Introduction

"Our Cities Are Patriarchy Written in Stone, Brick, Glass, and Concrete"

> It was not the custom to build on demolished areas. The modern idea was to get people out into the country.
>
> —**Andrew Beattie,** Dublin Citizens Association (1910)

> The city is becoming conscious of itself as a city of homes . . . as a place in which to rear children.
>
> —**Anna Nicholes,** Chicago settlement house resident (1913)

> There is a revolt of the Working Woman against home life and home cares. . . . Love of a home, however meagre, is no longer the aim and ambition of a working woman.
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> —**Tissie Sparrow,** "In a Woman's Doss-House" (1894)

> In the incipient domestic order—electric, hygienic, eugenic—the drudging charwoman, the futile fine lady alike disappear, and woman at once elemental and evolved, vigorous yet refined, will reappear within her home, and be at once effective in the kitchen and inspiring in the hall.
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> —**Patrick Geddes,** *Cities in Evolution* (1915)

By the mid-twentieth century, the built environments of cities of the transatlantic Anglophone world shared a number of distinctive characteristics. Residential, commercial, and industrial areas were separated from one another. New housing construction favored the single-family, preferably suburban, home. Slum clearance policies had removed many poor, working-class, and minority residents from the center of the city. Decisions about urban development were focused on protecting property values and fostering economic growth. Slum clearance allowed the construction of new types of buildings and monumental public spaces to promote the city's economic and cultural prowess.

These shared features did not arise by chance. They resulted from a discussion within the English-speaking, Anglo-Atlantic world that began in the late nineteenth century and soon engaged participants on both sides of the

ocean on how to reconstruct cities in the wake of the disruptions caused by industrialization. This was a discussion dominated by a comparatively small group of men who wrote extensively, traveled in both the United Kingdom and North America, and organized conferences in both places where they could set forth their ideas about how cities should be built or rebuilt. Eventually their efforts would lead to the creation of paid advisory positions with city governments and to academic positions within universities, both of which they and their followers naturally came to fill themselves. Whether acting as private citizens or professionals, though, these "experts" promoted a vision of the city that imposed a conceptual and geographical division between public spaces, intended mainly for men and their economic activities, and domestic residential areas reserved for family, home, and women.[1]

Though this patriarchal vision of the city was eventually successful in shaping the development of twentieth-century Anglophone cities, it met challenges almost immediately from the women of these cities, who had very different ideas of how a city should work and how it should be built. Just as the men found international audiences for their ideas, so too women in North America and the United Kingdom knew of one another's activities and attempted to implement them at home, often despite the delays and opposition of their male countrymen. Contesting the male vision of cities as places where men made money, these women maintained that the city should function for the good of all its residents.

This book compares the ideas and activities of these activist men and women in London, Dublin, Toronto, and Chicago from the 1870s into the 1940s, the crucial decades for shaping these Anglo-Atlantic cities into their present configurations. The four cities were chosen as representative examples of how, despite different specific historical contexts, shared ideological, professional, and cultural history underlay construction of the patriarchal city.[2] They also demonstrate the role that the municipal governing structure derived from English law, with its tradition of the city as the property of its male economic leaders, played in enabling this patriarchal construction while minimizing the influence of women.

Scholars have recognized that patriarchy—"the promotion of male privilege," as Allan Johnson defines it—has different manifestations in different contexts.[3] Lynn Appleton has argued that "all cities are patriarchal, but neither all cities, nor all patriarchies are the same." Yet "each city has a gender regime that it shares with equally constituted cities."[4] I use the term here to refer to the determination of men in cities to use power to structure the urban built environment to create and maintain both public and private patriarchy.[5]

I am not, however, concerned only with how male leaders of these cities used the power vested in them by urban institutions. I am also interested in women's resistance to men's projects and the underlying ideas of women

acting individually and, especially, in groups. Specific processes of urban infrastructure development—transportation, sanitation, water, and power networks, for example—have been examined for these cities.[6] Scholarship on the impact of the built environment on class, ethnic, labor, and racial groups reveals how different groups of urban residents experience the city as they work, live in, and navigate it.[7] But urban scholarship has largely ignored how ideas about women and proper gender roles shaped the built environment.

