarding libraries, the organizations were much more multi-faceted than the earlier ladies' library associations.

\textbf{Conclusion}

Some organizations, such as Grand Rapids and Plainwell, participated directly in the movement to form a public library. In other communities, such as Otsego and Flint, the ladies' library associations determined it
was in the best interest of the community to merge with evolving public libraries and provided the books and often the buildings for the public library. Otsego donated part of its holdings and returned proceeds to local churches. Wayland continued as a literary club and helped the library to purchase materials.

By the early twentieth century, more progressive ideas about the role of women in governance emerged. Women in Plainwell collaborated and became part of the governance of the library after interests and collections merged. This also occurred in Climax, Michigan. The Climax Ladies' Library Association organized at the Methodist Church on March 9, 1880. For the first fifteen years, the organization occupied a variety of locations, including private homes and rented commercial space. In 1896, the organization constructed a small frame building at the cost of $191.50. The organization operated until 1962, when deteriorating building conditions forced the closure of the library. By early 1963, the Ladies' Library Association and village of Climax followed the model of the Galesburg organization to form a public library.

The Richland Ladies' Library Association merged library and literary interests. It provided a service
for its members and sustained the organization into the 1940s when interest declined. Unlike organizations in other communities, the Richland Ladies' Library Association was unable to evolve as an organization, and it ceased to exist in 1948.¹⁵¹

The Otsego Ladies' Library Association succeeded in constructing a building in 1892 and operated a circulating library until 1905. The organization disbanded, selling the "Library building and contents" to the township for $1500.¹⁵² The women debated what to do with the proceeds with some favoring "dividing the money among the churches . . . while others would put the money into the library . . purchasing reference works and the class of books which could not be purchased with the average yearly appropriation."¹⁵³ They eventually divided the proceeds equally to the Baptist, Congregational, and Methodist churches.¹⁵⁴ The building became the site of the new district library, which included the merged collections of the township and ladies' libraries. The dissolution of the Otsego Ladies' Library Association differed from that of Plainwell where they turned proceeds to churches and did not participate in the governance of the new library.

The libraries provided a tangible service to the
communities through circulating libraries. Many of the associations took steps to increase their influence in the community by erecting buildings for organizational activities, including the circulating library. These semi-public buildings served the communities and organizations in a variety of ways. The buildings often continued to serve the community after ladies' libraries ceased to exist, providing a tangible legacy of Stone's model of ladies' library associations. The material aspects of the ladies' library associations will be explored in the next chapter.

4. Founding dates are taken from various club records. The Galesburg organization formed in 1877 according to the Ladies Library Association of Galesburg, Secretary Book 1-6-1877 to 4-13-1883. Richland formed in 1880, according to Constitution, preamble, Richland Ladies' Library Association. An organization formed in Vicksburg in 1899, see Grace Molineaux, Water Under the Dam: Vicksburg Then and Now. An organization formed in Climax in 1885 according to Dorothy Cummins, manuscript History of the Ladies' Library Association and the Lawrence Memorial Library compiled in 1987 from the minutes and an


6. Samuel Durant, History of Kalamazoo County, Michigan (Philadelphia: Everts & Abbott, 1880), 372-377. The earliest church was the Baptist, forming in 1832, which was followed by the Congregational Church in 1835.


10. Census of Michigan, 1874 Table II, Number and Area of Farms, 163.

11. Census of Michigan, 1884 Table IX, Soils, 298.

12. Census of Michigan, 1894 Table I, Tenure, Area and Value of Farms, 36.

13. Census of Michigan, 1904 Table I, Number, Average Size, Tenure, Area and Value of Farms, 30.


31. The population grew from 2,269 in 1850 to 16,507 by 1870. Between 1870 and 1874, the population increased another 57 percent to 25,989. See *History of Kent County* (Chicago: H. Belden & Company, 1876; reprint, Unigraphic, Inc., 1975), 79.
36. Letter from Mary L. W. Ball, April 19, 1870 to “Aunt Deborah.” Grand Rapids Public Library Collection, mss. 109, Box 2, folder 9.
40. Secretary Book Galesburg Ladies' Library Association, 1-6-1877 - 4-13-1883. Article 2nd Objects
41. Galesburg Ladies' Library Association Secretary Book 1-6-1877 to 4-13-1883, Article 9th Membership
42. Testimony of George Henika. Village of Wayland vs. LLC of Village of Wayland, Case #3005, Circuit Court, Allegan County February 4, 1902, page 107, Calendar #6
43. Galesburg Ladies' Library Association Minutes 1-22-1877
46. Letter from Mary L. W. Ball, April 19, 1870 to “Aunt Deborah.” Grand Rapids Public Library Collection, mss. 109, Box 2, folder 9.
47. Hogue Stinchcomb, *History of the Ladies' Literary Club of Grand Rapids, Michigan* (Grand Rapids, Michigan:
Clandoin Printery, 1910), 12.
48. Letter from Mary L. W. Ball, April 19, 1870 to "Aunt Deborah." Grand Rapids Public Library Collection, mss. 109, Box 2, folder 9.
50. Secretary Book Galesburg Ladies' Library Association, 1-6-1877 - 4-13-1883, Minutes January 22, 1877.
51. Minutes, Richland Ladies' Library Association, December 3, 1880.
52. Minutes, Richland Ladies' Library Association, June 2, 1911.
54. Minutes, Richland Ladies' Library Association, November 6, 1914.
56. Minutes of the Wayland Ladies' Library Association, April 8, 1913.
57. Minutes of the Wayland Ladies' Library Association, January 10, 1911, April 8, 1913, November 2, 1915.
58. Minutes of the Wayland Ladies' Library Association, April 2 and April 23, 1912. The organization responded by authorizing $4.09 at its April 30 meeting to join the Federation.
60. Minutes of the Wayland Ladies' Library Association, November 15, 1911.
61. Meeting days are taken from the minutes of the organizations.
64. Minutes of the Wayland Ladies' Library Association, March 18, 1913.
65. Minutes of the Wayland Ladies' Library Association,
March 25, 1913.
69. Galesburg Memorial Library Minutes, Book 1, 1952-1960, March, 1953. Galesburg represents a case study of how the Stone model evolved in the early twentieth century and into the progressive era. The Galesburg organization continued to serve the public by providing a circulating library until the 1940s, when the women participated in the construction and governance of the new public library.
71. Mrs. G. W. Grigsby, Correspondent, "Dr. Caroline Bartlett Crane Address Two Clubs," Galesburg Argus (August 30, 1934), 5.
72. Julia Ward Howe, "Associations of Women Old and New," The Woman's Cycle 1(1), 6. Howe places the work of nineteenth century women in a context in which women worked collaboratively with men to achieve community goals. Howe credited the General Federation of Women's Clubs and early twentieth century women's organizations as having greater independence and agency than the earlier nineteenth century women's organizations.
73. Secretary Book Galesburg Ladies' Library Association, January 6, 1877-April 13, 1883.
74. Secretary Book Galesburg Ladies' Library Association, 1-6-1877 - 4-13-1883. Article 2nd Objects
75. Undated [probably December, 1877] report of first year of the Galesburg LLA's activities.
76. Undated [probably December, 1877] report of first year of the Galesburg LLA's activities.
78. Hogue Stinchcomb, History of the Ladies' Literary Club of Grand Rapids, Michigan (Grand Rapids, Michigan:
Clandoin Printery, 1910, 12.

82. Grand Rapids Daily Eagle (Michigan), September 21, 1871, 1.
90. Daily Democrat (Grand Rapids, Michigan) December 2, 1877, 4.
91. Daily Democrat (Grand Rapids, Michigan) December 2, 1877, 4.
93. Grand Rapids Eagle (Michigan) April 8, 1878, 4.
94. Mrs. A. F. Bixby and Mrs. A. Howell, Historical Sketches of the Ladies' Library Associations of the State of Michigan (Adrian, Michigan: Times and Expositor Steam Print, 1876), 144.
96. "From the Minutes of the L. L. A." Vertical file at the Charles A. Ransom Library, Plainwell, Michigan, undated.
97. Allegan Gazette, Probate Notice, Amanda Ransom, August 1917.
98. Citations from the Minutes of the Plainwell Ladies' Library Association. The original minute books appear to
have been missing for many years. Vertical files at the
Ransom District Library contain information.
99. "Village Election," Plainwell Enterprise, March 14,
1918.
100. See Dunbar and May's Michigan: A History of the
Wolverine State, 3rd rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan:
School suffrage was extended to parents and guardians of
children of school age in 1881. The 1907-1908 Michigan
Constitution extended the vote on local bonding and tax
issues to women who paid taxes. Governor Albert E.
Sleeper signed a bill on May 8, 1917 granting Michigan
women the right to vote in presidential elections. Full
suffrage became available to women in 1918 after Michigan
male voters approved a state constitutional amendment
granting suffrage to Michigan women.
101. Sparta Area Quasquicentennial (Sparta, Michigan,
1971), 74.
102. See Frances L. Estes, Mendon Before the Fire
(Lansing, Michigan: Michigan History Division, Michigan
Dept. of State, 1978).
103. There were very few organizations in northern
Michigan or the Upper Peninsula. Where they formed, the
Yankee influence prevailed in areas such as Marquette and
 Traverse City. One of Marquette's earliest and most
influential citizens was Peter White, hailing from Rome,
New York. White eventually contributed funds to build a
public library. Marquette had a balance of people from
New York and from Finland, Germany, Canada. See Beverly
Dawson Gschwind's, "Informal and Incidental Education in
the City of Marquette, Michigan: 1870 to 1925."
 Traverse City also had a large population of New Yorkers.
Women organizing the Ladies' Library Association were of
New York and New England heritage. See The Traverse
Region: Historical and Descriptive, With Illustrations of
Scenery and Portraits and Biographical Sketches of Some
of its Prominent Men and Pioneers (Chicago: H.R. Page,
1884), 69-70. Some portions of northern Michigan did not
develop until later in the nineteenth century. Germans,
mostly Catholic and Lutheran, occupied vast portions of
central and northern Michigan. Most of these early
settlements were initially exploiting the lumber and
later trying to reap any agricultural benefits of the
land. They were highly agrarian and perhaps the
population mass needed to form such organizations did not
exist. Where Germans did settle in larger numbers, such

104. Talcott E. Wing, *History of Monroe County Michigan Illustrated* (New York: Munsell & Company, Publisher, 1890), 43.


109. Constitution of the State of Michigan as Adopted in Convention, Begun and Held at the Capitol, in the City of Detroit, on Monday, the Eleventh Day of May, A.D. 1835 (Printed by Order of the Convention. Detroit, Sheldon M'Knight, 1835).


