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Fin De Siecle Diana: The New Woman Discovers the Maine Woods

Nan Cumming MA
University of Southern Maine

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**FIN DE SIECLE DIANA:
THE NEW WOMAN DISCOVERS THE MAINE WOODS**

**A THESIS
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MAINE
AMERICAN AND NEW ENGLAND STUDIES**

**BY
NAN CUMMING**

1996



Figure 1. "On the Trail," postcard (1906). Author's Collection.

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MAINE
AMERICAN AND NEW ENGLAND STUDIES

Jan 19 97

We hereby recommend that the thesis of Nan Cumming entitled "Fin de Siecle
Diana: The New Woman Discovers the Maine Woods" be accepted as partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

Advisor: Ardia Lamon

Reader: Joseph Caputo

Accepted:

Nedada Stetler 1-13-97

Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

Abstract

Women's roles were in flux during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Faced with neurasthenia and other health problems, many upper- and middle-class women accepted the suggestions of doctors and social reformers that they take more exercise, usually in the form of calisthenics and bicycling. However, noise, filth, and other problems found in America's cities encouraged urban women to pursue field sports such as hunting, fishing, and camping as well. The quest for genuine experience in the increasingly artificial and over-populated cities brought many male "sports" to Maine's untamed woods and, by 1890, women joined them in increasing numbers.

This study explores the attraction that the Maine wilderness held for upper- and middle-class Victorian women. I have studied two Maine publications, *Maine Outings*, a bi-monthly sporting magazine published in Portland from 1895 to 1896, and the Bangor and Aroostook Railway's yearly issues of *In the Maine Woods* from 1900 to 1910 to determine how they encouraged female tourism in Maine. *Maine Outings* featured a section in each issue titled "Fin de Siecle Diana" which catered specifically to women's interests. The diaries of Margaret Stevens Allen and Mildred Cox Howes provided the viewpoints of individual sportswomen.

Escape to Maine freed women from some of society's expectations in terms of both their gender roles and personal appearance. The gradual acceptance of women's participation in athletics and adoption of sport clothing signaled women's expanding public position in twentieth-century society.

Table of Contents

List of Illustrations	vi
Introduction	1
Chapter One: A Vitalizing Wholesomeness	15
Chapter Two: Wildwood Charms, Insights, and Opportunities	39
Chapter Three: Feminine, Serviceable, Strong: Clothing the New Woman	88
Conclusion: Returning Home	117
Bibliography	126

Illustrations

1.	The New Woman "On the Trail"	frontispiece
2.	"Diana"	4
3.	Cornelia "Fly Rod" Crosby	6
4.	"Fin de Siecle Diana" masthead	8
5.	Charles Bullen Dunn Doing Laundry	12
6.	Climbing Mount Katahdin	33
7.	Margaret Stevens Allen at Camp	33
8.	Woman Spinning	43
9.	"Women Think Camp Life is Great Fun"	50
10.	Margaret and Neal Allen's Camp	52
11.	"Camping by the Wayside"	52
12.	"The Kitchen"	55
13.	Margaret Stevens Allen	55
14.	"A Deer for a Hobby-Horse"	57
15.	"We are Having a Pleasant Time"	61
16.	"A Fisherman's Luck"	61
17.	"Fishing"	62
18.	"The Game is Small but Plentiful"	63
19.	Learning to Shoot: "There He Is"	65
20.	Learning to Shoot: "Steady Now"	65

21.	"Mrs. Worster and Her Moose"	67
22.	"Diana of the Repeater"	69
23.	"The Modern Diana"	69
24.	"Women's Nerves are Steady"	70
25.	"The 'Gentler Sex' Can Hunt, Too"	71
26.	"Happy Huntswoman"	72
27.	Hunting Pose, postcard	74
28.	"Bringing in the Spoils"	74
29.	"Stevens Rifles" advertisement	75
30.	"Self-Reliance"	79
31.	"Canoeing is a Woman's Delight"	80
32.	Alice Dunn Sketching	81
33.	"Deer Make Interesting Pets"	82
34.	"The Fair Nimrod"	91
35.	Posed women, "Honey Tree"	92
36.	Charles Bullen Dunn and Guide	95
37.	"She Caught This Handsome String of Trout"	97
38.	"They Have No Fear of Wet Feet"	98
39.	"About to Coax a Trout"	99
40.	"Moosehead Salmon and Its Captor"	100
41.	"Lady's Hunting Costume"	101
42.	Hunting Costume	102

43.	"And Now the Huntswoman!"	104
44.	"Youthful But No Tenderfoot"	104
45.	"Steady Now!" detail	106
46.	"The 'Gentler Sex' Can Hunt, Too," detail	107
47.	Abercrombie & Fitch Co. Advertisement	109
48.	Abercrombie & Fitch Co. Advertisement	109
49.	Margaret Stevens Allen in Trousers	111

Introduction

In 1900, American cities were plagued with confusing and complex problems--or so they appeared to the upper- and middle-class men and women who lived in them. Their plight stemmed from growing pains modern America experienced as members of its population strove to build themselves a place in the nation. Young men and women from around the country poured into urban areas looking for jobs in new factories. Seeking similar opportunities, immigrants from around the world flooded the United States in pursuit of a better life than they had at home. These populations crowded the cities, pressuring municipal services and shifting the demographics of many towns from primarily Anglo-Saxon Protestant to Irish or Southern European. Upper- and middle-class residents felt threatened by the "invasion" of foreigners and laborers into their communities and worried about the overcrowding, pollution, noise, and disease which they seemed to bring with them.

The white elites were further dismayed by the desire of many of their female friends to improve their position in society. Throughout much of the nineteenth century, women had been cast as the managers of the domestic realm, while their husbands braved the public sphere and did business in town. This ideal for upper- and middle-class women was known as "True Womanhood," a moral femininity whose care of family, virtue, and respectability were of foremost importance. By the 1880s, however, the reality of women's lives began to tear apart the ideal. Women who sought change and equality with men were labeled "New Women." Many worked outside the home rallying for voting rights, education for women,

clothing reform, and a variety of other social programs aimed at curing the problems of the city. Others simply chafed under the restrictions of genteel gender codes.

Like many late nineteenth-century reformers, these New Women began to see nature as the antidote for the problems of urban civilization. Men and women with sufficient leisure time along with the means to travel tried to escape from the pressures of turn-of-the-century city life by vacationing in the wilderness for at least a few weeks a year. The Adirondacks of New York State, the Canadian Rockies, Yellowstone, the upper peninsula of Michigan, and other rustic, untamed places became popular destinations for a new cadre of "Back-to-Nature" tourists.

Maine soon became a favorite destination among tourists from the eastern United States. Between 1880 and 1920 most of these hunting, fishing, and camping enthusiasts known as "sports" journeyed via a series of trains which took them from their own downtowns through Portland and into Northern Maine. They spread the word about the great wilderness of the "Pine Tree State" and Maine's residents encouraged their perception, acknowledging tourism's boost to the state's economy. Thus, Maine's reputation as a healthy, wild, wooded area was established at this time.

Furthermore, urban dwellers believed that while time had ravaged their own states, it had left Maine untouched. Therefore, Maine also gained the esteem of those elites who sought their escape from contemporary problems by looking to America's past. They fostered a movement known as the "Colonial Revival," and yearned for a time before their country was populated by immigrants other than their

Anglo-American ancestors. In the 1920s, automobile tourism democratized travel to Maine, expanding the numbers of tourists who visited and changing their destinations and travel patterns. Because their experiences force a different series of questions of us today, the automobile tourist will not be discussed here.

Upper-class men started travelling to Maine for outdoor recreation in the middle of the nineteenth century, establishing a tradition which quickly came to include women. In the early 1920s, Sinclair Lewis's character, George Babbitt, explained to his Maine guide why modern men yearned for the wildness of the wilderness. "I tell you, Joe, you don't appreciate how lucky you are to live in woods like this, instead of a city with trolleys grinding and typewriters clacking and people bothering the life out of you all the time!"¹ Middle-class men were constrained in the civilized modern office where they felt pressured to earn more money in the competitive urban and suburban world. Like Babbitt, they might also have felt pressured by the expectations of a status conscious, feminine, and very civilized wife. Men sought freedom in nature and believed that a trip to Maine might cure them of both their mental and physical anguish.

Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, Maine people prepared for the arrival of these world-weary tourists by converting logging camps into sporting camps and offering their services as hunting and fishing guides. Although these camps may have been designed, in part, to help jaded urban men relearn unadulterated "masculine" traits, such as strength, toughness, and daring, the camps were not exclusively male enclaves. Women shared many of the same reasons for

seeking a place in nature. After decades of supposed inactivity for women, doctors began advising them to take some exercise and fresh air. In addition to their anti-urban sentiments, many upper- and middle-class women also journeyed to the woods to seek physical and spiritual wellness.

Women were also drawn to the woods by female icons. Diana, Roman Goddess of the hunt, was a popular figure in nineteenth-century art and literature. Young American sculptors--many of whom trained in Rome, loved classical themes they studied there and chose Roman immortals like Diana for their subjects. Augustus Saint-Gaudens' elegant "Diana" embodies the idealized view that the Victorians held of this sometimes savage goddess (figure 2). America's favorite poet, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, had also immortalized the divine Diana in 1841. In "Endymion," Longfellow referred to Diana's love of Endymion, citing her as a romantic queen whose love was unfettered by the conventions of mortal society.

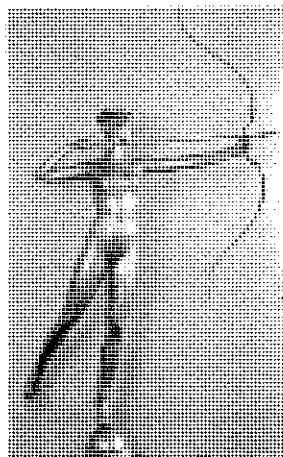


Figure 2. "Diana," Second Version, (1892). Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

A more realistic role model and important inspiration to sporting women was "Fly Rod" Crosby. Cornelia Crosby, known as "Fly Rod" to her fans across the

United States, was Maine's most famous "sport" of either sex (figure 3). Born in Phillips, Maine, Crosby worked as a bank teller in Farmington before her doctor induced her to try outdoor recreation in order to help cure her consumption. Soon, Fly Rod became an experienced hunter and fisher in the Rangeley area, and, because she was one of the first sports to employ a bamboo fly-fishing rod, she wrote about her experiences using "Fly Rod" as a her pen name. "Fly Rod's Notebook" was originally published in the *Phillips Phonograph*, but was later picked up by state and national newspapers. In 1895, she convinced the Maine Central Railroad to sponsor an exhibit on the sporting regions of the state at the first Sportsman's Show in New York City. In Madison Square Garden she erected a log cabin, complete with Maine guides and stuffed game. Tourism to the Maine woods increased so dramatically the following year that the railroad hired her in its publicity department. From that office she coined the phrase "Maine: The Nation's Playground" and planned her exhibit for the 1896 show, an even more impressive success which earned worldwide attention for Crosby and the state of Maine. Maine guides, although necessary in the wilderness, were unregulated at that time and the state's Commissioners of Fisheries and Game began lobbying the state legislature for guide registration. Crosby was one of the most vocal advocates for registration and, when the law passed in 1897, she became Maine's first licensed guide. Throughout her career, "Fly Rod" promoted Maine field sports and women's participation in them. She inspired female sportswomen and, within the next few years, the state also registered Mrs. Mabel Harlow and daughter Ethel Harlow as sporting guides.²

Although women's participation has been largely forgotten today, G. Smith Stanton, author of the travelogue, *Where the Sportsman Loves to Linger*, described their involvement in 1905: "The ladies seem inclined to follow the men to the woods, as they have on the bicycle and golf grounds."³ His publication encouraged women to visit Maine, but he was not the first. Since 1895 travel magazines actively marketed--and sold--the Maine woods to women across the country.

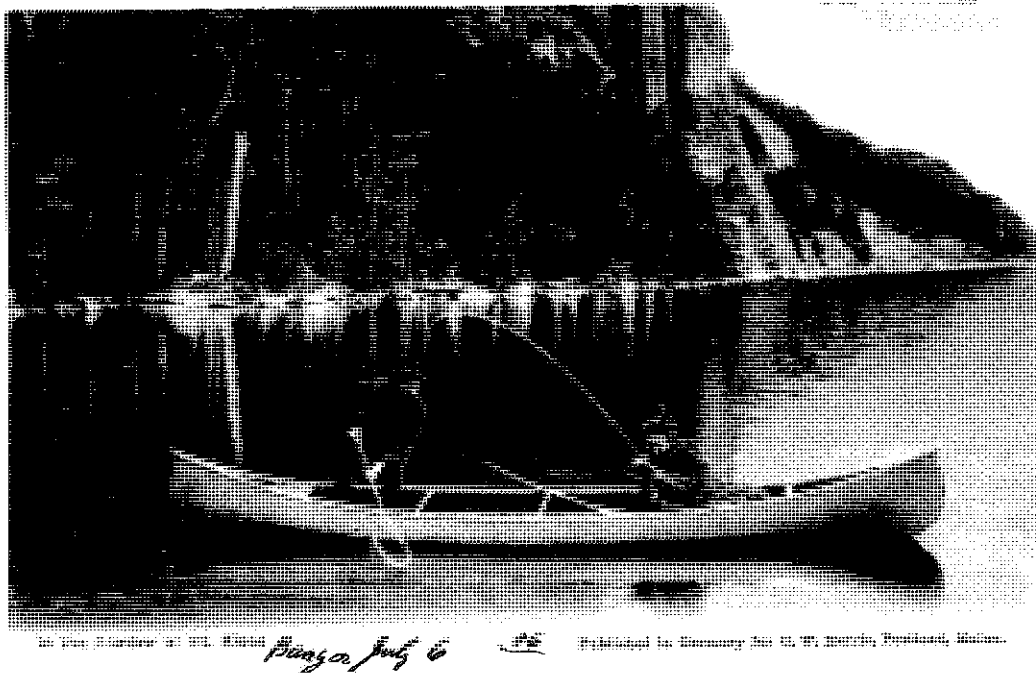


Figure 3 "In the Shadow of Mt. Kineo," "Fly Rod" Crosby, postcard (ca. 1906). Author's collection.

Two Maine publications helped create the sporting industry which targeted New Women. Taking advantage of women's new activity level and general quest for leisure outside the home, these magazines encouraged women to adopt field sports--hunting, fishing, hiking, and camping--as part of her new regime of physical activity. *Maine Outings*, published from 1895 to 1896, tied bicycle riding and

women's collegiate athletics directly to field sports in its editorials about female athleticism. Yearly volumes of the Bangor and Aroostook Railway's *In the Maine Woods*, published between 1900 and 1910, also encouraged female tourists to hunt and fish, but related the experience less to general athletics.

The Maine Outings Co. of Portland, Maine, began publishing *Maine Outings* in March 1895. Subscriptions could be obtained for one dollar a year for twelve issues.⁴ The magazine was also available at newsstands and on all trains running from Portland or Boston.⁵ Judging from the letters to the editor, its circulation covered southern Maine and Massachusetts, with some issues reaching New York, the Mid-West, and even the far West. *Maine Outings* articulated a plan to create a new leisure industry in the first issue. The editors intended "to not only foster and advance those interests...but to *create* the interest where it is not...."⁶ They also hoped to "number many of the fair sex among our contributors, for we do not see why they should not be interested, and they can not fail to see that *Maine Outings* is a useful and practical friend."⁷

Readers of *Maine Outings* were interested. Within the magazine's first year the editors introduced a section written by women specifically for their female followers. Entitled "Fin de Siecle Diana," this section included sporting advice, reports from the field, and fiction based on sports. Although the magazine is illustrated with both photographs and simple line drawings, the masthead for "Fin de Siecle Diana" reveals the philosophy of the magazine most succinctly (figure 4). In the center frolics Diana, Roman goddess of the hunt. With bears and rabbits

dancing with her, she raises her bow and arrow in the air. To either side of her image are contemporary sportswomen; a cyclist in bloomers riding a solitary road, a "gunner" in a hunting suit taking aim at a bird, a fisherwoman in short skirt angling



Figure 4 "Fin de Siecle Diana" masthead *Maine Outings* (February 1896). Collections of the Maine Historical Society.

on the bank of a river, and a sailor in a fashionable sailor suit, at the wheel of a yacht. These new Dianas participate in a variety of sports, wear the latest sporting fashions and, according to the illustrations, pursue these activities independently. Not all articles of interest to women were segregated to this section; this space was simply for those columns of special interest to women such as the continuous and heated debate over the appropriate apparel for cycling and other sports. In every issue writers and readers discussed bloomers, the new loosely cut pants being advocated for women. As a magazine whose primary intent was to sell copies while encouraging sportspeople to come to Maine, the publication had a different perspective than *In the Maine Woods*.

Although *In the Maine Woods* (titled "In Pine Tree Jungles" in 1902 and "Haunts of the Hunted" in 1903) also promoted opportunities for women in field sports, the magazine was published as a yearly advertisement for the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad Company, and its objective was to promote rail travel in Maine. As an advertising tool of the railroad, the magazine marketed outdoor recreation to women as potential customers, without becoming overtly political or focusing more than one article each year on specifically female experience. All other articles were directed at the male audience, mentioning women's participation only marginally. The magazine was heavily illustrated with photographs of both men and women, however, clearly presenting the Railroad's own image of female "sports."

In a time of controversy over changing roles for women, both publications sought to affirm the respectability of women engaging in field sports. They attempted to sell their product to the "New" active women without alienating the "True" woman and her values. The many reasons for camping in Maine fill the magazines' descriptions of women's experiences: the state of their health and physical strength, the spiritual enrichment they might find in discovering nature through field sports; and the freedom they gained to wear comfortable athletic clothing.

The magazines sold the outdoor experience well. *In the Maine Woods* noted their own success. "A lady may make any of these canoe trips. . . . The number of ladies taking these trips is increasing each year."⁸ Although the exact number of women who vacationed in the woods is difficult to determine, guest registers of

Rangeley's Pleasant Island Camps give an impression of the composition of guests at one sporting camp in 1884. Visitors arrived from Boston, Providence, Philadelphia, and Brooklyn. Approximately one in ten was female. Most often, women traveled with their husbands but a few unaccompanied women also registered that year.⁹ Six years later, guest registers from nearby Pickford's Camps show that female guests made up almost two thirds of the visitors from 1900 through 1902. Either female tourism had increased in general, or this camp was more open to female guests. Records show groups of unmarried women registering together and even mothers arriving with their daughters. Like other "back-to nature" tourists, they traveled from urban areas like New Haven, Worcester, and Buffalo.¹⁰ But who were these women? Were their experiences truly reflected in the national publications? The diaries of two women help to provide some answers.

