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The Origins of American Housing Reform

Alexander von Hoffman

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Alexander von Hoffman is a Senior Research Fellow at the Joint Center for Housing Studies.

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Abstract

Although housing reform is generally associated with government programs enacted in the twentieth century, the concept of the slum--a residential environment that degraded and harmed the poor--and the basic responses to it originated one hundred and fifty years ago.

In the mid-nineteenth century, changes in thinking about the formation of individual character, the importance of home life, spiritual redemption, the nature of poverty, the causes of crime and vice, and the sources of disease all converged to produce a moral environmentalist approach to the urban poor. The new concepts encouraged the idea that the physical disorder and dilapidation of the slums determined, or helped to determine, the physical and moral condition of their inhabitants.

The notion that the environment influences the individual held out the possibility of creating an alternative environment that could nurture and improve the individual. To this end, housing reformers began in the 1840s to campaign for construction of better housing for the urban poor, the regulation of tenements and lodging houses, higher standards of sanitation, dispersal of slum dwellers to the suburbs and the country, and home ownership. Twentieth-century housing reformers have pursued similar goals, although often by different means, as ways to solve the problem of the slum.

by

Alexander von Hoffman

These physical evils are productive of moral evils of great magnitude and number...

John H. Griscom, 1844.

Introduction: Slums and Housing

In 1936, while the United States Congress considered establishing a permanent public housing program, Harvard professor James Ford published a definitive two-volume work on the history and future prospects of the housing reform movement. Ford began his monumental study, entitled *Slums and Housing*, with a thoughtful discussion about the essential meaning of the term "slum." Carefully reviewing its recent use by sociologists, Ford formulated a definition which authors of works on housing would quote for decades afterwards.

"The slum is a residential area," wrote Ford, "in which the housing is so deteriorated, so substandard or so unwholesome as to be a menace to the health, safety, morality, or welfare of the occupants."¹ Ford's definition contained a striking assumption that a man-made physical *environment*, the slum, had the power to influence many aspects of the human condition, including both physical well-being and social behavior. The definition identified poor housing as the root cause of the deleterious residential environment and, by implication, called for housing reform to counter the threats that the environment posed.

Almost a century earlier, however, Americans produced strikingly similar analyses of the effects of the slums. In 1847 the annual report of the New York Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor (AICP) reported that because of the conditions in the lower-class tenements, the poor "suffer from sickness and premature mortality; their ability for self-maintenance is thereby destroyed; social habits and morals are debased, and a vast amount of wretchedness, pauperism, and crime is produced."²

Indeed, although housing reform is generally associated with government programs enacted in the twentieth century, the concept of the slum--a residential environment that degraded and harmed the poor--and the basic responses to it originated during the middle decades of the nineteenth century.

The concept of the slum first arose in the 1840s from the belief in the influence of the environment on the human condition, a belief historians have labeled "moral environmentalism." Moral environmental principles shaped, and continue to shape, many aspects of American society, ranging from architecture to education. In the mid-nineteenth century, changes in thinking about the formation of individual character, the importance of home life, spiritual redemption, the nature of poverty, the causes of crime and vice, and the sources of disease all converged to produce a moral environmentalist approach to the urban poor. The new concepts encouraged the idea that the physical disorder and dilapidation of the shabby residential districts determined, or helped to determine, the physical and moral condition of their inhabitants.

This environmentalist concept of the slum has inspired Americans to campaign for the elimination of bad housing and the creation of decent living conditions for over one hundred fifty years. The notion that the environment influences the individual held out the possibility of creating an alternative environment that could nurture and improve the individual. To this end, housing reformers began in the 1840s to campaign for construction of better housing for the urban poor, the regulation of tenements and lodging houses, higher standards of sanitation, dispersal of slum dwellers to the suburbs and the country, and home ownership. Twentieth-century housing reformers have pursued similar goals, although often by different means, as ways to solve the problem of the slum.

America's First Great Slum

Squalid districts of poverty have long existed in the cities of Europe and America. Perhaps the most infamous district was St. Giles of the Fields in London, an ancient rookery

which owed some of its notoriety to the contrast it presented with nearby fashionable Russell Square. The small cities of colonial America contained such locales as Philadelphia's notorious "Hell-Town." But prior to the 1840s, members of the urban middle and upper classes had little sympathy for the denizens of what they called dens of moral iniquity or "rookeries," places known primarily as the haunts of thieves, prostitutes, and other members of the underworld.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, the lower-class districts in American cities (as in European cities) increased in size and number. In the United States migrants from other parts of the country and particularly German and Irish immigrants poured into the growing cities to take advantage of the economic opportunities there. Competition for space among the growing numbers of businesses and residents put extreme pressure on land and housing prices, especially in New York, whose population (excluding Brooklyn) swelled from 61,000 people in 1800 to over 800,000 in 1860.

The housing market accommodated the growing number of working- and lower-class residents in several ways. Former mansions and single-family homes were subdivided into several small apartments and converted to "tenant houses" often by "sub-landlords" who leased the property and sublet it at a profit. Single working-class men often took a room in boarding houses where they frequently shared a bed with another worker.

Apartment buildings appeared as early as the 1830s and became a common form of construction by the 1840s. Originally, apartment buildings were known without any pejorative connotation as tenement houses; they ranged from three to five stories in height and contained apartments of two to four small rooms. Although their provision of light, air, and plumbing was later condemned as ridiculously inadequate, tenements were built primarily for skilled workers and their families, that is, the better-off members of the working classes.³

At the bottom end of the housing market, unskilled workers and families, often Irish immigrant or African-American, found homes in cellars, rear houses (built behind row houses), and ramshackle structures in alleys and courts that were equipped with only basic

privies or other waste collectors. Caught between their own low income and the high costs of housing, such tenants frequently were forced to share their humble quarters with one or more families.