118. *History of Jackson County, Michigan* (Chicago: Inter-
state Publishing Company, 1881), 544.
120. History of Jackson County, Michigan (Chicago: Interstate Publishing Company, 1881), 545.
123. See Colonel Charles V. Deland's DeLand's History of Jackson County, Michigan (B. F. Bowen, 1903), 409-420. There were so many literary clubs that the volume devoted an entire chapter to organizations that had formed between 1885 and 1895.
128. By-Laws of the Flint Ladies' Library Association, Article II.
129. Within the next twenty years, there were several attempts to form libraries, but none were as successful as the women's organization. A Flint Scientific Institution formed in 1857 and collected a library. As interest dwindled, the books were turned over to the high school. A Young Men's Christian Association Library formed in 1868. Howard M. Smith, Library Services in Genesee County (Ann Arbor: Institute for Human Adjustment, Horace H. Rackham School of Graduate Studies, University of Michigan, 1947), 7.
130. Mrs. Damon Stewart, "A Flint Record of Library


140. The minutes of the organization were not available or did not exist at the writing of this dissertation. The account of this meeting and resolution appears in Mrs. Damon Stewart's "A Flint Record of Library Evolution," in *Book of the Golden Jubilee of Flint, Michigan 1855-1905* (Flint, Michigan: 1905), 196-197.

141. The minutes of the organization were not available or did not exist at the writing of this dissertation. The account of this meeting and resolution appears in Mrs. Damon Stewart's "A Flint Record of Library Evolution," in *Book of the Golden Jubilee of Flint, Michigan 1855-1905* (Flint, Michigan: 1905), 198.


143. See *Public Libraries in the United States of America*...


147. Dorothy Cummins, manuscript History of the Ladies' Library Association and the Lawrence Memorial Library compiled in 1987 from the minutes. The minutes of the organization were reported as lost as of October, 2000. The manuscript history and some article are in a vertical file at the Prairie Historical Society, which is housed at the Lawrence Memorial Library in Climax, Michigan.

152. Scrapbook "Library" at Otsego District Library, articles "1905."
153. Scrapbook "Library" at Otsego District Library, articles "1905."
154. Scrapbook "Library" at Otsego District Library, articles "1905."
CHAPTER VII

A PUBLIC PRESENCE: THE CULTURAL AND PHYSICAL SPACE OF MICHIGAN'S LADIES' LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Ladies' library associations in Michigan extended the physical space allotted to women, increased women's influence into the public realm, and expanded boundaries by providing a much-needed public service. They made forays into the public by incorporating the organizations to insure continuity and conduct business. Published catalogs and regular reporting in the press kept them in the public eye. Fundraising provided a means to spread their message of reform as well as obtaining needed funds for rooms and buildings. Rented rooms provided space for conducting business and raising funds. Allocated rooms in public buildings signified the community's support and acknowledgement of the public purposes of these organizations. Women planned buildings to secure a permanent place for the library associations to conduct business and socialize and educate themselves. The buildings represented collaboration within the community.
and recognition of the importance of the organizations.

**Incorporation**

The first act that ladies' library associations in Michigan undertook to signify their public status and purpose was that of incorporating. Women's organizations incorporated for a variety of reasons. First, incorporation insured continuity. It gave the incorporation powers of continuity over changes in leadership and membership. It allowed the organization to hold a specified amount of property. Most library associations owned books. It was the means by which the organizations made their entry into the public arena and what allowed them to publish catalogs, conduct fundraisers, rent rooms, and eventually construct buildings.

For reasons similar to men's library and philanthropic organizations, women's relief and charitable organizations began to incorporate in New England in the 1830s. When women's organizations incorporated, it involved filing papers and was sometimes a very complex process. It required women to begin operating organizations according to a business model. In some instances, incorporation of women's clubs required special charters from the state legislature,
such as in the state of New York. The act of incorporating put women in the public realm, granting them powers as an organization typically reserved for males and some unmarried women.¹

In the cases of the library associations, the act of incorporation signaled the transformation from a private reading circle or literary club to a reform oriented organization operating for the members and the public.

The clearest illustration of the difference between an unincorporated private literary club and an incorporated ladies' library association occurred in the situation of the Wayland organization. The local press recognized and reported on the legal status of the literary association and the necessity of the club to incorporate to meet the conditions of Henika's bequest. Incorporation also signified the organization's transformation to a public entity. Six year's after its organization as a home-based literary circle, the organization became incorporated in May 1899 under the name of Ladies' Library Club.²

There is little evidence that ladies' literary clubs incorporated. They met in private homes and did not own books or rent buildings. In contrast, ladies' library associations incorporated because they owned books,
rented rooms, and constructed buildings. The 1876 *Historical Sketches of the Ladies' Library Associations of the State of Michigan* attests to the importance of the act of incorporating and of having constitutions, bylaws, elected boards, and treasuries. Of the twenty-six organizations included in the publication, all provide evidence about the existence of constitutions, bylaws, boards, and treasuries. Many reported the date of incorporating.

**Catalogs and Presence in the Press**

Publication of catalogs and frequent references in the press became another way in which the ladies' library associations moved in the public realm. Ladies' library associations published catalogs to inform members and other of the books in their collections. Local newspapers regularly published notices of annual meetings, fundraisers, and book acquisitions. Publications beyond the catalogs were not as common but broadened the scope of organizational activities or promoted ideas beyond the immediate organization and community.

The most common presence in the press was most frequently reports of meetings, book acquisitions, and fundraisers. The Kalamazoo Gazette took notice of the
Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association from its origins, reporting on February 6, 1852, "We are pleased to see quite a number of enterprising and intellectual ladies have taken measures to form a ladies library association." The Kalamazoo Gazette and Telegraph both published annual reports for the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association and provided information about the books, members, and treasury balance every year.

Similarly, other communities also featured news about the library associations in the local press. News of the Galesburg Ladies' Library Association continued through the 1940s.

While most press concentrated on the accomplishments of the ladies' library associations, sometimes women used the newspapers to gain support. For example, about three years into its organizational life in 1853, the Flint Ladies' Library Association printed a notice in the Wolverine Citizen describing the history of the fledgling organization and citing its need for additional community support.

The sphere of its usefulness might be much extended by the enlargement of the Library, and it has been suggested that many benevolent individuals, favorable to the diffusion of knowledge, might be willing to contribute to that end by donations of books, or otherwise to the Library of this Association.
The plea suggests that while some of the community knew of the value of the library, the women hoped to co-opt others by books or funds.

While organizations kept records of book acquisitions, the publication of a catalog listing the books within the collection provided a service for the members and promoted the organization to the broader community. The earliest catalogs include those of the Flint Ladies' Library Association, Adrian Ladies' Library Association, Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association, Coldwater Ladies' Library Association, Traverse City Ladies' Library Association, and Owosso Ladies' Library Association. The catalogs often contained copies of the bylaws, constitutions, and information about the books available for circulation. They served the dual purpose of providing information for the membership as well as providing a good marketing piece to non-members.

For the most part, library associations published catalogs and materials relating to the organization. One exception occurred when the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association ventured into areas beyond the immediate concern of the library. Almost from its inception, the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association assumed a public presence. Their first press presence occurred after the
Village Board requested assistance from the Ladies to coordinate the village's quarter-centennial celebration in 1853. On June 16, 1854, the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association printed a notice in the Kalamazoo Gazette inviting "the Ladies and Gentlemen of Kalamazoo and vicinity, to unit with them in such public celebration." One of the village papers reported favorably on the celebration noting, "the Library Association are entitled to the highest praise for their efforts in this and other objects connected with their institution . . . May their influence continue to widen and deepen." The speeches and activities of the celebration were the first publication of the organization and appeared one year later.

In 1875, the Adrian Ladies' Library Association produced the most publicly distributed publication to promote similar organizations in Michigan. In 1875, the organization decided to solicit and prepare a historical sketch of all the ladies' library associations in Michigan for presentation to the Woman's Department at the International Centennial Exhibition and the State Library.

WHEREAS, The work accomplished by the women of Michigan in the accumulation of libraries in a noble one, . . . Resolved, That our President send communications to the several Ladies' Library...
Associations of Michigan, asking unity of action in the preparation of a volume containing the history of library work.\textsuperscript{14}

They gathered twenty-seven histories and published a full-length history. The Adrian Ladies' Library Association presented copies to the State Library as well as participating organizations.

**Fundraising**

Ladies' library associations also raised funds, moving them into the public realm. Fundraising served three purposes. Members enlisted the support of the community and promoted their cause of libraries and literacy. It also provided the needed funds for books and programs, in addition to the member dues.\textsuperscript{15}

In addition to soliciting community support and funds, fundraising also provided a space where women worked within their culturally-assigned roles, with their special skills for their own and community enrichment. Most of the fundraising required women's special skills and abilities.\textsuperscript{16} Typically, the fundraisers employed by ladies' library associations involved fairs, bazaars, and socials.

The act of fundraising also distinguished ladies' library associations from the literary clubs. The ladies' library associations moved in the public realm,
sponsoring fundraisers that were in keeping with their sphere. The home-based literary clubs seldom sponsored fundraisers.

The fundraising in southwestern Michigan and amongst the ladies' library associations moved along pretty traditional lines. Like the other ladies' library associations, Richland needed to raise funds for books and later for building activities and this involved stepping into a public arena and becoming actively involved in a number of fund raising activities. Some of these socials involved the use of private homes and parties such as the December 1889 social held at the residence of Mrs. George Knappen, which raised ten dollars. Other socials were more public and involved the entire community. An oyster supper raised the funds to purchase a new carpet.

Sometimes the fundraising event involved networking with other women's organizations in the community and region. Richland often took advantage of these networks. In 1909, Mrs. Henry Hoyt of Kalamazoo offered to give a "lecture for the benefit of the building fund." Three years after the building construction project, the organization considered "the question of buying a piano" which resulted in the president appointing a committee.
Again, the organization worked with other women's groups to accomplish this task, as well, raising funds from a dinner furnished by the women's Grand Chapter of the Star Lodge. 22

When the organization decided to raise funds for a building, it used bazaars, socials, and a number of activities to raise the needed cash. The sponsoring of these activities thrust the women into the public arena. The dual purpose of providing books and getting the building constructed posed difficulties for the members. Four years after the donation of the land, the Ladies noted in their minutes the frustrations they felt at the "almost unsurmountable obstacle." 23

The Kalamazoo organization was particularly adept at raising funds and took great political pains to accomplish this with the cooperation and support of the male members of the community. When the organization decided in 1878 to construct its own building, the leadership realized that this would put women in the public arena. The president empowered "each lady to consider herself a member of the community" and interview "gentlemen" to find out what to do to raise the necessary funds to construct the building. 24 The Association spent most of 1878 on fund raising activities that required the
cooperation and efforts of men and women. The women raised funds through projects ranging from an operetta presented by the Association to a quilt raffle. Their husbands collected donations from the men of the community. Allen Potter, former mayor and husband of Board member Charity Potter, collected the most money, $425.00. These fundraising activities brought the women into the public realm, but they sponsored events within the female realm and left the actual solicitation to their husbands.

Kalamazoo had also taken some novel means to raise funds. Long-time treasurer, Mrs. Ruth Webster, was particularly astute and had long advocated for a building fund. Unlike other organizations, the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association moved into the public arena by lending funds at interest that they used to grow their building fund. "On a motion of Mrs. Dennison resolved that the Treasurer be instructed to loan the funds now on hand to Professor J. A. B. Stone at ten per cent interest." Because this appears to have involved the membership and husbands of members, their departure into the community as loaners of money did not seem to raise too many eyebrows.