Mildred Cox Howes (1888-1973) was a wealthy Boston resident in her first year of marriage to stockbroker Osborne "Howsie" Howes (1877-1934) when she began her accounts of their hunting and fishing trips along the West Branch of the Penobscot River. She recorded five trips to northern Maine with her husband in 1910, 1913, 1915, 1917, and 1921, including the year Mildred's sister-in-law and her husband joined them. An avid and able traveler, Mrs. Howes also kept journals of her visits to Europe, Egypt, Greece, and Turkey and of camping trips in Canada and Montana. In her later years, she used her camping diary to help summarize her experiences "roughing it" in Maine. Although this document, titled simply "Camping Trips," is undated, her reflections offer valuable insights, opinions, and

memories not recorded in her original journal entries.¹¹

A second diary offers different perspectives. Soon after Margaret Stevens Allen and her husband Neal W. Allen were married in Portland, Maine, they left for the region north of Moosehead Lake, around Northeast Carry and Lobster Lake. They kept a joint diary of their honeymoon trip. Every few days from June 21, 1909 to July 9, 1909, Mr. and Mrs. Allen traded their diary back and forth, recording their adventures in the woods as well as their wry and often humorous observations about their new partner. Perhaps because they shared one journal or even because they enjoyed the sound of their married names, Margaret and Neal often recorded their entries somewhat coyly in the third person using their initials or describing themselves as "Mrs. A." and "Mr. A." An experienced camper, Neal Allen also brought his camera with him. His photographs of their camp and of his new wife enrich the documentation of their experiences.¹²

These diaries and other contemporary sources suggest that, unlike Babbitt, not all men ventured into the Maine woods to assert their masculinity. Many took their wives, even as part of a honeymoon trip. Neal W. Allen enthusiastically recorded the romance he and his wife enjoyed throughout their camping honeymoon. He outlined their first night together: "Retired but not to rest at nine PM!"¹³ Completely alone in the woods for two weeks, without even a guide with them, the Allens could experience the intimacy of true isolation. Not only did they share a diary, but they also read *Adam Bede* together, taking turns reading aloud to one another. The young couple relished the romantic beauty of their surroundings. One

evening, when it was his turn to reflect on their day, Neal Allen began his account, "Startled from peaceful slumbers by the 'Mrs.' to watch the sunrise. Really worthwhile--description not necessary for either."¹⁴

Men might have come to the Maine woods to rediscover their masculinity; more likely they found a release from masculine stereotypes and cultural expectations. In the wild, male sports abandoned many gender traits, taking on whatever roles that nature required. Often, necessity caused men to take up "female" tasks around camp, doing their own cooking, washing, and darning their clothing when their guides could not. John G. Dunn, a wealthy sport from Philadelphia, travelled with a complete entourage of guides and companions but his photographs show that in the woods, the sports did their own laundry (figure 5).



Figure 5 "One of the Ways We Celebrate Sunday," Charles Bullen Dunn. Dunn Collection (1895). Collections of the Maine Historical Society.

Likewise, women who camped in the wilderness, secluded from society's judgments on their behavior, often experimented with actions which would not have

been considered "ladylike." Margaret Allen, who drank very little alcohol throughout her life, joined her husband in a few swigs of comforting whiskey after a rough day in the wilderness. She, and other women like her, also explored the less-gendered clothing options that the wilderness allowed, wearing men's hats, shirts, sweaters, coats, and most radical of all, trousers.

Rather than an essentially masculine experience, the Maine woods vacation offered a temporary freedom from modern gender roles. Such a sojourn benefitted both men and women who yearned to escape from the constraints and expectations of Victorian urban life.

Notes to Introduction

1. Lewis, Sinclair. *Babbitt*. (New York: Harcourt Brace & World, Inc. 1922), p. 241.
2. Kathleen Toothakers, Compiler, *Fly Rod Scrapbook*, Phillips Historical Society, Phillips, Maine.
3. G. Smith Stanton, *Where the Sportsman Loves to Linger: A Narrative of the Most Popular Canoe Trips in Maine, The Allagash, the East and West Branches of the Penobscot*, (New York: J. S. Ogilvie Publishing Company, 1905), p. 101.
4. "Editorial," *Maine Outings*, March 1895 p. 48.
5. *Ibid.*, November 1895, p. 275.
6. *Ibid.*, March 1895, p. 48.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
8. "Enjoying Maine's Waterways," *In the Maine Woods*, 1909, p. 43.
9. Guest Register of Pleasant Island Camps, 1884, Rangeley Lake Region Historical Society, Rangeley, Maine. Because many guests registered using only first initials, hard statistics are difficult to determine. Numbers of women staying at Pleasant Island Camps may actually have been much greater.
10. Guest Registers of Pickford's Camps, Rangeley, Maine, 1900-1902, Rangeley Historical Society, Rangeley, Maine.
11. Diary of Mildred Cox Howes. 1910-1917, Mildred Cox Howes Papers and Mildred Cox Howes, "Camping Trips" [n.d.] Mildred Cox Howes Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Mass. "Camping Trips" appears to have been written after Osborne Howes' death in 1934.
12. Diary of Neal W. Allen and Margaret Stevens Allen, 21 June 1909 to 9 July 1909 and photographs by Neal W. Allen. Collection of the Allen Family.
13. Allen and Allen, 21 June, 1909.
14. Allen and Allen, 22 June, 1909.

Chapter One

A Vitalizing Wholesomeness

Upper- and middle-class Victorians worried incessantly about their personal health. In their attempts to master their bodies, many adopted a three-faceted model of health which they used to account for their general state of well being. The concept contended that human physical health was controlled by biology modified by factors of physical environment and personal behavior.¹ In 1881, George M. Beard, author of the popular medical book, *American Nervousness: Its Causes and Consequences*, defined a principal Victorian complaint, neurasthenia, for his readers following a similar model. He believed that Americans' physical nature was most threatened by their democratic environment, particularly the burden of responsibilities and decisions that America's religious, political, and social liberties imposed upon its citizens. For urban-dwellers, this tension was compounded by the city's poor environment, by overwork and overworry, and by excessive indulgence in food, drink, and sex.

These health models placed a special burden on women. Philosophers, social critics, and politicians had debated the nature, definition, and role of women in American society for most of the nineteenth century. To aid their understanding, they created classifications or "types," such as the "New Woman," into which they divided the female gender. Now scientists joined the exchange as the nature of women's physical body also came into question. The perceived physical weakness of the female body, woman's role in the home, and female sexuality and morality

were now visible yardsticks by which doctors and the Victorian woman herself measured her chances of good health. Because her nature was also under scrutiny and she had less social and political power with which to defend herself, the biology/environment/behavior model of health left women at the mercy of misguided physicians and zealous social reformers.

Because nineteenth-century medical thought emphasized the importance of the uterus, doctors concluded that women were endowed with a biology which presented far greater risks than men's. Scientists believed that a woman's uterus was connected, through her nervous system, to all functions of the female body.² Therefore, each emotional upset or excitement which affected her nerves could result in any variety of illnesses--all of which were rooted in the womb. Without such a potent "conductor," men did not stand such a risk of agitation-caused disease. Consequently, the Victorian mind reasoned that men suffered from a variety of ailments derived from a variety of causes, but almost every disease which affected women stemmed from uncontrolled emotions which had compromised the well being of her sensitive female body.

Although belief in widespread female invalidism had arisen before the mid-nineteenth century, this conviction lacked scientific verification. In Boston, women's life expectancies remained higher than men's. Yet their smaller stature, less developed muscles, and conductive sexual organs were enough evidence to convince most Victorians that women's biological endowment meant a distinctive frailty, weakness, and vulnerability to sickness and neurasthenia.

In *American Nervousness*, George M. Beard summarized the findings of many Victorian doctors who had studied nervous disorders. He argued that his patients' symptoms of anxiety, insomnia, irritability, pains, fatigue, irrational fears, and compulsive or inadequate sexual behavior were caused by an inherent weakness of the nervous system. He believed men and women were born with varying amounts of "nervous force." Unlike some other medical writers, Beard did not view neurasthenia as a moral problem. Comparing people to batteries, Beard suggested that their reserve forces could be depleted when challenged by either environmental or emotional factors and the result was a legitimate medical complaint. Although he discussed the problems of both men and women, Beard too believed that women's sexual organs put them at greater risk of illnesses associated with neurasthenia. During childbirth, he reasoned, the general strain of nervous exhaustion made the womb and perineum much more susceptible to tearing and laceration which might cause a "prolonged, and even life-enduring illness."³ Yet biological endowment alone did not condemn women to a life of poor health. Writers such as Beard believed that the two other factors of health, environment and personal behavior, would either improve or worsen women's precarious physical state.

Dr. Beard, along with other physicians and their patients, detected numerous threats to female health in America's modern urban environment. Technology was transforming Eastern cities at an alarming rate. Within a period of only ten years during the late 1880s and 1890s, Boston gained electricity for light, power, communication, and transportation. Telephone use dramatically quickened the pace

of the city while its residents struggled to respond. Beard criticized the tempo of the modern city and blamed the new popularity of clocks and watches for contributing to American nervousness. "Punctuality," he asserted, "is a greater thief of nervous force than is procrastination of time."⁴ An even more effective contributor to this change of pace was the introduction of electrified railways. These trains not only altered how men got to work, but the faster travel offered them the freedom to live farther from the office. Their move away from the crowded inner city to the outskirts of town furthered the split between the suburban household and the urban workplace.

For middle-class women, the changes were especially unsettling. New electrical appliances, designed to make housework quicker and easier, often made simple chores more complicated. Reliance on modern technology in the home placed new burdens on women as they now worried about the means of attaining the appliances and having to re-learn almost every household task which she thought she had mastered long ago. Some observers blamed such "labor-saving devices" for further harming women's health.⁵ Older methods of washing and wringing clothes, scrubbing floors, and sweeping had provided exercise for women. Although few "True Women" would have viewed their chores as calisthenics, these activities provided regular physical exertion and movement for all but the most wealthy of American women.

Needy working-class, immigrant women, without the aid of the new cleaning inventions, certainly worked hard in the home and derived those important physical

benefits, yet upper- and middle-class urban dwellers viewed these foreign women and their families as a further health threat. Like many eastern cities during the nineteenth century, Boston's population grew dramatically, almost doubling between 1820 and 1860.⁶ The majority of these new inhabitants were European immigrants who lived with large families in crowded tenements. A number of experts believed these housing conditions produced impure air and spread disease, thus jeopardizing the good health of everyone in the city.

Clearly, racism and prejudice generated the fear and disdain that many Anglo-Americans felt for the new immigrants. Fearing the loss of a "national" culture, they exalted their own Anglo-Saxon past and drew racist notions of white superiority. Their notions were threatened by contact and intermixing with the Irish, Italians, and other new citizens. But Darwinian ideas about evolution influenced their thinking about health in another way too. As their cities became more difficult to maneuver and more stressful to endure, these upper- and middle-class Anglo-Americans believed good physical health was essential for the continuation of their race. In a difficult environment only the strong survive and they, especially the Anglo-American women, would need to be fit and healthy enough to meet the demands of city life. Urban dwellers desired general good health, not merely to defend against illness, but as an antidote for urban life.

Many men and women sought respite from the city by visiting local parks, such as those recently developed by Frederick Law Olmstead and his sons in New York and Boston. Other Easterners travelled to the countryside to enjoy the clean,

fresh air during a picnic or some other social gathering. Extended vacations to the Adirondacks or New Hampshire's White Mountains became popular with families who could afford the trip. Realizing the potential of their state, Maine's tourism promoters introduced the Maine woods as the ultimate escape from urban ills, endowing the region with all the attributes of a healthful, wild arcadia. Maine's invention as a healthful region began in the 1830s when tourists from Boston, New York, and Philadelphia first discovered Maine as a hunting and fishing utopia. By 1895 the Ricker brothers had firmly established Poland Spring as a mecca for those tourists seeking healing waters, contributing to the state's reputation for being pure, clean, and rejuvenating. Promoters of northern and central Maine claimed that the woods held curative properties for both men and women, making good health a paramount reason for vacationing in the Pine Tree State.

Both *Maine Owings* and *In the Maine Woods* used improved health as one of their strongest arguments for vacationing in Maine. Sportsman G. Smith Stanton appears to have written his travelogue, *Where the Sportsman Loves to Linger*, as a comprehensive medical prescription for his readers. His 1905 preface stated that he had "made many canoe and hunting trips through the woods of Maine and knows the benefit to health derived therefrom, and if this narrative is the means of restoring the health of even one reader, the object of its production will be attained."⁷ J.

Madison Taylor, a doctor from Philadelphia, preached a similar message in his 1908 article, titled "The Maine Woods as a Health Resort," published in *In the Maine Woods*: "Not only have I sent many overwrought men and women into these Maine

woods, who now call them and me blessed for their deliverance, but I have seized every opportunity which I could make mine to myself do likewise."⁸ Both travel writers and doctors described Maine as nature's "sanitorium," claiming a stay in the Maine woods would clear asthma, hayfever, poor digestion, and consumption.⁹

Part of Maine's identification as a healthful place was accomplished by its juxtaposition to the city, which was increasingly being described as "unhealthy." Beard for example was very concerned with the ill effects of dry, indoor air on his nervous patients. Although bad air would not produce disease itself, it could stimulate it.

When a nervous American is shut up in bad and overheated air, he becomes more nervous; his face perhaps flushes, his head aches, there is a sensation of suffocation and vague misery that finds quick relief on getting into the open air, and in all directions there...[are] ...injunctions to live as much as possible out of doors, and to get away from cities and city life are among the truisms of modern science.¹⁰

Scientists were not alone in suggesting that Maine offered respite and relaxation in clean, calm, unhurried surroundings. A contributor to *In the Maine Woods* wrote in 1908 that, "as a rest from the nervous life of the city, nothing more perfect can be sought than the magic of the woods...."¹¹ Ten years earlier, a *New York Sunday World* article about Cornelia "Fly Rod" Crosby concluded her message to urban women with the observation that, "If Fly Rod had her way all New York women would quit the city, travel to Maine, become fly-fisherwomen and get strong."¹²

Leaving the city for one of Maine's tourist resorts would not necessarily restore one's health, however. The state's many "watering holes" on the coast and

inland were unanimously criticized by those who praised the woods. "The vacation...which offers merely a change of base from hustle and late hours in the city to hustle and late hours at some fashionable resort fails to bring rest and recuperation...."¹³ Although these resorts might boast the same fresh air and natural bounty as the woods, the built environment and social whirl of casinos, dance halls, parties made these tourist meccas not very different from home, with all of its competition and anxiety. These pockets of civilization and worldly society would not cure anyone's ills.

In contrast to the materialism of Maine's resorts, tourism promoters used almost spiritual terms to portray the naturally healthy environment of the woods and wilds of the state. Fly Rod Crosby claimed she felt "nearer heaven in the woods."¹⁴ Indeed, the forest itself, as opposed to Maine's streams, lakes, or mountains, inspired most writers' health claims. Perhaps in comparison to ornate Victorian architecture or the new industrial smoke stacks, which urban dwellers had become used to seeing tower over them, Maine's essentially untouched trees became a symbol of the state's many healthful environmental qualities. One correspondent described Maine's woods as "large, roomy, impressing one unceasingly with their healing, isolation, always with their vitalizing wholesomeness."¹⁵ Trees took on a divine quality making them comparable to a convent or sanitarium. Words like "restful, invigorating wilderness"¹⁶ were used by enthusiasts to describe the sanctity of the forest. A female correspondent described her cabin at camp: "In the rear," she wrote, "stretches a primeval forest of pines and cedars, fragrant and health-

giving,"¹⁷ as if she expected to inhale better health during her stay. But a visitor needn't be in the forest; merely being close to nature might help one absorb its goodness. Maine was even likened to a lady by one writer who suggested that changing weather patterns might also improve one's health. "Nothing...is more completely revivifying and strengthening to nerves and muscles than to bivouac with nature and enjoy to fullest extent her varying moods and aspects."¹⁸ Short on specifics, these narratives suggest that their authors believed the environment itself could heal the sick.

For many correspondents female illness was foremost in their minds and, agreeing with doctors that the bulk of women's distress derived from nervousness, they addressed female nerves directly. Stanton described the state as a cure for problems caused by nervousness such as poor appetite and indigestion and claimed that these "imaginary evils" could be relieved because in Maine, "morbid thoughts give way to pleasant reflections." Fly Rod Crosby agreed that the woods were especially beneficial to her female readers. She assured them, "The pine woods and nervous prostration never go well together...."¹⁹ Both Stanton and Crosby also believed that Maine could subdue women's nervous problems stemming from rivalry and middle-class Victorian social climbing. Stanton targeted nervous women noting that, "Woman's jealousy of woman has no abiding place in the woods of Maine."²⁰ Fly Rod Crosby was equally blunt in her assessment of women's flaws, stating that, "Women are jealous and spiteful, I'm afraid, and the woods will cure them of this."²¹ Despite her critique of their character, Crosby offered her readership a

healthier alternative to their problems than they had probably tried before. Many Victorian women who suffered from nervous illnesses turned to drug- and alcohol-laced concoctions to ease their torment. In 1900, a writer for *In the Maine Woods*, referred to women's dependence on these narcotics when he commented that the woods are the "greatest of vitalizing tonics....No other stimulant is needed."²² Beyond their attempt to bolster Maine tourism, these writers joined the myriad of doctors and reformers who recommended diverse forms of sometimes unconventional nature cures, offering women hope of relief from their mental and physical anguish.

Yet a woman need not be ill to benefit from Maine's powers. "The Maine forest is a place where sick women grow well and well women accumulate muscle and happiness....,"²³ raved another *In the Maine Woods* reporter. For these women, the atmosphere they found in the Maine woods seemed to have restorative properties equal to whatever was in the waters found at Poland Spring and the other popular Victorian health spas.

Other writers cited the more tangible restorative properties tourists would find in Maine. Many list the "ozone-laden" air as one of Maine's greatest advantages, doubtless in contrast to the polluted air to which these city-dwellers had become accustomed. Promoters promised that the number of red corpuscles in a visitor's blood would multiply through contact with such ozone-rich air. In turn, this enriched blood brought increased physical and mental energy, precisely what confused urban women, anxious over the competitiveness of city life, needed.

Along with living outside and enjoying good air, the rhythms of the camp life offered vacationers further rehabilitation. As a poetic *In the Maine Woods* editor told his readers, "Deep in the woods...where nature sets an early bedtime and where the glories of an early morning sunrise are too magnificent to be missed, genuine rest is had for mind as well as body. . . ."24 This counselor's "early-to-bed" wisdom, much less passive than other writer's descriptions of Maine's healthful atmosphere, required a commitment from the camper to change her life and actively cultivate improved health in the woods.

Victorians scrupulously sought to control personal behavior, the third and final factor of their model of health, as they pursued well being for their communities and for themselves. The disruption of technology, immigration, and social upheaval prompted writers, educators, cultural critics, and the clergy to attempt to bring order to middle- and upper-class society by introducing methods of control. Much of this guidance came from etiquette advisors who devised strict rules of conduct which came to govern all aspects of social interaction. These rules made society seem more manageable, yet Victorian women still felt anxious about the turmoil of changes around them. Many women were convinced that if they could regulate their own lives, they too could be well. While functioning within sanctioned boundaries might give the appearance of well being, it was women's internal struggles which appeared to threaten their health.

Many doctors believed that health problems, especially women's, could derive from moral failures. Because most doctors and reformers believed women

were less able to control their emotions and their bodies than were men, female behavior--from hygiene to exercise to sexual functioning--was scrutinized far more rigorously and became the subject for countless books, articles, and pamphlets published throughout the Victorian era. Women believed it was essential for them to control their behavior as well as their emotions. Dr. Beard blamed such repression of feeling for contributing to neurasthenia, stating that corporeal excesses would only cause nervous diseases in a "soil that has been prepared by civilization."²⁵ But Beard was in the minority in his belief, and self discipline became the prevailing formula for personal and social health. Each woman accepted personal responsibility for her conduct and its consequences on her body.