Areas of these kinds of dwellings inevitably developed a distinct name. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the slang word "slum" meant a room; by mid-century slum referred to a sleepy back dwelling, the kind of rear alley or court residence into which the lowest members of society were crammed. By the end of the century, when blocks of cheap tenements had filled New York's Lower East Side, the low-income areas were known as the tenement districts or, generally, "the slum."⁴

In the early nineteenth century, such shabby districts could be found in Boston's North End and Fort Hill. In the latter neighborhood, a group of alleyways known as Half Moon Place appalled a committee of cholera investigators who described it as "a perfect hive of human beings, without comforts and mostly without common necessities," packed "like brutes, without regard to sex, or age, or sense of decency." In Philadelphia, similar clusters of alley and cellar dwellings were scattered along the waterfront and in the Southwark, Moyamensing, Grays Ferry, and Northern Liberties neighborhoods.⁵

But the best known of such neighborhoods was New York's Five Points. Named after the street intersection at its center, it was located in the city's notoriously violent sixth ward near the former site of the Collect, a pond so polluted by tanners with dead animals that in 1821 the city had it filled. The district's settlement by dirt-poor immigrants and blacks and small-scale manufacturing plants did nothing to enhance its reputation. Filled with brothels, whiskey-selling grocery stores, cellar dwellings, and dilapidated structures crowded with dozens of families, by the mid-1830s Five Points had become an "American paradigm of urban crime and poverty." Like St. Giles, the Five Points owed some of its visibility to the contrast its location provided with a well-known elegant district, in this case, Broadway. In the 1840s Five Points had become so famous that tourists, such as Charles Dickens, insisted upon seeing it during their visits to New York.⁶

By the 1840s, however, a dramatic change of attitude toward the back districts was underway. People were beginning to look upon the urban poor more sympathetically. Nothing symbolizes the shift better than the change in New Yorkers' response to the Five Points. In 1829 thousands of respectable New Yorkers became so enraged by the prostitutes and peddlers there that they launched a successful petition drive to demolish the worst section of the neighborhood. In 1850 a group of Methodist ladies took control of the Old Brewery, a notorious building inhabited by at least 300 people and located at the intersection of Murderer's Alley and Den of Thieves, and set up a mission there. The missionary effort soon spawned another, the House of Industry. Many other groups, as well, came to the Five Points to convert and uplift the locals. Once New Yorkers could only think of destroying this hopeless Sodom; now they sought to transform it and rehabilitate its residents.⁷

The Discovery of the Slum

At least as early as the 1840s, educated Americans began to believe that the physical environment had the power to influence many aspects of the human condition. Missionaries, moral reformers, and sanitarians who worked with the poor began to perceive that the evil of places such the Five Points lay in the external habitat rather than within the hearts and souls of the people who lived there.

The publication of the *Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population of Great Britain* in 1842 was highly influential in fostering the new attitude toward poverty and the urban environment. Its author, Edwin Chadwick, was a leading government investigator for factory and poor law reforms who, after collaborating on an analysis of disease in London's East End, conducted a three-year investigation of the living arrangements, sanitary conditions, and prevalence of disease among different population groups throughout Great Britain.

Chadwick's report of his investigation was an exhaustive compendium of testimony, surveys, and statistics. His principal argument was that sanitation in the form of street

cleaning, drainage, sewage, ventilation, and water supplies would prevent the outbreaks of deadly diseases and generally improve the health of the working classes.

Chadwick's experience in researching the report inspired him to introduce another important and influential idea. In a chapter concerning "Internal Economy and Domestic Habits," he concluded that the overcrowded and inferior homes of the poor had a direct negative impact upon the inhabitants' moral state. In Britain and the Continent, government commissioners, physicians, pamphleteers, and novelists would spread and build upon the notions Chadwick had pioneered.⁸

In the United States, Chadwick's most influential disciple was Dr. John H. Griscom. The son of a philanthropist, Griscom was a devout Quaker and a physician who had worked in New York City's medical dispensaries for the poor. In the 1840s he was appointed City Inspector of New York, whose job was to tabulate mortality and disease in the city and present the findings to the government in a report. Faced with cholera epidemics, Griscom could not content himself with merely presenting a set of statistics. In 1842 he appended to his report an analysis of the sanitary conditions in New York and the revolutionary recommendation that the municipality vigorously regulate building construction and sanitation. Griscom, however, was ahead of his time: the Board of Aldermen declared that they were unable to judge his novel ideas and summarily fired him.⁹

Griscom responded by launching a campaign for public health. Adopting Chadwick's theme and title, Griscom published *The Sanitary Condition of the Laboring Population of New York* in 1845. This pivotal work articulated the basic argument for sanitation and housing reform that would be repeated and elaborated in the United States throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth centuries. Indeed, Griscom was the first to use the phrase "how the other half lives," which Jacob Riis would employ fifty years later for the title of his best-selling exposé of the slum.¹⁰

Unlike Chadwick's weighty report, Griscom's book is a powerfully argued tract aimed at moving people to action. As later reformer-writers would do, Griscom employed a variety of

different rhetorical styles that ranged from the scientific to the anecdotal. In describing the cellar dwellings of the poor, for example, Griscom employed a Gothic literary style meant to create a sense of immediacy and horror for the reader.

You must descend to them; you must feel the blast of foul air as it meets your face on opening the door; you must grope in the dark, or hesitate until your eye becomes accustomed to the gloomy place...you must inhale the suffocating vapor of the sitting and sleeping rooms; and in the dark, damp recess, endeavor to find the inmates by the sound of their voices, or chance to see their figures moving between you and the flickering blaze of a shaving burning on the hearth, or the misty light of a window coated with dirt and festooned with cobwebs... There vapors, with malignant breath Rise thick, and scatter midnight death.¹¹

In his book, Griscom first explored the modern concept of the slum as a deleterious physical space. Moving beyond earlier moralistic pronouncements, he defined the problem of the poor by their housing, not their character. Indeed, in emphasizing dangerous environmental conditions, he discussed the inhabitants of the cellars, back alleys, and courts chiefly as victims of disease and objects of fallen virtue. His analysis reflected an optimism about the poor and working classes and the possibilities of improving their lives. He opposed the popular indictments of impoverished immigrants in particular, suggesting that they could hardly be blamed for the inadequate homes in which they were forced to live.

Griscom's attack on the squalid environments of the poor was a double-barreled one that aimed at improving both health and morals. Seeking the cause of disease and mortality, he condemned filth, bad air, and dampness. Going much further than Chadwick had, Griscom gave moral problems almost as much weight as physical problems, arguing that filth, lack of air, and overcrowding lowered morals and led to evils such as intemperance and prostitution.

Moral Environmentalism

In his book Griscom expressed the powerful new ideas of moral environmentalism.

When applied to the urban poor, the new concepts led to the conclusion that the physical disorder and dilapidation of the shabby residential districts determined, or helped to determine, the physical and moral condition of their inhabitants. From the 1840s, missionaries, moral reformers, and sanitary reformers, inspired by the tenets of moral environmentalism, launched the housing reform movement in the United States.