The Richland Ladies' Library Association adopted the
fair model as described by Gregory. By the accounts in the local press, it was a huge success in the 1920s and 1930s. An account from 1934 noted, “[i]n October of each year for the past eleven years community interest has been centered in the fair.” The fair included agricultural interests such as collaborations with the Richland Chapter of the Future Farmers of America. It also brought in educational interests, with participation from an extension of Western State Teachers College. Other organizations, such as the Women’s Christian Temperance Union, also had booths and displays. Both men and women participated in the fairs as contestants and spectators, but the activities such as baby judging, doll shows, lectures, sales, and suppers and contests in the categories of produce, flowers, and needlework had a decidedly female focus.

When organizations became too bold or moved too publicly, they risked controversy or scandal. This occurred three times in the small town of Otsego in Allegan County. The first two controversies involved fundraising efforts to construct a building. Between 1888 and 1892, the Otsego Ladies’ Library Association raised fund by “socials, and dances, and festivals, and concerts, and lawn parties.” The actual building
Realizing they needed about forty dollars to pay for all the debts, they pondered how to raise the remaining funds. Several members had gathered at the store belonging to the husband of the president of the Library Association, Mr. Mills, to discuss their dilemma. Mr. Mills joined in the discussion with the women and suggested that the association "raise the residue of money by organizing kissing societies." One of the members asked him how much he would give, to which he responded five cents. Within an hour the news had traveled throughout Otsego and to the northern-most part of town to the paper mill. Mr. Bardeen, the proprietor of the mill, offered 50 cents to every woman who would come to the paper factory and provide him with a kiss. Married and unmarried members took part in this. Some of the young men of Otsego complained because Bardeen was actually a Kalamazoo resident and suggested that he "confine his kisses to Kalamazoo society."  

While the kisses for money had generated a stir within the community, the next fundraiser catapulted the ladies into the national media. Still short of funds, the women decided to make a foray into the community and raise the money by completing a variety of tasks to earn
one dollar. The newspaper reported on the efforts of the women, which had defied convention: "Having exhausted all commercial means and being still in arrears they resort to schemes picturesque and unique and square the account; . . . forty ladies black boots, wash windows, etc., to raise the balance." They did a variety of tasks, including selling doughnuts, making candy, trimming a coffin, blacking shoes, and washing a milk wagon. One of the more scandalous activities involved a member who “hired a hand organ, and stood on the corner, one playing while the other passing the tin cup” in the streets of Otsego.

Upon concluding their fundraising efforts, the ladies conducted a meeting in which each described what she had done to raise a dollar. They had such an entertaining time at this meeting, they decided to repeat it for a public audience and called it an experience social. At this public social, a reporter wrote up the event. A Chicago newspaper picked up the story and from that point, the nationwide publicity began with several newspapers carrying the story, including the Police Gazette. In addition to the notoriety of appearing in a publication known for its entertainment and raciness, funds and books arrived from people around the nation.
wanting to help the ladies of Otsego pay for their library.\textsuperscript{39}

In 1895, the women of Otsego found themselves in the middle of a fundraising controversy again. This time it surrounded a public performance and the condemnation by the town's Methodist Episcopal minister, the Reverend I. N. Pattison.\textsuperscript{40} The women staged a production of Longfellow's \textit{Spanish Student}, complete with female members acting as male characters and wearing tights. The Reverend addressed the outrageous performance by preaching a sermon, "The Stage Its Use and Abuse," and lambasted the women for wearing "costumes exposing themselves to public view" and having "pictures taken."\textsuperscript{41}

The women aired their response in the \textit{Kalamazoo Daily Telegraph}, noting that the participants had been "of the highest character, morally, intellectually, and religiously" and that "a company of ladies from Plainwell . . . [saw] nothing objectionable" when they viewed the play.\textsuperscript{42} The women responded that possibly the Reverend Pattison had abused the rights and privileges of the pulpit.

The controversy continued in the media in February 1895 and \textit{The Kalamazoo Telegraph} reported that "hundreds of extra copies of \textit{The Telegraph} have been sold since the
trouble began, and last night the demand was so great that the supply ran out within half an hour . . . No one seems to know where the matter will end."\textsuperscript{43} Reporting of the matter probably helped newspaper sales as The Telegraph used the running title, "The controversy between the Ladies Literary Club and the Divine."\textsuperscript{44}

It ended with the men of the town supporting the women in their efforts. George Bardeen, a leading citizen and wealthy paper mill owner, defended the women to The Telegraph, noting "[T]he 'cast' were ladies of 'high caste,' and Otsego may well be proud that its intellectual calibre was so well set forth."\textsuperscript{45} Despite a request by the Plainwell Ladies' Library Association to perform the program in the neighboring town, the women politely declined.\textsuperscript{46}

Most of the fundraising efforts involved the female members and frequently their male family members. When women stayed within the bounds of traditional female behavior, they received financial support of the community. They faced sanction when their fundraising activities pushed the bounds of propriety. Female sponsored fundraisers took place in public buildings and public venues. By the end of the nineteenth century, women's participation in public fundraising became an
acceptable female activity, as women took up causes and raised funds through fairs and bazaars. After the organizations constructed buildings, ladies' library associations raised funds in their clubhouses.

**Rooms**

The importance of rented or allotted rooms for ladies' library associations marks a departure from a private, exclusive gathering of women to that of the public and quasi-public nature of these organizations. Once ladies' library associations raised the money to rent rooms, they moved from the private sphere to a more public realm.

There were two patterns of securing rooms. Those involved renting rooms in commercial areas. Often, the women rented rooms from husbands of the membership. The second method involved the granting of rooms at no-cost or at a reduced cost in public areas, ranging from churches to governmental halls. That the male elite granted library associations rooms in public buildings at no charge or at a nominal rate suggests that the organizations served a public purpose.

Often the organizations made several moves before setting in a permanent space. Plainwell fits this model. The organization operated its first library from the
house of one of its founding members. An historical account of the library association noted its placement "in various public buildings, book stores, the post office and for many years the bank, until the size of the library demanded quarters of its own." By 1889, it was apparent the organization needed permanent and larger quarters and the women launched a building campaign.

The organization in Otsego also rented rooms. In 1876, they rented space in Julia Stoughton's Millinary Store. By 1878, they had moved to rooms over George B. Norton's store. In 1880, they relocated to a local bank. Later in the 1880s, the organization moved the collection into private homes. This marked a period of decline and stagnation in the association which changed when the organization solidified its standing in the community by constructing a building.

Richland provides a compelling example of how the building situation reflected the constraints posed by the charity of the community and growing collection and programs of the organization. In all instances, the location of the organization assumed a highly visible and central presence. For the first four years the Association met in the Presbyterian Church. In 1884, brothers Alvin and Metzer Barnes offered the rooms
adjoining a store they owned near the Presbyterian Church in the Village Square in Richland. Presumably, Metzer Barnes offered the space to the Association because his wife, Susan Barnes, held a leadership position in the Richland Ladies' Library Association. Regardless, the women accepted the offer.

Though the Association remained in the rooms adjoining the Barnes brothers store for eleven years, the situation deteriorated by 1894 for unknown reasons. In July, the Association called a special meeting at which the Barnes brothers were present. Metzer wanted to charge the Association rent of fifty cents a week because as he reported "he had never had any thanks for accommodating [the Association] during all these years." Later Metzer's Brother Alvin reported to the Ladies "he had in a measure calmed the troubled waters of his brother's soul and if the society should repair the roof of their room nothing farther was to be said about rent."

References to alternative sites and possible options appear frequently in the minutes from this point. Though the idea of purchasing a bank building was first discussed in June, 1894, the actual authorization to go forth did not occur until the society voted to purchase a
bank building owned by Mr. George Knappen for $125 in 1896. The deal was settled and by the Association met in the building for the first time in February of that same year.

The Kalamazoo organization also experienced frequent moves in its infancy. The organization's first quarters were in a private home that was soon replaced by second floor rooms in a downtown commercial building. The Ladies' Library Association remained in these rooms for two years.

Between 1854 and 1860 the Supervisors of the County granted the Ladies' Library Association a room in the Court House. Collections grew to eight hundred and fifty volumes in 1860, and the board looked for another site. The first floor site offered by the Baptist Church "fitted up in a neat commodious style" served their purposes.

As the Association outgrew their space three times, the women depended on the Village Board for help in securing suitable rooms to operate the circulating library. Beginning in 1867, the Village made rooms available to the Association in a new "Corporation Hall" building "for the nominal sum of $1.00 per year." The new building provided "very pleasant and
commodious rooms" which demanded "increased responsibility and demands" upon the membership of the Association. Minutes of 1868 reference the "kind and generous Village Board" and note the renewal of the lease for five years. The arrangement did not last, and by the 1870s, the Village could no longer make the rooms available at any price because the growing public library demanded the space occupied by the Association. This was the defining moment for the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association when it determined it needed permanent space in order to continue as an organization.

Most of the organizations eventually felt the need for permanent space. This usually resulted in purchasing or constructing a building. The constructed buildings provide material evidence of the function and ideals espoused by the ladies' library associations.

Buildings

Residential and commercial buildings serve to exhibit and reinforce social categories and values. The built environment articulates variables such as gender, power, public, and private. The buildings constructed by the Michigan ladies' library associations certainly expressed the spatial and social relations within the community and reflected cultural values and technological
Examining the processes of building construction provides half the story. The papers of the Richland and Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Associations provide evidence about the steps leading to the building process. The Kalamazoo minutes are particularly detailed and revealing. While a building committee settled most of the construction details, the board made the final decision on some of the details.

From its inception, the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association depended on the County Supervisors and Village Board for help in securing suitable rooms to operate the circulating library. The Ladies' Library Association recognized the precarious status of its building situation and threat posed by the free public library after 1871. The women viewed the inception of the free public library as a "possible danger" to the future of the Ladies' Library Association.  

They noted, "we hold our rooms by grace . . . if the Association has their [the Village Trustees] good will, they may be quicker to see ways for advancing its interest." Ultimately, the Ladies decided that maintaining harmonious relationships with the free public library and avoiding all controversial themes were in its
An examination of the Board minutes of the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association reveals their acute awareness of the proper roles for women. This is most apparent in their initial discussions beginning in the early 1860s in which they discussed whether to build and later where to construct a building for the organization.

Board minutes from 1862 indicate that the building issue had been discussed previously. In 1863, the issue became more pertinent when an Association member offered land for construction. The Board once again considered the building question in earnest and formed a building committee to look into the matter. Initial reports of the building committee were optimistic. In addition to the membership of the Association, prominent men also reacted favorably to the idea of a building for the organization. The chairwoman of the building committee reported "having conversed with several business gentlemen who think this as favorable a time as can be expected for a long while to come" and received estimates to construct a one story brick building which ranged from $1,000 to $1,200.

However, by the spring of 1863, the committee concluded that the idea was not feasible because of cost.
of materials and labor. Some members expressed concern over the location of the donated land. The organization discussed whether to look for a location more removed from the center of the city because "some considered it as situated in too prominent a place, too near the bustling activities of business life." 

The building issue subsided but reemerged two years later. The annual report for 1865 reported on the issue, noting "this building, so long and so much needed, still haunts us like an unperformed duty." A motion by the organization in 1866 spoke to the relationship between the Ladies' Library Association and the Village Council. "Motion was made and carried that we present a Petition to the 'City Fathers' for permission to erect a wooden building on the desired spot." New building codes and other complications plagued the organization and the building continued to elude them. The organization continued to discuss the issue periodically and even maintained a building fund for the time when it might be feasible.