Although George Beard defined neurasthenia as a physical illness, his contention that it stemmed from American society fueled the debate over women's changing roles in the Victorian world. Beard postulated that a harmful relationship between social organization and mental health had grown in America. The very liberties upon which the country was founded offered its citizens too many choices in their social, political, and religious lives. He argued that groups whose freedoms were limited, such as Russian peasants or Catholics under Vatican rule, did not suffer from neurasthenia. Some doctors used this line of reasoning to place the blame for women's illnesses on the poor choices these women had made. Many doctors charged that neurasthenia and related nervous illnesses resulted from the "New Women's" indifference to marriage and motherhood or from women's "intrusion" into the male intellectual and public world.²⁶

The "rest cure," which Philadelphia doctor Weir Mitchell, among others, recommended to these women, immersed them in complete passivity, putting the female patient under her doctor's--and society's--control. Such a rest cure was the basis for Charlotte Perkins Gilman's tortured short story "The Yellow Wallpaper." Like many women, Gilman had followed the advice of Catherine Beecher, who recommended physical fitness for women who wanted to function better in their roles as wives and mothers. Although Beecher was her aunt, Gilman took the suggestions still further and became a follower of William Blaikie, whose 1879 *How to Get Strong and Stay So* advocated running, gymnastics, and weight training for women. After marriage and pregnancy forced her to withdraw from her active gymnastic program, and from society in general, Gilman experienced the first of her bouts of depression. Many modern scholars believe that Gilman's illness, diagnosed as neurasthenia, was the price she paid for abandoning her own interests in order to conform to Victorian standards of virtue.²⁷

Other social commentators found fault with the very clothing women wore, claiming that their choices indicated further moral weakness. All the fashions of the late Victorian era depended on structured undergarments to enforce an exaggerated silhouette on the female body. After the huge hooped skirts of the Civil-War era, attention shifted to the back of the dress, emphasizing a woman's derriere. In the early 1880s, fashionable women wore bustles which were increasingly large, heavy, and difficult to maneuver. This silhouette also relied upon a clearly defined waist to complete its manipulated feminine curve. By the middle of the 1890s, styles had

shifted again and women adopted the "hourglass figure," with its huge sleeves and wide skirts. A waist made tiny with the help of a corset continued to be the look most women desired. Although they defended their highly structured undergarments as an important part of their feminine modesty and decency, women's slavish adherence to such burdensome and even ridiculous apparel was criticized by two distinct and opposing factions.

Social conservatives censured female frivolity and the vanity which led women to wear corsets. These thinkers defended the "True Woman," and her role as the guardian of the home. How could she fulfill her childbearing and caregiving duties while wearing such excessive clothing? Conservatives blamed the corset for a variety of health traumas including harm to the fetus of a pregnant woman. Although corset-related internal disorders have been established, costume historian Valerie Steele makes the distinction between regular corset use and the practice known as "tight lacing."²⁸ The extremely small waists (12 to 18 inches) depicted in Victorian literature were largely exaggerated, the boasts of young women or the fantasies of a small but vocal group of fetishists. These extremely small waist measurements and the kind of lacing required to reach them sounded as alarming then as they do to us today and, to conservative, Victorian minds, fashionable, tightly-laced women were not only unhealthy, but frighteningly radical. Corset extremists, who appeared to value fashion over their role in the proper Victorian home, were as threatening to traditional values as those women who sought higher education and suffrage. Many clergymen and doctors urged women to reject the

artificial laws of fashion in favor of a natural beauty.

Feminists supported natural beauty as rebellion from a society which they believed immorally encouraged women to force their bodies into unnatural shapes by the use of painful and harmful undergarments. These reformers targeted the corset as a physical symbol of female confinement and oppression. Many of the same women who fought for women's suffrage also supported dress reform and the two movements have been philosophically linked ever since. Yet many women who supported dress reform had health rather than political motives. *Maine Outings* editor Clara Marcelle Greene described her female readers as "deformed" and "impoverished." "You are wholly abnormal," she claimed. Greene blamed restrictive dress for causing the "loaded hips, compressed waist, crowded heart, stomach, lungs, and liver" which hindered their movement and kept them from true health and fitness. From opposing directions and for many different reasons, female fashions evoked passionate criticism. Women were blamed for foolishly selecting clothing which made them feeble and inactive.

By the 1880s, much of society no longer considered female weakness to be as healthy or fashionable as it had seemed earlier in the century. Doctors and social reformers cautiously began to recommend that women improve their bodies by modifying their passive behavior and adding controlled exercise to their lives. As more women embraced physical activity, the popular press defined these "New Women" in large part by their increased participation in athletics. The idea had its skeptics, however. Dr. Beard stressed that without careful restraint, women's quest

for improved health through workouts with Indian clubs, dumbbells, and the like might sap their precious supply of nervous force.²⁹ Fifteen years later, *Maine Outings* was more optimistic in its discussion of the potential for women's physical strength. Clara Marcelle Greene began her commentary on "The Feminine Physique" by speculating that some of the causes for women's present "enfeebled" state were "surrounding circumstance, low standards, starved virility, or generations of puerility...."³⁰ She told her readers that physical strength was not an exclusively masculine trait and developed her argument for the physical fitness of women by citing cases in history when groups of people have become physically impaired by being denied fulfillment of their potential. In today's enlightened age, she contended, women recognize their possibilities and "feminine restlessness" is the result. In her view, only physical development would relieve the strain caused by the limitations American society placed on women's mental and physical powers.

In February, 1896, Greene took over as editor of the "Fin de Siecle Diana" department of *Maine Outings* where she continued to take advantage of historical arguments and Colonial Revival sentiment in her promotion of female fitness. Describing American women of the Colonial period calmly embroidering dimity while their fathers, husbands, and brothers were ambushed and massacred by Indians, she claimed Victorian women have the heroic qualities needed to perform better. She believed a modern female "lacks only the occasion, and--alas, the physique!"³¹ *Maine Outings* consistently encouraged physical culture for women, devoting pages not only to hunting, fishing, and camping but also to bicycling,

skating, horseback riding, and mountain climbing. Judging from their increasing prominence in each issue, these articles appear to have been a popular part of the magazine.

Although exercise in the form of calisthenics or gymnastics, or even bicycling and golf, might be available at home, *Maine Outings* praised the variety and "richness" of physical activities and the variety of exercise available to female readers who traveled to Maine. The magazine advanced the now popular notion that combinations of different kinds of exercise are necessary for total body fitness. One advocate recommended a Maine "wilderness cure" to his readers. He defined this cure as "a continuous life of physical activity in the woods,...the constant exercise of all the muscles of the body and not merely of a few, as in the city."³² Cornelia "Fly Rod" Crosby herself was first induced by her doctor to participate in field sports in order to cure her of consumption and anemia and to help strengthen her body which her doctor had described as "soft of muscle."³³ She spread the word of her recovery throughout the rest of her life. The *Washington Times* quoted her in 1896: "There is no reason in the world why women should not do their fair share of hunting, fishing, and tramping, and be all the better and stronger for it."³⁴

Those women who heeded Fly Rod's advice exerted themselves in varied activities each day they spent in the Maine wilderness. Sportspeople might hike miles in pursuit of a deer or to reach a favorite fishing pond. Women who preferred to enjoy nature peacefully were no less vigorous; they might paddle their canoe or climb a mountain (figure 6). In her journal Margaret Allen describes a

long walk to West Branch Carry from the remote campsite she and her husband shared. She estimated their journey at ten miles round trip, but the rough roads caused the walk to take virtually all day.³⁵ Less than one week later, in search of fishing grounds, they dragged and carried their canoe through a cedar swamp to Lobster Lake.³⁶ The next day they shared a far more rigorous walk through wet, boggy terrain which Allen called "mostly bad." That afternoon their trek worsened still as they hit another swamp, "almost a lake in itself." Although Allen admitted that at this point, because of the excessive difficulty of the hike, she "lost all control of herself," upon arrival at Ragged Lake she could see that it had been "well worth the walk" and on their homeward hike she "plunged bravely and cheerfully through the swamp."³⁷ Not all her exercise came from walking and paddling, however. As their photographs demonstrate, Mr. and Mrs. Allen, without a guide, looked after themselves, benefitting from that exercise derived from "housekeeping" without modern--indeed any--conveniences (figure 7). Allen explained that scouring their fry pans clean with sand provided "good development of muscles."³⁸

Even with the help of a guide, women lived far more rigorously at camp than at home. Mildred Howes describes canoeing from lake to lake looking for good trout fishing, pulling apart the beaver dams which blocked their way. Howes also walked 12 to 15 miles over "very tough trails" to return to camp when their trip was over.³⁹ For an upper-class woman to embark on a 15-mile walk through Boston would be peculiar and possibly dangerous. In Maine women could freely enjoy strenuous outdoor activities away from the limitations of their neighborhood.

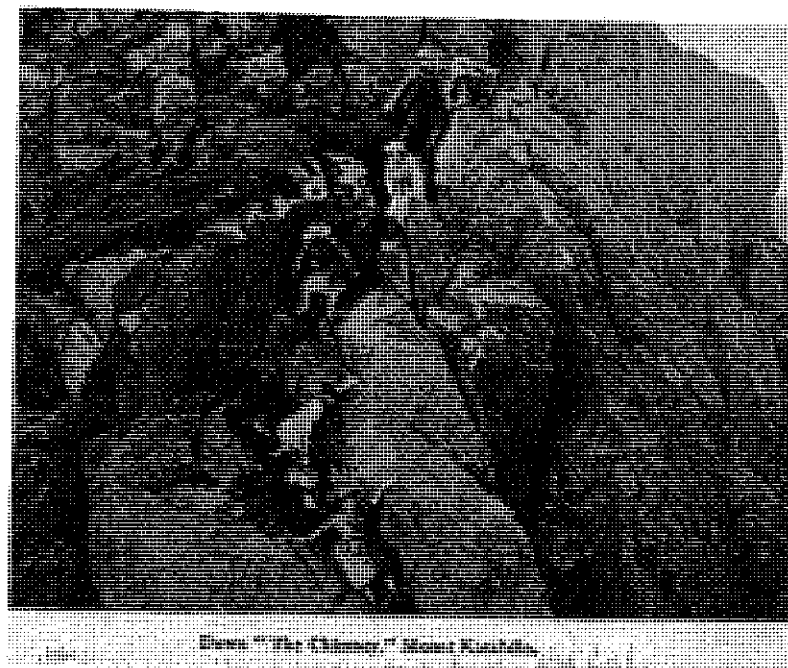


Figure 6 Down "The Chimney" Mount Katahdin, *Haunts of the Hunted* (1903). Author's collection.

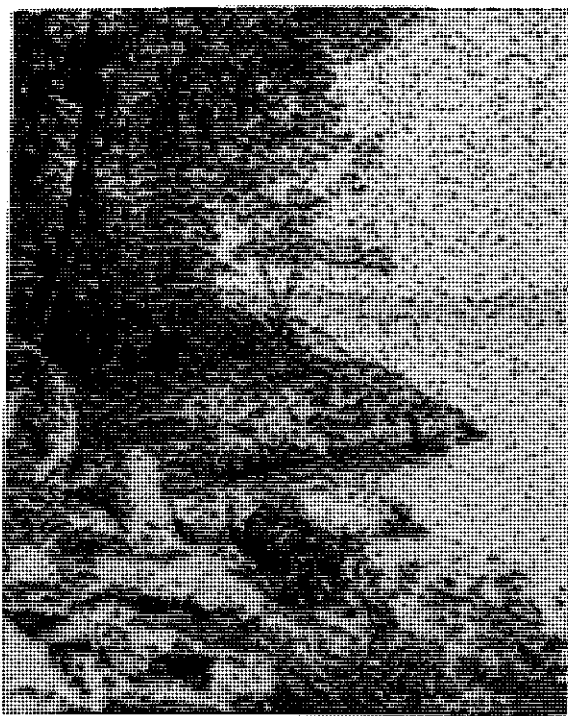


Figure 7 Margaret Stevens Allen, 1909. Collections of the Allen Family.

In contrast to exercise available in town, the Maine wilderness provided a place for sport in a wild environment, offering a revitalizing playing field for even the most delicate of women. Mary Alden Hopkins, in her promotional article, "Women in the Woods," seemed to attribute miraculous motivational powers to the Maine woods as she described an affliction common to inactive Victorian women: "the invalid...finds herself attempting short walks...she will soon be tramping with the hunters...."⁴⁰ In 1895, contributor Ida May described a similar experience in Maine's rejuvenating refuge. While fishing, she forgot her "semi-invalidism" as she battled with the fish on her line, discovering the "keen joy of...my own power" in the process.⁴¹ By providing fresh challenges along with its fresh air, Maine allowed women to attempt things they would not try at home. In this atmosphere, women were not discouraged from venturing out; rather, men and women encouraged their frail female friends to experiment and play.

From the beginning of the Modern era women came to Maine searching for an antidote to their urban ills. Most women believed that the inferior air and stressful, hazardous conditions of their cities combined with poor behavior patterns to produce the ailments to which the female body was prone. Upper- and middle-class women were able to take control of their lives and change their own environment and habits, at least temporarily, while they vacationed away from the city. They discovered in Maine's forests "a sanatorium, playground, hunting and fishing ground all in one."⁴² There, they could pursue health and fitness in a pristine landscape away from the pressures of their everyday lives. What made the

experience especially valuable to urban women was, however, more than its environmental or recreational offerings. A trip to the Maine woods gave women the opportunity to challenge themselves and overcome physical and mental obstacles because the wilderness provided them with a liberating alternative to the social structure they knew at home. Away from the prying eyes of the etiquette masters, women could drop their polite facade and escape from the strain of living within prescribed Victorian roles. In taking this opportunity to experience a freer and more spirited way of life than they had known before, Maine's female tourists found true revitalization.

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Chapter Two

Wildwood Charms, Insights, and Opportunities

A B.& A. Idyl of "The Good Old Summer Time"

When the city streets are swelt'ring
'Neath the summer sun's fierce reign,
Just remember there's a haven
In the cool, deep woods of Maine
Where the shelt'ring mountain shadows
And the lake-winds, soft, sublime,
Mark an ideal tourist's region
In the good old summer time.

There is nothing more delightful
Than to live in nature's arms
And to let her overwhelm you
With her lavish wildwood charms.
Then it is the happy camper
Cries aloud, his joy at prime:
"Bless the thought that sent me Maineward
In the good old summer time!

[excerpt from *Haunts of the Hunted*
Bangor and Aroostook Railroad, 1903]¹

When Dr. J. Madison Taylor of Philadelphia lauded the benefits of the state of Maine in his commentary for the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad, he was not inviting all Americans to reap Maine's rewards. "The great north woods is the normal dwelling place of the Anglo-Saxon race," he contended.² Taylor believed that men and women would not achieve complete physical well being if they strayed too far from the climate which was natural to their racial ancestors. When his white patients felt overwhelmed by the demands of living in modern Philadelphia, Taylor

prescribed a sojourn to the Maine woods because "the very best place possible for the blonde race to maintain the highest measure of health is under the conditions of their normal habitat, the cool, shady woods."³ Taylor implied that the Maine woods were somehow reserved for Anglo-Americans and that, perhaps, the "blonde race" was the only one deserving of such a place as Maine. Thus, the opportunity for upper- and middle-class Anglo-Americans to come to the Maine woods not only allowed them a temporary escape from the urban demands of industrialization, but also from close proximity to a population booming with recent non-Anglo immigrants.

Upper- and middle-class urban women may have found their cities' transformations bewildering, even frightening, by the end of the nineteenth century. Between 1850 and 1900, Boston's population quadrupled from 137,000 to 561,000 inhabitants.⁴ The additional residents brought noise and congestion, but even more distressing to many citizens, the newcomers' appearance and cultures were unfamiliar and their numbers appeared to be constantly increasing. Irish and, later, eastern and southern European immigrants settled whole neighborhoods of the city. By 1910 almost three-fourths of the city's population were either foreign or the children of foreign-born parents.⁵ Viewing themselves as "natives," the Yankee elite of Boston blamed these aliens not only for its health problems, but for the apparent decay of the metropolis. Boston residents became increasingly uneasy about living in a city of strangers.

Yet learning to live with the new immigrants was not their only modern

challenge. Industrial progress complicated life in Boston and other cities throughout the United States. Factories and mills built in or near New England's towns polluted their residents' air and water. As urban life became more congested, telephone and transportation advances increased the city's pace and its residents' anxieties.

With the help of Boston's new electrified railway system, many well-established families were able to flee the city and its problems. The speed of modern transportation provided men with a new, faster way of commuting to work which meant that they no longer needed to live as close to their offices. Thus, the suburbanization of Boston began. Between 1870 and 1900, members of the middle classes moved two to six miles outside the city, while wealthier families could afford country estates from five to fifteen miles from the center of Boston.⁶ Yet for many women and men, mere suburbanization was not sufficient. In their rejection of modern society they pursued a mental as well as physical separation from the modern city.

After their ancestors labored for two hundred years to settle their land by clearing its forests and building towns, the descendants of the Puritans sought escape from the communities they had built. Out of fear of what their cities had become, many citizens longed to return to the simpler life of their ancestors and embraced a movement sometimes known as "anti-modernism." Believing their contemporary experiences were artificial, they attempted to re-introduce the more authentic, noble, even sublime elements which they associated with America's past into their own

lives and thus repair some of the damage done by "over-civilization." For many Americans, the reaction against modern life was a cultural phenomenon which, in its veneration of the past, brought new ways of thinking about life, society, culture, art, and religion.

The "Colonial Revival" in American material culture was most ceremoniously inaugurated at the International Centennial Exposition held in Philadelphia in 1876 and reinforced seventeen years later at Chicago's Columbian Exposition. Both fairs featured, among their exhibitions of progress, tributes to the past in the form of domestic displays of colonial furnishings. These exhibitions were immensely popular with the public who viewed them, helping promote the Colonial Revival aesthetic and reinforcing the spinning wheel as the relic most symbolic of the movement. In an earlier manifestation of the revival, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote *The Courtship of Miles Standish*, 1858, one of America's most popular pieces of Colonial Revival literature, in which he immortalized settlers Priscilla Mullen and John Alden using Priscilla's spinning wheel as a principal representation of Puritan domestic life. Attempting to capture this mood and associate the Maine woods directly with Colonial Revival imagery and sentiment, the editors of *In the Maine Woods* used the spinning wheel in a somewhat awkward, romantic, quasi-historical posed photograph of a woman spinning at her campsite beside a Maine lake (figure 8). Despite the Colonial Revival's association with a symbol which eventually became an historical cliché, this earnest new appreciation of American decorative arts launched serious

preservation activity in the United States.



Figure 8 Woman Spinning *In the Maine Woods* (1908). Collections of the Maine Historical Society.