Feminist social scientists have analyzed the city as a network of social relations and gender segregation, resulting from a "distinctive relationship between its political, economic, and familial systems," all determined by men. The city becomes "a version of patriarchy" in which the values and behaviors of men are presumed normative and thus embedded in urban institutions and structures to privilege male control.[8] The final result is a city, according to Jane Darke, in which "assumptions about roles and the proper place for different categories of people are literally built into towns and cities. . . . Our cities are patriarchy written in stone, brick, glass, and concrete."[9]

Yet as Helen Jarvis observes, except for observations such as Darke's, feminist analysis "rarely engages systematically with the built environment."[10] Urban historians, for example, generally ignore the impact of gender on decisions about the built environment. Before going further, I need to define how I use gender in this book. First, gender is not monolithic or essentialist. Not all men and all women think and act alike. So, what interests me is how specific activist groups of men and women viewed the city differently and proposed different solutions to its problems. Gender above all is a social construction through which values, behaviors, and norms are determined. History, experience, and centuries of male privilege produced the gendered visions of the city. Women were historically told that the private home was their sphere, and even the lives of women working outside the home revolved around taking care of home, children, and family. As women extended their activities out into the city, they conceptualized the city as a home for all its residents and applied their experiences and that knowledge to the city. Men were historically accustomed to believing it was their role to produce in the public sphere of the city. They conceptualized the city as the masculine space of work and production separate from the home as the feminine space of reproduction. Any threat to this division for men challenged public patriarchy, their power and authority to structure the city as they wished.

Public patriarchy is a historical construction. As bourgeois women moved into the urban market economy of the late medieval period, western men passed new laws that reconfigured "the market as male space." They began inserting walls, hedges, and gates between the house and the street to spatially divide the productive from the reproductive, while simultaneously delineating the private domestic spaces as "those associated with womanhood

containing things made intimate by their relegation to private, hidden, spaces."[11] In the mid-fifteenth century, Leon Battista Alberti contended that the best city would be one planned rationally and scientifically within a structure that placed women in private under control of their husbands.[12]

Choice of subject matter, modes of analysis, and professional practice and training have focused urban studies on explanatory elements other than gender. Overall, urban studies practices what geographer Helen Jarvis terms the "'macro' grandstand views of the city."[13] The macro analysis privileges the work and ideas of men. In the Marxist (or neo-Marxist) interpretation, the city is primarily the site of class conflict and struggles over ownership of means of production and property.[14] Doreen Massey contends that this analysis assumes "that the only axis of power which matters . . . is that which stems fairly directly from relations of production. No other relations of power and dominance are seriously addressed. The fact that patriarchy, for instance, is not reducible to the terms of a debate on modes of production, is not considered."[15] According to Andrew Merriman, even neo-Marxists who advocate a less structural analysis of the city mainly mix gender and race into their existing interpretations.[16] As Liz Bondi and Linda Peake argue, even Manuel Castells's analysis that recognizes the diversity of urban oppositions to capitalism reduces the urban "to reproduction of labour," a spatial unit for reproducing labor power. For Bondi and Peake, this split between production and the reproduction is fostered by looking primarily at "those aspects of the reproduction of labour power that are provided, at least in part by the state." Ignoring how "the processes that ensure the reproduction of labour occur in the home or in the community rather than at the workplace" has embedded a gendered conceptualization of the city in the literature.[17]

Finally, the practices and tools of the building professions designed by men more than a century ago continue to determine the shape of the built environment. Engineers, architects, and urban planners assumed they knew how to construct the city using the tools of their trades. A common result, as architectural historian Lynne Walker contends for that profession, is that "architectural practice is a case study in patriarchal control and economic hegemony."[18]

The quotations beginning this introduction reveal the contrasting gender visions of the problems facing industrializing cities. Those visions of men that would reconstruct the built environment emanated from three ideas about the city. First, many men saw the city as a disorderly space that needed to be controlled and made modern, a situation that could be achieved only if living and working spaces were separated. The city's productive and reproductive spaces had to be physically inscribed by reconstructing a new built environment.[19]

Second, men believed that women were a significant cause of urban disorder. Women were less free to travel, barred from much university educa-

tion or training in new professions such as architecture, and held very few university positions, but they too were communicating ideas across the Anglo-Atlantic world. They were leaving the home, asserting their rights to appear in public, demanding that the built environment be reorganized to accommodate their needs, and rejecting the idea that a woman's only proper place was inside the home. For men, fashioning a new domesticity was necessary for controlling both the public and private disorder of women.

Third, men sought to apply impersonal professional and structural solutions to urban problems. For men, the city was an organism that needed to be cleansed of its diseased parts. It could be reconstructed only using technological innovations wielded by professional men. Women, instead, advocated people-centered solutions focused on how people lived in and experienced the city.