Of fundamental importance to nineteenth-century moral environmentalism were changes in thinking about the formation of individual character and, in particular, the doctrine of associations. In their attempts to wrestle with the concepts of moral sense and aesthetic taste, eighteenth century neo-classical philosophers (such as John Locke and Archibald Alison) worked out the notion that mental associations acquired through experiences influenced different aspects of the human character or psyche. From the belief that the sublime, however awesome or terrible, expanded the soul and brought it closer to God came the idea that the external world provided mental associations that could elevate or debase the mental and moral faculties. For example, the associationist thinkers believed that exercise of the mental faculties upon objects of great beauty--such as paintings or natural scenery--improved the imagination (or taste as it was sometimes called) and satisfied the moral sense. On the other hand, according to the doctrine of associations, lack of elevating stimulation and exposure to debasing influences led the moral faculties to degenerate.¹²

Originally theorists considered that elevating associations had the greatest effect upon educated and well-to-do people like themselves who spent time refining their sensibilities by contemplating art or beautiful landscapes. But during the nineteenth century, reformers applied moral associationism more generally and attempted to provide the public at large with uplifting environmental stimuli. Hence, from the philosophical stream of associationism flowed into American life many rivers of reform, including campaigns for asylums, reform schools, prisons, playgrounds, parks, and public schools.

Home, Sweet Home

From the associationist perspective, the ideal living environment was the single-family middle-class house in the country, the antithesis of the slum homes of the urban poor. By the early nineteenth century, American city dwellers who could afford to do so, separated their workplaces from their homes. Even artisans longed for an independently owned house, preferably with servants. Until the luxury apartment building came into vogue, the shared dwelling, especially the boarding house seemed declass  or a sign of immaturity.¹³

From the 1830s a flood of books, articles, and pamphlets stressed that the family and the home were key to a moral Christian life and encouraged the emergence of what historians call the cult of domesticity. In the ideal nineteenth-century domestic division of labor, men functioned as public figures and breadwinners and women as superintendents of domestic affairs. The American Victorians believed that, as a woman, the mother of the household could create a nurturing and uplifting environment for her children and husband. In a crass and stormy world, the mothers would make the home a refuge where the family could pray and grow spiritually. Her moral influence was especially important in regard to children, who were at a stage of life when they were particularly susceptible to environmental influences.¹⁴

Authors, such as Catherine Beecher and Andrew Jackson Downing, wrote popular tracts on the best arrangement, management, and design of the home. Such writers always recommended the detached house where the family could enjoy proper middle-class privacy. In the plans in advice and pattern books, the respectable middle-class house clearly divided into public areas, such as the beloved parlor, and private areas, such as bedrooms.¹⁵

Nature, which according to associationist doctrine exerted a strong moral influence, was thought to be a particularly beneficent force on homelife. Downing was the leading voice among many recommending that middle-class Americans live in the country amidst a properly designed and domesticated landscape in the country or the suburbs.¹⁶

Spiritual Redemption for the City

The associationist philosophy, which celebrated the influences of the family home,

dovetailed with changes in religious beliefs. As traditional Protestant Calvinism eroded, a wide range of American Protestants came to believe in the free agency of the individual, even if most still insisted upon the need for penitence and atonement. Partly as a result, American cities, like the frontier, witnessed a tremendous outpouring of evangelical fervor during the early decades of the nineteenth century. Waves of religious revivals, especially those sparked by the enthusiastic preaching of Charles G. Finney in eastern cities during the late 1820s and 1830s, converted thousands and stirred up religious feeling. The evangelical notion that individuals were capable of redemption did not lessen the idea of sinning (or even for many the notion of innate depravity), but it did shift attention away from the inner qualities of the sinner toward external means of arousing religious faith. To act upon their own sense of spiritual grace and to activate it in others, Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Methodists, and other Protestants launched Bible and tract societies, Sunday Schools, and missionaries to convert the heathen and sanctify the unredeemed.

The changing notions about the means of spiritual redemption contributed to the environmentalist conception of the slum. Early nineteenth-century urban proselytizing efforts first took the whole city as a missionary field, but soon focussed primarily on the poor. Thus, in the 1830s organizations such as the New York City Tract Society and the New York Female Reform Society narrowed their mission from beating back sin everywhere to converting the lower classes in the slums. Inevitably, this involvement with the poor led beyond spiritual instruction to temporal charitable activities, and missionaries and moral reformers found themselves distributing food and clothing and searching for employment for their new wards.

From the start, the Protestant missionary impulse played an important role in housing reform. In the 1840s, Tract Society missionaries served as informants for Griscom's investigation of urban living conditions. From the nineteenth century to the present, church members have imbued the housing movement with a missionary zeal.¹⁷

A New Conception of Poverty

During the early nineteenth century new ways of defining the poor and the purpose of charity led philanthropists and moral reformers to embrace moral environmentalism. In late eighteenth-century England and early nineteenth-century America, mounting numbers of people applying for poor relief stimulated debates about the identity of the poor and the proper response to them. Out of these discussions came the novel notion that the poor could be divided into three categories: the industrious or "deserving" poor; the incapacitated poor--such as the disabled, orphaned, or elderly; and the paupers, the morally degraded poor who were usually too lazy to work and wallowed in vice, crime, and immorality. (Or as Henry Mayhew put it "those that will work, those that cannot work, and those that will not work.")¹⁸

Following this analysis came the idea that the industrious poor should be treated differently than the undeserving paupers. Even before 1820, merchants in New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore had formed anti-pauperism societies to target almsgiving more efficiently. From the 1830s, Britain's passage of the Poor Law of 1834 (banning relief outside poorhouses and attempting to create incentives to work) reinforced new attempts to deal with America's urban poor. In Boston, Joseph Tuckerman organized the Society for the Prevention of Pauperism and initiated a missionary Ministry-at-Large for the city's poor. In 1843 the New York City Tract Society founded the Association for the Improvement of the Condition of the Poor (AICP) as an organization that would reform the character of the poor and thus help the poor to lift themselves out of poverty. Robert Hartley, a leading member of the Tract Society and temperance reformer, became the group's leader.¹⁹

The leaders of the anti-pauper groups were adamant that traditional charity, in the form of indiscriminate donation of money and goods, only worsened the problems of poverty by promoting idleness. They stressed instead the importance of improving *character*. By providing instruction and incentives to industriousness and virtue, Tuckerman, Hartley, and others felt that they would equip people with the means to escape poverty and lead fulfilling lives.

Again the emphasis upon uplift directed attention to external conditions. By the 1840s missionaries and reformers who worked with the urban poor began to use the language of associationism to describe the conditions they observed. Those who were most active in the campaign to suppress pauperism were among the first to blame the physical environment of the slum for the health and social problems of the poor.