Yet the Colonial Revival was more than an admiration for an old-fashioned style; Americans also sought spiritual renovation. T. J. Jackson Lears explained how Anti-modern sentiment profoundly affected the way American Christians worshipped their God and decorated their churches. Conservative churches sought greater authenticity in their worship, introducing mystery, intensity, and drama into their services which, despite their rejection of foreign-born Catholics, pushed their ceremonies closer to those of the Catholic church. In a manifestation of the spiritual change, American pastors and their parishioners who planned new church buildings commissioned a new mode of ecclesiastical architecture during this time. Instead of the plain white meeting houses of their predecessors, congregations erected ornate eclectic structures based on Romanesque cathedrals built in Catholic countries 800 years before.⁷

Reliance on historic models and a new appreciation for America's past also affected secular architecture and interior design. Reacting against the fussy, mass-produced furnishings popular in middle-class homes during the Victorian era, some craftspeople returned to hand-production of furniture and textiles in the "Arts and Crafts" or "Mission" style. Furniture makers like Gustav Stickley purposely used commonly available woods and exposed joinery to reveal the construction methods of their furniture, putting the emphasis on craft rather than expensive materials or fancy ornamentation. They created simple, unadorned wood furniture, quarter sawing white oak logs to expose patterns in the grain which gave the pieces much of their visual appeal. Likewise, Arts and Crafts textiles borrowed motifs from nature, featuring leaves, pine cones, and countless amorphous natural forms. New designs in domestic architecture, interpreted by John Calvin Stevens in his *Examples of American Domestic Architecture* (1889), and popularized nationally by Frank Lloyd Wright, also emphasized natural building materials for homes which were integrated into their surroundings through use of native wood and stone. When vacationers arrived at a Maine sporting camp with its typical rough-hewn log cabins, they must have recognized an aesthetic they had recently learned to appreciate. Yet in Maine, the cabins were genuine. The loggers and woodsmen who built many of the camps knew little of modern urban traumas or Colonial Revival taste. Therefore, campers found not only an integrity of design in their new surroundings, but were in a place where they could go on to discover the higher rewards of nature.

Like the congregations who sought to return the sublime to their lives, many people believed that nature would help them understand life's mysteries. Whatever secret individuals thought they might be missing, be it the existence of God, the nature of men and women, or the original innocence of their ancestors, Victorians believed that nature offered the key to finding it. Not all city dwellers could make the trip to the country to discover the woods for themselves, however, so the majority of the new "nature lovers" fueled their passion through fiction. Gene Stratton Porter was just one of the writers of wilderness fiction whose romantic novels were so popular that, in the first 30 years of the twentieth century, they outsold every other genre of American literature.⁸ Nature seekers with the means to travel to the country often tried to capture nature and its insights by collecting, cataloging, and sketching in a notebook their discoveries of insects, butterflies, flowers, trees, birds, or animals. This inclination for collection inspired the displays of bird's nests and eggs which became popular, even ubiquitous, decorations in Victorian homes. Each person's search for nature might take a different form, but most men and women at the turn of the twentieth century joined in the quest as part of the widely understood remedy for modern ills.

So strongly did urban women believe in the benefits of nature on a person's physical and social well-being that many affluent women made the "back to nature" movement their chief philanthropic work. Believing that children especially benefitted from the fresh air and freedom found in the out-of-doors, progressive urban women organized campaigns to send poor children to stay with families in the

country during the summer. In order to teach the children to appreciate and enjoy nature, educators and philanthropists established summer camp programs and clubs such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and the Camp Fire Club of America. By introducing them to nature when they were young, reformers hoped that the problems of lower- and working-class urban children might be solved before they grew up to jeopardize the quality of American city living.

One of the few voices for working-class adult women, Hortense Gardner Gregg, wrote Camping for Girls in 1907 in an effort to convince them to experience the mode of camping which had restored her own good health. Like many promoters of Maine woods tourism, she argued that a vacation spent at a crowded resort was not a true recess from life in the city: "A summer's outing to the average working girl often means but a few weeks' change from hot, stifling city stores and factories to some crowded sea shore hotel, where the hard earned money of weary months is soon spent in dress promenades along the beach."⁹ Gregg's audience was much different from those prosperous city dwellers that most tourism boosters targeted. She alone suggested that one of the prime benefits of a camping trip in Maine was its affordability as compared to time spent at watering holes or other areas which offered only "foolish pleasures." Gregg promised to instruct her readers about how they could spend only half the money on a trip to the woods--and truly enjoy it.

Most of the women who took trains into the Maine woods were well-educated, comfortably well-off, and in pursuit of edifying, outdoor recreation. The

women who wrote for *Maine Outings* or *In the Maine Woods* were from metropolitan areas such as New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Worcester, or Portland, and cited as one of their primary reasons for taking trips to the Maine woods the need to escape, not the drudgery of work, but the turmoil of life in the city. A female writer in 1896 praised the "vigor" and "robust appearance" of the peasant women of Europe whose hard labor in the fields had made them strong and healthy.¹⁰ Obviously unfamiliar with such physical work in her own life, she chose to improve herself by performing calisthenics in her leisure hours. Like many upper-class women, this writer found the women of Europe a more attractive, and less threatening, model than the female laborers of her own cities. The majority of the women who retreated to Maine were not tired from overwork; their exhaustion stemmed from the "artificiality" of the city and the social obligations found there.

Mildred Cox Howes enthusiastically recorded numerous hunting and fishing experiences in the rugged Maine wilderness in her diary, but returned each season to a luxurious home and pampered life in affluent Boston suburbs, Brookline and, later Chestnut Hill. In a later summary of her experiences, Howes described herself before her marriage as having been "carefully brought up in every luxury," stating that she "had certainly never roughed it" before.¹¹ When not camping in Maine, she and her husband spent much of their time travelling through Europe, Egypt, Turkey, and Greece, as well as cruising the Florida Keys in their yacht, the *Santanta*. Mildred Cox Howes was a wealthy, urban woman who embarked on her adventures in Maine as an escape from her domestic routine and social

responsibilities.

Likewise, Margaret Stevens Allen was the daughter of prominent Colonial Revival architect, John Calvin Stevens, born only one year after he founded his very successful architectural firm. Educated at Portland's exclusive Waynflete School for Girls, Margaret was 24 years old when she married Neal W. Allen in 1909. Her new husband was a prominent businessman, president of the F.O. Bailey Company of Portland and had built a house for them in one of Portland's new suburban neighborhoods, which they moved into on the day they were married and where they lived for the next 67 years.¹² She too had the means to enjoy the wilderness when she desired, with the comforting knowledge that her large suburban home and social circle awaited her return.

Yet, the dissatisfaction with modern life many wealthy and privileged women felt at the turn of the century led some of them to Maine as part of their quest for the authentic and sublime. Mary Alden Hopkins used Colonial Revival sympathies to attract the attention of her female readers as she began her 1902 article, "Women in the Woods":

When, a hundred years ago, our great-grandmothers followed their husbands into the Maine woods to find new homes, they learned of necessity how to handle they clumsy musket and bring down the prowling wild-cats and bears. To-day their descendants, armed with light magazine rifles...go blithely into the woods in search of deer and moose.¹³

Knowing that they were following in the footsteps of their forebears may have helped some women accept the new sport which had opened to them. Where they stayed and the activities they enjoyed were tempered by cultural constraints, which

some women let go of more easily than did others. Encouraged by the strong example set by "Fly Rod" Crosby at the New York Sportsman Shows of the late 1890s, by her columns, and by the writings of other sports enthusiasts, some women sought nature's truth and authenticity through its blood, tracking and killing animals in the forest. Other women sought nature's sublimity through more peaceful fishing or simple paddling, tramping, or tenting. Some remained within traditional feminine roles at camp; others took the opportunity to break out and experiment with society's, as well as their own, expectations of female behavior. Maine not only offered an escape from the city, but a range of options for combatting its ennui.

Vacationers to Maine's interior stayed in a variety of places according to how much "wilderness" they wanted to experience. Grand resorts like the Mount Kineo House on Moosehead Lake or the Great Northern Hotel in Millinocket, which were easily accessible by train and steamboat, provided many of the same entertainments as Maine's coastal watering holes. Although women were often associated with recreation at these larger resorts, they took part in all forms of lodging, and, as many wilderness advocates pointed out, these resorts provided little real encounter with nature. Adventurous sportspeople used hotels merely as convenient launching points for their expeditions. Both Margaret Stevens Allen and Mildred Cox Howes began their adventures at Mount Kineo House but did not stay long before heading into the true wilds of Maine. All of the female correspondents for the sporting magazines report on their experiences staying at camps or in tents, although certainly some women, including Howes' mother and sister, remained at the hotels.

Nevertheless, in 1900 *In the Maine Woods* emphasized that women ventured into the very center of the Maine woods and traversed the whole northern Maine wilderness every year.¹⁴

Many women stayed at the less accessible "camps," communities of cabins situated deep in the woods. Often located in abandoned logging cabins, these camps housed several parties at once and were staffed with qualified Maine guides. Sporting camps provided full, if rustic, accommodations including beds, fireplaces, and a real roof over one's head. Camp proprietors served three meals a day in a main lodge. Women and men could enjoy meeting and socializing along with their sport, as did the women in the illustration from "Haunts of the Hunted," 1903 (figure 9). Already quite remote, many campers stayed at sporting camps and took day or overnight trips with a guide even deeper into the woods to reach better fishing or hunting spots.



Figure 9 "Women Think Camp Life is Great Fun," detail. *Haunts of the Hunted* (1903). Author's collection.

From a resort or sporting camp small groups could hire their own guide and canoe and hike far into the woods, camping in tents and meeting nature first hand. In her article, "When a Woman Dared," a New York City woman recommended tenting as the most efficient way for sportswomen to get close to nature. Because a tent gave the camper her nights as well as her days in the forest, she effectively doubled her vacation time, fostering a special intimacy with her surroundings.

It makes you part of the out door world, to hear the call of the loon as you drop to sleep, to feel the wind from the pines in your face or hear the drip of rain on your canvas; to be waked in the early morning by the splashing and squawking of wild ducks below your tent, and perhaps, if sunshine tempts you, to take a dip with them by way of beginning the day.¹⁵

Both Howes and Allen ventured into the outdoor world, setting up camp in the wilderness. Howes canoed along the West Branch of the Penobscot River, stopping along its banks at spots which had been flattened through use by previous campers. She described their trip: "We preferred to spend several days by a lake or pond--if the fishing was good & partridge plenty--than to have to break camp & move on every day."¹⁶ Their goal was good fishing and hunting and they were prepared to hike miles from their tent to find it. Margaret and Neal Allen tented in one place for most of their honeymoon, exploring neighboring fishing grounds most days.

Campsites, comfort levels, and the tents themselves varied. Neal and Margaret Allen spent their nights under a high A-line tent with one open end (figure 10). Neal was not very pleased with their arrangements, complaining of

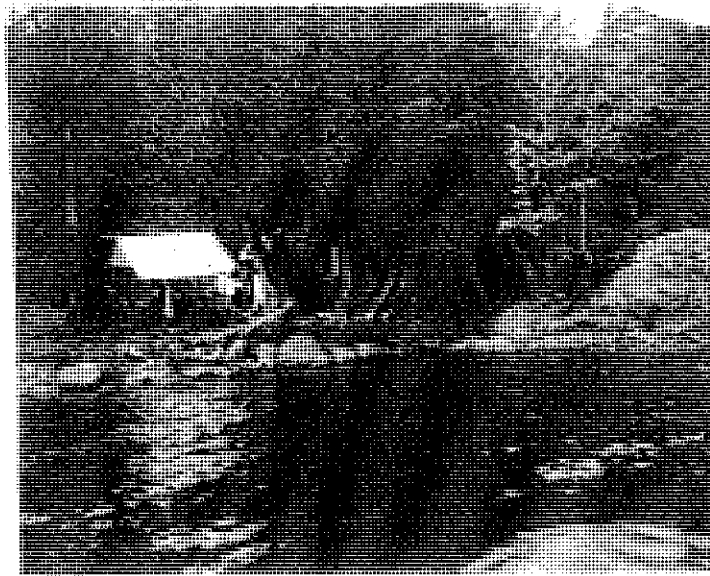
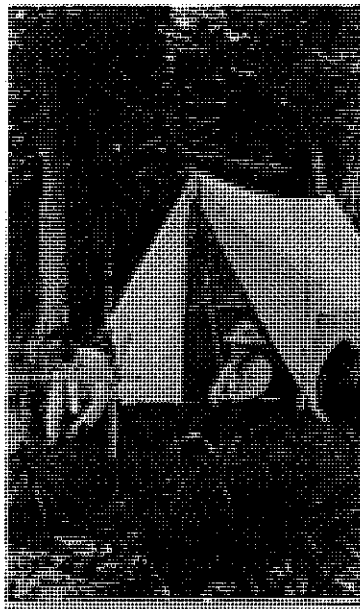


Figure 10 Allens' Camp (1909). Collection of the Allen family.



Camping by the Wayside

Figure 11 "Camping by the Wayside," *In the Maine Woods* (1909). Author's Collection.

mosquitoes in bed and endeavoring to find them a new site the following day. He took this responsibility because he and his wife employed a guide only to take them into the woods and care for their needs on the first day. After that, they maintained the campsite, cooked their own food, and roughed it alone.¹⁷ Without a guide, what they sacrificed in comfort, they may have gained in privacy. When tenting with a group beyond one's immediate family, privacy for women became an issue. The author of the article "Camping Out" suggested that wall or A-line tents, which could be closed, were the most suitable for the ladies in a sporting party (figure 11). With three guides furnishing their campsite, Mildred and Osborne Howes enjoyed private, even luxurious accommodations. In her reminiscences Howes recalled:

A large four sided canvas tent was set up for us and over it was placed an oblong piece of canvas called a 'fly'--It was held up by two additional tent poles, about a foot above the tent, as an added protection from rain. Our duffle bags were placed in-side & a rough table was set up for a washstand. Our bed was made by enclosing a large corner with four bags. One of the guides would go into the woods and bring back spruce boughs....They would be stuck in the ground at an angle, making a bed about a foot or more high--A rubber sheet was laid on and then usually three pair of blankets....It made a marvelous bed.¹⁸

Whether tenting in the woods or at camp, registered Maine guides often cared for all the needs of their party, shifting gender relationships and establishing their own identity in the group. Therefore, women's roles at camp were not usually defined in traditional domestic terms. The guide set up camp, washed clothes, and did all the cooking for the group. In case his female readers were not aware of this bonus, one writer notes, "The housewife is absolutely free to enjoy the life in the woods here without the nerveracking thought, 'What shall I get for breakfast?'"

(figure 12)."¹⁹ Furthermore, many women were probably used to servants at home and their guide, a combination outdoorsman, cook, and maid, would have been a welcome extension of her daily routine. But because they were not responsible for managing this "domestic staff," the arrangement left women free to enjoy the woods and discover any answers of nature that she might seek.

Like the Allens' short-term guide, NicSocoberson, many registered Maine guides were Penobscot Indians. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow introduced most Yankees to their country's native peoples in his poem, *Hiawatha*. Published in 1855, the poem romanticized America's Manifest Destiny policies by depicting Native Americans as an admirable but doomed people overcome by European settlement of the country. Meeting a Native American guide may have been another significant part of the city dweller's search for authenticity, an encounter with a "noble" but in their minds, inferior and even obsolete race.

Once NicSocoberson had left them the Allens shared the "domestic" chores at their camp home. Although Neal photographed Margaret working around the campsite (figure 13), their diary reveals that Mr. Allen did his part. The day their guide departed, Margaret recorded that dinner that evening was "prepared by the joint efforts of Mr. and Mrs. Allen." Thereafter, Neal Allen's own huge appetite, and his wife's habit of sleeping late in the mornings, led him to cook the majority of their meals, consisting primarily of potatoes, bacon, and fish supplemented with canned goods such as Burnham and Morrill's Baked Beans and Campbell's Oxtail Soup. At the end of their trip both "settled down to the business



Figure 12 "The Kitchen, Sandy Point Camp." Dunn Collection (1893). Collections of the Maine Historical Society.



Figure 13 Margaret Stevens Allen (1909). Collection of the Allen family.

of packing up" and both "scoured cooking utensils with sand until almost six o'clock."²⁰ Thus, in the first days of their marriage, the couple established shared responsibility for household chores. The team approach might not have continued at home, but their camping trip set a precedence of equality not possible at any watering hole.

Some women, however, chose not to leave their established domestic role when they left home. In "A Fishing Trip" recounted by a woman in *Maine Outings*, she and her husband go camping with another couple. She recorded all her activities: unpacking and setting up camp, making beds, cooking, reading, and doing fancy work. As the men left camp every morning to fish in streams which were too far her to reach on foot, she finds life at the tent somewhat monotonous.²¹ She is a "True Woman" transported to the woods but remains a rare example of this type cited by either *In the Maine Woods* or *Maine Outings*. A 1908 advertisement for sentimental fiction provides the only reference to traditional women's roles found in *In the Maine Woods*. The copy advised, "Slip a 'Heart Throb' book into your grip or pocket...it's more companionable than most men folks."²²

Maine Outings and *In the Maine Woods* suggest that most women on sporting vacations stayed within their traditional family units, accompanying their husbands, and, sometimes, their children. Although rarely discussed in magazines or travelogues, a *Haunts of the Hunted* illustration of "A Deer for a Hobby-Horse" (figure 14) offered startling proof of the existence of young children at sporting camps, even during hunting season. Fannie Hardy Eckstorm directed her article,

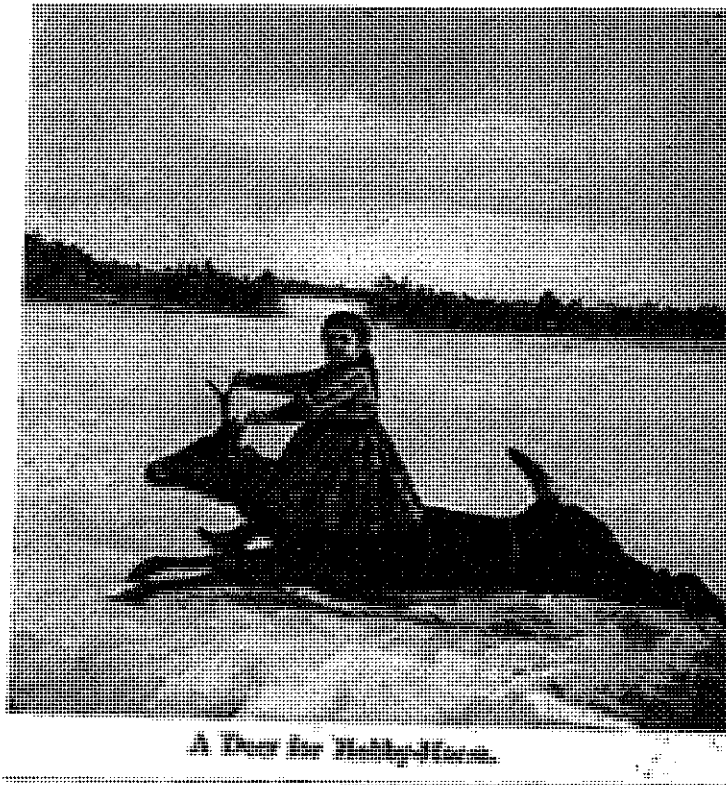


Figure 7 "A Deer for a Hobby-Horse," *Haunts of the Hunted* (1903). Author's Collection.

"Take HER With You," to the male readers of *In the Maine Woods*. Advising lonely male campers to bring their wives along with them on their next trip, she urged, "You know that the trip will be twice as much enjoyed; you know that the memory of it will be infinitely sweeter....take her with you!"²³ Speaking to the idea of "True Womanhood," she dismissed a husband's fears of his wife's weaknesses and described instead the comfort a wife can be to her husband at camp.