The refusal of men to build public toilets for women, an issue that I develop later for each city, is one example of public patriarchy. Women wanted cities to build public toilets for women, a seemingly benign request, since cities were building these facilities for men. But public toilets would allow women equal freedom to travel through the city and tacitly acknowledge that women had the right to be in the city's public spaces and to expect the city to meet their needs. Men in all four cities strenuously resisted furnishing such facilities for women.

The ideas and activities of London housing reformer Octavia Hill provide another brief example here of urban patriarchy. According to planning historian Helen Meller, Hill "took the urban fabric as she found it." For her, "urban renewal was first and foremost an activity involving people and improvement in the built environment followed from this. . . . Citizenship was a matter of personal caring and urban renewal took place around a healthy community."[20] Hill focused on bettering the conditions in which people lived and not restructuring the city to control them. She believed that personal human interaction across social classes was necessary for a better city.[21] One of Hill's contemporaries, Lord Shaftesbury, who was president of the Society for Improving the Conditions of the Labouring Classes, promoted instead a new domesticity to reorder the city. He claimed that people "were beginning to realize that a nation's happiness was in the domestic system of living and it was impossible to calculate the great good that would result if every man could have a place of dwelling to himself—a home in which he could have the comforts and decencies accruing from such a state of affairs."[22]

From the mid-nineteenth century onward, men feared the city was a disorderly, chaotic place needing massive change.[23] John Ruskin called London "that great foul city . . . a ghastly heap of fermenting brickwork, pouring out poison at every pore."[24] The frontispiece of Patrick Abercrombie's plan for Dublin, "Last Hope of the Night," depicted Dublin with the monster of

death sweeping overhead. For the later modernist theorist Le Corbusier, the city should contain nothing contradictory: everything arranged hierarchically and in its proper place. According to historian Elizabeth Wilson, these were specifically gendered fears of the modern city that were not necessarily shared by women: "Perhaps the 'disorder' of urban life does not so much disturb women. . . . [I]t may be because they have not internalised as rigidly as men a need for over-rationalistic control and authoritarian order." Unlike for many male writers and professionals, for women the modern city brought new possibilities and freedoms for which "modernist women writers" often "responded with joy and affirmation."[25]

Although men and women alike believed that the built environment of the industrial city needed change, they sought different ends and asked different questions about what was needed to reform the city.[26] Helen Meller suggests that women asked "people-centered questions"; they focused on asking what was needed for everyone to live decently in the city: "how to live in a 'modern' city."[27] Women began to ask these questions as they publicly encountered the city's defects and observed its social injustices. Their response was to apply their private domestic experiences to the public city, envisioning it as a reproductive and cooperative living space, the larger home of all who lived there. To make the city a home necessitated the "opening of the domestic to the space of the city" rather than enclosing the domestic inside the home.[28] Lest women have their way, men had to reassert their public patriarchy through new ways to restructure the built environment.

The Disorderly Body of Women

Because the concept of the disorder of women revolved greatly around ideas about women's bodies, this book discusses how the ideas of appropriate norms of masculinity and femininity influenced reconstruction of the built environment.[29] Ideas about these norms produced dualistic visions of the late-nineteenth-century city. The masculine was dynamic, changeable, movable; it embodied gravitas and time. The feminine was the absence of the dynamic; it always lacked something; it was emotional and restricted in space.[30] As the city offered women more freedom, their presence became "a growing threat and paranoia to men." Men were coming to fear the city as a "realm of uncontrolled and chaotic sexual licence, and the rigid control of women in cities has been felt necessary to avert this danger." In her analysis, Elizabeth Wilson argues that for men, women represented the crowd, liable to rush to extremes of emotion; they "represented feeling, sexuality, and even chaos; man was rationality and control."[31]

> The city is "masculine" in its triumphal scale, its towers and vistas, and arid industrial regions; it is "feminine" in its enclosing embrace,

> in its indeterminancy and labyrinthine uncentredness. We may even go so far as to claim that urban life is actually based on this perpetual struggle between rigid, routinised order and pleasurable anarchy, the male-female dichotomy.[32]

Richard Dennis interprets it as "the dilemma of reconciling licence and order, liberty and responsibility that lay at the heart of the planning and regulation of modern cities . . . producing top-down representations of space that translated into responsible spatial practices."[33]

When industrialization "loosened the patriarchal, familial control of women, and provided the preconditions for their greater independence," it undermined the city as a duality of the masculine public, productive space and the feminine private, reproductive space.[34] It gave women more access to public spaces. It brought young female migrants into the cities, many unaccompanied by family. It compelled even married women to join the paid labor force or to bring strangers into board in the private household. Other women turned to street-selling and prostitution. Middle-class women shopped and strolled. Women increasingly represented disorder and a threat to male control of both public and private patriarchy. Women became the sphinx who threatened to devour the city, according to Elizabeth Wilson's analysis of male fears of women in the city.[35] The feminine, for the influential Le Corbusier, had the power to "engulf," "swallow up," and bring "death."[36]