An Immoral Environment: Associationism Applied

In the squalid districts of the city, missionaries and reformers believed, the environment provided immoral associations. A lack of "intellectual and moral cultivation," the poverty workers asserted, held the slum dwellers back. Instead, corrupting influences, such as overcrowding, filth, bad air, liquor stores, even profanity, degraded the poor. Their depressing and filthy home life and the presence of grog shops drove men to drink; crowding and the malevolent atmosphere wore women down until they lost their virtue.²⁰

Slumming uplifters were horrified by the living arrangements of the lower classes, who could not afford servants and were forced to use what little space they had for all their indoor activities. Unable to imagine that families' mores might create social spaces where no physical spaces could exist, moral reformers decided that such physical conditions encouraged alcoholism at the least and prostitution and incest at the worst.²¹

Reformers argued that no one, no matter how well off, could withstand these influences. Griscom declared that if you remove individuals from "the [correct] moral atmosphere in which they move, their evil passions will rise." Confine a family to one room and force them "to perform all their personal and domestic duties in view of each other, to sleep, dress, and undress in each other's presence," and "moral distinctions...will be gradually subdued, or overthrown, the heart be hardened against the teachings of the moralist, and the wave of lustful passion become of increased power." (Such circumstances, he believed, were spreading prostitution throughout New York.)²²

In an 1852 article on the dwellings of the poor, Charles Eliot Norton described the "low,

disgusting haunts of poverty" as places where "the passions are early roused and are subjected to no restraint. Misery seeks a short forgetfulness of itself in the gratification of sensual desires. The affections are stunted; the natural instincts become the guides of life." The slum areas, he concluded, had produced "a people more brutal than the savages whom civilization has never approached."²³

Vice, Crime, and Revolution

The reformers liked to point out that by spreading pauperism and immorality the degrading slum environment would eventually threaten the rest of society with crime and possibly insurrection. In the antebellum period the emergence of violent street gangs, such as New York's Plug-Uglies and Dead Rabbits, gave credence to the idea that slums fostered crime and anarchy. The "festering corruptions and pollutions of the miserable accommodations of the poor," wrote Robert Hartley, encouraged vice "which not only leads to crime, but to the formation of 'the dangerous classes,' and the consequent insecurity of person, property and life, wherever they abound." Action must be taken, Norton warned "lest the sea of ignorance which lies around us, swollen by the wave of misery and vice which is pouring from revolutionized Europe upon our shores, should overflow the dikes of liberty and justice, and sweep away the most precious of our institutions."²⁴

Disease and the Urban Environment

As associationist philosophy took hold in the nineteenth century, medical thinking about the causes of disease also moved toward an environmental, rather than an individual-oriented, approach. In particular, the anticontagionist theory, which gained popularity from the 1830s onwards, blamed the physical environment, as opposed to infectious individuals, for certain kinds of disease. Following its tenets, many believed that poisonous miasmas or gases arose from combinations of dirt, decaying matter of all sorts ("effluvia"), and dampness or stagnant waters. Working in conjunction with predisposing causes (chiefly a constitution weakened

from intemperance, excessive eating, and other bad habits), miasmas were thought to bring on the diseases that laid low the urban population.²⁵

Sanitary-minded health reformers investigating urban mortality noted the correlation of the slum districts with high rates of disease. The sanitarians were shocked by the dramatic upward spikes in the levels of mortality that occurred during periods of large immigration and concluded that death rates in cities were rising to unprecedented heights. Frightening epidemics, such as the cholera outbreaks of 1849 and 1866, and persistent diseases, such as tuberculosis, took their heaviest toll in the slums and also threatened the population outside the slums.

Sanitarians were convinced that the primary cause of high disease-rates was the filth of the slums. Reflecting their anticontagionist beliefs, the sanitarians focused on cleaning up the sources of miasma and opening the city to clean air and sunlight. The sanitation agenda included efficient garbage and waste disposal, sewers, ventilation of tenement apartments, water systems, street cleaning, and regulation of public places that generated filth, such as markets, slaughterhouses, and lodging houses.

By spreading the gospel of moral environmentalism, the early sanitary reformers helped popularize housing reform. They inspired missionaries, reformers, and other observers of the poor who repeatedly drew an analogy between the poisonous physical conditions surrounding the poor and their moral state. From the 1830s references to "moral cholera" and miasmas of vice were sprinkled throughout the annual reports of reformer groups and newspaper articles about the squalid conditions of the lower classes. Some reformers, such as those in the New York Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, went further and blamed the darkness, filth, and miasmatic air directly for reducing the inhabitants' "vital energy," lowering their morals, and creating an "uncontrollable craving for artificial stimulants," especially alcohol.²⁶

Ironically, sanitary reform became a permanent part of urban reform even as experts came to reject the tenets of sanitarianism. During the late nineteenth century, germ theory

began to replace anticontagionism in the field of scientific medicine, but by that time environmentalism had taken a firm hold in the emergent field of public health. Historians have determined that although disease and death stalked the poor and especially their young children, it was the arrival of immigrants already weakened by malnutrition, hunger, and disease that caused the sudden rises in nineteenth-century urban death rates. Death rates began to improve before the implementation of sanitary reforms late in the century, probably due to a rising standard of living among the American population.²⁷

Fire, Another Threat from the Slum

Fires that originated in the slums also presented a hazard that extended to the city at large. In the years when fire prevention was primitive, wood construction of buildings was common, burning coal and wood provided heat, and fire was an ever-present danger. In 1860 the New York press vividly reported a series of tenement fires that killed women and children who were trapped on the upper floors. Reporters coined the words "death-trap" and "fire-trap" to describe a shoddily built tenement. During the aftermath, the local newspapers and national publications, such as *Harpers's Magazine*, accused the landlords of murder and condemned the laissez-faire system of building construction that allowed such outrages.²⁸

Housing Reform Solutions to the Slum

During the nineteenth century, many Americans continued to blame the plight of the poor on the poor themselves, or felt that the interaction between personal traits and the environment created a vicious cycle of degradation. Some concluded that the situation of the urban poor required better education or more coercive approaches such as suppressing saloons, prostitution, and gambling.²⁹

But the logic of moral environmentalist thinking led many who were concerned with the plight of the urban poor to embrace the cause of housing reform. If the squalid surroundings contributed to the ill-health and immoral behavior of the inhabitants of the slums, then it

followed that changing the environment might improve the condition of the poor. Hence, in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, missionaries, moral reformers, and sanitarians were in the vanguard of efforts to carry out housing reform measures: model dwellings, sanitation reform, building regulations, and the dispersal of the poor from the slums.³⁰

Model Dwellings

From the earliest days of the housing movement, reformers called for the construction of model dwellings, housing that would replace the inadequate homes of the slums. In *The Sanitary Condition of the Laboring Population of New York*, John Griscom proposed that philanthropists construct housing for the poor. In 1846, the year after Griscom's book was published, a citizens' committee in Boston wrote a report that deplored the living quarters of the poor and suggested that the city's capitalists finance the construction of better homes. In the 1850s and 1860s newspaper and magazine writers, including the poet Walt Whitman, urged the construction of model tenements and lodging houses.³¹