Experienced male sportsmen liked vacationing with their female partners. Charles W. Stevens recorded the adventures he and his wife enjoyed leaving their home in Boston for a canoe trip through Maine in an early published account of a

wife joining her husband on a sporting trip to Maine. *Fly Fishing in Maine Lakes* (1881), indicates that women's participation in Maine sporting tourism was unusual before 1880, as Stevens and his wife addressed the surprise her presence generated among fellow travelers and guides wherever they went. The Stevens' only reservation was how their Passamaquoddy guide might react to having a woman at camp. Happily, Stevens reported all their guides treated the party extra politely because of their unusual guest. This positive reaction may have quieted the qualms of Stevens' male readership after the book was published. He declared his feelings about his wife's company, both at home and in the woods, as he dedicated *Fly Fishing* to the woman

who for many years has shared with me the cares and comforts of a happy home, and who has been my fond companion in my journeyings to lake and stream; in memory of many pleasant hours passed in canoe and camp, this book is affectionately dedicated.²⁴

When Stevens expressed his desire for female companionship he articulated the sentiments of other male sportsmen. Both Osborne "Howsie" Howes and Neal W. Allen brought a woman with them at their earliest opportunity--within their first year of marriage. Both men had been on at least two canoeing and sporting trips in the Maine woods with male friends in the past. But, after marriage, both abandoned their male companions in favor of their wives the following season.

Like many couples, the Howes sometimes traveled with another twosome. On their third trip to Maine, in September 1915, Mildred and Osborne Howes brought his sister and her husband along with them. In this way, the tradition of travelling with a large sporting party could be maintained, without a solitary woman

feeling lonely or unwelcome.

Sporting publications occasionally acknowledged women venturing into the woods unaccompanied by male partners. One writer maintained that in 1902 one would find groups of women without male companions at many camps, and just as often, a group of schoolgirls with their teacher.²⁵ Inspired by the educational and spiritual lessons of nature, Oliva Howard Dunbar recorded an 1895 mineral-hunting expedition she led with another female teacher for two of their young students. The women traveled in northwest Maine for five days, hiking and digging for crystals and staying at small boarding houses along the way.²⁶

G. Smith Stanton affirmed that women need not always go with their husbands, "nor need they wait for an escort, as in the hands of the registered guides of Maine they are as safe as if they were with a brother, and much more so than in the company of the average young man of to-day."²⁷ While women might achieve a fuller independence in Maine than at home, male writers mention single women often in a purely social context. The author of *Through the Wilds: A Record of Sport and Adventure in the Forests of New Hampshire and Maine* (1892) comments on the two young ladies from Philadelphia he and his companions met at Mount Washington. The two women joined the men in his party and traveled with them for a short time.²⁸ In discussing his wide travels of Maine's sporting camps D. C. Farrington boasts, "at all these camps I have found beautiful and charming women. They now seem to be a neccessity there as one of the attractions. . . ." ²⁹

Likewise, Stanton assured his unmarried female readers that they will be most

welcome in Maine, citing the courtships he saw blossom between members of his party and some single women they encountered north of Katahdin on Telos Lake.³⁰

Such records indicate that nature incited romance as well as self-improvement as unmarried women met or vacationed with a beau. While it is difficult to know the prevalence of this practice, or the details of their sleeping arrangements, writers for tourism magazines complained about such courtships, not on moral grounds, but because their occurrence at camp was so ubiquitous--young couples seemed to occupy every quiet corner and forest path. According to one writer, the whole forest was monopolized by embracing couples. Guides at the sporting camp where he stayed found women's fishing rods abandoned in all sorts of out-of-the-way places!³¹ This sportsman's indignation appears to come from watching the women waste valuable fishing opportunities. Although such complaints lessened in the first decade of the twentieth century, one photograph makes clear that camp romances continued. "A Jungle Courtship" depicts a woman sitting on a bench outside her cabin, reading intently. At her feet is a young man gazing up at her. The image suggests that, although his attentions appear unwelcome, she is a single woman and he is her suitor. The Bangor and Aroostook Railway may have been suggesting to its female readers that a trip to Maine might be a good way to find a husband.

Several humorous postcards from the early twentieth century also imply that field sports offered opportunities for romance. "A Fisherman's Luck," ca. 1915, presents a well-dressed man and woman sharing a bamboo fishing rod (figure 16). The fisherman has an arm wrapped around his companion giving her, rather than the



We are Having a Pleasant Time in **PORTLAND, ME.**

Figure 15 "We are Having a Pleasant Time," postcard (ca. 1902). Collections of the Maine Historical Society.



Figure 16 "A Fisherman's Luck," postcard (ca. 1915). Author's Collection.

fish, his full attention. His friendly gaze seems to imply that she is his "catch" of the day and that he is lucky to have a fishing rod to help him lure women. Another postcard, "Fishing," dated 1909, offers a different twist on the chase and snare theme. Here, a young woman uses her heart as bait as she fishes for a mate (figure 17). "The Game is Small but Plentiful," dated one year later, shows a "Gibson Girl" hunter taking aim at her prey--a husband. Perched in a tree, he is depicted as tiny, less than a quarter of her size. With his monocle, feminine features, and floppy, foppish bow tie he is emasculated, waiting for his suitor with her rifle on her shoulder to take careful aim and capture him (figure 18). The publishers of these cards clearly intended to poke fun at the "New Woman" and her more aggressive, active, and adventurous ways of participating in both sport and love.



Figure 17 "Fishing," postcard (1909). Author's Collection.

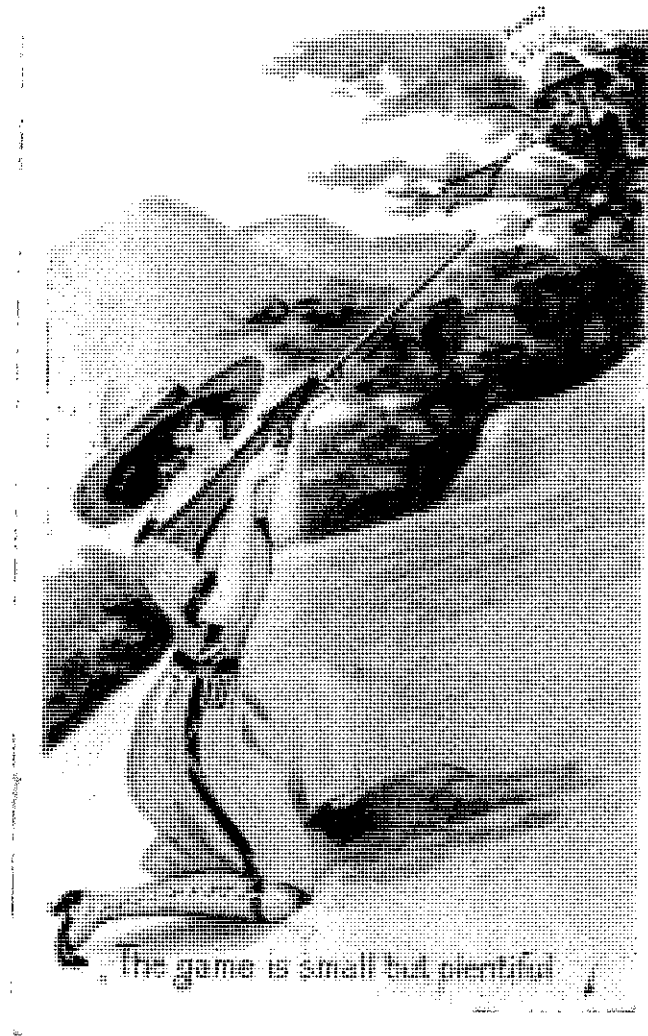


Figure 18 "The Game is Small But Plentiful," postcard (1910). Author's Collection.

Although the notion of unmarried women rendezvousing with their sweethearts in the woods might seem like a disgraceful departure from the accepted morality of middle-class Victorians, the editors of neither *Maine Outings* nor *In the Maine Woods* passed judgment on this behavior. Furthermore, they placed very few restrictions at all upon women's activities while at camp. Both magazines marketed Maine tourism and, therefore, emphasized the options open to women in the woods.

Once in Maine, women were free to try all the activities the outdoors offered, including hunting, fishing, canoeing, or simply enjoying nature around them. While *In the Maine Woods* showed respect for their female readers and passengers regardless of their preferred level of activity, *Maine Outings* was somewhat more critical. As a magazine aimed at active women, they often poked fun at those who lazed around camp working on their embroidery.

The editor's scorn is clear in a fictional piece entitled "A Romance of the Maine Woods," which contrasts young Alice Reid, a thoroughly "New" woman, with Mrs. Dent, an older relative whose family Alice joined on a hunting excursion. While Alice was described as "healthy" and "elastic," Mrs. Dent felt it a privilege to continue to wear her corsets in the woods and attended the trip only as a "wifely duty." Likewise, as Alice hiked, fished, and paddled, Mrs. Dent worked her embroidery and read romantic novels in her tent. Mrs. Dent's ladylike behavior is the one that is censored. One of the male hunters in the party even claims she has no soul.³² In the ongoing conflict between new and old notions of femininity, the "New Woman" rather than the "True Woman" is the heroine in this instance.



Figure 19 "There He Is," *In the Maine Woods* (1910). Collections of the Maine Historical Society.



Figure 20 "Steady Now!" *In the Maine Woods* (1910). Collections of the Maine Historical Society.

Most women reported on hunting in Maine with relatively few allusions to timidity or squeamishness; indeed, learning to hunt and kill was an important part of their back-to-nature experience. While several articles recognized urban women's previous lack of experience with firearms by describing their progress in learning to handle a gun, the satisfaction women gained from shooting is evident. A pair of photographs captioned, "There He Is" and "Steady Now" (figures 19 and 20) show Ella S. Williams learning to shoot. The woman from Worcester, Massachusetts, stands a head taller than the guide who directs her aim and fire. She explains the pleasure she derives from a hunting trip: "I am sure that I am as anxious as my husband for the day of starting to arrive."³³ A male writer, tracking moose and intent on bagging one, recalled his encounter with a man bleeding one of the largest bull moose he had ever seen. Upon congratulating the hunter, he was referred to the lady sitting on a nearby log. "She's the one to talk to! My wife did the shooting!" After recovering from his initial surprise, the writer heard the whole story from the hunter, Mrs. Worster.

'He was partly hidden behind a fallen tree...My husband told me to take careful aim and shoot. I did so and down he went with a crash. But he wasn't dead and my husband told me to go up close and finish him with a bullet through the neck. Yes, that's where I was a little timid, but I crept up and shot him all right and that finished him. Isn't he a big fellow?'³⁴

Mrs. Worster proved her worth that day in the woods. The author (or his editor) begrudgingly titled this episode "Beaten By the Fair Sex," (figure 21) yet he praised her accomplishment.

It is a wholesome sign of the times that women are more and more becoming the companions of their fathers, husbands, and brothers in the open, be it hunting, fishing or canoeing. The fragile young lady of our great-grandmother's day, who was timid and sweet and unutterably inane, and who fainted on every occasion, is fortunately a feature of that early period only. Our modern girls are of different calibre and metal.³⁵



Figure 21 "Mrs. Worster and Her Moose," *In the Maine Woods* (1910). Collections of the Maine Historical Society.

After learning to shoot and overcoming her timidity, Mrs. Worster vanquished a large, powerful animal, a species which this author had previously been respectfully calling "His Lordship." In western society, power is most often gained through bloody, violent victory over a foe. Through hunting, Mrs. Worster and other women showed themselves as victors, demonstrating their own power. In doing so, they not only gained the respect of men, but helped shape perceptions about their

role and position in society. After admitting his surprise at meeting Mrs. Worster, the author's view of women changed; he equated fragility and sweetness to inanity, making the ideal woman of only 20 years before seem ridiculous compared with the stronger, braver, more powerful kind of woman he had just met.

Female hunters represented a new kind of "New Woman," with the goddess "Diana" as their model. In Greek and Roman mythology, the goddess of the hunt was farther removed from civilization than were the other divinities. As a creature of nature, Diana was pure, virginal, and untouched by earthly society. She must have had a powerful appeal for romantic Victorian women who wished to rid themselves of the bonds of artificial city life and urban society. Editors of *Maine Outings* titled their section on women's issues "Fin de Siecle Diana," while *In the Maine Woods* also used Diana's appeal, comparing the women in their pages to her. "Diana of the Repeater" (figure 22) stands straight, taking aim at her prey with the concentration of the goddess. "The Modern Diana" (figure 23) appears less vigorous but poses next to her kill, proof that she too is a skilled huntress. Yet Diana offered more than an alternative to modern life. As the goddess of birth and a bringer of death, she might also offer some resolution to the mysteries of life. As a huntress, she taught that the urge to kill was divine.

Perhaps in hunting, women hoped to imitate Diana, gaining her strength and exploring the deeper meanings of their lives. An editor of *Maine Outings* reported the "magnificent moose" bagged by Mrs. Watts of New York, citing her triumph as further proof "that the spirit of Diana still lives in the breast of modern



Figure 22 "The Diana of the Repeater," *In the Maine Woods* (1910). Collections of the Maine Historical Society.



Figure 23 "The Modern Diana," *In the Maine Woods* (1909). Collections of the Maine Historical Society.

women."³⁶ After having been sheltered from some of the most basic aspects of public life, modern upper- and middle-class women like Mrs. Watts needed to prove not only to those around them, but to themselves, that they were capable of confronting life and death, and of growing from the experience. As men sought masculinity in Maine's woods, women sought an opportunity to seek Diana and the wisdom she offered.



Figure 24 "Women's Nerves are Steady Nowadays," *In the Maine Woods* (1910). Collections of the Maine Historical Society.

In the Maine Woods recognized the social progress women gained by their actions in Maine. A photograph of a confident hunter gazing down at her freshly killed buck was captioned, "Women's Nerves are Steady Nowadays" (figure 24). By demonstrating that she had the steady nerves needed to shoot and kill the animal, she triumphed not only over the deer, but over traditional Victorian notions of feminine

indecisiveness and excitability. A 1906 *In the Maine Woods* stated that "The 'Gentler Sex' can Hunt, Too" (figure 25). The woman in the accompanying photograph leans against a tree trunk dressed in men's clothing for the picture, comfortable with nature, with the rifle in her hand, and with her victim stretched out beside her. While little about this woman makes her appear "gentle" in a stereotypical ladylike sense, by titling the picture thus, *In the Maine Woods* has redefined the "Gentler Sex." In learning about the natural world women could create for themselves a new, stronger kind of femininity.



The "Gentler Sex" can Hunt, Too.

Figure 25 "'The Gentler Sex' can Hunt, Too," *In the Maine Woods* (1906). Collections of the Maine Historical Society.

For many women, playing Diana in the woods may not have been enough to satisfy their new self-perception. They would want to share their new identity with their family and friends once they returned home from Maine. *In the Maine Woods* cites "The number [of women] who distribute venison of their own shooting among their friends at home is increasing each year. . . ." ³⁷ The gift may have alarmed those acquaintances who still believed femininity rested with passivity. As Mildred Howes recorded her sporting adventures in her camp journal, she kept careful track of her catches, updating her record almost daily and finally totaling her prey at the end of each trip. Because her journal included only her vacations, she then registered her total kills from year to year on the inside cover of the volume.

1910	20 fish, 16 partridge, 1 black duck
1913	93 trout, 37 partridge, 1 deer
1915	41 fish, 34 partridge, 1 deer
1917	32 fish, 17 partridge, 2 deer, 1 duck ³⁸



Happy Huntswoman!

Figure 26 "Happy Huntswoman!" *Haunts of the Hunted* (1903). Author's Collection.

Other huntswomen settled for photographs of their accomplishments. They proudly posed with their kills, happy and content beside their bloody trophies. Traditionally, men and women posed next to the wooden stakes on which their deer or moose were hung to drain at camp (figure 26). So commonplace was this action for female hunters that a postcard entitled, "Greetings from the North Woods" printed in Portland ca. 1908 captured the scene (figure 27). Another postcard, with the caption, "Bringing in the Spoils in Northern Maine" shows a woman tromping through the snow behind a guide leading a horse burdened with two of her freshly killed deer on its back (figure 28). These cards, with their standard titles, demonstrate the frequency and conventionality of female hunters in Maine, and women purchased and sent them to illustrate their accomplishments. Those sportswomen lucky enough to have cameras with them on their trip could pose themselves for similar photographs. In either case, posed shots of a woman and her quarry proved that she had visited Maine, vanquished her prey, and returned home changed, quite possibly with a new self perception, confidence, and awareness of her potential.

Yet the "New Woman" would need more than Diana's bows and arrows for her hunt and, by the end of the nineteenth century, the sporting goods industry was ready to provide new equipment for a variety of developing pastimes, including hunting. A female writer for the New York magazine *Ladies' World* reported in the late 1890s that "the makers and dealers in sporting goods say that there has never been such a demand for rifles by women."³⁹ "Ladies' World" explained the



Figure 27 "Greetings from the North Woods," postcard (ca. 1908). Author's Collection.



Figure 28 "Bringing in the Spoils in Northern Maine," postcard (ca. 1910). Author's Collection.

importance of having the correct equipment:

If a woman is not very strong she can handle a light weapon. The fact that she can do as much hard shooting with her dainty rifle as can the guide with a gun she can hardly lift, gives her confidence, and she soon becomes as expert, sometimes turning out to be a better shot than the average man.⁴⁰

The magazine recommended a 30-calibre rifle weighing less than seven pounds. J. Stevens Arms and Tool Co. appeared ready to oblige. In 1906, the inside back cover of *In the Maine Woods* featured a full page advertisement for Stevens Rifles which targeted women (figure 29). The text does not claim that the rifle was made exclusively for women, but a huntswoman, rather than a man, demonstrates her successful bird hunting using the straight shooting rifle. The potential for female customers must have been great enough to warrant Stevens' directing its one yearly advertisement in this magazine specifically at Diana and her followers.

Although many of the same women who hunted also enjoyed fishing, the sport offered a different appeal for some women. When fishing, one does not see the prey until after it is caught. Unlike the hunter who tracks down a live animal, shooting it once or more until it dies, the fisher does not witness the life of the fish before pulling it from the water on her hook. Even after landing her catch, a fainthearted or sensitive woman still had the option to throw it back, letting it live. Even in the late nineteenth century, conserving resources by returning unneeded fish to the water was a popular idea, so women did not have to take a life if killing contradicted their moral upbringing.

Yet, the struggle for life and death, and the excitement it generated,

remained a powerful part of the attraction of fishing. After hooking her first fish and showing off her prize, novice fisher Ida May returned to her room at camp and then felt "a pang of regret for the gallant life I had taken." Self-recriminations flew through her head: "How the cruel hook must have hurt. Did not those frantic leaps and rushes eloquently tell? And how he gasped and struggled. . . ." Sounding like a nurturing "True" woman, May scolded herself reproachfully until her earlier emotion, exhilaration, returned. "Then there stole over me again something of the same sensation that came as I felt his first wild burst," she confessed, "and my brief pity was stifled in the more human, though perhaps less merciful, exultation of the victor."⁴¹ Margaret Allen also learned the appeal of the sport when her new husband taught her to fish on their honeymoon. After catching two fish herself and netting a third for Neal on her first trip out she, "was much excited, and . . . decided that fishing is a fascinating sport."⁴² Although her husband hunted, Margaret Allen never took up the rifle, contenting herself with the thrill of her new favorite pastime.

Not only did some women prefer fishing, but some experts believed that women were particularly well suited for the endeavor. "Fly Rod" Crosby herself expressed her preference: "I really doubt whether there is any sport in the world half so delightful as angling, or half so graceful and healthful for our sex."⁴³ The graceful sport also required great patience, a characteristic traditionally attributed to women. Whether trolling slowly around a pond or standing still for hours, women's ideal composure and persistence made the recreation seem like a perfect choice for

them. D.C. Farrington furthers the argument in his article "Ladies in Camp," asserting that women made better fishers than men because "They are not fish-hogs." Assuming her soft-hearted nature, he claimed that a lady would not kill a trout unless she wanted one for dinner. Perhaps women did understand the necessity of preserving trout in Maine waters better than men, but Farrington's reasoning is so completely immersed in female stereotypes that his argument develops comically. He described how women's experience handling multiple suitors made them better anglers:

A trout is a gentleman and should be treated as such, and no one knows how to treat or manoeuver a gentlemen or a trout so well as a lady. If a girl can have two or three fellows on the string why can she not manage two or three trout on the line?⁴⁴

Despite his exaggeration, his stereotypes seem to represent widespread feelings about women's nature which fostered the notion that the virtues of the "True Woman" made the "New Woman" a superior fisher.

