Gutman is an architectural historian and licensed architect whose strength is documenting individual buildings. She incorporates urban planning ideas into her account of Oakland, referring to the buildings as “nodes.” In *The Image of the City*, Kevin Lynch defines nodes as destinations where people gather for specific purposes; some may be the focus of their districts and serve as landmarks. The repurposed buildings that were so significant in women’s charitable efforts to improve the lives of children would have blended into their neighborhoods, but they would have been highly visible to those providing and seeking services.

As a planner, I was pleased to learn more about the neighborhoods in which these charitable buildings were located, details Gutman supplies by including insurance maps from the Sanborn Map Company in almost every chapter. For example, the West Oakland Home and its Cottage for Babies and Small Children were located in a block adjacent to a grammar school and the Cooper AME Church. One block away was a Catholic church, school, and convent, along with a dwelling for the priest, and a Protestant church and parsonage. Several blocks south were the Fannie Wall Children’s Home (founded by African Americans Fannie Wall and Lucinda Tilghman), the Catholic St. Vincent’s Day Home, and the “colored” YMCA. In addition to dwellings, these neighborhoods included several churches for whites, a “colored” YWCA, and a Catholic youth center. Parts of West Oakland, then, were integrated in terms of both race and religion.

Even a successful institution could face opposition. Welfare officials, for example, were wary of the St. Vincent’s Day Home because it was located in a repurposed building and the facility made it easier for mothers to work outside the home (291). If we replace “welfare officials” with “politicians,” feminists would claim that the same sentiments prevail today when state legislatures try to close abortion clinics. Spared by the army tanks brought in to raze the district in the 1940s, the building that housed the institution was turned into a family-oriented public arts and recreation center in 1949. The city invested in “creative childhood” by funding the Studio One Arts Center in the former orphanage. Maintenance was neglected for many years, but starting in 2001, private fund-raising, successful placement on the National Register of Historic Places, and passage of a $10 million city bond issue restored the building. Studio One reopened in 2008, “showing that once again Oakland has been remade through repurposing buildings for children” (349).

This is a well-written book, more accessible than many social histories because Gutman mixes theoretical references to Foucault with colloquial language (e.g., using “children” interchangeably with “kids”). She pays attention to the intersection of economic, political, and architectural history, as when she acknowledges the connection between real estate cycles and the ways women saved many places from speculative development. Gutman also weaves together the stories of whites and blacks, native- and foreign-born, and Catholics and Protestants. The book’s style and comprehensive coverage make it appropriate for undergraduate and graduate students in the fields of urban history and women’s history.

The only minor quibble I have with the book concerns the subtitle. Although it indicates a discussion spanning the hundred years from 1850 to 1950, the majority of the chapters are weighted heavily on the period from the 1870s to 1930s. There is very little about the 1920s and 1930s until chapter 8, and the 1940s appear mainly in chapter 9 and the epilogue.

The book raises timely questions in an era of government budget cutbacks affecting social services. Now that the majority of American women are in the labor force, who will construct the charitable landscape? Children are still dependent, of course, but the elderly—most of whom are women—are the current and future constituency in need of care. Today, the scarcity of independent living options for the older population is matched by the scarcity of women volunteers.

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**Note**


David Van Zanten, ed. *Marion Mahony Reconsidered* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011, 192 pp., 4 color and 65 b/w illus. $50 (cloth), ISBN 9780226850818

In the early 1990s the International Astronomical Union posted a call for names of “deceased women who have made outstanding or fundamental contributions to their field” for use in the designation of craters more than 20 kilometers in diameter on Venus.1 As the education director at the Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio Foundation at the time, I formally nominated architect Marion Mahony Griffin. While, unfortunately, there is yet no crater on Venus that officially carries her name, Mahony (1871–1961) has finally begun receiving the recognition she deserves for her contributions to the field of architecture in the early twentieth century.

Much of our previous understanding of this talented, yet marginalized, architect was the consequence of explorations into the lives and careers of two progressive male designers with whom she worked—Frank Lloyd Wright and Walter Burley Griffin. That a gendered penumbra continues to overshadow her work even today is reflected in the fact that the nonprofit associations established in Australia and the United States “to commemorate and promote a better understanding of the lives, ideals, vision and works of Walter Burley Griffin and Marion Mahony Griffin” include only the male partner in their shared name: the Walter Burley Griffin Society.2 That said, publications such as *Marion Mahony Reconsidered* have begun to fill out the story of America’s first female architect to be licensed via examination, including her personal and professional narratives and, perhaps most relevant to
today's global situation, her views on ecology, spirituality, and community.