The call for model dwellings soon bore fruit. In 1853 a group of wealthy Bostonians established the Model Lodging House Association and developed Osborne Place. The following year in New York the AICP sponsored the construction of the Workmen's Home, a large apartment building with eighty-seven three-room apartments which were rented to African-Americans, and other projects followed. Although by the 1880s the Big Flat, as the Workmen's Home was called, degenerated into one of the city's worst buildings, the philanthropic model-dwellings movement continued to grow. During the 1870s, Alfred T. White, a devout follower of the creed of housing reform, built handsome apartment buildings for low-income families in Brooklyn that were widely celebrated. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, numerous philanthropic and reform groups became home builders in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Washington, D. C., and Cincinnati.³²

In developing model dwellings, reformers aimed to demonstrate that developing sanitary and sound housing, as opposed to cheap substandard dwellings, could be profitable. They

thereby hoped to inspire commercial builders to replicate the standards of the reformers' model dwellings. The housing reformers considered model housing projects to be business enterprises, not charity which they felt undermined the self-reliance of the poor. Hence, they set rents in the model dwellings that reflected the actual costs of development and maintenance.

Yet reformers also believed that model dwellings were philanthropic ventures that directly improved the physical and moral health of the slum dwellers. Over the last half of the nineteenth century, developers of model dwellings, especially tenement buildings, emulated the methods of the British reformer Octavia Hill, who acted as a building manager, rent collector, and social worker in her London slum properties.³³

Sanitation Reform

In his influential report, John Griscom also called for increased regulation of sanitary and housing conditions. Griscom envisioned what he called health police or health missionaries who would enforce "domiciliary cleanliness" (by denying occupancy if necessary), give advice to tenants about hygienic housekeeping, and function as district physicians. Although New York never established a health police, a public health movement in America's large cities realized Griscom's regulatory goals.³⁴

Responding to the reformers' lobbying groups, press coverage, and a growing popular literature about the slums, nineteenth-century city and state governments organized committees to investigate the conditions in the tenements and back alleys. In 1850 the Massachusetts Sanitary Commission published a lengthy and influential report on public health that marshalled statistics of mortality, pointed to the evils of overcrowded lodging houses and cellar dwellings, and condemned the "moral influence of filth." In the 1850s and 1860s the New York State legislature established several committees to investigate tenement houses in New York and Brooklyn.³⁵

In a related attack on the perilous conditions of the slums, medical reformers launched a

vigorous public health movement for sanitation reform. Griscom in New York, Lemuel Shattuck in Boston, and John Bell in Philadelphia called for systematic sanitation surveys of city districts and demanded that medical experts be given official jurisdiction over public health. In the 1850s and 1860s the reformers campaigned within the Hygiene Committee of the American Medical Association, formed Sanitary Associations in New York (1859), Boston (1861) and other cities, and converted urban boards of health to the cause. In 1872 the sanitation reformers formed the American Public Health Association.³⁶

In the 1860s the sanitation-oriented public health movement scored significant legislative victories. In 1866 under the threat of a new cholera epidemic, the New York state legislature created a Metropolitan Board of Health, a health authority organized along the lines envisioned by Griscom twenty years earlier. The new agency's campaign of disinfection was so successful in halting the epidemic that it garnered praise from all corners of New York.³⁷

Building Regulations

In the wake of Griscom's report and other investigations, New York City in the late 1840s passed a series of laws pertaining to waste removal, the licensing of immigrant boarding houses, and semi-fireproof construction. Yet the city made no systematic attempt to cope with sanitation and safety problems in housing until after the establishment of the Metropolitan Board of Health. Boosted by its success in halting the cholera epidemic of 1866, the board attacked the "evils existing in tenement houses" by first surveying sanitary conditions throughout the city and then enforcing corrective measures.³⁸

New York reformers used the reports of the Metropolitan Board of Health and the angry dispatches about housing conditions from the daily newspapers to persuade the legislature to pass the Tenement House Law of 1867. The first of its kind in the nation, the new act set minimum requirements for ventilation, sewage connections, and fire escapes in existing and new buildings. Soon, Boston, Philadelphia, and other cities copied the New York laws.

Unfortunately, the 1867 law's enforcement mechanisms were weak, and a provision

allowed the construction of the "dumbbell" tenement whose air shafts were soon deemed a hazard. Such inadequacies in the original law only stimulated the reformers to lobby for additional laws. The passage of new regulations reached a climax with the Tenement House Act of 1901, enacted largely through the efforts of Lawrence Veiller, a member of the Charitable Organization Society who had done relief work on the Lower East Side. Veiller included stringent provisions including a prohibition on future construction of dumbbell tenements and requirement to install toilets in every tenement and systematic enforcement procedures. He then disseminated a model regulatory law that was adopted in cities across the United States.³⁹

Dispersal Programs for the Urban Poor

Sanitation and building regulations and model dwelling projects attempted to improve conditions in the slums, but some reformers believed that the ultimate solution lay in removing the slum dwellers from the malevolent environment of the inner city altogether, preferably to a single-family house in the country. One school of thought held that dispersing the urban poor to the West would help dissolve the concentrations of vice in the city and allow individual character to develop on the frontier. AICP reformers surveyed adults they aided about their willingness to migrate to the American West, but found few in favor and abandoned the effort.⁴⁰

Charles Loring Brace, the founder of the Children's Aid Society in New York City, had greater success in dispersing children from the slums. Interestingly, Brace's version of moral environmentalism emphasized social as well as physical influences. He felt that the concentrations of the ignorant and debased poor--which included "evil companions and vile parents"--corrupted their honest working neighbors. In 1853 Brace started the Children's Aid Society to help the colorful street urchins of New York City by establishing industrial schools and model lodging houses, but chiefly to remove children in poverty from "the miasmata of vice and filth" to pure country air that would stimulate them to "virtue and industry."