The situation escalated in 1878 when, for the first time, the organization faced the prospects of no assistance from the Village Board. Members determined that the organization needed to decide on the building
question once and for all. The viability of the organization was at stake, as evidenced by the minutes, which stated the determination of the organization "either to build ourselves a home, or give up the ghost." 73

The membership consulted with the male business elite of the community to determine what to do, consulting a "committee of gentlemen of leisure and judgment." 74 As a result, the organization decided to construct a building and maintain the organization.

The greatest support came from male spouses and relatives of the members, whom the women organized into a committee to help them with their building goal. The minutes of May 3, 1878, suggest that the women initiated the organizing of the men when they noted "it will seem very proper to notify these gentlemen of their appointment and politely invite them to cooperate with us, to assist us in what we may need." 75

The Association spent most of 1878 on fund raising activities that required the cooperation and efforts of men and women. The organization presented an operetta, netting them $84.63, and they raffled off a quilt. 76 The women secured the necessary legislative approval from the state to own property worth less than thirty-thousand
dollars.\textsuperscript{77} The women led all phases of planning and worked with the contractors during the planning and building phase. "As the plans were not on hand at first, Mrs. Sill volunteered to go to Mr. Bush and obtain them."\textsuperscript{78} Upon reviewing the plans, the Board "Resolved that the plans of the building presented by W. S. Gay be adopted, and that the Building Committee be authorized to employ Bush and Paterson to construct the building in accordance with his plans and specifications."\textsuperscript{79}

The offer of free land finally dictated the location of the building. The lot, prominently situated within the city limits, one block south from the public square and about two blocks from the major business arteries of Rose Street and Main Street, faced west on Park Street. See Figure 2 which shows the area in 1873 about five years before the construction. The organization's concerns over location were not unfounded. The building was located adjacent to the business, governmental, and religious center of the Village.
Figure 2. Area of the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association 1874.

The area contained a mix of commercial and residential, with several houses located in the immediate area as well. Located just north of the building was the home of Judge H. G. Wells.80 Wells' home clearly shows the residential element in the area. An 1880 Kalamazoo County history includes the north and west facades of the building and another residential structure to the south. See Figure 3

One way in which the organization may have tried to blend in with the residential structures such as the Wells' house, aside from the building construction, was in the landscaping. The landscape treatment in the drawing of the Ladies' Library Association mirrored surrounding residential landscapes. The fence treatment used for Wells' property continued along the property lines of the Ladies' Library Association building. Though located in a central area, the building reflected domestic ideals with its landscape treatment and architectural style.

The building is two stories high, consisting of a main block measuring thirty by sixty feet. A heavy stair tower spans both stories, measuring fourteen by eighteen feet and visually breaks the north facade. A one-story portico extends from the stair tower and faces west.
Figure 3  View of Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association Building 1880.

The major construction materials are brick. The brick is of great significance because of the additional expense for construction. The organization selected brick out of necessity because of the building location. A Village ordinance, adopted in 1866 after a serious fire destroyed many downtown commercial buildings, prohibited wood frame buildings for all new construction within designated fire limits. The updated building ordinances, more than any other reason, prohibited the organization from pursuing construction for nearly a decade because of the additional expense of using bricks. In contrast, most residential structures in Kalamazoo were constructed of wood during this period.

Henry Gay of Chicago created architectural drawings for the organization for seventy-five dollars, and local contractors, Bush and Paterson, executed the plans. The irregularly pitched roof, prominent front-facing gable, irregular windows, and asymmetrical facade with a partial porch and tower are indicative of the Queen Anne architectural style which reached a zenith of popularity in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The single-story small entry portico and arched window tops are reflective of the Italianate style, which was a popular architectural style for several decades in the
nineteenth century. Though the building reflects some elements of the Italianate style, it is clearly within the Queen Anne tradition.

The plans from Gay, including the finishing details for the structure, are also indicative of the Queen Anne style.82 Included were decorative flashing ridges on the rooflines, glazed tiles under the eaves, two large patterned masonry chimney, and tiny dormers within the tower that also provided natural light for the interior stairwell. The building also included limestone banding and a series of stained glass windows that served to memorialize members.

The interior floor plan promoted similar ideals of domesticity and practical applications for public purposes. Though adapted for club and public use, the final building plans reflected the ideals of domesticity. The vestibule mediated between the public and private spaces of the building. Recognizing the importance of this point of entry, the entire Board discussed the decorative and practical features of the vestibule at length.83 Members and others wishing to view the museum or the library entered through the vestibule and then moved right into the building.

The main level included a museum, parlor, library,
and indoor water source. The first floor also included the most private of rooms, the parlor, closed by pocket doors when the Board conducted its meetings. In contrast, the library and museum had less privacy. Stained-glass windows depicted scenes from Washington Irving, William Cullen Bryant, and other authors, and bookshelves lining the walls bespoke the tradition of English literature and the virtues of books and reading. Memorial stained glass windows lauded the efforts of early members in realizing the building dream.84

The major public space consisted of a museum and library. The museum contained specimens of natural history and other classified and labeled artifacts for examination.85 The library provided paintings, busts, and curiosities for users to view as they looked through books in cases lining the walls. A circulation desk provided space for a librarian to assist patrons with books. See Figure 4 for interior view of museum and library.

The front vestibule also allowed access to the second floor auditorium, which represented a public place that the women could choose to open to men and public.86 The staircase wound inside the tower, which had a star-filled vaulted ceiling, up to a second-floor auditorium
Figure 4. Interior View Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association Building.

Source: Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association Papers.
complete with a stage and Steinway piano. The piano represented the attributes of Victorian gentility or "refined sensibilities considered appropriate to the female role." The auditorium, complete with stage and seating, encompassed the entire second floor.

The original building did not include a kitchen, though the original architectural drawings indicate evidence of an indoor water source next to the museum. This indoor water supply possibly served cooking or cleaning needs. The building did not have a full kitchen until a 1931 remodeling project. Perhaps the missing kitchen was final evidence of the escape possible to women in this domestically inspired, but obviously different building. Nor did the building have a dining room. The lack of space for food preparation and dining is hardly surprising, given the literary and educational aims of the building.

At the building dedication in May, 1879, the Association deferred to the male elite of the community for the program and appointed Judge Wells as the "president of the evening" and allowed husbands and fathers to give "all the entertaining speeches" as they stood out of the spotlight "like true hostesses." The process of constructing the building represented the
culmination of the Ladies' Library Association working to extend, when prudent, the clearly defined public and private areas to gain a greater good for the community.

Kenneth Ames in *Death in the Dining Room* describes the "unspoken assumptions and persuasions of everyday life through things that framed and gave meaning to that life" and how they demonstrate issues of power, wealth, gender roles, and "resolutions of tensions between continuity and change." The completed building represented clearly defined public and private areas governed by the women of the Association and defined its relation to the greater community.

The Kalamazoo organization provided a model for other women's organizations, especially ladies' library associations, to construct buildings that served organizational and community purposes. The spirit of community cooperation in constructing the building became a model for the library associations that followed. Most of the buildings were far less elaborate in scale than the Kalamazoo building but they shared characteristics of construction and placement in the community that would establish a place of permanence for the organization.

The Kalamazoo Ladies' Library built a woman's club house as a permanent site for semi-public purposes and to
demonstrate their importance and permanence in the
community. Interestingly, the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library
Association had a far superior building than the public
library. The public library used the former quarters of
the Ladies' Library Association, consisting of two rooms
in Corporation Hall, for seventeen years until 1890, when
a bequest made construction of a permanent and separate
building a reality. The Ladies' Library Association
appeared on postcard series for many years and after the
turn-of-the century, often along with views of the public
library building.

For many of the ladies' library associations in
Michigan, the evidence is sketchier than records in
Kalamazoo. Minutes no longer exist. The material
evidence supplied by the remaining buildings and
contemporary renderings of the buildings does supply
clues where minutes are not available. Newspaper
accounts of the building progress and promotion provide
other clues. Because there are no minutes detailing the
construction process for Plainwell, Otsego, and Wayland,
newspaper accounts and the buildings provide the bulk of
the evidence.

Plainwell Ladies' Library Association Building. In
1889, the Plainwell Enterprise reported on the success of
the Ladies' Library Association during the year in its annual report. It was apparent by the 1880s that the organization needed permanent space and larger quarters in order to continue. "[It] was the only thing that would prevent the society from becoming one of the things that have been but are not."  

In August 1888, the Village granted the organization a piece of land in the center of the village and the ladies' library association "formally decided to build." The committee consisted of women of the Library Association, "Madames Hicks, Soule, Travis and Sternburg [who] met the builders" and worked with the "Messrs Koch and Root" to realize the goal of a permanent building. Throughout the spring of 1888, the women sought subscriptions, growing a treasury that began with about $160 and raising an additional $570 through subscriptions and $50.00 through entertainments. The community and members also provided gifts of windows and furnishings.

Similar to the Kalamazoo building, Plainwell's Ladies' Library occupied a prominent centrally located lot in a park at the center of the village. The annual report of 1889 described the building as "neither grand nor elaborate . . . neat, tasty and suitable for its purposes."
The building opened to the public on February 8, 1889. The gothic cottage was very domestic in scale, with dimensions of twenty-six feet by twenty-four feet in size. Formed in the shape of a St. Andrews Cross, it was church-like in its appearance. Nine gothic windows of stained glass provided light and decor. The gothic style prevailed in religious architecture throughout the nineteenth century and beyond, and its popularity was dominant in residential architecture from about 1840 to 1870. Masonry construction signified its permanence. See Figure 5.

The building served the organization until a donation of a much larger building, a house, through a bequest by one of the members, which resulted in the formation of a memorial library committee. There was a mutual decision on the part of the city and the Ladies' Library Association to get the building retrofitted. The ladies succeeded in garnering support to pass a millage to fund the memorial library. The Plainwell Ladies' Library Association disbanded and evolved into a friends group upon completion of the building. Several of the former library association members became charter members of the first library board.
Figure 5. Plainwell Ladies' Library Association Building, 1918.

Source: Sandy Stamm, Plainwell Historical Preservation Society.
The campaign of 1918 to secure a permanent library space for the community placed the Library Association into the public realm. The Library Association and City cooperated in this stance to provide better facilities for the community.

**Otsego Ladies' Library Association Building.** By the late 1880s, the Otsego Ladies' Library Association entered a period of decline. As it moved from rented rooms to private homes, the remaining members "decided the only way to become settled was to build a home" and a building campaign ensued. The organization solicited "the township board to lease some ground" and asked for support "from the business men." The women raised $2,000 in funds through socials, dances, festivals, and concerts, as well as enlisting the support of citizens' committees and church committees. "All this was done by the efforts of Otsego women. [S]ome of the money was paid by the men folks." 

The building opened in 1892 to a gala affair with a capacity crowd to hear the addresses, recitations and music. The building became the cultural center of the town. It was open Saturdays for the exchange of books and the librarian received 25 cents each week for her duties!
The Otsego building was centrally located within one block of the major intersection of the village. Unlike the other ladies' library associations, it was wood frame construction. This is unusual because all other ladies' library association buildings have been of brick or stone construction. Why the organization opted for a less expensive and less permanent construction material remains unknown. Using wood construction certainly reduced the expense of the building.