Despite their continued categorization into types, women could gain an independence in fishing that was not possible in other field sports. When Mildred Howes wanted to spend her day trout fishing, she left with one of their guides while her husband stayed near the camp and entertained their guests. At the end of her day out she proudly recorded her 13 solo catches. However, if a woman knew the region well, she could paddle her own canoe without even requiring the company of a guide and thus exercising another trait she might not practice at home, self reliance (figure 30).

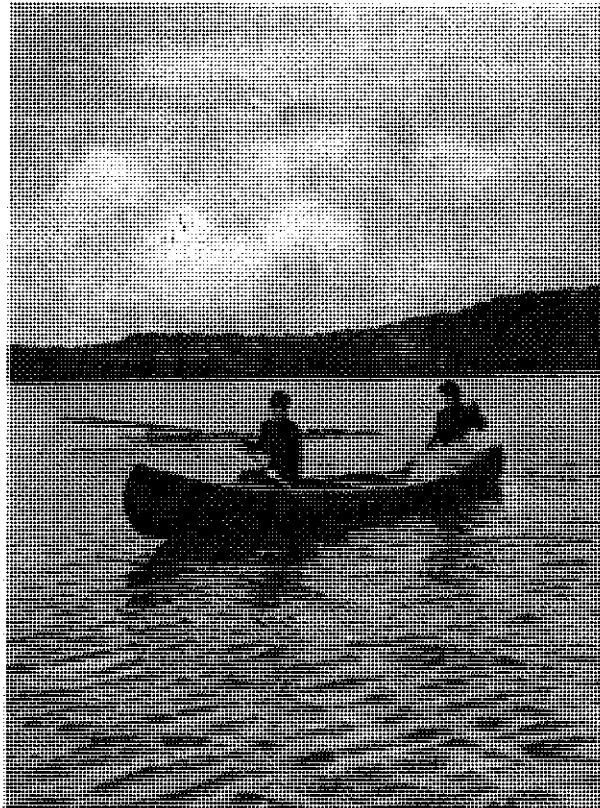


Self-Reliance.

Figure 30 "Self-Reliance," *In the Maine Woods* (1909). Author's Collection.

In the years after her first emotional confrontation with a trout, Ida May took up fishing seriously, enjoying the individualism of the sport and stressing the possession of her own equipment as she describes selecting, "*my tackle, my rods, my et coetrera*" with as great a care as her husband's.⁴⁵ Married women like May might enjoy joining in outdoors adventures with her husband rather than staying home as their mothers had done. Furthermore, as with hunting, women could improve their status by participating in a sport with men on equal terms. If the Maine woods was as much of an equalizer of men as male sportsmen loved to boast, having a woman take a man's place in the party must have earned her new respect. Although Ida May concluded that "we are re-created by such experiences" in the outdoors and felt "of infinitely greater value to myself and to all who have to do

with me" after she took up fishing, she did not claim to have been improved as much as changed by learning to kill. After her initial period of pity for the trout, her feeling was "stifled in the more human, though perhaps less merciful, exultation of the victor."⁴⁶ In allowing herself to experience a traditionally male drive like domination in addition to her accepted feminine reactions, May learned from nature how to be a more complete human.



Canoeing is Woman's Delight.

Figure 31 "Canoeing is a Woman's Delight," *In the Maine Woods* (1906). Collections of the Maine Historical Society.

For many women even fishing contradicted their peaceful quest for nature, but the Maine woods still offered them wilderness riches. Even without joining in

hunting and fishing sports, a woman could enjoy Maine's lakes and rivers, and tackle water sports not available at home. Paddling was an option for many women. *In the Maine Woods* cited this sport as one of women's favorites in their illustration, "Canoeing is a Woman's Delight" (figure 31). Paddling a canoe offered women both good exercise and an opportunity to further explore nature. Yet swimming, actually submerging oneself in the depths of unknown waters, must have been equally enticing. Over the course of four trips to Maine Mildred Howes remembers both swimming and bathing in a "secluded spot" when the weather was warm enough.⁴⁷ For ladies accustomed to indoor plumbing, taking a outdoor bath in a lake or river must have seemed like a genuine baptism in the back-to-nature movement.

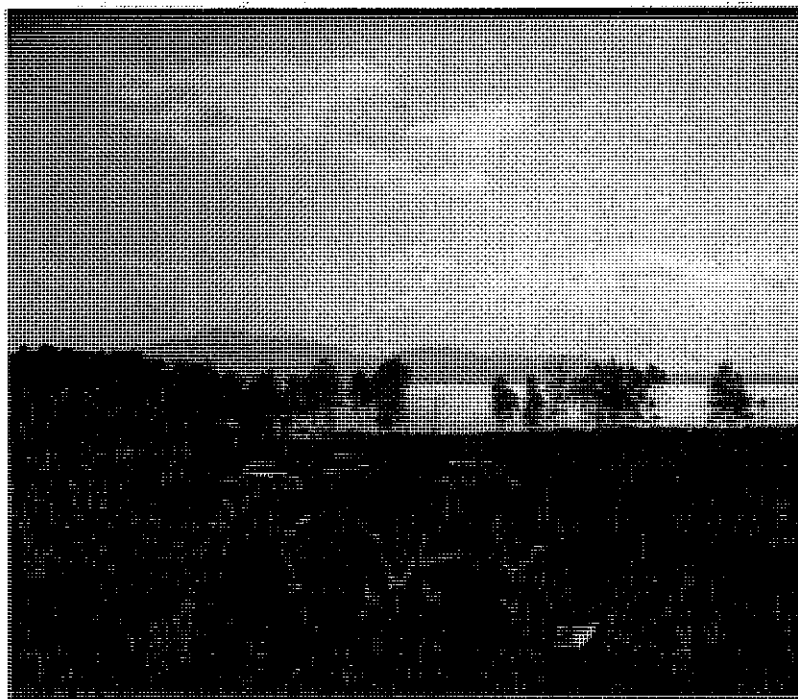


Figure 32 Alice Montfort Dunn and Companions, Dunn Collection, (1904). Collections of the Maine Historical Society.

Still other women studied nature more directly. Capturing the wilderness in a pencil sketch or painting allowed women to retain their traditional gender roles while closely surveying their surroundings. (figure 32). Nature's students collected wildflowers or mineral specimens. Likewise, meeting the local fauna could also be done peacefully, as demonstrated by an *In the Maine Woods* photograph of a female vacationer making friends with two deer, an idealized portrayal of a gentle woman's discovery of the wonders of the forest (figure 33).



Figure 33 "Tame Deer Make Interesting Pets," *In the Maine Woods*, (1906). Collections of the Maine Historical Society.

Yet not all women were awed into passivity; natural historian Fannie Hardy Eckstorm channeled her reverence for nature into historic preservation. In journal selections entitled "Down the West Branch of the Penobscot August 12-22, 1889,"

Eckstorm recounted one of her many long hikes through the Maine woods. Never describing her surroundings as sublime or mystical, Hardy was probably too aware of the dangers the woods faced with the arrival of large logging industries to worry about the unknown. Reflecting on the passing of Maine's small lumbering tradition in many of her writings, Hardy sought to capture the essence of life in the woods before it was lost. She commented on the beauty she saw around her but also photographed the region and recorded her observations in scientific and anthropological terms. Hardy rarely expressed feelings of wonder as she looked around her, even as she traveled through an impressive gorge. "The whole gorge is well worth seeing but we had to travel too fast to allow the grandeur of the thing to impress us very deeply."⁴⁸ Instead she estimated the height of the gorge, described its shape, and recorded how the loggers negotiated the area. Hardy did not seek the sublime; her mission was to preserve the region's history of habitation by Native Americans, lumbermen, and wildlife.

Despite the intrusion of progress which concerned Eckstorm, women from cities across New England saw Maine as a old-fashioned, safe haven from the challenges of modern living. Upper- and middle-class urban women reacted to the same demands which brought men to the woods. An added attraction for those Yankees most threatened by immigrants in their communities must have been the illusion that Maine's "others," the state's Passamaquoddys and Penobscots, knew their place as guides, serving the needs of the wealthy visitors. Yet the women's elite status does not diminish the profound effect a Maine woods vacation had on

their lives. The wilderness provided an arena where men and women could share sporting pleasures and learn about nature, enriching their lives with its lessons. Camping in the wilds, away from predetermined expectations of their behavior, freed women to experiment with new activities, new roles, new equality with their male companions. Sporting women's mementoes, whether their trophy be a painting of the area, a deer head mounted on a wall, or a photograph of a day's catch, proved that they returned to the city changed, holding evidence that they were part of the back-to-nature movement. Whether or not they defined themselves that way, in society's eyes they returned home as "New Women."

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3. Ibid, p. 38.
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10. Susan M. Spalding, "Letter from Susan M. Spalding," *Maine Outings* May 1896, p. 166.
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13. Mary Alden Hopkins, "Women in the Woods," *In Pine Tree Jungles*, 1902, p. 123.
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17. Diary of Margaret Stevens Allen and Neal W. Allen, 21 June 1909 to 9 July 1909, Personal Collection of the Allen Family.

18. Howes, "Camping Trips," p. 5.
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22. *In the Maine Woods*, 1908, p.161.
23. Fannie Hardy Eckstorm, "Take HER With You," *In the Maine Woods*, 1906, p. 85.
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26. Olivia Howard Dunbar, "Through the Blue Mountains," *Maine Outings*, September 1895, p. 228.
27. G. Smith Stanton, *Where the Sportsman Loves to Linger* (New York: Ogilvie Publishing Co., 1905) p. 102.
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30. Stanton, p. 102.
31. Farrington, p. 273.
32. *Maine Outings*, February 1896, p. 3-14.
33. Ella S. Williams, "Outing Hints By a Lady who has 'Been There'," *In the Maine Woods*, 1910, p. 84.
34. Edward Breck, "A Sporting Pilgrimage," *In the Maine Woods*, 1910, p. 93.
35. Ibid.
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37. Thompson, "In the Maine Woods," p. 123.

38. Diary of Mildred Cox Howes, 1910-1917, Mildred Cox Howes Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.
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43. *Washington Times*, April 19, 1896.
44. D. C. Farrington, "Ladies In Camp," November 1895, p. 273.
45. May, p. 68.
46. Ibid.
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Chapter Three

Feminine, Serviceable, Strong: Clothing the New Woman

Women's roles in society were in such a state of flux at the turn of the century that the American press responded to the confusion by presenting contradictory, ambiguous, and inaccurate images of the modern female. As historian Martha Banta explains, the shifting status of American women encouraged journalists, illustrators, philosophers, and social scientists to categorize women into "types" based on abstract ideals which made "woman" easier for them to perceive, if not actually understand.¹ As the mid-nineteenth-century's prescriptive "True Woman," pious, submissive, domestic, and pure, crumbled in the age of the "New Woman," Banta describes several new "types" which emerged, including the "Beautiful Charmer," the "New England Woman," and the "Outdoors Pal."

Yet the most popular and disturbing of these "types" was the "New Woman" herself who had entered the visual landscape by 1880. Illustrators often symbolized her youth, vigor, and independence by depicting her soaring astride a bicycle. Athleticism was one of the most prominent traits of the "New Woman," as well as self-reliance, intelligence, physical attractiveness, and a desire for new experiences. Banta points out, however, that her detractors called the New Woman selfish, egotistic, and controlling. In the 1870s and 1880s many young, educated upper- and middle-class American women took part in sports such as basketball at college. The girls' participation frightened some members of their class who wished to preserve their well-ordered social structure. After all, just a few decades before, abolitionism

had spurred the women's suffrage movement. Many opponents to suffrage saw women's heightened physical activity as part of the larger movement of voting rights.² Perhaps the New Woman cyclist was most threatening because bicycling was both independent and public, rather than a team activity played within the confines of a school gymnasium. Nevertheless, basketball and cycling marked just the beginning of a new era of activities and options for American women.

As bicycling demonstrated middle-class women's new attitude toward their role in society, the clothing they wore for such athletics offers suggestive evidence about how they felt about their newly-earned freedom. After years of considering women frail by nature, by 1880 Victorian doctors began to understand that women were weakened by their own constricting undergarments and voluminous dresses. Athletics advanced dress reform movements for women by providing an acceptable arena for alternative clothing. Women enjoyed a greater variety of choices in clothing for athletics than the marketplace had ever offered them before. Furthermore, the sport clothes each woman selected showed what level of activity she enjoyed. Tourism magazines, fashion periodicals, and sportswear manufacturers influenced her choices by demonstrating the extent of their endorsement of female sports through the kinds of clothing they offered to the New Woman.

Because most sports had previously been defined as either masculine or feminine endeavors, many women chose to adopt male athletics in a way that would not threaten social norms. As they entered each new male domain these women still wished to define themselves as ladies and sought appropriate, unquestionably female

clothing in the sporting field. Both *Maine Outings* and *In the Maine Woods* cautioned that the physical culture they promoted should not come at the cost of femininity. "Shoot, row, swim, fish, sail a yacht or ride a bicycle, my fair reader, but do all with due regard for the laws of man and nature. Do all as a woman, and the world and posterity will be better for it."³ Because femininity is linked with respectability in these magazines, the editors could safely encourage women to engage in outdoor recreation only if they stayed within society's accepted standards for the deportment and appearance of ladies. Therefore, for the New Woman and her spectators, a tension between practical, comfortable, athletic clothing and ladylike sporting apparel emerged.

Healthy-looking women were replacing the thin, pale ideal fashionable in the mid-nineteenth century. The quest for nature's splendor extended to an appreciation of a new, natural kind of beauty for women. Indeed, many writers promised improved looks along with good health to women who visited Maine as they praised the effects of the sun on the skin. Although a true suntan would not become popular for decades, slightly pink cheeks returned to favor after more than fifty years and "Gibson Girls" began rouging their cheeks in the 1890s. One editorial promised a "blooming cheek and sparkling eye" in exchange for the "sallow skin [and] lustreless regard" found in women who did not exercise.⁴ Likewise, Fly Rod Crosby told the *Washington Times* in 1896: "While fishing you're out of doors in the sunshine, coloring your cheeks..."⁵ Both male and female sports praised the beauty and charm of the women they met at sporting camps. After being left on the hotel

veranda by her husband, "semi-invalid" Ida May was taken fishing by a "charming and ardent little fisherwoman...[with a] lovely face, glowing with health..."⁶

Magazine editors' descriptions of their subjects as beautiful may have stemmed from the conventional courtesy which Victorian gentlemen typically directed toward ladies. Writers frequently called sportswomen the "Fair Sex" as if their participation in camping and field sports otherwise seemed too antithetical or threatening to established ideals of female beauty. "The Fair Nimrod," or pretty huntress, (figure 34) was a large woman with a deer slung over her shoulders. In the magazine image she grips both her rifle and the hind legs of the carcass as she faces the camera squarely. The woman is powerful, and a successful hunter, but



Figure 34 "The Fair Nimrod," *In the Maine Woods* (1922). Collections of the Maine Historical Society.

she is not "fair" in a conventional Victorian sense. As Allen Guttman has suggested in *Women's Sports: A History*, the writer of that caption was one of a largely forgotten group of Victorian men who found muscular, athletic women more attractive than their diminutive counterparts, or he simply hoped to lessen the impact of the photograph by describing the huntress in conventional and innocuous terms. A more traditional image of women appears in a 1908 edition of *In the Maine Woods*. Three pretty young women are posed on a tree stump, dressed in fashionable "Gibson Girl" shirtwaists and long skirts. They smile coyly as they raise small pistols in the air. The caption reveals the editor's use of women to seduce men into visiting Maine: "A 'Honey Tree' Indeed! Do not imagine all the stumps at Square Lake are as sweetly laden as this one" (figure 35). This photograph is one of very few in the publication which trivialized women's experience in the wild, using them as enticements for male travelers.



Figure 35 "A Honey Tree Indeed!" *In the Maine Woods* (1908). Collections of the Maine Historical Society.

Magazines confused their readers by presenting competing notions of womanhood and dress. However, by offering outfits ranging from men's clothing to the fashionable hourglass silhouette, with the full bust and wasp waist created by the kind of travelling, riding, or bicycling corset recommended by *Harper's Bazar*,⁷ these publications accommodated individual activity levels and inconsistencies. In "A Woman's Standpoint," a writer explained that a few simple garments are all that women needed in the woods, but admitted to having personal belongings hidden in her canvas cartridge bag. Instead of fishing tackle and ammunition, she found this bag the perfect place for her toiletries and "several different kinds of powder--all smokeless, if not scentless."⁸ Although she described her actions as equal to those of her male companions', this writer and her editors made sure that femininity was not left behind as she entered the woods.

The Maine wilderness served as a "middle ground" between the public sphere, where sport clothing on women was suspect, and the private realm of the college gymnasium, where more liberated athletic attire was worn. Yet camping clothing was appropriate only once the wearer reached the privacy of the woods. In order to remain respectable in public view, both men and women wore their city clothes during the journey from home and did not change until they embarked from the Mount Kineo House, or some other popular resort, into the woods. As Charles Stevens described in *Fly Fishing in Maine Lakes*, urban women were still an oddity in the Maine woods in 1881. The people they met on their trip from Boston expressed their surprise that his wife joined him on his fishing trip. Her clothing

was their primary topic of interest. Mrs. Stevens was not only properly dressed for any public street but wore her hair "tortured into shape" as she did in the city. On the train from Portland to Bryant's Pond, one astonished fellow exclaimed, "Gosh! cummin' all the way from Boston to go fishin? Not in them clo'es, is she?" Stevens explained that their travelling clothes were quite different from their fishing outfits. After their stay in the wilderness, he grumbled about having to return to city clothing. Twenty-five years later, travel customs had not changed. G. Smith Stanton recounted the same method of maintaining proper dress etiquette as his party reached Bangor, Maine: "Here we were to lay aside the dress appropriate along Fifth Avenue and don the woodsman's attire...", some of which they purchased in Bangor.⁹ After wearing a variety of outdoor clothing on her honeymoon trip, Mrs. Margaret Allen reluctantly donned her hat and gloves before boarding the steamer for home.¹⁰

Both men and women cite changing into different clothes as one of the greatest pleasures of camping in Maine. Male writers discuss their camping clothing in terms of comfort and functionality, imitating the way their seasoned Maine guides dressed in dirty khaki pants and old sweaters, warm flannel shirts, moccasins, and heavy wool socks (figure 36). By copying the men they considered more genuine and virile than themselves, many urbanites escaped still further from the artificiality of their city lives. In his novel, *Babbitt*, Sinclair Lewis described George Babbitt's longing to flee the "dull decency" of the suburbs and his inhibiting business suits to be "free and noisy in a flannel shirt" in the wilderness of Maine.¹¹ A *Maine*

Woods writer agreed, encouraging prospective "sports" by describing "the freedom of the wild, the freedom to dress, live, and act as you please."¹² Unshaven and unwashed, their rugged clothes made many men feel reckless and masculine, traits men like Babbitt feared losing in the city.