Accordingly, during the second half of the nineteenth century, the New York Children's Aid Society alone transported tens of thousands to the care of households in the West; Children's Aid Societies in nine other large cities pursued similar programs.⁴¹

Many housing reformers, however, wished to place slum dwellers in the ideal living environment through ownership of a suburban home. In Boston Joseph Tuckerman, the missionary to the city's poor, espoused this view early on, and the author of an 1854 pamphlet, *Homesteads for City Poor*, asserted that single-family homes on the outskirts of town would provide the overcrowded urban poor with "dignity, manhood, moral, and political independence." Others such as New York's reforming minister, Samuel Halliday, heartily agreed.⁴²

Among the champions of suburban relocation of inner-city residents was Edward Everett Hale, a Boston minister well-known for his civic crusades, who believed that suburban houses would do the urban working class more good than the eight-hour day. During the 1860s and 1870s Hale wrote sermons, stories, and articles in favor of a three-pronged program of cooperative building societies, large-scale suburban land development, and special discounted fares for working-class commuters.⁴³

Josiah Quincy, another prominent Bostonian, responded to Hale's proposals by persuading the Massachusetts legislature to pass legislation in 1872 that encouraged railroad companies to offer "cheap trains" at rush hour and by urging workingmen to band together in "Homestead Clubs" to borrow the money for purchasing new homes (and obtaining free commuting fares for a number of years from the local railroad).⁴⁴

One of the earliest suburban projects began in 1849 when John Stevens organized the Industrial Home Owners Society Number One for working-class New Yorkers to acquire cottages a short distance outside the city. The following year Stevens purchased and subdivided 367 acres in Westchester County and sold over one thousand individual quarter-acre lots to the society's members. The members built over three-hundred houses before hard times forced many of them to sell their properties to non-members.⁴⁵

In the 1870s Josiah Quincy organized successful workingmen's housing associations in the Boston suburbs. In the following years, several philanthropic companies, such as Robert Treat Paine's Workingmen's Building Association in Boston and the City and Suburban Homes Company in New York, developed single-family houses in the suburbs for workingmen and their families.

Reformers applauded the idea of the building and loan association (also as a savings and loan association or cooperative bank), which allowed shareholding members to pool their savings and loan them to each other for building and purchasing homes. Building and loan associations were often organized by residents of a neighborhood or members of a common ethnic group as a kind of mutual aid society. Building and loan associations had been organized informally in Boston since 1849--Quincy's Homestead Clubs were a type of building and loan--but in 1877, through Quincy's efforts, the Massachusetts legislature passed a law giving the cooperative banking association legal sanction and form. They were most prevalent in Pennsylvania cities, especially Philadelphia which because of its high rate of homeownership became known as "the City of Homes."⁴⁶

Conclusion: The Turn of the Century and Beyond

In 1890 Jacob Riis, a Danish immigrant and police reporter on New York's Lower East Side, published *How the Other Half Lives - Studies Among the Tenements of New York*, a book that focused national attention on the problems of the slums and galvanized public opinion in favor of housing reform. Using a lively journalistic writing style and powerful photographs that captured the denizens of the urban jungle in seemingly candid poses, Riis vividly portrayed the strange ethnic groups of the slums and the brutal living conditions of New York's poor. *How the Other Half Lives* was immensely popular; it went into innumerable editions.

One reason for the popularity of *How the Other Half Lives* was that it addressed the frightening problem of urban immigrants. Between 1880 and 1920 an unprecedented number

of immigrants, primarily from southern and eastern Europe, the middle East, and Asia, flooded the United States and raised fears among middle-class Americans. Their alien languages and dress marked them apart from the native-born population. In cities the immigrants, many of whom were poor, crowded into unbelievably dense settlements. In addition, the Haymarket bombing in Chicago in 1886 further associated urban immigrants with the specter of anarchy and revolution. In the midst of a perceived crisis about America's cities, and indeed American civilization itself, Riis offered his audience both an analysis and a strategy.

In *How the Other Half Lives*, Riis argued that although the immigrants and the poor had their faults, it was the slum environment that caused their problems. Recapitulating the moral environmentalist thinking that stretched back to John Griscom's 1844 tract, Riis indicted the slum for nurturing disease, crime, and poverty. He carefully mapped the harmful locales--the back alley, the tenement, the stale-beer dive, the cheap lodging house, the saloon, the sweatshop, and Mulberry Bend, successor to the Five Points as New York's most notorious and overcrowded neighborhood--and described their evil results: vicious street gangs, down-and-out alcoholics, poor sewing girls, homeless children, and dying babies.

To solve the evils of the slum, Riis invoked environmentalist reform causes of his day. He called for parks, playgrounds, different kinds of schools, and boys' clubs. Riis made common cause with the moral reformers who championed temperance, fought against prostitution and policy gambling. Within a few years after the publication of *How the Other Half Lives*, settlement house workers would combat the slum through campaigns for better working conditions for women, anti-child labor laws, sweatshop regulation, and municipal sanitary departments to rid the alleys and streets of garbage mounds and animal corpses.⁴⁷

But most of all, Riis cried out for housing reform. Riis began and ended *How the Other Half Lives* with chapters devoted to tenement reform. Citing contemporary studies of the tenements, he decried the housing-related evils of the slum districts: overcrowding, dirt, disease, unsanitary toilet facilities, inadequate light and air, fire hazards, lack of private sinks

and baths, immoral common bedrooms, and wretched home conditions.

Thanks in large part to Riis and the tenacious crusader Lawrence Veiller, housing reform grew into a national movement during the Progressive era. Social reformers, such as Albion Fellows Bacon, a charity worker in Evansville, Indiana who was inspired by Riis's book, became convinced that housing held the key to all other reforms.

From every quarter there was borne in upon me the definite conviction that I could do more for child welfare and for civic welfare, more to fight tuberculosis and typhoid, more to prevent vice and to promote social purity, by bettering the *homes* of our city than by all the varied lines of effort that had engrossed me. I began to notice how the threads of the social problems, the civic problems, and even the business problems of a city are all tangled up with the housing problem, and to realize that *housing reform is fundamental*.⁴⁸

Bacon became so zealous that she almost single-handedly lobbied the Indiana legislature into passing a comprehensive state building code.

Legislatures in the major cities and in states across the country adopted building regulations to suppress the tenement and ensure that the poor would have access to air and light. Housing societies developed increasing numbers of model dwellings--by 1916 the City and Suburban Homes Company accommodated more than 11,000 people in 2400 apartments--in order to demonstrate to the private building industry the correct way to house the masses. As the practice of social work became a profession, it became an important aspect of housing reform through the concept enlightened building management.⁴⁹

The flowering of the housing reform movement in the early years of the twentieth century revealed that the ideas pioneered in the 1840s by John Griscom and so vividly expressed by Riis had taken a firm hold on the American mind. The nineteenth-century beliefs in moral environmentalism, the malevolent slum, and the necessity of housing reform would flourish in the twentieth century. They can be found in the arguments for Garden City-style planned communities in the early 1900s, for public housing during the 1930s and 1940s,

and for urban redevelopment and anti-ghetto programs in the Cold War era.