Stylistically, the one-story building is a vernacular form of the Queen Anne. See Figure 6. It is symmetrical in appearance and featured two turrets capped by steeply pitched roofs. These turrets featured bay windows and graced each side of the entrance of the building. There are shingles in the gable of the front porch and along the bottoms of the turrets and building. Rectangular decorative stained glass windows with geometric designs were placed in the transom above the main door and across the front of the building, including the bay windows. A 1955 remodeling substantially altered the appearance of the building, which resulted in the removal of the ornate chimneys and gables to create a more modern appearance. It continued to be used for library purposes through the early 1970s.
Figure 6. Otsego Ladies' Library Association Building.

Source: "Otsego's Fair Forty," Otsego Union, March 23, 1892.
In the case of Otsego, "interest in things literary waned," and the women decided to sell the building to the district library and donate the proceeds from the sale to three churches in 1905.106 They donated books to the new district library. The organization disbanded and did not take on a new form as a literary club or as a friends group.

In Otsego, the construction of a library building became a method of gaining status and permanence in the community. Again, "building" involved the collaboration of men and women, as noted in the accounts.

Richland Ladies' Library Association Building.

By 1899, the organization once again posed the building question when it reported it was "hoping for a more desirable Library building sometime in the future."107 The topic was broached at a special meeting about six months later in which the members expressed optimism for a "better building and other improvements. Sometime they may be ours."108

It would be another year before the organization moved seriously toward its goal of constructing its own building. In 1902, Mr. B. F. Knappen approached the organization about his interest in purchasing the building from the organization. The Association
dismissed the subject because they had no other building options, though a committee was appointed to contact people about lots for sale or donation. Committees of members formed to discuss building sites and real estate sales, a situation that pushed some of the members into decidedly public roles.

Through the cooperation of one of the member's husband, the organization received an appropriate building site in 1903. Patrick Gilkey donated a site located in the square. From this point on, the Association devoted much of its efforts toward collecting funds for the proposed building.

Bazaars, socials, and a number of activities raised the needed cash. The sponsoring of these activities thrust the women into the public arena. The dual purpose of providing books and getting the building constructed posed difficulties for the members. Four years after the donation of the land, the Ladies' noted in their minutes frustrations they felt at the "almost unsurmountable obstacle."

The organization succeeded in completing the building in 1911, which was reported in the local media. The *Semi-Weekly Argus* reported on the success and hinted at the public nature of the building when it noted the
"new building, with all modern conveniences and an auditorium with a seating capacity of over a hundred, meets a long felt want in the community."  

The final appearance and location of the Richland library also strongly suggest the prominence of the ladies' organization and its mission. The building is prominently located on the village square on Park Street, bounded by the major streets and the smaller Park and Church Streets. Only the First Presbyterian Church, directly southeast, is more prominent. The prominent placement of this building and donation of land to construct it in the center of the Village of Richland suggest the importance placed on the ladies' library and its mission.  

The Richland organization's use of masonry as the primary building material also suggests the message of permanence. This type of building style did not specifically require masonry work. The cost of this building in masonry must have exceeded what it would have cost to build a simpler wooden structure. Brick construction signified the permanence of the mission and the organization.  

The classical construction of the library building suggests a link with the classical ideals of education.
See Figure 7. Beginning with the Philadelphia Centennial of 1876, the colonial revival architectural style took root as the nation looked to its colonial origins. This trend developed and gained popularity in the first three decades of the twentieth century.\textsuperscript{113}

The use of classical construction and details also physically placed the Library and organization within an existing landscape of architecture linked to the history of the community. The classical construction of the Ladies' Library Association building and is compatible with surrounding buildings on the square, despite its much later construction date of 1911. The Presbyterian Church, which dates to 1861, is located southwest of the library building, is of the revival classical wood clapboard church architectural style. It features a Greek Revival frame edifice with Italianate doors and windows. Directly south of the church was a small Greek revival house, predating the church, probably constructed before 1850.

The Richland organization disbanded in 1948. Minutes from the period do not exist. An examination of newspaper sources reveals numerous literary and service clubs by the middle 1940s, suggesting that the organization experienced the problem of the "third
Figure 7. Richland Ladies' Library Association Building.

Source: Richland From Its Prairie Beginnings, 225.
The process of constructing the building represented the culmination of the Richland Ladies' Library Association who, as others, worked within and extending out into the community when prudent. Thus, the Association clearly defined public and private areas with the assistance of males to gain a greater good for the community.

Wayland Ladies' Library Association Building

The Ladies' Library Association played a minimal role in the execution of the building in Wayland. Unlike sister clubs, where growing collections and services pushed the limits of the organization, the quest to construct a library building occurred only after a bequest of funds specified a Ladies' Library. A building committee consisting of the Village president and two trustees worked with architects and Julia Henika's widowed husband and mother to plan the building.115

The construction of the Wayland building touched off
a spark of controversy about the use and control of the building. Newspaper articles and court testimony about the use and ownership of the Wayland Ladies' Library building provides evidence about the public and private functions of library associations and literary associations. It also suggests a late nineteenth century understanding about the connotations associated with the term "literary club" and "ladies library association."

In June 1899, the Wayland organization incorporated under the name of Ladies' Library Club to comply with the stipulation of a bequest of a local woman reformer. Julia Henika left her "curiosities, Indian Implements and books" and two thousand dollars for a building "in which to keep them . . . . a Ladies' Library". Henika, born in Allegan County in 1840, moved to Wayland upon her third marriage to George Henika in 1893. Henika also made provisions for a variety of causes, including the Peoples Church in Kalamazoo for the Day Nursery and Manual Training School for girls.

The Wayland Globe reported on Henika's death and the ambiguous nature of her bequest, "The late Mrs. Geo. H. Henika in her will bequeathed to a ladies' library for the erection of a building." The article went on to speculate about the actions of the literary association.
"As there is no regularly organized library association in the village, it will be necessary for the ladies to formulate such a society in order to receive the benefits and requirements of the will. . . . It is probable that the L.L.C. will reorganize." 120

Reincorporated in June 1899, under the name of Ladies' Library Club, the organization planned for the new building. 121 As the building neared completion, a debate ensued about the ownership and use of the library building. The Saturday Globe reported, "Some maintained that it was intended . . . for the use of the local L. L. A. . . . and some claim it as a public ladies library." 122 An account in the Saturday Globe reported on the Village council's dilemma. "[I]t is an elephant and they don't know what to feed it. They don't know whether it is a legally adopted child of public charge or not. They do not know whether it was adopted for a public or private affair." 123

Financial difficulties of completing the building, as well as the intention of Julia Henika's will, eventually resulted in a lawsuit filed by the Village of Wayland against the Ladies Library Club and George Henika, husband of Julia Henika. The Village of Wayland stated its case surrounding "the question . . . as to who
is the proper [owner] entitled to the use and possession
of said property . . . also as to the rights and powers
of the village . . . in connection with said building." \(^{124}\)
The women’s position, according to testimony, alleged
that Julia Henika’s intention was for a building “held in
trust by the village of Wayland” for the Society’s “full
and complete use and control.” \(^{125}\)

The testimonies supplied in court and newspaper
accounts brought out some of the community’s ideas and
biases about library and literary associations. \(^{126}\) Mr.
Henika reported his deceased wife’s philosophical
difficulties with the organization, noting that she “was
opposed to said Literary Club for the reason that said
club was an exclusive society, and would not admit any
one to their meetings outside of their own members, not
even the husbands of the lady members of said society.” \(^{127}\)

Henika, a wealthy woman, obviously had difficulties
with issues of class that she encountered with the former
literary club. Henika’s widowed husband testified that
Julia Henika attended meetings of the unincorporated
literary club during her life but was not a member. \(^{128}\)
Her inclusive vision of a ladies’ library included

all the ladies of the village . . . no person,
association . . . should say they were too old or
too young, too rich or too poor, or that they
should dress in silk or calico, or should
determine the qualifications or morals of any lady
citizen, or should be subject to the payment of a
membership fee or dues or should submit to an
examination of any kind before they could have the
privileges and benefits of a public library.\textsuperscript{129}

Henika denied that wife’s “bequest was intended for the
Ladies’ Library Club or anybody else except the village
of Wayland.”\textsuperscript{130}

The judge decided the case in favor of the Village
of Wayland and determined that the Library Club did not
have any exclusive right or benefit to the building. The
Globe reported “The matter has finally been settled and
the village is the absolute owner.”\textsuperscript{131} Eventually, funds
secured from members of Henika’s family resolved the
situation.\textsuperscript{132} Despite the judgment, there were still
rumblings concerning Julia Henika’s true intentions.

May time cover all differences of opinion as to
whether the money left by Mrs. Henika was used as
she directed, and may a library be maintained that
will be a credit to the vicinity, and a help to the
poor villagers . . . to acquire the normal amount
of knowledge which keeps them from being classed
with the ignorant.\textsuperscript{133}

The building, however, did represent the interests
of the community in creating a model Ladies’ Library or
as the Saturday Globe touted “one of the most modern and
up-to-date little buildings of the kind to be found in a
village of this size in the state.”\textsuperscript{134} The building
program also included research and knowledge of previous

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building campaigns by ladies' library associations. The Saturday Globe reported that G. A. Youngs of Wayland visited Plainwell and "looked at the ladies' library building . . . He also visited the library building at Otsego." Presumably Youngs sought information in neighboring Plainwell and Otsego about the recent building projects taken on by ladies' library associations in those villages.

The building committee endorsed the "English cottage style" renderings submitted by Fred H. Ely of Grand Rapids. The stone building was one story and featured an open circular veranda. The front of the building featured a prominently placed bay window. The building committee awarded the contract for construction to S. H. Ocker of Grand Rapids. Stone and other materials arrived at the construction site a few weeks later. The construction involved members of the community ranging from organizations and churches to individuals. All churches and organizations were invited to participate in a corner stone ceremony on October 7, 1999. The stones for the building came "from the farm of J. H. Beamer . . .in the village." Progress reports appeared in the local newspaper from the winter of 1899 through June of 1900. See Figure 8.
Figure 8. Wayland Ladies' Library Association Building.

Source: *Henika District Library, Centennial Celebration, 1899-1999.*
The Wayland Ladies' Library Association is a perfect example of a Richardsonian Romanesque. It is a solid one story building constructed of square cut stones, incorporated into the decorative work. Cut stones frame the largest window on the front of the building as well as smaller attic windows. The building has an irregular roofline with a rounded roof on the bay window and a single gabled roof making up the main part of the structure. The overall appearance is asymmetrical. A 1960s expansion involved enclosing the veranda to gain additional library space.\textsuperscript{142}

The library is centrally located near the center of the village, on the major road that was once the plank road extending from Kalamazoo to Grand Rapids. An early account from the \textit{Saturday Globe} described the location as "at the head of the street running to the high school building."\textsuperscript{143} Certainly, it is only buildings away from the heart of the commercial center of the village.

\textbf{Conclusion}

Ladies' library associations in Michigan extended the physical space allotted to women, extended women's influence into the public realm, and expanding boundaries by providing a much-needed public service.