**Marion Mahony Reconsidered** had its beginnings in a symposium of the same title held more than a decade ago at the Mary and Leigh Block Museum at Northwestern University. The event was organized in connection with the museum’s 2005 exhibition **Marion Mahony Griffin: Drawing the Form of Nature**. While the show focused on two series of stunningly beautiful renderings, many on silk, executed by Mahony between 1910 and 1920, the larger goal of the symposium and related publications was to "place these remarkable objects in the broader context of Mahony's whole career" (3). **Marion Mahony Reconsidered** certainly goes a long way toward achieving this goal. The book features illuminating essays by four of the six scholars who presented at the symposium; essays by the two other participants, Christopher Vernon and Debora Wood, appeared in the exhibition catalogue.

At the start of her career, Mahony served as Wright's closest associate, working intermittently with him over a span of almost fifteen years (ca. 1895–1909). Less widely known outside Australia is Mahony's work with Griffin, a fellow Oak Park studio colleague. The two married in 1911 and formed a design partnership that took them first to Australia (1914–35) and later to India (1935–37). After Walter's unexpected death in 1937, Mahony moved back to Australia, but she lived there only briefly before returning to her native city of Chicago.

Capable of producing beautiful and functional building designs of her own, Mahony focused much of her talent and energy on creating spectacular presentation drawings for building projects attributed to others. Scholars have attempted to understand why and to identify the extent of her contribution to the design processes that took place in the architectural offices in which she worked. As editor David Van Zanten ponders in the book's introduction, "What seeped from Mahony's drawings into Wright's and Griffin's conceptions?" (16). He and other architectural historians have struggled in their explorations of Mahony's personal life and design career, as clear, straightforward answers have been elusive. What do exist are tantalizing clues: a monogram on a drawing here, a reference in correspondence there, and, of course, Mahony's massive unpublished manifesto "The Magic of America." Above all are the exquisite drawings. Like her renderings on silk that used "various coloring agents" to achieve stunning results, the essays in this volume add a complex richness to our understanding of Mahony as the author's thoughtfully interpret these clues in the larger contexts of the time and places in which she lived and worked.

In the first essay, "Girl Talk: Feminism and Domestic Architecture at Frank Lloyd Wright's Oak Park Studio," social historian Alice T. Friedman explores the role Mahony and other women played in the innovative suburban design environment of Wright's first major independent office. The author offers insight into the struggles that female designers typically faced at the turn of the last century as they tried to enter the masculine world of architecture. In addition to having a supportive cousin in the profession, Dwight Perkins, Mahony had much in common with Wright, likely making her entry into the design field easier and less painful than for many of her female contemporaries. As Friedman informs the reader, Mahony was raised in a family of teachers, intellectuals, feminists, religious reformers, and artists who championed progressive education—a background not at all that different from Wright's, as well as that of a number of his prominent female clients.

It is interesting to note that while Friedman addresses Mahony's relationships to these clients and their domestic commissions, as well as her close connection to Wright's wife, Kitty, she omits the fact that Mahony was not the first or the only woman Wright employed early in his career. There were others: Anna Hicks, Isabel Roberts, and Marion Lincoln Lewis Chamberlain, who, like Mahony, had graduated from MIT with a degree in architecture before arriving in Oak Park. Unlike Chamberlain, who soon left not only Wright's office but also architecture altogether, Mahony endured and proved to be an intellectual and artistic match for Wright. Friedman notes that, according to studio colleague Barry Byrne, there was a "sparkle" as lively exchanges of conversation and ideas passed between the two designers (38). Unfortunately, we can only guess at the topics of discourse, which, as Friedman suggests, likely revolved around "arts, education, women's rights, childhood, American democracy, individualism, the landscape of the Midwest, spirituality, domesticity—and of course the architecture of the home" (42).

Few would disagree with Mahony's claim that her specialty was presentation work. Her seductive renderings helped to market numerous architectural projects, ranging from Wright's Unity Temple in Oak Park to the Griffins' new city plan for Canberra, Australia. In his essay "Graphic Depictions: The Evolution of Marion Mahony's Architectural Renderings," Paul Kruty, who has devoted much of his career to promoting the work of Mahony and Griffin, explores the authorship of renderings produced in Wright's offices between 1893 and 1909. In particular, he focuses on the dissemination of a specific, eye-catching drawing style that first appeared in the Oak Park studio in early 1906.

Central to Kruty's investigation, which builds on the earlier scholarship of academics such as H. Allen Brooks, is his argument that this delicate, linear technique was largely Mahony's creation. Kruty offers a detailed exploration of the stylistic development of her architectural renderings as she moved away from the watercolor washes of her Beaux-Arts training at MIT toward this more graphic style. Its elegant, abstract foliage patterns recall Japanese prints, contemporary drawings by progressive architects in Europe, and, more directly, works by renderer Birch Burdette Long, who produced a number of watercolors for Wright around 1901–2. Kruty pinpoints the start of the style when Mahony transformed her color wash of the west façade of Unity Temple into a black-and-white line drawing for publication in the local newspaper, Oak Leaves. Compositionally a direct copy of the earlier rendering, the line drawing is compelling because the innovative style appears fully developed. Like Athena born completely armed from the head of Zeus, Mahony presents a mature rendering style with little evidence of previous explorations or struggle—an example of what Van Zanten refers to in saying that "she continually flashed onto the scene in new ways" (20). Kruty goes on to present a detailed story of the style's adoption by...
Mahony’s colleagues in Wright's Oak Park studio and beyond. This essay offers important insight into both the working process in the offices of Wright and the Griffins and the transmission of design practices among architects in the Midwest and elsewhere; however, it includes several instances in which the reader is left wondering about what evidence exists to support claims of authorship on specific drawings.