The nineteenth-century responses to the slum also influenced later efforts to solve the problems of the inner city, although twentieth-century reformers frequently turned to government to carry out their reforms. Having concluded that philanthropic companies were unable to build improved housing at a cost the working poor could afford, reformers pursued the goal of the model dwellings movement through government programs of public housing and subsidies to housing developers and tenants. State and local governments throughout the nation adopted minimal sanitation and building regulations.

The goal of that ideal living environment, the single-family home outside the city, motivated the Progressive-minded designers of several far-reaching programs of Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration. The Federal Home Loan Bank System chartered, regulated, and strengthened the building and loan associations. The Federal Housing Administration offered government insurance for private residential mortgages and helped popularize the long-term, self-amortizing low down-payment mortgage loan. The New Deal also conducted a short-lived experiment with developing Garden City-style suburban towns. Since Roosevelt, the federal government has implemented a myriad of programs aimed at encouraging homeownership for the masses of Americans.

Improvement in housing conditions in the last thirty years has diminished anxieties about physical threats posed by slum environments, except, ironically, in troubled public housing projects. In recent years, housing advocates have become more concerned with affordability than quality of housing. As conditions changed, reformers have increasingly emphasized the effects of the social, rather than the physical, environment of the slums, much as did Charles Loring Brace. They worry that the inner-city environment lacks jobs and good schools and exposes its inhabitants to the dangers of drugs and street gangs. Like nineteenth-century reformers, they support the dispersal of slum dwellers to the suburbs. With the hope that living in a prosperous community will offer opportunities that will lift people out of poverty, they advocate anti-housing-discrimination measures and the Moving to Opportunity program,

which places public housing residents in suburban communities.

Despite the fact that housing reform has become a permanent fixture of American public policy, the kind of blatant expressions of physical environmental determinism are heard less frequently in policy debates than they were as recently as the 1960s. Yet given the pervasiveness of moral environmentalism in American thought, it is doubtful that such sentiments have dissipated. More likely, physical environmentalism has entered a latent state, ready to emerge in the proper circumstances.

Already such circumstances may be in the making. In some areas the massive immigration of the 1980s has recreated the kinds of conditions that spawned the housing movement initially. In New York City, in particular in the Borough of Queens, poor immigrants crowd into attics, cellars, backyard shanties, and cut-up apartments in one and two-family homes, endangered by fatal fires, collapsing walls, and broken toilets. The local newspapers run exposés, criticizing the government's failure to build sufficient low-income housing and to enforce housing codes.⁵⁰

Indeed the environmentalist concept of the slum lies just under the surface of the national consciousness. "I worry about the kids, exposed to such squalid living conditions," Boston's Chief Housing Court Justice recently commented on a government survey of housing conditions in the city. "That's the tragedy of it all. Twenty years from now you put a gun in one of these kid's hands and what obligation does he have to society?"⁵¹

The origins of such sentiments, and the resiliency and vigor of housing reform in the United States, lie buried and forgotten in the middle decades of the nineteenth century when Americans first discovered the slum.

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Notes

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- ¹. James Ford, *Slums and Housing* Vol. 1 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1936), 13.
 - ². New York Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor (AICP), *Fourth Annual Report* (New York: Leavitt, Trow, and Company, 1847), 23.
 - ³. Elizabeth Blackmar, *Manhattan for Rent, 1785-1860* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), 206-209; Richard B. Stott, *Workers in the Metropolis: Class, Ethnicity, and Youth in Antebellum New York City* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), 168-174; James Ford, *Slums and Housing* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1936), I:72-102.
 - ⁴. *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2d ed., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 754-5; Eric Partridge, *Origins: A Short Etymological Dictionary of Modern English* (New York, 1958), 633.
 - ⁵. *Report of the Committee of Internal Health on Asiatic Cholera* (Boston, 1849), 13-14, cited in Stanley K. Schultz, *Constructing Urban Culture: American Cities and City Planning, 1800-1920* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989), 119.
 - ⁶. Carroll Smith Rosenberg, *Religion and the Rise of the American City: The New York City Mission Movement, 1812-1870* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1971), 35.
 - ⁷. Rosenberg, *Religion and the Rise of the American City*, 225-244.
 - ⁸. Edwin Chadwick, *Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population of Great Britain* (1842), passim, 194; M. W. Flinn, "Introduction," *ibid.*
 - ⁹. John Duffy, *A History of Public Health in New York City, 1825-1866* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1968), 302-308, passim; Schultz, *Constructing Urban Culture*, 132-3.
 - ¹⁰. John H. Griscom, *The Sanitary Condition of the Laboring Population of New York* (New York: Harper & Brothers: 1845).
 - ¹¹. Griscom, *Sanitary Condition*, 8-9.
 - ¹². The literature on this subject is extensive, but see Walter Jackson Bate, *From Classic to Romantic: Premises of Taste in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1946, reprint ed., New York: Harper & Row, 1961); Daniel Walker Howe, *The Unitarian Conscience: Harvard Moral Philosophy, 1805-1861* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1970); William Charvat, *The Origins of American Critical Thought, 1810-1835* (New York, A. S. Barnes, 1961; original ed., 1936); Samuel Monk, *The Sublime, A Study of Critical Theories in Eighteenth-Century England* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1960).
 - ¹³. Blackmar, *Manhattan for Rent*; Elizabeth Collins Cromley, *Alone Together, A History of New York's Early Apartments* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990).
 - ¹⁴. Nancy F. Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: "Woman's Sphere" in New England, 1780-1835* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977); Mary P. Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790-1865* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 145-203; Clifford Edward Clark, *The American Family Home, 1800-1960* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 25-36.
 - ¹⁵. Clark, *American Family Home*, 15-71; Catherine Beecher, *A Treatise on Domestic Economy* (New York: 1841, reprint ed., New York: Schocken Books, Inc., 1977), 268-297.

For the relation of the material culture of the house to middle-class culture, see Stuart M. Blumin, *The Emergence of the Middle Class, Social Experience in the American City, 1760-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 138-191; Louise L. Stevenson, *The Victorian Homefront: American Thought and Culture, 1860-1880* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1991).

¹⁶. Andrew Jackson Downing, *Treatise on Landscape Gardening* (New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1841); *Cottage Residences; or A Series of Designs for Rural Cottages and Cottage Villas* (New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1842).

¹⁷. Carroll Smith Rosenberg, *Religion and the Rise of the American City: The New York City Mission Movement, 1812-1870* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1971).

¹⁸. Gertrude Himmelfarb, *The Idea of Poverty: England in the Industrial Age* (New York: Random House, 1983); Henry Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor* (1850-1852).

¹⁹. Paul Boyer, *Urban Masses And Moral Order In America, 1820-1920* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978), 87.

²⁰. Sixth Annual Report of the Central Board of the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches (Boston: I. R. Butts, 1840), 23 (quotation). For similar examples, see annual reports of the Central Board of the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches and the AICP.