The members of the organizations were cognizant of...
the gender limitations imposed by society and worked within these limitations to provide library services for women and the entire community. There is evidence to support the hypothesis that the Ladies' Library Association expanded the bounds of the feminine sphere. Often noticed, these forays into the public received little criticism. Even when the women appeared to cross boundaries unacceptable to respectability, such as in Otsego, the male elite of the community ultimately supported the efforts of the library associations.

Clearly, the organizations expanded the boundaries of engendered space to create a space for a publicly accessible library as well as space for women's personal enrichment. They accomplished this through a presence in the press and by creating permanent usable, and motivating spaces that became acknowledged community institutions.

The buildings constructed and used by these organizations, in particular, speak to their public presence in the community. Even those buildings, such as the Kalamazoo's that were semi-public in operation, provided additional public space for programs. In fact, city directories through the late nineteenth and early twentieth century listed the Kalamazoo Ladies' Library
Association clubhouse as a public building. Buildings in Otsego, Plainwell, Wayland, and Richland were public.

The Michigan ladies' library association building campaigns also speak to larger issues of evolving gender roles and the role of women in public. The library building campaigns of Plainwell in 1918 involved the women directly in the political process. They rallied for millages and became appointed and elected to library boards. In contrast, the library campaigns of Kalamazoo, Plainwell, and Otsego in the late nineteenth century involved cooperation and collaboration of men and women. The Kalamazoo campaign and resulting Ladies' Library Association building were so novel that the women needed legislative approval to own the property.144

5. Kalamazoo Gazette, February 6, 1852.
6. Beginning in the 1850s, the annual reports of the Ladies' Library Association appeared in the newspapers every January after the annual meeting of the Association.


10. See Mary P. Ryan, Women in Public: From Banners to Ballots, 1825-1880 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990). Ryan argues that women began to assume
public role between 1825 and the Civil War as they participated directly through parades, inaugurations, anniversaries, especially as they sought to promote new feminine civic values of chastity, domesticity and sobriety. During and after the Civil War, American life became increasingly politicized and women entered public life as partisans of sectional, class, and racial conflicts.

19. Minutes, Richland Ladies' Library Association, November 9, 1889.
23. Minutes, Richland Ladies' Library Association, December 3, 1907.
24. "Minutes of the Ladies' Library Association Board of Directors," February 23, 1878, Archives and Regional
History Collections, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo.
26. Minutes of the Ladies Library Association Board of Directors, April 29, 1853.
27. Unpublished research by John Houdek and Charles Heller about women and lending practices in southwestern Michigan suggests that nineteenth century women loaned money on notes and that it happened much more than we would commonly suppose.
38. "For Sweet Charity," Police Gazette, Saturday, April 2, 1892.
43. Kalamazoo Daily Telegraph, "Getting Hotter," February 27, 1895, 1.
44. Kalamazoo Daily Telegraph, "Getting Hotter," February 27, 1895, 1.
47. See Beverly Gordon's, Bazaars and Fair Ladies: The History of the American Fundraising Fair (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1998). Gordon argues that the fundraising fair involved women in virtually all American communities in the nineteenth century. It was an arena where women did not struggle for inclusion because fundraising fairs were their events, where they had control and relative autonomy, and where they could express their own vision and priorities. She also argues that the fundraising fair reshaped public entertainment and attitudes about consumption and commodities.
49. Otsego Public Library, Scrapbook, Volume 5. Collection of articles and histories about the Library.
50. Typewritten history, untitled, of the library credited to Lizzie Palmer, Emily Smith and Mrs. Stephen Pierce, 1926. From the Otsego District Library history scrapbooks.
52. Minutes, Richland Ladies' Library Association, April 4, 1884.
53. Presumably, the offer may have been extended to the Association, because Metzer Barnes was married to Susan Barnes, one of the early leaders in the Richland Ladies' Library Association. Susan Barnes was 53 at the time of the organizations founding and hailed from Maine. She had spent much of her married life in Michigan because her children had been born in Michigan. Alvin was married, but there is no record of whether his wife, Caroline, also participated in the organization. Alvin Barnes is listed as a retired merchant in 1880. Like his brother, Metzer, he appears to have spent a large portion of his adult life in Michigan because of the five children living at home, all were born in Michigan.
54. Minutes, Richland Ladies' Library Association, July 10, 1894.
57. Minutes, Richland Ladies' Library Association, February 1, 1896.
58. "Minutes of the Ladies' Library Association Board of Directors Meeting," introduction to minute book includes brief history, Archives and Regional History Collections, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo.
60. "Minutes of the Ladies' Library Association Board of Directors," October 12, 1867, Archives and Regional History Collections, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo.
62. "Minutes of the Ladies' Library Association Board of Directors," December 1, 1868, Archives and Regional History Collections, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo.
64. Minutes of the Ladies Library Association Board of Directors, December 28, 1872.
65. "Minutes of the Ladies' Library Association Board, April 29, 1871," Archives and Regional History Collections, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan.
66. "Minutes of the Ladies' Library Association Board of Directors," September 24, 1875, Archives and Regional History Collections, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan.
67. Minutes of the Ladies Library Association Board of Directors, December 27, 1862.
68. Minutes of the Ladies Library Association Board of Directors, Special Meeting, January 3, 1863.
69. Secretary's Report, January 8, 1864, pg. 3. Ladies Library Association, Board of Directors.
70. Thirteenth Annual Report of the Ladies Library Association of Kalamazoo, Mrs. J. O. Seely, Secretary, 1866.
71. Minutes of the Ladies Library Association, Board of Directors, July 28, 1866.
73. Minutes of the Board of the Ladies Library Association, June 29, 1878.
74. Minutes of the Ladies Library Association Board of Directors, February 23, 1878.
75. "Minutes of the Ladies Library Association," May 3, 1878, Archives and Regional History Collections, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan.
76. Get footnote on this! September/fall of 1878
77. "An Act To authorize the Ladies Library Association of Kalamazoo to hold property real and personal to any amount not exceeding thirty thousand dollars in addition to the values of its books," resolution from Michigan Senate and House of Representatives dated May 3, 1879.
78. Minutes of the Ladies Library Association Board, August 2, 1878.
79. Minutes of the Ladies Library Association Board, August 17, 1878.
80. Identification of adjacent residents obtained through city directories.
81. The Minutes of the Ladies Library Association, Board of Directors, July 28, 1866 contain discussions relative to this ordinance and how it hindered the organization in its bid to construct a building.
83. "Minutes of the Ladies' Library Association Board of Directors," October 26, 1878, Archives and Regional History Collections, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo.
84. The memorial window honoring Ruth Webster, donor of the land and manager of the building fund, depicts a lamp symbolizing life and knowledge.
85. Eighteenth Annual Meeting--Report of the Secretary--Election of Officer, January 7, 1871 described items in the growing artifact collection at that time which included, "rare and curious things fast accumulating in our cabinet; some valuable for their intrinsic worth--rich specimens of natural history from our own great country, and from foreign lands, all classed, labeled and catalogued; crystalizations, and conglomerations, sea shells, sea urchins, crabs and starfish; sword of a swordfish, saw of a sawfish, and tusk of a whale, fossils, lichens, coquina, coralline, shale, and strange petrifications; rock from the areopagus, worn by the feet
of the ancient court, and a piece of our own plymouth rock . . . a newspaper printed among the Cherokees; . . . the Mormon's bible, . . . the Moslem's Koran . . . a pair of magnificent, stuffed loons, and some smaller, but not less beautiful birds; nicely preserved butterflies, moths . . ."

86. See Kenneth Ames, Death in the Dining Room and Other Tales of Victorian Culture (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992), 7-17, for an overview of the significance of the hall.

87. See Kenneth Ames, Death in the Dining Room and Other Tales of Victorian Culture (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992), 150-166 for an overview of the significance of organs and pianos in the Victorian household.

88. See Kenneth Ames, Death in the Dining Room and Other Tales of Victorian Culture (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992), 44-96, for an overview of the significance of the dining room. Ames identifies the dining room as a shrine to the notion of man's dominion over nature with the use of elaborately carved sideboards with elaborate friezes of slaughtered game and harvested vegetation.


97. See Clifford Clark, Jr. "Domestic Architecture as an Index to Social History: The Romantic Revival and the Cult of Domesticity in America, 1840-1870," Journal of Interdisciplinary History, VII:1 (Summer 1976), 33-56. Clark describes gothic architecture as an attempt to use the built environment to represent "the fruits of an
intense crusade that, in terms of its social significance, deserves to rank with temperance and abolitionism as a major reform movement," 33.
100. Plainwell Enterprise, "Village Election," March 14, 1918, 1.
106. Typewritten story credited to Lizzie Palmer, Emily Smith and Mrs. Stephen Pierce, 1926, "Library" file at Otsego District Library.
107. Minutes, Richland Ladies' Library Association, April 4, 1899.
108. Minutes, Richland Ladies' Library Association, January 6, 1900.
110. Minutes, Richland Ladies' Library Association, November 6, 1903.
111. Minutes, Richland Ladies' Library Association, December 3, 1907.
115. Saturday Globe, July 1, 1899.
117. Will of Julia Henika, March 9, 1896.
118. Wayland Globe, April 8, 1899.
119. Wayland Globe, May 6, 1899.
120. Article copied from Wayland Globe 5-6-1899.
121. "History of the Ladies' Library Club Wayland,

122. Saturday Globe, August 3, 1901.

123. Saturday Globe, June 15, 1901.

124. Village of Wayland vs. LLC of Village of Wayland, Case #3005, Circuit Court, Allegan County February 4, 1902, page 107, Calendar #6

125. Village of Wayland vs. LLC of Village of Wayland, Case #3005, Circuit Court, Allegan County February 4, 1902, page 107, Calendar #6

126. The records of the Wayland association are incomplete through 1910. The 1937 History of the Ladies' Library Club Wayland, Michigan," by Lillian Buskirk and signed by charter members Buskirk and Fannie Hoyt notes that "early records of the club were lost years ago. It is possible the books were destroyed in one of the several fires that devastated certain parts of the village."

127. Testimony of George Henika. Village of Wayland vs. LLC of Village of Wayland, Case #3005, Circuit Court, Allegan County February 4, 1902, page 107, Calendar #6

128. Testimony of George Henika. Village of Wayland vs. LLC of Village of Wayland, Case #3005, Circuit Court, Allegan County February 4, 1902, page 107, Calendar #6

129. Testimony of George Henika. Village of Wayland vs. LLC of Village of Wayland, Case #3005, Circuit Court, Allegan County February 4, 1902, page 107, Calendar #6

130. Testimony of George Henika. Village of Wayland vs. LLC of Village of Wayland, Case #3005, Circuit Court, Allegan County February 4, 1902, page 107, Calendar #6

131. Saturday Globe, February 15, 1902.

132. "Stories of the Town," obituary, May 1903, for Mrs. Mary Forbes, mother of Julia Henika, Wayland Globe, reports how she provided a substantial portion of the funds needed to complete the library.