In the essay “Motifs and Motives in the Lifework of Marion Mahony,” James Weirick, professor of landscape architecture at the University of New South Wales, looks to French philosopher Paul Ricoeur’s treatise Memory, History, Forgetting for an approach that might more fully recapture Mahony’s life and career, in particular, her work with Griffin in Australia. He does this by examining the relationship between “mental representation in memory and written representation in history” (97) as found in “The Magic of America.” In Mahony’s manuscript, in which she remembered, forgot, and altered aspects of her past to create a narrative that promotes her late husband’s career, Weirick finds carefully composed gaps and discontinuities like those that draw the viewer into her renderings. He focuses on the intersection of Mahony’s memory and imagination as viewed through the lens of Rudolf Steiner’s anthroposophy, a philosophy that had a strong influence on the Griffins beginning in the 1920s. While the extensive gaps in her story may have served as central factors in keeping Mahony’s “dramatic persona from its seemingly rightful place: center stage in the extraordinary development of Chicago architecture from Sullivan to Wright and Griffin” (97–97), as Weirick puts it, this lack has also contributed to recent interest in the designer.

In the final chapter, “Marion Mahony’s Return to the United States: War, Women, and ‘Magic,’” Anna Rubbo discusses an often overlooked era of the architect’s life: her time in Chicago after her husband’s death. This essay and Friedman’s serve as chronological bookends to Mahony’s life and career. Like Friedman, Rubbo examines the influence of Mahony’s personal relationships on her professional work. She explores the architect’s connections to pacifist and suffragist Lola Maverick Lloyd and discusses two substantial unrealized designs that Mahony produced during World War II: the World Fellowship Center in Conway, New Hampshire, and a utopian residential development in the style of the Griffins’ Castlecrag for Hill Crystals, Texas. Both projects illustrate Mahony’s profound sensitivity to nature and her interest in promoting peace and community living. Rubbo’s discussion of the architect’s relationship with early Prairie School scholars and the creation of “The Magic of America” is a fitting way to end Marion Mahony Reconsidered, as it helps to explain Mahony’s historical marginalization and the extensive gaps in our understanding of this remarkable designer.

The book has a few minor annoyances: footnotes referring to secondary sources, references to renderings that are not included in the book, at least one illustration showing a rendering of a building different from the one discussed in the text, the centers of two-page illustrations lost in the crease of the binding, and the inclusion of only four color plates. Nevertheless, Marion Mahony Reconsidered is definitely recommended reading for anyone interested in developing a fuller understanding of Marion Mahony Griffin and the progressive worlds in which she lived and worked.

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Notes
4. In a letter he wrote to Walter Wilcox in May 1904, architect Charles White mentioned a Mrs. Chamberlain who was working in the Oak Park studio. Through my research on Wright’s early studio employees, I was able to identify this person more fully as Marion Lincoln Lewis Chamberlain (Lee), who graduated from MIT with a degree in architecture in 1896, along with Oak Park native James Fyfe. Prior to entering Wright’s employment she was the head of the Fine Arts Department at the Boston Public Library.

Christine Mengin and Alain Godonou, eds.  
Porto-Novo: Patrimoine et développement  
Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2013, 560 pp., 88 color and 165 b/w illus. €29 (cloth), ISBN 9782859447571

As one approaches Porto-Novo, the capital of the Republic of Benin, a cathedral dominates the skyline, which is also punctuated by minarets. Less visible are the Vodun altars erected in the public spaces, streets, and squares of this West African city known for its ethnic and religious cohabitation. The spaces and narratives of the city are charted in Porto-Novo: Patrimoine et développement (Porto-Novo: heritage and development), a welcome contribution to the growing body of knowledge on heritage and its preservation in Africa. A massive edited volume written in French (with one essay in English), it adds to scholarly understanding of the architectural and cultural heritage of Porto-Novo. Edited by Christine Mengin, lecturer in architectural history at the University Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, and Alain Godonou, current director of the multicity UNESCO office in Libreville and former director of the École du Patrimoine Africain (EPA; School of African Heritage), this volume examines vernacular, Afro-Brazilian, and colonial built environments as well as natural and intangible forms of heritage and cultural capital.

The book serves as an interdisciplinary reference work on Porto-Novo. Its thirty-seven entries by some forty-four authors draw from a number of disciplines and include contributions from cultural