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This book can be read as the story of a small group of women who played a significant historic role over a thirty-year period. At another level, it is the case study of an entire, unique population. Eighty women were connected with the American Protestant mission in Hawaii during the period 1819-1850, and of these roughly a third are sufficiently documented to require more than a line's worth of references in the index of this study. A smaller group emerge as individuals, with names that evoke a whole era of American history--Mercy, Fidelia, and Clarissa--

along with still familiar names like Mary, Laura, and Sarah, and these are presumably the ones who are most fully documented, through their letters and journals. The events in which they were involved, albeit less visibly than their menfolk, make up a critical period in the history of Hawaii, from immediately after the abolition of the *kapu* laws by King Liholiho to the Great Mahele restructuring of land tenure that allowed ordinary Hawaiians and foreigners, including the missionaries, to become landowners. At the same time, this study is of great anthropological interest because of the light it casts on the functioning of gender roles and on one kind of culture contact.

The women of the Protestant mission represent a sort of overlay of two different periods of gender relations in the United States. On the one hand, they arrived in Hawaii already shaped by the nineteenth-century cult of true womanhood that accompanied industrialization. Many of the traditional activities of women, like spinning, weaving, and candlemaking, were taken up by industry, so that essential work in the home was much reduced. Increasingly, the work of men was taking them away from the home, and substantial numbers of women were also going out to work in factories. Many women were also becoming teachers, and levels of education for women were rising. During pioneer days, men and women had divided the tasks to be done, worked more or less side by side, and coped-- with little time to puzzle about the relative value of the tasks to be done. In the new context, there was a veritable flood of propaganda glorifying the role of married women who remained in the home as wives and mothers, promoting new vistas of perfection (and anxiety) and advising ever more scrupulous attention to the details of child development. During the same period, another order of tasks was defined for women: raising levels of virtue and civility, campaigning for abolition and sobriety. The aftermath of this process became the modern "feminine mystique," with myriad voices glamorizing housework and ready to explain to women how every potential efficiency should increase their effort and obligation.

The women who came to Hawaii as wives of missionaries brought this new consciousness with them into a situation where the actual physical tasks to be done replicated the pioneer situation. The women of the Hawaiian mission were like contemporary "superwomen," trying to meet the combined standards of two different eras and two different fields of aspiration. Nineteenth-century standards of propriety and gentility were superimposed on eighteenth-century or earlier conditions. Grimshaw writes as if the ruling of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions that there should be no single missionaries,

male or female, were a response to the sexual temptations of Polynesian culture. But the same view of the complementarity of gender roles existed in colonial New England where any single individual, male or female, was required to belong to a household at whose core was nuclear family, not only for propriety but also for practicality. a

At the time of the Hawaiian mission, patterns of gender complementarity were changing, and there were beginning to be single women living independently or with other women and pursuing careers. The insistence on married couples, pursued so awkwardly and even comically by aspiring missionaries who had quickly to find themselves wives, often women they hardly knew, echoed the adaptive needs of an earlier period. Even so, Protestant missionary work is one of a group of professions that have tended to require that male candidates be equipped with suitable wives, although the requirement has been wavering. Ministers, college presidents, and politicians as well can hardly fulfill their callings without wives. A larger group of professions require that if a man is married, his wife be committed to supporting him and conform to a set of expectations of her role: the foreign service, senior officers in the military, and many corporations evaluate wives as stringently as the husbands who are actually on the payroll. Until very recently, when women began to be ordained and to hold other independent positions, it was the case that marrying a divinity student was for many women the nearest they could come to fulfilling their sense of vocation to ministry and represented a full-time job. Not surprisingly, there is a considerable denominational research literature on the ambivalences and problems of modern clergy wives. For the women of the Protestant mission, marrying a missionary was the only available path to the fulfillment of their own individual vocations to proclaim the gospel.

The most interesting contribution of Grimshaw's work lies in her analysis of the effect of ethnocentrism on gender roles. The mission wives brought their New England standards and gender expectations and their deep commitments to evangelism to a society where the relative standing of women was higher than their own and the labors of housekeeping and childrearing far lighter. Such are the forces of cognitive dissonance, however, that it was apparently impossible for the New Englanders to learn anything in the area of gender roles and family life from the benighted pagans they came to save. It would have been useful and interesting if the author had made an inventory of what the missionaries, male and female, did learn from the Hawaiians. We do hear of the adoption of local foodstuffs and materials, for instance, and there were undoubtedly other subsistence techniques passed on that would have been remarked in letters home.

What the women did *not* learn comes through loud and clear: any alternative ways of fulfilling their roles. This is most striking in the area of childbirth, where the mission wives described the easy births of the polynesians as if these were an impropriety and continued to insist, for instance, on minimum activity in late pregnancy. The participation of men in domestic tasks, the lack of corporal punishment of children, the sharing of child care, clothing and construction suitable to the climate--none of these examples was seized. Even though, toward the end of the period, the ideas of the suffragettes were beginning to reach Hawaii, the mission wives continued to regard the ways in which Hawaiian women held authority over men as a sign of inferior civilization.

The ethnocentrism of the mission wives, combined with their rigid standards for female roles, was what finally frustrated their efforts to pursue, as wives of missionaries, their own missionary vocations. After a period in the field (this was not a prejudice they brought with them) they became convinced of the urgent need to protect their children from all contact with Hawaiian culture. What this meant was that their children were raised without supplementary caretakers, without non-sibling playmates, and largely confined inside the house or in closed yards. This in turn meant that the wives (who produced large numbers of children) had to cut back, sometimes eliminate, their teaching and visiting.

The women who arrived in Hawaii as missionaries were extraordinarily highly motivated, well educated for their time, and, because of their "middling" background (many came from farms), used to hard work. After a few years they were careworn, defeated, old before their time (although Grimshaw's figures show they did not die particularly early for that era), above all convinced that they had failed to carry out their lofty missionary vocations and that their only merit would be to have been good wives and mothers. What defeated them was a combination of the gender roles of two different eras, combined with extreme ethnocentrism. They were vastly proud of the very ideas about gender and family life that insured their subordination, They were made prisoners by their ethnocentrism. Their conviction of their own rightness gave them authority and influence over Hawaiians whose own culture was already crumbling.

Often, at the meeting place between cultures, or during times of transition, there are individuals who end up with the worst of both worlds. *Paths of Duty* is an important contribution to the literature of culture contact because of the vivid and individual images of a small and valiant group caught at such an interface.