133. Allegan Press, week of April 17, as reported in the Saturday Globe, April 25, 1903.

134. Saturday Globe, July 1, 1899.

135. Saturday Globe, July 22, 1899 [reprinted from the Plainwell Enterprise].

136. Saturday Globe, August 12, 1899.

137. Saturday Globe, September 16, 1899.


139. Saturday Globe, September 30, 1899.

140. Saturday Globe, September 30, 1899.
141. *Saturday Globe*, June 2, 1900.
143. *Saturday Globe*, June 10, 1899.
144. "An Act To authorize the Ladies Library Association of Kalamazoo to hold property real and personal to any amount not exceeding thirty thousand dollars in addition to the values of its books," resolution from Michigan Senate and House of Representatives dated May 3, 1879.
CHAPTER VIII

MICHIGAN LADIES' LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS AND THE SHAPING OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Ladies' library associations existed as one variation of the social libraries that provided much of the library service available in Michigan in the nineteenth century. Women's participation in library associations represented a moderate reform that required women to exercise deliberate choices about the direction of these organizations. In several instances, women's influence extended to subsequent public library development.

Ladies' library associations formed in areas lacking a strong library presence. Even though Michigan had a township library system, it failed to serve the needs of most communities. School libraries provided even less service to the general public. The ladies' library associations formed in response to this need. While Young Men's Christian Association libraries and men's social libraries flourished in some states, Michigan saw women filling the library void with ladies' library associations.
Through their activities in the library associations, women shaped the meaning of "public" and exerted influence on and in a physical and cultural space in which they navigated by providing a visible and much-needed public service. Ladies' library associations helped define and control public space within the community and actively participated in the process of promoting and forming public libraries in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The buildings constructed and used by these organizations, in particular, speak to their strong public presence in the community. The organizations selected prominent locations in the middle of the community near businesses and other public buildings.

Ladies' library associations in Southwestern Michigan worked within the boundaries of engendered space and extended their sphere by shaping public institutions and the built environment. In engaging in dialogue with male alliances within the community, creating collections, maintaining libraries, taking on ambitious building programs, and networking with other organizations in their communities and throughout the state, these women pushed the bounds of gender roles and gendered space. Their actions and roles in library reform
movements in the community speak to larger issues of gender, power, and the expansion and reinterpretation of the domestic realm of white middle-class women's lives in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

This examination of ladies' library associations and their significance in reform and community development provides an historical understanding of women's roles and influence in community development and reform. The ladies' library associations, to a large degree, mirrored the evolving societal expectations of women. Usually traditional in their approach, the ladies' library associations stayed within the accepted bounds even while challenging the status quo. Through these means, they gained community support. They used this position to exercise their leadership in organizing libraries and providing opportunities for women to develop in society.

The ladies' library associations in southwestern Michigan provide compelling evidence as to the impact and influence these organizations exerted on library reform in the late nineteenth century. Women's role as providers of library services was acknowledged and encouraged. The ladies' library associations evolved from small organizations aimed at improving the morality of the town to operating fully circulating libraries in
several instances. A female network of leaders emerged to support libraries and spread library associations throughout southern Michigan.

Building on women's traditional roles as moral guardians of the community and educators of the next generation, women formulated a strategy to achieve the goals of library formation and to secure public places for meeting and learning. Indeed, even as librarianship became professionalized, several authorities noted the special qualities women possessed that made them appropriate in this role. For examples, the 1876 *Public Libraries in the United States of America Their History, Condition, and Management* has a section about town libraries clearly that articulated the appropriateness of women as librarians, noting how "the nature of the duties is, to a great extent, and in many cases, suited to them [women]."¹ The *Grand Rapids Daily Eagle* also supported this assertion, reporting about the labors of the City Library Association "in a field, where woman's right to labor will not be disputed."²

The organizations operated on a sophisticated model with its origins in Kalamazoo resident Lucinda Hinsdale Stone's vision of library associations. Formal and informal networks existed amongst the ladies' library
associations at the state level even in the years before
the formation of the General Federation of Women's Clubs
in 1890. Women, such as Lucinda Hinsdale Stone,
networked throughout the Midwest to start other ladies'
library associations and eventually women's clubs.
According to Stone, the library associations evolved "by
a kind of telepathy . . . diffused throughout the State
and the West, each club being developed according to the
needs or tastes of the town where it has been formed."\(^3\)
Stone's influence in promoting library associations, and
later the literary clubs, bore fruit by the end of the
nineteenth century. She noted, "I think I am a member of
fifty Western clubs, at least, that have been direct
outgrowths of this club, which have given me the name of
'Mother of Clubs.'"\(^4\)

Ladies' library associations worked with men and
gained public space, eventually influencing political
decisions relating to libraries. On occasion, they
failed. In Grand Rapids, women of the 1870s departed
from the Stone model shortly after forming, determining
to evolve from a library association to a public library.
They worked with other organizations to influence policy
and form a public library, but they were unable to exert
power over the project they had fostered from the
beginning. When their ideas about library governance clashed with the ideas of the male power elite, they were unsuccessful in influencing the outcome. They ceased to be advisors and had no legal authority.\(^5\)

However, in instances such as Plainwell, where women gained political power by the early twentieth century, voted in elections and took leadership roles in the public library, library associations shifted interest from the organization to the public library. Women took leadership roles in the transition, lobbying for taxes to support the public library and held elected roles on the library board.

Women participating in library associations as a reform activity of the late nineteenth century exercised choices about the progression and growth of these organizations. There were three evolutionary paths that most ladies' library associations took. Each of these three paths contributed to public library development but often in very different ways.

Participation in the public library movement, the first path, often resulted in the eventual dissolution of the library association. Before that happened, the organizations contributed to public library development by donating books and buildings. They also contributed
to the public library development by promoting millage elections and taking part in the governance of the public library.

The Grand Rapids and Plainwell organizations provide the best examples of organizations that participated directly in the public library movement. Both organizations donated books and assets. More importantly, they became visible and vocal instruments in creating public support for the libraries.

Other library organizations evolved into women's clubs. As the library associations moved beyond the concerns of circulating libraries, they adopted broader reform causes and tended to focus on the social needs of middle and upper middle class female members. Kalamazoo shifted focus to club life, while still providing services for members and focusing on literacy initiatives for the community. The Kalamazoo organization actually determined this was in the best interest of the organization at the onset, but continued to take on an even more exclusive focus as a literary organization. The Grand Rapids organization also adopted a literary club model after it severed ties with the public library.

The Wayland organization also fits the second model. In fact, because of its later organization, the Wayland
organization adopted the club model from the beginning. It took on a supporting role and never operated a circulating library. The supporting role helped maintain the building and helped with the purchase of books after a public library formed. The General Federation of Women's Clubs influenced much of their work. They supported the library through fundraising and also adopted initiatives endorsed by the General Federation of Women's Clubs.

The third path, and the one least taken, was that of total dissolution of the organization. These organizations failed to evolve into women's clubs of any type. When such clubs disbanded, they relinquished the ability to influence subsequent library development. When the Otsego Ladies' Library Association disbanded, the organization gave the books to the public library. The Otsego organization sold the building and donated the proceeds to three churches.

The evolution of each type of women's organizations adds to the distortion of the historical record. The earlier services and functions performed by the library associations became lost in the historical record as the organizations dissolved or evolved into women's clubs. While sharing some characteristics, contrasts existed
between the more private and exclusive literary associations and the public oriented library associations. In Kalamazoo, Lucinda Hinsdale Stone (a major woman reformer) did not identify the ladies' library associations as the same or as a similar entity as the club movement of the late nineteenth century, even though many ladies' library associations eventually formed auxiliary literary clubs.

The women described in this study offered various stances about the place of reform activity in their lives. While overlap occurred between the Kalamazoo Ladies’ Library Association and auxiliary literary club, there did not appear to be overlap in the other organizations such as the Young Women's Christian Association and Women Christian Temperance Union. Eventually, the leaders of the Young Women's Christian Association and Ladies' Library Association began to draw from the same pool of middle and upper class women in Kalamazoo by the early twentieth century. The Women Christian Temperance Union appears to have had some members in common with the Ladies' Library Association but the leadership did not overlap.

The founders and early leaders of the Ladies’ Library Association also provide alternative models of
women in club work in the nineteenth century. Karen Blair’s assertion that these women were "feminist under the skin" did not apply as aptly to the majority of the Michigan ladies’ library associations, who took a moderate stance on most issues. Some of the leaders, such as Stone, did have feminist leanings, but they were more radical in their personal outlook than the organizations they led. Most of the women were married, had children, and were very cognizant of woman’s place in society. In fact, Stone suggested that the movement from a library association to a club had been a somewhat radical idea. Some members had actually questioned whether it would appear to "look too much like women's rights?" The Grand Rapids organization also took steps to separate library reforms from the sticky issue of suffrage, advocating for the “advancement of women mentally,” but not taking a “position upon the question of universal suffrage.”

It was not until the early twentieth century that the women in the ladies' library associations examined the suffrage movement and took organizational stances on the issue. By then, the General Federation of Women's Clubs had taken a position when it considered and adopted the issue of suffrage for women at its 1910 convention.
By the second decade, library associations pondered this issue and tended to support suffrage for women. In Richland, for example, in 1914, the Association explored the suffrage issue when Mrs. D. L. Brommell of Kalamazoo "spoke very entertainingly on the subject of suffrage." This program resulted in the formation of a suffrage organization.

As evidenced by the 1876 report of these organizations, Historical Sketches of the Ladies' Library Associations of the State of Michigan, there was an awareness of one another's activities in Michigan. The links between the organizations indicate women helped other women promote ladies' library associations through shared speakers, programs, or opportunities for socializing or assistance in fund raising.

It may be that the ladies' library associations decreased the reliance on Carnegie libraries in Michigan. The research on ladies' library associations demonstrates that these organizations provided books, buildings, and stirred community interest at least ten to twenty years before Carnegie became a major funder of public library buildings in the United States.

With the aims of educated citizens and "hungry for something better than their lives were now furnishing," as
uttered by an early Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association member, the ladies' library associations in southwestern Michigan promoted an agenda for libraries and opportunities for women from the middle of the nineteenth century. Beginning with the foundations laid by the Michigan ladies' library associations, these women shaped the growth of libraries and reading in communities, serving as precursors to the public library movement through their public activities.

6. Anne Ruggles Gere, Intimate Practices: Literacy and Cultural Work in U. S. Women's Clubs, 1880-1920 (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 257. Gere makes the case that by the turn of the century there were often hostile representation of clubwomen. The exclusivity cited in the case of the Wayland organization brought this issue before the public when the community...
and the court compared and debated the merits of library associations and literary clubs.


13. Several organizations worked directly with Carnegie, including Mendon and Ann Arbor. In contrast to Daniel Ring's studies suggesting that women hampered Carnegie funding, it may be that the early involvement of ladies' library associations negated the need for Carnegie funds.