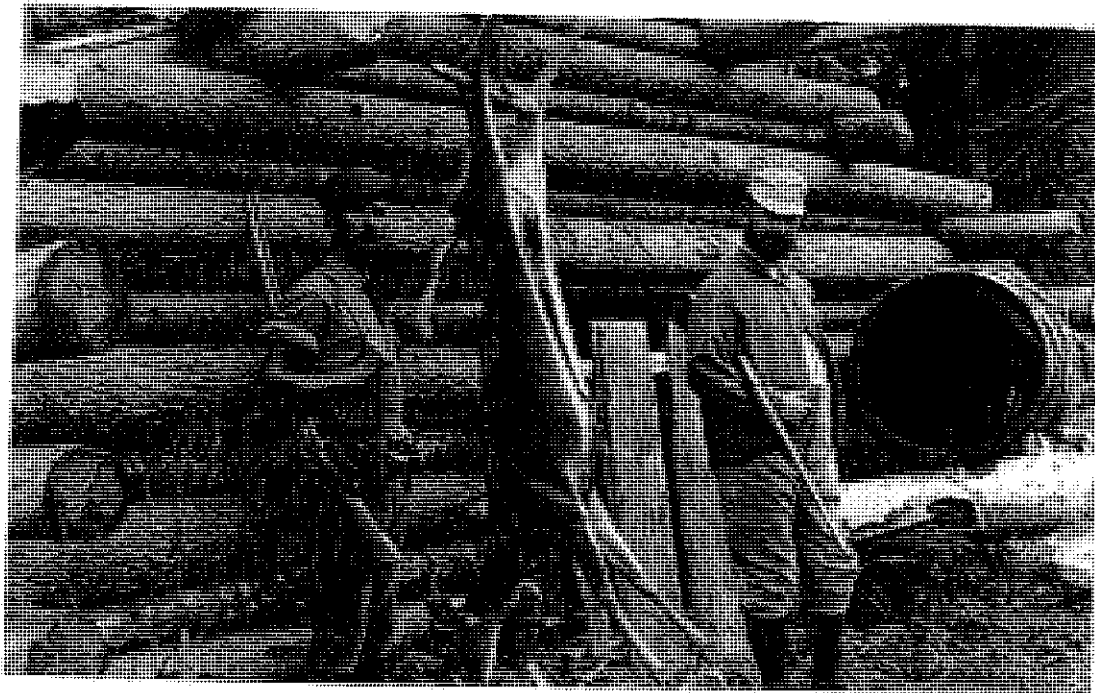


Figure 36 Charles Bullen Dunn and Guide, Dunn Collection (1887). Collections of the Maine Historical Society.

Likewise, women praised tenting for its opportunity to evade the constraints of tight, civilized city clothing for more comfortable garb. Mrs. James A. Cruikshank lists "wearing old clothes" among the charms of camping in Maine.¹³ Apparently, urbanites of both sexes were deprived of this "luxury" at home. Like their male friends, women enjoyed the freedom of dress they discovered in the woods. Yet, the role-playing that their clothing fostered was far more diverse than

their male counterparts' common quest for masculinity. The variety of their clothing selections suggests that women sought vastly differing levels of activity and liberation in the woods, conveying their range of attitudes in their apparel.

While none of the magazine writers recommended wearing full-length skirts or dresses, photographs in their publications reveal that many women brought fashionable city clothing with them. Usually, women brought traveling suits and nice clothes appropriate for wear during the occasional stay at a large resort hotel. Margaret Allen wore such dress while staying at the Mount Kineo House before and after her camping trip. Women wore these fancier outfits primarily in posed photographs, not actually fishing or hunting, but posing with their prey. These photographs can be found from 1895 to 1910, with only slight changes in fashion. Most often the outfit consists of a simple shirtwaist and wool skirt, often somewhat dated in style like the fisherwoman, displaying her catch in 1908's *Maine Woods*, whose puffy-sleeved shirtwaist was fashionable more than 10 years earlier (figure 37). Nevertheless, once women arrived home, these snapshots proved not only that they had shot their deer or moose, or caught a string of trout, but that they had maintained conventional ladylike decorum while doing so.

One writer's suggestion that women trim their outfits with a brilliant scarf may seem like vanity, but its aid in assuring that one stood out sufficiently in the woods to avoid being the target of an "overly-enthusiastic" hunter was entirely practical. She described as "ridiculous" women who might not recognize that the "soft frou-frou" of silk skirts was out of place in the woods.¹⁴ Like her, most



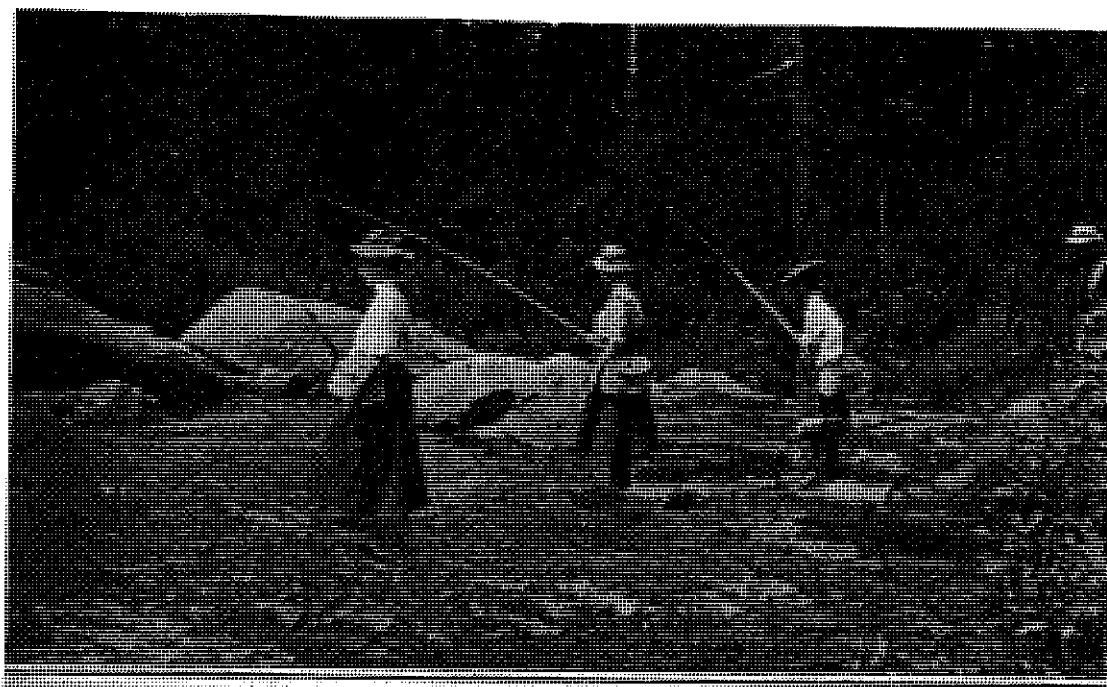
NO WONDER SHE'S HAPPY!
She caught this handsome string of trout at Horseshoe pond one morning.

Figure 37 "No wonder she's happy! She caught this handsome string of trout at Horseshoe pond one morning" *In the Maine Woods* (1908). Collections of the Maine Historical Society.

writers recommended that women disregard fashion completely. Editors counseled women to dress for warmth and comfort rather than to display the abilities of her "fashionable tailor."¹⁵ Mildred Howes followed their suggestions, inventorying an assortment of sensible sporting clothes in her journal, along with one red hair ribbon.¹⁶

Written descriptions and photographs published between 1895 and 1910 reveal that the most popular hunting garment for women was the shortened skirt. Raised twelve inches off the ground, this skirt allowed freedom of movement without straying too far from mainstream fashion (figure 38). Stylish skirts of the

1890s reached all the way to the floor and, while hemlines rose only enough to reveal the shoe by 1915, these shorter sporting versions were acceptable throughout



They Have no Fear of Wet Feet.

Figure 38 "They Have No Fear of Wet Feet," *In the Maine Woods*, (1909). Author's Collection

the period given the addition of gaiters, knee-high boots, or heavy wool stockings which adequately covered the legs (figure 39 and figure 40). Women noted that the skirt should be made of wool and have a leather hem and facing to keep it from catching on brush. Such skirts, however, may not have been available commercially. Several women refer to having skirts shortened or made especially for the hunting trip. Margaret Stevens Allen reported on her own outfit: "Took off wet shoes and stockings which disclosed a shocking condition of things. Mrs. A's stockings were of cheap quality, and being soaked the color ran. This, in

combination with the muddy bog she had been obliged to wade through, made feet and underclothing a sight not to be described."¹⁷ Despite the mess, her ensemble may have made wading through the bog easier than if she had been burdened with the extra weight of soaking wet trousers.

The mobility short skirts offered was praised by one writer in 1906 who observed the women in his party tramping freely through the woods.¹⁸ Despite the women's physical freedom of motion in these skirts, modesty may still have prevented them from a complete range of movement as they climbed mountains, or even lifted themselves out of a canoe.



ABOUT TO COAX A TROUT.
"French dorell" in the river near Frying in southern
Maine.

Figure 39 "About to Coax a Trout," *In the Maine Woods*, (1908). Collections of the Maine Historical Society.



Figure 40 "A Moosehead Salmon and Its Captor," *In the Maine Woods*, (1910). Collections of the Maine Historical Society.

Often, short skirts were shown in fashion magazines as part of a complete wool suit, fashionable outfits which embodied the conflict between function and femininity while proving that the popular press expected women to hunt for sport. In 1895 *Maine Outings* provided drawings of appropriate sporting costumes. The stylish hunting costume with a knee-length skirt made full with petticoats, featured a tightly-fitted coat with large leg o' mutton sleeves, cinched at the waist (figure 42). Made in a finer fabric and with longer skirt, this suit would not have looked out of place on a city street that year. *Harper's Bazar* also showed fashionable sporting outfits for women. Their "Lady's Hunting Costume" for Summer, 1893 features a knee-length skirt and snug jacket, but without the exaggerated puffed sleeves which

were so popular. Wrapped around her tightly-corseted waist is a belt ringed with cartridges (figure 41). *Harper's* showed scandalously short knee-length skirts not derived from current high fashion but styled to allow easier movement. In this way, the suits both restricted women to a ladylike role and answered a vital, progressive clothing reform concern--that short skirts were necessary and acceptable in situations when a long skirt would become dirty or even dangerous.



Figure 41 "Lady's Hunting Costume," *Harper's Bazar* (August 12, 1893). From Blum, *Victorian Fashions and Costumes*.



Figure 42 Hunting Costume, *Maine Outings* (September 1895). Collections of the Maine Historical Society.

Although a hunting suit for women was an exciting innovation when Fly Rod Crosby helped introduce it in the mid 1890s, the press usually presented fanciful, exaggerated versions of the basic garment. At the 1896 Sportsmen's Show in New York, Fly Rod boosted Maine tourism while wearing a leather suit made especially for her. Spalding Brothers designed the suit after a stylish French pattern by courtier Frederick Worth, but her New York audience was shocked by the shortness of the skirt and the buckskin material. Although in the Eastern United States leather clothing was probably most associated with male laborers at that time, Fly Rod wore it elegantly as did her friend, sharpshooter and Wild West Show performer Annie Oakley. Newspapers circulated the sensation Crosby's outfit caused to readers across the country.¹⁹ In 1898, the press described Fly Rod in a pale green kid suit worn with matching knee-high shoes and a solid gold fishing reel inlaid with mother-of-pearl. As a savvy promoter of Maine tourism, Fly Rod wore these outfits to sporting shows and attracted considerable attention. There is no evidence,

however, that either her solid gold reel or her chic leather ensembles ever saw the actual woods.

Five years later, a *Maine Woods* writer remembered the leather suit worn by "one of Maine's best known sportswomen," but described dressing in leather as an extreme most women would want to avoid.²⁰ Photographs show most sportswomen's skirts were supported by union underwear or bloomers rather than layers of fluffy petticoats and that the cut of their jackets had more in common with men's tailoring of the period than with the boned bodices of stylish Victorian women (figure 43 and figure 44). Most women followed the advice of travel editors and dressed as they felt comfortable.

Some sportswomen began choosing bloomers. *Maine Outings* took up the debate over the propriety of these new "bifurcated" garments for women in its first "Fin de Siecle Diana" in 1895 and continued defending women's right to dress according to the occasion and their own individual taste in every succeeding issue. The editor was careful to point out, however, that only a woman who looked well in bloomers should wear them, while her "scrawny friend" and "200-pound neighbor" should refrain.²¹ As early as 1881, Mrs. Charles Stevens wore a bloomer suit made of a dark waterproof fabric with good stout boots, buckskin gloves with armlets secured at her elbow, as well as a gentlemen's felt hat with a veil which reached from its brim to the collar of her dress, protecting her head from mosquitoes.²² In her choice of clothing Mrs. Stevens presaged what many women would wear to the woods a generation after her.



And Now the Huntswoman!

Figure 43 "And Now the Huntswoman!" *Haunts of the Hunted* (1903). Author's Collection.



Figure 44 "Youthful but no Tenderfoot," *In the Maine Woods* (1910). Collections of the Maine Historical Society.

As women who wore bloomers on bicycles had paved the way for bloomers or trousers as hunting garments a few years later, they also influenced how the bloomers were worn. *Maine Outings* quoted a *Chicago Tribune* report on "wheel suits" which described how women modified the startling effect bloomers produced by wearing a skirt on top of them: "A model skirt that has made a hit is cut like a circular cape and fastened up the side, so that it may be easily thrown off or on as the rider wishes."²³ Thus, a woman could avoid controversy, maintain her modesty, and still enjoy the freedom of movement that bloomers provided. In 1910, Ella S. Williams described the same procedure in "Outing Hints by a Lady Who Has Been There." She advised traveling in a wool skirt with bloomers underneath, a long woolen coat, and heavy walking shoes. Upon reaching the seclusion of camp, however, "the skirt, shoes, and coat are laid aside."²⁴ Photographs in *In the Maine Woods* show the middle-aged Williams taking aim wearing a pair of loosely cut bloomers, held up with an ammunition belt (figure 45). Mildred Howes remembered wearing exactly the same outfit that year, "a kahki [sic] skirt which came to the top of my boots--with serge bloomers under it." She admitted in her journal that by 1915 her photographs showed her "around the camp in bloomers!" Despite her apparent modesty, Howe noted that the bloomers had been "indispensable."²⁵ Women's photographs, journals, and travel accounts reveal that she was not alone in her conclusion.

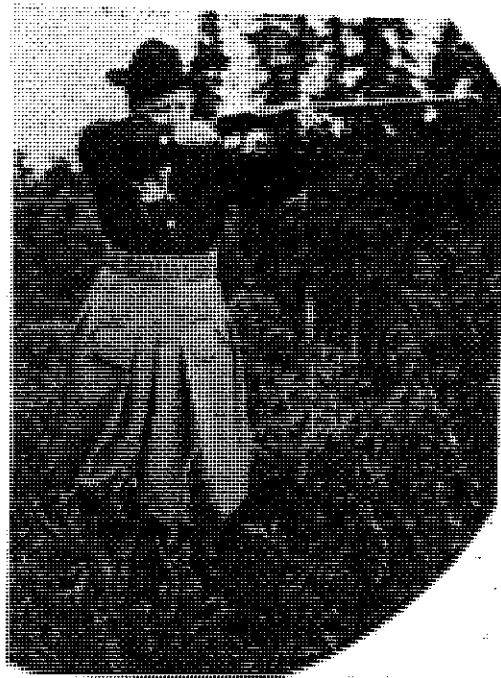


Figure 45 "Steady Now!" detail, *In the Maine Woods* (1910). Collections of the Maine Historical Society.

Other women ignored the controversial compromise of these pants designed for women and simply wore men's clothing in the woods. On the surface, they sought the warmth and practicality that men's clothing provided. Female travel writers often recommended that their readers purchase men's goods especially for their trip or borrow certain articles from their husbands and brothers. Among the "Outing Hints" Ella Williams gave her readers was that "frills and fancies are best left at home," and that she preferred "a man's soft woolen shirt and soft felt hat," with her bloomers.²⁶ Her candid suggestion may have proved shocking to some women who read the sporting publication, but many others heeded her advice. Mildred Howes brought her husband's old leather jacket and a boy's flannel shirt on her camping trips and Margaret Stevens Allen adopted Neal's sweater and coat when

she became wet or chilled. Evidently, some readers followed the lead of male sports, finally adopting the men's complete outfit. The 1906 photograph titled "The 'Gentler Sex' Can Hunt, Too," presents a smiling woman leaning on a tree stump next to her dead buck. She wears the same outfit recommended to men in the adjacent article: hat, old wool sweater (with a school letter on the front), trousers tucked into boots, and a scarf tied as an ascot at her neck (figure 46). Were women like her mavericks, intentionally wearing men's clothes, or was it simply easier to borrow or buy them than suitable women's garments?



Figure 46 "The 'Gentler Sex' Can Hunt, Too," detail, *In the Maine Woods* (1906). Collections of the Maine Historical Society.

Anne Hollander suggests in *Sex and Suits* that women who were accustomed to wearing corsets and skirts moved relatively easily in them.²⁷ Therefore, they did not adopt men's pants merely for greater mobility. Likewise, Shelly Foote contends in her essay, "Challenging Gender Symbols," from *Men and Women: Dressing the Part*, that when women adopted trousers they appropriated a potent gender symbol with the acknowledged intention of seeing what it was like to be men in their society.²⁸ Upper- and middle-class sportswomen who dressed in sportsmen's clothing while outside society's scrutiny may have also been exploring gender possibilities. Wealthy urban women hired dressmakers to sew their clothing from designs shown in fashion magazines. They could have easily commissioned them to copy the drawings of hunting suits they saw in *Harper's Bazar* in the early 1890s. These women also had the opportunity and the means to purchase female sportsclothing if they had wanted. Abercrombie & Fitch Co. marketed "serviceable, charming, and dainty" sporting attire for women by 1909 (figure 47). Their free catalog was sent all around the country, providing any woman of means with "the very costume you have been dreaming about, only far more attractive, far more in the MODE, far more serviceable and far less expensive than you have dreamed."²⁹ Drawings of the outfits show white shirtwaist blouses, simple knee-length skirts, and wide bloomers the company called "knickerbockers" (figure 48) made up in fabrics which were waterproof, warm, and "untearable." The catalog offered gender-specific sports clothing in realistic, fashionable, and conventionally attractive styles from which women could choose sportswear to their liking.



Figure 47 Abercrombie & Fitch Co. Advertisement, *New England Magazine* (1909). Collections of the Maine Historical Society.

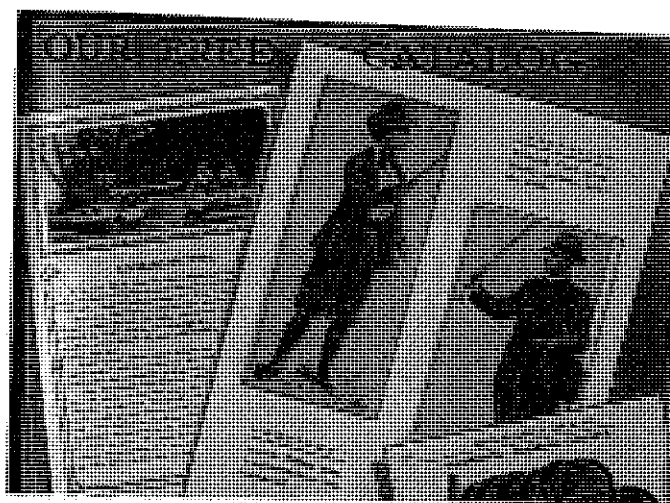


Figure 48 Abercrombie & Fitch Co. Advertisement, *New England Magazine* (1909). Collections of the Maine Historical Society.