²¹. *Report of the Select Committee Appointed to Examine Into the Condition of Tenant Houses*, 5.

²². Griscom, *Sanitary Condition*, 23.

²³. Charles Eliot Norton, *Dwellings and Schools for the Poor*, (Cambridge: Houghton & Haywood, 1852), 6-7, reprint of article in *North American Review* (April 1852).

²⁴. Hartley further argued that it would be cheaper to improve the living conditions of the poor than to pay the staggering costs of police and criminal courts caused by crime emanating from the slums. AICP, *Eleventh Annual Report* (New York: John F. Trow, 1854), 31; Norton, *Dwellings and Schools for the Poor*, 4. See also Charles Loring Brace, *The Dangerous Classes of New York and Twenty Years' Work Among Them* (New York: Wynkoop & Hallenbeck, 1872), 25-30.

²⁵. Schultz, *Constructing Urban Culture*, 111-149; Charles E. Rosenberg, *The Cholera Years: The United States in 1832, 1849, and 1866* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962); Barbara Gutmann Rosenkrantz, *Public Health and the State: Changing Views in Massachusetts, 1842-1936* (Cambridge, Mass., 1972).

²⁶. AICP, *Twenty-Second Annual Report* (New York: John F. Trow & Co., 1865), 38.

²⁷. Stott, *Workers in the Metropolis*, 181-186; John Duffy, *History of Public Health*, 576-7.

²⁸. Edward Lubitz, "The Tenement Problem in New York City and the Movement for Its Reform, 1856-1867," Ph. D. dissertation, New York University, 1970) 158-166.

²⁹. For the wide range of responses to the urban poor and related social conditions during the early and mid-nineteenth century, see Boyer, *Urban Masses and Moral Order*, 1-120.

³⁰. For accounts of nineteenth-century housing reform, see David M. Culver, "Tenement House Reform in Boston, 1846-1898," Ph. D. dissertation, Boston University, 1972; Ford, *Slums and Housing*, I:102-204; Lawrence M. Friedman, *Government and Slum Housing: A Century of Frustration*. Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1968; Anthony Jackson, *A Place Called Home: A History of Low-Cost Housing in Manhattan* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1976), 4-125; Lubitz, "Tenement Problem,"; Roy Lubove, *The Progressives and the Slums: Tenement House Reform in New York City, 1890-1917* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh,

1962).

³¹. Griscom, *Sanitary Condition*, 48-9; Ford, *Slums and Housing*, I: 118-120; Lubitz, "Tenement Problem," 286-292, 299.

³². Charles Eliot Norton, "Model-Lodging-Houses in Boston," *Atlantic Monthly* 5:32 (June 1860), 673-680; Robert H. Bremner, "The Big Flat: History of a New York Tenement House," *American Historical Review* 54:1 (October 1958), 54-62; Rosenkrantz, *Public Health and the State*, 68; Alfred Tredway White, *Sun-Lighted Tenements: Thirty-five Years' Experience as an Owner* (New York: National Housing Association, 1912); Edith Elmer Wood, *The Housing of the Unskilled Wage Earner: America's Next Problem* (New York: Macmillan, 1919). See also citations in Note 30, above.

³³. Culver, "Tenement House Reform in Boston," 142-158; Lubove, *The Progressives and the Slums*, 105-107.

³⁴. Griscom, *Sanitary Condition*, 54-55.

³⁵. Lemuel Shattuck, Massachusetts Sanitary Commission, *Report of a General Plan for the Promotion of Public and Personal Health* (Boston: Dutton and Wentworth, 1850), 266-272; Lubitz, "Tenement Problem," *passim*.

³⁶. Schultz, *Constructing Urban Culture*, 129-149.

³⁷. Lubitz, "The Tenement Problem," 475-490; Rosenberg, *The Cholera Years*.

³⁸. Ford, *Slums and Housing*, I: 118; Lubitz, "Tenement Problem," 490-531, 493 (quotation).

³⁹. Jackson, *A Place Called Home*, 27, 32-35, 37, 61-62, 99-101, 103, 128-130; Lubove, *The Progressives and the Slums*, chs. 2, 4, 5, 6.

⁴⁰. AICP, *Sixteenth Annual Report* (New York: John F. Trow, 1859), 59-66.

⁴¹. Brace, *Annual Reports of the Children's Aid Society* (reprint ed., New York: Arno Press, 1971), especially *Second Annual Report*, 5 (quotation); Brace, *The Dangerous Classes of New York*; Boyer, *Urban Masses and Moral Order*, 96-107.

⁴². Culver, "Tenement House Reform in Boston," 167-169, ; Edward Lubitz, "Tenement Problem," 189-191.

⁴³. Hale's causes included urban public parks and sending "excess" women factory workers to Oregon. Edward Everett Hale, *Workingmen's Homes, Essays and Stories, on the Homes of Men Who Work in Large Towns* (Boston: James. R. Osgood and Company, 1874); Edward Everett Hale to Edward Rogers, Boston, Dec. 20, 1866, Edward Rogers Papers, American Bureau of Industrial Research: Manuscript Collections of the Early American Labor Movement, 1862-1908, Microfilm (Frederick Md.: University Publications of America, 1985); John Potter, "The Debate Over State Subsidies for the Emigration of 'Excess' Massachusetts Women to the Far West in 1865," Spring Conference, New England Historical Association, April 26, 1997.

⁴⁴. Josiah Quincy, *Moderate houses for moderate means: a letter to Rev. E. E. Hale* (Boston: James R. Osgood and Co., 1874); Culver, "Tenement House Reform in Boston," 177-190.

⁴⁵. Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 84-85.

⁴⁶. Clark, *The American Family Home*, 95-96; A. B. Hart, *A Commonwealth History of Massachusetts* (Boston, 1932), Vol. 5: 353; W. A. Linn, "Co-operative Home Winning: Some Practical Results of Building Associations," *Scribner's* 7 (May 1890), 569-577; Culver, "Tenement House Reform in Boston," 183-184.

⁴⁷. For progressive-era urban reforms inspired by moral environmentalism, see Boyer, *Urban*

Masses and Moral Order, 191-294.

⁴⁸. Albion Fellows Bacon, *Beauty for Ashes* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1914; reprint ed. Arno Press, 1980), 163.

⁴⁹. Lubove, *The Progressives and the Slums*.

⁵⁰. "Barely Four Walls--Housing's Hidden Crisis," six part series, *New York Times*, October 6-11, 1996.

⁵¹. Tom Coakley, "Unsafe, Unclean Housing Has City Tenants in Crisis," *Boston Globe*, February 18, 1994.