APPENDIX A

Gender Composition of Social Libraries in Michigan
APPENDIX A
Gender Composition of Social Libraries in Michigan

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<th>Gender Composition</th>
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Dryden Ladies' Library Association Female
East Tawas Ladies' Library Association Female
Farwell Ladies' Library Association Female
Woman's Club of Fennville Female
Fenton Ladies' Library Association Female
Fentonville Ladies' Literary & Library Association Female
Flint Ladies' Library Association Female
Flushing Ladies' Library Association Female
Galesburg Ladies' Library Association Female
Goodrich Ladies' Library Association Female
Grand Blanc Ladies' Library Association Female
Grand Ledge Ladies' Library Association Female
[Grand Rapids] Grand Chapter RAM Male
[Grand Rapids] Grand Commandery Knights Templar Male
Grand Rapids Ladies' Library Association Female
[Grand Rapids] Young Men's Christian Association Male
[Grand Rapids] Young Men's Library Association Male
Greenville Ladies' Library Association Female
Hadley Ladies' Library Association Female
Harbor Springs Ladies' Library Association Female
Hartford Ladies' Library Association Female
Hesperia Ladies' Library Association Female
Hillsdale Ladies' Library Association Female
Holland Ladies' Literary Club Female
Holly Ladies' Library Association Female
Houghton Women's Library Association Female
Howell Ladies' Library Female
Hubbardston Ladies' Library Association Female
Ionia Ladies' Library Association Female
[Iosco] Wood's Reading Room Male
Ithaca Ladies' Library Association Female
*[Jackson] Young Men's Library Male
Jonesville Ladies' Library Association Female
Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association Female
[Kalamazoo] Young Men's Library Male
Lansing Ladies' Library Association Female
Lapeer Ladies Library Association Female
Lenawee Library Association Co-ed
Ludington Library Association Co-ed
Lyons Ladies' Library Association Female
Manchester Ladies' Library Association Female
Marcellus Ladies' Library Association Female
Marine City Ladies' Library Association Female
Marquette Literary Society Female
Marshall Ladies' Library Association Female
Mason Ladies' Library Association Female
Mendon Ladies' Library Association Female
Milford Ladies' Library Association Female
[Milford] W. & M. Crawford's Circulating Library Male
Mt. Pleasant Ladies' Library Association  Female
Muir Ladies' Library Association  Female
[Muskegon] Library Association  Co-ed
Muskegon Ladies' Library Association  Female
Nashville Ladies' Library Association  Female
Niles Ladies' Library  Female
North Branch Ladies' Library Association  Female
Northville Ladies' Library  Female
Oronoko Ladies' Library Association  Female
Ortonville Ladies' Library Association  Female
Otsego Ladies Library  Female
Ovid-Duplain Ladies' Library  Female
Owasso Ladies' Library Association  Female
Petoskey Ladies' Library Association  Female
Pewamo Ladies' Library Association  Female
Plainwell Ladies' Library Association  Female
Pontiac Ladies' Library  Female
Port Huron Ladies' Library Association  Female
Portsmouth Ladies' Library Association  Female
Quincy Ladies' Library Association  Female
Richland Ladies' Library Association  Female
[Rochester] Avon Ladies' Library  Female
[Saginaw] Germania Institute Library  Male
[Saginaw] Teutonia Library  Male
Schoolcraft Ladies' Library Association  Female
[South Haven] Literary and Library Association  Co-ed
Sparta Ladies' Library Association  Female
Springport Ladies' Library Association  Female
St. Clair Ladies' Library Association  Female
St. Johns Ladies' Library Association  Female
St. Louis Ladies' Library Association  Female
Stanton Ladies' Library Association  Female
[Sturgis] Library Association  Co-ed
Sturgis Ladies' Library Association  Female
Suttons Bay Ladies' Library Association  Female
Swartz Creek Ladies' Library Association  Female
Tecumseh Ladies' Library Association  Female
Three Rivers Ladies' Library Association  Female
Traverse City Ladies' Library  Female
Union City Ladies' Library Association  Female
Vicksburg Ladies' Library  Female
Watson Library Association  Male
Wayland Ladies' Library Association  Female
Whiteville Ladies' Library Association  Female
Ypsilanti Ladies' Library Association  Female

*The Jackson organization became co-ed in 1877.
**The Cassopolis organization became co-ed in 1871 after having been formed by men in 1870. The women changed the
name and membership to women in 1905.

APPENDIX B

Ladies' Library Associations in the United States
## APPENDIX B

Ladies' Library Associations in the United States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Year of Formation</th>
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<td>Muir</td>
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<td>Niles</td>
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<td>Michigan</td>
<td>North Branch</td>
<td>1877</td>
</tr>
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<td>---------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>Northville</td>
<td>1889</td>
</tr>
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<td>Michigan</td>
<td>Oronoko</td>
<td>(pre) 1877</td>
</tr>
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<td>Ortonville</td>
<td>unknown</td>
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<td>1871</td>
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<td>Michigan</td>
<td>Ovid-Duplain</td>
<td>1879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>Owosso</td>
<td>1867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>Petoskey</td>
<td>1883</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>Pewamo</td>
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<td>Michigan</td>
<td>Plainwell</td>
<td>1868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>Pontiac</td>
<td>1882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>Port Huron</td>
<td>1866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>Portsmouth</td>
<td>1868</td>
</tr>
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<td>Michigan</td>
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<td>1871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
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<td>1880</td>
</tr>
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<td>Michigan</td>
<td>Rochester</td>
<td>1872</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
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<td>1879</td>
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<td>1906</td>
</tr>
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<td>Springport</td>
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<td>1869</td>
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<td>Michigan</td>
<td>St. Johns</td>
<td>1870</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1873</td>
</tr>
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<td>Michigan</td>
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<td>unknown</td>
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<td>Michigan</td>
<td>Sturgis</td>
<td>1872</td>
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<td>Michigan</td>
<td>Suttons Bay</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
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<td>unknown</td>
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<td>Michigan</td>
<td>Tecumseh</td>
<td>1883</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>Three Rivers</td>
<td>1865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>Traverse City</td>
<td>1869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>Union City</td>
<td>1875</td>
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<td>Vicksburg</td>
<td>1879</td>
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<td>1893</td>
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<td>Michigan</td>
<td>Ypsilanti</td>
<td>1868</td>
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<td>New Hampshire</td>
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<td>1799</td>
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<td>Plymouth</td>
<td>1873</td>
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<td>New York</td>
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<td>1854</td>
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<td>Ohio</td>
<td>Newark</td>
<td>1872</td>
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<td>Ohio</td>
<td>Sandusky</td>
<td>1870</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vermont</td>
<td>Barnet</td>
<td>1872</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vermont</td>
<td>Middlebury</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vermont</td>
<td>West Randolph</td>
<td>1864</td>
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</table>

APPENDIX C

The Number of Public, Social and Ladies' Libraries in Michigan, by Time Period
### Table C-1
The Number of Public, Social and Ladies' Libraries in Michigan, by Time Period
(Excluding School and District Libraries)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Public</th>
<th>*Social</th>
<th>**Ladies'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1833-1850</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1851-1875</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1876-1900</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901-1925</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Founding dates are known for 25 of the 26 social libraries that formed in Michigan.

**Founding dates are known for 84 of the 105 ladies' library associations that formed in Michigan.

APPENDIX D

Year of Formation for 84 of 105 Ladies' Library Associations in Michigan
## APPENDIX D

Year of Formation for 84 of 105 Ladies' Library
Associations in Michigan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library Name</th>
<th>Year of Formation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flint Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalamazoo Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marquette Literary Society</td>
<td>1856</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lapeer Ladies Library Association</td>
<td>1859</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battle Creek Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coldwater Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corunna Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Rivers Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann Arbor Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port Huron Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlas Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fentonville Ladies' Literacy and Library Association</td>
<td>1867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owosso Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adrian Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1868</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greenville Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plainwell Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portsmouth Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ypsilanti Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albion Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fenton Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Blanc Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marshall Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1869</td>
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<td>Muskegon Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1869</td>
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<td>St. Clair Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1869</td>
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<tr>
<td>Traverse City Ladies' Library</td>
<td>1869</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charlotte Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1870</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grand Rapids Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1870</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Johns Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1870</td>
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<tr>
<td>Big Rapids Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1871</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dryden Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1871</td>
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<td>[Grand Rapids] West Side Ladies' Literary Assoc</td>
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<td>Lansing Ladies' Library Association</td>
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<td>Otsego Ladies Library</td>
<td>1871</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quincy Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dowagiac Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1872</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library Association</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<td>[Rochester] Avon Ladies' Library</td>
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<td>Sturgis Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1872</td>
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<tr>
<td>Detroit Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1873</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flushing Ladies' Library Association</td>
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<td>St. Louis Ladies' Library Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blissfield Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1874</td>
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<td>Hadley Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1874</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jonesville Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1874</td>
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<td>Ionia Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union City Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1875</td>
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<td>Alpena Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1876</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grand Ledge Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1876</td>
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<td>Ithaca Ladies' Library Association</td>
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<td>Augusta Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1877</td>
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<td>Caro Ladies' Library Association</td>
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<td>Galesburg Ladies' Library Association</td>
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<td>Goodrich Ladies' Library Association</td>
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<td>Holly Ladies' Library Association</td>
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<td>North Branch Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1877</td>
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<td>Oronoko Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>pre-1877</td>
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<tr>
<td>Howell Ladies' Library</td>
<td>1878</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grand Rapids Ladies' Literary club</td>
<td>1878</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hillsdale Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1879</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ovid-Duplain Ladies' Library</td>
<td>1879</td>
</tr>
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<td>Schoolcraft Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1879</td>
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<td>Vicksburg Ladies' Library</td>
<td>1879</td>
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<td>Climax Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1880</td>
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<td>Hesperia Ladies' Library Association</td>
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<td>Richland Ladies' Library Association</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cedar Springs Ladies' Library Association</td>
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<td>Niles Ladies' Library</td>
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<td>Mendon Ladies' Library Association</td>
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<td>Alma Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1884</td>
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<td>Northville Ladies' Library</td>
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<td>Harbor Springs Ladies' Library Association</td>
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<td>Holland Ladies' Literary Club</td>
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<td>Cassopolis Ladies Library Association</td>
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<td>Clare Ladies' Library Association</td>
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<td>Sparta Ladies' Library Association</td>
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<td>Fennville Ladies' Library Association</td>
<td>1921</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deckerville Woman's Club</td>
<td>1924</td>
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APPENDIX E

The Year of Formation of Ladies Library Associations by Location in Michigan
Table E-1
The Year of Formation of Ladies Library Associations by Location in Michigan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>*Southwest</th>
<th>**Southeast</th>
<th>***Northern</th>
<th>****Upper Peninsula</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1851-1875</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1876-1900</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901-1925</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>36</strong></td>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Southwest - Muskegon, Ottawa, Kent, Allegan, Barry, Ionia, Eaton, Van Buren, Kalamazoo, Calhoun, Berrien, Cass, St. Joseph, Branch

**Southeast - Clinton, Shiawassee, Genesee, Lapeer, St. Clair, Ingham, Livingston, Oakland, Macomb, Jackson, Washtenaw, Wayne, Hillsdale, Lenawee, Monroe

***Northern - Emmet, Cheboygan, Presque Isle, Charlevoix, Antrim, Otsego, Montmorency, Alpena, Leelenau, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Crawford, Oscoda, Alcona, Manistee, Wexford, Missaukee, Roscommon, Ogemaw, Iosco, Mason, Lake, Osceola, Clare, Gladwin, Arenac, Oceana, Newago, Mecosta, Isabella, Midland, Bay, Huron, Sanilac, Tuscola, Saginaw, Gratiot, Montcalm

****Upper Peninsula - Keweenaw, Houghton, Ontonagon, Gogebic, Barada, Iron, Marquette, Dickinson, Menominee, Delta, Alger, Schoolcraft, Luce, Mackinac, Chippewa

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396

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