A number of recent works in gender studies recognize the patriarchal nature of the city.[37] In this book I push beyond that recognition to analyze how the intersection of ideas about gender and patriarchy reconstructed the built environment of the city. Women's new public freedom not only intensified "public patriarchal struggles to control women's use of the city as a whole";[38] it produced renewed efforts to reassert private patriarchy through a domestic ideology that "intensified [the] ideal of the wife and mother in the home" in the face of its erosion by enormous economic changes.[39]

Doreen Massey chastises scholars for not realizing that "the public city which is celebrated in the enthusiastic descriptions of the dawn of modernism was a city for men."[40] The deeply rooted ideas of public patriarchy have meant, as Clara Greed concludes, that despite women's attempts to call attention to their ideas and needs in the city, "again and again, mainstream planners seem unable to take in what is said, and continue to make quite basic mistakes because they are just not thinking about women's needs."[41]

Organization of the Book

These four cities provide for excellent comparison because they were sufficiently equally constituted as corporate entities for men leading these cities

to assert their claims to power to reconstruct them as patriarchal regimes. Part I focuses on the unplanned city to provide the historical context of urban development in the Anglo-Atlantic world. Chapter 1 discusses the development of these cities as corporate, chartered entities, with clear divisions between the private and the public embedded in their political and economic structures. Chapters 2 and 3 focus on housing to see the early manifestations of the gendered ideas that underlay differing male and female approaches to the city. Chapter 4 examines ideas of modernity: what it meant to be a modern city and how these ideas occupied male discourse and decision making on reconstructing the built environment and how men used their ideas to marginalize women from the discussion of reconstructing the built environment. By the turn of the century, men were undertaking "purposeful intervention" in the built environment, focusing on infrastructures such "drains and sewers," for example. Such structures, as Helen Meller points out, were "not seen as the province of women," so men purposely shut women out from decisions on such undertakings. By accepting what Michael Batty identifies as "the single-minded force that cities, their developers, the capitalists required to finance them, even the workers and residents that occupy them demand to make their mark: to exhibit their difference from the past," by the early twentieth century, professionally trained men argued that only a comprehensive plan would produce a modern city distinguishable from the past.[42]

The chapters in Part I also introduce women's alternative conceptions to reconstruct cities that would produce a more equitable social infrastructure and guarantee the welfare of all urban residents. Comparing the ideas and actions of women rather than focusing solely on the male arguments for modernity, or on professional men's organizations and plans, or even on women's activities, produces a broader picture of the city, what it would become, and why certain paths were chosen by men to construct the city. It also demonstrates how as men saw themselves as the gender capable of understanding the city's problems, they assumed theirs was the appropriate vision of the city.

Finally, Part I considers the central role played by housing in the struggle over reconstructing the patriarchal city. Housing had deep implications for the public-private divide. Examining how early housing decisions were made, by whom, and the rationales for these decisions provides a crucial entree into the comparative study of urban built environments and the influence of gender.

Part II devotes a separate chapter to each city to examine how the men dominating business, professional, and political institutions directed the reconstruction of its built environment. An introduction to this part identifies the ideas of modernity, the city as a diseased organism, and the concept of creative destruction on which men rationalized their decisions. Each chapter

then discusses how male-dominated professions cast men as the capable professionals who understood the city and its needs. Each chapter also discusses how women attempted to influence the city's reconstruction as men rejected their ideas, marginalized them in public discussion, and exercised their power to construct the city as a public patriarchy. By planning all its concrete manifestations, determining who would have access to municipal services, building new housing forms, and redesigning the interiors of housing to redomesticate women, men consolidated the patriarchal city for the future.

This was not a conspiracy; it was an exercise in power to rebuild the city along the lines desired by men. Each chapter ends with a discussion of the ongoing implications of professional planning and earlier decisions for the city's development through the 1940s. As a recent book of essays on European cities, women, gender, and planning demonstrates, women are still struggling not just to obtain equality in cities but also to have their ideas implemented as municipal policy.[43] The patriarchal city of the Anglo-Atlantic world has remained firmly in place, with decisions about its built environment still shaped by gendered ideas. Men did not get everything they wanted, and women constantly challenged them. But new professional disciplines and practices in architecture, engineering, and city planning and developing academic disciplines in the social sciences allowed men to apply their ideas to reconstruct the patriarchal city.