Yet women who could have purchased such ladies' sporting apparel chose not to. Mildred Cox Howes was a wealthy Boston society woman who could have ordered any number of elegant and functional ensembles from Abercrombie & Fitch Co. or had such garb custom tailored to meet her needs. By choosing instead to dress in men's coats and shirts, was she, like her husband, trying robust masculinity on for size? During their camping trips Mr. and Mrs. Howes did not conform to established gender roles. Mildred often reported leaving her husband at camp to go fishing either alone or with one of their guides. Their guides handled all domestic arrangements while Mrs. Howes joined in the hard work carrying and dragging canoes on their hikes.

While Margaret Allen did not pack men's clothing for her trip, only borrowing from her husband once they arrived, she encountered situations in the woods which led her to explore male attributes. After a "fierce, cold, windy shower" and a terribly difficult day which Mrs. Allen blamed on the Devil himself, the young couple sat shivering, far from their campsite, without shoes or stockings. In her desperation, the normally abstinent Mrs. Allen "took a reckless draught of whiskey" and donned her husband's oilskin trousers before they set off across the raging lake for home. In her diary, Margaret depicts whiskey drinking and trouser wearing as equally outrageous and uncharacteristic measures she took only in extreme circumstances. But photographs Neal Allen snapped of his new bride prove that in the calm days after the storm Mrs. Allen continued to wear her husband's pants for less exciting adventures around camp like setting the table or hanging out

the laundry (figure 49). Although she did not admit to a change of heart in her journal entries, Allen appears to have taken advantage of her opportunity to embrace the new apparel--at least in the privacy of the woods. Furthermore, while Mrs. Allen wore pants, she and her groom shared the domestic chores of their wilderness home. She had escaped from the limitations of conventional Victorian femininity and succeeded in her search for natural strength and outdoor adventure.



Figure 49 Margaret Stevens Allen (1909). Collection of the Allen Family.

Only overtly rebellious women would have continued wearing trousers at home, yet for many Victorian women their first departure from corsets for any prolonged period of time was equally inspiring. Some ladies expected to wear the constricting undergarments when they came to the woods, but discovered they were unnecessary. On her first trip to Maine Mildred Cox Howes was "finally persuaded that I didn't need corsets!"³⁰ This initial relaxation probably fostered Howes' acceptance of bloomers a few years later and her general adoption of men's clothing for camping. Spending several weeks each summer and fall enjoying this comfort, can she have readily returned to her city wardrobe in Boston?

A trip through the Maine wilderness required more than just the departure from traditional women's garb; various stages of undress often became necessary. Sportswomen sometimes discovered the need to strip down to essentials when both they and their clothing encountered obstacles in the wild. During her journey down the West Branch of the Penobscot with her father and a group of other men, Fanny Hardy Eckstorm chronicled an especially rough hike across a carry where "I took off under drawers, shirt and petticoat to save carrying them across."³¹ By removing some of her undergarments, Eckstorm does not imply that she was exposed in any way, but the young woman did exhibit a freedom of dress during her adventures in the Maine wilderness which would not have been acceptable for a woman in her mid twenties in any American city. Bostonian Mildred Cox Howes needed a few years before she got used to the freedoms Maine offered. "On our second Maine trip . . . I remember overcoming my modesty by removing my skirt

& wading up a rocky stream in my bloomers."³² Like Eckstorm, the rough condition of the trails around the West Branch forced Howes to undress when her party found the stream leading to Loon Lake too dry for canoeing. Wading through the shallow water dragging their boats and supplies, Howes remembers, "That was where I just discarded a skirt!"³³

In the privacy of the Maine woods, Howes was free to discard all her clothing if she wanted to "have a quick swim and bath in a secluded spot."³⁴ That she cites both swimming and bathing in her memoirs suggests that she used the word "bathing" to mean washing herself, rather than the judicious wading which women in cumbersome wool dresses undertook at seaside communities. Her care to find a "secluded spot" for her bath implies that she reposed naked as she washed in a remote lake or stream. Any mention of a costume for swimming is conspicuously absent in Howes' journal entry of 1913, when she meticulously listed her "Clothes taken" on that camping trip down to "1 rubber cap" and "3 stockings."³⁵ Although she claimed that they "had warm enough weather on each trip to have a quick swim and bath," Howes would have had to enjoy those swims without a costume. Even though she swam in 1913, her list clearly indicates that she had no swimming costume with her that year. Furthermore, if she had swum during her previous two trips in 1910 and 1911, she certainly would have learned to pack a bathing costume by 1913 had she desired one. Instead, her diary account reveals that she preferred swimming in the nude, indulging in that unity with nature each time she returned to Maine. The pleasure Howes took from her own nudity was her ultimate escape

from city clothing and the Victorian restrictions under which she had grown up.

Upper- and middle-class urban women could not fully escape the tension of merging respectable femininity with utilitarian gear even in the Maine woods. Yet, as sportswomen explored the natural world, they also explored their own natural beauty, redefining their body image as they abandoned the advice of fashion and travel editors. A trip to the Maine woods demanded a change in clothing and women seized the opportunity to experiment with relatively short skirts, loosened corsets, bloomers, and even menswear. In the seclusion of the wilderness these genteel women happily adopted clothing that would have labeled them as extremists at home, basing their selections on the kind of comfort and function first seen in women's cycling suits. For women previously confined to corsets, bustles, and skirts which dragged on the ground, wearing clothes which often reached beyond even progressive dress reform ideals must have profoundly altered how they felt about their bodies. Could this new attitude have fostered Mildred Howes' exploration of traditionally masculine behavior? Was it this freedom which made Howes want to return to Maine year after year before trying trips to wilderness areas of Quebec, the Canadian Rockies, and Montana? Mildred Howes, Margaret Allen, and other sportswomen did not just become physically and spiritually healthy in the woods; they also gained important new self awareness. Despite being classified into unnatural "types" by philosophers and writers, these women discovered that they were not as they appeared in the city, but were multi-faceted individuals with, perhaps, more strength, daring, and virility than they had known.

Notes to Chapter Three

1. Martha Banta, *Imaging American Women: Idea and Ideals in Cultural History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), pp. xxvii-xxxi.
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3. "Editorial," *Maine Outings*, March 1895, p. 49.
4. Ibid.
5. *Washington Times*, 1896.
6. Ida May, "My First Trout," *Maine Outings*, May 1895, p. 66.
7. Stella Blum, ed., *Victorian Fashions & Costumes from Harper's Bazar: 1867-1898* (Toronto: Dover Publications, Inc., 1974), p. 257.
8. Mrs. James A. Cruikshank, "A Woman's Standpoint," *In the Maine Woods*, 1904, p. 124.
9. G. Smith Stanton, *Where the Sportsman Loves to Linger* (New York: Ogilvie Publishing Co.), 1905 p. 14.
10. Diary of Margaret Stevens Allen and Neal W. Allen, 9 July 1909, Personal collection of the Allen Family.
11. Lewis, Sinclair. *Babbitt*. (New York: Harcourt Brace & World, Inc., 1922), p. 238.
12. John D. Finnegan, ed., "Exploring Maine's Waterways," *In the Maine Woods*, 1909, p. 42
13. "Living in Tents," *In the Maine Woods*, 1908, p. 48.
14. Mary Alden Hopkins, "Women in the Woods," *In Pine Tree Jungles*, 1902, p. 125.
15. "Where the Big Fish Swim," *In the Maine Woods*, 1908, p. 77.
16. Diary of Mildred Cox Howes. 1910-1917, Mildred Cox Howes Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.
17. Allen and Allen, 5 July, 1909.
18. James Morey, "Memories of Cedar Pond," *In the Maine Woods*, 1906, p. 116
19. Thomas A. Verde, "Diana of the Rangeleys," *The American Fly Fisher*, Fall 1989, p. 11.

20. Hopkins, p. 124.
21. *Maine Outings*, September 1895, p. 179.
22. Charles W. Stevens, *Fly Fishing in Maine Lakes; or Camplife in the Maine Wilderness* (Boston: A. Williams & Co., 1881), p. 25.
23. "Ladies' Wheel Suits," *Maine Outings*, June 1895, p. 160.
24. Ella S. Williams, "Outing Hints from a Lady Who Has Been There," *In the Maine Woods*, 1910, p. 84.
25. Mildred Cox Howes, "Camping Trips" [n.d.] Mildred Cox Howes Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Mass.
26. Williams, p. 84.
27. Anne Holander, *Sex and Suits: The Evolution of Modern Dress*. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994) p. 136.
28. Shelly Foote, "Challenging Gender Symbols," in *Men and Women: Dressing the Part*, ed. Claudia Brush Kidwell and Valerie Steele (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989) p. 144.
29. Advertisement, "Abercrombie & Fitch Co.," *New England Magazine*, April 1907, p. xii.
30. Howes, "Camping Trips."
31. Fanny Hardy Eckstorm, *Down the West Branch of the Penobscot August 12-22, 1889*, ed. Benton L. Hatch, reprinted from *Appalachia*, December 1949, p. 488.
32. Howes, "Camping Trips," p. 2.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
35. Diary of Mildred Cox Howes.

Conclusion: Returning Home

Victorian upper- and middle-class urban women expanded their horizons when they ventured into the northern Maine woods. Encouraged by magazines and newspapers, they enjoyed a new recreational opportunity which made them reconsider their place in American society. Not only did Victorian women improve their physical health and strength as they joined men in hunting, fishing, and seeing the wilderness, but they also explored a new appreciation for things outside their daily domestic sphere. For some women, these new horizons included an awakened ambition for equality with men. Women's new-found love of nature also made them add conservation to their list of charitable causes and civic improvements as they became aware of the paper industry's threat to Maine's wildlife and lands. Finally, women viewed themselves differently. As their self-image changed, they found different fashions like shorter, ankle-length skirts not only more acceptable but more desirable. Likewise, standards of etiquette and behavior were changing as the Victorian period came to an end. The restrictions under which upper- and middle-class women lived were loosening, allowing them to pursue their personal and political interests.

Maine Outings and *In the Maine Woods* promoted active recreation for women at a time when such activity was still controversial. Many members of Victorian middle- and upper-class society were threatened by any changes in women's lives, including athletics, which might lead to suffrage. For the most part, the Bangor and Aroostook Railway avoided any political comments in the pages of

In the Maine Woods. Instead, the magazine concentrated on encouraging women to try a trip to the Maine woods. The railroad, after all, was trying to sell tickets. *Maine Outings*, on the other hand, was an independent publication whose goal was to create enough sensation to sell next month's magazine. Its "Fin de Siecle" department was written for an audience of women by a female staff who boldly debated women's roles, suffrage, and that new mode of female apparel, bloomers. Despite some inconsistencies in their message, these publications created new recreational opportunities for women. Their innovation was a business venture, however, rooted in their attempt to expand the consumer base for railway tickets, magazines, and the Maine woods.

Writers of travelogues had less at stake but their books and articles also signaled the changes that were transforming Victorian society. Charles W. Stevens recorded his fishing trip to the Maine lakes with his wife in 1881 in an effort to praise the wilderness and its virtues to all who would listen. Remarkably, he did not give his wife's name throughout the entire account, though she is significant as an early recorded female "sport." This inconsistency in her relative importance is further exposed when her husband described her on the steamboat ride home as "the limp specimen of womanly beauty and equal rights who lay so quietly in her narrow berth."¹ Like many women in this age of flux, she is both weak and strong, a specimen of beauty and a force to be reckoned with.

Like Mrs. Stevens, female sports did not lie quietly, but boldly broke free of their sphere when they travelled into the wilderness. As Victorian women were

judged and classified by the men and women around them, these female athletes earned praise from some and censure from others. At such a time of change in women's public role, participation in a traditionally male pastime like field sports did not go unnoticed--or unanalyzed. Entry into any new activity, even something as seemingly benign to us today as bicycling, carried potent political significance at the turn of the century. *Maine Outings* acknowledged the greater implications of women's physical development from its first issue in March 1895 when Clara Marcelle Greene, editor of the section "Fin de Siecle Diana," started to devote increasingly greater space to political and social issues. By the February and May 1896 issues, the editors debated the New Woman's place in society, her education, and her right to vote, leaving little space for sporting reports.

Editors sometimes left these political debates unresolved or ambiguous. Miss May Milliken, the original editor of "Fin de Siecle Diana," encouraged progress only as long as it did not threaten the home. In her editorial "The 'Advanced' Woman," she praised women's strides in education but asked, "Is progression for our sex...an unwomanly asserting of an independence of masculine control and advice?"² To Miss Milliken an "advanced" woman was mentally and physically superior to other women, but should not attempt to challenge men. In Clara Marcelle Greene's first editorial in February 1896, she argued vehemently for women's health through athletics, yet stated her belief that a woman and her home could not even be considered independent entities.³ Although many opponents of women's sports feared its link to women's rights, Greene's views represent a middle

ground between athleticism and feminism, a view which many of her readers may have shared.

Most often, writers for "Fin de Siecle Diana" criticized women's domestic role and her status in relation to men. In several instances they applauded the part sports could play in advancing women in society. "With physical development and the new life that comes with outdoor exercise, new aspirations come to women and new fields of usefulness open before them," observed an editor of *Maine Outings*, "The professions and trades stand invitingly open to those who have energy, perseverance and genuine pluck."⁴ She championed exactly what many people feared, that by exercising women "would find ourselves competitors in strength with the men, with whom...we shall no doubt shake hands at the ballot box."⁵

Gaining self-assurance and strength in the woods, however, influenced women's ideas on more than just politics; the lessons the women learned from the outdoors stayed with them through their lives. After her honeymoon camping trip, Margaret Stevens Allen spent her married life in Portland, quietly raising her children and volunteering for civic, church, and public school service organizations. Her family reports that, despite her actions in the privacy of the wilderness, when she returned to Portland she never again wore trousers. She was also a strictly temperate woman who disliked the use of alcohol, forgetting even the "reckless" drink of whiskey which had comforted her in the woods. Yet Allen was a religious woman and her belief in the sublimity of nature did not falter. In 1969 she published a book of poems she had been composing since the late 1920s. Her verse

is filled with imagery of the wonder of the seasons, the "infinite" sky, graceful birds, sunshine, flowers, and eternal light. In the lead poem of the collection, "The Burning Bush," Allen described hearing God's voice in a flaming maple tree on her farm in Maine.

Its radiant glory streaming toward the sky
Against the green of pine and spruce close by
I thought of Moses and the Burning Bush,
And on my soul there fell a sudden hush,
So clearly sensed I almost heard the sound.--
'the Place whereon thou standst is holy ground.'

The verse ends with her desire to hear "from every earth-worn clod, As from the Burning Bush, the Voice of God." Her deep appreciation of the value of the outdoors remained with her throughout her life.

Other nature lovers grew concerned about twentieth-century threats to the future of the Maine woods. Even as urbanites fled to Maine in search of pristine wilderness, they confronted the destruction of the woods as modern paper-making companies cleared huge areas of forest. With the progress of industrialization, large corporations could cut trees far more efficiently than the small groups of loggers who had populated the northern woods for years. On their third trip to Maine, Mildred and Osborne Howes took advantage of the logging road built by Great Northern Paper Company and saved three days travel by hiring a car to drive them back from Loon Lake. By 1921, they were less impressed with Great Northern's accomplishments. Heading to their favorite camping area north of Moosehead Lake, "we found that the West Branch of the Penobscot had been flooded by Gt. Northern Paper Co." In order to escape the "unattractive effects" of the flooding, the Howes

were forced to rent a motor boat to tow their three canoes further north.⁶ The couple appears to have been so disappointed by this destruction of Maine's wilderness that, after that trip, they never vacationed in Maine again. In 1924 they joined the Triton Fish and Game Club on Lac des Trois Caribous northeast of Quebec, Canada. Although the lake was more difficult to reach and much farther from Boston than was the Penobscot River, the Howes spent the next two years fishing and hunting there, introducing their young daughter Barbara to the natural pleasures of Canada rather than Maine.

Fanny Hardy Eckstorm was also acutely aware of how the Maine woods were changing. Guided by her northern Maine upbringing, Eckstorm became the state's leading historic preservationist. The fate of the Maine river-driver in the face of the Great Northern Paper Company was a particular concern of the scholar. In 1927 she lamented the end of that era in a letter to a colleague, writing that she would never again see "any big logs any more driven by water, talking of their woods and their travels. A log used to be a thing of romance; now it is only a tree cut down, and with a saw."⁷ Eckstorm savored and preserved the Maine woods and its unique culture in books like *The Penobscot Man*, a series of stories based on the real lives of the river-drivers she had known. Keen to preserve parts of Maine she saw passing, Eckstorm carefully chronicled the culture of Maine's Native Americans, traditional Maine folksongs, the origins of Maine place names, and the value of the Maine wilderness. Having lived away from Maine during her short-lived marriage, Eckstorm valued the state's endangered natural environment and the

people it supported, devoting a lifetime of scholarship to recording their history as she witnessed them slip away.

Yet, the appearance of urban landscape was also changing with the modern era. The generational clothing gap between the 1890s and 1920s was greater than any other in the history of American dress. The daughters of many of these early sportswomen adopted far different apparel than their mothers had worn. Perhaps fueled by the previous generation's quest for a kind of virginal purity unaltered by the refinements of civilization, the glorification of youth began. Youthful beauty, although seemingly untouched by artifice and opposed to sophisticated style in hair, makeup, and clothing, was far from natural. The young Flapper wore more makeup than her mother had dared to use. Clothing reform led fashion away from its dependence on a corseted waist for a stylish silhouette but still did not free women from its grip. Different corsets only gave the look of foundation-less dressing as fully matured women emulated the flat, boyish figure which had become the rage. This new silhouette did not exaggerate the female shape but denied its basic curves in the pursuit of an innocent, childlike body. Likewise, hair styles changed and for the first time in one hundred years, women wore their hair cropped short, as they had when they were girls. Although pants were not widely adopted until the 1940s when women of the war effort needed them, women in the 1920s wore their skirts progressively shorter, ending the modesty surrounding the American female leg for at least the rest of the twentieth century.

Thus, the New Woman begat the "Flapper," in many ways a more extreme

version of herself. As the New Woman was an explorer, stretching the boundaries of her position, education, and recreation, the Flapper could be called a thrill seeker, searching for greater adventure in cars, illicit drugs, dancing, and parties. With the door to leisure activity open, the New Woman's daughter was free to enjoy herself in ways which were not always healthy or spiritual. Yet the Flapper and her beau were just another in a series of stereotypes imposed upon American women and men. The demands that their society placed upon them were little different from the kinds of rigid expectations which generations of Americans have encountered. For women and men before and since, the solitude of the wilderness has offered relief from the "tight lacing" and "tight collars" of civilization.

Notes to Conclusion

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2. *Maine Outings*, November 1885, P. 269.
3. *Maine Outings*, February 1896, p. 77.
4. *Maine Outings*, February 1896, p. 163.
5. Ibid.
6. Mildred Cox Howes, "Camping Trips, 1910-1925," n.d., Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Massachusetts.
7. Elizabeth Ring. "Fanny Hardy Eckstorm: Maine Woods Historian," *The New England Quarterly*, March 1953, p. 47.

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Personal Collection of the Allen family.

Phillips, Maine. Phillips Historical Society. Fly Rod Crosby Collection.

Portland, Maine. Maine Historical Society. Dunn Collection.

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